



TEACHER NOTES FOR CHAPTER 3 THE KINGS & PROPHETS OF ISRAEL

PAGE	39
THEME	THE WINDS OF CHANGE: GOD RAISES UP SAMUEL
HOMEWORK BIBLE READING	1 SAMUEL 1, 3 & 7
DOCUMENT LAST UPDATED	30 JANUARY, 2011 Copyright Biblical Turning Points

OVERVIEW

Samuel was the last Judge of Israel and the man that God used to oversee the anointing of Israel's first two kings. The account of his early years is captivating, particularly when we see it contrasted against the lives of Eli's two wicked sons that Samuel would have grown up with.

The events that surround God's removal of Eli and his sons are also canvassed in the chapter as they show the students something they will see many times during this period of the Bible. God is patient and gracious toward his people but he is also holy. Eventually he will intervene to keep the nation of Israel on track so that the promises that God made through Abraham will come true.

This chapter looks at how God brought stability and light back into his nation through Samuel's leadership. Despite this we read at the start of 1 Samuel that Israel requested that Samuel give them a king like the other nations when they saw that he was ageing. The request from the people and the subsequent interaction of Samuel with God and the people sets the scene for the anointing of Israel's first king and the shift from the period of Judges.

Samuel as an individual makes for a compelling study and you may choose to spend more time unpacking aspects of his life than are covered in the chapter.

OUR TIPS

The third chapter / lesson of the course may lend itself to some drama to help keep the momentum of the course and the enthusiasm of the students. There are also great opportunities in this chapter to get students thinking about their own character as they evaluate Samuel's, Eli's and the people of Israel's.

As this is the last lesson in the pre-Kings period it would be good to summarise with the students what they have discovered about the nation of Israel prior to next lesson when they will look at Saul, the first king of the nation.

P47 is a great opportunity to talk about who God is. Throughout this course we want to encourage students to be putting together a growing picture of God's character as they look at his actions and responses to his people. Is he one of many or is he the one and only creator of the universe?

YOUR TIPS

We would love to hear what you have learnt after teaching this chapter. If you have tips that you are happy for us to freely share with other teachers using this course please let us know by emailing them through to us at admin@biblicalturningpoints.com.au.

COMMON QUESTIONS STUDENTS ASK

- If Samuel's sons were also bad does that make him as bad as Eli? A: The Bible never blames Samuel in the same way that it blames Eli. There are also hints that Samuel posted them far from the center of activity of the religious life of the nation because of his suspicions of them.
- Why does Samuel get to hear God's voice but we only get to read a book?

We would love to hear what questions students are asking in response to the content of this chapter. Please let us know at admin@biblicalturningpoints.com.au.

RESOURCES TO HELP YOU TEACH THIS CHAPTER

- Kings and Prophets Visual aid

If you know of any websites or resources that would assist teachers with bringing this chapter to life please let us know at admin@biblicalturningpoints.com.au.

ANSWERS FOR CHAPTER 3

Answers have been provided for questions where we believe clarification may be needed or where an activity requires the teacher to have the correct answer before the students commence the activity.

If you have any questions about an activity not written up in the following notes, please contact us at admin@biblicalturningpoints.com.au.

CHAPTER 3

Answers have been provided for questions where we believe clarification may be needed or where an activity requires the teacher to have the correct answer before the students commence the activity.

p. 42 Activity

Samuel's childhood

What was so special about Samuel's childhood?

He grew up in the presence of the Lord at the Tabernacle. He was dedicated to the Lord from birth by a mother who despite being unable to have children believed that God would hear her prayer.

Read 1 Samuel 3:1. What does the narrator say about the word of the Lord in those days?

It was rare – there were not many visions.

In light of this, what is significant about God's call to Samuel?

We see God's word coming again to Israel after a dark end to the book of Judges. We are reminded that God is not finished with this nation yet.

Compare Samuel's life with that of Eli's sons. What are the differences between them?

Samuel is faithful in his service to God while Eli's sons use their position to abuse those under their authority and commit acts of immorality.

They show no sensitivity to their calling while Samuel has a desire to hear from God and walk in his ways.

p. 45 Activity

Prophecy against the house of Eli and fulfilment (1 Samuel 4)

Cut short your strength and the strength of your father's house	v 14-20
There will not be an old man in your family line	v 19
You will see distress in my dwelling	V 14-18
All your descendants will die in the prime of life	V 19
Your two sons will die on the same day	V 17
I will raise up a faithful priest and firmly establish his house. Your family will bow before him.	1 Samuel 14:18-19

p. 49 Activity

Israel requests a king

Why do the people of Israel ask Samuel to appoint a king to lead them?

Samuel is old, his sons do not walk in his ways, and the Israelites need a leader.

What type of king do they want? Do you see any problems with this?

They want a king like the nations around them.

While they might have been thinking about the strength of the other kings, they also had a number of not so desirable qualities, including their idolatry.

How does God react to their request?

God tells Samuel to listen to the people and warn them. God says they are rejecting him, not Samuel. God instructs Samuel to give them a king.

p. 51 Activity

Samuel's warnings about the king

True or false

All statements are true. You will need to give us feedback if this activity does not have the required effect of surprising the students with what Samuel says a king will do.