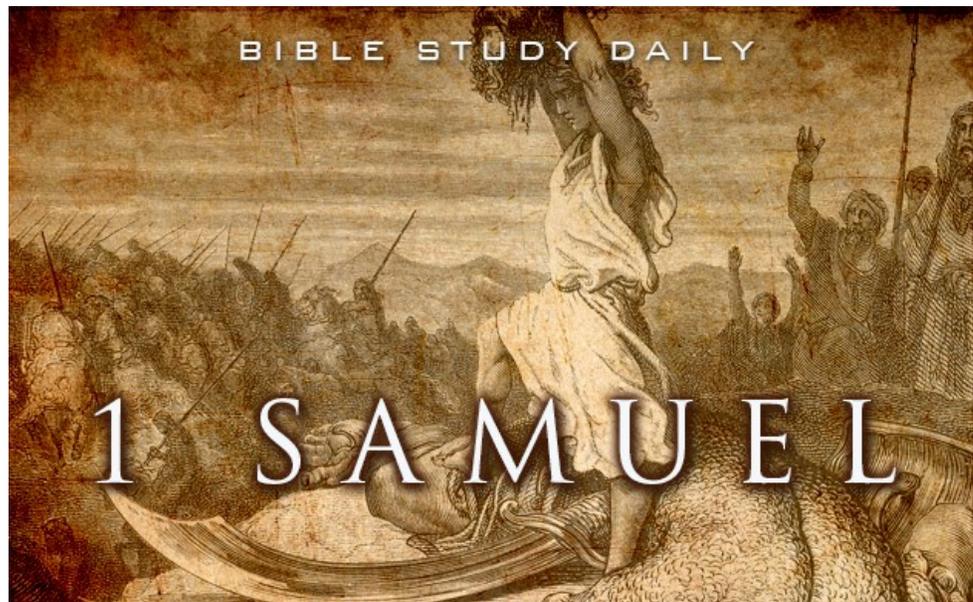




BIBLE STUDY DAILY



This document contains the introduction to the book of 1 Samuel as well as my study notes for the book.

Name

The title “1 Samuel” is derived from the name of Samuel who was a prophet and the central character reporting the events of this time period. Originally the books of 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel were a single book known simply as Samuel. However when the books were translated into Greek (about 150 B.C.) the books of Samuel and Kings were combined into one large book (titled First, Second, Third, and Fourth Kingdom). Later 1 and 2 Samuel were again separated from the books of Kings. Note: in the Latin and Vulgate Bibles they are referred to as First, Second, Third, and Fourth Kings.

Author

The book of 1 Samuel does not specifically name an author. Most scholars agree that Samuel wrote up to 1 Samuel 25, and that others completed the book at a later time.

Genre

History

Literary Form

Historical Narrative

Time Frame

The record of 1 Samuel begins at the close of the period of time of the judges continues to the installation of Saul as king, and concludes with Saul's death.

Emphasis

- The book of 1 Samuel emphasizes
- Samuel's birth, call, and ministry.
- God's selection of Saul to be king of Israel.
- Saul's victories.
- Saul's downward spiral and failures.
- God's preparation of David.

Outline

- 1) Samuel's ministry 1:1-12:25
- 2) Saul's reign 13:1-31:13

What I Noticed Today

(1 Samuel 1-3)

1 Samuel 1

Samuel's birth and dedication to God are recorded in 1 Samuel 1.

In verses 1-18 Hannah makes a vow to the Lord:

- Hannah, the wife of Elkanah was barren.
- She wept and prayed before the Lord at Shiloh (where the Ark of the Covenant was).
- She prayed that if the Lord would give her a son she would give the son to the Lord for his lifetime.

Note: Remember under Mosaic law the firstborn was to be dedicated to God, but could be redeemed. Hannah is promising to give her child to God to serve Him rather than redeeming him.

- Eli the priest saw her and ultimately blessed her for her prayer.

In verses 19 -28 Samuel is born and dedicated to the Lord:

- Sometime later God opened Hannah's womb and she had a son and she named him Samuel.

Note: The name Samuel means either "requested of God" or "heard by God."

- As promised, after Samuel was weaned Hannah took him and a three-year-old bull, some flour, and some wine to the Lord's house at Shiloh.
- The bull was sacrificed and Samuel was brought to Eli the priest.
- Hannah gave Samuel to the service of the Lord.

1 Samuel 2

1 Samuel 2 contains Hannah's song of praise to the Lord for the privilege of giving her son to serve the Lord.

- She is not bitter at giving up her son. Rather, she is joyful that he will serve the Lord!
- Samuel faithfully served the Lord as a young man and grew in favor with God and man.

In verses 12-17 Eli's sons, Hophni and Phineas were worthless young men.

- Given to bad behavior, they even desecrated and disrespected the sacrifices to God.

In verses 18-21 Samuel continued to serve the Lord with Eli the priest:

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- Each year Hannah would make a robe and take it to Samuel when she and her husband traveled to Shiloh to make their annual sacrifices.
 - Eli would bless them and pray for the Lord to give Hannah more children.
 - The Lord gave Hannah three more sons and two daughters.
 - Samuel grew in stature and in favor with the Lord.

Note: A similar reference to Samuel growing in stature and in favor with the Lord and men is made in v. 26. See Luke 2:52 for a similar reference made regarding Jesus.

In verses 22-26 Eli confronts his sons about their bad behavior:

- Eli heard about what his sons were doing.
- He rebuked them for their sinful behavior (but did nothing to stop them).
- Because of their disrespect and rejection of God, God rejected them.

