

1 Samuel 1

Intro: As we start the book of 1 Samuel Israel is in transition. They are moving from the era of Judges to now an era of human Kings to rule over them. As we will see Samuel has been called to guide Israel through a massive cultural and structural shift. With the goal of ensuring they maintain their spiritual allegiance to God rather than conforming to the worldly practices of surrounding nations.

Read 1:1-5.

First discussion: Read 1 Samuel 1:1–2; 1 Samuel 7:3–4; Romans 12:2. With the brief introduction in mind how can men effectively anchor their family in biblical truths when mainstream culture pushes in the opposite direction? How does that look in trying to influence society?

In what areas of life are we most tempted to compromise our spiritual values to fit into modern cultural norms, and how can we guard against that? As Godly men and Godly leaders what is our duty during times of instability.

Second discussion: Key Passages: 1 Samuel 1:3; 1 Samuel 2:12–17; Malachi 1:11. Despite serving at the sanctuary in Shiloh alongside Eli's wicked sons, Hophni and Phinehas, Elkanah remained dedicated to worshipping the Lord as commanded by the Law. Why is it so easy to use the moral failings or hypocrisy of church leaders as an excuse for our own spiritual complacency or decline?

How can we maintain a consistent personal devotion to God when the institutions or spiritual communities around us are struggling with corruption and to constant change in societal norms away from Christianity?

Notes:

Practical Application: Discuss

- **How we can lead through societal shifts:** Men are often called to lead their families, workplaces, or churches through disorienting structural or cultural changes. Focus on anchoring your household in eternal truths rather than letting secular trends dictate your family's direction.
- **Prioritize spiritual integrity over worldly conformity:** Evaluate whether your Christian walk models the surrounding culture or reflects a deep allegiance to God's Word.
- **Avoid using others' hypocrisy as an excuse:** It is easy to use the moral failings of church leaders or public figures as a reason to slacken in personal

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faith. Commit to consistent worship, prayer, and devotion regardless of the spiritual health of those around you.

- **Set a godly example for your household:** Continually lead your family in Biblical principles and God's word and teach them to honor God, showing that your faith rests in the Lord, not in human institutions.

Read 1:6-8

First discussion: Key Passages: 1 Samuel 1:6-8, 13–15; 1 Peter 3:7; Proverbs 18:13 Proverbs 10:12; James 3:14–16; Ephesians 4:31–32. Based on verses 6 – 8 and the companion verses discuss where you see that Elkanah failed his wife Hannah.

Notes:

Practical Application:

- **Practice active listening with loved ones:** When a spouse, child, or friend is in pain, avoid rushing in with self-centered fixes or dismissive statements. Seek to understand their heart burden rather than expecting your presence alone to solve their emotional needs.
- **Guard against quick assumptions:** Before addressing someone in anger or rebuke, take time to observe and listen carefully so you do not mistake deep grief or prayer for wrongdoing.
- **Examine your motives in disagreement:** What practical steps can we take to proactively address and resolve interpersonal tension before it turns into deep-seated bitterness?
- **Protect your household from strife:** In what ways does unchecked envy or passive-aggressive behavior subtly creep into our relationships and disrupt our spiritual lives? Take an active role in resolving interpersonal tension within your home, workplace, or church before it turns into deep-seated bitterness.

Read 1:9–11, 17–18; Psalm 62:8; Philippians 4:6–7; Hebrews 6:12.

Discussion: How do you see Hannah deal with her emotional pain? Identify the steps Hannah took and discuss.

Notes:

Practical Application: Discuss when faced with severe pressure, financial strain, or family hardship, where do you turn to? When God grants your prayers—whether in career, family, or

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personal growth— do you dedicate those blessings back to His service rather than using them purely for personal gain.

Read 1: 19–28; Ephesians 5:25–28; 1 Peter 3:7, Psalm 127:3–5; Deuteronomy 6:6–7, James 4:3; Hebrews 6:12; Philippians 4:6–7

Discussion: In these verses we see topics like submission, servant leadership, spiritual unity in marriage, raising and dedicating our children to the Lord, Faithfulness, Patience, and Praise in Unanswered and Answered Prayer.

As men of God how do you:

- balance husbandly authority with humble, supportive unity.
- Overcome male pride when a spouse exercises clear spiritual insight or initiative.
- Partner together in financial and spiritual commitments to serve God's kingdom.
- Recognize your children as God's property entrusted to parents for a season.
- Anchoring family life in the need for Christ's atonement and redemption.
- Understand why God delays or alters answers to prayer (discipline, motives, timing).
- Maintain daily habits of worship while waiting on God's promises.
- Turning answered prayers into dynamic, lifelong testimonies of God's faithfulness.

Notes:

Practical Application: Now discuss the above in terms of you practically apply this to your lives.

1 Samuel 2

Read 1 Samuel 2:1-9

Context: In her inspired prayer, Hannah extols a fundamental truth about God's character: He reverses human pride and lifts up the humble. Her song prophetically points to Jesus—who stooped to the lowest point of death and was raised up to highest glory so He could pull us off the "dunghill" of our sin.

First Discussion:

1. In what areas of your life (e.g., work, family, finances, personal struggles) are you most tempted to rely on your own strength rather than surrendering control to God?
2. Verse 9 says that *"not by strength shall a man prevail."* How does shifting from a mindset of self-reliance to a mindset of yieldness and trust change how you handle pressure, setbacks, or failure?
3. How does remembering that God was willing to reach down to our lowest, messiest moments change the way we look at our own failures and rock-bottom seasons?

