

“REASONS TO REJOICE”

*“Your Words were found, and I ate them,
and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.” Jeremiah 15:16*

I and II SAMUEL

Lesson 1

Welcome! We’re about to begin an exciting adventure as we study I and II Samuel. We will be introduced to several Bible characters, including Hannah, Eli, Samuel, and David. We will see the notice the change of government from a theocracy under the judges to a monarchy under the kings, as we learn about the history of the Kingdom era of Israel. Most importantly we will see the example of David, who was not only one of the greatest leaders in the ancient world, but is the one who “prefigured in his experience and character Jesus the Messiah, who is called the Son of David” (Matthew 9:27). (Irving Jensen) Through the succession of kings, God was preparing His people for Jesus, the true King of Israel.

The goal of this lesson is to provide you with a tool that will help in your study of God’s Word. Our prayer is that each of us will be changed as we study His Word together. I and II Samuel are much more than simply historical accounts of the nation of Israel. They are God-breathed words that are vital and extremely significant to us as Christians (2 Timothy 3:16). They not only provide us with meaningful facts to help us understand the history of God’s people, but also spiritual application for our lives (His kids!), as well.

May we become more like Him (Romans 8:29) as we receive God’s instruction and apply His principles to our heart. May His Word impact us in such a way that our lives are a shining example of His faithfulness, His grace, His mercy, and His love. I pray that each lesson will either teach you a new Bible truth, challenge you to action, develop deeper convictions based on His Word, expose wrong thinking or doctrine, or simply encourage you in His love. I challenge you to work hard at finishing the homework, knowing that you will gain as much as you invest. May He be glorified as we seek to walk in His ways (1 John 2:6)!

Our study this year will involve a bit more reading than usual. To stay within our 25-week time frame, we will be studying 2-3 chapters per

week. Don't panic! Try to plan ahead and schedule reading and study time into your daily routine. Believe me, it's worth it!

There are three steps that are very helpful as you study the Bible. These steps are referred to as the "Inductive Method" of Bible study. The steps are called **Observation, Interpretation, and Application**.

Observation: *In this step, you are looking for as many details as you can find in the passage you are studying. Read like a detective, asking yourself questions like: Who is speaking? Why is this happening? Who are the main characters? When is this happening? Are there any words that are repeated? Gathering all the facts will help you interpret the text you are studying more accurately. You will be answering the question, "What does the passage say?"*

Interpretation: *After gathering your facts, it's time to find out what they all mean. You now begin defining words and terms, cross referencing other passages, identifying key themes, and doing word studies. You do what you can to come to a good understanding of what the author is trying to say. Your goal is to answer the question: "What does the passage mean?"*

Application: *After you know what the text says, and what it means, it's time to see how it applies to you. Questions you may ask yourself are; "What difference should this truth make in my life?" "Are there any changes I need to make in my life?" "Is there a warning for me?" "A challenge?" "A rebuke?" In other words, "What does the passage mean to me?"*

Although we don't go step by step each day in our lesson, the questions hopefully will help us to think "Inductively." They are written with the intent of training ourselves to study in this way. Please feel free to dig deeper whenever you desire. Some love to go more in depth, while others only have the time to answer the written questions. Again, this study is simply a "tool" to help **YOU** glean all you can from God's Word! Have fun!

First Day

Before we start reading, we need to know some of the background behind I and II Samuel. Today's lesson will be all reading, so sit back, grab a cup of coffee, get comfortable, and jump in!

The Author- Who is it?

The author of these books is semi-anonymous (if that's a word!). It is widely accepted that Samuel himself wrote up to I Samuel 25:1, where his death is recorded. The rest was most likely written by either Abiathar, an attendant of David, or Nathan and Gad (I Chronicles 29:29). If Samuel was one of the authors, these books were written somewhere between 1025-900 BC.

Title

Although I and II Samuel are two books in our English Bible, the earliest Hebrew Bible considered them as one, known simply as "Samuel." It has been divided several ways over the years. The name Samuel means "Name of God," "Heard of God" or "His name is God."

The Books of Samuel begin where the Book of Judges leaves off. It traces the transition of leadership in Israel from judges to kings. Israel had been governed by God, who used judges and priests to speak to His people. Samuel was born about 1105 BC and became a transitional figure used by God in this transitional time. He was Israel's last judge and first prophet. The office of a prophet became the way God spoke to His people, ending the period of judges. I Samuel covers a span of about 94 years, beginning with the birth of Samuel and ending with the death of Saul (1105-1011 BC).

