

**LOOK AT THE BOOK
1 & 2 SAMUEL
SEEKING A KING AFTER GOD'S HEART**

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What do YOU look for when you're about to select a leader—especially a national leader?

How about a religious leader? What do you look for?

How about a national leader for God's people?

Normal trends:

1. Attractive, dynamic, charismatic, visionary leader.
2. Popular, nice guy, friendly, outgoing.
3. Issues: stands for what we stand for.
4. Values: stands for the values we believe in.

All of these are based on what you *SEE!*

When GOD chooses a leader, *He looks at the heart!*

AUTHOR

The two books of Samuel were originally one book.

It has been suggested that Samuel himself wrote a large portion of 1 Samuel, though he could not have written the entire book.

It may be a compilation of records left by Samuel, Nathan and Gad (1 Chron. 29:29), written by an unidentified author of a slightly later period.

2 Samuel may take into account the book of Jashar as well (1:18).

DATE

The events described in 1 Samuel begin near the end of the times of the judges of Israel, slightly before the birth of Samuel.

They end near the death of Saul in 1011 B.C.

That story was probably written some years later since 2 Samuel concludes in about 971 B.C.

2 Samuel recounts events which occurred during the forty years of David's reign, from 1011 to 971 B.C.

The book indicates that some time has passed since the division of the kingdom in 931 B.C. (27:6).

The author's silence on the matter probably demonstrates a date prior to the fall of Israel in 722 B.C.

BACKGROUND

Historical sequence continues:

Genesis => Exodus => Numbers => (Deut. 34) => Joshua => Judges => Samuel

1 Samuel describes the transition from the period of the judges to the foundation of the monarchy in Israel—from Samuel to Saul.

It begins under the same sad conditions as those observed in Judges and Ruth.

For lack of national leadership everyone did as he pleased.

Cycle of the judges continues:

Rebellion resulted in *discipline*, which usually consisted of *oppression* by another nation, until *repentance* caused God to provide another *deliverer*.

God prepares Samuel as the last of these judges, to free His people from the oppressive hand of the Philistines.

Spiritually the nation is full of sin and idolatry.

The priesthood is corrupt and self-seeking.

Samuel calls the people to repentance and then leads them to victory over the Philistines, though they will continue to affect Israel's history.

As Samuel ages and it becomes apparent that his ministry will soon conclude, the people refuse to accept his sons as their future leaders because they have failed to walk rightly before the Lord.

Sad parallel with Eli!

Though apparently different from God's perspective.

Eli's sons treated what belonged to God with contempt (2:12, 17-18).

Eli did nothing about it (2:22-25)!

Eli establishes the principle that distinguishes his sons' guilt from Samuel's sons' guilt (2:25)!

Samuel's sons were dishonest (8:3-4)

Their dishonest dealings gave the critics a cause to rebel against them!

The people appeal to God for a king like the other nations have. Though Samuel warns them of the dangers of their request, they insist. Therefore, God gives them a king.

Saul, the first king, is a good choice from man's viewpoint, but he failed to depend on God. Therefore, he was rejected.

God then provided another king, David, a man after His own heart.

David gave Israel the kind of relationship the people needed in order to follow God's laws.

The final chapters of 1 Samuel center on the conflict between David and Saul.

The book concludes with Saul's death.

David must then gain the confidence of the nation and take control of the government.

2 Samuel begins where 1 Samuel closes.

There is no break historically, since they were originally one book.

It continues with *David's* story.

As the story begins, Saul has just been killed by the Philistines, who now threaten to destroy Israel.

At a time when unity is necessary among God's people for their survival, fierce competition develops between the northern and southern tribes.

God brought David onto the scene at a critical time in the history of His people to unite them and to deliver them out of the hands of the Philistines.

As David trusts God and remains faithful to Him, the nation prospers and expands.

The results of David's personal sin affect his own family, and the nation as well.

PURPOSE AND THEME

Major lessons taught by broad brush strokes!

Detailed study reinforces the broad lessons.

Most the "preaching" will be based on the broad brushstrokes!

Historically, the purpose of 1 Samuel is to trace the transition from the judges' rule over Israel to the foundation of the monarchy—from Samuel to Saul.

It explains how the monarchy came into existence.

2 Samuel describes one of the most important periods of Israel's history.

When David, the king after God's own heart, comes to the throne, God's blessing results in significant developments in the country.

The nation is unified.

A new capital is established and made the political and religious center.

