



LESSON 18

Samuel— Israel's Last Judge







VOCABULARY

Iniquity: violation of a moral law; sin

Rout: to put to disorderly flight or retreat

Israel Rejects God

The book of 1 Samuel is the story of three men—Samuel, Saul, and David. Up until the time of Samuel, judges ruled over the people of Israel. Read 1 Samuel 8:4–8 to learn why Samuel was the last true judge in Israel.

-  What did the Israelites ask of Samuel? ***They wanted a king to rule over them like all the other nations had.***
-  According to verse 7, who wanted to reign over them (guide and direct their lives)?
the Lord
-  According to the Lord, whom had the people rejected? ***Him***
-  Why did the people want a king? What was their problem? ***They were jealous of other nations, and they had rejected God.***
-  Even after all the problems in their history that we read about in the book of Judges, the people still did not desire to serve God. They wanted useless things—things of the world. Read 1 Samuel 12:20–21 and explain what these verses teach about the power of idols. ***They are useless because they cannot do good to you or rescue you.***
-  In chapter 8, God spoke through Samuel to tell the people how wrong it was to desire another ruler besides God. He told them that a king would bring wars and taxes and problems that they had not faced before. What was the people's attitude according to verse 19? ***The people refused to obey God and were determined to have a king.***



The Israelites had chosen the useless things of the world. God had told them that worldly things would eventually harm them, but the Israelites would not listen to God's warnings. Finally, when they would not listen, what did God tell Samuel (1 Sam. 8:21–22)? **Listen to what the people want and give them a king.**

It is not always good for us to have everything we want. Sometimes, God gives us our way just to teach us this lesson.



The First King Of Israel

When the people of Israel set their minds to have a king, God did not act spitefully against them. God always wants the best for His people, so He chose a king that had strong character. Describe this man God had chosen to be the first king over Israel from 1 Samuel 9:1–2.

The Attributes Of Saul	
His Father	<i>Kish, a Benjamite, a man of standing</i>
His Appearance	<i>tall and impressive</i>
His Character	<i>without equal among the Israelites</i>

Samuel: A Man Of Prayer

As we study the life of Samuel, we find that he was truly a man of God. While we know that as all men, Samuel was a sinner, it is difficult to find mistakes in his life. The best explanation for this was that his life was centered around prayer. As you have already seen, Samuel talked to the Lord continually and included Him in all his plans and activities.



This attitude began when Samuel was a baby. Even his birth was prayed for by his mother, Hannah. What did she ask of the Lord (1 Sam. 1:10–11)? **If the Lord would give her a son, she promised to give him to the Lord's service.**

When Samuel was young, his mother kept her promise and took him to live at the house of the Lord in Shiloh. So, as a child, Samuel ministered to the priest, Eli. Samuel learned early to listen to the Lord and was a child of prayer.



Explain how Samuel learned to hear the voice of the Lord from 1 Samuel 3:3–10. **One night the Lord called to Samuel, and he thought it was Eli. After the Lord had called him three times, Eli realized it was the Lord. Eli told Samuel to listen to what the Lord had to say to him.**



As a judge of Israel, Samuel brought victory to his people through prayer. Read 1 Samuel 7:8–10 and explain what happened when Samuel prayed. **As Samuel prayed and offered up a lamb as a burnt offering to the Lord for victory over the Philistines, the Lord sent loud thunder, and the Philistines were thrown into such a panic that they were routed by the Israelites.**



We have already studied how the people rejected God by asking for a king. What was the first thing that Samuel did when this happened (1 Sam. 8:6)? **He prayed to the Lord.**

Life Principle

Prayer is not...


- A good luck charm to prevent misfortune from coming into our lives.
- A tool to use when we are in an emergency situation.
- A way to get our selfish desires met.
- Something memorized and repeated without thinking.

Prayer is...


- Christians' way to talk to our Father about our problems and feelings.
- A time to seek wisdom and guidance from our Father.
- A time to praise God and show Him reverence.
- Answered according to God's will with God's glory and our good in mind.

Success In Prayer

God's Word reveals conditions for effective prayer. There are certain areas that will hinder our prayer relationship with God, and there are principles that God will honor.

 After each verse below, name the quality that is being discussed: stubbornness, a clear conscience, a yielded heart, obedience, selfishness, sin, a humble spirit, or disobedience.

Conditions For Prayer	Hindrances To Prayer
2 Chronicles 7:14— <i>a humble spirit</i>	1 Samuel 13:13; 14:36–37— <i>disobedience</i>
Jeremiah 29:13— <i>a yielded heart</i>	Psalms 66:18— <i>sin</i>
James 5:16— <i>a clear conscience</i>	Zechariah 7:12–13— <i>stubbornness</i>
1 John 3:22— <i>obedience</i>	James 4:3— <i>selfishness</i>


 Samuel grieved because the Israelites had chosen to reject God and have a worldly king rule them. But even at this time, what was his attitude as seen in 1 Samuel 12:23?

He continued to pray for the people, desiring to teach them the way that is good and right.

Conquering The Enemy


We discussed two very important areas of your life in this lesson.

The first area is that getting involved in useless things—things of the world—will eventually harm you. Think about your own life and consider areas of your life that God may want you to think about leaving alone.

 List these things here. ***Answers will vary.***

The second area is the area of prayer. One of the key reasons you need to have good communication with God is so that you will know what God says in His Word about how you are to obey Him. God wants your life to cause you to depend on him and grow spiritually. Your life will certainly have hard times, but God blesses those who trust His promises. Now think about your own prayer life and how it demonstrates your consistent dependence on God.

 Do you pray to God every day? _____

 Name one or two problems that you have that you need to discuss with the Lord today.



Name one or two things that you have to be particularly grateful for today.

Go to the Lord in prayer now and thank Him for these things.

