

The background is a dense mosaic of small, irregular tiles in various shades of gold, brown, and black. In the center, there is a stylized crown with three points, rendered in a lighter, more detailed mosaic pattern. The crown is positioned in the lower half of the image, above the text.

2 SAMUEL  
CHAPTERS 1-7

OVERVIEW



# OVERVIEW - 2 SAMUEL 1 - 7

## SERIES OUTLINE

16/10/2022	The End of an Era	2 Samuel 1
23/10/2022	Civil War	2 Samuel 2
30/10/2022	Conflict resolution	2 Samuel 3-4
06/11/2022	David's Kingship	2 Samuel 5
13/11/2022	The Ark returns	2 Samuel 6
20/11/2022	An eternal Kingdom	2 Samuel 7

## LOOKING AT THE OLD TESTAMENT

As Christians we will always be looking at the Old Testament from the standpoint of the New Testament. Given the New Testament continually assumes the unity of the Old Testament, we are importantly driven to study the Old Testament on its own terms. Two realities will become evident:

1. The account of redemptive history in the Old Testament is a process unfolding according to God's eternal plan.
2. The unfolding plan finds its locus and fulfilment in the person and work of Christ.

The events of 1 & 2 Samuel take place around 1000 BC. To provide some perspective the account of the leadership of Abraham is dated circa 18<sup>th</sup> C. BC and Moses circa 13<sup>th</sup> C. BC.

In so far as the Old Testament is history, it is a *theological* history. It is God's own authentic record of dealing with his purposes for the world and humanity within it. This theology controls the writing of the history. This means that the events being described are both recorded and interpreted according to divine authority, and we accept them as the Word of God, revealing the plans of God. This is the unifying reality of the Old Testament.

The narratives of 1 & 2 Samuel form part of a collection of works (with Joshua, Judges, and Kings) known as *The Former Prophets*. The books of Samuel (like all the Old Testament) preach the gospel to us before Christ came (Hebrews 1:1-2<sup>1</sup>). And lead us to him.

1 & 2 Samuel are two volumes of the one work. We know neither the date nor the authors of these books (1 Chronicles 29:29<sup>2</sup> is our best clue), but we do know they are a natural continuation to the Book of Judges, where "In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit." (Judges 21:25).

## BACKGROUND IN 1 SAMUEL

As we begin the series it's good to observe the movement in government and leadership taking place in this period of Israel's history.

### From the Judges to the Monarchy | A change in rule

After the settlement in the land of Canaan the need for a new form of government became evident. The period of the Judges had served its purpose such that the covenant now needed to be administered

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<sup>1</sup> In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.

<sup>2</sup> As for the events of King David's reign, from beginning to end, they are written in the records of Samuel the seer, the records of Nathan the prophet and the records of Gad the seer,

under a more comprehensive form of oversight, moving on from the tribal and localised framework of Israel's structures.

The parlous state of Eli's household is mirrored in the people of God in the early chapters of 1 Samuel, and signifies the need for change. The degenerate priesthood of Eli's household is set against the godly piety of Hannah (1 Samuel 1), who provides hope in the midst of despair. God's judgment upon Eli for his rebellious sons contrasts with the Hannah story. Hannah symbolises the way of salvation and restoration as the faithful servant who trusts in the Lord's strength (see Hannah's song in 1 Sam 2:1-10).

Samuel becomes the last in the line of Israel's judges as the monarchy is introduced in chs 7-12. Resistant to God's kingship and rule, Israel demands a human king so they can be like the other nations around them (1 Sam 8:4-8; 12:12, 17, 19). In God's sovereign providence he grants their request (1 Sam 8:22 cf. Deut 17:14-15<sup>3</sup>), at the same time remaining faithful to his promises by not abandoning his people, despite their hardheartedness (1 Sam 12:22).

### **From Saul to David | A change in ruler**

Saul became the appointed king, his rule incumbent upon the nation he ruled living according to God's word (1 Sam 12:13-15). This had been the pattern for blessing since God rescued a people for his own from Egypt (Deut 6:13-19<sup>4</sup>). Saul's kingship begins with some promise, but ultimately fails to reflect the designs God had in mind for the earthly king he would install. Saul's rejection of the prophet's counsel becomes his ultimate downfall and the kingship is removed from him (1 Sam 15:26). Samuel, as prophet, remains the Lord's spokesperson and ultimately brings the word of judgment against the disobedient Saul. The relationship of prophet to king will persist throughout the monarchy in Israel, for the prophet remains the guardian of the covenant of Sinai which governs the Lord's people.