Second Discussion

Context: Hannah's praise didn't come out of nowhere; it was born out of years of deep anguish, mockery, and unanswered prayer. Before God blessed her, she took her tears directly to the Lord (1 Samuel 1). God often *"turns the waters of our tears into the wine of joy."* When her prayer was answered, her immediate response was not self-congratulation, but putting the focus entirely on God's character—His holiness, knowledge, and salvation.

Discussion Questions:

1. When you experience a victory or an answered prayer, is your first instinct to praise God, or do you take credit for it? How can we cultivate a habit of immediate gratitude?
2. Hannah's song was forged in years of hardship before she saw the turnaround. How can we encourage one another to keep praising God and trusting "the Rock" when we are still waiting in the middle of our own hard seasons?
3. What specific attribute of God mentioned in Hannah's song (e.g., His holiness, His justice, His mercy, His sovereign control) speaks most directly to where you are right now?

Third Discussion

Context: Hannah's prayer highlight the prophetic picture of Christ in this passage. Hannah says in verse 8 that God *"raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes."* This foreshadows the Gospel: Jesus lowered Himself to death so that we, who were spiritually bankrupt, could be lifted up into eternal life.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does recognizing that God lifted us out of our own "dust and ash heap" change how we view our identity, worth, and status as men?

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2. As men called to lead in our homes, churches, and workplaces, how can we reflect God's character by lifting up those around us who are struggling, weak, or marginalized?

Notes:

Application: Identify and discuss one situation in your life right now where you feel like you are fighting in your own strength or hitting a brick wall. Write it down, pray over it, and consciously hand the final outcome over to God, asking Him to give you His peace as you trust His timing.

Read 1 Samuel 2:12-17

Context: Hophni and Phinehas were raised in the sanctuary, wore the sacred garments, and handled the holy sacrifices daily—yet scripture bluntly states they *"did not know the LORD."* Over time, familiarity bred contempt. They turned the holy things of God into a means for personal gain and gratification, causing the rest of the community to despise God's service. As a commentator notes, *"a holiness that is but external is the worst unholiness."*

Discussion Questions:

1. Eli's sons were surrounded by sacred things every day, yet their hearts were dead to God. How can a man who goes to church regularly guard his heart against becoming cynical or numb to spiritual things?
2. The corrupt behavior of these spiritual leaders made everyday people despise the service of the Lord. How do hypocrisy and inconsistency in Christian men cause unbelievers to stumble today?
3. What is the key indicator that tells you whether your faith is an authentic, heart-level relationship versus just an external performance?

Notes:

Application: Discuss this - Men who go through the religious motions without an authentic, personal relationship with God become major stumbling blocks to others. Take ten minutes alone with God in quiet self-examination. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any area where you have been "going through the motions" or treating sacred responsibilities with casual indifference and ask Him to renew a fresh awe for Him in your heart.

Read 1 Samuel 2:18–19

1 Samuel 2

Context: In sharp contrast to Eli's corrupt sons, young Samuel was faithfully serving in the sanctuary. Every year, his mother Hannah brought him a new, larger robe that she had painstakingly hand-stitched. The scripture draws a vivid picture: just as Hannah stitched physical clothes for Samuel, parents constantly "clothe" the young people looking up to them in character traits through their daily example. Whether we realize it or not, the younger men, children, and people around us are taking cues from our private discipline, our integrity, and our attitude toward God.

Discussion Questions:

1. Children and younger believers are constantly watching our reactions, priorities, and habits. What kind of "spiritual character" are those under your influence inheriting from you right now?
2. Samuel grew up faithful despite being surrounded by corrupt leaders like Hophni and Phinehas. How can we equip young people and younger men to stand firm in faith even when spiritual leaders around them fail?
3. In verse 35, God promises to raise up a "faithful priest who shall do according to what is in my heart and in my mind"—pointing ultimately to Jesus. How does knowing Christ is our perfect, faithful Priest give us hope and strength when we face our own human failures?

Notes:

Application: Choose one specific habit this week—such as reading scripture in the open, praying out loud over meals, or showing patient grace during a stressful moment—to intentionally model for your family or a younger man you mentor. When we meet next week discuss how the Lord worked.

1 Samuel 3 & 4

Read 1 Samuel 3:1–10

Context: The chapter opens with a heavy detail: *"The word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision."* Yet, in the quiet, stillness of early dawn, God called out to a young boy. Samuel didn't recognize the voice at first—he thought it was Eli. Samuel had to learn to tune out surrounding distractions to recognize God's voice and yield to Him as a servant.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think it is so difficult for men today to sit in silence and listen for God's guidance? What "competing voices" (work demands, media, financial anxiety) make it hardest for you to sit in quietness and listen for God's guidance?
2. In what subtle ways can men fall into using religious activities—like weekly attendance, reading plans, or public service—as "magic charms" to get God on their side without surrendering their hearts?
3. What is one practical step you can take this week to cut out daily noise and cultivate genuine, unbroken fellowship with Christ?

Notes:

Application Discussion: Men face the same choice today: we can either build quiet routines to listen for the Spirit and cultivate authentic fellowship with God, or we can rely on external religious routines and busy noise as empty safety blankets. Carve out 10 minutes of complete silence each morning this week—no phone, no music, no agenda. Begin with the prayer, *"Speak, LORD, for your servant hears,"* and spend that time in honest self-examination and listening before opening your schedule. Discuss what you noticed.

Read 1 Samuel 3:9–18

Context: When Eli realized what was happening, he gave Samuel simple, game-changing advice: tell God, *"Speak, LORD, for your servant hears."* Notice the sequence: Samuel addresses God as Lord and positions himself as a servant *before* he even knows what God is going to ask of him.

