

**A Small Group or
Personal Study
on 1 Samuel**

by Mitch A. Schultz

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS ON THE STUDY

What you are about to embark on is not meant to be a profound, nor a deeply theological study on the book of 1 Samuel. The study is first and foremost the product of a personal study I undertook. For some years, I have exercised the discipline of devotional studies that have been more systematic in nature, and, in my opinion offering little relevant use to others. Just as a good sermon is often born out of a pastor's own time in the word, I found myself asking, why can't a good study guide also emerge from the pastor's quiet room.

I began this study on 1 Samuel with a lot of questions. Consequently, what you see before you happens to be a series of questions. My hope is that they are questions that will prompt you to dig further in the word. I offer little insight here, but prayerfully hope that the questions lead you to your own insights.

While the study is designed to be used as a resource for a small group, it can just as effectively be embarked upon by an individual looking for another effective study tool. The task of knowing what to study and when, is one I leave for your own structuring. There are no daily guides in this study, but simply the laying out of chapters and questions into seventeen lessons.

May the Lord Jesus use this study to draw you closer to himself.

Pastor Mitch

LESSON ONE

1 Samuel chapter 1

Vs. 1-8

1. What were the spiritual priorities of this family? V3.
2. How important was Elkanah's love to Hannah and why? (v.4-6). Was it enough for her? (see also v. 8).
3. What do you learn about Elkanah from his expression of love in vs. 8?
4. Have you ever felt like Hannah, where no other person can meet the deep need in your soul? Discuss!

Vs. 9-18

1. What do you think Hannah prayed about in vs. 9?
2. Look at vs. 10-11 and discuss the tension between Hannah's pain and her devotion to God. *Give me a son... (her cry) he will be yours (her devotion)*. Discuss how you live with this tension of crying out for something from God and remaining devoted despite what the outcome might be.
3. How hard do you think it was for Hannah to say what she said in vs. 11 in giving back to God this child? Were they just words? (Look also at vs. 28).

Vs. 19-28

1. How important is it for families to worship together? (vs.19). What works against this in your family or marriage or in your personal disciplines? What worked against Elkannah's family?

2. Note in vs. 17-18 how different Hannah seemed from earlier on? What has brought about this change? What burden do you need to turn over to God right now?

LESSON TWO

1 Samuel chapter 2

1. Read over Hannah's prayer and note what she said about God? List how she described God. Why were they important in light of her experience? In what way did Hannah recognize something bigger going on than just the provision of a son?

2. Why in this context do you think Hannah spoke so strongly against her "enemies"? In what way do you think she had Peninnah on her mind? (See 1:7).

3. Read vs. 12-36. How was it evident that God had brought Samuel into this setting to redeem a rotting spiritual situation? Describe what you see to be wrong spiritually in Israel.

4. Close by reading Hannah's prayer in vs. 1-10. As you do offer to God your burdens and the cries of your soul.

LESSON THREE

1 Samuel chapter 3

1. Describe the setting as given in vs. 1. Discuss together the significance of the phrase *In those days the word of the Lord was rare, there were not many visions?* How do you believe Israel came to this point where God seemed both silent and absent? Was the problem God, or Israel? What do you say to someone who complains that God seems absent? (Read Psalm 73 to expand your discussion).

2. Why is it important that Samuel continued to serve as he does in vs. 1 even though little seemed to be happening spiritually? What should be the Christians response when God "seems" to be doing less than He did before?

3. Describe what kind of man Eli was from the description in vs.2, and 3:11-14, and 4:18.

4. Eli was physically and spiritually blind. He was not only fat physically, but spiritually complacent (see how he *lies in his usual place* in vs. 2. He was also a negligent father, vs. 13.) What impact does poor spiritual leadership have on a community and nation? How important is it that pastors and Christian leaders maintain a high moral standard and what is the evidence when they don't? (See also 1 Timothy 3).

