

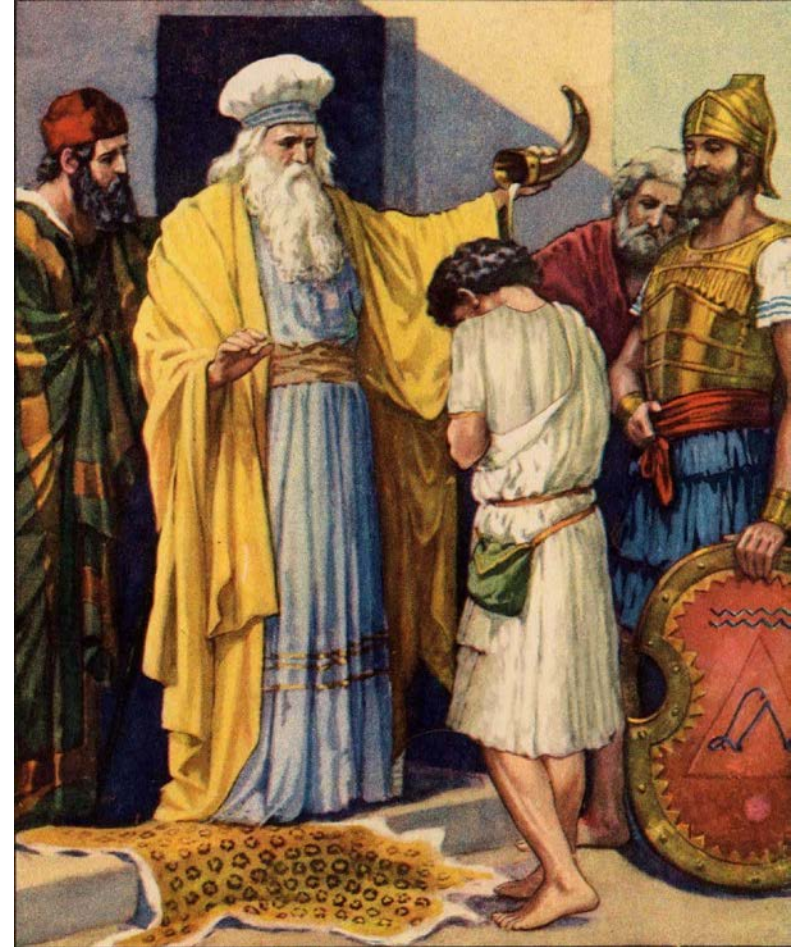
Lesson 22 - “The Lord Looketh on the Heart”

1 Samuel 9-17

Purpose: To encourage us to trust in the Lord rather than our own understanding.

My lessons take a different path than the Gospel Doctrine lesson manual. The lesson outline looks closer at the doctrinal topics included in the lesson purpose and scripture block. The lessons are designed to challenge mature, active Latter-Day Saints who have a solid Gospel foundation and are looking for insights into the scriptures that will broaden their faith and understanding.

If you are interested in downloading the Powerpoint file, links to source material or reading posts about improving Gospel Doctrine class preparation, delivery and engagement, you can join my Facebook Group and have full access to the content posted there. The link is <https://www.facebook.com/groups/188904648521022/>



