

Sunday School Member Quarterly

Fall 2023

Ruth, 1 Samuel

Faithful in Difficult Times

Sunday School Lessons for Adults and Youth

Written by John O. Yates



Morningside

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Sunday School – 9:00 each Sunday Morning

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Ruth & 1 Samuel.*
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for the Fall 2023 quarter.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are taken
from the King James Version of the Bible.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Sunday School Lessons

September through November 2023

Ruth, 1 Samuel *Faithful in Difficult Times*

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Daily Bible Reading Guide

Read the following scripture passages each day and complete the learning activities in this book each week. This will prepare you for Sunday School class, and God will bless you as you read, study, and memorize His Word.

Week of August 27 – September 2

Mon: Ruth 1; **Tues:** Genesis 19; **Wed:** Exodus 34:8-17;
Thurs: Memorize Ruth 1:16-17; **Fri:** Deuteronomy 25:5-10;
Sat: Ruth 1

Week of September 4 – 9

Mon: Ruth 2; **Tues:** Leviticus 19:9-10; 23:22;
Wed: Deuteronomy 24:18-22; **Thurs:** Memorize Ruth 2:10;
Fri: Ephesians 2:1-10; **Sat:** Ruth 2

Week of September 11 – 16

Mon: Ruth 3; **Tues:** Ezekiel 16:1-14; **Wed:** Ephesians 1:1-14;
Thurs: Leviticus 25:25-49; **Fri:** Hebrews 9:11-22;
Sat: Ruth 3

Week of September 18 – 23

Mon: Ruth 4; **Tues:** Ephesians 2:1-10; **Wed:** John 3;
Thurs: Memorize 2 Corinthians 5:21; **Fri:** Colossians 1:9-29;
Sat: Ruth 4

Week of September 25 – 30

Mon: 1 Samuel 1; **Tues:** Numbers 6;
Wed: Numbers 30:1-2; Deuteronomy 23:21; Ecclesiastes 5:4;
Thurs: Memorize 1 Sam. 1:27; **Fri:** 1 Sam. 2; **Sat:** 1 Sam. 1

Week of October 2 – 7

Mon: 1 Sam. 3; **Tues:** 1 Sam. 4;
Wed: 1 Sam. 2:34-35; Psalm 101; Hebrews 11:1-6;
Thurs: Memorize 1 Sam. 3:10; **Fri:** 1 Sam. 3; **Sat:** 1 Sam. 4

Week of October 9 – 14

Mon: 1 Sam. 5; **Tues:** 1 Sam. 6; **Wed:** 1 Sam. 7;
Thurs: 1 Sam. 8; **Fri:** James 4:1-10; 1 John 2:15-17;
Sat: 1 Sam. 8

Week of October 16 – 21

Mon: 1 Sam. 9; **Tues:** 1 Sam. 10; **Wed:** Psalm 37;
Thurs: Memorize Psalm 37:4; **Fri:** 1 Sam. 9; **Sat:** 1 Sam. 10

Week of October 23 – 28

Mon: 1 Sam. 11; **Tues:** 1 Sam. 12; **Wed:** 1 Sam. 13;
Thurs: Memorize 1 Sam. 15:22-23; **Fri:** 1 Sam. 14;
Sat: 1 Sam. 15

Week of October 30 – November 4

Mon: 1 Sam. 16; **Tues:** Ruth 4; **Wed:** Hebrews 4:12-16;
Thurs: Memorize 1 Sam. 16:7; **Fri:** 1 Peter 3; **Sat:** 1 Sam. 16

Week of November 6 – 11

Mon: 1 Sam. 17:1-29; **Tues:** 1 Sam. 17:30-58;
Wed: Ephesians 6; **Thurs:** Proverbs 16; **Fri:** 1 Sam. 17:1-29;
Sat: 1 Sam. 17:30-58

Week of November 13 – 18

Mon: 1 Sam. 18 – 19; **Tues:** 1 Sam. 20;
Wed: 1 Sam. 21 – 22; **Thurs:** Memorize Matt. 5:44;
Fri: 1 Sam. 23 – 24; **Sat:** 1 Sam. 25

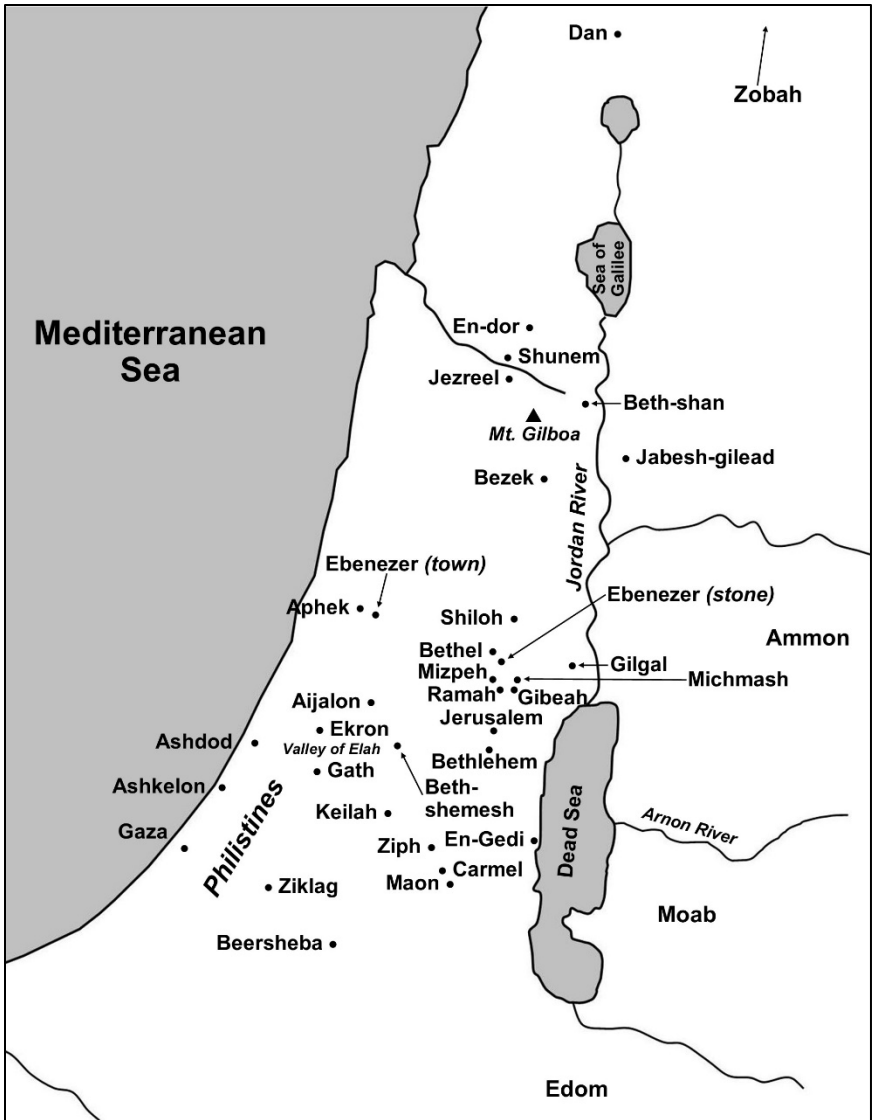
Week of November 20 – 25

Mon: 1 Sam. 26; **Tues:** 1 Sam. 27 – 28; **Wed:** Psalm 37;
Thurs: 1 Sam. 29 – 30; **Fri:** James 1; **Sat:** 1 Sam. 31;

Coming Next Quarter
(December 2023 – February 2024)

2 Samuel

Map



Introduction to Ruth

Author: Unknown; Jewish tradition ascribes the book to Samuel.

Date: 10th century, B.C.; probably written during the reign of King David.

