

April 17, 2016

## Kings and Prophets

1 Samuel 3-7

By Kirk Gambrell

Vol. 6 Num. 16

### Using This Study

#### ❶ EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? Open your time with prayer. The words God uses to communicate matters, so go back and pay close attention to the details that are emphasized or repeated in the passage.

#### ❷ EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN? Asking questions of the text helps surface how the details relate to the message God wants to communicate.

#### ❸ EMBRACE His Word

Why does it MATTER to me? Embrace God by responding to what you discover in His word in faith and obedience.



Through First Samuel, it will be important to take some larger sections of scripture in order to see the big picture of what God is doing. The nation of Israel has turned from God and His ways, along with the leadership of Eli and his two sons, Hophni and Phineas. God is raising up a new prophet to lead Israel back to Him. In these five chapters, we will see God calling out to a new prophet, Samuel. God will also deal with the rebellion of Hophni and Phineas; preparing Israel to receive their new leader that will proclaim the Word of the Lord.



## Read 1 Samuel 3-7 (NET)

<sup>3</sup> <sup>1</sup> Now the boy Samuel continued serving the Lord under Eli's supervision. Word from the Lord was rare in those days; revelatory visions were infrequent.

<sup>2</sup> Eli's eyes had begun to fail, so that he was unable to see well. At that time he was lying down in his place, <sup>3</sup> and the lamp of God had not yet been extinguished. Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord as well; the ark of God was also there.

<sup>4</sup> The Lord called to Samuel, and he replied, "Here I am!" <sup>5</sup> Then he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But Eli said, "I didn't call you. Go back and lie down." So he went back and lay down.

<sup>6</sup> The Lord again called, "Samuel!" So Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But Eli said, "I didn't call you, my son. Go back and lie down."

<sup>7</sup> Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord; the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. <sup>8</sup> Then the Lord called Samuel a third time. So he got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me!" Eli then realized that it was the Lord who was calling the boy. <sup>9</sup> So Eli said to Samuel, "Go back and lie down. When he calls you, say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went back and lay down in his place.

<sup>10</sup> Then the Lord came and stood nearby, calling as he had previously done, "Samuel! Samuel!" Samuel replied, "Speak, for your servant is listening!" <sup>11</sup> The Lord said to Samuel, "Look! I am about to do something in Israel; when anyone hears about it, both of his ears will tingle. <sup>12</sup> On that day I will carry out against Eli everything that I spoke about his house—from start to finish! <sup>13</sup> You should tell him that I am about to judge his house forever because of the sin that he knew about. For his sons were cursing God, and he did not rebuke them.

<sup>14</sup> Therefore I swore an oath to the house of Eli, 'The sin of the house of Eli can never be forgiven by sacrifice or by grain offering.'"

<sup>15</sup> So Samuel lay down until morning. Then he opened the doors of the Lord's house. But Samuel was afraid to tell Eli about the vision. <sup>16</sup> However, Eli called Samuel and said, "Samuel, my son!" He replied, "Here I am." <sup>17</sup> Eli said, "What message did he speak to you? Don't conceal it from me. God will judge you severely if you conceal from me anything that he said to you!"

<sup>18</sup> So Samuel told him everything. He did not hold back anything from him. Eli said, "The Lord will do what he pleases." <sup>19</sup> Samuel continued to grow, and the Lord was with him. None of his prophecies fell

to the ground unfulfilled. <sup>20</sup> All Israel from Dan to Beer Sheba realized that Samuel was confirmed as a prophet of the Lord. <sup>21</sup> Then the Lord again appeared in Shiloh, for it was in Shiloh that the Lord had revealed himself to Samuel through the word of the Lord.

<sup>4</sup> <sup>1</sup> Samuel revealed the word of the Lord to all Israel. Then the Israelites went out to fight the Philistines. They camped at Ebenezer, and the Philistines camped at Aphek. <sup>2</sup> The Philistines arranged their forces to fight Israel. As the battle spread out, Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand men in the battle line in the field.

<sup>3</sup> When the army came back to the camp, the elders of Israel said, "Why did the Lord let us be defeated today by the Philistines? Let's take with us the ark of the covenant of the Lord from Shiloh. When it is with us, it will save us from the hand of our enemies.

