
Week Three

Spiritual Principles, Life Lessons, and Holy Warnings Seen in the History of Samuel

Hymns:

Scripture Reading: 1 Sam. 1:10-11, 18-20, 27-28; 2:30, 35-36; 3:1-21; 4:11-22; 7:3-17; 12:23

§Day 1

- I. **Samuel was of the tribe of Levi (1 Chron. 6:33-38) but was not of the house of Aaron, the family of the priests ordained by God; Samuel ministered to the Lord as one who was a priest not by birth but by the Nazarite vow:**
 - A. **God's move with His answer to Hannah's prayer was to produce an overcoming Nazarite who was absolute for the fulfilling of God's desire; even before he was born, Samuel was consecrated by his mother to be such a person—1 Sam. 1:10-11, 18-20.**
 - B. **God desires that all His people be Nazarites; to be a Nazarite is to be sanctified, separated, absolutely and ultimately to God, that is, to be for nothing other than God and for nothing other than His satisfaction—the testimony of Jesus, which is the testifying church as the testimony and the expression of Christ—Num. 6:1-2; Psa. 73:25-26; Rev. 1:2, 9-13; 19:10; cf. Exo. 38:21:**
 1. For a Nazarite to abstain from wine and anything related to its source signifies abstaining from all kinds of earthly enjoyment and pleasure and taking and experiencing Christ as his enjoyment and pleasure; eating the tree of life, that is, enjoying Christ as our life supply, should be the primary matter in the church life—Num. 6:3-4; Rev. 2:7; Judg. 9:12-13.
 2. For a Nazarite to not shave his head signifies not rejecting but being absolutely subject to the headship of the Lord as well as to all deputy authorities appointed by God—Num. 6:5; Rom. 13:1-2a; Eph. 5:21, 23; 6:1;

Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:5.

3. For a Nazarite to not be defiled by the death of his blood relatives, but remain in his separation to be holy to God, signifies that a Nazarite overcomes natural affection—Num. 6:7.
4. For a Nazarite to not come near a dead person or to not be defiled by the sudden death of one beside him signifies that a Nazarite is separated from death—vv. 6-9; Rev. 3:4; Lev. 11:31; 5:2; cf. 1 John 5:16.

II. At the time of Samuel, the priesthood of the house of Aaron was utterly fallen; God, however, foresaw the situation; besides His ordaining the house of Aaron to be the priests, He made a supplement—the Nazarite vow in Numbers 6—in case there should be an inadequacy in the ordained priests:

- A. When the house of Aaron fell, this supplement was put into practical use; Samuel became a priest by being consecrated, separated, and lent to the Lord—1 Sam. 1:11, 27-28.
- B. At the time of Eli, God was poor as far as the priesthood was concerned, so Hannah lent Samuel to the Lord; when the situation is abnormal, the Lord becomes poor with respect to His administration, and there is the need for someone to voluntarily lend himself to the Lord.
- C. After she presented Samuel to Eli, Hannah praised God for His salvation accomplished through His marvelous deeds; her prayer was related to God's move in His economy and indicated that she realized something concerning God's economy—2:1-10.

§Day 2

III. Samuel grew up under the custody of Eli; in his youth Samuel ministered to Jehovah before Eli (vv. 11b, 18-19), being taught by Eli the way to minister to God:

- A. God called Samuel three times; "then Eli perceived that it was Jehovah calling the boy. And Eli said to Samuel, Go and lie down, and if He calls you, you shall say, Speak, O Jehovah; for Your servant is listening...Then Jehovah came and stood by and

called as at the other times, Samuel! Samuel! And Samuel said, Speak, for Your servant is listening"—3:1-10:

1. This was something completely positive that Samuel learned from Eli; as the Lord's servants, we need to maintain our fellowship with Him, always listening to Him—Luke 1:34-38; 10:38-42.
2. Our lives depend on the Lord's words, and our work depends on His commands (Rev. 2:7; 1 Sam. 3:9-10; cf. Isa. 50:4-5; Exo. 21:6); the life of the believers hinges totally upon the Lord's speaking (Eph. 5:26-27).
3. The Lord's speaking enables us to fulfill the goal of His eternal economy to have a bride as His counterpart—Rev. 2:7; Eph. 5:26-27; S. S. 8:13-14.

