

SAMUEL

Memorize I John 5:4b. Write it here.

Let's begin our study of Samuel with a little of his background. It's interesting to note several similarities between Samuel and Samson, whom we have already studied. The birth of each was miraculous and through the direct intervention of God. Both were Nazirites from birth. (A Nazirite was one who was dedicated to the service of the Lord. See Numbers 6:1-8.) Each lived in a time of deep apostasy and, by faith, both men were victorious in battle against the Philistines. There the similarities seem to end. Samson lived a life of great ups and downs. He was a loner who fought by himself and never seemed to inspire or rally the people around him. However, Samuel's walk with the Lord was very consistent. He was used by God to turn the hearts of His people back to Himself. There is much we can learn from this man of faith. As we drop in on Samuel and the Israelites, we find them oppressed once again by the Philistines. They are, however, beginning to see that their problems are because of their sins. They are getting serious about the Lord.

Read I Samuel 7:1 - 8:22.

1. From I Samuel 7:2 what does it mean that the people "lamented" (NASB) after the Lord?

Read I Samuel 7:3-4.

2. Samuel seems to seize this opportunity of their tender hearts to counsel and exhort them. Explain:

a. the condition(s) Samuel gave for returning to the Lord.

b. the promise if they did so.

c. the Israelites' response to his counsel.

Read I Samuel 7:5-6.

3. a. How did Samuel show spiritual leadership?

b. How did Israel show repentant and changed hearts?

Read I Samuel 7:7-14.

4. a. Notice the immediate testing of the Israelites after having a spiritual high. Describe the situation here and tell how they demonstrated faith.

b. How was their faith rewarded? (verses 9,10,11,13,14)

c. How does I Samuel 7:3 relate to these rewards?

5. a. Tell why you think Samuel felt a need to erect a memorial stone.

b. Why was the name he gave it appropriate?

c. What remembrance do you have in your life that reminds you that the Lord is your helper?

Read I Samuel 7:15-17 and Hebrews 11:32-34.

6. Samuel served the Lord in several official ways. Identify two of them.

a. I Samuel 3:19-20

b. I Samuel 7:15

7. Describe Samuel's work as a judge in verses 15-17.

" . . .the judge was not to be an impartial referee but a partisan champion of the law of God, actively concerned with bringing God's justice to bear on every situation. . ." (The Institutes of Biblical Law by Rousas John Rushdoony.)

8. In Hebrews 11, we see Samuel listed with those of like precious faith in the Lord. In what way could Hebrews 11:32-34 (NIV) have reference to I Samuel 7:13-17?

9. What do you see as significant in Samuel's life in verse 17?

Read I Samuel 8:1-3.

10. One reported blot on Samuel's life was his sons. How might you explain his appointment of his sons as judges?

11. I Chronicles 6:31-33; 15:17,19 mentions Herman, a grandson of Samuel. What do you find in these verses that would be helpful or encouraging to those who have children who have gone astray?

Read I Samuel 8:4-9.

12. What did the elders of Israel request of Samuel?

13. How did the Israelites try to justify their request?

14. a. Why do you think Samuel was displeased with the people wanting a king?

b. How do you think it made him feel personally?

c. How does Samuel manifest deep abiding faith in spite of any personal feelings he may have had?

15. Share how the Lord encouraged and comforted Samuel in verses 7-9.

16. In what kind of situation might you be able to claim the comfort of verse 7 as well?

Read I Samuel 8:10-22.

Samuel's life as a prophet was not easy. If he was to be faithful to his calling he must deliver not only the welcome messages from the Lord but the unwelcome ones as well. He was so careful to make sure his people didn't go into this decision ignorantly.

17. What speaks to you about Samuel's warning?

18. a. How did the Israelites respond to Samuel's words of caution?

b. What important fact had they forgotten?

c. How do we also forget that God is our Lord and King?

d. Describe how the people's desire for a king demonstrated a lack of faith.

19. Why do you suppose the Lord instructed Samuel to give in to the people's request?

20. Our memory verse says that "faith is the victory".

a. In what ways did you see Samuel realize victory because of his faith?

b. In what particular situation did Samuel inspire you to want to change your life? What are you going to do about it?

Barbara Forrey/lp