<sup>4</sup> So the army sent to Shiloh, and they took from there the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts who sits between the cherubim. Now the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God. <sup>5</sup> When the ark of the covenant of the Lord arrived at the camp, all Israel shouted so loudly that the ground shook.

<sup>6</sup> When the Philistines heard the sound of the shout, they said, "What is this loud shout in the camp of the Hebrews?" Then they realized that the ark of the Lord had arrived at the camp. <sup>7</sup> The Philistines were scared because they thought that gods had come to the camp. They said, "Too bad for us! We've never seen anything like this! <sup>8</sup> Too bad for us! Who can deliver us from the hand of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with all sorts of plagues in the desert! <sup>9</sup> Be strong and act like men, you Philistines, or else you will wind up serving the Hebrews the way they have served you! Act like men and fight!"

<sup>10</sup> So the Philistines fought. Israel was defeated; they all ran home. The slaughter was very great; thirty thousand foot soldiers fell in battle. <sup>11</sup> The ark of God was taken, and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, were killed.

<sup>12</sup> On that day a Benjaminite ran from the battle lines and came to Shiloh. His clothes were torn and dirt was on his head. <sup>13</sup> When he arrived in Shiloh, Eli was sitting in his chair watching by the side of the road, for he was very worried about the ark of God. As the man entered the city to give his report,

the whole city cried out.

<sup>14</sup> When Eli heard the outcry, he said, "What is this commotion?" The man quickly came and told Eli.

<sup>15</sup> Now Eli was ninety-eight years old and his eyes looked straight ahead; he was unable to see.

<sup>16</sup> The man said to Eli, "I am the one who came from the battle lines! Just today I fled from the battle lines!" Eli asked, "How did things go, my son?"

<sup>17</sup> The messenger replied, "Israel has fled from the Philistines! The army has suffered a great defeat! Your two sons, Hophni and Phineas, are dead! The ark of God has been captured!"

<sup>18</sup> When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell backward from his chair beside the gate. He broke his neck and died, for he was old and heavy. He had judged Israel for forty years.

<sup>19</sup> His daughter-in-law, the wife of Phineas, was pregnant and close to giving birth. When she heard that the ark of God was captured and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she doubled over and gave birth. But her labor pains were too much for her. <sup>20</sup> As she was dying, the women who were there with her said, "Don't be afraid! You have given birth to a son!" But she did not reply or pay any attention.

<sup>21</sup> She named the boy Ichabod, saying, "The glory has departed from Israel," referring to the capture of the ark of God and the deaths of her father-in-law and her husband. <sup>22</sup> She said, "The glory has departed from Israel, because the ark of God has been captured."

<sup>51</sup> Now the Philistines had captured the ark of God and brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. <sup>2</sup> The Philistines took the ark of God and brought it into the temple of Dagon, where they positioned it beside Dagon. <sup>3</sup> When the residents of Ashdod got up early the next day, Dagon was lying on the ground before the ark of the Lord. So they took Dagon and set him back in his place. <sup>4</sup> But when they got up early the following day, Dagon was again lying on the ground before the ark of the Lord. The head of Dagon and his two hands were sheared off and were lying at the threshold. Only Dagon's body was left intact. <sup>5</sup> (For this reason, to this very day, neither Dagon's priests nor anyone else who enters Dagon's temple step on Dagon's threshold in Ashdod.)

<sup>6</sup> The Lord attacked the residents of Ashdod severely, bringing devastation on them. He struck the people of both Ashdod and the surrounding area with sores. <sup>7</sup> When the people of Ashdod saw what was happening, they said, "The ark of the God of Israel should not remain with us, for he has

attacked both us and our god Dagon!"

<sup>8</sup> So they assembled all the leaders of the Philistines and asked, "What should we do with the ark of the God of Israel?" They replied, "The ark of the God of Israel should be moved to Gath." So they moved the ark of the God of Israel.

<sup>9</sup> But after it had been moved the Lord attacked that city as well, causing a great deal of panic. He struck all the people of that city with sores. <sup>10</sup> So they sent the ark of God to Ekron.