Ruth is one of only two books in the Bible named after a woman, the other being the Old Testament book of Esther.

Setting: The events described in the book of Ruth occurred during the time when the Judges ruled Israel. This period stretched from the time of Joshua's death (approximately 1375 B.C.), until the rise of the prophet-priest Samuel and King Saul (approximately 1050-1075 B.C.). Sometime during the latter part of that 300-year period, there was a famine in the land of Israel. That is where the book of Ruth begins.

Keys to Understanding Ruth: Two elements of the Old Testament Law, which seem unusual to our modern minds, figure prominently in the book of Ruth.

1. The first is known as **levirate marriage**. It provided for the survival of all family lines within Israel. If a married man died before fathering any children, it was the responsibility of his brother (the *levir*) to marry his widow and father an heir to carry on the dead brother's family name.
2. The second is the concept of the **kinsman-redeemer**. There was no welfare system in ancient times, so poor people often sold their property and even themselves into slavery. God wanted each tribe and family to retain their property, so He provided for a near relative (a kinsman) to buy back (redeem) those things that had been sold (both the property and the persons).

The theme of this quarter's study is "***Faithful in Difficult Times.***" Ruth was faithful in very trying circumstances. God rewarded her with redemption, family, and a godly heritage.

Faithful Commitment

What do the words “faithful” and “commitment” mean to you?

A few generations ago, a worker would take a job at a particular business and spend his entire career there. A Christian would join a church and faithfully serve there the rest of his life. Couples married and most stayed together “until death do us part.” A person borrowed money and made a commitment to pay it back, and then fulfilled that commitment.

Commitments are taken lightly in our modern world. Promises are broken, marriages dissolved, and debts defaulted upon at alarming rates. Our modern society doesn’t really know what the words “faithful” or “commitment” mean. In this week’s lesson you are going to learn about a young woman who understood the meanings of those words and made a faithful, lifelong commitment to another person. Read Ruth 1 and answer the following questions.

Ruth 1:1 Why did the man move his family from **Bethlehem** (in Israel) to the country of **Moab** (see the **Map** on page 6)?

Rather than trust God in Bethlehem (which means “*house of bread*”), the man took his family to a foreign land, letting their sons grow up around false religion and foreign women.

Ruth 1:2-3 Elimelech and his wife and two sons went to Moab. What happened to Elimelech?

Ruth 1:4 The family stayed in Moab for _____ years. What did the two sons do while there?

Ruth 1:5 What happened to the two sons?

Ruth 1:6 Why did Naomi decide to return home?

Ruth 1:7 Naomi and her two daughters-in-law began the long journey back to Naomi’s home of Bethlehem in the land of Judah (which was part of Israel).

Ruth 1:8-9 What did Naomi tell her daughters-in-law to do?

Ruth 1:10 What did the younger women say to Naomi?

Ruth 1:11-13 Naomi again told her daughters-in-law to return to their families. It was common in those days for a childless widow to be married to her dead husband’s brother. Naomi said she had no more sons to marry the young women. Even if Naomi married and had more sons, it would be ridiculous to expect her widowed daughters-in-law to wait for the boys to grow up to marrying age.

Ruth 1:14 Orpah left and went home. What did Ruth do?

Ruth 1:15 Naomi told Ruth that her sister-in-law had “gone back unto _____, _____, and unto _____.”

As Moabites, both Ruth and Orpah had grown up worshiping false gods; going back home meant going back to their false gods.

Ruth 1:16-17 Ruth made a **lifelong commitment** to her mother-in-law, Naomi. Note all that she promised:

- Where you _____, I will _____;
- Where you _____, I will _____;
- Your _____ shall be my _____;
- Your _____ shall be my _____;
- Where you _____, I will _____ and be buried.

Ruth promised to stay with Naomi for the rest of her life.

Ruth 1:18 Naomi stopped trying to persuade Ruth to go home.

Ruth 1:19 Naomi and Ruth finally came to _____.
The people there were surprised to see Naomi.

Ruth 1:20 She told them to no longer call her _____
(which means “pleasant”), but to now call her
_____ (which means “bitter”). Why did she
say she should be called Mara?

Ruth 1:21 Naomi said she went out _____, and the LORD
brought her home _____.

Naomi saw her afflictions as being from the hand of the LORD because she and her husband didn’t trust God during the famine, they moved to a foreign land full of false religion, and they let their sons marry foreign women. Her afflictions testified of her sins.

Ruth 1:22 When did Naomi and Ruth arrive in Bethlehem?

Concluding Thoughts: Ruth made a commitment to stay with Naomi until death. She left her family, her country, her culture, her religion, and everything familiar, because of her love and devotion to her mother-in-law. She put her faith and trust in God.

Have you broken any commitments to the Lord or to other people? Is it still possible to go back and honor those commitments? If so, get started today. Ruth’s commitment was the result of her love, devotion, and loyalty. Do you have enough love, devotion, and loyalty to keep your commitments to God and to others?

Would you make a commitment to attend Sunday School faithfully each week? If so, tell the Lord and tell your Sunday School teacher, so he or she can pray for you.

Project: Memorize **Ruth 1:16-17**. Keep your commitments this week. Do the **Daily Bible Readings** (pages 4-5) each day this week and come to Sunday School this Sunday.

Undeserved Grace

Grace is a word we often hear around the church. We sing about “Amazing Grace” and say that we have been saved by grace, but sometimes we use words that we can’t define. Do you know what the word “grace” means? Look up the definition online.

Simply put, grace is something good you receive that you don’t deserve. Has anyone ever done something good and kind for you that you didn’t deserve? If so, that was grace. In contrast, when you work all week at your job and then receive a paycheck that is not grace, because you worked to earn the paycheck. **Grace is something you don’t deserve and can’t earn.**

In Ruth 2 we will learn that the poor widow Ruth received grace.

Ruth 2:1 Remember that Naomi was Elimelech’s widow.
What was the name of Elimelech’s wealthy relative?

Ruth 2:2 Ruth asked Naomi’s permission to go out and glean in the fields. **Gleaning** was the “welfare system” of ancient Israel: poor people were allowed to gather the small amounts of grain that the reapers left behind or dropped when they reaped the harvest.
What did Naomi tell Ruth?

Ruth 2:3 Ruth went out to glean. In whose field did she just happen to glean?

Ruth 2:4-5 Boaz came out from Bethlehem to the fields. What did he ask the servant in charge of the reapers?

Ruth 2:6-7 How did the servant identify Ruth?

What did the servant say about Ruth?

Ruth 2:8 What did Boaz call Ruth?

He did this because he was much older than Ruth.
What did he tell her?

Ruth 2:9 Ruth was a defenseless young woman. How did Boaz protect and provide for her?

Ruth 2:10 Ruth was overwhelmed by the goodness of Boaz. She bowed down before him and asked, “Why have I found _____ in thine _____, that thou shouldst take _____ of _____, seeing I am a _____?” Ruth did not expect, earn, or deserve the goodness she received from Boaz.

Ruth 2:11-13 What did Boaz know about Ruth?

Boaz recognized that Ruth had placed herself under the care and protection of the God of Israel (verse 12). He said God would reward her. How did Ruth respond to his kindness?

Ruth 2:14 What else did Boaz do for Ruth?

Ruth 2:15-16 What did Boaz tell his reapers to do for Ruth?

Ruth 2:17-18 Ruth gathered enough grain to yield about 30 pounds of barley. Remember that Ruth was doing this so she and Naomi would not starve to death. She took the barley, along with a portion of her leftover lunch, home to her mother-in-law.

Ruth 2:19 What did Naomi ask Ruth?

Ruth told Naomi the man’s name was Boaz.

Ruth 2:20 Naomi praised and thanked God for His kindness. She said, “The man is _____ of _____ unto us, one of our next _____.”

