

1st Samuel 15:22 “Samuel said, 'Has the Lord as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice' ...”

Course Text: First Samuel

The book of 1st Samuel covers the period of time from the birth of Samuel the Prophet to the death of King Saul. That is about 100 years from approximately 1125 to 1025 B.C. The people of Israel know that things are going from bad to worse, but instead of turning to God they decide that what they need is a king. The first king of the united tribes of Israel is Saul, and he is not a very good king, although he does accomplish some things.



Suggested methodology:

1. Let the students have a copy of the lesson well before the class meets. (Perhaps the previous meeting)
2. The students read the Bible book and answer the questions in this lesson before the group meets.
3. At the class meeting allow time for greetings and fellowship. (Save most of this for the end)
4. Take prayer requests (Try to keep it from becoming a competition to see who has the most or the worst.)
5. Pray (The idea here is to leave our troubles with God so we can give His word our attention with a clear mind.)
6. Discuss the questions on page 9. Let those who prefer to listen, listen. My answers, when provided, are just one opinion; you may have a better answer. It might be good to establish the norm that only those who have actually read the book should discuss it aloud.
7. Discuss whatever other questions people have on their mind about the First Samuel.
8. Close in prayer (It is best to call on others to pray, but try to get their permission ahead of time.)
9. Fellowship (Leave this as open ended as possible for the time and place you meet.)

Depending on the number of people, this class is expected to take about two hours.

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First Samuel Chapters 1 to 12

Samuel the Prophet, the Last of the Judges

In the first chapters of this book we find the details of the early days of Samuel's life. First we see details of the dedication of Samuel to the work of God. His mother made the greatest part of this decision. The Lord's conversation with the boy Samuel is revealed. The Ark is lost and returned. Read 1st Samuel Chapters 1-7 and answer the following questions:

- [1] What did Hannah vow? _____
- [2] What did the man of God prophecy concerning Eli's evil sons' deaths? _____
- [3] How many times did Samuel go to Eli the priest thinking he had been called by him? _____
- [4] Who captured the Ark of the Covenant? _____
- [5] What happened to the statue of Dagon when the Ark of the Covenant was placed before it? _____
- [6] How did the Philistines send back the Ark? _____
- [7] How long did the Ark stay at Kiriath-jearim? _____

The Rise of Saul

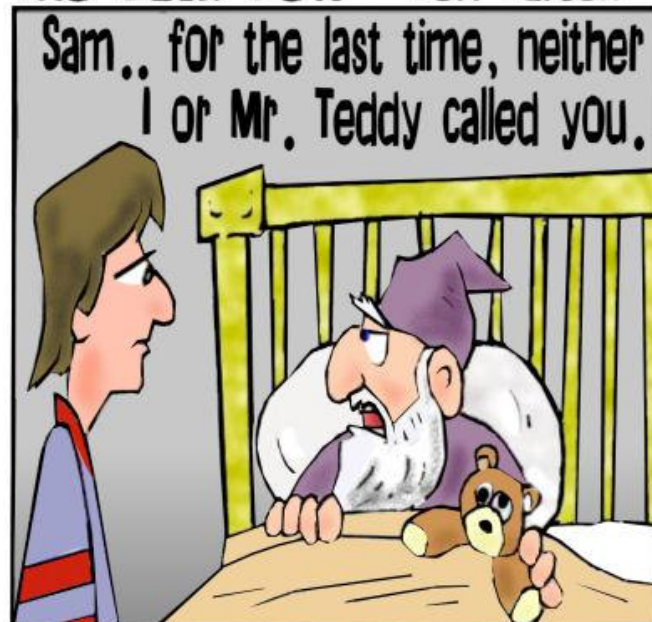
The people request a king and Saul is anointed by Samuel, crowned king and confirmed by God.

Samuel gives his farewell speech as King Saul is now to be the leader.

Read 1st Sam. Chapters 8-12 & answer the following questions:

- [8] Did Samuel agree with the people that a king was good idea? _____
- [9] What did Saul leave home searching for? _____
- [10] What did Saul do when the lot fell on him to be king? _____
- [11] How did Saul recruit soldiers for his army? _____
- [12] Did Samuel use his position to take advantage of people? _____

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



After a few sleepy chats with Eli.. Samuel realized God was speaking to him. **1 Sam 3**

----- ANSWERS -----

[1] What did Hannah vow?

