

1 & 2 Samuel

Author: The book titles, *1 and 2 Samuel*, may lead us to believe that Samuel wrote these books, but he was only a leading figure in the narrative. Samuel could not have been the author since he died only halfway through the story (I Samuel 25:1). It is possible that Samuel could have contributed the early material (before chapter 25), which a later prophetic editor could have used in the compilation of these books (see I Chronicles 29:29). These books were originally considered as one book, though the Hebrew text lists both halves as “A” and “B.” The Septuagint (LXX) translation of the Old Testament (made around 200 B.C.) combined the books of Samuel and Kings under the one heading, “1-4 Kings.”

Date: The book covers a period of about 150 years – from the birth of Samuel through the end of King David’s reign. Clues from the following verses – (I Sam. 27:6; II Sam 5:5; 12:8; 20:42-43; 24:1,9) show us that the book was very likely completed after Israel and Judah were split into two nations, but before Israel went into exile in 722 B.C.

Background: These books are born out of the backdrop of the Judges, a time of despair, defeat, paganism, and moral decline in Israel. Samuel, the last judge, is raised up God who restores a sense of morality and a national attempt to turn back to God. The people have largely rejected God as their King, and demand a human king to be their leader. The writer wants to use theological history to demonstrate to Israel and Judah the prosperity of those who keep God’s covenant. God would establish the Royal line from which the Ultimate Redeemer would come.

Message: God’s blessing and curses are given to his people in response to their willingness to obey or reject His covenant with them throughout history.

1) The Structure of 1-2 Samuel:

- The Birth and Role of Samuel (I Sam 1-7)
 - Saul’s Reign, Failure, & Rejection of God (I Sam 8-15)
 - David in Saul’s Court (I Sam 16-20)
 - The Lord’s Intervention with Saul & David (I Sam 21-31)
 - David’s Rise To Power in Israel (2 Sam 1-8)
 - David’s Failure (2 Sam 9-20)
- David’s End and Solomon’s Succession (2 Sam 21 – I Kings 2)

2) The Survey Outline of 1-2 Samuel:

I. The Eli and Samuel Narrative – *God’s Grace Amidst Apostasy* 1:1 – 4:1a

- a. The Miraculous Birth of Samuel the prophet (1:1-20)
- b. The Faithfulness of Hannah (1:21-2:11)
- c. The Miraculous Call of Samuel (2:12 – 4:1a)

II. The Ark Narrative – *Israel’s Idolatry and Unbelief* 4:1b – 7:1

- a. Israel’s Disrespect of the Ark
 - i. See Joshua 18:1 -The Ark had been at Shiloh in the Tent of Meeting from this point all the way through the period of the Judges.
 - ii. Israel, now at war again, wanted the “power” of the Ark in battle.
 - 1. God allows major Philistine victory (4:1-10)
 - 2. God brings major Israelite defeat
- b. God’s Judgment of Israel – Loss of Ark & Eli’s house (4:12-22)
- c. God’s Faithfulness to Israel Despite Her Unbelief (5:1 – 7:1)
 - i. Defeat of Philistine god, Dagon (5:1-8)
 - ii. Plague upon Philistine city, Ekron (5:9-12)
 - iii. God Returns the Ark to Israel (6:1 – 7:1)
 - iv. God Establishes Samuel’s Leadership (7:2-17)

III. The Rise and Fall of King Saul - *The Covenant Breaker* 8:1 – 15:35

- a. Israel’s Demand for a Human King (8:1-22)
- b. God Appoints Saul as King (9:1 – 11:15)
- c. Samuel’s final public speech – encouragements to obey God (12:1-25)
- d. Saul’s Sin and Prescriptive Dethronement (13:1-15)
- e. Saul’s Continued Foolishness as King (14:1 – 15:35)

IV. The Anointing of David – *The King-in-Waiting*

I Sam 16 – 2 Sam 1:27

- a. David's Anointing Meant that He was to Fight Israel's Wars (16:1 – 18:5)
- b. David is Despised by Saul and Driven from Saul's House (18:6 – 20:42)
- c. David, the Anointed Covenant Keeper Lives in Personal Exile (21:1 – 29:11)
 - i. David's Forced Exile and Saul's Disregard of God (21:1 – 22:23)
 - ii. God Delivers David (23:1-29)
 - iii. David Spares Saul 2x (ch 24 – 26)
 - iv. David is Spared, While Saul is Eventually Killed (27:1 – 1:27)

...To be continued...

