

Amesbury Baptist Church

*A Series for
Sunday Teaching
Group Study
Personal Study*

The History Channel(5)

Samuel, Saul, David

This is another part of THE HISTORY CHANNEL. The aim is to look at the great stories of the Old Testament with certain intentions in mind.

- 1. To learn the stories which may not be told so widely today*
- 2. To understand that they are not just “stories” but God speaking to us about the big issues of life and death*
- 3. To discover the meaning for us and how to apply that meaning to our own lives and to the lives of others*
- 4. To let God encourage us and allow our faith to grow*

This series draws from the 1st book of Samuel

Key figures are

Samuel –who is chosen by God to be the priest who will lead God’s people, the Israelites

Saul – chosen by God to be Israel’s first king. Though he makes a good start, he does not follow God’s ways and his office is removed

David – the shepherd boy whom God chooses to be king, and who in 2 Samuel leads the people to military victory and establishes Jerusalem as the city of God.

What we learn here is that God can use anyone to serve him. All the central characters here started out as ordinary people. God called them and they served God. Some went astray and paid the consequence of their disobedience, but most stayed true to God and many others benefitted from their life, principles and steadfast faith in the sovereign rule and will of God.

If God can do this with people such as these, he can do his work through us, too.

READ through the whole books of Samuel to get the whole picture and see how everyone and everything fits in. Use a commentary or a study Bible if you can. It will be worth the time taken.

JOIN a Cell Group to discover together what you can about what God has already said to us through these stories.

06 April 2008 PRAYER OF FAITH

1 Samuel 1:1-20

Read vv 1-8 What can you say about the attitude of Elkanah and Peninnah to Hannah and their treatment of her?

What can you make of the words “the Lord had closed her womb”? (God was seen as the one who gives/withholds birth-cf. Gen.29:31; 30:2,22)

What might Hannah be trying to say by refusing to eat?

In what ways were Elkanah’s comments both typical of people in general, and not very helpful? What might have been a better way of treating Hannah?

Read vv 9-20. Why do “bitterness of soul”, weeping and prayer end up in the making of a vow? What IS a vow to God? For how God views it cf. Eccles. 5:1-7. What is involved in “praying in the heart”? Why did Eli mistake what was going on? What is Eli’s role in the story? Why was the name of a person so important in the ancient world?

13 April 2008 VOICE OF GOD

1 Samuel 3:1-10 and 11-4:1

Read vv 1-10. Why might there have been little heard from God at this time?(it’s worth looking at 2:12 –end of chapter to see what was going on –and there WAS a word from God in 2:30 ff.) So when God seems distant –what might be the reason- and the remedy?

How do you think Samuel “heard” God? Why did Eli not realise what was going on? Why is Eli’s advice on the third occasion so important? What does “your servant” imply?

Read vv.11-4:1. What would have been difficult for Samuel? How does Eli help him to bear the Lord’s words? What is the final consequence of Samuel listening to God and then discharging his duty to God?

20 April 2008 WE WANT TO BE LIKE EVERYONE ELSE

1 Samuel 8:1-22

Read vv.1-9. What made this idea of having a king arise? Why did they want a king? Faced with this request which conflicted with Samuel's principles, what did he do? And what do we learn from his action? How does the Lord encourage Samuel? Why is a spiritual leader's role so hard? How can it be made less difficult?

Read vv. 10-22. If the people had been open to what Samuel said, then how might they have questioned the order of human king and people? What is the main reason for wanting a king? How might this being like all the others conflict with being the people chosen by God? What parallels are there in church history or present church practice? Why does God seem to give in?

27 April 2008 DIVINE CHOICE

1 Samuel 16:1-13

Saul is made king over the people and in time rejects the Lord's authority and so the Lord rejects him (CC.9-15)

Now Samuel is sent to anoint a new king, even though Saul is still king.

Read vv.1-13. What are Samuel's concerns and how does God help him?

What does the elders' question "Do you come in peace?" tell us?

Why is Samuel's selection not in line with that of the Lord? What can we learn from the Lord when we trying to discern who is right for a particular task in the church community? How should we go about choosing people for any church task?

04 May 2008 *THE BIGGER THEY COME-THE HARDER THEY FALL*
1 Samuel 17:1-58

Read 1-11. Why was the practice of single combat so frightening? Who or what might Goliath represent to us today? (or indeed any past event)

Read 12-31. What can we learn about God in that David shows up just at this time of crisis? Why does David react so boldly and outspokenly to the crisis? When is it good to speak out/ be silent? (cf. Ecclesiastes 3)

Read 32-40. What is the significance of being dressed with the armour and then choosing his own equipment?

Read 41-58. What is the real message of this combat? Who is the actual victor and who is saved? What was the effect of David's action on the people of Israel? What can we learn from this?