



International Bible Study Commentary

Verse-by-Verse Bible Lessons Thru the Bible

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International Bible Lessons

Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Teacher Page: The LORD Looks on the Heart

1 Samuel 16:4-13 (English Standard Version)

Before You Teach

A Note to the Teacher: This lesson is a flexible resource bank and contains more material than you will need for one class. Before teaching, choose and mark the activities and questions that best fit your students' English level, interests, and available time. You are not expected to use everything.

Suggested 60-Minute Selection: Choose 2 warm-up questions, 4-6 vocabulary words, 4 comprehension questions, 2 discussion or speaking questions, and 1 writing activity. The writing activity may also be assigned as homework.

Purpose and Scripture Materials

Purpose: Teach English as a Foreign Language using 1 Samuel 16:4-13 in the English Standard Version as the reading text.

New to TEFL? We recommend certification training through The TEFL Academy, which will teach you how to use and write TEFL lessons such as this Teacher-Led English Lesson.

Recommended Level: A2-B1 | Lesson Length: 30-45 minutes

Pronunciation Practice: The student can read along with the Scripture audio to practice English pronunciation with the teacher's help. The teacher may pause the audio after each verse or sentence so the student can repeat difficult words and phrases.

Lesson Resources

Scripture Text: 1 Samuel 16:4-13 ESV

Scripture Audio: 1 Samuel 16:4-13 ESV

The student may read along with the audio while the teacher pauses for pronunciation practice.

1) Lesson Overview

Theme: God directed Samuel to anoint David. Samuel learned that the LORD looks on the heart rather than outward appearance. David was called from tending sheep, and the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him after Samuel anointed him.

English Skills: Reading, listening, vocabulary building, pronunciation, sequencing events, describing people, comparing outward and inward qualities, discussion, speaking practice, and writing.

Outcome: The student can describe how David was chosen and anointed and explain the difference between outward appearance and the heart.

Teacher Tip

Help students read, write, listen to, and speak English while they study the ESV Scripture text. Encourage complete sentences, ask gentle follow-up questions, and give students time to think. Adjust the activities to fit the students' ages, number, English proficiency, and available class time.

Teacher Awareness

This passage includes sacrifice, consecration, and anointing. Explain these terms simply. Describe anointing as applying oil to mark God's appointment. Explain that the heart here refers to a person's inner life, character, and motives. Avoid treating physical appearance as proof of a person's character.

2) Suggested Lesson Flow

1. Begin with two warm-up questions.
2. Assign each student one or more verses to study and read aloud.
3. Ask what the assigned verses say and mean.
4. Put the principal events in chronological order.
5. Play the Scripture audio while students read along.
6. Review vocabulary and practice difficult pronunciation.
7. Use selected comprehension, discussion, and speaking questions.
8. Finish with one writing activity and the final question.

3) Warm-Up Questions

Choose 2. Mark the questions you plan to use.

- ☐ Why do people sometimes judge others by how they look?
- ☐ What good qualities can a person have that we cannot see?
- ☐ Why is it important to listen before making a choice?
- ☐ What responsibilities can a younger person carry out?

4) Vocabulary

Choose 4-6. Mark the words and prompts you plan to use.

Word/Phrase	Meaning	Teacher Prompt
elders	Leaders of a community.	Who came to meet Samuel?
peaceably	In peace, without intending harm.	How did Samuel say he had come?
consecrate	Set apart for God or a sacred purpose.	What did Samuel tell the people to do?
appearance	The way someone looks on the outside.	What do people often look on?
stature	A person's height.	What did God tell Samuel not to judge by?
rejected	Did not accept or choose.	What did God say about Eliab?
youngest	The one with the least age.	Which son was keeping the sheep?
anointed	Applied oil to someone as a sign of God's appointment.	Whom did Samuel anoint?

5) Bible Text Comprehension

Choose 4. Mark the questions you plan to use.

- ☐ Where did Samuel go when he obeyed the LORD?
- ☐ What did the elders ask Samuel?
- ☐ What did Samuel invite Jesse and his sons to attend?
- ☐ What did Samuel first think when he saw Eliab?
- ☐ What does the LORD look on, according to verse 7?
- ☐ How many of Jesse's sons passed before Samuel before the youngest came?
- ☐ What was Jesse's youngest son doing?
- ☐ What did God tell Samuel when the youngest son arrived?
- ☐ What did Samuel do with the horn of oil?
- ☐ What happened to David after Samuel anointed him?

6) Scripture Discussion

Choose a total of 2 from Scripture Discussion and/or Speaking Practice. Mark the questions you plan to use.

- ☐ Why was Samuel's first impression of Eliab not enough?
- ☐ What is the difference between outward appearance and the heart?
- ☐ What can we learn from Samuel's willingness to follow God's direction?
- ☐ What does David's work with the sheep tell us about his responsibilities?
- ☐ Why was it important that God identified the person to anoint?
- ☐ How does this passage challenge the way we judge people?

Language Coaching Tip

If a student gives a short answer, invite a fuller response: 'Can you tell me more?' 'Why do you think that?' 'What happened next?' or 'Can you say that in a complete sentence?' Correct gently and model the sentence when needed.

7) Speaking Practice

Choose a total of 2 from Speaking Practice and/or Scripture Discussion. Mark the activities you plan to use.

- ☐ Retell 1 Samuel 16:4-13 in your own words.
- ☐ Describe Samuel's visit to Bethlehem in three complete sentences.
- ☐ Explain the difference between looking on appearance and looking on the heart.
- ☐ Describe what David was doing before he was called.
- ☐ Put these events in order: Samuel arrives, sons pass before him, David is called, God identifies David, Samuel anoints him.
- ☐ Speak for 30-60 seconds: What qualities matter more than outward appearance?

8) Writing Task

Choose 1. Mark the writing activity you plan to use in class or assign as homework.

- ☐ Option A: Summarize 1 Samuel 16:4-13 in 6-8 sentences.
- ☐ Option B: Write a paragraph explaining what verse 7 teaches about judging people.
- ☐ Option C: Write the main events in chronological order.
- ☐ Option D: Write five sentences using these words: peaceably, consecrate, appearance, youngest, and anointed.

9) Wrap-Up

Wrap-Up

Samuel obeyed the LORD and came to Bethlehem. God told him not to judge by appearance or height, because the LORD looks on the heart. Jesse's youngest son, David, was called from tending the sheep. At God's direction, Samuel anointed David, and the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him.

Remember

"People look on outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."

Final Question

How can this passage help us look beyond outward appearance when we think about others?