



FAMILY GRAVITYTM
HOLDING FAMILIES TOGETHER

Bible Study Series

First Samuel Chapters 1-8

**A Bible Study for the
Entire Family**

Written by
Pastor Ken Lawrence

Family Gravity™ Bible Study Series - First Samuel 1-8

Introduction

This study has been designed with families in mind. We encourage you to use it as part of a weekly family study night. There are eleven lessons, which, if done once a week, will provide over two months of family study time. Each lesson contains six parts.

Pray: Begin each lesson by praying a prayer of control. Ask God to speak to you through His Holy Spirit as you study His Word. Ask Him to help you learn something from His Word today that He wants you to learn. Either one of the parents can pray this prayer each time or you can take turns and have a different member of the family pray each night. This helps teach the children how to pray.

Read: After the prayer is the Bible reference to be read followed by a series of questions to help bring out the meaning of the passage. This study is based on the New King James Version but has been checked against the New American Standard Bible, New International Version and King James Version so most questions are appropriate for any translation. If you are using a different translation you will want to read through the passage and review the questions, modifying any questions that are unclear in your translation. Get the entire family involved in reading the Bible passage. It is helpful if the whole family uses the same translation, but it is not necessary. After reading the passage go through each question providing opportunity for all family members to participate. The questions can be answered directly from the passage (literally the answers will be word for word out of the passage). Alternately, parents can make copies of the question and answer sheet and have the children answer them on their own and then gather together and go over the answers together.

Do: Following the reading and question & answer time there is an activity to do. Activities include word puzzles (word search, crossword puzzles, etc.), mazes, and drawings. These are fun activities intended to drive home a part of the lesson just studied.

Discuss: After the “Do” activity there is a discussion section. The discussion section starts with a question intended to invite discussion on the passage. While the questions from the “read” section can be answered directly from the passage, the discussion question requires the student to discuss their own conclusions about the study. If you have really young children you may need to skip or modify this section to suit the needs of your children. Following the discussion question there is a section for the parent to read that helps bring more insight to the Bible passage. This section includes questions that bring the passage down to a personal level.

Implementation: Following the discussing section there is an implementation to help the family apply what they have just learned.

Things To Know / Memory Verse: Each lesson concludes with either “things to know” or a Bible memory verse. “Things to Know” is some interesting additional information that adds to the lesson. Memory verses are selected to help the student remember the point of the lesson.

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We hope you enjoy spending time together with your family as you study First Samuel! Feel free to adapt any questions or activities to meet your family's needs.

About Family Gravity

The mission of Family Gravity™ is to help hold families together. To accomplish this, we publish videos, books, and newsletters and host special events all geared toward helping families build strong bonds that will withstand the attacks of society and governmental institutions. We are here for you, the Christian parent. We pray that the Lord will use us and our products to strengthen your family so you can impact your world for Him.

Family Gravity is a Ministry of Families For Christ Ministries, Inc. a 501(c)3 non-profit ministry.

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Family Gravity™ Bible Study Series - First Samuel 1-8

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Permission is hereby granted to make copies of the Question and Answer sheets and the “Do” activity sheets in sufficient quantities for use by each member of one (1) family. If multiple families are using the study together, each family must acquire their own book from which to make copies.

PLEASE NOTE: Answers to the activity sheets are in the Appendix beginning on page A-1.

Bibliography

All scripture references and memory verses are taken from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

¹Some information in the “Things to Know” section is based on notes from the NIV Study Bible, New International Version. Copyright © 1985 Zondervan Bible Publishers. These items are marked with the footnote “¹”.

²Some information in the “Things to Know” section is based on notes from the Preacher’s Homiletic Commentary, reprinted 2001 by Baker Books, a division of Baker Book House Company. Grand Rapids, MI. These items are marked with the footnote “²”.

Family Gravity™ Bible Study Series - First Samuel 1-8

Lesson 1 - 1 Samuel 1:1-8

Pray: Begin each lesson by praying a prayer of control. Ask God to speak to you through His Holy Spirit as you study His word. Ask Him to help you learn something from His Word today that He wants you to learn.

Read: 1 Samuel 1:1-8

1. How many wives did Elkanah have? (verse 2)

2. What were his wives' names? (verse 2)

3. What was the difference between them? (verse 2)

4. What did Elkanah give to Peninnah and her children? (verse 4)

5. What did he give Hannah? Why? (verse 5)

6. Who was Hannah's rival? (verse 6)

7. What did Hannah's rival do to her? (verse 6)

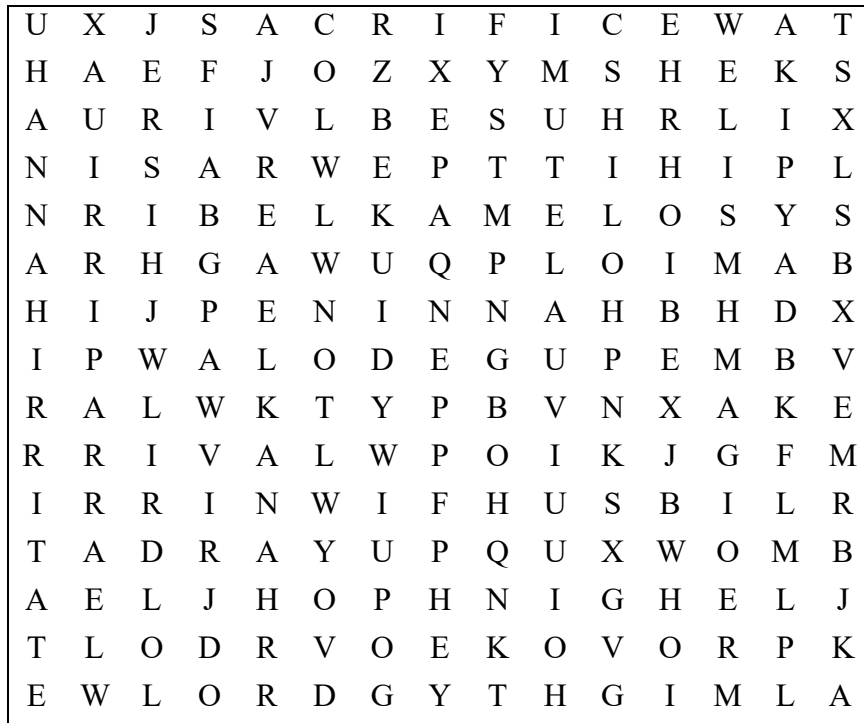
8. How did Hannah react when her rival mistreated her? (verse 7)

9. What did Elkanah say to Hannah when she was upset? (verse 8)

Family Gravity™ Bible Study Series - First Samuel 1-8

Do:

Lesson 1 - Word Search



Find the following words in the puzzle above:

Almighty
Eli
Elkanah
Hannah
Hophni
Husband

Irritate
Lord
Peninnah
Phinehas
Provoke
Rival

Sacrifice
Shiloh
Wept
Wife
Womb

Family Gravity™ Bible Study Series - First Samuel 1-8

Discuss: Lesson 1 - Discussion

Peninnah was mean to Hannah. In verse 6 it says, “And because the Lord had closed her womb, her rival kept provoking her in order to irritate her.” What do you think Peninnah was thinking when she picked on Hannah? What caused her to do it? How did it make Hannah feel?

(Read this after you have finished the above discussion)

People are mean to other people for many different reasons. Sometimes it makes a person feel powerful or better than others when they pick on someone else. Pointing out someone else’s problems helps you hide from your own shortcomings. Peninnah was competing with Hannah for Elkanah’s love. Even though she was able to give him children she knew Elkanah loved Hannah more. This must have really hurt Peninnah’s feelings. To try to make herself feel better and build herself up she picked on and tore down Hannah.

Do you ever provoke or irritate someone? Why do you do it? How do you think it makes the other person feel? (How did Hannah feel when Peninnah picked on her?) Does it really make you feel good to hurt someone else? How does Jesus want you to treat others? (Read Matthew 22:39 to find out)

Implementation:

Make a commitment to be nice to others, not mean. This includes your brothers or sisters!