Samuel's entry into leadership began with unconditional surrender—addressing God as Lord before even knowing what would be asked of him. That surrender was immediately put to the test when God handed him a difficult assignment: delivering a hard message of judgment to Eli, his mentor. Samuel handled it with both respect and unflinching honesty, holding nothing back.

Discussion Questions:

1. When you pray, do you tend to bring God a list of instructions to bless, or do you start with an open hand asking Him what He wants you to do?

1 Samuel 3 & 4

2. Why is saying "Yes" to God *before* knowing what He requires such a struggle for men who naturally want to keep control?
3. When you are called to address a hard truth or deliver tough feedback, do you tend to avoid the conflict entirely or blurt it out without grace?
4. How can we as men speak tough truths in love—whether to a child, spouse, or brother in Christ—without becoming harsh or passive?
5. What does it look like in a man's life to speak tough truths in love—whether to a child, a brother in Christ, or a colleague—without being harsh or passive?
6. Looking at Eli's response ("*It is the LORD. Let him do what seems good to him*"), how should we handle hard feedback or godly correction when it comes our way?

Notes:

Application Discussion: For men who like to calculate risks before committing. True spiritual strength requires saying "Yes" to God upfront and having the courage to speak hard truths in love within our homes, churches, and workplaces. Identify an area in your life (career, family, or personal habit) where you have been hesitating to give God a complete "Yes." Take steps this week to resolve any overdue conversation or issue with gentle, clear, and uncompromising honesty.

Read 1 Samuel 4:3, 10–11

Context: After an initial setback, Israel's leaders asked a valid question: "*Why has the LORD defeated us today?*" However, they refused to do the hard work of spiritual diagnosis. Instead of repenting of their sins or addressing the blatant corruption of Hophni and Phinehas—who stood right beside the Ark—they doubled down on their own flawed strategy. The result was a catastrophic defeat.

Discussion Questions:

1. When you face a major defeat or roadblock in life, marriage, or work, is your first instinct to look inward for God's correction, or do you just push harder with your own strategy?
2. Hophni and Phinehas stood next to holy things while living in deliberate, unrepentant sin. How does hidden, unconfessed compromise in a man's private life disarm his leadership at home and work?
3. How can a group of Christian men hold one another accountable to diagnose spiritual failures honestly rather than making excuses?

Notes:

1 Samuel 3 & 4

Application Discussion: When men face roadblocks, shifting blame or ignoring hidden compromise only guarantees bigger failures down the line. Real leadership requires diagnosing spiritual root causes through honest repentance. Bring one hidden area of personal struggle, compromise, or failure to God in confession today. If appropriate, share it with a trusted Christian brother or accountability partner to bring it into the light and pursue genuine recovery.

Read 1 Samuel 4:18, 21–22

Context: The tragic deaths of Eli and his daughter-in-law reveal what mattered most to them. Eli did not collapse when he learned of Israel's military retreat or the death of his sons; he collapsed and died when he heard that the Ark of God was captured. In her final moments, his daughter-in-law named her newborn son *Ichabod* ("no glory"), mourning that God's manifest presence had departed. "Ichabod" marks any life, household, or community that exchanges the real presence of God for superficial priorities.

Discussion Questions:

1. What breaks your heart more quickly—personal inconvenience and financial loss, or seeing God's presence and honor compromised in your life and household?
2. What are the early warning signs that "Ichabod" (a loss of spiritual vitality and God's felt presence) might be creeping into a man's home, marriage, or personal walk?
3. What is one area of your life where you need to invite Jesus back into the absolute center this week?

Notes:

Application Discussion: A godly man prioritizes protecting the presence and honor of Jesus above personal comfort or worldly success. Conduct a "spiritual temperature check" of your home and personal routine. Identify one practice—such as family prayer, consistent worship, or honoring biblical boundaries—that has been neglected, and actively re-establish it this week to keep God's presence at the center of your household.

1 Samuel 5 & 6

Read: 1 Samuel 5:2–4

Context: The Philistines tried to place God alongside their false god, Dagon, but God completely shattered Dagon's head and hands. We often try to "add" God into our lives while holding onto modern idols like career ambition, financial control, status, or hidden vices.

Discussion Questions:

1. When God exposes something we rely on, how do we mistakenly try to "prop it back up" instead of letting it break?
2. Looking at Dagon's severed head and hands, in what ways do we rely on our own intellect or hustle instead of trusting God?
3. Why do we fear letting Jesus into the private corners of our heart, and what are we afraid He will ask us to give up?

Notes:

Application Discussion: Identify one area (e.g., work, finances, a secret habit) where you have been trying to manage control yourself. Consciously yield it to Christ this week by confessing it to a trusted brother and taking one tangible step to step back and trust God's leadership instead.

Read 1 Samuel 5:6, 8

Context: Instead of repenting under God's heavy hand, the Philistines just shipped the Ark to different cities to dodge the pressure. Men do the same thing: when ungodly habits or poor choices create conflict, we change environments, switch jobs, or shift blame rather than humbling ourselves.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is human nature so quick to try to "relocate the problem" (shifting blame, running away) rather than owning our sin before God?
2. How can a man tell if his heart is getting hardened under discipline rather than softened by it?
3. How do we move from resisting God's conviction to full surrender when we feel His heavy hand?

Notes:

1 Samuel 5 & 6

Application Discussion: Discuss - Do you find yourself making excuses or switching tactics to avoid a hard reality. Take full ownership of a current conflict or personal failure at home or work —admit where you were wrong without placing blame on circumstances or others.

Read 1 Samuel 6:7, 12

Context: Two mother cows were separated from their calves and yoked to a cart carrying the Ark. Against all natural instinct, they marched straight down the road toward Israel, "lowing" in pain as they went, yet fulfilling their God-given path.

