

Jason Smith – Shadow King Part 1: Anointed by God

1 Samuel 16:11–13

God sees what others overlook and prepares unlikely people for His purpose.

You may be unseen by people, but you are never unseen by God.

Remain faithful where you are, receive the Spirit's empowerment, and trust God's timing.

Introduction: Seen by God

Have you ever been in a room where everyone else seemed to be noticed except you? Maybe someone else received the opportunity, the recognition, or the invitation. You were present, faithful, and willing, but somehow you were overlooked.

That feeling can follow us into our homes, workplaces, churches, and relationships. We begin to wonder, “Does anyone see what I carry?”

Does anyone recognize what God has placed inside me?” First Samuel 16 answers that question through the story of a shepherd boy forgotten by his own family but remembered by God.

Israel needed a new king. Saul still occupied the throne, but God had already rejected his leadership because of persistent disobedience.

The Lord sent Samuel to the home of Jesse in Bethlehem and said that one of Jesse's sons would be the next king.

When Samuel saw Eliab, the oldest son, he was impressed. Eliab looked like a king. But God corrected Samuel: **“People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart”** (1 Samuel 16:7).

One by one, seven sons passed before Samuel, and one by one God said, “Not this one.”

Then Samuel asked the question that changed the atmosphere: “Are these all the sons you have?” Jesse answered, “There is still the youngest, but he is tending the sheep.”

David was so unlikely that he was not even invited to the gathering. Yet the one person left in the field was the one God had chosen for the throne.

People may overlook you, but God never does.

David's story teaches us that God sees differently, preparation often happens privately, and His Spirit empowers ordinary people for extraordinary assignments.

God Chooses What Others Overlook

“Then Samuel said to Jesse, ‘Are all your sons here?’ And he said, ‘There remains yet the youngest, but behold, he is keeping the sheep.’ And Samuel said to Jesse, ‘Send and get him, for we will not sit down till he comes here.’” — 1 Samuel 16:11

David was the youngest. In that culture, the oldest son normally received attention, honor, and responsibility.

David was outside caring for sheep while his brothers stood before the prophet. His father did not call him into the room because nobody imagined David could be the reason Samuel had come.

But heaven had already made its decision. God did not ask Jesse which son looked the most impressive. He did not conduct a popularity contest. God looked beyond age, appearance, experience, and family expectations. He saw David's heart.

God sees beneath the surface

People often evaluate what can be measured: appearance, education, influence, connections, experience, and public success.

God certainly can use those things, but He is never limited by them. God searches the heart. He sees humility, teachability, courage, compassion, obedience, and faith when nobody else is watching.

Samuel almost repeated the mistake Israel had made with Saul. Saul looked like a king on the outside, but his heart resisted God.

David did not look like the obvious choice, but his heart was turned toward the Lord. God was not searching for the tallest man in the room; He was searching for a heart He could trust.

Rejection does not cancel selection

David's exclusion from the gathering did not cancel God's election. Human rejection cannot overturn divine purpose.

The door someone refused to open cannot stop God from calling your name. A title that has not been given to you cannot erase what God is developing within you.

This does not mean every personal ambition is automatically God's promise. It means that when God truly calls, human opinion does not have final authority.

Our responsibility is not to force recognition. Our responsibility is to keep our hearts surrendered to Him.

What people fail to recognize, God can still anoint.

Stay faithful in your field

David was not sitting in the field complaining that his brothers received more attention. He was tending the sheep.

He was faithfully doing the work placed in front of him. Before God brought him into the room, God watched him in the field.

Do not despise your present assignment because it seems small. Your field may be a classroom, a workplace, a nursery, a home, a hospital room, or a ministry that few people notice.

Faithfulness does not require an audience. If God assigned the field, the field matters.

Application: Stop measuring your calling by how many people recognize it. Ask God to form in you the kind of heart He can trust. Serve faithfully where you are and allow Him to determine when and where your next door opens.

Faithfulness in Small Things Prepares Us for Greater Things

David's anointing did not take him immediately from the pasture to the palace. Samuel poured oil on his head, but David still had a process to walk through.

He returned to ordinary responsibilities. Later, when Goliath threatened Israel, David's confidence came from what God had already taught him while he cared for sheep.

David told Saul that when a lion or bear attacked the flock, he pursued it and rescued the sheep. Then he declared, **"The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine"** (1 Samuel 17:37).

Private battles prepare us for public giants

Nobody applauded when David fought the lion. There was no crowd when he faced the bear. Those victories took place in obscurity, but God used them to prepare David for the battle everyone would see.

We often ask God for a Goliath-sized opportunity while resisting the lion-and-bear responsibilities in front of us. But God uses private obedience to develop public courage.

The prayer life nobody sees, the integrity that costs you something, the forgiveness you choose, and the service that receives no recognition are building spiritual strength.

The field was not punishment; it was preparation.

Remember what God has already done

David did not face Goliath by pretending the giant was small. He faced Goliath by remembering that his God was faithful.