The years of the judges were a time of spiritual decline for Israel because they were continually rebelling against God. They had no desire to obey Him, resulting in moral, religious, and political decay. They did "what was right in their own eyes." There was also an extreme lack of unity within the nation. Israel rejected God as their ruler, firmly believing that a king would be the answer to their problems. The other nations were ruled by kings, and they wanted one too! Israel thought they knew what they needed better than God did. (Gee, sound familiar?) God allowed Israel to have their hearts desire, but with the consequences that came with it. Saul became the first king of Israel, which ended in disaster.

Irving Jensen, in his commentary on I and II Samuel, offers three main purposes for this book that may be helpful for us to know before we begin reading:

1. Historical

a. To furnish a record of the transition from the era of judges to that of a monarchy (read Acts 13:20-21, noticing these three words: judges, prophet, king)

b. To describe the influences of Samuel upon the life of Israel and upon many of their leaders

c. To furnish a setting for the reign of David as described in 2 Samuel

2. Typical or Symbolical

The books of Samuel are rich in typical, or symbolical, truths. In many ways this Old Testament book foreshadows Christ in His offices of prophet, priest, and king.

In this history of the kings of Israel we see how utterly incapable man is of governing himself. The Bible and human history convince us that what the world needs is the universal reign of an Absolute Ruler who shall have infinite love, wisdom, and power. Such a Monarch is coming and, we believe, coming soon. But we are told in Scripture that before the true King comes there must come the antichrist who, in the power of Satan, shall rule for a time. The establishing of the Kingdom in Israel prefigures all this. David is a type of Christ; but before David comes Saul.

3. Spiritual

I Samuel shares this spiritual purpose with all Scripture. You will learn many spiritual lessons from this book. Among them is what is taught about prayer.

Although the Books of Samuel are considered “historical,” they may be referred to at times as “prophetic.” Remember that they are not prophetic in the sense of foretelling of the future, but in the sense of interpreting history from a prophet’s perspective. These books also remind us that there is divine retribution for sin, both at the national and personal

levels. The success or failure of the king would be determined by his obedience or disobedience to the Law and his commitment to the will of God. In other words, you reap what you sow! (Or you get what you deserve?)

Although Samuel was a great man, it is his place in history that is most significant. He leads us to the throne and person of David, who is a type of Christ. Samuel's personal history was a link to connect David with the Patriarchs, and directly to Jesus Himself. Barnes says that "the book of Judges, Samuel and Kings are each a part of a connected whole."

Let's end here for today. Besides historically, it is very important to note that Saul was the choice of a self-willed people, while David was the man "after God's own heart." (Acts 13:22) David loved God, but he made mistakes like we do. I echo the words of Charles Swindoll, "May these studies help us realize that devotion – not perfection – is the secret of living a life that pleases God." See you tomorrow!

Memory Verse of the Week: Guess what? You get to pick your own verse to memorize this week. (This will be the only time this year!) Tomorrow you will do an overview of the whole book. Choose one that grabs your heart upon first reading. Be ready to share it with the group.

Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Day

It's important to see a book as a whole before we break it down, chapter by chapter. We can better understand the specifics if we begin with the big picture. It's like looking down from a plane at a city, getting a feel for how it's laid out. When you land, you have a better sense of direction. The Bible works the same way. Once we see the big picture, we can better understand how each event relates to another. Again, it might seem long, but it is crucial for our study.

We will begin by reading I Samuel as a whole book. We have broken it down into 4 sections. You may do them all at once, or break it up into 4 days if you would like to. Read the section and then answer the questions for each. Don't spend a lot of time trying to figure out all the details - that will come later. We just want to get a basic understanding of what's happening.

