
1 SAMUEL INTRODUCTION

1 Samuel Introduction

The Lives of Samuel, Saul, and David.

My Purpose: My hope is, that if you have to teach the book of Samuel, that my examination of this book will be the only place you need to go for reference. I've spent years exegeting this book and inserting in numerous meaningful references as well (I've left a lot of references out because I found them not to be particularly helpful). One thing which I do, and I make it clear when I do this, is I will occasionally speculate as to some of the subjects which are not actually covered in this book, but appear to be occurring at the time of the events of this book (one of the most important events is the destruction of Shiloh).

The Topics of Chapter 1:

Introduction	Style Changes	Background
Personal Application	Historical Value	Name of the Book
Brief synopsis of the book of 1 Samuel	The Name of the book of 1 Samuel	Authorship
Source Materials	Style	Textual problems
Spiritual advance	The People and Places of the Book of 1 Samuel	Israel's enemies
The Priesthood	Food in the Book of 1 Samuel	The Book of Samuel by Sections
Outline of 1 Samuel	Accuracy of our Manuscripts	Missing Information
1 Samuel in Contrast with the book of the Judges	The Grand Themes in the book of Samuel	Prophecies in 1 Samuel
Many Unanswered questions		What is the big picture?

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines:

My Unique Approach (i.e., how is this commentary different from any other commentary?)

Why I Chose These Four Translations

The Overall Structure of 1 Samuel

The Divisions of the Books of Samuel and Kings

General Time Frame for the Book of Samuel

Specific Time Frame for the Book of Samuel

Authorship for the Book of 1 Samuel

Why David Probably Authored the Rest of the Book of Samuel

Other Suggestions for the Time Frame for the Book of Samuel

Source Materials for the Book of Samuel

Primary and Secondary Witnesses to the Events of 1 Samuel

People Found in the Book of 1 Samuel

Places Found in the Book of 1 Samuel

Key Events in the Book of 1Samuel
Keil and Delitzsch Summarize 1Sam. 1–7
Prophecies found in the Book of 1Samuel
Samuel, a Book Filled with Unanswered Questions

Doctrines Covered		Doctrines Alluded To	
		Comparative Chronology Chart	Ammonites
		Philistines	Amalekites

Introduction: 1Samuel follows the life of Samuel, who eclipses the life of Eli; and then the life of Saul as it is eclipsed by David. Eli is a priest to God, not a man of greatness, from what we can tell, and, quite unfortunately, a failure with his two sons, who would succeed him in the priesthood. God steps into the picture and brings Samuel onto the scene, a shadow of the Messiah to come, a man outside the priestly line of Aaron, possibly a Nazarite, and a man whose entire life is dedicated to God.

In every chapter of this commentary, you are going to see something you have never seen before: a point of view, a doctrine, a logical progression of thought.

He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, like a root out of the parched ground (Isa. 53:2a). Samuel is God’s man to replace Eli. Samuel is the first prophet-priest since Moses and he illustrates Jesus Christ more than anyone else from Moses to this point of time, about 4 centuries since Moses.

Similarly, we have Saul, who appears, at first, to be God’s man, the man to step into the gap, and man upon whose shoulders Israel could rest. However, Saul also had his failings, those being even greater than the failings of Eli. In the book of 1Samuel, God brings His own man to take Saul’s place, just as Samuel replaced Eli. God brings in a man who has no beauty or majesty that we should look upon him, nor glamour, that we should treasure him (Isa. 53:2b).¹ Even David’s own father did not see David as a candidate for royalty (1Sam. 16:7–11).

Scofield: This book represents the personal history of Samuel, last of the Judges. It records the moral failure of the priesthood under Eli, and of the Judges in Samuel’s attempt to make the office hereditary (1Sam. 8:1). In his prophetic office Samuel was faithful, and in him begins the line of writing prophets. Henceforth the prophet, not the priest, is conspicuous in Israel. In this book the theocracy, as exercised through judges, ends (1Sam. 8:7), and the line of kings begins with Saul.²

Barnes: The important place to be filled by Samuel in the ensuing history is seen at once in the opening chapters of the book which bears his name. Further, the fact that Samuel’s birth of her that had been barren is represented in Hannah’s song as typical of the triumphs of the Church and of the Kingdom of Christ, is another indication of the very distinguished place assigned to Samuel in the economy of the Old Testament, borne out by the mention of him in such passages as Psalm 99:6; Jer. 15:1; Acts 3:24. Though however, Samuel’s personal greatness is thus apparent, it is no less clearly marked that his place is one not of absolute but of relative importance. When we view the history as a whole, the eye does not rest upon Samuel, and stop there, but is led on to the throne and person of David as typical of the Kingdom and Person of Christ. An incidental mark of this subordination may be seen in the fact that the Books of Samuel are really a continuation of the Book of Ruth; a Book which derived its significance from its containing a history of David’s ancestors and genealogy. Clearly, therefore, in the mind of the

¹ Yes, I fully realize that these prophecies of Isaiah are descriptions of Jesus Christ; Samuel and David are types of Jesus Christ.

² C. I. Scofield, *Scofield Notes from the Scofield King James’ Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. Introduction.

*sacred historian, the personal history of Samuel was only a link to connect DAVID with the Patriarchs, just as the subsequent history connects David himself with our Lord JESUS CHRIST.*³

If you would like an even briefer overview of the books of Samuel and Kings, these books cover the history of Israel from the end of the rule by Judges to the scattering of Israel and Judah, the divided kingdom, under judgment.

There are a hundred commentaries which examine the book of Samuel—why is my approach any different?

My Unique Approach

- The thrust of my commentary is to come up with a good and accurate translation. Apart from accurately rendering a verse, one cannot properly comment on that verse. Although many commentaries make good observations concerning the translation of this passage or that (e.g., Keil and Delitzsch or Barnes), this is not the thrust of their approach.
- When translating a verse, every translator faces the dilemma, *should I be consistent and ultra-literal or should I give the general understanding of this passage?* I offer three translations—the first of which is ultra-literal; word-for-word literal, and very consistent with the translation of the same words in other passages. On the other hand, that sort of a translation can be very difficult to sift through. So then I offer a smoother version of same, making minor changes here and there, either with the tense, the number or gender. I allow myself the use of more synonyms, as a word can mean different things in different passages. Thirdly, I provide a much looser rendering of the same passage, where the thought and thrust of the passage is preserved, although the very words of the original are not necessarily carried over into the new translation.
- I know how frustrating it is to wade through a lot of Hebrew and Greek to get to the meat of a passage. Some people cannot deal with constant references to this or that Hebrew word or construction (have you ever tried to wade through the excellent, but often too meaty Keil and Delitzsch Old Testament commentary?). When I originally began exegeting the Bible, the most worthy criticism that I received was on this point (actually, this came from an old friend of mine). Therefore, so that you could see the Hebrew and dissect it carefully, if you so chose; or so that you could ignore 95% of my Hebrew references, I have placed the Hebrew in a table apart from the commentary of the text; this way, you can intentionally ignore it, or you can go back and examine it when you doubt my rendering of the passage. I include the English transliteration, the Hebrew, and the pronunciation in the first cell; the general meanings in the second (some of which will be peculiar to the stem of the verb); a complete morphology of each word in the third cell; and Strong's and BDB numbers in the fourth box, in case you want to check my work out more carefully. I am, of course, completely indebted to John Joseph Owens for the morphology and BDB numbers. However, I do include each and every part of speech in these cells, including all of the prepositions, many of which he simply refers to as a preposition. I also had to correct him in a few places (always noted), and, unfortunately, I introduced a few mistakes of my own.* However, the gist of this point is that, if you so choose, you can ignore most of the references to the translation process, and thereby not get so bogged down in the Hebrew. For those who choose to get bogged down by the Hebrew, I tried to present it in such a way that I assume that you know little or nothing about the Hebrew, but have an interest in it. Therefore, my explanations will seem a lot less muddy than those found in Keil and Delitzsch's works.**
- One of the weakest aspects of many exegetes is their lack of logic; a theologian often has no background in logical thinking, and therefore, often makes grave errors in their comments on this passage or that. The best example of this is I Cor. 13:1–3, a passage which is almost universally misunderstood because Paul presents a logical argument, and most people just prefer take this or that word or phrase out of its context and use it to suit their own theology. No charismatic would ever point to this passage to justify their speaking in angelic tongues if they examined the passage as a whole, from the standpoint of logic, which is the basis of this passage. If you have no training in logic and proofs, then much of what Paul writes will remain a mystery to you, as he is a master logician. When someone tells you, "That doctrine or passage is not to be understood logically, because you cannot understand God logically" is code for, "I am too stupid to understand what I am reading." Even in the best of Systematic Theology books, I find that they are weak

³ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. Introduction.

My Unique Approach

from the standpoint of logic. The author will make a point, name some passages, but when you examine those passages, they do not support the point that he makes (even though the point might be valid). My background is mathematics and my greatest interest was teaching proofs and logical thinking to young minds. I therefore bring this to the table; if I make a statement, then it has to mesh with previous statements and be consistent with the Bible throughout. Since I believe the Bible to be the Word of God, then there must not be any internal inconsistencies. Keeping track of everything—I must admit to falling down many times in this regard; however, I attempt to secure the most accurate interpretation of every passage which I come across. Furthermore, if I cannot grasp or explain any particular passage, I do not gloss over that fact, but I am willing to admit it.

- In every chapter of this commentary, you are going to see something you have never seen before: a point of view, a doctrine, a logical progression of thought. Sometimes, there will be a number of items in each chapter of the book of 1Samuel that you have never seen or even thought about before.
- My commentary is going to be quite lengthy. Right now, it appears as though this commentary will run about 3000 pages just for the book of 1Samuel. About half of that is Hebrew exegesis (confined to the Hebrew tables, so that it does not *get in the way*); that leaves about 1500 pages of actual commentary, which should make this the most thorough examination of this book.
- Finally, this is what I expect: once you finish examining this or that passage in my commentary, you will have a complete understanding of that passage and its implications. The only time you will have a question is when I have a question.

You may wonder, isn't 3000 pages a bit excessive for the book of Samuel? I have found that you can look at God's Word from a distance and from close up, and you will always unearth great truths. I believe that you can take any book from Scripture, give it this much attention, and continue to learn a great deal from that book.

Now, even though I spent some time explaining why there is a lot to be found in this commentary, I do not want you to think that this commentary is in any way the product of one man's work. I had an outstanding Bible teacher in the person of R. B. Thieme Jr.⁴ and depend a great deal upon the commentaries and works of others in order to assemble this work. This is every bit as much an assembly of works which have been written in the past along with a few things which I have added myself. The only reason that this commentary is possible is that I stand on the shoulders of thousands of men.

* I've done my best to weed them out, but I find usually one mistake per verse or two—e.g., I will say there is a suffix when there isn't one. The mistakes I make in the Hebrew exegesis are generally not made in the final translation, however. I make my English translation partially from Owen's Hebrew exegesis and partially from the changes which I have made.

** The Old Testament commentary by Keil and Delitzsch is outstanding; however, for most believers, it will be too dense to grasp. A paragraph found in their commentary might inspire me to write a page on the same subject. Furthermore, their constant allusions to a half dozen languages, often in the same paragraph, will leave most exegetes shell-shocked.

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Style changes: I began to do a couple things differently in 1Samuel. *Young's Literal Translation* is a great literal translation; albeit archaic. So, what I have begun to do is to update his translation, changing the *thee's* and *thou's* to *you's* and dropping the old *-eth* endings to the verbs. I will occasionally change or update this word or that for the purpose of clarity. The changes which I make are minimal, but it simply makes the translation a little more readable, particularly to those who do not typically read the King James Version of the Bible. Another change that I have done is I have begun to list the same four translations: the JPS, the NASB, the Septuagint (actually, the

⁴ However, interestingly enough, at this point, I have not gone back to my notes from Bob's teaching on this book. However, a great deal of what he has taught me is imbedded in my soul.

English version of the Septuagint—I modify Brenton’s translation from the Greek the same way that I modify Young’s), and Young’s *updated translation*. I chose these translations for the following reasons:

Why I Chose These Four Translations:

JPS (Tanakh)

My thinking is that, if a passage appears to refer to Jesus Christ, any *Christian* translation is going to lean that direction. Similarly, if any passage appears to lean toward Jesus Christ, a Jewish translation will tend to lean the other way. There are a great many powerful Old Testament passages which cry out to be interpreted with an eye to He Who Would Come in the New Testament. I just want to make certain that I did not unintentionally lean that direction without considering a differing approach. Furthermore, this is an outstanding translation. It is not dead-on literal; however, unlike many modern English translations, it is not a translation which dumb’s down the vocabulary.⁵

NASB

Of the modern translations, I find the NASB to be among the most accurate, and yet easy-to-read. In the past decade or so, they updated their version once again, removing some archaic language. This was an outstanding idea. However, that version is not as readily available as the version which I use.

NKJV

Equally good, and unfortunately unrecognized by many, is the NKJV, which I personally believe to be one of the best, if not the best, translation of our generation. I come from a time, not known to many young Christians (those under the age of 40) when there were a large number of *theologians* (and I used that term loosely here) who were on a *KJV only* kick. I think the result of that is, many people turned away from any version which bears the partial title of *King James Version*.

There seemed to be a coterminous rise of the NIV, although I don’t know why.⁶ The NIV is a good translation, but not a great one. When it comes to supported this point or that, one should confirm an NIV passage either in the NKJV or the NASB before citing it as a *proof text*.

⁵ And don’t get me wrong—there is definitely a place in modern translations for Bibles with limited vocabularies.

⁶ I have seen television advertisements for the NLT but not for the NIV. I don’t know why it caught on the way it has.

Why I Chose These Four Translations:

The Septuagint

Our Old Testament translations are based upon Hebrew manuscripts which were produced a little over a millennium ago. Some of the Old Testament was written nearly five millenniums ago (or, at least four). The Septuagint is an uneven Greek translation based upon manuscripts which were produced much closer to the time of the originals. This also provides us a perspective of certain words which are found only once or twice in the Hebrew. Furthermore, there are some mistakes which crept into the Massoretic text after the translation of the Septuagint. This Greek version gives us an alternate look at the Old Testament.

I should add that I use Brenton’s translation of the Greek, which I update slightly. Occasionally, often not more often than once a chapter, will I actually look at the Greek myself and translate. Doing so would increase my work considerably without enhancing my exegesis a proportional amount (just like I don’t do a full investigative work up on each and every Hebrew word). I should mention that Brenton smooths out his English translation so that it gives the gist of the Greek, but is not always literal. An example is 1Sam. 8:12, which he renders: *And he will take your daughters to be perfumers, and cooks, and bakers.* The Greek actually reads: *And your daughters he will take [or, possibly make, receive] into perfumers and into cooks and into bakers.*

Some of the words found in the Septuagint are not in my Greek lexicons, as the Greek language changed somewhat from the translation of the Septuagint to the writing of the New Testament. Therefore, correctly rendering the Greek would be an arduous process with few rewards.