In verses 27-36 the priesthood of Eli is rejected by the Lord:

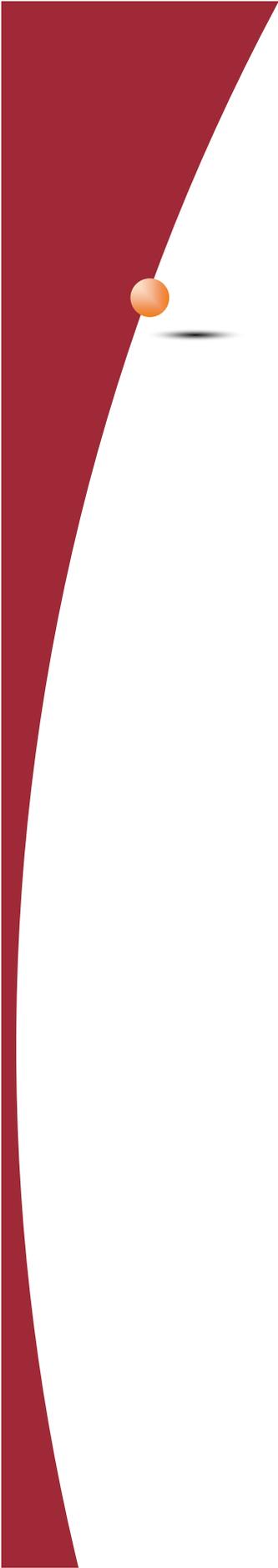
- A man of God appeared before Eli and told him the Lord would no longer honor Eli or his sons as priests because of their actions.
- The man told Eli no one in his family would grow old.
- Both his sons would die on the same day.
- After that, the Lord will raise up another priest who will be faithful to Him. He will be the Lord's anointed one for all time (a reference to Jesus Christ).

1 Samuel 3

As 1 Samuel 3 opens, we see that Samuel is now a young man serving Eli the priest faithfully. The word of the Lord was rare and prophetic visions were not common.

In verses 1-10 the Lord calls out to Samuel:

- God calls Samuel three times but Samuel doesn't recognize that it is God calling at first. At first, Samuel thinks it is Eli calling him.
- Eli told Samuel it was the Lord calling him. He told him to listen again and to respond that he was listening.
- Samuel finally recognized God's voice.
- God gave Samuel a vision of a bleak future for the household of Eli.
- Eli called Samuel the next morning asking what was the message the Lord had given him.
- Samuel told Eli everything God had said and Eli accepted the Lord's judgment.



In verses 19-21 God was with Samuel as he grew, and word spread throughout the countryside (from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south) that God had established Samuel as His prophet.

Some thoughts for further consideration:

- *I am so impressed by Hannah's faith. Remember, these were dark days for the Israelites. As we just saw in Judges, "man did what was right in his own eyes." Many had turned away from God. Yet Hannah remained incredibly faithful to God, clinging to His promises.*
- *Eli no doubt loved his sons, but he should have taken action against their sinful behavior. The result of not doing so was that they lost the privilege of serving God.*
- *Samuel was serving God but he didn't recognize God's call at first. He had to hear God several times before he realized that it was God speaking to him. We can be the same way today. We serve in some respect, but don't recognize when He is calling us to serve Him, to do the work He has called us to do!*

What I Noticed Today

(1 Samuel 4-7)

1 Samuel 4

1 Samuel 4 is a record of tragedy.

In verses 1-11 the first tragedy is the Ark was captured by the Philistines.

- The Israelites met the Philistines in battle at Aphek (about 25 miles from Shiloh).
- Israel was defeated by the Philistines who killed about 4,000 Israelites that day.
- The elders wonder why the Lord let them be defeated, so they decide to bring the Ark of the Covenant from Shiloh to the battle accompanied by Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas.
- The Philistines recognized that the God of the Israelites had entered their camp so the Philistines fought even harder.
- The Philistines killed 30,000 Israelites soldiers that day and captured the Ark.

In verses 12-21a the second tragedy was death.

- Samuel's two sons, Hophni and Phineas, both died.
- When news of the defeat of Israel's army reached Samuel and he learned that his sons had died and the Ark had been captured he fell over, broke his neck, and died.
- Eli had judged Israel 40 years.
- When Phinehas' pregnant wife heard the news about the death of her husband and father-in-law, and the capture of the Ark she went into labor and died in childbirth. She named the boy Ichabod (meaning "there is no glory").

In verses 21b-22 the third tragedy was the glory of the Lord had departed from Israel:

- When Phinehas' pregnant wife died in childbirth her last words were "The glory of God has departed from Israel because the Ark of God has been captured" (1 Samuel 4:22).

1 Samuel 5

1 Samuel 5 recounts the travels of the Ark of the Covenant through Philistine lands.

- The Philistines took the Ark to Ashdod (50 miles southwest of Shiloh) and placed it in the temple of Dagon (the Philistine god).
- The statue of the Philistine god, Dagon was found the next day fallen over before the Ark
- The Philistines put Dagon back on his pedestal and the next day he was found fallen over with his head and hands broken off.
- The Lord sent plagues against the people of Ashdod in the form of tumors.
- The Philistine rulers decided to move the Ark to Gath. The Lord's hand came against the people of Gath in the form of tumors.
- The Ark was moved once again to Ekron. The Ekronites said the Ark must be returned to its people. Once again the hand of God was against the people of Ekron.

Note: The Philistines kept moving the Ark around their country for seven months and wherever it went the Lord's hand was against the people.

1 Samuel 6

In 1 Samuel 6 the Ark is returned to the Israelites.

In verses 1-12 the Philistine elders made the decision that it was best to send the Ark back to the Israelites.

- The Philistine priests and diviners told the elders to send the Ark with an offering of five golden tumors and mice representing the five Philistine rulers. They told them to give glory to God and not harden their hearts like the Pharaoh in Egypt did.
- The men prepared a new cart pulled by two milk cows. They loaded the Ark onto the wagon along with the offering and sent it off.
- The cows took the Ark directly to Beth-shemesh, an Israelite village about 15 miles west of Jerusalem.
- The Israelite people were overjoyed to see the Ark return.
- They cut up the cart built a fire and sacrificed the cows on it.
- A number of Israelites looked inside the Ark (v. 19) and the Lord struck down 70 men (See Numbers 4:15).
- The men of Beth-shemesh sent messengers to the men of Kiriath-jearim telling them the Ark of the Lord had returned and to come and get it.