B. While Samuel was learning, he observed the deterioration of the degraded Aaronic priesthood:

1. He saw the Ark of God being usurped by the elders of the people and captured by the Philistines with the glory of God departing from Israel; he realized God's severe judgment on the house of Eli, which included the deaths of Eli and his two evil sons, Hophni and Phinehas—1 Sam. 2:12-36; 4:11-22.
2. God's severe judgment on the house of Eli was prophesied by a man of God (2:27-36); then, this severe judgment was confirmed by the word of Jehovah spoken through Samuel (3:11-18).
3. God's purpose in telling Eli through Samuel of the coming judgment might have been to make an unforgettable impression on this young priestly boy; this was God's wisdom—vv. 17-18.
4. This did not weaken Samuel in his future Nazarite priesthood; rather, it became a constant warning to him throughout his priestly service that helped him to remain pure in his service to God for his entire life.

§Day 3

IV. Samuel was one who turned the age into the age of the kingdom with the kingship; this was a great thing not only in the history of Israel but even in the history of mankind:

- A. Samuel did not rebel against the house of Aaron, and he did not usurp anything of the house of Aaron; as Samuel was growing, God arranged the environment to perfect him and to build up**

his capacity to do everything that was needed for God to change the age into the age of the king with the kingdom.

- B. As a priest Samuel replaced and, in a sense, terminated the stale Aaronic priesthood; God used Samuel to change the age not through rebellion or revolution but through the way of divine revelation to bring in the kingship.
 - C. Samuel was a man of revelation, and he did everything according to what he saw; "Jehovah revealed Himself to Samuel...by the word of Jehovah" (v. 21); furthermore, Samuel was a man according to God's heart—a copy, a duplicate, of God's heart; as such a person, he would never do anything rebellious.
- V. **Samuel's whole being and person, not just his doing, living, and work, were according to God; Samuel's being and God's heart were one; for this reason we may say that Samuel, a man according to God, was the acting God on earth:**
- A. God's mind was Samuel's consideration; he had no other thought, consideration, or thinking; his living and working were for the carrying out of whatever was in God's heart.
 - B. Samuel anointed Saul and David to be kings (10:1; 16:1, 13); this was according to God's ordination that Samuel should go before His anointed continually (2:35) to supervise the king, observing what the king was doing.
 - C. This indicates that Samuel, the acting God on earth, was greater than the king; Samuel could be qualified to such an extent because for many years God had been perfecting him uniquely for His economy:
 1. Samuel could be used by God to carry out His economy because he was a man according to God and God's heart, having no self-seeking nor any thought of self-gain—cf. Matt. 16:24-26; Luke 9:23-25.
 2. He had no heart for anything besides God's heart and God's elect; his heart was a reflection of God's heart—cf. Phil. 2:19-22; 2 Cor. 3:16-18.
 3. Samuel considered that not praying for God's people, who are His personal treasure and possession, was a sin against Jehovah—1 Sam. 12:23; Exo.

19:5.

- D. Although it was not easy for Samuel to stand for God in his particular environment, he cared for God's interest and turned the age; according to the Old Testament, Samuel is ranked with Moses in being for God and for God's interest—Jer. 15:1.**

§Day 4

- E. "Samuel told the people the practice of the kingdom, and he wrote it in a book and laid it before Jehovah"—1 Sam. 10:25a:**

1. Moses gave the law to the children of Israel, but before Samuel came they did not have a set of bylaws, a constitution.
2. Samuel taught the people the bylaws, the constitution, the practice, the customs, the manners, the ordinances, and the rules of how to practice the kingdom of God on earth.

VI. God began a new age in raising up Samuel, a young Nazarite, as a faithful priest to replace the degraded priesthood—2:35:

- A. Samuel was established by God to speak the word of God to replace the teaching of the word of God by the old priesthood; in the priesthood the first thing that a priest should do is to speak for God.**
- B. The breastplate and the Urim and the Thummim worn by the high priest were the means used by God to speak to His people (Exo. 28:30); in the degradation of the priesthood God's speaking was almost lost (1 Sam. 3:1, 3a).**
- C. God ministered His word to His elect by establishing Samuel as a prophet in the uplifted prophethood (vv. 20-21), and He exercised His authority over His elect by raising up Samuel as a judge (7:15-17).**
- D. Samuel, as the last judge, terminated the judgeship, and, as the new priest, brought in the kingship, which was strengthened by the uplifted prophethood.**
- E. God needed to raise up a living person, a prophet, to speak for Him; in God's ordination Samuel is considered as the first**

prophet because he brought in the prophethood for God's speaking—Acts 3:24; 13:20; Heb. 11:32.

