

Robert Vannoy, Exodus to Exile, Lecture 9B
Kingship in Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel

Theology of Judges

Judges View of Kingship

As I mentioned just before the break, I want to call your attention to one other section of that handout on the theology of Judges. That's on page 835, down to the third paragraph. The question being discussed there is the attitude for kingship in Israel which is reflected in the stories and comments that we find in the book of Judges itself. Is kingship a good or a bad thing for Israel in the mind of whoever put this material together? And you notice that the third paragraph begins, "In spite of this strong suggestion towards the end of the book [that in those days that there was no king in Israel, everyone did what was right in his own eyes], that would suggest a rather positive attitude towards kingship." In other words, when kingship comes along there would be more order. Everybody wouldn't just be doing whatever they wanted. "So in spite of this strong suggestion in the end of the book of Judges, the absence of a human king had contributed to the rise of chaotic conditions during the period of judges, therefore suggesting that kingship is desirable. Some interpreters have argued that this book should be viewed on the whole as antimonarchic." This is an issue that flows on to 1 Samuel, where you get this question: is kingship a good thing or a bad thing?

"The basis for this view is found in Gideon's refusal of the offer of kingship on one hand and his positive affirmation of the kingship of Yahweh on the other in Judges 8:22 and 8:23 [we looked at that], combined with an appeal to the disastrous account of the kingship with Abimelech in chapter 9." Remember I mentioned that Abimelech's kingship ended up with the destruction of Shechem? "In fact, some interpreters believe that the tension they find between the positive view of kingship in chapters 17-21 in the epilogue [There was no king in Israel and everyone did what was right in his own eyes] and the allegedly negative view of kingship we find in chapters 8 and 9 is so fundamental that the conflicting attitude can be explained only by assuming different layers of the text." That moves back into that kind of analysis of tensions and underlying sources.

“Short of this solution, other interpreters have argued that the statements about there being no king and everyone doing as they see fit are somehow to be seen in the positive sense towards what was going on and is consistent with the book’s overall negative outlook on kingship.” I think that’s a hard thing to argue.

But the next paragraph gives some of what I think is going on here. “Much of this debate misses an important point. Chapters 8 and 9 of Judges are not fundamentally opposed to kingship, and chapters 17-21 do not suggest that human kingship in and of itself is the solution to Israel’s problem.” In other words, it seems to me that a false antithesis is constructed here. “Judges 8:22-23 does not say that human kingship is wrong, but it does strongly affirm the importance of recognition of the kingship of Yahweh. In context, it is the combination of the denial of Yahweh’s kingship with the offer of human kingship to Gideon which required Gideon to respond the way he did. The Israelites say, ‘Rule over us, because you have saved us out of the hands of Midian,’ Judges 8:22. This false assessment of who was responsible for Israel’s victory over the Midianites is in direct contraction to both Gideon’s call to action before the battle, where it says, ‘The Lord is giving the Midianite camp into your hands,’ as well as the statement from Yahweh that Israel should not boast that her own strength has saved her (7:2).” [That to me is the issue.] “In this context, Gideon could do nothing other than reject the proposal and at the same time affirm, in no uncertain terms, the continuing rule of Yahweh over his people as Herbrant notes. Yahweh is Israel’s deliverer, and this Israel must not forget. Kingship is wrong whenever it usurps Yahweh’s role in this area.” In other words, Kingship is not wrong *per se*; it’s wrong when it replaces the rule of Yahweh.

“The Abimelech story, while decidedly negative in its evaluation of the appointed rule of Shechem by one of Gideon’s sons, is not a condemnation of kingship *per se*, but rather a critique of kingship when it is based on crime and injustice [which is what Abimelech’s “reign” was] and is modeled after the type of kingship found in the Canaanite city-states of that time. A more balanced view on the perspective that the book of Judges brings to the question of the relative merits of the role of judges and kings, is

that neither institution is the ultimate solution to Israel's problems as a nation. In some respects, kingship properly conceived and exercised would correct the chaos of the period of the judges by providing the center government authority in the visible sovereign to lead the sinful people in the way of the covenant. But kingship is also subject to the shortcomings and failures of any human institution.

