

# Dr. Robert Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, Session 0, Introduction Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide Quiz, and 5) FAQs

## 1. Abstract of Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, Session 0, Introduction, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This introductory lecture by Dr. Robert Chisholm provides a comprehensive overview of the Books of Samuel. **The lecture covers the historical context of the books**, placing them within the larger narrative of the Hebrew Bible and the Deuteronomic history. **It then explores the key figures of Samuel, Saul, and David**, highlighting the theological themes of kingship and God's covenant with David. **Dr. Chisholm analyzes the structure of the books**, proposing a three-part division based on these major characters, while acknowledging the overarching focus on David's kingship. Finally, **the lecture offers a brief outline of the subsequent lessons**, promising a chapter-by-chapter study of 1 and 2 Samuel.

**2. 19 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Chisholm, Session 0 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Historical Books → 1 Samuel).**



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### 3. Briefing Document: Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, Session 0, Introduction

Okay, here is a briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided excerpt of Dr. Robert Chisholm's introduction to 1 and 2 Samuel:

#### Briefing Document: Introduction to 1 & 2 Samuel

##### Overview:

This document provides a high-level overview of Dr. Robert Chisholm's introductory lecture on the biblical books of 1 and 2 Samuel. The lecture aims to orient listeners to the historical context, literary structure, and theological themes within these books.

##### Key Themes and Ideas:

###### 1. Placement within the Biblical Canon:

- **English Bible:** 1 & 2 Samuel are part of the "historical books," following the Pentateuch and preceding 1 & 2 Kings.
- **Hebrew Bible (Tanakh):** They are classified as "Former Prophets" (Nevi'im), along with Joshua, Judges, and Kings. This placement highlights their historical and theological connection to Deuteronomy, often referred to as "Deuteronomic History."
- **Quote:** *"In the Hebrew Bible... the former prophets consist of Joshua, Judges, not Ruth, Samuel, and Kings... scholars sometimes call this the Deuteronomic history. I call it the Deuteronomic history because the history as told reflects the theology of the book of Deuteronomy."*

###### 1. Historical Context:

- **Timeline:** The books cover roughly a 100-year period, from the end of the Judges era to the end of David's reign (approximately 1050 BC to 970 BC).
- **Fixed Dates:** Historical dates are determined through Assyrian records that mention a solar eclipse and the reigns of Israelite Kings Ahab and Jehu.
- **Quote:** *"When we do all of this work in the Assyrian records and then correlate the Assyrian material with what we have in the Old Testament... we are able to determine that Solomon began his reign in 970 BC."*

### 1. Transition from Judges to Kings:

- **Problem in Judges:** The Book of Judges ends with Israel in chaos, "everyone was doing what was right in his own eyes," due to the lack of a king. This sets the stage for the desire for a king.
- **Hope for an Ideal King:** The book suggests a longing for a king like the one described in Deuteronomy 17, who would lead the people both spiritually and politically.
- **Quote:** *"Judges ends with the observation in its epilogue that things were bad in Israel...Everyone was doing what was right in his own eyes because Israel had no king...there's this sentiment that if Israel just had a king, things would be better."*

### 1. Major Characters and Their Roles:

- **Samuel:** The prophet who anoints both Saul and David. He acts as the "kingmaker" under God's authority and is prominent in 1 Samuel 1-16.
- **Saul:** Israel's first king, whose name means "asked for." He represents the king Israel desired, but ultimately becomes a failure and a foil to David. He is introduced in 1 Samuel 9 and dies at the end of 1 Samuel 31.
- **Quote:** *"Saul is the king that Israel desired. His name, Shaul, means asked for. He is the one they asked for and perhaps deserved."*
- **David:** The Lord's chosen king, a "man after his own heart," introduced in 1 Samuel 16 (formally introduced in 17). He is the central focus of the book, including 2 Samuel. Despite his flaws, God's covenant with him sustains him.
- **Quote:** *"And finally, the Lord brings along David, a man after his own heart...the Lord makes an irrevocable covenant with David in 2 Samuel 7 that sustains him in spite of his great sin."*

### 1. Apologetic for David's Kingship:

- The narrative of 1 & 2 Samuel is an implicit "defense" of David's kingship, demonstrating that he was God's chosen king despite accusations of a coup.
- The text emphasizes David's loyalty to Saul and establishes his legitimacy as God's chosen ruler.

