



LIVING WAY BIBLE STUDY

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FOUR-STEP METHOD

Living Way Bible Study suggests this four-step method:

1. PERSONAL - The student prays for guidance from the Holy Spirit and answers the Personal Application questions at home using only the Bible (no commentaries).
2. SMALL GROUPS – The class meets for an opening and divides into small groups of 8–10 people. The Small Group Leader guides the group through the P.A. questions encouraging each to share their answers and add discussion.
3. THE MESSAGE – The lecture or message is given by a Pastor or lay person who has researched the material and presents the study giving personal experiences and complimenting, but not merely duplicating, the author's comments.
4. THE NARRATIVE – The author's comments or narrative, along with the P.A. questions for the next lesson, are given out at the door as the student leaves the class. At the next class meeting, before answering the P.A. questions, the Small Groups review the author's comments of the last lesson, and share what each has high-lighted as meaningful or important.

The first meeting of the class is an introduction to the study. Since the members of the small groups have no PERSONAL APPLICATION questions to discuss at the first meeting, they may use the time to get acquainted or to tell what they hope to receive by studying this course. At the first meeting the Lecturer presents background information about the course using the INTRODUCTION lesson as a guide.

Each lesson should be stapled together using the number of the lesson in the right hand corner of the page. To keep the lessons in order check the Bible text listed at the top of each page. The PERSONAL APPLICATION questions are attached to the author's narrative and will be the home study for the next class session.

With this 4-step method the student has the opportunity to study the particular section of Scripture covered by this lesson from four different approaches. This emphasizes the Bible text and gives the student a feeling of understanding and ownership for each section studied.

Lois Engelbart:

- Author of Living Way Bible Study course First Samuel.
- Edited by Reverend Robert Wolff.
- Author of Bible study material and leader of Bible classes for over twenty years.
- Married to Warren Becher Engelbart, and has three daughters and eight grandchildren.
- Educated in Lutheran grade school, public high school, and two years of college.
- Member of St. Paul Lutheran Church of Des Peres (St. Louis, MO) for many years.
- Now member of Hope Chapel Lutheran Church, Osage Beach, MO.
- Active member of boards and committees. Taught Sunday school, Bible classes and Vacation Bible School for many years.
- Sang in the “Lutheran Hour Choir.”
- Trained and active in Evangelism, and “Under Shepherds” program.

Bibliography for First Samuel:

- Concordia Self-Study Bible
- Matthew Henry Commentary with comments of Thomas Scott
- P.E. Kretzmann’s Commentary
- The Expositors Bible Commentary
- Halley’s Commentary
- Wiersbe’s Expository Outlines on the Old Testament
- Howard F. Vos Commentary

FIRST SAMUEL

Lois Engelbart

The book of First Samuel stands much like a cornerstone in the center of the Old Testament, marking a change in Israel's form of government.

First Samuel has not gained the same attention by Bible scholars which many of the other books of the Bible do. It provides no account of beginnings as does Genesis, nor end time prophecy, as does the book of Revelation, nor a narrative of the life of Christ as do the gospels. Neither does the book of Samuel offer great statements of doctrine, like the epistles provide. Yet it is an extremely important book...historically, doctrinally, and devotionally.

The Historical Account of 1st Samuel

Without a doubt, the most important historical event in 1st Samuel is our introduction to David, since Jesus our Savior was known as “the son of David”. Luke’s gospel tells us, “Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord”. (Luke 2:11)

Historically, 1st Samuel also relates the ending of the era when judges ruled Israel, and the beginning of the time when kings ruled God’s chosen people. 1st Samuel provides us with details of this transition.

Although the authors of 1st and 2nd Samuel remain unknown, most of 1st Samuel was likely written by Samuel. Over the centuries, the titles given to the two books of Samuel have varied. The two books have been named 1st and 2nd Kings, 3rd and 4th Kings, and also 1st and 2nd Books of Kingdoms. Although the titles have varied, the content of the two books of Samuel has remained unchanged. It is the living word of God – written to us, God’s people.

