

KosherTorah School
for Biblical, Judaic & Spiritual Studies

email. arieltzadok@gmail.com

www.KosherTorah.com

Ariel Bar Tzadok, Director, Rabbi



The Biblical Books of Samuel (1& 2)

A 30 Lesson (hour) Audio Course
Taught by R. Ariel B. Tzadok

Course Outline

1 Samuel 1-2

The story of Elkanah and his wives Hannah and Peninah. The Levitical origins of House Elkanah, possibly associated with the school of the prophets. Hannah and Peninah, bitterness between wives in polygamy. Hannah's prayer, an expression of bitterness spoken through the heart, not through words. God listens to the heart, and not to words. Eli, the High Priest blesses Hannah that he prayer be answered, and by the power that is channeled through the High Priest, her prayer is indeed answered and Samuel is born. Hannah's song, a classic example of the ancient Hebraic way of thinking. Again, Eli blesses Hannah and she continues to have many more children. Eli's sons defy Heaven, and a prophetic warning is given, speaking about their pending doom. One cannot dishonor Heaven for long, without reprisal.

1 Samuel 3-4

The rise of a prophet, the fall of a High Priest and the loss of the Ark of God. As a boy of 12, Samuel dreams "strong dreams" that awaken him. God speaks through the voice of Eli. Prophecy is received through imagery and form that the individual human mind can comprehend. Samuel does not recognize this, but Eli the High Priest eventually does. Samuel is over time transformed into a full fledged prophet, the likes of which had not been seen in Israel for some time. Directed now by prophecy, Israel goes to war with the Philistines, and they lose. God sent them to fight and lose to punish them, but they did not understand this. In order to win, they wrongly take the great Ark into Battle, but they take the wrong one. There are 2 Arks. The Ark is lost, a sign of things to come, loss of the First Temple, Second Temple and other future national tragedies. Eli's sons killed in battle, but he dies upon hearing the about the loss of the Ark. In the ears (and eyes) of Israel, this meant that God Himself was defeated and captured.

1 Samuel 5-7

The dangerous Ark of the Covenant. The Ark in the hands of the Philistines. Placing it in their Temple, was it an act of pride in victory, or an act of respect that they showed a god. The Ark emanates great powers and inflicts serious suffering on those around it. The Philistines respect the God of Israel and eventually seek to placate its terrible powers. This episode is the only Biblical account where it can be said that God was a real "pain in the a**." Lessons about showing respect to God and how even today we are to placate Heaven with acts of self-sacrifice. Public question: what is a golden hemorrhoid? The Ark is returned to Israel, the supernatural behavior of the cows. The offense and death of the local Israelites. The Ark is absolutely not to be trifled with. Was the Ark an electromagnetic conductor? Where is the Ark today? Legends of under the Temple Mount, and the Ark in Inner Earth. The defeat of the Philistines in battle using some form of sound technology that disoriented the mind.

1 Samuel 8-9

The Rise of Monarchy. Israel rejects the direct rule of God and instead chooses to embrace a monarchy. God calls this a direct rebellion. It is considered equal to the sin of the Golden Calf. God speaks to Samuel and tells him to warn the nation of the evils that come with big centralized government (regardless of its form). Seven distinct examples of social, political and economical imbalances are given. God warns the people that the monster that they seek to create will eventually consume them, and that the Divine Hand will then be there to intervene and help them. The mess we make is the one we must clean up! Chapter 9 discusses the choice of Saul, the tall, dark and handsome, ideal image of what a king and ruler should be. The difference between a Seer and a Prophet and their roles among the people and in the face of big government.

1 Samuel 10-11

The Establishment of Government. Samuel the Prophet contrives a proper political introduction of Saul to persuade the nation to accept a monarchy and to submit to a King. Saul is first subjected to a strange prophetic possession which begins rumors of his spiritual connection to God. Then Samuel follows through with a national gathering and public Goral/Question to Heaven, asking God to choose for all a king. Saul is chosen, because he is unknown and untested. While some accept the pick of God, others reject Saul outright. How can an untested youth lead like an experienced man? The episode of Yabesh Gilad gives Saul the opportunity to prove himself a man, a judge and a worthy leader. He rises to the occasion. While a leader may be chosen, his respect must still be earned!