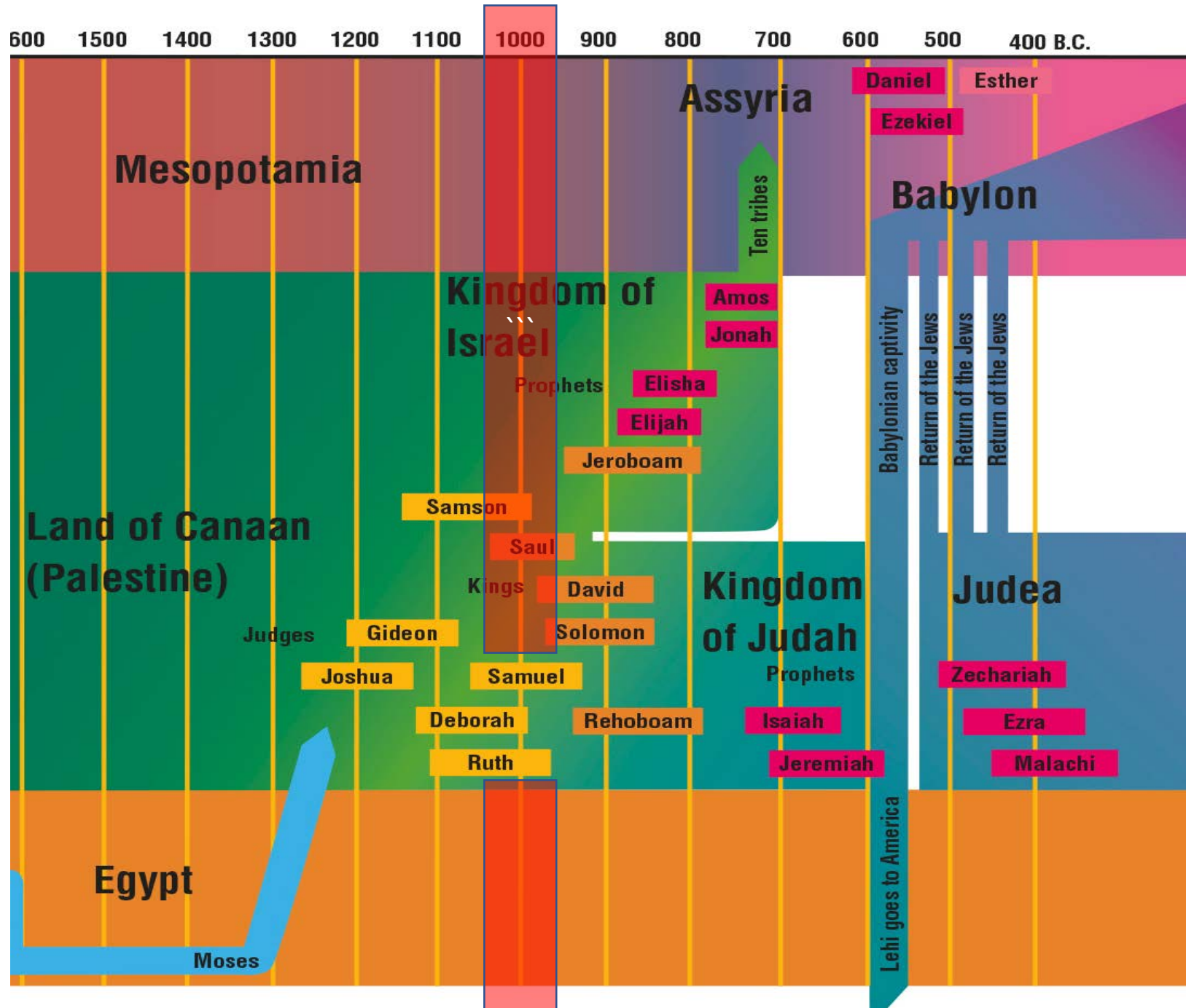
Last Week's Lesson Challenge

Our challenge last week was to first, compare the stories of Hannah and Samuel and Eli, Hophni and Phinehas. In Hannah and Samuel's story, we see humble people acting upon their faith in Jehovah. In Eli, Hophni and Phinehas' story, we see people in positions of great responsibilities stealing sacred things for themselves and trying to intimidate those who were sacrificing to Jehovah and a father in a position of greater responsibilities "honoring" his sons instead of Jehovah.

Second, do we find ourselves in similar situations with our children. Do we teach them gospel principles? Do we teach them to act responsibly and make correct choices? While ultimately, our adult children will make their own choices about the Gospel in their lives, we can do our best to help them make correct choices while they are children.

Would anyone wish to share their thoughts and experiences this past as they contemplated last week's lesson?

Samuel, Saul and David



Lesson Purpose: To encourage us to trust in the Lord rather than our own understanding.

Let's talk about what this means?
Would anyone wish to share an example?

Proverbs 3:5 – 6

5 ¶ Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Elder Robert D. Hales, serving as Presiding Bishop in the October 1988 General Conference, said the following:

*“First, we start with the intelligence with which we were born. To our intelligence we add knowledge as we search for answers, study, and educate ourselves. To our knowledge we add experience, which should lead us to a level of wisdom. In addition to our wisdom, we add the help of the Holy Ghost through our prayers of faith, asking for spiritual guidance and strength. **Then, and only then, do we reach an understanding in our hearts—which motivates us to ‘do what is right; let the consequence follow.’** (Hymns, 1985, no. 237.) The feelings of an understanding heart give us the sweet spirit of assurance of not only knowing but doing what is right no matter what the circumstances. **The understanding in our hearts comes from a close interdependence of study and prayer ... After we have attained knowledge and understanding, it is important to feel that our decision is right. Then when we act, we will do what is right.**”*

<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1988/10/making-righteous-choices-at-the-crossroads-of-life?lang=eng>

Let's review what Elder Hales said:

- We were born with intelligence.
- We add knowledge through education and study.
- To our knowledge, we add experience.
- Knowledge and experience lead to wisdom.
- We add the help of the Holy Ghost through our prayers of faith, asking for spiritual guidance and strength.
- Combined, we reach an understanding in our hearts—which motivates us to 'do what is right; let the consequence follow.' “
- The understanding in our hearts comes from a close interdependence of study and prayer.
- After we have attained knowledge and understanding, it is important to feel that our decision is right.
- Then when we act, we will do what is right.

