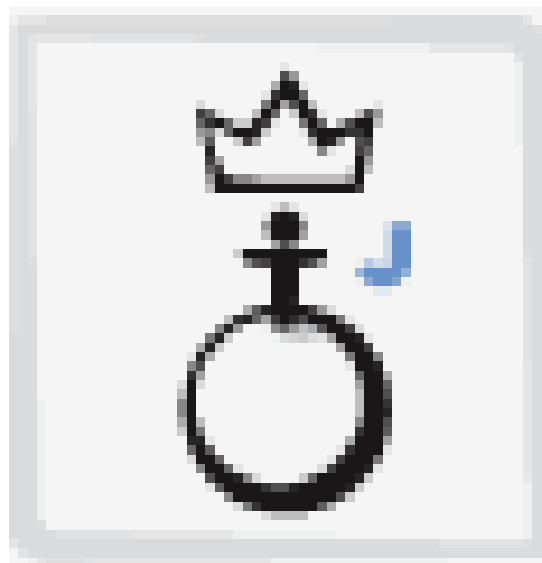




8 Bible studies in

1 Samuel

**“The king is dead,
long live *the KING!*”**



1 Samuel... 'the king is dead, long live *the KING!*

The Old Testament at first glance can look too big to take another look at!

There's so many pages. It all happened so long ago. There's a lot of history that you can think you have to get your head around in order to make head or tail of it—so many potential red flags or excuses to put it down, or at least head for the smaller, seemingly simpler New Testament.

But looks can be deceiving.

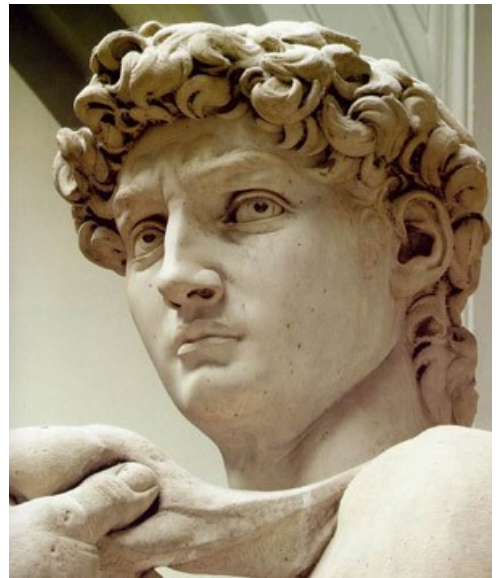
There is certainly a lot of detail and history spanning millennia. And some things happened so long ago that we don't have some of the background info that might help us to understand it more readily today. If we were there when these things happened, immersed in the culture and the times, many of the questions we have today just wouldn't be there.

But despite all of that, there is a simple plan that unfolds literally before our eyes as we read how God sets about rectifying the mess we as human beings have made of His beautiful original creation. Everything that happens in the Old Testament helps fill out how it's all going to come together, with the people of Israel narrowed down as showing us how it can be better when we let God be King or rule, with the King of Kings to one day to come and actually make it better.

In 1 Samuel, things are hotting up with all of this, with Israel's stocks increasing, especially when David comes on the scene. Through David, they get a good glimpse of how good one day it will be when God sends the actual person to do that— Jesus.

At the end of the day, this is the richest thing about the Old Testament and 1 Samuel—it helps us see and appreciate Jesus. It helps us understand the 'easier' New Testament so much more in that way. No wonder the inspired New Testament writers keep referring back to the Old Testament, and especially to David and what God was massively hinting at through him.

So sit back and enjoy the ride! Lets ask these kind of questions and it will impact your life all these millennia later.



