

The Book of Samuel

RESOURCES

STUDY GUIDES BY SECTION



THE BOOK OF SAMUEL

STUDY GUIDE 1.1

Lesson 1: An Introduction to Samuel

Section 1: Background (Time in video: 00:00 – 29:12)

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

Introduction

I. Background

A. Authorship

1. Traditional Outlooks

2. Critical Outlooks

3. Evangelical Outlooks

B. Date

C. Circumstances

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. According to the lesson, what did the author of the Book of Samuel want to affirm?
2. Why does the lesson speak of the “book” of Samuel, instead of the two books of Samuel?
3. Why was the Book of Samuel divided into two parts?
4. According to the Babylonian Talmud, who wrote the Book of Samuel?
5. Why does the lesson question whether Samuel was the author of the book bearing his name?
6. What is the opinion of Dr. Herbert Ward about the authorship of the Book of Samuel?
7. What does the lesson mean when it speaks of “critical scholars”?

8. What was the theory of the “critical scholar” Martin Noth, regarding the authorship of the Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings?

9. How does the lesson respond to the views of Martin Noth?

10. What does Dr. James Hamilton propose as a response to the theory of Martin Noth and critical scholars regarding the author of the Book of Samuel?

11. What is the general view of Evangelicals regarding the author of the Book of Samuel?

12. What are the two insights that the lesson gives about the author of the Book of Samuel?

13. Why is it important to recognize that the author of the Book of Samuel was a compiler of sources?

14. For whom was the author of the Book of Samuel writing?

15. How does the lesson explain the probable date of composition of the Book of Samuel?

16. According to the lesson, what circumstances led to the writing of the Book of Samuel?

17. What was the author’s purpose in writing the Book of Samuel?

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What are you hoping to learn in this course?

2. Do you think it is helpful to investigate the authorship, date and purpose of the Book of Samuel? Why?

3. Consider for example the story of David and Goliath. What difference does it make in the way you interpret the passage and apply it to know more about the author, date, and purpose of the Book of Samuel?

THE BOOK OF SAMUEL

STUDY GUIDE 1.2

Lesson 1: An Introduction to Samuel

Section 2: Design (Time in video: 29:12 – 1:15:22)

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

II. Design

A. Structure and Content

1. Samuel's Prelude to Kingship
2. Saul's Failed Kingship
3. David's Enduring Kingship

B. Overarching Purpose

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Was the author of the Book of Samuel just trying to give a correct historical account, or did he compose the account to address the people of his day?
2. What does the lesson mean when it speaks of "that world" and "their world"?
3. On what characters does the author focus in the Book of Samuel?
4. What are the three main divisions of the Book of Samuel?
5. What was special about Samuel's birth?
6. How did Hannah's praise for the birth of Samuel point to a future king?
7. To what position in Israel was Samuel exalted?
8. Describe Saul's earlier years as king (1 Samuel 8-15)?
9. Describe the later years of Saul's life (1 Samuel 16 - 2 Samuel 1)?
10. What particular sin did Saul allow that led Samuel to tell him that the kingdom would be taken away from him?
11. What was surprising about the choice of David over his brothers to replace Saul as king? What did God tell Samuel about what was most important?

12. What were the earlier years of David's kingship like (2 Samuel 2–9)?
13. What special promise was made to David regarding his family and the kingdom in 2 Samuel 7:16?
14. What were David's worst abuses of power as related in 2 Samuel 10-20?
15. How did God show mercy to David even after his terrible sins and abuse of power?
16. What were the two names given to David's son with Bathsheba who later became king, and what is the meaning of each one?
17. Describe the contents of the last four chapters of the Book of Samuel (2 Samuel 21-24).
18. What was the author's overarching purpose in writing the Book of Samuel?
19. What are the three elements of all biblical covenants, which we also find in the covenant with David?
20. What evidence do we find in the Book of Samuel that God made a covenant with David?
21. What was the unique emphasis of God's covenant with David?
22. Why did the people in the world of the author of the Book of Samuel need to be reminded that God would fulfill His promises in the family of David?
23. Did God promise to bless His people through just any son of David, no matter what he was like? What kind of king did he have to be?

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What lessons are important to you from the life of Samuel?
2. What lessons are important to you from the life of Saul?
3. What lessons are important to you from the life of David?
4. Do you sometimes make the mistake of Samuel, looking on the outward appearance instead of looking at the heart of people? Can you give examples of how this sometimes happens? How can we avoid this problem?
5. How does it change your life and your attitude toward God to know how God continued to graciously show His love and blessings in the life of David, in spite of his sins?

