**Dr. J. Robert Vannoy, 1 & 2 Samuel, Lecture 1 of 4
Resources from NotebookLM**

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

 **1. Abstract of Vannoy, 1 & 2 Samuel, Lecture 1 of 4, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**

**Dr. Vannoy's lecture series** examines the Old Testament books of First and Second Samuel within the broader narrative of the Bible, emphasizing their placement among the historical books and the importance of understanding Old Testament historiography. The lecture **explores Israel's unique linear concept of history** as divinely purposed, contrasting it with cyclical or oscillating views prevalent in the ancient world. It posits that Israel's historical understanding arose from recognizing God's actions and prophetic words in their experiences, a **"history of redemption."** Focusing on First and Second Samuel, the lecture identifies key redemptive historical advances, including the fulfillment of the Promised Land, the establishment of Jerusalem as a central hub, and the **foundational significance of kingship and the concept of the "anointed one,"** which foreshadows the messianic hope.

**2. 17 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Vannoy, 1 & 2 Samuel, Lecture 1 of 4 – 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 & 2 Samuel).**



**3. Briefing Document: Vannoy, 1 & 2 Samuel, Lecture 1 of 4**

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Briefing Document: Themes and Ideas in Vannoy & Samuels' Lecture on 1 & 2 Samuel

**Overview:** This lecture serves as the first in a series of four, aiming to understand the books of 1 and 2 Samuel within the broader narrative of the Bible. Dr. Vannoy begins by emphasizing the importance of understanding the literary genre of Old Testament historical books and then proceeds to discuss the unique nature of Old Testament historiography. The lecture concludes with an introduction to 1 and 2 Samuel, highlighting their central theme of kingship and covenant, their structure around the lives of Samuel, Saul, and David, and three significant advances in the history of redemption found within these books.

**Main Themes and Important Ideas:**

**1. The Nature of Old Testament Historiography:**

* **Historical Genre:** First and Second Samuel belong to the historical books of the Old Testament, requiring a reading strategy appropriate to this genre, distinct from law, poetry, or wisdom literature.
* **Purposeful and Goal-Oriented History:** Unlike the cyclical or oscillating views of history prevalent in the ancient world, Israel developed a linear concept of history, viewing events as part of a purposeful process moving towards a goal. This understanding was unique to Israel.
* Quote: "Hendrikus Berkhoff... has said that we must thank not Greece, nor Persia, but Israel for our sense that history is goal directed and that as such it has meaning."
* Quote: "Geerhardus Vos... claimed that 'the true principal of history writing, that which makes history more than the chronicling of events because it discovers a plan and posits a goal, was thus grasped not first by the Greek historians, but by the prophets of Israel.'"
* **Revelation Through Word and Event:** Israel's unique historical sense stemmed from knowing God not just through nature, but through historical events interpreted by prophets. Divine revelation in the Old Testament consists of God's word confirmed by his actions, not merely inferred from events.
* Quote: "Without God’s acts, the words would be empty... but without his words, his acts would be blind." (quoting Geerhardus Vos)
* **History of Redemption:** The central concern of Old Testament historical narratives is to describe God's actions in history to reveal himself and redeem his people. Events are significant due to their relationship with this ongoing work of redemption.
* Quote: "Old Testament history then is what may be properly described, in my view, as a history of redemption."
* **Interpretive Nature of Historiography:** All history writing, including that of the Old Testament, is interpretive and viewed from a certain perspective. The theological orientation of biblical narratives does not invalidate their historical legitimacy.
* Quote: "In the final analysis, I think we must say that all history writing is interpretive."
* **Faith Rooted in Historical Events:** The message of the Bible is inseparable from the history it describes. The reality of these historical events, particularly God's redemptive work, is foundational to Christian faith.
* Quote: "If the events of that history did not happen, then our faith becomes an irrational leap and is vain."

**2. Introduction to First and Second Samuel:**

* **Placement and Content:** Located between Judges and Kings, 1 and 2 Samuel cover a period of approximately 130 years (1100-970 B.C.), focusing on the transition from the period of Judges to the monarchy.
* **Central Figures:** The books center on the biographical stories of three prominent leaders: Samuel, Saul, and David.
* **Structure:** The two books can be divided into three sections based on these figures:
* 1 Samuel 1-12: Focus on Samuel
* 1 Samuel 13-31: Focus on Saul
* 2 Samuel 1-24: Focus on David (the largest section, indicating the author's emphasis)
* **Primary Theme: Kingship and Covenant:** Dr. Vannoy posits that the unifying theme of 1 and 2 Samuel is the development of kingship in relation to God's covenant with Israel. This theme unfolds in four stages:
* Kingship requested by the people in 1 Samuel 8 as a denial of the covenant.
* Kingship instituted by Samuel (1 Samuel 10-11, 14) as consistent with the covenant.
* Kingship as practiced by Saul (1 Samuel 13, 15) failing to meet the covenantal ideal.
* Kingship as practiced by David (2 Samuel) as an imperfect but true representation of the covenantal king.