David is subsequently anointed as the future king, for he is a man after God's own heart (1 Sam 13:14). The remainder of 1 Samuel depicts David's ever growing influence and might, set against the declining and diminishing authority of Saul. 1 Samuel concludes with the death of Saul in battle (1 Sam 31), to bring to an end his vexed rule, and opens the door for the establishment of the Davidic kingship, arguably the most significant period of triumph and progress for God's people between the promise to Abraham and the coming of Christ (see remarks on 2 Sam 7 below).

## **FULFILMENT IN 2 SAMUEL**

### **Davidic Kingship and the Kingdom of God**

The opening chapters of 2 Samuel describe David's growing reign and rule. The sense of expectation after Saul's failure brings hope and optimism for the future of God's people. David is 'a' key figure in this second volume, but not 'the' key figure. This is the Lord himself, guiding and directing events according to his promises (2 Sam 7:23-24). These promises ultimately find their fulfilment in the coming of the King of David's line, Jesus Christ (Matt 1:1). We can only truly understand the significance of David's kingship when we view it through the ministry of God's human and heavenly king.

David's growing leadership and established reign in 2 Samuel reveal a turbulent and tumultuous time for him personally, and for the people of God. There are moments of great military victories, and yet equally great personal moral failure. The constant throughout the warts and all narratives of 2 Samuel is the presence of the Kingdom of God. In these first seven chapters we will experience the establishment of David's rule over all Israel, culminating in the pivotal act of heavenly intervention in the covenant renewal of 2 Samuel 7. This is a game changer in the eternal plans and purposes of God,

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<sup>3</sup> When you enter the land the LORD your God is giving you and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, "Let us set a king over us like all the nations around us," be sure to appoint over you a king the LORD your God chooses. He must be from among your fellow Israelites. Do not place a foreigner over you, one who is not an Israelite.

<sup>4</sup> <sup>13</sup> Fear the LORD your God, serve him only and take your oaths in his name. <sup>14</sup> Do not follow other gods, the gods of the peoples around you; <sup>15</sup> for the LORD your God, who is among you, is a jealous God and his anger will burn against you, and he will destroy you from the face of the land. <sup>16</sup> Do not put the LORD your God to the test as you did at Massah. <sup>17</sup> Be sure to keep the commands of the LORD your God and the stipulations and decrees he has given you. <sup>18</sup> Do what is right and good in the LORD's sight, so that it may go well with you and you may go in and take over the good land the LORD promised on oath to your ancestors, <sup>19</sup> thrusting out all your enemies before you, as the LORD said.

and this chapter in many ways is a hinge between the gracious commitment of God in the promises to Abraham and its fulfilment in the coming of Christ.

## David & Jesus

David's rule only has worth when he is committed to the Kingdom's progress, the same guiding principle for any Christian leader. This is because the Kingdom of God is God's own rule, his reign over all. It is the Kingdom that Jesus proclaimed and brought near in his own life and witness, and established eternally in his death, resurrection and ascension. Jesus is therefore the anointed and eternal King of God's Kingdom, promised in 2 Samuel 7 (Matt 9:27).

The expanse of this Davidic Kingdom eventually reaches throughout the whole world as Jesus' instructs the disciples that their task will be to take the good news of the Kingdom to all nations, until the end comes (Matt 24:14), and commissions them accordingly in Matthew 28:18-20. In this light all Christians are committed to sharing the good news of the Kingdom and at the same time praying for its final and ultimate fulfilment at Christ's return (Matt 6:9-10)

By the conclusion of 2 Samuel we will discover David purchasing a temple site (ch. 24) in anticipation of the permanent move of worship to Jerusalem. Hence the books cover the restoration of right worship of the Lord, from its corrupt beginnings in 1 Samuel 1, to its potential renewal in the kingship of David's line.

Ironically, the books of 1 & 2 Kings tell the story of the relatively short-lived glory of the rule of David and his son Solomon. Through the messaging of the prophets in and beyond the exile we become aware that the hopes of the Kingdom promised to David were yet to be realized. It was only when Jesus came declaring "The time is fulfilled..." (Mark 1:15) that we begin to understand what God had in mind for his people.

## RECOMMENDED COMMENTARIES

Author	Title	Series
Tim Chester	<i>2 Samuel For You</i>	God's Word for You
Dale Ralph Davis	<i>2 Samuel, Out Of Every Adversity</i>	Reading the Bible Today
Andrew Reid	<i>1 &amp; 2 Samuel, Hope for the Helpless</i>	Focus on the Bible