A Study on 1 Samuel

5. How significant was it to this dark spiritual setting that in vs. 3 *the lamp of the Lord had not yet gone out*? What does this tell you about the value of God's presence when everything around seems so dark? (See also John 1:5 and Hebrews 13:5-6).

Vs. 3-21

1. Where was Samuel sleeping in vs. 3? How different is this from where Eli slept and why was that significant? What does this say about Samuel's hunger for God? Which of the two (Eli or Samuel) describes you?

2. Why did Eli not recognize God's voice?

3. What do you hope Eli would have done rather than what you read he did in vs. 18? How different would the story have been had he responded differently?

4. Describe what has changed in Israel between vs. 19-21 compared to how the story began in vs. 1-3? Take what you listed and discuss how they could be implemented to bring about renewal in your life.

LESSON FOUR

1 Samuel chapter 4

4:1-11

1. Israel faces a great defeat against the Philistines (vs. 1-2). The people were devastated and disillusioned by it. This is not what they expected under the context of renewal under Samuel (see 3:19-21). Why do you think God allowed this war, and allowed Israel to lose?

2. Look at the leaders reaction in vs. 3. What are some ways that question is being asked today? Discuss some events, such as Sept. 11, where many are asking this. How would you answer that question today, "*Why did God allow us to be defeated?*"

3. In what ways was Israel trying to use God in vs. 3-4? In what ways do we use God for our own benefit?

4. What does vs. 5 tell us about seeking a blessing from God without paying the price? Read the rest of the chapter and discuss together your reaction to how the story unfolds.

5. God asked Israel to go through a period of long testing. Without the ark it was as though God had abandoned Israel. Describe what you feel that long period was like. Can you relate? Talk about some drought times in your life and then close by reading Isaiah 58:11-13, and Jeremiah 31:9.

LESSON FIVE

1 Samuel chapter 5

1. Read vs. 1-7. What did God do to the Philistines to prove He was real and their gods were false?

2. If you had lived among the Philistines at that time, how would you have reacted to this?

3. Looking at this story, particularly the fear people possessed toward God in vs. 7,9,10,12; what impressed you about the justice and wrath of God. Discuss together why this side of God is something we don't dwell on much today. Read Romans 1:18-23 which tells us the wrath of God is being revealed from heaven... In what way is God's wrath being revealed today?

4. Discuss the contrast between God's wrath and his blessing.

5. Read Ephesians 2:17-18 and what was it God really wanted for the Philistines out of this tragedy? Discuss how you wish they would have responded rather than how they did respond.

LESSON SIX

1 Samuel chapter 6 and 7

6:1-18

1. From these verses what did the Philistines know about the God of Israel?
2. Read vs. 9 - Did the Philistines express any plan to turn to God if the ark was divinely led back to Israel? Why do some today refuse to repent even when it is obvious to them that the gospel is true? What is it beside “education and information” that changes a person’s heart? (See also 2 Cor. 4:4)
3. What was the reaction in Beth-shemesh when the ark came their way? (v.13)
4. What action did they take? (vs. 14-18).
5. What changed in this community with God now present?

Vs.19-7:3

1. Why did God respond so harshly to these seventy men? (v.19).

A Study on 1 Samuel

2. How did the people react? (v.20, 7:1-3)

3. Do you think this side of God needs to be recaptured today? Why? Read David's reaction to a similar scene in 2 Sam. 6:6-11. In what way did David's reaction reveal some of his preconceived notions about God? How would people react today if something like this happened? How would it bring about a crisis of faith as it did to David?

4. Fortunately God's wrath has been poured out on Jesus (see Isaiah 53:4-5, 10) but this has not changed whom God is, and what He is like. Read Hebrews 12:18-29 and spend a few moments quietly reflecting on God's true character and nature.

5. The rest of chapter 7 describes a great victory. Read vs. 10-11 and discuss in closing the connection between having things right in your life and the victories you will experience.