Things to Know:

Elkanah had two wives. This is called polygamy. Polygamy was a common practice in ancient times but it is not God’s plan for us. God intends for a man to have only one wife. This is called monogamy. In Genesis 2:18 God said that it wasn’t good for Adam to be alone so God decided to make him a (one) helper. Genesis 2:24 says, “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and they will become one flesh.” One man and one woman united as one in marriage. That is God’s plan for us. The Apostle Paul in his letters to Timothy (1 Tim 3:2) and Titus (Titus 1:6) says that in order for a man to be an elder in the church he must be the husband of only one wife.

The first time polygamy takes place in the Bible is in Genesis 4:19 when Lamech married two women. It is presumed by some that he did this to gain a double blessing from God by having twice as many children.

Family Gravity™ Bible Study Series - First Samuel 1-8

Lesson 2 - 1 Samuel 1:9-20

Pray: Begin each lesson by praying a prayer of control. Ask God to speak to you through His Holy Spirit as you study His word. Ask Him to help you learn something from His Word today that He wants you to learn.

Read: 1 Samuel 1:9-20 (review verses 1-8 if necessary)

1. Who was sitting on a chair by the doorpost? (verse 9)

2. Hannah was very upset. In bitterness of soul she _____
_____ (verse 10)

3. When Hannah prayed she made a vow to God. What was her vow? (verse 11)

4. When Eli saw Hannah praying he saw her lips moving but no sounds were coming from her. What did Eli think? (verse 13)

5. What did Eli tell her to do? (verse 14)

6. In verse 15 what did Hannah tell Eli she was doing? (verse 15)

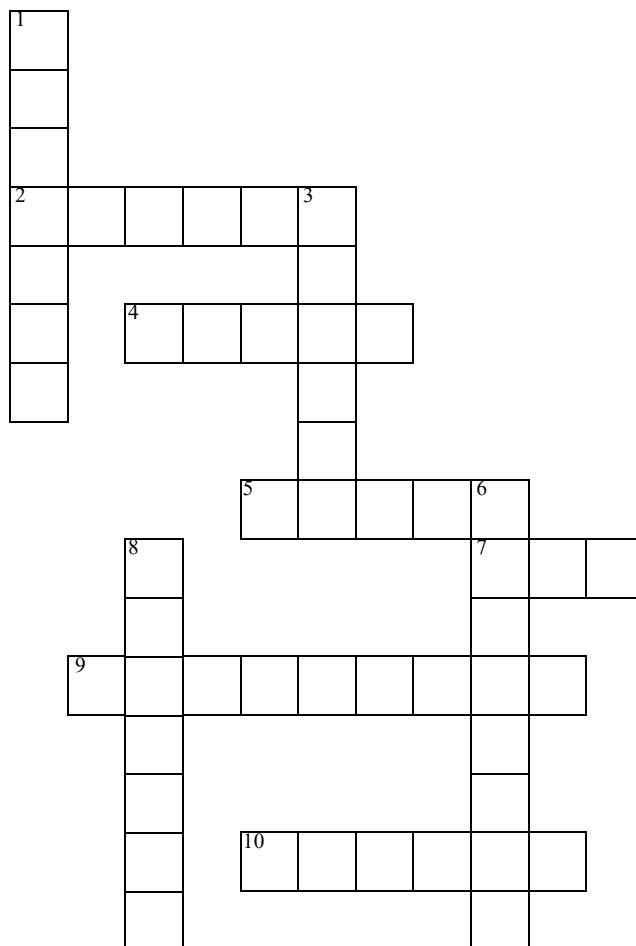
7. When Hannah went home what did the Lord cause to happen? (verse 20)

8. What did Hannah name her son? (verse 20)

Family Gravity™ Bible Study Series - First Samuel 1-8

Do:

Lesson 2 - Crossword Puzzle



Find the following words in the puzzle above:

ACROSS

2. The city Elkanah and Hannah worshipped in. (vs 9)
4. What the Priest thought about Hannah when he saw her praying. (vs 13)
5. What Eli was sitting on. (vs 9)
7. The Priest who was sitting by the door. (vs 9)
9. Another word for "became pregnant." (vs 20)
10. Hannah's son. (vs 20)

DOWN

1. To give praise and honor to God.
3. When _____ prayed her lips moved but no words came out. (vs 13)
6. Hannah asked God to _____ her. (vs 11)
8. Another word for agreement or vow made between two parties, such as Hannah and God (vs 11)

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Discuss: Lesson 2 - Discussion

Eli saw Hannah praying but because she wasn't praying the way he thought she should (that is, praying out loud so he could hear her) he thought she must be drunk. Is it possible for people to worship God in a way that is different from the way you worship Him? Do you think God wants everyone to worship Him and pray to Him in exactly the same way?

(Read this after you have finished the above discussion)

God has created each of us differently. We all have different personalities. We are all unique and special in God's eyes. God wants our relationship with Him to be real and personal. That means the way we worship Him and talk with Him can be unique and special too. It should match our own personality. The personality God gave us.

Have you ever visited a church that did things "different" than yours? How did you feel? What did you think of them? Did you think they were weird? Did you think they were wrong or not Christians? There are some basic beliefs that we all must have to be Christians (these are called essential beliefs). For example, we must believe in the one true God. We must believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that He is God. There are a few other essentials that we as Christians must believe. As long as we agree on these essentials then we are all brothers and sisters in Christ. We should not let the way someone worships the Lord influence what we think of them. Their way of worshiping may not be for us, and that's OK. We should rejoice that they have a personal relationship with the Lord!

Implementation: List some of the things you've seen or heard at other churches that bother you and make you think less of the people there. Honestly review those things and ask yourself if you are right in feeling this way. Make a commitment to be more accepting of worship styles of others as long as they are worshiping Jesus.

Things to Know:

Hannah prayed to God and asked Him to "remember" her. To "remember" someone in the Bible is not merely to recall that they exist. It is to express concern for someone, to act with loving care for them.¹ God remembered Hannah by allowing her to become pregnant and give birth to a son, as she had asked.

Family Gravity™ Bible Study Series - First Samuel 1-8

Lesson 3 - 1 Samuel 1:21-28

Pray: Begin each lesson by praying a prayer of control. Ask God to speak to you through His Holy Spirit as you study His word. Ask Him to help you learn something from His Word today that He wants you to learn.

Read: 1 Samuel 1:21-28 (review verses 1-20 if necessary)

1. When Elkanah went to offer his annual sacrifice to the Lord why didn't Hannah go with him? (verse 22)

2. What did Elkanah say when Hannah told him she did not want to go with him? (verse 23)

3. How long did Hannah keep Samuel before giving him to Eli? (verse 23-24) (see "Things to Know" for more information on this)

4. What did Hannah take with her when she took Samuel to Eli? (verse 24)

5. What did Hannah tell Eli about herself? (verse 26)

6. What did Hannah tell Eli about Samuel? (verse 27)

7. For how long was Samuel given over to the Lord? (verse 28)

8. Where did Samuel worship the Lord? (verse 28)

Family Gravity™ Bible Study Series - First Samuel 1-8

Do:

Lesson 3 - Word Puzzle

Fill in the blanks for the word or words described by the clues below. Once the words are complete, use the numbered letters to create a message to you from today's lesson.

1. 2 1
2. 14 12 3
3. 7 , 6 10, 13 15
4. 4 8 5
5. 11 16 9

Clues

1. Hannah's husband (vs 21)
2. Hannah's son (vs 20)
3. What Hannah brought to the temple with her son (vs 24)
4. Hannah said "I _____ for this child and the Lord granted me what I asked." (vs 27)
5. Samuel _____ the Lord in Shiloh with Eli (vs 28)

Find the hidden message

Fill in the blanks below with the corresponding numbered letters from above to reveal a hidden message.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

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Discuss: Lesson 3 - Discussion

Hannah made a vow (a promise) to God. She said that if God gave her a son she would give him back to God. God agreed and gave her a son. Hannah now had a decision to make. She finally had the son she had wanted all her life. But she had promised to give him back to God. Do you think it was difficult for her to give up Samuel, even though she was giving him up to God? What might have happened if she had decided not to give him up?