Ruth 2:21-22 Ruth said that Boaz told her to stay in his fields throughout the harvest. How did Naomi respond?

Ruth 2:23 Ruth faithfully gleaned in the fields of Boaz through the barley and wheat harvests (April through June).

Concluding Thoughts: Ruth and Naomi were poor widows with no financial means of supporting themselves. In order to keep from starving to death, Ruth went out to do the very lowliest work: gleaning the droppings and leftovers from a farmer’s fields. She couldn’t earn and didn’t deserve anything better, but Boaz graciously gave her an abundance of food and a guaranteed living. Ruth received grace from Boaz, which literally saved her life.

If you know Jesus Christ as your Savior, then you, too, have received grace. God did for you something **you could not earn** and **did not deserve**. You deserved death; in fact, you were dead in your sins (Eph. 2:1). Like Ruth, you were a stranger (foreigner, alien). There was nothing you could do to earn salvation and you didn’t deserve it, but God saved you by His grace (Eph. 2:8-9). If you are truly saved you can say to God the same words Ruth said to Boaz: “***Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?***”

Thank God for His grace. If you have never trusted Jesus Christ to save you, please turn from your sins and place your faith in him right now. Read the verses printed on the back cover of this book.

Project: Write a letter to God. Tell Him what you were like before He saved you, and how He has changed your life. Thank Him for giving you grace and saving you. Memorize **Ruth 2:10**.

Redemption Available

It has probably happened to you: you hurried into the grocery store to pick up a few items, gathered up what you needed, and headed for the checkout. You paid the bill and hurried home.

When you got home and started putting away your groceries, you saw it. On one of the items was a bright yellow sticker that said: “**Save \$1.00 NOW!**” The coupon was still attached and unused. You checked your receipt in hopes that the cashier saw the coupon and deducted it from the price; but sure enough, you paid full price.

Why didn’t you get \$1.00 off that item? Because you didn’t realize you had a coupon that could be redeemed. You didn’t know that a dollar’s worth of discount was available to you, so you didn’t present your coupon for redemption at the checkout.

In Ruth 3 you will learn that poor, widowed Ruth discovered that redemption was available to her. Faithfully following Naomi’s instructions, she presented herself as an object of redemption.

Ruth 3:1 Naomi lovingly spoke to her daughter-in-law, and asked: “Shall I not seek _____ for thee, that it may be _____ with thee?”

The only situation providing real rest and security for a woman in ancient times was marriage. Naomi wanted the very best for Ruth.

Ruth 3:2 Where did she say Boaz would be that night?

Ruth 3:3-4 What did Naomi tell Ruth to do?

Where did Naomi tell Ruth to lie down?

These instructions sound strange – perhaps even immoral – but they were not. God’s Law said that a childless widow should become the wife of her dead husband’s brother. This protected her from poverty

and made certain that their family name would not disappear from Israel. Also, the closest family member (the **kinsman-redeemer**) was responsible to buy back (redeem) land and people sold due to poverty. Lying at the feet of Boaz signaled Ruth's desire to be redeemed and come under his protection.

Ruth 3:5 How did Ruth respond to these instructions?

Ruth 3:6-7 What did Ruth do?

Ruth 3:8 What happened at midnight?

Ruth 3:9 Boaz asked who she was and Ruth identified herself. Ruth asked Boaz to, "Spread, therefore thy _____ over thine _____; for thou art a _____."

Ruth 3:10 Boaz blessed Ruth. He called her "my daughter" because she was much younger than him. He said she showed more kindness now (by asking for redemption and marriage) than at the beginning (in caring for Naomi). He praised Ruth for not running after the _____ men.

Ruth 3:11 What did Boaz say he would do?

What did everyone in Bethlehem know about Ruth's character?

Ruth 3:12 What information did Boaz give Ruth?

Ruth 3:13 How quickly did Boaz promise to talk to the other (nearer) kinsman?

One way or the other, Boaz assured Ruth that she would be redeemed!

Ruth 3:14-15 Where did Ruth lie down?

Before daylight Boaz sent Ruth home. What did he send with her?

Ruth 3:16 Ruth went home and told Naomi everything.

Ruth 3:17 What did she give Naomi?

Ruth 3:18 What did Naomi tell Ruth to do?

What did she say about Boaz?

Concluding Thoughts: Naomi told Ruth that redemption was available to her through their near relative. Ruth did not have to remain a destitute, childless widow, avoiding starvation by gathering the leftovers and scraps from the fields of the wealthy. There was a kinsman-redeemer available! If Ruth wanted redemption and obeyed Naomi in faith, she could be redeemed!

Redemption is available to anyone who truly wants it and trusts Jesus Christ to provide it. You do not have to remain spiritually destitute, gathering the scraps and leftovers the world throws out for you. You can become a child of the King.

Jesus Christ is available to be **your** kinsman-redeemer! If you want redemption and will obey God (Acts 3:19; Acts 16:31; Acts 17:30; 1 John 3:23) in faith, you can be redeemed. Read the verses printed on the back of this book. Humbly present yourself to God as an object of redemption. Confess your sin and He will buy you back from your spiritual poverty and sin.

Redemption is available. Do you want it?

Project: If you have questions about being redeemed, please contact your Sunday School teacher.

Redemption Complete!

Have you ever been given a gift card? Gift cards are fun, because you can purchase anything you want, up to the value of the gift card. You get to make the choice.

When you received the gift card, you thanked the person who gave it to you, and started thinking about how you would use it. Until you actually **go shopping**, however, all you have is a gift card. You don't own the items you want, until you **redeem** the gift card for the merchandise. When the **transaction** is complete, the store will have the gift card, and you will have the merchandise.

In Ruth 3, Boaz promised to redeem Ruth from widowhood and poverty, by marrying her. Ruth learned that redemption was available to her, and she had Boaz's promise of redemption, but she had not yet experienced redemption. In Ruth 4 she finally does!

Ruth 4:1 Naomi assured Ruth that Boaz would not rest until he settled the issues of her redemption and their marriage (Ruth 3:18). Where did Boaz go?

Who did he call to come and sit with him?

Ruth 4:2 Legal transactions in ancient Israel were conducted at the city gate. Boaz needed witnesses to conduct his business. How many city elders did he gather?

Ruth 4:3 Boaz told the other kinsman that Elimelech's property needed to be redeemed.

Ruth 4:4 Boaz told the other man to redeem Elimelech's property, or else he would do so. He said: "There is none to _____ it beside _____, and _____ am after _____." What did the other man say?

Ruth 4:5 What did Boaz say the other kinsman would have to do if he purchased the land?

See Deuteronomy 25:5-10 and the “**Introduction to Ruth**” on page 7 for information on the practice of **levirate marriage**.

Ruth 4:6 Why did the other kinsman say he could not redeem Elimelech’s property and marry Ruth?

Ruth 4:7-8 How did Boaz and the other man “seal” their deal?

Ruth 4:9 What did Boaz announce to the elders?

Ruth 4:10 What did he say about Ruth?

Ruth 4:11-12 Everyone present agreed to be witnesses of the fact that Boaz was legally redeeming Elimelech’s estate. They asked the Lord to bless his marriage to Ruth and to give them children.

Ruth 4:13 Boaz married Ruth. Her redemption was now complete! She was no longer a poor widow; now she was a bride! “The _____ gave her _____, and she bare a _____.”

Ruth 4:14 The women of Bethlehem praised God for His goodness to Naomi. They said the child’s name would be _____ in Israel.

Ruth 4:15 What did the women say about Ruth?

Ruth 4:16 How did Naomi show her love for this baby boy?

Ruth 4:17 What was Ruth’s baby named?

Obed would become “the father of _____,
the father of _____.”

Ruth 4:18-20 These are the prominent ancestors of Boaz, from Perez (the son of Judah) to his father, Salmon.

