



Samuel was born in a small town of Ramah in the outskirts of Jerusalem in a time when everybody did what was right in their own eyes. He was born to very Godly parents. Actually, his mother, through a pact with God, prayed him in. However, in just a few years, he was sent off to be taught for the priesthood under a man named Eli. Although he had five other brothers and sisters, he only saw them once a year, along with his mother and his father; during the festivals. Even though he had no family life, as he grew up, he began to have a love for the Lord. Soon, however; he began to see that his mentor and his sons did not. He began to see certain prophets come to rebuke Eli for his negligence in the area of his children and how his children were out of control, causing Israel to sin against the Lord.

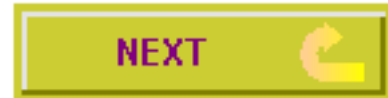
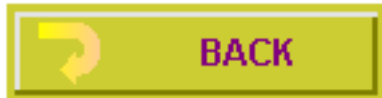
Samuel was still a boy when he received his first word from the Lord. It was that God would soon judge and take away the mentor who had become like a father to him. On a fateful day, this word was fulfilled when both of Eli's sons were killed in battle, and Eli, his mentor died as well. On top of that, the ark of the covenant, which was the physical presence of God, which he ministered before; was captured by the Philistines. Samuel was alone. As Samuel grew, he became more attuned to the voice of God, despite the fact that words and visions were scarce. Not many in his day received a true word from God. He didn't have much, if any, fellowship with others.

Samuel judged Israel righteously. He taught them to turn from idol worship and serve the only true God.

As Samuel's sons grew, he wanted them to follow in his footsteps as prophets for the nation of Israel, but the people rejected them because they were corrupt. Israel asked for a King to rule over them like the other idolatrous nations had. Samuel took it personally. God had chosen Israel to be a different nation; a nation that was governed by God Himself. Israel was to be a nation set apart as an example to all the others of being governed by the only true God. Yet, they asked to be like the other pagan nations and have a King instead. The example of the heathen nations had taken a hold of the heart of all Israel, and they wanted a man for their King. As the Lord put it, when Samuel was crushed, "They have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being King over them." I Samuel 8:7

Samuel was directed to a man of great stature and was told to anoint Saul, the son of Kish, as King. King Saul started out in a very humble way. Very quickly Samuel began to bond with him. In the beginning, Saul included Samuel in all of his decisions. Yet, as Saul became more comfortable with being King, he sought more to be honored in front of the people than to be honored in front of God. Finally, God had to turn away from

Saul because he had closed his heart from obeying the voice of the Lord. Samuel saw the man whom he had anointed with the Spirit of God to be the King, turn from loving



and serving God, into a raving, jealous King, who had resorted to killing to appease his jealousy.

Samuel, hesitantly, for fear that Saul would take his life, anointed another, David, to be King in Saul's place. When Saul saw David with the blessing of God on his life, he dedicated the rest of his life to trying to destroy David. Samuel saw the King that he had originally anointed, kill many priests of God just to find and pursue David. (I Samuel 21) Even in his death, Samuel saw Saul use a medium to call him up from the dead to get direction. (I Samuel 28)

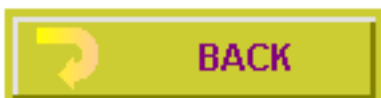
Samuel grew up away from home and was placed under bad ministry examples. He never saw his sons follow in his integrity, and serve the Lord. He saw the nation as a whole, turn away from God and ask for a King like the heathen nations. He saw the King he had anointed change from a humble man to a demonically controlled murderer. The next man he had anointed didn't come into the fullness of his calling during Samuel's lifetime. As a matter of fact, there was so indication that he ever would. If ever there was a man who could have felt that his life was a failure; if ever there was a man whose life seemed to turn into disaster; if ever there was a man who could have felt that no lasting fruit was produced from his life; it could have been Samuel. **However, the scripture never indicates that he wavered in his walk with God.** Amazingly enough, he stayed faithful to God in the midst of a generation that had turned his back on Him. Samuel's determination to follow God was obviously not contingent on whether or not other people did. He was bound and determined to do so even if it meant doing it alone. **He knew the God he served.** It wasn't based on someone else's revelation. It was based on knowing God personally. **That's why he was able to stand when everyone else wasn't.** If Samuel had considered the situations, he would have easily have fallen away. Yet, he, in all that he saw and went through, stayed strong in his zeal for God. How about you?

Maybe you feel like none of your efforts for the Lord have produced any lasting fruit; or that things are turning into a disaster. It might be easier to consider the circumstances than the promise of God. However; God has given you His Spirit of an overcomer to raise you above the circumstances. Samuel's effort produced one of Israel's most Godly, if not the most Godly King, ever to be seen. Samuel just never had the privilege to see it. **He was able to stay strong when everything was contrary. And we, with the Spirit of God, can do the same.** "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you." Romans 8:10

The Bible is a book of extremes. It always uses the extreme example so that we may take courage and know that God will stand by our side as well. Samuel is an extreme case. Not all of us can say that our cases match his, yet, we can take heart from his story to know that the same God that kept him is keeping us. "For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. 1:6)

Many times we deal with people who have lost their desire to continue with God because they have seen in someone else a bad testimony or someone did something that offended them and now they don't pray, they don't read their Bible, and they don't go to church; all

because of what someone else did or didn't do. We need to be bigger than that. It's really just an excuse to give into the flesh. Samuel could have used the whole country as an excuse to not be faithful and he



would have been justified. He could have just followed the crowd, but it wouldn't have moved him one inch closer to God, and one thing is for sure, there is no regret in Samuel's life right now. He's been totally rewarded for all his faithfulness.

Let's stop and consider other people in the Bible that were in the same predicament. Daniel, for example, was faithful to pray even though he knew a plot was formed against him for evil if he still sought the Lord. Yet, he sought the Lord anyway. Moses had a very powerful ministry full of signs and wonders, yet saw only two of all those in his congregation enter into the fullness of the promised land. Jeremiah persevered in preaching repentance to a nation bent on doing wrong and misinterpreting his messages constantly. Only Noah's family believed him as he endured one hundred and twenty years of scoffing while he built the ark. Yet, these men of faith all stayed strong in intense times of testing and trials because of their firm relationships with the Lord. As the New Testament tells us, "All these were to serve as examples for us." They are examples of standing firm. They're our great cloud of witnesses; cheering us on and saying, "We did it, so can you." The Lord will add no regret to our dedication. We must think more eternally. The majority of our lives will be spent in Heaven, not here on earth. Makes sense to set our affections on the things above, not on the things of the earth. It's our long-term investment, not our short-term investment, that will give the higher yield. If Samuel could come back from the dead and say one word of encouragement to us, I'm sure that it would be: "It was all worth it to stay faithful to God."

God is our refuge and our strength, a very present help in time of trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth should change, and though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God. (Psalms 46:1,2,4) Drink deeply!

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**Please do not put our names on checks,
but on an attached or enclosed note. Thanks!**

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We wanted to say a special thanks to all who have been giving to us this year. We sense many new and good things are on the horizon. Thank you for your giving. We understand that many of you are giving sacrificially and in obedience to the Lord, and we want to let you know how much we ap-

What Samuel Saw

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and we want to let you know how much we appreciate that. We pray that God will multiply the blessings back to you a hundredfold. God bless you.

