

Homegroup Notes for Week Beginning 18th January 2026.

Introduction:

For the first part of this term, we will be looking at stories from 1 Samuel under the title, 'God rules, OK?'

One of, if not *the* central prayer of scripture is the heart of the Lord's Prayer where Jesus teaches his disciples to pray, '*Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*' It outlines the end of the biblical narrative where the rule of God is realised and experienced on earth, where people live harmoniously out of the character of Christ and steward creation together in such asway as to bring glory to God. When we pray '*Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven*', this is what we are praying. It brings together God's plans for the world, for ourselves and for the church. We want to see God's will done in our hearts and our lives, the church is commissioned to be an alternative society acting as a beacon in a world of sin and we seek for the reconciliation of all things, where God's perfect reign brings peace.

The series we are looking at in 1 Samuel, like many of the biblical accounts in the Old Testament, sees the people wrestling with being able to live with God as their LORD or their king. Put otherwise, it is a wrestle played out in the hearts of sinful people about whether they want to live in such a way as to communicate that 'God rules OK'. It is only in the New Testament, in the person of Christ that this is lived out faithfully.

1 Samuel happens at a particular stage in the story of God and his people. The call of the Old Testament is for Israel to be a 'light for the nations' by living in accordance with God's will under his 'kingship' and distinctively. They are to be a distinctive people, different and holy. They serve a God who opposes the proud and lifts up the humble. This is the theme of 1 Samuel and, of course, is reflected throughout the bible, but so often we choose to be 'like all the other nations'.

This tension is worked out in the stories of Samuel and Saul. What sort of priest, what sort of king does God want?

This tension is worked out in our hearts as well- Romans 12.1-2 addresses this directly, as does the fresh commission of the church in 1 Peter 2.9-10.

What does it look like to say *Your Kingdom Come, Your Will be done on earth as it is in heaven?*

The following resources may be helpful:

Bible Project Summary video <https://bibleproject.com/videos/1-samuel/>

The Message of Samuel (BST) Mary Evans (exposition)

1 Samuel for you

Tim Chester (exposition and application)

Samuel for Everyone

John Goldingay (devotional)

1 Samuel 2:11 – 3:1



This series is called 'God Rules, OK?'

How do you feel living according to rules? Are there rules we find easy to live by, and others not? What's the difference?



Read 1 Samuel 2:11 - 26

What's going on in this passage and what are we to understand about living under the rule of God?

If you look back at Hannah's prayer in ch 2: 1 -10 you can see how her song is a commentary on what she saw happening at the tabernacle.

What were the faults of Eli's sons?

In what ways do we find ourselves 'doing church' for ourselves rather than for God? Using our prayer process from last time (our desires, God's rule, our action), how could the way we 'do church' to better reflect God's rules?



Read 1 Samuel 2:27 – 3:1

The man of God brings a challenge to Eli about his sons, and about Eli's legacy. Can we draw any insights about passing on faith through the generations?

(Be aware of the sensitivity of this topic, many in our groups will have family members who have not made a personal commitment to faith, and this can be a cause of anger, grief, guilt)

What are the characteristics of the faithful priest that God is looking for?

What is God's promise to those who live under his rule? To those who 'minister before the Lord'?

In the New Testament we read that Jesus is the perfect high priest. The work of the priest is to represent God to us and us to God. Take a look at Hebrews 7 : 23 – 28 to see what wonderful work the perfect high priest does. How can the characteristics of Jesus help us today? See also 1 John 1 : 8 – 2 : 2.

Woven throughout this passage are statements of Samuel's development. (2v11, 18, 21, 26, 3:1) What do you notice about his progress?

Are there young people we can encourage, disciple and celebrate? How can we be part of their development, whether our own children or children of others?



At the beginning of the year, we introduced a process in prayer that you might like to close with here. It sees three stages in prayer:

- We tell God what we want, speaking of our heart's desire
- God questions this by asking us to see his rule in the situation
- We settle to a place where we want what God wants, where God rules OK

Can we pray this way for personal, community and international situations? Maybe praying for young people in our church. Praying for our worship to be serving God not us, for our world to be led in ways of justice and peace.