



IMPARTING  
GOD'S WISDOM...

1COR.2:6-7

# 1 SAMUEL







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# LESSON SEQUENCE

- 01** | LESSON **ONE**  
1 Samuel 1-3
- 02** | LESSON **TWO**  
1 Samuel 4:1-7:2
- 03** | LESSON **THREE**  
1 Samuel 7:3-9:27
- 04** | LESSON **FOUR**  
1 Samuel 10-12
- 05** | LESSON **FIVE**  
1 Samuel 13-14
- 06** | LESSON **SIX**  
1 Samuel 15-16
- 07** | LESSON **SEVEN**  
1 Samuel 17
- 08** | LESSON **EIGHT**  
1 Samuel 18-20
- 09** | LESSON **NINE**  
1 Samuel 21-23
- 10** | LESSON **TEN**  
1 Samuel 24-25
- 11** | LESSON **ELEVEN**  
1 Samuel 26-27
- 12** | LESSON **TWELVE**  
1 Samuel 28-29
- 13** | LESSON **THIRTEEN**  
1 Samuel 30-31

# PREPARING TO TEACH

Congratulations! What an awesome responsibility it is to participate in the discipleship and education of adult believers. By His amazing grace, our triune God moves His people from death to life through the process of justification and sanctification. We are in constant need of heart transformation, mind renewal, and behavior change. The Christian life is to be one of growth and maturity in order to glorify God by loving Him and other people. To that end, God has given His people His Word and all truth to learn and to apply. And, He has blessed us with gifted teachers like you.

This Teacher's Manual is designed for a 13-week adult discipleship class or Sunday School. The format is mainly lecture, but can include as much discussion as your context allows. Each lesson is divided into three segments: **Opening, Rewind,** and **Bible Investigation.**

The **Opening** is where you start. It offers introductory information about the book of the Bible being taught. Each lesson gives important content to increase knowledge of the Scriptures.

The next section is the **Rewind.** It allows the students to have a brief review, connecting them back to what was previously investigated. Context and review is essential when teaching the Bible.

The heart and soul of the lesson is the **Bible Investigation** time. Each lesson takes the students through a certain amount of Bible text, in order to cover the content. The Scripture is to be read and discussed, making **observations** and **applications** along the way. Ultimately, you are teaching the students to know, study, and “do” God's Word on their own.

**Teaching the Old Testament.** All of God's Word teaches us the ONE STORY of redemption in Jesus Christ. So, while each story (in the narratives) certainly presents real people in real history, they are always in context of our need for a Savior! The Scriptures reveal God to us and shows us more about ourselves—especially our sin. Never teach the Old Testament stories as just moral lessons or interesting history. We need to learn God's Word so we love Him more, live for Him more, and teach others more about Him.

Ultimately, you prepare to teach others God's Word by a growing dependence on the Word and the Spirit. Grow in that grace as you teach.

# LESSON ONE / 1 SAMUEL 1-3

## OVERVIEW

1 Samuel opens with a common problem: a barren woman. Hannah nor her husband can solve this problem, since God alone is the giver of life. To make matters worse, Elkanah, Hannah's husband, has a second wife who mercilessly mocks her. All she can do is call out to the LORD for help! In a desperate move, she promises to give her child into full-time service to the LORD. As she submits to the LORD, Hannah moves from grief to contentment. God remembers Hannah and gives her a son! Hannah enjoys her infant son, Samuel, until he is weaned; then she gives him to Eli, the high priest. She breaks out in praise to God, focusing on His Kingdom more than just her answered prayer.

In a shocking turn of events, we learn that Eli's sons are worthless men who do not know the LORD. As priests, they take advantage of people, profane the sacrifice, and are sexually immoral. In contrast, the boy Samuel ministers before the LORD in simple innocence. In his old age, Eli tries to correct his sons, to no avail. A man of God prophesies that the worthless priests will die on the same day, and God will raise up a better priest for Israel.

