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BIBLE STUDY TEXTBOOK

***STUDIES IN
SAMUEL***

by

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DEDICATION

To Puella

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PREFACE

The work being presented is the outgrowth of a number of years of teaching the books of Samuel as a part of a course embracing the twelve books of history in the Old Testament. The method followed is one of providing both questions and answers on the verses where problems most often arise. The questions are much after the style used by J. W. McGarvey in his *Class Notes on Sacred History*, but move beyond the number he raised on each chapter.

With each question the verse number is also given, thus enabling the student to turn to the Bible to read the text and see the verse in its context. The wording of the King James Version is followed inasmuch as, in the opinion of the author, it is still the most frequently quoted version among Bible-believing students.

A general introduction to the books of Samuel precedes the actual text of the present work providing the student with general information about Samuel with regard to such questions as the name of the books, the author, the date of contents, the date of writing, the purpose, the plan, and the general outline.

In addition to the general outline of the books found in the Introduction, a fuller outline is given at the beginning of the text for each of the two books of Samuel. This broader outline is a recapitulation of the sections in the chapter digests found throughout the book.

A special feature of this work is the digest of each chapter which precedes the actual text. This digest is followed by another special feature entitled "Lessons for Learning." These "Lessons for Learning" are truths gleaned from the events described in the chapters.

In order that the real message in the Scriptures be embedded in the minds of the readers, it is suggested that the actual Scripture text be read first. This should be followed by a quick reading of the digest of the chapter. The "Lessons for Learning" should next be considered and

finally specific questions on finer points should be read along with the answers to the questions.

In order to give the student a quick review of the chapter, ten questions are appended to each chapter. These questions are not answered for the student but provide a means for him to check up on his impressions from his study. At times these questions are repetitions for emphasis of the questions in the text for which answers have been provided. At other times they are general questions which should stimulate the student to new thoughts which will embed the truths of the Bible indelibly in his mind.

It is hoped that the end result will be that the reader may say with the Psalmist, who is really the main person of the books of Samuel, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105) and with the purpose in mind of being able to say, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Psalm 119:11).

INTRODUCTION

The Name of the Book

The two books of Samuel of our contemporary English Bibles were originally considered as one book by the Jewish people. This is evidenced by the fact that Josephus (*Against Apion*, I, 8) says, "For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us disagreeing from and contradicting one another (as the Greeks have), but only twenty-two books. . . ." No doubt he is referring to the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament which would be reduced to twenty-two by combining such double books as Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, by considering the Minor Prophets as one volume, and by combining such books as Lamentations with Jeremiah, as well as Ruth with Judges.

The Jewish people have always referred to these books as the books of Samuel. When the Greek translation was made, the translators called it First and Second Kings (*Basileion Alpha* and *Beta*). The Latin titles give the books the names of *Liber I Samuelis* and *Liber II Samuelis*.

The Date of the Book

The writings which we call the books of Samuel cover a period extending from the birth of Samuel through the reign of David. The period begins immediately after the end of the book of Judges. It is quite possible that Eli was High Priest in Shiloh while Samson was active among the Philistines.

Chronological notes in the book of Judges total over four hundred years, but if we take the periods of judgeship alone along with the periods when the land had rest, the total is 299 years. Jephthah indicated that the people of Israel had come into Palestine three hundred years before his own date (Judges 11:26). If we consider the length of judgeships of those who followed Jephthah and the time from Moses to Judges, the period of Judges still is around three hundred years.

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We therefore conclude that Samuel must have been born around 1100 B.C. or three hundred years after the time of Joshua which is dated around 1400 B.C. If Samson was still active while Eli was high priest at Shiloh, it is quite possible that Samuel was a bit earlier than this date.

We do know that the division of the kingdom between Rehoboam and Jeroboam occurred around 931 B.C. The time of the reign of Solomon is set at 40 years (I Kings 11:42). This would mean that Solomon came to the throne around 970 B.C. This would be the end of the reign of David and would mark the extent of time to which the books of Samuel ranged. We are also informed that David reigned for forty years (I Kings 2:11), and we are thus able to establish the end of the reign of Saul at around 1010 B.C.

Such dates as these make it possible for us to state with a reasonable amount of accuracy that the books of Samuel cover a period of over a hundred years; and since the books close with David still active and say nothing about the way in which he died, we are also reasonably sure that the books were written during the lifetime of David, during the close of his reign. This would indicate that the books were written around 970 B.C.

Authorship of the Book

The Talmud says that "Samuel wrote the book which bears his name and the book of Judges and Ruth" (*Baba Bathra*, 14b). In the later section of the Talmud, however, it is recorded that "Samuel wrote his book (*Sifro*) but is it not written in it 'Now Samuel was dead'?" (*Baba Bathra*, 15a). Jewish tradition maintained that Samuel wrote the book, but naturally objections to holding the position that he wrote all of the book were raised even at that time.

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Samuel's death is recorded in I Samuel 25:1 and mention is made again of his death in I Samuel 28:3. Events which took place long after Samuel's death are also recorded in the two books. God temporarily raised him from the dead, according to the record in I Samuel 28:11-19.

Some critics hold the position that the books were not completed in their present form until sometime after the kingdom was divided under Rehoboam and Jeroboam (Edward J. Young, "The Books of Samuel," *Introduction to the Old Testament*, pp. 188-189).

It hardly seems plausible that the books were written at such a late date. The second book of Samuel ends with David still active, and the first book of Kings takes up with David still old and serving as king. It appears more likely that the death of David would have been recorded in Samuel if the books were not written until a long time after the event took place.

The more logical position is that the books of Samuel were written while David was still alive. *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges* has this note: "Samuel is the historian of his own lifetime. Nathan and Gad together give the history of David's reign" ("Introduction," page 11).

Quite likely Samuel did write the history from the beginning of the books until the account of his death. Probably Nathan wrote the rest of the history, making some additions and insertions in the earlier part as he brought the books to their present form. The books should still be called the books of Samuel, because they not only tell the story of Samuel's life but also the story of the lives of the two kings he anointed—Saul and David.

The Purpose of the Book

The general purpose of the book and main theme of the book are to trace the advance of the people of Israel

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under the Divine guidance to a state of settled prosperity and union in the Promised Land. Also to give prominence to the rule of God which was the essential condition of Israel's life as the people of God under all the changing forms of early government. The books are a record of the changes, national and constitutional, which accompanied the growth and development of the national life. At the close of this period the Israelites found themselves united under the rule of the king to whom all gave allegiance. They were controlled and guided by the definitely established institutions and laws.

Samuel himself is sometimes described as a "king-maker." He was called of God to anoint both Saul and David, the first kings of Israel. The books of Samuel naturally trace out not only the career of Samuel, himself, but also the career of those with whom he was associated.

Without the books of Samuel our knowledge of the history of Israel would be incomplete. We would be left to wonder how they progressed from the state in which they found themselves under the leadership of Judges to the place where they had men like Solomon and Hezekiah to be their kings. The simple purpose of the books may be described as that of carrying forward the history of the people of Israel.

The Plan of the Books

The books are in the form of historical records of events. They are easy to read. One chapter seems to follow another in natural order, and people who like to read history are sure to enjoy reading these books. Critics of the Bible and of the progress of mankind admit that these books are genuine history.

A definite plan is hard to trace out in the two books if they are to be compared with the book of Genesis, which is quite evidently planned around the ten generations

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enumerated in Genesis. The writers of the books of Samuel, however, have quite evidently followed the natural plan of writing history. They give the narrative of facts and events in a chronological order together with the causes and effects of those facts and events.

Some background is laid for the appearance of Samuel himself. Eli was high priest when Samuel was born. His life is certainly not exemplary nor is the life of his sons. He was a part of the early experiences of Samuel.

Once the background for Samuel's life has been presented, the author proceeds then to tell of the career of Samuel. Samuel's associations with Saul are traced out, and the second king whom Samuel anointed is introduced.

David is quite evidently more important to the entire story of God's dealings with mankind than any of the others. He is introduced in the sixteenth chapter of First Samuel, and the rest of the book is largely a record of David's activities.

Not only does the plan of God demand that sixteen chapters of First Samuel be given to David, but it is also expedient that all twenty-four chapters of Second Samuel be devoted to the story of David. David ruled no longer than his son Solomon, but it was not in God's plan to tell as much about Solomon. Solomon was not as important to the entire account of God's dealings with his people, and so the story of Solomon is told in only eleven chapters of First Kings. The forty chapters devoted to David and the eleven chapters to Solomon show the comparative importance of the two men.

This inequality of length of treatment is sometimes called "literary disproportion." It would be better to call it an evidence of the plan of God, the ultimate author of the books. David was a man after God's own heart, and Solomon in all his glory was not more important. Neither was Saul, but the high place occupied by Samuel is indicated by the fact that the two books are called the

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books of Samuel. Such is the plan of God in giving us these two books.

The Outline of the Book

Since the books of Samuel are divided into two sections in the English Bible, we may well outline the contents of the books of Samuel in two parts. Under this arrangement we have the following outline:

I. The influence of Samuel in the life of Saul—

I Samuel 1-31

II. The influences of Samuel in the life of David—

II Samuel 1-24

This kind of outline of the book, however, does not really give us much information about the contents of the two books.

A better outline of the books of Samuel would be to indicate the life of Samuel as a separate part. The outline would go as follows:

I. The life and work of Samuel—I Samuel 1-15

II. The life and reign of Saul—I Samuel 16-31

III. The reign of David—II Samuel 1-24

Still a third outline is suggested by the material in the books which outlines these points:

I. The lives of Samuel and Saul—I Samuel 1-15

II. The lives of David and Saul—I Samuel 16-II Samuel 1

III. The sole reign of David—II Samuel 2-24

From these various suggestions it is easy to see that the task of outlining the books is rather difficult, but any outline of the book must give prominence to Samuel. The only reason we know about Eli is that he was high priest when Samuel is born. The primary reason that we know Saul is the fact that he was anointed by Samuel. The outstanding thing about the beginning of the reign of David at least is that he was chosen by God through his prophet Samuel. The books are very properly called the

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Books of Samuel. They trace out the life of Samuel and the lives of those men upon whom he had primary influence.

The Contents of the Book

Some of the most thrilling incidents of all Bible history are recorded in the books of Samuel. It is here that we read about the Godly character of Hannah. Hannah's song is the most important part of chapter two. Samuel's vision of the God who called him to be a prophet is in the third chapter. The Philistines come into focus as the reader continues through the next four chapters. Samuel is rejected by the people as king as prophet and judge in chapter eight, and then we are introduced to Saul. Saul's anointing and his first victories are recorded in chapters ten and eleven. Chapter twelve is given over to Samuel's address to the people of Israel in regard to the nature of the king and the kingdom. Final events in the association of Samuel and Saul are found in the next three chapters, and David is introduced in chapter sixteen.

The great encounter of David and Goliath is found in the seventeenth chapter, and then David's various associations with Saul and Jonathan are the subject matter of the next seven chapters. Samuel's death is recorded in chapter twenty-five, and David's continued flight from the presence of Saul occupies the final chapters of the book. Chapter thirty-one records Saul's death on Mount Gilboa, and the first chapter of the second book records the evidently spurious account of the man who said he had killed Saul. It is also in the first chapter of Second Samuel that we read the Song of the Bow, David's lamentation over Saul and Jonathan.

David's reign in Hebron is recorded in II Samuel chapter two through five. This period of seven and one-half years was very important to the life of David. It was during this time that he married and fathered his first children.

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Perhaps these were the happiest years of his reign.

The reign of David from Jerusalem over all Israel is recorded in the rest of Second Samuel. The final chapters of the book contain David's last words and the account of his ill-fated numbering of the people of Israel.

David was a man after God's own heart. The records of his successes and failures are written in large letters so that they who read may understand. His life is exemplary and one that should be studied diligently by every Christian. It is perhaps this reason that makes most of us interested in the books of Samuel.

In addition to all the dramatic interest which is aroused by the records in First and Second Samuel is the fact that David is the ancestor of Jesus Christ. Jesus was of the house and family of David. He has been known as the Son of David. As the Christ was a Prophet after the order of Moses and a Priest after the order of Melchizedek, He was a king after the order of David. One can hardly understand the impact of the ministry of Jesus Christ without understanding the reign of David.

All these reasons go together to make studies in Samuel an imperative part of every Christian's background. Not only is the material to be covered a part of the Holy Writ, but it is also a part that looms large among the essential parts of the Bible. To know Samuel and David is ultimately to know God, the Father, and His Son, the true Son of David.

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AN OUTLINE FIRST SAMUEL

- I. The Judgeship of Samuel, 1:1—12:25.
 1. The Birth and Infancy of Samuel, 1:1—2:11.
 - a. Samuel's simple surroundings. 1:1-8
 - b. Hannah's prayer. 1:9-18
 - c. Samuel's birth. 1:19-23
 - d. Samuel presented to the Lord. 1:24-28
 - e. Hannah's song. 2:1-11
 2. The Childhood of Samuel, 2:12—3:21.
 - a. Eli's sinful sons. 2:12-17
 - b. Samuel's service in the tabernacle. 2:18-26
 - c. Prophecy against Eli's wicked sons. 2:27-35
 - d. Samuel's call. 3:1-10
 - e. Doom pronounced on Eli's house. 3:11-14
 - f. Samuel established as a prophet. 3:15-21
 3. Loss of the Ark and End of Eli's House, 4:1-22.
 - a. The loss of the Ark. 4:1-11
 - b. Death of Eli. 4:12-18
 - c. Sadness in Israel. 4:19-22
 4. The Captivity of the Ark, 5:1—7:17.
 - a. The Ark in the temple of Dagon. 5:1-6
 - b. The Ark in Gath. 5:7-9
 - c. The Ark in Ekron. 5:10-12
 - d. The decision to return the Ark. 6:1-9
 - e. The Ark returned. 6:10-18
 - f. The men of Beth-shemesh smitten. 6:19-21
 - g. The Ark in the house of Abinadab. 7:1, 2
 - h. Israel purged at Mizpeh. 7:3-8
 - i. Israel delivered under Samuel. 7:9-17
 5. The Installation of Israel's First King, 8:1—10:27.
 - a. The people ask for a king. 8:1-5
 - b. The Lord instructs Samuel. 8:6-9

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- c. Samuel describes a king. 8:10-18
 - d. The people persist. 8:19-22
 - e. Saul's search for his father's asses. 9:1-5
 - f. Saul seeks the seer. 9:6-10
 - g. Samuel and Saul meet. 9:11-21
 - h. Samuel honors Saul. 9:22-27
 - i. Saul anointed by Samuel. 10:1-8
 - j. Saul among the prophets. 10:9-16
 - k. Saul acclaimed by the people. 10:17-27
6. Samuel's Retirement from the Judgeship, 11:1—12:25.
- a. Jabesh-gilead attacked. 11:1-3
 - b. Jabesh-gilead delivered. 11:4-11
 - c. The kingship of Saul renewed. 11:12-25
 - d. Samuel reviews his career. 12:1-5
 - e. Israel's history reviewed. 12:6-15
 - f. Samuel rebukes the people. 12:16-25

II. The Reign of Saul, 13:1—31:13.

1. The Early Days of Saul's Reign, 13:1—14:52.
- a. Saul's campaign against the Philistines. 13:1-4
 - b. The counter-attack of the Philistines. 13:5-7
 - c. Saul's presumptuous sacrifice. 13:8-10
 - d. Samuel's rebuke of Saul. 13:11-16
 - e. The battle pitched. 13:17-23
 - f. Jonathan's surprise attack on the Philistines. 14:1-23
 - g. Saul's ill-advised oath. 14:24-46
 - h. Saul's other battles and his family. 14:47-52
2. The Lord's Rejection of Saul, 15:1-35.
- a. Saul sent against the Amalekites. 15:1-6
 - b. Saul's incomplete obedience. 15:7-9
 - c. Samuel delivers the Lord's message of condemnation. 15:10-23
 - d. Samuel and Saul parted permanently. 15:24-35

FIRST SAMUEL

3. David chosen as Saul's successor, 16:1-23.
 - a. Samuel goes to Bethlehem. 16:1-5
 - b. Samuel anoints David. 16:7-13
 - c. Saul seeks a musician. 16:14-23
4. David's meeting with Goliath, 17:1-58.
 - a. Goliath's challenge. 17:1-11
 - b. David hears of Goliath's challenge. 17:12-27
 - c. Saul sends David to meet Goliath. 17:28-37
 - d. David slays Goliath. 17:38-54
 - e. Saul inquires about David's background. 17:55-58
5. Saul's Reception of David into his Court, 18:1-30.
 - a. David's covenant with Jonathan. 18:1-4
 - b. Saul's jealousy of David. 18:5-9
 - c. David driven out of Saul's court. 18:10-16
 - d. David the king's son-in-law. 18:17-30
6. David's Final Flight from Saul's Court, 19:1-24.
 - a. Jonathan intercedes for David. 19:1-7
 - b. David driven out a second time. 19:8-17
 - c. David with Samuel. 19:18-24
7. David's Farewell to Jonathan, 20:1-42.
 - a. David's appeal to Jonathan. 20:1-10
 - b. Jonathan's plan. 20:11-23
 - c. Saul's attack on Jonathan and David. 20:24-34
 - d. David's and Jonathan's parting. 20:35-42
8. David's Flight to Gath, 21:1-15.
 - a. David at Nob. 21:1-9
 - b. David at Gath. 21:10-15
9. Saul's Reprisals against David and his Friends, 22:1-23.
 - a. The prophet Gad and David. 22:1-5
 - b. Saul's increasing jealousy. 22:6-16
 - c. Saul's slaughter of the priests. 22:17-23

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10. Saul's Pursuit of David to Keilah, 23:1-29.
 - a. Abiathar, the priest, with David. 23:1-6
 - b. David's and Jonathan's meeting. 23:7-18
 - c. Saul's pursuit of David. 23:19-29
11. Saul's Life Spared by David, 24:1-22.
 - a. David spares Saul's life. 24:1-7
 - b. David pleads for his life. 24:8-15
 - c. Saul accepts David's plea. 24:16-22
12. David's Continued Flight, 25:1—26:25.
 - a. The death of Samuel. 25:1
 - b. Nabal's shameful treatment of David. 25:2-13
 - c. Abigail appeals to David. 25:14-38
 - d. David's wives. 25:39-44
 - e. Saul pursues David again. 26:1-5
 - f. David again spares Saul. 26:6-20
 - g. Saul again repents. 26:21-25
13. David's Second Flight to Gath, 27:1-12.
 - a. David again in Gath. 27:1-7
 - b. David's pretended campaign against Judah. 27:8-12
14. Preparations for Saul's Last Battle, 28:1—29:11.
 - a. David with Achish in battle. 28:1, 2
 - b. Saul forsaken by God. 28:3-6
 - c. Saul seeks the witch of En-dor. 28:7-14
 - d. Samuel's appearance. 28:15-25
 - e. David challenged by the lords of the Philistines. 29:1-7
 - f. David departs from Achish. 29:8-11
15. David's Return to Ziklag, 30:1-31.
 - a. David's camp looted. 30:1-6
 - b. David's pursuit of his enemies. 30:7-20
 - c. David's goodwill towards Judah. 30:21-31
16. Saul's Last Battle, 31:1-13.
 - a. Saul's death. 31:1-6
 - b. Saul's burial. 31:7-13

PART ONE

THE
JUDGESHIP
OF SAMUEL

1:1—12:25

THE
FIRST BOOK
OF
SAMUEL

FIRST SAMUEL

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 1

Vv. 1- 8 *Samuel's simple surroundings.* The father, Elkanah, was a righteous and pious man. He went to the tabernacle regularly. Samuel's mother, Hannah, was despised by Peninnah, Elkanah's other wife.

The evils of polygamy are clearly seen in this situation. One wife, Hannah, was favored. Since she was childless, she was chided by the other wife, Peninnah. Although Elkanah tried to bestow other favors on Hannah, she was still unhappy with her lot. Unhappiness, jealousy and spite are all displayed.

Vv. 9-18 *Hannah's prayer.* Samuel's mother was faithful in her attendance at the house of God. She was sincere in her religious practices, and her prayer arose from such anguish of heart that she did not utter audible words.

The fact that the high priest saw her lips moving and heard no sound led him to believe that she was inebriated. His coming to this conclusion leaves us to wonder if he were accustomed to seeing people at worship in such a condition.

Vv. 19-23 *Samuel's birth.* God was faithful in answering Hannah's prayer. Eli, the high priest, had told her that her prayer would be answered. Samuel was a child of prayer.

Vv. 24-28 *Samuel presented to the Lord.* True to her promise, Hannah brought the child Samuel to God's house and gave him to the Lord. She was faithful in keeping her promise. Her gratitude for her blessings knew no bounds.

STUDIES IN SAMUEL

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *Problems call for prayers.* Some situations are more than men can cope with by themselves. Men and women of faith never hesitate to take their burdens to the Lord.
2. *Children are gifts from God.* Life itself is a gift which God has given to men to be passed on from generation to generation. Since they are given to parents as gifts of God, children ought also to be given back to God and His service in one form or another.

I. THE JUDGESHIP OF SAMUEL 1:1—12:25

1. The Birth and Infancy of Samuel, 1:1—2:11.

Samuel's Simple Surroundings. 1:1-8

Now there was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim, of mount Ephraim, and his name *was* Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite:

2 And he had two wives; the name of the one *was* Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

3 And this man went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the Lord of hosts in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the Lord, *were* there.

4 And when the time was that Elkanah offered, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions:

5 But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah: but the Lord had shut up her womb.

6 And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the Lord had shut up her womb.

THE FAMILY OF KING SAUL

Aphiah (I Sam. 9:1)

Becorath

Zeror

Maacah = Abiel, or Jeiel (I Ch. 9:35) (Ner? I Ch. 8:33)

Ner

Kish

Others (I Ch. 9:36)

Ahimaaz (I Sam. 30:31) 14:50

Abner

SAUL

=====

Ahinoam (I Sam. 30:31) 14:50

Jonathan, Ishui, Malchishua, Abinadab, Esbaal (Ishbosheth), Merab, Michal
(I Sam. 14:49; I Ch. 8:33-40)

Meribbaal (Mephibosheth) (I Ch. 9:40-44; 8:34-40)

Micah



A high-contrast, black and white aerial photograph of Old Jerusalem. The image shows a dense, walled city with a complex network of streets and buildings. The city is surrounded by a high, dark wall, and the surrounding landscape is rugged and hilly. The image is oriented vertically on the page.

An air view of the northern section of Old Jerusalem.
This view shows the north city wall and the Damascus gate.

Madsen Photo Service

7 And *as* he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the Lord, so she provoked her; therefore she wept, and did not eat.

8 Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? *am* not I better to thee than ten sons?

1. *Who were the parents of Samuel? 1:1, 2, 20*

Elkanah was a descendant of Kohath, who was of the tribe of Levi. Levi, of course, was the ancestor of all who were eligible for the priesthood. Elkanah is also known as an Ephraimite. Ephraim became the name of all the country or the tribes north of Judah. Levi's descendants had no inheritance in the promised land. Their inheritance in the promised land consisted of cities assigned them by the other tribes. Elkanah lived in the land assigned to the tribe of Ephraim. Although he was a Levite, he was also known as an Ephraimite. Samuel's mother was named Hannah. *Elkanah* is from two Hebrew words meaning "whom God has acquired." *Hannah* is from the Hebrew word which means "grace" or "favor."

2. *Was Samuel a priest?*

Samuel was of the tribe of Levi. All priests were Levites, but not all Levites could be priests. The priests were taken from the descendants of Aaron, the brother of Moses. Aaron was the son of Amram and Jochebed. He was thus descended from Kohath, who was also one of the ancestors of Samuel. Since Samuel was from the tribe of Levi, many Bible scholars conclude that he was a priest. It would seem better, however, to hold that Samuel was not a priest since he was not descended from Aaron. Samuel did serve as a priest, but his appointment seems unusual. He replaced Eli as the spiritual leader of Israel, but it would be better to think of Samuel as a judge and a prophet and not a priest in the fullest sense of the word.

3. *Where did they live?* 1:1, 19

They were from Ramathiam-zophim. The word *Ramah* means "hill." The word *Ramathaim* means "double hill." The word *Zophim* is a derivative of the word *Zuph*. Hence Ramathaim-zophim means "The double hill of the country belonging to the descendants of Zuph."

Mount Ephraim designates the hill country of Ephraim. Palestine was divided generally into four different sections—the hill country, the sea coast, the Jordan valley, and the Negeb, or the South. The center of the land was hilly, and the highest portion was known as the hill country of Ephraim. Here it is called Mount Ephraim.

4. *Who was Zuph, the Ephrathite?*

Zuph was an ancestor of Samuel's who gave his name to the home, Ramathaim-zophim. The fact that he was called an Ephrathite has led some to believe that his home was south of the land of the tribe of Benjamin and near Bethlehem. Bethlehem is sometimes known as Ephrath (Ruth 1:2). It is apparent from this reference and also the reference in I Kings 11:26, however, that Ephrathite is sometimes used interchangeably with Ephraimite. The importance of his place in the ancestry of Samuel has been lost to us; but when this was written, he was perhaps a well-known ancestor of Samuel.

5. *Who was Peninnah?* 1:2

Peninnah was one of the wives of Elkanah, Samuel's father. Her name comes from a Hebrew word meaning "coral." All we know about Peninnah is recorded here in these verses. No other mention is made of her in the Scriptures outside this place. We are left to wonder if she was the older wife since she is mentioned as having children before any children were born to Hannah.

6. *Was Hannah's barrenness a punishment?* 1:2

There are times in the Scripture when barrenness is called a punishment. Such was the case with regard to the people of Philistia in the days of Abimelech and Isaac. In

this case, however, it seems that barrenness was not a punishment for any wrong which Hannah or Elkanah had committed. It was rather a withholding of blessing.

7. *What was Elkanah's yearly custom?* 1:3

Elkanah went up to the tabernacle to worship and to sacrifice. The institution of the pilgrimage is as old as the existence of the institutions. Although it is not stated that this was the time of the Passover, the Passover was the one great feast of the Jews; and this is probably the feast he attended yearly. Simply because it is not stated that he went up thrice yearly is not grounds for saying that he did not observe the feasts as he had been commanded in the law. He would attend each given feast yearly.

8. *Where was Shiloh?* 1:3

Shiloh was also in the hill country of Ephraim. It was located east of the main road from Jerusalem to Bethel and Shechem. Shiloh itself was situated about five miles north of Bethel. This had been the site of Israel's center of worship from the time of Joshua. The tabernacle had been located here by Joshua, and the tribes had gathered here to receive their inheritance in the Promised Land (see Joshua 13-21). All in all, it was a good choice for a location for the tabernacle. It was centrally located, and quite accessible to all the tribes of the children of Israel. As a priest, Eli was directly descended from Aaron. Aaron had four sons—Nadab, Abihu, Ithamar, and Eleazar. Nadab and Abihu were slain when they offered strange fire before the Lord (see Leviticus 10). The priestly families were thence all descended from Aaron's two sons, Ithamar and Eleazar. Eli was descended from Aaron through Ithamar (Leviticus 10:1, 2, 12). This appears from the mention of Abiathar, who was a descendant of Eli (I Kings 2:27). This man had a son Abimelech, who is expressly stated to have been "of the sons of

Ithamar" (I Chronicles 21:3; cf. II Samuel 8:17). Eli is generally supposed to have been the first of the line of Ithamar to hold the office of high priest (Josephus, *Antiquities*, V, v, 2). His name means "God is high." His two sons were called Hophni and Phinehas, names without particular meanings in the Hebrew language. Phinehas was also the name of Eleazar, the son of Aaron.

9. *Who were the priests?* 1:3

Hophni and Phinehas, Eli's sons, were priests. It is necessary that Eli should be mentioned because he appears in the immediate sequel. By understanding that his sons were priests, we will refrain from indicting Eli for much of what afterwards happens. As priests, they should have been an example to the people of Israel.

10. *What indication do we have of Elkanah's love for Hannah?* cf. I Samuel 1:4, 5, 8

"Whenever Elkanah offered, he gave to Peninnah, his wife, and to all her sons and daughters, portions: but to Hannah he gave a WORTHY portion; for he loved Hannah." This, together with his statement that he meant more to her than ten sons, showed his love (cf. I Samuel 1:4, 5, 8). Various translations of this passage have been made, showing that Elkanah gave Hannah a double portion, or a portion equivalent to that which he gave to two other persons. All of this would express his love for her.

11. *Meaning of "double portion"?* 1:5

(cf. *Genesis* 43:34; *Deuteronomy* 31:17; I Samuel 1:5)

The meaning is that he gave more to Hannah because of his love for her. The custom of showing respect to distinguished guests by giving them the largest and best pieces (I Samuel 9:23, 24; Homer, *Iliad* II, 7, 321; 8, 162, etc.) is met with elsewhere. This is done by giving double portions (e.g. the kings among the Spartans, *Herod* 6, 57), and even by fourfold portions in the case of the Archons among the Cretans (Heraclid, *Polit.* 3). Among the Egyptians, the number five appears to have been preferred

to any other (see Genesis 41:34; 45:22; 47:2, 24; Isaiah 19:18). The double portion of Elijah is not the same as the double portion here and in the case of Joseph. This double portion is called a "worthy portion" in the King James Version.

12. *What was Peninnah's attitude toward Hannah? 1:6, 7*

When Elkanah gave Hannah a double portion as an expression of his love for her, Peninnah must have been jealous. Peninnah constantly taunted Hannah to irritate her. She was not necessarily interested in making her angry, but she was wanting to put Hannah into inward commotion and to excite her. Just as Elkanah showed his love to Hannah at every sacrificial festival, so did Peninnah repeat her provocation, the effect of which was that Hannah gave vent to her grief in tears, and did not eat. Peninnah's attitude may be called a habitually scornful treatment. She taunted Hannah about her barrenness. Her treatment was so shameful that she is called Hannah's "adversary" (verse 6).

13. *What effect did this have on Hannah? 1:7, 8*

She wept, and would not eat, and was sore grieved. Hannah no doubt reproached herself with her shortcoming, though it was not voluntary. Her husband exhorts her not to blame herself, which is precisely what she was doing. The Scriptural picture of Hannah is not that of one who with hysteria would continually berate herself and those about her, but rather of one who would carry a heavy burden with meekness. Those who were intimately acquainted with her would know of her grief, and she shared her burden in silent prayer to God. Casual acquaintances would hardly know the nature of her burden. It was very cruel of Peninnah to provoke her about it.

14. *What did Elkanah say to Hannah to comfort her? 1:8*

Elkanah asked a rhetorical question. The first question is followed by a second. All this was said to comfort her, but the very mention of the word "sons" must have started

the springs of grief afresh, because it was for his sake that Hannah wished to bear children. The answer would have been in the affirmative, and otherwise would have been no consolation. Although he asked the question without expecting an answer, he must have asked it in good humor. We smile when we think of a man who thinks he brings more happiness to his wife than a great number of children.

Hannah's prayer. 1:9-18

9 So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the Lord.

10 And she *was* in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore.

11 And she vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.

12 And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli marked her mouth.

13 Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken.

14 And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee.

15 And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I *am* a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord.

16 Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto.

17 Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant *thee* thy petition that thou hast asked of him.

18 And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more *sad*.

15. *Was eating and drinking normally associated with worship? 1:9*

God had ordained a central sanctuary for Israel (Deuteronomy 12:5-12). He gave them instructions about the nature of their worship, and He said of the place where they were to worship: "There ye shall eat before the Lord your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households" (Deuteronomy 12:7). They were forbidden to eat the tithe of their corn or of their wine or of their oil within their gates: that is, within the towns where they lived they were not to conduct their worship services. They were further instructed: "Thou must eat them before the Lord thy God in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose" (Deuteronomy 12:18). On many different occasions people enjoyed a sacrificial meal together (Genesis 31:54; Exodus 18:12). A holy feast was very much a part of Israel's worship. It was this kind of a feast that was enjoyed by Elkanah and his household.

16. *Why is the Tabernacle called the "Temple"? 1:9 b*

The temple proper was not built until the days of Solomon. The Tabernacle itself was more portable and less permanent than the Temple. It was intended to be a temporary place of worship which could be moved about in the wilderness. The Tabernacle was set up rather permanently in Shiloh. Excavations on the site indicate that there were some rather permanent walls erected around the court, and the fact that it was there for a long time made it seem less like a portable place of worship.

All of these rather permanent arrangements led to the Tabernacle being called the Temple. Notices are made in the Scripture that there was a post erected and a seat where the high priest could sit. References to these are made again in I Samuel 4:13 and 18.

