

SAMUEL

“The experience of the boy Samuel, as he responded to the Lord’s call, has ever been an inspiration to me.”¹ —President Thomas S. Monson

My mother, Hannah, was barren and prayed at the temple for a son, vowing to give him to the Lord. God answered her prayers; she gave birth to me. While I was still young, she brought me to the temple to serve Him. There the priest Eli cared for and taught me.²

As a child, I heard a voice calling my name one night. Three times I went to Eli, but he had not called me. He said it was the Lord calling me. I followed Eli’s counsel when I heard my name the fourth time and answered, “Speak; for thy servant heareth.”³ The Lord spoke to me, and as I grew older, He was with me. He called me to be His prophet.

When I grew old, I appointed my sons as judges over Israel. My sons

were unrighteous, so the elders of Israel asked for a king. I warned the people of the dangers of having a king, but they persisted in their pleas. The Lord commanded that I should “hearken unto their voice.”⁴

The Lord sent me Saul—“a choice young man”⁵—and I anointed him as “captain over [the] people Israel.”⁶ He became their king. However, when the Lord commanded Saul to destroy the Amalekites and all they had, he disobeyed. He kept the Amalekites’ animals and offered them as sacrifices. I taught Saul that “to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.”⁷

Due to Saul’s disobedience, the Lord commanded me to anoint a new king from among the sons of Jesse.

Jesse presented his seven oldest sons to me, but the Lord had not chosen them.⁸ The Lord revealed to me that the youngest son, David, should be the king. By countenance or stature, David’s older brothers may have looked more like future kings, but the Lord had chosen this young shepherd boy to lead His people. From this experience I learned that “the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.”⁹ ■

NOTES

1. Thomas S. Monson, “The Priesthood in Action,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 47.
2. See 1 Samuel 1–2.
3. 1 Samuel 3:10.
4. 1 Samuel 8:22.
5. 1 Samuel 9:2.
6. 1 Samuel 9:16.
7. 1 Samuel 15:22.
8. See 1 Samuel 16:10.
9. 1 Samuel 16:7.

