

## The Heart of A Leader

Lesson for October 30, 2022

**Unit II:** Out of Slavery to Nationhood

**Scriptural Background:** 1 Samuel 16:1-13

**Printed Text:** 1 Samuel 16:1-13

**Key verse:** 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 people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” (1 Samuel 16:7, NIV)

### Word Study

#### Hook

Heart is used in Scripture as the most comprehensive term for the authentic person. It is the part of our being where we desire, deliberate, and decide. It has been described as "the place of conscious and decisive spiritual activity," "the comprehensive term for a person as a whole; his feelings, desires, passions, thought, understanding and will," and "the center of a person. The place to which God turns."

J. Stowell, *Fan The Flame*, Moody, 1986, p. 13.

This is the message to Samuel regarding His choice of David as Israel’s second king.

#### Key Terms

1. **Anointed** (v. 6) – Set apart; consecrated person(s) or object(s) set apart for divine use. The act of anointing was significant of consecration to a holy or sacred use; hence the anointing of the high priest (Exodus 29:29; Leviticus 4:3) and of the sacred vessels (Exodus 30:26). Anointing a king was equivalent to crowning him (1 Samuel 16:13; 2 Samuel 2:4, etc.).
2. **Consecrated** (v. 5) – Became holy; sanctified (KJV). The devoting or setting apart of anything to the worship or service of God.
3. **Fill** (v. 1) – Properly, to press; to crowd; to stuff. Hence, to put or pour in, till the thing will hold no more; as, to fill a basket, a bottle, a vessel.
4. **Heart** (v. 7) – Inner man. The seat of the affections and passions, as of love, joy, grief, enmity, courage, pleasure. The seat of the will; hence, secret purposes, intentions or designs. There are many devices in a man's heart. The heart of kings is unsearchable. The Lord tries and searches the heart.
5. **Name** (v. 3) – To utter, say, declare. To nominate; to designate for any purpose by name.
6. **Reigning** (v. 1) – Ruling. To possess or exercise sovereign power or authority; to rule; to exercise government, as a king or emperor; or to hold the supreme power.
7. **Sacrifice** (v. 2) – Offer to God upon an altar; destroyed, surrendered, or suffered to be lost.

## Lesson Background

In last week's lesson the people of Israel asked God for a king. God's response was to allow Saul the Tishbite, from the tribe of Benjamin, to be selected (1 Samuel 8:5, 10:1). The choice of crowning an earthly king was not a part of the Lord's perfect will. Nonetheless, God through Samuel anointed Saul, and he did not measure up as the king God would have for his people.

Saul made one mistake after another, ultimately rejecting the word of the Lord. Saul's first act of disobedience was recorded in 1 Samuel 13:8-14. He made a presumptuous sacrifice without waiting for the prophet Samuel to show up. His second act of disobedience was recorded in 1 Samuel 15. Saul spared king Agag of the Amalekites and some of the animals for sacrifice. God had told him to destroy everything.

It was made clear to Samuel the prophet and then to Saul, that the Lord had rejected Saul as king. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He also has rejected you from being king: In his empty religious practice, rebellion, and stubbornness against God, Saul rejected God's word. So, God rightly rejected him as king over Israel. *For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king* (1 Samuel 15:23). While Saul would remain enthroned for many years, the next king would be anointed immediately. This next king would be an unlikely choice on the surface, an overlooked son of Jesse, but the Lord makes it clear that He does not see as man sees; those who may be overlooked or forgotten by man, can be the next to be chosen by God.

David grew up at a time when leadership was in great demand. The judges had come to power and presided over a weak and wicked country for a time, but then the people pleaded with "Samuel" to appoint for them a king. As the leadership of King "Saul" began to fail, the nation worsened. Yet God was at work, preparing David to be "king" of Israel.