1 Samuel 7

In 1 Samuel 7 the Ark is restored in Israel.

In verses 1-17 the men of Kiritath-jearim came and took the Ark to Abinadab's house where they consecrated his son eleazer to take care of the



Ark.

- Levites from Kiriath-jearim came to Beth-shemesh and took the Ark home, and all of Israel began to seek the Lord (1 Samuel 7:2).
- But Samuel warned them if they really wanted to return to God they needed to repent, get rid of their foreign gods and idols and worship the Lord only!
- They did and Samuel prayed to God as they fasted.
- When the Philistines came up against the Israelites God himself caused a panic among the Philistines. The Philistines retreated and never tried to invade Israel again.
- The Lord's hand was against the Philistines throughout the life of Samuel.
- The Israelites regained land from the Philistines and had peace with the Amorites.
- Every year Samuel would go from Bethel to Gilgal and Mizpah as he judged Israel. Then he would return home to Ramah where he had built an altar to the Lord.

Hophni and Phineas had rejected God when it suited them and their lifestyle but when they were in trouble they wanted God to save them. Had they and the people of Israel repented and turned back to God, perhaps God would have given them victory over the Philistines.

The Philistines had God in their midst for seven months and clearly understood that all the bad things that were happening to them were happening because God was against them. Yet they never repented and turned to God. What an incredible opportunity to be with God and it was lost!

Finally, after learning the lesson the hard way, the Israelites heeded Samuel by repenting of their sin and turning back to God with all their hearts.

Some thoughts for further consideration:

- *My how these situations are reflected in our lives today! For some we lead our lives the way we want and wonder why God doesn't save us, as though He is there for our convenience! Or there are people who see the power of God all around them, yet stubbornly hold to their false beliefs and reject the one true God. And yet, for those who repent and return to Him, God is gracious to forgive and allows us to restore our relationship with Him!*

What I Noticed Today

(1 Samuel 8-11)

1 Samuel 8-9

The Israelites demand a king. Samuel anoints Saul.

1 Samuel 8

In verses 1-5 Samuel had appointed his sons, Joel and Abijah, to serve as judges in Beer-sheba but they were dishonest judges who perverted justice. The elders brought their behavior to Samuel's attention and demanded that he appoint a king over them rather than letting his sons rule as judges.

Note: We don't see that Samuel did anything to correct his son's bad behavior.

In verses 6-9 Samuel went before the Lord to inquire about what he should do. The Lord told Samuel that the people were not rejecting him but had rejected Him as their King. The Lord told Samuel to warn the people about the rights of a king who would rule over them.

In verses 6-22 Samuel warned the people what life under a king would be like; harsh demands, taxes, and servitude. Yet the people demanded a king "like all the other nations." They wanted a king who would judge them, go out before them, and fight their battles. The Lord told Samuel to appoint a king and Samuel told the people to go home and wait.

1 Samuel 9

In 1 Samuel 9 Saul met Samuel.

In verses 1-14 a Benjamite named Saul was instructed by his father to go and look for some missing donkeys. He was miles from home when one of his attendants suggested consulting with the man of God who lived in Zuph (about five miles from Gibeah where Saul lived). Saul decided to consult with Samuel to see where he should go.

In verses 15-27 the Lord had told Samuel the day before that the next day a Benjamite would come to him. This man was to be anointed as king over Israel.

- When Samuel saw Saul, the Lord told him this is the man who will save Israel from the Philistines.
- Samuel told Saul not to worry about the donkeys because they had been found three days before.
- Samuel had a ceremonial feast where Saul was seated in a place of honor.
- After the feast, Samuel and Saul spoke privately.

- The next morning before dawn Samuel again spoke to Saul privately.

1 Samuel 10-31

The reign of Saul as king over Israel.

1 Samuel 10

1 Samuel 10 Saul is anointed as king.

In verses 1-8 Samuel told Saul privately he was God's choice to be king of the people of Israel.

- Samuel anointed Saul as king over Israel.
- Samuel told Saul he would meet two men near Rachel's tomb who would tell him the lost donkeys had been found. He would also meet three men at the oak of Tabor who would give him two loaves of bread. After that, Saul would encounter a group of prophets as he approached Gibeah.
- Samuel told Saul the Spirit of the Lord would come over him and he would become a new person.
- Afterward, Saul was to go to Gilgal with instructions to wait seven days when they would offer sacrifices to God together.

In verses 9-16 everything Samuel prophesied about Saul's return home came true. The Spirit of the Lord entered Saul and he prophesied with the prophets.

- Saul told his uncle about the donkeys but didn't say anything about what Samuel had told him.

In verses 17-26 Samuel proclaimed Saul as king over Israel.

- Samuel called the people of the Lord together at Mizpah.
- Through a process of elimination, Saul was selected as king.
- The people rejoiced shouting, "Long live the king."
- Samuel pronounced the rights of kingship to the people, wrote them on a scroll, and placed the scroll in the presence of the Lord (at the Tabernacle).
- Saul returned home with some brave men whose hearts God had touched. But some wicked men despised Saul.

1 Samuel 11

In 1 Samuel 11 Saul's first test came soon after he had been proclaimed king.

In verses 1-5 Nahash the Ammonite threatened the Israelites in Jabesh-gilead.

- The elders of Jabesh-gilead sent messengers throughout the land with the



hope that someone would come and save them from the Ammonites.

- Saul came in from the field and was told about the plight of the people of Jabesh-gilead.

