

## 9. I Samuel

1. Writer: Unknown – Probably mostly written by Samuel (See 1 Samuel 10:25), but as Samuel dies in Chapter 25, it could have been finished by the prophet Nathan and/or Gad based on Chronicles 29:29. *Now the acts of David the King, first and last, behold they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer.*
2. Time Period: The book starts at some point during the period of the judges about a year before the birth of Samuel and follows Samuel as he grows up to be prophet and the final judge. The book continues through the anointing of Saul as the first King over all the tribes of Israel and his subsequent fall, and ends with Saul's death. Because little is revealed about Samuel's age it is difficult to precisely link up the dates in the timeline between the ending of the period of the judges and the beginning of the period of the Kings.
3. Detailed by Chapter:
  - Chapter 1 – Elkanah, a man of the tribe of Ephraim, had two wives: Peninnah and Hannah. Hannah was barren and being sore distressed by it, once while the family was worshiping at Shiloh, where the tabernacle of the Lord was pitched, she vowed that if the Lord would bless her with a son then she would give him to the Lord for his whole life and would never cut his hair. (See Concept of a Nazarite in Numbers 6) Eli, an old priest, saw Hannah's lips moving as she prayed silently and accused her of being drunk. After she explained, he blessed her and the Lord blessed her to bare a son whom she named him Samuel ('Heard of God'). When he was weaned, she fulfilled her vow by delivering Samuel unto Eli to minister unto the Lord at Shiloh. See Key Verse #1
  - Chapter 2 – Hannah gives a sweet prayer of thanksgiving to God before returning home with her husband and each year she would return with a new little coat for Samuel. God blessed Hannah to have five more children. Eli had two wicked sons, Hophni and Phinehas, who as priests abused their rights to take a portion of the sacrifices brought before the Lord and lay with women that came to the Lord's tabernacle. Eli knew of these faults and called them out on it, but they didn't listen to him. A prophet visits Eli and declares that the Lord shall utterly cut off Eli's descendants from the priesthood (Fulfilled in King Solomon's day- See 1 Kings 2:27) and as a sign that it would come to pass, the Lord would kill both Hophni and Phinehas on the same day.
  - Chapter 3 - Samuel ministered unto the Lord with Eli. The Lord speaks to the young boy, who didn't initially realize it was the Lord speaking, and tell Samuel that he shall do a thing to make everyone's ears tingle and that same day he shall bring the promised judgment upon Eli's. Samuel grows up and is established as a prophet.
  - Chapter 4 - Israel is initially defeated in battle by the Philistines. In an effort to gain an advantage and favor with God, they brought the ark from Shiloh down to the field of battle in Ebenezer, but they still lost the battle, both of Eli's sons were killed and the ark was captured. When a messenger brings tidings, Eli, now an old and fat man, upon hearing the news tumbles off his seat, broke his neck and died. Phinehas's wife, before dying in child birth, bears a son and names him 'Ichabod' ('Where is the Glory') after she heard the fate of the ark, her husband, and father in law.
  - Chapter 5 – The ark is taken to various Philistine cities and the Lord torments them with various plagues, infirmities, and death, and even decapitates one of their idols.
  - Chapter 6 – After 7 months, the Philistines voluntarily return it to Israel by putting it on a cart pulled by two milk cows, along with golden mice and golden emerods (hemorrhoids) in honor of the plagues God had sent them. They said if the cart goes the straight down the road back to Israel then Israel's God caused of all these hurts, but if the cart goes any other direction, then it was just bad luck. The cart goes straight to Israel and to the city of Beth-shemesh, but those people opened the ark to look inside and the Lord destroyed them. The survivors sent word to Kirjath-jearim asking them to come down and get the ark.

