

I Samuel 1-3 –6 January 2022

“Relationship Not Religion”

Introduction

- * Although author is unknown, it's written about 930BC – written as 1 book & split when translated to Greek
- * The book is called “Samuel” b/c it depicts the life & legacy of the man Samuel (1100BC-1000BC)
- * I Samuel can be divided into 3 sections
 - * The instigation of earthly kingship (Chap 1-7)
 - * Focus on Samuel
 - * The failure of earthly kingship (Chap 8-15)
 - * Focus on King Saul
 - * God's man chosen & tried (Chap 16-31)
 - * Focus on David to be king
- * II Samuel – depicts the entire reign of King David
- * Book opens up showing stark difference between man centered religion & having a real relationship w/ God
- * A true test of whether you're in relationship or dead religion is how you handle your earthly relationships
- * **Today, 3 principles for handling our most precious relationships**

1st principle is that if you have true relationship w/ God, you'll honor God w/ them (Chap 1:1-2:11)

Read Chap 1:1-2

1. God begins each time period with a person
 - a. He could act Himself, use angels or actions but He chooses to use people
2. Elkanah is Levite settled in the tribe of Ephraim
3. Polygamy: never endorsed & always seen as difficult

Read Chap 1:3

1. Tabernacle sits at Shiloh w/ Eli as priest
2. All were to go to tabernacle at the 3 feasts

Read Chap 1:4-7

1. Polygamy & now Favoritism which is never good – leads to strife
2. Don't show favoritism between equals (kids)

Read Chap 1:8

1. Elkanah tries to comfort Hannah
2. This is a big deal b/c all Israeli women longed for children, so they could be mother to the Messiah

- a. Some wanted this for the self-pride attained
- b. Some wanted simply for the Messiah to come

Read Chap 1:9-11

1. Hannah makes a tit for tat deal w/ the Lord
2. But her heart is of dedication to God
3. *She vowed not to place her love of kids higher than her love of God (see I Sam 2:29)*
 - a. Some desert God b/c of trials, but some desert God b/c they place other goods things as more important than God (Read Matt 13:20-22)

Read Chap 1:12-16

1. Hannah was so deeply connected to this vow she was seen as drunk
2. Are we passionate about things we pray about?

Read Chap 1:17-18

1. Cordial interaction and she leaves
2. Notice, Eli is a polite gentleman, this will be important for chapter 2

Read Chap 1:19-20

1. God graces Hannah w/ Samuel b/c she asked

2. James reminds us to ask our gracious God
 - a. Read Jam 4:1-3 – Ask in faith for right things

Read Chap 1:21-23

1. Most often this weaning was for 3 years
2. Women weren't required to go, only the men

Read Chap 1:24-28

1. Hannah fulfills her vow giving him to God
2. Notice how she fully credits God for this

Read Chap 2:1-2

1. Her praise is focused on God's ability, not hers
2. This expression - "God will never give you more than you can handle" isn't true.
 - a. God does give us more than we can handle
...by ourselves

Read Chap 2:3-7

1. The Lord can set up or take down anyone
2. These are worthy of memorizing – edification

Read Chap 2:8-11

1. Man's power does nothing, without the Lord!

2nd principle is that if you're in dead religion, you'll honor self w/ them (Chap 2:12-36)

Read Chap 2:12

1. These 2 worthless men, who didn't know the Lord, did religious things everyday
2. If your activities aren't for God's glory, then they're worthless even if they're religious

Read Chap 2:13-17

1. Priests were only to get some meat, vs 14 is more than is prescribed for them to take
2. Vs 15-16 is meat that should be burned b4 God
3. Vs 17 they despised the work God wanted to picture thru these sacrifices

Read Chap 2:18-21

1. Even in the face of a wicked priesthood, Samuel honored God
2. Notice nothing negative here about Eli, just his sons – he's perfectly polite & loving to all

Read Chap 2:22-25

1. These sons were fornicating ...at the tabernacle
2. Eli spoke to his sons ...well that's not enough
 - a. Needed to take action to correct this

Read Chap 2:26

1. And then there's Samuel who's just content walking with the Lord
2. It is possible to be liked by God & people
 - a. Some are mean to people, as if to say, "well they hate me anyway"
 - b. Strive to have a winsome personality

Read Chap 2:27-28

1. This prophet's message starts w/ "didn't I give you, as a priest, a special place of blessing?"
2. Judgement is here pronounced to Eli for allowing the sin, not the sons for committing the sin
3. Eli was given the position of authority to deal with the sin of these priests...his sons, but didn't

Read Chap 2:29

1. Why have you valued your sons greater than the God who has blessed you so greatly
2. Your decision proves who your god really is
 - a. Eli's decision not to correct his sons proved he valued them higher than God Himself

Read Chap 2:30-35

1. The sentence of the Lord for their wickedness
 - a. Their lineage as priests will be cut off
2. Proof of the prophecy has to happen during their lifetime – that Eli's two sons will die

Read Chap 2:36

1. His descendants will be desolate, all b/c he didn't use his God given place of authority
2. Both Eli and the sons were in dead religion
 - a. The sons did religious activity everyday yet callously & cared not for the Lord
 - b. Eli did religious activity everyday lovingly & yet idolized his sons above God

3rd principle is you'll have to choose the fear of God rather than the fear of man (Chap 3:1-21)

Read Chap 3:1-5

1. No one was speaking for the Lord in those days
2. Samuel could hear the call of God at a young age, but Eli couldn't hear the Lord
 - a. B/c Samuel's heart was set on God, but Eli's heart wasn't – Read Matt 13:14

Read Chap 3:6-7

1. Certainly, Samuel knew of the Lord mentally but he didn't know the Lord yet experientially
2. God is looking for Samuel to respond to him by choice for the first time in true relationship

Read Chap 3:8-9

1. Eli could help in spiritual things
2. Eli knew WHAT to do but couldn't bring himself to act on it when it came to the sin of his sons – Eli just couldn't choose God over them

Read Chap 3:10

1. Samuel has a tender heart to listen & obey God
2. Life is so busy we need literal quiet time to be able to hear the Lord – in that still, small voice

Read Chap 3:11-14

1. God reveals his plan for Israel to Samuel
2. Notice Eli's judgement is b/c he knew of sin happening in an arena that he was given control of and yet did nothing about it
 - a. There's a sin of commission, & here we see the sin of omission – should have acted

Read Chap 3:15-18

1. Samuel feared Eli, yet he did the right thing
2. Yes, it's good to accept whatever that Lord will do, but we can get off our butts & repent
 - a. Eli should have begged God for grace

Read Chap 3:19-21

1. Samuel walked with God in relationship

Conclusion

So test yourself whether you're in dead religion or if you're in a true relationship w/ the one true God. How you handle your most precious relationship will be a tell.

1. **Are you honoring God w/ your closest relationships like Hannah?**
 - a. Even good things can lead us away from God, by they themselves becoming our gods
2. **Are you honoring self w/ your closest relationships like Eli & his sons?**
 - a. Dead religion looks authentic except it's motivated differently
 - i. By what you can get (like Eli's sons)
 - ii. By what you can keep (like Eli)
3. **Are you ready to choose God over others in all things like Samuel?**
 - a. Are we living by a short-term concern of what man's power can do to us or a long-term concern about what God's power will do?
 - b. So continually ask yourself, "*Is this for the glory of self or for the glory of God?*"