

**A WALK THROUGH THE OLD TESTAMENT**  
**TIME FRAME #5– THE UNITED KINGDOM – SAMUEL AND SAUL**  
**1050 BC TO 1010 BC**  
**SELECTED CHAPTERS IN 1 SAMUEL**

**CLASS NOTES**

**SUMMARY**

After 300 years of uneven history under the Judges, God raises up Samuel. He is unique among biblical figures. He is a Judge, Priest and Prophet. He bridges the gap between the time of the Judges and the beginning of the Monarchy. He is a godly man of prayer and courage.

Saul will become the first king of Israel, and in some ways will successfully unite this loose confederacy of 12 Tribes into a nation. He also makes strides in securing their borders, especially when David is leading his segment of his army. However, he does not have a true heart for God. His failures lead to rejection by God. This rejection does not happen immediately however. God will choose to have David anointed King but give Saul some 15 more years before he and his sons die in battle.

**MAJOR EVENTS**

**EVENT #40 – THE BIRTH OF SAMUEL (1 SAMUEL 1-3; 7:3-5)**

We are introduced to the fractured family of Samuel's parents. His godly mother, Hannah wept and prayed for a child. She vows to dedicate the child to God as a Nazarite. When God answers her prayer, she brings the 3-4 year old Samuel to Eli the priest to serve at the Tabernacle. God calls out to Samuel years later, and gives him a prophetic message of judgement against Eli and his two worthless sons. Then as an adult, he is made a Judge, the last one in Israel.

**EVENT # 41 – SAUL BECOMES THE FIRST KING OF ISRAEL (1 SAMUEL 8-10)**

Samuel makes his sons judges to serve after him. They are not any better than Eli's sons, lacking integrity. The Elders of Israel come to Samuel to demand he appoint a king over them. This will make them like the other nations around them. God prepares Samuel to recognize Saul as His choice for king. Then he leads Saul to Samuel who anoints him as King. God then orchestrates an event where Saul is revealed to the nation of Israel.

**EVENT #42 – SAUL'S FAILURES (1 SAMUEL 13, 15)**

Saul proves to have a key weakness – a heart that is not devoted to God. The first failure takes place when Saul is waiting for Samuel to arrive to offer a sacrifice for him and his army. Facing a superior force of Philistines, Saul's men start to melt away. Saul panics, and offers the sacrifice himself. This is a violation of God's Law and the instructions given by Samuel. Then later, Saul is given instructions to utterly destroy the Amalekites as judgement for their attacking Israel after they left Egypt. Instead, he destroys the unwanted and kept the best as plunder. As a result of these failures, God declares the crown will be removed from Saul and his family and given to someone else.

### **EVENT # 43 – DAVID IS ANOINTED KING (1 SAMUEL 16:1-13)**

God had told Saul that he was being rejected as king and that the Lord would choose another man who had the right heart. Samuel is sent to Bethlehem to the house of Jesse, where God reveals that the youngest brother, David, was the one who would replace Saul as King.

### **EVENT #44 – DAVID DEFEATS GOLIATH (1 SAMUEL 17:1-18:5)**

Most know this story, even if they have never touched a Bible. The main point of the story is not that David defeated a giant, but David's heart for and trust in God and the courage that view of God gave him. In addition, we discover that God will be with the one whose heart is fixed on Him.

### **EVENT #45 – SAUL'S JEALOUS REJECTION OF DAVID (1 SAMUEL 18:6-19:17)**

As David's military accomplishments grew, so did his fame. This was too much for Saul to take. He turns on David, making multiple attempts to kill him. Then he spend 8 years pursuing him from place to place until David takes refuge in Philistine.

### **EVENT #46 – DEATH OF SAUL (1 SAMUEL 31)**

The Philistines battle Saul and his army. Routing Israel, the Philistines pursue and kill Saul's sons. Gravely wounded, Saul commits suicide.

## **KEY CHARACTER – SAMUEL SPIRITUAL LIFE LESSON – HEARING THE VOICE OF GOD**

### **SAMUEL'S LIFE WAS IMPACTED BY HIS GODLY MOTHER. 1 SAMUEL 1**

Hannah not only made a profound impact on Samuel's life, she laid a spiritual foundation. However, before she could do that, she had to live that faith out herself.

1. Hannah had experienced a stress filled and disappointing life. She is childless and shares her husband Elkanah with a second wife who has born him children and who looks down on Hannah with open contempt. **1:1-8**
2. Hannah takes her broken heart to God in prayer. **1:9-18**
  - Hannah makes a vow to God, if He blesses her with a child he will be a Nazarite for life. One separated themselves to serving God. This could be for a specific purpose or amount of time or for life.
  - Note how Eli encourages Hannah in **verses 17-18**. Prayer and encouragement are a powerful combination!
  - God not only blesses Hannah with a child, but will give her son Samuel a triple blessing, anointing him to be a Judge, a Prophet and a Priest. He is one of the few who ever hold all three positions.