Doctrinal Brief Summary

Doctrinally, 1st Samuel speaks of the nature of God.

1. His Holiness.
2. His demand of complete obedience.
3. His judgment of sin.
4. His grace.

As the chapters of Samuel unfold, we will see God’s hand at work in all of these areas. But mostly we will concentrate on the gracious and loving hand of our God as He gives blessings, affords protection to those who are His, and builds lasting, loving relationships. The account of David and Jonathan recorded in 1st Samuel is the finest example of human friendship recorded in scripture.

Devotional Significance

As we look at the lives of both Samuel and David, we will see a beautiful picture of godly living. Both men lived lives which we would do well to emulate. David's ability to live for God in spite of constant trials and yet remain the sweet Psalmist shines like a ray of hope for us, as we struggle, like he did, with life's problems.

Samuel stands out in scripture alongside of Jacob's favorite son, Joseph. There is not one word recorded about either man that would indicate rebellion or displeasure to God. Samuel's life of obedience is a life which encourages every believer to walk humbly and closely with their God, always listening to Him as He speaks to them through His living word.

The Principle Characters

1st Samuel centers around the lives of three of God's chosen people: Samuel, Saul, and David. Samuel was chosen by God to be His prophet at a very young age, and during a very dark period in Israel's history. Sin abounded both in the nation and in the church. In his role as God's prophet, Samuel stood for righteousness, listened to God, and then spoke God's word to Israel.

Samuel was the last of the judges to rule in Israel, and the first of the prophets. (Acts 3:24) While occupying his prophetic office, Samuel saw the necessity to continue having Godly prophets after he was gone - prophets who would follow in his footsteps as proclaimers of God's word to the nation of Israel. To facilitate this vision, Samuel established a school for the training of future prophets in the town of Ramah. (1 Samuel 19:20) Samuel's example teaches us the importance of training the next generation to carry God's word to future generations, as well as to the world around them.

How we need men like Samuel in our world today! Men whose whole desire is to live for God and to speak God's word in all of its truth, purity and power – to men and women everywhere who need to know, and learn to care about the Lord.

Saul had the distinction of becoming Israel's first king. Up until Saul's reign, Israel had been a theocracy. The Lord God had been their ruler and king. But because they desired to be like the nations around them, they demanded an earthly king. Saul was God's answer to their demand. The tall, handsome Saul that the Lord gave them as their King was everything they thought they had wanted. Actually, God had chosen Saul to be His instrument of punishment to his chosen people – for preferring an earthly king over Him. Saul was, for the most part, a miserable human being, and a miserable king. And the people who so desired an earthly king suffered under Saul's control.

Soon after Saul had begun his reign, David was anointed by Samuel to be Israel's next king. However, too many years would pass before he would ascend the throne... Years which would punish Israel, but help shape David, through trial and

tribulation, into the godly king the Lord desired he become. As long as Saul was on the throne, David lived a desperate life as a fugitive. He was constantly fleeing to save his life from the jealous pursuit of Saul. David hid in desolate places. The wilderness caves and mountain crevices became his home. For a time he even resorted to living among Israel's great enemy, the Philistines, to escape Saul's wrath.

Comments on 1st Samuel

If this book were not a part of the canon of scripture, it would find its way to the best-sellers list, even in today's market. It contains true stories of bravery, trickery, love, hate, judgment, jealousy, madness, an ugly marriage, a beautiful child, pride, cowardice, witchcraft, and even suicide. While the sensational always seems to grab our attention, the purpose for studying 1st Samuel is to gain Godly wisdom, to learn to walk before our God in a pleasing manner, and to recognize Him as our personal Savior, our Lord, and our Protector who loves us with an everlasting love.