1. Chapters 1-7:

A. Who are the main characters?

B. Name a few of the main points in this section.

*C. How do they relate to each other? (What would you say is the **MAIN** thought or point of this section?)*

D. What is happening politically in Israel at this time?

E. Name one thing that specifically ministered to your heart.

2. Chapters 8-15

A. *Who are the main characters?*

B. *Name a few of the main points in this section.*

C. *How do they relate to each other? (What would you say is the **MAIN** thought or point of this section?)*

D. *What is happening politically in Israel at the time?*

E. *Name one thing that specifically ministered to your heart.*

3. Chapters 16-20

A. *Who are the main characters?*

B. *Name a few of the main points in this section.*

C. *How do they relate to each other? (What would say is the **MAIN** thought or point in this section?)*

D. *What is happening politically in Israel at this time?*

E. *Name one thing that specifically ministered to your heart.*

4. Read Chapters 21-31

- A. Who are the main characters?*
- B. Name a few of the main points in this section.*
- C. How do they relate to each other? (What would you say is the **MAIN** thought or point in this section?)*
- D. What is happening politically in Israel at this time?*
- E. Name one thing that specifically ministered to your heart.*

5. *List some of your general impressions of I Samuel.*

6. *What would you say is the “tone” of this book?*

7. *What did you choose as your memory verse? Why?*

*That's it! This week is definitely different than the others. The rest of the lessons will be broken down into a 5-Day homework plan. For now, think of some blessings that God has given you. Isn't it impossible to count all the “**Reasons to Rejoice**” we have been blessed with? God is so good, isn't He?*

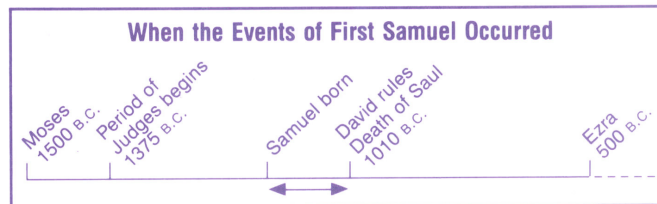
***“I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel;
My heart also instructs me in the night seasons. I have
set the Lord always before me; Because He is at my right
hand I shall not be moved.” Psalm 16:7-8***

A Prayer of David

(See next pages for “I Samuel at a Glance” and an Outline of I Samuel, taken from Nelson’s Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts)

FOCUS	SAMUEL		SAUL		
REFERENCE	1:1 ————— 4:1 ————— 8:1 ————— 13:1 ————— 15:10 ————— 31:13				
DIVISION	FIRST TRANSITION OF LEADERSHIP: ELI-SAMUEL	JUDGESHIP OF SAMUEL	SECOND TRANSITION OF LEADERSHIP: SAMUEL-SAUL	REIGN OF SAUL	THIRD TRANSITION OF LEADERSHIP: SAUL-DAVID
TOPIC	DECLINE OF JUDGES		RISE OF KINGS		
	ELI	SAMUEL	SAUL		DAVID
LOCATION	CANAAN				
TIME	c. 94 YEARS				

Nelson’s Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts © 1993 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.



Part One: Samuel, the Last Judge (1:1—7:17)

- I. **The First Transition of National Leadership:**
 - Eli-Samuel1:1—3:21
 - A. The Birth of the New Leader1:1—2:11
 - B. The Need for the New Leader2:12—3:36
 - C. The Transition from Eli to Samuel3:1—18
 - D. Samuel Is Recognized as the New Leader of Israel ...3:19—21
- II. **The Judgeship of Samuel**4:1—7:17
 - A. The Need for Samuel’s Leadership4:1—6:21
 - B. The Victories Under Samuel’s Leadership7:1—17

Part Two: Saul, the First King (8:1—31:13)

- I. **The Second Transition of National Leadership:**
 - Samuel-Saul8:1—12:25
 - A. The Causes of the Transition8:1—9
 - B. The Transition from Samuel to Saul8:10—12:25
- II. **The Reign of King Saul**13:1—15:9
 - A. The Early Success of King Saul13:1—4
 - B. The Failures of King Saul13:5—15:9
- III. **The Third Transition of National Leadership:**
 - Saul-David15:10—31:13
 - A. The Transition of Kingship from Saul
to David15:10—18:9
 - B. The Attempts of Saul to Slay David18:10—20:42
 - C. The Rise of David in Exile21:1—28:2
 - D. The Final Decline of Saul28:3—31:13

Samuel

Samuel’s story begins late in the turbulent time of the judges when Eli is the judge-priest of Israel. The birth of Samuel and his early call by God are found in chapters 1—3. Because of his responsiveness to God (3:19), he was confirmed as a prophet at a time when the “word of the Lord was rare” (3:1).