In verses 6-15 the Spirit of the Lord came over Saul:

- Saul cut up two oxen and sent pieces throughout the land this is what would be done to anyone who doesn't come and march behind Saul and Samuel.
- The terror of the Lord fell over the entire people of Israel and they were united.
- Saul, through the power of the Spirit, brought the army of 330,000 Israelites together Bezek (12 miles west of Jabesh-gilead).
- Saul and the army marched all night and defeated the army of Nahash.
- Following their victory, Saul and Samuel went to Gilgal and in the presence of the Lord sacrificed fellowship offerings to the Lord and the people rejoiced.

It seems that Saul was almost reluctant to assume the responsibility of king at first. He claims to be from humble origins and even stays in the background when it is time for Samuel to announce his kingship to the people. Yet when it came time to act, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him and he led the Israel army to victory.

Some thoughts for further consideration:

- *How sad! God had saved these people for generations. God had conquered their enemies for hundreds of years and provided for them, yet they wanted a king to be like the very people God had conquered!*
- *This scenario shows just how far from God the people had fallen over the years. They didn't care at all about the hundreds of years that God had provided and cared for them. They rejected God, in favor of a king, like other nations. One that God even warned them would make conditions miserable for them. But in their stubborn, hard hearts they insisted on a king anyway.*
- *How hard do our hearts become at times? Do we reject God's best, in favor of man's solutions?*

What I Noticed Today

(1 Samuel 12-14:23)

1 Samuel 12

In 1 Samuel 12, Samuel gave his final public speech to the Israelites.

In verses 1-15 Samuel's final speech to the people of Israel is partly a farewell address, a recounting of the history of God's protection and provision to the nation, and an admonishment to remain faithful to the Lord even though they now have had Saul as king.

In verses 16-25 Samuel was a man of prayer.

- He called on the Lord and the Lord sent thunder and rain (most unusual since it was the dry harvest season).
- While the people were afraid, Samuel reassured them saying that even though they had sinned against God, God would not abandon them.
- However, Samuel also gave them a dire warning that if they continued to do evil God would sweep them away.

1 Samuel 13

1 Samuel 13 recounts Saul's failure as a leader of the people.

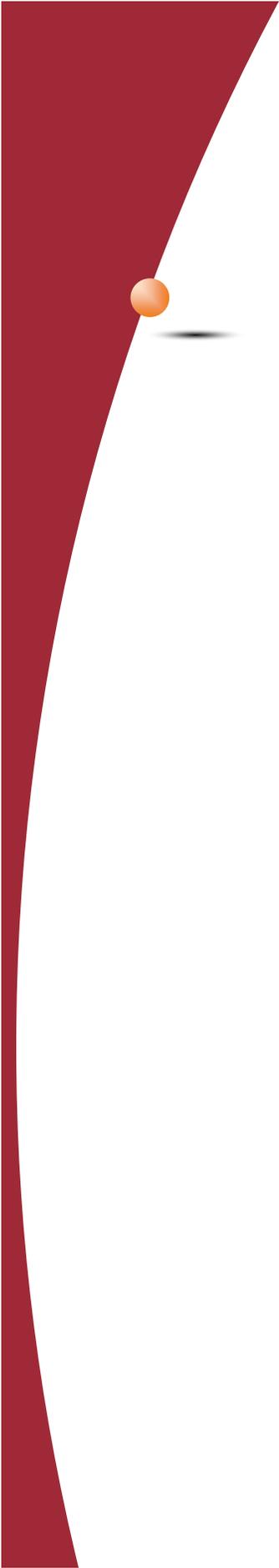
In verse 1 Saul was 30 years old when he became king and he reigned 42 years over the Israelites.

In verses 2-22 four major failures of Saul are recounted:

- Saul failed to act decisively when threatened by the Philistines (1 Samuel 13:1-4). Jonathon, his son, declared war on the Philistines and defeated them, yet Saul took credit for the victory.
- Saul failed to inspire or control his army. Some of the men ran away, some hid, and some left the country ((1 Samuel 13:5-7).
- Saul failed to follow Samuel's directions to wait seven days before offering a sacrifice. (1 Samuel 13:8-9). His impatience and rebellion against God began his downward spiral early in his reign.
- Saul lied to Samuel in an attempt to excuse his actions (1 Samuel 13:10-15). When Samuel confronted Saul he lied to Samuel rather than confessing and repenting his sin. (We'll catch Saul in a similar lie in 1 Samuel 15:15.)

1 Samuel 14:1-14:23

In 1 Samuel 14:1-23 Jonathan secured victory over the Philistines:

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- Once again Jonathan took action against the invading Philistines.
 - Jonathan inquired of God, had faith in God's promise, and proceeded against the Philistines in faith.
 - When Saul heard about the battle initiated by Jonathon, he finally called the army together and joined in the battle.
 - The Lord, through Jonathon, gave Israel victory over the Philistines.

Some thoughts for further consideration:

- *What a contrast there is between Saul and Jonathon! In many respects Saul failed as a leader, yet Jonathon, his son, was a man of God who took action!*

What I Noticed Today

(1 Samuel 14:24-16)

1 Samuel 14:24-52

In verses 24-46 Saul rashly made an oath that weakened his army by not allowing them to eat during the course of a long battle.

- Saul's army went through a forest and found honey, but none of them ate because of Saul's oath.
- Saul's son, Jonathan had not heard of his father's oath and ate some of the honey and was refreshed.
- As the Israelites defeated the Philistines that day they rushed to take plunder, slaughtered cattle and ate meat with the blood still in it (prohibited in Leviticus 17:10-14).
- Saul realized eating the blood was also wrong (Leviticus 17:10-14) so he rushed to build an altar to the Lord and have the men slaughter their animals there.
- Saul also rashly wanted to continue the battle the next day without consulting God, but Samuel stopped him until they inquired of God.
- God did not answer. Saul realized someone had violated the oath not to eat. The men of the army were cleared. Jonathan admitted to eating honey and Saul declared that Jonathan must die.
- The interceded on Jonathan's behalf saying he should not die because he had delivered Israel.
- Ultimately Saul gave up pursuing the Philistines and the Philistines returned to their territory.