17. What was Hannah's attitude? 1:10

Hannah is described as being "in bitterness of soul." She "prayed unto the Lord," She also "wept sore." We dare not describe her as being cynical, but she was bitter. Much of her time was spent in prayer. On other occasions she was seen to be weeping. The Hebrew word used to describe the bitterness of her soul is from the same root as the word which Naomi used to describe her condition when she came back from Moab. Naomi had lost her husband and her two sons in Moab. She had gone out as a happy wife and mother and came back to her home in Bethlehem alone except for her foreign daughter-in-law. When the people came out to greet her, she asked them not to call her anymore Naomi but Mara (Ruth 1:20). The word *Naomi* indicates pleasantness, the word *Mara* is best translated as "bitter." This is the same word used to describe Hannah.

18. What vow did Hannah make? 1:11

The vow of Hannah stipulated that she would give her son to Jehovah all the days of his life. She intended that he would become a servant around the house of Jehovah (see Numbers 8:19). A vow is a promise to give something to God, or to perform some thing for Him, in case He grants a prayer. An example of this is Jacob's vow (Genesis 28:20-22). She further vowed that he would be reared in a way that reminds one of the Nazarite vows of Samson. The regulations for a Nazarite are found in Numbers 6. He could not shave his head, neither was he to take strong drink or touch a dead body. Hannah mentions specifically the matter of not shaving the head. A married woman could vow a vow only if her husband

approved. Single women could make a vow only if their fathers approved (Numbers 30). Since these limitations prevailed, Elkanah must have known of Hannah's vow and concurred in it.

19. Did Hannah pray often? 1:12

The fact that the Scripture says she "continued praying" indicates that Hannah was often in the Tabernacle in prayer. The original language indicates that she multiplied her prayers. This brings to our minds the statement of Jesus that "men ought always to pray and not to faint" (Luke 18:1). Jesus set the good example Himself when He went and prayed the same prayer three times in one night. The apostle Paul indicates that he prayed three times that the thorn in the flesh might be removed from him (II Corinthians 12:8). Hannah no doubt prayed repeatedly that God would give her a man child. Her prayer may also have been quite extended. All of this attracted Eli's attention. He noticed especially that she was not saying anything audibly. His attention was thus directed to her mouth. He saw that it was moving, but he heard no sound.

20. Why would Eli think Hannah was drunk? 1:13

It was no doubt not uncommon to see women drunken in that day. The specific reason was that "she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard." Since he could see her lips moving and could not hear her voice, he supposed that she was drunken.

The fact that he supposed that she was drunk is an indication of the prevalency of intemperance. Had he been more accustomed of seeing women in deep prayer, he would have supposed she was praying silently. Hannah's attitude in prayer gives us an example of prayer that is silent. Even though we make no sound with our lips, we believe that God hears us.

21. *What light does Eli's accusation throw on the moral condition of the Israelites at this time? 1:14*

Eli was evidently so accustomed to seeing the wickedness around about him that he spoke the way he did to Hannah. This would imply that the moral condition of the civilization was bad. The conduct of his sons, the religious leaders of the time, would indicate that the corruption was very generally thorough. It had touched even the worship of God, and morality was not present in the place of public worship.

22. *What explanation did Hannah make? 1:15*

Hannah explained that she was not drunken but that she was of sorrowing spirit. She prayed Eli not to think of her as a vile woman. Greek translators render *men of Belial* by adjectives like *vile, ungodly, senseless, contrary*. It was her hope that Eli would not think of her as one who had fallen to the depths from which few arise.

23. *Who was Belial? 1:16*

The word "Belial" is used in the King James version as if it were a proper name. It seems better not to transliterate it this way but rather to translate it as indicated above. In the New Testament books, the term appears in the form *Belias*, and *Belial*. This term is used in II Corinthians 6:15 for example; and is generally understood as a reference to Satan as the personification of evil. This is a proper way to render this verse. Hannah is saying that she does not want to be counted as a daughter of Satan.

24. *How could Eli say that God would answer Hannah's prayer? 1:17*

No man has the power to forgive men their sins by himself alone. Neither does any man have the right to say what God will or will not do without a revelation from God. Those who know the Scriptures can rest assured that they are true. If they make a prophecy, man can say that it will come true. Eli was announcing what

he knew was right and true. He knew that God hears and answers prayers. He knew that Hannah was sincere in her prayers. Such prayers could not go unanswered. In addition, Eli was anointed of God as high priest. He had charismatic gifts which would enable him to make announcements beyond the normal, and this was also a prayer of his own. He sent Hannah away with his spirit united with hers. He would join her in praying that God would hear her petition. He firmly believed that her prayers would be answered; and as God's anointed high priest, he predicted that they would be answered.

25. *Why did Hannah call herself a handmaid? 1:18*

The term was used quite frequently by women who wanted to describe themselves as being a part of a household. The word does not indicate one who is a slave, but one who had something of the stature of Hagar in the household of Abraham (Genesis 16:1). The same word is also used to describe Zilpah, the handmaid of Leah (Genesis 29:24). Hannah felt that she found a friend in Eli. She did not want to make herself equal to him, but she did want him to look upon her as one of the household of faith, willing to do what the Lord commanded as might be directed by the high priest himself.

Samuel's birth. 1:19-23

19 And they rose up in the morning early, and worshiped before the Lord, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the Lord remembered her.

20 Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, *saying*, Because I have asked him of the Lord.

21 And the man Elkanah, and all his house, went up to offer unto the Lord the yearly sacrifice, and his vow.

22 But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her

husband, *I will not go up* until the child be weaned, and *then* I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord, and there abide for ever.

23 And Elkanah her husband said unto her. Do what seemeth thee good; tarry until thou have weaned him; only the Lord establish his word. So the woman abode, and gave her son suck until she weaned him.

26. *Where was Ramah? 1:19*

Ramah was on the site of the present village Ar-Ram, a hill-top two hour's journey northwest of Jerusalem. People like to live on the tops of hills. This has been true throughout the history of the human family. It is especially true that cities were set on hills. Jesus makes reference to the fact that a city set on a hill cannot be hid (Matthew 5:14b). The word Ramah means "height." Samuel's home was on a high place evidently, and it was a unique place with a couple of prominent spots. For that reason it was called Ramathaim-zophim in the first verse of this chapter. Here it is called only Ramah.

27. *What does "Samuel" mean? 1:20*

There has been a great deal of controversy and doubt surrounding this name for generations. There have been theories proposed and definitions offered such as meaning "name of God" and "asked of God." Some of these are not satisfactory. These different interpretations are due to the falling of the word *samu* from the Israelitish tongue. The original meaning, as borne out by a student of ancient Assyrian dialect, is "name of God." Hannah may have named him this because she had asked him and received him from the Lord. Probably the name means "God-heard," the implication being that his mother realized that Samuel was a direct answer to her prayer.

28. *What were Elkanah's sacrifice and vow? 1:21*

Every Israelite was expected to go to the Tabernacle to make sacrifice. He might make a burnt offering, a peace

offering, a meal offering, a sin offering, or a trespass offering (Leviticus 1-6). In addition to offerings and sacrifices which he was to make, he might perform different vows. He could vow some of his land, his buildings, his servants, his children, or some of his animals (Leviticus 27). These were free and voluntary vows. We are not told what Elkanah's vow was, but he went to the Tabernacle to perform it. It may have been that he was making a sacrifice regularly until such time as he could join Hannah in fulfilling the vow to give Samuel to the Lord.

29. *How long was it before Samuel was weaned?* 1:22

Hebrew children were not weaned as early as modern American children. It was not uncommon for them to be nursed by their mother for several years. Some of these practices are carried over in more primitive civilizations today, and we are led to believe that Samuel stayed at home until he was able to take care of himself with very little help. This is the meaning of his being weaned. We doubt that he would be presented to Eli before he was able to care for himself, to wash, and to dress, and be content away from home.

30. *Why did Elkanah expect the Lord to "establish His word"?* 1:23

Elkanah evidently expected conditions to prevail in such a way that they would be able to fulfill their vow to present Samuel as the Lord's servant. They had only the word of Eli, the High Priest, that the prayer of Hannah would be heard. God had confirmed this benediction of Eli in that Hannah had conceived and borne a son. No doubt Elkanah was anxious that no misfortune befall Samuel and make it impossible for them to carry out their end of the vow.

Samuel presented to the Lord. 1:24-28

24 And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bullocks, and one ephah of flour, and a

bottle of wine, and brought him unto the house of the Lord in Shiloh: and the child *was* young.

25 And they slew a bullock, and brought the child to Eli.

26 And she said, Oh my lord, *as* thy soul liveth, my lord, I *am* the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the Lord.

27 For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him:

28 Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord. And he worshiped the Lord there.

31. *Why did they take a bottle of wine? 1:24*

The size of the offering given by Elkanah and his wife when they presented Samuel to the Lord is an indication of the sobriety of the occasion. Their bullocks would be used for burnt offerings (Leviticus 1). The ephah of flour would be used as a meal offering (Leviticus 2). The bottle of wine was not for human consumption but was to be poured out as a drink offering to the Lord (see Genesis 35:14; II Kings 16:13; Ezekiel 20:28).

32. *Why did they slay a bullock? 1:25*

When God described the various offerings to be offered by the children of Israel, He indicated that a burnt offering of the herd should be a male without blemish (Leviticus 1:3). The practice was for the worshiper to bring the bullock to the priest. The priest would then present the blood and sprinkle the blood round about the altar that was at the door of the meeting. They would then flay the burnt offering and cut it into pieces. The priests would then lay fire on the altar and put the pieces of the sacrifice in order upon the wood. The whole bullock was to be burned on the altar as a burnt offering. It was described as "a sweet savor unto the Lord" (Leviticus 1:9).

This solemn ceremony preceded their presentation of the child Samuel to the high priest, Eli.

33. *Did Hannah fulfill her vow?* 1:26

The vow was fulfilled when Samuel was presented to the Lord. Hannah remained at home and did not attend the yearly feasts until the child was weaned. Ancient custom among the Hebrew women kept the children unweaned until their third year. At that time Samuel was taken to the Tabernacle and probably cared for by one of the women who served about the Tabernacle and regularly worshiped there. When Hannah brought him, she made a sacrifice of three oxen, an ephah of meal, and a pitcher of wine.

The fact that it says she lent him to the Lord did not mean that she did not give him to the Lord. She fulfilled her vow in every sense of the word.

34. *Why did Hannah say that it was this child for which she had prayed?* 1:27

Hannah had no other children. She was not specifying Samuel as the child to be given to the Lord in distinction from any other child which she had. She was emphasizing the fact that it was this very child for which she prayed. On occasions people who had made vows to give children, houses, lands, or other possessions to the Lord might make a substitution (Leviticus 27:10). Hannah was giving the very child for which she had prayed earlier. Although Samuel was her first child and to that time her only child, she was gladly giving him to God.

35. *How could Samuel be loaned to the Lord "as long as he lived"?* 1:28

A man might be a Nazarite for a period of time. Sometimes those who were Nazarites broke their vows and had to begin all over again to live the life of a Nazarite. Samuel, however, was not to be the Lord's for a short time. He was the Lord's completely and wholly for the duration of his life.

STUDIES IN SAMUEL

CHAPTER 1 IN REVIEW

1. What was Samuel's father's name? _____
2. What was Samuel's mother's name? _____
3. Where was Samuel's home? _____
4. Where was the Ark in Samuel's day? _____
5. Who was the high priest? _____
6. What were his sons' names? _____
7. Of what tribe was Samuel a member? _____
8. In which tribe's land was Samuel's home? _____
9. Who was the other wife of Samuel's father? _____
10. Which wife did Samuel's father love more? _____

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 2

Vv. 1-11 *Hannah's song.* This grand passage in the Old Testament finds a parallel best in Mary's "Magnificat" in Luke 1:46-55. Both women must have spoken as they were moved by the Spirit of God, and both were expressing their heartfelt thanks for God's blessings in their lives.

Vv. 12-17 *Eli's sinful sons.* A strange contrast is seen between the wicked ways of Eli's sons and the pious ways of Elkanah's household. Perhaps the contrast is greater because more is expected of religious leaders such as the high priests of Israel.

It is nonetheless true that piety can be displayed in the lives of any of God's people. A man does not have to be born into the household of a priest in order to live a godly life. Any man who is willing to trust God and keep his commandments can become a leader in God's kingdom.

Vv. 18-26 *Samuel's service in the tabernacle.* The child Samuel was able to perform many needful tasks around the house of God. Under Eli's direc-

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tions he grew into manhood through years of toil at menial tasks.

Vv. 27-35 *Prophecy against Eli's wicked sons.* An unnamed man of God brought God's message of condemnation against the sinful sons of the old high priest.

Eli had learned of the impious ways of his boys, but his rebukes were not strong enough. Parental indulgences have been the undoing of many a son and daughter of doting mothers and fathers.

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *Man cannot outgive God.* Hannah might have been tempted to go back on her promise to give Samuel to God, but she did not do it. She faithfully performed her vow and brought the child to God. As a result, ". . . the Lord visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and bare three sons and two daughters" (I Samuel 2: 21). She who had no child at first was blessed greatly. She gave her first son back to God. God gave her additional sons and daughters as extra blessings.
2. *Unchastened sons are a heaviness of heart to mothers and fathers.* It may have been hard for Eli to correct his sons, but he would have been infinitely better off in the long run to have punished them more severely. His halfhearted rebukes made it possible for them to continue in their sinful ways and eventually led to Eli's being rejected as high priest.

Hannah's song. 2:1-11

And Hannah prayed, and said,
My heart rejoiceth in the Lord,
mine horn is exalted in the Lord;
my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies:

STUDIES IN SAMUEL

because I rejoice in thy salvation.

- 2 *There is* none holy as the Lord:

for *there is* none besides thee:

neither *is there* any rock like our God

- 3 Talk no more so exceeding proudly;

let *not* arrogancy come out of your mouth:

for the Lord *is* a God of knowledge,

and by him actions are weighed.

- 4 The bows of the mighty men *are* broken,

and they that stumbled are girded with strength.

- 5 *They that were full* have hired out themselves for bread;

and *they that were* hungry ceased:

so that the barren hath borne seven;

and she that hath many children is waxed feeble.

- 6 The Lord killeth, and maketh alive:

he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.

- 7 The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich:

he bringeth low, and lifeth up.

- 8 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust,

and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill,
to set *them* among princes,

and to make them inherit the throne of glory:

for the pillars of the earth *are* the Lord's,

and he hath set the world upon them.

- 9 He will keep the feet of his saints,

and the wicked shall be silent in darkness;

for by strength shall no man prevail.

- 10 The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces;

out of heaven shall he thunder upon them:

the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth;

and he shall give strength unto his king,

and exalt the horn of his anointed.

- 11 And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house. And the child did minister unto the Lord before Eli the priest.

1. What was Hannah's "horn"? 2:1

Perhaps the figure is taken from the life of animals. An animal with a large horn is thought to be powerful. It is also a mark of full development and beauty. Deer, for example, are prized for their antlers. Other animals use their horns as they fight with others. If this is the meaning Hannah had in mind, she is saying that God has given her a mark of strength and excellence.

2. Why did Hannah refer to God as a "rock"? 2:2

Moses spoke of the Lord as the "Rock of his salvation" (Deuteronomy 32:15b). Isaiah chided Israel saying that they had ". . . forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the rock of thy strength" (17:10). The steadfastness of God is like a rock to a soul tossed to and fro in the stormy seas of life. This conception of God has been constant among those who have feared Him in all ages. Moses also challenged the heathen nations saying, "Where are their gods, their rock in whom they trusted" (Deuteronomy 32:37). The Israelites knew that the Lord was not just one god among many. He was the one true and living God. Hannah thus could say: ". . . neither is there any rock like our God" (v. 2b). There was no god like Jehovah, the God of Israel. There was no anchor for the soul like the Lord.

3. Whom was Hannah warning against arrogance? 2:3

No doubt Hannah was remembering Peninnah's arrogant speeches against her personally, but her warning is always meaningful and timely for God's people. Too much proud talk is found among the servants of God as they take credit for what is achieved in Christian work. Too much arrogance is found among those whom God has blessed abundantly. All should remember that they will eventually be judged by God, and God knows their weaknesses.

4. *What is the meaning of the "bows of the mighty men being broken"? 2:4*

Hannah is simply suggesting that the first are now last. The last are therefore first. Underneath all this is her great joy over being blessed of God. Before she had been reviled by Peninnah because she had no children. Peninnah thought that she was one of the "mighty men." Hannah would consider herself as being among them that "stumbled." Now Hannah was girded with strength.

5. *Did Hannah have seven children? 2:5*

Personal references seem to abound through this poem of thanksgiving, but we have little evidence of Hannah's having seven children. In verse twenty-one of this chapter, we learn that Hannah did have three sons and two daughters. This would make a total of five children and lead us to believe that she uses the number seven in this reference as an indication that she had received an abundant blessing. The number seven is sometimes used to indicate fullness or completeness. What Hannah says may not only be applied to her own abundant blessing, but it is always true for all those who fully trust the Lord.

6. *What powers did Hannah attribute to God? 2:6-10*

Hannah attributed all power to God. She regarded the Lord as the one who gave life in the first place. She also believed that life ended at His command. Life and death are in His hands. In addition, by His providences man is made poor or rich. He is exalted or abased. Those of low estate are often made to sit in high places. Even the very foundations of the earth were laid by God. The paths of God's saints are directed by God Himself, and no man prevails by his own strength alone. Eventually the voice of the wicked will be silenced, and the Lord's adversaries will be destroyed. Once again Hannah returns to the figure of the "horn" as she speaks of the way in which God will give strength to His chosen leaders. She attributed the following traits to God:

1. The power over life and death
2. The control of wealth
3. Providences that either bring fame or disgrace
4. The rendering of fair judgments on rich and poor alike
5. The direction of the work of His people
6. The eventual judgment of the wicked
7. The creation of the physical universe

7. *In what way did Samuel "minister" before Eli? 2:11*

A lad like Samuel could perform many menial tasks about the Tabernacle. The priests and their Levites had their assigned duties, but others might also be of service. Mention is made in this same chapter of women who "assembled at the door of the Tabernacle" (v. 22; cf. Exodus 38:8). A part of the ministry might also have been in worship; such as a part of the way God's people "minister unto the Lord." Since mention is made of the "lamp of God" (3:3), we are left to wonder if this might not have been a part of Samuel's service. He may have tended this lamp, lighting it when it was to be lit; and extinguishing it when it was to be put out.

2. The Childhood of Samuel, 2:12—3:21.

Eli's sinful sons. 2:12-17

12 Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord.

13 And the priests' custom with the people *was, that*, when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant came, while the flesh was in seething, with a fleshhook of three teeth in his hand;

14 And he stuck *it* into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; all that the fleshhook brought up the priest took for himself. So they did in Shiloh unto all the Israelites that came thither.

15 Also before they burnt the fat, the priest's servant came, and said to the man that sacrificed, Give flesh to

roast for the priest; for he will not have sodden flesh of thee, but raw.

16 And *if* any man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat presently, and *then* take *as much* as thy soul desireth; then he would answer him, *Nay*; but thou shalt give *it me* now: and if not, I will take *it* by force.

17 Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord: for men abhorred the offering of the Lord.

8. *What is the meaning of the term "sons of Belial?"*
2:12

They were "base fellows," meaning "reckless, worthless, wicked." The term used is the masculine equivalent of the feminine form used in 1:16, where Hannah besought Eli not to count her as a wicked woman. The word "Belial" may be used as a proper name; but whatever its origin, it denotes extreme depravity. The wickedness of these men was not so much in what they stole from God, but in the leading of the people to be contemptuous of the sacrifices.

9. *Why did the sons of Eli not know the Lord?* 2:12 *b*

No doubt Eli's sons were well versed in the Pentateuch. Probably they could recite the Ten Commandments from memory. In order to be priests they were versed in the rituals of the sacrifices. They knew that God had given the Law to His people and must have been familiar with the past history of Israel. Their knowledge of God was "head knowledge." It was not "heart" knowledge. They did not personally follow the commandments of the Lord and thus caused many other people to go astray. They are like the people of Paul's day of whom he said "Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind" (Romans 1:28).

10. *What was "a fleshhook of three teeth"?* 2:13

No mention is made of the number of teeth in the fleshhooks when they were first fashioned (Exodus 38:3).

The mention of three teeth in this setting leaves us to wonder if a part of the sin of Eli's sons was greediness. Certainly a fleshhook with three teeth would enable them to secure more meat than a fleshhook with only one prong. We learn that it was customary for them to strike it into the pan, kettle, caldron, or pot. All that the fleshhook brought up was for the priest. We know that the men were of base appetites, for they would not receive the sacrificial meat in the form prescribed by law. They wanted their meat to be given to them before it was roasted on the altar. They wanted raw meat, perhaps to be prepared in a way that would better satisfy their appetites.

11. Why did all the Israelites come to Shiloh? 2:14

Shiloh was the location of the Tabernacle. It had been there since the days of Joshua. In keeping with the commandments of God found in Deuteronomy 12, the people brought their sacrifices to this central location. Here is historical evidence of a central sanctuary. Radical critics deny that religion would be developed enough at this early age for people to have one place of worship. It is not because of the lack of evidence that the radical critics make this charge, but it is because of their own religious and philosophical presuppositions. They believe that religion like everything else must have evolved. They think that man began as a nature worshiper and evolved to a worshiper of demons. From demons he went to the place where he did believe in God, but he was a polytheist. To find Israel with one central sanctuary as early as 1,000 B.C. throws their schedule of evolutionary development of religion out of order. Yet we find good solid historical evidence of the fact that all Israel did come to this one central location to worship.

12. What is wrong with wanting flesh to roast? 2:15

Eli's sons were so contemptuous of the sacrifices of God that they demanded raw flesh of those who sacrificed.

Evidently they wanted to take this and prepare it in a more tasteful way than would be possible if they followed the directions given to the people in Leviticus 1-6. To demand this raw flesh from the people was to cause them to despise God's ordinances.

13. Why did some people refuse? 2:16

Many Israelites must have been willing to stand up for what they knew was right. All had not gone astray. In the times of Judges there were still many who had not given up their faith in the ordinances of God. It was for the sake of these people that changes had to be made in Israel's priesthood. If such conditions were allowed to prevail over a long period of time, hardly any could be found to maintain the faith.

14. What was the real gravity of the sins of the young men? 2:17

Hophni and Phinehas were corrupt in their own lives. This is bad enough. They also refused to reason with the worshipers who came to the tabernacle. The gravity of their sin is seen in the fact that they were threatening to inflict corporal punishment upon the people (2-16 b). They threatened to take some of the sacrificial meat by force. When men stoop to force in situations like this, they admit that their reasoning is wrong. The greatest sin lay in the fact that they caused other people to abhor the offering of the Lord. It is a tragedy that man comes to the place where he rejects God's commandments and loathes God's ordinances.

Samuel's service in the Tabernacle. 2:18-26

18 But Samuel ministered before the Lord, *being* a child, girded with a linen ephod.

19 Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought *it* to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.

20 And Eli blessed Elkanah and his wife, and said, The

Lord gave thee seed of this woman for the loan which is lent to the Lord. And they went unto their own home.

21 And the Lord visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and bare three sons and two daughters. And the child Samuel grew before the Lord.

22 Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assembled *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

23 And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people.

24 Nay, my sons; for *it is* no good report that I hear: ye make the Lord's people to transgress.

25 If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them.

26 And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favor both with the Lord, and also with men.

15. *What is a linen ephod?* 2:18

A welcome change comes in the narrative as we read about the child Samuel ministering before the Lord. Earlier we read that he ministered "unto the Lord" (2:11b). His ministry was "before Eli the priest" (2:11b). Here we read that he ministered "before the Lord." All of this would indicate that his real service was unto God and not unto men. At the same time he was under the direction of Eli the priest. Samuel must have ministered conscientiously as one who would minister "before the Lord." The linen ephod which he wore was the distinctive garment worn by the priests. It was a part of the apparel as commanded by God through Moses for Aaron, the first priest and his sons (Exodus 28:4). The ephod was to be made of gold, of blue, of purple, of scarlet, and of fine twined linen with cunning work. It was joined with two shoulder pieces at the edges of it. A band went around

it. On the shoulders of the garment were two onyx stones on which were engraved the names of the children of Israel. The names of six tribes were on one stone and the other six names on the other stone. This was the garment that the high priest was to wear (Exodus 28:6, 12). Eli probably wore this distinctive garment, but the other priests were given ephods to wear. These ephods were something similar to the garments which we call jumpers today. Samuel was given this distinctive garment to wear. It was the sign of the fact that he was ministering as a priest around the Tabernacle.

16. *What kind of a coat did Hannah make for Samuel?*
2:18

The priests were also commanded to wear a coat. Moses was told to make coats for Aaron and his sons as well as girdles to bind them at the waist. In addition, they wore bonnets "for glory and for beauty" (Exodus 28:40). Since it is not said that Hannah made the ephod for Samuel, we presume that the coat she made was more of a token of her abiding love for him than an effort to equip him in the full regalia of a priest. Her motherly devotion is seen in the fact that she made him a new one each year. As he grew in stature, it would be necessary for him to have a new garment.

17. *What blessing did Eli pronounce upon Elkanah and Hannah?* 2:20

Eli pronounced a blessing upon this devoted couple as they came to the Tabernacle. He prayed that the Lord would give them additional children in exchange for Samuel whom they had "lent to the Lord" (1:28). God visited Hannah as we read in the next verse. She conceived and had three sons and two daughters (2:21).

18. *In what way did Samuel grow?* 2:21

In a later verse (v. 26) we read that "Samuel grew on and was in favor both with the Lord and also with men." This is suggestive in the way in which John the Baptist

grew. Of him we read "the child grew and waxed strong in spirit" (Luke 1:80). Of Jesus it was said "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52).

19. *Who were the women that assembled at the door of the Tabernacle?* 2:22

When Moses built the Tabernacle, he made the laver of brass out of the "looking glasses of the women which assembled at the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation" (Exodus 38:8).

Jephthah may have devoted his daughter to perpetual service at the Tabernacle (Judges 11:29-40). If he did not actually sacrifice her on an altar as a burnt offering, he may have devoted her to service as long as she lived. Such a dedication to holy service would be reason for the daughters of Israel to go up yearly to celebrate the daughter of Jephthah in a feast for four days in a year (Judges 11:40). When Jesus was born, Hannah the prophetess who gave her whole life to service around the Temple, came up to see the Messiah (Luke 2:36-38). Evidently there were many of these women in the days of Eli. They probably did what they could in service around the Tabernacle. At least they spent their time in prayer and worship. The baseness of the sons of Eli is brought out in the mention of the fact that they committed adultery with these women.

20. *Did Eli rebuke his sons?* 2:23, 24

Eli rebuked his sons, but his rebuke was very weak. When the man of God came to him, he said that Eli honored his sons above God (2:29). When God told Samuel that Eli was to be punished, God said of Eli and his sons that "he restrained them not" (3:13).

21. *What did Eli mean by a "sign against the Lord"?* 2:25

Eli is saying that when one man steals from another there is an earthly judge who renders the verdict. When our transgressions are against our fellowmen, we might

expect that our fellowmen would judge us. If our transgression is against God, God has already pronounced judgment. It is inexcusable for us to sin against the Lord. It would not do for man to plead the case for another man before the Lord. Only the Lord Jesus Christ is our advocate (I John 2:1). Those living under the Old Testament dispensation did not have the hope of the Christian for an advocate before God. They could expect only a certain fearful judgment.

22. *Did God want to slay Eli's sons? 2:25b*

God is not willing that any should perish (II Peter 3:9). He has laid down certain rules and laws of life. For example, it is written, "correction is grievous unto them that forsaketh the way and he that hateth reproof shall die" (Proverbs 15:10). Since Eli's sons would not listen to the correction of their father, they were doomed to destruction. God would slay them, for they could not be allowed to continue in their rebellion.

Prophecy against Eli's wicked sons. 2:27-35

27 And there came a man of God unto Eli, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house?

28 And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel *to be* my priest, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? and did I give unto the house of thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel?

29 Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering, which I have commanded *in my* habitation; and honorest thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people?

30 Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed *that* thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the Lord saith, Be it far from

me; for them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.

31 Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house.

32 And thou shalt see an enemy *in my* habitation, in all *the wealth* which God shall give Israel: and there shall not be an old man in thine house for ever.

33 And the man of thine, *whom* I shall not cut off from mine altar, *shall be* to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart: and all the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age.

34 And this *shall be* a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them.

35 And I will raise me up a faithful priest, *that* shall do according to *that* which is in mine heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever.

36 And it shall come to pass, *that* every one that is left in thine house shall come *and* crouch to him for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and shall say, Put me, I pray thee, into one of the priests' offices, that I may eat a piece of bread.

23. *Who was the man of God?* 2:27

Sometimes we labor under the false apprehension that only the men mentioned in the Scriptures are active in the service of God. In every age God has had a great host of people who do His bidding. Some of them are important enough to be mentioned by name; others are anonymous characters that move across the pages of the Scripture and fulfill their ministry without much recognition. Of such nature was this "man of God" who came to Eli and pronounced God's judgment upon Eli's house. He was an unnamed prophet, a servant of God.

24. Was Eli's father in Egypt? 2:27b

Eli's father would have lived in the age of the judges. The period of Judges itself covers some three hundred years, and prior to this era was the time of Joshua. Moses preceded Joshua and led the people out of Egypt. The use of the word *father* in this verse must indicate that it refers to an ancestor. Levi was the son of Jacob, the founder of the tribe of which Eli was a member. God spoke to the Levites as they were in bondage in Egypt. He led these predecessors of Eli out of Egypt.

25. Who was chosen to be priest in Israel? 2:28

God chose the tribe of Levi to be the priestly tribe. He further selected his priests to be the descendants of Aaron. Aaron himself was the first high priest. Aaron had four sons—Nadab, Abihu, Ithamar, and Eleazar. Two of the sons—Nadab and Abihu—were killed when they offered strange fire before the Lord (Leviticus 10). All the priests were thus descended from Ithamar and Eleazar, the sons of Aaron. These were the men whom God chose to be his priests. Eli was out of this priestly family.

26. How did Eli kick at God's sacrifices? 2:29

Eli himself may not have rejected God's sacrifices. We have no record of his making a complaint or "kicking" about what was provided for him. His sons were the ones who abhorred the offerings of the Lord. Since Eli was the high priest, he was responsible for the conduct of all the priests. He was especially responsible for the conduct of his own sons, and he is blamed for what was going on in the priesthood.

27. What judgment was passed upon the house of Eli? 2:30-33

God did not mean that he would literally cut off Eli's arms (v. 31), but he meant that the line of Eli would not expand. This would be the end of Eli's house. Those who were not actually to die in the flower of their youth would be removed from the priesthood and caused to beg

as poor people in the street. God had ordained that his priests would be supported through the tithes of the Israelites; but if the priests did not appreciate what He had done for them, He would put them out of their offices. They would then be wishing to have what they had rejected and would say "put me I pray thee in one of the priest's offices that I may eat a piece of bread" (2:36).

28. *What sign did God give Eli that he would be removed from the priesthood? 2:34*

God told Eli that both his sons would die in the same day. This explains partly why Eli took so seriously the announcement of the loss of the Ark and the death of his two sons. He knew that this was the end of his house. God had said that these things would come to pass and gave him a token of their being fulfilled. When the thing transpired, Eli knew that God was fulfilling His word.

29. *Who was the faithful priest? 2:35*

Some people believe that this was Samuel, but it is taken to be a reference to the other line of the priesthood. When Solomon put down the attempted usurpation of Adonijah, he took Zadok out of the priest's office and put Abiathar in his office (I Kings 2:35). Ezekiel makes reference to this change in the priesthood in his book (Ezekiel 44:15) and there is also a reference to it in I Chronicles 29:22. Samuel served as priest in the transition period. David had two priests (II Samuel 8:17; II Samuel 20:23-26) while the change was being made; but the word of God was fulfilled eventually nonetheless.

CHAPTER 2 IN REVIEW

1. How many children did Hannah bear? _____
2. What figure did she use to describe God? _____
3. What instrument of war did she say was broken? _____
4. What was it that belonged to her and was exalted? _____

STUDIES IN SAMUEL

5. What word was used to describe Samuel's service? _____
6. How many teeth were in the fleshhook used by Eli's sons? _____
7. What was the distinctive garment worn by the priests? _____
8. What garment did Hannah make for Samuel each year? _____
9. Who told Eli his house was doomed? _____
10. Who was to be killed as a sign God's prophecy was being fulfilled? _____

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 3

- Vv. 1-10 *Samuel's call.* The call of Samuel to the place of leadership in Israel is comparable to the call of Moses (Exodus 3 and 4) and the call of Isaiah (Isaiah 6). His natural reluctance is typical of those who are given a vision of the tremendous responsibility laid upon God's servants; but his alacrity is also demonstrated in his response: "Speak; for thy servant heareth" (v. 10b).
- Vv. 11-14 *Doom pronounced on Eli's house.* The earlier message of the unnamed prophet is verified in the revelation given to Samuel. Eli is condemned because he knew of the wicked ways of his sons, but he did not rebuke them strongly enough.
- Vv. 15-21 *Samuel established as a prophet.* Samuel's first message was perhaps his most difficult to deliver. After Samuel had faithfully delivered the message of doom against Eli's house, all the people in Israel knew that God had indeed set Samuel aside in the office of the prophet. From time to time thereafter, God revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh.

