

# 1 SAMUEL

PROPHETS, PRIESTS, & KINGS

## WEEK 1

### 1 SAMUEL 1:1-20

#### BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Pray for God to give you and your discipleship group eyes to see and ears to hear what he is saying in the book of 1 Samuel.

What do you (members of the group) know from previous studies on the book of 1 Samuel? What cumulative knowledge does the group have as you embark on this study?

Watch the Bible Project video introducing 1 Samuel (~7 mins):

<https://youtu.be/QJOju5Dw0V0>

Read the passage aloud.

#### STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. What do we learn about Elkanah in verses 1-5? What was important for him in life?
2. Describe the dynamic between Elkanah and his two wives (1:4-8). In what ways does Peninnah create trouble? In what ways does Elkanah add to the strain?
3. What do you think of Hannah's actions and prayer in verses 9-11? What does it say about her?
4. Why does Hannah vow that no razor will touch the head of her child? Look up Numbers 6:1-21 and skim this chapter to see what you can learn about this particular vow.
5. What does Eli mistakenly believe about Hannah when he sees her praying (1:12-14)? Based on your knowledge of chapter 2, why do you think he draws this conclusion?

#### APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Based on human logic, Hannah faced a hopeless situation. When has the Lord allowed you to face a seemingly hopeless situation in order to prove Himself faithful?
2. What should we believe about the role of prayer during our times of hopelessness?



# 1 SAMUEL

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## WEEK 2

### 1 SAMUEL 1:21-28

#### BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Pray for God to give you and your discipleship group eyes to see and ears to hear what he is saying in the book of 1 Samuel.

Read the passage aloud.

#### STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. What other biblical stories contain barren women given children by God? Any similarities/differences?
2. According to the law, Elkanah could have nullified Hannah's vow to the Lord (Num. 30:10-12). Instead, how does he treat his wife and her vow (1:21-23)?
3. What do Hannah's words show her greatest concerns are for her son?
4. It would have been common knowledge to the original audience that a child was weaned around the age of 3. Why do you think the author includes the final, brief description in 1:24?
5. Can you think of any other places in scripture where a moment of despair is a prelude to a mighty work of God?

#### APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. What does Hannah's barrenness teach us about our 'impossible' situations?
2. What can we learn about trusting the Lord from the actions of Hannah and Elkanah?
3. What does this passage teach us about how we raise or 'steward' our children?



# 1 SAMUEL

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## WEEK 3

### 1 SAMUEL 2:1-10

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#### **BEFORE YOU BEGIN:**

Pray for God to give you and your discipleship group eyes to see and ears to hear what he is saying in the book of 1 Samuel.

Read the passage aloud.

#### **STUDY QUESTIONS:**

1. Hannah's prayer is one that begins with thanksgiving. What does this teach us about how we should start our prayers and the place for thanking God?
2. There is something of a warning in verse 3. What does Hannah say that is a warning to us?
3. In verses 6 & 7 what does Hannah say that the Lord does? What do you think about those things?
4. Having fulfilled her vow to the Lord in great faithfulness, Hannah prays to the Lord. How does her prayer in 2:1-11 contrast to her earlier prayers in 1:1-16?

#### **APPLICATION QUESTIONS:**

1. How should Hannah's prayers, both in grief and in rejoicing, instruct the way you pray?
2. Which elements of her prayers do you most need to incorporate into your own?



# 1 SAMUEL

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## WEEK 4

### 1 SAMUEL 2:11-26

#### BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Pray for God to give you and your discipleship group eyes to see and ears to hear what he is saying in the book of 1 Samuel.

Read the passage aloud.

#### STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. What do you learn about the character of Eli's sons? What was it that Eli's sons did as priests? How did Eli's sons deal with other people? What do does that tell us about them?
2. What tender care does Hannah continue to show to her son (2:19)? What other article of clothing does Samuel wear (2:18)? Look up Exodus 39:1-7 for a description of this garment. For whom was this garment reserved?
3. In 2:22-25, what does Eli do to address the sins of his sons? What does he fail to do?

#### APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. What lesson should we learn from the story of Eli?
2. What comfort can we take from it?



# 1 SAMUEL

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## WEEK 5

### 1 SAMUEL 2:27-36

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#### **BEFORE YOU BEGIN:**

Pray for God to give you and your discipleship group eyes to see and ears to hear what he is saying in the book of 1 Samuel.

Read the passage aloud.

#### **STUDY QUESTIONS:**

1. In 2:27-36, Eli receives a message from a "man of God." What are the first words the man speaks? Based on how this phrase is used elsewhere in the Bible, what do these words tell us about the identity of the man of God?
2. Though the narrative has focused on the wicked actions of Eli's sons, who does the man's message accuse?
3. Look at the immediate fulfillment of the faithful priest prophesied in 2:35. Now, look up Hebrews 7:26-28 and note what you learn about the ultimate fulfillment of this prophecy.

#### **APPLICATION QUESTIONS:**

1. What lesson should we learn from the story of Eli?
2. What comfort can we take from it?



# 1 SAMUEL

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## WEEK 6

### 1 SAMUEL 3:1-21

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#### BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Pray for God to give you and your discipleship group eyes to see and ears to hear what he is saying in the book of 1 Samuel.

Read the passage aloud.

#### STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. How does the information in 3:1-3 provide needed context for what happens in the rest of the chapter?
2. Based on the context of the passage, what do you think 3:7 means?
3. Why do you think the story repeats so much before getting to the point? Why not just cut out verses 4-9? What do they add to our understanding?
4. What uncomfortable situation do God's words create for Samuel (3:15-18)? How might having to tell the prophecy to Eli be good training for future situations Samuel would encounter?

#### APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. The first three chapters of 1 Samuel show us that "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6). How have you witnessed this principle in your own life, both in your pride and your humility? Give an example of each.



# 1 SAMUEL

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## WEEK 7

### 1 SAMUEL 4:1-11

#### BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Pray for God to give you and your discipleship group eyes to see and ears to hear what he is saying in the book of 1 Samuel.

Read the passage aloud.

#### STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. What accounts for Israel's defeat in 4:2? Look up Deuteronomy 28:15, 25 to help you with your answer. How does their loss make sense based on what we learned in 2:27-30?
2. The Philistines believed that deities actually dwelt within idols. Describe their response to the knowledge that "a god" had entered the camp of Israel. On what past event do they base their feelings (4:6-9)? Do you think their feelings changed after their victory? Why or why not?
3. What do you think the Israelites hoped to accomplish by bringing the ark of the covenant with them to war? What was the faulty logic behind their decision?
4. Does it surprise you that God would allow His people to be catastrophically defeated in battle? Why or why not?

#### APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. In what ways do modern-day believers follow the example of Israel, expecting God's favor on their own terms?
2. Consider your own life. What are some ways you are tempted to pursue your own plans, expecting that God will grant you favor? What is a better approach to follow?



# 1 SAMUEL

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## WEEK 8

### 1 SAMUEL 4:12-22

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#### BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Pray for God to give you and your discipleship group eyes to see and ears to hear what he is saying in the book of 1 Samuel.

Read the passage aloud.

#### STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. Word of Israel's defeat comes quickly to Eli at Shiloh. Why is Shiloh a significant place? Look back at 1:3 and 4:3 to help you with your answer.
2. What word(s) best describes Eli's mental state while Israel was at war? What do you think was the underlying cause of his state of mind?
3. How does the city respond to the news of Israel's defeat? Do you think they were surprised? Why or why not (4:13b-14)?
4. Describing how Eli and his family members are affected by the capture of the ark (4:12-17). Consider Hophni & Phineas, Eli, Eli's daughter-in-law, and Ichabod.
5. Look back at 2:30-34. How was the word of the Lord fulfilled through what happened in 4:12-17?

#### APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Eli's failure as high priest ultimately led to the capture of the ark. How is this story a warning to the Church? To you personally?