§Day 5 & Day 6

VII. Samuel was one with God on earth; as the acting God on earth, the representative of the very God in heaven to rule over His people on earth, Samuel ministered in five statuses—1 Sam. 7:3:

- A. Samuel ministered as a Nazarite, consecrated to God absolutely for God's fulfillment of His economy—1:11, 28a.**
- B. Samuel ministered as a God-honoring, God-pleasing priest to replace the stale and degraded priesthood, and he was faithful to act on behalf of God, even to appoint and establish kings for the divine government on earth—2:30, 35-36; 7:3-17; Judg. 9:9, 13.**
- C. Samuel ministered as a prophet established by God (1 Sam. 3:20) to speak the word of God to replace the teaching of the old priesthood at a time when the word of Jehovah was rare and visions were not widespread (vv. 1-10, 19-21).**
- D. Samuel ministered as a judge in the reality of the kingship to replace the judging of the people by the old and stale priesthood—7:15-17.**
- E. Samuel ministered as a man of prayer who prayed for God's elect so that they would be kept in the way of God, would be one with God, would not be ensnared by the idols of the nations, and would enjoy God as Ebenezer (meaning "the stone of help"—v. 12) in order that God's desire in His will regarding them might be fulfilled (vv. 3-17; 8:6; 12:19-25; 15:11b).**

WEEK 3 — DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

1 Sam. 1:11 ...I will give him to Jehovah for all the days of his life, and no razor will come upon his head.

27-28 It was for this child that I prayed, and Jehovah has granted me my request that I requested from Him. Therefore I, for my part, have lent him to Jehovah; all the days that he lives, he is lent to Jehovah...

God's move with His answer to Hannah's prayer was to produce a Nazarite who was absolute for the fulfilling of His desire. A Nazarite is one who is consecrated to God absolutely. A Nazarite could never cut his hair or drink wine. In the Bible, long hair signifies the headship, the authority. A Nazarite's keeping his hair long was a sign that just as a female takes her husband as her head, he takes God as the Head, considering God his Husband. Thus, a Nazarite is one who submits himself to God, taking God as the Head, the authority. This is why Hannah prayed that if the Lord would give her a boy, no razor would come upon his head (1 Sam. 1:11). In the Bible, to drink wine is to enjoy the worldly pleasures. A Nazarite...has no interest in the enjoyment of worldly pleasures. Even before he was born, Samuel was consecrated by his mother to be such a person. This is a great thing, for it was Samuel who brought in a new age. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, p. 12)

Today's Reading

In his youth, perhaps at the age of two or three, Samuel was offered to Jehovah by his mother to fulfill her vow to God (1 Sam. 1:21-28, 11). In 2:1-10 we have the offering mother's prayer. In her prayer she praised God for His salvation through His marvelous deeds. Her prayer was related to God's move in His economy and indicated that she realized something concerning God's economy. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, p. 13)

The Lord had given Moses a supplement in Numbers 6. This...was His

special provision against the degradation of the priesthood. The Lord had appointed and ordained only the house of Aaron, of the tribe of Levi, to be the priests. The rest of the Levites who served in the tabernacle were not the priests.

God's intention had been to make the whole nation of Israel a kingdom of priests; however, through Israel's failure, the Lord chose the Levites as a tribe of priests to replace a nation of priests in Israel. But not all of the tribe of Levi were chosen by the Lord. Only those of the house of Aaron were to be the priests. But the house of Aaron eventually came to the point of being fully and utterly fallen at the time of Eli's sons (1 Sam. 2:12-17). However, the Lord foresaw the situation. Besides His ordination of the house of Aaron as priests, He had made a supplement in Numbers 6. This supplement was given in case there should be an inadequacy in the ordained priests. When the house of Aaron fell, this supplement was put into practical use.