Hints for these studies – with each question, sometimes there's a follow up question or two included at the same number. This is to just help draw it out a bit more. You may get it with the first one so don't panic if you end up saying the same thing in thinking about the follow up question—so just move on. Also, don't panic if you can't quite see what a question might be driving at. These questions are not the Bible. Feel free to move onto the next one. The questions are just an attempt to help us get into the passage/issue. Let the passage drive things at the end of the day. The questions are of course still meant to be a lead in to what could be very important with what God has in front of us here. So at least think about it before moving on. It's good to dwell for a bit and often, it then becomes a little more obvious.

the God who saves



kick off

'God helps those who help themselves.' What could be misleading with this?



key verse

1 Samuel 2:9...
"He will guard the feet of his saints..."



big idea

Our hope has to be grounded in the faithfulness of God.

read 1 Samuel 2:1-10



investigate

1. How were things going with Israel/God's people at this point in their history? Any clues in Hannah's prayer? *See also Judges 21:25.*

2. Scan over 1 Samuel 1. How desperate had Hannah's plight become?

3. Where is Hannah's hope firmly placed throughout the prayer? (1 Samuel 2:1-10)

4. What are the consequences for looking elsewhere? (1 Samuel 2:1-10)

5. Hannah seems to not just be thinking about her personal situation in the prayer. Discuss any parallels with what the nation needed.

6. Any clues with how Hannah's situation was turned around and how the nation's might be turned around? *Compare 1 Samuel 2:17 and 26, 3:1 and 4.*



think & apply

7. What does this opening to 1 Samuel reveal about God's character? *See Genesis 3:15, 12:1-3, Deuteronomy 18:15.*

8. Why do you think God seems to delight in raising up saviour figures from miraculous beginnings or births (like Moses, Isaac, Jacob and now Samuel)?

9. How does all of this inevitably lead us to Jesus? Note the even stronger parallels between Jesus and Samuel. *See Luke 1:34-35, Mary's Song in Luke 1:46-55, Jesus as a child in Luke 2:40, 52.*

10. Share how God's faithfulness, supremely seen in Jesus, makes a difference to the ups and downs in your life. *Paul in Romans 8:38 seems to be on the same page as Hannah.*



prayer points

Pray in response to this chapter...



through wk

1 Samuel 4-7

* * * Ordinary people following an extraordinary God * * *

raiders of the lost ark



kick off

Why do people think they can call on God at their convenience?

key **verse**

1 Samuel 7:3... "If you are returning to the LORD with all your hearts... he will deliver you..."

big **idea**

You can't 'put God in a box' or manipulate Him to your agenda.

read 1 Samuel 4:1-11



investigate

1. Why didn't the Israelites win the battle against the Philistines? (v 1-3) Hadn't God promised them victory? *See Joshua 1:1-5.*

2. What gave confidence to the Israelites with their second go at the Philistines? (v 4-5) Why didn't it work even with the Ark in their possession?

3. Have a look in chapter 5 how the Philistines went with the Ark in their possession. Why didn't it help them either?



think & apply

4. How do people conveniently think of God today? What kind of pressures are behind these attempts to mould God to suit?

5. How can even believers fall into conveniences with God? What kind of pressures are at play here?

read 1 Samuel 7:2-13a



investigate

6. How did Samuel put his finger on the real issue for Israel? What was symptomatic of their problem? (v 3)

7. Do you think they were sincere in their response? (v 4-6)

8. Did it last? (v 7-13a)



think & apply

9. How does an authentic faith relate to God all the time? Why does it want to?

10. *See Hebrews 4:14-16.* How is Jesus greater than the Ark? Are there any pitfalls though? *Matthew 7:21-23 is sobering.*

Pray in response to this chapter...



prayer points



through wk



1 Samuel 8

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peer pressure



kick off

What was it like for you in the playground at school?



key verse

1 Samuel 8:7... "...they have rejected me as their king."



big idea

There is great pressure on us to not take God seriously.

