

Bible Reading Notes
1 SAMUEL

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1 Samuel 1

1 Samuel recounts the work of Israel's last judge, Samuel.

1:4 – This was the Peace Offering or Fellowship Offering in which the family could share in part of the meat of the sacrifice (Leviticus 7:11ff).

1:5 – It is the Lord who gives or withholds children for his own purpose.

1:20 – Samuel sounds in Hebrew like “heard of God.” But some commentators believe Samuel means “name of God.”

1 Samuel 2

2:1-10 – Hannah's song is similar in some ways to the song of Mary found in Luke 1. Both rejoice in God's salvation.

Three statements are made about Samuel which are in contrast to Eil and his two wicked sons (2:21, 26; 3:19).

2:13 – custom of the priests – Their custom was contrary to the Lord's directions in Lev. 7:28-36 and elsewhere.

2:15 – Fat – The fat was always to be burnt as the best part of the sacrifice (Lev. 3:16; 7:31).

2:35 – faithful priest – Refers to Zadok who will serve as high priest during the reign of David.

1 Samuel 3

3:1 – the word of the Lord was rare in those days – When this happens it is often because of the great sinfulness of God's people.

3:10 – Speak for your servant hears – This is the same attitude we are to have as we approach the word of God today.

3:18 – What a horror for a father to hear such news, both about himself and his sons.

1 Samuel 4

- 4:3 – **Why has the Lord defeated us** – Instead of waiting for the answer they decide to use the Ark as if it had magical powers to bring victory.
- 4:13 – **his heart trembled for the ark of God** – Eli's greatest concern was for the safety of the ark, which was symbolic of God's presence with his people.
- 4:17 – Death of Eli's sons was in fulfillment of the Lord's word in 2:34.

1 Samuel 5

- 5:2 – It was typical practice to take the gods of a defeated nation and put them in the temple of your god. The Philistines thought that the defeat of Israel showed that Dagon was more powerful than Yahweh.
- 5:3-5 – This account is reminiscent of Isaiah's teaching on the vanity of idols in contrast to the Lord (Isaiah 44).
- 5:8 – They mistakenly thought that a different location for the ark might impact the power of the Lord. Many pagans believed that gods were limited in influence by geographical areas.

1 Samuel 6

- 6:4 – **tumors...mice** – This has led commentators to believe the plague the Philistines were suffering under was like a bubonic plague spread by rodents.
- 6:8-10 – The Philistines did all possible to make it unlikely that the cows would indeed go to Israel.
- 6:19-20 – The holiness of God will come forth on both pagans and covenant people who ignore the law of God.

1 Samuel 7

7:3 – Israel has once again turned to the worship of other gods as they repeatedly did in the book of Judges.

7:12 – **Ebenezer** = Stone of Help. The stone was a memorial to the many times the Lord had helped his people.

1 Samuel 8

8:5 – **like all the nations** – in asking for a king Israel was rejecting their status as a unique nation with the Lord as their king (8:7) and wanted to be like the other nations (8:20).

8:10-18 – Samuel tries to dissuade Israel from wanting a king by warning them of all that a king will do.

1 Samuel 9

The calling of Saul to be king was around 1050 BC and his reign would last for 60 years.

The Lord had someone in mind (Saul) and providentially worked through lost donkeys to bring Saul to Samuel.

9:9 – **Seer** – This is another name for a prophet.

1 Samuel 10

10:2 – Anointing with oil was the sign of a man being set aside for office (priest, prophet, or king).

10:3-8 – The first sign would be natural, but the two that followed would confirm to Saul that the Lord was setting him aside as king.

10:9 – **another heart** = We are unsure of all that this phrase means. At a minimum, it speaks of the Holy Spirit coming on Saul to enable him to fulfill his calling. Later, the Holy Spirit will depart from Saul.

10:22 – **among the baggage** – Saul was timid about his new calling. He did not run away like Jonah, but he did hide in an effort to not take on his call.

1 Samuel 11

11:1 – Ammonite – The Ammonites were the descendants of Lot.

11:6 – Spirit of God – The Lord who called Saul, equips Saul through the Holy Spirit to fulfill his calling.

11:13 – Lord has worked salvation – Saul makes an important profession of faith. Unfortunately, this will not be a pattern going forward in his life.

11:15 – This is Saul's public coronation where he is truly accepted by Israel as their king.

1 Samuel 12

Now that a king has been chosen, it is time for Samuel to transition out of the picture. Though this is a farewell address, Samuel still has time and much influence left in Israel.

12:18 – all the people greatly feared - The thunder and rain at harvest season could destroy all their harvest.

12:23 – Part of the work of a leader in the church is to be faithful to pray for the church.

12:24-25 – The promise of blessing and cursing is a reminder of the covenant renewal in Deuteronomy 28.

1 Samuel 13

1 Samul 13-14 gives a contrast between King Saul and his son, Jonathan.

13:13 – command – Saul did not have authority to offer the sacrifices since he was not a priest.

13:14 – This is the beginning of the decline of Saul. His son will not succeed him, but he will be allowed to complete his reign. This verse is quoted in Acts 13:22 as referring to David.

1 Samuel 14

14:6 – Jonathan, in contrast to his father, is a man of faith.

14:24 – **oath** – Making a rash oath like this, is more evidence of Saul's unfitness to serve as Israel's king.

14:45 – **ransomed** – Israel redeemed Jonathan from death.

1 Samuel 15

15:2 – **Amalek** were descendants of Esau, who attacked Israel on their way to Mt. Sinai (Exodus 17).