LESSON SEVEN

1 Samuel chapter 8-11

8:1-22

1. From what you have learned about Samuel, does it surprise you that his sons turned out the way they did (vs.1-3)? It seems Israel followed Samuel, (see 3:19-21) but his sons did not. Discuss this in light of those you know, or your own experience, where children have chosen not to follow the heritage of their parents.

2. What reason in vs. 5 did the leaders in Israel give for wanting a king? How different would this have been if Samuel's sons had followed the Lord? How do you think this affected Samuel?

3. What was God's response in vs. 6-9?

4. What warning did God give in vs. 10-18 should he give them a king?

5. What other reason did Israel give for wanting a king in vs. 19-20?

6. The people wanted God to bless them while they insisted on having their own king. They wanted their own way under the umbrella of God's protection. God warned them in vs. 10-18 that they cannot have it both

A Study on 1 Samuel

ways. In what way(s) do we sometimes seek our own freedom while expecting God to bless and protect us?

7. A rebellious teenager insists he be able to live by his own rules while still enjoying all the benefits of living at home. In light of what you have studied today, how would you challenge him? In what way is Israel behaving like this teenager?

9:1-10:16

1. Saul is introduced as an ordinary man going through the ordinary experience of searching for a lost donkey. God worked in this ordinary situation to confront Saul with the high calling of becoming the King. How would you describe Saul's life in vs. 1-5? Did he ever expect what was coming?

2. Describe the contrast between what Saul had in mind that day, and what God had in mind. What Saul wanted (v.5-10) What God wanted (v.15-17, 10:1).

3. Saul's vision and expectation for that day was a limited one; to find a donkey. God's vision and expectation for Saul was that he becomes king. How have you struggled between your own limited expectations and the discovery that God has more for you than you thought?

A Study on 1 Samuel

4. What was Saul's reaction to hearing God's plan for him (9:19-20)? How would you react?

5. What do you think Saul and Samuel talked about in v.25?

6. Describe the three things Saul would encounter that day and why were they significant? (10: 3-4, 6).

7. Why do you think Saul kept all this to himself in 10:14-16? Read vs. 20-22 for a possible explanation.

8. Read 10:17-19 and discuss together the significance of Samuel's words here. Did it really have much impact on the people in vs. 22-24?

9. The story of Saul is really a study on self-rule. By in large people prefer to rule for themselves than to submit to God. That is the nature of man's rebellion. When the people in vs. 24 shouted *Long Live the King!* they were declaring allegiance to Saul (self) over God. (Read again v.19 and 12:16-17). God seemed to tolerate self-rule but only for a season. Later Israel would pay dearly for their decision to reject God as their king. (See 8:11-18).

Spent the last few moments together declaring your love and allegiance to Jesus, you're King. Close by reading Rev. 7:19-17.

LESSON EIGHT

1 Samuel chapter 12

1. In vs. 1-5 Samuel absolved himself of having done anything that will give Israel a reason to rebel further against God. Reading over what Samuel said, what adjectives would you use to describe Samuel's life? How do you hope people will remember you?

2. In vs. 17 Samuel told the people to stand near him so he can confront them with the evidence of God's righteousness. Read over vs. 6-15 and summarize the events of the past to which Samuel referred, which spoke so clearly of God's righteousness. Why do you think he appealed to God's righteousness to confront them in v. 7?

3. Samuel cited all this to stress that God will punish Israel again as he did in the past should they rebel (v.15). What would be theirs if they choose to obey in v.14?

4. Read vs. 16-25. What did this demonstrate of God's power do to the people (vs. 18-19)?

5. What do you observe about the grace of God in vs. 20-22? Relate this to Ephesians 2:8-9 and Romans 6:23. Is there anything you can do that will cause God to stop loving you? Prayerfully reflect on this statement by Phillip Yancy from his book What is So Amazing About Grace; *There is*

A Study on 1 Samuel

nothing we can do for God to love us more and there is nothing we can do for God to love us less. What is your reaction to hearing this?