Nevertheless, kingship integrated with the covenant—that is a concept of kingship that continues to affirm the ultimate sovereignty of Yahweh over his people—is nowhere censured in the book of Judges.” It seems to me that this becomes an issue when we get into Samuel, when kingship is actually established. Kingship there is established by covenant and continues to recognize the ultimate sovereignty and kingship of Yahweh and not as a replacement for him. “The Old Testament is consistent in viewing the institutions in both Judges and Kings as important in the divine program of redemption. In fact, it is the very failure of Judges that points forward to the need for the Judge who is to come. 2 Timothy 4:8 speaks of the Lord as a righteous Judge in the end, the ultimate Judge—just as it is the failure of the kings of Israel and Judah that points forward to the need for the great King to come (John 1:49, Revelation 19:16). Those comments at this point set us up for the same issue that will reappear when we get into 1 Samuel 8-12, where kingship is actually established.

Ruth

I don't have anything in your outline about the book of Ruth, which is inserted in our Bibles between Judges and Samuel. I want to make just a brief comment on Ruth. I think that you might say there are a couple purposes for the book of Ruth. This book gives us a different picture of things going on during this dark period of the Judges, when there was so much chaos and religious and moral deterioration. This is a story set in that time. Notice in Ruth 1:1: “In the days when judges ruled, there was a famine in the land. A man from Bethlehem of Judah and his wife and sons went to live in Moab. The name of the man was Elimelech and his wife's name was Naomi.” They went out of Israel to Moab where Elimelech dies. Her two sons marry Moabite women, one named Orpah and

the other Ruth. Then her two sons die and she's left without her sons and husband. She decides to go back to Bethlehem and Ruth, her daughter-in-law, goes with her. Ruth ultimately marries Boaz.

I won't go through that story. But what I want to call your attention to is the end of the book where you have a genealogy of David. If you look at verse 17 of chapter 4, you read, "The women living there said, 'Naomi has a son.' And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David. This, then, is the family line of Perez: Perez was the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram, Ram the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, Salmon the father of Boaz, Boaz the father of Obed, Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David."

So at the end of the book of Ruth, you have a genealogy that traces the lineage of David back and you notice in that lineage that is Ruth at the top of that line. You go down: grandfather, father, and then to Jesse, the father of David. That is significant in the context of this flow of redemptive history, where it's ultimately the seed of the woman from which the Christ will ultimately come. The main link in that when we get to Matthew 1:1 is, "Jesus Christ the son of Abraham, the son of David." So inserted in the story, here we have part of that line of the promised seed going from Boaz and Ruth down to David.

V. 1 & 2 Samuel

A. General Comments

1. The Name(s)

Let's go on to 1 and 2 Samuel. This is Roman numeral V, 1 and 2 Samuel. A. is "General comments." 1. is "The Name." The name is taken from Samuel, who is a prominent figure in the first part of this book. It is a lengthy book with 55 chapters—31 in 1 Samuel and 24 in 2 Samuel. So there's a lot of material. Samuel was God's instrument, sent to anoint both Saul and David, Israel's first two kings. I think there's often a mistaken idea that Samuel is the author of 1 and 2 Samuel. He clearly is not the

author because the record of his death is in 1 Samuel 25:1. So you're not too far into the book it before Samuel is gone. He does anoint both Saul and David, but he is not around during much of David's life and does not outlive Saul.

However, I think it is likely that whoever the author was—and it's an anonymous author, we don't know who it was—it is likely he utilized material from Samuel as well as Nathan and Gad. If you look at 1 Chronicles 29:29, there is an explicit reference to Samuel, Nathan, and Gad. You read from the chronicler, "As for the events of King David's reign, from beginning to end, they are written in the records of Samuel the seer, the records of Nathan the prophet and the records of Gad the seer." So Nathan and Gad were prophets who admonished David at various points. Samuel was the one who anointed David. They all kept records and wrote things down. Those records were available to the chronicler at the time he was writing, and he makes reference to them.

Samuel was originally a single unit—one book, not two. The division into two parts was done by the translators of the Septuagint. An appropriate dividing place is the death of Saul, which happens now in the last chapter of 1 Samuel, chapter 31. It's appropriate because Joshua ends with the death of Joshua, Deuteronomy ends with the death of Moses, and here 1 Samuel ends with the death of Saul.