read 1 Samuel 8:1-22

investigate

1. How was Israel ripe for a leadership change? (v 1-5)
2. Why were Samuel and God so "displeased" with the people's ideas? (v 6-9)
3. Why would the people still want a mere human king, even after Samuel had passed on God's sober appraisal of what it would really be like? (v 10-20)
4. Was God just giving in to them by seemingly granting the people their request? (v 21-22)
5. How does this whole sorry incident show that God really did have Israel's best interests at heart?
6. Think about Samuel's shortcomings, even though God had used him to help the nation. How does he point us to the need for Jesus?
7. How do we sometimes grab at attractive short term solutions that in the long term only make matters worse? Can you give an example?
8. How can we make sure we get the right advice, and that we'll listen to that advice? Who's in your inner circle of confidence?
9. How does Jesus' 'advice' make so much sense? *See for example, Matthew 6:25-34.*
10. Why does the Bible talk so much about Kingship? What do we need to die to or lay down? *See Luke 14:25-35.*



think & apply



prayer points

Pray in response to this chapter...

through wk

**1 Samuel
9-15**

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everything that glitters is not gold



kick off

What kind of things turn your head in this world?

key **verse**

1 Samuel 13:14...
"...the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart..."

big **idea**

Mere human prowess will eventually reveal its weakness.

read 1 Samuel 11:1-15



investigate

1. How did the people show their need for a real king? (v 1-5)
2. How did Saul go with his first challenge as king? (v 6-15) Building on a good start? *See 9:2, 10:23-24.*

3. Is Saul acknowledging the greater King? (v 13-15)



think & apply

4. Can you think of an example where something looks good and seems initially to be working out well contrary to what God had warned?
5. *See Genesis 2:15-17 and compare with Genesis 3:1-5.* Any parallel with what's going on with Israel here years later? Adam and Eve didn't 'immediately' die.
6. How hard is it to make Godly decisions when the consequences are not always so immediate?

read 1 Samuel 13:1-14



investigate

7. Do you sympathise with Saul in v 8 as he anxiously awaited for Samuel's arrival?
8. What was the problem with Saul's actions? (v 9-13) Was Samuel being a bit harsh? (v 14)



think & apply

9. Why is our heart so crucial in life? (and not just the physical pump!)
10. How is Jesus such a contrast to Saul? When the blow torch was applied to Jesus' belly (or more accurately hands, feet, head, back and side), did he take matters into his own hands? *See 1 Peter 2:23.*



prayer points

Pray in response to this chapter...



through wk

1 Samuel
16

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more to it than meets the eye



kick off

Why wouldn't Jesus ever be elected Prime Minister/President of any country?



key verse

1 Samuel 16:7...
"Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."



big idea

We need someone to lead us who really cares, someone who has a heart for God.

read 1 Samuel 16:1-23



investigate

1. Why would Samuel be "mourning for Saul" (v 1), especially given 15:35?
2. Why are things so on edge? (v 2-5, bearing in mind 15:28)
3. Is it a case of 'de ja vu' or 'Ground Hog Day' when Samuel goes to check out Jesse's sons? (v 6-7, bearing in mind 9:2)
4. Why was the younger son David chosen to be anointed King over his older brothers? (v 8-12)
5. Any contradiction or irony with v 12?
6. Why the use of oil by Samuel in anointing David? (*See Exodus 30:22-33*) Why the need for witnesses? (v 13)
7. *See Matthew 2:3 and 16*. Any parallels or links or clues that Jesus will fulfil what was going on with David? While we're at it, any parallels with us and Saul and Herod?
8. *See Isaiah 53:1-3*. Can we see why Jesus would be called the "Son of David"? (*Luke 1:32, 18:39*)
9. How did Jesus show he really was/is "*the good shepherd*" (*John 10:14-18*)?
10. Think about how David would be so different to Saul, and how Jesus would then take that so much further—so different to how kings usually operate in this world. How much easier should it therefore be to accept Jesus' leading in our lives?



think & apply

Pray in response to this chapter...



prayer points



through wk

1 Samuel 17

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hope for the hopeless



kick off

How do people think they'll one day be able to stand before God?

key **verse**

1 Samuel 17:26... "Who is this...that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

big **idea**

Only Jesus/God can win the victory over our greatest enemy.

read 1 Samuel 17:1-50



investigate

1. Any irony in how Israel was in fear of someone very tall? (v 1-11) What was their tall champion/king doing?

2. How did David's older brothers' confirm they were rightly rejected as king material? (v 12-16)

3. Why was David so angry when he came on the scene? (v17-26)

4. Why was David's oldest brother so angry with him? (v 27-28) Does this brother again confirm their of kingly credentials?