In 1 Samuel 8, Israel's leaders petition Samuel to step down as judge and give Israel a king. What is Israel saying about their relationship to Jehovah by insisting they be ruled by an earthly king?

“The people of Israel traced the cause of the oppression and distress, from which they had suffered more and more in the time of the judges, to the defects of their own political constitution. They wished to have a king, like all the heathen nations, to conduct their wars and conquer their enemies. Now, although the desire to be ruled by a king, which had existed in the nation even from the time of Gideon, was not in itself at variance with the appointment of Israel as a kingdom of God, yet the motive which led the people to desire it was both wrong and hostile to God, since the source of all the evils and misfortunes from which Israel suffered was to be found in the apostasy of the nation from its God, and its coquetting with the gods of the heathen. Consequently their self-willed obstinacy in demanding a king, notwithstanding the warnings of Samuel, was an actual rejection of the sovereignty of Jehovah, since He had always manifested himself to His people as their king by delivering them out of the power of their foes, as soon as they returned to Him with simple penitence of heart.” (Keil and Delitzsch, Commentary, 2:2:78.)

The Lord Himself said to Samuel, “They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them” (v. 7).

<https://www.lds.org/manual/old-testament-student-manual-genesis-2-samuel/1-samuel-1-15-the-prophet-samuel-and-saul-king-of-israel?lang=eng>

1 Samuel 9:1 – 2 KJ Version

1 Now there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjamite, a mighty man of power.

2 And he had a son, whose name was Saul, a choice young man, and a goodly: and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people.

1 Samuel 9:1 – 2 NI Version

1 There was a Benjamite, a man of standing, whose name was Kish son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bekorath, the son of Aphiah of Benjamin.

2 Kish had a son named Saul, as handsome a young man as could be found anywhere in Israel, and he was a head taller than anyone else.

What do we first learn about Saul from these verses?

- From the Tribe of Benjamin.
- Son of Kish, a man of standing.
 - Handsome
- A head taller than anyone else.

Jehovah Calls Saul to Be Israel's King

1 Samuel 9:15-24

15 ¶ Now the Lord had told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, saying,

16 To morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me.

17 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.

18 Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer's house is.

19 And Samuel answered Saul, and said, I am the seer: go up before me unto the high place; for ye shall eat with me to day, and to morrow I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that is in thine heart.

20 And as for thine asses that were lost three days ago, set not thy mind on them; for they are found. And on whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not on thee, and on all thy father's house?

21 And Saul answered and said, Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? wherefore then speakest thou so to me?

22 And Samuel took Saul and his servant, and brought them into the parlour, and made them sit in the chiefest place among them that were bidden, which were about thirty persons.

23 And Samuel said unto the cook, Bring the portion which I gave thee, of which I said unto thee, Set it by thee.

24 And the cook took up the shoulder, and that which was upon it, and set it before Saul. And Samuel said, Behold that which is left! set it before thee, and eat: for unto this time hath it been kept for thee since I said, I have invited the people. So Saul did eat with Samuel that day.

In Verse 21, Saul questions the wisdom of having a man from the least family in the smallest tribe reign over Israel. He questions Samuel by possibly saying isn't it better wisdom to have a prince of the largest tribe, Judah, as Israel's king.

Saul questions the authenticity of Samuel as a prophet and Jehovah as Lord from the very beginning.

Questioning the Lord and His anointed becomes a pattern for Saul throughout his reign.

In 1 Samuel 10, Samuel anoints Saul to become Israel's king and gives him instructions of where to go and what he is to do that day. Jehovah wants to prove to Saul that he is the Lord's anointed king and that as the Lord's anointed, he will have the spirit of prophecy among other spiritual gifts.

[1 Samuel 10:9 - 13](#)

9 ¶ And it was so, that when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart: and all those signs came to pass that day.

10 And when they came thither to the hill, behold, a company of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them.