Young’s Literal Translation

What Young attempted to do was to improve the consistency of an English translation. In the KJV, despite the fact that it is a very literal and a very accurate translation, still has some Hebrew words which are given literally 80–90 English equivalents throughout Scripture. Some individual words are given almost as many translations as occurrences in Scripture. Young sought to limit the number of ways that any given Hebrew word might be rendered, yielding a more accurate translation. He also tried to maintain the traditional Hebrew word order and tenses. The biggest negative to Young’s translation is that, like the KJV, it is archaic. Its strongest point is its accurate literal rendering of the Hebrew (and Greek) into English.

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Nelson does a nice table where one can glance at the table and know everything one needs to know about the overall structure of Samuel.

The Overall Structure of 1Samuel

Focus	Samuel’s dedication; the failure of Eli’s sons	The Ark of God	Israel’s desire for a king; Saul’s rise	Saul’s disobedience	Saul’s pursuance of David; David’s spiritual growth
Scripture	1Sam. 1:1–3:21	1Sam. 4:1–7:17	1Sam. 8:1–12:25	1Sam. 13:1–15:9	1Sam. 15:10–31:13
Leadership	Eli → Samuel	Samuel	Samuel → Saul	Saul	Saul → David

The Overall Structure of 1Samuel				
	In each case, there is a transference of power because of sin. Eli's sons sin and are not fit to succeed him in the priesthood, so the priestly functions go to Samuel. Samuel grows old and the people of Israel sin and reject God as their ruler, demanding a king; so they get Saul. Saul sins, and God has Samuel anoint David as his replacement.			
Topic	Decline of the Judge		Rise of the King	
Person(s)	Eli and Samuel		Samuel and Saul	Saul and David
Location	The Land of Canaan			
Time	1115–1105 B.C.	1094–1074 B.C.	1067–1065 B.C.	1065–1050 B.C. 1050–1025 B.C.

This chart or something close to it is found in *The Open Bible*; the New Living Translation; Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN; ©1996, p. 363. I have changed it somewhat, but it is quite close to the Nelson notes found there.

I took the dates from Reese: *The Reese Chronological Bible*; KJV translation; Editor: Edward Reese; ©1977 by Edward Reese and Klassen's dating system ©1975 by Frank R. Klassen; ©1980 by Bethany House Publishers, South Minneapolis, MN; pp. 413–481. This chart is a great bird's eye view of 1Samuel.

Background: The book of 1Samuel is a bridge between the time of judges and the monarchy of Israel. The first third of this book will primarily examine the ministry of Samuel, who is a judge, a priest and a prophet. He is raised by Eli, a priest in the line of Aaron, but whose own sons are a disgrace to the priesthood.

The people of Israel have come out of a dark spiritual time, as we witnessed in the book of Judges. They had been repeatedly involved with idolatry in the book of Judges, and had found themselves under the thumb of this national entity or that as a sign of God's disapproval of their actions. The final few chapters of the book of Judges reveals a dark spiritual place for the people of Israel, committing shocking acts of carnality. Therefore, we should not expect that the people of Israel have suddenly turned into this enlightened group of believers.

Bob Thieme Jr. used to say that a people got the government that they deserved. Let us expand this to include the experiences and troubles of their nation. We find Israel in war after war with the Philistines and surrounding groups. We can only imagine that God is culling out from the population the chaff from the wheat. The fact that King Saul rules over them is an indication of the people's lack of spiritual growth, and, in some cases, their direct opposition to God (after all, Israel is a theocracy, and their demand for a king so that they could be like other nations is a rejection of God reveals their spiritual inadequacies).

On the other hand, at the end of the book of Samuel, Saul will be dead and David will soon be the king over Israel, indicating that the people who remained in Israel had experienced some spiritual growth.

Personal application: You are going to find a myriad of personal applications in every chapter of 1Samuel. In fact, I will point them out time and time again. This is the sort of thing that you get when you are guided by a teacher and something which you generally miss when you simply read through the book on your own.

Historical value: The book of 1Samuel documents the transition in Israel's history from a nation ruled by judges to a nation ruled over by a king. We see the process that Israel goes through in order to make this change. We also find the introduction of the prophet of God as an integral part of Israel's history.

Name of the book Samuel: The book named *Samuel* was originally one book to the Jews. Christian historian Origen, from the 3rd century A.D., tells us that the Jews referred to this as one book.⁷ The Septuagint referred to

⁷ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 6.25. I got this from Robert Gordon, *I & II Samuel A Commentary*; Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI; ©1986; p. 19.

Samuel and Kings as 4 books and called them *the Books of Reigns* or the *Books of Kingdoms*. This is a more accurate overall name for these books. However, the first of these two books, regardless of logic, will always be called 1Samuel and 2Samuel.

Samuel is the focus of the first third of this book, as both a spiritual leader of Israel and as a type of Christ. It is apparent that he probably wrote at least the beginning chapters in this book (see 1Chron. 29:29). For this reason, I believe the book was named after him. However, the bulk of the 1st book of Samuel will deal with Saul and David; and almost the entirety of the 2nd book of Samuel will be about David's rule over Israel.

Brief synopsis of the book of 1Samuel: Samuel eclipses Eli as the High Priest and spiritual leader of Israel; and then David will eclipse Saul as the political leader of Israel.

The Name of the book of 1Samuel: Even the JPS has adopted the convention of the names of the books of 1 and 2Samuel, 1 and 2Kings. No such division existed originally, and it was possible that this was viewed as one long-ass book at one time. In time, Samuel and Kings were separated into two books, and Samuel and Kings were further subdivided into four books (the Septuagint and Vulgate list them as I, II, III and IV Kings). Like verse and chapter divisions, the eventual division into 4 books was done sometime after the writing of Scripture.

Originally, in the Hebrew Bible, Samuel was one book. In the LXX translation made in Alexandria, it was subdivided into the 1st and 2nd Kingdoms, and Keil and Delitzsch tell us that the book of Samuel was about two kingdoms, Saul's and David's; and the book of Kings was about two kingdoms, Israel and Judah (the northern and southern kingdoms). In the 16th century, David Bomberg divided these books in the Hebrew Bible as they had been in the Greek Bible almost two millenniums earlier.

The Divisions of the Books of Samuel and Kings

Books	The People Covered in this Book
1Samuel	Samuel eclipses Eli; David eclipses Saul. Begins with Samuel's birth and ends with Saul's death.
2Samuel	Primarily the rule of David over Israel.
1Kings	David dies and is succeeded by his son, Solomon. Solomon is followed by Rehoboam, then Abijah, Asa and Jehoshphat (all kings of Judah, the southern kingdom). However, 1Kings also deals with the kings of Israel, the northern kingdom, and concludes with the death of Ahab (the 7 th king of the northern kingdom).
2Kings	Jehoram, Ahaziah, Athaliah, Joash, Ahaziah, Azariah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoakim, Jehoichin, and Zedekiah. The next 12 kings of Israel are also covered briefly.

When it comes to face time, we spend more time with David in these books than anyone else. He is followed by Solomon, then Samuel and Saul; and then come the other northern and southern kings.

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Barnes gives us⁸ a simple time frame for the books of Samuel: 130 years. This book begins approximately 1090 B.C. (although others list this as being as recent as 1076 B.C. and others as late as 1134 B.C.). Saul's death, which is the end of 1Samuel, occurs around 1000 B.C. (or between 1025–980 B.C.).⁹

⁸ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. Introduction. I have added the dates.

⁹ See my **Comparative Chronology Chart** from the introduction to the book of the Judges.

General Time Frame for the Book of Samuel

Events	Scripture	Years
The life of Samuel up to Saul's election to be king	1Sam. 8:1, 5	50
Saul's reign	Acts 13:21	40
David's reign	2Sam. 5:4	40
Total		130

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Other Suggestions for the Time Frame for the Book of Samuel

Author	Time Period	Number of Years
Robert Gordon ¹⁰	1050–970 B.C.	80 years
Keil and Delitzsch ¹¹	1140 to 1015 B.C.	125 years
Usher ¹²		115 years

The big disagreement is the length of Saul's reign, which is examined in greater detail in 1Sam. 13:1

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The NIV Study Bible and Reese (among others) give us an approximate time line.¹³

Specific Time Frame for the Book of Samuel

Event	Scripture	Year (Reese)	Year (NIV)
The birth of Samuel	1Sam. 1:20	1115 B.C.	1105 B.C.
The dedication of Samuel	1Sam. 2	1112 B.C.	
The birth of Saul	1Sam. 14:51	1105 B.C.	1080 B.C.
The Ark is taken; Eli dies	1Sam. 4:17–18	1094 B.C.	
Saul is anointed as king	1Sam. 10:1	1065 B.C.	1050 B.C.
The Birth of David	2Sam. 5:4	1055 B.C.	1040 B.C.
David is anointed by Samuel to be Saul's successor	1Sam. 16:1–13	1030 B.C.	1025 B.C.
The Death of Samuel	1Sam. 25:1	1027 B.C.	
The Death of Saul	1Sam. 31:5–6	1025 B.C.	1010 B.C.

¹⁰ Robert Gordon, *I & II Samuel A Commentary*; Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI; ©1986; p. 21.

¹¹ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 1Sam. Introduction.

¹² C. I. Scofield, *Scofield Notes from the Scofield King James' Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. Introduction.

¹³ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 370. *The Reese Chronological Bible*; KJV translation; Editor: Edward Reese; ©1977 by Edward Reese and Klassen's dating system ©1975 by Frank R. Klassen; ©1980 by Bethany House Publishers, South Minneapolis, MN; pp. 413–485.

Specific Time Frame for the Book of Samuel

Event	Scripture	Year (Reese)	Year (NIV)
Total		90 years	95 years

You will notice a variance of about 10–15 years for most of these events. There are, of course, other chronologies; however, the primary purpose here is to give you a time frame to hang your hat on.

I should add that Reese's chronological Bible, although helpful much of the time, is a little scary at this point. He interweaves both Judges and Samuel together and has certain events overlap that seem odd to me (like Samson's function as a judge and a thorn in the flesh for the Philistines and Eli's priesthood—and bear in mind, it makes sense for there to be a judge and a priest functioning at the same time in Israel). I am not saying that he is off; I just am not ready to sit down and work through all the implications. If he is correct, then I am glad that the Bible is not arranged chronologically.

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Authorship: This book appears to be assembled—that is, put together by an editor (or editors) after the fact. There are primary sources who seemed to have recorded what occurred (for instance, the information in the first half of 1Sam. 14 could only have been written by Jonathan). However, there are times when we find a summary inserted, e.g., the summary of Saul's military victories and his line (1Sam. 14:47–52). This summary appears to be out of place, as though it were tacked on long after vv. 1–46 were written.

There is also a variety of writing styles. For the first several chapters, the book of Samuel is written in a very simplistic Hebrew style, each phrase held together by *wâw* consecutives, and each phrase bearing the standard Hebrew sentence structure. Then, around chapter 9 or so, the Hebrew becomes more complex, revealing a slightly more challenging vocabulary. The exception to this generalization is Hannah's psalm, in the first half of 1Sam. 2, whose vocabulary is extensive and almost exclusive to her, and whose sentence structure is much more difficult than that found in the rest of Samuel (it is also poetry, which accounts, in part, for this).

The writing of this book was different than the writing of the book of Genesis. In the book of Genesis, it appeared as though the several patriarchs each wrote a few chapters and appended this to what had gone before. There was apparently some editing which occurred, although it is not clear by whom or when this editing occurred (that is, a later author would insert a parenthetical phrase to clarify this or that location). My guess is that there was this running manuscript to which each patriarch added, recognizing the importance of what had been written before and what they were writing. It is possible that the final form, with the various clarifications, was the work of Moses, who is often incorrectly cited as the author of Genesis (but not ever so cited by Scripture). In the book of Samuel, it appears as though there were several documents, rather than one continuous document, than an editor gathered, edited, and inserted his own comments or summaries here and there (like, 1Sam. 14:47–52).

Why do I reject the idea of a continuous manuscript added on by one spiritual leader after another? We have the question of Saul. His life and exploits are found covered in 1Sam. 9–31, although what we find at times is rather scathing, and it was not in Saul's personality to be particularly introspective and brutally honest about his own errors. Furthermore, there were some sections (e.g., 1Sam. 14:1–46) where the bulk of information would have come from someone other than Saul or Samuel. For this reason, I see one or two men, editors, who gathered a few manuscripts and later (but not too much later) put together the history of Samuel, Saul and David. Because of the differences of writing styles, it is likely that many of these manuscripts were quoted verbatim.

Let's get more specific: in 1Sam. 1:9, 18, there are two mentions of Hannah eating. We have mentions of Eli's sons having a fondness for bbq (1Sam. 2:12–16). Eli, the High Priest at that time, was known for being rotund (1Sam. 4:18), which would suggest that food weighed heavily on his mind. Based upon this, and the fact that Eli

was the spiritual authority in Israel for 40 years, it is reasonable to assume that he originally recorded the first 2 chapters of this book. It would also be reasonable for Eli to have told Samuel the story of his birth and background many times, and for Samuel to have recorded that story in Scripture, making Eli indirectly the author of the first few chapters of Samuel. Given Eli's weak spiritual condition, we would not have expected him to pen or to be otherwise responsible for more than the first couple chapters of this book. In 1Sam. 3, God speaks to Samuel. Although it appears that either Eli or Samuel could have recorded this chapter, Samuel is the only one in the position to know that he revealed everything that God told him to Eli (1Sam. 3:18). Now, whereas it is very clear in the writings of Moses when God spoke to him and it also appears that Moses recorded everything or very nearly everything that God told him, Samuel's recording of the Words of God seems to be less rigorous. First of all, there appear to be many things which God said to Samuel which he did not convey in Scripture. In 1Sam. 3:21, Jehovah appeared again at Shiloh and revealed Himself to Samuel, and in v. 19, God let none of his words fail. However, we are not really given many examples of this. If Samuel is known from Dan to Beersheba to be a prophet of God and that God allowed none of his words to fail, we would reasonably expect more than one major instance of prophecy from him (1Sam. 4:18), which prophecy seems to be relatively private. By the time that Samuel prophesies to Saul (1Sam. 9:19–20 10:1–8), it is already known throughout Israel that Samuel is a true prophet to God (1Sam. 3:19–20 9:6). This would indicate to us that God communicated many times to Samuel and that Samuel communicated these things to the people of God. However, he clearly did not record all these things (or, at least God did not preserve them to remain in His Word). This would suggest that Samuel recorded much of this information much later in his life.

