

# 1 Samuel 16:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

## Analysis

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**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.**

This verse contains one of Scripture's most profound anthropological and theological statements. The contrast between human sight (einayim - eyes) and divine sight reveals fundamentally different modes of evaluation. 'The LORD looketh on the heart' (lebab) - encompassing mind, will, and affections - establishes internal character as the true criterion for divine approval. This principle anticipates Jesus' teaching that 'out of the heart proceed evil thoughts' (Matthew 15:19) and underscores that God's kingdom operates by values counter to worldly wisdom.

## Historical Context

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Ancient Near Eastern cultures valued physical prowess and appearance in kings as signs of divine favor and military capability. Israel had adopted these criteria in choosing Saul. God's corrective through Samuel challenges cultural assumptions about leadership qualifications that persist across civilizations.

## Related Passages

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

1. What aspects of your 'heart' - thoughts, motives, affections - need transformation before God's eyes?
2. How does this passage challenge the criteria your church or organization uses to select leaders?

## Interlinear Text

אָל	תִּבֶּ ט	אָל	שְׁמוּאֵל ל	אָל	וְיֵהוָה ה	וַיֹּאמֶר
H413	H5027	H408	H8050	H413	H3068	H559
Look			unto Samuel		But the LORD	said
כִּי	קוֹמַת ו	גִּבֹּהַ	וְאֵל	מִרְאֵה הו		
H3588	H6967	H1364	H413	H4758		
	of his stature	or on the height		not on his countenance		
כִּי	הָאָדָם	יִרְאֶה ה	אֲשֶׁר ל א	כִּי י	מֵאָסֶתִּי יֵהו	
H3588	H120	H7200	H834	H3808	H3588	H3988
	for man	looketh			because I have refused	
יִרְאֶה ה	וְיֵהוָה ה	לְעֵינַיִם	יִרְאֶה ה	הָאָדָם		
H7200	H3068	H5869	H7200	H120		
looketh	But the LORD	on the outward appearance	looketh	for man		
						לְלִבִּי:
						H3824
						on the heart

## Additional Cross-References

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**John 7:24** (Parallel theme): Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

**Jeremiah 17:10** (References Lord): I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

**Luke 16:15** (Parallel theme): And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

**1 Peter 3:4** (Parallel theme): But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

**Proverbs 31:30** (References Lord): Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.

**Proverbs 16:2** (References Lord): All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits.

**1 Chronicles 28:9** (References Lord): And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.

**1 Kings 8:39** (Parallel theme): Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men;)

**Acts 1:24** (References Lord): And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen,

**Jeremiah 20:12** (References Lord): But, O LORD of hosts, that triest the righteous, and seest the reins and the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I opened my cause.

