

## 2019 Through the Bible Reading: *Bible Study Support*

The Book of 1 & 2 Samuel	
Background (Who, what, why, when)	<p>The two books that now make up 1 &amp; 2 Samuel were originally one book called, "The Book of Samuel." The actual author for some of 1 Samuel is unknown, however Samuel either wrote or supplied the information for chapters 1-25, which covers his life and ministry until his death. The author of the remaining chapters in 1 Samuel is uncertain. Some scholars affirm that the author of 2 Samuel is possibly Abiathar the Priest.</p> <p>1 Samuel covers a period of about 140 years, beginning with the birth of Samuel at about 1150 B.C., and ending with the death of Saul at about 1010-15 B.C. Because of the comment in 1 Samuel 27:6 "Ziklag has belonged to the kings of Judah to this day." The book of 2 Samuel has to be dated after the division of the kingdoms following Solomon's reign in 931 B.C. There was also no reference to the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C., which makes it unlikely to be written after that event.</p> <p>In 1 Samuel, Israel had been governed by judges who God raised up at crucial times in the nation's history, however the nations had deteriorated morally as well as weakened politically, as it had been under the merciless onslaught of the Philistines. The temple of Shiloh had been dishonored, damaged, degraded and the priesthood was corrupt and immoral. Into this religious and political confusion stepped Samuel, the miraculous son of Hannah. The birth of Samuel brought a renewed sense of joy to his mother and provided that same hope for the nation. Samuel's sons do not share the same godly character (1 Samuel 8), so Saul was reluctantly chosen to become Israel's first king. A handsome and charismatic man with an ego to match, Saul rushes himself into the office of priest, rejects Gods commands and is then rejected by God. After this rejection, Saul becomes a tragic figure, consumed with jealousy and fear, gradually losing his sanity. His final years are spent relentlessly chasing David in efforts to kill him, however David finds an ally in Saul's son Jonathan who warns David of his father's plot to kill him. Ultimately, when both Saul and Jonathan are killed in battle, the stage is set for David to become the second king of Israel.</p> <p>2 Samuel deals with the rise of David to the throne of Israel and the forty years of his reign. He is the focal point of the book. The book begins with the death of Saul and Jonathan in the battlefield and David is anointed king over Judah. Dealing with the unresolved issues with the house of Saul (with Saul's son &amp; the commander in chief), it took seven and a half years before the nation is unified under David. (ref: 2 Samuel 3:1) King David unifies both the political and religious life of the nation by bringing the ark of the covenant from the house of Abinadab. (ref: 2 Samuel 6:1-7:1) God is introduced as the coming King and establishes an everlasting covenant with David and his kingdom. (2 Samuel 7:16) A time of stability and prosperity begins to emerge after David successfully defeats the enemies of Israel. His vulnerability and weakness lead him into sin with Bathsheba, being confronted by his son Absalom, eventually flees from Jerusalem and makes a series of unfortunate and unwise decisions. After a quarrel between Israel and Judah dealing with unsettled feelings about bringing David back, David returns and is once again established in Jerusalem. The book ends with two poems and David building an altar to the Lord - offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. The Lord heeded the prayers for the land, and the plague was withdrawn from Israel.</p>

<p>Interesting Facts in 1 &amp; 2 Samuel</p>	<p>Samuel was a man of prayer, who began the school of prophets, anointed Israel's first two kings (Saul &amp; David), was Israel's last judge and Israel's first prophet. 1 Samuel describes the transition of leadership in Israel from the judges to the kings. The transition involves three stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From Eli to Samuel.</li> <li>• From Samuel to Saul.</li> <li>• From Saul to David.</li> </ul> <p>2 Samuel – David (the main character) is the halfway point between Abraham and Christ. David's character is characterized by: justice, wisdom, integrity, courage and compassion prior to his compromise with Bathsheba.</p>
<p>Christ Revealed in 1 &amp; 2 Samuel</p>	<p>The Similarities between Jesus and the boy Samuel are very interesting. Both were children with promise, dedicated to God before birth, they were the bridges of transition from one stage of the nation's history to another. Samuel combined the offices of prophet and priest, Christ is Prophet, Priest and King. The tragic end of Saul illustrates the ultimate result of earthly kingdoms. The only hope is a kingdom of God on earth, whose ruler is God Himself. In David, the earthly lineage of God's King begins. In Christ, God comes as King and will come again as King of Kings. David, the simple shepherd boy, prefigures Christ the good Shepherd. Jesus becomes the ultimate Shepherd-King.</p> <p>2 Samuel – David and his reign look to the coming of the Messiah. God intercepts David's plans to build a house for the ark and explains that while David cannot build Him a house, God is building David a house, that is, a lineage that will last forever. In his victory over all Israel's enemies, his humility and commitment to the Lord, his zeal for the house of God, his combining of the offices of prophet, priest and king – David is a forerunner of the Root of Jesse, Jesus Christ</p>
<p>Memory Verses</p>	<p><i>“Then the Spirit of the Lord will come upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man” (1 Samuel 10:6 NKJV).</i></p> <p><i>“As the proverb of the ancients says, ‘Wickedness proceeds from the wicked.’ But my hand shall not be against you” (1 Samuel 24:13 NKJV).</i></p> <p><i>“For we will surely die and become like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. Yet God does not take away a life; but He devises means, so that His banished ones are not expelled from Him” (2 Samuel 14:14 NKJV).</i></p>
<p>Personal Application</p>	<p>It is clear in 1 Samuel that God is at work in history. Even the most sinful and rebellious occurrences can be used by Him to continue His divine plan. The corruption of Eli's sons and his unwillingness to deal with them becomes the schooling environment for the child Samuel. The rejection of God and the demand for a king by Israel becomes the basis for the establishment of an earthly royal line that will bring forth the entrance of God into human history in the person of the Messiah. It's not only the broad sweeps of history that God's hand is obvious. God steps into the pain and misery of Hannah to give her three sons and two daughters (2:21). Though men look on the outward appearance, God looks at the heart (16:7). Obedience is better than sacrifice (15:22, 23), indicating that God is concerned about men's hearts as well as their actions. God does not spare even those in high position when they have sinned, but He is still a God of patience and forgiveness.</p>