6. What was Samuel's commitment in v. 23? Are there people you have given up on? What is there in Samuel's words that might help change your attitude toward those who frustrate you like Israel frustrated Samuel?

7. Why is the phrase (v.24) *consider the great things God has done* important for us as we also *fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart*? Why do you think God's track record of the past is so important for the present?

8. Close out talking together about some of the *great things God has done in your life*?

LESSON NINE
I Samuel chapter 13-15

13:1-22

1. Saul's attack of the Philistine outpost in vs. 3-4 was like the lancing of a festering boil. War was now inevitable. Read vs. 5-6 and describe the difference between the force of the Philistines and that of Israel. Read also vs. 16-22 to see how overpowering the enemy was. How are the Philistines here an appropriate picture of our enemy as described for us in Ephesians 6:10-12? In what way should we not *"mess with our enemy"*?

2. What does the army's reaction in vs. 6,7 say about their lack of trust in Saul's leadership? Where were the people placing their trust in, in vs. 6-7? (Read 10:20-22 for further insight into what kind of man Saul really was).

3. What was wrong with Saul's reaction in vs. 7-12? (For an interest parallel read 9:10-14).

4. How different would the story have been had Saul waited for Samuel both for that moment and for Israel's future? (Read 13:13)

5. Describe a time when waiting on God for something was hard and discuss the consequences of the choice you made, good or bad.

A Study on 1 Samuel

6. What does vs. 15 reveal about the depth of Saul's self reliance?

13:23-14:23

1. Read 13:23 - 14:14 and discuss in what way Jonathan was different than his father.

2. What evidence do you see here that God's hand of blessing was on Jonathan?

3. God apparently had this victory already planned for Israel. The blessing however would be Jonathan's not Saul's. As Christians we know the battle is won. However, how do Christians sometimes miss out on the blessing?

4. Read vs. 15-23. When Saul heard of the Philistine panic, for a brief moment he sought God. What changed this in vs. 18-19? What was it in Saul that made depending on God so hard? Reflect on your own life and note in what ways you live with this tension of wanting to trust God, but ending up doing your own thing like Saul did.

14:24-15:35

1. Read vs. 24-48 and discuss together your reaction to this story. If this had been front-page of the newspaper what would the headlines have been?

2. What did Jonathan's reaction in vs. 29-30 reveal about his attitude toward his father?

A Study on 1 Samuel

3. In what ways was Saul the cause of this great sin in vs. 31-32?

4. Why is vs.35 so significant in understanding the tension in Saul's heart?

5. Why did God remain silent in vs. 37? Discuss a time in your life when God did not seem to respond to you.

6. When the men intervened for Jonathan in v.45 Saul's authority was undermined. The rest of his life was characterized by war and fighting, victories and losses (see vs. 47-48). In v.52 we see that Saul never did enjoy the honor of being king. He had been chosen by God to reign, but lived that call out with tension and conflict. Had he been obedient this would not have been the case.

7. Read over chapter 15 and list all the reasons cited as to why God rejected Saul as king. In light of this many Christians struggle through life never enjoying the honor given them in serving God. Called to serve, and possibly to lead, we can live out that call in tension and conflict moving from one battle to the next with diminishing effectiveness.

Close out this time in prayer asking God to help you serve and lead well in a way that honors him. Read Ephesians 1:3-14 and thank God for each of the things he had given you as laid out in this passage.