6. Have you ever had a hard time feeling forgiven for some sin? How does the story of David help you feel forgiven? Do you know someone else who has struggled with feeling forgiven? What could you say to that person?

7. How do you think our faithfulness is related to God's blessings? Does His blessing always depend on our faithfulness? When we are unfaithful, does He punish us as we really deserve? How does our sin affect God's relationship with us?

THE BOOK OF SAMUEL

STUDY GUIDE 1.3

Lesson 1: An Introduction to Samuel

Section 3: Christian Application (Time in video: 1:15:22 – 1:43:37)

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

III. Christian Application

A. Divine Covenants

1. Samuel's Prelude to Kingship
2. Saul's Failed Kingship
3. David's Enduring Kingship

B. Kingdom of God

1. Inauguration
2. Continuation

Conclusion

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the two biblical concepts that the lesson uses as guidelines for applying the original message of the Book of Samuel today?
2. What are the three aspects of the divine covenants that are manifested in all sections of the Book of Samuel?
3. Who was the final righteous heir of David's throne that fulfilled every aspect of the divine covenants?
4. How is Jesus different from Samuel, Saul and David in his role of covenant mediator?
5. How do the dynamics of the New Covenant apply to the daily lives of Christ's followers?
6. What important New Testament theme describes how the hope of the author of the Book of Samuel was fulfilled?
7. What important event occurred in Israel around 538 B.C.?

8. Describe the situation of Israel between the time of the Book of Samuel and the New Testament age. Were God's people faithful? Where were most of God's people living?
9. Did all the Israelites lose faith in the Messiah during the time between the exile and the birth of Christ?
10. What Gentile nations ruled over the Israelites during the five centuries before Christ?
11. What is the parallel between Luke 1:46-55 and 1 Samuel 2:1-10?
12. What is the parallel between Luke 2:52 and 1 Samuel 2:26?
13. What promise from the Book of Samuel does Peter mention in his sermon recorded in Acts 2:30-31?
14. In what way do we need the same message today that was given to Israel in the Book of Samuel?

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Can you identify with Israel at the time the Book of Samuel was written? Have you ever been tempted to lose hope? What helped you through that difficult time? Explain what happened.
2. Do you believe that God had planned all the events narrated in the Book of Samuel for a purpose? How does that make you feel? How does it help you in difficult times?
3. How would you describe the spiritual situation of the Church in the world today in general? Would you say that it is like Israel at the time the Book of Samuel was written? What is similar? What is different?
4. If you were to preach only one sermon or teach only one Bible study on the whole Book of Samuel, what would you emphasize? What part of Samuel would you highlight? What application would you make?
5. What is the most important thing you learned in this lesson?
6. Read 1 Samuel 2:1-10 and answer the following questions:

What are some of the attributes of God for which Hannah praises Him?

What are some of the deeds of God for which Hannah gives thanks and rejoices?

According to Hannah's song, what are some of the ways that God turns things around, blessing in ways we would not expect? (verses 5 and 8)

Think of some special way that the Lord has blessed you, and pray through this passage, giving thanks and praising God for it.

THE BOOK OF SAMUEL

STUDY GUIDE 2.1

Lesson 2: Samuel and Saul

Section 1: Samuel's Prelude to Kingship (Time in video: 00:00 – 47:24)

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

I. Samuel's Prelude to Kingship

A. Structure and Content

1. Samuel's Earlier Years
2. Transition in Leadership

B. Christian Application

1. God's Covenants
2. God's Kingdom

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What illustration is given to explain the purpose of the Book of Samuel?
2. Review the three main divisions of the Book of Samuel.
3. Identify the following: Elkanah, Peninnah, Hannah , and Eli.
4. What promise did Hannah make to God if He would give her a son? What did it mean when she said, "No razor shall touch his head"?
5. What are the key themes that appear in Hannah's song of praise?
6. What is the interpretation of 1 Samuel 8:7 given in the lesson? (When Israel asks for a king, God says, "They have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them.")
7. What transition in leadership in Israel is narrated in 1 Samuel 2:12-7:2?
8. What two special sins of Eli's sons are mentioned in 1 Samuel 2?
9. How was God's curse on Israel, due to the sins of Eli's family, made manifest in the events narrated in 1 Samuel 4:1-7:17?
10. Why was the son of Eli's daughter-in-law named "Ichabod"? What does the name mean?