But when the ark of God arrived at Ekron, the residents of Ekron cried out saying, "They have brought the ark of the God of Israel here to kill our people!" <sup>11</sup> So they assembled all the leaders of the Philistines and said, "Get the ark of the God of Israel out of here! Let it go back to its own place so that it won't kill us and our people!" The terror of death was throughout the entire city; God was attacking them very severely there. <sup>12</sup> The people who did not die were struck with sores; the city's cry for help went all the way up to heaven.

<sup>61</sup> When the ark of the Lord had been in the land of the Philistines for seven months, <sup>2</sup> the Philistines called the priests and the omen readers, saying, "What should we do with the ark of the Lord? Advise us as to how we should send it back to its place."

<sup>3</sup> They replied, "If you are going to send the ark of the God of Israel back, don't send it away empty. Be sure to return it with a guilt offering. Then you will be healed, and you will understand why his hand is not removed from you." <sup>4</sup> They inquired, "What is the guilt offering that we should send to him?" They replied, "The Philistine leaders number five. So send five gold sores and five gold mice, for it is the same plague that has afflicted both you and your leaders. <sup>5</sup> You should make images of the sores and images of the mice that are destroying the land. You should honor the God of Israel. Perhaps he will release his grip on you, your gods, and your land. <sup>6</sup> Why harden your hearts like the Egyptians and Pharaoh did? When God treated them harshly, didn't the Egyptians send the Israelites on their way? <sup>7</sup> So now go and make a new cart. Get two cows that have calves and that have never had a yoke placed on them. Harness the cows to the cart and take their calves from them back to their stalls. <sup>8</sup> Then take the ark of the Lord and place it on the cart, and put in a chest beside it the gold objects you are sending to him as a guilt offering. You should then send it on its way. <sup>9</sup> But keep an eye on it. If it should go up by the way of its own border to Beth Shemesh, then he has brought

this great calamity on us. But if that is not the case, then we will know that it was not his hand that struck us; rather, it just happened to us by accident.”

<sup>10</sup> So the men did as instructed. They took two cows that had calves and harnessed them to a cart; they also removed their calves to their stalls.

<sup>11</sup> They put the ark of the Lord on the cart, along with the chest, the gold mice, and the images of the sores. <sup>12</sup> Then the cows went directly on the road to Beth Shemesh. They went along, mooing as they went; they turned neither to the right nor to the left. The leaders of the Philistines were walking along behind them all the way to the border of Beth Shemesh.

<sup>13</sup> Now the residents of Beth Shemesh were harvesting wheat in the valley. When they looked up and saw the ark, they were pleased at the sight.

<sup>14</sup> The cart was coming to the field of Joshua, who was from Beth Shemesh. It paused there near a big stone. Then they cut up the wood of the cart and offered the cows as a burnt offering to the Lord.

<sup>15</sup> The Levites took down the ark of the Lord and the chest that was with it, which contained the gold objects. They placed them near the big stone. At that time the people of Beth Shemesh offered burnt offerings and made sacrifices to the Lord. <sup>16</sup> The five leaders of the Philistines watched what was happening and then returned to Ekron on the same day.

<sup>17</sup> These are the gold sores that the Philistines brought as a guilt offering to the Lord—one for each of the following cities: Ashdod, Gaza, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron. <sup>18</sup> The gold mice corresponded in number to all the Philistine cities of the five leaders, from the fortified cities to hamlet villages, to greater Abel, where they positioned the ark of the Lord until this very day in the field of Joshua who was from Beth Shemesh.

<sup>19</sup> But the Lord struck down some of the people of Beth Shemesh because they had looked into the ark of the Lord; he struck down 50,070 of the men. The people grieved because the Lord had struck the people with a hard blow. <sup>20</sup> The residents of Beth Shemesh asked, “Who is able to stand before the Lord, this holy God? To whom will the ark go up from here?”

<sup>21</sup> So they sent messengers to the residents of Kiriath Jearim, saying, “The Philistines have returned the ark of the Lord. Come down here and take it back home with you.”

