



# BOOKS OF THE BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS

by WAYNE PALMER

## 1 SAMUEL





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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Book of 1 Samuel covers the transition from the judges who ruled Israel to the kings. It covers the reign of King Saul and preparations for David to be his successor.

## **AUTHORSHIP**

We are not certain who wrote 1 Samuel. Most likely, Samuel himself wrote the first part of the book, but since his death is recorded in chapter 25, someone else, possibly a disciple of Samuel, completed the book and wrote 2 Samuel.

## **PURPOSE**

The Book of 1 Samuel focuses on the way God remains faithful to Israel even when they reject His Kingship and demand a human king so they can be like all the other nations. God continues His gracious rule through Samuel, Saul, and David.

## **OUTLINE**

For the purposes of this study, 1 Samuel will be divided into the following sections:

- 1.** Birth of Samuel and Religious Environment in Israel (1–3)
- 2.** Movement of the Ark, Emblem of the Lord's Presence (4:1–7:2)
- 3.** What's at Stake in the Governance of Israel (7:3–8:22)
- 4.** Transition from Judgeship to Monarchy (9–12)
- 5.** Rise and Crisis of Saul (13–15)
- 6.** Saul Must Decrease, and David Must Increase (16–31)

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

# BIRTH OF SAMUEL AND RELIGIOUS ENVIRONMENT IN ISRAEL (1–3)

The Book of Judges ended with Israel in chaos—both socially and spiritually. These first three chapters of 1 Samuel reveal how Israel still suffers and struggles under that same spiritual chaos.

### FAITHFUL FAMILY: ELKANAH AND HANNAH

Childless Hannah cries out to the Lord and vows to give her firstborn son to serve the Lord his entire life.

**Read 1:1–20.**

**Q 1: What are some possible reasons Elkanah’s second wife Peninnah provoked Hannah?**

A 1: Peninnah had been able to have children, but Hannah could not. She could have been jealous of the attention Elkanah paid to Hannah—which is why she would be considered a “rival” wife, fighting for their husband’s attention. This grief led Hannah to cry out to the Lord, and He gave her a special son, Samuel.

Hannah brings Samuel to the tabernacle located at Shiloh.

**Read 1:21–28.**

**Q 2: How could Hannah dedicate this young child, for whom she had prayed and struggled, to live in the Lord’s house and serve Him his entire life?**

A 2: She recognized that everything she received—even Samuel—was a gracious, generous gift of God. Her selfless sacrifice led to Samuel’s life as the last judge, a faithful prophet, priest, and anointer of kings. Thus her sacrifice turned out to be a great blessing to the whole nation of Israel.

Hannah sings a song of praise to God for hearing and answering her prayer.

**Read 2:1–11.**

**Q 3: How is Hannah’s song similar to Mary’s song in Luke 1:46–55 when she is pregnant with Jesus?**

A 3: They both talk about God recognizing the humble, casting down the proud and mighty, and raising up the lowly.

## UNFAITHFUL FAMILY: ELI'S SONS

In contrast to this faithful Levite family, we see the unfaithfulness of another—the sons of the high priest Eli.

**Read 2:12–21.**

**Q 4: How does this passage give encouragement that God blesses His faithful people through His gifts in worship even if those who minister are selfish and corrupt?**

A 4: The five children who were given to Hannah and her husband were clearly shown to result from the blessing given her by the high priest Eli.

The high priest Eli rebukes his sons, but does not dismiss them.

**Read 2:22–26.**

**Q 5: Was it fair for the Lord to determine to put Eli's sons to death (v. 25) when they could not be saved without the Holy Spirit urging them to repent?**

A 5: The Lord determined to do this because of their persistent, arrogant sin against God and the priestly office. They had hardened their own hearts in unrepentance a long time before God hardened them.

A prophet announces God's rejection of Eli's household as priests and high priests.

**Read 2:27–36.**

**Q 6: What is significant about God raising up a prophet to confront an erring high priest?**

A 6: God established the priests and Levites to be the spiritual leaders of Israel. But when they failed in their duty, God still cared enough about His people to raise up prophets to confront the priests, lead them to repentance, or announce God's wrath against them.

## CALL AND INITIAL MINISTRY OF SAMUEL

God calls young Samuel.

**Read 3:1–10.**

**Q 7: Why didn't Samuel realize it was God speaking to him?**

A 7: He did not have experience receiving direct revelation from God up to that point. But his quick response each time showed his willingness to serve the Lord—whether the one calling for him was Eli or God Himself.