Israel's enemies are subdued and its borders expanded.

A new ruling dynasty is established, with the promise that it will rule over God's people forever.

These were exciting days in Israel's history.

Theologically, Samuel follows the pattern of other historical books.

God is depicted as faithful to His covenant, holy, gracious to forgive His people when they turn to Him, and sovereignly in control of all the nations of the world.

Israel is unfaithful and disobedient, continuing to seek its own way.

When God forces the nation to submission, they repent and obey Him.

God repays obedience with blessing and disobedience with cursing.

In *1 Samuel* God presents, by precept and by illustration, the principles which are to govern Israel, as part of a theocratic program:

God is to rule the nation. He is in control.

The king is His representative before the nation.

Those who submit to God's authority will demonstrate it by submitting to God's appointed king.

Submission to the laws established by the king is intended to bring the people into submission to God's law.

These principles are illustrated by the examples of Saul and David.

The first two kings of Israel represent graphically the two alternatives Israel's king may follow.

Saul was the king the people were looking for.
He was a king like the other nations had.

His lifestyle and leadership style was everything a king is expected to be.
Popular-nice-friendly-dynamic-visionary-strong natural leader!
Stood for all the right issues and values of the people.

As one who used his position for personal gain, he disobeyed God and was rejected by God.

David, on the other hand, was God's kind of king.
He was a man after God's own heart.

He submitted to God's authority in his life and in his kingdom.

He sought to know and obey God's will.

God blessed David and established his kingdom over Israel forever.

Later kings would be able to look back at these two examples and choose which path they would follow: *Would they follow man's pattern, or God's?*

The results of their reign depended on their choice.

The people also could learn an important lesson from 1 Samuel. Blessing is based on obedience to God's Word and submission to His appointed ruler. They too must make a choice.

In 2 Samuel, as the book begins, David obeys God's Word and leads the people to do so. As a result, the nation, and David personally, prosper.

When David sins, the book turns from triumph to tragedy as David's personal, familial and national problems develop.

Even God's king had to pay dearly for his failure to submit to God's standards for his life.

The book teaches future kings, as well as God's people in general, the importance of doing God's will.

God's love and forgiveness are seen when David confesses his sin.

Nevertheless, the consequences remain and affect the rest of his life and ministry.

God's servants, as all men, need to learn from David's example the importance of obedience to His will.

ORGANIZATION

The structure of 1 Samuel centers on the three main personalities of the book:

Samuel is the last of the judges and God's spokesman throughout most of the period.

He calls the people to repentance and awakens them to their need for a strong national leader (1-8)

The people reject God's kind of leadership and ask for a king like the other nations have.

God gives them *Saul*, a king who will imitate the way pagan kings rule their countries (9-15).

When Saul's disobedience causes God to reject him as king, Samuel anoints another.

He's through back at chapter 15!

Nevertheless he continues to hang on.

The king the people want tries to destroy the king after God's heart!

David is a man who seeks to imitate God.

Although his reign begins after 1 Samuel concludes, Saul's attempt to destroy God's appointed king occupies the last section (16-31)

The man who rules like a pagan tries to destroy the man who seeks to imitate God.

2 Samuel hinges on David's sin with Bathsheba (11-12).

ACHIEVEMENTS => FAILURE => AFFLICTIONS
1-10 11-12 13-24

Previous to that failure, David was pictured as obedient to God's will and blessed by Him (1-10)

David's success as king leads to his failure (11-12).

Self-confidence stirs up the flesh!

Following his failure, David experiences sorrow and tragedy in every area of his life (13-24).

ARGUMENT

SAMUEL: GOD'S JUDGE REPLACED 1-8

The cycle presented throughout the time of the Judges concludes with Samuel.

God's people, having continued in their sinful rebellion and idolatry, were suffering under the oppressive hand of the Philistines.

The priesthood, which should have demonstrated God's holiness by its example, was leading the rest of the nation in their sin.

To call Israel back to Himself and to deliver the nation from the Philistines, God raised up Samuel, the last of Israel's judges.

HIS PROMISE 1:1-18

Hannah receives the promise of his birth.

In contrast to the nation at large, and the priesthood in particular, Hannah, Samuel's mother, is presented as an example to the nation.

God will use her as a source of blessing to the rest of the nation.

HIS BIRTH 1:19-2:11

God responds to Hannah's request, sending her the son she requested.

