

Old Testament Survey

1 and 2 Samuel

General Outline of 1 Samuel

- I. The Career of Samuel and the Deliverance From the Philistines - 1:1-7:17
 - A. Samuel's mother and her song - 1:1-2:10
 - B. Samuel's apprenticeship - 2:11-3:21
 - C. Disaster at Shiloh - 4:1-22
 - D. The captivity of the ark in Philistia - 5:1-12
 - E. The return of the ark to Israel - 6:1-21
 - F. Samuel drives out the Philistines and leads a revival - 7:1-17
- II. The Rise of Saul - 8:1-15:35
 - A. Israel petitions for a king - 8:1-22
 - B. Saul anointed by Samuel and is victorious over the Ammonites - 9:1-11:15
 - C. Samuel's final address and warning - 12:1-25
 - D. Victories of Saul and Jonathan over the Philistines - 13:1-14:52
 - E. The Amalekite Campaign and Saul's disobedience - 15:1-35
- III. The Decline of Saul and the Rise of David - 16:1-31:13
 - A. David anointed by Samuel - 16:1-23
 - B. David's deliverance of Israel by killing Goliath - 17:1-58
 - C. David's flight from Saul - 18:1-20:42
 - D. David's wanderings as an outlaw - 21:1-30:31
 - E. Saul's final battle and death on Mount Gilboa - 31:1-13

General Outline of 2 Samuel

- I. David's Career as King over Judah and Israel - 1:1-14:33
 - A. David's lamentation over Saul's and Jonathan's death - 1:1-27
 - B. David crowned at Hebron; the war with Abner - 2:1-32
 - C. Abner's defection and murder by Joab - 3:1-39
 - D. The assassination of Ishbosheth - 4:1-12
 - E. Establishment of national and religious unity - 5:1-6:23
 - F. God's covenant with David, the Messianic King - 7:1-29
 - G. Extension of David's rule to the limits of the Promised Land - 8:1-10:19
 - H. David's sin with Bathsheba - 11:1-12:31
 - I. The crime of Ammon and Absalom's revenge - 13:1-14:33
- II. The Closing Phase of David's Reign - 15:1-24:25
 - A. Absalom's rebellion - 15:1-18:33
 - B. David's restoration to power - 19:1-20:26
 - C. The famine and the Gibeonite's revenge on Saul's descendants - 21:1-14
 - D. Later wars with the Philistines - 21:15-22
 - E. David's psalm of praise and final testimony - 22:1-23:7
 - F. David's mighty men - 23:8-39
 - G. David's sin in numbering the people and the subsequent plague - 24:1-25

Date of Composition

Evidence For A Time During the Divided Monarchy

1. Internal evidence points to the fact that the books of Samuel could not have been written before the death of Solomon.
2. I Samuel 27:6 infers that the divided monarchy had already begun.

3. Most scholars date this book around 930 to 722 B.C. The writer appears to be ignorant of the fall of Samaria and hence the books must have been written before the fall of Israel to Assyria.
4. It is evident that the author of 1-2 Samuel employed other written sources including the "Acts of David" as mentioned in 1 Chronicles 29:29.

Critical Objections

1. Critics divide the book into three documents, **L**, **J**, and **E**. They assign parts of it to the Solomonic period with other parts to the Deuteronomistic School of the seventh century. Some even ascribe parts of the book to a time after the exile.
2. Critics point to supposed doublets, such as the two alleged accounts of the establishment of the monarchy in 1 Samuel 7-9.

What the critics fail to realize is that even though God did not support the establishment of the monarchy he blessed Israel in spite of their disobedience.

Alleged Inconsistencies in Samuel

1. The Tribal Background of Samuel

Some point out that 1 Samuel 1 and 1 Chronicles 6:27-28 give two accounts of Samuel's tribal heritage. 1 Samuel indicates Samuel to have been an Ephraimite since his home was Ramathaim-zophim. 1 Chronicles 6:27-28 state he was a Levite. The way to understand this is that Elkanah, Samuel's father, was a Levite who lived in Ephraim, as Levites lived throughout the land having no inheritance of their own.

2. David's Introduction to Saul

In 1 Samuel 16:14-23 we find David's first introduction to Saul as a harpist, and in 1 Samuel 17:55-58 apparently he is reintroduced to Saul all over again. The key to understanding this is that in his second introduction to Saul, Saul is merely asking David about his father and family, as it was possible he desired to have some of David's family be part of his bodyguard.

3. The Slaying of Goliath

In 1 Samuel 17 we read that David slew Goliath whereas in 2 Samuel 21:19 we are told that Elhanan killed Goliath. This problem is cleared up by looking at 1 Chronicles 20:5 and seeing that the scribe who transcribed the books of Samuel miscopied the verse in 2 Samuel 21:19.

4. Two Accounts of David Sparing Saul's Life

David sparing Saul's life could have happened twice!

The Rise and Fall of Saul

Rise

1. Israel Demands a King - 1 Samuel 8
2. Saul is Chosen by God - 1 Samuel 9
3. Saul is Anointed King and Acclaimed at Mizpah - 1 Samuel 10

4. Saul's Leadership is Confirmed Militarily - 1 Samuel 11-12

Fall

1. He Intrudes into the Priesthood - 1 Samuel 13
2. He Orders the Death of His Own Son - 1 Samuel 14
3. He Spares Amalek - 1 Samuel 15
4. He Is Possessed by an Evil Spirit - 1 Samuel 16:14; 18:10; 19:9
5. He Attempts to Kill David - 1 Samuel 18:11, 21, 25; 19:1, 10, 15
6. He Curses and Attempts to Kill His Own Son - 1 Samuel 20:30-33
7. He Slaughters 85 Priests of God - 1 Samuel 22:17-19
8. He Goes to the Witch and Endor - 1 Samuel 28:31

The Life of David

1. His Anointing to be King - 1 Samuel 16
2. His Victory over Goliath - 1 Samuel 17
3. His Falling Out with Saul - 1 Samuel 18-20
4. His Persecution by Saul - 1 Samuel 21-30
5. David Becomes King over Judah - 2 Samuel 1-2
6. David Becomes King over All Israel - 2 Samuel 5
7. The Davidic Covenant - 2 Samuel 7
8. David's Military Exploits - 2 Samuel 8-10
9. David and Bathsheba - 2 Samuel 11
10. David's Family Melts Down - 2 Samuel 12-14
11. The Insurrection of Absalom - 2 Samuel 15-18
12. David's Restoration - 2 Samuel 19
13. David's Census and God's Judgement - 2 Samuel 24
14. David's Death - 1 Kings 1-2