In Chapter Three, we have the familiar story of God's call to Samuel. A new day is dawning in Shiloh: God is speaking again! And His first words in the middle of the night are words of judgment. God tells Samuel about the judgment coming to the house of Eli. Samuel tells Eli, and continues to grow in grace before the LORD!

## APPLICATION ▶

- Only God has the power to bring something out of nothing, filling an empty womb!
- How tempting is it for us to NOT pray in our pain, to remain angry, anxious, or depressed about our situation.
- All Christian parents should ask the LORD to use their children in full-time service to Him!
- Do you see light in the midst of darkness in our world today?
- The consequences of refusing to discipline our children in the LORD!
- Until God reveals Himself to us, we cannot know Him!
- Every time we open God's Word we are listening to the voice of God.



## OPENING

**Greet the students. Welcome visitors. Open with prayer.**

*Today, we begin our study of the Old Testament Book of 1 Samuel. This Bible book gets its name from its first central character, the prophet Samuel!*

*When reading any book of the Bible, we typically ask the question: who is the author? Sometimes, there is a debate on the identity of the author; at other times, it is obvious.*

**So, who is the author of the Book of 1 Samuel?** *The name of the author is not indicated in the book. Samuel may have written it, since he certainly supplied the information for 1 Samuel 1:1–24:22, which is a biography of his life and career, up to his death. But it is not very likely.*

*1 Chronicles 29:29 notes that Samuel, along with Nathan and Gad, recorded the “acts of King David.” Evidence in the writing suggests that the book of 1 Samuel was compiled by someone from the prophetic school who used documents from Samuel, Nathan, and Gad.*



## REWIND

*Let’s move on to a time we call REWIND. In order to keep each lesson in context, and to maximize our learning, we’ll remind ourselves of what we learned in the past.*

*Since this is our first lesson in the Book of 1 Samuel, we don’t have anything to review. So, we’ll use this time to put the book in context. Originally the six monarchy historical books—the two Samuels, the two Kings, and the two Chronicles—were but three books.*

*The division of the original works came when these books were translated into the Septuagint (Greek) version late in the third century B.C. The Hebrew language of the Bible did not write symbols for vowel sounds in words. When the Hebrew was translated into the Greek language, the vowel letters virtually doubled the size of the scroll. Therefore, to make the use of the scroll more manageable, the material was divided into two separate scrolls. So, now we have 1 and 2 Samuel!*



# BIBLE INVESTIGATION



**Introduction:** *The Book of 1 Samuel opens with a tragic problem that strikes so many couples: an inability to have children...*

## **A. An Unfixable Problem (1 Samuel 1:1-8)**

### **Read verses 1-2.**

<sup>1</sup> There was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim of the hill country of Ephraim whose name was Elkanah the son of Jeroham, son of Elihu, son of Tohu, son of Zuph, an Ephrathite. <sup>2</sup> He had two wives. The name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other, Peninnah. And Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

**Observations:** *Hannah had a problem that she couldn't fix. She was not the first woman in the Bible who couldn't have children.*

**Who were some others?** *Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Samson's mother come to mind.*

► **Application:** *Only God has the power to bring something out of nothing, filling an empty womb!*

### **Read verses 3-8.**

<sup>3</sup> Now this man used to go up year by year from his city to worship and to sacrifice to the LORD of hosts at Shiloh, where the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests of the LORD. <sup>4</sup> On the day when Elkanah sacrificed, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and daughters. <sup>5</sup> But to Hannah he gave a double portion, because he loved her, though the LORD had closed her womb. <sup>6</sup> And her rival used to provoke her grievously to irritate her, because the LORD had closed her womb. <sup>7</sup> So it went on year by year. As often as she went up to the house of the LORD, she used to provoke her. Therefore Hannah wept and would not eat. <sup>8</sup> And Elkanah, her husband, said to her, "Hannah, why do you weep? And why do you not eat? And why is your heart sad? Am I not more to you than ten sons?"

