

OT Term 2: Week 1

Samuel's birth and call; Saul anointed king; David at Court.

1 Samuel 1 - 20

Psalms 8, 11, 12, 19, 23, 29, 31, 59.

1-3 – ELI AND SAMUEL

1 Samuel 1

1-3 Elkanah, an Ephraimite, with his two wives, goes to Shiloh for his yearly worship and sacrifices.

4-8 He favours Hannah, who is barren and provoked by Peninnah.

9-11 Greatly distressed, Hannah prays for a son.

12-18 Eli, the priest, initially misunderstands her; then blesses her.

19-20 Hannah has Samuel [Heb. asked of God] at Ramah.

21-28 When he is weaned, she dedicates him to the Lord at Shiloh as she had vowed.

1. Place of abode Ramathaim-zophim // Ramah [verse 19]

2. The tension between the two women in respect of children

3. The making of a vow to give the child to the Lord as Nazarite

4. Elkanah is in agreement with her dedication of Samuel [v 22-23] In accord with the regulations of Numbers 30.1ff

1 Samuel 2

1-10 Hannah's prophetic song of thanks.

1. Hannah's song is against the pride of people, which is a rebellion against God and He can put down that pride a save the humble. It celebrates the dealing by the Lord with chronic childlessness [Ge 18.14, Luke 1.36f Romans 4.18-21 He 11.11]

2. The positioning of this hymn/psalm here makes clear in the light of Samuel's career that his birth is a supernatural work of God.

3. The likeness to the Magnificat of Mary as place by Luke is suggestive.

11 Elkanah & Hannah return to Ramah; Samuel stays with Eli.

12-17 The sins of Eli's sons.

18-21 Hannah has more children, by God's blessing.

22-26 Eli reprimands his sons; Samuel grows.

27-36 Prophecy of downfall of Eli's house and his sons'death.

1. Here we see the rise of Samuel is set alongside the fall and supercession of the house of Eli'

2. There are parallels here with the house of Saul and David [2 S 3.1;]

3. The way the prophet expresses himself takes the issue back to the establishment of the priesthood at the time of the Exodus. This wonderful responsibility which was given to the house of Eli is not taken away, but that the people would die early is stated.

4. The issue for Eli is that he has preferred his sons to the Lord.

5. The raising up of Samuel as a priest of God is seen to be a matter of the Lord's choice.

1 Samuel 3

1-9 Samuel hears the Lord calling him three times.

1. The tragedy of the contrast between the old man, whose house is coming to an end, and the young growing boy is maintained as the Lord begins to deal with the young man directly.

2. The content of the message to Samuel is really for Eli, as a confirmation of the prophetic word delivered before hand.

10-14 He answers; the Lord tells of the judgment on Eli's house.

15-18 After persuasion, Samuel tells Eli the vision.

19-21 Samuel grows; recognized as a prophet in Israel.

The confirmation of Samuel's words – and so of himself as a prophet - who is still holding a priestly commission in the worship centre of Shiloh.

That his words do not fall to the ground is a way of saying that they come to pass.

By the end of these 3 chapters we have Samuel established as a person who is destined to hold the three offices of prophet, priest and king. For the latter office is really exercised by him prior to, and even as Saul begins his reign. Here is a figure who is greater than Joshua, the servant of Moses. The parallels of Samuel's early life and that of Jesus are clearly standing at the back of Luke's presentation of the early part of his Gospel.

4-6 THE HISTORY OF THE ARK

1 Samuel 4

1-5 After the Israelites are defeated by the Philistines at Ebenezer, they bring the Ark from Shiloh to the camp.

1. We have already seen that the Philistines were a continuing issue for the Israelites [Ju10.7].

2. The scene of the battle is Aphek which is north of the Philistine territory bounded by the five towns Gaza, Askelon, Ashdod, and Ekron and Gath.

3. The ark is given the title "YHWH the Lord of hosts who sits between the cherubim" – He is seen as a God of war.

6-11 Terrified, the Philistines again defeat Israel and capture the Ark; the sons of Eli are killed.

12-18 On hearing the outcome, Eli drops dead. He judged Israel for 40 years.

19-22 At this, Phinehas' wife also dies while giving birth to Ichabod [Heb. there is no glory].

1. In sharp contrast to the birth of Samuel that the wife of Phinehas pays no attention to the birth of her son, - a very important matter normally – due to the "glory" of God that has gone into the hands of the enemy [Ps 78.61].

