

## Chapter 14      **NOT BY BREAD ALONE**

*1 Samuel 3: 19*

***"Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him and let none of His words fall to the ground"***

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In Chapters 1 - 3, we can read of the longings, the prayer, the faith and the thankfulness of Hannah, for the birth of a son called Samuel, and how in her thankfulness, she presented Samuel to God. So, Samuel was taken as a young child to the 'house of the Lord at Shiloh' to serve there. God listened to the prayers of a faithful mother, and whilst Samuel was in his boyhood, serving the temple. God revealed Himself to Samuel by speaking to him in the night, calling him by name.

Samuel's service became a service of personal devotion to God; a service always and ever directed to honouring and obeying the word God spoke to him. Any sort of service that doesn't flow out of love for God and a desire to honour Him in it, is sadly, just religious activity', fruitless in God's purposes.

In 3:19, we read the words *"Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground,"* Isn't that something to think on! God made Samuel's words effective and fruitful in His purposes. God gave him impact; people listened, because Samuel spoke in accordance with God's word to him. *" so Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life"(7:15).*

Later, the people became discontented and told Samuel they wanted to be as other nations and have a king rule over them, which was really a rejection of God's rule. In 12:16 we read of Samuel's strong declaration to the people that it was great wickedness to ask for a king. Their response in 12:19 conveyed not repentance that they were grieving God , but simply concern for themselves, begging Samuel to pray that they would not die!

In 1 Samuel 12:20-25 Samuel, in acknowledging them now had the king they wanted nevertheless goes on to encourage them, urging them to not be afraid and to turn aside from God but to serve Him with all their heart. He wisely reminds them that if they do turn aside from following the Lord they will start going after 'empty things' that will do nothing for them(v.21).

He encourages them that the Lord will not abandon them, for He has made them His people. It was for them to reverence the Lord, to serve Him in truth, and to "*consider what great things He had done*" for them 9v.24). Samuel also assured them that he would not cease to pray for them.

The grace of God, evident in His patience and mercy towards His people is shown so clearly in these words of wisdom.

Samuels' words to the people he served, remain just as vital for every believer in the here and now.

God has been pleased to make Us His people.

We, too, are exhorted to not turn aside from following Him, but to serve Him with all our heart.

We, too are reminded of the folly of turning aside to seek satisfaction in other 'empty things' in place of relationship with God, things which will never satisfy.

We, too are encouraged to reflect thoughtfully upon and To never lose sight of "*the great things He has done*" for us.

*"...Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

*For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls."*

(Hebrews 12:1-30)

The word transformed Samuel's life, leading him in the direction God planned. The word gave him wisdom, and sustained him. The word, ministered to our hearts by the Holy spirit, does and will do the same for us. Jesus Himself said (in Matthew 4:4), that "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God*".

These same words were used in Deuteronomy 8:2-6 where the Israelites were told to that their 40 years journey in the wilderness was to "*humble you and test you to know what in your heart.... So He humbled you, allowed you*

*to hunger, and fed you with manna... **That he might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man, lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.**"*

In these words, love speaks, pointing to the way of true peace, which is ours **only** in fellowship with the living God. Romans 3:17 refers to those living in unbelief and reads, *"They have not known the way of peace."* In unbelief they live outside of fellowship with God and cannot know true peace. Our Father desires our daily walk to be a walk of true peace --- only possible in relationship with Him and given to the believer through faith in Christ.

Deuteronomy 8:6 tells us that **all** the humbling and testing of the Israelites was *"to do them good in the end,"* surely bringing us to know that **all** our humbling and testing is that He may do us good in the end - amazing grace always working in the purpose of Perfect Love.

So, what better than to conclude this segment with words from the Word; words of truth, words of precious promises; words that encourage, guide, correct and sustain; words of life and peace. As we embrace them, may they enrich our hearts and strengthen our faith.

**Psalm 33:4;** *"for the WORD of the Lord is right, and all His work is done in truth."*

**Psalm 119:11;** *"Your WORD I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You."*

**Psalm 119:49-50;** *"remember the WORD to Your servant, upon which you have caused me to hope; this is my comfort in my affliction, for Your WORD has given me life."*

**Psalm 119:89-90;** *"Forever,, O Lord, Your WORD is Settled in heaven. Your faithfulness endures to all generations..."*

**Psalm 119:105;** *"Your WORD is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."*

**Psalm 119:114;** *"You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in Your WORD."*

**Psalm 119:133;** *"Direct my steps by your WORD; and let no iniquity have dominion over me."*

**Psalm 119:140;** *"Your WORD is very pure: therefore your servant loves it."*

**Psalm 119:162:** *" I rejoice at Your WORD as one who finds great treasure."*

**Psalm 119:172;** *" My tongue shall speak of Your WORD for all your commandments are righteousness."*

**Jeremiah 23:29:** *"Is not My WORD like a fire? Says the Lord, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?"*

**Proverbs 30:5;** *Every WORD of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him."*

And, lastly, The assurance of:

**Psalm 119:130;** *"The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple."*

Samuel knew the true, incomparable riches of the word of God, choosing to live in and by that word. May we too, not live *"by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God"* trusting to grow in wisdom in our words, that ours too may not 'fall to the ground' but may be granted fruitfulness in the Lord's purpose.