

# Bible Challenge 2018

## Week 10: March 4-10

### Outline:

1 Samuel 1: The Birth of Samuel  
1 Samuel 2:1-11: Hannah's Song  
1 Samuel 2:12-36: Eli and his Wicked Sons  
1 Samuel 3: The Call of Samuel  
1 Samuel 4-5: The Capture of the Ark  
1 Samuel 7: Samuel as Judge over Israel  
1 Samuel 8-10: Saul becomes King  
1 Samuel 11: Saul Restores the Kingdom  
1 Samuel 12: Samuel Steps Down from his Judgeship  
1 Samuel 13-15: Saul's Battles against Israel's Enemies  
1 Samuel 16: David Anointed King  
1 Samuel 17: David and Goliath  
1 Samuel 18-27: Saul's Pursuit of David  
1 Samuel 28: Saul and the Witch of Endor  
1 Samuel 29-30: David's Battles  
1 Samuel 31: Saul and Jonathan's Death

1 Samuel is the account of the transition of Israel from being led by Judges and regional rulers to the establishment of a monarchy. It covers a period of about 100 years, from about 1120 BC to 1020 BC and begins with the account of Samuel's birth and ends with the account of Saul's death. As a whole, the book contrasts the work of men with the designs of God and how man always loses when the two are at odds. It should be noted that in the Hebrew Bible, 1 and 2 Samuel are considered a single book, their length simply fills two scrolls.

### The Birth of Samuel

The birth of Samuel is a familiar story to many of us. His mother, Hannah, had been barren and was desperate to have a child. Eli, the Priest, initially saw her prayers to be that of a drunken woman and reproved her only to find his error and blessed her. The child she would bear (the first of six children), would be named Samuel, would be anointed as a Nazirite from birth, and would stay at the altar in ministry.

### Hannah's Song

What we have here is Hannah's song of praise to God for the giving of Samuel. There are two things that I really want to highlight about these verses. The first is that we ought to notice the theological depth to this song. Here is a woman who not only knows her scriptures, but she understands how the promise of God is laid out in her life and in the life of his people. How often the songs we sing pale compared to Hannah's song when it comes to such depths.

The second thing is to notice how similar the themes of Hannah's song are to the themes of Mary's song. And in many ways, Samuel is a foreshadow of the Messiah, Jesus, to come.

### Eli and His Wicked Sons

In the rest of chapter 2 we are introduced to Samuel's sons, Hophni and Phinehas. These men have been abusing their role as priest to serve their own ends, accepting monies for themselves. When Eli seeks to rebuke them, they fail to listen. What is interesting is that we are told that the reason they failed to listen was because God willed it that these sons of Eli would be put to death (see 2:25). Once again we see the account of God being sovereign not only over the lives of his Elect whom he will redeem, but also over the lives of the reprobate, whom he will keep under judgment (2 Peter 2:9). These sons of Eli, God rejects and Samuel will rise up in their place.

### The Call of Samuel

There is a hymn from the 1980's, written by Dan Schutte, that many of you may be familiar with, entitled "Here I am, Lord." Usually hymnals attribute the hymn to Isaiah 6, but it fits the context of 1 Samuel 3 much better. The calling is simple, Samuel has been serving the Priest as a young boy and God utters a call. Samuel does not realize that it is God at first, but under the guidance of Samuel, he responds. Interestingly, the first task that Samuel is given is that of telling Eli that his house will soon be under the punishment of God for the iniquity of his sons.

### The Capture of the Ark

The death of Eli and his sons are part of the events surrounding the capturing of the Ark of the Covenant by the Philistines. A little background in ancient warfare is helpful in understanding the events that transpire. Commonly, ancient relics were taken on the Battlefields as a kind of token of their god's support. It boosted morale and as long as the relic was in sight of the soldiers, the soldiers would fight harder and advance with it. Of course, when the totem was taken, it was treated as if their god had failed them (or been displeased with them) or had been beaten by the god of their enemies. If you recall that the motivation for raising up Saul as king was that the people wanted to be like their neighboring nations with a king of their own, then you can see how they thought, "our enemies bring out the sign of their god, why don't we bring out the sign of our God — we are sure to win." Yet, God will not be mocked nor will be treated as just another god of the nations to be used at the whim of man. And so, not only are the soldiers defeated, but God permits the Ark to be taken into Philistine custody.