## Lesson In Depth

### I. It's A Matter of the Heart (1 Samuel 16:1-7)

**How long will you mourn for Saul:** There is a time to mourn, but there is also a time to move on. Perhaps Samuel was paralyzed with mourning because of Saul's tragic rebellion, but God was not paralyzed. The Lord let Samuel know the time for mourning Saul was over. The task at hand was to move Israel forward with a new king.

**Fill your horn with oil:** This must have excited Samuel because he knew that God wanted him to anoint someone else as king over Israel. God will never allow His work to die with the death or failure of a man. If it is *God's* work, it goes beyond any man.

**I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite:** Israel's next king would be found among Jesse's sons. God's new king of Israel (and ultimately the Messiah; Numbers 24:17; 1 Samuel 2:10; Psalm 2), would come from the tribe of Judah, and from Bethlehem of Judah (Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:2-6).

**I have provided me a king among his sons:** The king was chosen and provided by God (Deuteronomy 17:15), who orders all things according to the counsel of His own will (Isaiah 40:14), not according to human desires (8:5-6; 2 Samuel 8-9). Years before this, Israel rejected the Lord as their king and they wanted a human king instead. God gave them a human king after their own desire (Saul) but God was still on the throne, crowning who He pleased as He pleased.

The simple fact was that God did rule Israel. They could recognize His rule, submit to it, and enjoy the benefits. Or they could resist His reign over Israel and suffer because of it. It does not matter what my attitude towards God is as far as it affects His ultimate victory. The Lord is God and King and will always triumph. But my attitude matters a great deal as it affects my ultimate destiny.

**How can I go? If Saul hears it, he will kill me:** We can certainly *understand* Samuel's fear. Saul's unbalanced emotional state was already known in Israel. Saul was still king, as far as he was concerned. He had never relinquished the throne. He still had many followers and would be dangerous to anyone who might try to dethrone him. There isn't any doubt that Saul would consider this treason. Samuel didn't have anything to worry about, because God promised **I will show you what you shall do.**

**And the LORD said, Take a heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice to the LORD:** Was God telling Samuel to lie? Not at all. "This was strictly *true*; Samuel *did offer a sacrifice*; and it does not appear that he could have done the work which God designed, unless he had offered this sacrifice, and called the elders of the people together, and this collected Jesse's sons. But he did not tell the principal design of his coming; had he done so, it would have produced *evil* and *no good*." (Clarke)

The place of sacrifice could be in any town until the establishment of the house of God in Jerusalem (Deuteronomy. 12:11). Instead of telling Saul where he is going and what he intends to do, he is to tell him he is there to sacrifice. He will sacrifice the heifer.

**And call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show thee what thou shalt do:** The sacrifice would be a sacrifice with a feast attached to it. It would be Samuel's privilege to invite anyone he wanted to come to the feast. Jesse is the father of David. The Ark was not established at a given place during the time of its captivity, and they had held sacrificial feasts at places named by the spiritual leader at the time. It would not have been unusual for Samuel to call such a sacrificial feast here. Saul would not be suspicious of the presence of Jesse at the feast. The oil of anointing was special oil used for purposes such as this. Remember, the anointing with oil had been the beginning of the call of Saul himself.

**You shall anoint for Me the one I name to you:** The first king of Israel was anointed *for the people*. He was the kind of king the *people* wanted. Now the "people's choice" failed and disqualified himself. "Now," the Lord said, "It's time for a king **for Me**." God was going to show Israel *His* king.

**So Samuel did what the LORD said, and went to Bethlehem:** Bethlehem was a small town not very far from Jerusalem. It was the home of Ruth and Boaz, from whom the family of Jesse descended. It was a hilly grain-growing region with many small grain fields carved into the hillsides.

**And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, “Do you come peaceably?”:** Considering what Samuel had just done with the Amalekite king, Agag (1 Samuel 15:33), it is no wonder the elders of Bethlehem were afraid. Samuel was a highly respected spiritual leader. The people knew that Samuel spoke for the LORD. They were fearful that the LORD had sent a warning to them by Samuel. The elders immediately ask if they should fear the message Samuel brings?