Discussion Questions:

1. The cows moved forward in obedience even while "lowing" (expressing pain). How does this reframe what obedience looks like when doing the right thing feels costly?
2. What "natural instincts" (financial anxiety, desire for ease, self-preservation) tend to pull you away from God's calling for your family or church?
3. How can we encourage one another to stay on the "straight road" when our feelings urge us to pull off to the side?

Notes:

Application Discussion: Identify a hard, necessary duty you've been avoiding because it causes discomfort or emotional friction (e.g., a difficult conversation, a financial sacrifice, a commitment to serve). Make the decision to step forward in obedience this week regardless of how you feel. What does that plan look like?

Read 1 Samuel 6:3, 19

Context: The Philistines tried to bribe God with golden offerings to make Him go away, while the men of Beth-shemesh treated the holy Ark with careless curiosity. Both groups failed to approach God with true heart repentance and deep reverence for His holiness.

Discussion Questions:

1. In what subtle ways do Christian men try to "bargain" with God—offering external good deeds or church attendance—instead of surrendering a specific sin?
2. The people of Beth-shemesh went from celebrating God's presence to treating Him with casual disregard. How do we guard against becoming spiritually numb or overly casual toward holy things?
3. How does cultivating a deep awe for God's holiness actually protect a man's moral integrity and character?

1 Samuel 5 & 6

Application Discussion: Reset your daily spiritual routines. Before reading Scripture or praying this week, pause for 60 seconds in total silence to acknowledge God's absolute holiness, approaching Him not out of religious habit, but with reverent awe and a willing heart.

1 Samuel 7 & 8

Read 1 Samuel 7:3–4

Context: Samuel called Israel to stop merely lamenting and start dismantling their physical idols. For men, real repentance requires moving past vague feelings of guilt and taking tangible steps to clear out compromise.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the practical difference between feeling guilty about a recurring sin and taking decisive steps to eliminate it?
2. The Israelites poured out water at Mizpah as a symbol of complete helplessness (v. 6). Why is admitting vulnerability so difficult for men, and why is it necessary for spiritual growth?
3. Which step is most urgently needed in your personal walk or family right now: honest confession, removing a false god/distraction, or stepping into intercessory prayer?

Notes:

Application Discussion: Pick one specific area where you have felt passive guilt. Take a concrete action this week to eliminate the trigger—such as installing accountability software, setting a financial boundary, or scheduling a candid conversation with a brother in Christ.

Read 1 Samuel 7:10, 12

Context: On the exact battleground where Israel previously suffered a humiliating defeat (1 Samuel 4), God intervened and gave them victory. Samuel raised a memorial stone named *Ebenezer* ("Stone of Help") to lock in the memory of God's real-time help for future generations.

Discussion Questions:

1. God brought a breakthrough on the exact same ground where Israel had previously failed. What is a "battlefield" in your life where you need God to redeem a past defeat?
2. Why do we as men so quickly forget God's past faithfulness the moment a new crisis or financial stressor hits?
3. What is a concrete "Ebenezer" you can establish to keep God's past track record fresh in your mind and visible to your household?

Notes:

1 Samuel 7 & 8

Application: Create a tangible reminder of a past time God brought you through a tough spot—write it down in a journal, share the story around the dinner table with your family, or keep a physical milestone on your desk as an anchor for the next fight.

Read 1 Samuel 7:15; 8:1–3

Context: Despite Samuel's life of integrity, his sons turned aside after money, bribes, and corrupt power. Spiritual authority, character, and faith cannot simply be handed down through "succession"—each child and younger man must cultivate a personal relationship with God.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does the failure of Samuel's sons challenge our assumptions about parenting and mentoring younger men?
2. How do we guard against relying on our own Christian reputation, church leadership, or background when guiding our kids or family?
3. What is one practical way we can help younger men cultivate an authentic, firsthand faith rather than living in the shadow of ours?

Notes:

Application: Shift from managing outcomes to modeling authentic faith. Invite your child or a younger man you mentor into a real conversation about how you navigate doubts, pray through decisions, and process personal mistakes.

Read 1 Samuel 8:5, 19–20

Context: Israel rejected God's distinct, invisible leadership because they wanted a visible king to fit in with surrounding nations and fight their battles. When they demanded their own way, God warned them of the heavy cost (taxation, forced servitude) but ultimately granted their request, letting them experience the friction of their choice.

Discussion Questions:

1. Where are you most tempted to place your trust in human systems (e.g., career status, financial cushions, political figures) rather than leaning on God?
2. What are subtle ways men compromise their Christian distinctiveness just to "blend in" at work, among peers, or in public life?
3. How can we spot the difference between waiting patiently for God's direction versus trying to force an outcome through pushy, self-willed efforts?

Notes:

1 Samuel 7 & 8

Application Discussion: Examine a current goal or decision you are pushing hard to achieve. Bring it before God in prayer, asking Him to reveal if you are driving your own agenda to fit cultural standards, and pledge to pause until you have peace and clear biblical wisdom.

1 Samuel 9

Read 1 Samuel 9:3–6, 10, 14

Context: Saul didn't set out to find a kingdom; he set out to find missing livestock. The entire sequence of events—lost donkeys, an exhausting hunt, a servant's timely suggestion, a few spare coins, and meeting young women at the well—reads like a series of random accidents. Yet every detail was an orchestrated step in God's plan to bring Saul to Samuel.

