

First Samuel Outline

Introduction: First Samuel tells the story of the first prophet, Samuel, and the rise of Israel's first king, King Saul. In First Samuel we also meet David, who succeeds Saul to become Israel's greatest king. As part of the Deuteronomistic history, First Samuel carries on the conversation in Joshua and Judges regarding how best to rule Israel. While Judges makes the case for kingship, showing the people growing more and more fragmented, in First Samuel, we hear the opposite case being made, with Samuel making dark predictions about how kings can abuse their power.

Section One: Samuel

- Chapter 1: Samuel's birth; Hannah and the Nazirite vow (see John the Baptist)
- Chapter 2: Hannah's song (compare with Mary's Magnificat in Luke 1); Eli's sons
- Chapter 3: The call of Samuel
- Chapter 4: Philistines capture the ark; the death of Eli and sons
- Chapter 5: The ark and Dagon, the ark in Ashdod
- Chapter 6: The ark's return
- Chapter 7: Samuel judges Israel and leads them to victory; the Ebenezer stone (Come Thou Font of Every Blessing)
- Chapter 8: Samuel's sons corrupt; Israel asks for a king; Samuel's warning

Section Two: Saul

- Chapter 9: Samuel finds Saul to be king
- Chapter 10: Samuel anoints Saul; Saul's prophetic frenzy, Saul acknowledged as king
- Chapter 11: Saul defends Jabesh-Gilead; unifies tribes using the severed oxen
- Chapter 12: Samuel steps down
- Chapter 13: Saul makes unlawful sacrifice when battle against Philistines goes poorly
- Chapter 14: Jonathan routs Philistines; order to fast; Jonathan and the honeycomb
- Chapter 15: Saul fails to keep herem and saves Agag and the spoils; God rejects Saul

Section Three: Saul and David

- Chapter 16: Samuel anoints David; David in Saul's court
- Chapter 17: David against Goliath
- Chapter 18: Jonathan's covenant with David; David's success in battle, Michal and the 100 Philistine foreskins
- Chapter 19: Jonathan warns David, Saul attempts to kill David again, Saul's frenzy
- Chapter 20: Jonathan's second covenant
- Chapter 21: David helped by priests of Nob, David in Gath pretending to be crazy to escape
- Chapter 22: David at cave of Adullam; people gather to him, Saul and massacre at Nob
- Chapter 23: David saves Keilah; David in wilderness
- Chapter 24: David spares Saul's life once
- Chapter 25: Samuel dies; story of Nabal and Abigail
- Chapter 26: David spares Saul a second time
- Chapter 27: Philistines hire David as a mercenary
- Chapter 28: Saul consults witches of Endor and summons Samuel
- Chapter 29: Philistines dismiss David
- Chapter 30: David avenges Ziklag
- Chapter 31: Philistines kill Jonathan and Saul commits suicide

Stories to know: The call of Samuel (Chapter 3:1-18); the anointing of David (Chapter 16:1-13); David and Goliath (Chapter 17:31-49)