- **Quote:** *"There is a sense in which we have here an apology for David, a defense of David...It establishes his credentials and demonstrates that he is indeed the chosen one of the Lord."*
- Even David's sins against Uriah are seen within the context of this defense: David's sin is terrible, but God sustains him and his dynasty through His covenant, demonstrating David as the rightful king.

#### 1. **Structure and Outline Based on Kingship:**

- The overarching theme of the books of Samuel is *kingship* - its beginning, failure, revival and preservation in Israel.
- The books can be divided into sections based on the main characters but are structured thematically, particularly around the theme of kingship
- **Prelude to Kingship (1 Samuel 1-7):** The rise of Samuel as a key figure in establishing the kingship in Israel.
- **Kingship Inaugurated (1 Samuel 8-12):** Saul is established as the first king.
- **Kingship Fails (1 Samuel 13-15):** Saul's disobedience leads to his rejection.
- **Kingship in Limbo (1 Samuel 16-31):** The transition period with Saul still reigning and David chosen.
- **Kingship Revived (2 Samuel 1-10):** David becomes king and establishes his dynasty.
- **Kingship Preserved (2 Samuel 11-20):** David's sins are punished, but his kingship is sustained by God's covenant.
- **Epilogue (2 Samuel 21-24):** An overview of David's reign, with various events.

#### 1. **Connection to 1 Kings:**

- The narrative of 1 and 2 Samuel is incomplete without the beginning of 1 Kings as it is where the story picks up again, after David's epilogue, when David chooses Solomon as his successor.
- **Quote:** *"The story is put on hold at the end of 2 Samuel 20...the story picks up again in 1 Kings 1, where we then read about the fact that David chooses Solomon to be his successor and then David passes away."*

**Conclusion:**

Dr. Chisholm's introduction provides a foundation for understanding 1 and 2 Samuel as a narrative deeply concerned with the concept of kingship in Israel. The books trace the transition from a leaderless society to a monarchy, focusing on the failures of Saul and ultimately highlighting the chosen and preserved kingship of David, all within the larger context of God's covenant and plan for Israel.

## 4. Study Guide: Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, Session 0, Introduction

### Study Guide: 1 & 2 Samuel Introduction

#### Quiz

**Instructions:** Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. How are the books of Samuel categorized in the English Bible versus the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh)?
2. What is the "Deuteronomistic history," and how does it relate to the books of Samuel?
3. According to the source material, when did Solomon begin his reign, and how do we know?
4. What is the state of Israel at the end of the book of Judges? How does this relate to the beginning of 1 Samuel?
5. What are the three major characters that dominate 1 & 2 Samuel, and what is their relationship to each other?
6. In what sense is 1 & 2 Samuel considered an "apology" for David?
7. How does the covenant in 2 Samuel 7 affect the narrative surrounding David's sin with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah?
8. What are the three broad sections of 1 & 2 Samuel, based on the major characters, and what is a more nuanced way to understand the books' macrostructure?
9. According to the source, what is the overarching theme of the books of Samuel?
10. What is the function of the epilogue in 2 Samuel 21-24, and how does it relate to the rest of the narrative?

#### Answer Key

1. In the English Bible, the books of Samuel are categorized as historical books, following the Pentateuch. In the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh), they are part of the Nevi'im (Prophets), specifically the Former Prophets.

