

“Samuel and Saul” - Class 11

A Walk Through the Old Testament

1 Samuel 1-15

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Transcriber’s Note: Don Maurer turns on the recorder.

Jeff: Don, where are you going?

Don: Nowhere. Jeff, why is it that you always initiate trouble? I never do anything like that. (*Laughter*)

Jeff: I want to tell you this. I just want to be clear.

Don: An infamous President said that a few decades ago. (*Laughter*)

Jeff: There are no pictures of Don on today’s presentation. I want you to know that I receive email after email not from Don, but from Willy. (*Pause*) Wonka. (*Laughter*) And I’ve shared them with my wife and she still thinks I’m the bad guy. (*Laughter*) So I said, “No more,” at least for today. (*Laughter*) So Don, go ahead.

Kevin Cohn: Hey, Jeff? You guys should be comedians on television. (*Laughter*)
(Music)

Jeff: Our heavenly Father, we thank You for the day , for the time You’ve given, and for the love that we have in our hearts through the Lord Jesus Christ by the work of the Holy Spirit who brings glory and honor to Him. Father, thank You for the time that You’ve given us to open Your word and to be in it. We’re thankful for that. We’re thankful not only for the opportunity itself, but also for Your word. For we know indeed that it is Your word. Thank You for having given us the ability, that God-given ability to recognize this Bible for what it is, to be Your word. Not that it becomes Your word, not that it is not Your word but is meaningful to us, but it is, regardless of what anyone thinks, Your word, and we’re thankful for it. Father, we pray now that You would open our eyes more and more to its truth, that we might live our lives according to it, that we might be informed by it, that we might see the way in which You loved us as we open and unfold the plan of redemption for us through the pages of the Old Testament.

Father, we now pray, asking that You will continually bless us not only as we are in the Word but as we live our lives out of the Word. We pray for opportunities throughout each day, that You would give us opportunities to shine the light of the gospel into the darkness of the world around us. Father, we also ask for those who are near and dear to us and for those who are near and dear to this group. And we think of Harry Repic and the difficult situation that he’s in due to this really ugly divorce. Father, we pray that You would bring reconciliation between he and his wife so that they might be able to share custody of the children and that they might be able to get along for their sake. Father, we pray for that, asking that Your hand would minister in that situation, a very difficult situation.

Father, we pray for Terry’s wife. We continue to lift Mary up and ask that You will work in her. We pray that You will bring control to that particular situation. And Father, we pray for our brother Bruce Bickel, asking that as he battles Parkinson’s disease that You would give him the strength to do so. Father, we pray that You will continue to make

“Samuel and Saul” - Class 11

His life a light as You have all these years. We pray that in these latter years that You will continue to do so.

Father, we pray for Nancy, and we ask that you will strengthen her body. But we certainly pray as You strengthen her body through the means that You’re doing, through the treatment that You’re providing through the doctors, that You would also keep her from the vicious side effects that go along with that treatment. Father, we pray that Our would spare her from the nausea. We pray that You will encourage her heart most of all. We pray that her thinking would be resting upon You. We pray that for Sig as well, that they would find their strength in You. And we pray, Father, that Your love that You provide them in the Holy Spirit would surround them and always uplift and uphold them.

Father, we pray for our children and grandchildren. We ask that Your blessing would be upon them for good. And Father, we certainly pray for Mark Whittaker. We ask that You will oversee him in this situation. Father, what a remarkably horrible situation this is for him. And we just pray that You will sort it out. We know that You are more than able to do so, and so we commit this situation to You. More importantly, we pray that Mark would be able to commit the situation to you and find rest no matter the situation, in Your hand.

Father, we’re also thankful for Brett and the good report about the Dominican Republic, for the good work there, for the way in which they were able to minister to those people, for the way in which You blessed him as he was able to speak to those people in the service. Father, we just commit that whole work to You, thanking You for it. We pray now for the blessing upon our study, and we ask it in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen.

Jeff: All right. Today we’re going to continue on, looking at the Old Testament. And today we’re going to be looking primarily at the lives of Samuel, Saul and David. Now we’re going to stop short of looking at David’s life. We’re going to pick that up next week. So we’re going to get into David’s life insofar as that life intersects with Saul.

So today this is our purpose statement. Basically we’re looking at a transitional period. And the transitional period is the period of the Judges. They move into the land and it’s prior to the monarchy. There is this period of judges that is really situated between that entry into the land and the monarchy when Israel gets a king. And it sort of prepares us in one sense for the monarchy. Why? Because, if you’ll remember, the book of Judges continually says that “*there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in their own eyes.*” And so there is almost in a sense a preparation for the time of monarchy that is to come.

The other interesting thing that I can say to you about this particular time is that Israel ends up wanting a king, but for the wrong reasons. They want a king because all of the other nations have a king.

But I think you need to understand something that’s very significant. When they move into the Promised Land, there is no king. There are twelve tribes and each tribe gets an allotment of land. And each tribe participates in the expulsion of the Canaanites, such that by the time you get to Joshua 21 it says that “*not one of the good promises that God gave to the people failed,*” and they possessed the land.