15:3 – The directions to Saul were very clear. This was the Lord's judgment against Amalek for their treatment of Israel.

15:11 – **I regret** – The Lord's regret does not mean that he did not know in advance what Saul would do or which that he had made a different choice in king. For the Lord to regret in this situation is to have sorrow over the sinfulness of his anointed king.

15:21 – Leaders should never blame those they lead for their own sin.

15:24 – This does not appear to be genuine repentance since Saul is still blaming the people for his actions.

1 Samuel 16

16:7 – These were some of the characteristics that made Saul stand out as king.

16:13 – **Spirit...rushed upon David** – Same experience as Saul, though we are told that the Holy Spirit was with David "from that day forward," unlike with Saul (v. 14).

1 Samuel 17

Today we see David's first act as the anointed of the Lord.

17:4 – six cubits and a span = 9' 9"

This is an odd way to wage war to our modern ears

17:16 – 40 days - 40 is often used in Scripture for periods of trial – years that Israel spent in the wilderness and the days of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness.

17:27 – David's great concern was that Goliath was defying the army of the living God and in doing so, the Lord himself (also vv. 36, 45).

17:47 – This was the purpose of the Lord giving David victory over Goliath.

1 Samuel 18

18:4 – Jonathan's actions imply that he was accepting God's will and placing himself under David. David would be king, not Jonathan.

18:13 – commander of a thousand – Saul demoted David from his prior rank (v. 5) in order to combat his popularity.

18:23 – have no reputation – This is ironic since David's reputation was so great it caused great fear in Saul.

18:29 – continually – This will continue until Saul's death.

1 Samuel 19

1 Samuel 19 gives another contrast between wicked Saul and his righteous son, Jonathan.

19:13 – image – Righteous David was allowing household gods in his home. This may have come with Michal, but it was David's responsibility as the head of his home, to not allow idols in his home.

19:23 – Saul is overtaken by the Spirit of God and is unable to fulfill his intention to kill David.

1 Samuel 20

1 Samuel 20 gives yet another contrast between wicked Saul and righteous Jonathan in how they respond to the Lord's obvious favor on David.

20:5 – new moon – It must have been the custom for Saul to hold a feast at the start of every new month as part of the New Moon Festival.

20:13 – Jonathan recognizes that David will be the next king. He makes this explicit in 23:17.

1 Samuel 21

21:4 – holy bread = This is the Bread of the Presence (v. 6) that was put on the table in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle and changed every Sabbath. It was to be eaten only by the priests. Later, Jesus will approve allowing David to partake (Mark 2:25-26).

21:10 – Gath – This shows David's desperation as Gath was the home of Goliath and the killer of Goliath would be well known to them.

David's time in Gath is memorialized in Psalms 56 and 34.

1 Samuel 22

22:9 – David wrote of this event in Psalm 52.

22:17 – kill the priests of the LORD – Surely one of the lowest points of Saul's life as he commands the death of the priests that lived at Nob.

22:20 – The Lord saves a remnant from the priest's family who can carry on the work.

1 Samuel 23

Today's reading affirms that David will indeed be the next king of Israel as even his great enemy, Saul, must confess.

23:14 – Summary of the events in this section of 1 Samuel.

23:17 – Incredible statement by Jonathan, who by tradition would be the next king. He was a humble and godly man.

1 Samuel 24

24:6 – **The Lord's anointed** - Saul is a scoundrel but he is also the Lord's anointed. David submits to the Lord and his choice.

24:20 – Saul also confesses to David what he has tried to prevent – David will be the next king.

1 Samuel 25

25:3 – **Nabal** = “Foolish” or “the fool” as Abigail confesses in v. 25.

David understood Nabal's refusal to be an insult to David, the Lord's anointed (v. 39).

25:23ff – Abigail lays out a clear and godly argument for David to restrain himself, not the least being to protect his own conscience if he were to shed innocent blood.

25:30 – Abigail confesses that David will one day be king.

1 Samuel 26

26:9-11 – David still refuses to take action against evil Saul because Saul is still the Lord's anointed. Instead he leaves it in God's hands to deal justly with Saul.

1 Samuel 27

27:1 – Apparently David does not believe Saul's word that he will not pursue him any longer.

27:2 – **Gath** – This is the second time that David has gone to Gath in order to flee from Saul (1 Sam. 21:10).

27:9-11 – Scripture records David's actions but do not condone them. This appears to be sinful on David's part.

1 Samuel 28

28:6 – When the Lord rejected Saul, the normal means of inquiring into the Lord’s will were no longer available to him.

28:8 – Divine for me – According to 1 Chronicles 10:3 this sin was part of the reason Saul will lose his life the next day.

28:12 – saw Samuel – The text gives every indication that it was truly Samuel who appeared. Samuel’s appearance was not due to the medium’s power but to the Lord’s provision.

1 Samuel 29

29:5 – This was the song of Israel as recorded in 1 Samuel 18:7

29:6ff – David has fooled Achish as we have read. Achish’s commanders have better insight into David than Achish does.

1 Samuel 30

30:6 – In times of despair, as we read in the psalms, David regularly turned to the Lord for his strength and hope.

30:7-8 – In contrast to Saul (28:6), David is given an answer by the Lord.

30:17 – This was a fulfillment of the Lord’s word in Deuteronomy 25:19.

1 Samuel 31

This brings to an end the main conflict of 1 Samuel – that between Saul and David. The Lord’s rejection of Saul finds its completion in his death.

