



A King Unlike the Nations

First
S A M U E L
A King Unlike the Nations

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Select definitions of the attributes of
God were informed by *The ABCs of God*,
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TABLE *of* CONTENTS

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WEEK 1	8	Introduction to the Book of 1 Samuel
WEEK 2	10	Opposing the Proud, Exalting the Humble Ch. 1-3
WEEK 3	26	The Philistines and the Ark Ch. 4:1-7:2
WEEK 4	42	A King Like the Nations Ch. 7:3-10:27
WEEK 5	60	Saul's Victory and Unfaithfulness Ch. 11-13
WEEK 6	76	Saul's Downfall Ch. 14-15
WEEK 7	92	A New King Ch. 16-19
WEEK 8	108	David's First Flight Ch. 20-24
WEEK 9	124	David's Second and Third Flights Ch. 25-28
WEEK 10	142	David, the Philistines and the Amalekites Ch. 29-31
WEEK 11	160	Wrap-Up

APPENDIX A: Map of Israel at the Time of 1 Samuel

APPENDIX B: Attributes of God

PREFACE

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OUR PURPOSE

This study is designed to help you grow in Bible literacy. In doing so, it has two goals: First, it seeks to teach you a book of the Bible in a way that will enable you to retain what you learn.

Second, it seeks to train you to ask better questions of any biblical text on your own. Many of us come to our study of the Bible eager to pull from it wisdom that will help us to live differently. And we should. But before we can move from awareness of *what we don't know of the text* to awareness of *what we should do in response to the text*, we must move through the learning process. This study is designed to help you learn and employ that process.

It is a simple formula of approaching the text first for *comprehension*, next for *interpretation* and finally for *application*. Each stage of this learning process asks a critical question:

Comprehension asks, "What does it say?"

Interpretation asks, "What does it mean?"

Application asks, "How should it change me?"

If we rush too quickly to application, we short-circuit the learning process and limit our ability to retain what we have learned. Not only that, but application that is not built on careful comprehension and interpretation is unlikely to be faithful to the text. All three steps matter. But they require patience on our part.

Reading the Bible can be confusing. Because nobody likes to feel lost or confused, most of us rush to a commentary as quickly as possible to resolve our discomfort. That is actually the first sign that learning is about to occur, the first step in gaining and holding on to understanding. We need to learn to welcome the discomfort as a sign that our minds are being prepared for receiving instruction.

Because of this, for the purpose of our study here, please do not reference commentaries until comprehension, interpretation and application have been earnestly attempted on your own. In other words, wait to read commentaries until after you have completed the homework, attended small group time and listened to the teaching. And then consult commentaries you can trust. We recommend the following commentaries:

1 Samuel, 2 Samuel by Dale Ralph Davis;
Focus on the Bible, 2000, 2002

1 & 2 Samuel by Bill T. Arnold; NIV
Application Commentary, 2003

1 & 2 Samuel by Joyce Baldwin; Tyndale
Old Testament Commentaries, 1988

Remember that commentaries are not just books written about 1 Samuel. Sources of commentary include study Bible notes, sermons, podcasts, blog posts and articles. These are all great helps when used responsibly, but if used before we have studied on our own, they can keep us from developing the mental muscles that accompany a mature faith.

Each week, you will be asked to complete homework that will help train you in how to comprehend, interpret and apply Scripture. We will utilize the specific tools below to help develop our study skills.

One of the most important skills we can develop as students of the Scriptures is learning to look for what is true about God as we read. At the end of each week's homework, you will be challenged to meditate on what you have learned about God in that week's portion of the text. To aid you in this, a list of the attributes of God can be found on the last two pages of the workbook.

COMPREHENSION

What does it say?

- ▶ *Read the passage repetitively.*
- ▶ *Read the passage in multiple translations.*
- ▶ *Look up key words in the dictionary.*
- ▶ *Write a main idea or draw a picture in the margin next to the section it describes.*
- ▶ *Note any literary techniques that the author is using. Pay attention to genre rules.*
- ▶ *Look for repeated ideas, connected ideas or progressions of thought and mark them.*
- ▶ *Look for what the passage teaches is true about God (attributes).*

INTERPRETATION

What does it mean?

- ▶ *Explore why the author would have used a particular word or phrase, or why he would have made a particular point the way he made it. Keep in mind the textual, historical and cultural context.*
- ▶ *Make connections to other parts of the book or other parts of the Bible (cross-references).*
- ▶ *Paraphrase or summarize part or all of the passage.*

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

This workbook is designed to be used in a specific way. The homework in the workbook will start you down the process of comprehension, interpretation and application. However, it is intended to dovetail with small group discussion time and the audio/video teachings. You can use the workbook by itself, but you are likely to find yourself with some unresolved questions. The audio/video teaching is intended to resolve most, if not all, of your unanswered questions from the homework and discussion time. With this in mind, consider using the materials as follows:

- If you are going through the study **on your own**, first work through the homework and then listen to the corresponding audio for that week.
- If you are going through the study **in a group**, first do your homework, then discuss the questions your group decides to cover, and then listen to the teaching. Some groups listen to the teaching before they meet, which can also work if that format fits best for everyone.

APPLICATION

How should it change me?

- ▶ *Consider how what the passage teaches about God should change the way you think, speak or act.*
- ▶ *Make meaningful connections to your own life:*
 - *Is there a sin to confess?*
 - *Is there cause for thanksgiving or praise to God?*
 - *Is there a promise or truth to trust in?*
 - *Is there an attitude to change or a motive to examine?*
 - *Is there a command to obey or an example to imitate?*
 - *Is there an error to confront or avoid?*

1

Introduction

1 Samuel

Imagine yourself receiving a letter in the mail. The envelope is handwritten, but you don't glance at the return address. Instead you tear open the envelope, flip to the second page, read two paragraphs near the bottom, and set the letter aside. Knowing that if someone bothered to send it to you, you should act on its contents in some way, you spend a few minutes trying to figure out how to respond to what the section you just read had to say. What are the odds you will be successful? No one would read a letter this way. But this is precisely the way many of us read our Bibles. We skip past reading the "envelope"—Who wrote this? To whom is it written? When was it written? Where was it written?—and then try to determine the purpose of its contents from a portion of the whole. What if we took time to read the envelope? What if, after determining the context for its writing, we started at the beginning and read to the end? Wouldn't that make infinitely more sense? In our study, we will take this approach to Scripture. We will begin by placing our text in its historical and cultural context. We will "read the envelope."

1. Who wrote the book of 1 Samuel?
2. To whom was it written?
3. When was it written?
4. In what style was it written?
5. What are the central themes of the book?

2

Opposing the Proud, Exalting the Humble

1 Samuel 1–3

The story of Samuel the prophet begins much like other stories of God's faithfulness: in conflict, corruption and barrenness. The word of the Lord has suffered neglect, the priests of the Lord exploit the faithful, and a woman named Hannah cannot bear a child. Infertility was the greatest stigma known to women of Hannah's time and culture. But though her womb may be barren, her faith is rooted deep. God grants her prayer, and she shows herself to be a woman of her word. As the sons of Eli fatten themselves in the day of slaughter, this daughter of lack brings to the house of God a precious and pleasing sacrifice: a son with an ear attuned to the voice of the Lord.