In 1Sam. 1:9, we find the word *temple* used to refer to the *Tent of God*. Although some might point to this word to indicate that it infers a post-Solomon author, that is not the case. In fact, just the opposite would be inferred. Once Solomon had built the Temple of Jehovah, then there would have been a stark contrast between the temporary Tent (or, *Tabernacle*)¹⁴ of God and the permanent Temple of God. You would never mistake one for the other and you would never call one by the name of the other. However, prior to that time, prior to the building of the Temple, the word might be loosely applied to any semi-permanent structure. Given that the Tent of God resided in Shiloh for most of the time period of the judges (300 years), it would be reasonable for there to have been either attached or nearby dwellings added in the area of the Tent of God, making it more and more a permanent structure. By the time of Eli and Samuel, it might even be called a *temple*, as we do not have the strong contrast of the actual *Temple of God* in the minds of the one who wrote this portion of God's Word. Again, this would suggest that Eli was the original author, or that Samuel was the author, having carried this information in his head for many years, having been told it many times by Eli.

In 1Sam. 6–7, we follow the Ark in Philistia, and the information that we get is quite detailed. We hear exactly which cities that the Ark goes to, we sit in on a meeting between the princes of Philistia, and we hear the opinions of their religious men as well. Again, this information does not sound like it came from Samuel just musing as to what might have happened, but it appears as though these things were originally recorded by eyewitnesses who shared this with Samuel in some way or another. Now, given that the Philistines were bitter enemies to Israel, this may seem unlikely; however, the Ark of God went through Philistia much like an evangelist. Many people were struck with illnesses and death; however, many must have believed in the God of Israel, the God represented by this Ark, and no doubt, some moved to Israel and, no doubt, some had contact with Samuel, the priest of his time.

Beginning in 1Sam. 9, we have material about Saul specifically, and experiences which only he would be privy to (and his servant). There are personal conversations and details that another person would not have necessarily recorded. At the same time, the information in this chapter about Samuel, for his personal experience apart from the experience of others, is noticeably brief. This would cause me to believe that Saul recorded much of the history found in 1Sam. 9–12 and that Samuel used this to compose the book of Samuel (as he did the stories which he heard from Eli).

This takes us to roughly 1Sam. 13. In 1Sam. 14, we have Jonathan supernaturally (I believe) defeating a large group of Philistines. The information found here in this detail would only be known to Jonathan and to his aide. This

¹⁴ Just so you know, there are different words in the Hebrew for *tent*, *tabernacle*, *house* and *temple*. A *tabernacle* is a semi-permanent tent.

does not mean that Jonathan wrote this chapter; it does indicate that he either told this to the author of this chapter or the author of this chapter took this from Jonathan's memoirs. I should add, we do not know Jonathan's aide, so it could have been him. I would suspect that Saul, back at that time, was less freaked out, and possibly even asked for Jonathan to write a report of what happened so that it could be placed into the official record.

Let's stop for a moment and consider a *what if*. What if we someday discover the documents from which the book of Samuel was taken (or any book, for that matter). Are they the inspired Word of God? No! In fact, emphatically *no!* On the one hand, such a discovery would be incredible and possibly even clear up some textual problems; however, God preserved His Word for us. We already have God's Word before us. God did not slip up and hold back a manuscript or two of a different book or of source material to be discovered at a later time. The Dead Sea Scrolls, for instance, gave us some insights on the original writings; but, for the most part, they primarily confirmed the Scriptures which we already have.

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Back to the topic of authorship: 1Sam. 15–16 are probably written by Samuel. When we come to 1Sam. 17 (or, even as far back as 1Sam. 16:14), Samuel is no longer on the scene (compare 1Sam. 15:35) of political matters. Almost everything involves David, suggesting to us that David is the author at this point. A minor exception to this would be 1Sam. 22, where Abiathar told David what had happened (1Sam. 22:21). The second exception, which is a major exception, is 1Sam. 28. Saul goes to the witch of Endor with a couple of his trusted aides, and Samuel rises from the dead to speak to him. The information found in this chapter would be known only by Saul (who died the next day) and his two aides, who also probably died the next day. We do not know who recorded this information—I suspect that one of Saul's aides did and that this was later found and woven into the narrative. Jonathan could have been his aide, but it seems strange that he would not be named. So, this chapter is a mystery to us, when it comes to the original author. I will discuss this in greater detail when we get to 1Sam. 28.

The final chapter which David did not personally observe is 1Sam. 31, the death of Samuel. Someone takes credit for killing Samuel in 2Sam. 1, but it appears that this person is attempting to lie to David in order to gain David's approbation. How David gets the real story is unknown; however, I suspect that this guy, prior to being executed, gave the correct set of events, which David later realized, by God the Holy Spirit, were accurate.

Given what we find here, this does not preclude an editor at a later date coming along, taking the writings of Samuel, Jonathan and David, and putting them together as a narrative, adding a comment or clarification here and there. In fact, I suspect that someone did have their hands on this manuscript as an editor in the final version. Since we have the statement that Ziklag belonged to the kings of Judah ever since the time of David (as well as some other glosses), we may assume that the final edited version of this would be after the time of Solomon, during the time of the divided kingdom. Nothing is ever implied about the degeneration of the kingdoms in Samuel, or the dispersions; so I would guess that the final editing of this book occurred within a couple of kings past Solomon. However, the original material was written very close to the time that it occurred.

Keil and Delitzsch: *In general, the contents and style of the books point to the earliest times after the division of the kingdom; since we find no allusions whatever to the decay of the kingdoms which afterwards took place, and still less to the captivity; whilst the style and language are classical throughout, and altogether free from Chaldaisms and later forms, such as we meet with in the writings of the Chaldean period, and even in those of the time of the captivity. The author himself is quite unknown; but, judging from the spirit of his writings, he was a prophet of the kingdom of Judah. It is unanimously admitted, however, that he made use of written documents, particularly of prophetic records made by*

persons who were contemporaries of the events described, not only for the history of the reigns of Saul and David, but also for the life and labours of Samuel.¹⁵

Edersheim makes the following observation: *We do not find...a strictly chronological arrangement of events [and]...we notice large gaps in the history of Samuel, Saul, and David, long periods and important facts being omitted, with which the author must have been acquainted, —and to which, indeed, in some instances, he afterwards expressly refers, —while other periods and events are detailed at great length. All these peculiarities are not accidental, but designed, and in accordance with the general plan of the work.*¹⁶

A part of this, I can explain. If the history that we find here is compiled by different original sources, which is my contention, then we should not expect to find everything put together chronologically, nor should we expect a complete history of Israel, even with respect to extremely important events (like the destruction of Shiloh). This forces us to do some speculation and some careful examination of the history that we do have in order to shed light on the history that we don't have. I do not believe that God the Holy Spirit expects us to check our brains at the door.

Since this is more difficult to apprehend in paragraph form, let me go through the chapters and list the probably eyewitnesses to the events found in 1Samuel.

Authorship for the Book of 1Samuel		
Scripture	Probable Eye-Witness; Probable Final Editor	Rationale for Eyewitness
1Sam. 1	Eli, Hannah, Elkanah; Samuel	Samuel was probably told the store of his beginnings by Eli, by his mother (who visited him there) or by those who also had taken care of him (probably Levitical women; possibly Eli's wife?)
1Sam. 2:1–10	Hannah's Song, written by Hannah; kept by Eli	Samuel was probably read this psalm on many occasions, and kept a copy of it.
1Sam. 2:10–36	Eli; Samuel	We find out about Eli's sons, about Samuel's spiritual growth and his relationship with his mother, and about God speaking to Eli. At least half of this would be known only to Eli and he would have to reveal it to someone (probably Samuel).
1Sam. 3	Samuel; Samuel	This is when God first called Samuel. All the information in this chapter would be something that Samuel witnessed himself.

¹⁵ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 1Sam. Introduction.

¹⁶ Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 407.

Authorship for the Book of 1Samuel		
Scripture	Probable Eye-Witness; Probable Final Editor	Rationale for Eyewitness
1Sam. 4	Samuel or Eli; Samuel	We are told of the conflict between the Israelites and the Philistines, but we are not given much by way of specifics—only where both camps were and the fact that Israel was losing. This information would have been conveyed to Eli and/or to Samuel. The taking of the Ark into battle by Hophni and Phinehas would also be something known to Eli and to Samuel (who was probably a teenager at this time?). The death of Eli and the birth of his grandson are also recorded, information that Samuel would no doubt know. Even though Samuel may have not witnessed all of these events, he would certainly be aware of them.
1Sam. 5:1–6:18	Some unnamed Philistine—possibly even a lord of a Philistine city; Samuel	We are given a very in depth look at the movement of the Ark within Philistia. The information is detailed enough to be more than just information received from across the border; it is even more likely that there was an eyewitness there who passed along these events. Given that God allowed the Ark to be taken by the Philistines, it is not a stretch to assume that He had a reason for that, which could have included evangelizing some of the Philistines. That a Philistine became a believer and passed along this information to Samuel is not out of the question.
1Sam. 6:19–7:2a	Someone relayed this information to Samuel; Samuel	A number of people were killed in Beth-Shemesh for looking into the Ark and the Ark was eventually taken to Kiriath-Jearim and kept by Eleazar ben Abinadab for a long period of time. This information is sketchy and was certainly known to Samuel. Being a priest, he had to know where the Ark was and why it was there. As we will find out, Samuel is content to leave the Ark there in Kiriath-Jearim. We will explore the reasons for this as we examine the book of Samuel.
1Sam. 7:2b–8:22	Samuel; Samuel	Samuel was a witness to all of the events in this chapter, and therefore, the most reasonable person to record it permanently as part of the Word of God.

Authorship for the Book of 1Samuel		
Scripture	Probable Eye-Witness; Probable Final Editor	Rationale for Eyewitness
1Sam. 9–13	Saul and Samuel; Samuel	Much of these events are detailed and things to which only Saul (and his personal servant) were privy to. Other events involve both Saul and Samuel. No doubt, Saul spoke to Samuel on several occasions and relayed this information to Samuel. Samuel also apparently knew that Samuel was coming to his city, as we see in 1Sam. 9:15, 22–24. Even though many commentators dis Saul regularly, there is every indication that, at one time, and for a relatively short time, he was a great man. He was also probably a believer in Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is not out of the question that he should record chronicles of his life as the <i>first</i> king of Israel (the king in the book of Judges notwithstanding). Every king should have recorded the chronicles of his life, or have spoken to an amanuensis who recorded it for him. Samuel, from his conversations with Saul and from the King's Chronicles, should have pieced together this information for a reasonably thorough history of these particular events in the life of Saul.
1Sam. 14:1–35	Jonathan and maybe Saul; Samuel	We have detailed information concerning Jonathan's two man assault on the camp of the Philistines. There is also information about Saul's stupid order. Jonathan is eclipsing his father in spiritual growth and Saul is getting out of control when it comes to his own growth (or lack thereof). Because of Jonathan appearing to be spiritually mature and Saul not, this would indicate that this information came from Jonathan.
1Sam. 14:36–15:9	Jonathan, Samuel and/or Saul; Samuel	Although we have a relatively cohesive narrative here, we have details of things which might be known to only Saul and Jonathan or only to Samuel. My thinking is, Jonathan was sort of the fly on the wall, who reported Saul's activities to Samuel (although I don't believe that we have a meeting between them ever cited); and some of these events would have been witnessed by Samuel himself.
1Sam. 15:10–16:11	Samuel; Samuel	These are events which Samuel observed directly and the details are preserved enough to suggest an eyewitness to the events which are recorded herein.
1Sam. 16:12–20:23	David; David or Samuel	This is David's private coronation along with many events in David's early life. These events include details likely provided by an eyewitness—David. Whether David began recording Scripture at this time instead of Samuel is hard to determine. This information would have been found in the Chronicles of the king after David supplanted Saul as king of Israel.

Authorship for the Book of 1Samuel		
Scripture	Probable Eye-Witness; Probable Final Editor	Rationale for Eyewitness
1Sam. 20:24–42	Jonathan; David?	The final half of 1Sam. 20 is a heated and detailed exchange between Saul and Jonathan concerning David. However, there is no clear way this got into Scripture, as it does not appear as though David and Jonathan see one another again. My guess is, after his friend died in battle, David asked for any information concerning Jonathan, his dear friend.
1Sam. 21–22:5	David; David	This is about David going to the priests at Nob.
1Sam. 22:6–19	Abiathar; David	Saul followed David to Nob (after hearing that he had been there) and slaughtered all of the priests, except for Abiathar, who escaped. He would have been the only witness to this mass execution. He probably relayed the details to David later.
1Sam. 22:20–28:2	David; David	This passage covers David and his life on the run from Saul.
1Sam. 28:3–25	one of Saul's servants; David	This is Saul's meeting with the witch of Endor; there are so many details that his had to be an eyewitness account. Saul did take two of his servants with him, and it does not seem impossible for one of them to be a believer (since God wanted this event recorded in His Word).
1Sam. 29–30	David; David	David's interactions with the Philistines is recorded here during events which were coterminous with 1Sam. 28 and 30.
1Sam. 31	an Amalekite; David	Here, we have Saul's death recorded in reasonable detail; an Amalekite goes to David in 2Sam. 1 and lies to David about Saul's death. Either he did observe Saul's death and recanted his story after being sentenced to death; or someone else observed Saul's death and passed the information on.

Because of the name of this book, and because he seems to be the common thread throughout most of it, I suspect that Samuel recorded most of the book of Samuel, but that he based it upon the eyewitness accounts of those we see named above. From the middle of chapter 16, the rest of 1 and 2Samuel seem to become David's book.

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I listed David as the author of the latter half of 1Samuel; let me explain why.

Why David Probably Authored the Rest of the Book of Samuel

1. David was clearly an author; he had authored many psalms.
2. It was common for kings or their secretaries to record their exploits in the ancient world.
3. David would have recorded information which revealed God's hand in his life—David probably authored the remainder of the book of Samuel.
4. Much of the material found in the latter half of 1Samuel is directly witnessed by David.

Although, certainly, several people could have authored the latter half of the book of Samuel; David is the most logical author.

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Source Materials: Although I believe that there were writings made by Samuel, Jonathan and David, Barnes suggests¹⁷ the following sources were used in compiling the book of Samuel:

Source Materials for the Book of Samuel*

- (1) The Book of Jasher (2Sam. 1:18)
- (2) David's Psalms (2 Sam. 22-23)
- (3) the Chronicles of king David (1Chron. 27:24)
- (4) The Book of Samuel the Seer (1Chron. 29:29)
- (5) The Book of Nathan the Prophet
- (6) The Book of Gad the Seer (1Chron. 29:29-2Chron. 9:29)
- (7) The national collection of genealogies.

Those sections which give full details of the sayings and doings of Samuel, are conjectured to be extracted from "the Book of Samuel the seer" (e. g. i - xii). Those sections which contain narratives in which Nathan bears a part 2 Sam. 7; 11; 12; 1 Kings 1; 2 may be referred to the "Book of Nathan the seer." Such passages as 2 Sam. 21; 2Sa. 22:5; 24; etc., are possibly from the Book of Gad the Seer. We seem to see extracts from the Chronicles of the kingdom in such passages as 1Sam. 13:1; 1Sam. 11:1-11, 1Sam. 11:15; 1Sam. 14:47-52; 2Sam. 2:8-11; 2Sam. 3:1-5; 2Sam. 5:4-16; 8; 2Sam. 20:23-26; 2Sam. 21:15-22; 23:8-39; while the song of Hannah 1Sam. 2:1-10, the elegy on the death of Abner 2Sam. 3:33-34, and the two Psalms 2 Sam. 22; 2Sam. 23:1-7, may as well as the elegy on Saul and Jonathan, be taken from the Book of Jasher.