Ruth 4:21-22 Obed, the son of Boaz and Ruth, was the grandfather of _____ (see also Matt. 1:5-6).

Concluding Thoughts: Ruth was once a poor, foreign widow. She had no husband or son to support her, so she had to pick up the scraps in the fields to support herself and her mother-in-law. She was a foreigner in a strange land, but she committed herself to Naomi and to Naomi's God. She obeyed Naomi and placed herself under the care of the God of Israel. A kinsman-redeemer was available, and Ruth became a candidate for redemption. Finally, the day came when she married Boaz. She was redeemed, no longer poor, no longer a foreigner, and no longer a widow. Ruth's redemption was complete.

What about your redemption? If you have come to know Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior, then you have been redeemed. A great transaction has taken place, in which Christ took your sin, and gave you His righteousness instead. In 2 Corinthians 5:21, the Bible says it this way: "*For He hath made Him (Jesus Christ), who knew no sin, to **be sin for us**, that we might be **made the righteousness of God in Him.***"

If you have experienced this great exchange, thank God for it.

If you haven't, why don't you turn your life over to the Lord right now? Read the verses printed on the back of this book. Confess your sin and commit your life to Jesus. He will forgive your sin, redeem you, give you new life, and make you His child.

Project: Memorize **2 Corinthians 5:21**. Any time you redeem a gift card or coupon, think about the great price God paid to purchase your redemption.

Introduction to 1 Samuel

Author: Unknown

Date: 10th century, B.C.; probably written after the division of Israel into the Northern and Southern Kingdoms in 931 B.C.

Our modern books of 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel are considered one book in the Hebrew Bible. First Samuel is one of the historical books of the Old Testament (all the books from Joshua through Esther fall into that category). It tells about the transition from the limited rule of the Judges to the centralized national rule of a king.

Main Characters: There are three main characters in 1 Samuel:

1. **Samuel** (chapters 1 – 7) was a prophet/priest who was Israel's first national leader after Joshua.
2. **Saul** (chapters 8 – 15) was Israel's first king, but he was a failure.
3. **David** (chapters 16 – 31) was Israel's second king. He was a man after God's own heart.

This quarter's study will be a survey of the major events in the book of 1 Samuel, rather than a thorough study of each and every chapter.

The theme of this quarter's study is "***Faithful in Difficult Times.***"

- Samuel's mother was faithful to God in spite of her childlessness.
- God removed unfaithful Eli and his sons, while elevating Samuel to great prominence as Israel's faithful prophet and priest.
- Israel's unfaithfulness led them to demand a king.
- Saul was unfaithful to God, resulting in his rejection from the throne, his demon-possession, and ultimately his death.
- David was faithful in the face of the giant and throughout years of pursuit by wicked King Saul.

Faithful to Keep a Promise

Have you ever agonized before the Lord in prayer? Have you ever wept before the Lord? Have you ever made promises to God? Has there ever been anything you needed or wanted so badly that you told the Lord, “*God, if you will do this one thing for me, then I promise to do _____ for you.*” Did you keep that promise?

As we begin our study of the book of 1 Samuel, we meet a man named **Elkanah** who had two wives (1 Sam. 1:1-2). Polygamy was common in ancient times, but it has **never** been God’s plan for marriage. As a matter of fact, every time polygamy appears in the Bible, we learn that family strife, jealousy, and trouble resulted.

One of Elkanah’s wives (**Peninnah**) had children, but the other (**Hannah**) did not. Childlessness was a terrible reproach in those days. Hannah was a faithful, godly person. She desperately wanted a son, so she made a promise to God. Let’s see what happened.

1 Sam. 1:3 How often did the man and his family go to worship the LORD at the Tabernacle at Shiloh?

Eli and his sons **Hophni** and **Phinehas** were the priests at the Tabernacle.

1 Sam. 1:4-5 Elkanah gave portions of the offering to his wives and children to offer to the Lord. Why did he give Hannah a “*worthy portion*?”

1 Sam. 1:6-7 How did Peninnah (“*her adversary*” or rival) treat Hannah?

How did Hannah feel about this cruel treatment?

1 Sam. 1:8 What did Elkanah say to try to cheer her up?

1 Sam. 1:9-10 What did Hannah do about her situation?

1 Sam. 1:11 Hannah made a vow to God. What did she promise to do if God gave her a son?

The fact that she promised never to shave or cut her son's hair indicates this was a Nazarite vow. You can learn more about such vows in Numbers 6.

1 Sam. 1:12-14 Eli the priest saw Hannah praying. What did he think she had been doing?

1 Sam. 1:15-16 Hannah explained her actions. She said she was sorrowful but had not drunk anything. She told Eli she had "poured _____ my _____ before the _____."

1 Sam. 1:17-18 What did Eli ask God to do for Hannah?

1 Sam. 1:19 Elkanah took his family back to their hometown of **Ramah** (see the Map on page 6). What did the LORD do?

1 Sam. 1:20 Hannah conceived and bore a son! What did she name him?

The name **Samuel** means, "*heard of God*." God heard and answered Hannah's earnest prayer!

1 Sam. 1:21-22 Elkanah and his family went up to worship every year. Why didn't Hannah take Samuel?

When the child was old enough, Hannah planned to leave him with Eli the priest to serve God forever.

1 Sam. 1:23 Did Elkanah agree with Hannah's plan?

1 Sam. 1:24-25 When Samuel was old enough to leave his mother, she took him to the Tabernacle at **Shiloh** (see the **Map**, page 6). What other offerings did she bring?

1 Sam. 1:26 How did Hannah identify herself to Eli?

1 Sam. 1:27 Hannah told Eli: “For this _____ I _____; and the _____ hath given me my _____ which I _____ of Him.”

1 Sam. 1:28 Hannah gave her son back to the LORD to serve Him. She said: “As long as he _____ he shall be lent to the _____.” Hannah made a bold promise to God, and she kept it.

Concluding Thoughts: Hannah was faithful to the Lord in spite of her childlessness. Some people abandon God when trouble comes, but not Hannah: her problem drove her **to** God, rather than **away** from Him. She begged God for a son and made a promise if God granted her request. He gave her a son and she kept her promise.

What about you? Have you made any promises to God that you haven't kept? Did you promise to read your Bible daily or witness to a lost friend? Did you promise to begin tithing? Did you promise not to make the same mistake again that brought trouble in the past? Did you promise not to commit a certain sin?

Have you kept those promises? If not, confess your sin to God right now. Apologize – without making excuses – for not keeping your promise, and then start today doing the thing you promised. If you need help or advice, contact your Sunday School teacher. He or she cares about you and will be happy to try to help.

Project: Memorize **1 Samuel 1:27**. Make a list of things you need to do to keep your promises to God.

God Called a Faithful Priest

In chapter 1 of 1 Samuel, we learned that God answered barren Hannah's desperate prayer, giving her a baby boy, whom she named Samuel. She committed Samuel totally to the Lord, and when he was old enough, Hannah took him to serve the Lord at the Tabernacle in **Shiloh** (see the **Map** on page 6) under Eli, the priest.

Chapter 2 tells us that Hannah and her husband visited Samuel at the Tabernacle every year. God gave Hannah and her husband five more children. More importantly, we learn that Eli's sons were wicked and evil men, but Eli did nothing to stop them from carrying out their sinful activities. A prophet came to tell Eli that God was going to kill his two sons and raise up a faithful, godly priest. God was going to replace corrupt leaders with a good one.

1 Sam. 3:1 Samuel ministered faithfully to the Lord. The Word of the LORD was _____ (rare) in those days.

1 Sam. 3:2-5 The LORD called to Samuel in the night. Who did he think had called him?

1 Sam. 3:6-7 The same thing happened a second time. "Samuel did not yet _____ the _____" personally.

1 Sam. 3:8 God called Samuel a third time. What did Eli realize?

1 Sam. 3:9-10 What did Eli tell Samuel to do?

Did Samuel obey Eli?