HIS YOUTH 2:12-36

Hannah's devotion to the Lord is reflected in the life of her young son as he grows to trust and serve God.

Their commitment to God stands in stark contrast to that of Eli's family.

Eli's sons had a reputation for wickedness; they have no respect for God (12-17).

In contrast, Samuel's love for God is seen in his faithful service before Him (18-21)

Eli heard of his sons' reputation and spoke to them about it but was unwilling to discipline them as needed (22-25).

In contrast to their rebellion and lack of respect, Samuel continues to grow in the Lord (26)

The result of the bad testimony of Eli's sons was the rejection of Eli and his family from the priesthood (27-36).

HIS CALL 3-4:1a

God calls Samuel to serve Him (3:1-10) and reveals to him what he plans to do to Eli (11-14).

As Eli's influence decreased among God's people, Samuel was becoming recognized as God's spokesman (3:19-4:1a)

HIS MINISTRY 4:1b-8:22

Concerning the oppression of the Philistines 4:1b-7:17

During those days, the oppression of God's disobedient people, that had prevailed throughout the period of the judges, was evidenced in the Philistine threat.

God used them to cause Israel to turn back to Him.

- The ark was taken.

- Eli and his sons died.

- The Philistines experienced God's judgment because of the ark.

 - Confrontation with Dagon demonstrates that Yahweh wasn't defeated!*

 - Dagon never defeated Yahweh.

 - Yahweh had judged His own people for their sin and rebellion.

- The ark is returned because the Philistines are afraid of it.

After more than twenty years of oppression, Samuel is able to lead the people back to Yahweh and deliver them from the Philistines.

Concerning the pressure for a king 8

When Samuel grew old, the people began to think about the future.

Samuel was placing responsibility in the hands of his sons but they were not leading in the same way as their father (1-3)

The people, aware of their need for strong national leadership, began to look at the other nations around them to see how they did things. They decide that they want a king like the other nations have (4-9).

Samuel tries to warn them of the dangers that a king would bring on the nation (10-18).

Nevertheless, they want to be like the other nations and have a king like they have (19-21).

Finally, God gives them the king they want (22).

SAUL: MAN'S KING INSTALLED 9-15

It was God's plan to give them a king in the future, but not one like the pagan nations have.

He wants them to have a king who recognizes Him as the true Ruler and submits to His authority.

Before Israel will be ready for God's kind of king, they must first experience what life would be like under man's kind of king--one like other nations have.

ELECTION OF THE KING 9-12

God directs Samuel to a great candidate for king.
He's everything they could ask for.

Thus the book presents Saul, the kind of king people long for.

REJECTION OF THE KING 13-15

Although Saul began to rule with a humble spirit, he soon becomes accustomed to power and to the perks of leadership, as kings do.

He forgets his dependence on God and begins to rule his kingdom his way.

Such conduct is normal for a human king, but it's out of place in a theocracy, where God is the true King.

Therefore, God judges Saul and rejects him as king of Israel.

THREE INCIDENTS are recorded that demonstrate Saul's attitudes and the cause of his rejection by God:

Caused by presumption 13:1-14

First, Saul becomes impatient with God and His servant.
He gave up on waiting for Samuel to come offer the burnt offering.
After seven days of waiting, he panicked!

Affected by rash judgment 13:15-14:52

Second, Saul acts foolishly and rashly in prohibiting his armies from eating while pursuing the enemy.

Though he never should have made such a decree, once he has made it before God, he is bound by it.

His foolishness harms his relationship with his own men and cuts the fellowship he has enjoyed with God.

In accordance with his own oath he deserves to suffer the consequences of his curse for he fails to fulfill his vow.

Caused by disobedience 15

Third, Saul only partially fulfills God's orders.

He obeys what he wants to obey.

He expects God to recognize his obedience and not notice his failure to obey.

God indicates that partial obedience is really disobedience.

The king over God's people must recognize that *GOD* is their true King and His rule must be obeyed.

DAVID: GOD'S KING ANOINTED 1 Sam. 16 - 2 Sam. 24

After Saul is rejected as king over God's people, God chooses a new king.

This king will be His kind of king, a man who recognizes His reign over the kingdom and who will submit to His authority.

DAVID'S SELECTION AND PERSECUTION 1 Sam. 16-31

As always happens, man's kind of king comes into conflict with God's kind of king. Man's king tries to destroy God's king.

The last section of 1 Samuel traces this conflict and demonstrates its final result.

