

MIXED MEDIA FAITH

MAKE ROOM FOR GOD'S HEART

WORD STUDY: WHEN GOD SEES WHAT WE CANNOT SEE

Primary passage: 1 Samuel 16:1-13 | **Focus:** 1 Samuel 16:7

Study rhythm: Text -> Hebrew -> grammar -> context -> interpretation -> Chaim Bentorah's devotional layer -> reflection. We will distinguish what the language establishes from what is symbolic or devotional.

1. READ THE WHOLE SCENE

Samuel is sent to Jesse's household to anoint the king God has chosen. When Samuel sees Eliab, he immediately assumes he is looking at God's chosen king. Eliab's appearance and height fit Samuel's expectation. God corrects him and contrasts what human beings can see with what God sees.

Read: 1 Samuel 16:1-13 slowly. Circle every reference to seeing, appearance, height, choosing, and heart.

What did Samuel actually observe? What conclusion did he draw from those observations?

2. THE HEBREW CONTRAST

The final clause of verse 7 places the same Hebrew verb on both sides of the contrast. The human sees; YHWH sees. The difference is not that Samuel failed to look. The difference is the object and limit of the seeing: human perception reaches what is available to the eyes, while God's sight reaches the heart.

Key observation: Spiritual maturity does not make a human being omniscient. Samuel is a faithful prophet, sent by God, and he still reaches a reasonable conclusion that God must correct.

3. WORD STUDY: RA'AH - TO SEE

Root: R-A-H (commonly transliterated *ra'ah*)

Basic sense: to see, look at, perceive, notice. Context determines how the act of seeing functions.

In this scene, Samuel sees Eliab and interprets what he sees. Verse 7 does not condemn observation. It exposes the boundary of observation. A person can accurately perceive visible facts and still lack information necessary for the final judgment.

Where might I be tempted to turn partial information into a complete conclusion?

4. WORD STUDY: LEVAV - HEART

Hebrew noun: *levav* - heart. Biblical Hebrew also uses *lev*. The biblical heart is not limited to emotion. Depending on context, heart-language can involve thought, intention, understanding, desire, will, loyalty, and moral disposition - the interior person.

God's sight of the heart is therefore deeper than knowing how someone feels. The passage presents God as seeing interior reality that another human being cannot directly inspect.

Grammar note: The form in verse 7 includes a prefixed preposition/article plus *levav*. The doubled letters visible in the full form should not be treated as a special spelling invented for this verse. *Levav* itself normally contains the doubled consonant.

5. CHAIM BENTORAH'S DEVOTIONAL LAYER

Chaim Bentorah deliberately moves beyond ordinary grammar into an esoteric or symbolic reading of the Hebrew letters. He reflects on the repeated Beth in *levav* as an image of two hearts joined - the human heart and God's heart. That can be meaningful devotional imagery, but it should be labeled accurately.

What the Hebrew establishes	Devotional / symbolic reflection
<i>Levav</i> is a normal biblical word for heart. God sees the interior person beyond the limits of human sight.	The repeated Beth can be contemplated symbolically as two hearts joined. This is an interpretive meditation, not the lexical definition of <i>levav</i> .

Keeping those categories separate does not diminish the devotional insight. It protects the text while still allowing us to sit with the imagery.

6. SAMUEL WAS NOT FOOLISH

Samuel knows God. He is experienced. He has been specifically sent on God's assignment. Yet when Eliab appears, Samuel's conclusion is wrong. The lesson is therefore larger than 'do not judge by appearances.' It is a lesson in the limits of even sincere, spiritually informed human perception.

Discernment is not: Because I am spiritually mature, my perception must be correct.

Discernment can be: I will faithfully notice what I can see while remaining teachable about what only God can see.

7. MAKE ROOM FOR GOD'S SIGHT

The prayer posture of Make Room for God's Heart has been: **Search me. Show me. Teach me. Correct me. Lead me.** Samuel gives us a living picture of that posture. He sees. He interprets. God corrects. Samuel continues following God's direction.

Perhaps making room for God's heart also means making room for God's sight - not merely asking Him to help us see better, but allowing Him to show us where we have reached the edge of what we are capable of seeing.

REFLECTION

1. Where have I confused what I can observe with everything there is to know?

2. When God corrects my interpretation, am I willing to release a conclusion that once seemed reasonable?

3. What would it look like to remain discerning without pretending I can see another person's heart?

4. What might I ask God to search in my own *levav* today?

PRAYER PROMPT

Lord, show me where my sight ends. Teach me to observe carefully without confusing perception with omniscience. Search my heart, correct what I have interpreted wrongly, and make my heart increasingly responsive to Yours. Help me leave room for what You see that I cannot.

Closing thought: Human perception has a boundary. Faithful discernment includes knowing that boundary - and remaining teachable when God says, 'There is more here than you can see.'

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