

• *Heroes of the Bible weak – just like us*

When we consider the heroes of the Bible, they turn out to be weak people just like ourselves. They are what they are because of God himself!

**1. God has a habit of rescuing us when everything we think we have lived for has collapsed**

1. **God has a habit of rescuing us when everything we think we have lived for has collapsed.** Samuel was depressed. His life's work had been to find a king for Israel, but his life's work had gone wrong. Samuel is elderly. What hope does he have of seeing the king who will lead Israel into righteousness and victory over the Philistines?

We sometimes feel that way, but God has a habit of rescuing us. Samuel was told to rouse himself from his depression (*'How long will you mourn... ?'*), to prepare himself for achieving his calling (*'Fill your horn with oil'*), to get moving (*'Be on your way'*) and to know that God was leading him still (*'I am sending you to Jesse'*).

**2. God likes to secretly prepare his servants**

2. Then we notice **God likes to secretly prepare his servants.** God says *'I have chosen one of Jesse's sons to be king'*<sup>1</sup>. God's choices are totally mysterious. We can think of no reason why God should choose us for himself or for his plans. If we are honest we can think of reasons why he should **not** choose us for anything!

• *David a highly gifted totally unknown true believer*

At the time we first meet David, he is a true believer, highly gifted but totally unknown. This is quite clear from what happens later in the story. David said later *'The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine'*<sup>1</sup>. It is quite clear that he knows God long before he ever appeared on the scene as the one anointed by Samuel. Most Christians will never be famous internationally. Yet we all like to be 'famous' in our own way. We like to be appreciated. We like to have our gifts recognised. We like to be known for doing at least some things well. Yet every servant of God has to have a time when he is totally unknown, totally unappreciated, when he is living for God alone. So it was with David. It is in days when we are totally unappreciated and living for God alone that God prepares us for great things. David was trained by lonely living, by obscurity, by learning lessons of faith from lions and bears in the Judean wilderness, to depend on God. When David became a famous psalm-writer and soldier it was because of what had been happening to him **before** the time he was called as king.

• *Prepared in the Judean wilderness - a place of obscurity learning lessons of faith*

• *Samuel's arrival – a public meeting with a sacrifice*

Samuel arrives in Bethlehem. The elders of the town are nervous<sup>1</sup>. Did they have a guilty conscience about something? *'The wicked person flees when no one is pursuing'*<sup>2</sup>! But Samuel reassures them<sup>3</sup>. He wants to hold a public meeting and offer an animal in sacrifice. Jesse is evidently a well-known figure in the town. He and his sons are asked to help in the meeting that is about to take place. They are 'consecrated' for the job, probably by ritual washing<sup>4</sup>. We notice that David is not included. He is too young and has been given the menial task of looking after the sheep that the family own. But though unappreciated even by his closest family, God already has him in mind for himself.

• *David not included*

<sup>1</sup> 16:1

<sup>1</sup> 17:37

<sup>1</sup> 16:4

<sup>2</sup> Proverbs

28:1

<sup>3</sup> 16:5

<sup>4</sup> see

Exodus 19:10;  
Numbers 8:21

### 3. God chooses the despised, the unrecognised

Seven sons presented or consideration but rejected

David summoned

• No-one would have thought of it in advance – yet it was God's wisdom

• Every Christian has been chosen for something

• To be conformed to the likeness of his Son

• Anointed with oil, and the Spirit came down upon him

• More secret training for David – God's plan for him continues

God has a plan for us

3. **God chooses the despised, the unrecognised.** Samuel thought he knew who God's choice was<sup>□1</sup>, but he was wrong. Samuel looked at appearance only. God was concerned about appearance as well<sup>□2</sup> but the heart had to be taken into consideration also, and that is beyond

the ability of Samuel. He needed - and he got - God's special guidance. Seven sons were presented for consideration. But the one God had in mind was the one no-one thought worthy of even mentioning!<sup>□3</sup> Jesse actually had eight sons<sup>□4</sup>. Samuel was puzzled. 'Are these all the sons you have?'<sup>□5</sup> 'Oh yes, I almost forgot!' says Jesse. 'There is the youngest' - he does not bother even to give him a name - 'but you won't want him. We have sent him out in the bush to look after the sheep. He is too young for anything you might want him for.' But he was the one God wanted! Samuel holds up the whole meeting, maybe for an hour or so, until David was brought to town. David was God's choice. No-one would have thought of it in advance yet one can see wisdom in it. David was obviously fit and healthy<sup>□6</sup>. God's king would have to deal with the Philistines and be a mighty soldier. God's choice was perfect.

If we know Jesus we can know God has chosen us! I suppose we will never be as famous as David but every Christian has been chosen for something. We are 'chosen to be conformed to the likeness of his Son'<sup>□1</sup>, and created for good works which God has prepared in advance for us to do<sup>□2</sup>. The Spirit is ready to give the enabling for whatever God has for us. David was anointed with oil, and from that day the Spirit came down upon David. It was not the Spirit giving him faith. He had faith already, long before this time. The Spirit was giving him gifts and enabling for the work of kingship. God's work cannot be done without God's Holy Spirit. Even Jesus the Son of God needed the Holy Spirit, over and above what he was as the Son of God.

No-one took all that much notice of what happened. Samuel moved on and it was soon forgotten. A few weeks later David was being despised by his brothers as much as ever<sup>□1</sup>, and went back to the sheep<sup>□2</sup>. But from then on, David was the Lord's anointed. There was more secret training for him. God had a plan for David's life and was bringing him into it. He does the same for us.

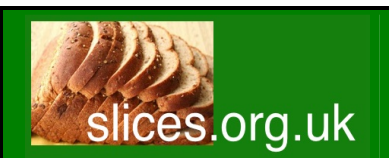
□1 16:6  
□2 note 9:2; 16:12

□3 16:7-10  
□4 16:10  
compare 17:12  
□5 16:11

□6 16:12

□1 Romans 8:29  
□2 see Ephesians 2:10

□1 17:28-29  
□2 17:15



Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His *Preaching Through The Bible* (PTTB) books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.



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