

# **I Samuel 1-3**

## **“Samuel’s Early Life”**

### **Introduction**

- Tonight we get into a brand new book – I Samuel
  - And the content of I Samuel can be remembered by the fact that the book is really about 3 people, 3 main characters

### **The Book of I Samuel**

#### **Samuel – I Samuel 1-7**

#### **King Saul – I Samuel 8-15**

#### **David – I Samuel 16-31**

- Samuel is the last judge of Israel, those guys that we learned about in the book of Judges, and he is also one of the greatest prophets and priests of the Old Testament
  - He will anoint Israel’s first King, King Saul
  - And he will anoint Israel’s second and greatest King, King David

### **The second guy this book is about is Saul**

- who will be the first King of Israel and he starts out really well, but he becomes and unmitigated disaster in Israel’s history
  - and that leads to the third man this book is about, David

### **David as we will see is a man after God’s own heart**

- and it won’t happen until we get to II Samuel but eventually he will become King over all of Israel and David will be the King all other Kings will be measured against
  - so in this book we learn about Samuel, Saul and the early life of a man by the name of David who will become King in II Samuel

### **Which brings up another point and that is that in the Hebrew Bible, where we get our scriptures, I and II Samuel are one book**

- in fact I and II Kings are also part of the same, very large book in the original Hebrew Bible known as the book called, “Book of the Kingdoms”
  - it was Christian scholar Jerome who influenced the translators of his time to divide the books into four parts, divided by subject matter giving us what we have today – modern Jewish Bibles divide them into 2 books, Samuel and Kings

### **I’m personally really glad that Jerome divided the books this way because it makes it easier for me to break what would be a mammoth study into workable parts**

- what we are going to do after we finished I and II Samuel which primarily deals with David
  - we will this summer look at the Book of Psalms which is primarily written by David
  - and if we have time we will look at the Poetry books written by David’s son Solomon who is introduced to us at the end of II Samuel

### **Then in the Fall we are going to look at the second part of the really large originally one book, the Book of Kingdoms, we will look at I and II Kings in September thru November**

- and then after a break from that at Christmas time, if the Lord is still leading this way, always keep praying things through, but we can then next year look at the prophets who were speaking to these Kings in that historical period of Jewish history
  - so it breaks up nicely – a little history, a little poetry, a little prophecy all covering about a 400 to 600 year time frame of Israel’s history over the next year and half on Wednesday nights

### **I’m excited, I don’t know about you, but I love this stuff, but of course the first thing is to get through I Samuel, so let’s begin that tonight**

**Now tradition holds that Samuel is the author of this book as well as Judges and Ruth**

- the Talmud, which is the original commentary on the Old Testament tells us that Samuel wrote Judges, Ruth and up to chapter 25 of I Samuel
  - then it attributes the rest of the I and II Samuel to the prophets Gad and Nathan who we will meet later
- and as the book of I and II Kings were by prophets that were later prophets in Israel's history, mainly Jeremiah and we will look at why when we get there

**Now the authorship of Samuel of Judges and Ruth and I Samuel 1-25, there is really no reason to doubt it**

- we have looked at reasons why those other two books were written by Samuel and again that fact that he was the most prominent religious leader of the day until his death again doesn't leave us with any reason to doubt what the original commentators said

Now the fact that Nathan and Gad wrote the rest we really don't know for sure, it's as good as theory as any for they were there and they were leaders

- but the main thing to know is I Samuel – II Kings, remember all originally one large history volume in the Jewish Bibles were written from the perspective of the prophets
  - they record the history and the faults of the leaders with a focus on their relationship with God

**And you contrast that with I and II Chronicles which is the same period of history but written from the perspective of priests who lived later in Jewish history, around the time of Nehemiah**

- the focus is on how they related to the temple in Jerusalem and the sins of the leaders are really seen with eyes of grace
  - and we will make more of that as we'll go through these books
- But sufficient for tonight
  - The author of I and II Samuel, as well as I and II Kings are prophets – written from a prophets perspective (Samuel, Gad, Nathan, maybe Jeremiah)
  - I and II Chronicles written from the perspective of the priests of Israel
- So with all of that background let's get into the text

**Again as I said, I Samuel is divided into 3 sections, dealing with the 3 main characters in this book, Samuel, Saul and then David**

- and tonight and next week we are going to look at the first guy, who the book is named after, and that is Samuel

