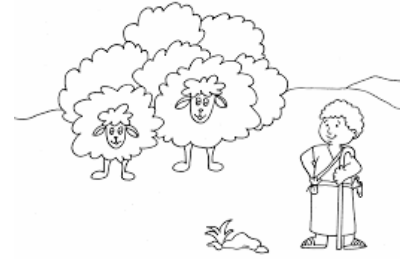


## In God's hands - Close to God's heart



Thinking back to Christmas and the presents you were given - did you know what was inside them before you unwrapped them? Could you tell what was inside from the shape of the parcel or was it impossible to guess?

It can be easy to be fooled by the wrappings and this is true of people too. We will discover in today's Bible story that God never gets fooled by the 'wrappings' such as the clothes people wear or how they do their hair. God knows exactly what each person is like on the inside!

**Watch** our video: <https://youtu.be/V1izjc4v8VM>

**Read** the story at the end of these resources or read the story of Samuel anointing David in the Bible: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

I wonder what characteristics Samuel was thinking would make a good king?

I wonder what God saw when he looked at David?

I wonder how the rest of the family felt when Samuel anointed David?

God didn't just look on the outside, he looked at their hearts. Maybe God saw that David loved him and wanted to please him and that's why God chose him to be king. God looks at us differently too, he knows our hearts and he loves each one of us!

**Pray** - Find an envelope and a small card or piece of paper. Read verse 7 again: *'The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.'*

God knows exactly what is in your heart - your thoughts, feelings, fears, hopes, dreams, strengths and weaknesses - which nobody else might see or know about.

Spend some time quietly thinking about what God sees when he looks into your heart. Write down your thoughts (or draw something symbolic) on the card or paper and place it in the envelope. Seal the envelope and keep it as a reminder that God knows exactly what you are like on the inside and that he loves you.

*Father God, thank you that you know me and that you love me, just the way I am. Please help me to love you and do what you want, just as Samuel and David did. Amen*

**Make** a medal: you will need a piece of ribbon or string about 60cm long, a piece of card, some foil and sticky tape. Cut a circle of card and cover it with foil.



Think of one good thing you think God sees in you, for instance being kind, brave or funny. Write your word on your medal using a permanent marker or a biro. Or write it on a circle of paper and stick it to the medal. Attach the ribbon to the back and then you can wear your medal to remind you that God loves you and what he sees in you!

**Olive oil:** In the Old Testament, when God asked you to do a special job, often someone would anoint you with olive oil - that means pour it on your head as a sign of being asked to do the special thing. Today we usually use olive oil in cooking and eating.

Make a dipping oil by putting some olive oil in a jar or container with a close fitting lid. Add some black pepper, dried oregano, rosemary and basil, salt and garlic powder into the jar. Put the lid on tightly and give it a really good shake then pour some into a saucer and enjoy dipping crusty bread into it and eating it.

**Think** about a compass: do you have a compass? Do you know what a compass is for and what it does? A compass needle is always drawn to North so you know which way to go. In the Bible it tells us that Saul's big problem was that he was always drawn to what people thought rather than what God thought. And in the story today we heard that Samuel and David loved God and wanted to do what God wanted them to do. We have the same choices to make. We can care most about what God says and follow him, or we can listen more to people around us. We can judge people from the outside or we can try to see what God sees in their hearts.



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**Draw** a large heart on a piece of paper and decorate it, you might like to use colouring pencils or collage materials. You could add the words 'God looks at my heart' or 'God knows me' on your picture. Put your picture up somewhere to remind you that God knows you and loves you!

## God chooses David

Many years ago, Israel had a king called Saul, but Saul wasn't a good king, and God was not pleased with him. One day Saul did something so bad that God decided that he had had enough! When Saul died, God wanted someone completely different to rule Israel.

A man called Samuel was God's messenger in those days. Samuel used to do what God told him, and go where God sent him. God told Samuel that he wanted a new King, and he wanted Samuel to go and anoint him. Samuel went to a small village called Bethlehem. When he got there, he went to a man called Jesse, and asked to meet his sons.

Jesse had seven sons. They were tall and handsome. The first was called Eliab. He was tall and handsome, really good looking. Samuel thought, "This must be the one! He's so strong and powerful. He'd make an excellent King," But God said to Samuel, "No. Not this one. I don't look at people the way you do. You are looking at his outside, but I can see his heart."

The second son, Abinadab, came up, and he was equally tall and good looking. But God said, "Not him, either."