The title has varied, being designated by the Septuagint as "1 and 2 Books of Kingdoms." When you get to the Vulgate, then it's changed to 1 and 2 Kings. And I think that's worth making note of. There is a long tradition in Roman Catholic biblical studies in the tradition following the Vulgate who write commentaries on 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 3 Kings, and 4 Kings, because what we call 1 and 2 Samuel in the tradition of the Vulgate is 1 and 2 Kings, and for us 1 and 2 Kings is what the Vulgate calls 3 and 4 Kings. So you will still come across commentaries that follow those titles. You may wonder about that when you're in library sometime and read "3 and 4 Kings." What is that? 3 and 4 Kings are what we call 1 and 2 Kings, because Samuel was called 1 and 2 Kings. So those are the comments on its name.

2. A Brief Survey of Content and Its Significance: Kingship and Covenant

2. is “A brief survey of content and its significance.” Samuel begins with the close of the period of the judges. Samuel himself was a judge, the last of the judges. The book ends shortly before David’s death. 1 and 2 Samuel do not tell us of David’s death. We find out about David’s death in 1 Kings 1 and 2 when we transition to the reign of Solomon in 1 Kings 1 and 2. Samuel spans a period of about 130 years. It’s not a detailed political history of the time, but for the most part it is a collection of stories connected with the three leading personalities in the book, namely, Samuel, Saul and David.

It seems to me that the overriding theme that binds those narratives together is the theme of kingship and covenant. But what you find when you take kingship and covenant as the theme is that kingship as requested by the people is the denial of the covenant. That’s in chapter 8 where the elders of Israel come to Samuel and say, “Give us a king.” You read in chapter 8 that that displeased Samuel because they also said, “We want a king like the nations roundabout, who will go out and lead us in battle and presumably give us victory.” So the kind of kingship requested by the people and the reason why they wanted a human king comes from a denial of the kingship of Yahweh. The request was a denial of the covenant. Kingship as instituted by Samuel was consistent with the covenant. If you go further into that section from 8-12 you find that Saul is ultimately inaugurated in the context of the covenant renewal ceremony in which allegiance is reaffirmed to Yahweh. That’s in 1 Samuel 12. So the kingship instituted by Samuel is consistent with the covenant.

When you get further into the book, you find that the kingship as practiced by Saul failed to correspond to the covenantal ideal. He refused to listen to the word of the prophet. He refused to repent when he was called to account by Samuel. And ultimately the Lord rejected Saul as king and sent Samuel to anoint a replacement. Then you find that the kingship as practiced by David was an imperfect but true representation of the ideal of the covenantal king. David is described as a man after God’s own heart. David certainly had his failures, but when he was called to account by Nathan, he repented. He made no excuse he did not try to justify his sin. It seems to me that that’s the fundamental

difference between him and Saul.

Structure of Samuel

So that's what divides the unity of this flow of narratives through 1 and 2 Samuel. Look on page 2 of that handout. The book as a whole can be divided into three sections that focus around the three primary personalities in the book—Samuel, Saul, and David. In 1 Samuel 1-12, the primary personality is Samuel. Although in chapters 4-6 Samuel is not present, he is in the other chapters in a very prominent way. In 1 Samuel 13-31 the focus is on Saul. He is inaugurated in chapter 12 and begins his reign in 13. From chapter 13 to the end, you find the downward spiral of the life of Saul. It goes from bad to worse and ultimately ends in suicide. The third figure is David, which is all of 2 Samuel, 24 chapters.

You'll notice on your handout I comment "In the Hebrew Bible these sections take up respectively 17, 34, and 45 pages, which is kind of interesting. I think that the amount of space given has to do with the significance that can be attached to each of these individuals. David's is by far the largest. I think that that, in and of itself, is an indication of the author's desire to highlight the reign of David.

B. Important Advances in the History of Redemption in 1 & 2 Samuel

1. Samuel Records the Provisional Fulfillment of God's Promise to Abraham Concerning the Promised Land

B. on your handout and your outline is: "Important advances in the history of redemption in 1 and 2 Samuel." I have three things listed here just to call to your attention to the progress of redemptive history in 1 and 2 Samuel. The first one is that Samuel records the provisional fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham concerning the extent of the promised land. That promise to Abraham was one of the central elements of God's covenant with Abraham. It is described in Genesis 15:18-21—let's turn to it. The Lord says, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates." So in broad terms Israel is to possess land from the river of Egypt

all the way over to the northeast river of the Euphrates. That promise in Genesis 15 is confirmed in Genesis 17:8, Numbers 34:1-12, Deuteronomy 1:7, 11:24, Joshua 1:4, and Psalm 105. In other words, that promise is repeated numerous times.