The Lord announces His judgment on Eli and his sons to Samuel.

**Read 3:11–21.**

**Q 8: Why did Eli resign himself to the terrible judgment the Lord announced to him through Samuel?**

A 8: It was either sarcasm or confession—realizing that he had failed in his responsibility as father and high priest, he accepted that the day of reckoning had finally come.

# MOVEMENT OF THE ARK, EMBLEM OF THE LORD'S PRESENCE (4:1–7:2)

The ark of the covenant, which symbolizes God's presence among His people, is captured by Israel's enemy.

## THE LORD REFUSES TO MANIFEST HIS PRESENCE THROUGH THE ARK

When Israel presumes to manipulate God's ark for their purposes, it results in a national calamity.

**Read 4:1–11.**

**Q 9: Why did God allow the ark to be captured?**

A 9: He wanted Israel to know that only His holy will would stand—not their sinful, self-centered wills.

## THE LORD'S WITHDRAWAL OF HIS PRESENCE

Israel's army is defeated with great loss, Eli and his sons die, and worst of all, the ark is captured.

**Read 4:12–22.**

**Q 10: What warning does this event give to all Christians—especially church leaders?**

A 10: God is very serious about how we respond to His grace and holiness. He is patient and long-suffering, but for those who persistently sin and are unrepentant about it, God's wrath will come suddenly without remedy.

## THE LORD MANIFESTS HIS PRESENCE THROUGH THE ARK

The Philistines treat the ark like a trophy—but soon learn the power of Israel's God.

**Read chapter 5.**

**Q 11: How do you see God's mercy in the midst of His punishment of the Philistines?**

A 11: God could have struck the Philistines down at once, but just like in Egypt, He was merciful and patient. As they held onto the ark, His punishments began slow and mild, and only gradually picked up in

intensity as the Philistines held onto the ark, until they finally sent it back to the land of Israel.

## **THE LORD'S PRESENCE AT THE ARK RETURNS**

The Philistines return the ark, but the Israelites do not treat it with the reverence required.

**Read 6:1–7:2.**

**Q 12: Why did God respond so rapidly and forcefully to the Israelites who looked into the ark but not the Philistines?**

A 12: The Israelites knew better than to mishandle God's holy things because Moses had instructed them about the proper reverence and who should handle the ark (the Levites). God used this terrible incident to teach them about proper reverence.



# WHAT'S AT STAKE IN THE GOVERNANCE OF ISRAEL (7:3–8:22)

Israel rejects God's rule through the judges and demands a king instead.

## ISRAEL REPENTS AND GOD DELIVERS THEM THROUGH SAMUEL

Though the Philistines returned the ark, they continued oppressing Israel for twenty years. All the house of Israel cried out to the Lord for deliverance.

**Read 7:3–17.**

**Q 13: How did this battle in particular, and the victories God won through the judges in general, show that God was the true King of Israel?**

A 13: In each case, the nation and the judge in and of themselves were powerless to defeat their oppressors—but God thundered mightily, throwing the Philistines into confusion, making it easy for His people to rout them. Having judges reminded the Israelites that God was in charge—something that would be obscured once they had a king.

## A KING LIKE THE NATIONS, INSTEAD OF GOD THROUGH HIS JUDGES

Samuel's corrupt sons are the excuse Israel uses to demand a king.

**Read 8:1–9.**

**Q 14: What is God reminding Samuel when He tells him the Israelites have not rejected Samuel, but God Himself?**

A 14: Samuel was falling into the trap of thinking he was the leader of Israel rather than God ruling through him. Just as Samuel forgot who was really in charge, so did the people of Israel.

Through Samuel, the Lord warns the Israelites of the heavy price of having a king.

**Read 8:10–18.**

**Q 15: Why did God give His people this warning?**

A 15: God was graciously warning His people that having a king would bring a lot of burdens they were not considering.

Despite God's warning, the people childishly insist on their own way.

**Read 8:19–22.**

**Q 16: Why are Israel's sinful plans unable to stop the Lord from bringing good out of a bad, sinful decision?**

A 16: Israel will suffer horribly from the unbelieving kings who will lead them, but God will bring good out of their error—sending His Son as Israel's king from the line of David.

# TRANSITION FROM JUDGESHIP TO MONARCHY (9–12)

God chooses a man to be Israel's king and sends Samuel to anoint him.