In verses 47-52 the reign of Saul as king is summarized:

- Saul fought against Israel's enemies; the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, the kings of Zobah (Arameans), and the Amalekites.
- Saul's family included his wife Ahinoam, his three sons Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malki-shua, and his daughters Merab, and Michal.
- Abner was the commander of Saul's army.

1 Samuel 15

In 1 Samuel 15, the Lord rejected Saul as king of the Israelites.

In verses 1– 35 Samuel instructed Saul to go into battle against the Amalekites and to not spare anyone or anything.

- Saul struck down the Amalekites but captured Agag their king alive, and took plunder of many animals and the best of everything else.
- This angered God because Saul had not obeyed him completely. This angered Samuel and he cried out to God all night.
- Early the next morning Samuel went to confront Saul and was told Saul had left and gone to Carmel where he set a monument to himself.
- When Samuel finally confronted Saul, Saul tried to blame the soldiers. He told Samuel the soldiers had taken the animals to sacrifice them to the Lord, but God had told Samuel what was in Saul's heart.
- Saul admitted his sin and said he was afraid of the people so he had obeyed them instead of the Lord.
- God rejected Saul as king because Saul had rejected God's instructions.
- Samuel had Agag, the king of the Amalekites brought to him and he executed him before the Lord at Gilgal.
- Samuel left Saul and went to his home in Ramah while Saul returned home to Gibeah.
- Samuel mourned for Saul and never visited him again

Note: Saul remained king in the eyes of the people for another 15 years, but in the eyes of the Lord he was no longer king.

1 Samuel 16

Samuel anoints David as king.

In verses 1-13 God sent Samuel off to anoint a new king from the tribe of Jesse.

- Samuel went to Bethlehem and told the people to consecrate themselves and join him in a sacrifice to the Lord.
- Jesse's sons were brought out but none of them were chosen.
- Finally, David was brought in from tending the sheep.
- God indicated that David was to be anointed as the new king.
- As Samuel anointed David the spirit of God came upon David.

In verses 14-23 the Spirit of the Lord had left Saul and an evil spirit tormented him.

- Saul's servants realized that music calmed him so they sent for David, the son of Jesse to play the lyre for Saul.
- David comforted Saul, stricken with an evil spirit that tormented him, as David played the lyre.
- Their relationship grew closer.

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- David became Saul's armor-bearer, and Saul said that "he cared for him greatly" (1 Samuel 16:21).
 - Whenever the spirit of God troubled Saul, David would play for him and Saul would be relieved.

Note: The evil spirit that troubled Saul could only be relieved by David who now had the spirit of God in him. In a very real way, the spirit of the Lord was still comforting and bringing relief to Saul even after the Lord had rejected him as king.

God gave Saul specific instructions but Saul was prideful and neglected God's instructions. Saul reflected poor leadership when he made the rash order for the army not to eat during the battle. He reflected poor character when he lied to Samuel and tried to blame the men in the army for taking plunder. As a result, he lost his friendship with Samuel who had anointed him and mentored him. And ultimately, he lost his position as king because he had rejected God's instructions.

Some thoughts for further consideration:

- *Such a simple thing to listen to God and follow him completely, but as Saul demonstrated our human will and pridefulness often get in the way of our desire to serve God as we intend.*

What I Noticed Today

(1 Samuel 17-18)

1 Samuel 17-18

1 Samuel 17-18 contain the story of David's defeat of Goliath, his successes in battle, and his rise in popularity among the people.

Note: There were 6 valleys through which enemies could enter the land of Benjamin and Judah. The Philistines had already come up through Aijalon Valley (1 Samuel 13:23). During the days of Samson, the Philistines had entered through the Sorek Valley. They already controlled Socoh and Azekah so if they were able to make it through the Valley of Elah all the land would be threatened.

1 Samuel 17

In verses 1-11 the Philistines and Israelites lined up on opposite sides of the Valley of Elah. Goliath came out from the Philistines every day for 40 days taunting the Israelites. Saul and the army of the Israelites were dismayed and afraid (1 Samuel 17:11).

In verses 12-38 David's father Jesse told him to take some provisions to his brothers who were in Saul's army. The trip was about 15 miles from Bethlehem where David lived to where the armies were in the Valley of Elah. When David arrived and he heard the taunts from Goliath he responded with courage volunteering to face Goliath himself. All the time that David had spent tending his father's sheep fighting off wild animals had prepared him to do battle with Goliath.

In verses 38-51 David refused Saul's armor, preferring instead to enter the battle with his own weapons, knowing that he was going in the power of the Lord. He even told Goliath that the battle was the Lord's. David killed Goliath with a single stone from his sling and cut off his head with Goliath's own sword.

In verses 52-54 David's victory over Goliath encouraged the army of Israel and they chased the Philistines in battle. They plundered the Philistine camp. David brought Goliath's head to Jerusalem but kept Goliath's sword for himself.

In verses 55-58 Saul asked Abner his military commander who was this young man who killed Goliath. Abner didn't know so David was brought before Saul. David explained that he was the son of Jesse of Bethlehem.

Note: It seems odd that Saul did not recognize David since David had been a musician serving Saul. Three theories are advanced by scholars. 1) Saul may have been so tormented by the evil spirit that he did not recognize David. 2) Saul may have recognized David but not known who his father was. 3) David



was only 12 years old when he entered Saul's service as a musician and he had only played for Saul for about a year. Several years had passed and David was now 17-18 years old. Saul may not have recognized David as the boy who used to play the lyre for him.

1 Samuel 18

In verses 1-9 Saul brought David into his household and did not let him return to his father.