David chosen 16:1-12

At God's command Samuel goes to find the new king God has chosen.

The choice is not made on the basis of human criteria.

God knows what's in a man's heart and David is the man God has chosen, because he will do God's will.

David anointed 16:13

Samuel obeys God's command and anoints David.

David feared 16:14-20:42

David's preparation to serve as king of Israel begins in Saul's court.

Numerous successful missions for Saul made him famous. Saul came to recognize that David is the obvious replacement for him and began to fear him.

David protected 21-28:2

David then escaped into the hill country.

Saul pursued them there.

On two occasions when David could have killed Saul, he spares him. He will wait on God's timing to remove Saul. He's in no hurry to establish his own kingdom. He doesn't have to take matters into his own hands!

David delivered 28:3-31:13

Finally, the showdown between Israel and the Philistines arrives.

God uses the Philistines as His instrument to eliminate Saul and his family, and to establish David as His king.

David, as God's king, a man after God's heart, will recognize God's right to rule, both on the throne and in his personal life.

He presents a pattern that future kings ought to imitate.

He will not make a move toward the throne until God gives it to him.

The two alternatives are thus defined.

Each of Israel's kings will have to choose between these two alternatives.

Will they recognize God's kingship over His people, and submit to His authority?

Or, will they follow the pattern of other nations and rule their own way, for their own benefit?

The people of God in all ages face a similar choice.

Who will rule our life?

Which pattern will we follow?

DAVID'S ACHIEVEMENTS 2 Sam. 1-10

Although David has already been chosen and anointed to be king over God's people, he is willing to wait for God's time to take control of the kingdom.

He won't take any action against the king that God has placed on the throne. God would arrange the necessary events according to His plan.

2 Samuel begins with Saul's death.

God has now removed Saul and David must exercise his authority to unite and to lead the nation.

Because David was submissive to God's will, and refused to take matters into his own hands, God blesses him.

David's accomplishments during the early years of his reign were remarkable.

Rule over Judah 1-4

At first his authority only extends over Judah.

Rule over all Israel 5-10

Later God gives him the northern tribes of Israel as well.

As a result of the death of Ish-bosheth, and David's care in handling these affairs, the people turn to him as their only hope.

Thus he becomes king of all Israel.

Immediately following his confirmation as king, David begins to advance his kingdom.

- His zeal for the city

- His zeal for the ark

- His zeal for the temple

DAVID'S FAILURE 2 Sam. 11-12

While the conflict with the Ammonites continues, and his kingdom continues to grow, David fails to obey God's direction in one significant area of his life.

His sin has consequences on the rest of his reign and he never again regains his previous effectiveness.

Commission of sin 11

Condemnation of sin 12:1-12

Confession of sin 12:13

Consequence of sin 12:14-23

Restoration after sin 12:24-31

Although David confessed his sin and God forgave him, the consequences of his sin would be carried out.

His house would be characterized by violence of the sword.

His wives would be publicly taken by members of his own family.

The most direct consequence would be the death of the child born to them.

All of these consequences are fulfilled in the deterioration of the kingdom described in the rest of the book.

This event was the turning point in David's reign.

The remainder of the book describes David's affliction in the latter part of his reign.

DAVID'S AFFLICTIONS 13-24

Affliction concerning his family 13-19:40

As Nathan indicated, the personal and familial nature of David's failure produced serious consequences in David's own family.

Absalom's story (15-18) demonstrates the damage done to David's relationship with his own son.

It teaches the serious consequences of refusal to submit to the authority of God's king, even though he may demonstrate failure in his own life.

Affliction concerning his nation 19:41-20:26

Although David was restored to power, the morale of his troops was destroyed by his reaction, and national confidence in his leadership was weakened.

Many relationships were strained.

As a result the nation remained divided.

Not all the people wanted David restored as king.

This tension produces the right environment for David's second sphere of affliction, his affliction concerning the nation.

The north-south inter-tribal conflicts are still alive.

David's inability to control his own family produces loss of national respect.

Final words and deeds 21-24

The book concludes with an appendix which points out several events from the last years of David's life.

These words and acts are not intended to be chronological, but rather to give an insight into the life, ministry and attitudes of God's king.

They do, however, continue to reflect the problems David faced in his final years as a result of his sin with Bathsheba.

These problems include:

--the census

--the plague

--the field that became the temple site

WHAT ARE THE LESSONS FOR OUR LIVES FROM THESE TWO BOOKS?