

## Purpose

To record the transition between the period of judges and the kingdom of Israel, with its first King, Saul, and its greatest King, David

## Meaning of Name

Literally “asked of God” since Hannah asked for Samuel

## Penman

Possibly Samuel, but also includes the writings of prophets Nathan and Gad (*1 Chronicles 29:29*)

## Setting

The book begins in the days of the judges and describes Israel’s transition from a theocracy (led by God) to a monarchy (led by a king)

## Key People

Eli, Hannah, Samuel, Saul, Jonathan, and David

## Key Places

Ramah, Shiloh, Kiriath-jearim, Mizpah, Gilgal, Valley of Elah, the Wilderness, Gath, Ziklag, Mount Gilboa

## Key Verse

“Do as they say, for it is Me they are rejecting, not you. They don’t want Me to be their king any longer...”

*1 Samuel 8:7, 9*

## An Overview (31 Chapters)

- Eli and Samuel (*1:1-7:17*)
- Samuel and Saul (*8:1-15:35*)
- Saul and David (*16:1-31:13*)

## Major Themes

- *Kings:* Establishing a monarchy did not solve Israel’s problems. What God desires is the genuine devotion of each person’s mind and heart to Him. No government or set of laws can substitute for the rule of God in one’s heart and life.
- *God’s Control:* God is always at work in this world, even when we can’t see what He is doing. No matter what kinds of pressures we must endure or how many changes we must face, God is ultimately in control of our situation. Being confident of God’s sovereignty, we can face the difficult situations in our lives with boldness.
- *Obedience:* For God, “obedience is far better than sacrifice” (*15:22*). God wanted His people to obey, serve, and follow Him with a whole heart rather than to maintain a superficial commitment based on tradition or ceremonial systems.
- *God’s Faithfulness:* Because God is faithful, He can be counted on to be merciful towards us. Yet God is also just, and He will not tolerate rebellion against Him. His faithfulness and unselfish love should inspire us to dedicate ourselves to Him completely. We must never take His mercy for granted.