“Samuel and Saul” - Class 11

Now think about this. This very quickly leads to a cycle of sin, the cycle that I put on the board last time, where they disobey God and commit apostasy. God brings an alien invader into their midst to punish them, somebody from the Canaanite area. They cry out to the Lord. The Lord raises up a judge; they're delivered. They have a time of peace and prosperity, and then they do it all over again. That's the cycle of these judges. Every story sort of builds around that cycle.

Now think about this for just a minute. At the time they move in prior to the monarchy there are these twelve allotments of land with different tribes that rule the allotment. But as they grow and as the nations around them grow, as the Ammonites grow and the Moabites gain power, and so on, the interesting thing that begins to happen is that they recognize that the localized government is not sufficient to withstand these nations that are growing up around them. So there's a sense in which, out of just the sheer practicality of it, that we need a centralized government. We need a king. So there are motivations at different levels for them to cry out for a king. But as we'll see in one sense, or at least from the only sense that we ought to think about, considering God's perspective, it's a rejection of a theocracy. It's a rejection of God as King over them, and God's ability to care for them in the way that only He can. So anyway, that sort of sets us up for what's to come.

Here's our outline for today. We're going to look at a brief introduction. We're going to take a look at the last Judge. The last Judge is Saul. And he's the last Judge. He's also the first Prophet. And he's the first Prophet because he anoints the first king. So there's always in the Old Testament now—

Don Maurer: Do you mean Samuel?

Jeff: Yes, Samuel.

Ron Baling: You said Saul.

Jeff: Did I say Saul? I meant Samuel. Samuel is the last Judge and the first Prophet. He anoints the first king, Saul. You know, I sometimes leave things out. So thanks, Don; I appreciate that.

If I leave things out, and you have a question, I know this. I just listened to myself on a recording yesterday that I made for my students. I just left a bunch of stuff out.

(Laughter) I figured that I'm going to post it anyway and see if they ask questions too.

(Laughter)

And you'll notice that throughout the Old Testament at the time of the monarchy, there's always a prophet and there's always a king. Those merge together along with the priests in the Messiah, who is Prophet, Priest and King. But all of these offices, this trifold of offices, go together.

And then the selection of Saul as king and the coming of David. The coming of David coincides with Saul's kingship, and then the flight of David, which is the result of Saul's jealousy. So we're going to look at that under this particular topic today. So those things today.

So let's look at some introductory material first of all. And I want us to think first of all about the days of the Judges. Remember that the days of the Judges, like I said, was a time when there was no king in Israel and everyone did what was right in their own eyes.

“Samuel and Saul” - Class 11

And that says it repeatedly. In 17:6 it's written down and in 18:1, 19:1 and 21:25. There is no king in Israel and everyone does what is right in their own eyes until you get to 1 Samuel chapter 8. And then the people start to cry out, “We need a king,” and for the reasons that I already mentioned. And we'll revisit that as we go.

But the next question is *why Judges?* Why the Judges? Well, as I've already said, there was the rise of the Arameans, there was the rise of the Ammonites and of the Moabites. There was the rise of these different nations. And there needed to be this centralized government to deal with these rising nations. And so they cry out for a king, this general ruler.

But you have to remember this. And I have to make sure that I state it up front even though I'll say it later. This king was always in the plan and purposes of God. If you were to go to Genesis chapter 49 and verse 10, one of the things that you would find there is the prophecy that is for all the twelve tribes of Israel. And for Judah in particular it says this: *“The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet.”* And so there's a sense in which there has always been a prophecy of kingship in the covenant. And so this is not something added because of the people's request; it's there.

Now why is it that God and the people have a difference of opinion at this point? Why is it that God says that their request for a king in 1 Samuel chapter 8 is not a rejection of Samuel but a rejection of Himself? Well, it's a rejection of Himself because it's a rejection of the theocracy. It is a rejection of God's kingship over the people.

Remember, He is the One who is King. He is the One who gave them the law by which they were to abide in the land or be driven out. They did not abide by the law. And they were always, always, under the threat of being driven out of the land, and eventually they were. In 722 the North was driven out, in 586 the South is driven out. But it takes a long time. Why? Because God is a gracious God, slow to wrath, longsuffering, patient, kind, those kinds of things. So eventually He drives them out. But their disobedience starts at the very beginning because they reject God's kingship over them.

So they want a king. You know, it's interesting. Samuel is all down in the mouth about this because he thinks it's a rejection of himself. And God has to say, “No, it's a rejection of Me.” And then God says this to Samuel in chapter 8. He says, “Now here's what I want you to tell them. I want you to tell them that they are at risk for the three w's.” And you know what the three w's are: wealth, weapons and women. (*Laughter*) This is what the king is going to stockpile. He's going to stockpile wealth, weapons and women. “And it's not going to be a good time for you because you're going to get a king just like the nations around you.”

And so why the Judges? Well, I said this the last time. I want you to—Look, no, I'm going to stop. Any questions? All right, good; let's stop. I get carried away.