► **READ**
1 Samuel 1–3
 from start
 to finish.

1. Summarize what happens in each chapter in 2–3 sentences.

Chapter 1:

Chapter 2:

Chapter 3:

2. Match each major character introduced in these chapters to the description that fits them:

Elkanah	<i>Priest, father of faithless sons</i>
Hannah	<i>Child dedicated to service to God</i>
Peninnah	<i>Favored wife, mother of Samuel</i>
Eli	<i>Wicked priests</i>
Hophni/Phinehas	<i>Cruel rival wife</i>
Samuel	<i>Husband of two wives</i>

Next to each character's name, note a **+**, **-** or **N** depending on whether you think the author wants you to view that character in a positive, negative or neutral light.

► **EXPLORE**
Now shift
your focus
to **1 Samuel**
1:1–20.

3. In **1:1**, we learn Elkanah's pedigree and hometown. Though he comes from the hill country of Ephraim, he does not belong to the tribe of Ephraim. Look up **1 Chronicles 6:16–30**. In which verses do you find the names of Elkanah and Samuel?

From which tribe are Elkanah and Samuel descended? Why does this make sense, in light of the whole story of Samuel?

4. The men of Israel were commanded to attend feasts at the central place of worship three times a year (**Deut. 16:1–17**). Where was the central location of the Tabernacle during Elkanah's time (**1:3**)? Did Elkanah attend the feasts alone?
5. 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?

6. Why do you think the text paints such a strained picture of Elkanah's household dynamic? Look up **Genesis 2:24** to help with your answer.

7. What vow does Hannah make to the Lord (**1:11**)? Summarize it in your own words.

8. 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.

What was it called?

What was its purpose?

Was it typically lifelong?

What other men can you think of in the Bible who lived under this vow?

► EXPLORE

Now look at

1 Samuel**1:21–2:11.**

11. 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**)?

12. 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**?

13. Compare **1:28** in the ESV and the NET. How does the NET expand your understanding of the verse?

14. 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**? Describe each “prayer session” in one phrase or sentence:

1:1–16**2:1–11**

► **EXPLORE**

Now look at

1 Samuel**2:12–36.**

15. When communicating the moral character of its subjects, typically, historical narrative “shows” but does not “tell.” It simply describes a person’s actions without commenting on his or her morality, or lack thereof. Here, we find a rare example of both telling and showing the character of Eli’s sons, Hophni and Phinehas. In the chart, note everything this section of the text tells and shows about them:

WHAT THE TEXT TELLS	WHAT THE TEXT SHOWS

16. 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?

17. In **2:18–21**, we glimpse both what Hannah has lost and what she has gained as a result of her sacrifice. In your own words, describe both.

Lost:

Gained:

18. In **2:22–25**, what does Eli do to address the sins of his sons? What does he fail to do?

19. In **2:27–36**, Eli receives a message from a “man of God.” What are the first words the man speaks?

“Thus the”

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?

- He is a priest.
- He is a prophet.
- He is an angel.

► **EXPLORE**

Now look at

1 Samuel

3:1–21.

23. How does the information in **3:1–3** provide needed context for what happens in the rest of the chapter?

24. In 2–3 sentences, summarize what happens in **3:4–14**:

25. Based on the context of the passage, what do you think **3:7** means? Rewrite it in your own words.

26. 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?

27. Summarize God’s message to Samuel in **3:10–14**:

▲ WRAP-UP

See the list of attributes on the last two pages of this workbook for help answering this question.

What aspect of God's character has this week's passage of 1 Samuel shown you more clearly?



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FILL IN THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

Knowing that God is

shows me that I am

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What one step can you take this week to better live in light of this truth?



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HANNAH'S PRAYER

1 Samuel 2:1-10

¹ And Hannah prayed
and said,

“My heart exults in the LORD;
my horn is exalted
in the LORD.

My mouth derides
my enemies,
because I rejoice in
your salvation.

² “There is none holy
like the LORD:
for there is none
besides you;
there is no rock
like our God.

³ Talk no more so
very proudly,
let not arrogance come
from your mouth;

for the LORD is a God
of knowledge,
and by him actions
are weighed.

⁴ The bows of the mighty
are broken,
but the feeble bind
on strength.

⁵ Those who were full
have hired themselves
out for bread,
but those who were hungry
have ceased to hunger.

The barren has borne seven,
but she who has many
children is forlorn.

⁶ The LORD kills and
brings to life;
he brings down to Sheol
and raises up.

⁷ The LORD makes poor
and makes rich;
he brings low and he exalts.

⁸ He raises up the poor
from the dust;
he lifts the needy from
the ash heap

to make them sit with princes
and inherit a seat
of honor.

For the pillars of the earth
are the LORD's,
and on them he has
set the world.

⁹ “He will guard the feet
of his faithful ones,
but the wicked shall be
cut off in darkness,
for not by might shall
a man prevail.

¹⁰ The adversaries of
the LORD shall be
broken to pieces;
against them he will
thunder in heaven.

The LORD will judge the
ends of the earth;
he will give strength
to his king
and exalt the horn of
his anointed.”

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3

The Philistines and the Ark

1 Samuel 4:1–7:2

Last week, we saw the faithful longing of Hannah graciously answered by God in the birth of Samuel. The sons of Eli walked in prideful disobedience, while Samuel was set apart and called to the work of the Lord. This week, we will see the fruit of sin lead to death as the nation of Israel foolishly goes to war with the Philistines, where they suffer heavy casualties and lose the ark of the covenant. Amidst their reckless behavior and its consequences, God remains faithful even while allowing their defeat. Though the enemy holds the ark of the covenant, the God of Israel is not restrained. He stands ready to demonstrate His holiness both to the Philistines and His covenant people.

► **READ**
1 Samuel
4:1–7:2
from start
to finish.

1. Summarize what happens in each chapter in 2–3 sentences.

Chapter 4:

Chapter 5:

Chapter 6:

2. The ark of the covenant was the centerpiece of the Israelite worship located in the inner sanctuary of the tabernacle. It was a chest crafted according to God's specifications, symbolizing His power and presence. Underline each use of "ark of the covenant" (ark of the Lord, ark of the God of Israel, ark of God). How many times does it appear in **4:1–7:2**?

Why do you think it is mentioned so frequently?

► **EXPLORE**

Now shift
your focus
to **1 Samuel**
4:1–11.

3. Place the following events in chronological order:

..... *The ark is captured by the Philistines in battle.*

..... *The Israelites decide to bring the ark of the covenant from Shiloh to help them win the battle against the Philistines.*

..... *The Philistines defeat the Israelites in battle.*

..... *Panic of the “gods” of Israel drives the Philistines to fight with more courage.*

..... *The Philistines defeat Israel in battle for the second time in a severe slaughter.*

..... *The Israelites raise a shout so loud that the ground shakes.*

4. 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**?

5. 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?