Discussion Questions:

1. Saul was just doing his everyday job when God redirected his life. When has a minor disruption or routine responsibility in your life turned out to be a major turning point?
2. Why is it so easy for us to view daily annoyances (like delayed plans or broken equipment) as useless friction rather than potential divine appointments?
3. How does knowing that God directs "ordinary links in a chain" change the way you approach your daily work, family responsibilities, or unexpected detours this week?

Notes:

Application Discussion: As men, we often wait for loud, miraculous signs, ignoring the fact that God frequently works through the everyday chores, unexpected detours, and routine frustrations of life. Stop writing off daily interruptions or minor frustrations as wasted time. Choose one current "detour" or stressor in your life, pray over it, and actively look for how God might be using it to guide your steps or refine your character.

Read 1 Samuel 9:1–2, 6

Context: When Israel demanded a king to be like other nations, God gave them a man who fit the cultural profile perfectly: tall, handsome, wealthy, and impressive on paper. Israel picked a leader based on outward presence, but God ultimately looks at the heart.

Discussion Questions:

1. Saul had all the external credentials of a winner, but lacked spiritual awareness. Where do you see men today prioritizing "outward stats" over internal godly character?
2. What are the subtle ways we evaluate other men (or ourselves) by world-driven standards rather than by how well they know and follow God?
3. Why is it so hard to build deep spiritual substance when the world around us only rewards and notices outer success?

Notes:

Application Discussion: Men face immense pressure today to focus on external metrics of success (job titles, physical appearance, wealth, social status) while neglecting hidden spiritual

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maturity. Take an honest inventory of where you spend your time, energy, and money. Identify one area where you've been over-investing in outward performance (career image, fitness, status) at the expense of your internal walk with God, and shift that focus toward prayer and scripture this week.

Read 1 Samuel 9:15–17

Context: Before Saul even arrived in town, God spoke clearly into Samuel's ear. Because he maintained constant communion with the Lord, he wasn't caught off guard by changing events—he recognized God's voice in real time.

Discussion Questions:

1. God revealed His secrets to Samuel because Samuel lived near to Him. What are the main obstacles or "noise" keeping you from hearing God's promptings in your daily life?
2. How can a busy man practically cultivate an "open ear" to God in the middle of a demanding workweek and home life?
3. Have you ever felt a clear spiritual prompting or direction from the Lord? What did it take to slow down enough to recognize it?

Notes:

Application Discussion: For men living in a world full of noise, media, and endless notifications, cultivating a quiet, attentive heart before God is necessary if we want to discern His direction for our families and work. Block out 10–15 minutes every morning this week for quiet solitude with God—no phone, no news, no agenda. Read a short passage of Scripture, sit quietly, and ask God to give you an attentive ear for the day ahead.

Read 1 Samuel 9:19–20, 22–24

Context: Samuel had faithfully led Israel for decades. Humanly speaking, Saul's arrival meant Samuel was being displaced and stepped down from national power. Yet, Samuel didn't view Saul as a rival or a threat. Because Samuel derived his security from God's presence, he was ready to honor and exalt the younger man God had chosen.

Discussion Questions:

1. Samuel welcomed and honored the very man who was coming to replace his role as leader. How do you typically react when someone younger, less experienced, or different from you gets promoted or given honor?
2. Why is security in Christ essential for a man to mentor and champion other men without feeling threatened or insecure?

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3. Where in your life (at home, work, or church) do you need to step back, stop competing, and actively support another man's growth and success?

Notes:

Application Discussion: Secure, godly men don't hoard power or fight for the spotlight; they joyfully invest in, honor, and lift up the next generation of leaders. Identify a younger man, coworker, or son whom you can intentionally encourage this week. Give him a seat of honor—whether through a verbal commendation, handing over a key responsibility, or publicly recognizing his strengths.

1 Samuel 10

Read: 1 Samuel 10:1, 6–7, 9

Context: Before Saul was ever publicly crowned king, God anointed him privately and promised that the Holy Spirit would "rush upon him" to turn him into a man capable of leading.

Discuss the following:

1. Saul couldn't fulfill his calling in his own strength; he needed God to give him a new heart and the Holy Spirit's power. Where in your daily life are you relying on your own grid, intellect, or experience instead of leaning on God?
2. The text encourages us to seek "the sacred anointing of the Holy Spirit at the spring of the day." What does practically seeking God's strength look like before you step into a high-stress workday or difficult family conversation?
3. How do we distinguish between stepping out in self-reliance versus stepping out in godly confidence because "God is with us"?

NOTES:

Application Discussion: God reveals our life's course day by day—He plans the steps but leaves us to choose the right response. Too often, men jump into the battlefield of work, marriage, and leadership relying entirely on their own intellect, charisma, or strength. But genuine spiritual impact requires an ongoing, daily reliance on the Holy Spirit to give us a renewed heart and divine wisdom. Discuss how this would look. (HINT: Before you look at your phone, news, or work calendar tomorrow morning, spend the first 5 minutes surrender-praying: ask God to fill you with His Spirit, renew your heart, and guide your responses to whatever unknown challenges surface during the day.)

Read 1 Samuel 10:17–22

Context: When the time came for Saul to be publicly chosen before all Israel at Mizpah, he was nowhere to be found—he was hiding among the equipment and baggage. While some view this as modesty, others will recognize that it revealed a deeper fear of responsibility and a lack of trust in God's power, despite all the miraculous signs he had just received.

Discuss:

1. Saul hid in the baggage because the weight of responsibility scared him. What are the common "baggage piles" (e.g., work, hobbies, past mistakes, self-doubt) that men hide behind today to avoid spiritual leadership?
2. Why is it so easy to confuse passive cowardice with genuine Christian humility?
3. What is one area of your life right now where God is calling you to step forward, but you feel tempted to shrink back or hide?

