

1 & 2 Samuel

1. Introduction to 1 & 2 Samuel

1) Title and Authorship

- a. The two books were originally combined as one.
- b. Samuel probably wrote most of 1 Samuel, at least up to 1 Samuel 25! Jewish tradition says that Nathan and Gad wrote the rest of 1 Samuel and all of 2 Samuel.

2) Purpose and Theme

- a. The purpose of 1–2 Samuel is to show that God established and directed Israel's monarchy.
- b. The theme of 1–2 Samuel is kingship and covenant.

3) Content and Message

- a. 1–2 Samuel revolve around three important people—

(1) Samuel

- (a) Prophet – representing God to men. They were individuals chosen by God who gave the Lord's message firsthand, unmediated (1 Sam 9:6).
- (b) Priest – representing men to God. Samuel was a priest (1 Sam 2:18; 7:9)
- (c) Judge – A military, civil, and spiritual leader chosen by God who delivered Israel from their enemies (1 Sam 7:15–17; 12:11)

(2) Saul – from the tribe of Benjamin, Israel's first king

(3) David – from the tribe of Judah, Israel's second and greatest king

- b. Other important individuals—

(1) Eli – high priest and judge of Israel. Despite caring and training Samuel, Eli did not restrain his wicked two sons Hophni and Phineas (1 Sam 2:12–17; 3:13)

(2) Jonathan – Saul's oldest son and heir, David's best friend

(3) Joab – David's uncle and one of his generals

(4) Abner – Saul's uncle and one of his generals

(5) Absalom – David's son, who would rebel against him and temporarily seized power

- c. In these books the **Philistines** were Israel's greatest, most oppressive enemy.
- (1) They came from the island of Crete
 - (2) Until David's reign this well-organized, warring people ruled almost all of Palestine
 - (3) The Philistines were based in five cities: Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, and Gath (see map)
 - (4) Their great source of power was **iron** (note 1 Sam 13:19–21)
 - (5) While Samuel and Saul brought a temporary halt to Philistine oppression, it was David who finally defeated them (2 Sam 5:17–25)



d. Summary of 1–2 Samuel

God promised king in the Abrahamic covenant and gave instructions for him in the Mosaic covenant. Saul was the first king chosen to lead Israel to obey the covenant, but his disobedience resulted in his rejection. David was the next king chosen, and he loved God's Law and lead Israel to obey it.

- (1) **1 Samuel** – God raised up Samuel as judge, prophet, and priest to guide, lead, and protect Israel. Israel rejected God's rule but God graciously provided a king, Saul. Sadly, Saul's pattern of unrepentant disobedience to God's Law resulted in God's rejection of him as king. God chose another to be king, David, who experienced God's blessing despite persecution by Saul.
- (2) **2 Samuel** – David's rule is firmly established and God graciously promised to eternally establish his family, rule, and kingdom. Sadly, despite God-given success and blessing, David sinned greatly against God. Though his genuine repentance preserved his life and rule, dire consequences resulted from his sin.

☞ 1 Samuel – *The **origin** of Israel's monarchy with Samuel and Saul*

☞ 2 Samuel – *The establishment or **stability** of Israel' monarchy under David*

2. Outline of 1– Samuel

Basic Outline

- 1) The Beginnings of Israel's Monarchy, 1 Samuel
- 2) The Establishment of Israel's Monarchy, 2 Samuel