

THE SUPERVISION OF GOD

PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE: I SAMUEL I Samuel 16:1-13

I. INTRODUCTION

A. AUTHORSHIP

1. ANONYMOUS—NO ATTRIBUTION IN BOOK ITSELF
2. TALMUDIC TRADITION—SAYS SAMUEL
 - a. **Problem**—Samuel’s death—recorded in **25:1**
 - b. **Support** for Samuel’s authorship
 1. Samuel *did* write a book—see **10:25**
 2. Samuel headed a ‘company of prophets’—see **10:5** and **19:20**
 3. Samuel could have written the first 24 chapters
3. PROBABLY BY MORE THAN ONE EARLY PROPHET
 - o **I Chr 29:29**—says David’s acts were recorded in ‘chronicles’ of Samuel, Nathan, Gad

B. COMPOSITION

1. TITLE ‘FIRST SAMUEL’
 - a. Originally—just one book called ‘Samuel’
 - b. Jewish ‘Tanak’ (Bible)
 1. Combined it with II Samuel
 2. Part of the ‘Former Prophets’
 - Joshua
 - Judges
 - Samuel (I and II Samuel)
 - Kings (I and II Kings)
 - c. Septuagint—LXX
 1. Divided Samuel and Kings into two parts each—4 books
 2. Entitled them—‘Books of the Kingdoms’
 - First Book of the Kingdom = I Samuel
 - Second Book of the Kingdom = II Samuel
 - Third Book of the Kingdom = I Kings
 - Fourth Book of the Kingdom = II Kings
 - d. Vulgate—renamed them—four ‘Books of the Kings’

- e. Later Latin Bibles—renamed—I and II Samuel—and I and II Kings

2. DATE

- a. If Samuel wrote first 24 chapters—these were composed before 1015 BC [his death]
- b. If one book with II Samuel—compiled after David’s death—971 BC
- c. Possibly both I/II Samuel compiled after Solomon’s death—931 BC
 - Since **I Sam 27:6**—refers to two kingdoms—Judah and Israel

C. SCOPE AND BACKGROUND

1. PERIOD COVERED

- a. Begins after Samson’s death—**Judges 16:31**—with birth of last Judge—Samuel
- b. 94 years—from Samuel’s birth (1105 BC)—to Saul’s death (1011 BC)

2. THREE MAIN CHARACTERS

- Samuel
- Saul
- David

D. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1. OPPRESSION BY PHILISTINES

- a. Samson never defeated them
- b. Philistine superiority
 - 1. Occupied coastal plain and harbors—dominated international trade
 - 2. Monopoly on iron—chariots and weapons
 - 3. Numerical and military superiority—**13:5**
 - 30,000 (iron) chariots
 - 6000 cavalry
 - Soldiers—‘like the sand’
- c. Philistines captured Ark of Covenant—kept it 7 months—**chapters 4-5**
- d. Israel defeated Philistines (1047 BC) temporarily—**chapter 7**
- e. Philistines continued to dominate Israel militarily and economically
 - Philistines prevented Israelites from having blacksmiths—**13:19-22**
 - Limited Israel’s ability to make agricultural tools and military weapons
- f. Israel occupied hill country and desert—continued to resist Philistines

2. DISUNITED ISRAEL

a. Political—Period of Judges

1. Judges arose regionally—and overlapped chronologically
2. Samuel itinerated—judged people in four places—**7:16**

- Bethel
- Gilgal
- Mizpah
- Ramah

b. Worship

1. Samuel maintained an **altar** in **Ramah**—**7:17**

2. **Tabernacle**—in various locations

- a. During most of the period of Judges—in **Shiloh**—**Jdg 18:1; 19:51**

- In tribal territory of Ephraim—later Samaria
- North of Bethel
- Where Hannah went to worship and dedicate Samuel—**chapter 1**

- b. Temporarily in **Bethel**—**Jdg 20:26-8**

- Again Shiloh—when Israel took Ark to Ebenezer—to fight Philistines—**4:1-5**

- c. Saul moved it from Shiloh—to **Nob**—**I Sam 21-22**

- Southeast of Saul's home in Gibeah
- Northeast of Jerusalem—just beyond Mt. of Olives