So let's think about *the last Judge* for a minute. Now you begin this story of 1 Samuel with a very obscure family. You begin this story with a family where you meet a father by the name of Elkanah. And Elkanah, well he has a wife by the name of Hannah. And Hannah means favored one or attractive.

Now she's down in the mouth, too. Now I'll tell you what. You can imagine why. I'll never forget the first time I brought the second wife home to my wife. (*Laughter*) I mean,

“Samuel and Saul” - Class 11

you know, when you start to add wives, the first one gets down about it. You know what I mean.

And Hannah, she's the attractive one, but guess what? Hannah is not fruitful in the womb. And so Elkanah says, “Well, I've got to remedy this situation.” And so he brings in Penny. Now that's not her name, but we're going to call her that because there are too many I's and I always trip up on it.

Don Maurer: Changin' the Bible, huh? (*Laughter*)

Ted Wood: That's a good shot, Don. (*Laughter*)

Brave Man: Could you erase that name?

Jeff: Could there be any more proof? (*Laughter*) I mean, any more? There are no pictures of Don here today. (*Laughter*) Don lobs them over the bough. (*Laughter*) Oh, here's one and here's another one! (*Laughter*)

Anyway, so Penny-y-y!! (*Laughter*) means *fruitful*. And she's always fruitful. You know, this is the one who comes waddling around the corner and you see her belly first, right? (*Laughter*) She's always pregnant.

And here's the interesting thing. The interesting thing is that we learn a very valuable principle from this text. We learn that the closer we get to God, what is inside of us always manifests itself all the more quickly. So it says that when they go to worship once a year at Shiloh, that's when Penny would agitate Hannah the most.

And you know how that would happen. You know, she would get around to all the other wives that had all the other children. And she would say, “Ooh, look at all these kiddoes! Ooh, you know, how am I going to feed them all?” She'd be carrying the five or six plates through the line. (*Laughter*) “Oh, Hannah, look! This is what barrenness is for you. Isn't it nice? You can hold your own plate.” That sort of thing, right? And she would agitate her.

And so Hannah actually has enough of it. And what happens is that she ends up going and leaving the feast and she ends up going to the tabernacle, and she ends up praying. And she prays, and there in her prayer she is not moving her mouth, which is certainly a rarity. She's praying from her heart. And Eli is sitting there watching. And Eli is the priest.

And Eli is sitting there watching. And he finally gets up and he says to her, “Stop! Look at you, all drunk! And you come here and you desecrate, dishonor and disrespect God.”

And she says, “No, it's not that at all. You see, I'm praying, I'm praying from my heart. And here's what I'm praying for.”

And Eli, you know, he's a cynic. He sees through everybody. And it's not hard for him to see through everybody, because he's got a couple of worthless sons. (*Laughter*) So he thinks he sees through them, and in the process he ends up seeing through everybody. And the interesting thing is, you know what C.S. Lewis says about cynics. He says that they see through to nothing, because that's usually what their opinions amount to in the end. So he's the cynic.

***“Samuel and Saul”* - Class 11**

He doesn't apologize to her. He doesn't say anything to her except, “*May the LORD bless you.*” “Go, and may the LORD bless you and give you what you're praying for.” And so she goes away and she conceives.

I want to talk about Eli for a minute. Chapter 2 starts off with “*Eli had two sons, and they were worthless.*” Two sons and they were worthless. What does that mean?

You know, we probably have a tendency to think that we've probably used that word before, worthless. And we probably think that it means worth nothing, or worth zero. But I want you to see that this is actually defined in the text.

Go to 1 Samuel chapter 1. In chapter 2 it says that “*the sons of Eli were worthless men.*” But I want you to see what it says in 1:16. This is what Hannah says when she is accused of being drunk at the tabernacle. In verse 16 he says, “*Do not regard your servant as a worthless woman.*”

Now what does *worthless* mean here? Well, *worthless* means *to have no regard for God*. It means to have disrespect for God. It means to treat the things of God with little or no worth. And that's the idea behind these sons.

Now I want you to think about these sons. These sons were both priests in Shiloh. What they did was that they sent their servants around to stab three-pronged fork into the pot. And whatever they pulled up was theirs. But in addition to that, what they would do is that a servant would go around and they would say, “Give us the fat portion of the meat.” And so the worshiper who would be capable would say, “Wait a minute! The fat portion, according to Leviticus,” (because remember, that was the Bible at the time, the five books of Moses), “that fat portion belongs to God. So let me burn the meat on the altar and cook it on the altar, and then you can have as much as you want. But let the fat be given to God.” That's what the worshiper would say. The worshiper is better than the priest in this regard, right?

And they would say, “If you don't give it to us, we're going to take it by force.” And these were the kinds of worthless men that were serving in Shiloh, men who had no regard for God, no regard for God at all, or the things of God. That made them worthless.

Now notice. You can see that. If you have a translation of chapter 2 it may say “*they did not regard the LORD.*” But my text says, “*They did not know the LORD.*” And that's probably closer to the Hebrew. “*They did not know the LORD.*” And that really gets to the heart of it, doesn't it? When you don't have respect or regard for the Lord, it's probably because you don't know Him, right?