FIRST SAMUEL

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *God's need for workers.* When the family of the high priest proved to be unfaithful, God had a need for someone else to lead His people. Through the ages, God has depended on men to carry His message and to perform His work.
2. *Man's need to respond to God's call.* When God calls, man should answer. Although all may be reluctant to take up the work which God has for them to do, they must accept the challenge or the work will go undone.
3. *Faithfulness leads to increased opportunity.* The master in the parable of the talents commended his servants who had been "faithful over a few things" (Matthew 25:21). He made them to be "ruler over many things" (cf. Matthew 25:23). This is a true principle in every day life. It is also true of those who work in God's vineyard.

Samuel's call. 3:1-10

And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was precious in those days; *there was* no open vision.

2 And it came to pass at that time, when Eli *was* laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, *that* he could not see;

3 And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God *was* and Samuel was laid down *to sleep*;

4 That the Lord called Samuel: and he answered, Here *am* I.

5 And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here *am* I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down.

6 And the Lord called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here *am* I; for thou didst

call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again.

7 Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him.

8 And the Lord called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here *am* I; for thou didst call me. And Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child.

9. Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down; and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

10 And the Lord came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.

1. Why was the word of the Lord precious? 3:1

It was not easy for the people in Samuel's day to have a copy of the scriptures. Manuscripts were expensive. Some of them were made on vellum in ancient times. Others were made on papyrus. The copies were hand-made and generally they were kept at the center of worship. The copies were made in later times as kings were commanded to do so in Deuteronomy (Deuteronomy 17:18). In Samuel's day the Word was precious because not very many people listened to it. Not many prophets were active and as the scripture says, there was "no open vision."

2. What was wrong with Eli's eyes? 3:2

One of the very common afflictions of old age is the dimness of eyes mentioned frequently in the scripture. Jacob's eyes became dim so that he could not see (Genesis 27:1). This dimness came quite a number of years before Isaac died. Eli seems to have been afflicted with this same weakness. Some commentaries suggested that this was the kind of affliction we notice when cataracts form. They

did not have the benefit of eye glasses nor surgery to correct this weakness. Eli's being in this condition must have thrown more responsibility on Samuel.

3. *When did the lamp of God go out?* 3:3

The lamp that was in the tabernacle outside the veil near the Holy of Holies was never to go out (Exodus 27:20). Some of the exterior lamps, however, would be put out as activity around the tabernacle ceased. Reference must be made of some of these lamps and it may have been a part of Samuel's responsibility to tend these lamps. This may be a part of his service "unto the Lord before Eli" (3:1).

4. *What vision did Samuel have?* 3:4, 10-18

Samuel had a vision in which the Lord called to him and revealed to him the coming destruction of the House of Eli. Samuel's reaction was that he was afraid to tell Eli. When we read "Jehovah came and stood," we understand that the revelation then was an objectively real affair and no mere dream of Samuel's. No doubt Samuel had first thought that the aged Eli had called him for assistance. Before the communication was over, however, he was undoubtedly sure of what he had heard and seen. A dream is not being described, for Samuel rose and ran to Eli after each call. The prophet heard a voice physically audible. This voice enunciated in articulate words the message which the prophet was to receive. The experience is not a parallel to Jacob who saw and heard God in a dream.

5. *Why did Samuel "not yet know the Lord"?* 3:7

Samuel had not had a personal revelation of the will of the Lord to him. He knew that God was the maker of the heavens and the earth. He must have known of how his mother had prayed to God for him. His own name meant "heard of the Lord." The last two letters of his name—e, l, were an abbreviation of the Hebrew word for God. Although Samuel knew that there was one true and living God, he had not yet been called of the Lord to His ministry.

6. *How many times did he go to Eli?* 3:8

Samuel went to Eli three times, during the course of the vision. On the third time when Samuel came to him, Eli spoke to him and told him that it was the Lord calling to him out of heaven and that he should answer him and say "Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth." On the fourth time, he came to him in the morning after he had opened the doors of the house of the Lord.

*Doom pronounced on Eli's house and
Samuel established as a prophet.* 3:11-21

11 And the Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle.

12 In that day I will perform against Eli all *things* which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end.

13 For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.

14 And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever.

15 And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of the Lord. And Samuel feared to show Eli the vision.

16 Then Eli called Samuel, and said, Samuel, my son. And he answered, Here *am* I.

17 And he said, What *is* the thing that *the* Lord hath said unto thee? I pray thee hide *it* not from me: God do so to thee, and more also, if thou hide *any* thing from me of all the things that he said unto thee.

18 And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, It *is* the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good.

19 And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground.

20 And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel *was* established *to be* a prophet of the Lord.

21 And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh: for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord.

7. Did Samuel want to tell Eli what the Lord had told him? 3:15

Samuel was understandably reluctant to tell Eli the message that God had delivered to him; but when Eli threatened him, he told him all. The formula, "So may God do to thee," is an imprecation originally connected with the ceremony of slaying an animal at the taking of an oath. The parties pray that the fate of the victim may be theirs, if they fail to perform their vows. When Eli heard the message, he quietly resigned himself to the will of the Lord. Although he had been quite indulgent with his sons, we picture Eli as a man personally devoted to the Lord in heart.

8. What doors did Samuel open? 3:15 b

The doors of the house of the Lord would be the outer doors through which the people could pass. In later times when the temple was established, there was not only a court for the Jews, but there was a court for the Gentiles. There was also a court for the women. These outer courts could be frequented by many people. Only the priests would go into the tabernacle proper. Samuel must have had the responsibility of opening the gates of the Tabernacle area so that the people coming to worship would have access to the areas which were open to them.

9. Why did Eli say, "It is the Lord?" 3:18

Eli knew that what Samuel had told him was the truth. The unnamed man of God had told him these things earlier. He may seem anxious to us as he inquires about the vision given to Samuel. His anxiety would stem from

his realization that these things were to come to pass. No doubt he lived each day in fear and dread of the judgment of God. Eli still had the surrender of will and serenity of spirit to say, "let him do what seemeth him good." His faith in God caused him to realize that God would only be fair and just in His judgments.

10. *What is meant by "let none of his words fall to the ground."?* 3:19, 20

It shows that the people accepted Samuel as the prophet. His words were words of wisdom and truthfulness and they respected his advice and warnings. Jehovah was with him and left none of His words unfulfilled when He spoke through Samuel. By this all Israel from Dan to Beersheba perceived that Samuel was found trustworthy, or approved, as a prophet of Jehovah. These three verses form a transition between the call of Samuel and the account of his prophetic labors in Israel. Many would be the times that men would come to consult Samuel, and many were the times that he rode about throughout Israel to take the word of the Lord to them.

CHAPTER 3 IN REVIEW

1. How many times did God call to Samuel? _____
2. Who did Samuel think was calling him? _____
3. What physical infirmity did Eli suffer? _____
4. How many times did Samuel go to Eli? _____
5. What doors did Samuel open? _____
6. Against whom did God pronounce a penalty when He spoke to Samuel? _____
7. What word was used to describe the word of God in those days? _____
8. Was this God's first revelation to Samuel? _____
9. When did Samuel tell Eli about the revelation? _____
10. What two towns were used to describe the extent of Israel's territory? _____

FIRST SAMUEL

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 4

- Vv. 1-11 *The loss of the Ark.* Israel's fortunes fell to a low ebb when the Ark of the Covenant was captured by the Philistines. This is a fulfillment of the prophecy made by the unnamed prophet (2:27-36) and by the young man Samuel (3:11-14). The things which were happening were enough to make the ears of those who heard to tingle.
- Vv. 12-18 *Death of Eli.* The bad news of the loss of the Ark was a shock to Eli. He had been waiting anxiously to hear news from the battle. When it came, he was overwhelmed by it.
- Vv. 19-22 *Sadness in Israel.* All Israel was affected by the sad news of the loss of the Ark. Typical of this sadness was the name, Ichabod, given to the son of Phinehas. Indeed, the glory had departed from Israel.

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *God does not abide in symbols.* The Ark of the Covenant was but a symbol of the presence of the Lord. The people of Israel thought that its presence would assure them of victory in battle. Their superstitious enemies, the Philistines also supposed that having the Ark on the battlefield was equivalent to God's being there. The Living God, however, does not dwell in temples made with men's hands. Moreover, He cannot be confined to a wooden box. His spirit is with those who worship Him in spirit and in truth.
2. *Disobedience breeds anxiety.* The aged high priest sitting in the gate of the Tabernacle area and worrying about the safety of the Ark is a pathetic picture of a man who has failed to take proper measures to guarantee

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God's blessings. If Eli had rebuked his sons in their earlier evil ways, he would have been strong enough to resist their unholy desire to take the Ark of the Covenant to the battlefield. Since he had been lenient on them in former activities, he was in no position to resist them in their final, fatal follies. He was left sitting helpless while tragedy fell.

3. *National calamity brings personal heartache.* Eli's daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was caught up in the holocaust of Israel's national disaster. Left alone in the midst of the pains of childbirth which ultimately resulted in her own death, she used her last breath to give a very descriptive name to her son—Ichabod. What was true for the millions of Israel was true for each individual. God had departed from them, because they had departed from God.

The Loss of the Ark and End of Eli's House, 4:1-22.

The Loss of the Ark. 4:1-11

And the word of Samuel came to all Israel. Now Israel went out against the Philistines to battle, and pitched beside Ezenezer: and the Philistines pitched in Aphek.

2 And the Philistines put themselves in array against Israel: and when they joined battle, Israel was smitten before the Philistines: and they slew of the army in the field about four thousand men.

3 And when the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, Wherefore hath the Lord smitten us today before the Philistines? Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of Shiloh unto us, that, when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies.

4 So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth *between* the cherubim: and the two sons

of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, *were* there with the ark of the covenant of God.

5 And when the ark of the covenant of the Lord came into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again.

6 And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they said, What *meaneth* the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews? And they understood the ark of the Lord was come into the camp.

7 And the Philistines were afraid, for they said, God is come into the camp. And they said, Woe unto us! for there hath not been such a thing heretofore.

8 Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty Gods? these *are* the Gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness.

9 Be strong, and quit yourselves like men, O ye Philistines, that ye be not servants unto the Hebrews, as they have been to you: quit yourselves like men, and fight.

10 And the Philistines fought, and Israel was smitten, and they fled every man into his tent: and there was a very great slaughter; for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen.

11 And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain.

1. *In what way did the word of Samuel come to all Israel? 4:1*

The background of the verb translated *came* indicates that the words which Samuel spoke came to pass. If he predicted certain things would occur, they did occur. Certain judgments which he pronounced were judgments of truth. In this way it is known that Samuel was a prophet. All Israel saw that the things which he spoke were true. None of his prophecies failed. He was speaking as God spoke to him.

2. Where is Eben-ezer? 4:2

From later history we learn that Eben-ezer was a spot named by Samuel. It was located between Mispah and Shen. It is quite near the old Roman road that runs northwest out of the city of Jerusalem and is located in the hill country of the tribe of Benjamin. Aphek is farther north and west and was a rallying place for the Philistines whenever they came up to attack Israel. Aphek would be found in the edge of the hill country as it began to slope down towards the Mediterranean sea.

3. Why did the elders of Israel send for the Ark? 4:3

They were the old folk; they should have known better. This is an illustration of the old people leading the young people out of the right track. The older people were teaching them wrong. They were corrupt. They had come to trust in the Ark itself as a sort of graven image to deliver them. These elders were afraid of the enemy, the Philistines, and sent for the Ark, thinking that its presence would bring freedom and deliverance to them.

4. What was this Ark? 4:3

This was the Ark that went before the people at the invasion of the country and the siege of Jericho. Jehovah and the Ark were very closely identified. It was a chest and it contained the two tables of the Covenant. It was covered with gold and named the Ark of the Testimony. When the command was given for its construction, the following dimensions were laid out: "two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof" (Exodus 25:10b). The same word is used to describe the sacophagus of Joseph (Genesis 50:26) and of the box set by the side of the altar to receive the money contributions of the worshipers (II Kings 12:10). The Ark of the Covenant was made of acacia wood.

5. What were the cherubims? 4:4

The cherubims were angelic figures. It is not necessary to spell this word as it is spelled in the King James version.

The form cherubim signifies the plurality of the word. We do often speak of a cherub and think of a cherub as being a little angel. Two of these cherubim were on the mercy seat which was placed over the Ark of the covenant. These cherubim spread out their wings and covered the mercy seat with their faces one to another (Exodus 37).

6. *Why were the Israelites called Hebrews? 4:6*

The Hebrews were descendants of Eber. Eber was a descendant of Shem. Shem is described as the father of all the children of Eber (Genesis 10:21). After Lot was captured by the kings of the East, one of the Canaanites came and told "Abram the Hebrew" (Genesis 14:13). Thus the children of Israel had been known as Hebrews for centuries, and it may have been the favorite name of their enemies, although we find men speaking of the name without being ashamed of it.

7. *Why were the Philistines afraid? 4:7*

The Philistines thought that there was an unusual appearance of God himself. They had heard of the mighty act which God had performed as they mentioned later. They must have remembered that it was the God of the Hebrews who had shaken down the walls of Jericho. It was He who had parted the water of the Jordan and enabled His people to cross over in dry land. Now they found themselves face to face with this God. It was their superstition which brought fear to them.

8. *Did the Philistines think the Israelites had many Gods? 4:8*

They asked, "Who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty Gods?" They went on to say, "These are the Gods that smote the Egyptians." Whether they thought that Israel had many Gods or only one, we cannot determine from the wording of the verse. The Hebrew word for God is plural in form. It may be that they were saying, "Who shall deliver us out of the hand of this

mighty God? This is the God that smote the Egyptians." The Israelites had given them no reason to believe that they had many Gods.

9. *When had the Israelites served the Philistines?* 4:9

Israel had been beaten by the Philistines many times in their past history. These Philistines were the perennial enemies of Israel. Samson had brought some deliverance (Judges 13-16), but his deliverance had not been long lived. Sampson himself had died in the prison house in Gaza, one of the principal towns of Philistia.

10. *Were the expectations of the elders realized?* 4:10

The Philistines smote the Israelites, and every man had to flee. 30,000 men of the Israelites fell there. This was 26,000 more than were slain in the first movement, which is described in verse two. Moreover, the Ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli were slain. All of this was accomplished by the unexpected resurgence of courage into the ranks of the Philistines. If the elders of Israel had expected something of courage to come to the men of Israel, they were disappointed. Instead, the courage of despair surged through the Philistines.

Death of Eli. 4:12-18

12 And there ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and came to Shiloh the same day with his clothes rent, and with earth upon his head.

13 And when he came, lo, Eli sat upon a seat by the wayside watching: for his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city, and told *it*, all the city cried out.

14 And when Eli heard the noise of the crying, he said, What *meaneth* the noise of this tumult? And the man came in hastily, and told Eli.

15 Now Eli was ninety and eight years old; and his eyes were dim, that he could not see.

16 And the man said unto Eli, I *am* he that came out of

the army, and I fled today out of the army. And he said, What is there done, my son?

17 And the messenger answered and said, Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God is taken.

18 And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died: for he was an old man, and heavy. And he had judged Israel forty years.

11. Who was the messenger from the battle? 4:12

Rabbinical tradition makes him to have been Saul. All the Scriptures tell us is that he was a Benjamite. The rabbinical tradition tells quite a story of the manner in which Saul had rescued the tables of the Law from the hands of Goliath and then had run to tell Eli. This Benjamite, who is unnamed is, however, described. He was in deep distress, having his clothes rent and earth on his head. These were the usual signs of grief (see II Samuel 1:2; 15:32); but he still had a task to perform, that of bringing the tidings of the battle to the people at Shiloh and to Eli, the old priest.

12. Where was Eli and why there? 4:13

He was at the roadside watching because he was anxious for the safety of the Ark of God. The road would naturally be the one leading to the scene of the battle. Yet the fugitive apparently comes first to the town and afterwards to Eli. If we understand that the gate mentioned is the gate to the Tabernacle, at which he was accustomed to sit (I Samuel 1:9) then we can better understand his position. Though he was blind, his mind was intent upon the road along which news must come. When the bearer of tidings came first to the town, the people shrieked at the news: and Eli heard the outcry before the messenger reached him, although the messenger had not delayed.

13. *Why did Eli have to ask the meaning of the tumult?*
4:14

As we have already read and as we read again in verse fifteen, Eli's eyes were dim. He could not see. As a man who was blind, he had to ask what the meaning of all the tumult might be. No doubt he was giving expression of his constant anxiety for the safety of the Ark and the fulfillment of God's judgment against his house.

14. *What effect did the news have on Eli and why?* 4:18

He was old and was blind. Eli must have known the Ark was going out, and he must have known that they had done wrong. He realized his own mistakes. Sitting there in the darkness of the so-called black cataract (for this is the description as given and generally is an affliction paralyzing the optic nerves of those who reach a great age) he was trembling for the safety of the Ark. He did not react so much to the news about the death of his two sons; but when he heard of the capture of the Ark, he fell back from his seat and broke his neck and died. The items of the news reach him in a scale of ascendancy: Israel had fled from before the Philistines, there was a great slaughter of the people, Eli's two sons were dead, and the Ark of God had been captured.

Sadness in Israel. 4:19-22

19 And his daughter-in-law, Phinehas' wife, was with child, *near* to be delivered: and when she heard the tidings that the ark of God was taken, and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bowed herself and travailed; for her pains came upon her.

20 And about the time of her death the woman that stood by her said unto her, Fear not; for thou hast borne a son. But she answered not, neither did she regard it.

21 And she named the child Ichabod, saying, The glory is departed from Israel: because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father-in-law and her husband.

22 And she said, The glory is departed from Israel: for the Ark of God is taken.

15. *What is the meaning of the word Ichabod? 4:21*

The real meaning of the word is, "where is the glory." It is also translated "there is no glory." Phinehas' wife knew that the glory of Israel was gone when the Ark was captured. We can rest assured that the glory of God's people is gone whenever they turn their backs on Him. This is the sad story of many individual lives, many churches and many Christian schools. They have forsaken their first love. The glory of God has departed from them because they have departed from God.

16. *What was the fundamental error in taking the Ark into the battle?*

It was the error of idolatry. Simply because of the fact that the Ark of the Covenant was in the Holy of Holies, and because it had been with the children of Israel in the wanderings of the wilderness and had preserved them, seemingly, these people thought that the Power was in the chest covered with gold, when the strength was in the Lord, who had caused the great deliverance and even commanded the making of the Ark.

It is just the same now, when we take merely a historical Christ outside us for our Redeemer. If we had not Christ, we could never stand. For there is no help in heaven and on earth beside Him. But if we have Him in no other way than merely without us and under us, if we only preach about Him, teach, hear, read, talk, discuss, and dispute about Him, He will no more help us than the Ark helped the Israelites.

CHAPTER 4 IN REVIEW

1. Where did Israel pitch her camp? _____
2. Where did the Philistines pitch their camp? _____
3. What did the people take into battle with them? _____

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4. What name did the Philistines call the Israelites? _____
5. How many Israelites were killed in the first battle? _____
6. How many Israelites were killed in the second battle? _____
7. How old was Eli? _____
8. Of what tribe was the messenger who brought news of the battle? _____
9. What was the name of Eli's grandson? _____
10. To which of Eli's sons was the grandson born? _____

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 5

- Vv. 1- 6 *The Ark in the temple of Dagon.* The Philistines treated the Ark of the Lord as if it were a part of the spoils of war. Since they worshiped the false god, Dagon, they took the Ark to the temple of Dagon. It was installed there as a trophy of war and as a sign of the superiority of their god over the God of the Israelites.
- Vv. 7- 9 *The Ark in Gath.* From the temple of Dagon in Ashdod, the Ark was carried to the city of Gath. This was one of the most important cities in Philistia and is famous in later times as the home of Goliath.
- Vv. 10-12 *The Ark in Ekron.* When an affliction from the Lord came on the inhabitants of Gath, they asked that the Ark be removed from their community. The men of Ekron were horrified when they saw the Ark had been brought to their city. They, too, asked to have it removed.

FIRST SAMUEL

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *God alone is God.* Men have invented many false gods for themselves. All of men's inventions are sheer folly. They are nothing more than the figment of their imaginations or the products of their hands. The prophet Isaiah described the folly of making graven images and molten idols (Isaiah 44:9-20). This foolishness is borne out in the activity in the house of Dagon. God demonstrated His superiority over the god of the Philistines by throwing down the image of Dagon.
2. *Sinners cannot escape from God.* Though sinful men flee from God, their sins will find them out. Though they strive to drive God from their homes and communities, He will pursue them. The repeated afflictions in Philistia were sign enough that God was punishing the Philistines for their mishandling of the Ark.

The Captivity of the Ark, 5:1—7:17.

The Ark in the Temple of Dagon. 5:1-6

And the Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it from Ebenezer unto Ashdod.

2 When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon.

3 And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon *was* fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the Lord. And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again.

4 And when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon *was* fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the Lord; and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands *were* cut off upon the threshold; only *the stump* of Dagon was left of him.

5 Therefore neither the priests of Dagon, nor any that come into Dagon's house, tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod unto this day.

6 But the hand of the Lord was heavy upon them of Ashdod, and he destroyed them, and smote them with emerods, *even* Ashdod and the coasts thereof.

1. Where did the Philistines take the Ark? 5:1

They thought they had captured the God of Israel, and they wanted to place this God by their god and glory in the triumph. As we should expect in the case of a remarkable trophy, they brought it to the temple of Dagon. Dagon was the national god of the Philistines, if we gather anything from his prominence here. The temple alluded to here existed until the time of the Maccabees (I Maccabees 10:83 ff; 11.4).

2. Who was Dagon? 5:2 (cf. Judges 16:23)

The nature and attributes of Dagon are not certainly known. He is a god of the Philistines in whose honor a great feast was held (Judges 16:23). If the name is Semite, it may be related either to the word for fish or to a word for corn. The adoration of a fish-god or corn would be at home in the fine grain-growing land of the Shephelah. A bas-relief in Khorsabad, Sargon's Assyrian capital, depicts a figure swimming in the sea. The upper part of the body resembled a bearded man, wearing the ordinary conical tiara of royalty and was adorned with elephants' tusks. The lower part of the body resembled the body of a fish. Since the whole scene is the picture of a battle between the Assyrian king and the inhabitants of the coast of Syria, this is in all probability a representation of the god of Ashdod, namely, Dagon.

3. What happened while the Ark was in Philistia? 5:3-7

Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the Ark of the Lord on the first morning. On the second morning, both the palms of Dagon's hands were cut off,

his head was cut off, and the remaining stump was lying upon the threshold of the temple. The visitation of God was not restricted to the demolition of the statue of Dagon, but affected the people of Ashdod as well. The desolation included diseases and also the withdrawal or diminution of the means of subsistence, the devastation of the fields, and such like. From Ashdod, the Ark was sent to Gath, thence to Ekron. There was a deadly panic. No part of the country wanted the Ark deposited in its borders, so they finally decided that something would have to be done about it. The tumult was not caused merely by fear or death, but it was a result of their actual suffering.

4. *Where was Ashdod?* 5:6

Ashdod was one of the five principal cities of the Philistines. Together with Gaza, Gath, Ekron, and Ashkelon it formed what was known as the Philistine pentapolis. These cities were at the very height of their power at the time of Saul and continued to be important after the time of David. Ashdod was situated between Ashkelon, a seaport, and Ekron, the city inland on the caravan route east to Lydda and west to Joppa.

The Ark in Gath. 5:7-9

7 And when the men of Ashdod saw that *is was* so, they said, The ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us: for his hand is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god.

8 They sent therefore and gathered all the lords of the Philistines unto them, and said, What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel? And they answered, Let the ark of the God of Israel be carried about unto Gath. And they carried the ark of the God of Israel about *thither*.

9 And it was *so*, that, after they had carried it about, the hand of the Lord was against the city with a very great destruction: and he smote the men of the city, both small and great, and they had emerods in their secret parts.

5. *Where was Gath?* 5:8

Gath was also one of the cities of the Philistine pentapolis. The name means "wine press." The site has not been uncovered, and the city probably disappeared because of the disaster hinted at in Amos 6:2. Many archaeologists favor a site at Telles-Safiyeh; ten miles east of Ashdod and ten miles southeast of Ekron. The Crusaders stopped here, and Richard the Lionhearted made his raids on caravans near Beersheba from this point. The city was the nearest of the large Philistine towns to Hebrew territory. It is known as the home of Goliath (I Samuel 17). Achish was king of the city at the time of David and befriended him during Saul's persecution. David later captured the city (I Chronicles 18:1).

6. *What were Emerods?* 5:9

The Hebrew word signifies a tumor (Deuteronomy 28:27). An affliction of emerods was considered a painful disease. It was especially promoted by the sedentary habits of the Orientals and hence very common among them. Although the affliction is rather easily cured by the advanced skill of the Western people, the popular medicine of the East had no cure for it. It was therefore a very terrible visitation. The affliction struck the men in their secret parts and made them very uncomfortable.

The Ark in Ekron. 5:10-12

10 Therefore they sent the ark of God to Ekron. And it came to pass, as the ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out, saying, They have brought about the ark of the God of Israel to us, to slay us and our people.

11 So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go again to his own place, that it slay us not, and our people: for there was a deadly destruction throughout all the city; the hand of God was very heavy there.

12 And the men that died not were smitten with the emerods: and the cry of the city went up to heaven.

7. *Where was Ekron?* 5:10

Ekron was about eleven miles from Gath. It had belonged at one time to Judah (Joshua 13:3). It was also possessed by the tribe of Dan (Joshua 19:43). The Philistines had jurisdiction over it in the time of Eli as we see here. The archaeologists have found its site at Akir, ten miles northeast of Ashdod. From what has been found, it has been concluded that the fly god was worshipped here. This is also brought out in the Scripture (II Kings 1:2).

8. *Why did the people say that the Ark would slay them?*
5:10b

Wherever the Ark had gone, the people had been afflicted. The men of Ekron therefore felt that they would all be killed. People are naturally afraid of deities. They may even fear the servants of God. This was the attitude of the widow of Zarephath when Elijah came to her. She felt that Elijah's coming had resulted in the death of her son (I Kings 17:18). The Philistine people were afraid that the presence of the Ark of the Lord in their midst would bring death to them.

9. *Who were the lords of the Philistines?* 5:11

The lords of the Philistines were the kings of the various city-states. One lord would rule in Gath. Another would have jurisdiction in Ashdod. Still another would be the ruler of Ekron. Some of them are known to us. Achish was king of Gath in David's day (I Samuel 21:10). These lords of the Philistines had come to Delilah to offer her money to deliver Samson into their hands. (Judges 16:5). They held a council to decide their strategy; and they were addressed on this occasion by the citizens of Ekron, who asked that the Ark be taken from their city.

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CHAPTER 5 IN REVIEW

1. To what city did the Philistines first take the ark? _____
2. Where did the Philistines put the ark? _____
3. What was the name of the Philistine god? _____
4. To what city was the ark taken next? _____
5. With what affliction did God smite the Philistine men? _____
6. To what Philistine city was the ark taken? _____
7. What happened to the Philistine idol during the first night? _____
8. What happened to the idol during the second night? _____
9. What other cities formed the Philistine pentapolis? _____
10. Which of the cities was nearest to Israel? _____

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 6

- Vv. 1-9 *The decision to return the Ark.* Although the Philistines had beaten Israel on the field of battle, they were themselves utterly defeated in their attempt to make a prize of war out of the Ark of the Testimony. As they had moved the Ark about from city to city, its trail had been marked by constant afflictions on the Philistines. In utter dismay, they gave up in their attempts to keep it and made preparations to return it to Israel.
- Vv. 10-18 *The Ark returned.* An ingenious plan was devised by the Philistines. By it they were able to determine that God was indeed directing the path of the kine. They knew then that

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Jehovah, the God of the Israelites, had been the source of the plagues brought against Philistia.

Vv. 19-21 *Men of Beth-shemesh smitten.* When the Ark was returned to Israel's territory, the first spot it reached was Beth-shemesh. Some of these men did not have proper respect for the symbol of God's abiding presence; and God smote 50,070 men of Israel on account of this lack of respect.

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *God's hand is seen in the affairs of men.* The Philistines knew that there was something very unusual about the fact that trouble came wherever the Ark was located. This might have been coincidental if it happened only a time or two; but when it happened again and again, they knew that some supernatural power was behind the occurrences. Since they saw the hand of Almighty God in these events, they rightly decided that they should repent of their wrong actions and make restitution for their misdeeds.
2. *God guides even the beasts of the field.* The natural instinct of the kine was overruled. Naturally, these milk cows would want to stay close to their calves. When the calves were locked in the stall and the cows were hitched to the cart bearing the Ark of the Lord, the cows went directly away from their own calves. Nothing short of the interference of God in the natural instincts of these beasts would cause them to go against their habits. This was a sign to the Philistines that the hand of God was in the whole affair.
3. *Man should have reverence for the things of God.* Only Levites and priests were to bear the Ark of the Covenant. Their duties were assigned to them (Numbers 4).

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The men of Beth-shemesh were quite presumptuous when they "looked into the ark of the Lord" (v. 19). This lack of respect brought punishment upon the people, and the event should be a lesson in reverence for men of all times.

The Decision to Return the Ark. 6:1-9

And the ark of the Lord was in the country of the Philistines seven months.

2 And the Philistines called for the priests and the diviners, saying, What shall we do to the ark of the Lord? tell us wherewith we shall send it to his place.

3 And they said, If ye send away the ark of the God of Israel, send it not empty; but in any wise return him a trespass offering: then ye shall be healed, and it shall be known to you why his hand is not removed from you.

4 Then said they, What *shall be* the trespass offering which we shall return to him? They answered, Five golden emerods, and five golden mice, *according to* the number of the lords of the Philistines: for one plague *was* on you all, and on your lords.

5 Wherefore ye shall make images of your emerods, and images of your mice that mar the land; and ye shall give glory unto the God of Israel: peradventure he will lighten his hand from off you, and from off your gods, and from off your land.

6 Wherefore then do ye harden your hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? when he had wrought wonderfully among them, did they not let the people go, and they departed?

7 Now therefore make a new cart, and take two milch kine, on which there hath come no yoke, and tie the kine to the cart, and bring their calves home from them:

8 And take the ark of the Lord, and lay it upon the cart; and put the jewels of gold, which ye return him *for*

a trespass offering, in a coffer by the side thereof; and send it away, that it may go.

9 And see, if it goeth up by the way of his own coast to Bethshemesh, *then* he hath done us this great evil: but if not, then we shall know that *it is* not his hand *that* smote us; it *was* a chance *that* happened to us.

1. *What was the final decision about the deposition of the Ark?* 6:1

The method of disposing of it was of rational order. They were to put a trespass offering beside the Ark. This was to be of five golden emerods and five golden mice. They there were to build a new cart; take two milk cows, upon which the yoke had never been; leave their calves at home; and see if the Lord would guide the cows to remove the Ark from their country. The natural inclination of the mother cows would keep them from going away. The behavior of the cattle would show whether God wished them to return to Israel. Their respect for God is seen in the fact that they prepared a new cart and they selected milk cows upon which no yoke had yet come.

2. *Who were the Diviners?* 6:2

Divination is practiced by many religious people who are without God's revelation. The king of Egypt had magicians whom he called to interpret his dreams (Genesis 41:8). Joseph pretended to divine by the use of a silver cup (Genesis 44:15). Generally speaking, divination was the art of obtaining secret knowledge, especially of the future. It may be considered as the pagan counterpart of Biblical prophecy. A careful study of Scripture reveals that divination is by demon power, whereas genuine prophecy is by the Spirit of God. Many passages in the Bible legislate against such activity as divination (Deuteronomy 18:10-12). The lords of the Philistines evidently had their diviners, and they depended upon them to help them to make decisions.

3. *How did the Philistines know about a trespass offering?*
6:3

Many false religions contain parallels of the true religion. The trespass offering of the Philistine paganism is an instance of this. God had laid down rules and regulations for the making of a trespass offering (Leviticus 5 and 6). What the Philistines offered was a pagan counterfeit of the true trespass offering. The fact that it is not a Biblical trespass offering is seen from the nature of what they offered—golden emerods and golden mice. Unclean animals such as mice would be an abomination to Jehovah.