11 And it came to pass, when all that knew him beforetime saw that, behold, he prophesied among the prophets, then the people said one to another, What is this that is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?

12 And one of the same place answered and said, But who is their father? Therefore it became a proverb, Is Saul also among the prophets?

13 And when he had made an end of prophesying, he came to the high place.

1 Samuel 10:17-27

17 ¶ And Samuel called the people together unto the Lord to Mizpeh;

18 And said unto the children of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all kingdoms, and of them that oppressed you:

19 And ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations; and ye have said unto him, Nay, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes, and by your thousands.

20 And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken.

21 When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken: and when they sought him, he could not be found.

22 Therefore they inquired of the Lord further, if the man should yet come thither. And the Lord answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff.

23 And they ran and fetched him thence: and when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward.

24 And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king.

25 Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house.

26 ¶ And Saul also went home to Gibeah; and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched.

27 But the children of Belial said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no presents. But he held his peace.

Samuel calls Israel together and chastises them for rejecting Jehovah for an earthly king.

Samuel wants to introduce Saul to those assembled but Saul has hidden himself amongst the supplies. He is brought to the front and stands a head taller than everyone else.

Samuel points him out as the man that Jehovah has anointed king.

Saul returns home with soldiers inspired by Jehovah to follow him.

Not all of the Israelites are happy about Saul being made king. They despise him and refuse to honor him.

Saul says nothing of the insult.

1 Samuel 13:8-16

8 ¶ And he tarried seven days, according to the set time that Samuel had appointed: but Samuel came not to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him.

9 And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and peace offerings. And he offered the burnt offering.

10 And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might salute him.

11 ¶ And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash;

12 Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the Lord: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering.

13 And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever.

14 But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee.

15 And Samuel arose, and gat him up from Gilgal unto Gibeah of Benjamin. And Saul numbered the people that were present with him, about six hundred men.

16 And Saul, and Jonathan his son, and the people that were present with them, abode in Gibeah of Benjamin: but the Philistines encamped in Michmash.

Saul grows impatient waiting for Samuel to come to Gilgal to oversee a burnt offering before a battle. Saul decides to do it himself.

As the burnt offering is finished, Samuel comes to Gilgal and chastises Saul, who offers excuses.

Samuel tells Saul he has been foolish and he family will not continue as kings.

Samuel tells Saul that Jehovah has found a man of His own heart.

[1 Samuel 15:10-23](#)

10 ¶ Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel, saying,

11 **It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king:** for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the Lord all night.

12 And when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel, and, behold, he set him up a place, and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal.

13 And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord.

14 And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

15 And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

16 Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the Lord hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on.

17 And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel?

18 And the Lord sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed.

19 Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord?

20 And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

21 But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal.

22 And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

23 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.

JST 1 Sam. 15:11 I have set up Saul to be a king, and he repenteth not that he hath sinned, for he is ...

Samuel tells Saul to destroy the Amalekites and allow nothing to live.

Saul chooses to let their king live and the best animals for sacrifice.

Samuel reminds Saul of how timid he was when he was chosen, but Jehovah made him king.

Samuel chastises him for his disobedience.

Saul tries to explain that he allowed the king to live and only the best animals for sacrifice.

Samuel tells Saul, "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice."

1 Samuel 16

Jehovah sends Samuel to Bethlehem to the family of Jesse. Jehovah has chosen one of Jesse's sons to be the new king. If you remember from Lesson 20, Jesse is the grandson of Ruth and Boaz and Boaz is a descendent of Abraham.

Jesse's sons are assembled and Jesse has each of his sons come before Samuel. Samuel looks at each one and says that this one is the Lord's anointed, but each time he receives no confirmation from Jehovah.

Jehovah reminds Samuel that he looks at people differently and doesn't look at their outward appearance. He looks at their heart.

7 But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.

In an October 1988 General Conference address, Elder Marvin J. Ashton of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said the following:

When the Lord measures an individual, He does not take a tape measure around the person's head to determine his mental capacity, nor his chest to determine his manliness, but He measures the heart as an indicator of the person's capacity and potential to bless others.

Why the heart? Because the heart is a synonym for one's entire makeup. We often use phrases about the heart to describe the total person. Thus, we describe people as being "big-hearted" or "goodhearted" or having a "heart of gold." Or we speak of people with faint hearts, wise hearts, pure hearts, willing hearts, deceitful hearts, conniving hearts, courageous hearts, cold hearts, hearts of stone, or selfish hearts.