I'd like to call your attention to Deuteronomy 1:7 of those numerous references. It says "Break camp and advance into the hill country of the Amorites; go to all the neighboring peoples in the Arabah, in the mountains, in the western foothills, in the Negev and along the coast, to the land of the Canaanites and to Lebanon, as far as the great river, the Euphrates. See, I have given you this land." Note another reference to the Euphrates. Joshua 1:4 says, "Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Great Sea on the west." So I think we normally think of that land of promise as encompassing Dan to Beersheba. But those boundaries are larger in the promise to Abraham, repeated by Moses, Joshua and these other references.

Now I think that promise was initially fulfilled when Joshua entered into the land, but only partially. It was not followed through to completion in Judges 1 where you get all of the tribal borders. This included borders from Egypt to the Euphrates. The realization of this came under David, who extended Israel's sovereignty to those boundaries, internally against the Philistines, and externally as well. You'll find the list of David's conquests in 2 Samuel 8. You read in verse 3, "David fought Hadadezer son of Rehob, king of Zobah, when he went to restore his control along the Euphrates River. David captured a thousand of his chariots." So it could be said of Solomon that when you get into 1 Kings and the transfer of David's kingdom to his son Solomon in 1 Kings 4:21, "Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the River to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt." What's "the river"? That's the river Euphrates. Go down to verse 24: "For he ruled over all the kingdoms west of the River, from Tiphshah to Gaza, and had peace on all sides." Tiphshah on this map is up here on the Euphrates. That was the territory that David and Solomon controlled.

So I think when you read 2 Samuel 8 with that list of conquests, it might seem like a rather mundane thing to be included in the book, but there's something of theological

significance there as well—and that is, God is faithful; he will accomplish what he says. He had promised Israel land to occupy from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates. During the time of Samuel and Saul, that was basically unthinkable. The Philistines were pressing in on them and Israel was almost overrun by them, but in God’s providence the great nations of the Fertile Crescent—Babylon, Assyria, Hittite, and Elam—were in weak periods of their history, and the kingdom of David and Solomon grew to the very extent that God had promised Abraham centuries before.

So as far as progressive redemptive history, I think the first thing we see is this provisional fulfillment of the promise to Abraham concerning extending the promise land. I said “provisional,” because that promise is said to be an everlasting promise. I don’t think that is totally fulfilled. I look for a future fulfillment of that. When you look at the current political situation, it is hard to imagine Israel winning the territory up to the Euphrates River.

2. Kingship

Go back to 2 Samuel, where we see in the books of 1 and 2 Samuel the progress of history where we have the record of the establishment of kingship in Israel and the association of anointing with kingship. There are two elements in that. Of course, the kingship is a very significant institution, but the association of anointing at kingship is also of significance. It is in the book of Samuel that the phrase “anointed of the Lord” comes to be used as synonymous with the king. The significance of this is seen when it is realized that “anointed” and “messiah” are the translation and transliteration of the same Hebrew word: *Meshiah* means “anointed.” *Christos* is the Greek translation in both the New Testament and the Septuagint for *meshiah*, which comes from the Hebrew meaning “to anoint.” This term becomes translated in our English translations as “Christ.” So there’s a lot of interesting meaning in this term “anointed.”

The stories of how David and Saul were anointed are found 1 Samuel 9:16 and 10:1 for Saul, and in 16:13 for David. The designation “anointed of the Lord” for the king appears in a number of references that I’ve listed there in 1 and 2 Samuel.

Now as far as kingship is concerned, it doesn't just come out of the blue in the progress of redemptive history. There's anticipation of kingship in earlier biblical statements. It's first explicitly expressed in Jacob's prophesy at Shiloh—the ruler out of the tribe of Judah in Genesis 49:10. When Jacob gives those blessings to all of his sons, he says in 49:10: “The scepter [symbol of royalty] will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs, and the obedience of the nations shall be his.” So kingship is anticipated in that prophesy, in the blessing of Jacob to Judah.