The principle of the Nazarite is voluntary consecration. It is not by being appointed, ordained, or even chosen by the Lord, but by voluntarily consecrating yourself to Him. At the time of Eli, the Lord was really poor as far as the priesthood was concerned; so Hannah lent Samuel to the Lord. She told the Lord that if He would give her a son, then she would lend him to the Lord.... When the situation is abnormal, the Lord becomes poor with respect to His administration, and there is the need for someone to voluntarily lend himself to the Lord. Samuel was of the tribe of Levi (1 Chron. 6:33-38), of Mount Ephraim (1 Sam. 1:1-2). He was not of the house of Aaron. But he became a priest by being consecrated, separated, and lent to God. Samuel became a priest by coming through the side door, not by coming through the main entrance. He became a priest according to the supplement provided in Numbers 6, not according to an appointment or ordination. By the principle of the Nazarite he became a voluntarily consecrated person to replace the ordained priest. (Truth Lessons—Level One, vol. 1, pp. 122-123)

Further Reading: Truth Lessons—Level One, vol. 1, lsn. 10

WEEK 3 – DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

1 Sam. 3:10 Then Jehovah came and stood by and called as at the other times, Samuel! Samuel! And Samuel said, Speak, for Your servant is listening.

Isa. 50:4 The Lord Jehovah...awakens my ear to hear as an instructed one.

Eph. 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word.

Song of Songs 8:13 says, “Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear it.” “Thou” refers to the Lord.... The word “hearken” means that everyone is listening. All those who are seeking the Lord together with [the lover] adopt the same attitude. They have been dealt with, and they know the futility of speaking and the profit of hearkening.... They know that their lives depend on the Lord’s words and their work depends on the Lord’s commands. They will only listen, because they cannot and will not move by themselves any longer. Without the Lord’s words, they will not have any revelation, light, or knowledge. The life of the believers hinges totally upon the Lord’s speaking.

“O Lord, while we are waiting to hearken, make us hear.... Please allow us to hear Your voice, because only this can guide us until Your return.” (CWWN, vol. 23, “The Song of Songs,” pp. 124-125)

Today’s Reading

Samuel grew up under the custody of the old Eli, the last priest of the waning Aaronic priesthood (1 Sam. 1:25). This was God’s wisdom. Because God intended to replace the waning priesthood with Samuel, it was necessary for him to learn certain lessons while he was under Eli’s custody.... Samuel had the capacity to understand and apprehend what he

saw in Eli's situation, and this became a constant warning to Samuel for the future. Samuel learned of Eli to minister to Jehovah as a priest (2:11b). While Samuel was learning, he observed the deterioration of the degraded Aaronic priesthood (2:12-17, 22-25). This did not weaken Samuel in his future priesthood. Rather, it became a constant warning to him throughout his priestly service.

Samuel came to realize that God's severe judgment was on the house of Eli (2:27-36; 3:4-18; 4:1-22). We should not think that God... is not doing anything about the situation of His people on earth. God is very busy in dealing with His people. First, God's severe judgment on the house of Eli was prophesied by a man of God (2:27-36). Second, this severe judgment was confirmed by the word of Jehovah through Samuel (3:4-18). I believe that God's purpose in letting Eli know through Samuel of the coming judgment was to make an unforgettable impression on this young priestly boy. This was God's wisdom.

Samuel observed all these tragedies, and they became lessons to him, warning him and reminding him throughout his service to God. Thus, his being placed by God in His wisdom under the custody of the old Eli was very profitable, for he learned certain things positively and observed other things negatively. This helped Samuel to remain pure in his service to God his entire life. When he was about to die, he could remind the people of Israel that he had never defrauded them, oppressed them, or taken anything from them (12:3-4).

While Samuel was under Eli's custody, God taught him in a very fine way, built him up, and established him as His proper priest. As such a priest, Samuel became a judge to judge Israel, a prophet to prophesy for God, and the one to bring forth the kingship. By this kingship the kingdom of God was established on earth. This is a picture of what our situation should be today. We need to be, first, a Samuel, and then, a David, enjoying Christ to such a degree that what we have enjoyed of Christ will become a kingdom, which is the church. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, pp. 15-17, 19)

Further Reading: Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, msgs. 2-7; The Principle of the Nazarite (booklet)

WEEK 3 – DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

1 Sam. 3:21 And Jehovah continued to appear in Shiloh, for Jehovah revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of Jehovah.

2:35 And I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest, who will do according to what is in My heart and in My mind; and I will build him a sure house; and he will go before My anointed continually.

Samuel was faithful to God to do according to what was in God's heart and mind. His whole being and person, not just his doing, living, and work, were according to God. Samuel's being and God's heart were one. For this reason it is not too much to say that Samuel, a man according to God, was the acting God on earth. God's mind was Samuel's consideration. He had no other thought, consideration, or thinking. His living and working were for the carrying out of whatever was in God's heart. As a consequence, Samuel was one who turned the age.

