

DAHVEED'S ANOINTING

Source: Terri Fivash, *Dahveed: Yahweh's Chosen* (Review and Herald, 2008), pp. 122–128

 For use in *Animated/Engaged Learning*.

Keren: Dahveed's mother
(Immi means “mother”)

Geber: masculine title of respect:
master or sir. “A valiant man or warrior;
generally, a person simply:—every one,
man, mighty.” (Strong's definition)

Ethan: leader of the Habiru
and David's teacher

Jesse: Dahveed's (David's) father

Eliab: Jesse's firstborn son, half-
brother to Dahveed (David)

Jamin: Ethan's younger brother

Habiru: name for bands of nomads, usually
small, that roamed Israel during the time
of David. They consisted of landless family
units or displaced persons from the 12 tribes
or any of the surrounding nations. Their
main occupation was as mercenaries, but
many bands simply supported themselves
by robbery and murder. Habiru can refer to
the entire band, or a single member of it.

Roeh Shamuel: Prophet Samuel

Yahweh: God

My hands on the harp strings, I cocked my head, listening to the afternoon stillness, the phrases for the song swirling around in my head. Now that I'd stopped growing so much, I could play better than ever as Grandmother had predicted, and I had the harp in my hands more often than not. Swiftly, I plucked the tune I was working on. Should I start with the phrases about the tables and oil or with sheep? He makes me lie down in green pastures . . . pastures of new fresh grass? and leads me . . . guides me? beside still waters. Or would waters of rest fit better? I hummed the tune again. “I shall not want for He restores my soul.” Every time that phrase went through my mind, I thought of Grandmother Ruth, and how Obed had restored the lives of Ruth and Naomi with his birth. Sighing, I set the harp aside. It was too hot to think today, and I stretched lazily, flexing my left hand, which still tired sooner than my right. The sheep were lying down out of the heat, and my fingers and arms were sore from my earlier practice with sling and bow. As happened so often of late, a vague dissatisfaction settled over me. It would be the second year in a row that I missed the first day of the new year feast.

Frowning, I threw an acorn out into the meadow. I suspected that I had to miss the rites of honor because Jesse didn't know what to do with me. Especially now that Miriam was dead, I found it harder to keep silent about the issue of my birth. She could no longer hurt Immi, and from the way Jesse looked at Keren, I knew that he'd like to have her comfort. And from the way she watched him,

I knew that she'd gladly give it. Sometimes it seemed the only reason he didn't claim me now was force of habit.

Glancing at the harp, I smiled slightly. Even with a song swirling around in my head, I hadn't tried to sing—yet. Out of the habit, I guessed. Well, as long as I had my habits, I should grant Geber Jesse his. But I really should try my voice again soon. And maybe I could push things along with Jesse, too.

If Ethan told my father that I'd learned all that he could teach me, it might prod him into sending me to some king in the area, or setting me up as a scribe here in town. Jamin could handle the breeding sheep without me, although I had gotten very interested in them, and if I was a local scribe, I could still help with our breeding experiments.

The sheep began to stir, and I put the harp away, hanging the case in the hollow of the oak. I kept my scroll of songs and bow and quiver in there also. Unexpectedly, Jamin hurried out of the trees. What would bring him here? He was accepting the [food] for the Habiru today. I stepped out to where he could see me.

“Dahveed, Geber Jesse wants you immediately. You'd best hurry. Roeh Shamuel didn't look too pleased.”

“What's the roeh doing at our compound?” I asked, amazed.

"Ask him when you get there, but go quickly!"

Setting off at a run, I wondered the whole way if I'd heard correctly, and if Yahweh's seer was really at our home. After a quick wash at the well in the west market, I took the back way home, hopping over the wall at the same place that Elhanan and I had scared Abigail years ago. It made me miss her.

Slipping into the small house where Immi still lived, I hastily pulled on my one good robe, noticing that it was a little short. After winding the girdle around my waist, I ran my fingers through my hair, hoping I looked presentable enough for Yahweh's roeh, but this was the best I could do without more time to prepare.

Pausing in the doorway a moment, one foot on the raised threshold, I studied the courtyard. Without really thinking about it, I scanned all the men and estimated what weapons they might have. Then, realizing what I was doing, I shook my head slightly. I was sizing the place up for an attack, but Ethan's training was ingrained by now. Finally I turned my attention to the man sitting with Geber Jesse. He looked about Jesse's height, with a long, bound mane of nearly white hair that coiled on the ground behind him. Even though he was silent, his regal presence made itself felt clear across the court.

As I threaded my way through the groups of people chattering while they waited, the strangeness of it struck me as the aroma of cooked [food] told me that the roast smelled done. I stopped in front of Jesse and bowed slightly. "You sent for me, Geber?"

The roeh's eyebrows rose at the title, then he turned to me, his gaze locking with mine. It was as if he touched me physically as he gazed deep inside, making me tremble.

He glanced back at Abbi. "Yahweh has made His choice. I can't say I understand yours."

Jesse didn't reply, but he looked at Immi, who was laughing with Keziah over something her little Jonathan had said, and his lips pressed together as if he'd made a decision.

"Now that he is come, you may serve," the roeh added.

Jesse walked to the [table], while I watched in confusion. It sounded as if the roeh wouldn't let the feast begin until I arrived, which didn't make sense. Not knowing what else to do, I bowed to the prophet and went to Immi.

She looked up in surprise. "What are you doing here?"

"I don't know. Geber Jesse sent for me. So I came."

"Sit down, then." She put her arm around mine, plainly glad that I was with her.

Jesse began the familiar ritual. He gave the choicest [food] to the roeh, thanking him for the honor he did the house by partaking of the festival meal with us. Knowing that my turn wouldn't come until he had called all the family and several servants, I paid little attention.