4. *Why did they send golden mice?* 6:4

The golden mice were images of the rodents which overran the land and added severity to the plague of boils which afflicted their persons. The pestilence which had accompanied the presence of the Ark was so severe that many of the men had died (5:12). The cry of the city went up to heaven. The men themselves were incapacitated and the pests added increased suffering and hardship to the afflicted people.

5. *How did the Philistines know about the Egyptian bondage?* 6:6

What happened in Egypt was well known throughout all the Mediterranean basin. Immediately after the people of Israel had crossed the Red Sea, they sang a song to celebrate the triumph. In one verse, they said: "The people shall hear and be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestine" (Exodus 15:14). This news did spread when Joshua led the people of Israel against Jericho. Rahab the harlot said: "We have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when you came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites (Joshua 2:10). The people of Philistia also knew that the Egyptians had hardened their hearts. This statement throws some light on the repeated reference made to the hardening of Pharaoh's heart.

Although it is said in some references that God hardened Pharaoh's heart (Exodus 10:27; 11:10; 14:4), it is also said that Pharaoh hardened his own heart (Exodus 9:34). The Philistines knew that Pharaoh was responsible for hardening his own heart, and they did not want to harden their hearts against God and be destroyed.

6. *Why were the heifers not broken?* 6:7

Heifers which were not broken would not naturally stand still while they were hitched to the cart. When their calves were penned up, they would not be expected to leave the area. All of this unnatural activity on the part of the kine indicated that God's hand was involved in this procedure.

7. *What were the jewels of gold?* 6:8

The jewels of gold were evidently the five golden emerods and the five golden mice. They are called here a trespass offering and identified as being the jewels. They were placed in the coffer by the side of the Ark. It is doubtful if the Philistines had removed the mercy seat from the Ark, and looked in it. If they had, they would have found the tables of stone and the pot of Manna which had been placed there in the days of Moses, along with the rod of Aaron which budded (Exodus 16:33, Numbers 17:10). All this trespass offering was carefully placed on the cart along with the Ark itself.

8. *Where was Beth-Shemesh?* 6:9

Beth-Shemesh is a place now called Aim Shems. The road to Beth-Shemesh from Ekron runs along a straight smooth bed of a valley in which a meandering brook makes a crooked line through the middle. The name of the town signifies "house of the sun." It was a priestly city (Joshua 21:16) in the tribe of Dan on the northern boundary of Judah (Joshua 15:10). The location would be on the northwest slopes of the mountains of Judah, and pottery remains found there indicate that the city was occupied from about 2000 B.C. through the seventh century of the

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same era. The town was evidently destroyed by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar II.

The Ark Returned. 6:10-18

10 And the men did so; and took two milch kine, and tied them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home:

11 And they laid the ark of the Lord upon the cart, and the coffer with the mice of gold and the images of their emerods.

12 And the kine took the straight way to the way of Beth-shemesh, *and* went along the highway, lowing as they went, and turned not aside *to* the right hand or *to* the left; and the lords of the Philistines went after them unto the border of Beth-shemesh.

13 And *they of* Beth-shemesh *were* reaping their wheat harvest in the valley: and they lifted up their eyes, and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see *it*.

14 And the cart came into the field of Joshua, a Beth-shemite, and stood there, where *there was* a great stone: and they clave the wood of the cart, and offered the kine a burnt offering unto the Lord.

15 And the Levites took down the ark of the Lord, and the coffer that *was* with it, wherein the jewels of gold *were*, and put *them* on the great stone: and the men of Beth-shemesh offered burnt offerings and sacrificed sacrifices the same day unto the Lord.

16 And when the five lords of the Philistines had seen *it*, they returned to Ekron the same day.

17 And these *are* the golden emerods which the Philistines returned *for* a trespass offering unto the Lord; for Ashdod one, for Gaza one, for Askelon one, for Gath one, for Ekron one;

18 And the golden mice, *according to* the number of all the cities of the Philistines *belonging to* the five lords, *both* of fenced cities, and of country villages, even unto

the great *stone* of Abel, whereon they set down the ark of the Lord: *which stone remaineth* unto this day in the field of Joshua, the Beth-shemite.

9. *Was the plan successful?* 6:9-12

The plan was successful. The Philistines knew that it was because the cows took a beeline right through Beth-shemesh, never turning to the right hand or the left. The apparent redundancy is due to the author's desire to make the miracle plain. The lowing of the kine shows their natural desire to return to the calves. The cows stopped in the field of Joshua, the Beth-shemite. When the men of Beth-shemesh stood in unrighteousness and looked into the Ark, God smote them; the men of Kirjath-jearim were called to take the Ark to their land. It remained here for twenty years.

10. *What time of year was it when the Ark was returned?*
6:13

It was the time of reaping in the wheat harvest when the Ark came back to Israel. This would be about the height of the growing season in Palestine, and would be in the time we mark as late June or early July. This would permit the people to be out in the fields where they would soon catch a glimpse of the strange sight.

11. *Who was Joshua the Beth-shemite?* 6:14

This man is unknown except for this reference. He is called Joshua the Beth-shemite to distinguish him from Joshua the son of Nun, who was the leader of the people of Israel following Moses (Joshua 1:1). The fact that he owned the field would indicate that he was not a Levite himself, but a farmer in Judah.

12. *What kind of offering did the men make?* 6:15

The fact that they offered the female animals would indicate that this was a peace offering. The specifications of the peace offering are found in Leviticus 3. It is stipulated there that the peace offering might be either

male or female, but it was to be without blemish. If these men offered this sacrifice in an acceptable way, they must have followed the regulations laid down in this chapter.

13. *What was the stone of Abel?* 6:18

The Hebrew word Abel is translated with the phrase "grassy place." We might define it as a meadow. The word is used as a prefix in a number of cases. Here it signifies the marker which located the spot where the offering was made as the Ark was returned. The fact that the stone remained unto the day of writing would indicate that it was there for a number of years—throughout the judgeship of Samuel and into the reign of Saul.

The Men of Beth-shemesh Smitten. 6:19-21

19 And he smote the men of Beth-shemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the Lord, even he smote of the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men: and the people lamented, because the Lord had smitten *many* of the people with a great slaughter.

20 And the men of Beth-shemesh said, Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God? and to whom shall he go up from us?

21 And they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim, saying, The Philistines have brought again the ark of the Lord; come ye down, *and* fetch it up to you.

14. *Why did God smite the people of Beth-shemesh?* 6:19

The people of Israel were glad to have the Ark back within their border. They were evidently overly familiar with the sacred chest, and God smote them. The number slain at this instance for irreverently examining this holy shrine is recorded as 50,070. The fact that the 50,000 is separated from the threescore and ten has caused some to wonder about the total number. But the text enjoys very

good integrity. The sin they committed was very gross, and God punished them accordingly.

15. *Why was the Ark taken to Kirjath-jearim?* 6:21

Kirjath-jearim was not a Levitical city. It was the nearest large town on the road from Beth-shemesh to Shiloh. The people of Beth-shemesh were anxious to get it out of their community and evidently sent to a nearby town for help. The town was in the rugged wooded highland which looked down on the valley of Sorek. The exact site is not known with certainty, but some archaeologists believe it is the present Kuriet Enab to the north of Mount Jearim. Once the Ark was set in this new location, it was off the border line of the Shephelah, and within Israel's proper territory. Here in the fields of the woods it rested until the day David brought it up to Jerusalem (II Samuel 6:2, 3, 12; I Chronicles 15:1-29). cf. Psalm 132.

CHAPTER 6 IN REVIEW

1. What offerings did the Philistines send back by the ark? _____
2. On what conveyance did they return it? _____
3. To what point in Israel was the ark first brought? _____
4. What time of year was it when the ark came back? _____
5. What was the name of the man who received the ark? _____
6. Of what tribe was he a member? _____
7. What kind of offering did the Israelites make when the ark came back? _____
8. What name was given to the place where the offering was made? _____
9. How many men were smitten when the Israelites looked in the ark? _____
10. To what point was the ark taken after the tragedy? _____

STUDIES IN SAMUEL

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 7

- Vv. 1- 2 *The Ark in the house of Abinadab.* After the men of Beth-shemesh were punished for their lack of respect, they besought the men of Kirjath-jearim to come and get the Ark. This they did. They brought it into the hill country of Judah and placed it in the house of Abinadab. One of the sons of Abinadab, Eleazar by name, was appointed to take care of the Ark.
- Vv. 3- 8 *Israel purged at Mizpeh.* Periodically throughout their history the children of Israel found it necessary to take stock of themselves and give better direction to their lives. Even the patriarch Jacob himself found it necessary to purge his house of idols when he was returning from his sojourn with Laban in Haran (Genesis 35:2-5). When Joshua was bidding farewell to his people, he urged them to choose whether they would serve Jehovah or the false gods that they had learned about in other communities (Joshua 24:23). This same action was necessary before the people could be united behind the leadership of Samuel.
- Vv. 9-17 *Israel delivered under Samuel.* The judges were not mere interpreters and administrators of the law. They were men upon whom the Spirit of God came when the occasion demanded it. Quite often they were great military leaders who delivered the people when they were attacked by foreign nations. One of Samuel's first acts was to lead the people of Israel in a successful military campaign against the Philistines. When peace and quiet

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were restored to the land, Samuel went from place to place to assist the people in living in peace in the land.

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *Making peace with God precedes going to war for God.* Before Israel was ready to do battle for the Lord, her inhabitants needed to purge themselves of the graven images and molten idols which had crept into their society. Just as Isaiah did not feel that he was ready to deliver the Lord's message until after his unclean lips had been seared with coals from the altar (Isaiah 6), the soldiers of Israel were not strong enough to carry the battle for God until their weak faith had been bolstered. The individual Christian today feels that he is impotent when the besetting sins of his life have not been ferreted out and forgiven by the grace of God and the advocacy of the Son of God.
2. *God helps His followers to fight their battles.* God fought for Israel. He "thundered with a great thunder on the day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them" (v. 10). In a very real way, the abiding presence of God assists those who wrestle against "principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12).

The Ark in the House of Abinadab. 7-1, 2

And the men of Kirjath-jearim came, and fetched up the ark of the Lord, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the Lord.

2 And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirjath-jearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.

1. *Who was Abinadab?* 7:1

Abinadab was a very interesting name. It signified "father of generosity." He was evidently a Levite of Kirjath-jearim. It was in his house that the Ark was deposited. Although the Israelites themselves did not gather together to anoint a new priest, the people of the community appointed Eleazar to take care of the Ark. This was not a change of the priesthood as prophesied by God (I Samuel 2:35), but it was the temporary arrangement made by the people to care for the Ark.

2. *Why did the people leave it there for such a long time?*
7:2

The people of Israel were not very punctual about performing the Lord's duties. The fact that they left the Ark in this strange location for 20 years is an indication of how they failed to do the Lord's bidding. Such an arrangement left the tabernacle itself still at Shiloh, but the main part of the tabernacle furniture at this distant location. It was only when David came to the throne that he began to take care of such neglected matters.

Israel Purged at Mizpeh. 7:3-8

3 And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, *then* put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.

4 Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the Lord only.

5 And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the Lord.

6 And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and drew water, and poured *it* out before the Lord, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the Lord. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh.

7 And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard *it*, they were afraid of the Philistines.

8 And the children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines.

3. *Why did Samuel exhort the people to return to the Lord?* 7:3

God's people had strayed very far from the road that He wanted them to walk. The wicked priests, Hophni and Phineas, had been allowed to lead the people astray. Their defection ultimately resulted in the capture of the Ark. Once the Ark was back in the borders of Israel, Samuel began a campaign to lead the people back to God. Samuel was addressing the leaders who were in return responsible for spreading his borders throughout the length and breadth of the land.

4. *Who were Baalim and Ashtaroth?* 7:4

They were Mr. and Mrs. Baalim. Baalim is the plural of Baal. Ashtaroth is the plural of Ashtarah. The plural *Baalim* is a general term employed to denote all the false deities, and is synonymous with the expression "other gods." Baal was the chief male deity of the Canaanites and all the nations of Hither Asia and was worshipped by the different nations with peculiar modifications. Therefore, he was designated by various distinctive epithets. Baal was a sun-god, and as such, the vehicle and source of physical life. Ashtaroth is derived from the singular *Ashtoreth* (see I Kings 11:5, 33; II Kings 23:13). In connection with the Sidonian Astharte, this was the general name used to denote the leading female deity of the Canaanitish tribes, a moon-goddess, who was worshipped

as the feminine principle of nature, embodied in the pure moonlight, and its influence upon terrestrial life. It corresponded to the Greek Aphrodite.

5. *In what way did Samuel judge? 7:6*

The judges who governed Israel were strictly God's vice-regents in the government of the people. God himself was the supreme ruler. Those who were thus elevated to the office of judgeship retained the dignity as long as they lived, although no family enjoyed regular unbroken succession to the office. Individuals prompted by the impulse of God's spirit when they witnessed the depressed state of their country were aroused to achieve deliverance. They continued in their office as defenders of religion and avengers of all crimes, particularly idolatry and its attended vices. Edersheim in his work, *Israel and Canaan*, (p. 107), says that the judges ruled only over one or several of the tribes. In such cases as the instance of Samuel it is apparent that he had jurisdiction in all the tribes. The Hebrew word for *judge* signified the effort necessary to settle a dispute and to maintain justice both for the individual and for the people. In the case of the Biblical judges, it has the added idea of liberating or delivering. The judges might be considered to be akin to the Roman consuls. In this particular case Samuel was interested in cleaning idolatry out of Israelite society.

6. *Why did the children of Israel ask Samuel to pray for them? 7:8*

The people knew that Samuel was a man of spiritual strength. Even when they rejected the Lord and Samuel's advice, they wanted Samuel to pray to God on their behalf. It is typical of the conduct of sinful people that they still want God's righteous leaders to pray on their behalf. Men who will not pray for themselves want somebody else to pray for them.

Israel Delivered Under Samuel. 7:9-17

9 And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered *it* for a burnt offering wholly unto the Lord: and Samuel cried unto the Lord for Israel; and the Lord heard him.

10 And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel.

11 And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until *they came* under Beth-car.

12 Then Samuel took a stone, and set *it* between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.

13 So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.

14 And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron even unto Gath; and the coasts thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.

15 And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.

16 And he went from year to year in circuit to Beth-el, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places.

17 And his return *was* to Ramah; for there *was* his house; and there he judged Israel; and there he built an altar unto the Lord.

7. *Where was Mizpeh? 7:9*

Mizpeh was five miles northwest of Jerusalem. The site is on a conical hill overlooking all the surrounding territory. The Philistines would be able to see the children of Israel as they gathered themselves together at this point. Since the Lords of the Philistines had recovered from their

afflictions they were able to come up to battle against Israel. As the children of Israel saw the Philistines, they were afraid. They knew that they had sinned in looking into the ark at Beth-shemesh, and they were afraid to go to battle against the enemy.

8. *Why did Samuel offer a sucking lamb?* 7:9

A whole burnt offering was to be a male without blemish. It could be of the flocks or of the herds, (Leviticus 1:10). It could also be out of the fowls (Leviticus 1:14). Such an offering would indicate the total dependence of the people of Israel on God's mercy.

9. *What was unusual about a great thunder?* 7:10

Palestine had little or no rain during the time of the wheat harvest. This was the time when the Ark was returned, and it would be a source of amazement to the people of Israel. Probably the great thunder would also have been accompanied with a storm which made it difficult for the Philistines to attack. As a matter of fact, the Scripture indicates that it did discomfit the Philistines. God himself fought for men and helped to overcome the attack of the Philistines. Thus the Philistines were stricken before Israel.

10. *Where is Beth-car?* 7:11

The name indicates a sheep house. The fact that it says they came "under Beth-car" indicates that the place itself was on a height with a road at its foot. The situation is not known. This is the only reference to the place to be found in the Scriptures. No doubt the Israelites chased the Philistines back down into their own territory.

11. *What is the meaning of Eben-ezer?* 7:12

This word means "the stone of help." Samuel said, "Hitherto the Lord has helped us." God had brought Israel a long way under Samuel's direction. They themselves were returning to the Lord. God had given them victory over the Philistines. The Ark was returned to

them. Samuel believed that God would help them further along their way. This is a good motto for Christians today.

12. *How was the hand of the Lord against the Philistines?*
7:13

God did not suffer the Philistines to gain the supremacy over Israel during the lifetime of Samuel. He brought such supernatural phenomenon upon them as the thunder which was a discomfiture in the battle at Mizpeh. On other occasions He indicated to the Israelites when it was time to go into battle. In every way by His good providence on the Israelites He was opposing the sinful ways of the Philistines.

13. *Who were the Amorites?* 7:14

The Amorites were the Canaanites. The two names are used rather interchangeably (Genesis 15:16; cf. Genesis 15:19-21). The word itself literally means "the high ones." It is generally supposed that these were the highlanders (Numbers 13:29; Deuteronomy 1:7). They were probably the most prominent of the Canaanite people and thus their name is sometimes used to signify the Canaanites in general. In the Tel-el-Amarna tablets, *amurri* is the name for Palestine-Phoenicia. This verse indicates that the people of Israel did not have any trouble from the Canaanite tribes dwelling in their land, but their war was against the Philistines who lived along the western border.

14. *How long was Samuel's judgeship?* 7:15

Samuel was a very young man when he came up to Eli at the tabernacle. He probably was not called until he had served some time as an apprentice to Eli. It took some time for him to become known among the Israelite people, but his judgeship was probably not very lengthy. The people soon rejected him, and they wanted a king. Samuel continued to live throughout most of the reign of Saul, and his death is not mentioned until near the end of Saul's reign (I Samuel 25:1).

15. *Where was Samuel's circuit?* 7:16, 17

Samuel did not make his home in Shiloh. He was evidently not a priest as such. He performed the function of a priest, but since Shiloh had lost the ark, Ramah became the center of his service as prophet and judge. The Ark of the Covenant was no longer the center of worship, and Samuel saw no reason to stay in Shiloh with the empty shell of the tabernacle. As has been indicated before, Samuel's home was in the highlands of Benjamin. He was centrally located to all the people of Israel at this point. From this home of his, he went out to Bethel on the north, Gilgal on the east, and Mizpeh on the west. His return was ever to his own home in Ramah.

CHAPTER 7 IN REVIEW

1. Who was appointed to take care of the ark? _____
2. How long was the ark left with him? _____
3. What two generic names are given to false gods? _____
4. What office did Samuel fulfill in Israel? _____
5. Where did Samuel assemble Israel? _____
6. Who attacked Israel while they were assembled? _____
7. What did the Israelites ask Samuel to do for them? _____
8. What did Samuel offer as a burnt offering? _____
9. What new name did Samuel give to the place? _____
10. At what places did Samuel judge Israel? _____

FIRST SAMUEL

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 8

- Vv. 1- 5 *The people ask for a king.* God had long foreseen the day when Israel would have a king. He had told Abraham that kings would come out of his loins (Genesis 17:6). Moses had received instructions from God to pass along to the Israelites to guide them in the selection of a man to rule over them (Deuteronomy 17:14-20). The people of Israel, however, were presumptuous in demanding a king before it was evident in God's good providence to establish a king over them. Their motive was also quite bad inasmuch as they wanted a king over them ". . . like all the nations" (v. 5).
- Vv. 6- 9 *The Lord instructs Samuel.* God told Samuel to hearken to the request of the people. He also instructed him to protest solemnly and show them the essential nature of a king.
- Vv. 10-18 *Samuel describes a king.* This passage is a classic description of the nature of a monarch. His demands upon the lives of his subjects are spelled out in large letters. Much of what Samuel predicted was fulfilled in the very first king of Israel. Other succeeding kings only verified what Samuel had said.
- Vv. 19-22 *The people persist.* Regardless of the consequences, the people were insistent in seeking a king. They heard all that Samuel had to say, but they were not diverted from their intentions of changing their society from one that has been described as a theocracy to one that is best known as a monarchy.

STUDIES IN SAMUEL LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *The pull of the world.* A great deal of pressure is brought upon individuals, communities, and countries as social custom prevails. What others do matters a great deal to all of us. Style of dress is dictated by what everybody seems to be wearing. Moral standards in non-Christian countries fluctuate with the changing social scene. Christian doctrine may also be interpreted differently according to what seems to be the prevailing opinions. It was this desire to conform that led Israel to ask for a king.
2. *The patience of God.* Although God had not instigated this movement towards the monarchy, His great love dictated that the request of the people should be granted. Samuel thought that the people had rejected him from being their judge. God declared that in reality the people were rejecting Him. Still, God did not turn His back upon them and forsake them to flounder in their foolish ways.

The Installation of Israel's First King, 8:1—10:27.

The people ask for a King. 8:1-5

And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel.

2 Now the name of his first-born was Joel; and the name of his second, Abiah: *they were* judges in Beer-sheba.

3 And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.

4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah,

5 And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

4. *When Samuel was old, whom did he make judges over Israel?* 8:1

He made his sons judges over Israel. The reasons assigned for the appointment of Samuel's sons as judges stem from his own advanced age. The inference which we might draw from this alone is that they were simply to support their father in the administration of justice and that Samuel had no intention of laying down his office and still less of making the supreme office of judge hereditary in his family. This is still more apparent from the fact that they were stationed as judges of the nation in Beer-sheba, which was on the southern border of Canaan.

2. *What are the meanings of the names of Samuel's sons?* 8:2

Samuel chose very appropriate names for his sons. His firstborn's name means "Jehovah is God." The other one had a name which means "Jehovah is my father." This is some indication of the faith which Samuel had, and it should have been an encouragement to his sons to walk in Godly ways.

3. *What sort of men were they?* 8:3

The sons did not walk in the way of their father. They set their hearts upon gain, took bribes, and perverted justice. All of this was in opposition to the command of God (see Exodus 23:6, 8; Deuteronomy 16:19). One can only marvel that having witnessed the failure of Eli to train his sons Samuel failed to curb the lusts of his sons. It is not enough to say that this is just the common experience of the Orientals. This is just another instance of a good father without the blessing of faithful sons. It is this very failure on the part of Samuel that occasioned the Israelites' demanding a king.

4. *Who were the elders?* 8:4

The elders of Israel were the leaders of the people. They were not elders in the same sense as leaders of the New Testament church (I Timothy 3). Each tribe would have

its appointed leaders. These men represented the tribes as they came to Samuel.

5. *What request did the people make of Samuel?* 8:5

The request was for a king. They used the age of Samuel, and the iniquity of his sons as an excuse. The people were represented by their leaders; and although in I Samuel 5:20 the desire is grounded in a need for a leader in war, the express reason here is the maladministration of justice. Samuel viewed this request as a sinful demand. He knew that the theocracy was the divinely appointed constitution for Israel. The substitution of another form was treason to God.

The Lord instructs Samuel. 8:6-9

6 But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord.

7 And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.

8 According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee.

9 Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.

6. *What was their real reason?* 8:6-9

They wanted to be like other nations. That is what many are saying today. We have to have a great association with offices and headquarters. Somebody is leading us around. Israel's request was based on a desire to follow the customs and institutions of other nations. These nations had been set aside for destruction when the people entered the land. These Israelites might have reminded

Samuel of his old age, which rendered him less able to attend to the duties of his office, and also of the avarice of his sons and the corruptness of the judges. They might have complained that his sons did not walk in his footsteps and asked God to choose suitable men. If they had done this, there could be no doubt that they would have received a gracious and suitable answer. They did not think of calling on God, however; they demanded that a king should be given them.

Samuel Describes a King. 8:10-18

10 And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people that asked of him a king.

11 And he said, 'This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint *them* for himself, for his chariots, and *to be* his horsemen; and *some* shall run before his chariots.

12 And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and *will set them* to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots.

13 And he will take your daughters *to be* confectionaries, and *to be* cooks, and *to be* bakers.

14 And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, *even* the best of *them*, and give *them* to his servants.

15 And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants.

16 And he will take your menservants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put *them* to his work.

17 He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants.

18 And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the Lord will not hear you in that day.

7. *What was the king to be like?* 8:10-18

With divine insight Samuel told the people that their king would demand of their best young men for his chariots and his horsemen. He knew that the king would need an army. Captains would be appointed from their midst over thousands and over fifties. Other men would be required to till the ground of the king and to make his instruments of war. Moreover the king would demand young women to serve as his cooks, bakers, and confectionaries. Their property would be confiscated by the king (I Kings 21). In addition to supporting the priests with a tithe, the people would also be required to give another tenth to the king. Samuel foresaw the day that they would cry out for relief, but God ordained that once they had committed themselves to such a form of rule, they would have no chance to return to the former times. God had ordained the theocratic form of government. Their rejection of His ordinances was the same as the rejection of Him, the Author of the ordinances (v. 7). It is rebellion against God to rebel against God's form of government. Church people should be very careful not to make such moves.

The People Persist. 8:19-22

19 Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us;

20 That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles.

21 And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of the Lord.

22 And the Lord said to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, Go ye every man unto his city.

8. *In what way had they rejected God? cf. I Samuel 8:20*

They had rejected God in that they wanted to be like all the nations. God had delivered them by judges. Samuel as a judge had delivered them, but they took it upon themselves. They were now saying, "We must have a king." In rejecting the judges, they were rejecting God. God was King. This is the verdict of God. In declaring Samuel incapable, they were founding their arguments upon mistrust in the Lord. In the person of Samuel they rejected the Lord and His rule. They wanted a king, because they imagined that Jehovah their God-King was not able to secure their constant prosperity. Instead of seeking for the cause of the misfortunes that had befallen them in their own sin, they searched for it in the constitution of the nation itself. In such a state of mind their desire for a king was a contempt and rejection of the kingly government of Jehovah.

9. *Why did Samuel rehearse the words of the people in the ears of the Lord? 8:21*

Samuel evidently went before the Lord again and again about the problem. This would be a rehearsal of these things in the ears of the Lord. Samuel's heart was heavy, and he found release in prayer. He was anxious about his people, and he wanted to be sure that he was doing the will of God in this matter. This demand of the people and the subsequent anointing of a king mark a turning point in the history of the people of Israel.

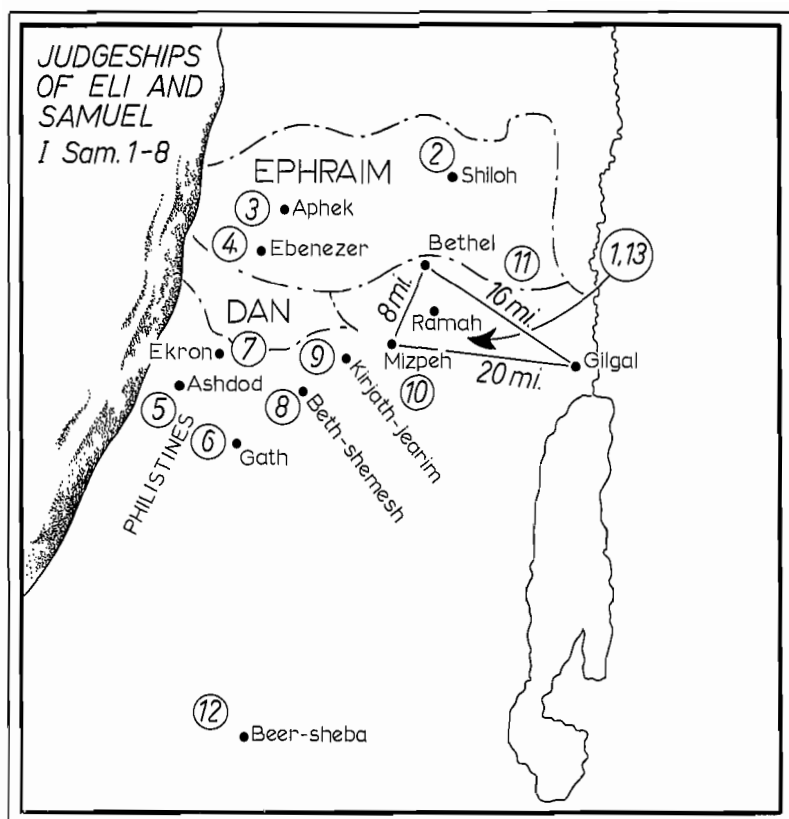
10. *Why did Samuel send the people back home? 8:22*

The elders of the people of Israel had come from various tribes. Some of them had come from across the Jordan in Gilead. Some had come from the far north near the Sea of Galilee. Others had no doubt come from Beer-sheba, the southern city half way down the length of the Dead Sea. Samuel was awaiting the will of the Lord in this matter, and he wanted time for this will to be made known to him. He would call the people again when a

king was picked out for them. The people evidently had respect for Samuel, and were willing to wait until the time was right. We find none of them rebelling openly against this dismissal, but they must have returned with thoughtful steps. What they were doing had brought sadness to the prophet. It had brought a statement from the Lord that forced them on in spite of the warning which Samuel had given them. Some of them may have entertained doubts about their actions as they waited in their home tribes to see what would happen. Much discussion must have transpired. All Israel was agog. The monarchy was about to be born.

CHAPTER 8 IN REVIEW

1. Whom did Samuel appoint as judges in Israel? _____
2. Where did these judges reside? _____
3. What were the names of Samuel's sons? _____
4. What reason did the people give for asking for a king? _____
5. What was the real reason? _____
6. What did Samuel say the king would do with Israel's young men? _____
7. What did Samuel say the king would do with Israel's young women? _____
8. What did Samuel say the king would do with Israel's land? _____
9. What portion of their income did Samuel say the people would have to give to support their king? _____
10. When Samuel said the people had rejected him, whom did God say they had rejected? _____



JUDGESHIPS OF SAMUEL AND ELI I Samuel 1-8

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Ramah
Birth of Samuel 1:1-20 | 8. Beth-shemesh
Ark sent to Israel 6:1-20 |
| 2. Shiloh
Dedication of Samuel 1:21-2:11 | 9. Kiriath-jearim
Ark remains 20 years 6:21—7:2 |
| 3-4. Aphek and Ebenezer
Defeat of Israel by Philistines 4:1-22 | 10. Mizpah
Samuel defeats Philistines 7:3-14 |
| 5. Ashdod
Fall of Dagon 5:1-7 | 11. Bethel-Gilgal-Mizpah
Samuel's circuit 7:15-17 |
| 6. Gath
Ark there 5:8-9 | 12. Beersheba
Samuel's sons judges 8:1-3 |
| 7. Ekron
Ark there 5:10-12 | 13. Ramah
Israel requests a King 8:4-22 |



The site of Shiloh - Excavations seen
in the distance at left

Matson Photo Service

FIRST SAMUEL

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 9

- Vv. 1- 5 *Saul's search for his father's asses.* God knew of Israel's demand for a king. He also knew where to find a man who would meet the people's requirements as a leader. His background was one of humble nature, but his appearance was impressive. As the reader of the Bible meets him, he is on an expedition to find the lost animals of his father.
- Vv. 6-10 *Saul seeks the seer.* A man who was called a prophet in Israel had formerly been called a seer. The seer was the kind of man who would be able to give answers to all kinds of hard questions. The servant who was with Saul was especially insistent that they employ the services of such a man. They thought he could help find the asses.
- Vv. 11-21 *Saul and Samuel meet.* God had told Samuel that Saul would come to him. The two met as Samuel was in a nearby city to lead the people in a sacrifice. Samuel announced to Saul that he should become king of Israel, but Saul could hardly believe it.
- Vv. 22-27 *Samuel honors Saul.* Samuel gave Saul a place of honor at the sacrifice. The best portion of the sacrificial animal had been set aside. Samuel ordered this to be put before Saul.

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *Life situations often demand the counsel of a man of God.* God's ministers are servants of all. Like the Master Himself, they should seek to serve and not to be served. Those who are men and women of faith will often seek out these men of God for their good offices. No burden is so great that they cannot be of some

assistance, and no problem is so small that they will not stoop to help.

2. *God exalts the humble.* Saul described himself as being ". . . of the smallest of the tribes of Israel" (9:21). He was amazed that Samuel had intimated that the desire of all Israel was upon him. If he had remained as humble as this, he might have been a great leader. When he lost this humility and disobeyed God, he was rejected as king. When he was humble, God's prophet exalted him by giving him a place of honor at the feast and prophesying good about him.

Saul's Search For His Father's Asses. 9:1-5

Now there was a man of Benjamin, whose name *was* Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjamite, a mighty man of power.

2 And he had a son, whose name *was* Saul, a choice young man, and a goodly: and *there was* not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward *he was* higher than any of the people.

3 And the asses of Kish Saul's father were lost. And Kish said to Saul his son, Take now one of the servants with thee, and arise, go seek the asses.

4 And he passed through mount Ephraim, and passed through the land of Shalisha, but they found *them* not: then they passed through the land of Shalim, and *there they were* not: and he passed through the land of the Benjamites, but they found *them* not.

5 *And* when they were come to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant that *was* with him, Come, and let us return; lest my father leave *caring* for the asses, and take thought for us.