LESSON TEN

1 Samuel Chapter 16

Vs. 1-13

1. In v. 1 Samuel just can't seem to get over Saul's failure to obey God. What is it exactly that Samuel is mourning about here?
2. What can you learn from God's instruction to Samuel in v.1 to *get up and move on* when we are wallowing in a difficult situation?
3. What does Samuel's reaction in v. 2 reveal about his own weaknesses and lack of faith?
4. Read vs. 2-5. Samuel's true purpose in going to Bethlehem was to anoint a new king, but the reason given was to provide a worship service where a sacrifice would be offered. Why is it important that the anointing of David take place in a context of worship and sacrifice? Note especially the term "consecrate" in v. 5 and discuss why this is important to the story.
5. Despite the spiritual climate now in place following the sacrifice, Samuel approached the selection of a king through human eyes, not spiritual. What important lesson does he learn from God in v.7?

A Study on 1 Samuel

6. Discuss leadership in society and the church. In what way(s) do we have it wrong in how we choose and look to spiritual leaders today? Share examples of people you know who had little to offer in terms of what the world looks for, but had it all in terms of what God looks for. (Read also 1 Cor. 2:1-5).

7. Read vs. 8-12. Why do you think Jesse never considered including David in the line up of potential kings?

8. In v.12, God had his own reason for choosing David that had nothing to do with human ability or quality. Ephesians one tells us that we also have been chosen by God in Christ (vs. 4,11). What is your reaction in knowing that God has chosen you and how should that impact the way you live tomorrow?

Vs. 14-23

1. In v. 13 David is filled with God's Spirit and stands before his brothers the anointed successor to Saul. Read vs. 14-23 and notice how God lead David, not to the throne, but to the servants quarters. Why do you think God takes David through this humble process?

2. How do you struggle with vs. 14,15? Does this suggest that God is the source and cause of evil? (Read also James 1:12-18 to help in your discussion). How responsible was Saul for what has occurred to him spiritually? Relate this to the psychological and spiritual struggles many face today and the tendency of placing blame on genetic conditions and past experiences.

A Study on 1 Samuel

3. Which of the qualities cited in v. 18 was most important?

4. What does v. 23 say to us about the value of music in our lives? Share together any songs or hymns God has used to really help you through a personal struggle?

LESSON ELEVEN

1 Samuel Chapter 17

1. **Read Chapter 17.** Assume for a moment this is the first time you have read this story. Before you arrived to the end, how do you think the story would have ended? What surprised you and interested you as the story unfolded?

2. Sum up in one sentence what this story teaches about God.

3. Read 16:7 again. In what way did David apply this truth to his confrontation with the giant?

4. Israel, it seemed, was paralyzed by fear, while David was empowered by faith. Look over vs. 4-11 and verse 24 and describe what dominated Israel's attention and contributed to their fear. How significant was it that they noted every detail about Goliath? Have you noticed in your life that when the problem (not God) is your focus, that you become consumed with every detail of the problem?

5. Looking at vs. 26 what seemed different about David from the rest of Israel's army?

6. What possible explanation can be given for Eliab's reaction toward David in vs. 28? (Look at 16:6 for jealousy being a possible explanation).

A Study on 1 Samuel

7. Read vs. 30-37. What reason did David give to convince Israel and Saul that he was a match for the giant?

8. We find in vs. 45-47 David was empowered by faith not paralyzed by fear. While Israel, it seemed, was consumed by every detail of the giant, David was evidently consumed by every detail of God. What is it about God that overwhelmed David and gave him this confidence to face Goliath?

9. Read vs. 48-58. What possible headline would have covered the front page of the next day's newspaper?

10. Close out this session sharing some of the problems that have consumed you lately. In what ways have they paralyzed you and in what ways have you been empowered by faith? Conclude by talking together or writing down the attributes about God that seem to overwhelm you the most during this difficult time.

LESSON TWELVE

1 Samuel chapter 19-20

Chapter 19

1. Read vs. 1-7. What impresses you most about Jonathan from these verses? At what risk was he willing to take David's side?

2. Share about one friend who has been like a Jonathan to you? How have you been such a friend to someone else?

3. We discover here that David's popularity increased, but in vs. 9-10 Saul's hatred toward David also increased. Read vs. 9-17. How would David's life never be the same again?

