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Scripture: I Samuel 2:1-10.

Text: I Samuel 2:2..
"There is none holy like the Lord
there is none besides thee;
there is no rock like our God"

Topic: To Know the One God.

Proposition: As with the people of the days of Samuel, Saul and David, so today to know the One God, we must and can find him in and through the common heritage and experiences of our lives.

Sources: Four points of theology, and technical data on Samuel, from The Interpreter's Bible, Vol. 2, pages 855-875.
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Introduction:

1. Folk sayings, proverbs, often both interesting & with truth, food for thought.

2. One which says: "A ship needs a captain, a crew and a destination to get where it is going". Suggests theme of I & II Samuel.

3. Consideration of these 2 books will point to captain, crew and destination of ancient peoples, and perhaps of us.

I. A resume of I and II Samuel, as to background and content.

1. Scripture today from I Samuel but we consider both together because really are one book, like modern 2 volumes of same book. I & II Kings actually are continuation of same story, or volumes III & IV.

2. Samuel, the prophet, actually mentioned only in I Samuel, and not in I or II Kings at all. Probably books called "Samuel" because they belong to section of Hebrew Bible known as "the former Prophets",

and Samuel (the man) represents the prophetic element in them.

3. Stories in Samuel among best-known in O.T.. Are inconsistencies and repetions which you can't miss with careful reading, which indicate progable synthesizing from other previous document s (J & E). Books as now exist probably put together about 550 B.C..

4. Books relate events in Isreal which led to the beginning of a monarchy, or kingdom. The division of the tribes related in Judges (19-20), and breakdown of tribal justice in Judges 17:6. Philistine pressure caused people to want king, like other nations. Samuel, widely known "circuit judge", and prophet, opposed kingship because he thought the Lord alone was King of Israel. Samuel finally gave in, after consulting God and anoints Samuel, at direction of". Books then are accounts of Saul's reign, his later replacement by David, and of many adventures of Samuel, Saul, David, Johathan, Absalom, Nathan and others.

5. Before considering significance of the books, interesting to review some of the familiar stories

a. Birth, dedication of Samuel: Elkanah, his father, & 2 wives, Perinnah and Hannah, 1st. with children. Perinnah's mocking. Hannah's distress, prayer & pledge. Samuel given to house of Lord & care of Eli. Scripture we read is Hannah's psalm of praise for God's gift, and recognition of much about God which is timeless truth.

b. Voice of Lord to Samuel, & response, "Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth". Told of coming destruction of house of Eli, and own assumption of prophetic role, which all happened. After years of judging people, passed some authority to his sons, who misused it, and contributed thereby to demand for a king. Directed by God in choosing and anointing Saul. Under Saul Israel wins its battles and becomes independent nation, in spite of many mistakes, and much getting away from God's will, but always back to it.

c. Later, Saulx becomes corrupt David, musical, handsome, strong, etners his court, and favorite at first. Later, David slays giant Goliath with slingshot, but Saul doesn't know him yet..so evidently this a story put in here later. Friendship between Saul's son Jonathan & David. When Salul became jealous of David & would kil him, Johathan helped save him. Eventually, Saul, Jonathan and Saul's power destroyed, and David becomes king,..tho he did not destroy Saul, "The annointed of the Lord".

d. Intrigue, murder, horror stories mixed with love, devotion & bravery throughout books. Awareness of Israel's particular relationship to God, of God's guidance, while frequently straying from him and his way. For instance David, Bathsheba, Urriah, & Nathan calling for repentance at th violation of justice and God's law. Books continue with exploits of David, those close to him, his nation, his enemies.

II. In these accounts of I & II Samuel there is some theology, some truth about God & man, which speaks to us still. Books contains ideas of not one century, but of many, but are still of worth. Many superstitions in thse, as in other religions of times and region. Distinctive thing about religion of Israel not that has many things in common with man-made religions of world, but that it quickly outgrew them under the influence of divine revelation.

1. Revelation is one great, lasting principle. The God who was worshiped by Eli and Samuel, by Saul & David, was a God who revealed himself to his worshipers. Samuel with his visions held his people firmly to what God revealed to him. Nathan, the prophet who rebuked David because of Bathsheba, spoke the word of the Lord with a stern morality. Under the leadership of such men there grew up a belief that God is constant in all his ways. God still reveals himself to us, through Christ, Christian lives, prayer, the Bible, everyday experiences & surroundings. God can be known.

heritage and experiences of our lives.

5. God is the captain of our ship. Faithful people are the crew. The destination is the state of complete conformance to the will and purpose of the captain, the state of perfect love, righteousness, justice and eternity.

2. The election of Israel, so prominent in minds of Samuel and people, says something to us. God was not chosen or imagined, one of many gods and idols, but the one God, who chose them, not especially to favor only them, but to carry his name and standards everywhere. The ark of the Lord, his ~~xxxxxxxx~~ presence, had to be with them for real success. Today we need this sense of his presence, don't we?

3. The providence of God. Source of success was God's goodness & righteousness in practice. Psychology of sin is revealed..one wrong follows more easily on the one before Yet, God punishes wrong severely. God asks mens cooperation, but does not force himself on them. Life in accordance with his laws brings rewards, and vice-versa.

4. Copporate personality. Death of the child of David and Bathsheba for their sin demonstrates this. Revenge on an enemy through his family and property, also. We, too, are party of society, corporate personality. None are mere indivi-

duals. Network of relationships binding us all. Thus, must work ogether for common good, or be excluded by confinement, exile or deaths Peole of Scriptural days saw commont good as dictated by God. Still true for us.

Conclusion:

1. Stories of I & II Samuel, or just Samuel, well-known, interesting, arouse some questions.

2. Four timeless principles we find in them..revelation, election (being chosen) by God, the providence and plan of God in all things, and the truth of corporate personality and our obligation to it.

3. Words of Hannah mear beginning (2:2) say well the concept of God which comes to view in all this:

"There is none holy like the Lord
there is none besides thee;
there is no rock like our God".

4. As with people of days of Samuel, Saul, & David, so today to know the one God, we must and can find Him in and through the common

Each Sunday morning before ~~this~~ service I get with the choir ~~down~~ in the chapel. We have a little prayer, and sometimes talk over various matters. ~~Mr. Holmes,~~ our choir director, accuses me of going down there before the service and setting that clock a little ahead to insure them getting in here on time; andnthen of coming up here and setting this one a little behind so that I can preach longer. ~~John, you'll never know. Unless you cathc me.~~

There are folk sayings, or proverbs, which often sum up in sort of a nutshell some things which are true. We stick to or use many of these things because they are true. I don't know that this thing I'm going to start out with is really a proverb, or whether the fellow that told it to me made it up. In our National Guard organization up in Wyoming, a fellow who for a couple of years has been coming in as a reserve to help bolster us, ~~who is~~ was a private in the Guard, a fellow about 27 years old. He was quiet and polite,. His job up at camp was

working in the message center, where telephone messages coming in have to be gotten out to the various people. ~~and son on.~~ This fellow irritated a lot of us no end, because he could never do anything right. ~~it seems.~~ ~~He's just one of those fellows.~~ ~~So I got,~~ As a chaplain should, ~~you know,~~ I was interested in helping somebody ~~who is~~ in trouble much of the time. ~~because he can't seem to do things right.~~ ~~And~~ Lo and behold, as I investigated I found that this man ~~he~~ was probably one of the best-paid people ~~man~~ in the whole camp, including the officers. ~~and all.~~ In civilian life he supervised a crew of salesmen of about 70. He probably was making ~~$35 to~~ over $50 ~~a~~ thousand a year. One reason that he was not doing his job in the Guard very ~~so~~ well was that his mind was not ~~isn't~~ on it. He was working over ~~constantly~~ sayings and approaches in his mind that he could use in training his salesmen. ~~So~~ ~~here you have~~ There was a man whose appearance certainly was deceiving.

I wrote down several ~~just lots~~ of the anecdotes he told me ~~gave~~. ~~This particular~~ One ~~isn't funny, but it certainly~~ introduces for us something of ~~what~~ the message of Samuel, from which we

read, TODAY. He said that "A ship needs a captain, a crew and a destination, to get where it's going".

Consideration of these two books, which are first and second Samuel, ~~will to the captain, to the~~ crew, ~~and to the destaination of ancient peoples, and~~ perhaps can help us to consider something of the ship, of the captain of it, of the crew, and of our destination.

A resume of First and SEcond Samuel is what we want to look at first. The Scripture that we read comes from I Samuel, the second chapter, the first ten verses. Really, First and Second Samuel are part of one and the same book. The writings which are First and Second Samuel in our Bible, and First and Second Kings, originally were one manuscript. Later on, they were broken for convenience into four books. I have in my study a three volume work, some 600 pages in each volume, on the history of American Methodism, ~~just recently published~~. It wasn't given me, ~~either~~ Those are costly. The reason we

break books down into volumes is because it is more convenient in handling and using them. Probably this is why we have First and Second Samuel, and First and Second Kings.

However, First and Second Samuel probably could be considered a grouping, or part of a book, with a specific type of message, which we want to consider this morning. Really, Samuel, after whom the books are named, is not the outstanding figure in the books. Possibly David is, or possibly Solomon. Samuel, though, is a prophet. These two books, First and Second Samuel, are part of the Hebrew Bible which are known as "the Former Prophets". Because Samuel is the chief prophet in these two books, perhaps that is why his name is given.

The stories in First and Second Samuel ~~, perhaps~~ are ~~about~~ among the best-known stories in the Old Testament. ~~They certainly are among the best-known stories of The Old Testament.~~ As you read these two books~~, as I did yesterday, again,~~ you find that there are inconsistencies and

repetitions in them. ~~We'll mention one a little later.~~ Things which you can't miss. These do not weaken the meaning or the story at all. Nevertheless, if you're going to be honest and observant in your reading, they are there.

The scholars tell us that probably these books are a blending of two sources of information, or traditions; what Bible scholars call ~~a~~ "J" and an "E" documents. One is probably from about 1000 B.C.. The other perhaps is from 700 and something B.C.. The particular form in which we have them now in our Bible probably was merged from these documents by an editor ~~of some type,~~ or editors, about 550 B.C..

These books about Samuel, ~~relat~~ relate events in Isreael which were around the beginning of the kingdom, of ~~the monarchy~~ ISRAEL. Until that time, after the days of Moses, the people had been led and ~~judged and~~ ruled by ~~a group of people~~ PERSONS who were called judges. The book of Judges, in the 19th and 20th chapters, tells of the tribes being divided into their

various areas; and then how the t ribes became divided somewhat from each other, and therefore were weakened as a nation, because they were at odds with each other. In the 17th chapter of Judges we are told of the breakdown of tribabl justice. ~~Then~~ much of the Old Testament tells us how the Philistines, the people who were surrounding the l and of Canaan where they had settled after Moses had died ~~and they had been brought in by Joshua, how the Philistines~~ put military pressure on ~~them~~ THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL in constant battles. Within their own TRIBAL groupings there were many intrigues and jealousies; much horror AND murder, ~~etc.~~

One of the widely-known judges, or leaders who heard the problems that were bothering the people, who laid down the law, who told them what was right, and who sometimes spoke for God, was a man named Samuel. Samuel ALSO was widely known outside of his own tribe. Samuel opposed the idea of one king, ~~or a kingship, or a monarchy~~ for the people. He felt that God alone was all the king they needed.

~~However~~, the books of Samuel show us, that after consultation with the Lord, he received advice from the Lord to go ahead AND cooperate with the request for a king. As a result, he annointed Saul, who was chosen by him at the specific instruction of God. ~~The books of Samuel tell of this.~~ They tell of the adventures of Saul the king, of David who followed him, of Jonathan DAVID'S FRIEND ~~his friend~~, of Absalom his son, of Nathan the prophet who spoke up to him, and of many others.

~~Before considering the significance of the books, or the permanent signficance of their specific message to us, perhaps~~ ~~It would be~~ IS interesting to review some of the familiar stories of these books.

One of them, of course, is the story of the birth of Samuel himself. You remember how Elkanah, a man with two wives, Perinnah and Hannah, went yearly up to the house of the Lord..whether it was a tent or a temple at the site of Jerusalem, we don't know. There he would give thanks, and participate in the

customs of their religion, which called them to this center annually. Every year, it seemed that Perinnah, who had children, would at this particular time pick on Hannah more than usual. Hannah, though beloved by her husband, had no children. At a particular time on one of these visits, Hannah was crying, and also praying, and with her lips moving and her crying it looked like she was drunk. At least, this was the way Eli, the chief preist of the temple, took it. He sta rted to rebuke her. She told him that she was praying, and she was distressed, and that she was not drunk. She wished her well and HOPED that her prayers would be heard. Her prayer was that she would be granted a son, and PROMISED that ~~if she were her~~ SUCH A son would be dedicated to the Lord. In due time the son was born. ~~His~~ HE WAS named ~~was~~ Samuel. He was taken to the house of the Lord, and given to Eli to raise. ~~and there he was raised~~ Hannah later had other children too.

You're familiar, perhaps, with the story of Samuel later in the temple. One night, as still a young boy, he was sleeping near the altar.

He heard his named called. Thinking i was Eli, he went to Eli. Eli said it wasn't him. He went back. Hearing i again, he weat to Eli. This time Eli realized that probably God was trying to speak to the boy. He told him, "if he speaks again, you answer, 'Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth These words have been quoted again and again in sermons: "Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth", as a good attitude for us, at any time, any age to practice, and to copy.

LATER, Samuel replaced Eli AS CHIEF PRIEST. ~~when Eli~~ ELI died, by falling over backwards and breaking his neck, because he was a heavy man, it says. You can break your neck easier if you're a heavy man and fall backwards. That would be one teaching you could get out of it, huh? Sameul then assumed the role of a prophet. After years of judging, Samuel began to grow old, and to pass some of his authority to his sons. They misuedd his authority abused it, and thereby caused the people to be even less satisfied with the system of judgships. The people wanted a king, a leader, just as the other peoples around them had,

and they insisted. Then Samuel went to the Lord and received instructions on how to choose Saul. He picked Saul out from the family of Jesse, Saul was annointed, and became king in due time. Under Saul, the nation was unified, it became an independent nation, fought successful wars against the people around, repulsed the Philistines. In one section it tells ~~you~~ that the Philistines were put out and peace prevailed; and then a few chapters later it tells ~~you~~ about wars going along still with the same people. ~~Which~~ THIS shows that probably two accounts were put together without too much regard for the order of it. But the truth was still there, that the king felt that he had been annointed by God, and that he was doing God's will in carrying out these forays, or wars.

Later, Saul, the king, became corrupt. You remember the story of how he was considered almost insane; raging at times. It was felt that perhaps music would help him. David, a young musician who played the harp, a young man of good looks, handsome, strong, entered his court

and became a favorite at once. Later, in the story, ~~of Dyid, which becomes the main scene then,~~ David, as a boy, slays the giant Goliath. You remember that story: ~~of~~ how this giant for 40 days challenged the armies of Israel to find a champion. If the champion could beat him, the Philistines would leave and the war would be over, without a pitched battle. David, the young boy ~~going~~ WENT out, BUT WAS not being able to wear armor because he wasn't used to it, HE TOOK ~~taking~~ a sling shot and five smooth stones from the creek; and with the first one knock~~ing~~ed the man down. ~~And~~ Here is one of the interesting inconsistencies you can't help but catch: he slew him with the sling shot, it says, By the direct hit, he slew him. And then just a few verses later, it says he went over to Goliath and took Goliath's sword out and with that he slew him. ~~So~~ You CAN find inconsistencies ~~But~~ The point is still there, that the young man, WITHOUT EVEN ~~not having the greatest~~ sword, but with faith that God was with him, was the superior ~~force.~~ WARRIOR.

After a while, Saul put David

in charge of armies. David was very, very successful. He built a tremendous friendship with the son of Saul, Johathan. ~~But,~~ Saul became jealous of David, ~~you remember,~~ because the people were singing David's praises, saying such things as "Saul has slain his thousands, but David has slain his ten thousands." Saul began to say, "if he's this popular, what's the next thing for him if it isn't the kingdom?" So, he felt that he had to get rid of David. ~~You remember how~~ Saul's son, Jonathan, several times intervened, helped hide David, even carried messages to David when David was ~~fleeing, etc.~~ HIDING. ~~You remember how~~ David had at least two chances to take Saul's life: ONCE when Saul ~~had~~ stepped into a cave where David and his lieutenants were hiding. Another time, when all of Saul's army were sleeping, ~~and~~ David and his friends went up and got Saul's spear and his water jug; and then went back up on a hill and hollered, "see what we could have done to you, if we had wanted to, but we will not touch the annointed of the Lord."

These are familiar stories, I think. There are many more in these books. Intrigue, murder, horror, ~~they~~ are there. Stories, ~~though,~~ like these, ~~are~~ HAVE mixed ~~with ones of~~ IN THEM love, ~~of~~ devotion, AND bravery, ~~of~~

Throughout these books there is ~~another~~ theme, which is the important thing, ~~That is~~ that, in spite of ~~their getting away from it,~~ their backsliding, the ~~still~~ PEOPLE were always aware of the presence of God. David recognized this, even when they were fighting THE armies of Saul who was pursuing him. When the showdown came he would not harm Saul, because Saul was "the annointed of the Lord", the one whom God wanted to reign. Saul, in his best moments, ~~would~~ came back to this and repent that he was chasing David, because David had been sent TO him by the Lord to soother his soul with music, and with friendship. Always, within these books, there is this coming back to what God wishes and to what God wants.

For instance, you remember that when David did eventually become king, he was a man with many wives and many concubines, ~~but~~ WHO always

~~lustnand a~~ wished for more. You remember the story made famous in the movie "David and Bathsheba". David saw Bathsheba taking a bath and had her brought to him. Adultery took place. Then Urriah, the husband of Bathsheba was sent to battle, with instructions, ~~unknown to him,~~ given to Joab the general to put ~~him~~ URRIAH in the front lines so that he would be killed, which is what happened. And then, a prophet came to David. A prophet ~~who~~ was a brave man, coming to a warrior king ~~and~~ IN a fierce age, when the king ~~was not unknown to~~ MIGHT take a spear and thrust it ~~immediately,~~ then and there ~~in the midst of the court,~~ through the hearts of ~~those~~ ANYONE who opposed him.

THE PROPHET Nathan came and told this story. He said that there were in a certain town two men. One of them was rich and one was poor. The rich had MANY herds ~~many~~, and the other had only one little sheep. A stranger came to the town. The rich man took, instead of one fat sheep from his flocks, the little lamb which the poor man had, and butchered it that the stranger might eat. What do

think of that Is that right? David flared up and said, "Who is the man? I will punish him severely," ~~and so on~~. ~~And~~ Nathan pointed right at him and said, "Thou art the man". David knew that he was speaking of what he had done to Urriah, and ~~the~~ ABOUT HIS relationship with Bathsheba.

Always within these books, you see, God's prophets ~~are~~ aware of God, and keeping a consciousness of God before his people.

~~In these accounts,~~ These interesting stories, ~~these stories~~ TELL of immorality and lust and superstition and killing, things which we can't APPROVE ~~accept, things which Christ helped put into the right light, but~~ in these stories there is, nevertheless ~~the~~ a constant awareness of God. This is what counts. Maybe they misunderstood God; maybe they weren't perfect people, as you're not and I'm not and none of us are going to be. They were, ~~nevertheless~~, aware that there was such a thing as God.

In these accounts there are some truths, some theology, about

God and man, which speaks to us still. These books contained ~~the~~ ideas not of one century, but of many. Some of these ideas are still of worth. ~~The~~ Superstitions are there. But what makes makes the Isreaelite, the Hebrew, religion so important, and so great, is not that they shared many superstitions and ideas with the peoples around them, but that they thought of God as the one God of the whole universe; not just one God of them and their tribe. Every tribe and people around them had gods which they manufactured. ~~But~~ The Hebrews thought of God as being not manufactured, but as being pre-existent, always in being. They were people who, ~~for some reason~~ had had revealed to them what this God was like.

This is the first principle: revelation. This is one of the great, lasting principles of Samuel. The God who was worshiped by Eli and Samuel, by Saul and by David, was a God who revealed himself to his worshipers. Samuel with his visions held his people firmly to what God revealed; and he would not approve a king until God told him it was all

kinng right. Nathan, the prophet who rebuked David over Bathsheba, spoke the word of the Lord with a stern morality. Because God wants certain standards, you,king or common man, must abide by them. Under the leadership of such men there grew up a belief that God is constant in all of his ways. His ways are dependable. He doesn't shift as the wind, as did the gods of the pagans around them.

God still reveals himself to us, we believe. Through Christ, through Christian lives, through prayer, through the Bible, through everyday experience, through everyday surroundings, God can be known.

Another principle which we find here is that which deals with the election, or the selection, of Israel to be the chosen people. This was prominent in the minds of Samuel and his people. And yet it says something to us. God was not chosen by them. He was not imagined and made up by them, as were the gods and the idols of the surrounding peoples. ~~But He~~ was the one God, the one and only God, who chose them. He chose

them not especially because he favored them, but so that they might carry his name and his standards everywhere. Evidently, this was ~~the~~ RESPONSIBLE FOR THE importance in the stories of Samuel ~~of the presence~~ of the ark of the Lord. The ark represented God's presence. We don't accept this limitation of God to a specialn place or that he is especially here in the church, or anywhere else. He is everywhere. He is not limited. Nevertheless, the point is good, that the presence of the Lord is important, if people are to have real success. Today, we could profit well by this teaching, if we would in all areas of life try to be aware of the presence of G od.

The third, of four principles here is the providence of God, which we find here. This was the thought that the source of success is God. God's righteousness, God's goodness, as you practice it; how you profit, how you get along in life, is difectly related to how you look at God, and how you try to practice his principle This is our thought. ~~Now,~~ THEY THOUGHT THAT if you suffer, then you must be doing wrong.

Today we don't equate riches and success with goodness; for many good people are failures in their work; and are hurt, and abused and diseased. Nevertheless, there is something here which is true. It is sort of a psychology of sin. The fact that if you sin once, it is easier to sin the second time. After you've done it several times, you think no more about it, you take it for granted. So is it in reverse, in the matter of righteousness. As you do things which are right, you may feel a little self-conscious, you may seem a little strange. As you do it the second time, it is less so. After a while, it is a habit. Life in accordance with the laws of God brings rewards; and vice versa. This is the thought about the providence of God.

ANOTHER PRINCIPLE IN SAMUEL

~~And then one, which I hadn't particularly thought of, which I found mentioned in one of the commentaries on this selection of Scripture~~ is the thought of corporate personality. You see it revealed in the story of David and Bathsheba. Their first child died, because of their

sin. The child had done nothing wrong. This doesn't seem just. Nevertheless, the sins of the parents were visited upon the child.

We know that this has been true in history. There are diseases of society, such as syphilis, where the diseases of the parents have been visited, as the Old Testament says, upon the third and fourth generations. ~~Well,~~ we may not ~~go with~~ THINK OF TYPE OF THING God having a direct hand in that now. Nevertheless, the laws in operation, the carrying on of diseases, the way that society looks upon ~~the~~ illegitimate children, all of this, means that it is true, whether we like it or not, that the sins of the parents OFTEN carry ~~in~~ their effects into the lives of the children.

This is the way it is. You see, we are ~~none~~ NOT isolated individuals. ~~Exxx~~ Each one lives within a role. If I am the minister here, you expect me to do certain things, including getting a sermon up each Sunday. It doesn't matter who the minister is, he's going to do that.

The individual, in this case, is not what counts: it is the fact that we are worshiping our God, and studying our Bible, and speaking the truth of our faith. If you are a merchant, or a teacher, or a farmer ~~(I could look around and name most of your occupations)~~, then within that occupation you are carrying out a certain role. You are part of a corporation, as it were. You are expected to ACT IN ~~carry on~~ these ways. You see, we are parts of society. Each one of us has a corporate personality. None is a mere individual.

Now, we are not speaking in ~~the~~ terms that ~~the~~ communist people do when they say "Let the individual be steamrollered over and destroyed by the state if he gets in the way". To us, the individual is important. We are simply recognizing, ~~though,~~ that the individual must always be thought of as a part of the society in which he lives. Corporate personality. There is a network of relationships binding us all. Thus we must work together for the common good. Or, if any one fights the common good too much, by murder,

by robbery, by violence of any kind, by certain attitudes, he must be confined; either to a mental or a penal institution, or perhaps even put to death. The people of Samuel, the people of Israel, saw the common good as something dictated by God; and people ~~must~~ HAD conform, or try to conform. WE ARE STILL MUCH LIKE THAT.

TO REVIEW A BIT NOW, ~~Well,~~ here are some of the things we get from the stories of First and Second Samuel, or just Samuel. We recognized that they aroused some interesting questions. We can't accept all of the superstitions, all the thoughts of vengeance, all the justification of polygamy, and many of the other things, that are there. We have outgrown MUCH OF THIS ~~them~~, thanks to our good Lord Christ.

Nevertheless, there are some truths here, which are timeless, which are why the books have lasted. We HAVE thought of ~~the~~ four principles: that God reveals himself as he did then; that we should feel that we are the elect of God, not especially favored by him ~~xxxx~~ but with a responsibility given us by him..but he never forces

it on us..we can accept it or reject it. If we accept it, a certain set of rules comes into play, If we reject it, another set.

Then, the third thing that we thought about was the providence of God, which works out as we accept and do his will. The fourth thing was that there is some truth in ~~this~~ the concept of corporate personality, for we are all parts of the society in which we live.

The words of Hannah, near the beginning of the books of Samuel, from which we ~~wordy~~ read, in which she was praising God because Samuel had been born, ~~comes up finally with~~ CONTAINS a view which, some scholars say was far beyond the concepts of that day. ~~Whether it is or not, I don't know. But I do know that~~ It is a view which is good for us today, a view which is true.

The words were these: "There is none holy like the Lord; there is none beside Thee; there is no rock like our God".

As with ~~the~~ people in the days of Samuel , Saul, David and Solomon, we do and can know the one God. ~~And~~ We can find him today revealed, through our common experiences of life.

God is the captain of our ship. We are the crew. The destination is the state of complete conformance to the will and the purpose of the captain. ~~And~~ This destination brings us to the ports of perfect love, of righteousness, of justice, and of eternity.

Prayer:

God, we are grateful for the insights of the men of old. We are grateful, too, that we can eliminate some of the standards and practices which they carried out as being not in the spirit of Christ. We are grateful that Christ's message and meaning is more ~~meaningful~~ IMPORTANT PLAIN CLEAR to us because of these people of old.

Give us, O God, a sense of the importance of Thee, of Thy holiness, and of Thy constancy. Help us to find Thee in many areas of life. Give us the strength to do thy will. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.