- Chapter 7 – The ark remained in Kirjath-jearim for twenty years. Samuel calls upon all of Israel to repent and to put away all their idols. There is a general assembly of the people at Mizpah, Samuel prays for them while they fast. The Philistines hearing of the assembly rose up to fight them, but Israel cried unto the Lord, who thundered with a great thunder and delivered them from the Philistines. (This may be the end of the 40 years of Philistine rule - Judges 13:1 since Samson was to begin to overthrow them) The Philistines didn't invade Israel the rest of Samuel's life, while he judged Israel. See Key Verse #2
- Chapter 8 – Samuel, now old, has made his two sons judges, but they are corrupt (willing to take bribes). All the elders of Israel call for Samuel to give them a king instead. Displeased Samuel prays to the Lord, who says the people have rejected God; nevertheless, Samuel should still grant their request after he has protested and informed them of what the king shall do to them. The people still desired a king so they could be like other nations.
- Chapter 9 – We are introduced to a tall young man of Benjamin named Saul. While searching for his father's lost asses, he meets Samuel. God reveals to Samuel that this is the man who shall be made King of Israel. Samuel declares to Saul that he should come up to a feast for he is the desire of all Israel. Saul, understandably confused, protests that he is a nobody from the smallest tribe (See Judges 21 on the near extermination of the tribe Benjamin).
- Chapter 10 – When they are alone, Samuel anoints Saul with oil and declares that he is to be captain over Israel. He tells him a series of signs that will shortly come to pass as a confirmation. God gives Saul 'another heart', and after all those signs came to pass, the Spirit of Lord came upon him and he prophesied with a group of prophets. Samuel called another general assembly of the people at Mizpah and a King was selected by casting lots first on the tribe, then family, until Saul is chosen as king. They had to search for him because he had hidden himself among the luggage. Some men, children of Belial (meaning worthless or wicked), rejected Saul as king.
- Chapter 11 – Upon hearing that the Ammonites threaten the city of Jabesh in Gilead, Saul in anger orders/threatens all of Israel to assemble. A decisive victory is won and after Saul's shuts down the idea of killing those men who rejected him as king, the nation travels to Gilgal to 'renew the kingdom' and all the people rejoiced to make Saul king.
- Chapter 12 – Samuel first testifies of his integrity and then reproves the people for their wickedness in asking for a king. He recounts God's past mercies and deliverances through Moses and the judges. Samuel then terrifies the people by calling on God to send a massive thunderstorm to destroy the wheat on harvest day and admonishes them to obey and fear the Lord. See Key Verse #3
- Chapter 13 – In the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Saul's reign, his son Jonathan fights against and defeats a garrison of the Philistines, but that results in the Philistines amassing a huge army in Michmash. Saul calls the people to Gilgal, but the people so afraid that many fled and hid. After a week of watching his army get smaller, Saul grows impatient and rather than waiting for Samuel he wrongfully offers sacrifices unto the Lord. Because of this breach, the kingdom will be removed from him and given to a 'man after [God's] own heart.' Saul leads about 600 men, almost all of whom are armed only with farming tools, to Gibeah of Benjamin.
- Chapter 14 – After the Lord delivers a garrison of the Philistines into the hand of Jonathan and his armor bearer, God causes a great trembling among the Philistines so much that the earth itself quaked. The Philistine host fled in a panic and fought each other as they went. Encouraged, all the men of Israel, who had hidden themselves or even had come up originally on the Philistine's side, joined in the fight. Saul's foolish command that no man may eat before nightfall nearly gets Jonathan killed and causes the people to sin as they flew upon the spoils and eat it raw.
- Chapter 15 - Saul is ordered to utterly destroy everything in Amalek as judgment for them coming out against Israel as they were fleeing Egypt (Exodus 17), but Saul disobeys and spares Agag the king, as well as all the best cattle. He attempts to justify himself by saying the people forced him and the goods were going to be used as sacrifices. '*Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice.*' For his disobedience, God rejects Saul and Samuel kills the King