**3. Significant Advances in the History of Redemption in 1 & 2 Samuel:**

* **Fulfillment of the Promised Land (2 Samuel 8, 1 Kings 4):** The books record the complete fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham regarding the extent of the Promised Land, reaching from Egypt to the Euphrates under David and Solomon. This highlights God's faithfulness to his promises.
* Quote: "God is faithful to his promises. What He says will come to pass. He will accomplish what He says."
* **Jerusalem as the Political and Religious Center (2 Samuel 5-6):** David's conquest of Jerusalem and his bringing of the Ark of the Covenant to the city established it as the central hub for both political and religious life in Israel. This symbolized Yahweh's ultimate sovereignty despite David's human rule.
* **Establishment of Kingship and the Concept of the Anointed One (1 Samuel 8-12):** First Samuel describes the institution of kingship in Israel and the association of anointing with the king. The Hebrew word "meshiah" (anointed) is the root of "Messiah," and its Greek translation "christos" is the origin of "Christ." This lays the foundation for the messianic idea in the Bible.
* Quote: "It’s in the book of Samuel that the phrase 'the anointed of the Lord' comes to be used as synonymous with king."
* Quote: "This means that the roots of the messianic idea, which is certainly a very important Biblical concept, have significant connections with the narratives of First and Second Samuel."
* **Kingship Anticipated:** The establishment of kingship was not unexpected, with allusions and prophecies found in Genesis, Numbers, Deuteronomy, and even Hannah's prayer in 1 Samuel 2:10. This indicates God's intention for a line of kings leading to the future Messiah.
* **Israel's Request for a King as a Rejection of Yahweh (1 Samuel 8):** The people's desire for a king "like the nations" was rooted in a lack of confidence in God's kingship and a desire for a more visible and seemingly secure human leader. This act was viewed as a rejection of the covenant.
* Quote: "At its core, this attitude was a rejection of the kingship of Jehovah..."
* **God's Sovereignty in Allowing and Redeeming the Request:** Despite the people's flawed motives, God allowed the establishment of kingship but intended it to be a covenantal kingship, distinct from the oppressive rule of surrounding nations. This event, though initiated by a negative desire, became part of God's redemptive plan, ultimately pointing towards the Messianic King.

**Conclusion:**

Dr. Vannoy's first lecture provides a crucial framework for understanding the books of 1 and 2 Samuel. By highlighting the nature of Old Testament historical writing as purposeful, revelatory, and ultimately redemptive, he sets the stage for interpreting the narratives within this context. The introduction to 1 and 2 Samuel emphasizes the central theme of kingship and covenant, demonstrating how the establishment of the monarchy, despite its flawed beginnings, played a significant role in the unfolding history of redemption and laid the groundwork for the messianic hope. The three key advances identified – the fulfillment of the Promised Land, the centrality of Jerusalem, and the concept of the anointed king – underscore the profound theological significance of these historical books.

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**4.** **Study Guide: Vannoy, 1 & 2 Samuel, Lecture 1 of 4**

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First and Second Samuel: A Study Guide

Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. According to the lecture, what is the primary literary genre of First and Second Samuel? Why is understanding this genre important for interpreting these books?
2. What was unique about Israel's view of history compared to other ancient Near Eastern cultures? What was identified as a key reason for this difference from a biblical perspective?
3. How does the lecture describe the relationship between God's words and actions (word revelation and event) in the Old Testament? Why is this important for understanding Old Testament history?
4. Why might some challenge the historical value of Old Testament narratives? How does the lecture respond to these challenges?
5. What is the overarching theme that, according to the lecture, provides unity to the books of First and Second Samuel? Briefly explain this theme.
6. What are the three main sections into which First and Second Samuel can be divided based on the prominent figures? Which of these figures receives the most attention in terms of narrative space?
7. What three significant advances in the history of redemption are identified as being found in First and Second Samuel?
8. How did the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham regarding the Promised Land occur during the period covered by Samuel, Saul, and David?
9. Why was David's bringing of the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem a significant event, according to the lecture? What did it symbolize?
10. What is the significance of the phrase "the anointed of the Lord" in First and Second Samuel? How does it connect to the concept of the Messiah and Christ?