2. We learn that the ark is not a supernatural means of victory. YHWH is not bound to the ark, He shapes history independent of the symbol of his constant presence. {John 4.19-24}

1 Samuel 5

1-5 The Philistines take the Ark to the temple of Dagon [corn] in Ashdod, where Dagon is struck down and the people get hemorrhoids.

1. The ark is not God, yet it remains his property. Further, it is not to be equated with the gods of the heathen either – to be simply gathered up and stored in the house of Dagon as a trophy room for the Philistines. This is expressed in the way that Dagon's image falls over in the presence of the ark – the box that bears the witnesses of what God had done with his people in the wilderness.

6-12 They move it but wherever they take it the Ark brings affliction and hemorrhoids - in Ashdod, Gath and Ekron.

The God of Israel can give his people into the hands of His enemies and still be the Victor himself.

1 Samuel 6

1-9 After 7 months, the Philistines ask how to return the Ark

10-15 They set it on a new cart, drawn by 2 cows with an offering of golden hemorrhoids and mice and let it go to Beth-shemesh.

These golden images of the tumours and the mice that plagued them have the purpose of being an offering by way of looking to ameliorate the hand of God which was heavy upon the Philistines.

The use of the milk cows, who would normally return to their calves to give suck are an overwhelmingly negative test that makes clear that the plague has come from the God of Israel and that the return up the road to Bethshemesh is a clear and obvious sign.

16-18 The offerings of the five Philistines lords.

The presence of the large stone in Joshua's field at Bethshemesh is a good site for an impromptu altar – since an altar cannot be fashioned with hand cut stones.

19-20 The inhabitants of Beth-shemesh are struck down for looking in the Ark.

21 They want it taken to Kiriath-jearim.

7-15 SAMUEL AND SAUL

1 Samuel 7

1-2 The Ark is kept at the house of Abinadab at Kiriath-jearim for 20 years.

This period of time tells us that between the Philistines returning the Ark and the end of Samuels period as a Judge we have twenty years passing.

3-6 The Israelites, under Samuel's direction repent at Mizpah.

The custom of drawing water and pouring it out before the Lord as not known elsewhere. Here it is connected with fasting and confession. Lam 2.19 has the expression 'pouring out your heart like water' - the action here may be an appropriate accompaniment to the change of heart that Samuel is calling for.

7-12 Samuel prays and offers sacrifices, the Lord panics the Philistines with thunder and they are driven back.

13-14 Philistines are subdued; Israelite cities are recovered.

15-17 Samuel judges Israel, on a circuit from Bethel, Gilgal and Mizpah, with his home at Ramah.

1. This section makes a last statement of Samuel as a judge. From here on we shall see the transition to the kings of Israel.

2. Samuel is seen as a bridge person who not only manages the transition to the kingship; he brings to an end the period of the Judges.

1 Samuel 8

1-3 An old man, Samuel appoints his corrupt sons as judges.

1. Samuels sons, had been appointed by their father as assistant judges in Beersheba, the most southern of the great sanctuaries.

2. Here we see the third such example -after Gideon and Eli - of an attempt to make a transition of government to the next generation by looking to the hereditary succession of the sons of the individual. In previous cases, as here, the failure of the individuals makes the movement impossible.

4-9 The elders ask for a king.

1. The king they are asking for is to be a judge; incorruptible and reliable in a way that Samuel's sons are clearly not.

2. The pattern of the kingship involved is that of the surrounding nations. It is to the style of this kingship that Samuel's following remarks are addressed.

3. The Lord makes clear that this is a rejection of Himself as their governor.

10-18 Samuel explains to the people the cost of having a king.

However, in the closing statements Samuel makes clear that the Israelite king is different from the heathen kings in this way; that when he gets it wrong the people can call to God for mercy and help. In this way we learn that the king is a representative of God – not a total despot.

19-22 They still insist; God permits it.

1 Samuel 9

1-4 Saul, the son of Kish, a Benjaminite, searches for his father's lost donkeys.

5-14 On his servant's advice, Saul seeks Samuel for direction.

15-17 Beforehand, the Lord tells Samuel to anoint Saul as King

18-24 Samuel welcomes & dines with Saul.

25-27 Samuel privately speaks to Saul.

1 Samuel 10

1 Samuel anoints Saul as king.

2-8 He prophesies to him of 3 confirming signs as he returns.