- d. Later moved to **Gibeon**—**I Chr 16:39**

- Gibeonites—had made treaty with Israel—pretending to be aliens from afar
- Levitical city northwest of Jerusalem
- In tribal territory of Benjamin
- Where Joshua fought Amorites—and sun stood still

- e. Finally—Solomon moved it to **Jerusalem**—**I Kgs 8:4**

3. **Ark of Covenant** displaced

- a. Captured by Philistines—to **Ashdod**—**I Sam 5**

- b. Returned to Israel

- Briefly in **Beth-shemesh**—**I Sam 6**

- In **Kiriath-jearim**—20 years—**I Sam 7**

- 9 miles north of Jerusalem
- In territory of Gibeonites
- On border between Judah and Benjamin

c. Finally—David moved it to Jerusalem—**II Sam 6:17**—[but Tabernacle in Gibeon]

E. PURPOSES

1. HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION OF ANCIENT ISRAEL

- Transition—from Judges to Monarchy

2. JEWISH PERSPECTIVE

- a. Centrality of **Torah**
- b. Purpose of ‘Former Prophets’
 - Show accuracy of God’s **covenantal promises**—blessings/curses
 - Reinforce Torah’s teaching—**obedience** to God is necessary for success

3. CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE—CHRISTOLOGICAL

- a. Links **Torah prophecies** about Messiah—to David

1. **Dt 17:14-15**—promise of a coming king

When you enter the land which the Lord your God gives you, and you possess it and live in it, and you say, I will set a king over me like all the nations who are around me,, you shall surely set a king over you whom the Lord your God chooses, one from among your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman.

2. **Gen 49:10**—from the tribe of Judah

The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes, and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.

- b. Christological **prototypes**

1. Samuel—as a prophet—priest—judge

2. David

- Born in Bethlehem
- Tribe of Judah
- Shepherd and King
- A man after God’s own heart—**13:14**

- Christ—the seed of David—**Rom 1:3**
- Christ—the Root and Offspring of David—**Rev 22:16**

F. ORGANIZATION

1. FIRST TRANSITION OF LEADERSHIP—Chapters 1-3****

- From Priest Eli—to Judge/Priest Samuel

2. SAMUEL'S JUDGESHIP—Chapters 4-7****

- Philistine oppression—taking and return of Ark of Covenant
- Defeat of Philistines—at Ebenezer

3. SECOND TRANSITION OF LEADERSHIP—Chapters 8-12****

- Rejection of Samuel's sons by Israel
- God's warning against taking a king
- Selection, anointing, and confirmation of Saul

4. REIGN OF KING SAUL—Chapters 13-15****

- 40-year reign—from age 30 to 70
- Early success against Philistines
- Sinful sacrifice at Gilgal
- Jonathan's victory and Saul's foolish vow
- Disobedience after defeating Amalekites
- Final rejection by God

5. THIRD TRANSITION OF LEADERSHIP—Chapters 16-31****

- Anointing of David
- David defeats Goliath
- Friendship between Jonathan and David
- Saul's attempts to kill David
- David consolidates army and power in exile
- Saul's retribution—killing of priests at Nob
- David defeats Philistines at Keilah
- David spares Saul's life—twice
- David takes refuge with Philistines
- David departs Philistines and defeats Amalekites
- Philistines defeat and kill Saul

G. KEY THEOLOGICAL THEMES

❖ LEADERSHIP

❖ LORDSHIP

❖ OBEDIENCE

1. LEADERSHIP

- a. Contrast between good and bad leadership
- b. Two **priests**—Eli and Samuel
 1. **Eli**—lack of discipline—allowed sons to defraud people
 2. **Samuel**
 - **Fellowship** with God—**3:19-21**
 - **Wisdom** and **boldness**—**3:21**
 - Lord's **blessing**—**7:13-14**
 - Contrast—faithful ministry—not defrauding like Eli's sons—**12:3-5**
- c. Two **kings**—Saul and David
 1. **Saul**
 - Wrongful **sacrifice** at Gilgal—**chapter 13**
 - Foolish vow—**fasting**—weakened soldiers in battle—**chapter 14**
 - Disobedience—took **spoils** after defeating Amalekites—**chapter 15**
 2. **David**
 - **Fellowship** with God—**16:18; 18:12, 14, 28**
 - **Wisdom** and **boldness**—**17:37; 18:27-8**
 - Lord's **blessing**—**17:52**