4. It is evident from Saul's situation that anger is not easily contained. Left to its own devices, anger, like yeast, rises with greater intensity. (See James 1:15). What was the source of Saul's anger and why was he unable to control it? What would Saul have to do to be set free from this anger? In what way(s) have you ever been controlled by anger and how were you set free from it?

5. Read vs. 18-24. How do you explain what happened to Saul in this incident?

6. What does this tell us about God?

7. When Saul entered into the Holy Presence of God he was overpowered by it. The force of God's Holy Spirit was so great even Saul, as wicked as he was, fell subject to it. Why is this scene important to the narrative and what does it teach us today?

Chapter 20

1. Read vs. 1-11. In David's trial he turned first to Jonathan. Keep in mind that Jonathan was heir to Saul's throne. Jonathan choose to take sides with David knowing that by doing so he risked giving up that right. It was Jonathan who had the most to lose by becoming friends with David. What has choosing Jesus cost you? (See Luke 12: 49-53).

2. In vs. 12-15 Jonathan acknowledged to David that he, David, was the rightful heir to the throne. (See how he symbolically demonstrated this in 18:4). Read vs. 12-15. What kept Jonathan from being threatened by David? Knowing he could claim the throne, what kept him from fighting for it against David. (See also 18:3).

3. Read vs. 16-17. What strikes you about the depth of friendship Jonathan and David shared? Do you have friends that have reached this level?

4. In vs. 30-33 Jonathan's relationship with his father turned sour. In what way did Saul's word sting Jonathan? Which of them do you think remained most embedded in Jonathan's mind? Can you remember stinging words

A Study on 1 Samuel

hurled at you from your childhood? What were they and how have you been affected by them?

5. Read vs. 41-42. In reading this moving drama, what situation comes to your mind of times when you have had to bid farewell to someone you loved deeply?

6. Jonathan's portrayal of friendship is one of the deepest examples of Christ's friendship with us. Close this moment by reading Philippians 2 and Hebrews 1 and discuss together the qualities both Jonathan and Jesus shared. In what way did humility play a big part in their friendship?

7. Finally, consider how you can be a friend, like Jonathan was to David with someone you are close to.

LESSON THIRTEEN

1 Samuel Chapter 21-23

Chapter 21

1. Read vs. 1-7. David was on the run from Saul but not from God. His impulse when in danger was to go to the priest at the place of worship. Read Psalm 18:1-6 and discuss in what ways God has been a place to run in your trouble.

2. In vs. 2-4 when David asked for food, the priest, Ahimelech, could only offer him the bread that had been consecrated for the priest. How does this relate to the word of God (spiritual bread) being all we have when we face trouble. (See Jesus response to Satan in Luke 4).

3. What reason does David give in vs. 5 that makes the bread acceptable? Why is it important to be without sin in order to receive God's spiritual food? (See also 1 Cor. 11:27-32).

4. Armed with Goliath's sword, (v.19) David ran to the enemy hoping to find refuge. Read vs. 10-15 and the related Psalm (Psalm 34). What certainties does David express in Psalm 34 that he could cling to when life seemed to have few safe places to run?

5. Read vs. 10-15. David was safe nowhere. He even resorted to feigning insanity in order to survive. What do you think happened to David's assumption that he would someday be King at this point in his life?

Chapter 22

1. In vs. 1-5 David found renewed strength from family and friends. Share about times in your life when family and friends became your only network of safety.

2. What in vs. 5 did the prophet Gad ask of David that would force him further into danger? What parallel is there here to our following Jesus? (See Matt. 16:24).

3. Read vs. 6-23. After reading this, how do you explain what has happened to Saul since the day he had been chosen and anointed by God?

4. David took responsibility for the tragedy described in vs. 20-23. Had Doeg not overheard David this would not have happened. In what way was David right in feeling responsible and in what way is he wrong?