- Saul's son Jonathan and David became very close friends. Jonathan gave David his own tunic, sword, bow, and belt.
- But as David was successful in battle Saul became more and more envious of David's popularity.

In verses 10-19 the next day, an evil spirit entered Saul while he was in the palace and David was playing the lyre.

- Saul tried to kill David by throwing a spear at him but David got away.
- Saul made David a commander over 1,000 men and David was successful in everything he did because the Lord was with him.
- Saul became more and more envious of David but the people loved David.
- Saul kept sending David on missions hoping the Philistines would kill him (ironic considering this is exactly what David did to Uriah the Hittite in 2 Samuel 11).
- Saul then attempted to get David to marry his oldest daughter but David said he was not worthy to become the king's son-in-law.

In verses 20-30 Saul's daughter Michal loved David and it was reported to Saul.

- Saul offered to give his daughter Michal to David as his bride hoping that she would be a snare to him, but Michal loved David, so Saul despised David even more.
- David again expressed reluctance to become the king's son-in-law because he did not have an appropriate bride price for a king's daughter.
- Saul asked only for the foreskins of 100 Philistines as a bride price in the hopes that the Philistines would kill David.
- Instead, David killed 200 Philistines and returned with their foreskins as a bride price for Saul's daughter.
- Saul gave his daughter Michal to David in marriage. Saul realized that the Lord was with David and his daughter loved him. Saul became even more afraid of David and viewed David as his enemy from then on.
- David became the most successful of all of Saul's officers and he became well known throughout the land.



Saul was God's anointed king, yet he stood afraid of the Philistines. Perhaps if he had finished the battle with the Philistines (1 Samuel 16) he never would have had this problem. Regardless, it's interesting that for 40 days Saul listened to the threats of the Philistines and never consulted God.

David came along in the power of God and defeated Goliath, and as he did he gave credit to the Lord. Through all of his battles that led to his increasing popularity with the people David gave credit for the success in battle to God.

Saul went from caring for David like a family member to angry because of his success and popularity with the people (v. 8), to fear of David (v. 12), to fearful awe (v. 15), to plotting to have him killed (v. 17, 25), to even more afraid of David (v. 29), and finally to making him his enemy (v. 29).

Some thoughts for further consideration:

- *God will prepare and use those whose hearts are devoted to him!*

What I Noticed Today

(1 Samuel 19-21)

1 Samuel 19

Saul is jealous of David and tries to kill him.

In verses 1-7 clearly fearful that David will take his kingship away from him Saul ordered Jonathon and his servants to find and kill David. Jonathon spoke up in defense of David and gave his father three reasons why killing David was not a good idea:

- 1) David had not sinned against Saul,
- 2) David had brought great victories to Israel, and
- 3) Saul would be guilty of shedding innocent blood.

Because of Jonathon, Saul swore an oath that David would not be put to death.

Note: The phrase “As surely as the Lord lives” was often the way an oath to God was made.

In verse 8 war broke out between the Philistines and the Israelites again. David led the Israelite army and defeated the Philistines.

In verses 9- 17 an evil spirit from the Lord came upon Saul and Saul tried to kill David again. First, by hurling a spear at him (v. 10), then by trying to have him captured (v. 11). David eluded Saul with his wife, Michal’s help, then again with Jonathon’s help. Saul’s children, Jonathon and Michal, both lied to Saul to protect David.

In verse 18 David fled to Ramah (three miles) to tell Samuel everything Saul had done. Samuel and David left Ramah and stayed at Naioth

In verses 19-24 Saul sent agents to seize David at Naioth in Ramah. Three times Saul sent men to seize David. Each time the men encountered Samuel and the prophets the Spirit of God came upon them and they also began to prophesy. Finally, Saul himself went to Naioth. The Spirit of God came upon Saul and he also prophesied before Samuel

1 Samuel 20

Jonathon and David meet secretly and Jonathon protects David.

In verses 1-24 David left Naioth and met Jonathon. David enlisted Jonathon’s help in determining what were Saul’s intentions toward him.

- David was supposed to join the king at the New Moon festival.
- If Saul missed David but was not angry he knew he would be safe. If,



however, Saul became angry because David was not at the festival then David knew Saul's intention was to kill him.

- David and Jonathan agreed to meet in a field the day after the festival. If Saul was not angry, Jonathan would send for David. If Saul was angry Jonathan promised to warn David and send him away to safety.

In verses 24-42 at the New Moon festival dinner, Saul noticed David's absence. At first, he thought David was ceremonially unclean and was unable to come. The second day when David did not attend Saul confronted Jonathan who deceived his father about David's absence.

- Saul became so angry he tried to kill his own son, Jonathan, with a spear.
- The next morning Jonathan went to the field to meet David and told him about Saul's anger toward him.
- Jonathan and David pledged allegiance to each other in the name of the Lord.
- David left and Jonathan returned to the city.

Note: David lived about 10 years in exile. During that time Saul tried repeatedly to kill David.

1 Samuel 21

David flees to Nob and then to Gath.

In verses 1-9 David fled to Ahimelech, the priest at Nob. David deceived Ahimelech about his real purpose in being in Nob. He asked for bread and the priest gave him the consecrated bread for his men. Doeg the Edomite, who was Saul's chief shepherd, was there and overheard David. (We'll see why this was important in 1 Samuel 22:9.)

In verses 10-15 David fled further away from Saul, going all the way to Gath which was Philistine territory. When David realized that people had heard of him, even referring to him as king, he got nervous and pretended to be crazy so the Philistines would leave him alone.

Some thoughts for further consideration:

- *I am a bit surprised at David's scheming in these chapters. This is the man who had such faith and courage before the Lord that he took on Goliath in battle. He led Saul's army to many victories over the Philistines. Yet when it came to Saul he lied repeatedly and involved others in his lies and deceptions. The one thing I don't see here is David consulting God for direction. He seems to be living out this period of his life on his own wisdom rather than seeking God's wisdom.*

What I Noticed Today

(1 Samuel 22-24)

1 Samuel 22

David reenters Saul's territory and Saul becomes even more paranoid.

