



Leader tip: The “Middle East or Middle Earth” game on DYM is a fun ice breaker that is a good way to remind students of the epic nature of 1-2 Samuel: <https://www.downloadyouthministry.com/p/middle-east-or-middle-earth/games-308.html>

Leader tip: The Bible Project has a great overview video of 1 Samuel: <https://youtu.be/QJOju5Dw0V0>

[Slide 1] Last week we kicked off our series on the books of Samuel. They are a massive epic. A story full of twists and turns, action, betrayal, fighting, and a struggle for the throne. All this pointed to God's coming King; because as much as the drama was at times horrific, it all laid the groundwork for Jesus' future arrival.

[Slide 2] As a reminder:

- It's named after the Prophet Samuel who instituted Israel's monarchy, transitioning them from the Wild West of the Judges to an actual world power.
- It was most likely written almost 3000 years ago after the death of King David, during Solomon's reign.
- We have no idea who wrote it, perhaps multiple authors.
- It was originally one book that was split into two when it was translated from Hebrew into Greek around 2200 years ago.

Last week we looked at the rise of the prophet Samuel and how he played a powerful role in the nation of Israel. Today we pick up when Samuel was an old man.

[Slide 3] *1 Samuel 8:1-3 (NLT) <sup>1</sup> As Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons to be judges over Israel. <sup>2</sup> Joel and Abijah, his oldest sons, held court in Beersheba. <sup>3</sup> But they were not like their father, for they were greedy for money. They accepted bribes and perverted justice.*

Sound familiar? It's not the first time Israel had a good leader who then had corrupt sons. The elders came to Samuel and told him this was no good,

that his sons could not be their judges because they weren't like him. Then came the kicker. They said:

[Slide 4] *1 Samuel 8:5b (NLT) "Give us a king to judge us like all the other nations have."*

Like all the other nations. The whole point of why God had set them up the way He had, with judges and prophets, was that God was to be their King, with His instructions given to them through these chosen people, like Samuel. God wanted them to be **DIFFERENT** from all the other nations, and here they were saying, "We want to be like them."

This didn't go over well. Samuel was ticked. He told God, and God wasn't happy either, but He did something unexpected: He told Samuel to give them what they wanted even though they were rejecting God. He also told Samuel to warn them first what having a human king would mean:

[Slide 5] *1 Samuel 8:11-18 (NLT) <sup>11</sup> "This is how a king will reign over you," Samuel said. "The king will draft your sons and assign them to his chariots and his charioteers, making them run before his chariots. <sup>12</sup> Some will be generals and captains in his army, some will be forced to plow in his fields and harvest his crops, and some will make his weapons and chariot equipment. <sup>13</sup> The king will take your daughters from you and force them to cook and bake and make perfumes for him. <sup>14</sup> He will take away the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves and give them to his own officials. [Slide 6] <sup>15</sup> He will take a tenth of your grain and your grape harvest and distribute it among his officers and attendants. <sup>16</sup> He will take your male and female slaves and demand the finest of your cattle and donkeys for his own use. <sup>17</sup> He will demand a tenth of your flocks, and you will be his slaves. <sup>18</sup> When that day comes, you will beg for relief from this king you are demanding, but then the Lord will not help you."*

Wow. Not great. But it didn't make a difference. The Israelites had made up their minds. They thought a human king was the only answer, that that would fix all their problems. So, God told Samuel to give them a king. In fact, 1 Samuel goes on to describe that God led Samuel to find a young man who would be the perfect candidate in human eyes to be king.

[Slide 7] *1 Samuel 9:2 (NLT) Saul was the most handsome man in Israel—head and shoulders taller than anyone else in the land.*

Saul was the whole package. He looked good. He was tall – and in a culture where he would need to be viewed as the top warrior leading their armies to defend them, his stature would be viewed as a sign of his strength.

But there is already a red flag, isn't there? He was the perfect candidate in human eyes.

Samuel followed God's leading and anointed Saul to be king. He then called all the people together to reveal and anoint him publicly. The people were so excited, and when the big moment arrived ... Saul had disappeared. He was hiding. Yeah. Not good.

Well, a month later, in 1 Samuel 11, Saul led the people in battle for the first time as king. The Ammonites had amassed their army to attack them. But Saul led them to victory. This sealed the deal in the people's minds; Saul was the king they had longed for. He looked good. He was tall. Yeah, it was weird he hid, but man, he kicked those Ammonites' butts.

Time passed, and the Israelites had a growing conflict with the Philistines. Saul led the Israelites in some guerilla-type warfare against the Philistines; small squadrons that did a lot of damage, but then the Philistines put together a massive army and set up camp, ready to invade. They were going to drop the hammer.

This army was so massive it terrified the Israelites. Many of them went into hiding. Even Saul's army was afraid. Samuel had told Saul he would come and do offerings before they went into battle, seeking God's blessing for the Israelite army. And that's where we pick up in 1 Samuel 13:

[Slide 8] *1 Samuel 13:7b-14 (NLT) <sup>7b</sup> Saul stayed at Gilgal, and his men were trembling with fear. <sup>8</sup> Saul waited there seven days for Samuel, as Samuel had instructed him earlier, but Samuel still didn't come. Saul realized that his troops were rapidly slipping away. <sup>9</sup> So he demanded, "Bring me the burnt offering and the peace offerings!" And Saul sacrificed the burnt offering himself. <sup>10</sup> Just as Saul was finishing with the burnt offering, Samuel arrived. Saul went out to meet and welcome him, <sup>11</sup> but Samuel said, "What is this you have done?"*

Oh snap. Have you ever had your parent walk in at the most inconvenient moment? When I was a kid, it was almost guaranteed that my dad would

## Week Two | The People's King

### 1 Samuel 8:5b (NLT)

"Give us a king to judge us like all the other nations have."

### 1 Samuel 13:13-14 (NLT)

<sup>13</sup> "How foolish!" Samuel exclaimed. "You have not kept the command the Lord your God gave you. Had you kept it, the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. <sup>14</sup> But now your kingdom must end, for the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart. The Lord has already appointed him to be the leader of his people, because you have not kept the Lord's command."

### 1 Corinthians 3:19a (NLT)

For the wisdom of this world is foolishness to God.

### James 5:8 (NLT)

You, too, must be patient. Take courage, for the coming of the Lord is near.

### Proverbs 11:2 (NLT)

Pride leads to disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.

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1. TRUST GOD'S WISDOM

2. BE PATIENT

3. BE HUMBLE

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why did God not want the people to have a human king? Why do you think God let them have one anyway?
- Are people good at picking out leaders? Why or why not?
- What stands out to you about Saul? Why?
- What emotions do you think Saul felt while waiting?
- What do you think about the consequence for Saul? Was it fair? Why or why not?
- What does it look like to trust God's wisdom? Who do you know who is good at trusting God's wisdom?
- Read James 5:8. In what ways does it take courage to be patient?
- What is a situation where you had to trust God and be patient? What happened?
- Why is being humble difficult? Has there been a time where you let pride get the best of you? What happened? How could being humble have made a difference?



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