5. How does David show true kingship? (v 29-50) Where does his confidence lie?

6. What do you make of Saul in comparison?



think & apply

7. Who do you relate to most in this story?

8. What is our biggest enemy that leaves us in great fear? *See Ephesians 2:1-3.*

9. Who has won the victory that counts the most for us? *See Ephesians 2:4-7.* Did it also look highly unlikely humanly speaking for him?

10. Why is it so important that we hold on to His victory alone? *See Ephesians 2:8-10.*



prayer points

Pray in response to this chapter...



through wk

1 Samuel
18-26

* * * Ordinary people following an extraordinary God * * *

trust and obey

**kick off**

'2 wrongs don't make a right.' True?

**key verse**

1 Samuel 24:10... "I will not lift my hand against my master, because he is the LORD's anointed."

**big idea**

David shows the need to trust the LORD's plans even when it's tempting to do otherwise.

read 1 Samuel 24:1-22**investigate**

1. Why was Saul rigorously pursuing David? (v 1-2, note the "three thousand chosen") Hadn't David kind of saved Saul's bacon, so to speak, with what we saw last time? (18:1-9 is indicative of what unfolds to chapter 24)

2. Can you understand David's men interpreting things the way they did with Saul incredibly seemingly falling into their hands?(v 3-4)

3. Why was David so upset for cutting off some of Saul's robe? (v 5-7) Apparently, doing this was a symbol of disloyalty and rebellion in those times.

4. How did David show better faith in the LORD's plans? (v 8-15)

5. Do you think Saul is genuine in his response to David's grace? (v 16-22) Cast your mind back over chapters 18-23 or remember Saul's apparent remorse with Samuel in 15:24-31.

6. Discuss how in this section of 1 Samuel (18-26), David has many times been faced with adversity and how he dealt with it.

**think & apply**

7. How do we sometimes grab at straws when we are under pressure? How do we justify such actions?

8. Does knowing God's plans help us to do better like David?

9. How did Jesus do even better than David? *See Matthew 26:36-46.*

10. Saul didn't stick with God's plans into the future (chapter 26). What future actions can we take to stay on course with God so when adversity comes, we're ready?

**prayer points****Pray in response to this chapter...****through wk****1 Samuel
27-31**

* * * Ordinary people following an extraordinary God * * *

**kick off**

Is there a correlation between the mess in people's lives and the running down of God?

**key verse**

1 Samuel 31:12... "They took down the bodies of Saul and his sons... (and) they burned them."

**big idea**

Not following King Jesus wrecks lives.

read 1 Samuel 30:1-31**investigate**

1. What do you find impressive about David here when confronted with the great misery of his people? (v 1-16)

2. What was the secret to his success? (v 6-8, 23)

3. Why was David so careful to make sure all of Israel benefited from his victory? (v 18-31)

**think & apply**

4. Any hint here that whilst David was a great taste of what a godly king can do, he's not the King we need? (v 17) Will any of Jesus' enemies escape?

5. What plunder does Jesus share with us today? Will any of his people miss out?

read 1 Samuel 31:1-13**investigate**

6. What's the state of affairs like for Israel at the end of Saul's kingship? (v 1, v 7)

7. How pathetic is Saul at the end? (v 2-6)

**think & apply**

8. Does it help to contemplate where not trusting in Jesus inevitably leads to in this life and the next? *See/remember Proverbs 5, preached on a term ago.*

9. In what ways can we see the fall out in our world/our nation/our Church/our families/our lives from following the wrong kind of kings? How does the enemy boast today?

10. How encouraging is it that Jesus body is still in existence unlike Saul's? How does this help us and therefore enable us to help others?

**prayer points****Pray in response to this chapter...****through wk**

Re-read the best part of 1 Samuel for you

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