



OT Survey Lesson 5: The United Kingdom.

Prepared by Dr. G. Steve Kinnard

Material Covered: 1 & 2 Samuel; 1 Kings 1-11; 1 Chronicles 10 - 2 Chronicles 9.

In the Hebrew Bible, 1 & 2 Samuel and 1 & 2 Kings are part of its second major division called the Nebi'im or the Prophets. They are part of the former prophets. The non-written prophets (like Elijah and Elisha) are introduced in this material.

4 Major Characters in the United Kingdom: Samuel. Saul. David. Solomon.

1 & 2 Samuel

1. Title: In the Hebrew Bible the title is שְׁמוּאֵל, Samuel. The title is based on Samuel, a main character who provides a transition from the tribal conquest of Canaan to a united monarchy. The two books were originally one book in the Hebrew Bible.

In the Greek Bible (the Septuagint) the title of the books is—Βασιλείων (*Basileiōn*), meaning, "Kings."

2. Author: Unknown.

1 & 2 Samuel could have been written during Solomon's reign. It was very common for ancient kings to keep a record of the activities of their kingdom.

Martin Noth posits that this book was written during the time of the exile (after the destruction of the temple in 586 B.C.). Dale Manor writes:

Martin Noth ... argued that the books of Deuteronomy and Joshua through Kings were written as a single composition during the Exile to trace God's displeasure with Israel and Judah in their apostasy which led ultimately to their exile. This thesis is known as the "Deuteronomistic History." In it,

Deuteronomy served as the theological premise which was traced through Israel's demise in the tribal and monarchical history until her exile.¹

(A). Martin Noth proposed that the material that makes up Deuteronomy through 2 Kings was composed or redacted by the Deuteronomistic historian during the exile in Babylon. The theme for the book was negative: Israel rebelled against God; therefore, God disciplined them.

(B). Fohrer and Cross posit that the redaction occurred earlier, perhaps during the reign of Josiah with reworking during the exile.

(C). Gerhard Von Rad sees the theme as more positive—the continuation of God's promise to David.

(D). Hans Walter Wolff believes the theme stresses repentance and forgiveness.

3. Date:

The events of 1–2 Samuel last between 1100–970 B.C.

David's rule began approximately 1010 B.C.

David's reign ends in 970 B.C.

Solomon born 1090 B.C.

One problem: In the Hebrew text of 1 Samuel 13:1, it reads "Saul was ... years old when he began to reign and he reigned ... and two years over Israel."² How old was Saul when he began his reign? Twenty? Thirty? Forty?

Notice: "Saul reigned ... and two years." There is a gap in the text. Two years and what? The Septuagint adds the number 40. Many English translations add the number 40. How long did Saul reign? Some add 20 years. Some add 40 years. Did Saul reign 22 years or 42 years?

This is the time of the rise of United Monarchy. Samuel is the transition figure from the judges to the monarchy. The land was a bit dormant during this time. No foreign powers were stretching their muscles, looking to acquire land and conquer armies. Israel's main concern was the Philistines along the coast. This time of relative peace and stability gave the twelve tribes an opportunity to build their territories, consolidate their strength, and, ultimately, to unite under one king.

4. Major Themes:

¹ Dale Manor, "Books of History," in *Old Testament Introduction*, ed. Terry Briley, Paul Kissling, and Mark Mangano, The College Press NIV Commentary (Joplin, MO: College Press Pub., 2005), 249.

² Revised Standard Version.

A. 1 & 2 Samuel are a continuation of the story God's redemption of his people.

B. 1 Samuel emphasized Samuel's good service as a priest, judge, seer, and prophet.

C. A king is chosen.

The people choose a king. This is reflected in 1 Samuel 8:18, "When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, and the Lord will not answer you in that day."

God chooses a king. Reflected in 1 Samuel 13:14, "But now your kingdom will not endure; the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the Lord's command."

5. Genre/Literary Style.

"Didactic History." "Theological History." The stories are historical, but they are recorded to teach lessons.

6. Outline/Structure:

Simple Outline Based on the Major Characters:

1 Samuel 1-7. Samuel alone.

1 Samuel 8-18. Samuel and Saul

1 Samuel 16-31. Saul and David

2 Samuel. David alone.

7. Teaching/Commentary:

Four major Characters in this section.

(1) Samuel. Transitional Character. Samuel was both the last judge of the conquest and the first prophet of the monarchy.

(2) Saul (1050–1010 BC). First King of Israel.

(3) David (1010–970 BC). Second King. First King from the Davidic Dynasty. David moved the capital of Judah to Jerusalem.

(4) Solomon (970–930 BC). Third King. Inherited the Davidic kingdom. Took Israel to its most prominent position in its history militarily, economically, and geographically.

8. NT Associations:

God establishes the Davidic monarchy during this time. From David's lineage will come the King of Kings.

9. Commentaries:

Anderson, Arnold. *Second Samuel*. Word Biblical Commentary. (Word, 1989).

Arnold, Bill. *The NIV Application Commentary*. Zondervan, 2003.

Balwin, Joyce. *Tyndale Old Testament Commentary*. InterVarsity Press, 1988.

Bergen, Robert. *New American Commentary*. Broadman & Holman, 1996.

Gordon, Robert. *1 and 2 Samuel*. Zondervan, 1988.

Klein, Ralph. *First Samuel*. Word Biblical Commentary. (Word, 1983).