

I AND II SAMUEL

Authorship:

1. Two prominent contributors, both unknown, offered their perspectives on the development of the monarchy. Each apparently motivated by their own political views.
2. A collection of short stories produced by many authors and compiled by an unknown collaborator.
3. An unknown editor who compiled and edited Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, I and II Samuel, and I and II Kings. He likely supplied several of his own notes into the inspired material.
4. Samuel, Gad, and Nathan are the three authors, primarily based on I Chronicles 29:29.

Structure:

1. I and II Samuel are historical literature. Their purpose is to inform God's people of the development of the nation Israel as central to God's plan for all nations.
2. I and II Samuel emphasize major characters in the telling of history:
 - 1 Eli – The priest and judge of God in Shiloh
 - 2 Samuel – The judge and priest
 - 3 Saul – The first king of Israel
 - 4 David – The great king of Israel
 - 5 Solomon – The descended king of Israel

Theme:

It has been well observed that in the midst of the narrative, the sovereignty of God is clearly on display. He is providentially working through the lives of mankind to accomplish His will instantaneously and eventually. His work is significant through the book when you recognize the spiritual decay recorded herein (EG Eli's sons, presence of witches, disregard for the Ark, ETC.).

Setting:

Samuel (1105-1013 b.c.) is a contemporary of Sampson (1108-1049 b.c.). Because Samson is engaging the Philistines to the west, Samuel was able to minister in relative peace in the central region of Israel. (Samuel outlived Samson by 36 years, establishing the monarchy, and seeing Israel through the transitional years.)

Surroundings:

Philistia was to the west. A constant threat and antagonist.

Ammon was to the east, over Jordan. The threat from them prompted Israel to ask for a king.

Edom was to the southeast. They weren't a significant threat but had to be monitored.

Moab was across the Dead Sea. Apart from Eglon's invasion, relations appear to be very good with Moab.

Assyria was to the north. By the time of Saul, political instability was relieving some of the pressure Israel would have doubtless felt.

Egypt, to the south had expanded its borders, and was allied to Assyria. This also presented a significant threat to Israel.