1 Samuel 12 - 13a

Samuel's review of Israelite history to prove that God alone is the nation's savior and that establishing a centralized government creates a false impression that individual responsibility is transferred to government and thus no longer the obligation of the individual. Samuel emphasizes how government officials are still individuals, and that the fear of God and righteousness must be foremost in their minds, over and above, and above all governmental concerns. Saul is faced with a serious military threat, brought on by his son Jonathan. When faced with crises, Saul acts as he sees fit, contradicting Samuel's spiritual directives. As such, Saul shows himself unworthy of being a leader, who, like all others is still subject to the higher authority of God.

1 Samuel 13-14

Jonathan's military strategy. Jonathan attacks the Philistines, but rather than relying exclusively on faith, he executes his attack with precise, and wise military strategy. While faith is the foundation of all, it still must dictate to us a path in reality that is workable and doable. Jonathan shows himself to be a much more capable and practical leader than his father Saul. Saul declares a fast for the soldiers. Jonathan, not knowing of this, does not observe it. When discovering this, Jonathan comments, that Saul's rash edict has weakened the army and disabled them from accomplishing an even greater victory. Saul's edict was that all who ate in violation of his ban was to die. Jonathan ate unknowingly. Saul was ready to kill his own son in a twisted belief that this would be the right thing to do. The army steps in and prevents the murder of Jonathan. The characters of father and son are juxtaposed to show us the moral superiority of Jonathan over Saul. Saul's character flaws are exposed, laying the groundwork for his later removal from kingship.

1 Samuel 15

Saul's victory over Amalek and his defeat to himself. Saul is king. As such, the king represents the entire nation, and is essentially God's representative on Earth. The king is commanded to fulfill the national destiny to eradicate Amalek, the archetypal enemy. This war is a vendetta, it is not for booty, or for any other personal/national gain. Vendetta means total annihilation. But Saul, the king, is of another mindset. He does take booty and he wants to boast of his victory, as with all the others. As such, Saul offers to God what Saul thinks is good enough, but God has other thoughts. In spirit, Saul has committed the same offense as did Eve in Eden, Cain with his sacrifice, and as did the worshipers of the Golden Calf, by personally defining his form of obedience, as opposed to listening to and following God. Saul is rejected from being king over Israel.

1 Samuel 16

The Rise of David. An interesting dialogue between God and Samuel. The nature of scriptural embellishments. The Hebraic/moralistic mindset. God's choice for king. Samuel's concern over establishing a new administration (David's monarchy) before the previous one (Saul) is removed, this is tantamount to treason and, under the law, is punishable by death. God's plan for a cover-up, the lessons of realism and practicality, we learn from this. We are introduction to a rambunctious teen-ager, who at this time is in his early teens (unlike those who believe David is at this time 28). God's emphasis on character over appearances. David's psychic transformation, similar to Samson. Saul's bout with mental illness, depression, if not bipolarism, brought on by God, in the same way as Nebuchadnezzar was struck with mental illness. The Hand of God touches the minds of men, for either blessing or curse. David, brings music which brings relief. Now, we have the new and old together. We have here the conception of the new king, in concealment in the womb of destiny, as he grows and matures, eventually to be born, and with him a new and everlasting dynasty.

1 Samuel 17

David and Goliath. A rendition of this tale in light of psychological and practical warfare. David the teenager does not go off to fight with spiritual zeal alone. He is a wild young man, knowledgeable in animal-style fighting (lion and bear). He is fully capable of defending himself with those weapons with which he is well acquainted and experienced in using. David's defeat of Goliath is the great example of the maxim stated centuries later by Benjamin Franklin, "God

helps those who help themselves.” David's zeal combined with his experience and expertise many him the winner that he became.

1 Samuel 18-19a

Saul's Descent into Mental Illness. Becoming jealous of a David is one thing, developing full blown psychiatric paranoia about him is another. Saul's mind is struck by God. His mental illness develops as a result of a psychic attack. Literally, he is being driven crazy. Saul expresses behaviors which might also have been schizophrenic, and the text clearly says, twice, that this comes about because of an evil spirit from God that rests on him. Crown Prince Jonathan, son of Saul is impressed with David and the two become bonded based on their warrior code of chivalry and honor. David marries Michal, daughter of Saul, who, in a plot to kill David, chosers her husband over her father. Jonathan and Michal both recognize their father's deteriorating mental health, with Michal fearing for her own safety as well as that of her husband David. This lesson teaches us a deep lesson about mental illness and that which we today call psychic attacks. This lesson serves us as a case study, with many modern-day applications and relevance.

1 Samuel 19b-20

David's Flight from Saul. The importance of recognizing the natural order when walking the spiritual path. Psychic warfare, how the mind is used as a tool of combat. Samuel directed his students to project the “spirit of God” on to Saul's soldiers, seeking to arrest David, thereby disabling them. Three squads were thus disabled and even Saul himself was overcome, when he tried to intervene personally. The “force” has a strong influence over the weak mind. The difference between prophecy and Ruah HaKodesh (Divine inspiration). David & Jonathan and their equal respect for authority. The need for privacy and how to make clandestine plans. Saul's public insult of Jonathan and his equally public call for the death of David.

1 Samuel 21-22

The Murder of the Priests of Nob, David becomes a Mob Boss. David flees to the religious center of the nation, seeking shelter and support. Lying to the High Priest, David acquires both food and a weapon. David acquired holy bread, which was permissible to him. We reference the Christian Bible's rendition of this episode and question its accuracy. David provided plausible deniability to the Priests by lying to them. David flees the country, but uses subterfuge to protect himself, the insanity he feigns reminds the observers of demonic possession, thus they cast him out. David then flees east and gathers to him 400 outcast men. His family flees the country for their safety. Then the Priests of Nob are slandered and lied about. The Priest protests his innocence, yet the King in a state of delusional paranoia orders the murder of all the Priests and their families. No Israelite dares to lay a hand against the Priests of God, but a foreigner does. The man who slandered and lied to them also murders them all. Lessons about modern times and how to deal with repressive government regimes.

1 Samuel 23-24

David on the Run. David is on the run from Saul in his home territory of Judea. When Judea is invaded by Philistines, it is David who rises up to defend his homeland. Saul is strangely silent to the border threat. After defending his tribal territory, David flees the immediate area fearing that the local people, his own tribesmen, who he just saved, who betray him and hand him over to Saul. Many others of David's own tribe of Judah conspire against him, spy on him and seek his downfall. God blesses David to outwit them all. But we learn from this the vital importance

of having a widespread, elaborate and completely secret spy network. Saul has a slip in his personal security. Rather than use it to harm him, David uses it to gain political leverage against him. David publicly proved to the troops pursuing him that he was no enemy of either Saul or his government and that there was no legitimate reason to be treating him like a common criminal. David's tactic was to sow dissent into Saul's ranks. This lesson serves us as a wise guide how to act in times of crises and persecution.

1 Samuel 25

David and Abigail, the code of honor and the woman of valor. This lesson teaches us major lessons about the Biblical code of honor and chivalry. This chapter teaches us the Biblical value of expected receiving for giving. In other words, when we give freely, there is an expectation of receiving freely, this is the unwritten code. Violation of this code is an insult of the highest degree. When Naval denies David rightful request for support, David is insulted to the point of violence. In steps Abigail, the wise and beautiful wife of Naval who makes peace. Her example is a role model for women throughout the centuries. With her husband's timely demise, David, so impressed by this woman's valor takes her to be his own wife. This lesson contains many valuable lessons about proper character and the proper forms of expressing honor and respect.

1 Samuel 26

David, the Ninja Spy. This lesson teaches us the value of stealth in everyday operations. Fitting in means becoming invisible, David was the expert in not being seen. David's spies blend into their surroundings, maybe even into Saul's army, subtly spreading sympathy for David's cause, and of course, finding out their plans, and the procedures of the enemy. Under cover of darkness, David sneaks into Saul's camp, in a display of stealth, that even a ninja would be impressed with. Stealing the king's spear, David sneaks out of the camp and again, under cover of darkness, calls out to advise those present of his successful infiltration. David holds the king's guards accountable for not properly defending him. Realizing that even this savvy psychological operation would not secure his safety, David decides that he and his followers would have to temporarily flee the country for their own safety. They flee into the hands of Saul's enemies, the Philistines, showing true the old adage, "the enemy of my enemy is my friend."