The measure of our hearts is the measure of our total performance. As used by the Lord, the "heart" of a person describes his effort to better self, or others, or the conditions he confronts.

<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1988/10/the-measure-of-our-hearts?lang=eng>

Elder Ashton continued his address with the following:

A question I suggest to you is this: How do you measure up? Ultimately you and I will be judged not only for our actions, but also for the desires of our hearts. This truth was revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith at a time when he was shown in vision the celestial kingdom. The revelation is recorded in section 137 of the Doctrine and Covenants. Joseph marveled when he saw his deceased brother Alvin in the celestial kingdom, for Alvin had died before the gospel was restored. Joseph then received this great truth:

“All who have died without a knowledge of this gospel, who would have received it if they had been permitted to tarry, shall be heirs of the celestial kingdom of God; ...

“For I, the Lord, will judge all men according to their works, according to the desire of their hearts.” (D&C 137:7, 9.)

If our works and the desires of our hearts are the ultimate criteria of our character, how do we measure up? What kind of heart should we seek? For what kind of heart should we pray? How should we measure the worth of other people?

<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1988/10/the-measure-of-our-hearts?lang=eng>

To answer this statement -- *If our works and the desires of our hearts are the ultimate criteria of our character, how do we measure up? What kind of heart should we seek? For what kind of heart should we pray? How should we measure the worth of other people?* -- Elder Ashton suggested we ask ourselves four questions:

How honest in heart am I? *An honest heart will lead to a change of heart. Spiritually speaking, a change of heart is not only desirable, but essential for eternal life. The Book of Mormon describes the conversion experience, which all of us must have, as a “mighty change in us, or in our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually.” (Mosiah 5:2.)*

Do I have a willing heart? *A willing heart describes one who desires to please the Lord and to serve His cause first. He serves the Lord on the Lord’s terms, not his own. There are no restrictions to where or how he will serve.*

Do I have an understanding, loving heart? *An understanding, loving heart is the pinnacle of all human emotions. As the Apostle Paul said, charity “beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.” (1 Cor. 13:7.) We come closest to becoming Christlike when we are charitable and understanding of others.*

“If ye have experienced a change of heart, and if ye have felt to sing the song of redeeming love, ... can ye feel so now?” (Alma 5:26). *Having a “change of heart” at one time in our lives is insufficient to give us an understanding heart today. Helping and understanding a person years ago do not fill us with the love of God today. Christlike love must be continuous and contemporary.*

<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1988/10/the-measure-of-our-hearts?lang=eng>