Now it may be that you act in such a way that you're sinful at the moment. And any time we're sinful we have no regard for the Lord. That doesn't mean we don't know Him. But in this case it means that they didn't know Him. Yes, go ahead.

Ted: The Hebrew word is definitely *know*.

Jeff: Is it definitely *know*? Okay. Now I want to talk to you just a minute about *the sons of Eli*, because this is one of those places where we can not just learn about the unfolding history of redemption. It's one of those places where we can actually learn how to be better fathers.

You know, it's interesting, because in chapter 2 Eli confronts his sons. He says, “Look. What I'm hearing about you is not good, my sons.” But by the time he confronts them,

***“Samuel and Saul”* - Class 11**

the text says, “*He was old, and he kept on hearing these things.*” In other words, this confrontation is probably long overdue.

But what is more, nothing comes of it. And in one sense we can say it’s just talk. Now talk is a great place to begin, right? You know, this seems a little hard, but I’ll relay it to you as somebody else having said it because that’s always the best way, right? (*Laughter*) You’ll say, “That sounds hard.” And you say, “Ah well, he said it.” (*Laughter*)

We have an international conference for our denomination. And one year we had Joel Beeke come and speak. And he was talking about family worship, and somebody asked him a question. What if you have teenage children who refuse to participate in family worship?

And he said, “Well, what I would do is I would sit down and talk with them about it. And if they continue to refuse to participate in family worship, I would say, “Well then, you’re not going to eat.” (*Laughter*) And I think everybody was sort of taken aback by that.

And he said, “Well, you can eat if you honor the Lord, because my house is going to honor the Lord. And if you honor the Lord along with us, then we’ll eat together. But if you’re not going to, then you’re not going to eat.”

And I thought to myself, You know, no matter what you think of that, it’s a step beyond Eli, isn’t it? Because Eli just says, “Look, what you do is not good.” And the kids say, “Who cares? Do you see the fat cuts we get from the steaks that are provided here?” And you know, the father doesn’t do anything about it.

And so no matter what you think about Beeke’s advice, he did something about it. He followed up his talk. He said, “This is what I would do.”

So you need to do more than talk to your children. Our world has taught us that punishment is somehow negative. And my guess is that probably all of us grew up with a father who used some sort of discipline with us that we did not enjoy. But that’s according to the book of Hebrews and it’s for our good. So I think that’s just an instructive example.

Now *Samuel’s call* comes next. It comes in chapter 3. And Samuel’s call is interesting because God has been preparing us for this.

Now I want you to go back with me and I want you to look at chapter 2 for just a minute. I want you to know that there has been this interplay. There has been an interplay between Eli’s sons and Samuel. For instance, in chapter 2 verses 12-17 you have this thing with Eli’s sons.

Transcriber’s Note: 1 Samuel 2:12-17, NKJV. “*Now the sons of Eli were corrupt; they did not know the LORD. And the priests’ custom with the people was that when any man offered a sacrifice, the priest’s servant would come with a three-pronged flesh-hook in his hand while the meat was boiling. Then he would thrust it into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; and the priest would take for himself all that the flesh-hook brought up. So they did in Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there. Also, before they burned the fat, the priest’s servant would come and say to the man who sacrificed, ‘Give meat for roasting to the priest, for he will not take boiled meat from you, but raw.’ And if the man said to him, ‘They should really burn the fat first; then you may take as much as your*

“Samuel and Saul” - Class 11

heart desires, ’he would then answer him, ‘No, but you must give it now; and if not, I will take it by force. ’Therefore the sin of the young men was very great before the LORD, for men abhorred the offering of the LORD. ’

Jeff: And then in verses 18-21 you have Samuel introduced, and his mom bringing his ephod once a year to Shiloh to dress him, and so on.

Transcriber’s Note: 1 Samuel 2:18-21, NKJV. *“But Samuel ministered before the LORD, even as a child, wearing a linen ephod. Moreover his mother used to make him a little robe, and bring it to him year by year when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. And Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, ‘The LORD give you descendants from this woman for the loan n that was given to the LORD. ’Then they would go to their own home. And the LORD visited Hannah, so that she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile the child Samuel grew before the LORD.”*

Jeff: And then 22 picks up with Eli’s sons again and goes through 25, and in 26 you get Samuel again. And then in 27 you get Eli’s sons again. So by the time you get to chapter 3, you’re prepared for the call of Samuel. God is going to call Samuel. And we’ve noticed that Eli’s sons are worthless. But this little boy Samuel is growing up right.

You know, this is just interesting to me. Here is Hannah leaving her son. He’s probably four years old when she first leaves him. She leaves her son in Shiloh with a father who raised Hophni and Phinehas, the two worthless boys, and sees him once a year. Can you imagine? Can you imagine how tied up in knots she must have been from year to year, to go back to see him? “I wonder how Samuel is doing this year. I wonder if he’s faithful,” or “I wonder if he’s like Hophni and Phinehas.” I’ll tell you what. Yes?