(Read this after you have finished the above discussion)

Making a vow with God was very common in the Old Testament time. The relationship God had with the nation of Israel was one of physical blessings and rewards when they kept their part of a vow, and physical punishments when they went back on their word. In verse 21 it says that Elkanah went up to offer the annual sacrifice to the Lord and to fulfill his vow. It would have been common for Elkanah to make an annual vow to God as he prayed for God to provide a good harvest of his crops and to multiply his flocks. If at the end of the year Elkanah returned a portion of his harvest and flocks to the Lord, the Lord would bless him again next year. If he went back on his vow and did not give God His share, God would punish him by giving him a bad crop or allow his livestock to die.

Hannah was very familiar with this system of reward for faithfulness and punishment for disobedience. It would have been difficult for her to give up her only son but she knew that if she did not keep her part of the vow, God would punish her severely. God's punishment could have been anything up to, or including, taking her life or even taking Samuel's life. She knew she must keep her vow.

Implementation:

God's relationship with the Christian church is different than His relationship with Israel. The vow, which is called the New Covenant, does not promise physical blessing for this life. Instead God promises us spiritual blessings for our eternal life. Some of the same principles of the Old Covenant still apply, however. God still expects you to keep your promises. Not only the promises you make to Him but any promise you make with anyone. We represent Jesus to the world around us. If we don't keep our promises our reputation is ruined and so is Jesus' reputation. If we want people to believe us when we tell them about Jesus they must have a trust in us first. The quickest way to lose someone's trust is to break a promise you make to them.

Make a commitment today to keep all of your promises.

Things to Know:

It was customary in Bible times, especially in the Middle East, for women to nurse their children up to the age of three, and sometimes even longer¹. So Hannah probably kept Samuel for the first three years of his life before giving him to the Lord.

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Lesson 4 - 1 Samuel 2:1-11

Pray: Begin each lesson by praying a prayer of control. Ask God to speak to you through His Holy Spirit as you study His word. Ask Him to help you learn something from His Word today that He wants you to learn.

Read: 1 Samuel 2:1-11

1. Hannah has just given her son Samuel to God. You would think she would be very sad. How does she say she feels in her prayer? (verse 1)

2. What does Hannah say about God? What does that show about how she feels about God? (verse 2)

3. What happens to the bow of the warrior? Those who stumbled? (verse 4)

4. What happens to those who were full? Those who were hungry? (verse 5)

5. What happens to she who was barren? She who had many sons? (verse 5)

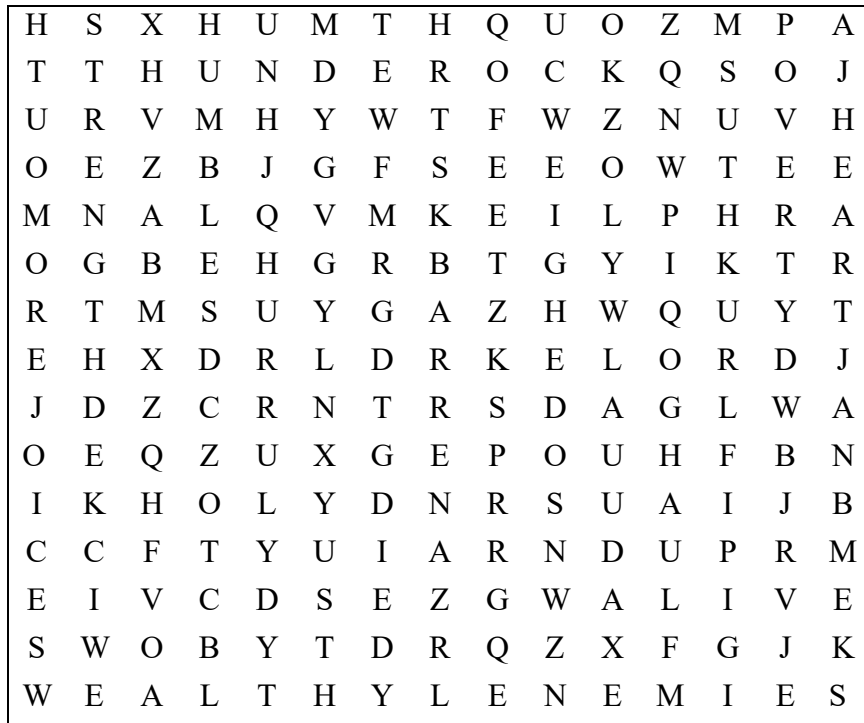
6. According to Hannah's prayer what does God do for the poor and needy? (verse 8)

7. Elkanah went home but what happened to Samuel? (verse 11)

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Do:

Lesson 4 – Word Search



Find the following words from Hannah's prayer in the puzzle above:

Alive

Barren

Bows

Enemies

Feet

Foundations

Heart

Hire

Holy

Humbles

Hungry

Lord

Mouth

Poverty

Rejoices

Rock

Strength

Thunder

Wealth

Weighed

Wicked

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Discuss: Lesson 4 - Discussion

Verse 3 says, “Do not keep talking so proudly or let your mouth speak such arrogance, for the Lord is a God who knows, and by Him deeds are weighed.” Who do you think Hannah was talking to in this verse? What did she mean by “the Lord is a God who knows, and by Him deeds are weighed?”

(Read this after you have finished the above discussion)

First and foremost on Hannah’s heart would have been the abuse given her by Peninnah. Peninnah was proud and arrogant about having children when Hannah couldn’t have any. She provoked Hannah in order to irritate her (1 Sam 1:6). But in general she is also talking to all of us. None of us should boast about ourselves or consider ourselves better than anyone else. There’s an old saying “pride goes before a fall”. God has a way of humbling those who think too highly of themselves. God knows all. When Hannah prayed “by Him deeds are weighed” what she was saying is nothing gets by Him. All things that are done pass before Him. The prideful quickly draw His attention.

Memory Verses:

1 Samuel 2:2 “*There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no one besides You; there is no Rock like our God.*”

1 Samuel 2:8 “*...For the foundations of the earth are the Lord’s; upon them He has set the world.*”

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Lesson 5 - 1 Samuel 2:12-36

Pray: Begin each lesson by praying a prayer of control. Ask God to speak to you through His Holy Spirit as you study His word. Ask Him to help you learn something from His Word today that He wants you to learn.

Read: 1 Samuel 2:12-36

1. How are Eli's sons described in verse 12?

2. What sin did Eli's sons commit? (verse 13-16)

3. How was this seen by the Lord? (verse 17)

4. What was Samuel doing while this was going on? (verse 18)

5. What did Eli do about his wicked sons? (verse 22-25)

6. How did his sons respond? (verse 25)

7. How did God respond? What is going to happen to Eli's sons? (verse 27-36)

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Do: Lesson 5 – Draw A Picture

Draw a picture below showing Eli's sons' evil behavior and how Eli and God felt watching these disobedient, selfish men.

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Discuss: Lesson 5 - Discussion

Eli's sons were Priests, men who were supposed to represent God to the people and intercede for them to God. They were supposed to be men of God but they had no regard for the Lord (vs 12). They were selfish and disobedient. Who did they disobey? Who was hurt by this behavior?

This passage paints a picture showing the contrast between good behavior and evil behavior. Who represents evil behavior? Who represents good behavior? What are the differences in their behavior (what are the characteristics of good and evil behavior)?

(Read this after you have finished the above discussion)

Eli's sons were arrogant, selfish, and disobedient. They took a position of God-appointed leadership and misused it for their own gain. They disobeyed God and they disobeyed their father, Eli. In doing so they hurt God by dishonoring Him, they hurt Eli by dishonoring him, they hurt the people they were supposed to be serving by misrepresenting God to them, and they hurt themselves and their relationship to God. Disobedience and selfishness affects more than the selfish person. This behavior affects everyone they come into contact with.