**Observations:** *It is not too surprising that two wives with the same husband would become rivals rather than friends. Elkanah was doing all that he could do to "fix" the problem, showing Hannah how much he loved her. Yet, Peninnah just made the problem worse, by constantly provoking Hannah. **Who is really in control here?** Hannah can't give herself a child. Elkanah can't give Hannah peace and contentment. And even Peninnah isn't really in control of Hannah. As is always the case, God is in control!*



## B. Seeking the Problem-Fixing God (1 Samuel 1:9-20)

### Read verses 9-11.

<sup>9</sup> After they had eaten and drunk in Shiloh, Hannah rose. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat beside the doorpost of the temple of the LORD. <sup>10</sup> She was deeply distressed and prayed to the LORD and wept bitterly. <sup>11</sup> And she vowed a vow and said, “O LORD of hosts, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your servant and remember me and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a son, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall touch his head.”

**Observations:** *So, a grieving, suffering Hannah moves away from herself to God. In her despair, she prays and weeps, rather than just weeping. Then, Hannah goes on to make a vow to the LORD, to give a son into life-time service to the Him. This includes the Nazarite vow, just like Samson and John the Baptist.*

► **Application:** *How tempting is it for us to NOT pray in our pain, but to remain angry, anxious, or depressed about our situation.*

### Read verses 12-18.

<sup>12</sup> As she continued praying before the LORD, Eli observed her mouth. <sup>13</sup> Hannah was speaking in her heart; only her lips moved, and her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli took her to be a drunken woman. <sup>14</sup> And Eli said to her, “How long will you go on being drunk? Put your wine away from you.” <sup>15</sup> But Hannah answered, “No, my lord, I am a woman troubled in spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before the LORD. <sup>16</sup> Do not regard your servant as a worthless woman, for all along I have been speaking out of my great anxiety and vexation.” <sup>17</sup> Then Eli answered, “Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition that you have made to him.” <sup>18</sup> And she said, “Let your servant find favor in your eyes.” Then the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad.

**Observations:** *Hannah already has a rival; now she has the high priest condemning her as the town drunk. And all she is doing is praying to God to solve her problem! Thankfully, Eli moved from false accusation to compassion. But the most extraordinary thing is that Hannah moves towards joy and contentment before her situation changes. She was growing in faith in God!*

### Read verses 19-20.

<sup>19</sup> They rose early in the morning and worshiped before the LORD; then they went back to their house at Ramah. And Elkanah knew

Hannah his wife, and the LORD remembered her. <sup>20</sup> And in due time Hannah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Samuel, for she said, “I have asked for him from the LORD.”



**Observations:** *Stop and think about how amazing this is. We need to be reminded that God alone is the giver of life. Only when He “remembered” Hannah would her prayers be answered and her problem solved. The name Samuel means: “The LORD has heard,” recognizing that the LORD answered her prayers. It is written in a way that foreshadows our answer to prayer, the Son that is to come!*

### **C. Dedicated to God (1 Samuel 1:21-28)**

#### **Read verses 21-25.**

<sup>21</sup> The man Elkanah and all his house went up to offer to the LORD the yearly sacrifice and to pay his vow. <sup>22</sup> But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, “As soon as the child is weaned, I will bring him, so that he may appear in the presence of the LORD and dwell there forever.” <sup>23</sup> Elkanah her husband said to her, “Do what seems best to you; wait until you have weaned him; only, may the LORD establish his word.” So the woman remained and nursed her son until she weaned him. <sup>24</sup> And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour, and a skin of wine, and she brought him to the house of the LORD at Shiloh. And the child was young. <sup>25</sup> Then they slaughtered the bull, and they brought the child to Eli.