2. The "Deuteronomic history" refers to the historical books from Joshua to Kings, which reflect the theology of the book of Deuteronomy. The books of Samuel are part of this history, as the narrative is influenced by Deuteronomic principles.
3. Solomon began his reign in 970 BC. This date is derived from a combination of Assyrian records, which mention a solar eclipse, and their correlation with mentions of Israelite kings like Ahab and Jehu in the Old Testament.
4. The book of Judges ends with Israel in a state of moral and spiritual chaos, characterized by the phrase, "everyone was doing what was right in his own eyes," due to the absence of a king. This creates a hope and expectation for a king to rectify the situation in 1 Samuel.
5. The three major characters are Samuel, Saul, and David. Samuel anoints both Saul and David, Saul is the first king, and David ultimately replaces Saul as king, becoming the focal point of the narrative, while Samuel and Saul function in relation to him.
6. 1 & 2 Samuel can be considered an "apology" for David in that the narrator defends David's kingship, establishes his credentials, and refutes accusations that he was a disloyal subject who had schemed for power.
7. The covenant in 2 Samuel 7, which promises David an enduring dynasty, sustains David's kingship and lineage despite his grave sins. The covenant is the reason God does not abandon David after his sin, though he is severely disciplined.
8. The simplistic view divides the books into three sections based on the main characters: Samuel (1 Samuel 1-8), Saul (1 Samuel 9-31), and David (2 Samuel). However, a more nuanced view is organized around the theme of kingship.
9. The overarching theme of the books of Samuel is kingship, exploring its inauguration, failure, and eventual restoration. The books trace the need for a king, the rise and fall of Saul, and the establishment of David's dynasty.
10. The epilogue in 2 Samuel 21-24 is not in strict chronological order and it acts as a microcosm of David's reign and his challenges. It offers a summary view of key aspects of his rule before the narrative progresses to the reign of Solomon in 1 Kings.

## Essay Questions

**Instructions:** Answer each question in essay format.

1. Discuss the significance of the different arrangements of the Old Testament books in the English Bible and the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh), particularly in relation to the placement of 1 & 2 Samuel. How does this impact our understanding of these books?
2. Analyze the role of the "Deuteronomistic history" in shaping the narrative of 1 & 2 Samuel. How does this theological framework influence the presentation of characters like Saul and David, and the overall message of the books?
3. Examine the theme of kingship as it develops throughout 1 & 2 Samuel. How does the story of Saul function as a foil to David's kingship, and what does this suggest about the qualities of an ideal leader?
4. Assess the argument that 1 & 2 Samuel serves as a defense ("apology") for David. How do the books present David's credentials and actions, particularly in light of his significant failures and the covenant of 2 Samuel 7?
5. Explain how the structure of 1 & 2 Samuel, particularly the use of the epilogue (2 Samuel 21-24), contributes to the books' central themes. How does this structure guide readers towards a specific understanding of David's reign?

## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Tanakh:** The Hebrew Bible, consisting of three parts: the Torah (Law), the Nevi'im (Prophets), and the Ketuvim (Writings).
- **Torah:** The first five books of the Hebrew Bible, also known as the Pentateuch.
- **Nevi'im:** The second major division of the Hebrew Bible, containing the books of the prophets.
- **Ketuvim:** The third major division of the Hebrew Bible, containing the "Writings," such as Psalms, Proverbs, and other books not categorized as Torah or Prophets.
- **Former Prophets:** The first part of the Nevi'im, including Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, which tell the historical narrative of Israel from the entry into the land to the exile.
- **Latter Prophets:** The second part of the Nevi'im, includes books like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve minor prophets.
- **Deuteronomistic History:** The historical books of the Old Testament (Joshua-Kings), understood to reflect the theology of the book of Deuteronomy.
- **Apology (Biblical Context):** A defense of a person, idea, or belief, in this case a defense of David's legitimacy as king.
- **Covenant:** A binding agreement between God and his people. In 2 Samuel 7, God makes a covenant with David, promising him an enduring dynasty.
- **Macrostructure:** The overall, large-scale organization of a text or narrative.
- **Epilogue:** A concluding section of a literary work, often offering a summary or reflection on the main events.

## 5. FAQs on Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, Session 0, Introduction, Biblelearning.org (BeL)

### FAQ on 1 & 2 Samuel

1. **How are the books of Samuel positioned within the Old Testament canon, and how does this differ between the English Bible and the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh)?**
2. In the English Bible, 1 & 2 Samuel are located within the historical books, following the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, and Ruth. In the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh), the arrangement is different. It's divided into the Torah (Pentateuch), Nevi'im (Prophets), and Ketuvim (Writings). 1 & 2 Samuel are part of the Nevi'im, specifically the "Former Prophets," along with Joshua, Judges, and Kings. Ruth, in contrast, is placed in the Ketuvim (Writings). This difference is significant because the Former Prophets are viewed as a theological history reflecting the ideas of Deuteronomy, whereas other historical books in the English bible do not carry this same emphasis in the Tanakh.
3. **What is the approximate time period covered in the books of 1 & 2 Samuel, and how do we determine these dates?**
4. The books of 1 & 2 Samuel cover approximately a hundred year period, from the time before kings in Israel until the end of David's career (around 1050 BC - 970 BC). This timeline is determined through a combination of Assyrian records, mentioning a solar eclipse and some Kings of Israel like Ahab and Jehu, which have been dated precisely by scientists. These records are then correlated with the Old Testament. From there, we find that Solomon began his reign in 970 BC, David's reign began in 1010 BC (after 40 years of rule), and Saul's began around 1050 BC (also after 40 years of rule). The early chapters of Samuel take place before Saul's reign, in the Judges period.