6. Compare the devastation of the first battle with the Philistines with the second battle:

..... Israelite men were killed in the first battle (**4:3**).

..... Israelite men were killed in the second battle (**4:10**).

Why do you think Israel suffered more severe losses in the second battle?

7. 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?

8. Does it surprise you that God would allow His people to be catastrophically defeated in battle? Why or why not?

▼ **APPLY**

In what ways do modern-day believers follow the example of Israel, expecting God's favor on their own terms?



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?

► **EXPLORE**

Now look at **1 Samuel 4:12–22**.

9. 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.

10. Circle the word(s) that best describes Eli's mental state while Israel was at war:

EMBARRASSED ANXIOUS SAD
HOPEFUL WATCHFUL FEARFUL

What do you think was the underlying cause of his state of mind?

11. 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)?

12. Fill in the chart below, describing how Eli and his family members are affected by the capture of the ark (4:12-17):

HOPHNI AND PHINEAS	
ELI	
ELI'S DAUGHTER- IN-LAW	
ICHABOD	

How do you think the Philistines felt seeing what happened to the statue of their god?

15. Holding the ark captive came with consequences. Fill in the table, noting the specific events that take place in each location (**5:6–12**):

CITY	AFFLICTION	RESPONSE OF THE PEOPLE
ASHDOD		
GATH		
EKRON		

16. What key event do the Philistines recognize as being similar to their current plight (**6:6**)?

Note any parallels you see between that story and this one:

EXODUS	1 SAMUEL 6:5-6
PHARAOH	
THE CAPTIVE ISRAELITES	
THE PLAGUES	
THE RESULT OF THE PLAGUES	

- How long do the Philistines suffer affliction at the hands of the God of Israel (6:1)?

Summarize the creative plan suggested by the priests and diviners of the Philistines for returning the ark (6:2-9).

18. How does their test prove that God had sovereignly directed the ark's return to Israel (6:10–12)?

▼ **APPLY**

What does the account of the ark of the Lord in enemy territory teach about God's power and authority?



How does this teaching encourage you in your current circumstances?

► **EXPLORE**

Now look at **1 Samuel 6:13–7:2**.

On the map in APPENDIX A, mark the movement of the ark in **6:13–7:2**.

19. 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:

6:13–15

6:20–21

20. Compare **1 Samuel 6:19** in the ESV and the NIV. Why does God strike the men of Beth-shemesh? Read **Numbers 4:18–20** to help with your answer.
21. What does the action of “looking upon” or inspecting the ark reveal about what these men truly believed concerning God’s commands?

▲ WRAP-UP

See the list of attributes on the last two pages of this workbook for help answering this question.

What aspect of God's character has this week's passage of 1 Samuel shown you more clearly?

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FILL IN THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

Knowing that God is

shows me that I am

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What one step can you take this week to better live in light of this truth?

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A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing, spanning the width of the page.

4

A King Like the Nations

1 Samuel 7:3–10:27

Last week, we saw God’s holiness and justice on display as both His enemies and His covenant people attempted to use Him for their own means. The Israelites entered into a familiar cycle of disobedience, affliction, repentance and rescue. Amidst their losses, God graciously preserved his prophet Samuel, the last judge of Israel. This week, we will see what happens in the hearts of those who return to the Lord and the victory found through trusting Him. Yet, for Israel, even miraculous victories against their enemies cannot overcome their forgetfulness. Israel rejects God as King and looks for an earthly monarch to take His place, so they may be like the nations.

► READ

1 Samuel**7:3–10:27**from start
to finish.

1. Summarize what happens in each chapter in 2–3 sentences.

Chapter 7:**Chapter 8:****Chapter 9:****Chapter 10:**

2. Match each of the following characters from this week's reading with the most fitting description:

Samuel	<i>Anointed king of Israel</i>
Kish	<i>Asks for a king like other nations have</i>
Joel/Abijah	<i>Father of Saul, a Benjaminite</i>
Saul	<i>Wicked priests, sons of Samuel</i>
People of Israel	<i>Judge of Israel who leads the nation in repentance and a time of peace</i>

Next to each character's name, note a +, - or N depending on whether you think the author wants you to view that character in a positive, negative or neutral light.

► **EXPLORE**

Now shift your focus to **1 Samuel 7:3–17**.

3. 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. Fill in the blanks from **7:3**:

“If you are to the
with, then...”

List every action Samuel calls the people of Israel to take in **7:3–5**:

4. 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?

Why was it critical that the Israelites rid themselves of foreign gods in order to return to the Lord (**7:4**)?

5. In the chart, contrast Israel's battles with the Philistines in **4:1-11** and **7:3-14**.

	BATTLE 1	BATTLE 2
SUMMARIZE ISRAEL'S BELIEF ABOUT THEIR RIGHT TO GOD'S DIVINE AID.	4:3	7:3, 7:8
WHAT WEAPON DOES ISRAEL EMPLOY?	4:3-5	7:8
WHO IS DEFEATED?	4:10	7:13
WHAT IS THE END RESULT?	4:11	7:14

6. How does Israel's choice to rely on prayer as their weapon against the Philistines demonstrate a true heart change (**7:8**)?

7. Who do you think is responsible for Israel's victory against the Philistines? Give evidence from the text to support your answer.

8. The stone that Samuel arranged at Mizpah held an important purpose and significance (7:12).

What was the name of the stone?

What does the name mean?

“Till now has
.....”

What was the stone's purpose? Compare **Joshua 4:1-9** to help with your answer.

9. What is the main idea in 7:13-17? Based on these verses, list several adjectives you would use to describe:

God

Samuel

Israel

► **EXPLORE**

Now shift
your focus
to **1 Samuel**
8:1–22.

10. What action does Samuel take in **8:1**?

What is the outcome (**8:3**)?

Look at **Judges 2:16**. How were Israel's judges appointed in the past? Did Samuel follow this precedent?

11. What reasons do the elders of Israel give to Samuel to explain their desire for a king (**8:4–5**)?

How does Samuel respond (**8:6**)?

Paraphrase how God responds in **8:7–9** in one sentence:

12. 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.

13. A monarchy would undoubtedly mean change for the lives of the Israelites. Fill in the chart, noting all that Israel stood to gain and lose by having an earthly king (**8:10–18**).

GAIN	LOSE

14. What is the desire revealed in **8:20** underlying Israel’s request for an earthly king?

“... that we also may be like the
, and that our king may
 judge us and go out before us and fight our battles.”

► EXPLORE

Now look at

1 Samuel**9:1–27.**

16. How does the text describe Saul in **9:1–2**? Why do you think the author emphasizes these particular familial connections and characteristics?

17. Fill in the chart below, giving a brief description to each of the three specific events that led Saul to meet Samuel:

9:3–4
9:5–10
9:11–14

18. Scan **9:15–17**. What are the two purposes God says Saul will accomplish?

9:16**9:17** (compare in the NIV)

19. Look up the word “seer” in a dictionary. In your own words, write a definition below that best fits the way it’s used in the text.

seer (noun):

How is “seer” an appropriate synonym for “prophet”?

