

## 2 SAMUEL WEEK ONE

June 10, 2021

*Background* – The book of Samuel was originally one book until sometime around the second century BCE when the Canonical Hebrew scriptures were translated into Greek which is known as the Septuagint. That's when the book of Samuel was divided into two parts. The book takes place in the territory known as Canaan or Israel. The story takes place during the last years of the tribal confederacy (think Judges) and the beginning of the reign of King Saul. (1020-1000 BCE). This was about 200-250 years past the time that the Hebrew people entered into Canaan (see Joshua) at the turn of the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age near 1250 BCE.

*Date, Theology, and Authorship* – Literarily speaking, this book can be placed among Joshua, Judges, and Kings. These books, along with Samuel demonstrate the distinctive theology and constitute what scholars call Deuteronomistic History. The idea here is that if the nation as a whole is faithful to Yahweh, then it will prosper. If it isn't faithful, it will have disastrous military conflicts until the nation repents. This theology sees loss in war as evidence of divine displeasure, which means that a victorious war leader will be understood as beloved by God.

Although Samuel chronicles events from the ninth century BCE, the book was not put into writing until around 550 BCE during the Babylonian Exile. So even though the book is written in the voice of Samuel the Prophet, it is evident that several authors contributed to this work. The theme of Samuel revolves around the importance of political and personal relationships as they relate to good government and good leaders.

Two sources unique to 2 Samuel include the court history of succession narrative found in chapters 9-20 which is linked to 1 Kings 1-2. The second source is in the appendix to 2 Samuel (chapters 21-24). This appears to be made up of miscellaneous material relevant to the reign of David. This section also includes two songs by David that give insight into how he understood his own life and his relationship with God. These two disparate sources remain a mystery, but fit well within the narrative of Samuel as a whole.

*Schedule* -

June -

10 - Review of 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel 1-3 "A Good Start?"

24 - 2 Samuel 4-6 "The Ark and Renewed Covenants"

July -

1 - 2 Samuel 7-9 "The Content of One's Character"

8 - 2 Samuel 10-12 "Personal Failure"

15 - 2 Samuel 13-15 "The Sins of the Father and Son"

22 - 2 Samuel 16-18 "How's That Monarchy Thing Going?"

29 - 2 Samuel 19-21 "The Second Revolt"

August

5 - 2 Samuel 22-24 "The End of a Legacy"

*Questions for 2 Samuel 1-3*

1. What are David's primary struggles with trying to rule Saul's kingdom?
2. What is the significance of "The Song of the Bow" and why would David want this song to be taught to the people of Judah?
3. Why does David continue to give Saul accolades when Saul spent a good part of his reign trying to kill David?
4. How does David's anointing as King over Judah set him up for conflict with Ishbaal, the new King of Israel and his chief military leader (and cousin) Abner?
5. Why are there still issues concerning the old tribal confederacies, and how does the conflicts between these "sons of Israel" help or hinder a monarchy?
6. Why did Abner defect to David's camp?
7. How does Abner's death affect David personally? How does it affect him politically?
8. How do the events in these chapters help David's rise to power?