Don Nemit: She dedicated Samuel to the Lord. She trusted the Lord under Eli.

Jeff: That was just what I was going to say. (*Laughter*) All right, I’m going to move on. (*Laughter*) Oh, a couple things. First of all, I want you to notice that the word of the Lord was rare at the time that Samuel was called. But notice that Samuel is ready to hear. He hears it. He needs some guidance and Eli gives him some guidance. But he hears the word of the Lord.

Now this is an interesting thing, because the Philistines are a thorn in the flesh of Israel. The Philistines are enemies that live along the sea. They’re on the western border, the lower part of the Promised Land. And Israel goes out to battle them. And when they go out to battle them Hophni and Phinehas go with them.

One of the things they do is that they take the ark with them. They take the ark and they treat it as a talisman, as a magic box. “We’ll take the ark and God will defeat our enemies.”

And God doesn’t defeat their enemies. In fact, what happens is that the Philistines defeat them, capture the ark and take it into Philistia with them.

Now here’s the great thing. The box is put in their temple, in Dagon’s temple. Dagon ends up falling down as a statue, of worshiping the Lord and breaking off his hands, and so on.

Let me stop here and say this. You know, because of this there is introduced in Philistia a custom of leaping over the threshold in their temple. Why? Because Dagon’s hands are broken off over the threshold. If you look when we get to that point, you’ll

“Samuel and Saul” - Class 11

notice that this same tradition leaks into Israel. And the priests begin to leap over the threshold, because they are always allowing the paganism of the external world to creep in, and they are syncretistic all the time. They are unfaithful to the Lord. They do not keep the covenant that God made with them under Moses. They are in the land as long as they are by His grace and mercy, not because of their own faithfulness.

Anyway God, As it were, basically gets Himself out of exile. And the beautiful picture is that “I’m not helping you because you’re sinful in the way you’re treating Me.” He goes into exile and then frees Himself and then returns to Israel, as if to say, “I’m not with you and you are not with Me. So it’s time to change your ways.” That’s the idea.

I should mention at this point that this is where Hophni and Phinehas die. Eli hears about the ark being captured. He’s a heavy man; he falls over backward and dies himself. And one of the boys’ wives gives birth to a baby. And they call the baby Ichabod, because “*God has departed from this place.*” That’s the idea.

The selection of Saul. There’s a need for a king. I already explained to you why there’s a need for a king. God is being rejected. And that provision for a king was in the Old Testament in Genesis 49:10. It’s also in the Mosaic law. Deuteronomy 17 not only talks about a prophet. Is it a prophet or a priest in Deuteronomy 18?

Don Maurer: A prophet.

Jeff: A prophet. Thanks, Don. But a king in Deuteronomy 17. And in Deuteronomy 17:14 you see that provision.

Transcriber’s Note: Deuteronomy 17:14, NKJV. “*When you come to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and possess it and dwell in it, and say, ‘I will set a king over me like all the nations that are around me.’*”

Jeff: Now when they select Saul, Saul is a great choice. Notice that his height is head and shoulders above everyone else. In 10:23 and 26 it says that there is none like him. In 9:21 he seems to be a humble sort of guy.

Transcriber’s Note: 1 Samuel 9:21, NKJV. “*And Saul answered and said, ‘Am I not a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel, and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Why then do you speak like this to me?’*”

Jeff: And then right after this he has success in fighting off the Ammonites at Jabesh-Gilead. And it’s right after this in chapter 12 that Samuel sort of recedes into the background. It’s almost as if he says, “Well, my work is done,” with his farewell speech, you know. They pray for him, you know, and he sits in the back of the car. I’ve got a picture of that for you, Don. (*Laughter*)

Don Maurer: Thank you, Jeff. (*Laughter*)

Jeff: You’re welcome. But take another look at Saul. Now you’ve got to remember this. What did Deuteronomy 12 say? Deuteronomy 12 said that “you are to worship Me as I prescribe. You’re not to add to what I say. You’re not to take away from what I say. You’re to do what I say.” And in 13:13-14 we find that Saul assumes for himself the duties of the priesthood.

Transcriber’s Note: 1 Samuel 13:11-14, NKJV. “*And Samuel said, ‘What have you done?’*”

“Samuel and Saul” - Class 11

“Saul said, ‘When I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that you did not come within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered together at Michmash, then I said, ‘The Philistines will now come down on me at Gilgal, and I have not made supplication to the LORD.’ Therefore I felt compelled, and offered a burnt offering.’

“And Samuel said to Saul, ‘You have done foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you. For now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not continue. The LORD has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you.’”

Jeff: He’s supposed to wait for Samuel to come and offer the sacrifice before they go to war. But he can’t wait. He said, “He’s not coming.” And so he doesn’t come, or at least he doesn’t come in Saul’s timetable, and Saul offers the sacrifice in Samuel’s stead.

So what does he do? He violates what’s called *the regulative principle*. He does what God told him not to do.