Concluding Remarks

The Bible tells us an amazing fact about Samuel. We are told that "not one of his words fell to the ground". God was in everything Samuel said and did. My prayer as we begin this study is that none of God's word falls to the ground in your lives, but rather that it falls into the rich soil of hearts desiring to know their Lord better and better.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Heavenly Father, we come to You, knowing that You alone are the giver of life, both physical and spiritual. In Your wisdom and love, grant life to those women who, like Hannah, are looking to You today for the gift of a child. Now may Your Holy Spirit cause our hearts and lives to become spiritually alive as we study Your word. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

1 Samuel 1:1-8

1. The spiritual climate in Israel at this time is recorded in Judges 21:25. How would you describe it?

2. Elkanah has the appearance of a godly man, yet there were problems in his home. List problems which existed in the Elkanah residence.

3. What great sorrow did Hannah have in her life? _____
4. Elkanah loved Hannah, yet he was unable to comfort her. What efforts did he make to try to help Hannah in her distress?

1 Samuel 1:9-18

5. Whom did Hannah turn to for help in her sorrow? _____
 - a. What does Psalm 50:15 tell us to do?

6. What vow did Hannah make to the Lord? (Numbers 6:1-8)

7. How did Eli the priest both hurt and help Hannah?

8. What can we learn from Hannah's response to Eli? (1 Thessalonians 5:12-15, Proverbs 11:16a)

9. What blessing did Eli pronounce upon Hannah?

10. How did Hannah's demeanor change as a result of Eli's blessing?

- a. What does this tell us about Hannah? (Hebrews 11:1)

1 Samuel 1:19-28

11. There is a wonderful lesson to be learned from Elkanah's family. What did they do before beginning their journey home?

12. How does the Bible verify that Samuel was born as a result of prayer?

13. Knowing what the name Samuel means, do you have any children or grandchildren who could rightly bear this name? _____
14. Hannah did not go to Shiloh the next year. Which words tell us that she had not forgotten her vow to the Lord?

15. Researchers today are learning how important the early years of our life are to the total development and well-being of our future life. Knowing she was giving her child to the Lord, what special early training do you envision Hannah giving to Samuel before presenting him to the Lord?

16. When Samuel was weaned, Hannah returned to Shiloh. What offerings did her family bring, and how did she introduce herself to Eli?

- a. How might this have enriched Eli's spiritual life?

17. Hannah brought her child Samuel to Eli the priest, but who did she give him to?

18. Today we also bring our children to the Lord in the sacrament of Holy Baptism. Do Hannah's words of dedication reflect how you felt when bringing your child to the Lord in Holy Baptism?

19. Do you know anyone who, like Hannah, is suffering because of infertility? What words or gestures might be helpful to such a person?

- a. What words or gestures might be hurtful?

20. Abraham Lincoln said, "No man is poor who has had a godly mother." Samuel was rich. Are you rich? _____ Are your children rich?

FIRST SAMUEL

Lois Engelbart

Family Life at the Elkanah's: 1 Samuel 1:1-8

We begin our study with a picture of family life. Certainly, family life was very different then (almost 3000 years ago), than it is now – or was it? Some of the same problems which hinder family life today were present in Elkanah's family. Infertility, jealousy and lovelessness all had found a place in the Elkanah residence. Jealousy and lovelessness arrived when Elkanah tried to solve his infertility problem. Rather than standing beside Hannah, the wife whom he loved, and praying that God would one day open her womb, Elkanah took a second wife, Peninnah. He solved his infertility problem, but created grave problems within his family. Peace was lost. He did not love Peninnah: she was simply a convenience, and she was very aware of the loveless state in which she lived. She was there simply to produce the children which Hannah was incapable of producing.

The Elkanahs Travel to Shiloh to Worship

Elkanah has the semblance of a godly man. Each year he gathered his family together and took them to Shiloh to worship the Lord and bring sacrifices to Him. While in Shiloh, Elkanah would try to bring happiness to his downhearted wife, Hannah, by giving her more to eat than the rest of his family. Elkanah's generosity to Hannah at these times brought the worst out of Peninnah. She hurled verbal abuse at Hannah, and increased her distress.