"Elihu, my seventh son, to you does this cut belong," Jesse said, and Elihu went forward.

Then Jesse sliced a large piece of the same choice part he'd given the roeh. "This portion is for my youngest son. To you does this cut belong."

The courtyard fell silent.

I couldn't breathe, and a rushing sound filled my ears as I stared. What had prompted Jesse to do this? Had the roeh said something to him?

He held out the [food].

"Go, go, son," Immi urged, shoving me, her voice shaking.

Not really believing what was happening, I stumbled to my feet. When I reached Jesse, I kept my arms to my sides. "Geber?" I questioned. I hadn't done anything special to be recognized for.

"Abbi," he corrected me. "Whose son are you?"

Beyond him, I saw Jamin's wide grin, and my questions vanished as I dropped to my knees. "I am—" Again I hesitated, suddenly realizing that as Jesse's son, I had no name. Ben-geber was Immi's pet name for me, Dahveed had been the Hassarah's [Ruth's]. I looked at Jesse, not knowing what to say.

He waited.

I closed my eyes, my head spinning. Who was I? Someone behind me stirred, but no one broke the silence as I struggled. Then I remembered Grandmother Ruth's eyes gazing at me and Old Patah's words.

Finally I took a deep breath. "I am the Dahveed, son of Jesse ben Boaz, and I accept this token for I am a true son of Jesse." I reached up for the meat, and Abbi placed it in my hands. When he put his hand on my shoulder and squeezed, I would have done anything in the world for him.

Tears blurred my eyes as I walked back to my place, setting the meat down by Immi, who sobbed with joy. Not even Eliab's black looks as I returned to my place could quell my own joy tonight.

Once the [food was served], the roeh's servant threw some incense on the fire, and the light scent of myrrh filled the air. On his way back he paused by my place. "When

you are finished eating, the roeh would like to speak with you alone." He smiled and bowed as if congratulating me and continued on before I could respond. Wondering why Yahweh's prophet would want me, I turned back to my food. Immi claimed my attention, rejoicing so much at Jesse's sudden decision, that she was hardly able to eat, and I soon forgot about the servant's message.

It was finally dark when I grew uneasy, feeling as though someone were watching me. But when I glanced around, everyone else was involved in finishing up the food and talking. My discomfort grew, and I looked around again. Eliab frowned at me, then deliberately turned his head away. I flushed a little, looking to see if Jesse had noticed what had happened. The roeh's gaze caught mine, his eyes flashing with irritation.

What had I done to annoy him, I wondered briefly. His servant stared at me also, and suddenly I remembered that Shamuel had wanted to speak with me alone. Where could we go? The common court was full, and the private courtyard was busy with servers coming and going with food.

Looking back at the roeh, I bent my head in apology, and rose. "I'll be right back," I said to Immi, and went into the small house. It wasn't long before I heard someone at the door.

"Your things were placed in here," Jesse said, opening the door. "Shall I get them?"

"That is not necessary," the roeh's deep voice replied a trifle hastily. "Gad has a lamp."

"As you wish, Roeh."

Something about the way Shamuel had spoken made me remain silent where I waited in the shadows of the room.

"Here is the cloak, Geber," Gad said.

"Good. That will be all. Wait for me outside. I will return to the feast in a moment."

The door closed again, and I stepped out of the shadows. "What is your wish, Roeh?"

Shamuel's eyes seemed to glow in the dim light as he turned to me. "I am here today at the command of Yahweh. He told me that among the sons of Jesse of Bethlehem He had found a king for Himself, one to rule His people. Yahweh instructed me to search out this man and anoint him."

He paused, and I wondered why he was telling me this. Surely he didn't need a recommendation

from me as to which of Jesse's sons—my brothers, I corrected myself—he should anoint.

"The moment I saw you, Yahweh commanded me to rise and anoint you, for He has chosen you."

His words didn't mean anything, and I waited for him to explain. When he put his hand on my head, my knees gave way. "Yahweh has chosen you to be king for Him."

A trickle of oil ran through my hair and down my face, the scent of myrrh and cinnamon filling my nose. As more oil flowed over my head, the strangest feeling came over me. A presence swelled into my mind, reminding me of the feeling that I had when I bested Ethan on the sparring ground, only this was more personal, more complete, and held me helpless in its thrall. The hair on the back of my neck prickled and my stomach lurched.

Someone is here! I thought, then recognized the powerful presence filling the room as the same that had wrapped around the housetop that long-ago night when Yah had claimed me. Only now, that presence filled me as well.

"Adonai Yah!" I gasped. The feeling intensified until I could no longer comprehend it, branding every inch of my body and mind with the indelible knowledge of Yah's power and greatness . . .

Then, gently, quietly, the feeling ebbed away, bringing me back to rest with the same tender assurance that I had felt the first time Yah had claimed me. As I opened my eyes, my shaking hands clung to Roeh Shamuel's robe to keep myself from falling to the floor. "What happened?"

"Yahweh has taken possession of you to be His king."

"But I'm a shepherd," I protested weakly, still not understanding.

"Yahweh chooses whom He will. Today when your father called you, you named yourself 'The Dahveed.' And such you will be. When Yahweh summons, you will be the Dahveed for His flock of Israel." His eyes burned like fire into mine.

"I am Yahweh's possession," I said at last. "He may do with me as He wills."

Shamuel helped me up and pulled my head close, kissing my forehead. "Go, with Yahweh's presence."

Numbly I left the room, emerging into the confused festivities of the courtyard as if it were a strange world that I'd never seen before. Running my hands through my hair, I wiped them on my good robe without thought. I needed to be away from here.