

# I & 2 SAMUEL: INTRODUCTION

## I. TITLE OF THE BOOK:

- A. Samuel's name means in Hebrew: "heard of God", "the name of God", or "His name is God".
  - 1. Samuel is the key character (1:20)
    - a. He anointed the two other main characters of the two books: Saul and David (I Sam. 10:1, 16:13).
  - 2. Samuel is the nation of Israel's prophetic leader (3:20).
- B. The two books were one book in the Hebrew Bible under the heading of the "Former Prophets" (cf. I Sam. 31:7, 2 Sam. 1)
  - 1. The LXX (Septuagint) first to divide – First and Second Books of the Kingdoms
  - 2. The Vulgate – First and Second Books of Kings
  - 3. English Bible- First and Second Samuel

## II. AUTHOR AND DATE:

- A. No internal evidence points to one particular writer.
  - 1. Samuel a strong possibility at least up to his death (I Sam. 10:25, 25:1).
  - 2. Nathan and Gad are possibly involved authors (I Chron. 29:29).
- B. Possibly compiled long after the events actually occurred
  - 1. Looking back to time when prophets were "seers" (I Sam. 9:9)
  - 2. Possibly after the kingdom of Israel was divided – became Israel and Judah (I Sam. 18:16)
- C. Time of events in the two books:
  - 1. Approximately 130 years.
    - a. Life of Samuel to Saul's selection as King – 50 years (I Sam. 8:1, 6)
    - b. Saul's reign – 40 years (Acts 3:21).
    - c. David's reign – 40 years (2 Sam. 5:4).
  - 2. Approximately 1101 B.C. – 971 B.C.

## III. IMPORTANT EVENTS IN THE BOOKS:

- A. I Samuel provides the historical account linked by the birth of Samuel, the last of the Judges, unto the death of Saul, the first of the kings (I Sam. 1:20; 10:1, 13:1, 31:5).
  - 1. The ark of the Lord and the Philistines (4:1-7:2)
  - 2. Israel desires a king like the other nations around them (8:20).
  - 3. Saul's rejection as king (13:1-15:35).
    - a. A striking and sobering lesson on obedience (15:22).
  - 4. David anointed as King (16:1-17:58)
  - 5. David fleeing from Saul (18:1-28:2)
    - a. Friendship of Jonathan and David (19:1, 20:17)
    - b. Saul and the witch of Endor (28:7-25)
- B. 2 Samuel provides the historical account of the reign of David over Israel up to his old age (cf. 2 Sam. 24; I Kings 1).

1. David's triumphs (2 Sam. 2-10).
  - a. Rules in Hebron for seven and one-half years (5:4-5)
  - b. Rules in Jerusalem thirty three years (5:4-5)
  - c. Sobering lesson on consequences of sin (6:3, 6)
  - d. Messianic promise of everlasting King (7:12-13; Acts 2:30)
2. David's sin (2 Sam. 11-12)
  - a. Adultery with Bathsheba
  - b. Has Uriah, the husband of Bathsheba, killed
3. David's troubles (2 Sam. 13-20)
  - a. Own family – Absalom's sin and rebellion
4. David's last acts and words (2 Sam. 21-24)
  - a. David's Psalm of praise (Chapter 23)
  - b. David's sin of numbering the people (Chapter 24)

**IV. MAIN CHARACTERS:**

- A. SAMUEL – Prophet, Priest, Judge (I Sam. 3:20, Acts 3:24, Heb. 11:32, I Sam. 2:11, I Chron. 6:33-38, I Sam. 7:15, Acts 13:20).
  1. God approved man (Psm. 99:6, Jer. 15:1)
  2. Leader of company of prophets (I Sam. 19:18-20)
- B. SAUL – King with great promise who fails.
  1. Physical superiority (9:2)
  2. Modest (9:21), Discreet (10:27), foe against sorcery (28:3).
  3. Saul's disobedience (13:13, 15:24)
  4. Jealousy leads to Saul playing "the fool" (18:8, 26:21).
- C. DAVID – Israel's great King
  1. Man after God's own heart (cf. Acts 13:22)
  2. Sin followed by contrite heart (2 Sam. 11-12, Psm. 51)
  3. Only character in the Bible named "David"

**V. LESSONS FOR STUDY:**

- A. Twelve lessons:
  1. Samuel as Judge (I Sam. 1-7).
  2. Samuel anoints Saul as King (I Sam. 8-12)
  3. Saul's early reign (I Sam. 13-15)
  4. God chooses David as King (I Sam. 16-17)
  5. Saul's jealousy of David (I Sam. 18-19:17)
  6. David's flight from Saul (I Sam. 19:18-26)
  7. David's continued flight and Saul's death (I Sam. 27-2 Sam. 1)
  8. David's early reign in Hebron and Jerusalem (2 Sam. 2-8)
  9. David's sin (2 Sam. 9-12)
  10. David's trouble with his son Absalom (2 Sam. 13-18:32)
  11. David returns to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 18:33-20)
  12. David's last acts and words – Appendices (2 Sam. 21-24).