1 Sam. 3:11 God was about to do something big in Israel. He said "the _____ of everyone that heareth it shall _____."

- 1 Sam. 3:12-13** What did God tell Samuel about Eli?
- 1 Sam. 3:14** Would there **ever** be any sacrifice or offering that could pay for the sins of Eli’s family?
- 1 Sam. 3:15** Why do you think Samuel was afraid to tell these things to Eli?
- 1 Sam. 3:16-17** Eli called Samuel and demanded to know what the LORD had said to him.
- 1 Sam. 3:18** How did Eli receive the things Samuel told him?
- 1 Sam. 3:19-20** “Samuel _____, and the _____ was with him.” What did all Israel think of Samuel?
- 1 Sam. 3:21** God continued to reveal Himself to Samuel.
- 1 Sam. 4:1-3** The Philistines (see the **Map** on page 6) came out to fight against Israel. Israel was defeated and lost 4,000 men. What did the elders propose to take out to the battle, in hopes that it would help Israel win?

The **Ark of the Covenant** was a golden box that symbolized God’s presence. It usually stayed in the Tabernacle, and held the stone tablets on which were written the Ten Commandments.

- 1 Sam. 4:4** Who went out to the battlefield with the Ark?
- 1 Sam. 4:5-10** The presence of the Ark encouraged the Israelites, and initially scared the Philistines; but the Philistines fought even harder and won the battle.
- 1 Sam. 4:11** What happened to the Ark and to Eli’s two sons?
- 1 Sam. 4:12-13** What was Eli most worried about?

1 Sam. 4:14-16 A man came with news from the battle. Eli asked what had happened.

1 Sam. 4:17-18 The man told Eli the sad news. What happened when Eli heard that the Ark had been lost?

1 Sam. 4:19-20 What happened to Eli's daughter-in-law when she heard the terrible news?

1 Sam. 4:21-22 Why did she name her son **Ichabod**?

Concluding Thoughts: The Israelites had wicked and corrupt priests, so God orchestrated the circumstances to replace them with a faithful and godly priest, Samuel.

As long as there have been religious leaders, there have been some who were corrupt and immoral. Far too often these days, we hear reports of illegal and immoral acts committed by church leaders. Such reports always hurt God's church. Church members can also be corrupt and immoral, and their wicked behavior hurts the church.

One lesson we can learn from this week's scripture is that God takes notice of such activities, and will judge them in His time. The truth will come out, either on this earth or at the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10). Are you right with God, or are you a spiritual fake? God knows the truth, so why don't you confess and repent of your sins right now?

Samuel learned to stay quiet and listen so he could hear God's voice. Prayer should be a two-way conversation, rather than just giving God a list of what we want. Try listening to God this week.

The Israelites treated the things of God superstitiously. They thought the Ark of the Covenant was a "good luck charm" that would guarantee a victory. Are you treating the things of God superstitiously? If so, confess that sin.

Project: Memorize **1 Samuel 3:10** this week.

Trying to Fit In

Have you ever wanted something simply because other people had it? What was it?

When you were a kid, you may have wanted a new bicycle or a new video game just like the kid down the block. As a young person, you may have envied someone else’s name-brand shoes, new dress, or car, desperately wanting them for yourself. Adults do this, too. You may have wanted a house or a job like someone else has. Some adults even envy one another’s spouse or children.

Envy and the desire to conform can often make us do foolish things that we later regret. In this week’s lesson we will learn why Israel demanded a king, as well as the cost of having a king.

Let’s review: In last week’s lesson, God killed Eli and his wicked sons, elevating Samuel to be His priest and the leader of Israel. The Philistines captured the Ark of the Covenant. Chapter 5 tells us that the Ark caused a lot of trouble for the Philistines, and chapter 6 tells how the Philistines returned it to the Israelites. Chapter 7 tells us that God gave Israel a great victory over the Philistines, and Samuel faithfully led Israel throughout his life.

1 Sam. 8:1-2 What did Samuel do when he grew old?

1 Sam. 8:3 How does the Bible describe Samuel’s sons?

1 Sam. 8:4-5 What complaint did the elders of Israel have against Samuel’s sons?

What did they ask for?

Why did they want that?

1 Sam. 8:6 This displeased Samuel. What did he do about it?

1 Sam. 8:7 God told Samuel to do what the people wanted. He said, “They have not rejected _____, but they have rejected _____, that _____ should not _____ over them.”

1 Sam. 8:8-9 God reminded Samuel that Israel had a long history of rebelling against Him. What did He want Samuel to explain to the people?

1 Sam. 8:10-11 Samuel told the people what God said. What did he say a king would do with their sons?

1 Sam. 8:12 What else would a king do?

1 Sam. 8:13 What would a king cause their daughters to do?

1 Sam. 8:14-16 What else would a king take from them?

1 Sam. 8:17 “He will take the _____ of your _____: and _____ shall be his _____.”

1 Sam. 8:18 They would cry out under their king’s oppression. How did God say He would respond?

1 Sam. 8:19 Did the people heed Samuel’s warnings?

They said, “_____, but we will have a _____ over _____.”

1 Sam. 8:20 The Israelites wanted to be _____ all of the other nations. What three things did they want their king to do for them?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1 Sam. 8:21 What did Samuel do when the people answered?

1 Sam. 8:22 What did the LORD tell Samuel to do?

What did Samuel tell the people to do?

Concluding Thoughts: God chose Israel to be His people before they were a nation or even had a place to live. He brought them out of Egyptian bondage and used religious leaders such as Moses, Joshua, and Samuel to lead them for several hundred years. Those religious leaders ruled under God’s authority. In a very real sense, God reigned over Israel as their king (1 Sam. 8:7); but Israel grew unfaithful to God and dissatisfied with His rule.

Israel wanted a king so they could be like the other nations. They wanted to **conform**. They ignored the fact that they were God’s people, making them different from other nations. They wanted to be just like the other nations, so they demanded a king. They sacrificed their relationship with God to be like everybody else.

Samuel told them very specifically how much it would cost to have a king, but they didn’t care about the cost; all they wanted was a king! Their desire could be summed up in four words:

CONFORMITY AT ANY COST!

What about you? Pressure to conform is very strong in our world. Do you want to fit in so badly that you are rejecting God’s rule in your life? Have you sacrificed your relationship with God just to be like everybody else? Have you considered the cost, but still chosen conformity over obedience? How’s that working out for you?

It’s not too late to turn back to God. Confess your sins of unfaithfulness, conformity, and compromise. Do it now.

Project: Ask God to help you establish godly standards in your life so you will not be driven by envy or seek to conform to the world.

Do You Desire the Right Things?

Have you ever wanted something really badly, but when you got it, you realized it didn't make you as happy as you thought it would? Perhaps when you were a kid you went wild over a certain toy. You just had to have it! You begged and pleaded with your parents (or perhaps saved up your money) until you finally got that toy. **Wow!**

Soon, however, you realized that the toy wasn't as wonderful as you thought. It was a real letdown. It almost seemed that wanting it and planning to get it was more fun than actually getting it. The reality didn't live up to the expectation.

In last week's lesson, unfaithful Israel demanded a king so they could be like all the other nations. In this week's lesson, we will learn that God granted their request and gave them a king. Next week we will see that the king they got wasn't as good as they thought he would be. Read 1 Samuel 9 and 10.

1 Sam. 9:1-2 **Kish** was a wealthy and powerful man of the tribe of Benjamin who had a son named **Saul**. How is Saul described?