Barnes gives us some additional insights on the use of source materials: *In these books are passages which occur in duplicate elsewhere, chiefly in the Books of Chronicles and Psalms; and a careful comparison of these duplicate passages throws great light upon the manner in which the sacred historians used existing materials, incorporating them word for word, or slightly altering them for the sake of explanation, as seemed most expedient to them. It illustrates also the errors and fluctuations of scribes in transcribing manuscripts, especially in regard to proper names.*¹⁸

With regards to 2, 3 and 4, I am in complete agreement with Barnes. It is possible that Nathan and Gad both provided further information on some of the history of David. I believe that somewhere, somehow, Jonathan contributed at least a small portion to the book of 1Samuel. However, this is an excellent summary of source material.

You may think that this contradicts a previous chart. On the previous chart, I listed the eyewitnesses to the event who probably, in some way or another, recorded the event (they either wrote it down or told someone what happened).

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Let's approach this from a different point of view; the primary witnesses or writers and those who possibly wrote the final version.

¹⁷ Taken from Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. Introduction.

¹⁸ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. Introduction.

Primary and Secondary Witnesses to the Events of 1Samuel	
Primary Witnesses	Later or Final Writers/Editors of 1Samuel
Eli, Hannah, Samuel, David, Jonathan, Saul or Saul's aides	Samuel, David, Gad, Zabud ben Nathan (an advisor to Solomon), Nathan, Solomon
<p>For most of Samuel, I think the primary witnesses are fairly clear. I expect that Eli told Samuel about his early life and Samuel recorded this. Hannah sang or recited her psalm and Eli recorded it. Eli no doubt recorded what the man of God said to him.</p>	<p>Most of the first half of Samuel, including many of the sections dealing with Saul, could have been originally recorded by Samuel and copied with an added comment or two later.</p>
<p>Although David would have been the most logical primary witness for the second half of this book, there is at least one chapter about Jonathan which David did not observe and one or more chapters about Saul which neither Samuel nor David observed.</p>	<p>David and Solomon were both prolific writers, so either could have penned part or all of the second portion of 1Samuel (although I would favor David over Solomon).</p>
<p>I suspect for 1Sam. 14, Jonathan either recorded this incident himself or reported this to the court reporter (as in the royal record keeper—whoever that might have been). As for incidents involving Saul (e.g., the first half of 1Sam. 13, the second half of 1Sam. 14, the second half of 1Sam. 20, and all of 1Sam. 28 and 31), Jonathan or Samuel was present at many of these events and could have recorded them. As for 1Sam. 28, Saul was accompanied by two trusted aides, one of whom probably recorded this incident (it would have had to have been immediate, as Saul and most of the Israeli army lost their lives the next day).</p>	<p>Since there are a couple of chapters which are removed from David and Samuel's direct observation, they would have had to have been written by someone else originally and woven into the narrative. Given that there are a handful of glosses throughout this book, it is not out of the question that another person functioned as an editor, recording almost word-for-word the writings of Samuel, David and possible Jonathan or an royal aide.</p>
<p>1Chron. 29:29 reads: Now the acts of King David, from first to last, are written in the chronicles of Samuel the seer, in the chronicles of Nathan the prophet, and in the chronicles of Gad the seer. This means that there could have been, at the time of the writing of 1Chronicles, 3 separate scrolls, all which dealt with the acts of King David. However, this could also be a listing of the 3 editors of the <i>Acts of King David</i>, who recorded his life (and the life of Samuel) and his kingship. We find Gad mentioned once in 1Samuel (1Sam. 22:5) and both Gad and Nathan are mentioned numerous times in 2Samuel.</p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is reasonable that the book of Samuel existed at the time of the writing of Chronicles, that it was used as source material, and was listed here in these books. 2. It would be unlikely that the book of Samuel was unavailable to the writer of Chronicles or that he would fail to mention it when listing these other books. 3. Almost everything that we find in Chronicles about David can be found in Samuel. There is a great deal of additional material in Samuel which is not found in Chronicles. 4. This leaves us with a couple of logical alternatives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The book of Samuel the Seer is equivalent to our book of Samuel, given the same name as we give to it (even though Samuel is only in half of 1Samuel). b. The other option is these three sets of scrolls are understood to make up one book about David. The men named (Samuel, Gad and Nathan) are authors and/or editors. Given that these men are all prophets, all known to be inspired by God, and that they had been with David, one or both of them, from early on, then it stands to reason that they could write a history about David. c. The chronicles of Samuel the Seer could be equivalent to our book of Samuel, and that it includes incidents from the Chronicles of Gad and Nathan. In other words, we have 3 scrolls; the first was begun by Samuel, but completed by someone else, which includes some of the information found in 	

- the other two scrolls. All three together make up the most complete history of David available to the writer of Chronicles.
- d. A fourth alternative is, the Chronicles of Samuel and Gad make up the book of Samuel and the Chronicles of Nathan is an additional historical work, which was not necessarily divinely inspired.
5. Although the book of Samuel does not cover every event in David's life, it certainly covers the most important events. Therefore, it makes less sense to me that we have the book of Samuel and then there are two other books chunk full of additional information about the history of David, which facts are completely lost to us. 6.

When we get to 1Chron. 29:29, we will probably explore these options more carefully.

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Style: Barnes: *The style of the Books of Samuel is clear, simple, and forcible, and the Hebrew remarkably pure and free from Chaldaisms.*¹⁹

Textual problems: Barnes: *The chief difficulties are the geographical statements of 1 Sam. 9; 10; the very difficult poem in 2Sam. 23:1-7; and the account of the mighty men which follows it, 2 Sam. 23:8-39. There are also some manifest corruptions of the text; but contradictions or disagreements of any kind in the statements of the Books of Samuel, as compared with each other, or with the Books of Chronicles, do not exist.*²⁰

Spiritual advance: Under Eli and then under Samuel, the Tabernacle functioned normally, or, at least, semi-normally. However, once we get to King Saul, his relation to God will be weak, and later, antagonistic. Saul attempts to usurp Samuel's spiritual authority in 1Sam. 13:9-10; because Saul attempted to usurp Samuel's spiritual authority, God will usurp Saul's political authority (1Sam. 13:14).

Not only does Saul do nothing to reunite the Ark of God with the Tabernacle of God (1Sam. 7:1-2), but Saul massacres the priests (1Sam. 22). Everything that Saul does from about 1Sam. 13 on indicates an estrangement from God.

The People and Places of the Book of 1Samuel: I strongly recommend that you read through these lists. That way, as these people come on the scene in the book of 1Samuel, you will have a general knowledge of who they are and what they will do. Similarly, when you come across this city or that, you will have a better understanding of where we are.

It may help to know who is in the book of Samuel:

People Found in the Book of 1Samuel

Person	Their Actions
Abiathar	The young priest from Nob who escaped Saul's deadly wrath. He went to David and brought the ephod with him.
Abigail	Abigail was the wife of Nabal who double-crossed David in a business deal. When Nabal realized that Abigail had saved him from being killed by David, he died of heart failure. Abigail became David's wife.
Achish	The king of Gath whom David went to twice to escape Saul.

¹⁹ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. Introduction.

²⁰ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. Introduction.

People Found in the Book of 1 Samuel	
Person	Their Actions
Agag	The king of the Amalekites whom Saul preserved alive; however, Samuel killed him.
Ahimelech	The High Priest (apparently) at Nob. David went to him to get some supplies and Saul went there and killed all of the priests because of this.
Ahinoam	A woman of Jezreel that David married when hiding from Saul. David had two wives at this time (see Abigail above).
Amalekites, the	This was a group who lived in souther Palestine who were very hostile to Israel. God told Saul to completely destroy them and all that they owned, but Saul did not. David later made raids against groups of Amalekites who remained; they also struck his camp when he and his men were gone, and took all of their women and possessions (MP3 players, cell phones, etc.).
Benjamin, the tribe of	Saul comes from the tribe of Benjamin, the smallest tribe of Israel, and one which was almost completely wiped out at the end of the book of Judges.
Dagon	A false god of the Philistines which is desecrated when the Ark is placed in the same room with it.
David	God's choice to rule over Israel, also called a man after God's own heart. Although David is famous for two indiscretions from the book of 2 Samuel, we will find that he makes mistakes in this book as well. His training to become king of Israel is extensive and rigorous.
Doeg the Edomite	This was one of Saul's men who ended up doing a lot of Saul's dirty work for him. It was Doeg who actually killed the priests at Nob, under Saul's orders.
Eleazar	The son of Abinadab who took responsibility for keeping the Ark (this would have been a lifetime responsibility).
Eli	The High Priest whose loser sons could not possibly replace him.
Eliab	Jesse's oldest son and David's brother. Although Samuel assumed that Eliab was God's anointed, God told him that he wasn't. His true colors became apparent when Goliath challenged any Israelite to battle for the whole enchilada.
Elkanah	Father of Samuel.
Gershurites and Girzites	Two groups of people that David raided when he lived in Ziklag, which was under the control of Achish, king of Gath.
Goliath	A giant of a Philistine who was willing to fight any Israelite in order to decide the outcome of the battle between the Philistines and the Israelites.
Hannah	Woman who promises God that she will dedicate a son to God if God gives her a son. She gives birth to Samuel, who is dedicated to God.
Hophni	One of Eli's loser sons.
Icabod	The son of Phinehas born the day Phinehas dies.

People Found in the Book of 1Samuel	
Person	Their Actions
Jonathan	Saul's son who had a wonderful friendship with David. Jonathan was a great loyal friend, and he was quite grace-oriented. Whereas, the son of a king would often do whatever he could to gain ascendancy to the throne, Jonathan accepted the fact that David would be the next ruler over Israel.
Kish	Saul's father. Although he is mentioned several times in Scripture, I don't recall that he actually ever <i>does</i> anything.
Man of God	A prophet who speaks to Eli in the 2 nd chapter of 1Samuel. What he says is rather harsh.
Merab	Saul's oldest daughter whom he promised to David. Saul went back on his word here.
Michal	Saul's second daughter who was in love with David; Saul did allow David to marry her, attempting to manipulate David into dying in battle.
Nabal	David did some work for Nabal and Nabal refused to pay him. David would have killed him, but for his wife, Abigail, who negotiated a deal with David.
Nahash	Nahash was a bloodthirsty Ammonite who wanted to gouge out the eyes of the people of Jabesh. Saul, before he was made king, rescued these people from the attack of the Ammonites.
Philistines, the	Israel's chief enemies in the book of 1Samuel. They will go to war against Israel at least a half dozen times in this book.
Phinehas	The second of Eli's loser sons. BBQ was more important to these boys than the Word of God. The day that Phinehas dies in battle, his wife will give birth to their son, Ichbod.
Samuel	Samuel is the first acting priest outside of the line of Aaron. He is probably a Nazarite, although there is some disputation concerning this. He is a prophet, a priest and a judge.
Saul	Saul is the first king of Israel. ²¹ He is the people's choice and functions as a fairly good king until he allows mental attitude sins to interfere with his kingship.
Ziphites	Twice, Ziphites went to Saul to disclose to him David's location when David was on the run from Saul.

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We also need to know about the places found in this book.

Places Found in the Book of 1Samuel	
Place	Incident
Aphek	<p>The first battle recorded in 1Samuel between Israel and Philistia occurred near Aphek, where the Philistines set up their pre-battle campsite. Aphek is found in northwestern Ephraim, in central Israel.</p> <p>In their final battle against Saul, the Philistines initially gathered at Aphek to muster their troops. It was here where David was rejected from joining them to war against Israel.</p>

²¹ More or less; there is another man who functions as king for a short time in the book of Judges.

Places Found in the Book of 1 Samuel	
Place	Incident
Ashdod	A city in Philistia where the Ark of God is first taken (after the Philistines take the Ark in battle). Ashdod is in central Philistia and Philistia, for the most part, makes up the western border of Judah. When the Ark was in Ashdod, the people there were struck with serious diseases and they shipped the Ark to Ekron.
Besor, brook	Many of David's men were too tired to pursue the Amalekites who raided their camp, so they stopped here to rest.
Bethlehem	This is where Jesse and his sons lived, including David. Samuel went there to anoint David as the next king over Israel.
Beth-Shemesh	The city of Israel where the Ark was returned to by the Philistines. Because the people of Israel treated the Ark without respect, many of them died in Beth-Shemesh.
Ebenezer	Israel set up its pre-battle campsite to warm against the Philistines for the first time in the book of 1 Samuel. Ebenezer would be located near Aphek.
Ekron	The second city of Philistia where the Ark is taken. This is further north and much closer to Israel. Death and disease followed the Ark here as well and the people demanded that it be taken out of Ekron.
Endor	Saul went to a witch in this city and asked for her to bring Samuel up from the dead.
Engedi, wilderness of	When Saul pursued David to this area, Saul went to relieve himself in a cave which turned out to be where David was hiding. David could have killed Saul, but he did not.
Gath	Another Philistine city. This is where David will originally flee to get away from Saul. His going to Gath to escape is ironic, because when David killed Goliath, the Israelites then chased the Philistines back to Gath and Ekron.
Gilboa	The city where Saul and his army camped the night before his final battle against the Philistines. Saul, in retreat, would die on Mount Gilboa.
Jabesh-gilead	This is a city in Gad threatened by the Ammonites prior to Saul being made king. Saul rescued this city, and many years later, they rescued his desecrated body which hung on a wall in Bethshan.
Keilah	The Philistines plundered Keilah and David, while on the run from Saul, delivered them. Had David allowed them to, Keilah would have surrendered David into Saul's hands.
Kiriath-Jearim	The second city in Israel where the Ark was taken to (after the thousands of deaths of those in Beth-Shemesh). The Ark remains here, apparently not in use, for 40–50 years. Kiriath-Jearim is found where Benjamin, Dan and Judah all meet, in south central Israel.
Mizpah	A revival of sorts of Israel takes place here under the auspices of Samuel (this is following the return of the Ark). The Philistines believe that Israel might be preparing to go to war against them. Mizpah is located on the borders of Ephraim and Benjamin.
Mizpah of Moab	A city in Moab where David placed his parents for safekeeping.
Nob	It appears that the priests went to Nob after spending many years at Shiloh. The why and the wherefore of all this requires that we piece some information together and then make an educated guess.