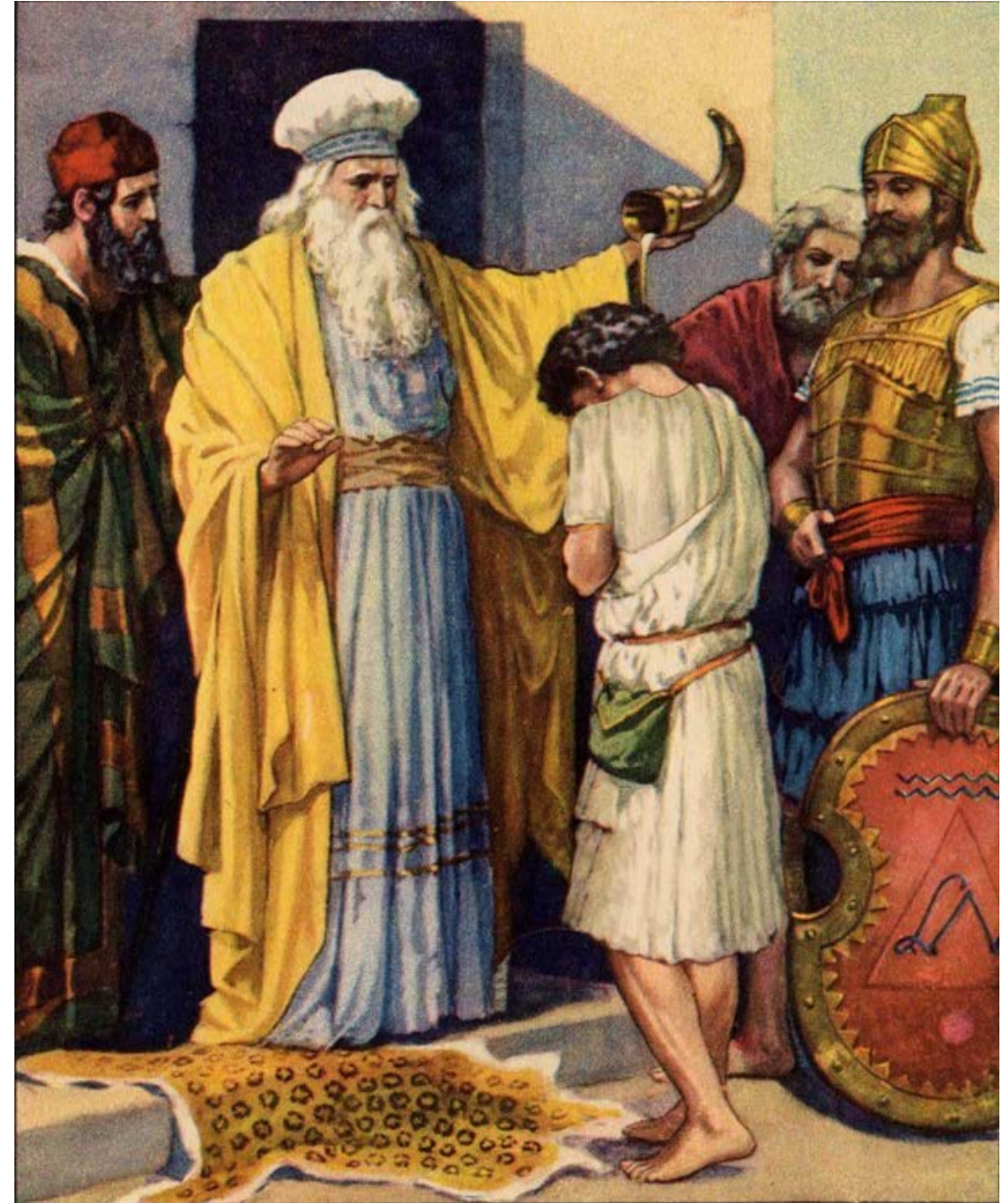
1 Samuel 16: 10-13

10 Again, Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The Lord hath not chosen these.

11 And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.

12 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.

13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.



1 Samuel 17 - David Slays Goliath

The story of David and Goliath is so well known that some readers take David's courage for granted. But his courage was not born of self-confidence alone, although he did believe in his own skills in battle. As a young shepherd, he had much practice at slinging stones. It was an effective way both to keep wolves and other vicious animals away from the sheep and to attract the attention of straying sheep and drive them back to pasture. As a result of his experience, David had confidence in his skills, but the true source of his courage was faith in the power of the living God. In fact, the contrast between David and the other Israelites was as great in terms of faith as in courage. David was incensed that "this uncircumcised Philistine [one not of the covenant but of the world] ... should defy the armies of the living God" (v. 26). There was no similar anger in the men of Israel, only a quaking fear because of Goliath's size and strength. And David's answer to Goliath's laugh of derision at the unprotected boy who came out to accept the challenge provides a classic study in faith as well as in courage. "Thou comest to me," he said to Goliath, "with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts. ... This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand, ... that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. ... for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands" (vv. 45–47).

The lesson has two learning objectives.

First, we compare and contrast the young Saul and the young David, likely about the same age when we first meet them. Saul is handsome and tall, but his heart fails him. He has no confidence that Jehovah will support and sustain him.

Conversely, David is common and short, but he has a big heart. He knows that Jehovah will support and sustain him and make it possible for him to slay Goliath.

The second objective is part of the first, the heart. 1 Samuel 7 says the following:

But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.

We judge a book by its cover. We judge people by their appearance. Most of the humankind's worst acts against one another have been about differences in outward appearance such as race, ethnicity and social status.

Jehovah, however, judges by the heart, the true measure of people. Elder Marvin J. Ashton said:

“The measure of our hearts is the measure of our total performance. As used by the Lord, the “heart” of a person describes his effort to better self, or others, or the conditions he confronts.”

No wonder that Jehovah measures us by our hearts and not our outward appearance.

This Week's Lesson Challenge

Our challenge this week is to be introspective. How do we judge others? Likely it is by outward appearance. Do we make assumptions about others based upon their outward appearance before we even talk to them and get to know them? Of course we do. It's what we have learned all through humankind.

As part of being introspective, consider Elder Marvin J. Ashton's four questions.

- How honest in heart am I?
- Do I have a willing heart?
- Do I have an understanding, loving heart?
- “If ye have experienced a change of heart, and if ye have felt to sing the song of redeeming love, ... can ye feel so now?” (Alma 5:26).