Quiz Answer Key

1. First and Second Samuel belong to the historical books of the Old Testament. Understanding this genre is crucial because historical books have a different literary character than other types of Old Testament literature, requiring a reading strategy appropriate to their nature.
2. Unlike the cyclical or oscillating views of history in other ancient cultures, Israel had a linear concept of history, believing it was purposeful and goal-directed. Biblically, this arose because Israel came to know God through historical events interpreted by prophets, rather than primarily through nature.
3. The lecture states that in the Old Testament, God made himself known through both speaking (word) and acting (event). Revelation is not merely inferring meaning from events but consists of God's word being subsequently confirmed by his actions, demonstrating his reliability.
4. Some challenge the historical value due to their religious perspective and the lack of detailed causal explanations. The lecture argues that the central focus is God's redemptive work, and the narratives describe actual events significant to this work, making them legitimate historical sources despite their theological orientation.
5. The unifying theme of First and Second Samuel is kingship and covenant. The books explore how kingship was requested in denial of the covenant, instituted in consistency with it, failed under Saul, and was imperfectly but truly represented by David.
6. The three main sections are centered on Samuel (1 Samuel 1-12), Saul (1 Samuel 13-31), and David (2 Samuel 1-24). The section focusing on David is the largest, indicating the author's desire to highlight his reign.
7. The three significant advances are the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham regarding the extent of the Promised Land, Jerusalem becoming the political and religious center of Israel, and the establishment of kingship with the association of anointing.
8. While the initial conquest under Joshua began the fulfillment, the promise of borders extending to the Euphrates River was not fully realized until the reign of David, as recorded in 2 Samuel 8 and later confirmed in 1 Kings 4 under Solomon.
9. David's act of bringing the Ark to Jerusalem in 2 Samuel 6 was significant because it made Jerusalem not only the political but also the religious center of Israel. It symbolized David's recognition of Yahweh as the ultimate sovereign and divine king.
10. The phrase "the anointed of the Lord" becomes synonymous with king in these books and is rooted in the Hebrew word "meshiah," which also translates to "Messiah." In Greek, this is "christos," giving us the title "Christ," thus connecting the establishment of kingship in Samuel to the messianic expectation.

 **Essay Format Questions**

1. Discuss the significance of understanding Old Testament historiography as "redemptive history" for interpreting the narratives of First and Second Samuel. How does this perspective influence our understanding of the events and characters portrayed in these books?
2. Analyze the reasons behind Israel's request for a king in 1 Samuel 8. What does this request reveal about their relationship with God and their understanding of the covenant? How did God respond to their request, and what were the implications of this response?
3. Compare and contrast the kingships of Saul and David as portrayed in First and Second Samuel. In what ways did each king adhere to or deviate from the ideal of a covenantal king as presented in the lecture? What were the consequences of their respective reigns for Israel's history of redemption?
4. The lecture identifies three significant advances in redemptive history found in First and Second Samuel: the fulfillment of the Promised Land, the establishment of Jerusalem as the central hub, and the introduction of anointed kingship. Choose two of these advances and explain their importance within the broader narrative of God's redemptive plan as presented in the Old Testament.
5. Explore the development of the messianic idea as it emerges in First and Second Samuel through the concept of the "anointed king." How do the anointings of Saul and David, and the language used to describe them, lay the groundwork for future messianic prophecies and expectations in the Old Testament?

**Glossary of Key Terms**

* **Historiography:** The writing of history; the study of historical writing and its interpretation.
* **Genre (Literary):** A category of artistic composition, as in music or literature, characterized by similarities in form, style, or subject matter.
* **Pre-exilic:** Referring to the period in Israelite history before the Babylonian Exile (586 BCE).
* **Exile (Babylonian):** The period in the 6th century BCE when the kingdom of Judah was conquered by Babylon and many of its inhabitants were deported to Mesopotamia.
* **Pentateuch:** The first five books of the Old Testament (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy).
* **Linear Concept of History:** The belief that history is a purposeful progression of events moving towards a specific goal or end.
* **Cyclical Concept of History:** The belief that history repeats itself in patterns or cycles.
* **Oscillating Concept of History:** The belief that history swings back and forth without a meaningful pattern or direction.
* **Word Revelation:** The idea that God reveals himself and his will through spoken or written words, such as through prophets.
* **Event Revelation:** The idea that God reveals himself and his will through historical actions and events.
* **Redemptive History:** An interpretation of history that sees God's saving work as the central theme, with historical events understood in relation to God's plan of salvation.
* **Objective Historiography:** The idea of writing history from a neutral, unbiased perspective, presenting facts without interpretation. The lecture suggests this is not fully possible.
* **Covenant:** A solemn agreement between two parties, often used in the Bible to describe the relationship between God and humanity or Israel.
* **Theocracy:** A system of government in which priests rule in the name of God or a god. In Israel's case, it refers to the period where God was understood as the direct ruler.
* **Anointing:** The ceremonial act of pouring oil on someone's head, typically to signify their appointment to a special office, such as king or priest.
* **Messiah:** A Hebrew term meaning "anointed one," used to refer to a future king and deliverer of Israel.
* **Christ:** A Greek term meaning "anointed one," used as a title for Jesus of Nazareth.
* **Septuagint:** The oldest extant Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible.
* **Vulgate:** The principal Latin version of the Bible, widely used in the Western Church for centuries.