Samuel never did anything rebellious, and his turning of the age was not through a revolution. Rather, it was absolutely a matter of the divine revelation. He behaved, worked, ministered, and served altogether in a mild, moderate, and proper way of revelation.... Furthermore, he was a man according to God's heart; that is, he was a copy, a duplicate, of God's heart. As such a person, he would never do anything rebellious. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, pp. 28-29, 39-40)

Today's Reading

As a priest Samuel replaced and terminated, in a sense, the stale Aaronic priesthood. He did not rebel against the house of Aaron, and he did not usurp anything of the house of Aaron. There was no revolution; there was only revelation. As Samuel was growing, God arranged the environment to perfect him and to build up his capacity to do everything that was needed for God to change the age. In the recovery the Lord will

never allow any kind of rebellion, but He will bring in many changes, adjustments, and improvements, not through rebellion but through revelation.

Samuel would never have cooperated with God if he had been a self-seeking person.... The day before Saul came to Samuel, God revealed to Samuel what He wanted him to do. God said to him, "At about this time tomorrow I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him ruler over My people Israel" (1 Sam. 9:16). When Saul and his servant came to Samuel, Samuel did exactly as God had instructed. He did not care to gain anything for himself or for his children.

We can see why Samuel was so useful in the hand of God. He had no self-seeking nor any thought of self-gain. Instead, as a Nazarite, who allowed no razor to come upon his head and who did not drink any wine, he was absolutely for God. He was happy to go wherever God wanted him to go and to do whatever God wanted him to do. He was a man according to God, a man according to God's heart. Therefore, he was a man whom God could use to carry out His economy.

Samuel was very human and had human concepts. Nevertheless, he was not a self-seeking person. All of his seeking was for God and for God's elect. He cared for God and for His interest and profit, and He prayed for God's people. Some Bible students have pointed out that Samuel was a person of high character.... Many people have a high character, but they are just for themselves, their enterprise, and their kingdom. They are not for God's kingdom. Samuel was not only high in character; he was high in the Nazarite vow.

Although it was not easy for Samuel to stand for God in his particular environment, he cared for God's interest and he turned the age. According to the Old Testament, Samuel is ranked with Moses in being for God and for God's interest (Jer. 15:1). (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, pp. 29, 45-46)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 23, "The Song of Songs," pp. 124-126

WEEK 3 – DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

1 Sam. 3:19-20 And Samuel grew, and Jehovah was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel...knew that Samuel had been established as a prophet of Jehovah.

Samuel was established by God to speak the word of God to replace the teaching of the word of God by the old priesthood.... The first thing that a priest should do is speak for God. The breastplate and the Urim and the Thummim worn by the high priest were the means used by God to speak to His people. In the degradation of the priesthood, God's speaking was almost lost. Thus, God needed to raise up a living person, a prophet, to speak for Him, and this is what He did with Samuel.... Abraham was a prophet speaking for God, but in God's ordained way Samuel was the first prophet to set up a prophethood. Samuel...turned the age in God's administration from the age of the priesthood to the age of the prophethood with the kingship. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, pp. 30-31, 38)

Today's Reading

The proper prophethood is always an assistant to the kingship. This should be a lesson to us. In the church life today, the elders hold the kingship. If you are not one of the elders and you see something in the church that is not so right, you should never criticize, oppose, or gossip. You need to be a prophet by praying to the Lord to receive a word from Him. If you do not receive a word from the Lord, you should not say anything. But if, in His mercy to His church, the Lord gives you a word, a prophecy, then you should go to the elders and prophesy to them. The elders, realizing that they hold the kingship, should learn that they are not all-capable, that they may be deficient. Therefore, they should listen to this brother's prophecy. This is the proper situation in the church life.

The priesthood was to minister the word of God to His people and to exercise the authority of God over His people. We all need to learn to do

these two things. However, one may be a prophet, having a vision of the riches of Christ, but he may not know how to exercise God's authority to take the proper way to deal with the lack of vision concerning Christ's riches. Troubles in the church life are often caused by those who do not know how to exercise God's authority. The Aaronic priesthood failed God in two things: in ministering God's word and in exercising God's authority. This is why the New Testament charges the elders to learn to do two things: to teach the saints (1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17), that is, to speak the word of God; and to take the lead among the saints (Heb. 13:7; 1 Pet. 5:1-3), that is, to exercise God's authority. If the elders teach the saints, they must take the lead to practice whatever they teach. This is to exercise God's authority by taking the lead.

