

Samuel Explained: Kingship, Covenant, and the Heart God Seeks

A reading companion | October 21, 2026

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Power and the heart

Israel wanted a king. Power alone could not make a faithful one. The books of Samuel follow Israel from the leadership of judges into the reigns of Saul and David. Along the way, public strength and private faithfulness do not always travel together. This reading companion helps you follow the main movements of our 16-minute teaching.

Begin with a prayer, not a throne

Read 1 Samuel 1-3. The story opens with Hannah and the birth and calling of Samuel. Before you reach the kings and battles, notice the people who pray, listen, and respond. This beginning gives you a different starting point for thinking about leadership.

What did Israel expect from a king?

Read 1 Samuel 8. Israel asks for a king like the surrounding nations. Samuel warns about what royal power can take from the people. As you read, ask what the people hope a king will provide, and what they are willing to overlook to gain it.

Look beyond the appearance of strength

Read 1 Samuel 16-17 and 24. David is anointed, faces Goliath, and later has an opportunity to kill Saul. These scenes invite you to watch how courage and restraint appear in the same life. What does David do when he has the power to act?

A promise does not hide a failure

Read 2 Samuel 7 and 11-12. God makes a promise concerning David and his house. Later, the account of Bathsheba, Uriah, and Nathan confronts David with the harm he has done. Read both passages carefully. The story preserves the promise while also naming the king's wrongdoing and its consequences.

Read, listen, and reflect

Our teaching follows Samuel, Saul, and David through kingship, covenant, and the heart God seeks. As you listen, keep one question nearby: where does the story show the difference between having power and using it faithfully? Return to one of the passages above and compare your observations with the teaching.

Source notes

Source and reading notes: Primary texts are 1 Samuel 1-31 and 2 Samuel 1-24. This companion summarizes the biblical narrative; it contains no direct Scripture quotations. The episode's comments on authorship, dating, composition, and audience are MMAB historical interpretation. Its illustrations are meaning-led artwork, not archaeological evidence or portraits of known individuals. Preserved archival speech is not relabeled as a new verbatim Berean Standard Bible reading.

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