Past deliverance became present confidence. The same Lord who sustained him before would be with him again.

Remembering God's faithfulness does not guarantee that every situation will unfold exactly as we prefer.

It gives us a foundation for trusting His character in every outcome. We do not know every detail of tomorrow, but we know the One who has carried us until today.

Character must grow with calling

Anointing can place someone before people, but character determines how that person carries the responsibility.

David needed more than talent. He needed patience, courage, humility, restraint, and dependence upon God. Those qualities were developed over time.

Do not rush the season in which God is building what your future assignment will require. A delayed platform may be divine protection. God loves you enough to develop your character before expanding your influence.

Application: Identify the assignment that is already in your hands. Do it with excellence. Let today's obedience become tomorrow's testimony. Do not wait for a bigger opportunity before becoming faithful.

God's Anointing Empowers Us for His Purpose

"Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon David from that day forward." — 1 Samuel 16:13

The oil was an outward sign of an inward work. Samuel poured the oil, but God supplied the power. David's future would not rest upon his natural ability alone. The Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon him for the assignment God had chosen.

Anointing is empowerment, not applause

We sometimes reduce anointing to visible emotion, gifted speaking, musical ability, or public recognition. Biblical anointing is not about making a person impressive. It is God empowering a person to accomplish His purpose.

The anointing was not given so David could feel superior to his brothers. It was given so he could serve God's people. God's power is never permission for pride. The greater the assignment, the deeper our dependence upon the Lord must become.

God does not anoint us to be admired; He empowers us to serve.

The Spirit supplies what the calling requires

David had ability, but ability was not enough. He needed God's presence. The same is true for us.

Talent can attract attention, organization can create momentum, and experience can open doors, but only the Holy Spirit can produce lasting spiritual fruit.

In the Old Testament, the Spirit came upon selected people for particular assignments. Through Jesus, the Anointed One, the promise of the Spirit is poured out upon all who believe.

Every follower of Christ is invited to live under the Spirit's influence, walk in His power, and use His gifts to build up others.

We should not say, "I cannot do anything because I am not enough." Of course we are not enough in ourselves. That is why God gives us His Spirit. His calling is not an invitation to self-confidence; it is an invitation to dependence.

Anointing begins with surrender

We cannot ask the Holy Spirit to empower a life we refuse to surrender. David was not perfect, but he continually returned to God with repentance and dependence.

The heart God anoints is not a heart that claims to have arrived; it is a heart that remains available.

Application: Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you afresh. Surrender your gifts, plans, wounds, insecurities, and ambitions. Pray, "Lord, make me usable. Give me power to serve, courage to obey, and character to carry what You entrust to me."

The Anointed King Points Us to Jesus

David's story is inspiring, but it ultimately points beyond David. David became Israel's king, but he was not the perfect king.

He experienced victories and failures. Israel still needed a greater Son of David, a King whose heart and reign would be completely righteous.

Jesus is that King. The word Messiah means "Anointed One." Jesus also came from Bethlehem. He was rejected and underestimated.

He did not appear with the outward splendor people expected, yet the Spirit of the Lord rested upon Him.

He announced good news to the poor, freedom for captives, sight for the blind, and liberty for the oppressed.

David was called from a shepherd's field to lead a nation. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who laid down His life for the sheep.

David defeated Goliath and delivered Israel from an enemy. Jesus defeated sin, death, and the grave to deliver all who place their faith in Him.

Our hope is not found in discovering that we are secretly the hero of the story. Our hope is found in belonging to Jesus, the true and better King. He sees us, saves us, calls us, and gives us His Spirit so that our lives can bring glory to Him.

Before you carry an assignment for the King, you must surrender your life to the King.

God Has Not Forgotten You

David began the day as a shepherd whom nobody invited. He ended the day anointed by God. His circumstances did not change immediately, but his life had been marked by divine purpose.

Some of you feel as though you are still in the field. You have been faithful, but you feel unnoticed. You have gifts, but no open door.

You have prayed, but the promise seems delayed. David's story reminds us that hidden does not mean forgotten. Waiting does not mean wasted. Small does not mean insignificant.

God sees your heart. He knows your name. He understands the season you are walking through, and He knows what He is preparing you to carry.

You do not have to manipulate your way into the room. You do not have to compete with someone else's calling. You do not have to become impressive enough to earn God's attention.

Stay faithful in the field. Let God deepen your character. Remember His past faithfulness. Receive the Holy Spirit's power, and trust the timing of the One who sees the end from the beginning.

Call to Action

This week, respond in three ways:

1. Be faithful where you are. Identify the responsibility already in your hands and serve with excellence, even if nobody applauds.
2. Surrender what you want to control. Release the need to be noticed, promoted, or validated by people. Let God direct the timing and shape of your calling.
3. Seek the Holy Spirit's empowerment. Ask Him to fill you afresh and give you courage, wisdom, gifts, and character for the work He has prepared.