Elkanah doesn't appear to have a handle on how best to help his barren wife Hannah in her heartache and pain. Nor does he take a hand in defending her from Peninnah's verbal abuse. All in all, today we would classify Elkanah's family as highly dysfunctional. There are similarities in the account of their family life to families today where divorce has occurred, families are splintered, and a second marriage leaves a husband with two distinct families to care and provide for. Many problems and heartache accompany such unions.

Handling Problems in Daily Life

We all handle grief and pain in our lives differently. Peninnah and Hannah certainly did. Peninnah allowed bitterness and anger to control her, while Hannah was a silent sufferer. Tears were her release.

Sorrow and problems in our lives can either draw us closer to the Lord, or drive us away from Him into a world of self-pity. Hannah was drawn closer to her Lord, while Peninnah was filled with self-pity, outwardly displayed by her anger.

Hannah's Prayer: 1 Samuel 1:9-19

Hannah needed help, and she knew where to turn for that help. She went to the temple and brought her heartache and misery to the Lord. Through her tears she pleaded with the Lord for a child.

Hannah's prayer serves as a model for each of us to follow. She was rightly related to the Lord. She was intense in expressing her desire to Him. She petitioned specifically for what she wanted. She made a vow of dedication to the Lord. She prayed in faith, believing that God would answer her prayer.

It would have been a real help to Hannah and to their marriage had Elkanah been kneeling beside Hannah, joining her in prayer, and being the spiritual leader that God had called him to be. (Genesis 25:21)

Hannah's patient and forgiving attitude was sorely tested by the very person she was turning to for spiritual help – Eli, the priest. In her distress, Hannah sobbed with such intensity that Eli accused her of being drunk. Instead of becoming angry with Eli, Hannah showed him respect. She replied, "Not so my lord," and then brought her personal anguish to Eli's attention. Sadly, Eli offered Hannah no apology, but he did then bless her. It was Eli's blessing, as God's representative, which gave Hannah new hope. She would become a mother!

Perhaps Elkanah noticed the smile which was now on Hannah's face when they went, as a family, to worship the next morning (before returning to their home in Ramah). Hannah had come to Shiloh empty...but she left Shiloh full. Full of faith, and full of hope in the God she worshiped, El Shaddai.

Hannah's Prayer is Answered: 1 Samuel 1:19-20

Once the family had safely returned home, Elkanah slept with Hannah as he had so many times before. But this time we are told, "The Lord remembered her," and little Samuel was conceived and born. We can only imagine the joy that filled Hannah's heart as she held her tiny baby boy to her breast. She now knew the joy of motherhood.

The name Hannah chose to give her new little son reflects her desire that everyone know that Samuel was a special gift to her from the Lord. For the rest of Samuel's life he would carry the name "Asked of God." What a wonderful reminder this would be to him and to others, that God answers prayer and gives good gifts to those who earnestly seek Him.

Hannah Keeps her Vow to the Lord: 1 Samuel 1:21-28

Hannah remained at home, nurturing and teaching her little son about the Lord God, until he was old enough to take to Shiloh as she had vowed to do. We can be

certain that Hannah's "mother-love" was stretched to its limit as she took her precious little son and left him in the care of Eli the priest at Shiloh. But she knew that the Lord would watch over Samuel now. Because of Hannah's sacrifice, Samuel's life is still ministering to people today.

Customs have changed since Hannah brought her son to Shiloh. Today we bring our babies to the Lord in the sacrament of Holy Baptism. Hannah's words of dedication are ones which could so aptly be used as we bring our children. "I give him to the Lord. For his whole life he will be given over to the Lord." Then we are told, "He worshiped the Lord there."

Conclusion

We are all called at times in our lives to wait on the Lord as Hannah waited. There is always a reason for our waiting. It teaches us godly patience, perseverance in prayer, and, at times, a yielding of our will to God's will.

Our world today has many "Hannahs" who are praying that God will bless them with a child. These women need all of the love and support which you and I can give them. Never pretend to know the pain which they are experiencing. Simply be kind, tenderhearted listeners, and show them the compassion which Jesus has for them. Do not make promises to them which only a sovereign God can fulfill. Then if God should choose to give them a "Samuel" – Rejoice with them!