11. What happened to the Philistines when they captured the ark of God from the Israelites? How did the Philistines respond after seven months?
12. What happened among the Israelites in Beth-shemesh when the ark of God was returned?
13. How was God's blessing on Israel, due to the faithfulness of Samuel, made manifest in the events narrated in 1 Samuel 7:3-17?
14. Identify the six major covenants in Scripture. Which one was in focus when the Book of Samuel was written?
15. Identify the way God fulfilled the three aspects of divine covenants in Samuel and in Christ.
16. Describe how God established each of the three stages of His kingdom, both in the Book of Samuel and in Christ.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What can we learn from the way the Philistines experienced curses when they stole the Ark of the Covenant and kept it among them? What was their mistake? In what ways might we make the same mistake in our lives today?
2. What can we learn from the way Israel suffered curses when they were unfaithful, and experienced blessings when they were faithful? Does this mean that, whenever we suffer, it is punishment for sin, or that whenever good things happen, it is because we deserve it because of our faithfulness? Think of Job and the blind man from John 9. On the other hand, does it make any difference whether we are faithful or not? How does the gospel of grace help answer this question?
3. In what ways have you experienced the blessings of Christ as a result of HIS faithful keeping of the covenant, in spite of your own unfaithfulness? Give an example.
4. Can you think of a time in your life when you needed to regain hope for future blessings? What helped restore your hope?
5. Read 1 Samuel 8 and answer the following questions:

What reason did the elders give for asking for a king? (verses 4 and 5)

How did they express their request?

How did Samuel respond? (v. 6)

What did God say to Samuel? (7-8)

What problems did Samuel warn them that they would have with a king? (10-18)

What was the conclusion of the people after hearing the warnings? (19-20)

What do you think: What was wrong with the reason the elders asked for a king?

In what sense were they rejecting God as their king?

Why do you think God granted their request?

What can we learn from this story about asking God for things we want?

What can we learn from this story about civil governments?

THE BOOK OF SAMUEL

STUDY GUIDE 2.2

Lesson 2: Samuel and Saul

Section 2: Saul's Failed Kingship (Time in video: 47:25 – 1:59:49)

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

II. Saul's Failed Kingship

A. Structure and Content

1. Samuel's Earlier Years
2. Transition in Leadership

B. Christian Application

1. God's Covenants
2. God's Kingdom

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the two divisions of the section of the Book of Samuel that deal with Saul's failed kingship?
2. How does the Book of Samuel describe Samuel's family when he had grown old?
3. What were the warnings that Samuel issued to Israel regarding their future kings?
4. What did God enable Saul to do at first to gain support of Israel and establish his kingship?
5. What things led to God's early rejection of Saul as king? Name some of the ways Saul abused his royal authority.
6. What led to God's final rejection of Saul? How did Saul abuse his royal authority after the battle with the Amalekites? (1 Samuel 15)
7. What was the meaning of "devoting to destruction" when Israel was at war?
8. What were Saul's major character flaws that led to God rejecting him as king?
9. During the transition in leadership from Saul to David, what was David's attitude toward Saul?
10. What was the source of the many good things that David did after being anointed as king?

11. What were the two curses from God that fell on Saul, as mentioned in 1 Samuel 16:14? What were the results of these curses?
12. How did David help Saul when he was tormented?
13. How did Saul and his army respond to the threats of Goliath?
14. How did David respond to the threats of Goliath?
15. How did Saul respond to David's victory over Goliath?
16. According to the lesson, why did Saul try to get David to wear his armor to fight Goliath?
17. How did Saul express his hostility toward David in the episodes that took place primarily in the city of Gibeon? (1 Samuel 18:10-19:17)
18. Who was Michal? How did she help David?
19. Who was Jonathan? How did he help David?
20. How do we see God's approval of David in the story of the bread in the Tabernacle in Nob?
21. How does the Book of Samuel summarize the hostility of Saul against David and God's protection of David? (1 Samuel 23:14).
22. How did David show his respect for the Lord's anointed king, even for Saul, in the episode in the cave at Engedi? (1 Samuel 23:29-24:22). How did Saul respond?
23. Who was Abigail, and what did she persuade David to do?
24. Explain how David related to the Philistines when he lived among them in Ziklag (1 Samuel 27 and 28). Did he help them fight against Israel?
25. What did Saul do when he was afraid of the Philistine army and God did not answer his prayer? (1 Samuel 28:3-25). What happened as a result?
26. How did Saul die? How did David respond?
27. The basic principle to follow for applying any passage of Scripture is to see its place in _____.
28. What can we learn from the way Saul failed miserably to be a faithful king and to keep the covenant, and even David later showed that he was not an ideal king? What did Israel need?
29. What was the author of the Book of Samuel demonstrating by telling about the failure of Saul's kingship, leading to the establishment of David as king of Israel? How does this help us as we face troubles in this world?