## SELECTION AND ANOINTING OF SAUL

While searching high and low for his father's lost donkeys, Saul is anointed king of Israel.

**Read chapter 9.**

**Q 17: Why is it fitting that Saul is anointed while performing an ordinary task rather than while performing some great military feat or quest?**

A 17: God knows every big and little thing that happens in our lives, and organizes them as He chooses to accomplish His great plans.

Saul is anointed as king of Israel.

**Read 10:1–16.**

**Q 18: Why does Samuel use the word “prince” in verse 1 instead of “king” when he says, “Has not the LORD anointed you to be prince over His people Israel?”**

A 18: Saul needs to remember that God is the only true King of Israel and he serves as ruler only at God's pleasure. The Holy Spirit is given to him and changes his heart and attitude, equipping him to be Israel's king and preparing him for humble service to his God.

## PUBLIC SELECTION OF SAUL

The nation assembles, and God publicly selects Saul by lot.

**Read 10:17–27.**

**Q 19: What are potential good and bad reasons for Saul to be reluctant to become king?**

A 19: Good reasons include being humble about taking that position. Bad reasons include Saul not wanting to accept the responsibility God is giving him, doubting God is able to make him fit for the responsibilities, or desiring to remain in his old lifestyle when God has a different direction in mind.

## SAUL'S VICTORY AT JABESH CONFIRMS HIS SELECTION AS KING

Saul has his first test as king of Israel.

**Read 11:1–11.**

**Q 20: What is the difference between the weeping of the people of Gibeah and Saul's anger?**

A 20: The people wept with a feeling of helplessness. Saul's anger was stirred by the Holy Spirit, a righteous anger because God's people were being threatened with great bodily harm. It moved Saul to swift, decisive action.

Samuel gathers Israel at Gilgal to renew the kingship.

**Read 11:12–15.**

**Q 21: How does Saul's gracious forgiveness of those who questioned his kingship point ahead to Jesus?**

A 21: Jesus offered grace and forgiveness for all those who had rejected Him, including those who nailed Him to the cross and mocked Him during His sufferings.

## **SAMUEL'S WARNINGS: THE BLESSINGS AND CURSES OF THE MONARCHY**

Samuel warns the people not to forget God since they now have a king to whom they will look for protection and security.

**Read chapter 12.**

**Q 22: What great, comforting promise did Samuel give the Israelites after convicting them of their sin by the thunder and rain?**

A 22: Despite Israel's great sin of demanding a king instead of waiting for God to anoint one, Samuel assures them that God will not forsake them for His own name's sake and because it pleases God to make the Israelites a people for Himself.



# RISE AND CRISIS OF SAUL (13–15)

King Saul faces his defining moments.

## SAUL'S IMPULSIVE SACRIFICE

When Saul's son Jonathan defeats a Philistine garrison, a massive, powerful Philistine army gathers for battle against Saul's smaller army.

**Read 13:1–7.**

**Q 23: What does it mean that “some Hebrews crossed the fords of the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead” in verse 7?**

A 23: Some Israelites were beginning to flee the battlefield seeing the size and superior power of the Philistine army. Others who remained were trembling in fear.

As Saul waits seven days to start the fighting at Samuel's direction, he sees his army melting away.

**Read 13:8–23.**

**Q 24: How did Saul fail God's test?**

A 24: God wanted Saul to show faithful patience, to trust His Word no matter what circumstances the king faced. From our sinful human perspective, seeing his army shrinking down to six hundred men, Saul's actions were warranted—in fact, some would say he waited too long to act. But as we will see, God intended all along to give Saul the victory—even if that victory was won by Saul and his son Jonathan alone.

## CAMPAIGN FROM GIBEAH AND PHILISTINE DETACHMENT AT MICHMASH

Jonathan attacks the Philistine detachment guarding the pass between the Philistine army and Israel's army.

**Read 14:1–23.**

**Q 25: What great difference do you see between Saul and Jonathan?**

A 25: Saul is impatient and does not trust God's Word—even interrupting the priest in verse 19 with the words “withdraw your hand.” He saw the battle going his way and didn't want to take the time to let the priest finish his work. Jonathan is courageous and bold to defend the honor of God's name and eager to protect God's people.

Saul puts Israel under a rash vow, which prevents him from completely defeating the Philistines when God gives him the chance.