Kingship is further developed in the oracle of Balaam in Numbers 24:7-17. I called your attention to that when we were looking at the book of Numbers. And then look at Deuteronomy 17:14-20. That section of Deuteronomy is often called the “law of the king,” where Moses lays out certain principles in advance that are to govern the conduct of the kings of Israel when kingship is established. So Deuteronomy 17:14-20 looks forward to the time when the Lord will place a king over his people after they reach the Promised Land. So kingship is anticipated, and I don't think that kingship was something that was fundamentally wrong or in conflict with God's purposes for his people. In fact, it was part of his purpose. He did want a king. We'll talk about that later.

1 Samuel shows us how kingship was established. I think this is significant that this was done in a way that assured covenantal continuity. We'll talk more about that later. The striking thing is that Saul's kingship proved to be a failure because he turned away from the covenant.

a. Davidic Covenant

David is placed on the throne in place of Saul, and then given the remarkable promise that his dynasty would endure forever. That's in 2 Samuel 7:11-16 and 23:1-5. As I note in the first sentence of the next paragraph, this is the high point of the entire book. I think that that promise to David is the single most important event, you might say, in the progress of redemptive history as recorded in the book of Samuel.

Let's look at 2 Samuel 7:10 and following: “And I will provide a place for my

people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies. The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you.” Now, there’s a play on words in this section. At the beginning of the chapter, David had asked the Lord for permission to build a house for the Lord, and Nathan says “Go ahead and do it.” But then he had to go back and reconcile because the Lord said, “No, it’s not my will that you should do that, but your son will do that. You’re not going to build a house for me, in the sense of a temple; I’m going to build a house for you in the sense of a dynasty.” So you get this play on the word “house” in the sense of temple versus dynasty. “When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by men. But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.”

b. Davidic Covenant Intertextually

So that promise of an eternal dynasty, that covenant with David, is spoken of in Psalm 89 as well. Let’s look at that, because these are important. The term “covenant with David” does not appear in 1 Samuel, but in Psalm 89:3 you read that the Lord says, “I have made a covenant with my chosen one; I have sworn to David my servant, ‘I will establish your line forever and make your throne firm through all generations.’” That’s the Davidic promise or the Davidic covenant. Go down to verse 20 of Psalm 89: “I have found David my servant; with my sacred oil I have anointed him.” Verse 28, “I will maintain my love to him forever, and my covenant with him will never fail. I will establish his line forever, his throne as long as the heavens endure. If his sons forsake my

law and do not follow my statutes, if they violate my decrees and fail to keep my commands, I will punish their sin with the rod.” Verse 33, “but I will not take my love from him, nor will I ever betray my faithfulness. I will not violate my covenant or alter what my lips have uttered. Once for all, I have sworn by my holiness—and I will not lie to David—that his line will continue forever and his throne endure before me like the sun; it will be established forever like the moon, the faithful witness in the sky.” So those are powerfully strong words spoken of the Lord’s promises to David in 2 Samuel 7.

As I comment on the bottom of page 3, there is this high point of the entire book. The line of Jacob’s prophecy to Judah is now narrowed and sharpened. The seed of the woman will come out of the line of David. David is to be the ancestor of the great messiah king to come. This promise is ultimately fulfilled as Psalm 89 describes. Jesus comes as the son of David in Matthew 1:1. The angel Gabriel said to Mary that her son will sit on the throne of his father David. When you get into the New Testament references, Jesus is addressed in Matthew by two blind men sitting by the road side as the son of David. “Have mercy on us, O Lord, son of David.” Jesus himself says to them, “I am the root and the offspring of David and the bright morning star.”

Now at the same time I think we have to notice it’s not so much David’s accomplishments or qualities as a leader as it is God’s purposes that were to be accomplished through him that are most significant. Because of that he’s not idealized or placed on a pedestal. His weaknesses are evident. The writer of the book doesn’t hesitate to tell us about his failures. But in spite of his weaknesses, he is still known as a man after God’s own heart. That’s a phrase used in 1 Samuel 13:14 and 16:7 and quoted in Acts 13:22. In general, it can be said that David sought to rule as God had intended Israel to be ruled. His reign did reflect the ideal of the true covenant king, not completely or fully, but in general way. He strove to pattern his reign under the power of the law of the Lord, to the capacity of his whole heart. His reign is summarized in 2 Samuel 8:13 as a king who “did what was just and right for all the people.” That’s a high commendation about the reign of David. Yet even with an individual as godly as David, it’s clear that no human king could fulfill the high ideal. He sinned and fell short of God’s standard. It’s

out of recognition of this fact, and even more so with subsequent occupants of David's throne, that you might say that David was the standard that subsequent kings were measured by. Often it says in the book of Kings, "He walked in the ways of his father," or "He didn't walk in the ways of David." More often it was the latter, "He didn't walk in the ways of David his father." So it was with subsequent occupants of David's throne, as kings tended to turn further and further away from the covenantal ideal.

