

SAMUEL

LITERARY TYPE: Historical Narrative

1 and 2 Samuel were originally one book. When they translated it from Hebrew into Greek it became two separate books.

AUTHOR: Samuel was involved in the writing and recording of some of the content of the book (see 1 Sam 10:25), but there are many events that occur after his death. It is probable that the writings of Samuel, Nathan and Gad were joined together by someone unknown (see 1 Chronicles 29:29).

DATE: The events of both books are from 1100-971BC, from the birth of Samuel through to the death of David. 1 Samuel 27:6 indicates that the book was compiled after the split of Israel into the two kingdoms.

RECIPIENTS: The Israelites

OCCASION: The book records Israel's transition from being ruled by judges to having a king. In the book of Judges, Samson is recorded as the last judge but Samuel is also mentioned as judging Israel (7:6). Therefore, the period of judges ruling Israel continues until the coronation of Saul.

Samuel had a school for prophets at Ramah and records would have been kept there until David established Jerusalem as his capital city.

David is God's choice for king and shows God's blessing on David. The people need to know this so they can obey the king.

1 Samuel covers:

- The prophetic viewpoint, obedience to God brings rewards, disobedience punishment.
- The dangers of demanding a king like the neighbouring pagan nations
- The fulfilment of a king from the line of Judah

2 Samuel covers:

- Establishment of Jerusalem as God's holy city
- Two public anointings of David as King
- Introduction of the Davidic covenant (7:10-16)

Both books mention the preparation for building the temple.

CONTENT SURVEY:

1 Samuel

Part One: Hannah the powerless woman (1 Sam 1 – 4)

Part Two: Samuel the reluctant king-maker (1 Sam 4 – 8)

Part Three: Saul, majesty and mania (1 Sam 9 – 15)

Part Four: David, the young pretender (1 Sam 16 – 24)

Part Five: David, the exalted nationalist (1 Sam 25 – 31)

2 Samuel

Part One: David in control (2 Sam 1 – 5)

Part Two: David in covenant (2 Sam 6 – 10)

Part Three: David out of control (2 Sam 11 – 13)

Part Four: Absalom, the usurping son (2 Sam 14 – 20)

Part Five: Filling in the gaps (2 Sam 21 – 24)

KEY VERSE:

1 Samuel 8:7

And the LORD said to Samuel, “Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them.”

2 Samuel 7:16

And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.

Sources: Willmington’s Bible Handbook and SOTW lectures