**Read 14:24–46.**

**Q 26: What does Saul's vow to put his own son Jonathan to death show?**

A 26: Instead of humbling himself and recognizing how rash and foolish his vow was, Saul tries to justify himself by killing his own son. We will see this same evil self-centeredness in Saul again.

### **SAUL'S LIMITED SUCCESS**

Saul's kingship focuses on commanding his military against the many enemies of Israel.

**Read 14:47–52.**

**Q 27: What does verse 48 tell us about Saul's military prowess?**

A 27: Saul was a skillful and brave military leader. After Saul dies in battle, David will write a song celebrating his military successes (see 2 Samuel 1:19–27).

### **SAUL'S THIRD IMPULSIVE ACTION AND REJECTION AS KING**

God commands Saul to totally destroy the Amalekites for attacking the Israelites in the wilderness.

**Read chapter 15.**

**Q 28: How did Saul's action cause God to reject him as Israel's king?**

A 28: God very clearly commanded him to kill every Amalekite and all their animals. Saul spared the king and the best of the animals. Notice how Samuel instructed Saul to listen carefully, then charged him to be careful to destroy everything. Notice also in verse 12 that Saul set up a monument for himself—rather than giving God credit for his military victory over the Amalekites. And when Samuel asked him about it, Saul shifted the blame to the people. And even when he finally admitted to Samuel that he had sinned, he still shifted the blame to the people rather than openly confessing his fault to God. And finally, when Samuel announced that God would tear the kingdom away from him and his family, Saul seemed more concerned about what the people would think of him than about his relationship with God through repentance and faith.

# SAUL MUST DECREASE, AND DAVID MUST INCREASE (16–31)

Samuel anoints David to replace Saul as king. David raises up through the ranks while Saul spirals downward.

## **SAMUEL ANOINTS DAVID; THE SPIRIT COMES TO DAVID**

God sends Samuel to Bethlehem to anoint David.

**Read 16:1–13.**

**Q 29: What lesson can we learn from God’s advice to Samuel not to judge a person by outward appearance (see v. 7)?**

A 29: We cannot know a person’s true character, intentions, and desires from outward expressions. Over time, we can learn by a person’s actions what kind of person they are, but we are wisest to trust God above all because He knows what is in each person’s heart and mind, and He has revealed His steadfast love and faithfulness to us in His Word and through His Son.

## **THE SPIRIT DEPARTS FROM SAUL AND RESTS ON DAVID**

Saul struggles mightily as a harmful spirit torments him mentally and emotionally.

**Read 16:14–23.**

**Q 30: David’s playing benefited Saul by driving out the evil spirit. How did it benefit David?**

A 30: David became acquainted with how things ran in a king’s court, similar to Moses growing up in Pharaoh’s house.

## **DAVID DEFEATS GOLIATH**

Goliath challenges Israel to a man-on-man contest. Saul is too fearful to battle him—but David is not.

**Read chapter 17.**

**Q 31: What difference did it make that David had the Holy Spirit and Saul no longer did?**

A 31: Back in chapter 11 when the Ammonites threatened the people of Jabesh-gilead, the Holy Spirit rushed upon Saul and filled him with righteous anger and zeal. Now Saul trembles in fear like the rest of the people, and the Holy Spirit rushes upon David, giving him a

holy zeal and trust in God's deliverance. Similarly, Jesus would go forward alone to destroy Satan, sin, death, and hell on the cross.

## **DAVID'S SUCCESS ANGERS SAUL**

Saul's heir Jonathan and David become fast and loyal friends.

**Read 18:1–5.**

**Q 32: What is the significance of Jonathan giving David his robe, armor, sword, bow, and belt?**

A 32: These were signs of Jonathan's status as crown prince, heir to the throne. Yet Jonathan happily yielded them to David, showing his humble acceptance of God's will to replace Saul with David. What a remarkable man of faith!

Saul grows more and more jealous of David's increasing successes.

**Read 18:6–16.**

**Q 33: Why did Saul become so afraid of David when David showed nothing but loyalty to him?**

A 33: Clear back in the days when Samuel stood beside him, Saul's pride and arrogance was growing as he turned more and more into himself wanting all the praise and glory. As David became more and more successful in battle, Saul could not see that David was helping him—he could only think that David was conspiring against him. This was similar to the growing jealousy the Pharisees felt as Jesus grew more and more popular with the people.

Saul uses his daughters to try to get David killed in battle.