20. What message does Samuel the seer reveal to Saul? How does Saul respond (**9:19–21**)?
21. Samuel arranges a significant meal for Saul (**9:22–24**). Look up **Leviticus 7:32–33** and note what it adds to your understanding of the menu:

23. Compare **10:9** in the ESV, NET and NIV. Write the verse in your own words:

24. What happens to Saul in **10:9** that highlights the change he experiences?

How do the people respond (**10:10–12**)? To understand the sense of their words, compare **Mark 6:1–4**.

How does your answer above help explain why Saul withholds specific information from his uncle (**10:14–16**)?

25. Note the contrast between the personal pronouns in **10:18** and **10:19**. What is being communicated?

If God is appointing Saul as king, why do you think He begins the formal process on such a negative note?

26. If God had already confirmed Saul as His choice, why do you think Samuel walked Israel through the process of casting lots (**10:20–24**)?
27. In **10:26–27**, what principle do the contrasting responses of the two groups of men illustrate? Compare **Romans 13:1–2** to help with your answer.
28. Compare Saul's behavior in **9:21**, **10:16** and **10:21**.

Place a ✓ by the word(s) that describe Saul's response to the Lord's divine call on his life:

- Humility
- Self-pity
- Fear
- Embarrassment

▼ **APPLY**

Saul was chosen by God for a specific purpose, yet he lacked confidence in his calling. In what sphere of your life do you doubt God's ability to use you? How would walking in a greater confidence in God affect your ability to minister in each of the areas noted?

🍷 **At home?**

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In the church?

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In your community?

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▲ WRAP-UP

See the list of attributes on the last two pages of this workbook for help answering this question.

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FILL IN THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

Knowing that God is

shows me that I am

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What one step can you take this week to better live in light of this truth?



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5

Saul's Victory and Unfaithfulness

1 Samuel 11–13

Last week, we saw Israel's demand for a king despite the warning of God's righteous servant, Samuel. God granted their request and gave them Saul, a man who met all the exterior qualifications of a king. But what kind of king will he be? Will he represent the character and heart of God to the people? Will the people follow him? These next few chapters begin to answer these questions as we get our first glimpse of King Saul. We will see him lead a mighty deliverance but also witness early signs of the consequences that come with being a man after man's own heart.

► READ**1 Samuel****11–13**

from start
to finish.

1. Summarize what happens in each chapter in 2–3 sentences.

Chapter 11:**Chapter 12:****Chapter 13:**

2. This week, the picture of Saul as Israel's first king continues to develop. As you read through each chapter, list words or phrases used to describe Saul and his actions.

► EXPLORE

Now shift
your focus
to **1 Samuel**
11:1–15.

3. **Chapter 11** opens with a neighboring nation easily defeating a group of Israelites. What does this scene indicate about the plight of Israel at the time Saul became king?

4. What do the men of Jabesh request of Nahash (**11:1**)?

What treaty condition does Nahash require? Why do you think it would bring disgrace on all of Israel (**11:2**)?

What does Nahash allow the men of Jabesh to do in **11:3**? Having already defeated them, what do you think motivates him to make such an allowance?

5. What happens to Saul immediately after he hears the news about the men of Jabesh (**11:6**)? Why do you think the author mentions this detail?
6. In five words or less, restate the command Saul gives to the people of Israel in **11:7**.

7. Compare **11:13** and **11:2**. How are the men in these verses similar? How are they different?

SIMILARITIES	DIFFERENCES

8. Gilgal was the site where Joshua and the people erected the 12 stones of remembrance after crossing the Jordan River and entering the Promised Land for the first time (**Josh. 4:1–24**). Why would Samuel choose this site as the place to make Saul king and “renew the kingdom” (**11:14–15**)?
9. How has the demeanor of the people changed from **11:4** to **11:15**? Compare them and note what you find.

▼ APPLY

*In this short chapter, the people move from weeping to rejoicing because of God's deliverance. Read **Psalm 30:11–12**. In what ways has God brought you from sorrow to celebration?*



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Now read **Revelation 21:4**. *In what ways are you still longing for God to make things right?*

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► EXPLORE
Now look at **1 Samuel 12:1–18**.

10. List the potential charges Samuel poses against himself to the people in **12:1–3**.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.

Is Samuel guilty of any of these charges? How are they similar to Samuel's first speech in **8:10–18**?

11. Fill out the chart below, listing the righteous deeds Samuel says God has done for Israel and their fathers, along with their respective responses (**12:6–7**).

	GOD'S RIGHTEOUS DEEDS	THE PEOPLE'S RESPONSE
ISRAEL'S FATHERS	12:8	12:9
ISRAEL	12:11	12:12

12. Compare Israel's behavior to the behavior of their fathers. How is it similar? How is it different?

13. Put a ✓ next to the sentence below that best summarizes the overall message of Samuel's speech:

- The people asked for a king because Samuel had failed to lead them and represent them to God.*
- The people asked for a king because God failed to keep His promises to them as His chosen people.*
- The people asked for a king because, like their fathers before them, they did not trust God and believed a human king would succeed where they believed God had failed.*

14. What conditional blessing and corresponding curse does Samuel present to the people in **12:14–15**? Summarize it below:

	IF...	THEN...
BLESSING 12:14		
CURSE 12:15		

15. The wheat harvest began a few months after the rainy season ended, making thunderstorms extremely rare. What reason does Samuel give for asking God to send the storm? How would this sign have supported Samuel's message (**12:17–18**)?

► **EXPLORE**

Now look at

1 Samuel

13:1–23.

20. What causes the Philistines to go to war against Israel (**13:1–4**)?

21. How are the Philistines described (**13:5**)?

And the Philistines mustered to fight with Israel,
 chariots and
 horsemen and troops
 like the on the
 in multitude.

After seeing them, how does Israel respond (**13:6–7**)?

22. Look at **13:8–15**. Summarize what happens in your own words:

23. What do you think motivated Saul to speed up the offering instead of waiting on Samuel?

24. Circle the word(s) that best describe(s) Saul's response to Samuel:

REPENTANCE SELF-JUSTIFICATION
 BLAME-SHIFTING HUMILITY

25. What are the consequences of Saul's sin? Why do you think they are so severe (**13:13-14**)?

26. Compare **13:2** with **13:15b**. What change has happened to Saul's army?

27. What alarming comparisons are we given between Saul's army and the Philistine army in **13:15b-23**?

	SAUL'S ARMY	PHILISTINE ARMY
SIZE	<i>13:15b</i>	<i>13:5</i>
LOCATION(S) OCCUPIED	<i>13:16</i>	<i>13:16-18</i>
WEAPONS	<i>13:19-22</i>	<i>13:5</i>

▲ WRAP-UP

See the list of attributes on the last two pages of this workbook for help answering this question.

What aspect of God's character has this week's passage of 1 Samuel shown you more clearly?



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FILL IN THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

Knowing that God is

shows me that I am

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What one step can you take this week to better live in light of this truth?



