



L1.42: Samuel – God Heard

1 Samuel 1-2

As 1 Samuel begins, we are introduced to a woman from the strange-sounding city called Ramathaimzophim! Her name was much easier to pronounce than her city! She was called Hannah.

Hannah was a faithful woman, and loved God. But God had not blessed her with the one thing that she desired most - a child. In time, Hannah and her husband travelled to Shiloh to offer sacrifices to God. As she prayed quietly, she began to weep, begging God to give her a child. If only He would bless her with a son, she prayed, she would dedicate the boy to serve God all his life. God heard the prayer of faithful Hannah, and fulfilled her request. Her son Samuel followed Hannah's example of faithfulness and dedication to God, giving his life in service for decades to come.

Discuss:

- Hannah dedicated her son to God. What does it mean to be dedicated to God?
- Hannah named her son Samuel which means "God heard". Why do you think Hannah chose that name for him?
- Samuel lived and served in the tabernacle from the time he was very young. What do you think it would be like to grow up working in the Tabernacle of God?
- Just as Samuel's story shows, you're never too young to serve and obey God. How can you be like Samuel today?



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Memory Challenge:

1 Samuel 2:26

And the child Samuel grew in stature, and in favor both with the Lord and men.



L1.43: Samuel Becomes a Judge

1 Samuel 3-4, 7

Samuel served in the temple from childhood. Under the guidance of Eli, Samuel began to learn about all the things of God. God was preparing Samuel for big responsibilities. One night, when he was still a young boy, Samuel heard someone call his name. Thinking it was Eli, he jumped out of bed and said to Eli "Here I am!" Eli hadn't called him, but Samuel was about to find out Who wanted his attention. And that was only the beginning of the story of how Samuel came to be a prophet and a judge over Israel.

Discuss:

- Samuel had a special calling to be a prophet to Israel at a very young age. What was Samuel's reaction when God spoke to him the first time?
- Samuel's first prophetic message was about Eli and his family. Why were Eli and his sons punished?
- What are the duties of a prophet? Why does God have prophets?
- What are the duties of a judge?



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Memory Challenge:

1 Samuel 3:10

Now the Lord came and stood and called as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel answered, "Speak, for Your servant hears."



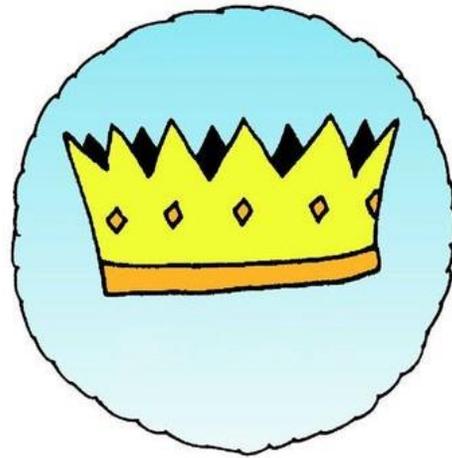
L1.44: Israel Wants a King

1 Samuel 7 - 8

Samuel had been judging Israel for many years. He traveled between the cities of Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah to judge the people, though he lived in Ramah with his family. Samuel's sons became judges, but they did not follow his example. They were evil in how they judged Israel, and the people were upset with how things were going. They decided they wanted to have a king to rule over them instead of a judge. Samuel tried to warn them of what would happen if they had a king, but the people would not listen, and God was preparing to let them have their way.

Discuss:

- Before Israel had a king, God gave Israel His laws and His judges made sure they were kept. What would change with a king?
- Israel was to be an example to the other nations (Deuteronomy 4:6–8). What does it mean to be an example? What is the difference between a good example and a bad example?
- What did God say would happen if Israel had a human king?
- Israel rejected God as their king because they wanted a human king.



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They did not appreciate what God had done for them. How can we appreciate what God does for us?

Memory Challenge:

1 Samuel 8:7

And the Lord said to Samuel, “Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not rule over them.”



L1.45: Samuel and Saul

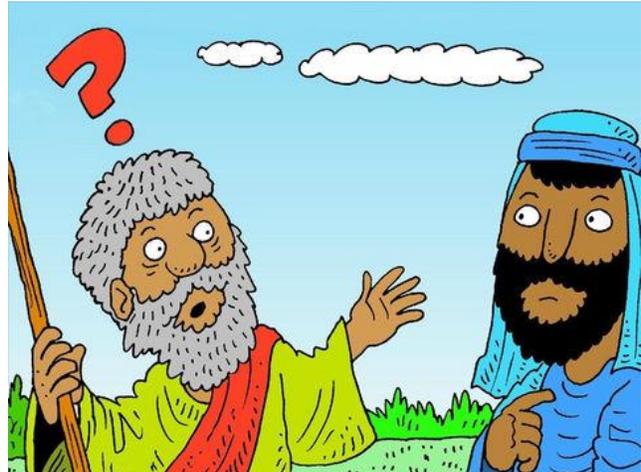
1 Samuel 9-12

The people wanted a king, so God had a particular man in mind for the job. This young man's name was Saul, and he was from the tribe of Benjamin. Saul was the tallest and most handsome man in all the land! God told Samuel that he wanted Saul to be king. Little did Saul know about what was in store for him!

One day, Saul's father told him to take a servant with him to look for his two missing donkeys. Saul and his servant searched and searched but they could not find them. They were about to give up when they remembered Samuel and decided that the man of God would be able to help them. He was, of course, able to help them, but not in the way that Saul expected. How could Saul know that the two missing donkeys were part of God's plan to anoint a king over Israel?

Discuss:

- Saul was tall and handsome. Do you think this was part of the reason God chose him to be the first king?
- When Samuel first told Saul about God's plan to make him king, how did Saul react? How do we react when someone tells us something surprising?
- Why do you think Saul kept it a secret that he had been anointed by Samuel to be the king?
- When Samuel went to proclaim to the people who would be king, where was Saul? Why do you think he was hiding?
- Later, God said that Saul was "small in his own eyes" at this time. This is another way of saying that he was "humble". What exactly does it mean to be "humble" or "small in your own eyes?"



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Memory Challenge:

1 Samuel 10:24

And Samuel said to all the people, "Do you see him whom the Lord has chosen, that there is no one like him among all the people?" So all the people shouted and said, "Long live the king!"