**Read 18:17–30.**

**Q 34: How did Saul use his daughter Michal to try to kill David?**

A 34: Instead of killing David himself, which Saul wanted to do, he knew appearances would be better if David died in battle. By demanding a hundred Philistine foreskins, he expected that one of these Philistines would be able to kill David. Imagine his surprise when David brought him two hundred! By the way, in 2 Samuel David will use a similar strategy to kill Uriah the Hittite and cover up his guilt in getting Uriah's wife, Bathsheba, pregnant.

## **SAUL'S FAMILY HELPS DAVID AVOID SAUL'S ATTACKS**

Saul's paranoia fills him with murderous hatred against David.

**Read chapter 19.**

**Q 35: How is Saul changing through this chapter?**



A 35: More and more, Saul became filled with jealous paranoia and preoccupied with conspiracies. His irrational fear of David continued to grow, and he imagined that his kingdom was in jeopardy. The remedy is repentance and faith, but Saul went deeper and deeper into his own selfish sin.

Jonathan befriends David, and the two friends vow their loyalty to each other.

**Read chapter 20.**

**Q 36: What is remarkable about Jonathan's loyalty to David?**

A 36: Saul is correct in verse 31: Jonathan would never be king as long as David lived. But Jonathan was not ambitious that way. He was pleased to let God choose who would reign over His kingdom.

## **DAVID'S FLIGHT FROM SAUL**

David seeks ordinary bread from the high priest, who gives him the bread of the Presence.

**Read 21:1–9.**

**Q 37: What is significant about David receiving this bread, which was reserved for the priests?**

A 37: God assures David that He will be present with him, protect him, and provide for him no matter where he goes.

David flees for safety to the Philistines, where Saul won't try to reach him.

**Read 21:10–15.**

**Q 38: What does it indicate that Achish's servants thought David was Israel's king?**

A 38: Though Saul was technically still king of Israel and David was fleeing from him, it was clearly seen that David had been leading the military and was recognized even by Israel's enemies.

David flees to a cave, where his family and others join him, along with a prophet.

**Read 22:1–5.**

**Q 39: Why did David bring his parents to live in Moab?**

A 39: His ancestor Ruth (from the book bearing her name) was a Moabite, so his family roots included Moab. They would be safe outside Israel's borders.

Saul confronts the high priest who helped David.

**Read 22:6–23.**

**Q 40: What is ironic about Saul's treatment of the priests of Nob?**

A 40: He totally wiped them out—men, women, children, and animals. This was something he refused to do to the Amalekites when so directed by Samuel in chapter 15.

David saves the Judah town of Keilah from Philistine raids.

**Read 23:1–14.**

**Q 41: How does Keilah’s treatment of David remind us of Jesus’ sufferings?**

A 41: David saved Keilah from the Philistines, but the people were willing to betray David to King Saul—just as Judas and the Jews betrayed Jesus to His enemies.

Jonathan encourages David to trust in God’s protection. God delivers David from sure and certain capture by Saul.

**Read 23:15–29.**

**Q 42: How was God’s deliverance necessary for David’s safety?**

A 42: David and his small group were trapped on the mountain with Saul’s men closing in. Only the word of a Philistine raid drew away Saul’s army and saved David.

King Saul falls into David’s hands.

**Read chapter 24.**

**Q 43: Why did David spare Saul’s life?**

A 43: David did not spare Saul’s life for Saul’s sake, but because he was the Lord’s anointed. His respect was centered in the Lord his God, and his respect for Saul’s office flowed from that—because it was an extension of the Lord’s office. Similarly, we show respect to our parents and our civil leaders, not so much because of who they are (especially if they are ungodly and evil), but because of the office God has entrusted to them. It shows David’s great faith and trust in God that he spared the life of the man who he likely suspected would turn against him again.

David seeks revenge on a man who wronged him and his men.

**Read chapter 25.**

**Q 44: How did Abigail keep David from burdening his conscience with innocent blood?**

A 44: She took responsibility for her husband Nabal’s guilt, and wisely persuaded David to trust God to avenge him rather than take vengeance himself—just as David had previously done when God put Saul in his hand. In a sense, Abigail gives us a picture of Jesus Christ—saving Nabal from David’s wrath by taking his guilt upon herself. Had Nabal repented and trusted in God, David would likely have forgiven and blessed him for Abigail’s sake.

God gives King Saul into David's hand a second time.

