

I Samuel

Introduction:

Originally in the Hebrew canon as one book, as were 1 & 2 Kings and 1 & 2 Chronicles. Originally with Joshua and Judges and called “the Former Prophets.”

In the Septuagint (Greek copy of OT) each of these single volumes was divided. Originally 1 & 2 Samuel was called 1 & 2 Kingdoms with 1 & 2 Kings as 3 & 4 Kingdoms. Latin Vulgate retained this division calling it 1-4 Kings.

We do not know who wrote I & 2 Samuel, and though some have tried to say the author was Samuel whose name the books carry, this cannot be for the books describe the death of Samuel and reach past that point. Part of the work of a prophet was to record history so it could be our present books contain notes from Samuel (ie. 1 Samuel 10:25 tells of a book Samuel wrote and laid before the Lord). Other sources for writing this history may be Nathan the prophet and Gad the seer (1 Chronicles 29:29).

Since 2 Samuel 5:4 refers to the length of David’s reign we must conclude these books were completed after his reign. Several times there are references to landmarks “present to this day” (ie. 1 Sam. 5:5, 6:18, 27:6) that take us beyond Solomon but before the exile.

These books are historical, and focus on real events that happened in the life of a people in a specific time and place. The perspective of this history is from the relationship of the peoples with their God. As some have rightly said, it is “His Story” – God’s story. The successes of the nation come from God’s faithfulness to His promises, and the failures are due to the rebellion and sin of the people. Proverbs 14:34 sums this up well: “Righteousness exalts a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.”

Time line:

Birth of Samuel	1115 BC
Samuel’s call	1105 BC
Samuel becomes Judge	1070 BC
Anointing Saul as King	1043 BC
Death of Samuel	1025 BC
David Becomes King	1010 BC
The death of David	970 BC

1 Samuel 1:1-20 - Samuel's Birth

1. Who was the father of Samuel? Elkanah (means created of God)
2. What was his home?
(Ramah was Samuel's birthplace [vv. 19–20], residence [7:17], and burial place [25:1].)
3. Elkanah had two wives (Deut 21:15). What does Jesus say is God's original plan (Matthew 19:8)? What caused tension between the two wives of Elkanah?
4. What did Elkinah do each year? What might this tell us about his religious devotion?
5. Why go to Shiloh for sacrifices? (Joshua 18:1)
6. According to verse 4 how did Elkanah show his favouritism of Hannah?
7. What caused Hannah distress in her life? (vss. 6-7)
8. How does Elkinah try to comfort his wife (v. 9)? Is he successful?
9. Where does Hannah go with her distress (V. 9-10)?
10. What vow does Hannah make to God as she prays in the temple (v. 11)?
11. Hannah is praying to God but the High Priest, Eli, sees something different. What does he conclude is happening (cf. verses 12-14)?
12. Hannah explains what is happening in verse 15-16. What does she tell the priest? What does she not tell him?
13. What does the priest say to Hannah after he hears what is happening? (v. 17)
14. How did Hannah respond to the words of Eli the priest (v. 18)? What sign was there that her spirits had lifted? What does this tell us about the faith of Hannah?
15. Our passage ends with the family worshipping one more time and then heading home. At the end of verse 19 it says "the Lord remembered her." Do you think God had forgotten her? Or her request?
16. Verse 20 recounts the happiest time of Hannah's life. What happened? What did she name her son? ("A godly name")
17. What do we learn about God in this chapter?