<sup>7</sup><sup>1</sup> Then the people of Kiriath Jearim came and took the ark of the Lord; they brought it to the house of

Abinadab located on the hill. They consecrated Eleazar his son to guard the ark of the Lord.

<sup>2</sup> It was quite a long time—some twenty years in all—that the ark stayed at Kiriath Jearim. All the people of Israel longed for the Lord. <sup>3</sup> Samuel said to all the people of Israel, “If you are really turning to the Lord with all your hearts, remove from among you the foreign gods and the images of Ashtoreth. Give your hearts to the Lord and serve only him. Then he will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines.” <sup>4</sup> So the Israelites removed the Baals and images of Ashtoreth. They served only the Lord. <sup>5</sup> Then Samuel said, “Gather all Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray to the Lord on your behalf.” <sup>6</sup> After they had assembled at Mizpah, they drew water and poured it out before the Lord. They fasted on that day, and they confessed there, “We have sinned against the Lord.” So Samuel led the people of Israel at Mizpah.

<sup>7</sup> When the Philistines heard that the Israelites had gathered at Mizpah, the leaders of the Philistines went up against Israel. When the Israelites heard about this, they were afraid of the Philistines. <sup>8</sup> The Israelites said to Samuel, “Keep crying out to the Lord our God so that he may save us from the hand of the Philistines!” <sup>9</sup> So Samuel took a nursing lamb and offered it as a whole burnt offering to the Lord. Samuel cried out to the Lord on Israel’s behalf, and the Lord answered him.

<sup>10</sup> As Samuel was offering burnt offerings, the Philistines approached to do battle with Israel. But on that day the Lord thundered loudly against the Philistines. He caused them to panic, and they were defeated by Israel. <sup>11</sup> Then the men of Israel left Mizpah and chased the Philistines, striking them down all the way to an area below Beth Car.

<sup>12</sup> Samuel took a stone and placed it between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying, “Up to here the Lord has helped us.” <sup>13</sup> So the Philistines were defeated; they did not invade Israel again. The hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.

<sup>14</sup> The cities that the Philistines had captured from Israel were returned to Israel, from Ekron to Gath. Israel also delivered their territory from the control of the Philistines. There was also peace between Israel and the Amorites. <sup>15</sup> So Samuel led Israel all the days of his life. <sup>16</sup> Year after year he used to travel the circuit of Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah; he used to judge Israel in all of these places. <sup>17</sup> Then he would return to Ramah, because his home was there. He also judged Israel there and built an altar to the Lord there.

**EXAMINE His Word (Observation)** (For personal preparation)

**What does God SAY? Prayerfully note significant details and terms emphasized in the foregoing passages.**

1. Who is involved in the text? Author, audience, main characters.
2. Where and when is this taking place? Geography and timeline.
3. What actions are carried out or commanded? Look for the verbs.
4. Is there anything repeated?
5. What is emphasized?
6. Is there anything in these passages that is related to other areas of scripture?
7. Are there things to be noted that are alike or unlike such as similes and metaphors?

**② EXPLORE His Word (Interpretation)** (For Community Group discussion)

**What does God MEAN?**

8. In chapter 3, why do you think the first message God gave Samuel was about Eli's house being cut off?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. What is the significance of 3:19 that says none of Samuel's prophecies fell to the ground? (Deut. 18:20-22)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. In chapter 4, why do you think that the Lord allows the Israelites to be defeated even when they take the ark with them?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
11. Why do you think the Lord allowed the ark to fall into Philistine hands?

**③ EMBRACE His Word (Application)** (For Community Group discussion)

**Why does this MATTER to me?**

12. Samuel was established as the prophet for all Israel. Do we have prophets like that today? (Acts 3:19-26)

13. Does God speak through the Holy Spirit today? How is it different than with Samuel? (Gal. 1:6-9; Acts 2:15-21; John 5:31; Heb 1:1-4; 1 Cor. 14:37-38)?

14. When the nation of Israel quit following God's ways along with the leadership of Eli's sons, God turned them over to the Philistines. When we stop following God today, what type of consequences should we expect?

### **Summarize your thoughts on the passage**

Write about what God wants you to KNOW, to FEEL, and to DO...

### **SERMON NOTES**