2. LORDSHIP

- a. God exercises absolute authority over nature and human history
- b. Explained—below—in terms of God's 'supervisory' providential control

3. OBEDIENCE—AND SACRIFICE

- a. The lesson of Saul—and his undoing
- b. It is better to obey God—than to sacrifice
- c. Otherwise—sacrifice is empty worship
 1. Rooted in human vanity and pride

2. Arrogantly assuming that we can manipulate and control God
3. Relying on religious fetishes—even the Ark did not bring victory in chapter 4

H. KEY TEXTS

1. FIRST USE OF TERM ‘MESSIAH’—IN HANNAH’S SONG

- **2:10**—*Those who content with the Lord will be shattered; against them he will thunder in the heavens. The Lord will judge the ends of the earth, and He will give strength to his king, and will exalt the horn of His anointed.*

2. ICHABOD—‘NO GLORY’

- a. After Eli and his sons were killed and the Ark of the Covenant taken by the Philistines
- b. Phinehas’s wife gave birth and named her son ‘Ichabod’
 - **4:21-22**—*And she called the boy Ichabod, saying, “The glory has departed from Israel . . . “*

3. EBENEZER

- a. Philistines defeated Israel and took the Ark—at Ebenezer—**chapter 4**
- b. When Israel defeated Philistines near Mizpah—Samuel erected this stone nearby
 - **7:12**—*Then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpah and Shen, and named it Ebernezzer, saying, “Thus far the Lord has helped us.”*

4. OBEDIENCE AND SACRIFICE

- a. Saul had disobeyed once at Gilgal—by **sacrificing** without Samuel present
- b. Saul disobeyed again by not destroying the king and spoil of the Amalekites
- c. Saul’s excuse was—he was saving the best to **sacrifice** to the Lord
- d. Samuel’s response:

15:22—*Has the Lord as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams.*

5. NUMBERS DON’T MATTER

- Jonathan’s exhorted his armor-bearer—going single-handedly against the Philistines
 - **14:6**—*“Come and let us cross over to the garrison of these uncircumcised; perhaps the Lord will work for us, for the Lord is not restrained to save by many or by few.”*

6. GOD SEES THINGS DIFFERENTLY THAN WE DO

- God’s instruction to Samuel—when selecting David from Jesse’s sons

16:7— *But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”*

II. BIBLICAL TEXT

I Sam 16:1-13—**1** *Now the Lord said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have selected a king for Myself among his sons.”* **2** *But Samuel said, “How can I go? When Saul hears of it, he will kill me.”* *And the Lord said, “Take a heifer with you and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.’”* **3** *You shall invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for Me the one whom I designate to you.”* **4** *So Samuel did what the Lord said, and came to Bethlehem. And the elders of the city came trembling to meet him and said, “Do you come in peace?”* **5** *He said, “In peace; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.”* *He also consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.* **6** *When they entered, he looked at Eliab and thought, “Surely the Lord’s anointed is before Him.”* **7** *But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”* **8** *Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, “The Lord has not chosen this one either.”* **9** *Next Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “The Lord has not chosen this one either.”* **10** *Thus Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. But Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord has not chosen these.”* **11** *And Samuel said to Jesse, “Are these all the children?”* *And he said, “There remains yet the youngest, and behold, he is tending the sheep.”* *Then Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here.”* **12** *So he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, with beautiful eyes and a handsome appearance. And the Lord said, “Arise, anoint him; for this is he.”* **13** *Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. And Samuel arose and went to Ramah.*

III. GOD’S ‘SUPERVISION’—IN I SAMUEL

A. NOTES ABOUT ANOINTING OF DAVID

1. NOTICE—THE HERO OF THE STORY IS THE LORD—NOT DAVID
 - Lord/God—mentioned 14 times—David’s name only once
2. NOTICE—NOBODY BUT SAMUEL KNEW DAVID WAS TO BECOME KING
 - a. All communication from God was only to Samuel
 - b. Samuel never told them his purpose—though it might have been inferred
 - c. Prevented political strife and civil war—with divided kingdom

- This came later—but it was minimized because of David’s strength
- d. This enabled God to work—over time
 1. To season David—into a mature and wise leader
 2. To test David’s obedience—patience
 3. To enable David in exile to build, train, and test his own loyal army in combat