**Read chapter 26.**

**Q 45: How was it clear to David that God worked a miracle here?**

A 45: Clearly God made all three thousand of Saul's soldiers fall into a deep sleep—otherwise guards would have detected his approach. Once again, though David could have killed Saul easily, he honored God by sparing the life of God's anointed, trusting God to avenge him.

David flees Israel and takes his company to live in Philistine territory.

**Read chapter 27.**

**Q 46: How was David able to convince Achish the Philistine that he was burning bridges with King Saul and Israel, while he was actually serving the interests of Israel?**

A 46: David and his men attacked nomads plundering the southern regions of Judah, but only told Achish the place he was attacking, giving the impression he was attacking Israelites.

**Q 47: Was this action pleasing to God?**

A 47: The writer of 1 Samuel does not tell us if God encouraged or approved of this action. That is because often our deeds can be upright or sinful—it all depends on the motives that lead us to do those deeds. Since these nomads plundered Israelite cities, David would be performing a God-pleasing work if his motive was to honor God by protecting and defending God's people. If his motivation was selfish greed or the thrill of violence, then God would be displeased. At the same time, remember that God can always bring good out of the evil deeds of others, as we see in Jesus' crucifixion.

Cut off from God and desperate for reassurance, Saul consults a medium.

**Read chapter 28.**

**Q 48: Was this actually Samuel's spirit, or a demon posing as Samuel?**

A 48: The Bible does not clearly state whether this was Samuel's spirit or a demon. But in either case, the message was the awful truth from God. Since Saul forsook God, God forsook Saul. His rejection of God's grace sealed his doom. He, his sons, and many Israelites would die in battle the next day.

As the Philistines assemble to battle Israel, the Philistine kings distrust David.

**Read chapter 29.**

**Q 49: What were two possible meanings of David's pledge to "go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king" (v. 8)?**

A 49: It all depended on which man David considered his lord and king—Achish or Saul. Achish thought David was speaking about himself. But the Philistine kings feared that David was speaking of Saul. They said in verse 4, “How could this fellow reconcile himself to his lord [Saul]? Would it not be with the heads of the men here?” (This recalls the way David carried Goliath’s head to Saul.)

**Q 50: Do you think David would have fought for the Israelites?**

A 50: It is hard to imagine that David, who had been attacking the nomads to defend the Israelites, would help the Philistines defeat Israel’s army. Recall David’s zealous fervor for the “armies of the living God” when he heard Goliath’s taunt in chapter 17 (see v. 26). It is quite possible that rather than being relieved, David was grieved to be sent away from this battle—knowing so many Israelites would fall in this battle on a northern battlefield that heavily favored the Philistine army with their powerful chariots.

With the Philistine armies gathered in the north to battle Israel, Amalekite raiders attack the families of David and his men in Ziklag.

**Read 30:1–15.**

**Q 51: What does the phrase “But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God” in verse 6 mean?**

A 51: While David’s men were bitter in soul, threatening to stone David, he could have turned his anger against God, blaming Him for not protecting his family. Instead, David poured out his heart in prayer to God and found comfort and strength in God’s mercy and love.

Feeling secure because the Philistine and Israelite armies are far to the north, the Amalekites feast and celebrate their raids through the night.

**Read 30:16–31.**

**Q 52: How did David show his leadership and wisdom in the way he distributed the spoils of the battle?**

A 52: He reconciled the four hundred who went to battle with the two hundred who stayed with the baggage by focusing them on God, who gave them the victory, and making it a standing rule that the spoil is divided equally among all. Then he gave part of the spoils to the elders of the cities of Judah who had been raided, paving the way for his rule as king of Israel.

The Philistine and Israelite armies meet in battle.

**Read chapter 31.**

**Q 53: What is ironic about Saul’s suicide?**

A 53: Rather than turn to God in repentance to give him grace and faith to endure the punishment and torture of the Philistines, Saul sought his escape in death. He failed to realize he would fall into



the hands of the living God and face the far worse punishment and torture of hell.

**Q 54: What was touching about the loyalty of the valiant men of Jabesh-gilead?**

A 54: When Saul first became king, he rescued the people of Jabesh-gilead from the Ammonites, who demanded them to gouge out their right eyes in chapter 11. They show their gratitude and loyalty by going into enemy territory to rescue the bodies of Saul and his sons from the wall. They cremated and buried them, perhaps to keep the Philistines from defiling their remains any further.