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**5. FAQs on Vannoy, 1 & 2 Samuel, Lecture 1 of 4, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)**
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Frequently Asked Questions on First and Second Samuel

**1. What is the primary literary genre of First and Second Samuel, and why is understanding this important for interpretation?** First and Second Samuel belong to the historical books of the Old Testament. Recognizing this genre is crucial because it dictates the appropriate reading strategy. Unlike law, poetry, or wisdom literature, historical books in the Old Testament have a specific character and purpose. Understanding Old Testament historiography influences how we read and comprehend the narratives within these books, including First and Second Samuel.

**2. According to the lecture, what was unique about Israel's view of history compared to other ancient nations?** Israel possessed a unique linear concept of history, viewing it as purposeful and goal-directed, moving towards a specific end. This contrasted with the cyclical or oscillating views of history prevalent in other ancient cultures like Greece and Persia. This understanding stemmed from Israel's experience of God working within historical events, as announced and interpreted by the prophets, revealing an unfolding divine plan.

**3. How does the lecture explain the theological perspective and occasional lack of detailed causal relationships in Old Testament historical narratives?** Old Testament historical narratives, including First and Second Samuel, have a clear religious or theological orientation. Their primary focus is to describe God's actions in history to reveal Himself and redeem His people—a history of redemption. The absence of detailed explanations for causal relationships is because the narratives prioritize events significant to God's redemptive work. Events not directly connected to this work are often passed over or mentioned briefly. This theological perspective doesn't undermine their historical value, as all history writing involves interpretation; rather, it highlights their specific purpose.

**4. What is the overarching theme that unifies the books of First and Second Samuel, as proposed in the lecture?** The unifying theme of First and Second Samuel is the development of kingship in Israel in relation to the covenant with God. The lecture outlines a four-fold progression of this theme: the people's request for a king as a denial of the covenant, the institution of kingship by Samuel as consistent with the covenant, the failure of Saul's kingship to adhere to the covenantal ideal, and David's kingship as an imperfect yet true representation of the covenantal king.

**5. Who are the three central figures in First and Second Samuel, and how is the narrative structured around them?** The three prominent leaders around whom the narrative of First and Second Samuel revolves are Samuel, Saul, and David. The books are broadly divided into three sections based on their prominence: 1 Samuel 1-12 focuses on Samuel, 1 Samuel 13-31 centers on Saul (with David's emergence), and 2 Samuel 1-24 highlights the reign of David. The significant amount of space dedicated to David suggests the author's intent to emphasize his reign.

**6. What are the three significant advances in the history of redemption that the lecture identifies in First and Second Samuel?** The lecture points to three key advancements in redemptive history found in First and Second Samuel: \* The fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham regarding the extent of the Promised Land during the reign of David and Solomon. \* The establishment of Jerusalem as the political and religious center of Israel by David, through making it his capital and bringing the Ark of the Covenant there. \* The establishment of kingship in Israel and the association of anointing with kingship, which lays the foundation for the messianic idea.

**7. How did the establishment of kingship in Israel come about, according to 1 Samuel 8-12, and what was the underlying issue with the people's request?** The establishment of kingship in Israel, as described in 1 Samuel 8-12, occurred in response to the elders' request for a king "like the nations round about." While God permitted this, the underlying issue was that this request stemmed from a lack of confidence in Jehovah as their divine king. It was seen as a rejection of God's kingship and a denial of the covenant that set Israel apart. The people desired a visible, human leader for security, mirroring the surrounding nations, rather than trusting in God's provision.

**8. What is the significance of the term "anointed of the Lord" in First and Second Samuel, and how does it connect to the concept of the Messiah?** In First and Second Samuel, the phrase "the anointed of the Lord" becomes synonymous with the king of Israel. The Hebrew word for "anointed" is *meshiah*, which is the root of the English word "Messiah." The Greek translation of *meshiah* in the Septuagint and New Testament is *christos*, the origin of the English word "Christ." Therefore, First and Second Samuel provide the initial biblical context for the messianic idea, as the anointing of Saul and David foreshadows the future great Messianic king.

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