**Observations:** *We may assume that Hannah was reluctant to give up her son. What loving mother wouldn't be? But we should also recognize a mother who was extremely grateful to spend time with her child, still committed to fulfill her vow to the LORD. In ancient times, the weaning of children could have taken up to three years.*

*We see Hannah's gratitude for Samuel bubble forth in her sacrifice to the LORD. **How?** In the Hebrew, she gave three, year-old bulls which was three times the required amount. A full ephah of flour and a skin of wine was also nearly three times more than required.*

#### **Read verses 26-28.**

<sup>26</sup> And she said, “Oh, my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who was standing here in your presence, praying to the LORD. <sup>27</sup> For this child I prayed, and the LORD has granted me my petition that I made to him. <sup>28</sup> Therefore I have lent him to the LORD. As long as he lives, he is lent to the LORD.” And he worshiped the LORD there.



**Observations:** *Hannah gives an incredible testimony to Eli. I was that “drunk” woman, and my prayer has been answered! In verses 27-28, Hannah uses the Hebrew root “to ask” four times. The literal translation is: “For this child I prayed and the LORD gave me my asking which I asked from Him; and I also have given back what was asked to the LORD; all the days He lives He is the one that is asked of the LORD.”*

► **Application:** *All Christian parents should ask the LORD to use their children in full-time service to Him!*

### **D. Dedicated to God’s Kingdom (1 Samuel 2:1-10)**

#### **Read verses 1-10.**

<sup>1</sup> And Hannah prayed and said, “My heart exults in the LORD; my horn is exalted in the LORD. My mouth derides my enemies, because I rejoice in your salvation.” <sup>2</sup> “There is none holy like the LORD: for there is none besides you; there is no rock like our God. <sup>3</sup> Talk no more so very proudly, let not arrogance come from your mouth; for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. <sup>4</sup> The bows of the mighty are broken, but the feeble bind on strength. <sup>5</sup> Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, but those who were hungry have ceased to hunger. The barren has borne seven, but she who has many children is forlorn. <sup>6</sup> The LORD kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up. <sup>7</sup> The LORD makes poor and makes rich; he brings low and he exalts. <sup>8</sup> He raises up the poor from the dust; he lifts the needy from the ash heap to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor. For the pillars of the earth are the LORD’s, and on them he has set the world. <sup>9</sup> “He will guard the feet of his faithful ones, but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness, for not by might shall a man prevail. <sup>10</sup> The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; against them he will thunder in heaven. The LORD will judge the ends of the earth; he will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed.”

**Observations:** ***Do you hear Hannah’s view of God and His Kingdom?** She is rejoicing in her salvation, not just her gift of a child. Hannah knew something much bigger was going on. She was dedicated to God’s Kingdom, not just her own desires. Her story was just part of God’s story.*

### **E. Corruption in the Priesthood (1 Samuel 2:11-36)**

*The next chapter in the story begins in verse 11.*



### Read verses 11-12.

<sup>11</sup> Then Elkanah went home to Ramah. And the boy was ministering to the LORD in the presence of Eli the priest. <sup>12</sup> Now the sons of Eli were worthless men. They did not know the LORD.

**Observations:** *What is the shocking contrast here?* Young Samuel is ministering to the LORD while the sons of Eli didn't know the LORD. These "worthless" men were priests! How could they not know the LORD? We have to remember that 1 Samuel comes right after the Book of Judges where "everyone did what was right in their own eyes." So it shouldn't surprise us that the worship of God had been corrupted at the very top!

### Read verses 13-17.

<sup>13</sup> The custom of the priests with the people was that when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant would come, while the meat was boiling, with a three-pronged fork in his hand, <sup>14</sup> and he would thrust it into the pan or kettle or cauldron or pot. All that the fork brought up the priest would take for himself. This is what they did at Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there. <sup>15</sup> Moreover, before the fat was burned, the priest's servant would come and say to the man who was sacrificing, "Give meat for the priest to roast, for he will not accept boiled meat from you but only raw." <sup>16</sup> And if the man said to him, "Let them burn the fat first, and then take as much as you wish," he would say, "No, you must give it now, and if not, I will take it by force." <sup>17</sup> Thus the sin of the young men was very great in the sight of the LORD, for the men treated the offering of the LORD with contempt.