You remember Nadab and Abihu, Nadab and Abihu in Leviticus chapter 11, or Leviticus chapter 10. Why am I struggling this morning? In Leviticus chapter 10 they have the worship service. The worship service is great, and everything climaxes. If you read it, it says that in that worship service they did exactly the way God said. And then after it’s all finished, when God appears to the people and consumes it with fire, they say, “Hey, let’s keep this thing going.” And it says that they go and they get strange fire for the altar, in other words, fire that was not prescribed by the Lord. They take that fire back. They offer it. And fire comes out from the altar and consumes them.

And remember what Moses says? He goes to Aaron and he says, “Get hold of yourself, brother. I know this is tough, but anyone who approaches God must approach Him as holy or set apart.” In other words, anyone who approaches God in worship must approach Him the way that He has prescribed to be approached, and not the way that you think or I think or anyone else thinks He ought to be approached, but in the way that He has prescribed. And Aaron gets hold of himself, remember?

And they end up going through the rest of the day, and they actually don’t eat the offering that’s given to them. They actually burn it all up, and Moses is bent out of shape. And he says, “Why didn’t you eat that?”

And Aaron says, “Do you think that God would have been pleased if I would have eaten that sacrifice today?” And Moses said, “Yes, you’re probably right.”

And the idea then is that you do things the way that God prescribed, not adding to them or taking away from them. And Saul does what God had not prescribed. The duty of offering was to the priest and not to the king.

And so, then, how about this? In 14:24 and 15:12 there’s more for self-benefit.

Transcriber’s Note: 1 Samuel 14:24, NKJV. *“And the men of Israel were distressed that day, for Saul had placed the people under oath, saying, ‘Cursed is the man who eats any food until evening, before I have taken vengeance on my enemies.’ So none of the people tasted food.”*

“Samuel and Saul” - Class 11

15:12: “So when Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul, it was told Samuel, saying, ‘Saul went to Carmel, and indeed, he set up a monument for himself; and he has gone on around, passed by, and gone down to Gilgal.’”

Jeff: And then how about this one? He seizes the plunder of the ban. Remember, he was supposed to go in and annihilate everything. And Samuel shows up and he says to him, “Hey, did you do exactly what the Lord said? Did you wipe out everything? Did you wipe out men and women and animals and everything?”

And Saul says, “I did everything exactly the way the Lord said.” And Samuel says, “Then why do I hear sheep behind me?” (*Laughter*)

And remember that Saul says, “Well, I was going to keep those and offer them to the LORD.” (*Laughter*) And remember, this is where Samuel tells Saul that “the kingship has been torn from you.”

And this is the kind of no-nonsense guy that Samuel is. Remember this? So Agag is the king. And he was supposed to be wiped out in all of this. And he’s smiling. He’s thinking, “You know, Saul rubbed my back. I’ll get a chance to rub his back; we’re kings.”

And Samuel comes along and says, “Why didn’t everybody get killed?” And all of a sudden Agag is like, “What?” And Samuel says, “*Bring the king in front of me.*” And it says that Samuel takes his sword and hacks Agag to pieces. He just butchers him, which is why it gives Esther and Mordecai trouble later, right?, and so on. But anyway,--

Ted: Jeff?

Jeff: Yes?

Ted: Can you give present-day application of what you just taught?

Jeff: You dog! (*Laughter*) **Ted:** Better a dog if he begs for the Lord. (*Laughter*)

Jeff: All right. You probably know that I’m from a denomination that only sings the Psalms. Okay, maybe you do, maybe you don’t. I am. (*Laughter*) So I’ll give you an application of how we see it. Is that what you were going for?

Ted: No, I wasn’t talking about Psalm-singing only.

Jeff: Okay. What were you talking about?

Ted: I’m just wondering. It’s a pretty brutal passage of Scripture. I wanted to see the application for today. But take it any place you wish.

Jeff: Okay. So for instance, here’s the Old Testament. In the Old Testament do you remember that the ark comes back from Philistia? And they keep it where it lands for a long time, many years. And it’s not parading to Jerusalem until David brings it into Jerusalem. And David goes to get it and puts it on a cart. Do you remember that? And you remember that it starts to teeter. And who reaches out to touch it?

Ted: Uzzah.

Jeff: Uzzah reaches out to steady the ark, and what happens to him?

Brave Men: God strikes him dead.

Jeff: Why? David goes back and says, “Why? We were honoring You. Why did You do this?”

And this is what God says. “Do what I’ve prescribed.” And so what do they do? David goes and he puts the acacia poles through the rings, and they carry the ark. The priests

“Samuel and Saul” - Class 11

carry the ark into Jerusalem. There, for instance, is a violation of the regulative principle and a correction of it.

In a modern-day context, my denomination would say that an application of the regulative principle is that you sing Psalms only. Somebody help me with Colossians 3:16.

