

## 1 Samuel 15:34-16:13

In our Hebrew Bible story **the Lord sends Samuel to anoint David to be the new king over Israel**. God has rejected Saul as king, but he remains in power and Samuel must go secretly on his mission. As so often happens in the Bible, one who seems least likely in the eyes of others is chosen by God to carry out the divine will.

Listen to the word of God:

<sup>34</sup>Then Samuel left for Ramah, but Saul went up to his home in Gibeah of Saul. <sup>35</sup>Until the day Samuel died, he did not go to see Saul again, though Samuel mourned for him. And the LORD was grieved that he had made Saul king over Israel.

<sup>1</sup>The LORD said to Samuel, “How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king.”

<sup>2</sup>But Samuel said, “How can I go? Saul will hear about it and kill me.”

The LORD said, “Take a heifer with you and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.’ <sup>3</sup>Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me the one I indicate.”

<sup>4</sup>Samuel did what the LORD said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, “Do you come in peace?”

<sup>5</sup>Samuel replied, “Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me.” Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

<sup>6</sup>When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, “Surely the LORD’S anointed stands here before the LORD.”

<sup>7</sup>But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”

<sup>8</sup>Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, “The LORD has not chosen this one either.” <sup>9</sup>Jesse then had Shammah pass by, but Samuel said, “Nor has the LORD chosen this one.” <sup>10</sup>Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, “The LORD has not chosen these.” <sup>11</sup>So he asked Jesse, “Are these all the sons you have?”

“There is still the youngest,” Jesse answered, “but he is tending the sheep.”

Samuel said, “Send for him; we will not sit down  until he arrives.”

<sup>12</sup>So he sent and had him brought in. He was ruddy, with a fine appearance and handsome features.

Then the LORD said, “Rise and anoint him; he is the one.”

<sup>13</sup>So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came upon David in power. Samuel then went to Ramah.

## Mark 4:26-34

In our gospel **Jesus tells the parables of the seed growing secretly and of the mustard seed in order to suggest what the kingdom of God is like.** God's activity is often unseen and mysterious, but it will produce its fruit and bring about the time for harvest. To human eyes the beginning of the kingdom seems insignificant, but suddenly it will break forth.

Listen to the word of God:

<sup>26</sup>He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. <sup>27</sup>Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. <sup>28</sup>All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. <sup>29</sup>As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

<sup>30</sup>Again he said, “What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? <sup>31</sup>It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest seed you plant in the ground. <sup>32</sup>Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds of the air can perch in its shade.”

<sup>33</sup>With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. <sup>34</sup>He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.