



IN SEARCH OF THE KING

Community Group Questions

1 Samuel 2:12-4:1
Descending Into Darkness

FOCUS

As God's people reject His word and descend into darkness, God mercifully shines a light into the darkness by raising up Samuel as a prophet to once again speak His word. As God's people today, we are to be people of the Bible – listening to God and obeying Him as He's revealed Himself in His word.

OPENING QUESTION

Does it still amaze you that the Bible is God speaking to you? If not, why not?

READ

1 Samuel 2:11-4:1 a

SOME QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND REFLECTION

What are the sins of Eli's sons? In what ways have they disobeyed God's word by committing these sins (see, for example, Leviticus 7:28-36; 17:6)?

In what way has Eli been at fault in all this (see 2:29 and 4:13)?

Beginning at 2:27, a mysterious man of God arrives with a word from God. How does God say He will judge Eli's house?

How is God's judgment against Eli's house also a merciful act of salvation for the people of God? (Can you think of the most notable way that this theme of salvation through judgment appears in the Bible? Hint: think cross.)

What is God's intention for the future of the priesthood (v.35)? In what way does it demonstrate God's tenacious love for His people?

From 2:11-3:1, while most of the attention is given to Eli's house, little snippets about Samuel are included throughout (2:11; 2:18-21; 2:26; 3:1). What do we learn about Samuel and what point do you think the author of this book is trying to make by structuring this section in this way?

Does the description of Samuel in 2:26 remind you of a description about another young boy? (Hint: see Luke 2:52.)



3:7 plays off of 1:12. In Samuel's case, his not knowing the Lord is simply in reference to him having not yet received a prophetic word from God. How does God now reveal Himself to Samuel?

Try to put yourself into Samuel's shoes. Considering his relationship with Eli, how difficult do you think it would've been for him to tell Eli the word he received from the Lord?

Compare 3:1 with 3:19-4:1a. What's the change taking place in Israel? Why is this so significant?

CLOSING REFLECTION AND APPLICATION

Like the judgment spoken in this passage, church discipline is never easy. But why is it necessary and ultimately life-giving for the whole community?

Read again 2:25. Why is it that Eli's sons in the end will not listen to the voice of Eli and repent?

The Bible presents a reality where we can so persistently reject God's word that He finally gives us over to our own desires and we no longer have the ability to repent (think of Pharaoh's heart being hardened or Romans 1:24, 26, 28). How can we encourage one another to repent daily?

The application from God's call upon Samuel is not to lie awake in bed waiting for God to speak. The application is to open the Bible so we can hear His voice. What does this look like in your life?

Read Psalm 119:105. How have you found this to be true in dark times and times of crisis (like Israel was currently experiencing)?

This passage shows us Eli's tragedy of honoring his sons above the Lord and thus failing to take the disciplinary action God's word required. Samuel, in contrast, fears God more than he fears Eli and thus faithfully speaks the word of God to Eli. Would you say that you tend to fear men more than God? How can you develop greater courage to speak and act on God's truth even when it's hard?

How does this passage exalt Jesus and help you to love Him more (Hint: just think what we've learned the past two weeks about a coming prophet, priest, and king)?