That if God would give her a son she would give him to God and not cut his hair. 1Sam 1:11

[2] What did the man of God prophecy concerning Eli's evil sons' deaths?

That they would die the same day. 1Sam 2:34

[3] How many times did Samuel go to Eli the priest thinking he had been called by him?

Three 1Sam 3:8

[4] Who captured the Ark of the Covenant? The Philistines 1Sam 4:10-11

[5] What happened to the statue of Dagon at Ashdod when the Ark of the Covenant was placed before it? It fell and was broken 1Sam 5:1-5

[6] How did the Philistines send back the Ark? In a cart hooked to a couple of cows. 1Sam 6:7-12

[7] How long did the Ark stay at Kiriath-jearim? Twenty years 1Sam 7:2

[8] Did Samuel agree with the people that a king was good idea? No 1Sam 8:6

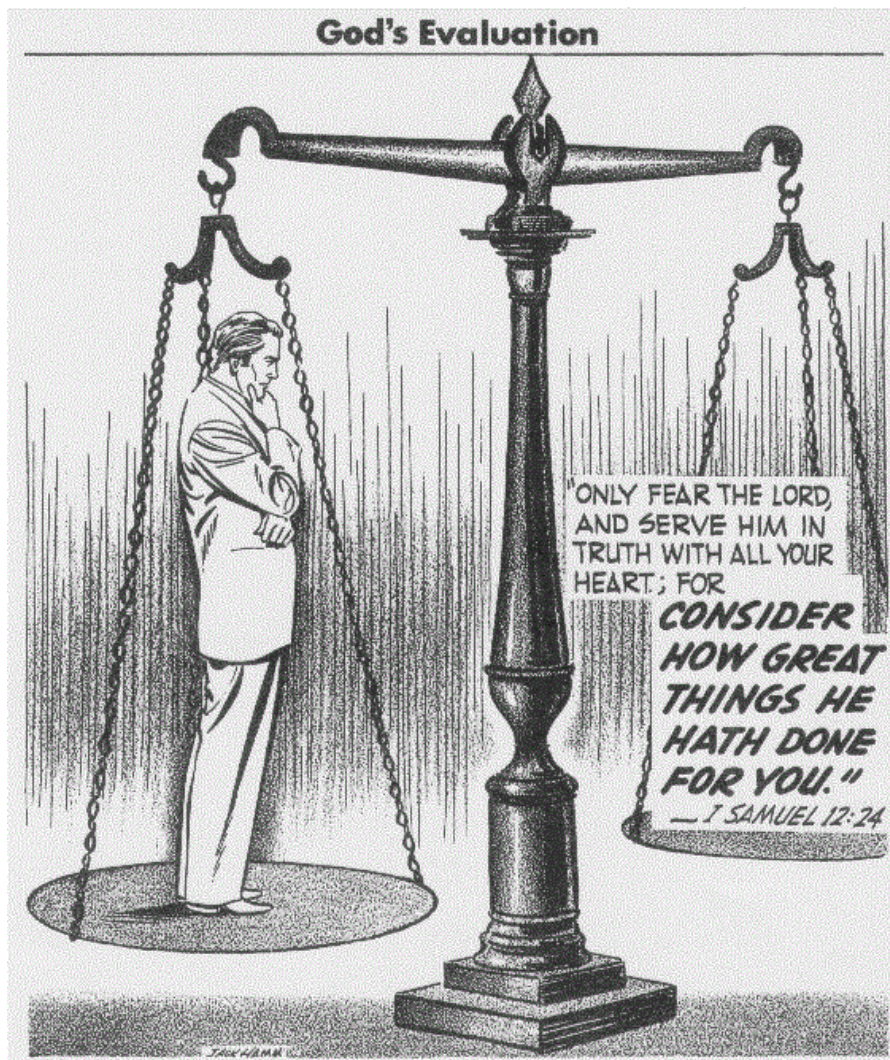
[9] What did Saul leave home searching for? Donkeys or asses 1Sam 9:3

[10] What did Saul do when the lot fell on him to be king?