1. *Whose son was Saul? 9:1*

Saul was the son of Kish. The elaborate genealogy of

Kish, the Benjaminite, and the minute description of the figure of his son, Saul, are intended to indicate at the very outset the importance to which Saul attained in relation to the people of Israel. Kish was the son of Abiel (cf. 14:51). I Chronicles 8:33 and 9:39 give Ner as the ancestor of Kish; but the difference there is in naming not the father but the grandfather. *Kish* means a man of property (see Ruth 2:1). The town of Kish was Gibeah of Benjamin. We conjecture that he was a man of some important position in the community.

2. *What was the appearance of Saul?* 9:2

Saul was in the prime of life and strong. He was not in his adolescence nor immature. So long as his father lived, he would be under his authority; and there is no necessary contradiction between the language used here and the later account, according to which Saul had a son already grown. The name of Saul is probably abbreviated from a longer form meaning *Asked-of-God*. In contrast with his father, he would be, of course, a "young man," i.e., in the full vigor of youth. It may even be said that no one equalled him in beauty. "From his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people." Such a figure as this was well adapted to commend him to the people as their king. Size and beauty were highly valued in rulers as signs of manly strength.

3. *What occasioned Saul's first meeting with Samuel?*
9:3-10

Kish's she-asses had strayed, and Saul went with his servants through the mountains of Ephraim in search of the animals. Saul was ready to leave the fruitless search when his servant suggested that they consult Samuel, "the man of God," who was in the vicinity.

4. *Where is Shalisha?* 9:4

Nothing is given to indicate the meaning of the name of the town or its exact location. The context indicates that it would not be right to consult a prophet without a gift

to give him; and he knew that their supplies were exhausted and was without knowledge of what present they might take him. The servant replied that he had a quarter of a shekel of money, a small coin containing about sixty grains of silver. The objection was met, and Saul consented to go to Samuel in the nearby town. Their supplies had been exhausted, but they may have been circling around without going far from home. It was probably near Mt. Ephraim, and the name means "triangular." Reference is made to Baal-shalisha (II Kings 4:42).

5. *Where was the land of Shalim?* 9:4 b

The word Shalim means "foxes." A place is mentioned by this name only with regard to Saul's passing through it in looking for his father's animals. Many commentaries consider this to be a reference to the land of Shual, which was near Ophrah (13:17). Ophrah was the home of Gideon (Judges 6:11), and would be located in the tribe of Manasseh west of the Jordan and six miles southwest of Shechem. Suggestions are therefore made that this Ophrah is another form of Ephraim and located in the land of Benjamin (II Chronicles 13:19). The mention of the name meaning "foxes" reminds the Bible reader of the incident of Samson's catching foxes down in Philistia near the territory of Dan (Judges 15:3-6). Although we cannot be sure of the exact location of this place, we are impressed with the fact that Saul wandered back and forth through the center of Palestine looking for his father's lost animals.

Saul Seeks The Seer. 9:6-10

6 And he said unto him, Behold now, *there is* in this city a man of God, and *he is* an honorable man; all that he saith cometh surely to pass: now let us go thither; peradventure he can show us our way that we should go.

7 Then said Saul to his servant, But behold, *if* we go, what shall we bring the man? for the bread is spent in our

vessels, and *there is* not a present to bring to the man of God: what have we?

8 And the servant answered Saul again, and said, Behold, I have here at hand the fourth part of a shekel of silver: *that* will I give to the man of God, to tell us our way.

9 (Beforetime in Isarel, when a man went to inquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the seer: for *he that is now called* a Prophet was beforetime called a Seer.)

10 Then said Saul to his servant, Well said; come, let us go. So they went unto the city where the man of God *was*.

6. *Who was the man of God?* 9:6

Saul's servant must have known of Samuel's being in the area. His reference was to Samuel himself, for it was he whom they met when they looked for the "man of God." Evidently they had confidence in his ability to give advice and direction in all kinds of life's situations. To speak of a "man of God" was to refer to a prophet. They were true men of God. Many unnamed prophets are known only in this way (I Samuel 2:27; I Kings 13:1). Even Moses is described by this phrase (Deuteronomy 33:1) as if there were no more honorable title.

7. *Why did they want to bring a present to Samuel?* 9:7

Saul knew that he did not have any kind of victuals to give to the man of God. He evidently did not have any money, for he took the fourth part of the shekel of silver which his servant had to give to Samuel. Such concern indicates that it was customary for the Israelites to give a little something to their prophets. Such a practice helps us to understand the meaning of the priest in Israel who told Amos to go on back to Judah to prophesy and "there eat bread" (Amos 7:12). It has ever been God's ordinance that they who preach the gospel should live by the gospel. It was not right to muzzle the oxen which tread the grain (Deuteronomy 25:4; I Corinthians 9:9; I Timothy 5:18).

8. *What is the meaning of the two words for a prophet?*
9:9

The Hebrew word used most often to describe a prophet is a word that means "to announce" or "to declare." The primary idea of the prophet is one who utters a communication. A popular definition of a prophet is "one who speaks for another." Two other Hebrew words are used to name the prophet. Both of these mean "one who sees." In this verse one of these other two words is used and is translated "seer." The three words occur together in I Chronicles 29:29, where they seem to be in contrast with one another. When the book of Samuel was written, the word prophet was most common, but earlier the other word had been used quite often. Radical critics take this to be an indication of the fact that the book was not written until a long time after the events had happened. A man's lifetime is long enough for different words to come into popular use. In less than a generation a word may fall into disuse, and this is not evidence enough to take the authorship of the book away from Samuel and give it to a later author. The two words help us to understand the functions of a prophet. Saul evidently went to the man whom he thought could "see" and tell him where he could find his father's asses.

Samuel and Saul Meet. 9:11-21

Samuel and Saul Meet. 9:11-21

11 *And as they went up the hill to the city, they found young maidens going out to draw water, and said unto them, Is the seer here?*

12 *And they answered them, and said, He is; behold, he is before you; make haste now, for he came today to the city; for there is a sacrifice of the people today in the high place:*

13 *As soon as ye be come into the city, ye shall straight-way find him, before he go up to the high place to eat:*

for the people will not eat until he come, because he doth bless the sacrifice; *and* afterwards they eat that be bidden. Now therefore get you up; for about this time ye shall find him.

14 And they went up into the city: *and* when they were come into the city, behold, Samuel came out against them, for to go up to the high place.

15 Now the Lord had told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, saying,

16 Tomorrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him *to be* captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me.

17 And when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said unto him, Behold the man whom I spake to thee of! this same shall reign over my people.

18 Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer's house *is*.

19 And Samuel answered Saul, and said, I *am* the seer: go up before me unto the high place; for ye shall eat with me today, and tomorrow I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that *is* in thine heart.

20 And as for thine asses that were lost three days ago, set not thy mind on them; for they are found. And on whom *is* all the desire of Israel? *Is it* not on thee, and on all thy father's house?

21 And Saul answered and said, *Am* not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? wherefore then speakest thou so to me?

9. Did Samuel know Saul was coming? 9:11-17

On the day before the meeting, Jehovah had told Samuel that the man whom he was to anoint as captain over his people was coming to him. God in His overruling provi-

dence directed Saul's way so that he came to Samuel. God's displeasure at the desire of the people was really a displeasure with the state of their heart from which the desire had sprung. Since the Philistines were making fresh attacks upon Israel, God was directing the affairs of His kingdom so that a strong deliverer would be raised up from among them.

10. What was the high place? 9:12

The name of the town Ramah means "a high place." About three miles north of Gibeah and six miles from Jerusalem a high hill rises from the right side of the road. This is crowned with the village called Er Ram. This is taken to be the site of ancient Ramah. Israel's Canaanite neighbors had high places where they planted groves and set up images and idols. There is no evidence that Israel was falling into these idolatrous practices, but no doubt they would build an altar in a prominent place. It thus would be known as "high place."

11. What city was this? 9:14

Samuel evidently did not live in the town where Saul met him. He had only come to it in order to hold a sacrificial feast as he did in Bethlehem (I Samuel 16:1). This is true even though Samuel did honor Saul by having him as his guest. They appeared to sleep under the same roof, but both were probably guests in another man's home. Some commentators assume that he had a house at his command for any time that he might be in the area, such as was provided for Elisha (II Kings 4). The town where Saul met Samuel was probably southwest of Bethlehem.

12. Why was Saul anointed king? 9:16

God had told Samuel that he was sending a man to him. This man was to be anointed "captain" over Israel. God was doing this in order to save His people out of the land of the Philistines. This makes Saul's call to the office of king similar to the call of Moses to be the leader of his people when they were in captivity in Egypt.

13. *Why was Samuel in the gate of the city?* 9:18

The prophet was evidently greeting the people who came to the city for the sacrificial feast. The custom of the people was to congregate in the broad area near the entrance of the city. Much of their business was conducted here, and many incidental and providential meetings have occurred here (Genesis 19:1).

14. *How did Samuel prepare Saul for the anointing?* 9:18 ff.

At the feast that night, Saul was Samuel's guest and greatly honored. As they retired, Samuel promised that on the morrow he would tell Saul all that was on his heart. This included more than the safety of the animals for which he had been seeking, inasmuch as Samuel told Saul all these things immediately. As they talked, Samuel asked a perplexing question that brought a humble answer from Saul. Samuel said, "To whom belong the desirable things of Israel? It is not to thee and to thy father's house?" Saul replied that he was a member of the least of Israel's tribes and that his clan was least among his tribesmen. All this must have caused Saul a sleepless night pondering all that had taken place.

Samuel Honors Saul. 9:22-27

22 And Samuel took Saul and his servant, and brought them in the parlour, and made them sit in the chiefest place among them that were bidden, which *were* about thirty persons.

23 And Samuel said unto the cook, Bring the portion which I gave thee, of which I said unto thee, Set it by thee.

24 And the cook took up the shoulder, and *that* which *was* upon it, and *set it* before Saul. And *Samuel* said, Behold that which is left! *set it* before thee, *and* eat: for unto this time hath it been kept for thee since I said, I have invited the people. So Saul did eat with Samuel that day.

25 And as they were come down from the high place into the city, *Samuel* communed with Saul upon the top of the house.

26 And they arose early: and it came to pass about the spring of the day, that Samuel called Saul to the top of the house, saying, Up, that I may send thee away. And Saul arose, and they went out both of them, he and Samuel, abroad.

27 *And* as they were going down to the end of the city, Samuel said to Saul, Bid the servant pass on before us, (and he passed on,) but stand thou still a while, that I may show thee the word of God.

15. *Why did Samuel reserve a piece of meat for Saul?*
9:23, 24

Samuel had already addressed Saul as the most outstanding Israelite of his time. To signify his honor for Saul he had reserved the best part of the sacrificial animal for Saul. Some understand this reference to that "which was upon it," to that broth which was poured over it. No doubt it was that which was attached to it. A strange interpretation has made this to be the kidney and that which was over it, but the kidney was to be burned upon the altar in the case of all the slain sacrifices (Leviticus 3:4). Only the flesh of the animals offered in sacrifice was used in the sacrificial meal. What was attached to the leg must have been the fat upon the flesh. The leg is the largest and best portion and was a piece of honor for Saul (Genesis 43:34).

16. *Why were they on the top of the house?* 9:25

Palestinian houses had flat roofs. They were places for retirement for private conversation (Deuteronomy 22:8). It was while he was on the housetop that Peter received a vision to go to the Gentiles (Acts 10:9), and many other references are made to activities of this kind on the roof of the houses.

17. *Why was Samuel secretive about anointing Saul?* 9:26

Samuel wanted Saul to get away early in the morning. Boaz had urged Ruth to leave his threshing floor "before one could know another" (Ruth 3:14). Samuel did not allow Saul's servant to hear the conversation. Samuel may have entered into private conversation concerning the moral degradation of the people, their clamor for the king, the oppression of the heathen, the inability of the Israelites to stand against their foes, the necessity for a conversion of the people and the need for a leader who was devoted to God. Such discussions are best conducted in secret when they concern only two particular individuals.

CHAPTER 9 IN REVIEW

1. Whose son was Saul? _____
2. Of what tribe was Saul? _____
3. Where was Saul's home? _____
4. For what was Saul searching when he met Samuel? _____
5. What was the old name for a prophet? _____
6. Did Samuel know Saul was coming to meet him? _____
7. Was Samuel in his home when he anointed Saul? _____
8. Who was with Saul when he met Samuel? _____
9. On what kind of occasion was Saul anointed? _____
10. In what part of the house were Samuel and Saul when they conversed? _____

STUDIES IN SAMUEL

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 10

- Vv. 1- 8 *Saul anointed by Samuel.* The priests were anointed (Leviticus 8:10). The prophets of Israel were also set aside to their office by this solemn ceremony (I Kings 19:16). The king was also to be set aside to his office by a divine service.
- Vv. 9-16 *Saul among the prophets.* This saying became a proverb in Israel, and is used often to express amazement at a person's being in unusual company: "Is Saul also among the prophets?" (I Samuel 10:12 b). His meeting the band of prophets and the change of heart which came upon him had been foretold by Samuel when the two parted company. His change of heart was typical of those charismatic leaders upon whom God's spirit came as they entered into their offices.
- Vv. 17-27 *Saul acclaimed by the people.* Samuel called the people to a solemn assembly. He issued grave warnings to them about the nature of a king, even writing the manner of the kingdom in a book and laying it up before the Lord to be preserved for future generations (v. 25). He proceeded then to implement the establishment of the king in his office. In prayerful spirit, the people shouted: "God save the king" (v. 24 b). As in most political situations, there was not complete unanimity of opinion; but it was only the "worthless fellows" who opposed Saul's coronation (v. 27).

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *The blessing of the spirit of God.* When God raised up judges to deliver His people, He sent His spirit upon

FIRST SAMUEL

them (Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6, 19). When the Spirit of God came upon Saul, he prophesied among the prophets. Although Christians today are not to expect miraculous manifestations of the Spirit of God in their lives, each Christian has the gift of the Holy Spirit to rest and abide in his life as he becomes an obedient child of God (Acts 2:38). God's Spirit bearing witness with his spirit enables him not only to begin a Christian life but to bring forth the fruits of the spirit (Galatians 5:22-26).

2. *The fellowship of the faithful.* Hardly any situation in everyday life finds a great number of people to be of unanimous opinion. The sharpest division of opinion and purpose occurs between good men and evil men. Those who are in a position of leadership in God's work ought not to grieve too much that there are wicked opponents of their good work, but they ought to give thanks daily for those who join with them in the good work they are doing. When Saul was anointed king, ". . . there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched" (10:26). Those whose hearts have been touched by God will uphold God's leaders today.

Saul Anointed by Samuel. 10:1-8

Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured *it* upon his head, and kissed him, and said, *Is it* not because the Lord hath anointed thee *to be* captain over his inheritance?

2 When thou art departed from me today, then thou shalt find two men by Rachel's sepulcher in the border of Benjamin at Zelzah; and they will say unto thee, The asses which thou wentest to seek are found: and, lo, thy father hath left the care of the asses, and sorroweth for you, saying, What shall I do for my son?

3 Then shalt thou go on forward from thence, and thou shalt come to the plain of Tabor, and there shall meet thee three men going up to God to Beth-el, one carrying

three kids, and another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a bottle of wine:

4 And they will salute thee, and give thee two *loaves* of bread; which thou shalt receive of their hands.

5 After that thou shalt come to the hill of God, where *is* the garrison of the Philistines: and it shall come to pass, when thou art come thither to the city, that thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp, before them; and they shall prophesy:

6 And the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shall be turned into another man.

7 And let it be, when these signs are come unto thee, *that* thou do as occasion serve thee; for God *is* with thee.

8 And thou shalt go down before me to Gilgal; and, behold, I will come down unto thee, to offer burnt offerings, *and* to sacrifice sacrifices of peace offerings: seven days shalt thou tarry, till I come to thee, and show thee what thou shalt do.

1. When was Saul anointed king at first? 10:1

On the morrow after the feast which Samuel and Saul celebrated together, Samuel called Saul from his bed early in the morning. As they went toward the edge of the town, Samuel told Saul to send the servant on ahead. Samuel then took a vial of oil and poured it upon Saul's head and kissed him. This anointing with oil was a symbol of endowment with the Spirit of God. Hitherto there had been no other anointing among the people of God than that of the priests and the sanctuary. Thus the monarchy was inaugurated as a divine institution. Now the king was set apart from the rest of the nation as "anointed of the Lord." The kiss bestowed by Samuel must have been only a mark of personal affection, for kissing is nowhere an act expressive of fealty to a king.

2. *Where was Rachel's sepulchre? 10:2*

According to Genesis 35:16, Rachel's sepulchre was on the way from Bethel to Bethlehem, only a short distance from the latter place. Jerome mentions a tradition of the tomb being located here. This traditional site is northwest of Bethlehem, and west of the road between Bethlehem and Jerusalem. Saul's passing by the tomb is another indication of the fact that he was not anointed by Samuel in Ramah. If he were southwest of Bethlehem when he met Samuel, he would naturally pass near Rachel's tomb on the way to Gibeah in Benjamin. He would have no need to pass by Rachel's tomb down in Judah if he were in Ramah when he was anointed. To go from Ramah to Gibeah, he would pass only through the territory of the tribe of Benjamin.

3. *Where was Zelzah? 10:2 b*

The expression "in the border of Benjamin" does not make it impossible for Saul to be traveling from near Bethlehem to his home. The traditional site of Rachel's tomb is several miles away from the southern border of Benjamin. The mention of Zelzah helps us to understand what is meant by the mention of the border and would be superfluous otherwise since Rachel's tomb was unquestionably a well-known place. Zelzah must have been up between Rachel's tomb and the south border of Benjamin. It is otherwise an unknown location, but it should not be translated by the phrase "in great haste." It is undoubtedly a reference to a place and not a Hebrew word to describe Saul's manner of traveling.

4. *Where was the plain of Tabor? 10:3*

Elsewhere the word translated plain in this verse is translated with the word *oak*. It is simply mentioned here as one of the points on the homeward journey of Saul. The place is nowhere else mentioned, and nothing further can be determined concerning it other than it stood by the road leading from Rachel's tomb to Gibeah. It no

doubt meant a great deal to Saul as a point of reference, but it has little meaning for us today.

5. *What was the hill of God? 10:5*

This is not a high place of God, a place dedicated to God's worship, but rather a reference to Gibeah, the native place of Saul. Gibeah is sometimes called the high place of Saul (11:4; 15:34; II Samuel 21:6). It is called the hill of God here because of the sacrificial height which rose within or near the town (10:13), and which may have possibly have been more famous than any other such heights. Here the Philistines had a military post. It was a seat for the school of the prophets (II Kings 2:3).

6. *Who were the company of the prophets? 10:5 b*

"Bands," or "schools," of the prophets were the men of God. They were active in Israel from this time forward to the time of Amos, who said he was not a prophet nor a "son of the prophets" (Amos 7:14). No definite reason is assigned to their going in the direction opposite to Saul at this time, other than that they had been in the high place for worship.

7. *Did they use instrumental music in their worship? 10:5c*

These prophets had with them a psaltery, a tabret, a pipe, and a harp. As far back as we have any record of music in worship, we find reference to instruments connected with the worship. God has never prohibited the use of these instruments, and there is even indication of different kinds of music in the New Testament (Ephesians 5:19)—both accompanied and unaccompanied.

8. *What signs were given to Saul to substantiate his appointment? 10:2-7*

Saul was told that he would meet two men in the vicinity of Rachel's tomb, and these men would tell him of his father's concern for his safety. This would substantiate the seer's announcement concerning the animals and also

raise Saul's thoughts to concern for his new work. The second sign was his meeting three men going up to God to Bethel, carrying three kids, three loaves of bread, and a bottle of wine. Saul was told to accept their inquiry concerning his welfare and their proffered gift of two loaves. The third sign concerned Saul's meeting a group of prophets who were to be coming down from Gibeah, his home town. As Saul met these men, it was prophesied that he too would be filled with the spirit of God and begin to prophesy as did the prophets.

9. *Where was Gilgal?* 10:8

Gilgal was one of the towns on Samuel's circuit (7-16). The people of Israel had been circumcised there immediately after they had crossed Jordan into Canaan under Joshua's leadership (Joshua 4:19). The spot was located in the border of the tribe of Benjamin and would be found between Jericho and the Jordan river. Some evidence is seen for there being another location by this name in the hill country of Ephraim (Joshua 9:6; 10:15), but the former location seems more appropriate to the narrative here. No doubt Samuel wanted to meet Saul at Gilgal as he made his next appointed visit on his circuit.

Saul Among the Prophets. 10:9-16

9 And it was so, that when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart: and all those signs came to pass that day.

10 And when they came thither to the hill, behold, a company of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them.

11 And it came to pass, when all that knew him before-time saw that, behold, he prophesied among the prophets, then the people said one to another, What *is* this *that* is come unto the son of Kish? *Is* Saul also among the prophets?

12 And one of the same place answered and said, But who *is* their father? Therefore it became a proverb, *Is Saul also among the prophets?*

13 And when he had made an end of prophesying, he came to the high place.

14 And Saul's uncle said unto him and to his servant, Whither went ye? and he said, To seek the asses: and when we saw that *they were* no where, we came to Samuel.

15 And Saul's uncle said, Tell me, I pray thee, what Samuel said unto you.

16 And Saul said unto his uncle, He told us plainly that the asses were found. But of the matter of the kingdom, whereof Samuel spake, he told him not.

10. What is the meaning of the proverb? 10:13

Saul was known as the son of Kish, the man of Benjamin. He was evidently acquainted with rural life, and his father had sent him out to look for his lost she-asses. To find Saul among the prophets of God was an unexpected experience. Those who knew Saul were surprised to find him in such company. They asked, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" Whenever we find someone in a group to which he is not accustomed, we often ask the same question. This is especially true when one is found in the company of those who are generally considered to be of a higher class. The proverb was evidently used this way in Israel in ancient times.

11. Who was Saul's uncle? 10:14

Saul was introduced as the son of Kish (9:1), the son of Abiel (14:51). Abner became Saul's captain, and they were very closely associated throughout the reign of Saul. This constant association would indicate that they might have been reared in the same community. Such a condition would point to Ner's being the uncle mentioned in this account of Saul's return to his home.

12. *Why was Saul's uncle anxious to know what Samuel said? 10:15 b*

Here is an indication of how the people did not let any of Samuel's words "fall to the ground" (3:19). Whatever Samuel had to say was of interest to the people of Israel. It would be hard to imagine that Ner would have any idea that his nephew would be chosen king. His inquiry undoubtedly was one of general curiosity and wholesome interest in any pronouncement of the man of God. Saul did not mention anything about his being anointed king of Israel or his relationship to the kingdom which the people were wanting to see established. The latest developments along the line of setting up the monarchy may have been a part of the uncle's interest; but Saul did not divulge what had happened to him in this respect. Josephus indicates that Saul kept this secret because he did not want to arouse unbelief or envy. Others believe that it was probably because of his unambitious humility.

Saul Acclaimed by the People. 10:17-27

17 And Samuel called the people together unto the Lord to Mizpeh;

18 And said unto the children of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all kingdoms, *and* of them that oppressed you:

19 And ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations; and ye have said unto him, *Nay*, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes, and by your thousands.

20 And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken.

21 When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken: and when they sought him, he could not be found.

22 Therefore they inquired of the Lord further, if the man should yet come thither. And the Lord answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff.

23 And they ran and fetched him thence: and when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward.

24 And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that *there is* none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king.

25 Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote *it* in a book, and laid *it* up before the Lord. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house.

26 And Saul also went home to Gibeah; and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched.

27 But the children of Belial said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no presents. But he held his peace.

13. *Where was Saul anointed a second time? 10:17-27*

Saul was anointed publicly at Mizpeh. It is quite appropriate that the anointing take place here, because it was at Mizpeh that the Israelites repented and defeated the Philistines. It was here also that the judges had met to make many decisions and to worship. Here at Mizpeh Saul was chosen by lot. First the tribe from among the twelve tribes was selected, then the family from within the selected tribe, the household within the family, and finally the man from within the household. God thus guided them in the selection. When Saul was singled out, he hid

from the people because of his modesty. Had he only kept this attitude, his affairs would have had a different ending.

14. *Who was Matri?* 10:21

Matri is a Hebrew name meaning Rainy. He was evidently a Benjaminite and head of the family to which Saul, the king of Israel, belonged. The mention here is the only mention in the Scripture, but this would place him considerably earlier than 1020 B.C. The fact that he was so unimportant has caused his name to drop out of the genealogies. First Chronicles gives evidence that many of the genealogical lines may be incomplete. As has been generally concluded before, the genealogies in the Scriptures list only the important people in most cases.

15. *Why did Saul hide?* 10:22

Saul spoke very humbly of himself when he first met Samuel. He said that he was a member of the tribe of Benjamin, the smallest in all the land. He also said that his family was the least of all the families within this tribe (9:21). The task of reigning over the people may have seemed overwhelming to him. In his humility he ran and hid. Without accusing Saul of mistrusting God, we can believe that he was not willing to step out and take God at His word. He need not trust in his own strength alone, and this reluctance must have been largely born out of humility.

16. *How could Samuel say that God had chosen Saul?*
10:24

God had told Samuel that He would send a man to him to be anointed king. God indicated that the man was Saul as he came to Samuel seeking information about his lost animals (9:17). In this way God had chosen Saul and sent him to Samuel. The people were the ones who were anxious to have a king, yet God had chosen the man to fill the office. He met the qualifications given in the Law (Deuteronomy 17:14-20), and in addition he was bigger

than any other man in all the land. He made a striking appearance and was a popular choice.

17. *What was the meaning of the shout? 10:24*

In the Authorized Version, the phrase is translated: "God save the king." The American Standard Version has this: "Long live the king." The literal meaning of the original language is as follows: "Let the king live." It is typical English usage to make the phrase to be the equivalent of the idiom, "God save the king." It is really a prayer that the king might enjoy long life and prosper as the leader of God's people. By this shout the people acclaim Saul as their ruler and pledge their allegiance to him.

18. *What opposition did Saul have? 10:27*

None seemed to oppose the monarchy on the grounds that it was against God's will. The people had rejected God's will. The people had rejected God, but in His mercy He led them to select and appoint an acceptable ruler. As in every major crowd, there were some who were unwilling to see Saul in the office of king. They are described as worthless fellows, sons of Belial. Satan was at work even in the early days of the monarchy. The fact that these evil men did not bring presents to Saul indicates that the other people did bring tokens of their love and esteem. Some of their presents may have been to support him through the critical years of the infancy of the monarchy.

CHAPTER 10 IN REVIEW

1. With what was Saul anointed? _____
2. What mark of personal affection did Samuel bestow on Saul? _____
3. By what memorial did Samuel tell Saul he would meet two young men? _____
4. What kind of musical instruments did they have? _____

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5. How many men going up to Bethel was Saul to see? _____
6. What items of offering were they to have? _____
7. To what town was Saul to go to meet Samuel again? _____
8. In what unusual activity was Saul to participate after God's spirit came upon him? _____
9. Who was Saul's uncle? _____
10. Where was Saul anointed a second time? _____

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 11

- Vv. 1-3 *Jabesh-gilead attacked.* Israel was seldom free from oppression and opposition. This may have been the meaning of the spies who said, "The land, . . . , is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof" (Numbers 13:32). Many of the attacks came from neighbors nearby, and the Ammonite people were such neighbors.
- Vv. 4-11 *Jabesh-gilead delivered.* The Spirit of God came upon Saul, and he took immediate steps to rescue the Trans-jordan residents of Jabesh-gilead from the clutches of their attackers. His kindness on their behalf made them his lifelong friends.
- Vv. 12-25 *The kingship of Saul renewed.* Samuel called the people to an assembly at Gilgal. Saul was again presented to the people, and some called for the punishment of those who had rejected the kingship of Saul when he was first crowned king. Saul's magnanimity prevailed, and the worthless fellows who had opposed him at the first were spared. This happy solution to the situation caused all Israel to return to their homes with joy.

STUDIES IN SAMUEL

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *Christian living is never easy.* The Israelites may have thought that their life in the promised land of Palestine would be without hardship. It was, indeed, often described as a land "flowing with milk and honey" (Exodus 3:8). The land, however, was a political football; and from the south the Egyptians often attacked it. From the north came the Assyrians. From the east came the Ammonites and Moabites. Besides these hostile peoples, there were the Edomites, Amalekites, and Philistines. These are typical of the enemies of Christians—the materialists, secularists, atheists, and hedonists.
2. "*There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother*" (Proverbs 18:24 b). When the tribes of Israel demanded that the men of Benjamin deliver up the criminals of Gibeah, the Benjaminites refused (Judges 20:13). As a result, a civil war was fought; and Benjamin was nearly destroyed. The remnant of the men of Benjamin found wives in Jabesh-gilead (Judges 21:14). We are left to wonder if Saul might have been descended from one of these. At any rate, he moved swiftly to deliver the inhabitants of the city in his day. As a result, these people were ever after indebted to him. They showed him the final kindness of taking his gibbeted body from the walls of Beth-shean (I Samuel 31:11-13). Christians today should be grateful for their lifelong friends in the church and especially thankful that they can sing, "What a friend we have in Jesus."

Samuel's Retirement from the Judgeship, 11:1—12:25.

Jabesh-gilead Attacked. 11:1-3

Then Nahash the Ammonite came up, and encamped against Jabesh-gilead: and all the men of Jabesh said unto Nahash, Make a covenant with us, and we will serve thee.

2 And Nahash the Ammonite answered them, On this *condition* will I make a *covenant* with you, that I may thrust out all your right eyes, and lay it *for* a reproach upon all Israel.

3 And the elders of Jabesh said unto him, Give us seven days' respite, that we may send messengers unto all the coasts of Israel: and then, if *there be* no man to save us, we will come out to thee.

1. *Who was Nahash? 11:1*

Nahash was the king of the Ammonites. The Ammonites were descendants of the younger daughter of Lot by Lot himself (Genesis 19:38). These people settled in the land east of the Jordan near the north end of the Dead Sea. They became a very idolatrous people and worshiped a false god named Molech. Although the people of Israel had been told not to fight against them when they came out of Egyptian bondage, these people were quite often among Israel's warring neighbors and enemies (Judges 11:12).

2. *Where was Jabesh-gilead? 11:1 b*

Jabesh-gilead was an Israelite town east of the Jordan river and north of the Jabbok river. It was an important town in Gilead, somewhat closer to the Sea of Galilee than to the Dead Sea. Wives had been found among the citizens of Jabesh-gilead for the men of Benjamin after the other tribes had nearly exterminated the Benjamites (Judges 21:8-15). It may have been that some of Saul's ancestors were citizens of this community.

3. *Why would Nahash's cruelty be a reproach on Israel? 11:2*

For all the men of one city to be maimed in such a terrible way would be a sign of reproach to any people. They would be looked upon as rather helpless cripples. The fact that an enemy had been able to do this to them would also indicate that they were weak and unable to

defend themselves. The loss of the right eyes of all the men in the town would be a terrible price to pay for peace. No honorable group of people would allow such a penalty to be exacted from them. It would be quite a victory for Nahash if he were able to exact this ransom from the men of Jabesh-gilead, but a reproach on Israel.

Jabesh-gilead Delivered. 11:4-11

4 Then came the messengers to Gibeah of Saul, and told the tidings in the ears of the people: all the people lifted up their voices, and wept.

5 And, behold, Saul came after the herd out of the field; and Saul said, What *aieth* the people that they weep? And they told him the tidings of the men of Jabesh.

6 And the spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard those tidings, and his anger was kindled greatly.

7 And he took a yoke of oxen, and hewed them in pieces, and sent *them* throughout all the coasts of Israel by the hands of messengers, saying; Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen. And the fear of the Lord fell on the people, and they came out with one consent.

8 And when he numbered them in Bezek, the children of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand.

9 And they said unto the messengers that came, Thus shall ye say unto the men of Jabesh-gilead, Tomorrow, by *that time* the sun be hot, ye shall have help. And the messengers came and showed *it* to the men of Jabesh; and they were glad.

10 Therefore the men of Jabesh said, Tomorrow we will come out unto you, and ye shall do with us all that seemeth good unto you.

11 And it was *so* on the morrow, that Saul put the people in three companies; and they came into the midst of the host in the morning watch, and slew the Ammonites

until the heat of the day: and it came to pass, that they which remained were scattered, so that two of them were not left together.

4. *Why did Saul return to the farm? 11:5*

There was no kingdom as such; that is, there was no army, no court, no palace. Saul again demonstrates a very wholesome attitude inasmuch as he was content to return to his father's house and to his former way of life. When he heard of the oppression of the Ammonites, his anger was aroused; and it is even connected with the Spirit of God, inasmuch as he was rightly indignant that such an act was to be committed. He sent word to Nahash, as the custom of war would be; but it would further take Nahash off his guard, making it possible for the Israelites to attack unawares while the enemy was lax with its night guard.