Kish's donkeys were lost, so he sent Saul and one of his servants to look for them. They searched all over central Israel for three days, but still couldn't find the donkeys. The servant had a plan.

1 Sam. 9:6 Who did the servant suggest they ask?

Saul agreed to the servant's plan. They went into town looking for the "*man of God*," who was the prophet/priest Samuel.

1 Sam. 9:14 Who did they meet in the city?

1 Sam. 9:15-16 The day before, the LORD had told Samuel something very special. What was it?

1 Sam. 9:17 What did God tell Samuel when he saw Saul?

1 Sam. 9:18-19 Samuel identified himself to Saul. What did he promise to tell Saul?

1 Sam. 9:20-21 What did Samuel tell Saul about the donkeys?

He also said Israel's desire for a king would be met in Saul. How did Saul react to this announcement?

Saul was the guest of honor at a special dinner. He was to go home the next morning.

1 Sam. 9:26-27 As they were leaving the city, Samuel told Saul to send his servant on ahead. What did Samuel say he would show Saul?

1 Sam. 10:1 What did Samuel do to Saul?

He said, "the _____ hath _____ thee (Saul) to be _____" over His people.

Samuel told Saul that he would experience three signs to confirm that God had indeed chosen Him to be king of Israel. Samuel gave Saul a lot of detail about each sign.

1 Sam. 10:9 God gave Saul _____ heart. How many of the signs came to pass in that one day?

1 Sam. 10:17-18 Samuel called all Israel together and reminded them how God had delivered them from their enemies.

1 Sam. 10:19 "Ye have this day _____ your _____." What did they want instead of God's rule?

1 Sam. 10:20-22 Out of all Israel, Saul was chosen to be the new king. Why do you think Saul was hiding?

- 1 Sam. 10:23** They brought Saul before the people. What did they notice about him?
- 1 Sam. 10:24** Samuel introduced Saul as Israel’s new king. The people shouted, “_____ save the _____!”
- 1 Sam. 10:25** What did Samuel tell the people and write in a book before he sent them home?

Concluding Thoughts: Israel demanded a king, so God gave them one. The main things we know about Saul at this point are: (a) he was tall, (b) he was handsome, and (c) he sometimes acted like he was shy or embarrassed. Next week, however, we will learn that Saul wasn’t all that the Israelites had hoped for in a king.

What about you? Have you asked God for something that you later regretted? Have you gone after something with all your might, but then when you got it, realized that it didn’t really satisfy?

We can’t go back and change our past mistakes, but we can determine to do better from now on. We need to be careful what we desire and what we ask God for. We should check our desires out with the Word of God.

Psalms 37:4 says, “*Delight thyself also in the LORD; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart.*” If we are careful to focus our attention on God, we will only want things that will be pleasing to Him and beneficial to us.

Project: Memorize **Psalm 37:4**. Examine your prayer list. Ask God if the things on that list are pleasing to Him. Ask Him to show you if any of your desires are not pleasing to Him. Your Sunday School teacher or another mature Christian can help you with this. Read the **Daily Bible Readings** (pages 4-5) each day, and don’t miss Sunday School this Sunday.

Costs of Unfaithfulness

When you were in school, did you ever fail a test? Did a teacher ever return a graded paper that had a big red “F” written at the top? It was a pretty discouraging experience, wasn’t it?

Most of us have had other failures in life, besides failing a test in school. Your failure may have been in your work or in your personal life. It may have been a long time ago, or just recently.

Remember that Israel demanded a king, so God appointed Saul to be their first king. Saul had a son named Jonathan who was a great military commander. In 1 Samuel 13:1-7, Jonathan won a battle against the Philistines, but Saul took credit for the victory. Saul prepared for a massive counter-attack. The Israelite soldiers were very fearful. In this week’s lesson we will learn about some of King Saul’s failures of faith and the costs of those failures.

1 Sam. 13:8 Samuel told Saul to wait seven days, until he could come and make an offering to God. Saul’s impatient army was deserting him.

1 Sam. 13:9 It was the priest’s job to offer sacrifices to God, but Saul was in a tight spot. Did he faithfully wait for Samuel’s arrival? _____ What did he do?

1 Sam. 13:10 Who arrived as soon as Saul offered the sacrifice?

1 Sam. 13:11 Saul gave three reasons for taking upon himself the role of a priest. What were they?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1 Sam. 13:12 Saul said, “I _____ myself, therefore, and _____ a burnt offering.”

1 Sam. 13:13 What did Samuel say to Saul?

1 Sam. 13:14 Samuel told Saul, “But now thy _____ shall not _____.” What kind of man did God want to lead Israel?

In 1 Samuel 14 Saul and his army stayed home while Jonathan bravely defeated a Philistine garrison. Later, Saul foolishly ordered that if any of his men ate anything before nightfall they would be put to death. Jonathan didn’t know about the ridiculous order, so he ate some honey. Saul tried to make himself look powerful by ordering Jonathan’s execution, but the army refused because Jonathan was such a valiant warrior. In 1 Samuel 15, God (through Samuel) gave Saul some very specific instructions.

1 Sam. 15:3 Saul was supposed to attack the Amalekites. What was he supposed to do to them?

1 Sam. 15:7-8 Saul defeated the Amalekites, but who did he keep alive?

1 Sam. 15:9 What else did Saul and his army spare?

1 Sam. 15:10-11 God spoke to Samuel about Saul. What did He say?

1 Sam. 15:13 Saul boasted, “I have _____ the _____ of the _____.”

1 Sam. 15:14 Samuel asked Saul: “What meaneth then, this _____ of the _____ in mine ears, and the _____ of the _____ that I hear?”

1 Sam. 15:15 Why did Saul say they had spared the animals?

Samuel reminded Saul that God had elevated him from a nobody to become king of Israel, and he asked why Saul hadn’t obeyed God’s instructions. Saul again insisted that he had obeyed.

1 Sam. 15:21 Who did Saul blame for his disobedience?

1 Sam. 15:22 Samuel told Saul God didn't care as much about sacrifices as simple obedience. "Behold, to _____ is better than _____."

1 Sam. 15:23 "For rebellion is as the sin of _____, and stubbornness is as _____ and _____." What did the LORD do because of Saul's disobedience?

Saul admitted his sin and asked for forgiveness. Since he confessed after being caught, we don't know if he was really sorry for his sin or simply sorry about the consequences he would face. Samuel turned to leave, but Saul grabbed his clothing and a part of it tore off. Samuel told Saul that God had torn the kingdom from him, and then he did Saul's job of killing the Amalekite king. Samuel went home, mourning over Saul's unfaithfulness and failure as king.

Concluding Thoughts: Saul failed to obey God. Why do people disobey God? Because they don't trust Him to do what He says. Obedience requires faith, even in difficult times. When Saul was faced with trials, he should have faithfully followed God's instructions. God expects His children to obey Him. Remember this lesson from Saul: **partial obedience is actually disobedience.**

Are you disobeying God in some area of your life? Is it in your church attendance, tithing, honesty, or moral behavior? Whenever we disobey God, there are consequences. Disobedience just isn't worth it! Confess your sin and ask God to forgive you right now.

Project: Memorize **1 Samuel 15:22-23**. Saul's lack of faith cost him the kingdom, and your unfaithfulness carries a price tag, too. You can't erase the consequences of your past disobedience, but **you don't have to continue in your current disobedience.** Determine to obey God in every way you know this week.

How's Your Heart?

“You can’t judge a book by its cover.” What does that well-worn old expression mean? It simply means that outward appearances are often deceptive. Have you ever been to a play or live drama? The sets appear to be real buildings, but they aren’t. Walls that look like brick are actually painted fabric and heavy boulders are actually made out of Styrofoam or paper-maché.