- Agag. After that day, Samuel did not come to see Saul again until after Samuel's death. (See 1 Samuel 28- Saul seeks to see Samuel after his death) See Key Verse #4
- Chapter 16 – God sends Samuel to Bethlehem to anoint a son of Jesse. Samuel anoints David and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David that day forward and departed from Saul. The Lord sent an evil spirit to trouble Saul and David is called to play the harp whenever the evil spirit vexed Saul. See Key Verse #5
- Chapter 17 – The Philistines set their army and send out Goliath, giant of Gath, who issues a single combat challenge causing all the men of Israel to greatly fear. Saul didn't take David to the war so he returned home to feed his father's sheep before being dispatched with provisions for his brothers. Hearing the reproach that Goliath is heaping upon the God of Israel, David confronts him with just a staff (rod) and a sling in the name of the Lord and the Lord delivers Goliath into his hand.
- Chapters 18-20 - Saul quickly becomes jealous of David and fearing that the kingdom should be given to David, Saul seeks to destroy him both directly- javelins; and indirectly, by setting a dowry of 100 Philistine foreskins in exchange for Saul's daughter's hand in marriage. David brings back 200 and earns his first wife. Saul's son, Jonathan, who is David's dear friend, intervenes to his father on David's behalf, but unsuccessfully, so he instructs David to flee for his life
- Chapters 21-22 – As David flees from Saul, he comes to the city of Nob and from Ahimelech the priest he receives food (shrewbread) and the sword of Goliath. (See Matthew 12:3) David travels to Gath, but upon hearing that his reception might be hostile, he feints himself to be mad so he is able to depart unto a cave in Adullam. Men begin to gather unto David till he has a band of about 400. Saul hears that Ahimelech gave aid to David and he orders the deaths of all the priests in the city of Nob, except Abiathar who escaped and fled to David. Saul's servants refuse to obey, but Doeg, an Edomite, slays them.
- Chapter 23 - David's band having grown to about 600 of men deliver the city of Keilah from the Philistines, but God warns David not to linger for Saul would come and the men of Keilah would (ungratefully) turn him over to Saul. David narrowly avoid Saul's pursuits until Saul is distracted by a Philistine invasion.
- Chapter 24 – Saul pursues David again with three thousand men. David spares Saul when he rests inside the same cave where David's men are hiding. Saul acknowledges that David is a more righteous man than he and that David shall surely be king. Saul requests that David swear not to cut off his house entirely (don't kill all his family) when he is king. David swears and Saul goes home.
- Chapter 25 – Samuel dies and David sends a message to a rich man named Nabal, whose flocks David's men had protected. Nabal rebuffs David and will send no present in gratitude. His quick thinking and faithful wife Abigail preserves the life of Nabal by meeting David with gifts before he can arrive in his anger to destroy Nabal. Shortly thereafter, God kills Nabal, and Abigail becomes David's 2<sup>nd</sup> wife along with Ahinoam, who is wife number 3. While David has been on the run, Saul gave his first wife, Michal to another man.
- Chapter 26 – Saul seeks David again with his band of three thousand. David and Abishai creep into their camp at night and could have killed Saul, but David spares Saul a second time. They slip out with Saul's spear and water jug and travel to the top of hill a far off and yells to Saul to inform him that he has spared him. Saul promises not to do him anymore harm and goes home.
- Chapter 27 – Thinking that one day Saul would catch and kill him, David flees to the Philistine city of Gath (Goliath's home town) and dwells among them after finding favor with Achish, King of Gath, who gives David the city of Ziklag. Saul did not pursue him anymore. David remained among the Philistines for a year and four months.
- Chapter 28 – The Philistines rise up to invade Israel and King Achish takes David and his band along. Saul gathered his forces but when he saw the Philistines, he greatly feared and sought guidance from the Lord, but received no answer. Desperate, he seeks a woman with a 'familiar spirit' (witchcraft) to bring Samuel up in a vision (who is already dead). Samuel does appear and tells Saul that he has been rejected by God for his disobedience and

that both he and his sons shall die tomorrow and Israel shall be defeated by the Philistines.

Chapter 29 - David who had marched to battle Israel with Philistines is sent home by Achish because the other princes did not trust David to fight for them.

Chapter 30 – When David returns to Ziklag, he discovers that the city has been burned and everyone's wives and children were taken captive by the Amalekites. David pursues after them and successfully restores all the captives and sends a present to the elders of Judah of the Amalekite.

Chapter 31 – As Samuel had said, the Philistine army conquers Israel in battle and Saul and three of his sons, including Jonathan, are all slain.

#### 4. Key Verses:

1. 1 Samuel 1:27-28 - *For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him: Therefore also I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD. And he worshipped the LORD there.*
  2. 1 Samuel 7:12- *Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.*
  3. 1 Samuel 12:12 *And when ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the LORD your God was your king.*
  4. 1 Samuel 15:22-23 *And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.*
  5. 1 Samuel 16:7 - *But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.*
5. How does this book point to Jesus the Christ? It Introduces the Role of the Lord's Anointed King.

The Lord only selected two men to be King of Israel: Saul and David. At God specific command, Samuel anointed of each of them by literally poured oil on their heads. All the other kings of Israel and Judah were selected by who the people were willing to follow and they generally chose the prior king's son. The importance of the selection being made by God is highlighted by David's repeated refusals to lay his hand upon, or kill, the man that God himself had set up to be king. The anointing of a man selected of God points to Jesus most plainly by Jesus's title- the Christ. Christ is the Greek word (Christos- Strong's 5547) meaning the Anointed. The Hebrew word for Anointed is 'Messiah.' Jesus was anointed not by oil but by the Holy Spirit. (Luke 4:18)

Before anointing Saul, Samuel tells him that God hath made him 'Captain', or chief leader, over the Lord's inheritance referring to the nation of Israel. God hath made Jesus to be the Captain over all things, but most especially the children of God and his church. (See Ephesians 1:20-23, Philippians 2:9-11, & Hebrews 2:10) Saul is obviously a flawed king and full of disobedience and by his failures he acts as a foil for King David, who is mostly obedient unto the Lord as we'll see in 2 Samuel. (A foil is literary term for individual, whose character traits are the opposite of another character). King Jesus, unlike Saul, is perfectly obedient to all the father's commands down to the last jot and tittle.