

2 Samuel

Introductory Note

Since 2 Samuel merely continues the history begun in 1 Samuel, being these two books were originally one volume, issues pertaining to message, title, authorship, date, and historical background should be carefully reviewed in the *Introduction section of 1 Samuel*.

Theological Purpose

As was shown in the introduction to 1 Samuel, the overriding theme of the Book(s) of Samuel is to provide an official account of God's establishment of Israel's monarchy in the eleventh century B.C. Having discussed the *Prelude to Monarchy in Israel* (1 Sam 1:1–7:17) and the *Establishment of Monarchy in Israel* (1 Sam 8:1–31:13), with Samuel's appointment of Saul as Israel's first king, the author now turns to the *Consolidation of Israel's Monarchy Under David*, Israel's second, and greatest human king (2 Sam 1:1–20:26).



The Book of 2 Samuel focuses primarily on the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam 7:12-16; Ps 89), the instrument of divine promise and commitment whereby the LORD God would bring to pass through human government that which He had pledged to Abraham concerning a land, the Promised Land of Canaan (Kingdom), a house or dynasty (Seed) of rulers leading to David's greater Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and a throne (Authority and Sovereignty to Rule, see Gen 49:10) as part of His covenanted messianic, redemptive plan (Gen 12:1-3; 15:18-21; 17:6, 8, 16; 49:10; Num 24:17).¹ David serves as the divinely chosen instrument of God anointed to occupy the throne in Israel and delegated to lead the nation of Israel by exemplifying what it means to rule with, for, and under almighty God. It is through David and his divinely elected dynasty that David's greater Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, eventually came through the incarnation to establish the sovereign rule of God over all creation. Christ perfectly exercised kingship in His own life, and through His sacrificial death and resurrection He has provided the basis for all people who believe in Him to reign with Him and through Him forever (2 Sam 7:12-16; Ps 89:36-37; Isa 9:7).

Outline²

¹Gene Merrill, "2 Samuel," in *Old Testament Explorer*, 226.

²The following outline for the Book(s) of Samuel that was presented in conjunction with 1 Samuel

As stated above, 2 Samuel continues the history of Israel were 1 Samuel concluded—with the tragic deaths of Saul and his sons—and presents the record of David’s consolidation of Israel’s monarchy. Whereas 1 Samuel was primarily concerned with presenting a history of the events surrounding the lives of Samuel and Saul; 2 Samuel contains the record of David’s consolidation of Judah and the ten northern tribes (7 years), which he then reigns over as a united kingdom for thirty-three additional years.

Outline of 2 Samuel

I. The Consolidation of Israel’s Monarchy: the Period of David 1:1–20:26

A. David Becomes King Over Judah 1:1–3:5

1. David’s lament for Saul and Jonathan 1:1-27
2. David’s anointing as king over Judah³ at Hebron 2:1-7
3. David’s conflict with Abner and Saul’s surviving son Ishbosheth 2:8–3:5

B. David’s Attempts to Unite Judah and Israel 3:6–4:12

C. David Becomes King Over All Israel 5:1–10:19

1. David is enthroned as king over all the tribes of Israel 5:1-5

is also presented here in its entirety (see the notes on 1 Samuel “Outline,” pp. 8-9):

- I. The Prelude to Monarchy in Israel: Samuel, Israel’s Last Judge (1 Sam 1:1–7:17)
- II. The Establishment of the Monarchy in Israel: **the Period of Saul** (1 Sam 8:1–31:13)
 - A. The Rise of King Saul (1 Sam 8:1–10:27)
 - B. The Reign of King Saul (1 Sam 11:1–14:52)
 - C. The Rejection of King Saul (1 Sam 15:1–35)
 - D. The Replacement of King Saul by David (1 Sam 16:1–31:13)
- III. The Consolidation of the Monarchy in Israel: **the Period of David** (2 Sam 1:1–20:26)
 - A. David Becomes King over Judah (2 Sam 1:1–3:5)
 - B. David’s Attempts to Unite Judah and Israel (2 Sam 3:6–4:12)
 - C. David Becomes King Over All Israel (2 Sam 5:1–10:19)
 - D. David’s Sins and Sufferings (2 Sam 11:1–20:26)
- IV. The Closing Appendices (2 Sam 21:1–24:25)

³This was David’s second anointing at Hebron as king over Judah, his first was by Samuel (1 Sam 16:13), and his third comes below in connection with his anointing as king over all Israel 2 Samuel 5:5.

2. David conquers Jerusalem and prospers (“City of David”) 5:6-16
 3. David defeats the Philistines 5:17-25
 4. David brings the Ark of Yahweh to Jerusalem and establishes Jerusalem as the nation’s center of worship 6:1-23
 5. David is promised an eternal dynasty from the LORD: **Davidic Covenant** 7:1-29
 6. David extends his kingdom 8:1–10:19
 - a. His conquests 8:1-18
 - b. His kindness for Mephibosheth 9:1-13
 - c. His defeat of Ammon and Syria 10:1-19
- D. David’s Sins and Sufferings 11:1–20:26
1. David’s adultery with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah 11:1
 2. God, through the prophet Nathan, rebukes David and promises both grace and discipline because of his sin 2 Sam 12:1-14; cf. Gal 6:6-7
 3. David experiences the judgment of having his child by Bathsheba die yet experiences God’s blessing in the birth of Solomon and the victory at Rabbah 12:15-31
 4. David experiences God’s prophesied judgment on his house [including the death of two more sons] 13:1–18:33
 - a. Amnon rapes Tamar 13:1-19
 - b. Tamar’s brother Absalom kills Amnon and flees 13:20-39
 - c. Absalom partial restoration leads to Absalom’s revolt 14:1–18:33

5. David's return to Jerusalem, with more rebellion 19:1-43
6. David's response to crush Sheba's rebellion 20:1-26

II. The Closing Appendices⁴ 2 Sam 21:1–24:25

- A. Summary of Saul's Family: David Kills Seven of Saul's Sons as Punishment for Saul's Sin in Breaking the Gibeonite Covenant 21:1-14
- B. Summary of David's Ongoing Conflict with the Philistines, and Victory Over Goliath's Family 21:15-22
- C. Summary of David's History Presented in a Psalm of Praise 22:1-51
- D. Summary of the Theology of Samuel: *The Testament and Theology of David* 23:1-7
- E. Summary of David's Thirty-seven Mighty Men 23:8-39
- F. David's Sinful Census in Numbering the People Becomes the Basis for Yahweh's Choice of and Provision for the Temple Site in Jerusalem 24:1-25

⁴Ryrie notes that "this section is a non-chronological appendix to the book and records many events that occurred earlier in David's reign" (Charles C. Ryrie, "2 Samuel," in *Ryrie Study Bible* [1976], 495).