

The Book of 1 Samuel

9

Morning Devotions

Select a passage in God’s Word. Talk with the Lord as you read the passage, then go back and find one or two verses which the Lord has impressed on your heart and meditate on them.

Morning Study

This morning we start reading the book of **1 Samuel**. Like Joshua, Judges and Ruth before it, this book is a book of history. But unlike the history books you may have studied in school, the storyline of **1 Samuel** is primarily about God. The Lord himself is the main character of **1 Samuel**.

In the Hebrew Canon, the two books of **Samuel** are counted as one book, as are the two books of **Kings** and the two books of **Chronicles**. The twin books of **Samuel** bore the name “Samuel” not because anyone believed Samuel was the author, but because Samuel was the first main character in the story.

The book of **1 Samuel** is really about the first two kings of Israel – Saul and David. Samuel’s role in the story is one of “kingmaker.” At the direction of the Lord, he anoints both Saul and David as kings of Israel. We await **2 Samuel** for David’s actual reign (even though he is anointed as king within the narrative of **1 Samuel**).

The book of **1 Samuel** can be divided quite easily into two parts:

- The rule of Samuel – **chapters 1-12**
- The rule of Saul – **chapters 13-31**

Samuel is the last of Israel’s judges (**7:15; 8:1-4**) and Saul is the first of Israel’s kings, and so **1 Samuel** acts as a bridge between these two grand epochs of Israel’s history – the judgedom of **Judges** and the kingdom of **Kings**.

Yet behind the story of both Samuel and Saul rises a young figure – David. There is no doubt that he is the main focus of both **1 Samuel** and **2 Samuel**, quickly grabbing our attention and our loyalty.

Let’s pull up a comfortable chair and read the first half of **1 Samuel** – **chapters 1-15** – in one sitting. Note in this section the two principal events: the loss of the Ark of the Covenant and the anointing of Saul as king over Israel.

Memory Verse

Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

Romans 3:19-20

Here are a few suggestions that may help you to memorize your memory verse:

- ➡ Ask the Lord to help you remember his Word (see [John 14:26](#)).
- ➡ Use the version of the Bible you are most familiar with. What you normally read in your Bible is what you need to be memorizing.
- ➡ Don't just memorize the contents of the verse; memorize its "address" (the verse reference) as well. You can do this by following this pattern: Step 1: **reference**; Step 2: **verse content**; Step 3: **reference**. Then repeat steps 1-3. Note that you are quoting the reference twice as many times as you quote the actual verse content. This gives the verse a clear "reference tag."
- ➡ After you have read your memory verse out aloud several times, try going through your memory verse *without* reading your computer screen.
- ➡ Look up your memory verse in your Bible. Look at its immediate context and read the verses that come before and after your memory verse.
- ➡ Print out your memory verse or jot it down on a piece of paper. Take this paper with you when you go to work or do other daily activities. Meditate on the meaning of the verse throughout the day.
- ➡ During your noon appointment with the Lord, take out your memory verse and go over it again. Talk to the Lord about what this verse means to you personally.
- ➡ In the evening (at either your evening study or your evening devotions), see if you can quote your memory verse from memory. Then, without looking at the memory verse itself, see if you can find it in your Bible.
- ➡ The next day, before you begin committing a new verse to memory, rehearse your previous day's memory verse and see if you can remember it (without cheating!).
- ➡ Finally, at the end of the week (possibly on the Sunday), collect all your week's memory verses, rehearse them and see if you can recall them without reading them. Spend a little extra time on any verses you have difficulty recalling.
- ➡ Remember: Don't just memorize a verse. Put it into practice ([James 1:22](#)). It is not being able to quote a verse from memory that counts. It is His Word *abiding* in your heart that counts ([John 15:7](#)). When you actually apply a verse consistently to your daily life, that is when you *truly* know that verse!