

# **READING 1 SAMUEL TOGETHER**

## **MARCH 2025**

"The Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."

1 Samuel 16:7

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### **INTRODUCING 1 SAMUEL**

When the Israelites first settled in the land God had promised, they were ruled by a series of judges. The book of Judges ends with the words: "In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes." 1 & 2 Samuel (which were originally one book) show us the history of the first Israelite kings, Saul and David, who reigned from around 1050 BC to 970 BC.

1 Samuel contains many memorable events, including the call of Samuel, David's defeat of Goliath, and Saul's pursuit of David. Most importantly, in different ways, the reigns of both Saul and David point us to a greater King, Jesus.

The book focuses on three main people: chapters 1–7 focus on Samuel; chapters 8–15 focus on Samuel and Saul; and chapters 16–31 focus on Saul and David. The main character, though, is always the Lord, who we see at work in and through the lives of Samuel, Saul and David.

## FIVE KEY THEMES

- **The Lord is King.** In chapter 8, the Lord says the people have rejected him as King. As you read about the human kings Saul and David, remember the divine King whose authority lies behind their reigns.
- **God humbles the proud and lifts up the humble.** Hannah's prayer in chapter 2 celebrates how he reverses the positions of the proud and the humble. Look out for examples of this through the book.
- **We need to listen to God's voice.** In Samuel's life, we see an example of someone who listens to and obeys the words of God. This challenges us to think about our own response to God's words.
- **We should trust in the Lord, not ourselves.** Although he is not a perfect king, David shows us what it looks like to rely on God, not our own strength or wisdom. We can learn from his example of faith.
- **We need a better king.** The contrasting examples of Saul and David both leave us longing for a greater King who will rule God's people. This greater King is Jesus, the Christ – which means "anointed one", like the anointed kings in 1 Samuel.

## SOME EXTRA RESOURCES

- **BibleProject** – This has several helpful resources, including a video introduction (scroll to the bottom): [bibleproject.com/guides/books-of-samuel](http://bibleproject.com/guides/books-of-samuel)
- **The Gospel Coalition** – This has some good background information, as well as links to dig deeper: [thegospelcoalition.org/course/1-2-samuel](http://thegospelcoalition.org/course/1-2-samuel)

**Two helpful books** (both of these are available from 10ofThose.com, or Adam can order a copy on your behalf):

- ***1 Samuel: The Coming King*** by Andy Mason  
A short book with 31 daily reflections and questions
  - ***1 Samuel: Looking on the Heart*** by Dale Ralph Davis  
A very readable commentary, with helpful insights
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## POSSIBLE READING PLANS

You can read or listen to the whole book across the month with one chapter a day (31 chapters, 31 days). Or you can make time once or twice a week to read a bigger section.

If you only have time to read or listen to part of the book, that's ok too! Every sentence of the Bible contains precious truth from God, so even a bit of 1 Samuel will bless you and enable you to encourage others.

# SOME QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

In 1 Samuel, as in much of the Bible, God teaches us through stories. In these historical narratives, we learn about God through his actions, words and promises. We also learn about ourselves, through both positive and negative examples.

The questions below, similar to those we have used before, may help you as you reflect on the lessons of 1 Samuel.

1. What did you learn about our God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?
2. What did you learn about yourself, or human nature?
3. How were you corrected or rebuked? How do you need to change in response?
4. What did you learn from the Scriptures that will help you endure and be encouraged?
5. How were you equipped for works of service, to build up the church?
6. What has helped you to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind?
7. What has helped you to love your neighbour as yourself?