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6

Saul's Downfall

1 Samuel 14–15

Last week, we began to see the flaws in Israel's new king, as well as the consequences they would bring. Israel's army is diminished and disarmed before the mighty Philistine forces. Will Saul return to the trust and virtue he displayed when first commissioned by Samuel? Can he still be a king after God's heart to rightly lead the people? In these next few chapters, Saul's rash behavior and misplaced confidence answer these questions in decisive fashion.

► **READ**
1 Samuel
14–15
from start
to finish.

1. Summarize what happens in each chapter in 2–3 sentences.

Chapter 14:

Chapter 15:

► **EXPLORE**
Now shift
your focus
to **1 Samuel**
14:1–23.

2. This week, the picture of Saul as Israel's first king continues to develop. As you read through each chapter, list words or phrases that describe Saul and his actions:
3. How does this portion of the narrative connect logically to what happened in the previous chapter?
4. In **14:3**, who is listed with Saul? Look back at **4:12–22** to refresh your memory on this person's family connections. Why do you think the author includes these details?

5. In **14:6**, what mission does Jonathan propose? Fill in the blanks:

“It may be that the will work for us, for nothing can hinder the from saving by many or by few.”

What does Jonathan’s statement indicate about his view of God?

6. Before he attacks the Philistines, Jonathan waits for a sign from God. In your own words, describe the sign (**14:8–10**).

7. What is the outcome of Jonathan’s mission (**14:11–15**)?

8. In **14:18**, Saul asks Ahijah to bring the ark so he can discern if the Lord wants him to join Jonathan’s attack against the Philistines. Put a ✓ by the phrase(s) below that best describe(s) the reason for his change of mind in **14:19**.

- He was being impatient.
- He was being strategic.
- He was being anxious.
- He was being self-reliant.
- He was trusting in God.

► **EXPLORE**

Now look at

1 Samuel

14:24–52.

11. Compare **14:24** in both the ESV and NIV. Why are the men “hard pressed”?

What does the people’s unquestioning obedience to Saul’s command indicate about their regard for his authority (**14:24–26**)?

12. What is Jonathan’s assessment of his father’s vow (**14:29–30**)? How does it show wisdom?

13. After defeating the Philistines, what does Israel’s hunger drive the soldiers to do (**14:32**)?

Why does Saul respond by building an altar (see **Lev. 3:17; 7:26–27**)?

14. What causes Saul to believe the people had sinned (**14:36–37**)?

15. The Urim and Thummim were part of the high priest's ephod (linen garment). They were two stones used for casting lots to determine the will of God. Saul uses them in **14:40–42**. Considering his sinful sacrifice and makeshift high priest in **chapter 13** and his vow and his trial of Jonathan in **chapter 14**, how would you describe Saul's ability to discern God's will?

16. What reason do the people give to ransom Jonathan (**14:45**)?

17. The closing verses of **chapter 14** tell us a number of specific details for very specific reasons. In the chart below, summarize each detail and give your best answer as to why it is included for our benefit:

	WHAT IS DETAILED	WHY WE NEED TO KNOW IT
14:47–48		
14:49–51		
14:52		

19. Skim back through **15:1–35**. How many times does the phrase “devote to destruction” appear?

List everything God commanded Saul to destroy when he attacked the Amalekites (**15:3**).

..... and

..... and

..... and

..... and

Welcome to one of the most difficult themes of the Old Testament. It is difficult to reconcile a loving God with a command like this one. We will discuss the “why” of the command further during the teaching time, but for now, look up **Deuteronomy 20:16–18** and note what you learn.

20. Though our eyes are drawn toward the drama of the command itself, the text focuses on obedience. Using the list from question 19, note the commands that Saul and the people fulfill in verses **15:7–9**. How do their actions compare with God's original command in **15:3**?

SIMILARITIES	DIFFERENCES

21. Why do you think Saul and the people spare Agag and the best of the animals (**15:9**)?

24. In the space below, rewrite the dialogue between Samuel and Saul in **15:14–21** in your own words. Try to capture what you believe to be the tone of the dialogue in your paraphrase.

Samuel (**15:14**)

Saul (**15:15**)

Samuel (**15:16–19**)

Saul (**15:20–21**)

25. Fill in the blanks from **15:22**:

“Behold, to is better
than”

How do you think Saul’s actions would have differed if he had believed this truth?

26. In **15:24–31**, do you think Saul responds with repentance? Why or why not?

▲ WRAP-UP

See the list of attributes on the last two pages of this workbook for help answering this question.

What aspect of God's character has this week's passage of 1 Samuel shown you more clearly?



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7

A New King

1 Samuel 16–19

Despite the disobedience we saw from Saul in last week's lesson, Samuel rightly grieves the king's downfall. He understands the stakes. Still, God immediately commissions the prophet to anoint the next king of Israel, this time one of His own choosing. In these chapters, we will see simultaneously Saul's demise and David's rise to the throne.

► **READ**

1 Samuel

16–19

from start
to finish.

1. Summarize what happens in each chapter in 2–3 sentences.

Chapter 16:

Chapter 17:

Chapter 18:

Chapter 19:

2. Deliverance is a major theme in these chapters. Write below the definition for God as “Deliverer” from APPENDIX B in the back of your workbook.

► **EXPLORE**

Now look at

1 Samuel

16:14–23.

8. Look at **16:13–14**. Draw a line connecting each name with the word that describes the Holy Spirit’s activity in his life.

David	<i>Spirit departed</i>
Saul	<i>Spirit rushed upon</i>

9. Which of the following do you think best describes the “harmful spirit” that tormented Saul? Give your best answer.

- A demon doing Satan’s will
- The Holy Spirit directly tormenting Saul
- A spirit, perhaps demonic, allowed by God’s permission

10. What do Saul’s servants suggest as a solution to his issue (**16:16**)?

11. List the characteristics used to describe David in **16:18**. Put an “x” next to the ones that most set apart David from Saul.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

► **EXPLORE**

Now look at

1 Samuel 17.

14. What details do we learn about Goliath's appearance and armor? List them below (**17:4-7**).

In **17:8-11**, what message does Goliath shout out to Israel? Summarize it in your own words.

15. Fill in the blanks from **17:26**:

“For who is this
Philistine, that he should defy the armies of
the God?”

What do you think David wants to communicate by using these two adjectives? Note the tone of his statement.

16. Why is David confident in God's ability to deliver him from Goliath (**17:34-37**)?

17. In **17:45–47**, David delivers a powerful message to Goliath. Read it out loud and then fill in the blanks below:

In whose name does David come?

Who will deliver Goliath into the hand of David?

Who doesn't "save with sword or spear"?

Whose battle is it?

Goliath ridicules the God of Israel, but it is God who defeats him using only a slingshot and a stone. What principle does this story emphasize? Look at **2 Corinthians 12:9–10** to help with your answer.

18. Since Saul first met David in **16:19–23**, why do you think Saul asks him about his father in **17:58**? We will discuss this in the teaching, but give your best answer.

21. What happens to David in his new role?

Fill in the blanks from **18:14**:

And David had in
all his undertakings, for the
..... .

Skim **18:1–27**. What repeated emotion does Saul experience at hearing of David's success?

