

Old Testament 22
The Lord Looketh Upon the Heart
(1 Samuel 9-17)
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(This material gives inspirational background and insights into important prophecies beyond Biblical events. While Lesson 21 dealt with the pattern of the replacement of unrighteous priesthood leaders, this lesson deals with the replacement of unrighteous kings.)

I. Saul initially served well as Israel's king (Ch.10).

A. But he sinned gravely when he made an offering that he did not have authority to make (1 Samuel 13:11).

1. Elder James E. Talmage tells why this kind of action was evil. "Saul prepared the burnt offering himself, forgetting that though he occupied the throne, wore the crown, and bore the scepter, [he had] no right to officiate... in the Priesthood of God; and for this and other instances of his unrighteous presumption he was rejected of God and another was made king in his place" (*Jesus the Christ*).

B. One of those other "unrighteous presumptions" was refusing, as anointed king, to obey the word of the Lord, thinking that to sacrifices alone pleased God.

1. The Lord rebuked him for his pride, saying, "When thou wast little in thine own sight... [the Lord anointed thee King].... 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" (1 Samuel 15:17, 22).

C. Thus the kingdom was rent from Saul, and the Lord appointed a new King, David.

1. David was chosen because his heart was pure before the Lord.

II. The calling of David as King was very important in the history of Israel.

A. When I visited Israel, of all the sites that were the most crowded, the most crowded was the tomb of David.

B. Some have said that we cannot understand the Jews unless we understand the great honor they give to David.

C. The stories concerning his early life contain many *exemplary* principles for us to learn: such as His amazing courage in facing Goliath and in conquering him.

III. However, if we read the Old Testament focusing only on the surface meaning, **we read it as those who rejected Christ read it. We miss the many great and significant prophecies which they missed. (Mosiah 3:15).**

A. For these things witnessed that in a future time, when *kings would again usurp the priesthood* like Saul, God would send the True King, Jesus.

1. In the years before Christ, the Maccabees, a large family, gathered followers and achieved independence for Judea. Unfortunately, in time they became a dynasty of unrighteous rulers. **In fact they actually took upon themselves the roles of high priest, and thus, like Saul, made offerings unrighteously.**

a. **When the Maccabees usurped full priesthood authority, it was even a greater sin.**

b. For in addition, the Maccabees schemed, plotted and warred against each other. The eventual result of these power struggles was Herod, who married a descendant of the Maccabees and was named King of Judea in 40 B.C. by the Romans. **He offered the position of high priest for money to those having no right to receive it. His was a rule of murder, in which he slew even most of the members of his own family.ⁱ It was during the rule of this extremely wicked king that Jesus the Christ was born.**

IV. The Replacing, Righteous King was anointed by God

A. David was anointed by God to replace the corrupt king of *his* age (1 Sam. 16:13).

B. As Son of God, Jesus was *pre-anointed* to be the True King of Israel.

(“Messiah” means the anointed one). In fact, His genealogy shows He really *was* the King of Israel.

1. Talmage explains, “At the time of the Savior’s birth ... The rights of the royal Davidic family were unrecognized; and the ruler of the Jews was an appointee of Rome. Had Judah been a free and independent nation, ruled by her rightful sovereign, Joseph the carpenter would have been her crowned king; and his lawful successor to the throne would have been Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.”ⁱⁱ

V. The wicked king envied and sought to murder the new king

A. Saul reacted in jealous rage at the possible threat of a new king, seeking to slay him (1 Samuel 18: 8-11).

B. Herod slew *all the infants* in Bethlehem and the surrounding areas with the specific intent to murder the true king (Matthew 2:1-16).

VI. The Witness of The Shepherd King

A. While there are many prophecies that Christ would come to reign upon the earth as King, there are also special witnesses His kingship will be like no other. For Christ would combine within Himself, as no other ruler ever has, the special qualities of humble, loving shepherd and wisest, most powerful King. The scripture which actually teach us, then, the most about the nature of Christ’s kingship are those books which tell of King David, **the Shepherd King**, and King Solomon, **the King of wisdom** (We will cover Solomon later).

B. The early David was a witness that Christ’s outward appearance would be such that men would not easily recognize his foreordination as king. “Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature;... for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; ... the Lord looketh upon the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7).

C. The early David witnessed that Christ would rule in meekness, whose subjects would follow out of love, as sheep do a good shepherd, and not as a tyrant who rules with force.

D. The early David was a witness that Christ would set his people free from the oppression of bondage, but that He would not do it with a sword, *but with a stone!* “And David said... I cannot go with these (sword and armor)... and David put them off him.... So David prevailed over the Philistine with a ... stone” (1 Samuel 17:39, 50).

1. Visualize or compare pictures of David and Goliath and of Christ emerging from the tomb.

- a. Consider: **Jesus overcame the bondage of sin and death through a stone. That is, He conquered a greater Goliath --- Death --- through His Resurrection which came out of a *tomb of stone*.**

VII. Christ eventually acknowledged He was the True King in the way David had.

A. Jesus entered Jerusalem in the manner by which both King David *and* King Solomon came up to be King, riding upon the foal of an ass. He did so to manifest His own Kingship. And for a brief time, the people did accept Him as their King (Matthew 21:1-9)

B. Isaiah and Zechariah, understanding the witness made by David, gave vocal prophecy of this event. “Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: because thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation: lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass” (Isaiah 62:11, Zechariah 9:9).

C. As these prophets testified, Jesus had deliberately come to be a *different kind* of King. He came not to conquer with force, but to conquer with a crown of thorns. And His throne would be a cross with joking inscription, “King of the Jews.”

VIII. Other events in 1 Samuel bear witness of the First and Second Comings of Christ.

- A. Most of us are likely disturbed when Jehovah commands Saul to slay every Amalekite (Ch. 15: 3), and when He removes Saul as King for saving King Agag and animals for sacrifice to God (15:15-23). And we are likely shocked when Samuel personally slays King Agag (15:33). While there must be some basic truths here, it is also likely a prophecy regarding Christ’s true destiny as King.
- B. For **behind these events was not a *cruel demanding God*, after all, but a kind and loving God, the pre-mortal Jesus Christ**. Through these events Jesus was testifying that the previous sacrifices of *sheep, oxen, and cattle would ultimately not be enough to satisfy justice. What was required was the blood of a King. And He, Jesus Himself, would come down as that True King to offer His King’s blood*.
- C. **Furthermore, Christ will return as King of Kings and must slay all the wicked in preparation for His Kingdom of Peace and Full Righteousness**
 1. Christ could have assumed His full role as King in 30 A.D., by overturning not only Israel’s false rulers but *all* earth’s rulers. But if He had done so, *all mankind* would have perished, forever. **He gave His own King’s Life** to redeem them instead.
 2. At Christ’s second coming, all the wicked, including all wicked rulers, will perish as He cleanses the earth from sin. *Then* He will rule as King of Kings
 3. In the succeeding chapters of 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 Kings, we will see much more of how King David and King Solomon taught of Jesus Christ, the ultimate King, both of His first coming, of His powerful second coming, and of His glorious Millennial reign.

Truly all things testify of Christ, and these witnesses strengthen one’s testimony of our Savior, and remind us of His Second Coming and our need to prepare (2 Nephi 11:4).

ⁱ Boadt, Lawrence, *Reading the Old Testament*, Paulist Press, 1984, p. 520-21.

ⁱⁱ Talmage, James E., *Jesus the Christ*, p.87.