Transcriber’s Note: Colossians 3:16, ESV. *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”*

Jeff: *“Let the word of Christ—”*

Don Maurer: *“Dwell in you richly.”*

Jeff: *“Dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.”*

All right. Okay, so let’s take a look at this. My denomination says this. What is referred to as *“psalms, hymns and spiritual songs?”* Well first of all, they say that they’ve got to be connected in some way with the word of Christ or the word of God, which is at the very end of the text. So *“let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.”* The psalms, the hymns and the songs are obviously in some sense connected to the word of Christ with which you are to teach and admonish. So first of all, psalms hymns and songs are that.

Second, the interesting thing is that this particular word *spiritual* comes at the end of this list. And so it’s *psalms, hymns, songs spiritual*.

Now if you look at Andrew Lincoln’s commentary, I don’t think he’s a Reformed guy. But he’s a exegetically responsible technical exegete. If you look at Andrew Lincoln, if you look at a Pillar commentary—Obrien—if you look at those guys they will tell you, (and they are not of my denominational stripe), they will tell you that *spiritual* modifies all three nouns in this list. And so these are spiritual psalms, hymns and songs. It is a translation move to make *spiritual* only modify *songs*. So they are not only connected in some way with the word of Christ, but these are all spiritual.

Now B. B. Warfield says that of the number of times this word *pneumatos* is used in the New Testament, it always has some idea of inspiration connected to it, save for one occurrence. So the idea then that this is the word of Christ, and that these are in some sense inspired, or in some sense Spirit-borne or given, is pretty strong in the text.

And then the other argument is that the psalms, hymns and songs are what is called a Hebraism. And a Hebraism is, for instance, a heaping up of three words to say the same thing. For instance, in the Old Testament you get *“holy, holy, holy.”* Well, when you get Hebrew Greek-speaking folks, what happens is that Hebraism turns not into *“sing psalms, psalms, psalms,”* but it’s *“sing psalms, hymns and songs.”*

Take, for instance, *“Jesus Christ, a Man attested to you by signs, wonders and miracles.”* Well, signs aren’t different then wonders and wonders aren’t different from miracles. The idea is that this is a Man attested to you by miracles. It’s a Hebraism—miracles, miracles, miracles.

And in the same way you have psalms, hymns and songs. And you say, “How do you prove that?” I’ll tell you how I prove that. For instance, if you look at the Psalm headings

“Samuel and Saul” - Class 11

in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible which is called the Septuagint, which is what Greek-speaking churches would have used, you find for instance that Psalm 76 in the Psalm title is called “a Psalm, a hymn and a song.” There are other Psalms that are called hymns, and there are other Psalms that are called Psalms. Some are called hymns and songs, and so on. They are all variations in the titles.

And so when Paul says to these Greek-speaking people, using a Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, “Sing psalms, hymns and songs,” they know that he means “I’m using a Hebraism for sing the psalms.”

So in terms of how we would understand it, we would understand the regulative principle to say that you are to sing inspired Psalms of the Bible. And this passage is one of those passages. Ephesians 5:19 is another one of those passages that’s a parallel passage. So that’s one modern way that we would apply it.

Now that’s not necessarily modern, because the church did that for a long, long time in church history. And so all denominations did it that way for a long time.

Bill McCoy: Just for my own curiosity, does your church sing the predatory Psalms?

Jeff: The what?

Bill: The predatory Psalms.

Don Maurer: The imprecatory Psalms.

Bill: The Psalms that say, “Wipe them out! Don’t let his children survive.”

Jeff: Absolutely. (*Laughter*) Absolutely, with gusto. (*Laughter*) Yes we do, because we recognize that we’re singing these Psalms in light of their fulfillment in Christ. And these are the enemies of Christ that are being referred to.

Bill: Jesus said, “*Love your enemies.*”

Jeff: Yes, but we’re clearly singing those imprecatory Psalms in light of our union with the King who crushes His enemies under His feet. We’re going to delay this.

Ted: I realize that this is a little bit off track. Your explanation is very interesting. As I’m listening to it, I follow it and I think like that.

Jeff: Okay.

Ted: But for the vast majority of those in the Christian community,--I’m thinking about over at Christ church, but you can take any church,--that what you’ve just given as an excellent explanation sounds like a lot of sophistry, basically kind of obscure arguments winding in and out. I don’t know that in churches today that the average evangelical churchgoer really cares. I mean, I don’t even know if the average member of your church can explain what you just said. “Why do you guys sing Psalms?”

“Well, that’s just the way we do it.” No, here’s the explanation: because the word of Christ means singing Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, which all basically mean the same thing because this is connected with that, whatever. You could almost say that the thought I had as you were doing that is that if “*let the word of Christ dwell in you richly*” means that you only sing Psalms, then maybe you should only teach about the works of Christ. I mean, you’re giving a lot of explanation on top of that. And those of us who sing hymns might say, “Well, the hymns are an explanation or an exposition of the Psalms and the Scripture.”

Jeff: Well, I’m—

“Samuel and Saul” - Class 11

Ted: I’m not being critical.