22. Summarize all that David is required to do before he can marry Saul's second daughter, Michal (**18:20–27**). Why did Saul make the process so difficult?

23. In **19:4–5**, Jonathan boldly calls out his father's sinful actions. What is ironic about his statement? Read these two verses again, substituting Jonathan's name in place of David's to help with your answer. Then compare **14:45**.

24. In **19:1–24**, Saul tries to kill David four times, and each time David escapes. Fill in the chart by summarizing the main points of each nearly fatal encounter:

	HOW DOES SAUL TRY TO KILL DAVID?	HOW DOES DAVID ESCAPE?
19:1–7		
19:8–10		
19:11–17		
19:18–24		

25. What does Michal mean by her response to Saul’s question in **19:17**? Read this verse in the NET to help with your answer.

26. We will discuss this during the teaching time, but what do you think it means when the author describes Saul and his messengers “prophesying” in **19:20–24**? Give your best answer.

▲ WRAP-UP

See the list of attributes on the last two pages of this workbook for help answering this question.

What aspect of God's character has this week's passage of 1 Samuel shown you more clearly?

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8

David's First Flight

1 Samuel 20–24

The relationship between Jonathan and David is as much about covenant as it is about friendship. Jonathan demonstrates sacrificial commitment because of his faith in the Lord. He knows David will be king and he wants to play a part in what God is doing. Similar to David, Jonathan also gives us a picture of Christ. In contrast, Saul gives us a picture of rebellion against God's grace. He is all that we were and would continue to be apart from redemption. Saul continues to pursue David, but the Lord governs every movement.

► **READ**
1 Samuel
20–24
from start
to finish.

1. Summarize what happens in each chapter in 2–3 sentences.
NOTE: Because so much transpires, it may be helpful to ask yourself, “What do I see God doing in this section of Scripture?”

Chapter 20:

Chapter 21:

Chapter 22:

Chapter 23:

Chapter 24:

► **EXPLORE**
 Now shift
 your focus to
1 Samuel 20.

2. Immediately following Saul’s attack, who does David seek out and why (**20:1**)?

3. What do David and Jonathan agree to do to determine whether or not Saul desires harm (**20:5–17**)?

4. Fill out the chart by listing the two key phrases Jonathan says he will use to confirm David’s safety, as well as their meaning:

	KEY PHRASE	MEANING
20:21		
20:22		

5. Fill in the blanks from **20:31**:

“For as long as the son of lives on the
 earth, neither nor
 kingdom shall be”

► **EXPLORE**
 Now look at
1 Samuel
21–22.

8. “Provider” is one of God’s attributes listed in APPENDIX B. List what God provides for David in each of the following sections:

WHAT GOD PROVIDES FOR DAVID	
21:1–6	
21:7–9	
21:10–15	
22:1–2	
22:3–4	
22:5	

9. Why do you think Ahimelech is afraid when David arrives alone on his doorstep (**21:1**)?

10. Why do you think David lies about his reason for coming? How might his lie have served to protect Ahimelech (**21:2**)?

11. Eating the consecrated bread meant that David could be condemned as a lawbreaker. Compare **Matthew 12:1–8**. How does Jesus interpret David's actions?

12. In **21:10**, David goes to Achish, the king of Gath. Look back to **17:4**. Who else lived in Gath?

Why do you think David acts like a madman in the presence of Achish and his servants (**21:13**)?

13. Who joins David at the cave of Adullam (**22:1–2**)? List the three groups:

1.

2.

3.

14. Why does David feel as if he could ask a favor of the king of Moab (**22:3–4**)? Read **Ruth 1:22** and **4:17** to help with your answer.

15. Who reveals David's location to Saul (**22:9**)?

..... the

Describe the resulting conversation Saul and Ahimelech have in **22:13-14**. What does Saul ask? How does Ahimelech respond?

How does Saul respond to the servants' refusal to kill the prophets (**22:17-18**)? Look back at **2:30-33**. How does it shape your understanding of this scene?

16. Why does David offer Abiathar protection in **22:23**?

“...for he who my
..... your”

What does this reveal about David's character?

18. When Abiathar flees to David, what does he bring with him (**23:6**)?

Why do you think the author mentions this detail? Remember our discussion of the Urim and Thummim and this item during the teaching time in week 6. You can also look at **Exodus 28:1–14** to help with your answer.

19. How big is David's army now (**23:13**)?

20. According to **23:16**, why does Jonathan visit David?

“To his hand
.....”

Specifically, how did Jonathan do this (**23:17–18**)?

What do David's men urge him to do (**24:4a**)?

24. How does David respond (**24:4b**)?

Then David arose and cut off a
..... of Saul's

Why is this significant? Look back at **15:27-28**
to help you with your answer.

25. What reason does David give for why he is not trying to harm
Saul? How does Saul respond? Summarize their exchange:

DAVID 24:8-15	
SAUL 24:16-21	

▲ WRAP-UP

See the list of attributes on the last two pages of this workbook for help answering this question.

What aspect of God's character has this week's passage of 1 Samuel shown you more clearly?



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9

David's Second and Third Flights

1 Samuel 25–28

Last week, we saw David exercise tremendous restraint in his dealings with the king of Israel. This week, we find him in need of restraint in his dealings with a local Israelite. God's chosen king proves he isn't perfect, but unlike Saul, who seeks his own power apart from the Lord, David is attuned to the Word of the Lord and is quick to submit to its authority. As David wanders and eventually settles within foreign territory, God is crafting him for kingship. Just as David's character matures, Saul's disintegrates, despite entering the story with great stature and strength.

► **READ**

1 Samuel

25–28

from start
to finish.

1. Summarize what happens in each chapter in 2–3 sentences.

Chapter 25:

Chapter 26:

Chapter 27:

Chapter 28:

► **EXPLORE**

Now shift
your focus
to **1 Samuel**
25:1–44.

2. What significant event opens the chapter? Does it offer a sense of closure? Why or why not?

3. In **chapter 25**, we are introduced to two new characters. Fill in the chart with the name and description of each character in **25:3**.

NAME	DESCRIPTION

4. What does David send his men to request from Nabal?

Why does David expect Nabal to fulfill his request (**25:7-8, 14-16**)?

5. Fill in the blanks from **25:11**.

“Shall I take bread and water and meat that I have killed for shearers and give it to men who come from I do not know where?”

What does Nabal's answer to David's request expose about Nabal's character?

6. Read David's response (**25:12-13**) and note the following:

..... Number of times the word "sword" appears

..... Number of men David takes with him

What is David determined to do?

Contrast David's intention with his words and actions in **17:47** and **24:8-13**. Do you think that his decision to deal violently with Nabal is how God expects His chosen king to act?

7. In **25:18-31**, Abigail implements a plan to stop David from killing Nabal and all the men in Nabal's household. Identify the three main parts of her plan:

PART ONE — What does Abigail bring David (**25:18, 27**)?

PART TWO — What does Abigail warn David against (**25:26**)?

PART THREE — What does Abigail remind David of (**25:28-31**)?