Of course, it does not remain in their custody for long as God also pours out his wrath on the Philistines for taking the Ark. And so, the Philistines sent it back with a gold tribute. Then, it remained in the house of Abinadab for two Decades before David brings it down to Jerusalem.

### Samuel as Judge and Saul as King

And so, the baton is passed not just from Samuel to Saul but also from the era of Judges to the era of Kings. What needs to be stressed is that the problem was not that Israel wanted a king, but it was because Israel wanted a king *like the other nations*. Essentially, they wanted a king in their own timing and of their own making rather than a king of God's making in God's timing.

And so, Saul is raised up because he is tall, strong, and handsome...gee, that is much the same basis as Americans often elect their presidents...sorry, I couldn't resist the reminder that we aren't that different than those who lived in ancient times.

### Saul Restores the Kingdom and Samuel Steps Down

One of the primary roles of a king in ancient times was to lead the armies (which is, by the way, why the President of the United States is the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. military, it is based on this ancient model). And so, Saul does what a King should do and starts fighting against Israel's enemies to establish their borders. As he is doing this, Samuel steps down from his official capacities, though he continues as a prophet and even as a judge, until his death.

### David Anointed as King and Slays Goliath, Saul's Pursuit and the Witch

Most of us know the story of David's call as well as we know the story of Samuel's. David stands in stark contrast to Saul. He is small, ruddy, and the youngest child in his family, but he has a heart of faith, hence he is chosen and anointed the King (though he will not assume that role until Saul's death).

Notice that when David slays Goliath, he is already Israel's Anointed King (Saul just doesn't know it yet). But David is already acting as a King, taking a stand against Israel's enemy and tearing them down. Soon a jealousy builds up because David is slaying more Philistines than Saul is. Why is this? The one who fights for Israel is the Lord and against the Lord no one can stand. David fights in that strength while Saul relies on his own.