He hid in the baggage, stuff, supplies or equipment. 1Sam 10:22

[11] How did Saul recruit soldiers for his army? By threatening to kill their livestock 1Sam 11:7-8

[12] Did Samuel use his position to take advantage of people? No 1Sam 12:3-4



First Samuel Chapters 13 to 20

The Decline of Saul

No sooner has Saul taken on the role of leadership, than he is in violation of God's directions. Saul and Jonathan, his son, show their courage as they attack the Philistines with an army that has no weapons. Jonathan showed his great faith as he attacked the Philistines alone, and won the victory. Jonathan eats honey which was prohibited by the king and Saul decides to take his life, yet Jonathan was saved. The weakness of Saul is shown as he refuses to follow the commands of the Lord, and he is rejected by God because of this disobedience.

Read 1st Samuel Chapters 13-15 and answer the following questions:

[13] What did Saul do that caused his kingdom to eventually fail? _____

[14] How many Philistines did Jonathan and his armor bearer kill? _____

[15] What is better to God than sacrifice? _____

The Rise of David

The Lord chooses David to be king, and young David is anointed. He is soon in the service of King Saul. We see one of the greatest stories of faith in the Old Testament, as David cannot stand by while Goliath speaks against God and his people. The faith shown here is not unlike the faith of Jonathan in chapter thirteen as he attacked the Philistine army all by himself. The jealousy of King Saul makes him do all he can to defeat God's plan by killing David. It is significant that Jonathan stands by David, and protects him from his father, the King, when David becomes a fugitive.

Read 1st Samuel Chapters 16-20 and answer the following questions:

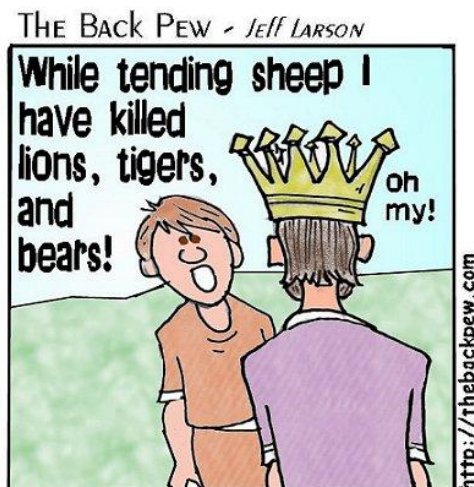
[16] What relieved Saul of the evil spirit that bothered him? _____

[17] What weapon did David use to kill Goliath? _____

[18] What made Saul turn against David? _____

[19] When Saul issued a death warrant for David who warned David to run? _____

[20] Where did David hide while waiting to hear from Jonathan, if Saul's attitude was softening? _____



David explains to Saul that he is not afraid of Goliath, or even the 'terminator' as long as God is on his side! **1 Samuel 17:34-37**

----- ANSWERS -----

[13] What did Saul do that caused his kingdom to eventually fail?

He did not wait for Samuel at Gilgal but offered the sacrifices without him. 1Sam 13:8-14

[14] How many Philistines did Jonathan and his armor bearer kill? Twenty 1Sam 14:13-14

[15] What is better to God than sacrifice? Obedience 1Sam 15:22-23

[16] What relieved Saul of the evil spirit that bothered him? David's music 1Sam 16:23

[17] What weapon did David use to kill Goliath? A sword 1Sam 17:49-51

The stone from the sling just knocked him out. It was the cutting off of his head that killed him.