Places Found in the Book of 1Samuel	
Place	Incident
Ramah	The hometown of Hannah and Elkanah which is probably located on the border of Ephraim and Benjamin in south-central Israel. Samuel was born here and he would be buried here.
Ramath-zophim	Formal name for Ramah.
Shiloh	Where the Tabernacle of God was set up for a great length of time. Shiloh is in north central Ephraim (which is central Israel).
Shunem	The Philistines gathered in Shunem before attacking and destroying the Israeli army under Saul in the battle where Saul and his sons were all killed.
Ziklag	David was given this city by Achish to stay in when living among the Philistines.
Ziph, wilderness of	When David was hiding here, the Ziphites told Saul where he was. For the second time, David has the opportunity to kill Saul, but he chooses not to.

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Israel's enemies: Then, as today, Israel was surrounded by enemies. They are God's people, so we would expect that.

Early on in the book of Samuel, we will come across the Ammonites, who are cousins of the Israelites, descendants of Lot (Gen. 19:30–38). We studied the **Ammonites** back in Judges 3:13 and 11:12. In the book of Samuel, they will terrorize the citizens of Jabesh, and Saul, prior to being made king, will act as their savior and deliver them from Ammon. They live east of Israel's eastern settlements (Gad and Reuben).

The Philistines lived along the western coast of the Land of Canaan, next to Judah. Throughout the book of Judges, it appears as though they made great inroads into the land of Israel. They tended to move north and then east into Israel and, at various times in this book and in the book of Judges, the Philistines controlled Israeli territory. It is from the name of the Philistines that we get the name *Palestine*, a synonym for the *Land of Promise (Canaan)*. We studied the **Doctrine of the Philistines** back in Judges 14:4.

Another enemy of the Israelites is the Amalekite. They appear to be several groups of nomads who live south of Judah and possibly as high up as southern Judah. In 1Samuel, God will call for their complete destruction. Because they are not destroyed, they will cause David a great deal of grief and, far into the future, they will pose a great threat to the Jews living in Persia (in the book of Esther). See Num. 24:20 for the **Doctrine of Amalek**.

The Priesthood: Now, the focus of this book is upon Samuel, then Saul and then David. However, let us not ignore the reintroduction of the High Priest, Eli. In the book of Judges, we don't even find the term *High Priest*. In fact, the *High Priest* is mentioned by office only in Joshua 20:6, and Phinehas, who presumably functioned as the High Priest, is mentioned in Joshua 22:13, indicating that he naturally assumed a leadership position that Joshua had abandoned due to old age. However, throughout the book of the Judges, which covers a period of over 300 years, we do not find the function, office or person of the *High Priest*. This did not mean that this office ceased to function nor did it mean that the office of High Priesthood lay dormant. It simply did not play an important part in Israel's history, accounting in part for Israel's continual fall into servitude to a variety of surrounding nations (Judges 2:11–15 3:7–8 4:2–3 etc.). In fact, in all of the history of the judges, we have two Levites (who are not actually priests but assistants to the priests) who are not living where they are supposed to live, and one of them even sold himself out to a rich man as his private priest (this is not unlike the celebrities who, in the 1970–1980's, paid for various religious gurus to spiritually guide them). In the book of Judges, all we find are two men related to the priesthood: the Levite-priest who had sold his birthright (I am speaking figuratively) in order to function as a

private priest in Judges 17–18 and the Levite who had problems with his mistress (Judges 19), which situation culminated in an horrific crime. My point is that the Aaronic priesthood is almost nonexistent in Israel with respect to its importance. God chose this priesthood to convey truth and the gospel, yet we have a period of 300 years where their presence appears to be immaterial to the political life of Israel. Now, suddenly, in the first chapter, we have Israelites going up to Shiloh to sacrifice to Jehovah God before priests of Israel. Although the center of these chapters is the circumstances surrounding the birth of Samuel, Eli the High Priest to Israel, plays an important part.

Food in the Book of 1Samuel: As odd as it might seem to you, food and food offerings are mentioned on several occasions in the book of Samuel and these insertions are not simply to spice up the text or to make you feel more down home. What Hannah will bring as an offering when she brings Samuel to dedicate him to God is significant. The meals of Eli's two adult sons is significant. And, when Saul has his last meal, it is significant as well. When we exegete these passages, I will speak to these matters.

Although I will provide an outline, there are key events which occur in the book of 1Samuel, which are noted below:

Key Events in the Book of 1Samuel	
Key Event	Passage
Hannah, a woman who pretty much comes out of nowhere, prays to God to be given a son, and promises to give her son back to God. She does fulfill this vow to God.	1Sam. 1
Hannah, as a prayer when leaving her son Samuel with Eli, the High Priest, prays a marvelous prayer which include a prophecy of Messiah to come.	1Sam. 2:1–10
As a result of the evil of Eli's sons, a man of God will prophesy to Eli that his line will be cut off from the altar and that he and his sons would die.	1Sam. 2:23–36
God calls to Samuel directly.	1Sam. 3
The Philistines take the Ark of God in battle (the Israelites brought it into battle for good luck). Wherever the Philistines carry the Ark, there are problems, and they finally return it to Beth-shemesh, where the Ark even plagues Israel (because they treat it with fundamental lack of respect). The Ark is finally kept in Kiriath-jearim, where it will remain until David becomes king.	1Sam. 4:1–7:2
God delivers Israel from the Philistines and the cities previously taken by the Philistines were returned to Israel. This took place before Saul became king and apart from Saul.	1Sam. 7:3–17
Israel demands a king and God gives them Saul. Saul's defeat of the Ammonites in 1Sam. 11 is what wins Saul great public acclaim.	1Sam. 8–12
Saul faces the Philistines in the first of many wars during his time. His son Jonathan effects an almost single-handed victory over the Philistines. Saul's inability to make good decisions is revealed during this period of time.	1Sam. 13:1–14:46
Saul was involved with wars against many of the surrounding peoples.	1Sam. 14:47–52
Saul's first great failure was to disobey God's order to destroy all of the Amalekites and all of their stuff. Because of his disobedience, Samuel tells Saul that God would replace him.	1Sam. 15
Samuel is guided to Bethlehem to anoint Saul's replacement: David ben Jesse. After this time, David will be brought into the palace of Saul in order to play music to soothe Saul's mental illness.	1Sam. 16

Key Events in the Book of 1Samuel	
Key Event	Passage
Goliath, a Philistine giant, will challenge Israel day after day to a one-on-one fight to determine the outcome of an Israeli-Philistine war. David will kill Goliath in battle.	1Sam. 17
Although David will be a great warrior on Saul's behalf, Saul will become jealous of David. He will plot against David, offering David marriage to his two daughters (on separate occasions). Because of Saul's duplicity, David will not end up marrying his first daughter, but he will marry Saul's second daughter, Michal. Saul's son, on the other hand, will become close friends with David.	1Sam. 18
Both Jonathan and Michal will protect David from Saul. Saul will even try to kill Jonathan, because their disagreement is so great. However, Saul will send men to either capture or kill David in his home, and David flees. The remainder of the book of Samuel will be David on the run from Saul.	1Sam. 19–20
David will first go to the city of priests, Nob, where he will get food and a weapon. Saul will go there later and kill all of the priests, save one, out of anger. The young priest who escapes death will hook up with David.	1Sam. 21–22
Saul will continue to pursue David, and David is twice given the opportunity to kill Saul, but he chooses not to.	1Sam. 23–24 26
Samuel dies.	1Sam. 25:1
David has an altercation with a selfish man named Nabal. His wife, Abigail, will intercede to keep David from killing him. Nabal will die of heart failure and his wife will marry David.	1Sam. 25
David will move to Philistine area, having been given permission by Achish, king of Gath. Achish gives David a city to operate from and David plunders groups of the uncircumcised in his area in order to live. When the Philistines decide to attack Israel once more, Achish requires David to join them. However, the other Philistine generals reject David, as they do not trust him.	1Sam. 27 29–30
Saul, on the eve of his last battle against the Philistines, goes to a witch and asks her to bring up Samuel from the dead. To her surprise, Samuel is brought up from the dead and he tells Saul that he will die in battle the next day. The witch and Saul's aides manage to get Saul to get up and return to his men, despite his reticence.	1Sam. 28
Saul and his sons will die in their final battle against the Philistines. Their bodies will be hung on a wall in Bethshan to ridicule Saul's loss. Brave men from Jabesh will retrieve the bodies of Saul and his sons and cremate them.	1Sam. 31
<i>The Books of Samuel contain the account of the cessation of Israel's original relationship with God, founded on their obedience to the terms of the old covenant, and the special prescriptions of the Book of Deuteronomy; the sovereign interference of God in prophecy; and the setting up of the king whom God Himself had prepared, with the circumstances which preceded this event. It is not merely that Israel failed under the government of God: they rejected it.</i> ²²	1Samuel
Although <i>what</i> happens is important, this is only a small part of the story. You could memorize the events, the people and the places of 1Samuel and not really get much out of the book itself. There is a lot more to be found in this book apart from the simple facts of the historical narrative.	

²² John Nelson Darby, *Synopsis of the Old and New Testaments*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. Introduction.

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The Book of Samuel by Sections:

1. Samuel usurps the spiritual authority of Eli (1Sam. 1–3).

Summary: We have two separate stories which become intertwined. We have the story of Hannah who could not provide her husband Elkanah with children; and we have the High Priest Eli, who is near the end of his service to God and man, without suitable replacements (his sons are a pair of turds). Hannah finally vows to God to give her son to God if God will give her a son to begin with. God hears her and gives her a son; Hannah fulfills her vow and brings this son to Eli to be brought up in the Tabernacle of God.

Eli raises the boy and God calls out to Samuel, something which was rare at that time. As Samuel grew to adulthood, it is apparent that he has a close relationship to God and that what he says comes to pass. In this context, Samuel is confirmed as a prophet of God.

Comment: Apparently, there are some exegetes who noticed that the narratives of Eli and his sons could be separated from the birth and growth of Samuel, and therefore conclude that these narratives have different origins. Although this is possible and it is possible that an editor interwove two historical manuscripts, there is really no reason to take that view. Samuel replaces Eli because of the degeneracy of Eli's sons. The narrative alternates between the two stories because they are intertwined.

2. The Movement of the Ark (1Sam. 4–7:2a).

While Samuel's authority is being recognized, Israel is at war with Philistia. The elders suddenly have the bright idea to grab the Ark and take it into battle with them as a good luck charm. This does not work. The Philistines defeat Israel, take the Ark and kill Eli's two worthless sons in the process. Eli also dies at hearing this news.

In this section, there are two particularly remarkable sections: Hannah will sing an inspired song as she gives Samuel up to God; and a man of God will speak to Eli and tell him what to expect concerning himself and his errant sons.

Meanwhile, the Ark is taken two a couple of different Philistine cities with disastrous results for the Philistines. After some inexplicable things happen in their own temple, and after thousands of Philistines die, the Ark is returned to Israel. Now, the Israelites also treat the Ark lightly at first, as more of an object of curiosity than a holy object which speaks of Jesus Christ, and thousands of Israelites in the city of Beth-Shemesh die as well. The Ark is finally taken to Kiriath-Jearim, where it is stored until the reign of David in 2Samuel.

Now, you will note that I stop this section in an very odd place—not just part way through a chapter, but in the middle of a verse. Here's the deal: we have the Ark and the time period of 20 years mentioned in 1Sam. 7:2, and for this reason, some have assumed that the Ark remained in Kiriath-Jearim for 20 years. The separation of the Bible into chapters and verses was not original with the writing of Scripture. In fact, these things took place hundreds of years later. The end result of having chapters and verses in Scripture is both a blessing and a curse. Here, the Ark staying in Kiriath-Jearim is one topic, and the mention of 20 years is another topic. We will discuss that in full at the end of 1Sam. 6 (which is where I placed the full exegesis for 1Sam. 7:1–2).

3. Israel calls for a king and Samuel provides them with Saul (1Sam. 7:2b–10:27).

20 years after the incident with the Ark, the people of Israel began to take their spiritual heritage more seriously, and they turned toward God. Samuel prayed on their behalf. In this same section, Samuel is also called a judge, meaning that he wore at least 3 hats: prophet, priest and judge.

Samuel was seen as a great authority, and the people finally came to him and asked for a king. This was difficult for Samuel to take, so he went to God about their request, and God gave him to go-ahead, saying, “They have not rejected you, they have rejected Me.” (1Sam. 8:7b).

God chooses Saul as the king for Israel, and, when Samuel goes to tell him, Saul is very humble about all of this. Samuel tells him about a series of events that will take place in the near future, so that Saul can confirm for himself that Samuel’s words are truth. These things take place and Samuel publically presents Saul as the next king of Israel.

4. Saul distinguishes himself before the people of Israel and is confirmed as king (1Sam. 11–12).

Even though Saul is presented by Samuel as king, he does not become king immediately. One of the purposes of a king, as the people saw it, was to lead them into battle against their many enemies. Saul has the chance to prove himself when the Ammonites seize the city of Jabesh. Samuel delivers these people and their city from the Ammonites and the people confirm him as king.

5. Saul’s rule progresses from good to bad (1Sam. 13–15).

Saul hand-picks an army, subdivides it, but then makes his first mistake: he is supposed to wait on Samuel to perform the proper spiritual services; however, when Samuel does not show, Saul usurps Samuel’s spiritual authority and offers some sacrifices himself, for which he is chewed out.

Jonathan single-handedly is victorious over a camp of Philistines, and Saul does another lame thing: he vows that no man will eat until all the Philistines are killed or routed—if anyone does, then he will be killed for ignoring Saul’s vow. Well, Jonathan, who has been out killing Philistines, misses this vow, eats some honey, and Saul is faced with either fulfilling his vow or letting Jonathan, a hero, live. The people persuade Saul not to carry out his vow.

Saul and Samuel speak again, and Saul is clearly told to destroy every Amalekite and all that they own. Saul instead keeps the king of the Amalekites alive and he sets aside the best of their possessions. Samuel thoroughly reams Saul out for his disobedience and warns him that God will replace him as king.

6. David is brought into the picture and Saul eventually turns on David (1Sam. 16–18).

Unlike Saul, David’s appearance did not cry out *king of Israel*. When Samuel goes to the home of Jesse and asks to see his sons, Jesse parades out his oldest boys, thinking that these are the ones who Samuel wants to see. However, God tells Samuel that none of these young men will be king over Israel, and Samuel finally gets to meet David, who shepherds some of the family’s flock. Samuel anoints David and leaves.

David is later brought into the palace to play soothing music, to an increasingly disturbed Saul.

When providing his brothers with sustenance from home, David answered the challenge of Goliath.

David’s relationship with Saul’s son Jonathan and daughter Michal are much better than his relationship to Saul.

Some see this final half of the book of 1Samuel as an apologetic for David’s reign; that is, a few chapters to vindicate David as a man who did not greedily go after Saul’s throne (see 2Sam. 16:7–8).²³ Personally, I do not see that as a motivating factor for Scripture, and perhaps I am being naive here. In this latter half of 1Samuel, David will be shown, warts and all, and he is in 2Samuel. He will make mistakes, he will make bad decisions, etc. What David will not do is go after the throne of the king.