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NOTES:

Application Discussion: Like Saul many men fall into this exact trap: when called to step up as spiritual leaders in their homes, churches, or communities, they shrink back and hide behind "the baggage"—busyness, feelings of inadequacy, past failures, or fear of stepping into the spotlight. Identify one responsibility you have been avoiding—whether taking the lead in family devotions, initiating a tough conversation, or stepping into a leadership role at church or work. Commit to taking one concrete step out of the "baggage" this week.

Read: 1 Samuel 10:26–27

Context: Even though God clearly chose Saul and surrounded him with a band of valiant men not everyone cheered for him. A group of detractors openly mocked his ability to lead. Saul's initial reaction was remarkably wise and noble: he held his peace.

Discuss:

1. Saul chose to be "as though he were deaf" to his critics. How do you normally react when people doubt your abilities, criticize your faith, or disrespect you?
2. Why is it so dangerous for a man to let the noise of detractors dictate his emotional state or choices?
3. How can we build a strong filter that allows us to accept constructive godly counsel while ignoring destructive noise?

NOTES:

Application Discussion: Identify a recent piece of criticism, insult, or cultural pressure that has been eating away at your focus. Make a deliberate choice to "be deaf" to it—release it in prayer, refuse to replay it in your mind, and stay focused on what God has called you to do.

Read: 1 Samuel 10:19, 23–24

Context: Before casting lots, Samuel explicitly warned Israel that by demanding a human king, they were rejecting the God who had delivered them out of all their trials. Yet, the moment they saw Saul's impressive stature, a wave of "fleshly enthusiasm" swept through the crowd. They wanted an impressive figurehead to fight their battles for them. God gave them what they wanted. Saul was a leader who reflected the people's own unspiritual condition.

Discussion Questions:

1 Samuel 10

1. Israel celebrated Saul because he looked impressive on the outside, ignoring God's warning about their own spiritual compromise. Where do you see us making similar mistakes today in evaluating leaders?
2. Why are we as men so prone to place our ultimate trust or hope in a human figure, system, or organization rather than in God's invisible hand?
3. What happens to a man's faith when the human leader he idolized or depended on inevitably stumbles or fails?

NOTES:

Application Discussion: As men we must guard our hearts against putting ultimate trust in visible, human leaders—whether political figures, pastors, or personal mentors—over God Himself.

Evaluate where you have placed your highest expectations for security or direction. If you find yourself overly reliant on a boss, pastor, political candidate, or mentor, discuss how you turn that around. Take time this week to realign your priorities and anchor your ultimate trust back in Jesus alone.

1 Samuel 11

Read: 1 Samuel 11:1–3

Context: Faced with danger, the men of Jabesh-gilead attempted to negotiate peace with Nahash (whose name means "the serpent"). But Nahash demanded a horrifying price: their right eyes. As the commentary notes, compromise with spiritual falsehood or subtle sin always blinds us—it robs a man of his "eye of faith" and leaves him spiritually maimed. Instead of resisting, the men of Jabesh almost settled for a treaty that would have humiliated them and brought shame on God's people. Men face constant temptation today to make small compromises with sin, culture, or personal integrity just to avoid conflict or keep the peace.

Discussion Questions:

1. The men of Jabesh-gilead were ready to make a covenant with an old enemy just to avoid a fight. Where are we most tempted to "negotiate" with persistent sin or cultural pressure rather than standing against it?
2. Nahash aimed to blind their right eyes, destroying their ability to aim a bow and fight. How does tolerating "small" compromises in our lives gradually blind our spiritual vision and disable us from fighting for our families?
3. How can a man tell the difference between maintaining peace through Christian gentleness versus making a cowardly compromise with sin?

Notes:

Application Discussion: Examine one area in your life—work habits, entertainment choices, or private thoughts—where you have been "negotiating" with compromise. Cut off the negotiation today by establishing a firm boundary and confessing the issue to an accountable brother in Christ.

Read 1 Samuel 11:6–7, 11

Context: When news of Jabesh-gilead's plight reached Saul, the Spirit of God came upon him, producing a fierce, righteous anger against injustice and oppression. He immediately rallied the nation and led a daring rescue mission. While the commentary cautions that Saul's methods showed his human rashness, it also highlights a vital truth: when the Spirit of God empowers a man, he can break through seemingly impossible odds to defend others. Righteous anger isn't self-serving fury; it is a holy hatred of evil that drives a man into selfless, decisive action.

Discussion Questions:

1. Saul's anger was kindled by an attack on his fellow countrymen. What is the difference between destructive human temper and Spirit-led, righteous anger that moves us to action?

1 Samuel 11

2. The commentary asks, *"When the Spirit of God comes upon a man, what cannot that man do?"* How often do we step into tough situations depending on the Holy Spirit versus relying purely on our own energy?
3. Where in your community, church, or family is there a situation of spiritual passivity or injustice that requires men to step up with Holy Spirit-inspired courage?

Notes:

Application Discussion: Identify a family member, friend, or brother in Christ who is currently being overwhelmed by trials or spiritual attack. Stop waiting for someone else to help—reach out this week to offer direct support, prayer, and encouragement to help them hold the line.

Read 1 Samuel 11:12–13

Context: Fresh off a massive military victory, the crowd turned on the "sons of Belial" who had previously mocked and opposed Saul's leadership (1 Samuel 10:27). They wanted revenge. But Saul exercised remarkable restraint, forbidding execution and giving God the glory for the victory. The commentary notes the deep connection between Saul's earlier self-control (when he was "as a deaf man" to his critics) and his ability to exercise mercy here. A man's ability to lead and help others on the outside depends directly on his discipline and mastery over self on the inside.