LESSON FOURTEEN

1 Samuel Chapter 23-25

Chapter 23

1. Read these chapters and note all the verses where David inquired of the Lord or sought God's will before acting. (Note especially vs.2,4,9-10,12)

2. What do you learn from this about the value of seeking God's lead for every need? How do you find that hard in your life?

3. Why is v.14 so important to this tense standoff between David and Saul? What assurance does this give you that living in Christ guarantees protection? (While for David this meant physical protection, for us it won't always be. Believers are not insulated from physical harm. What is assured is that physical harm will not come to us unless God permits it. We are certainly promised spiritual protection. See Rom 8:37-39).

4. What do you think Jonathan's' visit in vs. 15-18 did for David? In what ways did it confirm God's presence with David?

5. How did God intervene for David in vs. 26-28?

Chapter 24

1. Read vs. 1-7. What do you attribute David's sensitivity to here?

A Study on 1 Samuel

2. In what ways ought Christians to be "conscience stricken" even over light matters today? How does this contrast to the way the world tends to react to everyday situations? Discuss or write some examples.

3. Read vs. 8-15. What did David say to Saul as an explanation for his refusal to seek revenge? Did he have to respond this way? Why or why not?

4. David's response softened Saul. (See Prov. 15:1 for why). Read vs. 16-22 and discuss how God has softened those bent on harming you because of your "gentle answer".

5. What does Saul's response tell you about the tension and conflict that existed in his own soul? What would Saul have had to do to repent completely? How has God changed your heart through the gentleness of others?

6. Close out this time praying for those you work or live with who have perhaps made life hard on you. Then, consider how your response to them could bring about a change!

Chapter 25

1. Read vs. 1. How did Samuel's death add to the crisis between David and Saul?

A Study on 1 Samuel

2. Read vs. 2-13. David's reaction seemed such a contrast to the earlier account where he is conscience stricken from touching Saul's robe? What do you think happened to David that caused him to react so differently this time? What bearing did Samuel's death have on David and his reaction?

3. Read vs. 13-31. How would you describe Abigail in one sentence?

4. What attributes in Abigail would you talk about if you were helping a woman who was married to a man like Nabel?

5. Read vs. 32-44. How did God take care of this situation once David placed it in God's hands? How have you seen God work out a tough situation that you once tried to manage yourself?

LESSON FIFTEEN

1 Samuel chapter 26-27

Chapter 26

1. Read chapter 26. It is becoming apparent that as long as Saul was alive David would remain on the run. Likewise, as long as there is a devil, in a very real sense Christians will live under his threats. What examples can you give of this reality in your life?

2. Tempted by his friends to kill Saul, David insisted that Saul's life was in God's hands. (vs. 10-11,23). How do you struggle with this in light of some world events today? Should evil people remain in position to do evil things, or should they be removed? Discuss your struggles over this.

3. What are some things you need to leave in God's hands even though you would prefer to dislodge them yourself?

4. What did David's reaction teach his friends on the value of life? (see v.9, 23-24).

5. This incident marked the end of Saul's pursuit of David. In fact from here on Saul's journey took a dark turn. Look over what Saul told David in vs. 24,25 and write down why it is that Saul seemed so conscience stricken only when he is backed in a corner. What would have to happen to Saul for him to have made a full and complete turn around?

Chapter 27

1. By fleeing to Gath, David was too far away from Saul for Saul to care any longer. By doing this it seemed David had to give up his dream of becoming king. (See 26:19). What dreams you thought were from God have you had to give up?

2. While David settled in his own town (vs.5-7) he is not inactive. Read vs. 8-12 and write down how you struggle over what David did. What explanation would you give a new Christian for David's apparent heartless exploit?

3. While we might remain emotionally uneasy by what David did, he is fulfilling a God given mandate, albeit several centuries late. Read Joshua 6:21, 13:1-7 and Judges 3:1-6. With this background in place, why was David right in what he did?