3. THE MORE POWERFUL ANOINTING

- a. The Spirit of the Lord—came upon David
- b. Similar to what happened to Saul—that led Saul to prophesy—**chapter 10**
- c. Contrasted with the Spirit departing from Saul—and an evil spirit terrorizing Saul—**16:14**
- d. The Spirit of the Lord never departed David

B. THE SUPER-VISION OF GOD

❖ PENETRATING VISION

❖ PROPHETIC VISION’

❖ PROVIDENTIAL PROVISION—SUPERVISION

1. PENETRATING VISION

- a. Seeing what we do not see—beyond the surface—beyond the obvious
- b. Recognizing potential in us—even when we don’t see it
- c. Examples
 1. Saw Samuel’s potential—contrasted to sinfulness of Eli’s sons
 2. Saw David’s potential
 - a. Better than Saul
 - b. Best of Jesse’s sons
 - c. Qualities
 - **Patience**—to wait and play the lyre and tend sheep
 - **Courage**—to fight the lion and bear—and Goliath
 - **Obedience/loyalty**—not killing Saul when he had the chances
 - **Wisdom**—listened to Abigail—in not slaughtering Nabal’s men
 - **Diplomacy**—in negotiating with Philistines
 - **A heart for God**
 1. The main thing for which God was looking—**13:14**

2. Paul's testimony—*a man after my [God's] own heart*—Acts 13:22
3. Jonathan's courage and insight—like those of David—and unlike Saul his father!
 - a. Taking on the Philistines single-handedly—with only armor-bearer—chapter 14
 - b. Jonathan's testimony—[above]—numbers don't matter with God!

2. PROPHETIC VISION

- a. Seeing above and beyond—timelessly—seamlessly linking together past/present/future
- b. Christological fulfillment of Dt 17 and Gen 49

Mt 1:1—*The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.*

- c. Examples of fulfilled prophecy in I Samuel
 1. **Samuel's** prophecy of Saul's **selection as king**
 - Fulfilled by drawing lots—10:20-21
 2. **Samuel's** prophecy of **thunderstorm**—confirmed God's displeasure about
 - Confirmed God's displeasure about Israel wanting a king—12:16-18
 3. **Jonathan** relying on Lord's sign—whether to fight Philistines or not
 - God said—he/armor-bearer should 'come over'—and they succeeded—14:8-13
 4. **David** consulted the Lord about situation in **Keilah**—that he had rescued
 - God told David Saul would pursue him there
 - God told David the men of Keila would betray him
 - David was able to escape to safety—23:6-14

3. PROVIDENTIAL PRO-VISION—SUPERVISION

- ❖ Superintending nature and history
- ❖ Overseeing all events—to accomplish His providential purpose

- a. Caused barren woman to bear a son—Hannah and Samuel—chapter 1
- b. Defeated pagan god Dagon—5:1-4
 1. Philistine god—father of Baal—at Ashdod
 2. Destroyed in the presence of the Ark—without human intervention
- c. Defeated better equipped and manned army of Philistines

1. At Mizpah—commemorated by the Ebenezer (Stone of Help)—**chapter 7**
 2. By Jonathan—assisted by earthquake from God—**14:15**
- d. Defeated towering giant—Goliath—with just a sling and stone—**chapter 17**

1. David relied not on himself—but on the ‘name of the Lord’

17:45—*Then David said to the Philistine, You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the god of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted.*

2. David did not rely on military might—but on the Lord

17:47—*and that all this assembly may know that the Lord does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the Lord’s and he will give you into our hands.*

3. This became a main them of the shepherd-king David

Ps 20:7—*Some boast in chariots and some in horses, but we will boast in the name of the Lord, our God.*

Ps 33:17—*An horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength.*

Based on Moses’ exhortation in the Torah—‘Laws of Warfare’

Dt 20:1-4—*When you go out to battle against your enemies and see horses and chariots and people more numerous than you, do not be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, who brought you up from the land of Egypt, is with you. When you are approaching the battle, the priest shall come near and speak to the people. He shall say to them, ‘Hear, O Israel, you are approaching the battle against your enemies today. Do not be fainthearted. Do not be afraid, or panic, or tremble before them, for the LORD your God is the one who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.’*