It is then that the future messianic hope begins to emerge. Namely that at some future time there will be a king who will occupy the throne of David who will be greater than any ordinary man; he will be a divine king. Isaiah 7:14, "A virgin will conceive and bear a son, and his name will be Immanuel, God is with us." And that is a sign given in the context of the failure of an occupant of David's throne, Ahaz. Ahaz didn't want to listen to the Lord, didn't want to walk in the way of the Lord, didn't want to find his security in trusting in the Lord, but instead found security by making an alliance with Assyria. So a worthy representative of the house of David will replace Ahaz, and he will be called Immanuel, God with us. Isaiah 9:6, a child will be born, with names to indicate deity: Mighty God, Everlasting father, Prince of Peace, the government will be upon his shoulder. And of the increase of his peace there will be no end. He will do what? "He will reign on David's throne over his kingdom establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on until forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this." The one who will occupy David's throne will be called the Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.

Look at Jeremiah 23:5, where we read of this future messianic king: "'The days are coming,' declares the LORD, 'when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land.'" That is how David's reign was characterized. "In his days, Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness.'" This is a divine king who is to sit on David's throne at some future time.

In 1 and 2 Samuel we have a record of the establishment of kingship in Israel and this points forward to something greater to come: the Messiah, the king of all the earth.

So kingship and Messianic expectation become central to the eschatology of the Old and New Testaments. That's an enormously important biblical truth. It finds its roots in 1 and 2 Samuel. That's where it all begins, because that's where kingship is established. That's where this idea of being anointed first takes shape, and that becomes something that becomes enormously important in the progress of redemptive history subsequent to 1 and 2 Samuel. So that's the second fact. In 1 Samuel, we're told about the establishment of kingship in Israel and the association of anointing with kingship.

3. 1 & 2 Samuel Tell Us How Jerusalem Became the Religious and Political Center

The third thing: 1 and 2 Samuel tell us how Jerusalem became the religious and political center of those years. In 2 Samuel we read about David's conquest of the Jebusite city of Zion which he made his capital. That's in 2 Samuel 6. In chapter 6 you read that he brings the ark to that city, making it the religious center of the nation and implicitly demonstrating that he recognizes Yahweh as the supreme ruler of the land. The Ark of the Covenant, is described as the throne seat of Yahweh. Yahweh is enthroned between the cherubim. So it's as if from the Ark that invisible Yahweh exercises his dominion and rule over the people of Israel. It seems to me that David's first act after conquering Zion or Jerusalem is to bring the Ark to that city. Symbolically that is saying, "I'm not your sovereign, Yahweh is." He is enthroned between the cherubim on that Ark. From 2 Samuel 6 forward, Jerusalem becomes both the religious and the political center of Israel and has remained such from that day to this. It will continue to be important in God's purposes in the future eschatologically as seen in Revelation 21 and 22. So that's another important thing that happened in 1 and 2 Samuel. When you pick up the paper today, you hear stories about Jerusalem. That all started in 1 and 2 Samuel. God has used this site in working out his purposes in history. Any questions or comments?

C. The Life of Samuel

5. The Establishment of Kingship and Covenant Continuity

I think what I'd better do is stop here at C., "The life of Samuel." I want to make a

few comments on the life of Samuel, but then focus next week for a good part of our time on number 5. letter C., “The establishment of kingship and covenant continuity,” and some issues associated with that. This issue of restructuring the theocracy, and the integration of kingship into the structure of the theocracy, is something that has enormous significance. So we’ll spend some time on that, and then I’ll probably end the hour with a few comments on 1 and 2 Kings over on the last page. Next week is our last session, so we’ll wrap it up next week.

I think there was confusion at the time of Christ because the expectation was that the Messiah would come, throw out the Romans, and rule the earth. Why? This idea was founded on the basis of certain prophecies. What wasn’t understood was that Christ was going to come two times. The first time, he was going to come in the form of the Suffering Servant, a figure in another Old Testament prophecy, in order to make atonement for sin. The second time, he will come with power—and that wasn’t clearly sorted out or understood by many people at that time.

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