9-13 Saul's heart is changed; he prophesies among the prophets.

14-16 He meets his uncle but does not tell him about the kingdom

17-24 At Mizpah, Saul is chosen as king by lot.
25 Samuel reads the rules of the kingdom.
26-27 Saul returns to Gibeah; people's attitudes to him differ.

1 Samuel 11

1-2 Nahash, the Ammonite, offers the elders of Jabesh-gilead appalling conditions for peace.
3-4 They appeal to the rest of Israel for help.
5-11 Hearing it, Saul rallies the people to defeat the Ammonites and deliver Jabesh-gilead.
12-15 Saul is confirmed as king at Gilgal.

1 Samuel 12

1-5 Samuel addresses Israel on his own integrity;
6-11 he outlines God's past deliverance of them from oppressors
12-18 & chides them for now wanting a king, warns them to be obedient and as a sign, asks God to send a thunderstorm.
19-25 He encourages them to serve the Lord who is faithful & warns them against wickedness.

1 Samuel 13

1-2 Saul, 40 years old, chooses his troops.(his total reign was 32 years)
3-4 Saul summons the Israelites to Gilgal against the Philistines whom Jonathan had attacked.
5-7 A great army of Philistines assemble at Michmash; Israel is afraid.
8-10 When Samuel is delayed, Saul offers the sacrifice.
11-15 Samuel reproves him; Saul's kingly line will not continue.
16-23 The Philistine tactics in their 3 pronged raids and in leaving the Israelites with no iron weapons.

1 Samuel 14

1-14 Unbeknown to Saul and his army, Jonathan and his armour bearer leave and miraculously kill 20 Philistines, bringing fear.
15-23 Saul and his army, plus those hiding, seeing the enemies' confusion, attack and defeat them.
24-26 Saul puts the men under oath not to eat till evening.
27-30 Jonathan unwittingly breaks the curse.
31-35 At the end of the day, the weary fighters eat animals with blood; Saul restrains them and builds an altar.
36-44 Jonathan, found by lot to have eaten, is to die.
45-46 The people intercede for his rescue before Saul.
47-48 Saul also fought Moab, Ammon, Edom & the Amalekites.
49-52 Saul's family.

1 Samuel 15

1-6 Samuel sends Saul to destroy the Amalekites.
7-9 Saul does but spares king Agag and the best of the spoil.

10-11 The Lord is angry.
 12-23 Samuel confronts Saul with his disobedience and God's rejection of him.
 24-31 Saul asks pardon but is rejected as king.
 32-33 Samuel executes Agag.
 34-35 Samuel and Saul part forever; Samuel grieves over Saul.

1 Samuel 16

1-5 The Lord sends Samuel to Bethlehem to anoint a new king of the house of Jesse.
 6-13 Out of his brothers, David is anointed; the Spirit of the Lord comes on him.
 14 The Spirit of the Lord leaves Saul; an evil spirit terrorises him
 15-23 David is appointed Saul's musician to quiet him and to be his armour bearer.

PSALMS OF PRAISE WRITTEN BY DAVID

Psalm 8. singing of the Lord's majesty and man's dignity.

Spoken directly to the Lord ₁↑⁹

1-2 The psalm opens with a display of God's splendour above the heavens. The point of view is that of a man on the earth looking up.

Extols the Name of the Lord in all the earth and shows that He is using the words of weak, dependant and defenceless babes to establish His strength so that His enemies will cease.

The expression "established strength" might mean to have founded a stronghold. The LXX gives a free version, "Thou hast perfected praise" and it is in this form which the words are quoted by Christ in Matthew 21.16 The general sense is plain, God has chosen that even the feeblest representatives of humanity should be his champions to confound his adversaries. The mystery of man, made in the image of God, is greater than the mystery of the heavens, with all their immensity and their majesty. See 1 Cor. 1.27

3-4 The consideration of the majestic, heavenly works of God when compared to humans makes for a seeming incongruity. Why would God care for little ones who seem so insignificant?

5-8 Yet God does honour men and women. He has made them a little lower than the angels and He crowns them with such majesty and glory. It is given to men and women to rule over the creation of God and all things are placed in subjection to man. This includes all domestic and wild animals and the sea creatures.

9 This arrangement extols the Name of the Lord in all the earth.

1. The psalm simply states the wonderful fact of the rule of humans – for all their weakness and dependency upon God as Creator – over the whole earth that God has made.