8. Fill in the chart according to the verses listed:

	WHO RESTRAINED DAVID?	WHAT WAS DAVID RESTRAINED FROM?
25:26		
25:33		
25:34		
25:39		

9. By the end of **chapter 25**, how many wives does David have?

Is this cause for concern or no big deal? Look at **Deuteronomy 17:16–17** to help with your answer.

What lesson has David learned from the outcome of his run-in with Nabal (**25:36–39**)?

12. David takes Saul's spear as proof that he was in his pursuer's camp. The spear is also a symbol of something else. Look up **18:10–11**, **20:33** and **22:6** and give your best guess as to what Saul's spear symbolizes.
13. This story should feel very familiar. Match the major elements of the first time David spares Saul's life in **chapters 23–24** to the correct reference in **chapter 26's** account:

26:18–20	<i>The Ziphites tip off Saul to David's location (23:19–20)</i>
26:1	<i>Saul is vulnerable (24:3)</i>
26:22–24	<i>David's men urge him to strike (24:4)</i>
26:8	<i>David acquires a symbolic object (24:4b)</i>
26:11	<i>David refuses to harm Saul, the Lord's anointed (24:5–6)</i>
26:9–11	<i>David pleads his case to Saul (24:8–15)</i>
26:17	<i>Saul inquires, "Is this your voice my son David?" (24:16)</i>
26:25b	<i>Saul is penitent (24:17–18)</i>
26:25	<i>David responds (24:21–22)</i>
26:21	<i>Saul speaks a blessing over David (24:19–20)</i>
26:7	<i>David and Saul part ways (24:22)</i>

Why do you think both stories are included in the narrative, instead of just one?

► **EXPLORE**

Now look at

1 Samuel

27:1–28:2.

15. Fill in the blanks from **27:1**:

Then David in, “Now I shall perish one day by the hand of Saul. There is for me than that I should escape to the land of the Philistines. Then Saul will despair of seeking me any longer within the borders of Israel, and I shall escape out of his hand.”

Now look up **Psalm 42:5** and contrast it with David’s words in **27:1**. Which approach to processing the legitimate concerns of life is worthy of emulation?

16. While David is in Philistia, he conducts raids in the surrounding areas. Fill in the chart below with the three areas David actually raids and then fill in the three he reports to Achish that he raids (**27:8–10**):

<p>ACTUAL RAID OF ISRAEL</p>	<p>REPORTED RAID OF ISRAEL</p>

- Look up **Exodus 17:8–16**. Having read about the Amalekites, are the people that David *actually raids* historically friends of Israel or enemies of Israel? Write your answer in the blank on the chart.

 - Look up **1 Samuel 18:16**. Having read about Judah, are the people that David deceptively reports to Achish that he has raided friends of Israel or enemies of Israel? Write your answer in the blank on the chart.
17. This isn't the first time we have seen Achish, the king of Gath. From his previous interactions, David has reason to believe he can successfully dupe Achish (**21:10–15**). What is it that David wants Achish to believe?

Is David right in his assessment of King Achish (**27:12**)?

18. David's ruse may have been too convincing. What predicament does David find himself in after having won Achish's trust (**28:1–2**)?

▼ APPLY

The story we tell ourselves influences our behavior and choices. Are you in the habit of the psalmist who reminded himself to “hope in God” in the face of worry, anxiety and uncertainty? Or are you more like David in this chapter, prone to reminding yourself of your fears instead of God’s faithfulness? What is one specific area where you are speaking things to your heart that undermine your confidence in God? How might you change the mantras of your mind to remind yourself of God’s faithfulness?



► EXPLORE
Now look at
1 Samuel
28:3–25.

19. In one sentence, summarize the event that triggers Saul’s state of terror and his first attempt at finding help (28:4–6):

What is Saul’s alternate plan (28:7–11)?

20. When Samuel appears, how does the woman react (**28:12**)?

Is her reaction surprising? How might you have expected an experienced medium to react? What reason might she have for reacting the way she does?

21. Fill in the blanks from **28:15–16**:

Then Samuel said to Saul, “Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?” Saul answered, “I am in great distress, for the Philistines are warring against me, and has turned and answers me no more, either by prophets or by dreams. Therefore I have summoned you to tell me what I shall do.” And Samuel said, “Why then do you ask me, since the has turned from you and your?”

Think back to where we left David in **28:1–2**. Who is in a worse predicament, Saul or David? Explain your answer.

22. Samuel's response to Saul reiterates the declaration he already made in **15:26–29**. In comparing the two accounts, what new detail does Samuel reveal in **28:17**?

What new information does Samuel give Saul about the impending battle with the Philistines (**28:19**)?

23. How does Saul handle all of Samuel's news? Contrast the picture of Saul in **28:20–24** with the first description of him in **9:2**.
24. Look back over **chapters 25–28**. In the chart below, note the ways you see God proving that, regardless of who rules, ultimately He is the sovereign King over Israel:

EXAMPLES OF GOD'S SOVEREIGN RULE
<i>Chapter 25</i>
<i>Chapter 26</i>
<i>Chapter 27</i>
<i>Chapter 28</i>

▲ WRAP-UP

See the list of attributes on the last two pages of this workbook for help answering this question.

What aspect of God's character has this week's passage of 1 Samuel shown you more clearly?



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FILL IN THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

Knowing that God is

shows me that I am

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What one step can you take this week to better live in light of this truth?



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NOTES

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10

David, the Philistines and the Amalekites

1 Samuel 29–31

The closing chapters of 1 Samuel reveal a final contrast between Saul and David. Saul has been spiraling down to his own demise, displaying a life marked by self-sufficiency and a refusal to accept God as the ultimate King over Israel. Now David, while not perfect, demonstrates again his reliance on and acceptance of God as the source of his royal authority and direction. David tastes the sweetness of victory over his enemies and Saul the bitterness of death. As we watch Israel's first monarch fall to his enemies, just as God promised he would, we aren't left without hope. God has promised that He brings low but also exalts, and all eyes turn to the one God has named to rule over Israel.

► READ

1 Samuel

29–31

from start
to finish.

1. Summarize what happens in each chapter in 2–3 sentences.

Chapter 29:

Chapter 30:

Chapter 31:

2. In these chapters, how does God work quietly behind the scenes to bring about His purposes?

Why do you think God sometimes cloaks His sovereign hand in the mundane and unexpected instead of the obvious and exciting?

► **EXPLORE**

Now shift
your focus
to **1 Samuel**
29:1–11.

3. When we last saw him in the narrative, David had been commissioned by Achish to be a part of his army, even his own bodyguard, against David's own people (**28:1–2**). In the opening lines of **chapter 29**, what do we find David doing (**29:1–2**)? At this point, is there a clear way out of his predicament?

Imagine yourself in David's position, among the ranks of the Philistines on the way to battle with Israel. What might he be feeling and thinking?

4. Who notices David and his men among the Philistine ranks (**29:3**)? What tone do you think the author intends for you to hear in their question?

