

THROUGH THE BIBLE
November 1, 2017

LESSON 9: 1 SAMUEL

A Review of What We Did Last Week
Lesson 8 in the Workbook / Judges and Ruth



Page 45 – *What factor accounted for Israel’s dismal failure recorded in Chapter 2?*
Israel did not follow the commands of God as it pertained to the conquest of Canaan. They did not drive out the Canaanites completely but pressed them into forced labor. They did evil in the sight of the Lord.

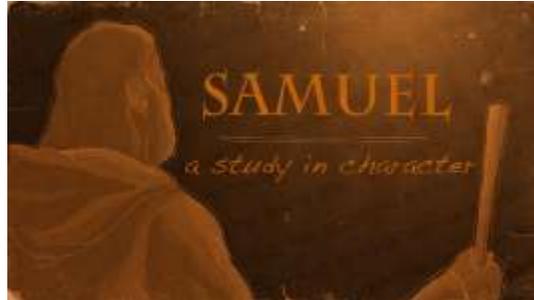
Page 46 – *How do we account for the fact that God used such seemingly sinful people to accomplish his purposes, and then commended them for their obedience?*
It was a time of religious and moral decline. God did not allow his purpose to be thwarted even in an age of hopeless decadence. God used the people (sinful as they were) to work through his plan. Scripture neither condemned nor condoned the immorality of the people. They were praised only for their courage and faith. We are not to imitate their wickedness but their faithfulness.

Page 46 – *In looking at the account of Samson, explain how his life typifies the nation of Israel.*
He was set apart from birth. Samson, like Israel, possessed great power. However, Samson murmured and grumbled just like the Israelites in the wilderness. He did what he wanted to do and engaged in personal vendettas against the Philistines. He had sexual liaisons with those outside the Israelites which demonstrated moral weakness. His ultimate downfall was when he tried to possess the land of Canaan on his own. But the promise of deliverance remained.

How does the New Testament continue the theme of lordship?
In order to survive in the Promised Land, the people have to submit to the reign of God. In the New Testament Jesus is referred to as *the Lord Jesus Christ*. In the book of Revelation, the Lamb is seen seated on the throne and is described as the *King of Kings and Lord of lords*. Romans 10:9 and Philippians 2:11 are two other passages about confessing Jesus as Lord.

Page 48 – *What three themes are important in the book of Ruth?*

- 1) The book of Ruth is a story of Naomi's transition from emptiness to fullness.
This occurs through the kindness of Ruth and Boaz.
- 2) The book highlights the selfless acts of Ruth and Boaz.
Ruth is loyal and both are examples of how God expects his people to live.
- 3) Participation in the kingdom of God is decided (not by blood and birth) but by conforming one's life to the will of God. Ruth's place in the ancestry of David signifies that all nations will be represented in the kingdom of God.



1 and 2 Samuel recount critical periods of transition and change for the Israelites.

At the opening of 1 Samuel, Israel is a loose federation of tribes.

At the conclusion of 2 Samuel, an emerging monarchy is firmly in place under David.

The books of Samuel make clear that the Lord is at work during their turbulent times.

1 and 2 Samuel were originally one book.

The division into two books was probably introduced by Greek translators (the Septuagint)

1 Samuel takes us from the birth of Samuel to the death of Saul.

The actual reign of David begins in 2 Samuel.

1 Samuel highlights the lives of three men – Samuel / Saul / David

Samuel was 8 years old when he was called by the Lord.

He served from 1094-1014 B.C. (approximately 80 years).

He died when he was approximately 90 years old.

Saul was 30 years old when he was named the king of Israel.

He served from 1052-1010 B.C. (approximately 42 years).

He died when he was approximately 72 years old.

David was 30 years old when he was named to succeed Saul.

He served from 1010-970 B.C. (approximately 40 years).

He died when he was approximately 70 years old.

