

A serene forest scene at sunset or sunrise. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow through the trees. Sunbeams filter through the foliage, creating a hazy, ethereal atmosphere. In the foreground, a stream flows gently, and a deer is seen drinking from it. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL

TITLE/AUTHOR

As you might guess, the books of Samuel are named after Samuel the prophet/judge

1-2 Samuel are one book in the Hebrew Bible

In the Greek OT, they are actually called 1-2 Kingdoms (so 1-2 Kings = 3-4 Kingdoms)

If you have a Catholic Bible, 1-2 Samuel are called 1-2 Kings (so 1-2 Kings = 3-4 Kings)

Confusing right?

Also, the author of these books is unknown



COMPOSITION

1-2 Samuel were probably composed and edited in several stages

The final editing was probably completed (minus some minor adjustments) during the late 10th century BC

LITERARY ANALYSIS

The primary genre of these books is hero story focusing on three major figures: Samuel, David, Saul

The story of Saul is the “only undisputed and fully elaborated literary tragedy in the Bible” (ESVSB)

A major literary purpose of these books is “to embody universal human experience as the means of teaching moral and spiritual lessons for all people at all times” (ESVSB)

Realism, as a literary technique, permeates these books

OUTLINE

- A. The Birth of Samuel (1:1-2:11)
- B. The Corruption of Eli's House (2:12-3:21)
- C. Exile and Return of the Ark (4:1-7:17)
- D. Saul's Rise (8:1-12:25)
- E. Saul's Fall (13:1-15:33)
- F. David in Saul's House (15:34-20:42)
- G. Saul vs. David (21:1-27:12)
- H. Saul's Death (28:1-2 Samuel 1:27)

OUTLINE

- H. Saul's Death (28:1-2 Samuel 1:27)
- G.' House of Saul vs. House of David (2:1-4:12)
- F.' David as King (5:1-9:13)
- E.' David's Fall (10:1-12:31)
- D.' Absalom's Rise (13:1-15:12)
- C.' Exile and Return of David (15:13-19:43)
- B.' Rebellion of Sheba (20:1-26)
- A.' The True King (21:1-24:25)

MAJOR THEMES

The central theme of the books of Samuel is God's inauguration of a Davidic dynasty in Israel

He does this by making Jerusalem as the holy city where David's successor will establish the temple for the worship of Yahweh

The key themes of 1 Samuel are the kingship of God, his providential guidance, and his sovereign will and power

The key themes of 2 Samuel are the Davidic covenant and the messianic promise

PURPOSE

The major purpose of the books of Samuel is to show God's continued care for his people, in raising up for them a king whose job was to be their champion, representative, and example

He does this by preparing David for the throne throughout 1 Samuel and establishing a covenant with him in 2 Samuel