

## The Holy Book of First Samuel

### Title and Authorship

- First Samuel is appropriately named after Samuel, the principal character of the early narratives and the one who anointed Israel's first two kings, Saul and David.
- First and Second Samuel were originally one book, "The Book of Samuel" in the Hebrew Scriptures. When these Scriptures were translated into Greek, around 150 B.C., the books of Samuel and Kings were brought together into a complete history of the Hebrew monarchy. This unit of Scripture was divided into four sections: First, Second, Third, and Fourth Kingdoms. Samuel and Kings were later separated again, but the divisions of the Greek translation persisted. The result was a First and Second Samuel and a First and Second Kings.
- The authors of the books of Samuel were probably **Samuel, Gad, and Nathan**. Samuel wrote the first twenty-four chapters of the first book. Gad, the companion of David (1Sam. 22:5), continued the history thus commenced; and Nathan completed it, probably arranging the whole in the form in which we now have it (1 Chr. 29:29).

### Historical Background:

- The two books of Samuel contain the history of Israel from the appearance of Samuel as a prophet to the end of the reign of David. They include the renewal of the theocracy by the labours of Samuel, and the establishment of the earthly monarchy by Saul and David.
- We meet with certain prophets as early as the times of the judges; but the true founder of the Old Testament prophecy was Samuel. With whom the prophets first began their continuous labours, and the prophetic gift was developed into a power which exerted an influence, as strong as it was salutary, upon the future development of the Israelite state.
- The Holy book of first Samuel tells how the Lord raised up Samuel, the son of the pious Hannah, who had been asked for of the Lord and consecrated to His service from his mother's womb, to be His prophet. God appeared to him continually at Shiloh; so that all Israel acknowledge him as the prophet appointed by the Lord, and through his prophetic labours was converted from dead idols to serve the living God.
- In consequence of this conversion, the Lord gave to the Israelites, in answer to Samuel's prayer, a complete and wondrous victory over the Philistines, by which they were delivered from the heavy oppression they had endured for forty years at the hands of these enemies. From that time forward Samuel judged all Israel.
- As he grew old, his sons, whom he appointed as judges in Beersheba were found dishonest (8:2, 3) and failed to walk in his steps. With such evil leaders as models, the people of Israel disregarded the word of God and refused to listen to His prophet Samuel (8:19).
- The worship center of Israel at this time was located at Shiloh, where the tabernacle was set up (1:3; Josh. 18:1). However, even the contents of the tabernacle were not left undisturbed during these tumultuous and evil times. The Ark of the Covenant was captured by the Philistines (4:11). After a seven-month sojourn among the Philistine cities (5:1–6:16), the ark was returned to Beth Shemesh (6:19) and then kept at Kirjath Jearim (7:1) until David brought it to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:1–17).

- During this time, the Israelites became dissatisfied with the abusive rule of the judges (8:3). The people longed for the glories of a monarchy such as they saw in the surrounding nations. So the Lord allowed the Israelites to have their way. He gave them a king like the other nations: the handsome and tall King Saul (10:1).
- Although Saul appeared to be well suited for leading a nation, his reign ended in tragedy because he ignored the word of God.
- First Samuel is associated with the tumultuous life, reign, and decline of Saul, contrasted with the rapid rise of the young and faithful David.

### **Purpose of the Book**

- To record the life of Samuel, Israel's last judge
- To provide an official account of the rise of the monarchy during the time of Samuel
- To record the reign and decline of Saul, the first king
- To record the choice and preparation of David, Israel's greatest king.

### **Main Characters**

#### **Samuel**

- The name Samuel means 'Heard of God'
- He came as a result of God's answer to his mother's prayer for a child
- He was called to fill many different roles: judge, priest, prophet, counsellor and God's man at a turning point in the history of Israel. Samuel was willing to be one thing: God's servant Samuel showed that those whom God finds faithful in small things will be trusted with greater things.
- He anointed the first two kings of Israel.
- Was the last and most effective of Israel's judges
- His mistake is that he was unable to lead his sons into a close relationship with God

#### **Saul**

- Presented physically the ideal visual image of a king, tall with a striking appearance
- First God appointed king of Israel
- During his reign he had the greatest success when he obeyed God
- His failure resulted from acting on his own
- His leadership abilities did not match the expectations created by his appearance
- Jealous of David, he tried to kill him
- He specifically disobeyed God on several occasions

### **The Lord Jesus Christ in the Book of 1 Samuel**

- Samuel as a symbol of the Lord Jesus Christ Hannah song (1 Sam 1:2-10) resembles in occasion and content the song of St. Mary (Lk 1:46-55).
- Samuel was a prophet, a judge and a God chosen priest as our Lord Jesus Christ who is the source of these three positions, the kingship, the prophesy and the priesthood.
- The Israelites refused Samuel and asked for a king as the Jews rejected the Lord Jesus Christ saying "We have no king but Caesar!" (Jn 19:15)
- Samuel was intercessor between God and the people as the Lord Jesus Christ is our intercessor (1Tim 2:5)

## **The Holy Book of Second Samuel**

### **Title and Authorship:**

As in the case of 1 Samuel, the author of 2 Samuel is not named. Tradition assigns the authorship to Samuel.

The Book of 2 Samuel begins with the active rule of David over Judah and concludes with the strained latter days of his reign over the united monarchy.

This prophetic history covers a period of about forty years (1010-970 B.C.).

### **Purpose of the Book:**

- To Define the Monarchy of Israel as it related to the Rule of God over the nation. These books show the need of a king and both the wrong motives as well as the right motives in desiring a king. It has been said that Saul was a king after the heart of the people while David was a king after God's own heart.
- To Legitimize the Reign of King David.
- To Emphasize the Importance of Following the Lord and Obeying His Statutes.
- To Teach the Grace of God. In David, we are admitted to a wonderful picture of the mercy of God. Though he suffers greatly from the consequences of his sin, David is forgiven his sin and continues to trust in the Lord. From his experiences, we learn that failure can be overcome through repentance and faith.

### **The Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Book of 2 Samuel**

- David the king was a symbol of the Lord Jesus Christ
- Both were from the tribe of Judah and both from Bethlehem
- David was a shepherd and our Lord called Himself the Good Shepherd
- David was a king and a prophet, the Lord Jesus Christ is the King of kings and higher than the prophets
- David was anointed king and our Lord was called the Messiah the Anointed "Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions. (Ps 45:7)
- David started his practical life by defeating Goliath and the Lord Jesus Christ started His ministry by defeating the Satan in the wilderness
- Saul asked to kill David, so David escaped though he could have killed Saul. Herod asked to kill the Lord Jesus Christ, so he fled while he could have destroyed Herod
- David used to forgive those who trespassed against him. He forgave Saul and was upset when he dies, he also cried for the death of Absalom who wanted to kill him. Our Lord Jesus Christ forgave those who crucified Him
- David was betrayed by his son Absalom and the Lord Jesus Christ was betrayed by His disciple Judah
- David went to the valley of Kedron to the Mount of Olive before his son's attack and the Lord went to the same place before Judah's betrayal and His arrest.