²³ See Robert Gordon, *I & II Samuel A Commentary*; Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI; ©1986; pp. 37–39.

7. David flees the palace of Saul and becomes a fugitive, pursued by Saul (1Sam. 19–26).

David and Jonathan have become great friends, and even Saul accepts David once again. However, Saul is unstable, and turns on David, causing David to leave the palace. David meets with Jonathan once again, but when Jonathan speaks to his father, it is clear that Saul cannot be reasoned with.

David also makes some poor choices, and even lies to the priests at Nob in order to get a weapon and food. The end result is, Saul will murder the priests in Nob, and only one of them escapes.

David does get back into fellowship, and is faced with a number of decisions where he makes the right choices. One of the most important is, David is given the opportunity to kill Saul, but he does not.

8. David finally goes to the land of the Philistines to take refuge from Saul; Saul fights his last battle against the Philistines (1Sam. 27–31).

At the end of the book of 1Samuel, we have several things occurring simultaneously, and we jump back and forth between this scene and that (much like we did at the beginning of this book). David allies himself with Achish, king of Gath, but misleads him about his own activity (David attacks several heathen groups in his periphery, but tells Achish that he is attacking Israelites and Israelite allies). Achish likes the sound of that, and invites David to war with him against Israel. Although David agrees to, the other Philistine generals poo-poo the idea, not wanting David to turn on them in battle.

At the same time, it is clear to Saul that he is facing some serious crap in this upcoming battle against the Philistines. He is so upset and afraid, that he goes to a psychic in Endor to bring Samuel up from the dead for guidance. Much to the surprise of this psychic, Samuel does come up from the dead, and tells Saul that this battle will be his last—that he and his sons will die in this battle. A question you should ask yourself between now and the time that you study the end of this book is, *why does God allow a witch-psychic bring Samuel up from the dead? Doesn't that lend some sort of credence to her?* It is a question which I had and will answer when we get there.

With some coaxing, Saul, who faints from exhaustion and fear, returns to his soldiers and goes to war for the last time.

Outline of 1Samuel: 1Samuel may be easily broken down into 3 major sections: that dealing with Samuel, then Saul and then David.

I. Samuel (1Sam. 1–8)

A. The Birth of Samuel (1Sam. 1)

1. Elkanah and his two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. Hannah is barren and there is a bitterness between the two wives (1Sam. 1:1–8).
2. Hannah goes to the Temple of God and prays for a son. She tells God that she will give this son over to Him. Eli, the High Priest, distressed about having no children. Eli promises her that God would hear and grant her petition (he did not actually know what Hannah was praying for) (1Sam. 1:9–18).
3. Hannah gives birth to Samuel and then brings him to Eli to raise as God's son (1Sam. 1:19–28).
4. The celebratory song of Hannah (1Sam. 2:1–11).

B. Eli raises Samuel (1Sam. 2:12–3:21).

1. The evil practice of Eli's biological sons (1Sam. 2:12–17).
2. Hannah and Samuel (1Sam. 2:18–21).
3. Eli rebukes his sons (1Sam. 2:22–25).
4. Samuel's spiritual growth (1Sam. 2:26).
5. God, through a man of God, rebukes Eli for his sons behavior and Eli's inability to control them (1Sam. 2:27–36).
6. God speaks to Samuel in a dream (1Sam. 3:1–18).

7. Samuel grows up and is recognized by all Israel as a man of God (1Sam. 3:19–21).
- C. The Philistines and the Ark of God (1Sam. 4:1–7:2a).
 1. Israel brings the Ark into battle against the Philistines (1Sam. 4:1–9). The Philistines defeat the Israelites and capture the Ark (1Sam. 4:10–11).
 2. A messenger brings the news of the battle to Shiloh. Both Eli and the wife of his son Phinehas die (although the woman gives birth to Ihabod, who is apparently the only one left in the line of Eli). 1Sam. 4:12–22
 3. The Ark of God in Philistia (1Sam. 5:1–6:18). This narrative was probably written by a Philistine.
 - a. The Ark of God causes great catastrophe in the Philistia (1Sam. 5).
 - b. The Philistines send the Ark back to Israel (1Sam. 6:1–12).
 - c. The Ark enters into the border of Beth-shemesh, and the people of Israel celebrate with offerings and sacrifices (1Sam. 6:13–18). It is unclear whether this portion was written by one of the Philistine rulers who observed it from afar, or whether this was written by Samuel, based upon the observations of an Israelite who was there.
 4. The Israelites in Beth-shemesh treat the Ark with disrespect, as though it were some sort of a carnival item, and God punishes many of them with the sin unto death (1Sam. 6:19–20).
 5. The Ark is then transported to Kiriath-jearim where it remains until the time of David (1Sam. 6:21–7:2a).
- D. Samuel acts as Israel's spiritual leader (1Sam. 7:2b–8:22).
 1. Samuel leads Israel in spiritual reform, as they had been under Philistine attack for another 20 years after the incident with the Ark (1Sam. 7:2b–6).
 2. The Philistines mount up an attack against Israel, mistaking a spiritual gathering for a political uprising. God gives the victory to Israel (1Sam. 7:7–12).
 3. The Philistines remain subdued before Israel until Saul becomes king (1Sam. 7:13–14).
 4. Samuel's circuit judgeship (1Sam. 7:15–17).
 5. Israel demands a king of Samuel (1Sam. 8:1–6).
 6. Samuel goes to God and God allows a king to rule over Israel (1Sam. 8:7–9).
 7. Samuel warns the people about having a king over them (1Sam. 8:10–18).
 8. The people remain adamant about having a king (1Sam. 8:19–22).
- II. **Saul** (1Sam. 9–15)
 - A. Saul and Samuel (1Sam. 9–10).
 1. Saul and his servant search for two donkeys (1Sam. 9:1–5).
 2. Saul and his servant decide to enter into Ramah to see the man of God (Samuel) who resides there (1Sam. 9:6–14).
 3. God had told Samuel of Saul's coming (1Sam. 9:15–17).
 4. Samuel tells Saul about the donkeys and adds that Saul is the desire of all Israel (1Sam. 9:18–21).
 5. Saul enjoys a banquet in his honor, planned prior to his arrival in Ramah (1Sam. 9:22–24).
 6. Samuel proclaims the Word of God to Saul (1Sam. 9:25–10:8).
 7. "Is Saul among the prophets?" (1Sam. 10:9–13).
 8. Saul returns home (1Sam. 10:14–15).
 9. Saul is publically proclaimed king over Israel by Samuel (1Sam. 10:17–27).
 - B. Saul as a good leader over Israel (1Sam. 11:1–14:23).
 - C. Saul as a poor leader over Israel (1Sam. 14:24–15:35).
- III. **David**—God Chooses and Protects David (1Sam. 16–31)
 - A. David and Samuel: Samuel goes to Bethlehem to anoint the next king (1Sam. 16)
 1. Samuel goes to the house of Jesse and anoints his son David, after rejecting all of his older brothers (1Sam. 16:1–13).
 2. Saul is tormented by an evil spirit and David is brought to him to soothe him with music (1Sam. 16:14–23).
 - B. David and Goliath (1Sam. 17)
 1. Goliath, a giant of a Philistine, challenges any man in Israel to a one-on-one fight (1Sam. 17:1–11)
 2. David brings supplies to his brothers and to their commander, who are ready to go to war with the Philistines (1Sam. 17:12–21).

3. David hears about Goliath as he walks through the Israeli camp and further inquires about the situation (1Sam. 17:22–30).
4. David rises to accept Goliath's challenge, and is prepared by Saul (1Sam. 17:31–39).
5. David kills Goliath (1Sam. 17:40–51, 54).
6. Inspired by David killing Goliath, the soldiers of Israel chase off the Philistines, killing many of them (1Sam. 17:52–53).
7. Saul inquires about David and then personally interviews him (1Sam. 17:55–58).
- C. David, Saul and Saul's offspring (Jonathan and Michal) (1Sam. 18–20)
 1. David and Jonathan's friendship (1Sam. 18:1–4).
 2. David's military success (1Sam. 18:5–7).
 3. Saul's mental attitude sins toward David (1Sam. 18:8–16).
 4. David and Merab (Saul's oldest daughter—1Sam. 18:17–19).
 5. David and Michal (Saul's younger daughter—1Sam. 18:20–28).
 6. David and Saul contrasted (1Sam. 18:29–30).
 7. Jonathan warns David about Saul's intentions to kill him (1Sam. 19:1–3).
 8. Jonathan persuades Saul that David is not his enemy (1Sam. 19:4–6).
 9. For a short time, David resumes a normal relationship with Saul; but then Saul tried to kill him again (1Sam. 19:7–10).
 10. Saul sends assassins to David's home to kill him and Michal helps him to escape (1Sam. 19:11–17).
 11. David goes to Samuel to escape; Saul's servants and then Saul pursue David, but they are unsuccessful (1Sam. 19:18–24).
 12. David meets with Jonathan and discusses the situation (1Sam. 20:1–23).
 13. Saul and Jonathan have a falling out over David (1Sam. 20:24–34).
 14. Jonathan and David meet up again, for the last time (1Sam. 20:35–42).
- D. David, Saul and the priests of Nob (1Sam. 21–22).
 1. David obtains a weapon and food by deception from the priests at Nob (1Sam. 21:1–9).
 2. David goes to Achish king of Gath, and then rethinks this plan midway through his meeting with Achish (1Sam. 21:9–15).
 3. Saul goes to Nob and has all but one of the priests executed (1Sam. 22:1–19).
 4. One very young priest, Abiathar, escapes and hooks up with David (1Sam. 22:20–23).
- E. David and Saul (1Sam. 23–24).
 1. David delivers Keilah from the Philistines (1Sam. 23:1–14).
 2. Saul pursues David but has to back off to fight the Philistines (1Sam. 23:15–29).
 3. David has the opportunity to kill Saul, but he chooses not to (1Sam. 24).
- F. David and Abigail (1Sam. 25).
 1. Samuel dies (1Sam. 25:1).
 2. Nabal reneges on a financial arrangement with David (1Sam. 25:2–13).
 3. Abigail, Nabal's wife, intercedes (1Sam. 25:14–35).
 4. Nabal dies anyway (1Sam. 25:36–38).
 5. David marries Abigail (and Ahinoam) (1Sam. 25:39–43).
 6. David's wife, Michal, is given to another man (1Sam. 25:44).
- G. David spares Saul's life once again (1Sam. 26).
- H. David loosely allies himself with the Philistines in order to get away from Saul (1Sam. 27).
- I. Israel and Philistia at war (1Sam. 28–31).
 1. Saul, prior to battle, goes to the witch of Endor to bring Samuel up from the dead to advise him (1Sam. 28).
 2. The Philistines will not go into battle allied with David (1Sam. 29).
 3. David returns to his camp in Philistia and finds that the Amalekites have raided it and removed their women and possessions. David pursues the Amalekites and defeats them (1Sam. 30).
 4. Saul and the army of Israel are soundly defeated by the Philistines (1Sam. 31).

Another approach that we can take is the summary provided by Keil and Delitzsch:

Keil and Delitzsch Summarize 1Sam. 1–7

I. History of the People of Israel Under the Prophet Samuel - 1 Samuel 1-7

The call of Samuel to be the prophet and judge of Israel formed a turning-point in the history of the Old Testament kingdom of God. As the prophet of Jehovah, Samuel was to lead the people of Israel out of the times of the judges into those of the kings, and lay the foundation for a prosperous development of the monarchy. Consecrated like Samson as a Nazarite from his mother's womb, Samuel accomplished the deliverance of Israel out of the power of the Philistines, which had been only commenced by Samson; and that not by the physical might of his arm, but by the spiritual power of his word and prayer, with which he led Israel back from the worship of dead idols to the Lord its God. And whilst as one of the judges, among whom he classes himself in 1Sa_12:11, he brought the office of judge to a close, and introduced the monarchy; as a prophet, he laid the foundation of the prophetic office, inasmuch as he was the first to naturalize it, so to speak, in Israel, and develop it into a power that continued henceforth to exert the strongest influence, side by side with the priesthood and monarchy, upon the development of the covenant nation and kingdom of God. For even if there were prophets before the time of Samuel, who revealed the will of the Lord at times to the nation, they only appeared sporadically, without exerting any lasting influence upon the national life; whereas, from the time of Samuel onwards, the prophets sustained and fostered the spiritual life of the congregation, and were the instruments through whom the Lord made known His purposes to the nation and its rulers. To exhibit in its origin and growth the new order of things which Samuel introduced, or rather the deliverance which the Lord sent to His people through this servant of His, the prophetic historian goes back to the time of Samuel's birth, and makes us acquainted not only with the religious condition of the nation, but also with the political oppression under which it was suffering at the close of the period of the judges, and during the high-priesthood of Eli. At the time when the pious parents of Samuel were going year by year to the house of God at Shiloh to worship and offer sacrifice before the Lord, the house of God was being profaned by the abominable conduct of Eli's sons (1 Samuel 1-2). When Samuel was called to be the prophet of Jehovah, Israel lost the ark of the covenant, the soul of its sanctuary, in the war with the Philistines (1 Samuel 3-4). And it was not till after the nation had been rendered willing to put away its strange gods and worship Jehovah alone, through the influence of Samuel's exertions as prophet, that the faithful covenant God gave it, in answer to Samuel's intercession, a complete victory over the Philistines (1 Samuel 7). In accordance with these three prominent features, the history of the judicial life of Samuel may be divided into three sections, viz.: 1 Samuel 1-2; 3-6; 7.*

* Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 1Sam. 1 Introduction.

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Accuracy of our Manuscripts: Prior to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the oldest manuscripts that we had of the Old Testament dated back to the 10th century A.D. With the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, we have found bits and pieces of various manuscripts, including a 4th century B.C. fragment of 1Samuel (the oldest manuscript portion discovered to this day). According to ZPEB and Gordon²⁴, 1Samuel is probably the worst preserved book of Scripture, with some ancient manuscripts agreeing more with the Septuagint than with the Massoretic text; and there is another fragment which appears to be superior to both the LXX and the MT. A. B. Johnson attributes this to a damaged manuscript of 1Samuel.²⁵ We will spend a considerable amount of time analyzing the text of this book when we believe the Masoretic text to be weak or in question. Now and again, I will even exegete passages of this book from the Greek.

We will take a look at the ancient manuscripts sometime during our study of the first chapter of 1Samuel, but let me give you the gist: there are families of manuscripts. That is, we can trace certain manuscripts and their origins and we can also tell approximately when some manuscripts began to diverge. The Masoretic text is in the same

²⁴ Robert Gordon, *I & II Samuel A Commentary*; Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI; ©1986; p. 57.