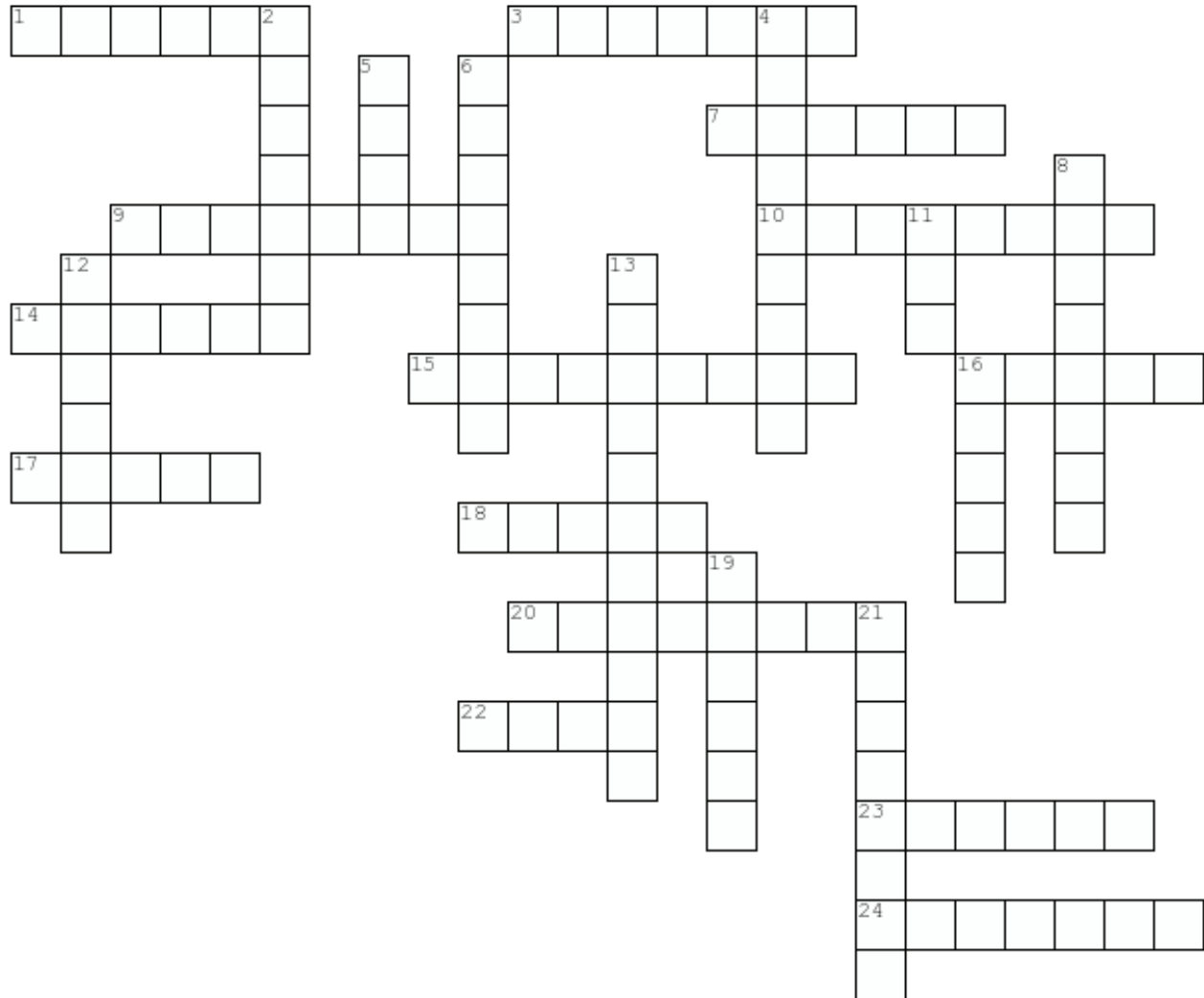
Saul will pursue David, seeking to preserve the throne for his own son, Jonathan. Space does not allow us to explore all of the exploits here, but we can once again say that God preserves his own while frustrating the plans of his enemies.

### Saul and Jonathan's Deaths

This book closes with the noble deaths of Saul and Jonathan. The book begins and ends on a sad note — a barren woman on one hand and a dead father and son on the other. Such is the consequence of man pursuing his own ends and timing rather than trusting in God's.

# Week 10: 1 Samuel

Complete the crossword below



Created with [TheTeachersCorner.net](http://TheTeachersCorner.net) [Crossword Puzzle Generator](#)

## Across

1. The Philistines gave this city to David.
3. This is the name of Samuel's father.
7. David's first wife and Saul's Daughter.
9. David's best friend and Saul's son.
10. The name of the stone that Samuel placed between Mizpah and Shen.
14. Saul was proclaimed king here.
15. Saul gets in trouble because he offers this instead of Samuel.
16. God made Eli's sons stubborn because he wanted to put them to \_\_\_\_\_.
17. Goliath had taunted Israel for this many days before David slew him.
18. David's father.
20. The Ark of the Covenant would remain in this man's house for 20 years.
22. When the people gave the Ark back, it came with an offering of golden \_\_\_\_\_ and tumors.
23. Saul meets a witch from En-Dor to bring back this person's soul for advice.
24. A wise woman married to a foolish man.

## Down

2. David took this person's sword from the Tabernacle.
4. This priest assists David as he flees Saul.
5. David hid in the wilderness of \_\_\_\_\_ hiding from Saul until Saul went there.
6. One of the wicked sons of Eli.
8. Saul was of this tribe.
11. Saul slew the priests of this city for assisting David.
12. Saul and Jonathan were slain on this mountain.
13. The Ark of the Covenant was captured by these peoples.
16. The name of the idol that was found bowed before the Ark of the Covenant.
19. This is the mother of Samuel.
21. Saul's dead body was fastened to the wall of this city.