2. There is an amazing use of Psalm 8.4-6 in the New Testament. The letter to the Hebrews makes clear for us that God has spoken to us in the last days - in which we live - through a Son. This Son who has made purification for sins and now has ascended and sat down at the right hand of God. He has received a name which is far above the angels of God, who are messengers of God sent out for the benefit of those humans who will know salvation.

3. Picking up the arrangement of God-angels-humans in Psalm 8.4-6 as declaring a hierarchy of order, Hebrews 2 goes on to apply this to the fact that God has now given over the rule of the age to come, not to angels, but to men and women.

4. In the Ascended reign of Jesus we see Him as truly man, to whom all things have been given over to rule. In being given this rule He has taken men and women into God's full intention for them. They are to reign alongside in relation to this heavenly Son of man. The reign and sovereignty comes to men and women through the Messiah, who is truly God and man. It is "in Christ Jesus" that the state of affairs that David extols as an amazing thing comes to its fruition.

5. This state of affairs has come in the ascended Jesus, but is still yet to be seen upon the earth [Hebrews 2.8]. For we live in a time when the humiliation of the Son of God [Hebrews 2.9-18] has taken place for us and for our salvation.

6. And the help which the Saviour can bring us, in this present time, derives from the fact that while we and He are from the same Father. [He is not our Brother because He took flesh, He took flesh because He was already our Brother.]

7. He has taken flesh and come to a place where He has been tempted and so is able to provide help for us who are so tempted in this present age.

Psalm 19 praises about the glorious works and words of God.

1 ↑⁵ 6 → 9 ↑¹⁰ → 12 ↑¹⁴ → 19 ↑²⁰

The Psalm consists of two parts:

a. verses 1-6 which celebrates the revelation of the power and the majesty of God - testified by the heavens

b. verses 7-11 celebrates the moral beauty and the beneficent power of God's law. In respect of man who is the recipient and the practiser of this law.

c. verses 12-14 the Psalmist, viewing his own life in the light of this law, concludes with a prayer for pardon, preservation and acceptance.

1. One cannot miss the themes of the work of God and the word of God. Their intermingling is vital here. Similar to how it is in Genesis. We may like to think of it as general and special revelation - in the way they are understood in theology.

2. The theme of the visible glory of God [the Shekinah] which was first seen in the Ex. 16.7, 10; 23.22 Rom. 9.4.

3. The shift in the first part where God is called "El" - the God of Power, the Creator and the second where He is called Jahweh - the covenant God of Israel, the redeemer and the God of grace.

4. The view of the Law is that it is a warning device v.11; and that there is a great reward in doing the law. This doesn't mean that there are extra rewards other than that which the Law itself brings. It is the rewarder of those who do it of itself.

Psalm 23 acknowledges the Lord as his shepherd who gives goodness and loving kindness.

1 → 3 ↑⁶

A song of David who, as a shepherd boy looked after the flocks of his father. He would have known these things that shepherds are called upon to do. David, seeing himself as a sheep of the Lord's flock, understands that the shepherd is looking after him in a way that makes for him a constant provision, good and restful pasture, a restoration of his soul, attended by a guide who takes him in right paths, who comforts him with his rod and staff – releasing him from dangerous places, who feeds him in a wilderness, authorizes him through anointing his head. He is aware of the goodness and lovingkindness of the Lord.

1. We cannot miss the elements of David's life as an anointed [authorized] person who is the king in waiting. Whilst this is going on he is hunted by Saul, lives out in the places where a table is not readily available but God has provided for him.

Psalm 29 ascribes glory and strength to the Lord and His voice.

1→11

The Voice of the Lord in the Storm

1-2 Speak of a an exhortation to the sons of the mighty [angelic ones?] who are to gather and worship God in holy array.

3-9 Pictures the created, natural world and all its active phenomena, as the expression of God in His creation by movement and demonstrations of power. It is not that God is thought of here as a nature god – such as the Scandinavian Thor – the god of thunder. We are a long way from that.

This celebrates the Creator in the midst and expressing his creative power in creation. The raw power of the cosmos is expressing personal power of the living God.

10-11 The Lord's reign, or kingship, is seen in that He has marvelous control over the floods. So we should not doubt that He can bless and care for His people.

1 Samuel 17

1-11 Goliath, the giant Philistine, challenges Israel in the valley of Elah.

12-21 David is sent by Jesse to give provisions to his brothers at the battlefield.