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Heavenly Father, help us to be Your obedient children. But when we fail, forgive us for Jesus' sake, and restore us by the power of Your Holy Spirit to once again walk as Your children of light. Open our hearts and our minds now as we study Your Word. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

1 Samuel 2: 1-11

1. Who is at the center and forefront throughout Hannah's song of praise?

List the verses where the Lord is mentioned.

2. Find verses in Hannah's song which reflect the difficulties Peninnah had brought into her life. _____

How were the difficulties overcome? _____

3. What is your favorite hymn or song of praise?

1 Samuel 2: 12-17

4. Describe the behavior of Eli's sons toward their fellow-Israelites who brought sacrifices to the Lord at Shiloh.

5. Why was this such a great sin? (v. 17) _____

1 Samuel 2: 18-26

6. In the midst of the evil being done by Eli's sons, who remained faithful to the Lord? _____

7. What had Hannah prayed in her song (v. 9), and how was it being fulfilled?

Is there anyone whom you are under girding with prayer? _____

8. Prayer is the greatest gift parents can give their children. Besides prayer, what other gift did Hannah bring to Samuel each year?

9. What blessing did Eli pronounce upon Hannah and Elkanah each year?

How many children did the Lord bless them with? _____

10. What other sins were Eli's sons committing, according to verse 22?

11. When Eli became aware of his sons sinful lives, what did he do about it?

12. Who is our Great High Priest, and what is He doing right now for each one of us who belong to Him? (Hebrews 7:24,25) _____

13. Read Ezekiel 34:2 & 3, and apply it to Eli's sons.

14. We are again given a glimpse into young Samuel's life. What are we told about Samuel? (Compare 1 Samuel 2:26 with Luke 2:52)

What does the Lord say we are to be? (Ephesians 5:1, 3 John 11)

1 Samuel 2: 27-36

15. Who does the Lord speak to about the sin which Eli's sons were committing?

16. What charges did the Lord bring against Eli? _____

17. Sin always has consequences. Name the consequences which Eli's family must bear because of his sons' sin.

18. How does the Lord describe a faithful priest?

19. How can we know what is in God's heart and mind? (2 Timothy 3:16,17)

20. What are some of the duties Eli's sons had failed to do as shepherds of Israel? (Ezekiel 34:4)

21. What promise does the Lord make which we can draw comfort from? (Ezekiel 34:11)

FIRST SAMUEL

Lois Engelbart

Hannah's Song: 1 Samuel 2:1-10

First Samuel chapter two begins with Hannah's song of triumph. Surely God had blessed Hannah with the birth of little Samuel. She was now a mother. God had removed her disgrace, and her heart could not contain the joy which welled up within it. Words of praise flowed forth to God, to whom she had prayed, and whom she worshiped.

Noteworthy are the numerous times in her song of praise that she references the torment with which Peninnah had filled her life. Hannah had refused to fight her own battle. Now she gives God the thanks and praise He so deserves, for He was the One who fought and overcame her enemy, Peninnah.

Hannah praises God for His holiness, His knowledge, His power, His faithfulness, His provision, and His judgment.

The Wickedness of Eli's Sons: 1 Samuel 2:12-17.

Solomon wrote, "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people." (Proverbs 14:34) How fitting Solomon's words were to Eli's sons, who had been called to be the spiritual leaders at that time in Israel.

Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas, trifled with the ordinances of God. Every day they were surrounded with the sacrifices brought to God by His people – the worship of God by His people, and yet they did not know God, honor God, or obey Him.

They enjoyed all of the benefits of being God's chosen priests here on earth, but missed them for all eternity. Sadly, this account is also the epitaph of many today.

The Bible clearly states that Eli's sons were "wicked men." Yet Hophni and Phinehas were serving as priests in the temple at Shiloh. They had been trained in their priestly duties. Eli, their father, had also been their "seminary professor." He taught them everything they knew about God. I believe that they could recite the commandments and the creeds of that day, and carry out all of their liturgical services flawlessly. They were filled with head knowledge, but their hearts were far from God.