In verses 1-3 David had the good sense to leave Gath but reentered Saul's territory when he hid in the cave of Adullam. When David's family heard he was there they joined him. Some 400 men who were desperate, in debt, or discontented rallied around David and he became their leader.

In verses 3-4 David took his parents to the king of Moab and requested permission to leave them in the land of Moab.

Note: Remember, Moab was the son of Lot, Genesis 19:37).

In verses 6-10 Saul's leadership style comes into view as he tries to play on the sympathies of the people, complaining that no one feels sorry for him (v. 8). Saul even makes the false claim that his son Jonathan was stirring up servants to ambush Saul. Doeg the Edomite then told Saul about seeing David at Nob.

In verses 11-23 Saul confronts the priests at Nob, accusing them of not being loyal to him. He orders their execution. When even his own soldiers won't murder the priests, Doeg steps up and kills 70 priests, and then wipes out everyone and everything in the town of Nob. Only Abiathar, son of Ahimelech, survived the slaughter and escaped to join up with David.

1 Samuel 23

David rescues the people of Keilah in Judah.

In verses 1-6 the Philistines were raiding the threshing floors of the people of Keilah and this was reported to David.

- David asked the Lord if he should go and attack the Philistines and rescue the people of Keilah (Keilah was 15 miles southwest of Jerusalem, near the Philistine border).
- David's men were concerned with attacking the Philistines since they were already in danger being in Judah.
- David asked the Lord a second time and the Lord confirmed they should go and rescue the people of Keilah. David saved them by driving the Philistines back.

Note: If the Philistines were raiding the threshing floors it was harvest time. The Philistines would wait until the grain was harvested and then raid the town stealing the grain.



Note: The phrase translated “Go at once” to attack the Philistines carries a sense of urgency. David was to attack immediately.

In verses 7-14 Saul found out that David was in Keilah so he summoned his army to go besiege the city of Keilah and trap David.

- When David learned that Saul was after him again David inquired of the Lord and learned that the Keilahites were prepared to turn him over to Saul so David and his 600 men fled into the wilderness of Ziph.
- It seems David and Saul played cat and mouse for some time. Saul kept launching campaigns to find and kill David, but David always managed to find out and escape Saul’s forces.

In verses 15-18 Saul’s son Jonathan came to David in Horesh and they confirmed their covenant with each other. Jonathan said he knew his father would not catch David, David would become king, and Jonathan would be David’s second in command.

Note: Jonathan’s predictions did not all come true. He never became David’s second in command. He was killed in battle fighting alongside his father, Saul (1 Samuel 31:2).

In verses 19-29 some Ziphites betrayed David to Saul:

- Ziphite men told Saul David was hiding among them in the hills of Horesh
- They promised to hand David over to Saul.
- Saul told the men to keep watch on David and report his exact routine and location.
- David was told about Saul coming for him so David fled to the Wilderness of Maon (about 5 miles further south).
- Saul chased after David and was getting close when a messenger came and told Saul the Philistines were attacking. Saul broke off his chase to capture David and went to engage the Philistines.
- David and his men went to the strongholds of En Gedi.

Note: En Gedi was an oasis 10 miles north of Masada.

1 Samuel 24

David spares Saul’s life.

- Saul took 3,000 soldiers to look for David in the wilderness near En Gedi. Saul went into a cave to relieve himself. This was the same cave where David and his men were hiding.
- David had the opportunity to kill Saul, and was urged by his men to do so, but David had great respect for the Lord’s anointed and refused to kill him.

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- Instead, David snuck up on Saul and cut off a corner of his robe.
 - When David demonstrated that he could have killed Saul and chose not to because he was loyal to Saul, Saul recognized that David was more righteous than he and that God would indeed make David king.
 - Saul made David swear an oath that he would not cut off his descendants or wipe out his name.

Some thoughts for further consideration:

- *David was the kind of leader that consulted God regularly, and importantly, he didn't let the voices of others sway him from God's direction. There will be times in our lives when people we help or befriend will turn on us and treat us badly. But God has promised to provide, protect, and deliver us as we follow Him faithfully!*

What I Noticed Today

(1 Samuel 25-27)

1 Samuel 25

1 Samuel 25 opens with the death of Samuel and includes the story of Nabal the Calebite and his wife Abigail.

Note: Nabal means “folly” or “fool.” He was a descendant of Caleb who entered the promised land with Joshua (Numbers 13:6, Joshua 14:6-14).

In verse 1 Samuel died and was buried near his home in Ramah. Afterward, David went to the Wilderness of Paran (see Genesis 21:21, Numbers 10:12, 1 Samuel 13:3).

In verses 2-8 David and his men had been providing protection to the people of the area. When it was harvest/sheep-shearing time, he sent some men to ask Nabal for a contribution to help support the 600 men who were with him (600 men and their families, probably a band of 2,400 people).

In verses 9-43 Nabal refused, his response being both arrogant and insulting.

- When David heard of Nabal’s response he vowed to kill him.
- Abigail gathered an offering together, took it to David, and implored him not to kill Nabal and bring bloodguilt on himself.
- David relented.
- Ultimately, Nabal had a seizure and died 10-days later, struck down by the Lord.
- David then took Abigail as his wife.
- David also married Ahinoam of Jezreel.

1 Samuel 26

1 Samuel 26 is another case of Saul setting out on a journey to find and kill David.

In verses 1-3 Saul was told by the Ziphites that David was hiding in the hills of Hachilah near Jeshimon.

In verses 4-6 David sent out spies to confirm Saul’s location and planned to infiltrate Saul’s camp.

