

1 Samuel 16:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.

Analysis

And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.

The description of David combines physical attractiveness with divine confirmation. 'Ruddy' ('admoni) suggests reddish complexion or hair, possibly connecting to the name Adam (from 'adamah, red earth). Unlike Saul's evaluation, David's appearance is secondary to God's command: 'Arise, anoint him: for this is he.' The definitive zeh (this one) leaves no doubt. Beauty existed but was not the criterion; God's designation was the criterion.

Historical Context

Reddish coloring was considered attractive in the ancient Near East, possibly indicating health and vigor. The 'beautiful countenance' (yepheh mareh) would later be echoed in descriptions of David's son Absalom. David likely appeared to be in his mid-teens at this anointing.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does God's confirmation of David challenge our tendency to either dismiss or overvalue physical attributes?
2. What does immediate obedience to God's designation teach about recognizing divine choice?

Interlinear Text

וַיְשַׁלַּח	וְיִבְרַא	הָא	וְיָהּ וְאַ	עַם	אַדְמֹן	וְיָהּ
And he sent	and brought him in		H1931	Now he was ruddy	and withal	
H7971	H935			H132		H5973
וְיִפְנֵה	וְעַיְן	וְזָבֵב	וְאֵי	וְרָא	וְאָמַר	וְהִנֵּה
of a beautiful	countenance	and goodly	to look to	said	And the LORD	
H3303	H5869	H2896	H7210	H559		H3068
מְשִׁיחַ הָאֵלֶּךָ	כִּי	כִּי	הִנֵּה	וְיִמְשְׁחֵת	וְיִמְשְׁחֵת	וְיִמְשְׁחֵת
Anoint			H2088	H3588	Arise	
H4886					H6965	

Additional Cross-References

Lamentations 4:7 (Parallel theme): Her Nazarites were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk, they were more ruddy in body than rubies, their polishing was of sapphire:

Song of Solomon 5:10: My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.

Acts 4:27 (Parallel theme): For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together,

Acts 7:20 (Parallel theme): In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's house three months:

Genesis 39:6 (Good): And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured.

1 Samuel 9:17 (References Lord): And when Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said unto him, Behold the man whom I spake to thee of! this same shall reign over my people.

1 Samuel 17:42 (Parallel theme): And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him: for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance.