

Cast of Characters in 1 Samuel Chapters 1 - 12

Character	Meaning	Description	Reference
Hannah	“grace”	Mother of Samuel, wife of Elkanah	1:2
Elkanah	“God created”	Father of Samuel, husband of Hannah and Peninnah	1:1
Peninnah	“coral” or “pearl” or “woman with rich hair”	Other wife of Elkanah	1:2
Eli	“high”	High priest at Shiloh, custodian of Samuel, father of Hophni and Phinehas	1:3
Hophni	“tadpole”	Eli’s sons. Corrupt priests of sinful ways and a disgrace to Eli.	2:12
Phinehas	“dark skinned” or “mouth of brass”		2:12
Ichabod	“No Glory”	Son of Phinehas - so named by his mother because his father, uncle, and grandfather were dead and the Ark had been captured	4:21
Samuel	“God is exalted”	Last judge of Israel. First “king maker.” A holy and obedient prophet.	1:20
Dagon	“little fish”	Philistine god of [grain] harvest	
Abinadab	“my father is generous”	The Ark rested in his house for twenty years after recovery from the Philistines	7:1
Eleazar	“God helps”	Son of Abinadab; guard of the Ark	7:1
Joel	“YHWH is God”	First-born son of Samuel who became an evil priest.	8:2
Abijah	“my father is YHWH”	Samuel’s second born son who was also an evil priest	8:2
Kish	“gift”	A Benjamite - father of Saul	9:1
Saul	“asked for”	First king of Israel. Tall and handsome.	9:2
Nahash	“serpent”	Ammonite who threatened Jabesh Gilead.	11:1