**Sanctify yourselves:** Worship of Yahweh was always preceded by cleansing or washing, both of the outward garments and the inner man (Exodus 19:10, 14; 1 John 1:9).

We see from this, that Samuel made sure that Jesse and his sons were ceremonially clean to come to this feast. He truly has come in peace; to anoint the person the LORD shows him is to be the next king. He is going to sacrifice as well. During the feast, he will have the opportunity to talk to Jesse about his sons.

**And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab:** Eliab was the oldest son of Jesse. “Eliab”: Literally “My God is Father.” Since Eliab was the first of Jesse’s sons to catch Samuel’s eye, he must have been an impressive young man by outward appearance.

**Surely the LORD’s anointed is before Him:** As Samuel looked at the oldest son **Eliab** he thought, “This man sure looks like a king. This must be the one God will tell me to anoint. That’s a good choice, God!” Samuel saw a tall, good-looking young man who *looked* like he would be a great king and leader.

**Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him:**

**His countenance ... height of his stature:** Samuel needed to be reminded that God’s anointed was not chosen because of physical attributes. This was initially a difficult concept for Samuel as he was accustomed to a king whose only positive attributes were physical. Samuel made the mistake of judging Eliab based on his **appearance**. This was the same mistake Israel made about their first king. Saul had been a head taller than all of his fellows and was a handsome man, but he had greatly disappointed the Lord. Saul *looked* the part, but he didn’t have the *heart* a king of God’s people should have. The Lord tells Samuel not to look at the outward man. Sometimes, those who look strong are the weakest ones, when it comes to sin. The Lord refused Eliab because the Lord was looking on the heart. He was looking for someone who would love him with all his heart. It didn’t matter how good Eliab *looked* because God said, “**I have refused him.**”

**For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart:** This was both a *statement of fact* and an *exhortation to godly thinking*.

First, it was a *statement of fact*. **Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.** Even the best of men will look **at the outward appearance**. At that moment, Samuel was guilty of it. We must understand that we can't read the secrets of another's heart and we often do only judge on outward appearance. "The world is full of idolatries, but I question if any idolatry has been more extensively practiced than the idolatry of the outward appearance." (Blaikie)

It was also an *exhortation to godly thinking*. God told Samuel, "Your natural inclination is to only judge on outward appearance. But I can judge the heart that you can't see. So, look to Me and don't be so quick to judge a person only on their **outward appearance**." Samuel needed to know his natural inclination to judge only on **outward appearance**, but he didn't have to give in to it. He could seek the Lord and seek God's heart and mind when looking at people.

**The Lord looketh on the heart:** The Hebrew concept of "heart" embodies emotions, will, intellect, and desires. The life of the man will reflect his heart (Matthew 12:34-35).

## II. Listening to God's Voice (1 Samuel 16:8-13)

**Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel:** "Abinadab": Literally "My Father is noble".

**And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this:** Samuel, now more sensitive to the leading of God's Spirit, quickly discerned that Abinadab was not God's anointed. Again, this fine young man was not the choice of the Lord.

**Then Jesse made Shammah to pass by:** "Shammah": Literally "Yahweh hears or heard". This again, is not the son the Lord has chosen.

**Again, Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel:** God told Samuel that He had not chosen any of the seven sons of Jesse attending the feast. It wasn't that these sons of Jesse were bad men, but they were not God's choice. God had a man in mind different from Samuel's or Jesse's expectation. Eliab and the seven oldest sons of Jesse were perfect potential kings as far as the flesh is concerned. But God didn't want a king after the flesh. Israel already had a king like that.

**And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children:** At this time, it was probably concerning Samuel that the Lord had not chosen one of the sons. Generally, the Lord chooses the one that is the least likely (by human judgment) to be the one. Jesse has no idea what is going on at this time. This is so important; Samuel will not serve the feast until the other son is here. Someone must go and get him, because he is keeping the sheep. The anointing of the chosen one of the Lord would take place just before the feast.