In contrast, Samuel was selfless. He continued to minister before the Lord (vs 18), giving his whole self in service to God. As a result of this good, godly behavior, "he continued to grow in stature and in favor with the Lord and with men." (vs 26)

Implementation:

God expects obedience from us. One of the purposes of the family structure He has put us in is to teach us how to obey authority (our parents). If you do not learn to obey your parents it will be nearly impossible to obey God, your heavenly Father. God also put us in a family to give us the opportunity to learn how not to be selfish. In a family we learn to work with others and look out for others, not just ourselves.

The challenge from this lesson is to obey your parents and stop being selfish. You are being both disobedient and selfish if you argue with your parents when they tell you to do something. You are being obedient and selfless when you do what you are told, even when you don't want to.

Things to Know:

Verse 18 describes Samuel as "a boy wearing a linen ephod." An ephod is a garment worn by those who served before the Lord at his sanctuary. It was a close-fitting, sleeveless pullover, usually of hip length. The linen ephod Samuel wore is not the same as the special ephod worn by the high priest (described in Exodus 28:6-13).¹

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Lesson 6 - 1 Samuel 3:1-21

Pray: Begin each lesson by praying a prayer of control. Ask God to speak to you through His Holy Spirit as you study His word. Ask Him to help you learn something from His Word today that He wants you to learn.

Read: 1 Samuel 3:1-21

1. What happened when Samuel was lying down in the temple? (verse 4)

2. How many times did God call Samuel before he and Eli realized that it was God calling him? (verse 4-8)

3. What was different about the fourth time God called to Samuel? (verse 17)

4. What did God tell Samuel? (verse 11-14)

5. Did Samuel tell Eli what God told him right away? Did he want to? (verse 15-18)

6. What did Eli do when he heard what God told Samuel? (verse 18)

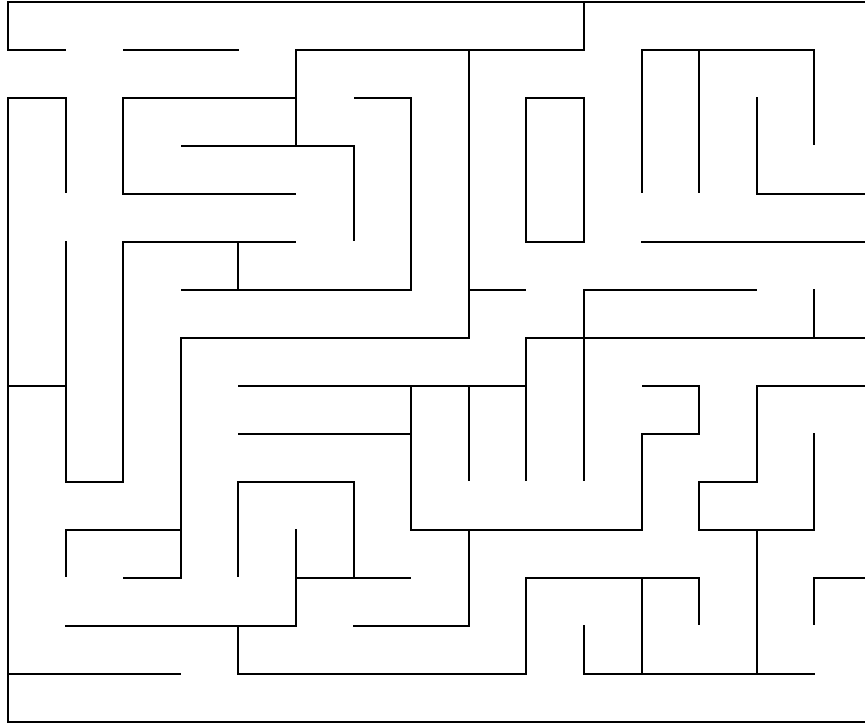
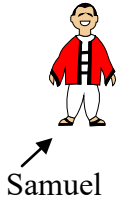
7. What happened to Samuel after his encounter (meeting) with God? (verse 19-21)

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Do:

Lesson 6 – Maze

Eli



God

Get Samuel from Eli to God

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Discuss: Lesson 6 - Discussion

Three times God called out to Samuel and three times Samuel thought it was Eli calling him. Why do you think Samuel didn't realize it was God calling him? It took three times for Eli to realize that it was God calling Samuel. What might that say about Eli's own relationship with God? How does this situation, the fact that God had to call out four times before Samuel responded, relate to our relationship with God and the way we respond to Him?

(Read this after you have finished the above discussion)

The fact that Samuel was still a boy when this happened may give Samuel an excuse for not recognizing the voice of God. Verse 7 says, "Samuel did not yet know the Lord: The word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him." Eli, on the other hand, was a priest and should have had a personal relationship with God. He should have realized it was God calling Samuel. This may be an indication of Eli's lack of a relationship with God. Verse one does say, "In those days the word of the Lord was rare; there were not many visions."

This situation can resemble the relationship many of us have with God. If we don't have a personal relationship with Him, if we don't communicate with Him daily through prayer and studying His word, we don't hear Him when He calls out to us. Samuel was a boy who had been ministering in the temple most of his life. Yet, he did not know the Lord. How many of us minister in God's house but don't know the Lord or recognize His voice?

It is believed that at this time Samuel is about 12 years old. That means he had been with Eli for about 9 years, yet Samuel had had no direct experience with God. Eli had failed to bring him up into a real relationship with God. When Hannah gave Samuel back to God, Eli took on the responsibility of raising Samuel, of being like his adopted father. As Samuel's adopted father, it was Eli's responsibility to train up Samuel in the ways of the Lord. He had already failed with his two sons. It looks like he was failing with Samuel, too.

Implementation:

This passage illustrates the importance of having a real and personal relationship with God. Commit to getting to know Him better by speaking with Him every day through prayer and the study of His Word. Get to know His voice.

It also shows how important it is for parents to teach their children about God and bring them up in a way that when God speaks to them, they know His voice.

Memory Verse (especially for parents):

Proverbs 22:6 "Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not turn from it."

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Lesson 7 - 1 Samuel 4

Pray: Begin each lesson by praying a prayer of control. Ask God to speak to you through His Holy Spirit as you study His word. Ask Him to help you learn something from His Word today that He wants you to learn.

Read: 1 Samuel 4:1-22

1. What happened when the Israelites fought the Philistines? (verse 1-2)

2. What did the Israelites do to prepare for the next battle? (verse 3-4)

3. What happened in the next battle? What happened to Eli's sons? (verse 5-11)

4. What was said in chapter 2 vs 34 about Eli's sons? (1 Sam 2 verse 34)

5. What happened to Eli? (verses 12-18)

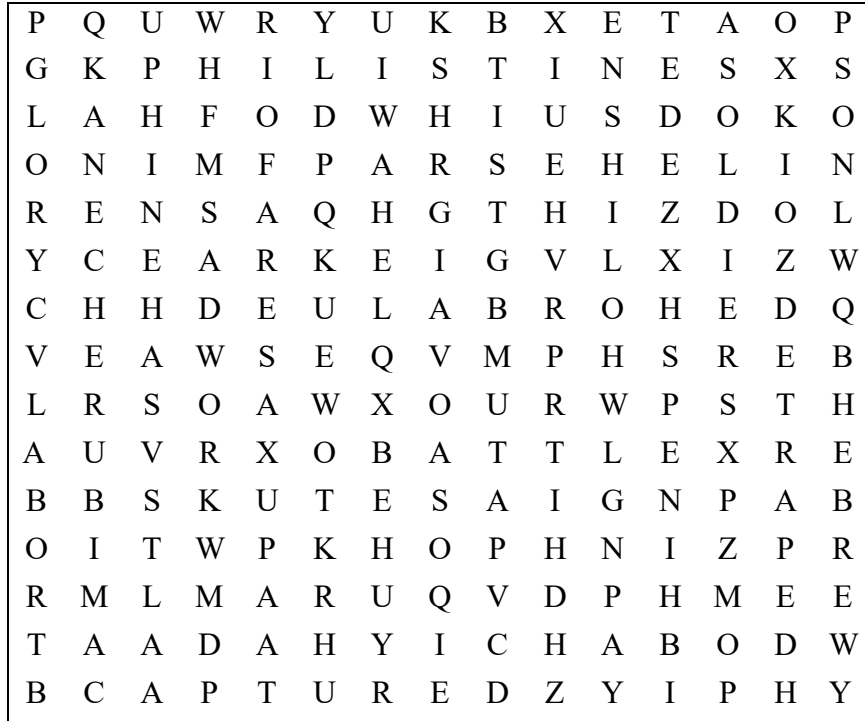
6. What happened to Eli's daughter-in-law? (verses 19-20)