We pay a lot of attention to outward appearances. Most of our presidents and military leaders have been tall and handsome men. In that way we are a lot like ancient Israel. They wanted a king, so God gave them a king. Saul was tall and handsome, but his character was bad. He failed to obey God, so God told him the kingdom would be taken from him. At the end of last week’s lesson, we learned that Samuel mourned over Saul’s failure.

- 1 Sam. 16:1** God told Samuel to stop mourning about Saul, but to fill his horn with oil (with which to anoint the new king). Where did God tell Samuel to go?
- 1 Sam. 16:2** Why was Samuel afraid?
- 1 Sam. 16:3** Remember from our study of the book of Ruth that **Jesse** was the grandson of Ruth and Boaz (Ruth 4:17). Who was Samuel to anoint as king?
- 1 Sam. 16:4-5** Samuel went to **Bethlehem** (see the **Map** on page 6) and called Jesse and his sons to the sacrifice.
- 1 Sam. 16:6** What did Samuel think when he saw Jesse’s oldest son?
- 1 Sam. 16:7** What two things did God tell Samuel **not** to look at?

God told Samuel, “Man looketh on the _____, but the LORD looketh on the _____.”

1 Sam. 16:8-10 Jesse brought his second and third sons before Samuel, but neither of them were the Lord’s choice. Jesse continued bringing sons before Samuel until seven had come. Samuel told Jesse, “The _____ hath not _____ these.”

1 Sam. 16:11 What did Samuel ask Jesse?

Jesse didn’t bother to bring his youngest son. What did Samuel tell him?

1 Sam. 16:12 Jesse’s youngest son (David) came before Samuel. How is David described?

What did God tell Samuel to do?

1 Sam. 16:13 Samuel anointed David to be Israel’s next king. What happened to David?

In Old Testament times, the Holy Spirit came upon a person to empower him or her to do some special work for God, after which the Spirit left that person. Today, the Holy Spirit permanently indwells all genuine believers, but that was not the case back then.

1 Sam. 16:14 What departed from King Saul?

What troubled him?

We don’t like to think of the LORD being responsible for anything bad, but we must remember that Saul had failed God and God was in the process of destroying him. Here He used an evil spirit.

1 Sam. 16:15-17 What did Saul’s servant suggest?

1 Sam. 16:18 One of the servants suggested David come and play the harp for Saul. How is David described?

1 Sam. 16:19-20 Saul sent for David, and David went to him.

1 Sam. 16:21 How did Saul feel about David?

1 Sam. 16:22 Saul asked Jesse to let David stay with him.

1 Sam. 16:23 What did the evil spirit do when David played for Saul?

Take note of the power of music. David played psalms of praise to God, which the evil spirit could not endure. God-honoring Christian music has great power to **dispel** evil spirits, while worldly, fleshly music actually **invites** evil spirits. Modern Christians ought to learn this lesson and stay away from the world's music. If you are discouraged or depressed, listen to uplifting Christian music.

Concluding Thoughts: Samuel looked on outward appearances and assumed God would choose one of Jesse's big, strong, and handsome older sons. Instead, God chose the youngest and most insignificant son. God does not look at people the way we do. We look at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart. The LORD chose David because David was a man after His own heart.

God knows everything about your heart. You may put on a good appearance to the outside world, but God is not fooled. He made you and He knows all about you. Are you trying to fool those around you by putting up a good front, but inside you know that your heart is wicked? Confess that as sin.

Project: Memorize **1 Samuel 16:7**. Ask God to let you see your heart the way He sees it. Tell Him the truth about yourself. Ask God to make you a person "*after His own heart*" (1 Sam. 13:14).

Faithful When Facing a Giant

How do you handle obstacles in your life? When something really big and frightening stands in your way, what do you do?

- Turn tail and run?
- Seek the best advice and tools the world has to offer to try to overcome that obstacle?
- Turn that obstacle over to the Lord, trusting Him to deal with it for you and bring glory to Himself?

This week's lesson is about a very familiar Bible story: David and Goliath. Even though it is familiar, try to read it in a fresh light to see what David did when faced with the biggest obstacle of his life. Will David remain faithful to God when facing a murderous giant?

1 Sam. 17:1-2 The Philistines gathered to fight against Israel. Saul and his army went out to meet them (see **Map**, p. 6).

1 Sam. 17:3 Where were the two armies located?

1 Sam. 17:4 Who went out from the Philistine camp?

Goliath was 9 feet, 9 inches tall!

1 Sam. 17:5-7 Describe Goliath's armor and weapons:

1 Sam. 17:8-9 Goliath challenged the Israelite army. What deal or bargain did he offer?

1 Sam. 17:10 He said, "I _____ the armies of _____ this day; give me a _____ that we may _____ together."

1 Sam. 17:11 How did Saul and his army react to this challenge?

Did they send a man out to fight Goliath?

**1 Sam.
17:12-15**

Where were Jesse's three oldest sons?

Where was David?

1 Sam. 17:16 How long did Goliath challenge Saul's army?

**1 Sam.
17:17-24**

Jesse sent David to the battlefield with food for his sons and their captain. While David talked with his brothers, Goliath again challenged Israel's army.

1 Sam. 17:25 Soldiers told David that King Saul would do three things for anyone who killed Goliath. They were:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

**1 Sam.
17:26-30**

David asked again what would be done for the man who killed Goliath. How did David's oldest brother react to his curiosity?

**1 Sam.
17:31-32**

David was taken to Saul. "And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart _____ because of him; thy servant will go and _____ with this Philistine."

1 Sam. 17:33 What did Saul tell David?

**1 Sam.
17:34-36**

What two experiences gave David confidence that God would enable him to defeat Goliath?

Whose armies did he say Goliath had defied?

1 Sam. 17:37 David had great faith in God. Who did he say would deliver him?

- 1 Sam. 17:38-39** Saul offered to let David use his own armor and weapons. Why didn't David use them?
- 1 Sam. 17:40** What weapons did David take to face Goliath?
- 1 Sam. 17:41-44** David went out to face the giant warrior. What did Goliath think of David?
- What did he say he would do to David?
- 1 Sam. 17:45** David replied, "I come to thee in the _____ of the _____ of hosts, the _____ of the armies of _____, whom thou hast _____."
- 1 Sam. 17:46** David told Goliath the LORD would deliver him into his hand, enabling him to kill Goliath and cut off his head. David gave a reason why God would do this. What was that reason?
- 1 Sam. 17:47** David said everyone would know that God doesn't need a sword or a spear to win a victory. He said: "The _____ is the _____'s."
- 1 Sam. 17:48** How did David approach Goliath?
- 1 Sam. 17:49** What did David do?
- What happened to Goliath?
- 1 Sam. 17:50-51** What did David do with Goliath's sword?
- What did the Philistines do when they saw this?
- 1 Sam. 17:52-53** What happened next?
- 1 Sam. 17:54** What did David do with Goliath's head and with his armor?

Concluding Thoughts: When David faced the greatest obstacle of his life (the giant Goliath), he had three choices. First, he could have run away or been paralyzed by fear. That’s what happened to Saul’s army. They listened to Goliath’s challenge for forty days, but were too afraid to do anything. Second, David could have sought out the best advice and tools the world had to offer in his attempt to defeat Goliath. Saul tried to get David to do that when he offered David his armor. The world’s best weapons, however, wouldn’t defeat Goliath, and David knew it. David chose the third alternative. He realized that the battle was the Lord’s, so he trusted God to give him victory over his adversary.

We have the same choices when we face “giants” and obstacles in our lives. We can let fear paralyze us into inaction, or we can run away from the situation. Many people spend their entire lives running from problems. Like Saul, we can try to use the world’s best advice and weapons to overcome our obstacles, but these things will not defeat the “giants” we face in life. That’s because, “*we wrestle not against flesh and blood*” (Eph. 6:12), and because the way that seems right to man results in death (Prov. 16:25).