3. Hannah follows through with her commitment to the Lord. She shows a deep relationship with God and a commitment to obedience. These two qualities will be part of Samuel's life as well. **1:21-27**

**NOTE:** *As parents and as members of the church family, we should dedicate our children to the Lord with an openness to how He chooses to use them for His Kingdom. As we dedicate them to the Lord, we also dedicate ourselves to live the life of a Fully Devoted Follower of Christ before them.*

### **SAMUEL LEARNED TO RECOGNIZE GOD'S VOICE WITH THE HELP OF ELI. 1 SAMUEL 3**

1. In this chapter God calls Samuel to be a prophet. Any prophet needs to be able to discern the voice of God in their heart. We see Samuel learn to do that as God speaks to him four times in order to teach him.
2. Samuel knew about God. He also knew the Word of God, especially as it taught about serving at the Tabernacle. He was serving God at the Tabernacle. However, Samuel was not yet personally connected with God. I believe he was 'saved' through faith, but not yet personally close.
  - Because of their sinful behavior, Eli and his sons were not hearing God's voice. **3:1**
  - Samuel had learned how to serve God from Eli and his sons, but not to hear God's voice. **3:7**
3. Because Samuel had never heard God's voice speak to him, he assumed the voice he heard had to be Eli. Eli was not expecting God to speak, so it takes him four times before it occurs to him that Samuel was hearing from God. **3:6-9**
4. Samuel learns two important elements in hearing God's voice:
  - "Speak LORD" – We need to have a heart that wants to hear God speak to us. The two most common ways God speaks to us today is through His Word and through Prayer. We have this desire when we set aside time for these two practices with an open heart looking to hear from God.
  - "Your servant hears" – A servant is attentive to their master's voice and listen with the intention of obeying. We are called to take this attitude with us as we are in the Word and Prayer.
5. This lesson on hearing God's voice is well learned by Samuel! Throughout his life he knew when he was speaking God's Word. As a result every prophetic word he spoke was fulfilled. **3:19-21**

**NOTE:** *The ability to discern God's voice speaking into our lives grows as we mature in our Faith. Having a heart that wants to hear God speak to us and stands ready to serve through obedience is crucial. If we go to the Bible to gain information we will gain knowledge. If we go to the Bible to gain wisdom for a situation we will gain wisdom for that moment. If we go with a desire to hear God speak with a heart that is ready to hear and obey, it will transform our lives.*

## **SAMUEL ALLOWED HIS PERSPECTIVE AND ACTIONS TO BE DIRECTED BY GOD. 1 SAMUEL 8:1-18**

1. The people of Israel go to Samuel and demand he anoint a king for them. They use Samuel as an excuse for this need. He had appointed his sons as Judges to assist and one day succeed him. But they lacked his heart for God and integrity. Their demand displeases Samuel. He knows this is wrong. **8:1-6**
  - One part of this displeasure came from knowing it displeased God, for their demand showed a lack of faith. God had always raised up a Judge when the people needed one. Now they want a full-time king to lead them.
  - Most of his displeasure was undoubtedly personal. Their demand was a rejection of his sons. This had to weigh on him and was probably the main cause of his displeasure!
  - Samuel takes this displeasure – this sense that this is wrong – to God in prayer. We see a reflection of his mom back in 1 Samuel 1.
2. God gives Samuel His perspective on the situation. In addition, Samuel receives instruction on how to respond. **8:7-9**
  - Samuel is told to not take their demand personally. They may have used Samuel's sons as an excuse, but they were in fact rejecting God's rule and care over them.
  - Before granting their demand, Samuel is told to warn them about how this king will rule.
3. Samuel issues the warning. The context indicates he may have thought these warnings would cause them to have a change of heart. **3:10-18**
4. They are not dissuaded, but continue to demand a king to lead them like the other nations around them. Again, Samuel goes to God. The Lord instructs him to accommodate them. **8:19-22**

**NOTE:** *Our initial perspective and reactions to people and situations are often clouded by personal issues and agenda's. It takes going to God to receive the insight that blows away the fog of self and gives clarity to understanding and to responding.*

## **SAMUEL SPOKE GOD'S WORD WITH COURAGE AND WITH A HEART OF COMPASSION. 1 SAMUEL**

1. When God instructs Samuel to confront Saul with his sin, Samuel does so with great courage. His words could have cost him his life. **15:13-23**
2. However, Samuel takes no pleasure in Saul's failures, nor does he write Saul off. He grieves over Saul, and has to be nudged by God to move on to God's next man for king. **15:34-16:1**

**NOTE:** *Sharing God's Word with others is to be done with love and compassion, even when our hearers are not receptive. This is truth spoken in love.*