



## **"Reading the Bible Together"**

**Issue 9.**

**Book of 1Samuel (cont'd) and 2Samuel:**

**God's people get organised and form a common heritage.**

**October 2009.**

### **Introduction:**

Last month saw the Book of Judges come to an end, a brief respite from history as we looked at the wonderful story of faith and selflessness found in the person of Ruth, and concluded with the stories of Samuel and the rise of Israel's first king in Saul.

We didn't have any of the background notes (see below) but we moved on now into the story of one the Old Testament's central characters, King David.

### **Background notes for last month:**

#### The end of the Book of Judges:

The last few chapters of the Book of Judges speak of the demise of Samson at the cunning hand of Delilah. It also includes the stories, not often told, of Micah and the Levite, and of the great war between the Israelites and the tribe of Benjamin, following the abuse and death of a woman from Bethlehem. The Book closes, as it began, with the overarching story of man's greed and moral corruption. The only reason Israel has not been overrun by her enemies is because God has stayed His hand from allowing it but Israel's story of redemption has scarcely moved on. The scene is now set for God to act.

#### The Book of Ruth:

This is a little oasis in terms of the beautifully crafted story of selflessness and faithfulness which so clearly God can and does use to bless. Set against the backdrop of the immorality and waywardness of the time of the Judges, Ruth and Boaz are characters that clearly are meant to inspire and encourage us all into what each of us can do in the face of such a tide of unfaithfulness; we, at least, can choose to be faithful, and faithful in a humble and not a haughty or proud or defiant way. Unselfconscious of her inner beauty Ruth can and should be an example to us all. And she should also challenge us to see such character in the most unlikely of others. For given that she was a Moabitess, and therefore a member of a tribe at enmity at such times with Israel, can we still find goodness and blessing in our enemies, or in the stranger, as well as in our neighbour and friend?

#### 1 Samuel Ch 1-15:

The opening of the two books of Samuel begins with the story of Samuel's birth and calling (Ch 1-3). At their heart is the commitment of both Samuel, and his mother Hannah to the same selfless love and obedience that Ruth and Boaz showed us in the last book. Note Hannah's Prayer in Ch 2 and how it is so closely paralleled by Mary's Magnificat (Luke 1) at the coming of Jesus.

The story moves on but Samuel continues to act throughout his life as a consistent man of faith through the great political and theological upheaval between the time of the judges and the appointment of Israel's first two Kings, Saul and David. In that sense Samuel mirrors Moses, himself a man of faith who maintained and guided the people through the dramatically changing times of Israel's physical journey from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land.

Saul is eventually made King, but Israel's kingship was to be defined as still being under the rule and authority of the Great King. So when Saul fails to follow the command of Samuel, as the man of God, in 1Samuel 15 – which itself has its own problems around a God of love commanding a nation's genocide, Saul is told he will have his title of kingship removed and it will be given to another. What we need to note, as it will be a helpful guiding principal over the coming weeks as we look at the whole history of monarchy in Israel, is that if Israel's King is faithful and humble before God, as the nation's representative, then all will go well for her; if he is not, if he is arrogant or proud or does not treat the people with fairness and humility then the whole nation will suffer. In that sense what role do we play as the Church today, and what attitude should our politicians and leaders have?

### What's happening this month?

It is no mere chance that Ruth is David's great-grandmother. In the failure of Saul as King God seeks to raise up someone after His own heart and so he finds and calls David through his prophet Samuel. Not the eldest, not the strongest, but certainly courageous David takes upon himself the mantle and title bestowed upon him. The rest of the first book is the battle and tussle between the power of man – represented in Saul, and the victory and supremacy of God – in and through David. The Book closes with Saul, pursued and cornered by the Philistines, choosing to end his life honour and defeat by falling upon his own sword.

The second Book of Samuel sees the beginning of David's rule and reign. He is a true, though imperfect, representative of the ideal theocratic King, humble and faithful before God, most of the time. David takes and establishes Jerusalem as his capital in 2Samuel 5 and there is a time of prosperity and peace. David wants to build a house for the Lord (the Temple) but it is the Lord who builds David's house, his dynasty. But all does not go well for David. There is a darker side and Chs 10-20 bring this to the fore.

### Bible Together Meetings: October meetings will be:

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October 9.00am – 10.00am  
 Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 8.00pm – 9.15pm, both in the Chancel.

### Scheme of Reading for October:

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Reference:</u>	<u>Date:</u>	<u>Reference:</u>
Thurs 1 <sup>st</sup> Oct	1Sam 16:1 – 16:23	Mon 19 <sup>th</sup> Oct	2Sam 3:1 – 3:21
Fri 2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct	1Sam 17:1 – 17:58	Tues 20 <sup>th</sup> Oct	2Sam 3:22 – 4:12
Sat 3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	1Sam 18:1 – 18:30	<b>Wed 21<sup>st</sup> Oct</b>	<b>2Sam 5:1 – 5:25</b>
Sun 4 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-----	<b>(Bible Together Meeting today @ 9.00am)</b>	
Mon 5 <sup>th</sup> Oct	1Sam 19:1 – 19:24	Thurs 22 <sup>nd</sup> Oct	2Sam 6:1 – 6:23
Tues 6 <sup>th</sup> Oct	1Sam 20:1 – 20:42	Fri 23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	2Sam 7:1 – 7:29
<b>Wed 7<sup>th</sup> Oct</b>	<b>1Sam 21:1 – 22:5</b>	Sat 24 <sup>th</sup> Oct	2Sam 8:1 – 8.18
<b>(Bible Together Meeting today @ 9.00am)</b>		Sun 25 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-----
Thurs 8 <sup>th</sup> Oct	1Sam 22:6 – 23:29	Mon 26 <sup>th</sup> Oct	2Sam 9:1 – 10:19
Fri 9 <sup>th</sup> Oct	1Sam 24:1 – 24:22	Tues 27 <sup>th</sup> Oct	2Sam 11:1 – 11:27
Sat 10 <sup>th</sup> Oct	1Sam 25:1 – 25:44	Wed 28 <sup>th</sup> Oct	2Sam 12:1 – 12:31
Sun 11 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-----	Thurs 29 <sup>th</sup> Oct	2Sam 13:1 – 13:22
Mon 12 <sup>th</sup> Oct	1Sam 26:1 – 26:25	Fri 30 <sup>th</sup> Oct	2Sam 13:23 – 13:39
Tues 13 <sup>th</sup> Oct	1Sam 27:1 – 28:25	Sat 31 <sup>st</sup> Oct	2Sam 14:1 – 14:33
Wed 14 <sup>th</sup> Oct	1Sam 29:1 – 30:31	Sun 1 <sup>st</sup> Nov	-----
Thurs 15 <sup>th</sup> Oct	1Sam 31:1 – 31:13	Mon 2 <sup>nd</sup> Nov	2Sam 15:1 – 15:37
Fri 16 <sup>th</sup> Oct	2Sam 1:1 – 1:27	Tues 3 <sup>rd</sup> Nov	2Sam 16:1 – 16:14
Sat 17 <sup>th</sup> Oct	2Sam 2:1 – 2:32	Wed 4 <sup>th</sup> Nov	2Sam 16:15 – 17:29
Sun 18 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-----	Thurs 5 <sup>th</sup> Nov	2Sam 18:1 – 18:18