Our best choice when facing giant obstacles is to do what David did: faithfully trust God to enable you to overcome the obstacle. This requires God’s strength and brings glory to Him.

What obstacles are you facing? Will you run, seek man’s advice, or will you turn that situation over to the Lord and trust Him to give you victory? Remember that “*the battle is the Lord’s.*”

Project: Don’t be surprised when opposition and difficulty comes your way this week. Stay faithful in spite of the giants. Do the **Daily Bible Readings** (pages 4-5) every day this week and don’t miss Sunday School this Sunday.

Faithful When Attacked

How do you treat those who mistreat you? Jesus taught us to turn the other cheek (Matt. 5:39) and to do good to those who hurt us (Matt. 5:44).

Let's review. Israel demanded a king, so God chose Saul to be their king. He looked "kingly," but his heart was corrupt and he repeatedly failed God. God told Saul that He would replace him with a new king to lead Israel. David was chosen to be that new king, and he came to national prominence by defeating Goliath. David couldn't actually assume the throne, however, until Saul was gone. Saul viewed David as a rival, so he hated him. In this week's lesson we will learn how David responded to Saul's vicious attacks. Will David remain faithful to God even while being oppressed and chased? Let's find out.

1 Sam. 18:5-6 After his victory over Goliath, David became one of Saul's military commanders. The people loved him.

1 Sam. 18:7 What did the women say about Saul?

What did they say about David?

1 Sam. 18:8-9 How did Saul feel about this?

1 Sam. 18:10-11 The evil spirit (see 1 Sam. 16:14-15) troubled Saul again. What did Saul try to do to David?

1 Sam. 18:12 Why was Saul afraid of David?

1 Sam. 18:13-16 Saul sent David away to lead the army. How did David behave himself?

Saul was still afraid of David, but how did the people feel about him?

1 Sam. 19:8 Once again there was war with the Philistines, and David won great victories.

1 Sam. 19:9-10 What did Saul try to do to David again?

Saul's son Jonathan loved David very much. He saw in David spiritual qualities that were lacking in his father. Jonathan made a covenant with David and helped him escape from Saul.

1 Sam. 23:14-15 David stayed out in the wilderness, hiding from Saul. What did Saul want to do to David?

1 Sam. 23:16 What did Jonathan do?

1 Sam. 23:17 Jonathan told David not to be afraid. He also said: "Thou shalt be _____ over _____."

1 Sam. 23:18 They made a covenant and parted company.

1 Sam. 24:1 What information did Saul receive?

1 Sam. 24:2 What did Saul do?

1 Sam. 24:3 Saul went into a certain cave. It "just happened" to be the very cave where David and his men were hiding!

1 Sam. 24:4 What did David's men want him to do?

What did David do?

1 Sam. 24:5-6 David felt guilty for cutting off a piece of Saul's garment. Why did he feel he shouldn't raise a hand against Saul?

1 Sam. 24:7-8 Saul left the cave, and David followed. David called to Saul. What did he do when Saul turned?

1 Sam. 24:9-10 What did David tell Saul?

1 Sam. 24:11 What did David show Saul to prove that he did not want to kill him?

David insisted he didn't want to harm Saul, "yet _____ huntest my _____ to take it."

1 Sam. 24:12 Who did David say would settle things between him and Saul?

1 Sam. 25:1 Who died?

Concluding Thoughts: David knew God had chosen him to be the next king of Israel, but Saul had to be out of the way before he could assume the throne. Many men in David's position would try to kill Saul so they could become king.

Saul hunted David, often trying to kill him. It would be natural for David to retaliate and try to kill Saul. Saul walked right into David's hiding place within easy reach of David and his men. It would be natural for David to kill Saul so all his troubles would be over.

David didn't do the natural thing; he did the godly thing. He refused to harm the one God had anointed to be king over Israel. He knew God would one day remove Saul so he could be king, but he left that entirely up to God and His timing. He didn't try to take matters into his own hands. David remained faithful to God.

How do you react when you're mistreated? Do you do the natural thing: retaliate and try to hurt the one who mistreated you? Or do you do the godly thing and return good for evil? That's what Jesus told us to do (Matt. 5:44). Trust God to take care of your enemies in His time.

Project: Memorize **Matthew 5:44**. Do something good for an "enemy" this week.

Are You Patient?

How patient are you?

We live in an “instant” world. Advances in technology have caused us to expect things to happen instantly. We are not very good at waiting for things; we are not very patient people. Even when we know God’s will about something, we have a hard time waiting for God to do what He has said He will do.

David knew he was going to be the king of Israel, but Saul stood in the way. Saul worked hard trying to track down and kill David, but as we learned in last week’s lesson, David refused to harm Saul. Will David continue to trust God to deal with Saul, or will he take matters into his own hands? You will find the answer in 1 Samuel 26 and 31.

1 Sam. 26:5 Saul once again went out to search for David, but David heard about it and found Saul’s camp. Saul lay sleeping, surrounded by his soldiers.

1 Sam. 26:6 What did David ask his men?

1 Sam. 26:7 David and Abishai crept into Saul’s camp at night. Where did they find Saul?

1 Sam. 26:8 What did Abishai ask David?

1 Sam. 26:9 Why did David refuse to let Abishai kill Saul?

1 Sam. 26:10 David said that one of three things would happen to Saul. What were they?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

David faithfully trusted God to deal with Saul in His own way and in His own time. Do you trust God to deal with your problems?

1 Sam. 26:11-12 What did David and Abishai take from Saul's camp?

Why were they able to get in and out of the camp undetected?

1 Sam. 26:13-14 David went to a nearby hilltop and called out to Abner, Saul's military commander.

1 Sam. 26:15-16 Why did David say Abner was "*worthy to die*?"

What did David say to prove he had been in Saul's camp?

1 Sam. 26:17-18 Saul recognized David's voice; David assured him that he meant him no harm.

King Saul was temporarily sorry for his actions against David, but soon changed his mind. David continued to hide from Saul.

1 Sam. 31:1 The Philistines again fought against Israel (see the **Map** on p. 6). How did the battle go?

1 Sam. 31:2 What happened to Saul's sons?

1 Sam. 31:3 What happened to Saul?

1 Sam. 31:4 Saul was mortally wounded, but he did not want to fall into the hands of the Philistines. Victorious armies often tortured and abused their wounded enemies. What did Saul tell his armor-bearer to do?

What did Saul do when the armor-bearer refused?

1 Sam. 31:5 What did the armor-bearer do?

1 Sam. 31:6 “So _____ died, and his three _____,
and his _____, and all his
_____, that same day together”

1 Sam. 31:7 What did the rest of the Israelite army do when they realized Saul and his sons were dead?

1 Sam. 31:8-10 What did the Philistines do with Saul’s body?

Putting Saul’s armor in their pagan temple meant they thought their god was stronger than Israel’s God. Hanging his headless body on a city wall was a sign of contempt and disrespect.

1 Sam. 31:11-13 What did the men of **Jabesh-gilead** do?

Concluding Thoughts: David refused to take God’s work into his own hands. In God’s perfect time and in His way, He eliminated Saul so David could become king of Israel. David knew God could be trusted to fulfill His plan; he even wrote that in one of his Psalms: *“Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass. And He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him”* (Psalm 37:5-7).

We can learn from David’s example and from the words of scripture that we should be patient people. God does not operate on our timetable, and we must learn to faithfully and patiently wait for Him to do His will in His way and in His time. Ask the Lord to help you do that.

Project: When you feel yourself growing impatient this week, ask God to help you trust Him more. Be sure to pick up a **Sunday School Member Quarterly** for the new quarter, so you can begin the Daily Bible Readings on Monday. Come to Sunday School every Sunday. God will bless you by helping you understand His Word. The story of David continues next week.