

uel did. His faith in God overcame his fear of man. (3) *Fears are no sin when they are not allowed to rule the conduct.* **To Bethlehem.** A village six miles southeast of Jerusalem, in the mountains of Judah, the burial place of Jacob's wife, Rachel, the home of Boaz and Ruth, the birthplace of David and of Jesus Christ. It was also the residence of Jerome while he was composing the Vulgate, or Latin translation of the Bible. **The elders.** The local rulers, hereditary heads of the families, according to the primitive government of the East. **Trembled.** Perhaps because his coming might expose them to the wrath of the king, but more likely because Samuel's visits were often to "judge" the people for some wrongdoing or neglect of duty. **Comest thou peaceably?** With friendly spirit.

5. Come to sacrifice. It was his habit to go through the land and keep the people in fellowship with God by religious services. **Sanctify yourselves.** By the outward acts of washing the body and the clothes, tokens of inward consecration to God. **Come with me.** The offering and sacrificial feast were probably on the day after his coming. **Sanctified Jesse.** He gave personal attention to this one family and their preparation for the service.

6. When they were come. To the sacrifice, which in most instances was accompanied with a feast upon a part of the offering. **Eliab.** Jesse's oldest son, one of Saul's army in the Philistine war (chap. 17, 15), and afterward the ruler of Judah under David. In 1 Chron. 27, 18 he is called Elihu. **Said.** No doubt to himself. **The Lord's anointed.** He judged by his size and personal appearance. Physical beauty appears to have been an hereditary trait in the family of David.

7. The Lord said. The prophets could readily distinguish between their own thoughts and the voice of God. **Look not on his countenance.** The time had gone by when a king was chosen upon his physical appearance; now God was choosing an instrument fitted to work his will. **Not as man seeth.** Man looks upon the outside, and reasons upon the unseen within; God sees at a glance through and through. (4) *I love happy for us that this omniscient eye belongs to one who loves us!* **On the heart.** On the springs of character, the measure of moral worth. (5) *Let us try to cultivate that which is the noblest part of our being.*

8-10. Abinadab. Of him and his brother

Shammah nothing more is known than that they were soldiers of Saul. **To pass by.** Perhaps Samuel had told Jesse that God had chosen one of his sons for his service, without specifying the direct object. **Seven of his sons.** Including the three already passed upon. **Not chosen these.** For the unnamed purpose, which Jesse might suppose to be the prophetic office.

11. Are here all. A trial of faith to the prophet, who knew that God had directed him, yet must have been somewhat puzzled as to the result. **The youngest.** The common chronology places this event ten years before David's accession, thus making him twenty years old. It seems better to give it an earlier date, when he was about fifteen or sixteen, as the Bible gives no figures by which to reckon the precise year. **Keepeth the sheep.** He was considered too young to take part in the public service, and was left in the fields. His companions were the sons of his older sister Zeruiah, Joab and Abishai, and his shepherd life gave him a good training for the throne. **Not sit down.** Around the table for the sacrificial meal. (6) *There is no comfortable participation in any sacrifice without the presence of the true David.*

12. He was ruddy. Probably this refers to red or auburn hair as well as a fair complexion, both considered very beautiful among orientals because uncommon. **Beautiful countenance.** Literally, "Beautiful-eyed," having bright and penetrating eyes. **Goodly to look to.** "Goodly in appearance." His form was not massive, like that of Saul, but showed a fine and noble nature. (7) *A good heart and pure thoughts will impart their own nobleness to the looks.* **The Lord said.** By a special moving of Samuel's spirit.

13. Anointed him. There was no collusion or conspiracy; Samuel appears not to have known of David's existence, and those present probably supposed that the old prophet was ordaining the youth to a prophetic career. **In the midst of his brethren.** Saul's anointing had been secret, but David's was in presence of the company at the sacrifice. **Spirit . . . came upon David.** A spirit of mingled wisdom, courage, and prophetic gifts, as a preparation for the great work yet to be designated. **Went to Ramah.** Samuel's birthplace and home, among the mountains north of Bethlehem. He maintained an intercourse with David, and may have revealed his high destiny by degrees.

CRITICAL NOTES.

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Verse 1. How long wilt thou mourn for Saul? This statement, added to the fact that Samuel spent an entire night in intercessory prayer for Saul (1 Sam. 15, 11), refutes the charge

that the aged prophet was plotting to dethrone the king. The question asked shows that this was some time after Samuel's interview with Saul (see 1 Sam. 15, 34, f.). The reasons for the prophet's