When the priesthood was proper, the priests were patterns to the people. What the priests taught and what they exercised in the authority of God, they themselves did, taking the lead to carry out all the things regarding God's eternal economy. For example, the priests took the lead to step into the river Jordan and then to circle the city of Jericho.... Today, this is the proper way to take care of the church—teaching to speak for God and taking the lead to exercise God's authority.

God began a new age in raising up Samuel, a young Nazarite, as a faithful priest to replace the waned priesthood (1 Sam. 2:35). God ministered His word to His elect by establishing Samuel as a prophet in the uplifted prophethood (3:20-21), and He exercised His authority over His elect by raising up Samuel as a judge (7:15-17). Samuel, as the last judge, terminated the judgeship, and, as the new priest, brought in the kingship with the strengthening of the uplifted prophethood, in which Samuel was established as the first prophet (Acts 3:24; 13:20; Heb. 11:32).... The old priesthood had the word of God and exercised the ruling of God. God replaced it with the uplifted prophethood to speak God's word to His people and the kingship to rule over God's people. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, pp. 39-41)

Further Reading: Life-study of Ephesians, msgs. 95, 54, 59

WEEK 3 – DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

1 Sam. 7:3-4 Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, If you are returning with all your heart to Jehovah, remove the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth from your midst, and direct your heart to Jehovah and serve only Him; and He will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines. Then the children of Israel removed the Baals and the Ashtaroth, and served only Jehovah.

By the time that Saul was raised up to be the king in Israel (1 Sam. 9:3—10:27), Samuel had reached the highest position.... We may even say that, as God's representative, Samuel was the acting God. God intended to move, to act, yet He needed a representative. Samuel thus became a prophet, a priest, and a judge. He was God's oracle and God's administration. As such, he was the acting God on earth.

Samuel...was one with God on earth. We may say that Samuel was the acting God on earth. At least we may say that Samuel was the representative of the very God in heaven to rule over His people on earth. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, pp. 43, 28)

Today's Reading

Samuel ministered as a Nazarite consecrated to God absolutely for God's fulfillment of His economy, a volunteer to replace any official and formal serving ones of God (1 Sam. 1:11, 28a). The Nazarite vow was initiated by his mother and completed by Samuel.

Samuel ministered as a priest.... Samuel was a priest not by birth but by God raising him up particularly.... [First Samuel 2:35] indicates that Samuel would be a faithful priest to act on behalf of God, even to appoint and establish kings for the divine government on earth. David was appointed and anointed by him.

Samuel had a clear view of God's economy and also of what the enemy had been doing to devastate God's economy on earth. Samuel was thus a

person full of insight concerning God's economy and concerning the environmental situation. Eventually, God did something to match him, and there was a change among the people of Israel. The people returned to God, lamented before God, and were willing to remove all the idols.

In this replacing priesthood, Samuel anointed Saul and David to be kings (10:1; 16:1, 13) as God ordained that he should go before His anointed continually (2:35b) to supervise the king, observing what the king was doing. This indicates that Samuel, the acting God on earth, was greater than the king. Samuel could be qualified to such an extent because for many years God had been perfecting him for His economy, not for anything else.

When God's economy is carried out among His people, they are blessed. This means that our welfare, our well-being, is altogether linked to the carrying out of God's economy. We should not seek our well-being apart from God's economy.... I wish to say, especially to the young saints, that we should not expect to have prosperity for ourselves. Rather, as saints in the Lord's recovery, we should expect that through us the Lord will do as much as possible to accomplish His economy. Then we will be blessed.

Samuel ministered, or served, not only as a priest but also as a prophet. In the Old Testament the last part of the divine revelation is with the prophets, from Isaiah to Malachi. Apart from God's speaking the universe would be empty. We thank the Lord that, by His mercy, we have His continual speaking in His recovery today.

Samuel's first prophesying was his speaking to Eli (3:1-18). Samuel received the word of God and spoke it to the old Eli in the waning priesthood. This speaking should have gone forth through Eli, but he was waning, and God could not speak through him. Instead, God spoke through someone much younger. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, pp. 28-31)

Further Reading: Truth Lessons—Level One, vol. 1, pp. 121-124

WEEK 3 – DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

1 Sam. 7:15 And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.

12:23 ...As for me, far be it from me that I would sin against Jehovah by ceasing to pray for you, but I will instruct you in the good and right way.