5. Below is a list of descriptions given for David in **29:3–9**. Based on your understanding of the story thus far, mark each one True or False:

..... the servant of Saul
..... a deserter to Achish
..... faultless in his loyalty to Achish
..... worships a God who demands the defeat of the Philistines
..... on the side of Israel
..... sung of as mighty in war against the Philistines
..... honest with Achish
..... on the side of the Philistines
..... blameless as an angel of God before Achish

Do you think it is easy or difficult to determine a clear verdict on David's motives and loyalties in **chapter 29**?

6. What emotion do you think David feels when Achish tells him he cannot fight alongside the Philistine army?

What risk would he have run by agreeing to follow Achish's directions too quickly?

9. Who is responsible for the violence and destruction in Ziklag (**30:1**)? Why is this significant? Glance back at **chapter 15** to help with your answer.

10. Compare the wartime actions of the Amalekites in Ziklag (**30:2-3**) with those of David (**27:9**). How does God work invisibly to protect David and his family?

11. How much strength do David and his men have left after mourning the capture of their wives and families (**30:4**)?

In addition to the great loss his people have suffered at the hands of the Amalekites, what personal reason does David have for being distressed (**30:6**)?

12. Where does David turn in his distress (**30:6**)?

But David himself
in the his

Look back at **27:1**. Where did David turn the last time he was in despair?

How is his reaction to his current hardship an improvement?

13. David's general statement about gathering strength from the Lord becomes specific, concrete action in **30:7-8**. How does his resolve translate into "next steps"?

14. The Amalekites were nomadic raiders without a permanent settlement. They could have headed off in any direction at any time. Answer each question by checking "yes" or "no."

Yes No Is there any indication in verses **30:1-8** of where the Amalekites were going after they raided Ziklag?

Yes No Does God direct David to go find them (**30:8**)?

Yes No Does David obey God's direction (**30:9**)?

In light of your answers, what "spiritual muscle" does David employ when he sets out to find the Amalekites (**30:9**)?

► **EXPLORE**

Now look at

1 Samuel

30:16–31.

16. When David and his men discover the Amalekites, what do they find them doing (**30:16**)? Were they expecting David and his men?

17. Fill in the blanks from **30:18–19**:

David recovered that the Amalekites had taken,
and David rescued his two wives.
....., whether small or
great, sons or daughters, spoil or anything that
had been taken. David brought back

Is there any room to argue that God did not make good on the promise He made to David when David sought Him in **30:8**?

18. Another dispute breaks out when David and the 400 men who went with him to battle are reunited with the 200 men who stayed behind. What is the dispute and who brings it about (**30:22**)?

19. What reason does David give to dispute the claims the “wicked and worthless men” make to all the spoil they won from the Amalekites (**30:23**)?

Look up the following verses and note what mentality we should have about our possessions:

John 3:27

1 Corinthians 4:7

James 1:17

20. Look up **Matthew 20:25–28** and note the similarities between the words of Jesus to His disciples and the words of David to his men in **30:23–25**.

JESUS TO HIS DISCIPLES MATTHEW 20:25–28	DAVID TO HIS MEN 1 SAMUEL 30:23–25

Circle the word that best describes what kind of event the author intends for us to see in the final destruction of Saul and his kingdom:

CELEBRATION TRAGEDY NEUTRAL

22. Of the names of the fallen, which one most signifies the wastefulness and loss of Saul's reign as Israel's king?

23. Answer the questions below to identify the irony in the circumstances of Saul's death:

<p>WHO WAS SAUL MEANT TO PROVIDE VICTORY AGAINST (9:16)?</p>	
<p>WHO DID SAUL FOCUS ON PURSUING (24:1-2)?</p>	
<p>WHO CAUSED SAUL TO TAKE HIS OWN LIFE (31:1)?</p>	

24. Saul rejected the Lord as sovereign Ruler over his life, choosing to recognize himself as the ultimate royal authority. Turn to APPENDIX B in your workbook and find the attribute “just.” Write the definition in the box.

just:

What do you learn about God’s perfect justice in the demise of Saul?

25. The final act of 1 Samuel is one of kindness (**31:8–13**). Look back at **11:1–11** and note what reason the residents of Jabesh-gilead have for their brave mission to provide the fallen King Saul with some final dignity.
26. Turn again to Hannah’s prayer in **2:1–10**. What hope does she profess (especially in **vv. 6–8**) that is demonstrated in Saul’s death in **31:1–13**?

▲ WRAP-UP

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11

Wrap-Up

1 Samuel

For 11 weeks, you have had the rich blessing of following the lives of Samuel, Saul and David in the book of 1 Samuel. Take some time to reflect on what you will take away from this study. Set aside time this week to read your chapter summaries and skim through the entire book. Pay special attention to what stands out most in your mind about the reign and rule of God among His people from these 31 chapters.

1. What attribute of God has emerged most clearly as you have studied 1 Samuel?

How does knowing this truth about God change the way you see yourself?

How should knowing this truth change the way you live?

4. How has the Holy Spirit used 1 Samuel to encourage you? What cause to celebrate have these chapters imprinted on your heart?

5. What verse or passage from 1 Samuel stands out most in your mind after 11 weeks of study? Why?

Close by reading **Psalm 5** aloud as a prayer.

NOTES

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Attributes of God

Attentive: God hears and responds to the needs of His children.

Compassionate: God cares for His children and acts on their behalf.

Creator: God made everything. He is uncreated.*

Deliverer: God rescues and saves His children.

Eternal: God is not limited by and exists outside of time.

Faithful: God always keeps His promises.

Generous: God gives what is best and beyond what is deserved.

Glorious: God displays His greatness and worth.*

Good: God is what is best and gives what is best. He is incapable of doing harm.

Holy: God is perfect, pure and without sin.*

Incomprehensible: God is beyond our understanding. We can comprehend Him in part but not in whole.

Infinite: God has no limits in His person or on His power.

Immutable/Unchanging: God never changes. He is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Jealous: God will not share His glory with another. All glory rightfully belongs to Him.

Just: God is fair in all His actions and judgments. He cannot over-punish or under-punish.

Loving: God feels and displays infinite, unconditional affection toward His children. His love for them does not depend on their worth, response or merit.

Merciful: God does not give His children the punishment they deserve.

Omnipotent/Almighty: God holds all power. Nothing is too hard for God. What He wills, He can accomplish.

Omnipresent: God is fully present everywhere.

Omniscient: God knows everything: past, present and future; all potential and real outcomes; all things micro and macro.

Patient/Long-Suffering: God is untiring and bears with His children.

Provider: God meets the needs of His children.

Refuge: God is a place of safety and protection for His children.*

Righteous: God is always good and right.

Self-Existent: God depends on nothing and no one to give Him life or existence.

Self-Sufficient: God is not vulnerable. He has no needs.

Sovereign: God does everything according to His plan and pleasure. He controls all things.

Transcendent: God is not like humans. He is infinitely higher in being and action.

Truthful: Whatever God speaks or does is truth and reality.

Wrathful: God hates all unrighteousness.

Wise: God knows what is best and acts accordingly. He cannot choose wrongly.

Worthy: God deserves all glory and honor and praise.

*Definitions taken from or informed by *The ABCs of God* by Children Desiring God



The Village Church Institute