Jeff: Yes. You asked how it would apply today. It’s really applied this way in my denomination, and that’s kind of why we stand out. People are like, “Oh, you’re the Psalm-singing church.” And so this is why we do it. This is an application of the regulative principle. In terms of its being obscure for today, I think that for instance if you brought somebody from ancient history up to today they would say, “What’s going on?”, because, you know, back in the day this is what they did. It was recovered in the Reformation to some degree. You know, at the time of the Westminster Confession, the Westminster scholars in Ireland and England created a Psalter that was to be used because they were covenanted nations. And they were going to use the Psalter as the way of singing and praising God. So there’s a sense in which the argument that well, it seems so foreign today that nobody cares, if you kind of went back in history to different points in history, people would have come forward and said, “I don’t get what you’re doing.”

Ted: The Psalms have been used throughout history in the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. I mean, all the Psalms in that can be sung and are sung. I was raised in the Episcopal Church that sang three Psalms every Sunday in addition to the hymns. But then we would have to say that Luther would have needed to get it right, because he was a prodigious—

Jeff: Luther didn’t get a lot right. (*Laughter*) Maybe you wouldn’t think so, but I would think that Luther was a great hero. But I think that Calvin got more right than Luther.

Ted: Oh, he did. (*Laughter*) But I’m just saying that there’s a whole history that would have to be discussed. We’ve digressed and I apologize.

Jeff: So I hope you enjoy this 27-week walk through the Old Testament. (*Laughter*) So what we’ll do is, how about we pick up with the coming of David next time? Do you have any questions that will round out this time with us? Don, I knew you were going to raise your hand. (*Laughter*) I didn’t do it. (*Laughter*) Are you gonna round it out, Don, or

Don Maurer: Well, I don’t know if you’ll consider this rounding it out,--

Jeff: Or keep the fire burning? (*Laughter*)

Don: The very Psalms that you sing say that we’re to use instruments.

Jeff: Yes.

Don: What is your rationale for not using them?

Jeff: Anybody can leave if they have to leave. (*Laughter*) Let me give you a quick rationale because we don’t use instruments, either; we sing *a capella*. The quick rationale is that if you look at Numbers chapter 10, it institutes the reason for using the trumpets. The trumpets were to be used in a bunch of different ways. But in one way they were to be used and blown over the morning and evening sacrifices. It’s under David’s administration when he made plans for the temple that the use of instruments is enlarged, and singers as well in a choir-type fashion with the Levites. And it says that David did this under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

All of this is part of the ceremonial law. And when Christ comes and fulfills the ceremonial law He not only fulfills the use of incense and priestly vestments and

“Samuel and Saul” - Class 11

sacrifices, but instruments as well are part of the ceremonial law. They are not reinstated in the New Testament. And therefore we don't use them in the New Testament because they're not reinstated as part of the ceremonial law. We only use the Psalms which were, because they're reinstated in the New. Yes?

Bishop Rodgers: I think that one of the things that trouble me just as a modern person is that here's Saul, and Samuel doesn't show. And so he believes that the sacrifice needs to be offered, so he offers the sacrifice. And then he really catches it then for his response. It just seems like an overreaction on God's part. That's kind of the initial reaction. I think that's part of what Ted was raising.

Jeff: And I think that when you think about the fact in and of itself, it's the same with David and the moving of the ark. David says, “Why did You kill Uzzah?” It feels like an overreaction. “Why did you kill Nadab and Abihu?” And Moses to me has the answer. Moses grabs hold of his brother and says, “I know that your two sons have just been killed in front of your eyes. But the God who is holy must be approached as holy.” In other words, the God who is holy must be approached as He demands, and not as you would like. And that's it.

Bishop Rodgers: Don't you think it's also that, of course, God sees the heart? But this is a guy who will not only do the expedient thing, but he has a tendency to do his own thing.

Jeff: Absolutely, and here's the thing about this. You know, this doesn't save anyone's worship, and it doesn't cause it to be pure. But what causes it to be pure is the heart. I mean, the heart is really the issue. In one sense, if your heart is impure, if your heart has a wrong bent to it, even as you're singing Psalms, right, then your worship is impure. It's as simple as that. So it comes back to a heart issue.

Kevin Cohn: Whereas, then, the two priests die by touching the ark, was it not once a year that the High Priest would go into the tabernacle and he could actually touch the ark, or was it forbidden for him also?

Jeff: Well, he could go in and sprinkle the blood on the mercy seat.

Kevin: But was he physically able to touch the ark?

Jeff: Bishop, what would you say to that?

Bishop Rodgers: I doubt if he would have.

Kevin: I understand what you're saying, but once a year—

Jeff: I think that the only time they were permitted to move it was when it was at the tabernacle, and the Levitical priests only were permitted to move it. Only the High Priest could go into the Holy of Holies and sprinkle the blood on the mercy seat.

Kevin: He would or wouldn't have?

Bishop Rodgers: Would not have. That's why they had the poles that hooked to it.

Jeff: Okay. Anybody else? Okay, let me pray. Father, thank You for this day, for the time You've given and the love You've shed abroad in our hearts in the Lord Jesus Christ. And thank You, Father, for Your word. We pray that You will continue to bless it to us and strengthen us by Your grace in it, that we might live our lives according to Your purposes. We pray it in Christ's name. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen. (*Applause*)