

- 7 *1 Samuel 19*
Michal deceives her father Saul and his men, claiming that her husband David is ill in bed, giving him time to make his getaway. Her lies, she would argue, were justified as being 'for the greater good'. Do you agree?
Or would you be more sympathetic with Corrie Ten Boom's sister, Nollie (see the story in the notes).
- 8 *1 Samuel 19*
Continuing with this theme more generally, how about trying an experiment where for a week or even a day you resolve to answer any question someone might ask you completely truthfully, and completely fully, without being evasive.
Where on a spectrum ranging from very easy to extremely challenging do you think you'd find this?
- 9 *1 Samuel 23*
Twice in this chapter we read that David sought the Lord's guidance before rushing into action (vv.2,10).
Is this something you have ever done when faced with a significant decision? How did you discern God's will?
How did it all turn out?
- 10 *1 Samuel 28*
Saul visits the witch of Endor. Psychics, mediums and tarot readers abound today. Some would see this as a pastorally justifiable activity, some would see it as harmless fun, while some would see it as spiritually very dangerous.
What do you say? What does the Bible say?

Closing

*Light a candle, silently watch the flame flicker, reflect on the discussion you have had, and pray for God's help in addressing any specific matters that have arisen for you personally.
After a few minutes, end by saying together the Lord's Prayer.*

SACRED

Group Resources

Month 7

Opening Prayer

My dearest Lord,
be now a bright flame to enlighten me,
a guiding star to lead me,
a smooth path beneath my feet,
and a kindly shepherd along my way,
today and for evermore.
Amen.

(after St. Columba, 521-597)

General Question

- 1 Has God spoken to you in any specific way from what you've read in this month's readings?

Activity

Obtain beforehand a selection of small stones or pebbles, ideally polished ones that come in different shapes and sizes and colours purchased from a retail outlet such as a garden centre.

Spread out all the stones in a large basket or on a table. Invite the members of the group to examine the stones, looking at them and feeling them, with a view to each person picking out a stone (or stones) that says something to them about themselves or their relationship with God (or both).

Ask people to share with one another which stone(s) they picked and why.

Further Ideas

As usual, spend time on just a few of these questions as you see fit.

- 1 *1 Samuel 1-30*
In this book the key characters who we meet are Samuel himself, Saul and David. What do you make of these three?
- 2 *1 Samuel 3*
The chapter contains the lovely story of Samuel hearing God's voice. Have you ever experienced hearing God's voice or sensing his presence with you in a very real and personal way? Could you share this with the group?
- 3 *1 Samuel 5*
The story in the notes is concerned with discerning the real from the counterfeit. How, in our own lives, do we make this kind of distinction? How do we prevent the many things we pursue or dedicatedly follow becoming 'gods' that we 'worship', despite their powerlessness?
- 4 *1 Samuel 7*
Referring back to our 'activity', Samuel set up an 'Ebenezer' stone as a permanent reminder of God's intervention in a difficult situation. In what ways was this beneficial? The notes include some examples of people seeking to apply the same principle today. Is this something that you might consider embracing for yourself?
- 5 *1 Samuel 17*
Are there any 'giants', whether physical, emotional or even spiritual, that have threatened to overwhelm you, and which you've had to overcome seemingly against all odds? Were you aware of God's presence with you, strengthening you?
- 6 *1 Samuel 18 (and others)*
Why did David become such a bitter rival for Saul? Disastrously, this rivalry dominated the rest of Saul's life. How have you managed to come to terms with 'rivalry' when it has surfaced for you in the past (or present)?