

sanctuary : that was the horn used at Solomon's anointing, 1 Kings 1 : 39. The materials for the sacred oil used in setting apart kings and priests to their office are prescribed in Ex. 30 : 23-25. *Go . . to Jesse the Bethlehemite* ; for one of his sons was to be king in Saul's place. Jesse was the grandson of Ruth, the young Moabite widow, whose filial piety is told in one of the fairest idylls of all literature (see Ruth 4 : 21, 22). Jesse was of the tribe of Judah. Bethlehem lay five miles south of Jerusalem, a little to the east of the road from Jerusalem to Hebron, in the territory of Judah. The ancient name of the place, Ephrathah (Ruth 4 : 11), is from a Hebrew word meaning "to be fruitful", and refers to the fruitfulness of the valley surrounding the town. The two names are combined in Mic. 5 : 2.

Vs. 2, 3. *How can I go ? . . Saul . . will kill me.* Samuel is put in a difficult position : will not Saul slay him, when he hears that he has anointed another king ? *Take an heifer . . say, I am come to sacrifice.* This was one of the reasons for Samuel's going to Bethlehem. He did not tell the other and more important reason. *I will shew thee.* While there he shall anoint the man of God's choice secretly.

Vs. 4, 5. *The elders . . trembled.* At Samuel's arrival in Bethlehem, the townspeople are stricken with consternation. Such a sudden, unexpected appearance of the prophet had perhaps meant on some former occasion earnest rebuke. The terror of the people finds expression through the "elders" or chief men. *Comest thou peaceably ?* "Doth thy coming betoken good, O seer (prophet) ?" they ask. "Yes", answers the seer, "*I am come to sacrifice . . sanctify yourselves ;*" undertake the ceremonial purifications necessary for acceptable presence at the holy act of sacrifice. The body and clothes must be washed. One would be unfitted, for example, by contact with a dead body, Lev. 11 : 39; Num. 19 : 11. Samuel took part, it would seem, with the family of Jesse in these preparations; it may be that the anointing of David took place at this time.

## II. The Lord's Choice, 6-13.

What follows (vs. 6-10) appears to have been, for the most part, a dialogue which

went on in the mind of the prophet. Likely at Samuel's request (see v. 11) Jesse called his sons in order. In some way not explained, Jehovah made known to him that his choice was not Jehovah's choice.

Vs. 6, 7. *He looked on Eliab . . Surely the Lord's anointed.* In this stalwart son of Jesse, Samuel perhaps saw a noble counterpart of Saul, and judged him fit for the kingly office. *Man . . outward appearance . . the Lord . . the heart.* Qualification for kingship was not a matter of thews and sinews, but of character, and this the eye of God alone could discern. Eliab was one of the many that would not do : Jehovah wanted a man after his own heart, a man of mental and moral worth.

Vs. 8-10. *Abinadab . . Shammah . . seven . . not . . these.* One by one the young men stood before Samuel, while Jehovah announced his judgment on each. This judgment we are to think of as made known only in Samuel's heart. The young men themselves were unaware of what it all meant.

Vs. 11-13. *Samuel . . Are here all thy children ?* There is "a touch of bewilderment" in the question. Where can the Lord's chosen one be, if not among these seven stalwart men ? *The youngest . . keepeth the sheep.* It is as if the father had said, "There is no use in sending for him ; he is a mere stripling, not a man". *Fetch him . . not sit down . . till he come.* For David, the Lord's chosen, the sacrifice and the feast following must wait. *Brought him . . ruddy ; with fair skin and auburn hair, regarded by the swarthy Judeans as special marks of beauty. Of a beautiful countenance ; literally, "beautiful-eyed". Arise, anoint him : for this is he.* Silently God made known His choice, and silently, with no hint of his purpose, the prophet poured the consecrating oil on David's head. *This spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David* (Rev. Ver.). He received from heaven gifts fitting him for his yet unknown office.

## Light from the East

ANOINTED—From the earliest times it was common in the East to rub oil on the hair ; and on the exposed parts of the skin, to soothe the irritation produced by the burning sun. Amongst the luxurious, the oil used was