Discussion Questions:

1. Saul resisted the urge to execute his critics during a high-adrenaline moment of victory. Why is it so tempting to use moments of success or authority to settle old scores or prove people wrong?
2. The commentary observes that *"the measure of our success will be the measure of our ability to help others."* How does fighting personal battles against bad habits, pride, or quick tempers equip a man to lead others well?
3. How can we ensure that when God gives us a win—at work, in our homes, or in ministry—we give Him the credit rather than feeding our own ego?

Notes:

Application Discussion: The next time you experience a personal win, promotion, or breakthrough, intentionally deflect praise back to God and choose to show grace or kindness to someone who previously doubted or opposed you.

1 Samuel 11

Read 1 Samuel 11:14–15

Context: At Gilgal, the nation celebrated Saul's crowning with sacrifices and great joy. Yet, as the commentary points out, Samuel knew the celebration was largely "skin deep." Israel was celebrating their human king and military power, but they still hadn't truly repented of rejecting God as their ultimate King. It's easy for men to mistake outward success, church attendance, or smooth circumstances for actual heart alignment with God. Gilgal was historically a place representing death to the flesh, reminding us that God desires deep internal transformation, not just outward religious enthusiasm.

Discussion Questions:

1. The commentary notes that while the people rejoiced at Gilgal, Samuel looked deeper and saw that their joy was surface-level. How can we fall into the trap of having "skin-deep" faith that looks good on the outside?
2. Why is it so easy to focus on external victories (financial success, public reputation, smooth family life) while ignoring the true condition of our heart before God?
3. How can a group of men hold each other accountable to ensure their walk with Christ is genuine, deep, and grounded rather than just an outward show?

Notes:

Application Discussion: Take 15 minutes in private prayer this week to do a "heart check." Ask God to reveal any areas where your spiritual life has become routine or performance-driven, and invite Him to work genuine, deep renewal from the inside out. Share if you would like what God showed you.

1 Samuel 12

Read: 1 Samuel 12:2–5

Context: As Samuel finishes his long service as Israel's leader, he doesn't offer a polished campaign speech; he invites a full, public audit of his life. Standing before the entire nation, he challenges anyone to name a single instance of corruption, greed, or abuse of power. The nation unanimously testifies to his absolute integrity. As the commentary points out, Samuel didn't just start well—he finished well, living out a life of unselfish service. In a culture where character failures among leaders are frequent, men are called to build a quiet, day-by-day record of financial, sexual, and personal honesty that can withstand any scrutiny.

Discussion Questions:

1. Samuel could comfortably invite the entire nation to inspect his record. If your family, coworkers, or closest friends audited your private life, business dealings, and habits, what would they find?
2. Why is it so rare to see men maintain long-term, lifelong integrity without drifting into moral compromise or shortcuts?
3. What is one habit, transparency standard, or accountability boundary you can put in place today to guard your integrity for the long haul?

Notes:

Application Discussion: Conduct a personal "character audit." Review your recent financial transactions, business interactions, and digital footprint. If there is anywhere you have compromised or acted dishonestly, confess it to God and make it right with the person affected this week.

Read 1 Samuel 12:8–10, 12

Context: Samuel lays out a quick history lesson to show Israel their recurring pattern: whenever danger arose, they forgot God's miraculous past deliverances and demanded a visible, human solution. They thought a physical king would fix a spiritual problem. As the commentary highlights, we make the exact same mistake when we rely on what we can see—money, career clout, human leaders—and forget that the invisible Christ is waiting to save and support us. Men often scramble to solve crises through sheer human effort while completely ignoring God's sovereign power.

Discussion Questions:

1. Israel wanted a human king because a visible leader felt safer than trusting an invisible God. What visible "kings" (e.g., bank accounts, job security, status, personal control) do you tend to lean on when pressure hits?

1 Samuel 12

2. Why do we so easily forget how God delivered us out of past struggles the moment a fresh crisis lands on our desk?
3. How can we train ourselves to make prayer and reliance on the invisible God our *first* response to a problem rather than our last resort?

Notes:

Application Discussion: Take the biggest stressor or crisis you are facing right now and write it down. Below it, list three times in your past where God reliably brought you through a trial. Use that record of His faithfulness as a prompt to surrender the current situation back into His hands.

Read 1 Samuel 12:19, 23

Context: After God confirmed Samuel's message with unseasonal thunder and rain during the wheat harvest, the terrified people begged Samuel to pray for them. Samuel's response is striking: he declares that failing to pray for the people under his care would be a direct sin against God. The commentary notes that prayerlessness is not just a lack of discipline or a busy schedule—it is a spiritual failure that requires confession. Men are called by God to stand in the gap as spiritual caretakers and intercessors for their wives, children, churches, and communities.

Discussion Questions:

1. Samuel viewed *ceasing* to pray for his people as a direct sin against God. How does viewing prayerlessness as a sin—rather than just a busy schedule—change your approach to daily prayer?
2. What usually gets in the way of you consistently praying for your family, friends, and leaders?
3. What does it look like in practice for a man to step up as a faithful intercessor in his household or church?

Notes:

Application Discussion: Build a dedicated intercession list this week with specific names—your family, your pastor, a brother in Christ going through a battle, and your community leaders. Commit to praying over those names intentionally every single day.

1 Samuel 12

Read 4: 1 Samuel 12:20–22

Context: Even though the people had openly rejected God by demanding a king, Samuel delivers a message of comfort: God will not abandon them. His mercy isn't based on their flawless performance, but on His own covenant commitment—*"for His great name's sake."* As the commentary emphasizes, even when we blow it, miss the mark, or drift, God's love doesn't run away. His own honor and reputation are tied to preserving His people. This gives men the ground to repent, dust themselves off, and keep following Him instead of wallowing in defeat.