**There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep:** This shows the low regard David had among his own family. First, his father didn't even mention him by name. Second, he wasn't even invited to the sacrificial feast. Third, he was only called to come because Samuel insisted on it. God's favor/choice often fell on the younger and the least (Jacob, Joseph, Gideon). David, although the youngest, was the firstborn over Israel (Psalm 89:27), whose humble beginnings as a shepherd, and later rule as king, typify Jesus: the ultimate Shepherd and King of Israel.

**Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to:** The physical description of David tells us he was good-looking. The word "ruddy" indicates that he had red hair. He had bright eyes, which speak of vitality and intelligence. David was also good-looking. David had a pleasant appearance, but he did not look like Saul, who looked like a leader and a king (1 Samuel 9:2). David looked nice, but you didn't look at him and say, "There's a born leader. There is a king." That is what people said when they looked at Saul. When they looked at David they said, "That's a nice-looking boy."

We don't know how old David was at this time. The ancient Jewish historian Josephus says that David was ten years old. Others guess he was about fifteen years old. It's safe to say he was in that range.

**And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is the one!":** By all outward appearances David's seven brothers seemed to be better material for royalty. As unlikely as he was, David was **the one**.

**Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren:** David's first anointing is before his family/house. His second anointing would be before the assembly of his tribe, Judah; and his third anointing would be before the nation Israel.

David's anointing was an external symbol of an inward work of God. The operation of the Holy Spirit in this case was not for regeneration, but for empowerment to perform his (David's), role in God's program for Israel (compare Saul, 10:6).

**The spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward:** The "Spirit of the Lord came upon David" the same way it came upon Saul when he was chosen as King, privately confirming that David was God's choice to succeed Saul. When Samuel poured the anointing oil upon the head of David, he was filled with the Spirit of God. The name "David" means beloved of God. Up until this time, the brothers were not aware of what was going on. Samuel anoints David in front of witnesses. The brothers are witnesses. After Samuel anointed David, he went back to Ramah. He had done what the Lord sent him to do.

## Lesson Summary

In this life, we most often judge people based on how they look, behave, dress, talk, or carry themselves. But God sees through all of that. Israel had already made this mistake with their first king. Saul looked the part but he didn't have the heart a king of God's people should have. As Samuel sought to anoint the next king, it would be based on the heart. God was looking at his heart! From the Scriptures we can get a pretty clear indication of what David's heart looked like:

Psalm 15:1-2—A truthful heart.

Psalm 23:1—A believing heart (Psalm 14:1).

Psalm 23:2—A meditating heart.

Psalm 23:3—A heart set on holiness.

Psalm 23:4—A heart confident in God.

Psalm 23:5—A grateful heart. (Psalm 9:1)

Psalm 23:6—A fixed heart, not enticed by the world (Psalm 57:7)

Psalm 26:2—An open heart. (Psalm 139:23)

Psalm 37:4-5—An expectant heart that depended on God.

Psalm 40:8—He remembered God's Word (Psalm 19:14).

Psalm 40:8—An obedient heart.

Psalm 51:10, 17—A repentant heart when he was wrong.

Psalm 131:1—A humble heart.

Those are the things that we ought to strive for in our walk with the Lord! Like David, be faithful to whatever flock is around you presently. God has you where he needs you. What was true for David, is true for us today, the Lord desires those who are after His heart.

God often chooses unlikely people to do His work, so that everyone knows the work is God's work, not man's work. He wants to work in a way so that people regard His servants as they regarded Samson: they wondered at the secret of his strength ([Judges 16:5](#)).

iv. "You may not be intellectual or well thought of in your family circle; you may be despised by others for your faith in Christ. Perhaps you had only a little share in the love of your parents, as David did. But remember that those who are rejected of men often become beloved of the Lord." (Redpath)