

30th April Coronation Family Service

Intro to reading

So our story today is about what it takes to become a king. And the background to today's reading is that the people were wanting a new King. They wanted a king that was strong and powerful. And so they were delighted when King Saul was anointed because he looked so good. He was tall, handsome and strong. He looked just like a king should. And so he started off really well, but then things started to go wrong because he allowed all power to go to his head. It was time to find a new King. Samuel who was a prophet and a judge for God was given the job to find a new King. Let's listen to the story which is in 1 Samuel 16

Reading

Talk 1

The official way that a person was shown to be chosen by God was to be anointed with oil. So Samuel travelled with the oil on his journey to Bethlehem. The town elders were very nervous to see him, in case he had been sent by God to deal with something they had done wrong. But Samuel assured them that he had come in peace to offer a sacrifice to God. That would have helped the elders realise why he had come – in order to find a new King. But how on earth do you choose a King, what are you looking for? It was bound to be very daunting to do this correctly.

I wonder if I was to put up some pictures of people would you be able to guess what activity they would be really good at.

Which of these guys would you choose to lift a heavy load?

Which of these guys would you think would win a 100m sprint?

Which of these guys would you choose if you needed an operation in hospital?

Isn't it true that we often judge people by how they look, rather than what's going on inside their head. I wonder what was going through Samuel's mind about who to choose. Which would you choose to be the King? Would it be the tallest person, the smartest, the most popular, the one with all the money, which one?

Would you not just choose the oldest who is next in line? That would have been Eliab. He was such a fine looking young boy that Samuel thought he must be the one God had chosen. But God told him that he shouldn't look at the outward appearance, but instead God looks at the heart of a person.

In fact Jesse brought our 7 sons but none of them were suitable to be King.

But God could see into David's heart and it pleased him. David wasn't even with his other brothers – he was the youngest of all the brothers. He had been sent out to look after the sheep. And so when David was called back, Samuel knew that God had chosen him.

You see God had chosen based upon what David was like inside – he knew that he loved the Lord, he knew that he would be used for many great things. Anyone who has ever seen Star Wars movies knows it's not what on the outside but the inside that counts. When Luke Skywalker met Yoda, he didn't believe that this tiny, green muppet-like character could possibly be the great Jedi warrior, but Yoda's size and funny looks were no hindrance when it came to using the force or yielding a light-sabre. You see David was someone who took such care of his father's sheep in the field. If he cared that much for his sheep, he knew

that he would take good care of his people. Remember that verse in our reading **“People judge by outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart “**

Talk part 2

So on the 6th May we will celebrate King Charles III’s coronation. But what is a coronation? We have to go back as far as 1066, when William the Conqueror was crowned King at Westminster Abbey. At that very moment all the roles and responsibilities of being a King became his – he was in charge of all people,, he approved all the rules for the country. Since then there have been many kings and queen coronated. And now Charles will be the 40th person to be crowned at Westminster Abbey. And at the coronation there will be trumpets playing, there will be shouts of “Long Live the King”. There will be lots of very ornate objects made of precious stones and gold and silver. Like David was, King Charles will be anointed with oil, he will presented with an orb and sceptre which represents his power, and then finally the crown which has 444 precious jewels in it. But one of the most important parts of the coronation will be when Charles gives oaths or promises about how he will serve us. And those promises will be made to God.

So let’s stop for a minute? Why does a King promise to serve us and not us serve him? You see the Bible tells the story of a great and might King, and that is King Jesus. In fact hundreds of years before Jesus was born, prophets said Jesus would come and rule over Israel, that he would reign as King and rule with wisdom. He would come not to be served but to serve. And he came and was friends with those that people considered the least important, he came and healed the sick, he even washed his friends feet. But the main reason that King Jesus came was to serve us by dying for us on a cross to pay the price for all the things we have done wrong. And throughout the coronation next weekend we will see reminders about King Jesus – through the songs, in the bible readings that are spoken, on the orb where a cross is at the top of it, and also on the sceptre, and even on the crown that Charles will wear. And as we see all these this can be a reminder to us and to King Charles that Jesus is the King over all the world. The bible says “that at the name of Jesus every [so that includes even King Charles] knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord”. He rules with perfect love and justice.

So however we will mark King Charles’ coronation let us celebrate that Jesus is our forever and true servant King. And let us all pray for King Charles that he will know how to serve us