**I Samuel 1-7 – The Prophet Samuel**

**#1 – Samuel's Parents – I Samuel 1:1-2:11**

**#2 – Samuel's Preparation – I Samuel 2:12 – 3:31**

**#3 – Samuel's Predicament – I Samuel 4-7**

- We will look at the first two tonight and then focus on chapters 4-7 and the world that Samuel ministers in next week
  - But let's start in chapter one verse one and look at Samuel's Mom and Dad

**I Samuel 1-7 – The Prophet Samuel**

**#1 – Samuel's Parents – I Samuel 1:1-2:11**

- read the whole section up to the prayer

**Samuel's parents were godly people who loved the Lord**

- yes like all people they had issues
  - Elkanah had two wives which is always a problem and it will be here – we see tonight just more evidence of why God told them not to practice polygamy in the first place
- You do understand that just because the Bible reports that it was happening, that does not mean the Bible condones the practice at all

- In fact the bible gives us insight into the problems

### **Well why would a godly man have two wives in the first place?**

- Well the indication of the text is that Hannah was the first wife and yet was barren and so as was very common in the day, they took on Peninnah
  - The Jews were very much into preserving their lineage, keeping the family name going
  - We learned last week of the Kinsman redeemer and Levirate marriage to keep the family name going in the book of Ruth
- Well some people, if a wife was barren, would take on a second wife to have kids
  - But it still had problems and Peninnah made life horrible for Hannah, she mocked and made fun of her

### **But even with the problem and the issues this godly family would every year go to the tabernacle in Shiloh**

- And when you realize this story happened in the time of Samson, this is amazing
  - This man Elkanah, issues, yes, but he is trying to lead his family and he is trying to be a good husband

### **Peter says in his epistle in the KJV...**

**“Likewise, husbands, dwell with your wife according to knowledge,” – I Peter 3:7 KJV**

- and then the NKJV comes along and translates it...

**“Likewise, husband, dwell with your wife with understanding..” – I Peter 3:7 NKJV**

- and they messed everything up

Husband you are to know your wife

- you are to know what upsets her, what blesses her and seek to live after those things
  - you have to engage your mind and have some knowledge in the subject of your wife – you don’t have to know how my wife operates, how Pastor’s wife works
  - you need to know your wife

### **But understanding? – I don’t think any man will ever understand a woman? – I’m sorry, I not trying to be comical or chauvinistic, I just know guys and I don’t think it’s possible to understand**

- Elkanah is trying to be knowledgeable –he knows Hannah is having a hard time - he tries to bless her with a double portion of meat – that is most loving gift a husband can give, but he is still a husband
  - He doesn’t understand

### **Because He says one of the dumbest things in all of the bible in verse 8 – why are you sad, why are you crying – am I not better than 10 sons?**

- Dumb, dumb, dumb
  - notice she doesn’t answer his question
  - if you have nothing nice to say, don’t say anything at all – she doesn’t

### **But notice also she doesn’t rail on him either – in fact she goes to the one place she knows she will be understood – she goes to the Lord**

- what a lesson

### **Marriage can be one of the most wonderful things on earth, but the key, is to realize you will never find your fulfillment in another human being**

- you can be friends, you can be lovers, you can do life together and parent together
  - but she is not your god, and he is not your savior
  - and when we put things on our spouse that they were never created to fulfill – problems will always be the result
- Hannah loves Elkanah, and Elkanah loves Hannah, but Hannah knows – this guy is never going to understand, he is never going to fulfill some void in my heart
  - But I know who will

- And she goes into the presence of the Lord

**Hannah goes into the presence of the Lord and then she pours out her heart to the Lord and that is how we get introduced to Eli, the high priest**

- He sees her and he thinks she is drunk
  - Now this speaks volumes about him – that he is not used to seeing someone praying and crying out
  - It speaks volumes of him and it speaks volumes of the culture that this would happen in all the time
  - It was a regular occurrence for people to come into the tabernacle, totally drunk

**But Hannah is not drunk – she is pouring out her heart and making a vow to God, if you give me a child, I will give him back to you**

- now we are just a few weeks removed from studying another vow from the book of Judges, where Jephthah vows, Lord if you give me victory, I will sacrifice whatever comes out of my house to meet me
  - and whatever you think about what he actually did, it is without doubt his vow was foolish

**But what is the difference between Jephthah's vow and Hannah's vow?**

- I suggest to you it was one of motivation and inspiration
  - One, Jephthah was motivated by something he wanted to gain for victory, he wanted to make a name for himself – so he tries to talk God into giving him what he wants
- Hannah as you read her prayer in chapter 2 you see is really motivated by a desire to give God her son
  - It is not that she wants him for herself, maybe that was how her prayers started years earlier, but now she just wants the joy of giving her son back to the Lord
  - So I believe motivation is different

**I also believe the inspiration was different**

- Jephthah again didn't need to make a vow, God was going to bless him, but he was convinced, I have to talk God into this
  - So he is really the inspiration for his vow, not the Lord
- With Hannah God is wanting to produce one of the greatest men in the old Testament and so I suggest to you that God was inspiring what she was saying and the circumstances that lead up to that point

**She has had years of disappoint and so she is just pouring out her heart, casting her cares upon the Lord**

- And isn't that again what Peter tells you and I to do

**“cast your cares upon Him for He cares for you.” – I Peter 5:7**

- the word picture is pushing a cart up a hill, you push the cart and it moves up the hill, but then it rolls back toward you, and you push it again and it comes back on you

**But in the process you are growing stronger and God is working in your life**

- And this is certainly true of Hannah
  - She pours out her heart before the Lord, and I guarantee this was not the first time she had poured her heart out before the Lord – but God was working and working and the work was now done – what do I mean???
- God wanted to produce one of the greatest men of the old testament – and he needed to get Hannah to the right place
  - As he does with us so often

**No doubt Hannah had prayed many times before, crying out to the Lord concerning her situation.**

- and no doubt if she was like you and me her prayers began with “Lord give me a child so I can give the child to my husband”

- “Peninnah has given him all these kids and because of it, she torments me – Lord give me a child to give to my husband”

**Now Friends, there is nothing wrong with that prayer, except for the fact that it was not what God wanted to do**

- Hannah wanted to give a child to her husband
  - God wanted to give a prophet to a nation
  - And so she prayed and prayed and though God wasn’t answering, as she cast her cares upon the Lord, God was working in her heart, shaping her
- and now this day, as we read in verse 11, she prays not give me a son so I can give him to my husband, but she prays give me a son, that I might give him back to you
  - and God is going to answer that prayer because she was now praying His heart and His will

**Now wait a second you may say, how do I know if I’m praying God’s heart or not, how do I align my heart with His?**

- listen, you do what Hannah did, you do what Peter exhorts
  - you pray, you cast your cares upon Him, and as you pray God is working on you, shaping you
- Prayer friends, is not getting my will, my way done in heaven – what did Jesus pray, “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Prayer is not getting my will done in heaven, it is getting His will done on earth
  - and as I pray – God shapes my heart to His will
  - Hannah prays and Eli realizes, this woman isn’t drunk and puts his stamp of approval on her request and she goes off believing by faith things were going to be different – such great faith

**Remember she is not pregnant at this time**

- All she has is the Word of God
  - But for Hannah that is enough – may God do that same work in our hearts

**Oh I can remember times in the early days of the ministry in Texas when we would need some money to pay bills and I would worry and worry and then someone would drop a check off and it would be exactly what we needed**

- and I would rejoice and jump around, my countenance would change, like Hannah I would no longer be sad
  - and the Lord just really convicted me one day, hey wait a second – why are you excited now that you have a piece of paper with some numbers on it
  - what if that check bounces, and more than that, haven’t you always had a piece of paper, my Word that said, I would take care of you – why do you rejoice when man says they are going to take care of you, when you have had my Word all along – busted!!!!

**Hannah rejoiced, not because she was pregnant, not because she saw any evidence at all that things would get better other than the Word of God**

- What a lady, no wonder God used her to be the mother of one of Israel’s great prophets

**God comes through**

- And she does what she promised, maybe a little hesitation, maybe she just wants Samuel to be self sufficient around 3 years old
  - But Elkanah encourages her – let the Word of the Lord be established – here he is being a good husband, helping his wife get to where she needed to be
  - I hope you do that men, instead of tearing your bride down – you are helping her get to where she needs to be

**Samuel’s parents love God and are dedicated to God**

- Now again before we move away from Samuel’s parents, I have to point out what a woman of God this is



**She leaves little Samuel with the priest Eli, who we will see was not a good Father and that was well known in Israel. Not a good Father, not a good spiritual leader and she does it when he is 2 to 3 years old**

- Now I have kids – I remember when my son was 2 to 3 years old, there is one thing I know, he didn't like to be dropped off in children's ministry – oh he had a great time when he was in there, but it's so sad to leave him there, crying to us
  - Its hard knowing we are going to pick him up in an hour, I can not imagine leaving him for good, and leaving him with not the wonderful nursery we have here, but with Eli, this old, blind, sad Father and priest

**It again shows me that this woman, Samuel's mom was a woman of great faith and trust in the Lord**

- A woman willing to give even that which was most precious to her to the Lord

**And I point that out because so often we want to be used of the Lord in a great way**

- and don't misunderstand me, I'm sure Hannah had her faults
  - but don't let it escape your attention that when God picks a Mom for a very special prophet, He picks this woman who is sold out to Him

### **I Samuel 1-7 – The Prophet Samuel**

**#1 – Samuel's Parents – I Samuel 1:1-2:11**

**#2 – Samuel's Preparation – I Samuel 2:12 – 3:31**

- and really he is prepared for his life in two ways

**Samuel was prepared by**

**#1 – Learning from bad examples**

- Samuel has some bad examples to watch – these sons of Eli were taking more than the share the Bible gave to them and they were doing it by force
  - The law clearly allowed the priests to live off the offerings of the people
  - The priests were to focus on ministering to the Lord and ministering to the people not on farming their land and raising their cattle
  - But they still needed to eat
- So they lived off the offerings of the people
  - But what they could take, how much they could take, that was all outlined in the Word
  - And these guys were going way beyond the law of God and they were forcing people to do it
- I mean, can you image – if we were to shake you down for the offering – if we had this guy taking the offering – **Mobster picture** – hey, put something in there you hear!!!!

**Of course you would find somewhere else to go to church**

- but understand for them there was no where else to go – so the people loathed coming to the tabernacle, not because they loathed God but because they loathed the priests

**Samuel was prepared by**

- **#1 – Learning from bad examples**

**And that got me thinking – what can we do to hinder people from coming to church**

- what can we do to encourage people to be here
  - in the way we greet someone around us – in the way we make people feel welcome and feel like we care that they are here
  - and of course the opposite – we can have such an effect

**These priests are not being good examples – they are making people loath coming to worship**

- and then if that wasn't bad enough – they are sleeping with girls who come to worship
  - Are you kidding me????

I will never forget - I had a guy one time who was employed by the church in Texas, and I could just tell something was wrong with him, something he was struggling with – I would ask, you okay,

“yeah fine” – I knew he wasn’t fine, I thought maybe he was struggle with pornography or something along those lines—then one day he says I need to confess something – I thought I am ready to help this guy with whatever and he says and then he says, “I am sleeping with multiple women in the church and I want to be free – I said I’m sorry, what??? – Jason Yetz literally had to restrain me I was so mad at this guy – I just don’t get it, listen I’m a sinner as much as everybody else, but you guys are God’s kids, God’s bride and my prayer is if I’m ever going to do something that would make it loathsome for you to come to church or hurt the bride of Christ – kill me God, kill me first

**Now you are going to wonder if I die suddenly – remember that sermon**

- Listen I know I am wicked in my heart but I fear coming between Jesus and His bride, I fear that with all that I am
  - But these guys didn’t

**But what I want you to notice is, in the midst of all this sin, this chapter over and over says, Samuel grew before the Lord, in favor with God and Man**

- in contrast to the sin, Samuel is growing before the Lord
  - or in other words – He is learning from their bad example
  - he is learning what not to do, and why not to do it
- and this is something we need to consider

**All of us have examples – some of us have great examples around us, and yet many of us have to face radically not good examples**

- but here is the key – like Samuel you and I have a choice
  - either we are going to learn from those examples, and learn what not to do, and why not to do it
  - or we are going to become just like them, and I believe it is a choice you have to make
- The world will tell you – oh your father is an alcoholic, you are going to be an alcoholic – your parents divorced so you are going to divorce
  - But I say to you – no – you decide if you are going to learn from their example, positive or negative

**Part of what made Samuel who he was, was learning from mistakes others made around him**

- he did not have to make them himself in order to see that sin was bad
  - He saw it lived out in others
  - And you and I have to make the same choice
- Instead of shaking our fist at God and then falling into the same thing, blaming God for our upbringing
  - I thank God for the grace of being able to see sin, see the effects of sin without touching myself
  - It prepared me to be who God wanted me to be today
- And I pray the same thing would be true for you
  - That you would learn from others – be it family, other ministers, (hopefully not me), but others you have been around, that went the wrong way, followed the wrong path – you see the folly, you see the pain
  - And you decide, by God’s grace, to go a different direction
  - Samuel did, and it prepared him for ministry

**As bad as it was, as bad as the examples were, in love verse 26 – there was little Samuel just ministering before the Lord**

- God always has his remnant – we can think – we are post Christian and we are – but that doesn’t scare the Lord – he has those that are His, tucked away ready for his call

- He had Samuel – and Hannah verse 19 every year would bring him a little new priestly outfit

- And Eli blesses Elkanah and Hannah and so does the Lord – Hannah goes on to have 3 more sons and 2 daughter and we just see once again – you can't out give the Lord

I remember in the church in Texas we were determined to give away 10 percent – and it was crazy – every time I added a missionary – we started supporting the Apples at \$500 bucks a month and that was a lot for us then, our entire church budget was \$5,000 a month that was all the expenses for the rent, the utilities and my salary, \$4,500 after we gave to the Apples and the next month, our tithe, churches budget increased by \$5,000 dollars, it doubled, now it happens, but it just continued for a few months, so we added another couple for \$500 and it went up another \$5,000 – so the leadership team and I just started looking for quality missionaries to support – yes because we believed in it, but we were blessed and I tell pastors that and they say - we don't have a big enough budget to support missionaries or local ministries – and I would tell them honesty - I can't afford not to

- anyway – I just believe you are blessed when you choose to support the kingdom of God here or wherever you feel like you are being fed – the blessing is yours
  - That is not a pressure sell
  - We are not bringing this guy out - **Mobster picture again**
- It is because I love you, and I believe in the principals of God's word and I want you to enjoy them too

### **Samuel was prepared by**

- **#1 – Learning from bad examples**

### **We need to choose – verse 30**

- you can choose what way to go, but you can't choose the consequences and you need to think that through
  - I want to live carnally – okay – God will still love you
  - And I want to be effective for the kingdom – nope, doesn't work that way

### **I want to raise my kids, no discipline, just let them learn by experience – okay, God still loves you**

- And I want them to be good respectful young men and women – nope
  - You can choose what way to go, but you can't choose the consequences
  - Choose to follow the Lord
  - Choose to follow His Word
  - Choose to do it God's way
- Learn from the poor examples in your life, in scripture and learn from the good examples in both of those as well

### **Samuel was prepared by**

#### **#1 – Learning from bad examples**

#### **#2 – Learning to hear from the Lord**

- read chapter 3

### **The word of God was rare, yet Samuel ministered to the Lord – we need to operate by faith not by feeling**

- sometimes our devotions are sweet and worship is emotional and I love those seasons
  - but sometimes we feel like we are praying to the walls, and I know those times are tough
- But please don't think necessarily that something is wrong
  - I usually ask the Lord – have I done something, do I need to repent of something
  - But most of the time – the Lord is teaching us to walk by faith and not by feelings – and we need to learn to speak the language of faith
  - The Word of the Lord was rare

### **Now we covered this story last Weekend**



- go over the whole story – sleeping in the tabernacle – the Lord calls him, he got to Eli, eventually Eli perceives it was the Lord (humbling you think) and so he tells him to say, Speak Lord, your servant hears

**The next morning Eli wants to know and Samuel is being prepared – He tells him everything**

- Such an important principal – we have so many ministers today that tell most of the truth, or some of the truth
  - God loves you – true
  - God is for you – true
  - But then they stop
- You also need to walk with Him in purity and strength, you need to be filled with His Spirit
  - We have enough feel good messages, we need men and women who will speak the truth in love
- And notice when Samuel does – Eli doesn't loose his mind – he knows the truth and he needs to hear it
  - And Samuel just keeps growing – how, by the Word of the Lord – can be true for you and me as well
  - You don't have to be a prophet, but you have to be a man or a woman of the Word
- Maybe end here or .....

**And on Sunday we looked at how and why Samuel heard the voice of God and how we can too**

- Who did God speak to
  - He spoke not to old experienced Eli, no, God spoke to a child
  - And if we are going to hear God's voice, we need to come to Him with faith like a child – Lord I just believe you want to speak to me and lead me
- We saw – When God spoke to Samuel
  - It was as him ministering to the Lord – not for the Lord, not to get anything from the Lord, in fact Samuel didn't even know God personally yet

**Samuel just ministered to the Lord because He heard He was worthy and so Samuel loved on Him, ministered to Him**

- And as we minister to the Lord – just loving on Him in worship, in personal time of devotion, what is going to happen, you are going to hear God's voice
- We also saw, not just who God spoke to and when God spoke to Samuel but where God spoke to Samuel
  - And it was in the tabernacle – it was in the place of meeting
  - So often God will speak to us as we gather together. Does God speak when you are in the woods, certainly, but more often than not, God's voice is clearly heard, at the place of meeting
- Finally on Sunday we looked at why God spoke to Samuel
  - And I suggested to you it was because he got out of bed
  - Or in other words, because he responded to what God was saying – do we????