# 1 SAMUEL

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## WEEK 9

### 1 SAMUEL 5:1-12

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#### BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Pray for God to give you and your discipleship group eyes to see and ears to hear what he is saying in the book of 1 Samuel.

Read the passage aloud.

#### STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. The Philistines moved the captive ark from the battlefield into the temple of Dagon, their principle god of fertility and agriculture. What happens that shows the supremacy of the God of Israel over Dagon (5:3-5)?
2. How do you think the Philistines felt seeing what happened to the statue of their god?
3. Holding the ark captive came with consequences. What were the specific events that take place in each location (5:6-12)?
  - a. Ashdod
  - b. Gath
  - c. Ekron

#### APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. What does the account of the ark of the Lord in enemy territory teach about God's power and authority?
2. How does this teaching encourage you in your current circumstances?



# 1 SAMUEL

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## WEEK 10

### 1 SAMUEL 6:1-7:2

#### BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Pray for God to give you and your discipleship group eyes to see and ears to hear what he is saying in the book of 1 Samuel.

Read the passage aloud.

#### STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. What key event do the Philistines recognize as being similar to their current plight (6:6)? What parallels do you see between that story and this one?
2. How long do the Philistines suffer affliction at the hands of the God of Israel (6:1)?
3. Summarize the creative plan suggested by the priests and diviners of the Philistines for returning the ark (6:2-9).
4. How does their test prove that God had sovereignly directed the ark's return to Israel (6:10-12)?
5. Beth-shemesh was a town of Judah in Israel near the Philistine border. Describe how the Israelites felt about having the ark back in their possession.
6. What does the action of "looking upon" (6:19) or inspecting the ark reveal about what these men truly believed concerning God's commands?

#### APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. What does the account of the ark of the Lord in enemy territory teach about God's power and authority?
2. How does this teaching encourage you in your current circumstances?



# 1 SAMUEL

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## WEEK 11

### 1 SAMUEL 7:3-17

#### BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Pray for God to give you and your discipleship group eyes to see and ears to hear what he is saying in the book of 1 Samuel.

Read the passage aloud.

#### STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. Twenty years have passed since the ark was taken to Kiriath-jearim under the care of Eleazar. The nation of Israel has spent those years in lament after the Lord (7:1-2). Samuel presents them with an "if/then" statement. Name every action Samuel calls the people of Israel to take in 7:3-5.
2. Baal and Ashtoreth were Canaanite deities believed to hold authority over crops, fertility and military strength. Why do you think God's covenant people kept foreign gods among them?
3. How does Israel's choice to rely on prayer as their weapon against the Philistines demonstrate a true heart change (7:8)?
4. Who do you think is responsible for Israel's victory against the Philistines? Give evidence from the text to support your answer.

#### APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. The fruit of victory meant restoration, deliverance and peace for the people of God. What are the "Ebenezers" in your own life that remind you of God's past faithfulness?
2. What circumstance or sin pattern challenges your belief in God's faithfulness today? How do your "Ebenezers" spur you toward perseverance?



# 1 SAMUEL

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## WEEK 12

### 1 SAMUEL 8:1-22

#### BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Pray for God to give you and your discipleship group eyes to see and ears to hear what he is saying in the book of 1 Samuel.

Read the passage aloud.

#### STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. What action does Samuel take in 8:1? What is the outcome (8:3)?
2. What reasons do the elders of Israel give to Samuel to explain their desire for a king (8:4-5)?
3. How would you sum up how God responds in 8:7-9?
4. Do you think it was wrong for Israel to request a king? Why or why not? Compare God's response with Deuteronomy 17:14-20 to help you with your answer.
5. What is the desire revealed in 8:20 underlying Israel's request for an earthly king?
6. Why do you think God allows Israel to have an earthly king despite the suffering it will bring (8:21-22)?

#### APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Despite being a nation called and set apart for God, Israel wanted to be like other nations. Think about your relationship to things like money, property, entertainment, family members, peers, activities and so on. In what ways are you guilty of trying to be like the world around you rather than set apart for God?
2. In what practical ways could you live so as to demonstrate your citizenship in heaven?