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What can we learn from the way David refused to kill Saul because he was the Lord's anointed? What kind of relationship would be parallel today? What would that mean for you?
2. What practical lessons can we learn from the story of David and Goliath?
3. With which of the characters of the section of the Book of Samuel studied in this lesson can you identify most? Why? (Samuel, Saul, David, Michal, Abigail, or another?)
4. Do you believe that God only blesses you when you have been faithful? Explain your answer and give examples.
5. Do you believe that God always punishes us as we deserve when we have sinned? Explain your answer.
6. What is the most important thing you learned in this lesson?
7. Read 1 Samuel 17 and answer the following questions:

Describe Goliath. (verses 4-8)

What did he propose to Israel? (8-9)

How did the men of Israel react to Goliath? (v. 24)

What did David say? (26, 36-37)

What armor and weapons did David use? (38-40)

How did David kill Goliath? (48-51)

How did the Philistines react? (51)

How did the men of Israel and Judah react? (52-53)

What can we learn from this story? How does it encourage you?

If we think of David as a figure of Jesus, what does this story point to regarding Jesus?

THE BOOK OF SAMUEL

STUDY GUIDE 3.1

Lesson 3: King David

Section 1: Earlier Blessings (Time in video: 00:00 –46:20)

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

Introduction

I. Earlier Blessings

A. Structure and Content

1. In Hebron

2. In Jerusalem

B. Christian Application

1. God's Covenants

2. God's Kingdom

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Review the overarching original purpose of the Book of Samuel.
2. Review the contents of the three major divisions of the Book of Samuel.
3. Summarize the contents of the three sections of the third main division of the Book of Samuel.
4. Summarize the way David received God's blessing in Hebron (2 Samuel 2:1-5:5).
5. What city is the geographical center of all biblical history?
6. In what ways did God initially bless David in Jerusalem (2 Samuel 5:6-6:23)?
7. What did David do to show his awareness of the importance of faithful worship in Jerusalem?
8. What happened to Uzzah when he touched the ark as they were bringing it into Jerusalem? According to the lesson, why did this happen? How did David respond?
9. Did David build a temple in Jerusalem? Why?

10. How did God promise to deal with David when he committed iniquity? (2 Samuel 7:14-15). What did this mean for the original audience of the Book of Samuel?
11. According to 2 Samuel 8: 2, 7, 8 and 11, God also blessed David with great _____.
12. Who was Mephibosheth, and how did David treat him?
13. The greatest blessing of all in this portion of our book was the _____ God made with David, in which He promised David an enduring dynasty.
16. By way of summary, mention the important ways in which God advanced his kingdom through David. Explain how Jesus did similar things, but superseding David.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What things do you learn from the life of David, as studied in this section? Think of both good things and bad things we can learn from his life.
2. How do you see the grace of God in the life of David? Have you experienced the grace of God in similar ways? Explain.
3. Think of how Jesus is similar but superior to David. What particular things do you now understand better about Jesus that move you to love Him and revere Him more?

THE BOOK OF SAMUEL
STUDY GUIDE 3.2
Lesson 3: King David
Section 2: Later Curses (Time in video: 46:20 – 1:26:00)

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

II. Later Curses

A. Structure and Content

1. Initial Troubles
2. Extended Troubles

B. Christian Application

1. God's Covenants
2. God's Kingdom

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is the main focus of the second section (2 Samuel 10-20) of the story of David's enduring kingship?
2. According to Dr. Averbeck, what is a key lesson we learn from David's sins narrated in 2 Samuel?
3. After lying with Bathsheba and finding out that she was pregnant, what did David do to try to cover up his sin? Then when that didn't work, what else did he do?
4. According to the lesson, why might the original audience of Samuel tend to excuse what David had done with Bathsheba?
5. How did Nathan confront David and show him his sin?
6. What sentence did Nathan first pronounce upon David for his sin (2 Samuel 12:10-11)?
7. After Nathan pronounced the curses upon David and his family for his sin, how did David respond? What further message did Nathan communicate to David at that point (2 Samuel 12:13-14)?
8. How did God show mercy to David after the death of his first son born to Bathsheba?