Eli, their father, was very permissive. He overlooked the sins which his sons were committing. In 1st Samuel 3:13, we are told that God held Eli responsible for the sins of his sons. The entire account of Hophni and Phinehas casts a shadow on Eli's personal relationship with the Lord.

Ezekiel wrote about men like Eli's sons, who are called into God's service, but misuse that which God has entrusted to them. "Woe to the shepherds of Israel who only

take care of themselves....You eat the curds, clothe yourselves with the wool and slaughter the choice animals, but you do not take care of the flock.” (Ezekiel 34:2 & 3)

The Righteousness of Hannah’s Son: 1 Samuel 2:18-21

“But Samuel” – What refreshing words. Right in the middle of the account of the wickedness of Eli’s household, we are given a refreshing peek into Elkanah’s family. Little Samuel, in the midst of the wickedness which surrounded him, was ministering before the Lord. It would appear that Eli had changed since little Samuel had been entrusted to his care. Perhaps he viewed Samuel as God’s second chance given him to help shape a young life.

God was gracious to Hannah. We are told that she gave birth to three sons and two daughters. The conclusion to the account of Elkanah’s family tells us that the boy Samuel grew up “in the presence of the Lord.”

Eli Reproves his Sons: 1 Samuel 2:22-25

Eli was now an old man, and sadly, everything that he heard about his sons’ lives indicated that their wickedness was growing. Sin, when left unchecked, spreads like cancer. And so it did in Hophni and Phinehas’s lives.

Eli finally spoke to his sons. He reminded them that they were sinning – not only against God’s people – but against God Himself. God, who was their intercessor. Eli’s words were so true. But they were too few and too late to save his sons.

Samuel’s Right Standing with God: 1 Samuel 2:26

“And the boy Samuel continued to grow in stature and in favor with the Lord and with men.” What a bold contrast to the lives of Hophni and Phinehas. When our Savior was a child, it was also recorded of Him: “Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men.” (Luke 2:52) What an honor the Lord bestowed on the child Samuel that he should bear a resemblance to God’s own Son.

God Sends a Warning to Eli: 1 Samuel 2:27-36

God is patient, not wanting any to perish. However, His patience does not last forever. God’s messenger was sent to Eli to tell him that his family was no longer to hold the office of priest in Israel. The charges brought against him were threefold: 1) You have scorned My sacrifices and offerings, 2) You have honored your sons more than Me, and 3) You have fattened yourself on My offerings. “Because of this, Hophni and Phinehas will both die on the same day, and there will never again be an “old man” in your household.” (1 Samuel 2:32, 34, paraphrased) However, God’s message of judgment to Eli ended with a promise: “I will raise up a faithful priest who will do according to what is in my heart and mind. I will firmly establish His house, and He will

minister...always.” The writer of Hebrews tells us the fulfillment of this promise. He says of Jesus, “You are a Priest forever.” (Hebrews 7:21b)

Conclusion

The story of Samuel, Eli, Hophni and Phinehas illustrates three typical human responses to the Lord:

1. Hophni and Phinehas – Hear, but neither listen nor care.
2. Eli – Hears and cares, but still chooses not to live his life for the Lord.
3. Samuel – Hears and cares, and grows in favor with the Lord and man.

Are you a Samuel? Is it your heart’s desire to grow in favor with your Lord? Then you will also grow in favor with godly men and women.

Lastly, the words of Psalm 1 come to mind as we review the contrasting lives illustrated in this chapter. “Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on His law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yield its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.”

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Heavenly Father, we thank You for speaking clearly to us today through Your word. Help us to be like Samuel who listened attentively when You spoke to him, and then responded obediently to Your Word. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

1 Samuel 3:1-9

1. Young Samuel ministered before the Lord under the direction of Eli the priest. What are we told about the "word of the Lord" at that time?