1 Samuel 27-28

David, Marauding among the Philistines, Saul, the Witch and the Seance. David continues to act with stealth and wisdom, strengthening himself and watching his back. David acts like a "red-beard" pirate, impressing his Philistine host. Sensing pending doom, Saul seeks to consult God, but is ignored by Heaven. Saul consults a medium, the witch of Endor to conduct for him a séance. Through means not described, she conjures the ghost of the prophet Samuel. We discuss exactly what is a ghost, distinguishing between the Neshama soul and the Nefesh life-force energy. Saul's fate is sealed. Even though the witch practiced an occult art forbidden by the Torah, her occultic practice still worked. This class explains why.

1 Samuel 29-31

The Defeat of Israel, the Suicide of Saul, David & Ziklag. This lesson concludes our studies in the Book of First Samuel. Was David really going to join a Philistine assault on his own people? It was a blessing that he was turned back and not allowed to fight. Ziklag, destroyed by the Amalekite. Why does tragedy strike the righteous? The army splits, but the booty is for all. All for one, one for all! The motto of the righteous. Israel is defeated. Saul in panic attempts to

commit suicide, an act of honor similar to what occurred centuries later at Matzada. His body is mutilated by the enemy and publicly displayed. Under cover of darkness, his remains are rescued and cremated before the burial of his bones. Mention is made to the laws of suicide and cremation in Torah.

2 Samuel 1-2

David, King of Judah, the First Israelite Civil War. Honor in death, the sacrilege of raising a hand against the anointed of God. What is an anointed one, a Mashiah, how this differs in Judaism and Christianity. The penalty for sacrilege. David becomes king of Judah, and his power grows. David's general Yoav takes his army and meets Abner, general of the surviving House of Saul. They decide on a contest of battle. Twelve from each side step forward and exactly the same time each performs the same martial move on his opponent, resulting in the deaths of all 24 men. Lesson to be learned, thou shall not be predictable. Civil war ensues. In the battle Yoav's brother is ruthlessly murdered by Abner. David's men kill their foes in a ratio of 18 to 1. Then the battle ceases.

2 Samuel 3-4

Fall of the House of Saul. David grows in power as King of Judah. Israel, the northern kingdom grows weaker. Abner is the the one holding the northern government together. Abner is the power behind the throne, with all its subtle implications. Upon being insulted by Mephiboshet, Abner resolves to surrender the northern kingdom into David's hands. He does just this. David makes peace with Abner. David make peace, but not Joav. Joav deceives Abner into meeting with him, and then assassinates him. Abner is responsible for uniting all the tribes of Israel under one king, and his reward is to to be murdered. Comparison made between the fate of Abner and the later American President Abraham Lincoln. Joav is mourned but not punished further, even David has limits to his power before his own "man behind the throne."

2 Samuel 5-6

David, Jerusalem and the Holy Ark. David conquers Jerusalem, yet is "threatened" with the "blind and lame." These are references to the gods of the Jebusite. Psychic/occultic warfare, the battles between the gods, how it was viewed in the ancient Middle East, and how it is viewed (and practiced) to this day (angelic wars). Jerusalem becomes the capital of the United Tribes of Israel, why this city was chosen over all others. The Ark is moved. The Ark, in a cart, as opposed to being carried by Levites, is shaken. Uzza, the Ark's escort, reaches out to stabilize it and is electrocuted. The Ark is powerful and deadly, we endeavor to explain why and how this is so. David later brings the Ark to Jerusalem, dancing all the way, and is later rebuked by his wife Michal for acting in a way that she views as undignified for a King (like her father). David, the man of emotion, rebuffs her. Who knows who would have succeeded David as King if this conversation never happened.

2 Samuel 7

The Temple and First Messianic Prophecies. David is secure in his Kingdom. While enemies continue, they pose him no immediate threat. Having built his house and seat of government, David's desire is to establish the nation's first national "monument." This is to be the grand Temple for YHWH. Although it sounds like a good idea to both King and Prophet, God has other plans. In a vision of the night, Nathan brings to David the prophecy that a Temple will be built, but not by him, but rather by his son. Then the prophecy reveals Gods promise for an eternal Davidic dynasty. This is discussed in detail. Reference is also made to verse 14, wherein which

David's son is referred to as God's "son." This verse is addressed as to how it is authentically meant to be understood, as well as how it is interpreted today within Christianity.