4. Prayerfully consider what decisive action needs to take place in your life against the presence of sin. Close this time in quiet prayer and confession. (Read Col. 3:5-10).

LESSON SIXTEEN

1 Samuel chapter 28

A Study on 1 Samuel

1. Without Samuel, Saul had no crutch to lean against. When faced by the Philistine army in vs. 5 what was Saul's reaction? What is the most frightened you have been?

2. Fear is a logical response to living out of the will of God. Those who face death especially are often afraid. Why do you think God did not answer Saul in vs. 6? Why is it important to live for God if you are expecting to receive guidance from God? (Read Romans 12:1-3 for more insight on this.)

3. In vs. 7 Saul did the unthinkable; he sought out a witch. Look over vs. 9 and how did Saul compromise all his convictions? Why do you think he was willing to go to such an extreme?

4. What irony do you see in the fact that Saul disguised himself in vs. 8? Read also Heb. 4:13 and note how impossible is it to hide anything from God.

5. Read vs. 11-19. Do you believe this man really was Samuel, or a demonic apparition of him? (To help your answer look over Deut. 18:9-13).

6. If this was demonic, what advantage would Satan have in telling Saul the truth? Read vs. 16-19 and list all the truths Samuel purportedly uttered to

A Study on 1 Samuel

Saul. (It is important to understand that while Satan is the father of all lies (John 8:48), he is able to use truth against us particularly if we are wavering in our faith. By telling Saul the truth, Satan was likely rubbing salt into Saul's wounds, mocking him for his desperation at the time that God had rejected him).

7. Read vs. 20-25. Describe the effect this incident had on Saul?

8. What impact has this story had on your faith and commitment to God?

LESSON SEVENTEEN

1 Samuel chapter 29-30

Chapter 29

1. David had been in hiding among the Philistines, but found himself in a conflicting situation. How did God intervene?

2. Have you ever found yourself in a “no win” situation like David? How did God intervene for you? (God will never ask us to go against our convictions, and certainly, as David discovered, he will never ask us to take our stand with the world. He promises to always provide a way of escape. See also 1 Cor. 10:13).

Chapter 30

1. David’s brief absence gave the Amlekites an opportunity to take revenge for David’s attack on them as described in 27:8-9. What losses did David and his men incur at the hands of this enemy? (See 30:1-3).

2. Discuss or write down what losses would devastate you the most. Which of these have you found most difficult to release to the Lord?

3. Read vs. 3-6. Describe the mood in the camp when this loss was discovered. Why did the men take out their anger on David in v.6? What one statement sums up David’s response?

A Study on 1 Samuel

4. In vs. 7-9 David sought God's guidance on how to best respond to this crisis and he received immediate guidance. Is God's response to you always that clear and immediate? What value is there in our having to sometimes struggle and wait over God's response to us?

5. Read vs. 9-31. In what two ways did David show unbelievable compassion and fairness in this story? (See especially vs. 13-15 and 23-25).

6. What would have likely happened had David not shared the plunder equally as he did?

7. How is God like David in this act of fairness toward us? And how are we often like these "evil doers and trouble makers" in v.22? (See also the parable of the talents in Matt. 20:1-16).

Chapter 31

1. God seemed to remove any restraints to protect Israel, and all hell broke loose. Why do you think God allowed Israel to be overrun like this?

2. In v. 4 Saul seemed more concerned in protecting his dignity than to salvage his relationship with God. At his last moments he cared more about being "abused" by the Philistines. In what way do you see "image" today promoted as a higher virtue to godliness?

A Study on 1 Samuel

3. If you knew you were dying, what would matter to you? How true is it, that *what matters to us when we live is what will matter to us when we die*?

4. The rest of the chapter is a sad chapter in Israel's history. Read vs. 7-13 and in what ways had the enemy won?

5. What do you see in v.13 that offered a glimpse of hope?

6. Summarize in one paragraph how this study on Saul, Samuel and David has impacted you the most.