5. *In what way did the Spirit of God come upon Saul?*
11:6

Nothing is said about the manner in which the Holy Spirit came upon Saul. On the Day of Pentecost the coming of the Spirit was attended by certain outward signs which were visible and audible (Acts 2:3, 4). God's spirit came upon the judges throughout their three-hundred-year history, but nothing is said in any of their cases to indicate that there were such manifestations to be tested by the senses. Generally, it was stated that "the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him (Judges 14:6). The coming of the Spirit in such a case enabled Samson to perform feats of unusual strength. In the case of Saul it appears that God's spirit helped him to have the courage he needed to take the necessary action. The spirit of God incited him to such righteous indignation that he determined not to let the king of the Ammonites go unpunished for his threatened cruelty.

6. *Why did Saul dissect his oxen?* 11:7

By sending a piece of his oxen to each of the twelve tribes of Israel, Saul demonstrated in a dramatic way that their help was needed in the war against Nahash. He told them that if they did not come forth to fight with him and Samuel against Nahash, their oxen might well be hewn into pieces by the enemy. It was in this way that the Levite had called all Israel as one man to punish the sinners of Gibeah after they had misused and killed his concubine (Judges 19:29, 30). The dramatic action served its purpose in Saul's case, and the fear of the Lord came upon the people. They came out to battle with a unified purpose.

7. *Where was Bezek?* 11:8

Bezek was one of the first towns conquered by the Israelites after the death of Joshua (Judges 1:4). The location is indefinite, but it must have been near the border of Benjamin and Judah. This was a good place for the men of Israel to meet before they crossed over the Jordan to attack Nahash.

8. *Why was a difference made between Israel and Judah?*
11:8

Judah had been given the preeminence by his father Jacob (Genesis 49:8-12). Judah had been the leader as the people marched through the wilderness under Moses' guidance. In many ways he was always separate from the rest of the people of Israel. Saul's numbering revealed that there were 30,000 men of war ready to go up to battle out of Judah. The other eleven tribes totaled only 300,000. Judah had been the largest tribe in both the numberings in Moses' day (Numbers 1 and 26). Since there were only 330,000 between the two at this time, only one-half of Israel's fighting force must have been involved in this campaign. At the first numbering in the wilderness, there were 603,550 men twenty years of age and over, thus able to go to war (Numbers 1). At the second numbering

there were 601,730 (Numbers 26). The fact that there is a division made between Judah and the rest of Israel is not an indication of this book's being written after the schism in the days of Jeroboam (I Kings 12).

9. *Why did the men of Jabesh-gilead send a message to Nahash? 11:10*

The men of Jabesh-gilead said that they would come out to Nahash on the following day. They indicated by this that they were coming out in order that he might put out their right eyes. Such a message of seeming surrender would throw the king off his guard and make him less watchful. It would also give the necessary time for Saul's army to make a forced march all night and come upon the Ammonites by surprise.

10. *What was Saul's strategy? 11:11 .*

Saul divided his people into three companies. They would thus be able to attack from both sides of the city and from the front or the rear. Since he came on them in the morning watch, it was before the heat of the day when the Ammonites were expecting the men of Jabesh-gilead to surrender. Such strategy took the Ammonites completely by surprise. They were separated from each other and could not join forces to do battle. The victory was complete for the men of Saul.

The Kingship of Saul Renewed. 11:12-15

12 And the people said unto Samuel, Who *is* he that said, Shall Saul reign over us? bring the men, that we may put them to death.

13 And Saul said, There shall not a man be put to death this day: for today the Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel.

14 Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there.

15 And all the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king before the Lord in Gilgal; and there they

sacrificed sacrifices of peace offerings before the Lord; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

11. How did Saul demonstrate his wisdom? 11:12, 13

After the rout of the Ammonites, many of the people of Israel thought they should punish those evil men who had opposed Saul's becoming king. Saul had now demonstrated that he was an able military leader and the populace thought that those who distrusted him should not be allowed to continue their propaganda against him. Saul was very wise in not seeking vengeance. He decreed that there would not be any man put to death in Israel during the time of victory celebration. He would do nothing to mar the complete victory which belonged to the people. Saul was also very wise in attributing the victory to the power of the Lord. He said it was the Lord who had wrought salvation in Israel.

12. In what sense was the kingdom renewed? 11:14

Samuel called the people to go again to Gilgal. He wanted to emphasize the fact that the kingdom was now firmly established. Saul had proved himself to be a capable leader, and Samuel thought it was wise that the people reaffirm their allegiance to the new king. The place that he chose was very significant. At this place the covenant of circumcision had been renewed by the people of Israel when they crossed the Jordan under Joshua (Joshua 5:1-9). It was necessary to renew the kingdom because it was much firmer after the united effort against the Ammonites than it had been at any previous time. Now, too, the people of Israel were ready to give thanks for the victory and the many blessings they had received from God's hand.

13. Why did they offer sacrifices at Gilgal? 11:15

The sacrifices mentioned here are peace offerings. In a sense they were thank offerings and were usually connected with a sacrificial meal. People offered these on

joyous occasions, for they were feasts of rejoicing. Israel had many things for which to be thankful, and it was quite appropriate that they offer such sacrifices. Samuel again demonstrates that he is serving as a priest in leading the people to make such offerings.

CHAPTER 11 IN REVIEW

1. Who was the king of the Ammonites who died? _____
2. What town of Israelites did the Ammonites attack? _____
3. In what area was the town located? _____
4. What influence came to Saul? _____
5. What animal did Saul dissect and distribute? _____
6. Where did Israel assemble to go to battle? _____
7. How many men of Israel went to fight? _____
8. How many men of Judah went to battle? _____
9. Who won the battle? _____
10. Where did Israel meet for a sacrifice? _____

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 12

- Vv. 1- 5 *Samuel reviews his career.* Although Samuel had many more years of service to give to his people, they had rejected him as being their most prominent leader. They had demanded and received a king. Samuel took advantage of an opportunity to rehearse his manner of life among them. It is a man of sterling character who can say, “. . . ye have not found ought in my hand” (v. 5).
- Vv. 6-15 *Israel's history reviewed.* While Samuel was speaking to the people, he reminded them of their heritage. God had been with them throughout many thrilling experiences. In no

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case had they found God to be unfaithful to them. They had been unfaithful to God.

Vv. 16-25 *Samuel rebukes the people.* God worked a wonder among the people that caused them to tremble. They realized that they had been ungrateful to God and to His chosen servant, Samuel. As they repented, they asked Samuel to pray for them; and the unswerving love of Samuel for his people prompted him to reply that he would without fail remember them in prayer.

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *The blessing of good leaders.* Debates rage over the question as to whether times make men or men make times. Great leaders are demanded in perilous times. Opportunities and occasions may bring out the best in great men. In this passage of scripture, however, the emphasis is laid on the true value of faultless leaders. Samuel was one of these, and his career had been a blessing to his people.
2. *The challenge of a rich heritage.* People dare not rest on their laurels. To do so is to decay. They can take courage from what has been accomplished. Israel should have done this. God had amply demonstrated that He was with them. This fact should have encouraged them to remain faithful to God.
3. *The power of prayer.* When the people asked Samuel to pray for them, Samuel replied that it would have been a sin against God for him to cease to pray for them. Regardless of their attitudes toward him, Samuel ever had the best interests of his people at heart. Nothing could cause him to stop praying for them. Good leaders of God's people must always be in prayer for God's blessings to be upon both people and their leaders (I Timothy 2:2).

Samuel Reviews His Career. 12:1-5

And Samuel said unto all Israel, Behold, I have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto me, and have made a king over you.

2 And now, behold, the king walketh before you: and I am old and grayheaded; and, behold, my sons *are* with you: and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day.

3 Behold, here I *am*: witness against me before the Lord, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received *any* bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you.

4 And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken aught of any man's hand.

5 And he said unto them, The Lord *is* witness against you, and his anointed *is* witness this day, that ye have not found aught in my hand. And they answered, *He is* witness.

1. How could Samuel speak to all Israel? 12:1

Samuel could not find a place where all the millions of Israelites could gather. His message must have been given to leaders from various tribes. His message would then be carried back to the many thousands in each tribe. On occasions great numbers did gather at one place. They were expected to come to the Tabernacle on the three annual feast days. Samuel's address may have been given at one of these times.

2. What was Samuel's appearance? 12:2

Samuel describes himself as being gray-haired. He must have been a venerable man. His appearance would have commanded respect. The dignity that goes with a venerable, silver-thatched man was his; and in addition his godly life would have won him the admiration of all good men.

3. *Was Samuel without fault?* 12:3

Samuel asked a series of questions which, perhaps purposely, are cast in rhythmical form with assonance at the end of each question in the Hebrew forms. These are the questions:

1. Whose ox have I taken?
2. Whose ass have I taken?
3. Whom have I oppressed?
4. Whom have I maltreated?
5. From whose hand have I taken a gift that I might blind mine eyes with it?

The tendency of the prophets to cast their oracles in poetic form is illustrated elsewhere. The questions asked by Samuel all refer to judicial honesty which has always been rare in the East. Samuel was not without sin, but his work was irreproachable.

4. *Who was the Lord's anointed?* 12:5

The king was the Lord's anointed. Samuel himself had anointed Saul to be king, and Samuel knew that Saul was not taking over the leadership in Israel because he found fault with Samuel's judgeship. God Himself could testify to the good work of Samuel, and the people were impressed with the sacred testimony which they were bearing to him on this occasion.

Israel's History Reviewed. 12:6-15

6 And Samuel said unto the people, *It is* the Lord that advanced Moses and Aaron, and that brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt.

7 Now therefore stand still, that I may reason with you before the Lord of all the righteous acts of the Lord, which he did to you and to your fathers.

8 When Jacob was come into Egypt, and your fathers cried unto the Lord, then the Lord sent Moses and Aaron, which brought forth your fathers out of Egypt, and made them dwell in this place.

9 And when they forgot the Lord their God, he sold them into the hand of Sisera, captain of the host of Hazor, and into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab, and they fought against them.

10 And they cried unto the Lord, and said, We have sinned, because we have forsaken the Lord, and have served Baalim and Ashtaroth: but now deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, and we will serve thee.

11 And the Lord sent Jerubbaal, and Bedan, and Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side, and ye dwelled safe.

12 And when ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the Lord your God *was* your king.

13 Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, *and* whom ye have desired! and, behold, the Lord hath set a king over you.

14 If ye will fear the Lord, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the Lord your God:

15 But if ye will not obey the voice of the Lord, but rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then shall the hand of the Lord be against you, as *it was* against your fathers.

5. *Why did Samuel rehearse Israel's history? 12:6-9*

History is a great teacher. It has been facetiously said that the only thing we learn from history is that we do not learn from history. Many people forget their past history and make the same mistakes that their forefathers made. Those who are wise will look into their past and see mistakes which have been made. They will profit by good examples which have been set for them. In review-

ing their history they learn how to live in the present and to lay plans for the future. Samuel's use of Israel's history was of such nature as to remind them that their forefathers turned their backs on God. God sold them into the hand of such people as Sisera and into the hand of the Philistines, as He did in the days of Samson. When Israel was reminded of these things, they would learn from the experiences.

6. *When had Israel been delivered into the hand of the king of Moab? 12:9*

The Moabites were descendants of Lot's older daughter by Lot himself. Israel had only recently been engaged in a war with the Ammonites, descendants of Lot by his younger daughter (11:1). The Moabites had afflicted Israel in the days of Ehud, a judge from the tribe of Benjamin (Judges 3:12). Since Saul, their new king, was from Benjamin, this reminder of how they were oppressed in the days of a Benjamite judge would be a particularly helpful lesson to the Israelites.

7. *Who was Bedan? 12:11*

Bedan is a name of one of Israel's former leaders. His name is not given in this form in any of the canonical history. Jerubbaal is another name for Gideon. Jephthah is a later judge in the history of Israel. Since Bedan occurs between the two names, it is generally concluded that this is another name for Barak. Barak had helped Deborah in their war against Sisera (Judges 4:6). The earlier mention of Sisera by Samuel in this passage lends credence to the belief that this is a reference to Barak.

8. *What additional reason does Samuel give for their asking for a king? 12:12*

The reason emphasized the most by the Israelites was that they wanted to be like all the other nations. They had excused themselves by saying that Samuel was old and that his sons were not following in his good ways.

The ascendancy of Nahash to a place of prominence on Israel's eastern border evidently aggravated their request for a king. Nahash threatened the national security of the people. They had this added reason for asking for a military and political leader under whose authority they might unite.

9. *What was the condition of their future prosperity?*
12:14, 15

Samuel solemnly threatened the people that they would prosper only if they obeyed God, served Him, and feared Him. God's voice would be made known to them through those prophets who spoke for God. Israel already had many ordinances and statutes to keep as they served God in regular worship. Their fear of the Lord would be reverence for Him and His appointments. Samuel warned them that if they rebelled against the commandments their national existence would be threatened. The king was not exempt from these conditions. He was another man in the sight of God and would be subject to the same frailties as the others. He would be expected to fear God, serve Him, and obey His voice.

Samuel Rebukes the People. 12:16-25

16 Now therefore stand and see this great thing, which the Lord will do before your eyes.

17 *Is it* not wheat harvest today? I will call unto the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness *is* great, which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking you a king.

18 So Samuel called unto the Lord; and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel.

19 And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins *this* evil, to ask us a king.

20 And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not: ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside from following the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart;

21 And turn ye not aside: for *then should ye go after vain things*, which cannot profit nor deliver; for they *are* vain.

22 For the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people.

23 Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way:

24 Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great *things* he hath done for you.

25 But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.

10. *Why did Samuel ask for a sign? 12:16-18*

Miracles were performed throughout the Old Testament and the New Testament in order to attest either the message or the messenger. When a truth pronounced by a prophet was in doubt, God often vindicated it by a sign. On other occasions a sign was given to authenticate a messenger of God. As Samuel was bidding farewell to his people, he asked them to stand still and see the great thing which the Lord would do for them.

11. *What was the effect of the sign? 12:17, 18*

Very little rain fell in Palestine during harvest time. Seasons were marked by dry periods and wet periods. The temperature did not vary a great deal. Rain falling in harvest time would be very unusual. The people realized this. The thunder they heard and the rain that fell caused the people to fear the Lord greatly. They also stood in awe and reverence of Samuel.

12. Why did the people think that they would die? 12:19

A great number of the people had died when they had shown improper respect for the Ark as it was brought back to Beth-shemesh (6:19). When Manoah saw the angel of the Lord, he said to his wife, "We shall surely die, because we have seen God" (Judges 13:22). One of man's natural reactions upon the realization of his own guilt and the complete holiness of God is to realize that sin cannot abide in the presence of God. Since he is a sinner, he wonders that he is able to stand in God's presence (Psalm 24:3). As the Israelites realized their sinful nature they believed that they would perish in the presence of the Holy God.

13. Why did Samuel reassure the people? 12:20-22

God will not reject the broken and contrite heart (Psalm 51:17). The people of Israel had repented completely of their iniquity. They admitted that they had the wrong motives for asking for a king. Samuel sensed this repentant spirit and reassured the people that God would pardon them. Throughout the ages God had not forsaken His chosen people. He had threatened to destroy them in the days of Moses when they made a golden calf and Moses had interceded for them asking God to blot his name out of the book of life, but to spare the people of Israel (Exodus 32:32). Moses prayed that God would not forget His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (32:13). God did not forget His covenant, and Samuel reassured the Israelites that the Lord would not forsake His people.

14. Why would it be a sin to cease praying for them? 12:23

Samuel would have demonstrated a reprehensible degree of selfishness if he had prayed only because he was an official. Once he was not serving as a judge, he assured the people that he would be faithful in remembering them in prayer. He would be concerned for them as long as he

lived. In addition to praying for them, he would continue to teach them as a faithful prophet. Samuel stands as a good example for a model preacher.

15. *How is this a tribute to Samuel?*

Every local minister could study Samuel's Farewell Address with profit. Every leader of any congregation in quest of a preacher might well use him as an example. This is the sermon outline which has been suggested by this chapter:

THE IDEAL PREACHER

I. Blameless in character (Vv. 1-5)

A. He speaks concretely of besetting sins

1. He knows well the pitfalls
2. He knows the misdeeds of his own ministerial sons, as well as those of Eli's boys

B. He has not otherwise abused the powers

1. He has never yielded to the lure of money
2. He doesn't have to assure his friends that he has never stolen any man's wife, or dallied with any woman's affections

C. He is free from the following:

1. Ambition
2. Greed
3. Lust

II. Gifted as a teacher (Vv. 6-18)

A. The ideal preacher teaches all day

1. Cherishes the ideal of a teaching
2. Like Ezra, he set his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and ordinances

B. He wants these things for his hearers:

1. To get every hearer right with God

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2. To lead everyone in doing the will of the Most High

C. His sermon is a model

1. He uses facts, facts, facts
2. He makes clear what they mean
3. He appeals to the head and to the heart

D. He speaks with authority—"Thus saith the Lord" *ill.* George Whitefield, upon being asked for a copy of the sermon that had made such an impact, said that he would upon one condition—the hearer and inquirer must supply the lightning and thunder that had driven home the message of the hour.

III. Mighty in prayer (Vv. 19-25)

A. He was the son of a woman who prayed and the pupil of a man who interceded

1. He relied chiefly on prayer
2. He had also taught the most spiritual-minded of them to pray
3. Many are fearful of the future, but not a true man of God

B. In the hour of dread concern about the unknown morrow the eyes of those deluded mortals were opened

1. They could see their sin
- 2.. They understood why their asking for a king made Samuel grieve

Conclusion

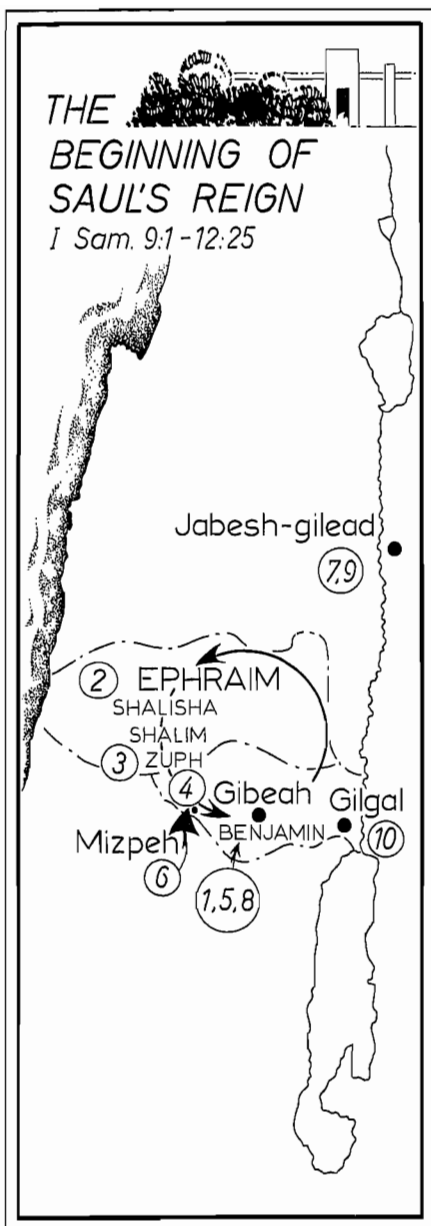
1. A test of the minister's work is in seeing how many of them seek him out to ask for prayer
2. The secret lies largely in learning to pray
3. This is the ideal-blameless in character, gifted in teaching, mighty in prayer!

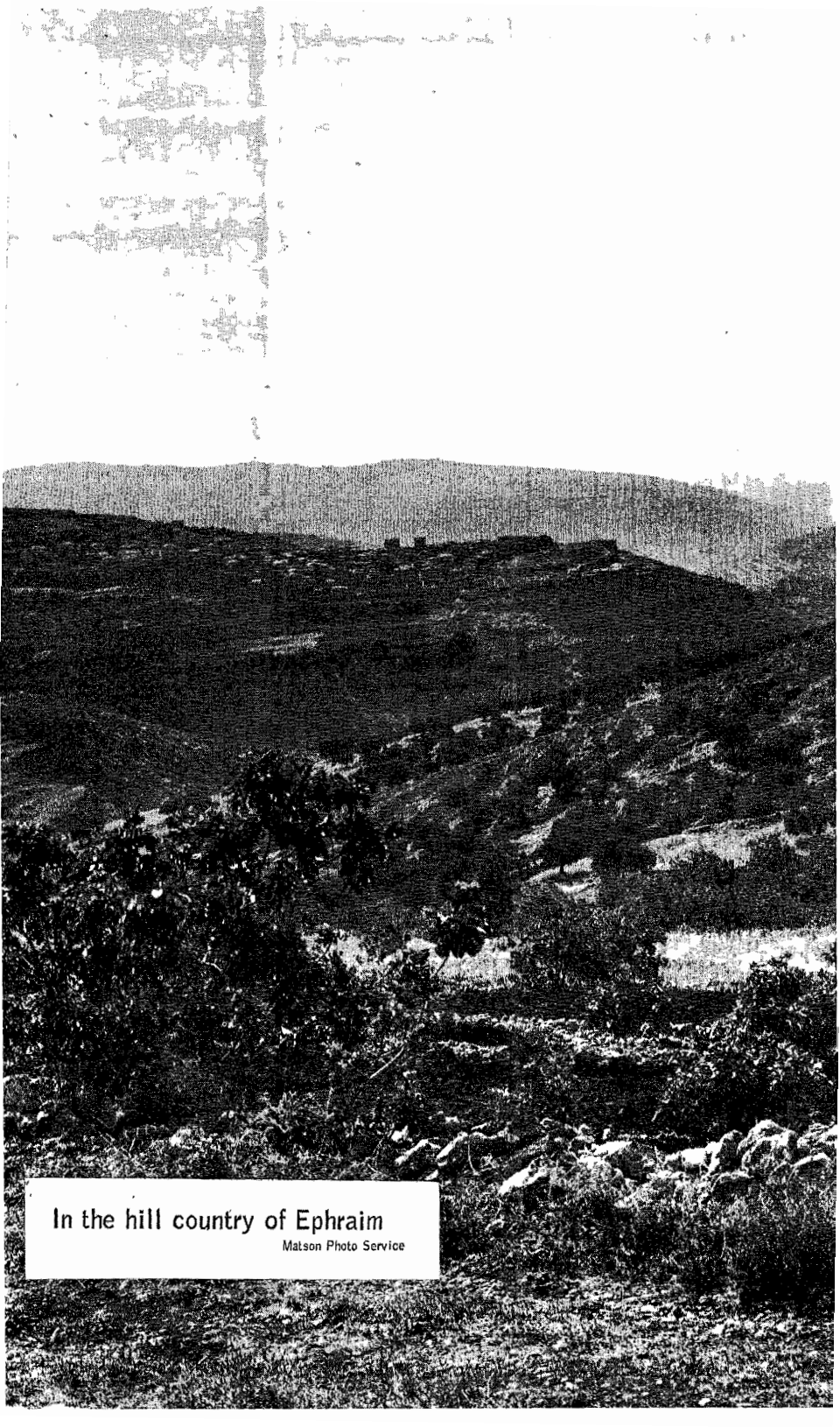
STUDIES IN SAMUEL
CHAPTER 12 IN REVIEW

1. How many questions did Samuel ask the Israelites? _____
2. What color was Samuel's hair when he stood before them? _____
3. What two leaders did Samuel mention as leading Israel out of Egypt? _____
4. What is another name for Jerub-baal? _____
5. What is another name for Bedan? _____
6. The rise of what king had prompted Israel to ask for a king? _____
7. What three things was Israel to do in order to receive God's blessings? _____
8. What sign did Samuel call for to substantiate his word? _____
9. What time of year was it? _____
10. What did they ask Samuel to continue to do for them? _____

THE BEGINNING OF SAUL'S REIGN I Samuel 9:1 - 12:25

1. Gibeah
—Saul sent to seek asses;
9:1-3
2. Ephraim, and lands of
Shalishah and Shaalim;
—seeking asses; 9:4
3. Land of Zuph
—Meeting with Samuel,
and anointing of Saul;
9:5-8
4. Between Zuph and Gibeah
—Saul meets three groups
of men.
—fulfilling Samuel's
prophecies; 10:9-13.
5. Gibeah
—Saul is questioned by his
uncle; 10:14-16
6. Mizpah
—Saul publicly proclaimed
king; 10:17-27
7. Jabesh-Gilead
—Attack by Nahash the
Ammonite; 11:1-5
8. Gibeah
—Saul gathers army;
11:6-10
9. Jabesh-Gilead
—Saul defeats Ammon;
11:11-13
10. Gilgal
—Samuel's address to
Israel; 11:14—12:25





In the hill country of Ephraim

Matson Photo Service

PART TWO

THE
REIGN
OF SAUL

13:1—31:13

STUDIES IN SAMUEL

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 13

- Vv. 1- 4 *Saul's campaign against the Philistines.* The initial victory over the Ammonites at Jabesh-gilead must have given the Israelites courage to go against their chief oppressors, the Philistines. Jonathan won the first battle, and the Philistines were infuriated.
- Vv. 5- 7 *The counter-attack of the Philistines.* The weapons of war used by the Philistines indicate that they enjoyed a rather highly developed civilization. To this point in history, we know of Israel having only weapons for foot soldiers, there being no references of their use of chariots and other military equipment. At this particular time, they were largely subjugated by the Philistines and had hardly any weapons at all.
- Vv. 8-10 *Saul's presumptuous sacrifice.* Samuel had made arrangements to meet Saul at Gilgal and to lead the people in a sacrifice to God. Saul tarried a minimum amount of time and then took things into his own hand. He had no right to do this. He was not a priest in any sense of the word. He committed a grave sin.
- Vv. 11-16 *Samuel's rebuke of Saul.* Once again it was Samuel's task to pronounce judgment against Israel's leader. As he had received a message of doom to pronounce against Eli, he now pronounces God's judgment against Saul, Israel's first king.
- Vv. 17-23 *The battle pitched.* The Philistine policy was to divide their host and attack the two companies of Israelites. Their superiority in equipment is brought out in the fact. ". . . that

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there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan: but with Saul and with Jonathan his son was there found" (v. 22).

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *A minimum is not enough in God's service.* It is evident from the text that Saul waited until the seventh day for the arrival of Samuel. He did not wait until the seventh day was completed. He was not patient in waiting for God's servant to perform his part of the covenant. His failure to be thorough brought the announcement that his dynasty would not be long-lived.
2. *The folly of trusting in man's strength.* The history of Israel is filled with examples of God's people going out to battle against their enemies with overwhelming odds in favor of their foes. In many of these instances they were nonetheless victorious. When they trusted in God, they found that they had nothing to fear.

THE REIGN OF SAUL. 13:1—31:13

The early days of Saul's reign, 13:1—14:52.

Saul's Campaign Against the Philistines, 13:1-4

Saul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel,

2 Saul chose him three thousand *men* of Israel; *whereof* two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and in mount Beth-el, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin: and the rest of the people he sent every man to his tent.

3 And Jonathan smote the garrison of the Philistines that *was* in Geba, and the Philistines heard *of it*. And Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, Let the Hebrews hear.

4 And all Israel heard say *that* Saul had smitten a garrison of the Philistines, and *that* Israel also was had in abomination with the Philistines. And the people were called together after Saul to Gilgal.

1. *How old was Saul when he began to reign? 13:1*

Saul already had a son Jonathan who commanded a division of the army. Saul himself was hardly less than forty years of age, and Jonathan hardly less than twenty. Israelites did not go to war until they were twenty (Numbers 1:3). No number is in the Hebrew text in the first part of this verse, and the translation in the authorized version is a bit awkward. It is hard to understand the impact of such a statement as is made here. All we learn from it is that he reigned one year and then he reigned another year. The normal way of introducing a king was to give his age and then to tell how long he reigned (II Kings 15:1-5). We are left to wonder if this is the intention of the author here.

2. *What was the purpose of the 3,000 men chosen by Saul? 13:2*

Saul was attempting to check the advance of the Philistines. He took the advance position himself in Michmash, a prominent overlook in the mountains of Ephraim near Beth-el. Beth-el was the famous spot where Jacob had seen a vision of the angels of God ascending and descending on a ladder set up on the earth (Genesis 28:10-22). A thousand men were with Jonathan back in Gibeah, the home of Saul. Saul evidently felt that it was not necessary to keep the 330,000 men away from their homes and normal occupations. He sent the rest of the army home and manned the outposts with only a few soldiers.

3. *Where was Michmash? 13:2 b*

Michmash is the present village of *Mukbmas*. The village is in ruins and lies on the northern ridge of the *Wady Suweinit*. Although it is only some ten miles north

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of Jerusalem, it is difficult to reach and takes a person some three hours and a half to make the journey on foot. Beth-el is northwest of this point, and it is some two hours' journey away by the road if one were to walk. The mountain of Beth-el cannot be identified exactly. Beth-el itself was located on a very high ground, but the location is surrounded by heights.

4. Why did Jonathan make his attack? 13:3

Jonathan was closer to the garrison which the Philistines kept in Gibeah. Jonathan was a very brave man and won the respect and admiration of all the Israelites by his daring exploits. By winning this initial skirmish, Jonathan gave courage to the rest of the people. Saul took advantage of the situation and publicized the victory widely.

The Counter-attack of the Philistines. 13:5-7

5 And the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen, and people as the sand which *is* on the seashore in multitude: and they came up, and pitched in Michmash, eastward from Beth-aven.

6 When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait, (for the people were distressed,) then the people did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits.

7 And *some of* the Hebrews went over Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. As for Saul, he *was* yet in Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling.

5. Why were the people so alarmed? 13:6

The armies of Israel were caught in a trap. The Philistines came against them with their 30,000 chariots, 6,000 horsemen, and innumerable foot soldiers. Caves, thickets, rocks, high places, and pits afforded the people the only safety. Some of them even went across the Jordan into

the land of Gilead in order to get as far away from Philistia as possible.

6. *Why did Saul go to Gilgal?* 13:7

Gilgal was on the very eastern border of western Israel. It was the farthest rallying point from Philistia. In addition to being rather inaccessible to the Philistines, the spot was hallowed by the many events which had transpired here in Israel's earlier history. Moreover, Samuel had told Saul that he would meet him there when Saul was anointed by Samuel (10:8).

Saul's Presumptuous Sacrifice. 13:8-10

8 And he tarried seven days, according to the set time that Samuel *had appointed*: but Samuel came not to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him.

9 And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and peace offerings. And he offered the burnt offering.

10 And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might salute him.

7. *What was Saul's first act of disobedience?* 13:8-14

Samuel had made an appointment with Saul when Saul was anointed king (10:8). It was Samuel's intention that Saul should call the people together at Gilgal again and keep them there until he could arrive. Saul impatiently took matters into his own hand and sinned greatly by offering sacrifice himself. Since he was not a priest, he was openly disobeying the Law of God. At that time, Samuel told Saul that there would be one chosen who would obey God. There was no personal conflict between the two men other than that which comes when God's representative is treated disrespectfully. Saul's refusal to heed Samuel's injunctions was tantamount to rejecting the commands of God.

Samuel's Rebuke of Saul. 13:11-16

11 And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and *that* thou camest not within the days appointed, and *that* the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash;

12 Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the Lord: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering.

13 And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever.

14 But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord, hath commanded him *to be* captain over his people, because thou hast not kept *that* which the Lord commanded thee.

15 And Samuel arose, and gat him up from Gilgal unto Gibeah of Benjamin. And Saul numbered the people *that were* present with him, about six hundred men.

16 And Saul, and Jonathan his son, and the people *that were* present with them, abode in Gibeah of Benjamin: but the Philistines encamped in Michmash.

8. *What was the purpose of the offering? 13:12*

No doubt the Israelites were wanting to beseech God for His help in the battle. Saul said that he had not made supplication unto the Lord. The Hebrew original gives the idea of entreating the face of the Lord. Saul may have been wanting to know the will of the Lord with regard to this battle. No doubt it was the custom of these people to make a sacrifice before they went into battle. Before Jephthah went into battle he vowed a vow to the Lord (Judges 11:30, 31).

9. In what way had Saul done foolishly? 13:13

It was not wrong to make a sacrifice. Saul had sinned in that he had not kept the commandment of the Lord. Samuel had told Saul to wait until he came to him before he made a sacrifice (10:8). To disobey the commandment of the prophet, was to disobey the commandment of the Lord. Saul had sinned against God. As a result the kingdom was not to be longlived.

10. What is the meaning of "after his own heart"? 13:14

Saul had been a very popular choice. He was in effect a man after the peoples' hearts. Saul had failed. He had rationalized and depended upon his own strength in such a way as to make him unacceptable to God. The man who was to be after God's own heart was David. David is described in this way in Acts 15:22. David was not perfect; when he sinned he repented. He was more completely devoted to God and was thus a man after God's own heart.

