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I & II Samuel Background

Author of I & II Samuel: Samuel. Jewish tradition also supports Nathan and Gad as possible authors. (I Chronicles 29:29; I Samuel 10:25)

Date of Writing: The narrative of Samuel spans three to four generations. Several individuals combined to write the book around 1000 B.C.

Purpose of I & II Samuel: To tell the continuing history of Israel from the time of the Judges to the death of David.

Outline of I & II Samuel:

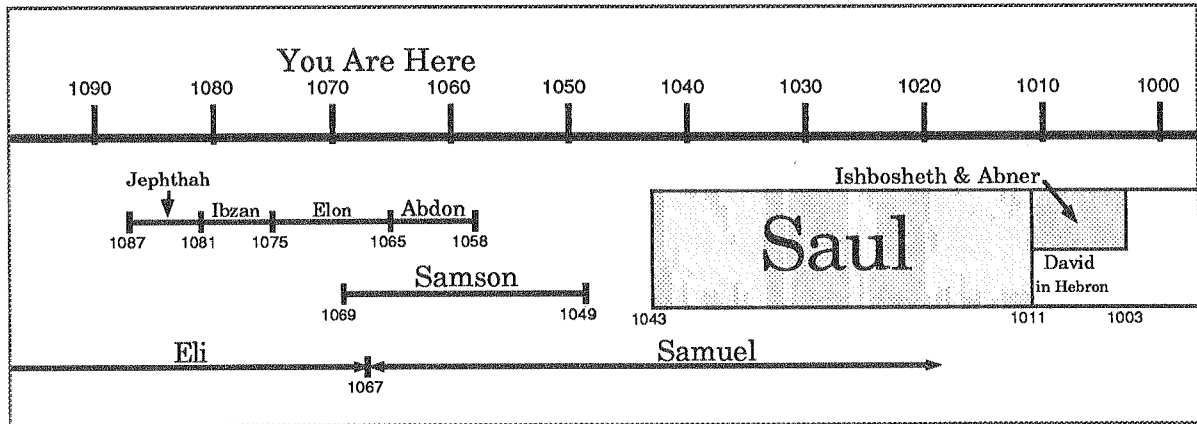
- I. Samuel -- The Last Judge (I Sam. 1-7)
 - A. His Birth (I Sam. 1)
 - B. His Growth (I Sam. 2, 3)
 - C. His Office (I Sam. 4-7)
- II. Saul -- The First King (I Sam. 8-15)
 - A. His Rise (I Sam. 8-12)
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 - C. His Failure (I Sam. 15)
- III. David -- The Greatest King (I Sam. 16 - II Sam. 24)
 - A. David the Warrior (I Sam. 16-31)
 - 1. Replacement for Saul (I Sam. 16)
 - 2. Rise to Prominence (I Sam. 17, 18)
 - 3. Rejection by Saul (I Sam. 19-31)
 - B. David the King (II Sam. 1-24)
 - 1. His Triumphs (II Sam. 1-10)
 - 2. His Troubles (II Sam. 11-24)

Big Idea of I & II Samuel: I & II Samuel were originally written as one book, but later divided into two. The book centers around three men: Samuel, Saul, and David. These individuals helped to form and develop Israel's early monarchy. Until this time, the nation of Israel had been ruled by judges. When the people asked for a king, God directed Samuel to anoint Saul first, then later anoint David as king.

The accounts within the book span about 160 years of history. Samuel explains to his readers the effects of sin and holiness in relation to the people and their kings. The people of Israel were taught, just as they were in the books of Joshua and Judges, that in order to be successful as a nation, they had to obey God's commandments and lead righteous lives.

The Birth of Samuel

Lesson #1



Lesson Goal: To understand how God hears and answers our prayers.

