

1 Samuel

Who, When, Where

Written by Samuel. Samuel was dedicated to God by his mother just after he was born and grew up to become the main prophet in Israel towards the end of the time of the Judges, around 1100BC. He appointed Saul and passed away during Saul's 40 year reign. Samuel was born around 1129BC and this story takes us from there until the end of the reign of Saul (around 1009BC).

This story is mostly set in Israel, around Jerusalem.

Summary

This is really the first part of the story of David, King of Israel, and how he came to power.

Samuel was the last judge of Israel, Saul was the king the people chose for themselves, and David was the king that Yahweh chose. (You can guess how that worked out).

This is the story of how Yahweh gave the people what they said they wanted, (Saul), and then gave them what they really needed, (David).

Before You Read

What would you do if someone tried to kill you?

Would it make any difference if that person was someone God had anointed to be your leader?

Should it?

What do you think about astrology and star signs? What does Yahweh think about it?

Is not breaking a rule the same as keeping it?

Key Verses

1 Samuel 1:13

1 Samuel 2:12

The sons of Eli were wicked men. They didn't know Yahweh.

PK's... Pastor's Kids. MK's Missionary Kids. Of course quite often they are passionate and on fire for Yeshua the way their parents are. But sadly sometimes they aren't. There are no guarantees that your kids will have your faith.

There can be other reasons too, but often they are disillusioned because of their workaholic parents. We need to make sure we are raising our families well.

Paulus even says that if we don't then we are disqualified from Christian leadership.

What would happen if churches enforced that?

Time and time again in the Old Testament story so far we have seen that it only takes a single generation for an entire nation to walk away from God.

1 Samuel 8:5-7

"Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations." But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, "Give us a king to judge us."

Samuel prayed to Yahweh. Yahweh said to Samuel, "Listen to the voice of the people in all that they tell you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me as the king over them."

They wanted to be like the people around them.

But in reality they were rejecting Yahweh. Just so they could fit in with the people around them.

They were willing to reject Yahweh so they didn't have to feel rejected themselves.

Nothing has changed. Even now modern Christians often reject Yeshua and his standards so we fit in with the world around us. Not bad enough that we bow to "science", but we also bow to their thinking on moral issues!

And how about you? What do you do to blend in? What do you compromise so you don't have to face rejection?

1 Samuel 13:11-12

Samuel said, "What have you done?"

Saul said, "Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that you didn't come within the days appointed, and that the Philistines assembled themselves together at Michmash; therefore I said, 'Now the Philistines will come down on me to Gilgal, and I haven't entreated the favor of Yahweh.' I forced myself therefore, and offered the burnt offering."

Excuses, excuses, excuses.

Yahweh said, only Levites are allowed to make offerings.

It's very dangerous to use our own logic to justify breaking God's rule.

Do you do that?

Sarah did that... "obviously" God wants you to have a child through my maid servant... so sleep with her.

That had consequences... Saul lost his kingdom to David. Ishmael and his descendants are still enemies of Abraham's descendants.

1 Samuel 15

Saul keep the best sheep and animals to give to God as an offering. In human logic that makes sense and you would think that God would be happy. He wasn't.

Let's get one thing straight. God doesn't need anything from you. Nothing. He doesn't need your money. Or your sheep. Or even your time.

Giving to God is not at all about him having a need and you supplying it. It is ONLY about you revealing your heart - how lightly you hold on to riches and wealth, how you value others, how much you trust him, how generous you are.

Saul messed up big time because he thought he had something God wanted. What God wants is your obedience and faith. Not your stuff.

1 Samuel 16:7

But Yahweh said to Samuel, "Don't look on his face, or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for I don't see as man sees. For man looks at the outward appearance, but Yahweh looks at the heart."

Who impresses you?

Is that because of their outside appearance, or because of their heart?

How about you, do you try to impress others with your outside appearance, or with your heart? Which one is going to work?

Who should you be trying to impress?

The world has really lost the plot on this one. It used to be that you became famous because you were special. Now you are treated as special because you're famous.

We completely do not have God's perspective on this.

1 Samuel 28:15

Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me, to bring me up?"

Years after Samuel died... a witch summoned his spirit and Saul talked with him.

There is nothing here to suggest that it was a fake, or that Saul didn't really talk with him, or that it wasn't really Samuel.

These things are real. They are just forbidden. Don't be fooled into thinking they are OK to play with. They aren't.

After You Read

What verses really stood out to you?

How would you summarize this book in a sentence or two? What is it about? What is God trying to say to us?

Saul was the king who just keeps doing things his own way instead of doing what Yahweh has told him to do. And then always trying to justify it!! But which is kind of fitting since the people rejected Yahweh's advice and insisted he give them a king... So he gave them one just like them... one who ignores Yahweh and does what he wants.

He is contrasted as the arrogant and self-centred king against a humble shepherd who refused to do anything which might be against Yahweh his god.

When it comes to breaking the rules where do you draw the line? Are you like Saul who draws the line wherever he thinks he can justify it at the time? Or like David who lets God draw the line for him?

For a little guy David was a mighty warrior. Where do you think he got that power?

How about you? These days we don't usually fight physical enemies. But in your spiritual battles are you as mighty as David? You could have the same life of "adventure" as David in the spiritual realm. You could take on mighty beings and defeat them. You could rescue hundreds of people from a life of slavery.

Or you can stay home, play it safe, and get the t-shirt.