11. Why did Samuel go to Gibeah? 13:15

Gibeah was a well-known assembly place for the people. In addition, it was Saul's home. Jonathan had stayed with the garrison here and made the first attack against the Philistines. It was a high place, a place where Samuel could offer an acceptable sacrifice to God.

12. Why did Saul return with such a small army? 13:15 b

Saul had not accomplished his avowed purpose in sacrificing. He had said that he thought the people would be scattered from him and for this reason had forced himself in offering a burnt offering. When he was at Michmash, he had 2,000 men with him. Jonathan had another 1,000 with him. Now Saul had only 600. The people themselves must have revolted against Saul's impertinence in offering a whole burnt offering. They must have known of the judgment of Samuel and were unwilling to follow Saul.

The Battle Pinched. 13:17-23

17 And the spoilers came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies: one company turned unto the way *that leadeth* to Ophrah, unto the land of Shual:

18 And another company turned the way *to* Beth-horon: and another company turned *to* the way of the border that looketh to the valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness.

19 Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel: for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make *them* swords or spears:

20 But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock.

21 Yet they had a file for the mattocks, and for the coulters, and for the forks, and for the axes, and to sharpen the goads.

22 So it came to pass in the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that *were* with Saul and Jonathan: but with Saul and with Jonathan his son was there found.

23 And the garrison of the Philistines went out to the passage of Michmash.

13. Where was Beth-horon? 13:18

Two towns bear the name of Beth-horon. One is known as the "upper," and the other "nether" (Joshua 16:3, 5; I Chronicles 7:24; II Chronicles 8:5). They lie off the road from Gibeon to Azekah (Joshua 10:10, 11) on the way to the Philistine plain. These locations lay on the boundary lines between Benjamin and Ephraim (Joshua 16:3, 5; 18:13, 14). They were assigned to Ephraim and given to the Kohathites as Levitical cities (Joshua 21:22). Reference is made to an enlargement of these locations in later Israelite history (I Chronicles 7:24). The building referred to was not the establishment, but the rebuilding and enlarging. Sherah was no doubt an heiress who had

received these places as her inheritance. The road running between the two Beth-horons is one of the roughest and steepest in Palestine, but is still used as the road from the coast. In effect, the road is a key to the country. The Philistines naturally used this road as an access against Israel.

14. What had become of the smiths? 13:19

The Philistines had made it illegal for a blacksmith to practice his art. Many of them had no doubt been taken out of the country. Some may have been slain. The Philistines forced an Israelite to go down into their country to sharpen his plowshare and the coulter of his plow. Even his ax and his mattock had to be sharpened by the Philistine lords. The only tool left for the Israelite to use was a file. He could use this instrument to keep an edge on his mattocks, coulters, pitchforks, axes, and goads. When the edge was worn away, however, he had to depend upon his captors to repair his tools and implements. This kind of regulation would keep an Israelite from forging swords and spears.

15. How were Saul's men armed? 13:22

Only meager implements were in the possession of the Israelites. They could defend themselves only with such tools as were normally used in peaceful pursuits. Some of them probably had axes; others used goads and forks. Only Saul and Jonathan were equipped with normal weapons. These verses describe a people that are completely beaten. It explains why the loss of the Ark was such a catastrophe and indicates how low Israel had been brought by the Philistines. As a matter of fact, this period in Israel's history is known as the "captivity of the land" (Judges 18:30). This condition prevailed all the time until Saul began to win some decisive and permanent victories. The victories were not complete in the days of David, and it was left to him to be a man of war and firmly establish the Israelite kingdom in Palestine.

FIRST SAMUEL
CHAPTER 13 IN REVIEW

1. How old was Saul when he began to reign? _____
2. How many men did Saul take into battle? _____
3. How many were with Jonathan? _____
4. Where were Saul and his men? _____
5. Where were Jonathan and his men? _____
6. Where were the Philistines whom Jonathan attacked? _____
7. How many chariots did the Philistines have? _____
8. Where did Saul go to make a sacrifice? _____
9. How long did he wait for Samuel? _____
10. Who were the only two men who had spears in Israel? _____

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 14

- Vv. 1-23 *Jonathan's surprise attack on the Philistines.* Jonathan and his armor-bearer devised a startling plan of going against the enemy by themselves. Evidently the Philistines thought that their position was impregnable and that the Israelites were so poorly equipped that they had nothing to fear. The skirmish started by Jonathan and his armor-bearer started such confusion that the Philistines attacked their own men, and a great victory was won for Israel.
- Vv. 24-46 *Saul's ill-advised oath.* King Saul had ordered that his men were to fast as they went into battle. Although Jonathan was unaware of his father's order, Saul threatened to punish him for tasting a little honey. Only the intercession of the people saved Jonathan.
- Vv. 47-52 *Saul's other battles and his family.* Saul was a great warrior, and his campaigns took him against Moab, Ammon, Edom, Syria, as well

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as Philistia. His wife, sons, daughters, captain, and father are all mentioned at this point in his career.

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *Trust in God overcomes fear of men.* Although Israel was in a dire strait, Jonathan was not afraid to do what he knew was right. With a full trust in God and using the good common sense with which he was endowed, he devised a strategy that gave victory to God's people.
2. *Rash oaths should not be kept.* Under ordinary circumstances, an oath should be very sacred and kept if at all possible. When oaths are made in rashness, however, it is better to repent for making the oaths rather than to keep them. Herod beheaded John the Baptist, although he was "exceeding sorry" (Mark 6:26). He went ahead and performed the dastardly deed ". . . for their sakes which sat with him" (Mark 6:26 b). He was afraid of what the people would think of him if he went back on his oath. Saul was evidently determined to go ahead and carry out the penalty he had pronounced against any soldier who ate anything, even though it meant the slaying of the hero of his own army, even his own son.

Jonathan's Surprise Attack on the Philistines. 14:1-23

Now it came to pass upon a day, that Jonathan the son of Saul said unto the young man that bare his armor, Come, and let us go over to the Philistines' garrison, that is on the other side. But he told not his father.

2 And Saul tarried in the uttermost part of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree which is in Migron: and the people that were with him were about six hundred men;

3 And Ahiah, the son of Ahitub, Ichabod's brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the Lord's priest in Shiloh,

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wearing an ephod. And the people knew not that Jonathan was gone.

4 And between the passages, by which Jonathan sought to go over unto the Philistines' garrison, *there was* a sharp rock on the one side, and a sharp rock on the other side: and the name of the one *was* Bozez, and the name of the other Seneh.

5 The forefront of the one *was* situate northward over against Michmash, and the other southward over against Gibeah.

6 And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armor, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the Lord will work for us: for *there is* no restraint to the Lord to have by many or by few.

7 And his armor-bearer said unto him, Do all that *is* in thine heart: turn thee; behold, I *am* with thee according to thy heart.

8 Then said Jonathan, Behold, we will pass over unto *these* men, and we will discover ourselves unto them.

9 If they say thus unto us, Tarry until we come to you; then we will stand still in our place, and will not go up unto them.

10 But if they say thus, Come up unto us; they we will go up: for the Lord hath delivered them into our hand: and this *shall be* a sign unto us.

11 And both of them discovered themselves unto the garrison of the Philistines: and the Philistines said, Behold, the Hebrews come forth out of the holes where they had hid themselves.

12 And the men of the garrison answered Jonathan and his armor-bearer, and said, Come up to us, and we will show you a thing. And Jonathan said unto his armor-bearer, Come up after me: for the Lord hath delivered them into the hand of Israel.

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13 And Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet, and his armor-bearer after him: and they fell before Jonathan; and his armor-bearer slew after him.

14 And that first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armor-bearer made, was about twenty men, within as it were a half acre of land, *which a yoke of oxen might plow.*

15 And there was trembling in the host, in the field, and among all the people: the garrison, and the spoilers, they also trembled, and the earth quaked: so it was a very great trembling.

16 And the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked; and, behold, the multitude melted away, and they went on beating down *one another.*

17 Then said Saul unto the people that *were* with him, Number now, and see who is gone from us. And when they had numbered, behold, Jonathan and his armor-bearer *were not there.*

18 And Saul said unto Ahiah, Bring hither the ark of God. For the ark of God was at that time with the children of Israel.

19 And it came to pass, while Saul talked unto the priest, that the noise that *was* in the host of the Philipines went on and increased: and Saul said unto the priest, Withdraw thine hand.

20 And Saul and all the people that *were* with him assembled themselves, and they came to the battle: and, behold, every man's sword was against his fellow, *and there was* a very great discomfiture.

21 Moreover the Hebrews *that* were with the Philistines before that time, which went up with them into the camp *from the country* round about, even they also *turned* to be with the Israelites that *were* with Saul and Jonathan.

22 Likewise all the men of Israel which had hid themselves in mount Ephraim, *when* they heard that the Philistines fled, even they also followed hard after them in the battle.

23 So the Lord saved Israel that day: and the battle passed over unto Beth-aven.

1. Why did Jonathan fail to tell Saul of his plan? 14:1

Saul would probably have opposed such a daring enterprise. In the first place, he would be reluctant to see his son risk his life in such an expedition. In the second place, he had lost a great deal of his courage because of the stunning announcement of judgment which Samuel had made to him. The same fear and trembling which had come upon the people had affected their leader.

2. Where is Migron? 14:2

Migron is a locality which has been lost to modern geographers. Indications in the narrative would point to a place on the north side of Gilbeah and a different place from the Migron on the northwest of Michmash (Isaiah 10:28). Saul felt this was a good place to wait and observe the activities of the Philistines. Since it is called the uttermost part of Gibeah, it is taken to be in the vicinity. Saul still had only 600 men with him.

3. Why was Abijah not at Shiloh? 14:3

When the Ark was taken from Shiloh, the place was no longer regarded as the center of worship. Later David fled from the presence of Saul, and the Tabernacle itself was at Nob (21:1). The Ark was still in the house of Abinadab in Kiriath-jearim on the west side of the border of Judah near Philistia. A priest would hardly be safe at that point, and his services were needed by Saul.

4. What was the advantage of the two campsites? 14:4

Israel was on one crag, and the Philistines were on the other. The site of this valley is almost impenetrable. One can hardly go down into the valley on horseback. About a mile eastward of the line between these two promontories the valley is so narrow and so deep that the opposite heights are less than a mile apart. The two armies would

keep each other under observation without fearing a frontal attack at this point.

5. *On what did Jonathan rely? 14:6*

Jonathan was convinced that Israel was the nation of God's own choosing and that God would preserve them in every situation. He did not know for sure that God would give them success in the particular venture that they had in mind, but he hoped that He would. He knew that it did not make any difference whether there were a few men or many in an army. As he said: "For there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few" (v. 6 b).

6. *What was so frightening about Jonathan's attack?*

14:7-15

Things in Israel were rapidly coming to a sorry state. Samuel had returned to Gibeah because Shiloh had been forsaken. Saul came with just a few men because all the people were of a mind to desert and many had done so already. There were no smiths for making of weapons since they required iron work. The two enemy armies were at the time separated by a mile-long valley between two high crags, one some 50 feet of sheer rock, the other about 100 feet of sheer rock. Jonathan relied entirely upon the guiding hand of Jehovah, not even mentioning the expedition to his father. More than likely his father would never have permitted him to go. Hence when he suddenly appeared in the camp of the Philistines it was terribly unexpected and actually frightened them beyond measure. If the Philistine soldiers were really valiant, they would come down after Jonathan and his armor-bearer; if they said, "Come up," they were lazy, cowardly, and careless. This would indicate to Jonathan the advisability of continuing his attack.

7. *Why is mention made of what oxen might plow? 14:14*

Rural people would measure things by standards to which they were accustomed. A "furrow" of land was what could be plowed with a yoke of oxen in one day. It is

like the Roman *jugum*, or *jugerum*, containing some 28,000 square feet. The area where the battle was fought is described as the furrow of an acre of land, because the length only of an half-acre was to be given and not the square footage.

8. *Why did the Philistines tremble? 14:15*

The situation was reversed. The Israelites had trembled when they saw the mammoth Philistine host coming out against them. After Jonathan and his armor-bearer surprised the Philistines, the Philistines were afraid. The very fact that they did not expect two men to climb the cliff alone led them to relax their vigil. Two men coming upon them in an unexpected way confused them and frightened them.

9. *Why did Saul call for the Ark? 14:18*

The Ark had led the Israelites into battle on a number of occasions. Priests carried the Ark into the Jordan River when Israel crossed over into Palestine (Joshua 3:6). Moses refused to send the Ark into the ill-fated battle against the Canaanites (Numbers 14:44). When Israel was walking in God's paths, the Ark was a symbol of His presence. When they were rebelling against God, the fact that the Ark was with them did not guarantee a victory for them. This truth was demonstrated in the days of Eli's sons as the Ark was captured by the Philistines. Saul could hardly have forgotten this lesson, and he surely would not have risked losing it again. His decision to call for the Ark must have been prompted by his desire to find out the Lord's will with regard to the battle. He must have thought his having the Ark with him would have helped him to learn this will.

10. *Was the ark again brought into the camp? 14:19*

Saul commanded Ahijah the priest to fetch the Ark; but while he was conversing with the priest, the noise and confusion in the Philistine camp was brought to his attention. The way was then clear. It was up to the Israelites to pursue the enemy and there was no need to command,

"Withdraw thy hand." There would be no need for the priest to give any further order or to make any further move towards fetching the Ark. Even though there is mention of some Israelites who had not joined with the men of Saul but rather had joined with the Philistines, the Israelites won a victory and pursued the Philistines first to the north and then to the west.

11. Who were the Hebrews with the Philistines? 14:21

These men were defectors and captives. Notice that they are called Hebrews, while the people of Saul were called Israelites. Living had become so difficult in Israel that these people had sought asylum with the enemy even at the risk of calling down the wrath of their own people upon them. David fled to Achish, king of Gath, in order to escape the murderous intentions of Saul (I Samuel 21:10).

12. Where was Beth-aven? 14:23

Beth-aven was near Ai. Ai lay near Beth-el on the road which ran from Jerusalem to Shechem. It was east of Michmash. The Philistines fled westwards from Michmash to Aijalon (v. 31). If we bear in mind the fact that the camp of the Philistines was on the east side of Michmash before Beth-aven (13:5), the fact that the Israelites attacked it from the south explains the extent of the battle. As the main body of the Philistines fled as far as Ajalon, they were pursued to that place by some of the Israelites.

Saul's Ill-advised Oath. 14:24-46

24 And the men of Israel were distressed that day: for Saul had adjured the people, saying, Cursed *be* the man that eateth *any* food until evening, that I may be avenged on mine enemies. So none of the people tasted *any* food.

25 And all *they* of the land came to a wood; and there was honey upon the ground.

26 And when the people were come into the wood, behold, the honey dropped; but no man put his hand to his mouth: for the people feared the oath.

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27 But Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath: wherefore he put forth the end of the rod that *was* in his hand, and dipped it in a honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his eyes were enlightened.

28 Then answered one of the people, and said, Thy father straitly charged the people with an oath, saying, Cursed *be* the man that eateth *any* food this day. And the people were faint.

29 Then said Jonathan, My father hath troubled the land: see, I pray you, how mine eyes have been enlightened, because I tasted a little of this honey.

30 How much more, if haply the people had eaten freely today of the spoil of their enemies which they found? for had there not been now a much greater slaughter among the Philistines?

31 And they smote the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon: and the people were faint.

32 And the people flew upon the spoil, and took sheep, and oxen, and calves, and slew *them* on the ground: and the people did eat *them* with the blood.

33 Then they told Saul, saying, Behold, the people sin against the Lord, in that they eat with the blood. And he said, Ye have transgressed: roll a great stone unto me this day.

34 And Saul said, Disperse yourselves among the people, and say unto them, Bring me hither every man his ox, and every man his sheep, and slay *them* here, and eat; and sin not against the Lord in eating with the blood. And all the people brought every man his ox with him that night, and slew *them* there.

35 And Saul built an altar unto the Lord: the same was the first altar that he built unto the Lord.

36 And Saul said, Let us go down after the Philistines by night, and spoil them until the morning light, and let us not leave a man of them. And they said, Do whatso-

ever seemeth good unto them. Then said the priest, Let us draw near hither unto God.

37 And Saul asked counsel of God, Shall I go down after the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into the hand of Israel? But he answered him not that day.

38 And Saul said, Draw ye near hither, all the chief of the people: and know and see wherein this sin hath been this day.

39 For, *as* the Lord liveth, which saveth Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die. But *there was* not a man among all the people *that* answered him.

40 Then said he unto all Israel, Be ye on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side. And the people said unto Saul, Do what seemeth good unto thee.

41 Therefore Saul said unto the Lord God of Israel, Give a perfect *lot*. And Saul and Jonathan were taken: but the people escaped.

42 And Saul said, Cast *lots* between me and Jonathan my son. And Jonathan was taken.

43 Then Saul said to Jonathan, Tell me what thou hast done. And Jonathan told him, and said, I did but taste a little honey with the end of the rod that *was* in mine hand, *and*, lo, I must die.

44 And Saul answered, God do so and more also: for thou shalt surely die, Jonathan.

45 And the people said unto Saul, Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: *as* the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall on the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not.

46 Then Saul went up from following the Philistines: and the Philistines went to their own place.

13. *What was the purpose of Saul's prohibition? 14:24*

To forbid a fighting man to eat is to cut down his efficiency. Saul must have been more interested in demon-

strating kingly zeal than to care for his men. Fasting had its place as a man is disciplining his spirit but it could hardly serve a useful purpose in the field. The only possible practical reason for the prohibition would be to save time, but this value would be lost in the decreased efficiency of the soldiers.

14. *What is the meaning of "his eyes were enlightened"?*
14:27

Partaking of a little food gave increased energy to Jonathan. Honey is a well-known quick-energy food. Jonathan was strengthened physically; and since the loss of strength is noticeably reflected in the eyes, this was the primary center of the resurging energy. His eyes would be keener and his hand would be stronger.

15. *How had Saul troubled the land?* 14:29

Saul had disobeyed Samuel and brought a pronouncement of judgment on himself. He had issued a foolish order to his troops in the midst of a situation which might have resulted in total victory for Israel. The king had demonstrated a lack of courage in staying behind in the battle. In all these things Saul had caused trouble among his people.

16. *Where was Aijalon?* 14:31

Aijalon was on the west slope of the hill country of Judah. A modern spot named *Yalo* (see Joshua 19:42) is pointed out as the most likely location. This site is about three miles southwest of Michmash. Joshua had been fighting the armies of the southern coalition at this point when he prayed for the sun to stand still and give the Israelites the needed extra hours (Joshua 10:12).

17. *Why were the people so faint?* 14:31

The people were weak from hunger since Saul had forbidden them to eat until evening (v. 24). The sight of the booty was too much for them and they seized sheep, oxen, and calves. Without proper care for dressing the animals, they devoured them where they were. Animals

which were slain were left lying on the ground and were saturated in their own blood. The famished soldiers ate the flesh along with the blood which adhered to it. By doing this they sinned against the law in Leviticus 19:26 and the earlier prohibition given by God to the post-diluvian world (Genesis 9:4).

18. Why did Saul call for a stone? 14:33

Saul requested a stone to be provided as a place for slaughtering the animals. In this way the blood would run off properly on the ground. The flesh would be separated from the blood, and the people could eat without committing sin. The hungry people could thus satisfy their overwhelming appetites.

19. Why did he build an altar? 14:35

Saul had learned his lesson about offering sacrifices when he was ineligible to act as a priest. His purpose in erecting an altar was hardly to provide a place for a sacrifice. This altar was to be a memorial of the presence of God. If this is the first altar he ever built, it is evidence of his irreligion. More devoted people, such as Abraham, build altars on many occasions and never allow their devotion to lag (Genesis 12:8, 18).

20. Why did Saul think that someone had sinned? 14:38

Saul had asked counsel of God about going down in pursuit of the Philistines. He wanted to know if God would deliver the enemy into his hands, but God did not give him an answer. He concluded that someone had sinned and prevented God from giving him an answer.

21. Why was Saul willing to slay Jonathan? 14:39

When the breach of a commandment such as that given by Saul is revealed, the guilt has to be expiated. The law of the ancient Oriental kings was inviolable, and no law-breaker was exempt from the wrath of the monarch. Saul had proudly boasted, "though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die" (v. 39). When he found out it was Jonathan who had violated his prohibition, he was forced

to carry out his threat to prevent losing prestige among the people.

22. *What prompted Saul to exact such a penalty?*

Although the king had made a decree that no one was to eat during the time of the battle, Jonathan had put forth the rod that was in his hand and dipped a little honey to his mouth to eat. When Saul asked God to direct him in his activities, there was no answer; and Saul concluded that someone had sinned. When the lot was cast, it fell upon Jonathan. Jonathan confessed his crime; and Saul was willing to exact the penalty by slaying his own son. He knew that as a ruler he was setting an example. He was also exerting the authority that was his, and those who witnessed would have greater respect for his authority. The people, when they saw this, were willing then that Jonathan be spared; and by their earnest entreaty Saul was led to withdraw his order. Thus it is said that the people rescued Jonathan that day.

23. *How did the people rescue him? 14:45*

The objection of the people was so conclusive that Saul was obliged to yield. Justice would demand that Jonathan be spared. He had done nothing wrong in itself. Jonathan had not heard the oath which his father had imposed on the people. He did not consciously or intentionally go against his father's commandment. The divine lot had revealed to Saul that Jonathan had tasted a little honey. The sentence of death was not thereby pronounced by God. Judgment was in the hands of Saul, and he was wise to listen to the desire of the people to spare Jonathan.

Saul's Other Battles and His Family. 14:47-52

47 So Saul took the kingdom over Israel, and fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, and against the children of Ammon, and against Edom, and against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines: and whithersoever he turned himself he vexed *them*.

48 And he gathered a host, and smote the Amalekites, and delivered Israel out of the hands of them that spoiled them.

49 Now the sons of Saul were Jonathan, and Ishui, and Melchi-shua: and the names of his two daughters *were these*; the name of the first-born Merab, and the name of the younger Michal:

50 And the name of Saul's wife *was* Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz: and the name of the captain of his host *was* Abner, the son of Ner, Saul's uncle.

51 And Kish *was* the father of Saul; and Ner the father of Abner *was* the son of Abiel.

52 And there was sore war against the Philistines all the days of Saul: and when Saul saw any strong man, or any valiant man, he took him unto him.

24. *Over what kingdoms did Saul have victory? 14:47, 48*

Saul won victories over practically all of the surrounding kingdoms. Those specifically mentioned include Moab, the land just east of the Jordan river; Edom, the kingdom of the descendants of Esau, being the land lying in the south of the Dead Sea, Philistia, the land bordering along the Mediterranean Sea, and extending from the River of Egypt to the Bay of Acre along the west of the land allotted to the twelve tribes; Zobah, the land lying in and around the Lebanon Mountains; and the Amalekites, the land lying in the wilderness to the west of the land of Edom. The people could with propriety sing, "Saul has slain his thousands" (18:7).

25. *How many sons did Saul have? 14:49*

Only three sons of Saul are mentioned in this early part of his reign—Jonathan, Ishui, and Melchi-shua. From later history and references in genealogies, we learn that he also had a son named Ish-baal (Esh-baal in I Chronicles 9:39) or Ish-bosheth. It was Ish-bosheth who was made king over Israel with his capital at Mahanaim in Gilead

after Saul's death (II Samuel 2:8). Ishui is called Abinadab in I Chronicles 9:39 and in I Samuel 31:2. The three older sons of Saul were killed with him in the battle on Mount Gilboa, leaving only Ish-bosheth as a survivor and a claimant of the throne.

26. *How many daughters did Saul have? 14:49b*

Daughters are not often mentioned in the Bible unless they enter into important events. Of Adam it was written that he begat sons and daughters (Genesis 5:5b), but only the sons—Cain, Abel, and Seth—are named. Jacob's daughter, Dinah, was named along with his twelve sons (Genesis 30:21); but probably this was because she occasioned the unhappy experience at Shechem (Genesis 34). Two of Saul's daughters are mentioned. Merab was the older of the two. She should have been given to David as his wife; but when the time for the marriage was fulfilled, Saul gave her to be another man's wife (I Samuel 18:19). Michal, Saul's younger daughter, loved David, and Saul did give her to be David's wife (I Samuel 18:27).

27. *Who was Saul's wife? 14:50*

Saul's wife was named Ahinoam. As far as the Scripture narrative describes his marital relations, there is mention of only this one wife. He did have a concubine whose name was Rizpah (II Samuel 3:7). Ahinoam is identified as the daughter of Ahimaaz, but nothing more is known of her father or the other members of the family. Ahimaaz is a rather common name for a man in Israel, and in later history the name was given to one of the sons of the priests (II Samuel 17:17). Saul called his wife a perverse and rebellious woman (I Samuel 20:30), but we do not have any knowledge of why he should call her this except our understanding that Saul was almost insanely jealous and selfish. Probably she was a good woman.

28. *Who was the captain of Saul's army? 14:50b*

Abner, the son of Ner, was the leader of Saul's army. He was a cousin of Saul, since Kish and Ner were brothers.

In I Samuel 9:1 Kish is identified as also being the son of Abiel. Ner, the father of Abner, was the son of Abiel (I Samuel 14:51). The family appears to have been rather closely related to one another, since it was Saul's uncle who made inquiry about the search for the asses of Kish when Saul and his servant returned from their meeting with Samuel (10:14). Abner remained with Saul throughout his reign and upheld the honor of the family after Saul's death by placing Saul's son on the throne of Israel (II Samuel 2:8). He entered into negotiations with David in an attempt to put David on the throne of all the tribes; but he was killed by Joab, who thought Abner should have spared Asahel (see II Samuel 3:27). David respected Abner and called him a prince and a great man (II Samuel 3:38).

29. *What was the nature of Saul's reign?* 14:52

Most of Saul's time on the throne was spent in battle. The war against the Philistines was described as being "sore"; and when he ascended to the throne, he went out to battle against the Ammonites (I Samuel 11:1-15). His failure to slay the Amalekites had brought about his being rejected as king (I Samuel 15:1-35). Samuel had warned the Israelites that the king would take their sons to fight in his army (I Samuel 8:11); and this had come to pass as "when Saul saw any strong man, or any valiant man, he took him unto him" (v. 52b).

CHAPTER 14 IN REVIEW

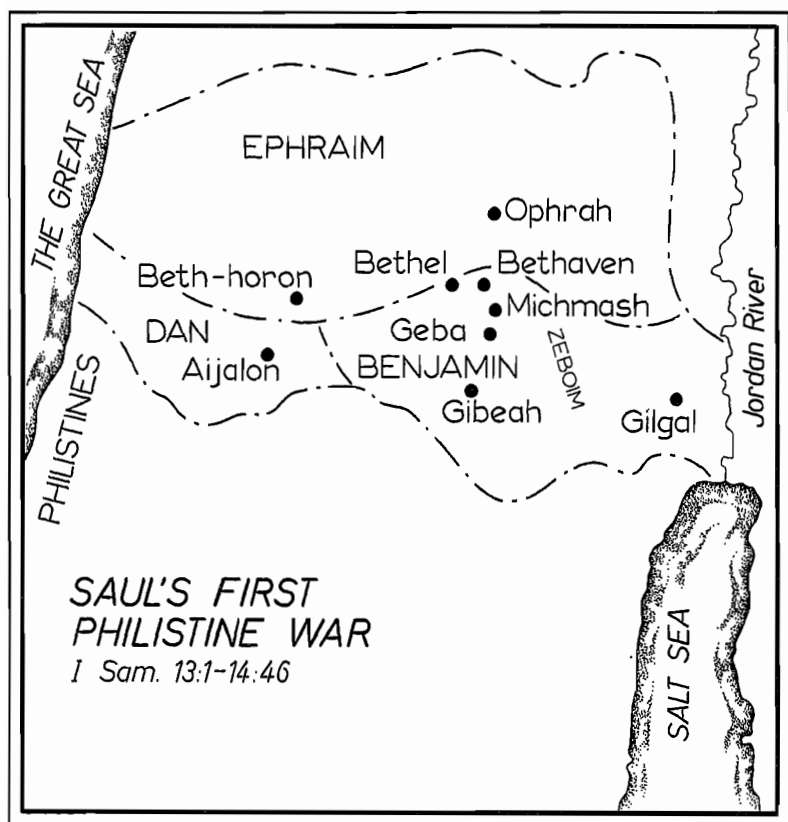
1. Who went with Jonathan to make a surprise attack on the Philistines? _____
2. Where was Saul? _____
3. What was the name of the priest with him? _____
4. Whose son was the priest? _____
5. Where were the other priests? _____
6. What did the priest have with him? _____

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7. What did Saul ask the priest to fetch? _____
8. What had Jonathan eaten? _____
9. What did Saul threaten to do to him? _____
10. What was the name of Saul's wife? _____

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 15

- Vv. 1- 6 *Saul sent against the Amalekites.* The children of Amalek had been constant aggressors against the Israelites. They were the first nation to attack Israel when they left Egypt (Exodus 17:16). At that time God instructed Moses to write an account of the conflict in a book and note that their aggression would not go unpunished. Saul was thus ordered to utterly destroy the Amalekites.
- Vv. 7- 9 *Saul's incomplete obedience.* Saul destroyed most of the men of Amalek, but he spared the king. He also spared some of the best of the animals. He excused his failure by saying that they were to be used as sacrificial animals.
- Vv. 10-23 *Samuel delivers the Lord's message of condemnation.* Once again it was Samuel's hard lot to deliver a message to judgment from the Lord. This time the message was one of complete rejection. When Saul had presumptuously offered sacrifice, Samuel announced that Saul's kingdom would not continue for long. After Saul failed to destroy the Amalekites, Samuel announced that God had rejected Saul himself.
- Vv. 24-35 *Samuel and Saul parted permanently.* Saul begged Samuel to stay with him, even seizing Samuel's robe and ripping it. Samuel did stay with Saul long enough for Saul to summon



SAUL'S FIRST PHILISTINE WAR

I Sam. 13:1-14:36

1. Saul gathers 2000 men at Michmash, and Jonathan 1000 at Gibeah. (13:1-2)
2. Jonathan smites Geba. (13:3)
3. Saul goes to Gilgal and makes a foolish sacrifice. (13:4-14)
4. Saul goes to Geba with 600. (13:15-16)
5. Philistines camp at Michmash, and send out raiders toward Beth-horon, Ophrah, and Valley of Beboim. (13:17-23)
6. Jonathan and armorbearer climb the pass between Geba and Michmash, and smite Philistines. (13:24-14:15)
7. Saul's troops join in and smite Philistines from Michmash to Aijalon. (14:16-23-31)
8. Jonathan is saved from Saul's curse about eating. (14:24-30, 32-46)



The village of Michmash

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STUDIES IN SAMUEL

Agag. Samuel then slew Agag, after first worshipping with Saul. Finally, Samuel left Saul, never to see him until the day of his death.

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *Sin cannot go unpunished.* Israel defeated the Amalekites in battle when they first met, but the defeat was not complete. Though the Amalekites might have thought they had escaped rather intact, God had declared that He would “. . . utterly put out of the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven” (Exodus 17:14). Men today who resist God and His word should expect no happier end.
2. *“To obey is better than sacrifice”* (v. 22). This eternal principle needs to be burned into the hearts of men today. It is better to do God’s will in the first place than to expend great amounts of time, money, and energy in an effort to make atonement for failure to follow God’s leading.

The Lord’s Rejection of Saul, 15:1-35.

Saul Sent Against the Amalekites. 15:1-6

Samuel also said unto Saul, The Lord sent me to anoint thee *to be* king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the Lord.

2 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I remember *that* which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid *wait* for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt.

3 Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.

4 And Saul gathered the people together, and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of Judah.

5 And Saul came to a city of Amalek, and laid wait in the valley.

6 And Saul said unto the Kenites, Go, depart, get you down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them: for ye showed kindness to all the children of Israel, when they came up out of Egypt. So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites.

1. Why did Samuel remind Saul that he had anointed him 15:1

Samuel wanted Saul to place current events in the proper perspective. Saul had seemingly lost his way. He had presumed to offer a sacrifice when he had no right to serve as a priest. He had grown fainthearted in battle and placed a useless curse on his people. Samuel must have felt that he could not help Saul unless Saul were to return to his former humble self. By remembering his origins, Saul might be able to understand the error of a proud man's way.

2. How could the Amalekites be doomed to destruction? 15:2

There was a quarrel that Israel had with the people of the Amalekites. It was this quarrel that was to be avenged and since the Amalekites were completely reprobate, they were appointed of God to utter destruction. The Kenites who were ordered out were kinsmen of Moses' wife. They had come along with Judah into Canaan; but when the land was allotted to the children of Israel, the Kenites had returned to the desert. We are unable to locate Havilah and Shur with certainty, but they were quite evidently the two extremities of the country of the Amalekites. God had predicted the fall of Amalek when they first attacked Israel in the days of Moses (Exodus 17:14).