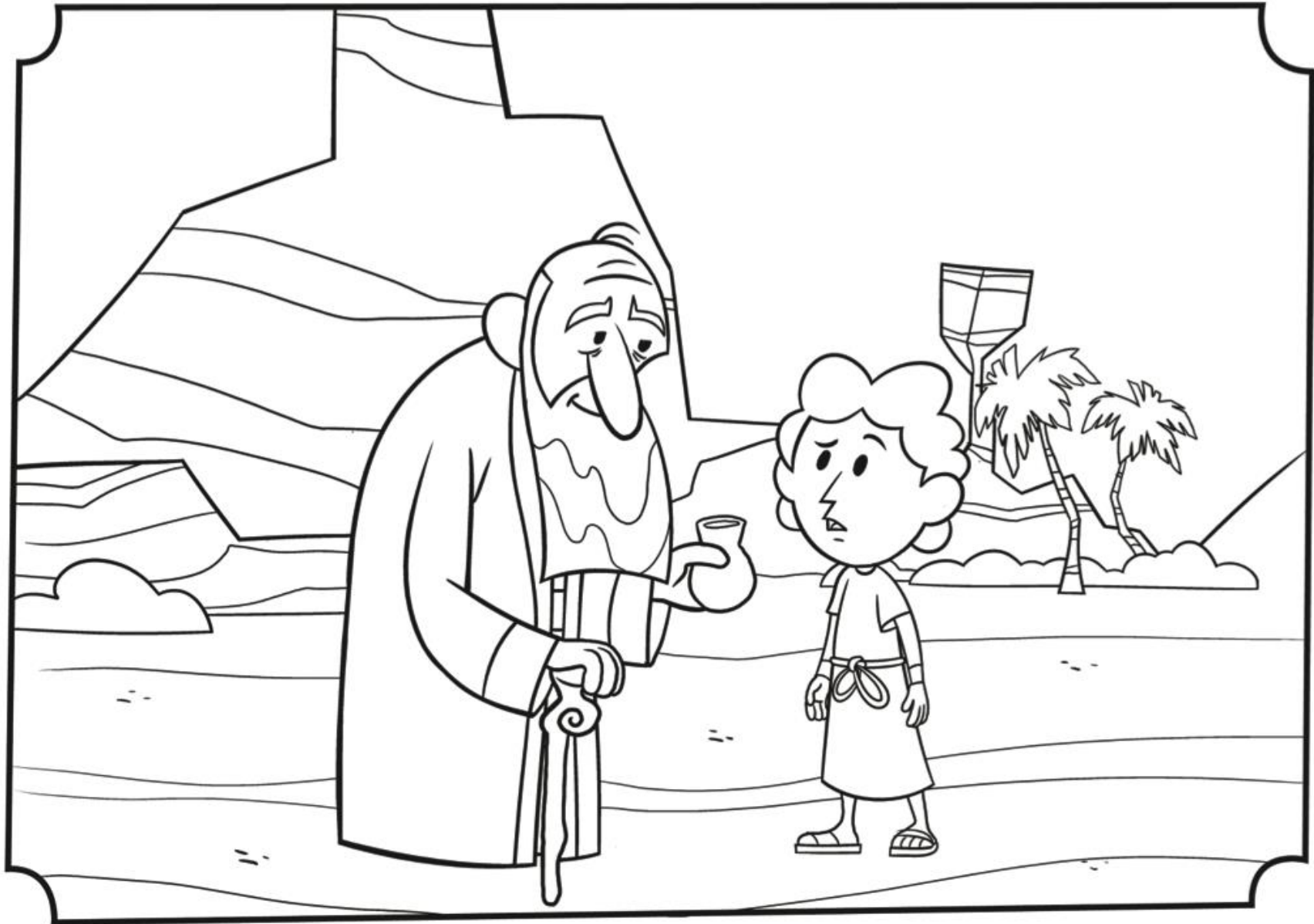
The third son, Shammah, came by, and the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh. Each was strong and tall, but God had chosen none of them.

Samuel was confused. God had told him to come to Jesse's house, to choose one of his sons, and yet God had said no to all seven of them. He said to Jesse, "Are these all of your sons?"

"Well," Jesse said, "There is the youngest. He's with the sheep. Shall I send for him?" "Yes, do," said Samuel.

So Jesse sent a messenger and David came back with him.

He was a good-looking boy like his brothers, and God said to Samuel, "Yes, this is the one. His heart is right, because he loves me and will put me first." Samuel took some oil and poured it on David's head, as a sign that he would be the next king. And then Samuel went home and David went back to his sheep.



Samuel anointed a boy named David to be king after Saul, who had become too proud and had forgotten to give all the glory to God. - **1 Samuel 16**