[18] What made Saul turn against David? David was getting more praise than Saul 1Sam 18:5-9

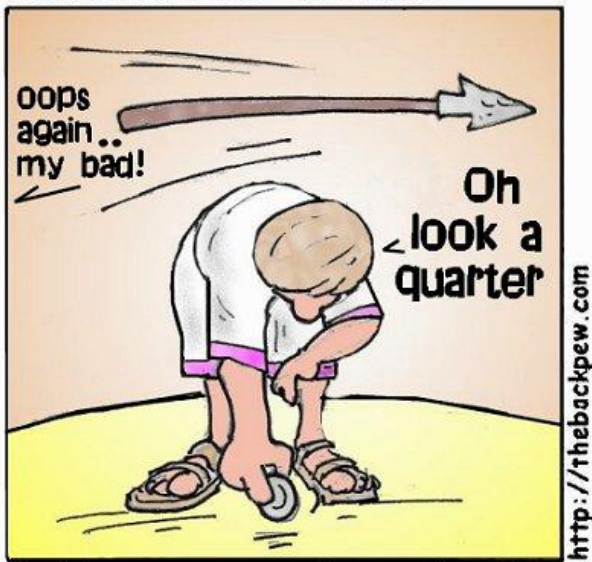
[19] When Saul issued a death warrant for David who warned David to run?

Jonathan, Saul's son 1Sam 19:2

[20] Where did David hide while waiting to hear from Jonathan, if Saul's attitude was softening?

In a field by the stone of Ezel 1Sam 20:19-24

THE BACK PEW - JEFF LARSON



Saul is overcome by an evil spirit and tries to spear David again! David narrowly escapes! **1 Samuel 19:10**

THE BACK PEW - JEFF LARSON



If Saul was a talent judge on American Idol.. he would be Simon. **1 Sam 18:10-11**

First Samuel Chapters 21 to 31

David Wanders as an Outlaw

Saul hunts for David to kill him. David has the opportunity to take Saul's life twice. David refuses to kill Saul, knowing that such acts belong to God alone. David decides to go and live in the land of the Philistines, so that Saul would stop trying to kill him.

Read 1st Samuel Chapters 21-27 and answer the following questions:

- [21] How did David keep the king of Gath from killing him? _____
- [22] Who killed the priests of the Lord for Saul? _____
- [23] What saved David from being captured by Saul in the wilderness of Maon? _____
- [24] When David had a chance to kill Saul in the cave what did he do instead? _____
- [25] What kept David from killing Nabal? _____
- [26] What did David take from beside Saul while he was asleep? _____
- [27] How did David keep anyone from telling the Philistine king of Gath that he was really not attacking Israel? _____



The end of the reign of Saul

Here we have the gruesome details of the end of King Saul and his sons, as God makes preparation to make David King.

Read 1st Samuel Chapters 28-31 and answer the following questions:

- [28] Who did Saul ask the woman to bring back from the dead? _____
- [29] Did the Philistines allow David to go into the battle with them? _____
- [30] Who attacked his home while David had been gone? _____
- [31] How did Saul die? _____

----- ANSWERS -----

[21] How did David keep the king of Gath from killing him? He pretended to be crazy 1Sam 21:10-15

[22] Who killed the priests of the Lord for Saul? Doeg the Edomite 1Sam 22:18-19

[23] What saved David from being captured by Saul in the wilderness of Maon?

The Philistines attacked 1Sam 23:27-28

[24] When David had a chance to kill Saul in the cave what did he do instead?

David cut off part of Saul's clothing 1Sam 24:4

[25] What kept David from killing Nabal? Abigail, Nabal's wife, talked David out of it. 1Sam 25:23-35

[26] What did David take from beside Saul while he was asleep?

A spear and a container of water. 1Sam 26:11-12

[27] How did David keep anyone from telling the Philistine king of Gath that he was really not attacking