Background Text: I Samuel 1

Memory Verse: But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Matthew 6:33

In Scripture we find the following principle; parents who love the Lord generally have children who grow up to love the Lord. As children, where would we be without our parents? We need them to supply so many of our basic needs. If you did not have your parents or guardians, where would you live? How would you eat? Who would love and take care of you? God gives parents to love and take care of us, and He also gives us parents to guide and direct our actions. Part of this guidance is spiritual direction. It is the Biblical role of the parents to guide and direct their children into a strong and loving relationship with their heavenly Father.

Samuel had parents who loved God, but their level of commitment to God was first tested. More than anything else in the whole world, Hannah wanted a child. Year after year she would go with her husband Elkanah to the tabernacle in Shiloh and would ask God for a child. But, each year would pass and she was not given a child. Was God hearing her prayer? Did He answer her request?

God knows and understands everything. Further, He only desires the best for His people who love and serve Him. God, therefore, answers our prayers in three different ways. Sometimes God says "No" to what we request, because He knows it would not be good for us to have the thing we desire. Other times, God says "Yes" because the thing we are requesting is in His purpose and will. Finally, there are times when God waits to answer our prayers. He is building our

The Birth of Samuel

patience so we may learn to trust Him. This was what God was first telling Hannah when she was praying for a child. God wanted Hannah to wait before He gave her a child.

Eventually, God answered Hannah's request with a "Yes," and she was blest with a very special son. This story is a beautiful example of the wonderful God we serve. As humans, it is difficult to patiently wait for God's answer to our prayers. But we can have confidence that God's will is perfect. We will never be truly contented unless we are following God's will and direction for our lives. God does not hold back any good thing from His children, but He desires that we love and worship Him completely. (Psalms 84:11).

Questions: Match the correct answer with the proper question.

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. ____ Who was Elkanah's father? (1:1) | a. Bullock |
| 2. ____ Who were Elkanah's wives? (1:2) | b. In her heart |
| 3. ____ Who were Eli's sons? (1:3) | c. Portions |
| 4. ____ What did Elkanah give to his sons and daughters? (1:4) | d. Weaned |
| 5. ____ What did Hannah request from the Lord? (1:11) | e. Hophni and Phinehas |
| 6. ____ Where did Hannah speak? (1:13) | f. Male child |
| 7. ____ What did Eli think was wrong with Hannah? (1:14) | g. Peninah and Hannah |
| 8. ____ What did Hannah name her son? (1:20) | h. Jeroham |
| 9. ____ What needed to be done to Samuel before he was brought to the temple? (1:24) | i. She was drunk |
| 10. ____ What did Hannah slay? (1:25) | j. Samuel |

Thought Questions:

1. What prayer requests have you had that God answered with a "yes"? How did that make you feel? _____

2. What requests has God answered with a "no"? How did that make you feel?

3. What requests did God answer by having you wait a while? How did that make you feel? _____

Lesson Review:

1. Around what three men does the book of Samuel center? (Samuel Background)

2. When was Samuel most likely written? (Samuel Background) _____

Supplemental Exercise: Complete the crossword with the missing words from the passages below.

I Samuel 1:12-15

And it came to pass, as she continued 6-D before the LORD, that Eli marked her 1-D. Now 2-A, she spake in her 3-D; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? Put away thy wine from thee. And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful 4-A: I have drunk neither 9-A nor strong 14-A, but have poured out my soul before the LORD.

I Samuel 2:18-21

But Samuel ministered before the LORD, being a child, 8-D with a linen 12-A. Moreover his 1-A made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up with her 13-D to offer the yearly 11-D. And Eli blessed 10-D and his wife, and said, The LORD give thee seed of this woman for the loan which is lent to the Lord. And they went unto their own 15-A. And the LORD visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and bare three sons and two 14-D. And the child Samuel 8-A before the LORD.

I Samuel 3:8-10

And the LORD called Samuel again the 18-A 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. Therefore 7-A said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, 16-A, LORD; for thy servant 5-D. So Samuel went and lay down in his place. And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, speak; for thy 17-D heareth.