**Observations:** *These worthless priests did several different sinful acts with the sacrifice. What did they do?* They would send a servant with a fork to steal extra food, even though they were allotted more than enough. Instead of honoring God with the fat, the priests took the choicest raw meat. If a worshiper tried to offer right sacrifice, the servant threatened to beat him up, like a mafia thug. The bottom line was that the sin of these two young priests was very great. They treated the offerings of the LORD with hatred.

### Read verses 18-21.

<sup>18</sup> Samuel was ministering before the LORD, a boy clothed with a linen ephod. <sup>19</sup> And his mother used to make for him a little robe and take it to him each year when she went up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. <sup>20</sup> Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, "May the LORD give you children by this woman for the petition she asked of the LORD." So then they would return to their



home. <sup>21</sup> Indeed the LORD visited Hannah, and she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. And the boy Samuel grew in the presence of the LORD.

**Observations:** *While the corrupt priests were enriching themselves, young Samuel was serving the LORD in a linen ephod and a little robe. What a contrast between sinister evil and pure innocence! And for those who thought Hannah was foolish for dedicating her son to the LORD, see how He blessed her act of faith. Five more children for a once barren woman! As for Samuel, his story in the LORD is just beginning.*

**Read verses 22-26.**

<sup>22</sup> Now Eli was very old, and he kept hearing all that his sons were doing to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who were serving at the entrance to the tent of meeting. <sup>23</sup> And he said to them, “Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all these people. <sup>24</sup> No, my sons; it is no good report that I hear the people of the LORD spreading abroad. <sup>25</sup> If someone sins against a man, God will mediate for him, but if someone sins against the LORD, who can intercede for him?” But they would not listen to the voice of their father, for it was the will of the LORD to put them to death. <sup>26</sup> Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favor with the LORD and also with man.

**Observations:** *Finally, when it was much too late, Eli tried to stop his sons from their evil. But they would not listen. They had moved from corrupting the worship of God to sexual abuse. Why didn't Eli remove them as priests? Why just idle threats?*

Verse 25 reveals what God was doing. **What was it?** *Much like Pharaoh, these evil priests had hardened their hearts past the point of repentance. God's wrath was upon them. But, then, we see God's grace alive and well in the boy Samuel. Amidst this darkness, a new light is dawning in Shiloh!*

► **Application:** *Do you see light in the darkness in our world today?*

**Read verses 27-36.**

<sup>27</sup> And there came a man of God to Eli and said to him, “Thus says the LORD, ‘Did I indeed reveal myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt subject to the house of Pharaoh? <sup>28</sup> Did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to go up to my altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? I gave to the house of your father all my offerings by fire from the people



of Israel. <sup>29</sup> Why then do you scorn my sacrifices and my offerings that I commanded for my dwelling, and honor your sons above me by fattening yourselves on the choicest parts of every offering of my people Israel?' <sup>30</sup> Therefore the LORD, the God of Israel, declares: 'I promised that your house and the house of your father should go in and out before me forever,' but now the LORD declares: 'Far be it from me, for those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed. <sup>31</sup> Behold, the days are coming when I will cut off your strength and the strength of your father's house, so that there will not be an old man in your house. <sup>32</sup> Then in distress you will look with envious eye on all the prosperity that shall be bestowed on Israel, and there shall not be an old man in your house forever. <sup>33</sup> The only one of you whom I shall not cut off from my altar shall be spared to weep his eyes out to grieve his heart, and all the descendants of your house shall die by the sword of men. <sup>34</sup> And this that shall come upon your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, shall be the sign to you: both of them shall die on the same day. <sup>35</sup> And I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who shall do according to what is in my heart and in my mind. And I will build him a sure house, and he shall go in and out before me anointed forever. <sup>36</sup> And everyone who is left in your house shall come to implore him for a piece of silver or a loaf of bread and shall say, "Please put me in one of the priests' places, that I may eat a morsel of bread." ' "