The Book of 1 Samuel

Focus	Samuel				Saul				Saul & David							
Divisions	Samuel's Birth & Call		Samuel's Rebuilding of the Nation		Saul, First King of Israel		Saul, Disobedient & Rejected		David in the Court of Saul		David's Escape & Flight from Saul		David's Encounters With Saul		Saul's Final Downfall & Death	
	1	3	4	8	9	12	13	15	16	19	20	23	24	26	27	31
Topics	Leadership in Transition								A Newly Anointed Leader in Exile							
	From Judges to Kings								From King Saul to King David							
Place	Israel in Canaan															
Time	Approximately 60 Years															
Author	Samuel															

1 Samuel 1:1-4:1a

Israel is in a grave crisis but we are not introduced to that crisis yet.

Instead we hear the story of Hannah (a barren woman who makes a vow to the Lord).

Her story correlates to the story of Israel's barren future.

Her son, Samuel, will become the prophet who leads Israel through the time of crisis.

Samuel ministered before the Lord.

He continued to grow in stature and in favor with the Lord.

In those days the word of the Lord was rare and there were not many visions.

But then the Lord calls Samuel.

God raised up a leader for Israel who is not only a judge and priest but a prophet as well.

In contrast, the opening segment also depicts the corruption of the house of Eli at Shiloh.

At the end of Chapter 3, Samuel is established as the prophetic voice from God.

Judgment has been pronounced on the house of Eli.

In the Bible, whenever God has a special purpose for a person, there often is something unusual or significant about his/her birth. In this case, Samuel enters the dark world of corruption and is like a light of righteousness. He is held in contrast to Eli's sons –

Eli's sons were treating the Lord's offering with contempt

They engaged in temple prostitution

1 Samuel 4:1b-7:1

Here we learn of the external crisis facing Israel.

The threat comes from the Philistines who defeat Israel and capture the Ark of the Covenant.

The ark is the powerful presence of the Lord.

While in their presence, it defeats the Philistine god Dagon and brings plagues on the people.

The Philistines finally send the ark back into the Israelite territory.

Human leadership plays no role in these events.

As a result, it seems unnecessary for the people to demand a king.

The Lord reigns / governs without humans (even when facing threats from armies and gods).

Eli's two sons are killed in the battle and Eli dies when he hears the ark was captured

Eli's daughter-in-law goes into labor and gives birth to a son.

She names him Ichabod which means *the glory has departed Israel*.

1 Samuel 7:2-17

Samuel suddenly reappears in the story and leads Israel to a victory over the Philistines.

Samuel meets the threat through prayer and by mediating through God's power.

It seems as if Samuel did this single-handedly so again there is no rationale for a king.

Israel has the power of God and the leadership of Samuel (it should suffice).

1 Samuel 8:1-15:35

These chapters focus on the establishment of a king in Israel and the installation of Saul.

As we have seen, the crisis facing Israel drove some of them to demand a king.

We also see a divided opinion on this matter.

Chapters 8 and 12 – View kingship as sinful and allowed by an indulgent God

Chapters 9:1-10:16 and 11:1-15 – Choice of a king is part of God's providential grace

This divided opinion is understood as being rooted in a genuine division within Israel.

Reflection –

In the book of Judges, the primary theme was the lordship of God over his people.

Survival in Canaan was contingent upon submission to God's rule.

He was to be their king.

Even after Samuel warns them of the hazards of a king they insist (8:19b-20).

They wanted to be like all of the other nations – with a king to lead them and to go out before them and fight their battles. In essence Israel is breaking their covenant with God by rejecting his kingship.

Samuel plays a crucial role in representing God.

In Chapter 10:1 he anoints Saul.

In Chapter 12 he voices the covenant demands of God on the king and on the people.

In Chapter 13:8-15 and 15:1-35 he holds the king accountable to God.

David is the true climax of the story and of God's purpose.

Saul appears destined for failure and tragedy ... and becomes a preparation for David.

Saul pays the personal price as one destined to fail so another could succeed.

1 Samuel 16:1-2 Samuel 5:10

Now the focus shifts to David.