2. How would you describe the availability of the "word of the Lord" (the Bible) in our world today? _____
3. Where was Samuel's resting place at night? Why would this be a wonderful place to rest? (1 Chronicles 13: 6, Psalms 91:1)

4. Who called young Samuel, and how did he respond?

 - a. What does Samuel's response tell us about him?

5. Is there an area of ministry into which the Lord has called you? Please share it with your group.

6. Why did Samuel not realize that it was the Lord calling to him?

7. It appears that by the third time Samuel ran to Eli's side, Eli realized that it was the Lord calling young Samuel. What did Eli tell Samuel to do?

1 Samuel 3:10-18

8. How did Samuel know that the Lord was calling him, and not some other person?

 - a. Does the Lord also call each of us? (Isaiah 43:1b)

9. What beautiful truths did Jesus tell us about His name and His voice? (John 10: 3-5)

10. How are we told the people of Israel would react to the news of God's punishment carried out against Eli's family?

11. List three reasons the Lord gave for bringing punishment to the house of Eli.
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-
-
12. What statement is made in scripture which would lead us to believe that Eli's sons did not inherit eternal life?
-
-
13. What negative emotion kept Samuel from telling Eli that which God had entrusted him to tell? _____
- a. How did Eli help to ease Samuel's troubled heart?
-
14. We are told that Samuel was called by the Lord on four occasions in this chapter. How did he respond the first three times?
-
- a. How did he respond the fourth time? _____
15. Eli had failed as a parent. State your opinion of Eli's answer to young Samuel when Samuel told him of God's coming judgment on him and his family.
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16. There is an old saying, "Never send a boy to do a man's work." However, that is just what the Lord did in young Samuel's life. Why might He have given Samuel such a "man-sized" job as his first assignment?
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1 Samuel 2:19-21

17. What remarkable statement is made about the words which Samuel spoke and would speak in the future?
-
-
18. Why did all of Israel recognize Samuel as a prophet of the Lord?
-
19. How did the Lord continue to reveal Himself to Samuel?
-
20. How does the Lord continue to reveal Himself to us today? (2 Timothy 3:14-17, John 16:13-15)
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FIRST SAMUEL

Lois Engelbart

Samuel, God's Child: 1 Samuel 3:1-3

We are told that "the boy Samuel ministered before the Lord." Samuel was a young man called by God and dedicated to the Lord, and he served the Lord with a sincere heart. What an example young Samuel is to boys and girls today, as well as to adults.

Since Samuel was walking so closely with the Lord, the evil which he saw in Eli's household must have greatly bothered him. But it was not his place to point out the evil in their lives. Samuel's duty was to live his life walking before the Lord as His child. Our lives, like Samuel's, should remain pure and uncluttered in a world which surrounds us with temptation to do evil.

Samuel lived in God's temple. His bed was very close to the Ark of God. This constituted being in the very presence of Almighty God as he slept. Psalm 91:1 tells us, "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty." This is where Samuel rested.

The Lord Calls to Samuel: 1 Samuel 3:4-10

While Samuel was lying in his bed next to the Ark of God, the Lord called to him. Samuel did not recognize God's voice, but he did respond to God's call. He ran and reported for duty to Eli, whom God had placed over him. What a pity that after all of the years Eli had spent in God's temple, in the presence of God's Ark, he failed to immediately recognize God's voice. But he did. He told Samuel to "go back to bed." Samuel wasn't back in bed for very long before the Lord called to him a second time. Samuel again ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, you called me." What an obedient, willing heart young Samuel had. Sadly, Eli again failed to recognize that God was calling young Samuel, so he again sent him back to bed. But the Lord did not give up as we might, and say "What's the use? I failed to reach Samuel and Eli twice." Instead, the Lord kept calling, a third and yet a fourth time. What a comfort it is to know that the Lord never gives up on us. He is persistent and consistent in His call on our lives.

The third time God called, Samuel was again sent back to bed. But the fourth time was different. God's call was the same as before, but Samuel's response was different. Eli had had time to ponder what the Lord was trying to do in young Samuel's life, so he instructed Samuel this time to respond "Speak Lord, for Your servant is listening."