

The Unstable King

1 Samuel 9-31

Period of Bible history

United Monarchy. Samuel, the last and greatest of the judges, established a kingdom and anointed Saul to be king. Three kings (Saul, David and Solomon) reigned, each of them about forty years.

Major Events

Demand for a king (8)
Saul appointed king (9)
Saul's unlawful sacrifice (13:8-15)
Saul rejected (15)
David anointed (16)
David and Goliath (17)
Saul tries to kill David (19)
David spares Saul (24, 26)
Saul visits the witch (28)
Saul's death (31)

Important Individuals

Samuel: The last judge, also served as prophet and priest. Anointed first Saul then David as king over Israel.

Saul: A Benjaminite, the first legitimate king of Israel. He started well but quickly spiraled into disobedience and instability.

Jonathan: Son of Saul, becomes good friends with David.

David: Of the tribe of Judah, anointed king over Israel once Saul was rejected by God.

Goliath: A Philistine, a giant of Gath who terrified the Israelite army but was defeated by David.

Michal: Daughter of Saul, he reluctantly gives her to David in marriage after David kills 100 Philistines.

Abigail: In 25:2-42, she is kind to David when her husband, Nabal, ridicules him. Her husband is struck dead by God. David takes her as his second wife.

Witch of Endor: In chapter 28 Saul seeks someone to contact the dead for him. He finds a witch or medium of Endor who contacts a spirit assumed to be Samuel.

Outline of 1 Samuel 9-31

This section is paralleled in 1 Chronicles 9:35-10:14

- I. Israel demands a king (8)
- II. Saul appointed and anointed king (9-10)
- III. Saul, victorious in battle (11)
- IV. Samuel's farewell address (12)
- V. Saul and the Philistines (13-14)
 - A. Saul's unlawful sacrifice (13:8-15)
 - B. Saul's foolish vow (14:24-46)
- VI. Decline of Saul, Rise of David (15-18)
 - A. God rejects Saul (15)
 - B. Samuel anoints David (16:1-13)
 - C. David serves Saul (16:14-23)
 - D. David and Goliath (17)
 - E. David and Jonathan (18:1-5)
 - F. Thousands and ten thousands (18:6-16)
 - G. David marries Saul's daughter (18:17-30)
- VII. Saul opposes David (19-30)
 - A. Saul tries to kill David (19)
 - B. Jonathan protects David (20)
 - C. David flees Saul (21-30)
 1. Gathering provisions (21)
 2. David in the caves (22:1-5)
 3. Saul kills priests of Israel (22:6-23)
 4. David defends Israel (23)
 5. Saul is spared by David (24)
 6. David and Abigail (25)
 7. Saul is again spared by David (26)
 8. David with the Philistines (27-29)
 - a) David hides among the Philistines (27)
 - b) Saul visits a witch for counsel (28)
 - c) Philistines reject David's presence in war (29)
 9. David against the Amalekites (30)
- VIII. Saul's death (31)