²⁵ I don't know this person, but Gordon mentions his opinion in a footnote in Robert Gordon, *I & II Samuel A Commentary*; Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI; ©1986; p. 329 (footnote #101).

family of manuscripts as is the Peshitta and the Latin Vulgate (but not the Old Latin). This branch diverged early on from the LXX. Therefore, we can expect the readings from the Hebrew, the Latin and the Syriac to be in agreement most of the time when the MT diverges from the Greek Septuagint. When determining the best reading, we cannot simply say, 3 against 1, the MT must be correct. On the other hand, we can barely fathom the time and care which went into preserving the Hebrew text—no ancient book outside of Scripture has seen this kind of devotion. Therefore, even though 1Samuel may be the book with the greatest number of variants, the text is still essentially sound. Furthermore, the differences of text may slightly alter our understanding of an historical incident, but it will never affect a fundamental doctrine of Scripture.

What will help us in determining the best text will be the book *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*; translation and commentary by Martin Abegg Jr., Peter Flint and Eugene Ulrich; Harper SF, ©1999. It will be apparent in many cases where there is disagreement between the text of the LXX and the MT that the Dead Sea Scrolls will be in agreement with the LXX, indicating that this translation was not occasionally a product of a translator's imagination, but that he was working with a Hebrew text different from the MT upon which his Greek translation is based. In other words, the LXX, when it diverges from the MT, will often be the more accurate text. On the other hand, this does not mean that every time we find agreement between the Dead Sea Scrolls and the LXX that is the best understanding. There are some obvious errors which occur in both sets of manuscripts.²⁶ Therefore, we must consider the texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls along side other ancient texts, but without giving them an inordinate amount of weight.

I should mention one additional fact about the Dead Sea Scrolls. As the LXX is not just *one* manuscript, neither do we have just one manuscript of 1Samuel from the Dead Sea Scrolls. What we have are fragments of 3 different manuscripts of 1Samuel all from the same cave. They are known as 4QSam^{a-c}.²⁷ Being fragments, we will find large chunks of chapters missing from this book, as well as large chunks of verses. That reading which is supposed, but not actually found, will be enclosed in brackets when giving the English translation of the Dead Sea Scrolls.²⁸

Missing Information: There are several important incidents in the history of Israel which are not directly recorded in the book of Samuel, although one would expect them to have been recorded: (1) the destruction of Shiloh; (2) Saul's attack and decimation of the Gibeonites; (3) the movement of the Tent of God and the reasons for this movement.

Shiloh, a spiritual center of Israel, wherein was the Tent of God, was where Hannah went to pray over her barrenness; a prayer which resulted in the birth of Samuel, one of the great men of Scripture. And later, when Israel goes to war with the Philistines, Israel's military leaders went to Shiloh to fetch the Ark of God for good luck (the Ark of God, of course, was kept in the Tent of God). However, when the Ark of God is returned, it is not transported to Shiloh. When Samuel becomes Israel's spiritual leader, there is no mention made of Shiloh during his time as the spiritual Atlas of Israel. It is later in a psalm and by the warning of a later prophet that we find out that Shiloh was destroyed. During this exegesis, we will determine roughly when the destruction of Shiloh occurred and what were some of the pertinent events of that time period.

The second incident is one of the more interesting occurrences. Saul, for whatever reason, decided to decimate the foreign Gibeonites who lived in peace in Israel by treaty. Actually, we do not know how many were killed or even when exactly they were killed. As for the reason, we can logically speculate that Saul had no good reason for doing what he did, based upon the retrospective Scriptural reference in 2Sam. 21. We find out about this incident during the time of David when Israel is under divine discipline in the form of a famine and David is required to make restitution for what Saul had done.

²⁶ Gordon cites a number of passages, including 1Sam. 2:24 8:16 2Sam. 7:23 where the text of the Dead Sea Scrolls is likely incorrect. Robert Gordon, *I & II Samuel A Commentary*; Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI; ©1986; p. 59.

²⁷ This means they all came from cave #4 in Qumran.

²⁸ I do not personally own the Greek and Hebrew copies of the manuscripts from the Dead Sea Scrolls.

One of the most important aspects of Israel's spiritual history was the Tent of God, the ceremonies related to this Tent, and the location of the Tent. Even though we have several unequivocal locations for the Tent of God (Shiloh—1Sam. 1:3, 9; Gibeon—I Chron. 16:39; Jerusalem—1Kings 8), we have no mention of the actual movement of the Tent from Shiloh to Gibeon (or to any intermediate place, e.g., Nob).

In our study of the Book of Samuel, we will examine these incidents that took place; and I will attempt to place them chronologically where they belong. Furthermore, I will endeavor to give reasons for the incidents taking place as well as reasons why these incidents were not recorded in Scripture.

1Samuel in Contrast with the book of the Judges: The book of Judges is filled with little people who have defects and whose effect upon the history of Israel is essentially a footnote. The most well-known person from this book is Samson, who was an odd duck, at best. The person from that time period who had the greatest effect was probably Ruth, and she was given her own book. On the other hand, the book of Samuel is filled with men and women who are almost bigger than life: Hannah, Eli, Samuel, Saul, Jonathan and David.²⁹

The Grand Themes in the book of Samuel: Throughout the book of Samuel, there are some grand themes³⁰:

The usurping of power: Samuel usurped Eli's spiritual authority; David usurps Saul's political power. In addition to this, we find the prophet usurping the spiritual authority of the priest; Abigail usurps Michal's relationship with David. A theocracy was replaced by a monarchy.

Prayer: The book of Samuel begins and ends with a prayer. Throughout this narrative, we find several prayers. Rather than God communicating directly to man, as He did with Moses and Abraham, man speaks to God in prayer and God speaks to man in a variety of ways (the ephod, prophets, etc.).

Prophecy: Even though the book of Samuel is principally narrative, there are a lot of short-term prophecies of what is going to happen. These will be listed under **Prophecies in 1Samuel**. The prophet also usurps the spiritual preeminence of the priest.

Israel is transformed into a world power. This is begun in 1Samuel, but it will be brought to fruition by David in the book of 2Samuel.

Prophecies in 1Samuel: Although the book of 1Samuel is primarily a narrative covering the lives of Eli, Samuel, Saul and David, it does contain near and far prophecies (that is, prophecies for the near future and the far future). Most of the prophecies were short-term and fulfilled in the book of 1Samuel.

²⁹ Taken from J. Vernon McGee; *I & II Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 5.

³⁰ Some of these came from J. Vernon McGee; *I & II Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; pp. 5–6.

Prophecies found in the Book of 1Samuel

Prophecy	Fulfillment
<p>She vowed a vow, and said, "The LORD of Armies, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your handmaid, and remember me, and not forget your handmaid, but will give to your handmaid a boy, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come on his head." (1Sam. 1:11).</p> <p>Eli responded, "Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant the petition you've requested from Him." (1Sam. 1:17).</p>	<p>God did give Hannah a son, Samuel, whose life is covered in the first half of the book of Samuel. After some time, Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, because she said, "I requested him from the LORD." (1Sam. 1:20).</p> <p>Hannah, speaking to Eli, said, "I prayed for this boy, and since the LORD gave me what I asked Him for, 1Sa 1:28 I now give the boy to the LORD. For as long as he lives, he is given to the LORD." (1Sam. 1:27–28a).</p>
<p>Hannah's psalm: "Those who oppose the LORD will be shattered; He will thunder in the heavens against them. The LORD will judge the ends of the earth. He will give power to His king; He will lift up the horn of His anointed." (1Sam. 2:10).</p>	<p>For this reason God also highly exalted Him [Jesus Christ] and gave Him the name that is above every name (Philip. 1:9).</p> <p>Then I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and against His army. But the beast was taken prisoner, and along with him the false prophet, who had performed signs on his authority, by which he deceived those who accepted the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. Both of them were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. The rest were killed with the sword that came from the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh Rev. 19:19–21).</p> <p>The devil who deceived them was thrown into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever (Rev. 20:10).</p>
<p>Eli would bless Elkanah (and his wife) and say, "May the LORD give you children from this woman in place of the one which she has given to the LORD." Then they would go home (1Sam. 2:20).</p>	<p>The LORD came to Hannah. She became pregnant five times and had three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile, the boy Samuel grew up in front of the LORD (1Sam. 2:21).</p>
<p>"The time is coming when I will break your strength and the strength of your father's house so that no one will grow old in your family. You will see distress in my dwelling place. In spite of the good that I do for Israel, no one in your family will live to an old age. Any man in your family whom I do not remove from my altar will have his eyes fail, and he will be heartbroken. And all your descendants will die in the prime of life (1Sam. 2:31–33; the remainder of this passage is below).</p>	<p>So the king said to Doeg, "You turn and attack the priests." Doeg from Edom turned and attacked the priests, and that day he killed 85 men wearing the linen priestly ephod. He also killed the people of Nob, the city of the priests. Using his sword, he killed men and women, children and infants, cows, donkeys, and sheep (1Sam. 22:18–19; see also 1Kings 8:26–27 below).</p>

Prophecies found in the Book of 1Samuel

Prophecy	Fulfillment
<p>What is going to happen to your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, will be a sign to you: Both of them will die on the same day (1Sam. 2:34; see also 1Sam. 3:12–14).</p>	<p>"Israel fled from the Philistines," the messenger answered. "Our troops suffered heavy casualties. Your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, also are dead, and the ark of God has been captured." (1Sam. 4:17).</p>
<p>Then I will appoint a faithful priest to serve me. He will do everything I want him to do. I will give Him faithful descendants, and He will always live as my Anointed One (1Sam. 2:35).</p>	<p>Brothers and sisters, you are holy partners in a heavenly calling. Therefore, look carefully at Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest about whom we make our declaration of faith (Heb. 3:1).</p> <p>You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26).</p> <p>You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek (Heb. 5:6b).</p> <p>He [Andrew] first found his own brother Simon and told him, "We have found the Messiah!" (which means "Anointed One") (John 1:41). He demonstrated this power in the Messiah by raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavens (Eph. 1:20).</p>
<p>Then anyone who is left from your household will bow down in front of him to get a coin or a loaf of bread and say, 'Please appoint me to one of the priestly classes so that I may eat a piece of bread.' (1Sam. 2:36).</p>	<p>Then to Abiathar, the priest, the king [Solomon] said, "Go to Anathoth, to your own field, for you deserve to die; however, I will not put you to death at this time, because you carried the ark of Jehovah God before my father David and because you were afflicted in everything with which my father was afflicted." So Solomon dismissed Abiathar from being priest to Jehovah in order to fulfill the word of Jehovah, which He had spoken concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh (1Kings 8:26–27).</p>
<p>Samuel told them, "If you are returning to the LORD with all your heart, get rid of the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths that are among you, dedicate yourselves to the LORD, and worship only Him. Then He will rescue you from the hand of the Philistines." (1Sam. 7:3).</p>	<p>So the Israelites removed the Baals and the Ashtoreths and only worshiped the LORD (1Sam. 7:4). Samuel was offering the burnt offering as the Philistines drew near to fight against Israel. The LORD thundered loudly against the Philistines that day and threw them into such confusion that they fled before Israel. Then the men of Israel charged out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines striking them down all the way to a place below Beth-car (1Sam. 7:10–11).</p>
<p>Although 1Sam. 8:10–18 appears to be a prophecy, it gives a general description of what a king would do to Israel—he would take the bet of everything to himself. We do not have a specific fulfillment of this prophecy; however, we can rest assured that every bad king partially fulfilled this and every good king did to some extent.</p>	

Prophecies found in the Book of 1 Samuel

Prophecy	Fulfillment
<p>Now the day before Saul's arrival, the LORD had informed Samuel, "At this time tomorrow I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin. Anoint him ruler over My people Israel. He will save them from the hand of the Philistines because I have seen the affliction of My people, for their cry has come to Me." (1Sam. 9:15–16).</p>	<p>When Samuel saw Saul, the LORD told him, "Here is the man I told you about; he will rule over My people." Saul approached Samuel in the gate area and asked, "Would you please tell me where the seer's house is?" (1Sam. 9:17–18).</p>
<p>Today when you leave me, you'll find two men at Rachel's Grave at Zelzah in the land of Benjamin. They will say to you, 'The donkeys you went looking for have been found, and now your father has stopped being concerned about the donkeys and is worried about you, asking: What should I do about my son?' "You will proceed from there until you come to the oak of Tabor. Three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you there, one bringing three goats, one bringing three loaves of bread, and one bringing a skin of wine. They will ask how you are and give you two loaves of bread, which you will accept from them. "After that you will come to the Hill of God where there are Philistine garrisons. When you arrive at the city, you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place prophesying. They will be preceded by harps, tambourines, flutes, and lyres. The Spirit of the LORD will control you, you will prophesy with them, and you will be transformed into a different person. When these signs have happened to you, do whatever your circumstances require because God is with you (1Sam. 10:2–7).</p>	<p>When Saul turned around to leave Samuel, God changed his heart, and all the signs came about that day. When Saul and his attendant arrived at Gibeah, a group of prophets met him. Then the Spirit of God took control of him, and he prophesied along with them. Everyone who knew him previously and saw him prophesy with the prophets asked each other, "What has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?" (1Sam. 10:9–11).</p>
<p>Samuel's warning to the people of Israel when Saul was confirmed as king: "Above all, fear the LORD and worship Him faithfully with all your heart, considering the great things He has done for you. However, if you continue to do what is evil, both you and your king will be swept away." (1Sam. 12:24–25).</p> <p>After Saul disobeyed a direct order from God, Samuel told Saul, "For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and defiance is like wickedness and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has rejected you as king." (1Sam. 15:23).</p>	<p>So on that day, Saul died together with his three sons, his armor-bearer, and all his men. When the men of Israel on the other side of the valley and on the other side of the Jordan saw that Israel's men had run away and that Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned the cities and fled. So the Philistines came and settled in them (1Sam. 31:6–7). Saul spent a great deal of time pursuing David, and for no reason. He also ordered that the priests of Nob be killed. This is poor leadership and his men should not have agreed to his agenda.</p>

Prophecies found in the Book of 1Samuel

Prophecy	Fulfillment
<p>[After Saul usurped Samuel's spiritual authority], Samuel said to Saul, "You have been foolish. You have not kept the command which the LORD your God gave you. It was at this time that the LORD would have permanently established your reign over Israel, but now your reign will not endure. The LORD has found a man loyal to Him, and the LORD has appointed him as ruler over His people, because you have not done what the LORD commanded." (1Sam. 13:13–14).</p>	<p>The next day when the Philistines came to strip the slain, they found Saul and his three sons dead on Mount Gilboa (1Sam. 31:8). This battle ended Saul's brief dynasty.</p> <p>After removing him [Saul], He [God] raised up David as their king, of whom He testified: 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who will carry out all My will.' (Acts 13:22).</p>
<p>Samuel anointed David as the next king of Israel to supplant Saul: So Jesse sent for him. He had beautiful eyes and a healthy, handsome appearance. Then the LORD said, "Anoint him, for he is the one." So Samuel took the horn of oil, anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the Spirit of the LORD took control of David from that day forward (1Sam. 16:12–13a).</p>	<p>All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "Here we are, your own flesh and blood. Even while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led us out to battle and brought us back. The LORD also said to you, 'You will shepherd My people Israel and be ruler over Israel.'" So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron. King David made a covenant with them at Hebron in the LORD's presence, and they anointed David king over Israel. (2Sam. 5:1–3).</p>
<p>Then David said, "The LORD who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine." (1Sam. 17:37a).</p>	<p>David defeated the Philistine with a sling and a stone. Even though David had no sword, he struck down the Philistine and killed him (1Sam. 17:50).</p>
<p>So David inquired of the LORD: "Should I launch an attack against these Philistines?" The LORD answered David, "Launch an attack against the Philistines and rescue Keilah." But David's men said to him, "Look, we're afraid here in Judah; how much more if we go to Keilah against the Philistine forces!" Once again, David inquired of the LORD, and the LORD answered him: "Go at once to Keilah, for I will hand the Philistines over to you." (1Sam. 23:2–4).</p>	<p>Then David and his men went to Keilah, fought against the Philistines, drove their livestock away, and inflicted heavy losses on them. So David rescued the inhabitants of Keilah (1Sam. 23:5).</p>
<p>Samuel to Saul, after being summoned from the dead: "The LORD will also hand Israel over to the Philistines along with you. Tomorrow you and your sons will be with me, and the LORD will hand Israel's army over to the Philistines." (1Sam. 29:19).</p>	<p>So on that day, Saul died together with his three sons, his armor-bearer, and all his men (1Sam. 31:6).</p>
<p>David said to Abiathar the priest, son of Ahimelech, "Bring me the ephod." So Abiathar brought it to him, and David asked the LORD: "Should I pursue these raiders? Will I overtake them?" The LORD replied to him, "Pursue them, for you will certainly overtake them and rescue the people." (1Sam. 30:7–8).</p>	<p>So he led him, and there were the Amalekites, spread out over the entire area, eating, drinking, and celebrating because of the great amount of plunder they had taken from the land of the Philistines and the land of Judah. David slaughtered them from twilight until the evening of the next day. None of them escaped, except 400 young men who got on camels and fled. David recovered everything the Amalekites had taken; he also rescued his two wives (1Sam. 30:16–18).</p>

All of these prophecies will be given a more thorough explanation in the specific exegesis of that chapter.