2 Samuel 8-9

Expanding the Kingdom, Faith to Friends. David secures the borders of the nation. He subdues opponents and turns them into either allies or vassals, neither of which continue to be a threat. Building a nation requires wisdom and realism. One cannot establish stability only within one's mind. Stability must be real and this means making real, and hard decisions that will shape the course of the future. David prepares for the Temple that some day will be built by his heir. Established and secure, David seeks out the last remaining son of Saul, who was concealed out of fear of David. There is no more fear, no more reason to hide. The wise king is the righteous and kind king. The grandson of Saul is welcomed by David as is treated as if he is a son of the king.

2 Samuel 10-11

Dealing with Disgrace, David & Batsheva. David's messengers to Ammon are publicly embarrassed and disgraced. Such behavior was a personal insult to David. The response was war and the subjugation of Ammon. After this as war continues, David meets Batsheva. There was no adultery here. There is no scriptural reference to Batsheva, in any way, being an unwilling participant in this liaison. Batsheva's behavior is even more suspect than that of David. Uriah is true to the military protocol and refuses intimacies with a woman, who during warfare, he is technically not married to. To cover the affair, David seeks to have Uriah removed, but not to protect himself, for no one knows that he is the father, but rather to protect Batsheva. The story here has some interesting twists and turns that most have never thought of.

2 Samuel 12

Payback. Natan the Prophet Confronts David. How does a prophet receive a message from God, the nature of psychic communication. The place of the parable. Man judges himself when he steps into the shoes of another, that he himself is wearing. David is punished with a promise of violence to come, as well as with the death of Bat-Sheba's child. David fasts and prays to avoid the death of the newborn, and still the child dies. When faced with the inevitable, rather than mourn David arises up and goes about his business. How this is a role model for us all today.

2 Samuel 13

The Rape of Tamar. Amnon, crown prince of Israel is, frankly, a real bastard. He not only rapes his half-sister, he then treats her like a cheap whore. This infuriates Tamar's full brother Avshalom, who patiently plans revenge for his sister. In the end, Avshalom arranges for Amnon to be assassinated. Avshalom then flees to the protection of his maternal grandfather. This is a story about a violent assault, and total disregard for human dignity. No one comes out of this story unscathed. Peripheral to our discussion, we briefly review the Rabbinic laws of Yihud and Negiah, the prohibitions of private encounters with members of the opposite sex, and inappropriate physical contact. This lesson has much to teach us today with our modern epidemic of bankrupt morals.

2 Samuel 14 – 15a.

The Actress from Tekoa & the Redemption of Avshalom. After the political assassination of the crown prince Amnon, the kingdom is scandalized. Political expediency demands that something

be done. Joav, the power behind the throne hatches a plot to arouse the king's emotions to call for the restoration of Avshalom, to thus pave the way for him taking on the role of crown prince. After a brilliant performance by an actress, the king agrees to allow Avshalom back into the capital, but is still not willing to extend to him credibility. This lack of acceptance into the political inner circle is thwarting Avshalom's plans. In the end, Avshalom is officially received again, but this reception is rather cool at best. Avshalom is described as being a real Biblical hunk-of-a-guy. He unleashes his plot to gather public support in his attempt to usurp the throne.

2 Samuel 15b-16

Avshalom's Coup d'etat. Avshalom's rise to power follows the very wise and thought-out plan. He first gains popular support, and then prepares for a popular uprising. David recognizes what is happening and instead of standing on principles, evacuated the capital in order to spare it from a bloody fight. David's actions show how he valued the continuity of government and nation over his own personal considerations. David's top advisor Ahitophel betrays him and joins the opposition. His advice will either make or break both Avshalom and himself. David's actions, and Avshalom's are clearly all in the public eye. Who will win the popular support, and thus win the government and the nation? This lesson is all about political power plays, past and present. The lessons herein about politics and political/social psychology are universal and eternal.

2 Samuel 17-18.

The Ninja Plot of Ahitophel & the Fall of Avshalom. Ahitophel, the wise court counselor counsels to finish off David in a hurry, with a clandestine, stealthy, ninja-like night attack. Hushai, another counselor, secretly loyal to David, offers opposite advise. Taking advantage of Avshalom's vanity, he offers council that enables David to regroup and plan an attack. This lesson is all about stealth, spies, spying, and more spies. Examples are given showing relationships between the Biblical stories to modern times and events. Ahitophel commits suicide, and Avshalom is defeated in battle. The details of both these events teach us many pertinent lessons very applicable to modern times.

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