7. What name was given to Eli's grandson? Why? (verse 21-22)

Family Gravity™ Bible Study Series - First Samuel 1-8

Do:

Lesson 7 - Word Search



Find the following words in the puzzle above:

Ark
Battle
Camp
Captured
Cherubim
Departed

Eli
Glory
Hebrew
Hophni
Ichabod
Israelites

Labor
Philistines
Phinehas
Shiloh
Soldiers
Son

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Discuss: Lesson 7 - Discussion

The Israelites lost the first battle with the Philistines. In verse 3 the soldiers recognize that God was not with them in the battle. What do they do to try to fix the situation? What should they have done instead?

(Read this after you have finished the above discussion)

After losing the first battle the Israelites realize that God was not with them. They had several choices to choose from. They should have stopped what they were doing and prayed to God for guidance and mercy. They could have asked Him to reveal His will for them in this matter. If it was His will that they fight, they should have asked Him to be with them in the battle. If it was His will that they not fight, then they should have left the battle and gone home, knowing that God was not with them in the battle.

Instead, they took matters into their own hands. They went and got the ark of the covenant and used it like a good luck piece. They mistakenly thought that if the ark was there, God would be there with them, too. They tried to force God to be with them, pushing their will on God, instead of submitting their will to His.

Implementation:

What is the lesson to be learned from this passage? What can we learn from the mistakes of the Israelites?

The next time you are faced with a tough decision ask yourself whose will you are trying to serve, your will or God's will. Submit yourself to God's will. Ask Him to guide you according to His will. Ask that His will be done in your life.

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Lesson 8 - 1 Samuel 5

Pray: Begin each lesson by praying a prayer of control. Ask God to speak to you through His Holy Spirit as you study His word. Ask Him to help you learn something from His Word today that He wants you to learn.

Read: 1 Samuel 5:1-12

1. What did the Philistines do with the Ark after they captured it? (verse 1-2)

2. Dagon was the principal god of the Philistines. What happened to the statue of Dagon after the Ark was brought to Dagon's temple? (verse 3-5)

3. What happened to the people of Ashdod after the Ark arrived there? (verse 6-8)

4. What happened to the people of Gath after the Ark was moved there? (verse 9)

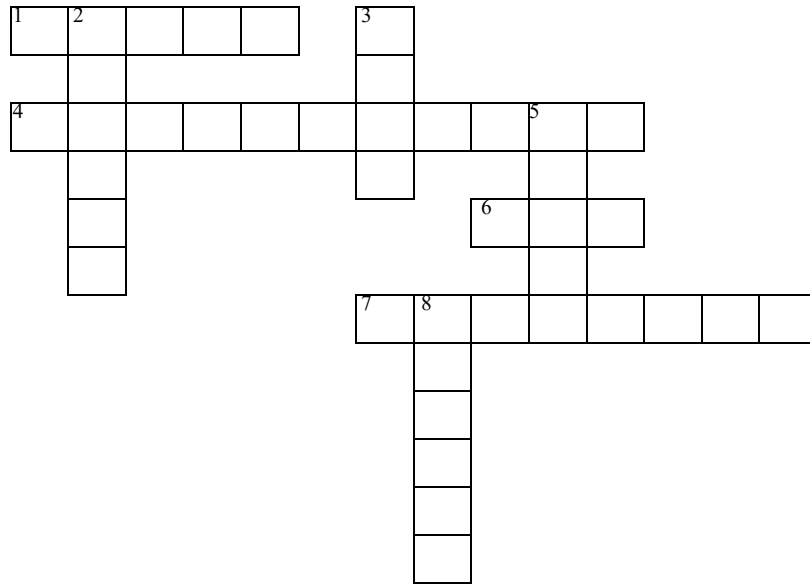
5. Where did the Philistines move the Ark next? (verses 10)

6. How did the people of Ekron respond when the Ark arrived there? (verses 10-12)

Family Gravity™ Bible Study Series - First Samuel 1-8

Do:

Lesson 8 – Crossword Puzzle



Across

1. The principle God of the Philistines
4. They captured the ark of God from the Israelites
6. After being taken from the Israelites, it was placed in Dagon's temple
7. The city where the ark was captured

Down

2. The first city to which the Philistines took the ark
3. The second city to which the Philistines took the ark
5. The third city to which the Philistines took the ark
8. When Dagon fell before the ark the second time his head and hands were _____ off.

Family Gravity™ Bible Study Series - First Samuel 1-8

Discuss: Lesson 8 - Discussion

In the Old Testament, Israel was God's chosen people. The Philistines were the enemy of Israel and thus, the enemy of God. The Philistines did not worship God but instead worshiped other gods such as Dagon and Baal. Dagon was the principle god of the Philistines. In Canaanite mythology Dagon was the son of El and the father of Baal. When the Philistines captured the Ark of the Covenant they put it in their temple next to an image of Dagon to show that Dagon was superior to the God of Israel. God was not at all pleased with this. What did He do to the image of Dagon? What was significant about the position of Dagon when the Philistines found him the next morning (in verse 3)? What was the significance of what God did to Dagon in verse 4?

(Read this after you have finished the above discussion)

God allowed Israel to be defeated to teach them that He is God, that He is in control. He will not allow His people to manipulate Him. The ark, nor God for that matter, is not a good luck charm that can be pulled out and used according to their will. God also would not allow the Philistines to think that their victory over Israel and the capture of the ark meant that their god was more powerful than Him.

In verse 3 Dagon is found face down before the ark. This position is a position of humility. To show honor to someone you bow before them. The highest honor you can show someone is to lay face down before them (this is called laying prostrate before them). God had placed Dagon in the prostrate position symbolizing that God is above all other gods. The Philistines didn't get the message and put Dagon back up in a superior position to the ark (and God). In verse 4 God not only puts Dagon prostrate again but this time He breaks off Dagon's head and hands. Removing Dagon's head may have been a way for God to show that God, and God alone, is the head of all creation. God removed Dagon's hand and then in verse 5 we see God's hand was heavy upon the people showing once again that God is in control, whether you believe in Him or not!

Implementation:

What kind of relationship do you have with God? Do you use Him like a good luck charm, only talking with Him when you need something? God wants a real relationship with you. He wants to talk with you every day. You should praise Him and give thanks for your salvation and for all the things He does for you and gives to you. It's okay to ask God for things when you are in need, but you should go to Him when you aren't in need too, just to give Him praise and honor. This shows Him that He is the God of your life.

Pray to God every day and study His word. Ask yourself "what have I placed above God in my life?" Examine what keeps you from spending time with God in prayer, study, and worship. Have you placed any of the following above God? (What occupies your mind more or what do you spend more time with, them or God?) TV, video games, sports, clubs, trading cards, work, school activities, hobbies, music, money, etc. None of these things are bad but they can become gods in our life if we are not careful.

Bible Memory Verse: Exodus 20:3-4 (for younger children) 20:3-6 (for older children)

Family Gravity™ Bible Study Series - First Samuel 1-8

Lesson 9 - 1 Samuel 6

Pray: Begin each lesson by praying a prayer of control. Ask God to speak to you through His Holy Spirit as you study His word. Ask Him to help you learn something from His Word today that He wants you to learn.