**Observations:** *Out of nowhere, a man of God appears with some hard words for Eli. Judgment from God is coming! The family of Eli should have continued as priests, since Eli was a descendant of Aaron. But no longer. Why? Because Eli honored his sons above God. So the LORD confronts Eli's inaction with the promise of action. This abuse of the worship of God can't go on! The man of God also gave Eli a sign of judgment: Hophni and Phinehas would die on the same day. Their death will not be a coincidence, but from the hand of God. **But don't miss the more important promise: a faithful priest for Israel! A promise fulfilled in Christ alone!***

► **Application:** *The consequences of refusing to discipline our children in the LORD!*

### **F. The LORD speaks to Samuel (1 Samuel 3)**

#### **Read verse 1.**

<sup>1</sup> Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD in the presence of Eli. And the word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision.



**Observations:** *As Chapter Three opens, we are reminded of the spiritual state of Israel. The LORD was no longer speaking to His people because no one was listening.*

**Read verses 2-7.**

<sup>2</sup> At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his own place. <sup>3</sup> The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was. <sup>4</sup> Then the LORD called Samuel, and he said, "Here I am!" <sup>5</sup> and ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call; lie down again." So he went and lay down. <sup>6</sup> And the LORD called again, "Samuel!" and Samuel arose and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call, my son; lie down again." <sup>7</sup> Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.

**Observations:** *Two times the LORD calls out to Samuel, and each time, Samuel thinks it's Eli. Pretty funny, right? Obviously, Eli thinks Samuel is just having some kind of bad dream. **Why didn't Samuel know it was the voice of the LORD?** Look at verse seven. Even though Samuel was growing in the grace of God, he didn't yet know the LORD! God had not revealed Himself to Samuel.*

► **Application:** *Until God reveals Himself to us, we cannot truly know Him.*

**Read verses 8-14.**

<sup>8</sup> And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy. <sup>9</sup> Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant hears.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place. <sup>10</sup> And the LORD came and stood, calling as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant hears." <sup>11</sup> Then the LORD said to Samuel, "Behold, I am about to do a thing in Israel at which the two ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. <sup>12</sup> On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. <sup>13</sup> And I declare to him that I am about to punish his house forever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God, and he did not restrain them. <sup>14</sup> Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever."





**Observations:** *After the third time, it dawns on Eli that the LORD is calling Samuel. He instructs Samuel how to respond to His voice. “Speak, LORD, for your servant hears.” Eli was teaching Samuel to always listen to the Word of the LORD. Think about the first words Samuel hears from the LORD. God could have said, “Hey, Samuel, this is God. I love you so much.” Instead, Samuel is given a prophetic word of judgment against his mentor and spiritual father. How shocking this must have been!*

► **Application:** *Every time we open God’s Word we are listening to the voice of God.*

### **Read verses 15-21.**

<sup>15</sup> Samuel lay until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. <sup>16</sup> But Eli called Samuel and said, “Samuel, my son.” And he said, “Here I am.” <sup>17</sup> And Eli said, “What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also if you hide anything from me of all that he told you.” <sup>18</sup> So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. And he said, “It is the LORD. Let him do what seems good to him.” <sup>19</sup> And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. <sup>20</sup> And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of the LORD. <sup>21</sup> And the LORD appeared again at Shiloh, for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the LORD.

**Conclusion:** *What a long night that must have been! Then, this young boy has to tell the high priest what God said. What a huge responsibility! But God was with him. Eli accepts the Word of the LORD, as he should.*

*In contrast, Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him. He began to do the work of the LORD among His people!*