In verses 7-25 David is again able to sneak up to Saul and could have killed him but did not because he was “the Lord’s anointed.”

- When David called out to Saul and Saul understood that David spared him once again, Saul admitted his sin and foolishness. He promised never

to harm David and blessed David for considering his life valuable. David and Saul parted and both returned home.

Note: These were the last words spoken between Saul and David.

1 Samuel 27

1 Samuel 27 recounts David's decision to journey into Philistine territory to Achish, king of Gath, to seek refuge from Saul.

In verses 1-8 David asked Achish for a town to live in and Achish gave him Ziklag.

Note: Ziklag was one of the cities that the Israelites were promised, but had never captured.

In verses 8-12 from his headquarters in Ziklag David conducted raids against Geshurites, Girzites, and Amalekites.

- Whenever Achish asked David where he was raiding, David would give a technically correct answer, but was deceiving Achish by letting him think he was warring against his own people.
- David left no one alive in the towns he raided so there would be no one alive to report back to Achish.

Note: David's actions fulfilled the Lord's command to wipe out the evil inhabitants of the land (Joshua 13:1-7).

- This made Achish trust David, thinking that David was more of a friend to him than an enemy.

Some thoughts for further consideration:

- *David's encounter with Nabal reminds us that we can respond to situations in several ways. We can return evil for good as Nabal did when he refused to return David's kindness. We can return evil for evil as David considered when he swore to kill Nabal. Or, we can return evil for good as David ultimately did when he accepted Abigail's offering and apology for her husband.*
- *While David was following God by sparing Saul's life, he made a poor decision by going to live in Philistine territory without consulting God. It seems he was more concerned with survival and avoiding conflict with Saul than trusting in God and seeking His will.*

What I Noticed Today

(1 Samuel 28-31)

1 Samuel 28

Saul consults a medium.

In verses 1-2 the Philistines decide to attack Israel again. Achish, king of Gath, approached David about fighting with him against the Israelites.

In verses 3-25 Saul consults a medium:

- Samuel had died and Saul had removed all the mediums and spiritists in the land.
- The Philistine army gathered at Shunem. Saul gathered the Israelite army at Gilboa.

Note: From Gilboa Saul could watch the Philistines.

- Saul was terrified of the Philistines and inquired of the Lord but the Lord did not answer him.
- Saul ordered his men to find him a woman who was a medium. Saul disguised himself and went to the woman and ordered her to bring up Samuel.
- Saul told Samuel about his trouble and asked what he should do.
- Samuel confronted Saul with his failure to obey the Lord as the reason why the Lord had taken his kingship away from him and given it to David.
- Samuel told Saul the next day he and his son Jonathan would be killed, and the Lord would hand the Israelite army over to the Philistines.

1 Samuel 29

In verses 1-7 meanwhile, the Philistines are getting ready to attack (1 Samuel 29:1-2 refers back to 1 Samuel 28:1-3). David has aligned himself and his men with Achish, the Philistine, and they marched off to do battle with Israel. Some of the Philistine leaders questioned David's presence among them. Achish summoned David, told him of their concerns about him and asked him to leave the battlefield.

In verses 8-11 David protested, saying he had not been disloyal to Achish. Achish admitted he thought David was as reliable as an Angel of God, but asked him to leave at daybreak the next day. So David left early the next morning and returned to the land of the Philistines while Achish and the Philistines army went to Jezreel.

Note: Jezreel was a valley where they would meet Saul in battle.

Note: I don't understand this! Is David ready to do battle against his own people? Some of the Philistines don't trust David so they send him home. I don't understand this either. David knows they are preparing for war against his people and he goes home without warning the Israelites about the impending attack?

1 Samuel 30

David defeats the Amalekites

In verses 1-3 it took three days for David to march home to Ziklag. During that time, the Amalekites attacked, burned the city down, and captured all the people and animals.

Note: If Saul had killed all the Amalekites like he was supposed to Ziklag would have been safe (1 Samuel 15:1-3)!

In verses 4-31 David arrived and found Ziklag burned down and all the people kidnapped including his two wives Ahinoam and Abigail.

- David summoned Abiathar the priest and inquired of the Lord. The Lord told him to go save the people.
- David and his army pressed on, and eventually caught up to the Amalekites, defeated them, and saved all their people and took a great plunder.
- David distributed some of the plunder to the men who went into battle as well as those who stayed behind with the supplies.
- David wisely took some of the spoil and sent it as gifts to the elders of Judah saying it was from the enemies of the Lord.

1 Samuel 31

Saul and his sons die in battle.

Note: 1 Samuel 31 jumps back to Saul's timeline to the day after Samuel gave him the bad news (1 Samuel 28:19).

- The Philistines engaged in a battle with Saul's army and defeated them. Saul and his sons, Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua were killed in the battle just as Samuel had prophesied.
- Saul was wounded by an archer's arrow. He told his armor-bearer to kill him, but the armor-bearer was terrified and refused. Saul fell on his own sword and died. Then the armor-bearer also fell on his sword and died.
- When the Israelites saw that Saul had been defeated they abandoned the towns beyond the Jordan River and the Philistines settled in them.
- When the Philistines were taking plunder from the battlefield they found Saul's body. They cut-off his head stripped off his armor and spread the news of his death. They hung his armor in the temple of Ashtoreth and hung Saul's body on the wall of Beth-shan.

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- Some brave men from Jabesh-gilead heard what had been done to Saul so they travelled all night, retrieved Saul's body and those of his sons. They returned to Jabesh, burned the bodies, buried the bones under a tamarisk tree, and fasted for seven days.

Note: David later learned of the bravery of the men of Jabesh and how they buried Saul (2 Samuel 2:4-7).

Some thoughts for further consideration:

- *Saul's disobedience to God caused many problems for his people, not just himself. The same is true of us today. Sometimes we neglect following God's instructions completely, and it causes problems not just for us, but for those around us as well!*