Read: 1 Samuel 6

1. How long was the ark of the Lord in the country of the Philistines? (verse 1)

2. The Philistine priests recommended that the Philistines not send the ark back empty. But instead, that they should send it back with what? (verse 3)

3. What trespass offering did the priests recommend? (verse 4)

4. What kind of cart did the Philistines use to return the ark? What pulled the cart? (verse 7)

5. What happened to the ark? Did it make it back to the Israelites? (verse 12)

6. What did God do to the men of Beth Shemesh? Why? (verse 19)

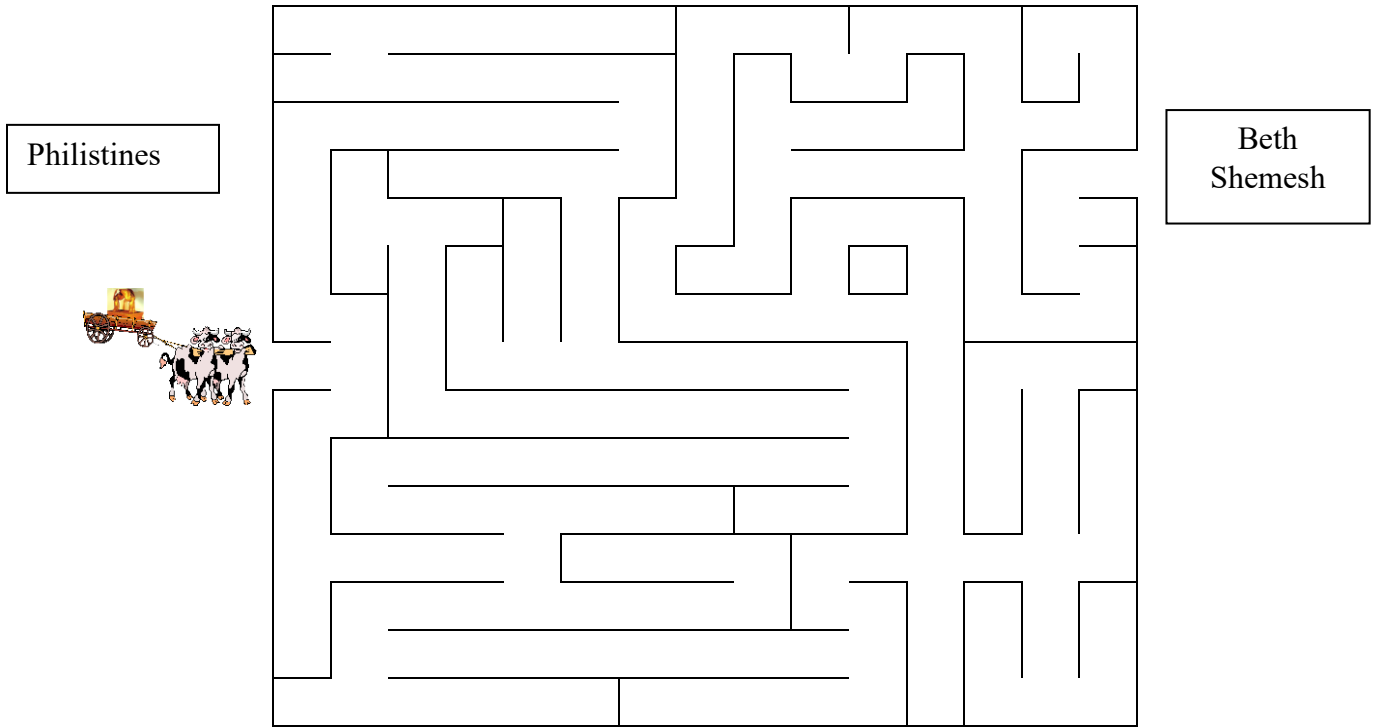
7. What did the men of Beth Shemesh do with the ark? (verse 20)

Family Gravity™ Bible Study Series - First Samuel 1-8

Do:

Lesson 9 – Maze

Get the ark of the Lord from the Philistines back to Israel at Beth Shemesh



Family Gravity™ Bible Study Series - First Samuel 1-8

Discuss: Lesson 9 - Discussion

The Philistines sent the ark back on a new cart pulled by two milk cows that had never pulled a cart before. They also took the cows calves away from them. What is the significance of these facts? What would you expect to happen to the ark in this situation? What does the fact that the ark made it back safely tell us about God?

(Read this after you have finished the above discussion)

There are two significant things about the Philistines using a new cart and cows that had never pulled a cart before. First, it is a sign of respect to God. They acknowledged that their afflictions were probably a result of the ark of the Lord being with them. To send the ark back on an old cart that had been used for many earthly things would be considered an offense against the holy God of Israel. The same would be true about using animals that had drawn a cart before. So the Philistines were honoring God by sending the ark back on a new cart being pulled by unspoiled animals.

The second thing that is significant about this is that the Philistines did not want to admit that the God of Israel was greater than their gods. They set up a little test to see if their afflictions really were being caused by the God of Israel. The test they set up wasn't exactly fair. They could have used young oxen to pull the cart, oxen that had never pulled before. Instead, they chose to use two milk cows whose calves were locked up at home. When calves are locked up away from their mothers they bawl, really loudly! The milk cows' instincts would be to rush right home to be with their babies. The Philistines probably thought that once they let the cows go with the ark, the cows would turn quickly toward home and maybe even upset the cart so the ark would fall and be destroyed. But they were in for a big surprise!

God led the cows straight to Beth Shemesh. The Israelites were surprised to see the ark. I'll bet the Philistines were even more surprised. God showed the Philistines that He is the one and only God. This is just one more example for us to look at whenever we have doubts about God's existence.

Implementation:

This chapter ends in a strange way. Verse 19 hits us abruptly with a matter-of-fact statement that God struck fifty thousand and seventy of the men of Beth Shemesh because they looked into the ark of the Lord. To us, this may seem extremely harsh. In Numbers 4:15 God tells Moses and Aaron, "...then the sons of Kohath shall come to carry them (the holy things of the tabernacle), but they shall not touch any holy thing lest they die." In Numbers 4:20 God also says, "but they shall not go in to watch while the holy things are being covered, lest they die." The men of Israel knew these commands of God. They knew that God said they were not to touch the ark or look at it's contents. They knew the penalty for disobeying this command was death. This is a strong lesson for us to learn. Doing the wrong thing for the 'right' reason is still wrong. Sometimes we are tempted to break a rule because we think we have a good reason. This story shows us that there is no good reason to break God's law.

Family Gravity™ Bible Study Series - First Samuel 1-8

Lesson 10 - 1 Samuel 7

Pray: Begin each lesson by praying a prayer of control. Ask God to speak to you through His Holy Spirit as you study His word. Ask Him to help you learn something from His Word today that He wants you to learn.

Read: 1 Samuel 7

1. The Israelites took the ark of God to the city of Kirjath Jearim. To whose house did they take it? (verse 1)

2. How long was the ark at Kirjath Jearim before Samuel came? (verse 2-3)

3. Samuel gathered all of Israel together to talk to them. What did Samuel tell them? (verse 3)

4. What did Israel do? Did they listen to Samuel or ignore him? (verse 4)

5. What happened to the Philistines after Israel repented and turned back to God? (verses 10-13)

6. How long did the hand of the Lord remain against the Philistines? (verse 13)

7. What other nation made peace with Israel? (verse 14)

Family Gravity™ Bible Study Series - First Samuel 1-8

Discuss: Lesson 10 - Discussion

For twenty years Israel lamented after the Lord because the Philistines continued to oppress and dominate them. Finally, Samuel gathers all of Israel together and tells them he has the solution for their problems. What did Samuel tell the Israelites they needed to do? Did they listen? What did God do? What is the overall theme of this chapter? How does it apply to us?