3. *Was God cruel in ordering the slaughter of all?* 15:3

The people of Amalek had been given more than 400 years in which to repent of their opposition to God's people. They had attacked Israel when Israel first came out of Egypt, around 1447 B.C. While Israel wandered forty years in the wilderness, Amalek made no effort to make amends for her senseless attack. As Israel had settled in the promised land, there were still no overtures from Amalek. In fact her opposition to Israel had been constant. While the judges led Israel through a three-hundred-year period, Amalek still made no attempts to live at peace with God's people. God had finally called a halt to the rebellious ways of the Amalekites. It is an eternal principle that any nation who falls to the depths in which Amalek was wallowing must perish before a people who are roused by a vision of a higher destiny. To allow even the women to continue in such a life would not be mercy. Infants growing up in such a society would have no hope beyond that of a reprobate. God was attempting to work an act of mercy through the sword of Saul.

4. *Where was Telaim?* 15:4

Telaim comes from a Hebrew word which means, "young lambs." A form very close to this is a word *Telen*. Telen is a town in the southern border of Judah (Joshua 16:24). It lay between Ziph and Bealoth. The gathering of Saul's army at this point is the only important event which transpired there according to Bible history. Once again the men of Israel were separated from the men of Judah. The proportion was still ten to one, with Judah making up one-tenth of the number of soldiers in Israel.

5. *What kindness had the Canaanites shown Israel?* 15:6

Hobab was a Canaanite. He is known as Moses' brother-in-law. As the people of Israel departed from Mt. Sinai, Moses invited his brother-in-law to accompany Israel through the wilderness. He promised Hobab that they would share their blessings with him and his people. At

first Hobab declined to go along with them, but as Moses insisted he must have yielded and served as a scout for the hosts of Israel (Numbers 10:29-32). No doubt this is the kindness which the Canaanites showed Israel in the wilderness as mentioned here.

Saul's Incomplete Obedience 15:7-9

7 And Saul smote the Amalekites from Havilah *until* thou comest to Shur, that *is* over against Egypt.

8 And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.

9 But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all *that was* good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing *that was* vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly.

6. Where are Havilah and Shur? 15:7

Shur was in Negeb, the land lying south of Beer-sheba. Generally speaking it is territory to the west of the south end of the Dead Sea. Havilah was on the edge of the Negeb. Another region by the same name was encompassed by the Pison branch of Eden's river (Genesis 25:18) and reached into north Arabia (Genesis 2:11).

7. Who was Agag? 15:8

Agag is the common name for all the Amalekite kings similar to the name of Pharaoh, the name of the kings of Egypt, or like Caesar, the common name of the rulers in Rome. Balaam makes mention of Agag in his prophecy (Numbers 24:7). His reference implies that the king was a leading monarch at that time or else that he was the first one to attack Israel when they came out of Egypt. This particular ruler was evidently no better than his predecessors and he was to be slain, but Saul spared him.

8. *What else did Saul spare?* 15:9

Saul spared the best of the sheep, the oxen, and the lambs. As a matter of fact, he did not destroy that which was good. Only that which was vile and refuse was destroyed. Saul was senseless in disobeying God's commandment in this way, but he gave a feeble excuse when he was confronted with his sin.

Samuel Delivers the Lord's Message of Condemnation.

15:10-23

10 Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel, saying.

11 It repenteth me that I have set up Saul *to be* king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the Lord all night.

12 And when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel, and, behold, he set him up a place, and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal.

13 And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed *be* thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord.

14 And Samuel said, What *meaneth* then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

15 And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

16 Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the Lord hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on.

17 And Samuel said, When thou *wast* little in thine own sight, *wast* thou not *made* the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel?

18 And the Lord sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed.

19 Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord.

20 And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

21 But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal.

22 And Samuel said, Hath the Lord *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey *is* better than sacrifice, *and* to hearken than the fat of rams.

23 For rebellion *is as* the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry. Because thou has rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from *being* king.

9. *Why was Samuel grieved at Saul's action? 15:11*

Samuel loved Saul. Those who try to make Saul's being rejected a jealous act of Samuel miss the gist of the entire story. Samuel regretted the action which Saul had taken. What Saul had done was nothing small; he had completely changed from the humble fellow he was when he was chosen king. He had elevated himself and the people had elevated him until he had lost his modesty. When he disobeyed, he was unfaithful to God. In one sense, he had almost carried out God's orders; but yet he had failed to carry out the order directly and was certainly culpable. The narrative shows how he tried to shift the blame from himself to the people, and his whole unmanly character comes out.

10. Where was Carmel? 15:12

The most famous Carmel is Mt. Carmel, the mountain which juts out into the Mediterranean Sea on the west coast of Israel along the northern border of the tribe of Manasseh. Samuel was not usually in this area, and it is doubtful that this reference here is to this northern Carmel. The name itself signifies a "fruitful field." Another Carmel is a name given to a town in the hill country of Judah (Joshua 15:55). This was the home of Nabal (I Samuel 25:2). One of David's wives is known as "Abigail, the Carmelitess" (I Chronicles 3:1). It was doubtless here that Saul set up a marker for his partial victory over Amalek.

11. How could Saul say he had performed God's commandment? 15:13

Saul had evidently lost his understanding of truthfulness as well as humility. He had partially fulfilled the commandment of the Lord, but he had openly and blatantly disobeyed God's commandment to destroy utterly the Amalekites. This loss of his ability to discern between truth and falsehood is indicative of the sad condition into which Saul had fallen.

12. What was Saul's excuse for his disobedience? 15:15

As Saul had excused himself for offering a sacrifice by saying that he was afraid the people were going to leave him, so he once again blamed the people for his disobedience of God's commandment to destroy the Amalekites. He said the people had spared the best of the sheep and the oxen to sacrifice to the Lord. He took partial credit for having destroyed the rest, but he took no blame for saving the best.

13. Why did he call the Lord Samuel's God? 15:21

Saul had a great deal of impudence to argue with Samuel with regard to his disobedience. Samuel reminded him of how God had blessed him when he was little in his own sight. He reviewed the circumstances which had led to

the giving of the commandment to destroy the Amalekites. Samuel openly confronted Saul with his disobedience, but Saul persisted in excusing himself. When he made reference to the Lord, he called him Samuel's God. Saul may have come to the place where he could not accept God as his own personal God. He was completely reprobate.

14. What is the meaning of Samuel's question? 15:22

Samuel clarified the issue. He drew a distinction between burnt offering and sacrifices and the obeying of the voice of God. Saul was excusing himself for sparing the best of the flocks and herds by saying that he was going to give them to God as a sacrifice. Saul was attempting to reason that it was all going to be given to God in the end and that it really made no difference whether he had obeyed God's voice or not. Samuel made it clear that it is far better to obey than to sacrifice. It is better to hearken to God than to offer Him the fat of rams.

15. What added penalty was pronounced on Saul? 15:23

Samuel taught Saul that rebellion against God is the sin of witchcraft. Saul put out the witches from the borders of the people of Israel, but he himself rebelled against God (I Samuel 28:9). Saul's stubborn heart was an iniquitous heart. Although he had not openly worshipped another God, he had made himself God and was as sinful as if he were an idolator. As a result, God rejected Saul personally from being king. This was a much more severe sentence than was passed on him when he offered his presumptuous sacrifice. At that time God simply said that the kingdom would be taken away from Saul's house and given to another. On this occasion, Saul himself was personally rejected as being fit to rule. On other occasions of rejection, God tempered His judgments by announcing that what He had predicted to come to pass would not come to pass in the lifetime of the one who had sinned. This might have been the penalty for Saul.

If he had not sinned again, Saul might not have lived to see the end of his dynasty. He himself might have been allowed to die in a good old age, but now he himself is to be punished.

Samuel and Saul Parted Permanently. 15:24-35

24 And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.

25 Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord.

26 And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.

27 And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent.

28 And Samuel said unto him, The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbor of thine, *that is* better than thou.

29 And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he *is* not a man, that he should repent.

30 Then he said, I have sinned: *yet* honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord thy God.

31 So Samuel turned again after Saul; and Saul worshipped the Lord.

32 Then said Samuel, Bring ye hither to me Agag the king of the Amalekites. And Agag came unto him delicately. And Agag said, Surely the bitterness of death is past.

33 And Samuel said, As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal.

34 Then Samuel went to Ramah; and Saul went up to his house to Gibeah of Saul.

35 And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul: and the Lord repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.

16. What was Saul's final confession? 15:24

Saul finally came to the place where he said, "I have sinned." Before, he had tried to pass all the blame onto the people. At last he admitted that he was a transgressor. He said that he had transgressed the commandment of the Lord. He apologized to Samuel for disobeying his commandments, saying that he had transgressed the words which Samuel had spoken to him. He still blamed the people partially and excused himself by saying, "I fear the people and obey their voice." As far as the record is concerned, we have no evidence that the people caused Saul to spare Agag. Neither do we have any notice of their demanding that some of the best of the flocks of the herds be spared for sacrifice. This is a rationalization of a man's sin by the man himself.

17. Why did Saul want Samuel to worship with him? 15:25

Perhaps Saul wanted to offer a trespass offering or a sin offering. He was not eligible to offer the offering himself. He knew that Samuel was God's spiritual leader, and he wanted his presence with him. His repentance was too late. If he had been totally sincere about it, he could have gone to the Tabernacle and offered a sacrifice there under the leadership of the priests. His plea seems to be more of an outpouring of the spirit of the moment. It was not a longlasting nor deepseated repentance.

18. Why did Saul tear Samuel's skirt? 15:27

In his desperation Saul grabbed the skirt of Samuel's mantle and tore it. This is typical of the action of a man who is beside himself with emotion. Had he learned self-

control in other matters, he might not have gone to this extreme in his demonstration of his grief. Joel found the Israelites making a great show of their repentance in his day and he told them to "rend their hearts" and not their garments (Joel 2:13). Samuel seized upon this drastic action of Saul's and used it as a sign of God's judgment. He said that God had torn the kingdom of Israel out of Saul's hands on that day and had given it to a neighbor of his. He describes the neighbor as being better than Saul, but he does not identify him by name.

19. *Who is the Strength of Israel?* 15:29

Samuel used the title, the Strength of Israel, to describe God himself. Many different names are given to God throughout the Old Testament. Abraham described him as the Judge of the whole earth (Genesis 18:25). God told Moses to tell the people of Israel that his title was "I Am" (Exodus 3:14). The everlasting God is the strength of His people.

20. *Why did Samuel finally yield to Saul's entreaty?* 15:31

Samuel did turn again with Saul, and Saul worshipped the Lord. Samuel did not do it for Saul's sake. When Saul asked him to honor him before the elders of his people and before all the people of Israel, Samuel acquiesced. Samuel yielded, but not for the personal entreaty of Saul himself.

21. *Why did Samuel slay Agag?* 15:32

Agag came into Samuel's presence "delicately." Agag thought that he had been spared for good. He evidently thought that he was safe and the danger of dying was past. He walked with a spring in his step. His gait was mincing. He may have even been flippant, but Samuel brought upon Agag's head a punishment similar to that which he had brought upon others. He hewed him in pieces. Some critics of the Bible accuse Samuel of being sadistic and unnecessarily cruel. If Samuel took only one swing of the sword and decapitated Agag, the Amalekite's body was

hewed into pieces—two pieces at least. Samuel at least showed alacrity and thoroughness in executing God's command, qualities which Saul did not demonstrate.

22. *What prompted God's repentance?* 15:34, 35

The action of Samuel in slaying Agag did not stimulate this feeling on the part of God. Because of his extreme wickedness, Agag was slain by the prophet. Samuel thereafter looked upon Saul as one in whom God had found only that which was displeasing and visited him no more. We understand that it repented God that He had made Saul king when we look upon the act as man would look upon it. This is what we call an anthropomorphism—putting things in the form that man can understand. Most certainly we do not look upon the occurrence as a mistake on God's part. God was grieved on account of Saul's failure. Inasmuch as grief is a part of our repentance, God's attitude resembles this part of repentance.

CHAPTER 15 IN REVIEW

1. What people was Saul sent to destroy? _____
2. What people lived among them? _____
3. To what place did Saul gather Israel? _____
4. How many men did Saul have with him? _____
5. How many men were from Judah? _____
6. Who was the king of the people Saul attacked? _____
7. Where did Saul meet Samuel? _____
8. With what sin did Samuel compare rebellion? _____
9. With what sins did he compare stubbornness? _____
10. What title did Samuel give to God? _____

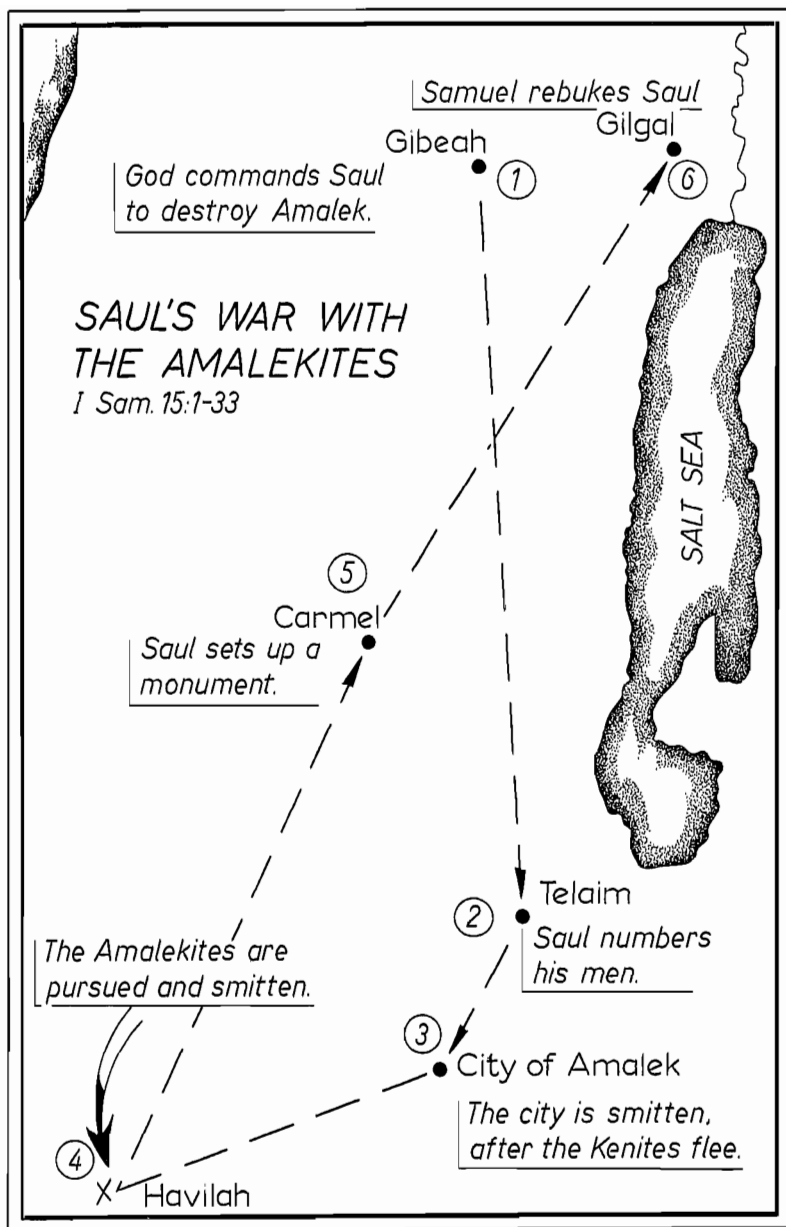
STUDIES IN SAMUEL

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 16

- Vv. 1-6 *Samuel goes to Bethlehem.* Bethlehem was south of Samuel's home in Ramah, and located in the heart of the land of the tribe of Judah. His arrival in the city aroused the curiosity of the people and might easily incite the wrath of the king, but he informed the people that he was on a mission of peace and summoned them to a sacrifice.
- Vv. 7-13 *Samuel anoints David.* Jesse, a man of Judah and a resident of Bethlehem, was called to the feast. Samuel sought a replacement of Saul from among his sons, but it was only when David was called from the fields that the Lord made known to Samuel that David was to become the Lord's anointed. Samuel then poured oil from his anointing horn, thus signifying that David was God's chosen vessel.
- Vv. 14-18 *Saul seeks a musician.* In fits of acute melancholia, afflicted as he was with an evil spirit, Saul sought the soothing effects of music. His courtiers knew of David's ability in this realm and suggested that he be summoned to the king's court.

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. "*Man looketh on the outward appearance*" (v. 7a). Eliab, Jesse's oldest son, made a striking appearance. This was one of Saul's chief qualifications for the office of king. Saul stood head and shoulders above all the other men in Israel (I Samuel 9:2). When Samuel saw Eliab, he thought surely this was the man for the job. Samuel did not know Eliab's nature (see 17:28). He did not know that he was not suited to the task.





A stream from Elisha's fountain
close to ancient Jericho

Matson Photo Service

2. "*The Lord looketh on the heart*" (v. 7b). God knows a man's motives. He can know his thoughts. These count much more than the size of his physical frame. Often God chooses things that the world would despise to be vessels of His power and grace (I Corinthians 1:27-29). For that reason, man must be careful lest he be found fighting against God when it is evident that the choice has been made.

David chosen as Saul's Successor, 16:1-18.

Samuel Goes to Bethlehem. 16:1-6

And the Lord said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Beth-lehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.

2 And Samuel said, How can I go? if Saul hear *it*, he will kill me. And the Lord said, Take a heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice to the Lord.

3 And call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me *him* whom I name unto thee.

4 And Samuel did that which the Lord spake, and came to Beth-lehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, Comest thou peaceably?

5 And he said, Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto the Lord: sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice.

6 And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the Lord's anointed *is* before me.

1. Why did Samuel mourn for Saul? 16:1

Samuel loved Saul. Samuel had addressed Saul with love when he first saw him (I Samuel 9:19 ff). He had des-

cribed Saul as the one for whom all Israel desired (I Samuel 9:20). The very coronation of Saul was filled with emotion. Samuel had felt rejected by the people. God had assured Samuel that the people had rejected God himself. Samuel had promised to pray for the people. He had anointed Saul, and it was very natural that he should be grieved at the ignominious failure of the first king.

2. *Whose son was David?* 16:2

David was the son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite. The name, Jesse, belongs to this man alone in the Old Testament. Its etymology is obscure. Bethlehem is a well-known town of Judah, and it was located five miles south of Jerusalem on a site where a town still flourishes under its ancient name. David had seven brothers, all of whom were considered by the prophet as he came to select one for anointing king over Israel. At the close of the Book of Ruth, a note is made that David was a great-grandson of Ruth. In this passage we note that Boaz, the husband of Ruth, begat Obed; Obed begat Jesse; Jesse begat David (Ruth 4:18-22).

3. *Why was Samuel afraid of Saul?* 16:2

Saul was still king and could execute his enemies. His nature had changed. He was no longer the humble young man who had hid himself in the baggage when the people came to anoint him king. He was more like King Herod, whose nature was such that all Jerusalem was afraid when the wise men had caused the king to fear (Matthew 2:1 ff).

Saul might be possessed of evil spirits and seek to kill Samuel even as he later threw his javelin a number of times at David. Samuel loved Saul, and Saul had clung to Samuel when they parted. There was no way for Samuel to know, however, if Saul would be kindly disposed towards him.

4. *Did God tell Samuel to lie? 16:2b*

Samuel was afraid of going to Bethlehem to anoint David as king. He was afraid that Saul might try to kill him as he later tried to kill David. Edward J. Young, in his *Introduction to the Old Testament*, says that it might appear that the Lord (16:2) commanded that Samuel tell a lie as to his purpose in going to Bethlehem, but Samuel was, as a matter of fact, going to Bethlehem to sacrifice. There was no need to tell the entire truth upon this occasion. If Samuel had been asked, "Are you going to Bethlehem in order to anoint David as king," and in answer had said to Saul, "I am going only to sacrifice, then Samuel would have been guilty of dissimulation and so also would be the Lord. Such, however, was not the case. There is a vast difference between dissimulation or acting under false pretenses and not telling the entire truth. There was no point in Samuel's revealing at this time the principal object of his mission. Dr. Young goes on to quote a passage from Calvin's *Commentary* where Calvin said that there was no dissimulation or falsehood in this since God really wishes his prophet to find safety under the pretense of the sacrifice. The sacrifice was therefore really offered, and the prophet was protected, thereby so that he was not exposed to any danger until the time the full revelation arrived. Once we admit, as we are compelled to, the genuineness of the Lord's intention for Samuel to sacrifice, the difficulty disappears. It is of the very nature of God not to lie. God himself cannot lie (Hebrews 6:18), and God never commands any of His servants to lie. God can kill and has on a number of occasions struck people dead. God may command His servants to kill their enemies, but He never will command His servants to lie. God himself does not lie, and He does not wish those who believe in Him to lie.

5. Where was Bethlehem? 16:4

Bethlehem was in the hill country of Judah. It was about ten miles south of the city of Jerusalem. It lay on a hill that made it visible for miles around as travelers came to it. Later it was the place of the inn where Mary gave birth to the Christ-child. It was the home of Naomi, who had gone with her husband, Elimelech, to the land of Moab when it was a time of famine in their own land in the days of the judges (Ruth 1:1 ff).

Bethlehem was the home of Boaz, who married Ruth, the widow of Mahlon, and daughter-in-law of Naomi. It was Ruth who gave birth then to Obed by Boaz, and Obed was the father of Jesse. This is the old home of the family of David.

6. Why were the elders afraid? 16:4b

The elders of the city came out to meet Samuel, and they were trembling. They asked him if he were coming in peace. These elders would be afraid because a visit from the judge of Israel might mean that there was trouble stirring. When Elijah went to the widow of Zarephath, she accused him of coming to bring her sins to remembrance (I Kings 17:18). This is a natural reaction of sinful people when they stand in the presence of one who is righteous and holy. Quite often the judge or the prophet would come to a community to pronounce judgment upon them. This must have been the thought of the elders of Bethlehem when they came out to meet Samuel.

7. In what ways did Samuel sanctify Jesse and his sons? 16:5

God's people never enter lightly into an act of worship. When the people of Israel came to Mt. Sinai under the leadership of Moses, they were given three days to prepare for the receiving of the law. On that occasion we read, "And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified the people; and they washed their clothes. And he said unto the people, Be ready against the third

day: come not at your wives" (Exodus 19:14, 15). Not every occasion would be as filled with meaning as the receiving of the Ten Commandments, but every act of worship is a time to meet the Holy God; and it should not be entered into lightly. No doubt Samuel urged the men of Jesse's house to prepare their hearts, minds, and bodies for the sacrifice which they were to offer. The preparations may well have included the washing of their garments and even the abstaining from connubial relations. When the people of Israel were preparing to cross over into the promised land under the leadership of Joshua, they were given a similar three-day period in which to prepare victuals themselves (Joshua 1:11). Of course, it would be necessary for the household of Jesse to prepare the sacrificial animals as they were getting ready for the sacrifice. All of this would be a part of "sanctification" of Jesse and his sons.

8. *Who was Jesse's oldest son?* 16:6

Eliab was the name given to Jesse's oldest son in the book of Samuel. In the book of I Chronicles (27:18), however, he is called *Elibu*. The word *Elibu* means, "He is my God," and the name is given to a number of different people in the Old Testament, including one of Job's friends (Job 32:3). *Eliab* is a word meaning, "God is father." It is generally supposed that the name Elihu is given to him after he became known and officially recognized as the head of the tribe of Judah. This is noted in the passage of Chronicles.

This oldest brother of David made such a good appearance that Samuel thought surely this one was the one whom God had chosen. He is quite active in the later history recorded in the Bible. He was contemptuous of David when David went down to the camp of the army (I Samuel 17:28). His daughter, Abigail, married her second cousin, Rehoboam, and bore him three children (II Chronicles 11:18, 19).

9. *What is the meaning of the "Lord's anointed"? 16:6b*

The Greeks translated this word with the word which is the background for the English word *christ*. It would not be amiss to say that this is the Lord's christ. God had exalted the kingship by anointing the kings as the priests had been anointed earlier. Later we find that the prophets were anointed. These are the chosen men of God, and point forward to Him who is indeed the Lord's Anointed—Prophet, Priest, and King.

Samuel Anoints David. 16:7-13

7 But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the Lord seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.

8 Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, Neither hath the Lord chosen this.

9 Then Jesse made Shammah to pass by. And he said, Neither hath the Lord chosen this.

10, Again, Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The Lord hath not chosen these.

11 And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all *thy* children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.

12 And he sent, and brought him in. Now he *was* ruddy, *and* withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him: for this *is* he.

13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.

10. *Who were Jesse's seven sons? 16:10*

Eliab was the first to pass before him, and in I Chronicles we learn that Abinadab and Shammah were also sons of Jesse. So were Nethanel, Raddai, Ozem, and David himself. These are listed in I Chronicles 2:13-15. According to I Samuel 17:12, Jesse had eight sons. This count in Chronicles, which agrees with that in I Samuel 16:8-12, may be reconciled with the enumeration in I Samuel 17:12 on the supposition that one of the sons died without posterity, hence he was not listed in the passage in Chronicles.

11. *Who was anointed to take Saul's place? 16:11*

Samuel was sent to David. After the seven sons of Jesse had been presented, and the Lord had not pointed out any one of them as the chosen one, Samuel was prompted to ask if these were all. David was absent, having been sent into the field to tend the flock. A full description of his person is given as the narrator tells of his entrance. The adjective "ruddy" is used at times to denote the reddish color of the hair, which was regarded as a mark of beauty in lands where the hair is generally black. All that is said of him indicates how eminently he was fitted, so far as his looks and his figure were concerned, for the office to which the Lord had chosen him. Along with the anointing, the Spirit of Jehovah came upon David from that day forward.

12. *What did Samuel experience in selecting the one to be anointed? 16:12*

Samuel came to Bethlehem and was met by the elders of the city. He sanctified Jesse and his sons. In attempting to find the son God had chosen to anoint king, all seven of the sons of Jesse were brought before Samuel. Having been told by the word of God that none of these seven was the right one, Samuel asked Jesse if these were all of his sons. He was informed that there was one more, the youngest, who was watching over the sheep. Samuel told

Jesse to fetch him, and that they would not so much as eat until he had come. When David was brought to Samuel, Samuel was told of God that this was the right one. 13. *Did David's brothers know he was to be king?* 16:12, 13

There is nothing recorded concerning any words of Samuel to David at the time of the anointing and in explanation of its meaning, as in the case of Saul (10:1). In all probability Samuel said nothing at the time, since, according to verse two, he had good reason for keeping the matter secret, not only on his own account, but still more for David's sake; so that even the brethren of David who were present knew nothing of the meaning and the object of the anointing, but many have imagined that Samuel merely intended to consecrate David as a pupil of the prophets. Immediately following the account of the anointing, we read this brief note, "So Samuel arose and went to Ramah." At the same time, we can hardly suppose that Samuel left Jesse and even David in uncertainty as to the object of his mission and of the anointing which he had performed. He may have communicated all this to both of them, without letting the other sons know. It by no means follows that because David remained with his father and kept the sheep as before that his calling to be king must have been unknown to him. In the anointing which he had received he did not discern either the necessity or obligation to appear openly as the anointed of the Lord. After receiving the Spirit of the Lord in consequence of the anointing, he left the further development of the matter to the Lord in childlike submission, assured that He would prepare and show him the way to the throne in His own good time.

Saul Seeks a Musician. 16:14-23

14 But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him.

15 And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee.

16 Let our lord now command thy servants, *which are* before thee, to seek out a man, *who is* a cunning player on a harp: and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well.

17 And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring *him* to me.

18 Then answered one of the servants and said, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Beth-lehemite, *that is* cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the Lord *is* with him.

19 Wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said, Send me David thy son, *which is* with the sheep.

20 And Jesse took an ass *laden* with bread, and a bottle of wine, and a kid, and sent *them* by David his son unto Saul.

21 And David came to Saul, and stood before him: and he loved him greatly; and he became his armor-bearer.

22 And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David, I pray thee, stand before me; for he hath found favor in my sight.

23 And it came to pass, when the *evil* spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took a harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.

14. *What was the evil spirit which came upon Saul?* 16:14

Jamiesson says that he had lost everything and was irritable. Matthew Henry said that he grew fretful and peevish and discontented, timorous and suspicious, ever and anon starting and trembling. Josephus says that he was as if he had been choked or strangled, and a perfect demoniac by fits. This made him unfit for business, precipitate in his counsels, the contempt of his enemies, and

a burden to all about him. The affliction was a divine visitation, apparently mental perturbation. It is described as an "evil spirit from Jehovah." It is difficult to discover the exact idea. There is no trace of a belief in the existence of evil spirits, in our sense of the word. We conclude that the spirit thought of as the agency of evil is a higher evil power, which took possession of him, and not only deprived him of his peace of mind, but stirred up his feelings, ideas, imagination, and thoughts. It is from Jehovah, because God sent it as a punishment.

15. *What was Saul's reaction to the servants' suggestion?*
16:17

Saul's servants, seeing him in such an evil state, suggested that he secure a musician to render such music as would bring him comfort. Music was known as a remedy, and the courtiers recommended that he seek a skillful harpist. The powerful influence exerted by music upon the state of mind was well known even in earliest times so that the wise men of ancient Greece recommended music to soothe the passions, to heal mental diseases, and even to chuck tumults among the people. Saul approved his courtiers' plan, and David was mentioned by one of Saul's attendants. Saul sent for David; and coming to court, David speedily established himself in the favor of the king.

16. *How could David be called a man of war?* 16:17, 18

The description of David as a "mighty man" and a "man of war" does not presuppose that David had already fought bravely in war, but may be perfectly explained from what David himself afterwards affirmed respecting his conflicts with lions and bears (17:34, 35). The courage and strength which he had then displayed furnished sufficient proofs of heroism for any one to discern in him the future warrior.

17. *Why did Saul send for David?* 16:19

Saul sent for David to be his attendant. David's name means "beloved," and he had a bubbling personality with

a great deal of talent. His name does not mean "chieftain," as some evidence from the Mari letters may indicate. Saul was not looking for a chieftain as some translations would suppose. He was looking for a man to play the harp before him, and to calm his troubled mind when the evil spirit came upon him.

18. What presents did Jesse send to Saul? 16:20

David's father sent an ass laden with bread, a bottle of wine, and a kid to Saul. The Septuagint translation does not show an ass laden with bread, but rather a bushel of bread. This change of translation was made in misreading a Hebrew word for a beast of burden as a homer, and ancient Israelite measure. The circumstances point to David's taking a beast of burden for these various provisions rather than his carrying such a load himself. Such humble gifts to a king indicate that Saul's court was very crude.

19. What was Saul's attitude toward David? 16:21

Saul was attracted to David from the first time he saw him. He had no idea that David had been anointed to succeed him. Had there been no jealousy, Saul would have loved David as his own son. It was only when he saw his real potentiality and popularity that Saul was afraid of David and jealous of him. These verses explain how the two men met for the first time. David hardly looked at Saul as a man to replace. He was simply conscientious about his work. His being in the court afforded him the opportunity to learn the responsibilities of a leader of the state. At the same time he was in a position to demonstrate his abilities and talents and thus prepare for the time when he would take over the full responsibilities of the government.

20. Why did Saul want David to stand before him? 16:22

Radical critics attack this verse and charge that it was interpolated. There is absolutely no reason for taking this verse out of the text. Its meaning affects the narrative

considerably. Saul evidently called David before him and gave him a short trial period of service. He passed the first examination with flying colors. Saul was attracted to David and loved him. Saul therefore sent word to Jesse and asked him to consider David his servant permanently. Here is an example of the kind of thing which Samuel said would happen when the people got a king. Samuel said that he would take their sons and appoint them for himself (I Samuel 8:11). Saul was not despotic but rather made a request of the father.

21. *What was David's service?* 16:23

David's principal services to Saul consisted mainly of his being with Saul when the evil spirit came upon him. This last verse indicates that his services were needed repeatedly. The Septuagint translates the verb in the way that lends itself to giving the idea of repeated activity. David did not have to do this only once when he was first called to administer to Saul. His services were needed repeatedly, and he was the means of sustaining Saul in his activities.

CHAPTER 16 IN REVIEW

1. To what town did God send Samuel to find a king? _____
2. Who was David's father? _____
3. Of what tribe was he? _____
4. Which purpose of his mission did Samuel announce? _____
5. What was David's "home town"? _____
6. Who was David's oldest brother? _____
7. Which other two of David's brothers were named? _____
8. How many brothers did David have altogether? _____
9. Where did Samuel go after anointing David? _____
10. On what musical instrument did David play? _____