9. What question might be raised in the minds of some of the original audience of the Book of Samuel regarding the fact that Solomon became the king of Israel? How did the author of the Book of Samuel answer that question?

10. Indicate the five steps of the extended troubles that came upon the family of David as a result of his sin with Bathsheba, problems related to his sons Amnon, Chileab and Absalom.

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.

11. What can we learn from the fact that God disciplined David for his sin?

12. What does Hebrews 12:3-17 teach us about the discipline of God in this life? What is the difference between the results for true believers and the results for non-believers?

13. Summarize how Jesus accomplishes the work of establishing His kingdom in each stage: inauguration, continuation, and consummation.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. When you reflect on the fact that David, a man after God's own heart, committed adultery and murder, how does it make you feel? Does it frighten you? Does it discourage you? Does it humble you? Does it lead you to pray more? Does it make you depend more on the Holy Spirit? Explain your response.

2. Suppose a family that you know has lost a child and, besides the devastation of the death of their child, they also feel a heavy weight of guilt. Suppose they think they are being punished for some sin, like king David. What would you say to them?

3. Suppose a friend of yours has committed a serious sin, but has not yet repented of it. What can you learn from the way Nathan confronted David that might help you talk to him or her?

4. Think of some example in your life when you believe the Lord disciplined you. Can you see that experience now as something God did because he loves you? Can you see how it helped you grow spiritually? Explain your experience.

5. Read Psalm 51 and reflect on the following questions:

According to the title, when was this psalm written?

How does David express his repentance?

What phrases does he use when he asks for forgiveness?

What does he recognize regarding his sinful nature? (vs. 5)

How does he express his confidence in God's forgiveness? (v. 7)

Besides forgiveness, what else does he ask for? (vv. 10-12)

What does he promise God (vv. 13-14)

Think of a sin that you have committed, and pray through this psalm to ask forgiveness.

When you finish, write your sin on a piece of paper, then tear it up and throw it away as a symbol of your forgiveness.

THE BOOK OF SAMUEL

STUDY GUIDE 3.3

Lesson 3: King David

Section 3: Ongoing Benefits (Time in video: 1:26:00 – 2:04:07)

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

III. Ongoing Benefits

A. Structure and Content

1. Dynastic Song
2. Dynastic Last Words
3. Victorious Warriors
4. Victorious Warriors
5. Relief from God's Curse
6. Relief from God's Curse

B. Christian Application

1. God's Covenants
2. God's Kingdom

Conclusion

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is the subject of the last section of the Book of Samuel (2 Samuel 21-24)?
2. How is the last division of the Book of Samuel structured (2 Samuel 21-24)?
3. In the "dynastic song" (2 Samuel 22:1-51), David sang that God brings great _____ to His king and shows steadfast _____ to his anointed.
4. In the "dynastic last words" (2 Samuel 23:1-7), David announced that a king who _____ will bring tremendous blessings to his people.
5. The first record of "victorious warriors" (2 Samuel 21:15-22) summarizes how God had blessed Israel with victories in four different battles against the _____, even when David himself grew _____.

6. How does the lesson summarize the second record of “victorious warriors” (2 Samuel 23:8-38)?
7. What is the focus of the first account of “relief from God’s curse” (2 Samuel 21:1-14)?
8. What is the focus of the second account of “relief from God’s curse” in the closing chapter of the Book of Samuel (2 Samuel 24:1-25)?
9. According to the lesson, although we can’t be sure, what is the probable reason that it was wrong for David to take a census of his fighting men (2 Samuel 24:1-25)?
10. What did David do to stop the plague that came upon Israel because of David’s sin of taking a census of his fighting men?
11. What was significant about the place where David built an altar and offered sacrifices to avert the plague on Israel, the threshing floor of Araunah?
12. Who is the superior mediator of the covenant to whom all the three elements of the covenant made with David point?
13. Who is the perfectly righteous son of David who fulfills all the kingdom promises that God made to David?

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What is the most important thing you learned in this course?
2. How do the teachings of this lesson, or of the whole course, make you feel about your relationship with God? Does it give you hope? Does it frighten you? Does it make you take your own sin more seriously? Does it make you appreciate God’s grace and forgiveness more?
3. What do you plan to change in your life as a result of studying this course?
4. If you were to select three passages, or three events, from the Book of Samuel to teach a Bible study, which ones would you select? Why? What would you emphasize in the studies?
5. Write out a prayer in response to what you have learned in this study of the Book of Samuel. Include praise, thanksgiving, confession of sins, and petitions.

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