(Read this after you have finished the above discussion)

After twenty years of Philistine domination, Samuel gathers the nation of Israel together and tells them that they need to return to the Lord. The Israelites had taken up worshipping the gods of the Canaanites and the other people of the area. They had broken the first commandment of God, “you shall have no other gods before me.” Samuel calls Israel to repent, to return to the Lord with all their hearts and put away all the foreign gods they had been worshipping. The nation of Israel agreed with Samuel. They saw the error of their ways and turned back to God. They cried out to Him for forgiveness. God saw that their repentance was real, so He forgave them and blessed them. He drove the Philistines out of Israelite territory and kept them out for as long as Samuel lived. Israel kept their promise and worshipped God alone for as long as Samuel lived.

Implementation:

We can learn a lot from Israel’s relationship with God. When you read through the Old Testament, put yourself in the place of Israel. Israel had a national covenant with God. In the New Covenant, we have a personal covenant with God. He wants to be first priority in our life. He wants us to have no other gods but Him. We may not worship other gods like Baal or Ashtaroath, but we do let other things come between us and God. Anything that comes between you and God is like another god to you. What have you allowed to get in the way of your relationship with God? Money? Video games? Bikes? Material possessions? Your own selfish will? Whenever we realize that we have put something or someone ahead of God we need to repent and turn back to God.

The theme of this chapter is repentance. To repent means to turn away from the things that are taking you away from God and turn back to following God. You may feel anxious about your relationship with God and mourn over your sins. But as long as you do not give up what comes between you and God, you have not sincerely repented.

What do you need to repent of today?

Family Gravity™ Bible Study Series - First Samuel 1-8

Lesson 11 - 1 Samuel 8

Pray: Begin each lesson by praying a prayer of control. Ask God to speak to you through His Holy Spirit as you study His word. Ask Him to help you learn something from His Word today that He wants you to learn.

Read: 1 Samuel 8

1. When Samuel was old whom did he assign as judges over Israel? (verse 1)

2. What kind of men were Samuel's sons? (verse 3)

3. The elders of Israel did not want Samuel's sons to judge them. Who did they want to be their judge? (verse 5)

4. What did Samuel think of them wanting a king? (verse 6)

5. God told Samuel to give Israel what they wanted but to be sure to warn them what would result. What all did Samuel warn them would happen if they had a king? (verses 11-18)

6. What was Israel's response to Samuel's warning? (verse 19)

Family Gravity™ Bible Study Series - First Samuel 1-8

Do: Lesson 11 – Cross-Out Word Puzzle

There are four columns of words shown below. Follow the instructions below the list of words to reveal the answer to this question:

Why did Israel say they wanted a king?

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
Samuel	Joel	To	Weapons
Judge	Plow	War	Ramah
Cooks	Rich	Throne	Us
And	Sons	Abijah	Chariots
Elders	King	Fight	Peace
Baker	Our	Harvest	Beersheba
Perfumers	Lamb	Trade	Battles

Row 1	Row 2	Row 3	Row 4	Row 5	Row 6	Row 7
-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------

1. Cross off all 4-letter words
2. Cross off the longest word in each column (for columns 1, 3 and 4)
3. Cross off all words that begin with “W”
4. Cross off all proper names of people and places
5. Cross off all words that are another name for chef
6. Cross off all words that begin with “T” and end with “E”
7. Cross off the longest remaining word
8. Cross off the words that have two “E”s in them
9. Write the remaining words in the spaces provided starting with the top row and working your way down to the last row

Family Gravity™ Bible Study Series - First Samuel 1-8

Discuss: Lesson 11 - Discussion

Have your parents ever warned you that something you wanted to do (or buy) was not a good idea but you went ahead and did it anyway? Looking back, who was right? There's an old saying about people who are so strong willed that they want their own way regardless of what anyone says. The saying is, "don't confuse me with the facts, my mind is made up." Israel had this attitude. Samuel warned them of all the hardship having a king would bring. It didn't matter, their minds were made up. They wanted a king so they could be "like all the nations." Have you ever made a poor decision because you wanted to be like everyone else? Discuss what you learned from that mistake.

(Read this after you have finished the above discussion)

When God created us, He decided to give us a will of our own. He allows us to make our own decisions. Rather than force His will upon us, He will allow us to make bad choices. He even sometimes gives us what we ask for even though it displeases Him, just like He gave Israel a king even though He did not want them to have one. That is why it is so very important to have a strong relationship with the Lord. He is so much better at making decision than we are. If you follow His will you will never go wrong. Left to yourself, you are bound to make a wrong decision.

Implementation:

Israel made two major mistakes that we can learn from. First, they were strong willed. They made up their mind and would not be persuaded that their decision was a bad one. God gives us every opportunity to make the right decisions. He sometimes will send people into our life to give us godly advise. It is usually so much easier to see a bad decision when you are standing on the outside looking in. When ever you have a big decision to make (or even a small one) seek the advice of other Christians (like your parents). Proverbs 27:17 says, "as iron sharpens iron so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend." Make sure you are getting advice from someone who is strong in the faith, not just one of your peers. As you will see, giving into peer pressure is not a good way to make decisions. Which leads us to mistake number 2.

The second mistake Israel made is that they wanted to be like the rest of the world. Their attitude was, "everyone else has a king so we should have a king, too!" Following the ways of the world is almost always the wrong thing to do. Giving in to peer pressure and trying to keep up with what "everyone else" has or is doing is the quickest way to disaster! The apostle Paul wrote in Romans 12:2, "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

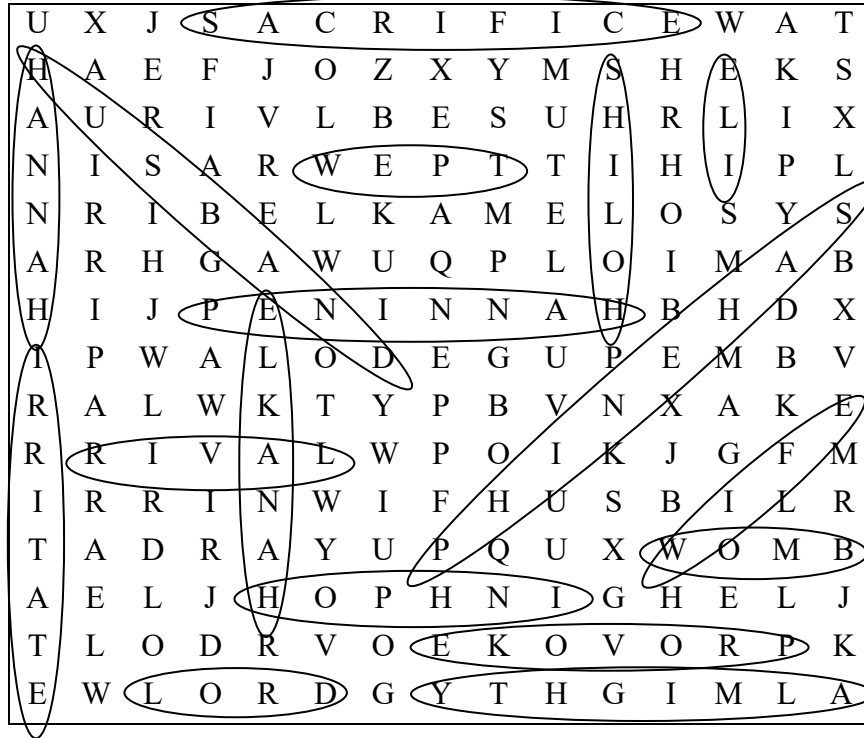
Things To Know:

No one is sure exactly how many years passed between chapter 7 and chapter 8 but we do know that Samuel is now "old." He has two adult sons whom he has set up as Judges in Beersheba to help lighten his workload. Most scholars estimate that Samuel was most likely in his sixties at this time.

Bible Memory Verse: Memorize Proverbs 27:17 and Romans 12:2.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES

Lesson 1 - Word Search



Lesson 3 - Word Puzzle

1. $\frac{E}{2} \frac{L}{1} \frac{K}{1} \frac{A}{1} \frac{N}{1} \frac{A}{1} \frac{H}{1}$.

