

## House On The Rock Life Group Study outline 2025

### May: Great Grace – The Rise of the Shepherd Boy

#### Outlines for the month

Week 1: The call of Samuel

Week 2: The rejection of Saul✓

Week 3: The rise of the Shepherd Boy

#### Instructions

During this study, we will be doing a 'deep dive' into a scriptural passage. It is strongly encouraged that you study the passage and entire chapter ahead of the study. Also be prepared with your research tools, for example Google or your study Bible, as you will need to reference it during the study. Spend time answering and discussing each question with the intention to gain sufficient understanding to help your own private Bible study as you further explore these topics.

**Study chapters: 1 Sam 8-15; 18-30; Rom 7**

#### Pilot text

***1 Sam 8:7-9 7 And the Lord said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them. 8 According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even to this day—with which they have forsaken Me and served other gods—so they are doing to you also. 9 Now therefore, heed their voice. However, you shall solemnly forewarn them, and show them the behaviour of the king who will reign over them."***

***9:2 2 And he had a choice and handsome son whose name was Saul. There was not a more handsome person than he among the children of Israel. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people.***

***10:23 23 So they ran and brought him from there; and when he stood among the people, he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward. 24 And Samuel said to all the people, "Do you see him whom the Lord has chosen, that there is no one like him among all the people?"***

***15:26 26 But Samuel said to Saul, "I will not return with you, for you have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you from being king over Israel."***

1. What do the events of chapter 10:1-10 tell us about God's grace? [Consider the empowering and transforming nature of grace]
2. Do you think Saul was a bad person at heart? Why or why not?
3. If you could give one reason why God rejected Saul as king, what would it be?

Closing thoughts: When looking at the story of Saul, there is a temptation to dwell on the many things he did wrong, and how he could have got them right. Objectively speaking, however, Saul was not the worst king of Israel – not by a long shot. In fact, David was not even a ‘better’ person than Saul; if you consider all the things they did ‘right’ and ‘wrong’. So, if this story is not primarily about right and wrong behaviour, what then is its purpose?

Let’s step away from looking at Saul as an individual and look at what he, as Israel’s first king, represented. Israel got their first king because they rejected God’s leadership and wanted to be like the nations around them. A lot about this king was about outward appearance – his looks, his height, his presentation. Furthermore, the king’s conduct would eventually show that the people’s choices would only ever reflect their own limitations and failed aspirations. Try as he may, this king could not bring them into God’s promise. In his life, we see repeated attempts to do the right thing by one’s own strength. “If I try hard enough, maybe I’ll get it right next time”. But these efforts were all doomed to fail.

But this story is not really just about Saul. In the book of Genesis, mankind rejected God in order to forge their own path. Subsequently, the law came as a place holder until grace – the original plan - was revealed in time. The story of Saul is a picture of the law and its rejection because it could never bring salvation. The law is about walking by sight, not by faith. We see this described further in Romans 7, which emphasises that the law does not bring life. Instead, it succeeds in showing exactly how lost we are, which then positions us to receive God’s free gift of grace. The passage ends with the cry in Rom 7:24-25a “Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord.” [NLT]

So, while we look at Saul’s story and consider the lessons to be learned, we must not end on a note of despair. Instead, we should embrace the free gift of grace in Christ Jesus; in that even where we are weak, God is more than able to bring us into His promise.

***Gal 3:19,24 [NLT] 19 Why, then, was the law given? It was given alongside the promise to show people their sins. But the law was designed to last only until the coming of the child who was promised. God gave his law through angels to Moses, who was the mediator between God and the people.***

***24 Let me put it another way. The law was our guardian until Christ came; it protected us until we could be made right with God through faith.***

**Application questions (use scriptures to support your position):**

1. A friend tells you he is resigning from his job. When you ask why, he explains to you that he doesn’t believe that this job represents his place of grace because ‘it’s too much hard work’. What would you say to him?

2. "Grace is an excuse given by those who are unable to compete on a level playing field with others." Agree/disagree with reasons.