Saul is portrayed as driven, impulsive, cruel, fickle, and ineffective.

David is portrayed as courageous, resourceful, humble, an effective leader with political skill.

Saul begins with great promise.

He is privately anointed king then is publicly proclaimed king.

He is humble and zealous to fight the Lord's battle.

But despite his great potential he ends in utter failure.

Already in Chapter 13 he began to fall away from God.

His reign is characterized by impatience, insubordination, indignation and plain carelessness.

Chapters 18-26 show how Saul's condition deteriorates –

Saul tries to kill David.

He even tries to kill Jonathan for siding with David.

Saul kills all the priests of Nob for giving provisions to David.

He relentlessly pursues David.

David spares Saul's life which does little to affect Saul's attitude.

Saul is possessed with a jealousy and a hatred for David.

God is at work in great historical reversals and is clearly present with David.

The narrator wants to legitimize the kingship of David and to overcome any objections.

After the death of Saul, David becomes king over Judah.

Eventually David becomes king over all of Israel.

David takes Jerusalem as his capital city.

In David and Jerusalem God established a new future for Israel.

Readings on Sunday Morning

1 Samuel 2:18-26

Christmas – December 30, 2018

Christmas is the season of giving and receiving gifts.

Christians celebrate the gift we receive from God – salvation to all humanity.

We are invited to understand the magnitude of the gift exchange between God and Hannah.

Hannah is in the depths of despair over her childlessness.

Hannah makes a request and a promise to God (a covenant agreement).

It becomes an unbelievable act of faithfulness.

Hannah is thankful for answered prayers.

It is her love for God that enables her to keep her covenant with God.

In the mind of Hannah her covenant with God had been fulfilled.

She asked God for a gift and promised a gift in return. She honored her commitment.

Back to Christmas We receive the holy child of Bethlehem.

Does God want something in return? If so ... what is it?

We recall the promises we make to God when people are baptized (parents / congregation).
We allow them to grow in stature.
We are to allow them to grow in the way of Christ.
Within the same story we hear about Eli whose children are no longer in God's favor.

1 Samuel 3:1-10

Epiphany 2B – January 14, 2018

The opening chapters of 1 Samuel provide background for the institution of Israel's monarchy.
In 1 Samuel 3 we have the call narrative for the new Israelite leader.
Samuel ministers under Eli and hears the voice of God three different times.
God reveals to Samuel the next phase of God's activity and he is called to be a prophet.

We are reminded that the word of the Lord was rare and visions were not frequent.
Both of these phrases do not occur anywhere else in the Bible.
It is a reminder that it was a chaotic time for Israel (from the political period of the Judges).
It is highlighted by the shameful activities of the sons of Eli.

1 Samuel 3:7 – Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord.

The Lord was with Samuel but this divine calling did not erase his humanness.
Samuel is eager, confused, mature, and panicked (a mix of emotions).
Eventually Samuel is a successful prophet and military leader.

We emphasize on this day his words – *Lord, here I am.*

We could also emphasize these words – *Speak, for your servant is listening.*

1 Samuel 16:1-13

Lent 4A – March 26, 2017

The failures of the judges and the Philistines set the stage for the installation of a monarchy.
Saul (at first) was the perfect ruler – he was a military leader and he was widely popular.
He was tall, majestic, strong and handsome. He was humble in spirit (at first).

The humility of Saul gave way to disobedience and he lost favor with God.
Samuel grew despondent over the reign of Saul and the fate of Israel under his rule.
God is sympathetic but also challenges the prophet – How long will you grieve?
Samuel is honest with God and admits his fears.
God does not ignore the feelings of terror but offers specific instructions.
And Samuel did what the Lord commanded.

In Bethlehem, Samuel realizes and affirms the presence of the Lord's anointed.
What follows is the *audition* for the next king of Israel.
Eventually David is anointed as king.

We are to examine what blinds us to the wishes of God.

We are to examine what prevents us from truly experiencing the intent of God.

Next Class – November 8