2. $\frac{S}{14} \frac{A}{12} \frac{M}{3} \frac{U}{3} \frac{E}{3} \frac{L}{3}$.

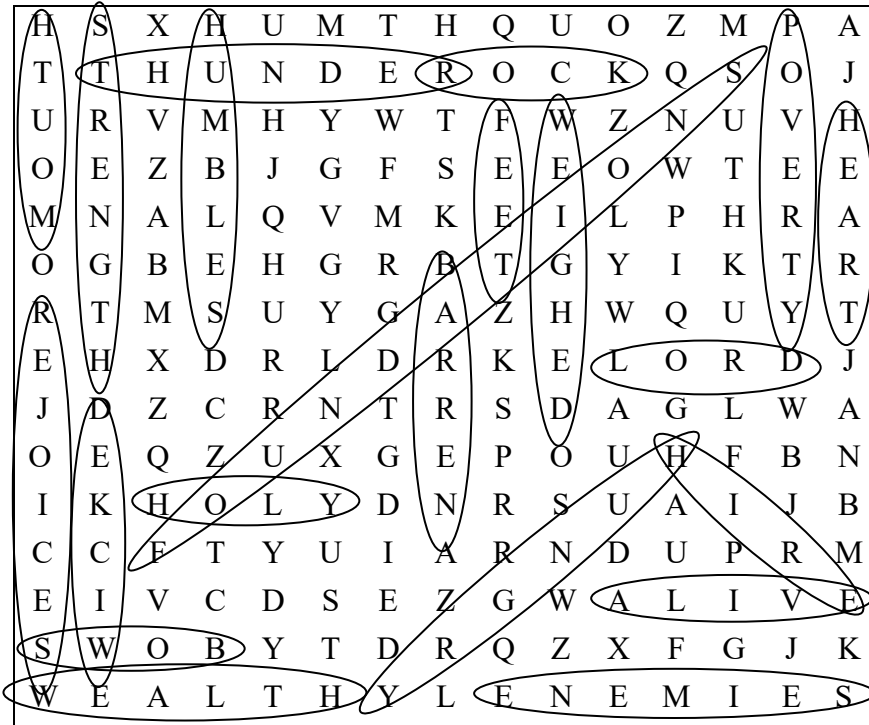
3. $\frac{B}{7} \frac{U}{7} \frac{L}{7} \frac{L}{7}, \frac{F}{6} \frac{L}{6} \frac{O}{6} \frac{U}{10} \frac{R}{10}, \frac{W}{13} \frac{I}{13} \frac{N}{15} \frac{E}{15}$.

4. $\frac{P}{4} \frac{R}{8} \frac{A}{5} \frac{Y}{5} \frac{E}{5} \frac{D}{5}$.

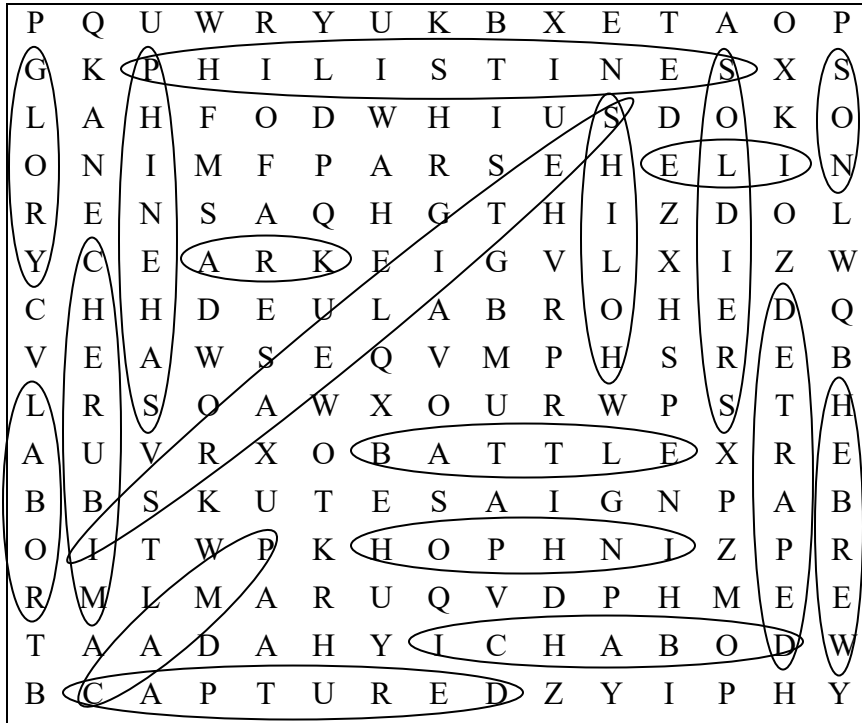
5. $\frac{W}{11} \frac{O}{16} \frac{R}{16} \frac{S}{9} \frac{H}{16} \frac{I}{9} \frac{P}{9} \frac{E}{9} \frac{D}{9}$.

$\frac{K}{1} \frac{E}{2} \frac{E}{3} \frac{P}{4} \frac{Y}{5} \frac{O}{6} \frac{U}{7} \frac{R}{8} \frac{P}{9} \frac{R}{10} \frac{O}{11} \frac{M}{12} \frac{I}{13} \frac{S}{14} \frac{E}{15} \frac{S}{16}$.

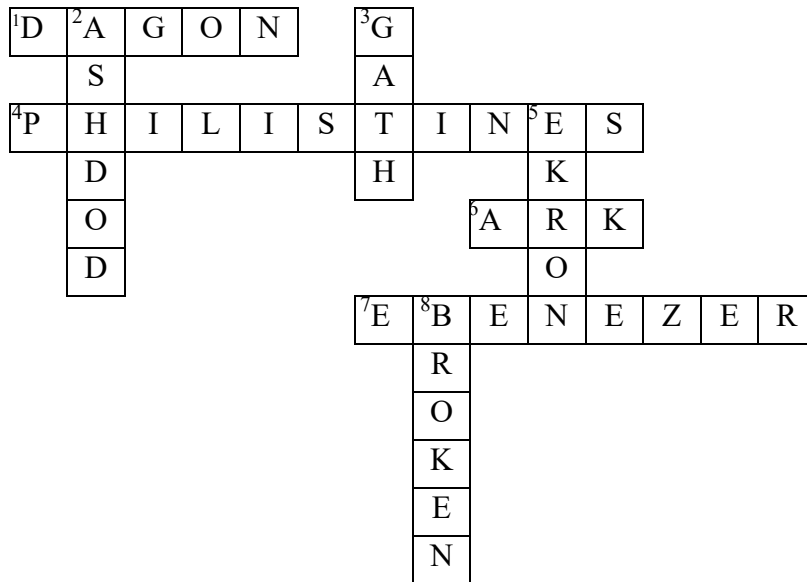
Lesson 4 - Word Search



Lesson 7 - Word Search



Lesson 8 - Crossword Puzzle



Lesson 11 – Cross Out Word Puzzle

Why did Israel say they wanted a king?

Samuel	Joel	To	Weapons
Judge	Plow	War	Ramah
Cooks	Rich	Throne	Us
And	Sons	Abijah	Chariots
Elders	King	Fight	Peace
Baker	Our	Harvest	Beersheba
Perfumers	Lamb	Trade	Battles

<u>To</u>	<u>Judge</u>	<u>Us</u>	<u>And</u>	<u>Fight</u>	<u>Our</u>	<u>Battles .</u>
Row 1	Row 2	Row 3	Row 4	Row 5	Row 6	Row 7

(1 Samuel 8:20)



FAMILY GRAVITY™
HOLDING FAMILIES TOGETHER

Bible Study Series

A Study of the First Book of Samuel

Part 1 - Chapters 1-8

This study is designed to help families start a weekly routine of family Bible study. It is easy for the parents to lead and easy for the entire family to understand. It has fun activities and a wide range of questions from fill in the blank (directly from the verses being studied) to thought provoking discussion questions. We pray that God blesses you through this study and draws your family closer together, not only to each other, but closer to Him as well.