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Unanswered questions: I read a lot of commentaries and one of the thing that strikes me is, they leave out so much. There is so much information here to be unearthed in the book of Samuel and that very few of these commentators deal with it. I will answer a great many of those questions.

Some of the questions listed below have been dealt with; however, many have not.

Samuel, a Book Filled with Many Unanswered Questions	
Question	Answered in:
What is wrong with polygamy? We find it practiced by a number of saints.	1Sam. 1
What piece of meat did Elkanah give his wife Hannah? What was its significance? And what is the <i>guy theory</i> ?	1Sam. 1
Why did Hannah bring three specific things to offer when she brought Samuel to the House of God? Were these simply the first things she grabbed up as she walked out the door?	1Sam. 2
Was Samuel a Nazarite? Both sides of the question are given a hearing.	1Sam. 1
What are these pillars of God which hold up or support the earth?	1Sam. 2
Why did God raise Samuel from the dead when Saul asked the psychic to do so? Why didn't God simply send Saul an angel to tell him what's up?	1Sam. 2, 28
What is the significance of Saul's last meal? Why is this even mentioned in Scripture?	1Sam. 28
Is suicide a valid out? Did Saul lose his salvation or was he not ever saved because he committed suicide?	1Sam. 31

As I have studied Scripture, God the Holy Spirit has revealed a great many things to me. Now, I don't mean that, I look up and explanations are being magically written on my computer screen. I don't hear this still, small voice deep inside which says, "Here's another one, dude!" (followed by the answer to a question). All of this comes through the moderately logical mind which God has given me, along with the time the leisurely examine the book of Samuel (I am at about 5 years right now for the first half of this book). God prepared me by having me teach logic for 29 years, as well as providing me with an excellent set of Bible teachers.

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Edersheim makes an excellent point at this time: *We notice large gaps in the history of Samuel, Saul, and David, long periods and important facts being omitted, with which the author must have been acquainted, —and to which, indeed, in some instances, he afterwards expressly refers, —while other periods and events are detailed at great length. All these peculiarities are not accidental, but designed, and in accordance with the general plan of the work. For, we must bear in mind, that as in the case of other parts of Holy Scripture, so in the Books of Samuel, we must not look for biographies, as of Samuel, Saul, and David, not yet expect merely an account of their administration, but a history of the kingdom of God during a new period in its development, and in a fresh stage of its onward movement towards the end.*³¹

³¹ Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 407.

In order to whet your appetite, I like to list of few of the famous and sometimes not-so-famous verses to come from the book of 1Samuel.

Quotations from the Book of 1Samuel		
Citation	Scripture	Commentary
1Sam. 2:10	Those contending with Y ^e howah are broken into pieces; He thunders against them in the heavens. Y ^e howah judges the ends of the earth and He gives strength to His king and He exalts the horn of His Anointed One [or, <i>His Messiah, His Christ</i>]."	Samuel is a type of Christ; therefore, when Hannah sings this song of thanksgiving, we would expect her to make reference to God's King, God's Messiah.
1Sam. 2:35	And I have caused to raise up for Myself a faithful priest; he will do as that which [is] in My heart and in My soul. And I have built for him a sure house and he [He] will go in and out before My Anointed [<i>anointed</i>] all the days.	The priest that this unnamed prophet speaks about is both Samuel and the Messiah to come. As we find over and over in Scripture, this is a prophecy with a double-fulfillment.
1Sam. 3:1b	And word from Jehovah was rare in those days, and visions were infrequent.	Some people view the Bible is a non-stop miracle fest, and believe that Sunday in church ought to be run the same way. However, the truth of it is, the number of miracles in Scripture are few, ³² and the amount of revelation received over time is also rare. Now that Scripture is complete, there is no reason to add to it—i.e., no reason for direct divine revelation (Rev. 22:18).
1Sam. 8:19–20	Nevertheless, the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel, and they said, "No, but there will be a king over us, so that we may also be like all the nations, that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles."	This is the point at which the people of Israel demanded that Samuel provide them with a king.
1Sam. 10:11	And it came to pass when all who knew Saul previously saw that he prophesied now with the prophets, and the people said to one another, "What has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?"	This was the result of a fulfilment of Samuel's prophecy to Saul, to let him know that God had really chosen him to be king over Israel.
1Sam. 12:22	"For Jehovah will not abandon His people on account of His great name, because Jehovah has been pleased to make you a people for Himself."	The people realized that asking for a king was wrong and asked if God would abandon them for doing so. This was Samuel's answer.

³² Essentially we have Moses leading the children of Israel out of Egypt; that involved a number of miracles, both before and after. We have Elijah and Elisha and a handful of miracles which were done with their hands. Finally, in the New Testament, we have the miracles of Jesus Christ, which identify Him as the Messiah and the miracles of the early church, which indicated that there was a transference of power and authority to the Apostles.

Quotations from the Book of 1Samuel		
Citation	Scripture	Commentary
1Sam. 12:24–25	"Only fear (and respect) Jehovah and serve Him in truth with all your heart, for consider what great things He has done for you. But if you still do wickedly, both you and your king will be swept away."	This was the flip side of eternal security above.
1Sam. 15:22–23	And Samuel said, "Has Jehovah as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of Jehovah?" Listen, to obey is better than sacrifice and to heed than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of divination and insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have reject the word of Jehovah, He has also rejected you from being king."	Saul had been clearly told by God to destroy all of the Amalekites and their possessions; he disobeyed God in this, and this was Samuel's response. In context, Saul claimed that he kept the best of the Amalekite livestock alive in order to sacrifice them to God.
1Sam. 16:7	"Do not look at his appearance or at his height, because I have reject him. God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but Jehovah looks into the heart."	God explained to Samuel why Eliab (David's oldest brother) was not God's choice to rule Israel. Eliab revealed more of his true nature in 1Sam. 16:28, when David faced off Goliath.
1Sam. 17:42–47	And the Philistine came on, coming and drawing near to David; and the shield bearer was before him. And the Philistine looked, and he saw David, and disdained him, for he was a youth, even ruddy, with a handsome form. And the Philistine said to David, Am I a dog that you have come to me with sticks? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the heavens and to the beasts of the field. And David said to the Philistine, You are coming to me with sword, and with spear, and with javelin. But I am coming to you in the name of Jehovah of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, which you have reproached. Today Jehovah shall shut you up into my hand, and I shall strike you, and take off your head from you and give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the heavens and to the beasts of the earth today. And all the earth shall know that there is a God for Israel. And all this company shall know that Jehovah does not save by sword and by spear, but that the battle belongs to Jehovah, and He has given you into our hand.	David clarifies the issues prior to killing Goliath.
1Sam. 18:7	And the women who were playing answered and said, "Saul has slain his thousands, but David his tens of thousands."	David and Saul were both well-known for their exploits in battle; however, it appears as though David was a much more effective military man.

Quotations from the Book of 1Samuel		
Citation	Scripture	Commentary
1Sam. 19:24	And Saul also stripped off his clothes and he too prophesied before Samuel, and laid down naked all that day and all that night. Therefore, they say, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"	Saul, when chasing after David, was suddenly waylaid by the Holy Spirit and caused to prophesy.
1Sam. 21:13–15	David pretended to be insane in the presence of the king of Gath [and his court]. He acted like a madman around them, scribbling on the doors of the gate and letting saliva run down his beard. "Look! You can see the man is crazy," Achish said to his servants. "Why did you bring him to me? Do I have such a shortage of crazy people that you brought this one to act crazy around me? Is this one going to come into my house?"	There is very little of recorded humor spoken by anyone in Scripture, but this was one clever statement made by Achish, King of Gath. The implication is, he had a cabinet filled with demented men; why did they bring him another?
1Sam. 22:18	And King Saul said to Doeg, "Turn around and attack the priests." So Doeg the Edomite turned around and killed 85 priests that day.	Saul was upset at the priests, thinking that they had intentionally helped David, knowing that he was after David. This gives you an idea as to how far he had fallen from grace.
1Sam. 24:14	"After whom has the king of Israel come out? Whom are you pursuing? A dead dog? A single flea?"	Although David had the opportunity to kill Saul, he chose not to. However, he asks Saul why he has come with his entire army out to seek one man.
1Sam. 24:16b–21	Saul wept aloud and said to David, "You are more righteous than I, for you have done what is good to me though I have done what is evil to you. You yourself have told me today what good you did for me: when the LORD handed me over to you, you didn't kill me. When a man finds his enemy, does he let him go unharmed? May the LORD repay you with good for what you've done for me today. "Now I know for certain you will be king, and the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hand. Therefore swear to me by the LORD that you will not cut off my descendants or wipe out my name from my father's family."	Saul vents his heart-felt sadness, realizing how good David has been to him, and what a jerk he has been in return. Saul has used everything in his power to pursue David to kill him. However, when David has the chance to kill Saul, he does not. Saul can't believe it and feels very guilty for his actions.
1Sam. 27:1a	Then David said to himself, "I will die one day at the hand of Saul. I should escape to the land of the Philistines."	Here, David gets out of fellowship, actually believing that Saul is able to get to him and kill him, despite all that has happened previously, despite all the promises of God.

What I hope I can accomplish in this study of Samuel is what Edersheim said: *[There are several] difficulties [in the book of Samuel]: those connected with the ban upon Amalek, the consultation of the witch of Endor, and in general with the lower moral standpoint evidently occupied by those of that time, even by David himself. Such questions could not be passed over. They are inseparably connected with the Scriptural narratives, and they touch the very foundations of our faith. In accordance with the plan of progressive advance which I set before myself in the successive books of this Bible History, I have endeavoured to discuss them as fully as the character of this work allowed. Whether or not I may always succeed in securing the conviction of my readers, I can at least say, that, while I have never written what was not in accordance with my own conscientious conviction, nor sought to invent an explanation merely in order to get rid of a difficulty, my own reverent belief in the authority of the Word of God has not in any one case been the least shaken. It sounds almost presumptuous to write down such a confession. Yet it seems called for in days when the enumeration of difficulties, easily raised, owing to the distance of these events, the great difference of circumstances, and the necessary scantiness of our materials of knowledge—whether critical, historical, or theological, —so often takes the place of sober inquiry; and high-sounding phrases which, logically tested, yield no real meaning, are substituted for solid reasoning.*³³

What is the big picture? Let's look at this from an historical perspective. We have seen in the book of judges that, even when God raises up specific judges in order to deliver Israel, Israel fails again and again. The final judge alluded to is Samson, whom God gave great strength, and even he was an incredible embarrassment. You look at the things that Samson did, how he played with fire, how he was easily seduced by a Philistine woman, even though he seemed to understand that the Philistines were evil. There was no man from these judges who seemed to have any spark of greatness in him. And it is not like it was difficult. God was very patient with Gideon, and made certain that Gideon was comfortable with trusting Him; and God was willing to work with any judge/deliverer in this way—yet, no man of greatness presented himself to God.

At the time that the book of Samuel opens, we have Eli, a priest-judge; but a man who indulges his children, allowing them to disrespect the sacrifices of God. Then, from seemingly nowhere, comes Samuel. Samuel is the first great man since Moses. The office of prophet will come to the forefront, and Samuel will be a prophet, priest and judge; and, in this way, Samuel is a shadow of Jesus Christ (in fact, he is the first great precursor to the Messiah since Moses). However, what is important here is, his three hats: priest, prophet and judge—all which describe different aspects of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Much of Scripture foreshadows Jesus Christ. The book of Samuel is no exception to this. We begin with a priest who is not necessarily in the line of Aaron, whose birth comes about by the will of God, who become a priest, a prophet and a judge. Samuel, in many ways, exemplifies the Lord Jesus Christ. David rounds out this picture as a prophet of sorts (he writes the Word of God) and as a king, anointed by God. In 1Sam. 2, we will examine in more detail the similarities between Samuel and Jesus Christ—one of which, I prophesy, will knock your socks off. As a preview, for those of you who know about 1Sam. 28—do you now understand why God raised Samuel from the dead to speak to Saul? This was not done to give Saul a picture of what was coming up; this was done to complete the parallels between Samuel and Jesus.

Now, don't let me mislead you—the prophetic gift had existed for a long time. However, it does not appear to see much use since the time of Moses. The priesthood had also been around since even before the Mosaic Law, but we saw little of it in the book of Judges. In fact, mostly what we saw in Judges were renegade Levites who prostituted their services for work. Judges had been around for a long time; however, as we observed in the book of judges, few of them were any good.

The second great institution which will be introduced in this book is monarchy—Israel will have a king. In the book of the Judges, there was no man who we could point to and say, "He would have made a great king for Israel." However, in the book of Samuel, we will come across of man whose faith is great and whose courage is inspiring—David. Like Samuel, David will also be a type of Christ.

³³ Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 404.