

## *From the Garden to Glory*

# 1 Samuel

**Author:** Possibly Samuel, Nathan and/or Gad

**Timeline:** c. 1106 - 1011 B.C.

**Location:** Canaan

**Category:** Historical

**Theme:** The Establishing of the Kingdom of Israel

### **Overview:**

The book of 1 Samuel describes the transition of leadership in Israel from a nation ruled by judges to one ruled by kings. The nation of Israel rejected God as their King and asked for a king like the other nations had (1 Samuel 8:5-7).

In 1 Samuel we meet the first king over Israel, Saul, the man who always had an excuse for his sin and who never repented. We also meet David, a man after God's own heart.

### **Introduction:**

As you begin your study of 1 Samuel, consider the following questions and write your responses:

1. Look up the word *transition* in a dictionary and write the definition. Are you experiencing any transitions in your life right now? Do you usually regard times of transition with excitement or with dread?

2. Make a list of the major transitions in your life (leaving home for college, marriage, death of a parent, etc.) What were the positive aspects of each? What were the negative aspects?
3. In what ways do you think being ruled by a king would be superior to being ruled by a judge? How do you think it would be inferior?
4. Think of those who are in positions of leadership over you. How does knowing the sovereignty of God allow you to submit to their authority? How does it cause you to *refuse* to submit when asked to do something sinful?
5. The name Samuel can be translated in several ways and one of these is "Heard of God." What is one thing you would like to "hear from God" at this juncture in your life?

## **Samuel, "Name of God"**

Read 1 Samuel 1-3

1. What happened in 1:12-16? Have you ever been misunderstood? How did you feel? What is one thing you can do to insure that you do not misunderstand others?
2. Look at 1:20. Why did Hannah name her son Samuel? What is one thing that you have asked for and received from the Lord? How long did you have to wait to receive what you requested? What did you learn during this time of waiting?
3. Look at 3:10-14. What was Samuel's response to the Lord in verse 10? The word *hears* means "to hear with interest" or "to hear as to obey". What are you *hearing* the Lord say to you today? How will you respond?

## **Samuel, the Prophet**

Read 1 Samuel 4-7

1. Look at 4:1. Samuel had been established as the Lord's spokesman or representative. When have you been called to speak for the Lord? What did He direct you to say? How did this situation impact your relationship with Him?
2. Summarize 4:1-11. Look at verse 3. According to John MacArthur, "The ark symbolized the presence and power of the Lord. Yet, Israel treated it like a good-luck charm, which would ensure them victory over the Philistines. Knowing that victory or defeat depended upon the Lord's presence, they confused the symbol of His presence with His actual presence." How could the Lord's presence and the symbol of His presence be confused today? What can you do to protect this from happening in your own life?
3. Look at 7:3-4. What did Samuel say to the house of Israel? How did the people respond? What is the Lord instructing you to put away today? How is He instructing you to prepare your heart and serve Him? How are you responding?

## **Saul, the King**

Read 1 Samuel 8-12

1. As you read chapter 8, write your answers to these questions: Why did the elders of Israel want a king? What did Samuel tell them about the behavior of the king who would rule over them? Look at Genesis 17:6, 16; 35:11; Deuteronomy 17:14-20. The Lord promised that His people would be ruled by a king; it was Israel's timing, rather than the request, which was improper. Have you ever run ahead of the Lord? What was the result? What did you learn from this experience?

2. As you read chapters 9 and 10, make a note of everything you learn about Saul. How would you describe his character at this point in his life?
  
3. Imagine that you were in the crowd listening to Samuel in 12:20-25.
  - How would you have felt?
  - What is one thing you can do today to obey the command to "serve the Lord with all your heart?"
  - What is one "empty thing" you need to avoid?
  - Who is one person for whom you must not cease praying?
  - What is one specific way you can "fear the Lord and serve Him in truth?"

## **Saul, the Self-Willed**

Read 1 Samuel 13-15

1. What did Samuel tell Saul in 1 Samuel 10:8? Summarize 13:8-12. In verse 13, Samuel said to Saul, "You have done foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of the Lord your God, which He commanded you." What do you think led Saul to disobey the Lord? What can tempt you to disobey the Lord? How do you resist this temptation? Write out 1 Corinthians 10:12-13.
  
2. How is the man the Lord chose to replace Saul described in 13:14? What is one thing you are doing currently so that you will be "a woman after God's own heart?"
  
3. Summarize 15:1-9. In what ways did Saul obey the Lord? In what ways did he disobey? What motivated his disobedience? How is partial obedience a demonstration of faithlessness?

## **David Anointed**

Read 1 Samuel 16-18

1. Summarize 16:1-4a. What was Samuel feeling at this time? He chose not to surrender to his feelings but to obey the Lord. Think of a time when you chose to obey the Lord in spite of your feelings. What was the result?
2. Look at 16:7 and read Isaiah 55:8-9. What "truths" do you learn about yourself and the Lord from these two sections of Scripture? How will this impact your relationship with Him?
3. Look at chapter 17, and read about the battle between David and Goliath. What "Goliath" are you facing in your life right now? Summarize David's words in 17:45-47. How do these words encourage you in your current battle?

## **David's Adventures**

Read 1 Samuel 19-20; 22; 24

1. Look at 19:9-10. Saul was dominated by jealousy and anger. How do you resist the temptation to be jealous? Be specific. The Handbook of Bible Application states, "Jealousy may not seem to be a major sin, but in reality, it is one step short of murder. Jealousy starts as you resent a rival; it leads to your wishing he or she were removed; then it manifests itself in your seeking ways to harm that person in word or action. Beware of letting jealousy get a foothold in your life." Is there jealousy in your life at this time? If so, confess it to the Lord, repent, ask for and joyfully receive His forgiveness.
2. What do you learn about the friendship between David and Jonathan in 20:17? What character traits are most important to you in a friend? Who has the Lord called you to befriend? List one thing you can do to obey Him in this area.

3. Summarize 1 Samuel 24. Read Matthew 5:43-48. What "enemy" does the Lord want you to love? What is one thing you can do this week to bless that person?

## **Death of Samuel and Saul**

Read 1 Samuel 25-26; 31

1. What was David's plan in 25:21-22? Summarize Abigail's actions in 25:23-31. How did David respond in 25:32-35? Abigail helped David regain eternal perspective. What causes you to lose your eternal perspective? Who or what helps you to regain it?
2. Look at 26:9-11. What does this reveal about David's character? How can you apply this to your own life?
3. Summarize chapter 31. Read 1 Chronicles 10:1-14, and make a note of any additional information that you find about the deaths of Saul and his sons.

## **Summary**

As you conclude your study of the book of 1 Samuel consider the following questions and write your answers:

1. What is the most important lesson you have learned from your study of this book? How can you apply this lesson in your life this week?
2. What "new insights" did you learn about the Lord and yourself from your study?

- 3.** List one way in which your study caused you to do each of the following:

Praise and worship the Lord:

Confess an area of sin to the Lord:

Thank the Lord:

Ask for something from the Lord: