

## **1 SAMUEL WEEK ONE – December 10, 2020**

*Background* – The book of Samuel was originally one book until sometime around the second century BCE when the Canonical Hebrew scriptures were translated into Greek which is known as the Septuagint. That's when the book of Samuel was divided into two parts. The book takes place in the territory known as Canaan or Israel. The story takes place during the last years of the tribal confederacy (think Judges) and the beginning of the reign of King Saul. (1020-1000 BCE). This was about 200-250 years past the time that the Hebrew people entered into Canaan (see Joshua) at the turn of the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age near 1250 BCE.

*Date, Theology, and Authorship* – Literarily speaking, this book can be placed among Joshua, Judges, and Kings. These books, along with Samuel demonstrate the distinctive theology and constitute what scholars call Deuteronomistic History. The idea here is that if the nation as a whole is faithful to Yahweh, then it will prosper. If it isn't faithful, it will have disastrous military conflicts until the nation repents. This theology sees loss in war as evidence of divine displeasure, which means that a victorious war leader will be understood as beloved by God.

Although Samuel chronicles events from the ninth century BCE, the book was not put into writing until around 550 BCE during the Babylonian Exile. So even though the book is written in the voice of Samuel the Prophet, it is evident that several authors contributed to this work. The theme of Samuel revolves around the importance of political and personal relationships as they relate to good government and good leaders.

*Schedule* -

December 3 - "Catching Up With Israel"

December 10 - Chapters 1-3, "Hannah's Song."

December 17 - Chapters 4-7 "Rise of the Philistines."

January 7 - Chapters 8-10 "Sam Finds a King"

January 14 - Chapters 11-15 "Better (Not) Call Saul."

January 21 - Chapters 16-17 "The Shepherd Who Would Be King"

January 28 - Chapters 18-20 "The Fall of Saul"

February 4 - Chapters 21-18 "The Hunt for David"

February 11 - Chapters 29-31 "Dealing With Our Dark Side"

### **Questions for 1 Samuel 1-3**

1. Who is Hannah? What kind of family did she come from?
2. What role did God play in the birth of Samuel?
3. What is the intent behind Hannah's vow to Yahweh? (vs. 11)
4. What was Eli's response to Hannah's prayer? What do you think contributed to this response? How was it resolved?
5. How is Samuel a "chosen one?" What is Samuel's role and purpose?
6. After Hannah left Samuel with the priests at Shiloh, she offered a song to Yahweh. Does this song sound familiar? Would you consider it prophetic in any way? Why or why not?
7. What themes do you see in Hannah's song? Name three things that God promises.
8. What made the sons of Eli such "scoundrels?" How are they dealt with? What are the consequences of their actions? Should Eli be held accountable for their actions?
9. What does it mean that "the word of the Lord was rare in those days?" (3:1) How does this fit into Samuel's call to be a prophet?
10. Why was Samuel afraid to tell Eli about his vision? How did it turn out for Samuel?