Israel? He killed them all. 1Sam 27:9-11

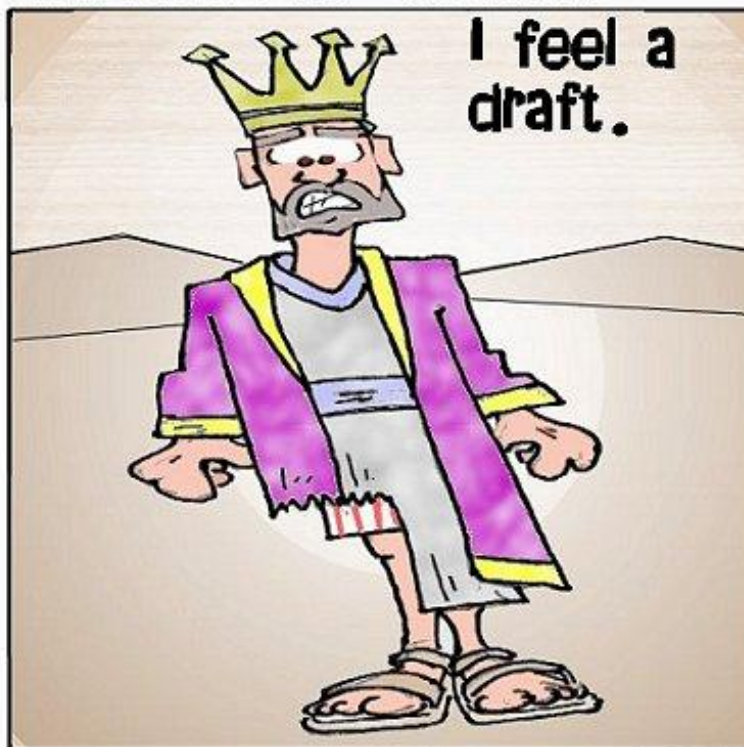
[28] Who did Saul ask the woman to bring back from the dead? Samuel 1Sam 28:11

[29] Did the Philistines allow David to go into the battle with them. No 1Sam 29:9-11

[30] Who attacked his home while David had been gone? The Amalekites 1Sam 30:1

[31] How did Saul die? Suicide by falling on his own sword. 1Sam 31:4-5 In the first chapter of 2nd Samuel a Amelikite tells a big lie about how Saul died, in order to explain how he came to be in possession of Saul's crown and bracelet. He had just robbed the body.

THE BACK PEW - JEFF LARSON



David performs unrequested alterations on King Saul's robe, and a few accessories. **1 Samuel 24:3-5**

(1) David has two opportunities to kill Saul and does not. Why?

Think & Pray _____

(2) Compare 1st Sam 21:1-9 and 1st Sam 15:22-23 with Matthew 12:1-7. How would you explain this to someone who did not understand the Bible?

Think & Pray _____

(3) In 1st Samuel Chapter 28 Saul apparently has a conversation with the spirit of Samuel. The witch's surprise and dismay at being successful probably means that she was not normally able to bring up spirits. Some say the spirit of Samuel was sent by God, and others say it was a demon pretending to be Samuel. What do you think? Why?

Think & Pray _____

(4) Which verse or passage would you select to memorize from First Samuel? Why?

Think & Pray _____

(5) If someone asked you what First Samuel was about what would you say?

Think & Pray _____

(6) How can the lessons of First Samuel be applied to our own life?

Think & Pray _____

If you have any questions about First Samuel, now is the time to discuss them with your classmates.

(1) The Lord's Anointed God had chosen Saul the King, so David respected him. Justice belonged in God's hands, not David's. David wanted to do God's will, not his own.

(2) Matthew Jesus quoted both of these passages in Samuel. I think, what the Pharisees were missing in Matthew 12 was that God is looking for people to understand Him and obey Him. He does not want them to take the Bible and through the use of their own understanding turn it into a bunch of rules and regulations and then try to impose them on others. He wants us to understand that His commands are to love, and all those other things were just details about how to love in particular situations.

(3) Ghost? The prophesy of the Spirit came true and the message was obedience to God. Sounds like the real thing to me. But if anyone wants to believe otherwise it is not worth an argument.

(4) A Verse to Remember 1st Samuel 15:22-23 is my choice. "Samuel said, 'Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry'."

(5) First Samuel Core Message The book of 1st Samuel covers the period of time from the birth of Samuel the Prophet to the death of King Saul. That is about 100 years from approximately 1125 to 1025 B.C. The people of Israel know that things are going from bad to worse, but instead of turning to God they decide that what they need is a king. The first king of the united tribes of Israel is Saul, and he is not a very good king, although he does accomplish some things.

(6) First Samuel Life Application God is in sovereign control of everything. He loves us. There is no panic in heaven, only plans. Everything is going to turn out exactly as God wants it to. At least, that is what I got out of it.