Samuel's prophesying...was at the time when the word of Jehovah was rare and visions were not widespread [1 Sam. 3:1b].... Samuel's first prophesying was also at a time when the waning Eli's eyesight was so dim that he could not see [v. 2]. Furthermore, Samuel began to prophesy at a time when the lamp of God had not yet gone out in the temple (v. 3). God's speaking had stopped, but there was still some light.

Samuel ministered as a judge. A priest served God, a prophet spoke for God, and a judge carried out God's governmental administration. Samuel stood on the earth to be the acting God—the one representing God and acting for Him—in his priesthood, prophethood, and judgeship. In the church life in the Lord's recovery today, we have the priesthood, the prophethood, and the kingship. As a result, things are not upside-down but right-side-up. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, pp. 31-32)

Today's Reading

Samuel was established as a judge to replace the judging of the people by the old priesthood. The judgeship actually belonged to the priesthood, for the priesthood included the two matters of speaking for God and administering for God. But because the old Aaronic priesthood was waning, God raised up Samuel to be a new priest, a new prophet, and a new judge.

Through Samuel and his threefold responsibility in the priesthood, prophethood, and judgeship, a good order was brought in, and the Philistines were defeated and subdued. In this situation, God commanded Samuel to anoint David to be God's chosen king. Samuel brought in David, a crucial ancestor of Christ. Christ's coming to earth was the greatest event in

the universe, and credit for this should be given to Samuel.

Today Christ is our good land, and now we are developing Him and laboring on Him. We are the members of Christ and the constituents of His Body, the church. This is God's accomplishment of His eternal economy, which will consummate in the New Jerusalem. In order to accomplish His eternal economy, God needed a Samuel.

Samuel ministered as a man of prayer.... Samuel prayed for God's elect, the children of Israel (1 Sam. 7:3-14; 8:6; 15:11b). Samuel prayed for the children of Israel to be kept in the way of God, to be one with God, not to be ensnared by the idols of the nations, and to enjoy God as Ebenezer, which means "the stone of help." "Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpah and Shen; and he called its name Ebenezer and said, Thus far Jehovah has helped us" (7:12).

Samuel prayed for God's elect that God's desire of His will in His elect might be fulfilled. Up to this day God has helped us, but why has He helped us? God has helped us that His desire might be fulfilled. We need to realize that God's helping us is for His fulfillment of His economy and that we are enjoying the blessing in this fulfillment. Today God is blessing us in every way for the fulfillment of His economy to build up the Body of Christ. In Samuel's consideration, ceasing to pray for God's elect was to sin against Jehovah (12:23). We also need to pray for God's people. In particular, the co-workers and elders need to pray for the churches every day.

God admitted to Jeremiah that Samuel, like Moses, was a man standing before Him for His people (Jer. 15:1). Moses was a priest, a prophet (Deut. 18:15, 18), and a judge, and he always prayed for God's people. In these matters Samuel was the same. He was a priest, a prophet, and a judge who prayed for God's people. In the Old Testament, only Moses and Samuel were qualified to participate fully in the priesthood, the prophethood, and the judgeship. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, pp. 32-34)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1954, vol. 1, pp. 418-421

<< WEEK 3 — HYMN >>

Hymns, #848 What a blessing, what a privilege

The Church — Her Building

- 1 What a blessing, what a priv'lege!
 Called of God a royal priest,
 That this glorious, holy office
 I should bear, though last and least.
(Chorus) All the building of the Body
 On the priesthood doth depend;
 Ever praying in the spirit
 I this office would attend.
- 2 If I keep this royal calling
 Under Thine authority,
 Priestly duty thus fulfilling,
 Then the church will builded be.
- 3 Now the church is but the priesthood;
 Thus the priesthood formed we need;
 When the priests are knit together,
 Then the church is built indeed.
- 4 Through the church's degradation,
 Saints this office desolate;
 Through the weakness of their spirits
 Preaching doth predominate.
- 5 Most are leaning on the message
 And the preaching emphasize,
 Yet neglect the priestly praying
 And their spirits' exercise.
- 6 Deal with me and make me balanced,
 As in preaching, so in prayer;
 Leading others oft in praying,
 As Thy Word I too declare.
- 7 Only serving by our praying
 Will our spirits mingled be;
 Stressing prayer as much as preaching-
 Thus the church is built for Thee.