5. **What is the overarching theme of 1 & 2 Samuel, and how is this connected to the book of Judges?**
6. The overarching theme of 1 & 2 Samuel is kingship in Israel. The book of Judges ends with the observation that things were bad in Israel due to the absence of a king and the people doing as they saw fit. 1 & 2 Samuel addresses this by showing how kingship began in Israel. The people seek an ideal king as described in Deuteronomy 17, and 1&2 Samuel shows how the ideal of this kingship is tested in the reigns of Saul and David. Ultimately the book of Samuel shows that not just any king will do, and that true kingship must be derived from God's will.
7. **Who are the three major characters in 1 & 2 Samuel, and how do their stories overlap?**
8. The three major characters in 1 & 2 Samuel are Samuel the prophet, Saul the first king, and David, who becomes the second king. Samuel is prominent in the early chapters, anointing both Saul and David. Saul's reign dominates the latter part of 1 Samuel, and David is a central figure throughout 1 & 2 Samuel. Their stories overlap. Samuel functions as the kingmaker, Saul serves as a flawed king, and David becomes the ideal king in contrast to Saul. Their stories are interwoven and the narrator uses the overlapping structure to demonstrate the superiority of David.
9. **How does the narrative of 1 & 2 Samuel function as a defense ("apology") of David's kingship?**
10. The books of Samuel can be seen as a defense of David's kingship. The narrator demonstrates David's superiority over Saul, dispelling any notion that he led a coup or was responsible for Saul's death. By highlighting David's loyalty, faith, and strengths, even his eventual rise to power is framed as the work of God. However, the narrative does not shy away from David's serious sins. Even the account of David's sin with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah are folded into this defense by showing that David's covenant with God allows him to continue to be a divinely appointed king, showing the stability of God's covenant rather than the perfection of David.

**11. How is the structure of 1 & 2 Samuel organized around the theme of kingship?**

12. The books of Samuel are structured around the theme of kingship. The first few chapters (1 Samuel 1-7) act as a prelude to kingship with the rise of Samuel, the prophet. Next, the books describe the inauguration of kingship with the reign of Saul (1 Samuel 8-12), followed by the failure of Saul's kingship (1 Samuel 13-15). This leads to an in-between period where the chosen king (David) has not yet taken the throne (1 Samuel 16-31). 2 Samuel opens with the revival of kingship through David and his dynasty (2 Samuel 1-10), followed by a preservation of kingship in the wake of David's sin (2 Samuel 11-20), and concludes with an epilogue (2 Samuel 21-24) which acts as a microcosm of David's reign.

**13. Why is it important to understand that the narrative in 1 and 2 Samuel is not always in strict chronological order?**

14. It's crucial to understand that the narrative in 1 & 2 Samuel is not always chronological because the purpose of the books is to emphasize specific themes, particularly related to kingship, and not to provide a strict timeline. For example, the epilogue in 2 Samuel 21-24 is a series of events not presented in a strict chronological order. This arrangement allows the narrator to highlight key moments and themes from David's reign in a way that would not be possible in a strictly chronological approach. It's as if the story pauses after 2 Samuel 20, so it is able to reflect on different themes with the selection of events in the epilogue.

**15. How does the covenant between God and David play a role in the narrative, especially in the context of David's sins?**

16. The covenant God makes with David in 2 Samuel 7 is vital to understanding the narrative, particularly in the context of David's severe sins. The covenant is described as irrevocable. Despite David's adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah, actions that might otherwise disqualify a king, the covenant is what sustains David's kingship. God does discipline David harshly, but he does not abandon David as he did with Saul. The covenant emphasizes God's faithfulness and commitment to David's lineage, as well as his choice of David as king, showing that God's will is not simply a matter of human perfection.