Discussion Questions:

1. Samuel tells the people, *"You have done all this evil... Yet do not turn aside."* Why do men often want to pull away, isolate, or quit following God after they make a major mistake or fall into sin?
2. What does it mean for your confidence to know that God's commitment to keep you is tied to *"His great name's sake"* rather than your own performance?
3. How can understanding this depth of God's grace help us extend the same patience and second chances to the people we lead at home or work?

Notes:

Application Discussion: If you are currently carrying shame or guilt over a past failure that makes you feel like shrinking back from spiritual leadership, confess it to God today. Accept His grace based on His name and promise, and step back into active service to your family and church.

1 Samuel 13

Read: 1 Samuel 13:8–12

Context: Facing a massive Philistine army and watching his own troops panic and desert, Saul hit his breaking point. Samuel was running late according to Saul's clock, so Saul "forced himself" to perform the priestly sacrifice—stepping completely out of his line of authority and violating God's direct command. As the commentary notes, he likely panicked mere minutes or hours before Samuel arrived. Men often justify taking matters into their own hands when deadlines loom, pressure mounts, or God feels "behind schedule." Taking a shortcut out of anxiety always turns into spiritual failure.

Discussion Questions:

1. Saul tried to justify his disobedience by pointing to his scary circumstances: dwindling troops, an approaching enemy, and a late prophet. What circumstances in your life most easily push you to say, "I had no choice, my hand was forced"?
2. What is the difference between taking proactive, responsible action as a leader versus "forcing" an outcome out of fear and lack of trust in God?
3. How can we as men support each other when a brother is standing in the middle of a "dwindling army" situation and feels tempted to break biblical boundaries to fix it?

Notes:

Application Discussion: Identify an area in your life (a financial decision, a career move, or a tense relationship) where you feel tempted to rush ahead of God or compromise your standards to force an outcome. Commit to standing still, praying, and waiting for clear, biblical alignment before taking another step.

Read 1 Samuel 13:3–4

Context: It was Jonathan who stepped out in genuine faith and struck the Philistine garrison. But Saul immediately blew the trumpet across the land, taking the credit for himself ("Saul has defeated the garrison") and framing the nation merely as "Hebrews" rather than "Israel," the covenant people of God. As the commentary observes, Saul's leadership was marked by self-confidence, ego, and a desire for personal glory rather than dependence on Jehovah. A man who leads out of fleshly pride will gladly steal credit from others to protect his own image.

Discussion Questions:

1. Jonathan did the hard work of faith, but Saul took the public credit. Where do men face the subtle temptation to hijack credit or exaggerate their role at work, in ministry, or at home?

1 Samuel 13

2. The commentary points out that Saul spoke like a worldly leader rather than a shepherd of God's covenant people. How does leading out of personal ego damage the morale of those we are called to lead?
3. What practical habits can help a man stay humble and ensure God (and the team around him) receives the proper credit for successes?

Notes:

Application Discussion: Think of a recent win at work, in your family, or at church. Make a point this week to publicly highlight and praise someone else who helped make it happen—giving them the credit rather than soaking up the spotlight.

Read 1 Samuel 13:5–7, 19–20

Context: When crisis hit, Israel ran to hide in caves and pits. Worse still, because they had let the Philistines dominate them for so long, they didn't even possess the tools to make their own weapons—they had to go to their enemies just to sharpen their farming plows. As the commentary notes, "like king, like people." Saul's lack of faith trickled down, leaving the whole nation paralyzed and dependent on their oppressors. When men lead out of unbelief, it creates an environment of fear that disarms their households and teams, leaving them spiritually defenseless.

Discussion Questions:

1. The Israelites were so demoralized by fear that they hid in holes and left themselves without weapons. Where have you seen fear or spiritual passivity disarm a man in his role as a husband, father, or leader?
2. The commentary warns that unbelief places the people of God in bondage to their enemies. What spiritual "weapons" (prayer, scripture, fellowship) do men tend to put down when they get overwhelmed by circumstances?
3. How can a man cultivate a posture of courage so that his family and brothers in Christ are inspired to stand firm rather than run for the caves?

Notes:

Application Discussion: Audit your "spiritual armory" this week. Are you actively sharpening your mind with scripture and taking time to pray, or have you allowed stress to disarm you? Re-establish a daily routine of reading God's Word so you are equipped for the fight.

1 Samuel 13

Read 1 Samuel 13:13–14

Context: Because Saul refused to obey and wait, Samuel declared that his kingdom would be taken away and given to a "man after God's own heart." That man turned out to be David, who would later write, *"Wait on the Lord: be of good courage and He shall strengthen thy heart"* (Psalm 27:14). The commentary stresses that a man after God's heart isn't perfect, but he obeys to the uttermost and dares to trust God even when disaster feels imminent. God tests our hearts in the waiting room; how we handle the delay reveals who we truly trust.

Discussion Questions:

1. What does it actually mean in daily practice to be a "man after God's own heart"?
2. Why is waiting on God one of the hardest tests for a man to pass? Why does delay feel so much like failure or inaction to us?
3. The commentary states: *"Man thinks God slow, behind the appointed time... Nay, but God is waiting to be gracious."* How does knowing God is intentionally timing His intervention change the way you endure season of waiting?

Notes:

Application: Memorize Psalm 27:14 this week: *"Wait on the Lord: be of good courage and He shall strengthen thy heart."* Whenever you feel the impulse to act recklessly or out of anxiety, speak that verse to yourself as a reminder that God's timing is always right on time. Share what you received from this time.