22-25 He hears Goliath's taunt; the Israelites are afraid.

26-37 David volunteers to go against Goliath, confident the Lord will deliver him.

38-50 David kills him with a slingstone in the Lord's name.

51-54 The Philistines flee, pursued by the Israelites.

55-58 David is brought before Saul.

1 Samuel 18

1-5 Jonathan loves David

6-16 Saul increasingly dreads David the more he prospers.

17-25 Saul, hoping to have the Philistines kill him, offers his daughters in marriage for a dowry of dead Philistines.

26-30 David agrees to the conditions, fulfills them and marries Michal.

Psalm 11 1→7

In the court of Saul when his friends warn him to flee, speaking of the Lord as a refuge for the upright.

1-3 Perhaps David and his men were discussing how good the mountain strongholds were to them in their flight from Saul. He makes clear that the mountains are not like it is for a bird, his soul finds its refuge in the Lord. However, the situation is bad, because the very foundations are threatened when the righteous in the land are being shot at, out of the darkness and don't know when the next arrow is coming their way.

4-7 David sees that God is in his temple, and his eyes look up and see what is

happening. He is testing the righteous and the wicked. David has confidence that God will judge for the righteous and that the wicked will suffer the repercussions of their own life style. David has such confidence in the fact that the Lord is righteous and that the upright will be before Him.

1 Samuel 19

1-7 Saul instructs Jonathan & his servants to kill David; Jonathan persuades his father to be reconciled.

8-11 David again defeats the Philistines; aroused, Saul throws his spear at David.

12-17 Michal saves David.

Psalm 59 David prays for deliverance to God, his stronghold, when Saul sent men to watch his house to kill him and is speaking things about David which are an attack on his life.

1^{↑17}

1-8 Pictures a physical attack set as an ambush for David's life. But as the picture develops we see that the attack is likened to a howling dog around a town, and that the sword is in their lips. This describes the assailing of David through the words of people who speak of him what they want with no thought that anyone hears so as to hold them to account.

9-15 Calls on God as the ruler in Jacob – amongst his own people, to destroy them. He will call them to account and render to them what they deserve.

16-17 Meanwhile David will sing of God's strength and enjoy Him as a stronghold into which he can retire as the words about him fly all around.

1 Samuel 19:18-24 David escaped to Samuel at Ramah; those sent by Saul and Saul himself, prophesy.

Psalm 12

A prayer for help against the treacherous.

1^{↑2} 3→6 7^{↑8}

1-5 Once again the setting of these psalms is in the context of David fleeing from oppression and pursuit. He finds that there are no good faithful men left and feels that the oppression is verbal – things are being said about him which are not true. He calls on God for help. Similar to Psalm 59 above, we see that the idea that people can say what they like and there is no one who sees this is how David sees their sin.

6-8 By contrast the words of the Lord are pure words. He speaks what is true and right and so may be relied upon to preserve David in the midst of his troubles.

1 Samuel 20

1-10 David consults Jonathan about his father's anger and his safety.

11-17 Jonathan covenants with David

18-23 They plan what to do.

24-34 Saul is angry with Jonathan over David.

35-42 Jonathan signals David of his danger; they affectionately part.

Psalm 31

Calls on the Lord, his strength in time of distress, to deliver him from his enemies and praises Him for His good.

¹↑²² 23→24

The Psalm shows a man who has strong faith in God's deliverance [1-8] whilst, at the same time, acknowledging great weakness. For a righteous man there is no confidence apart from walking in weakness [9-13].

His confidence is drawn from a consideration of God's character.

An important sequence is seen in verses 1-5 which are instructive for the death of Jesus.

Verse 1b and c speak of vindication and deliverance

Verse 2 speaks of rescue

Verse 3 asserts the safety that is in God who leads and guides

Verse 4 deliverance from plans laid against him

Verse 5 commits his spirit into God's hands, because he has been ransomed.

The idea that he is dying is conveyed by the committing of his spirit into God's hands – for death is the place of separation of spirit and body [Luke 8.55]. [This is why people who accept the counterfeit of astral travel actually are committing themselves to a 'death experience' ie. the separation of the body and the spirit.]

1.The use of Psalm 31.5 in the NT is found in the person of Jesus and also of Stephen. In both cases it has to do with men who are dying and commit their spirit to the Lord.

2.Stephen has people killing him and dies at the hands of others and knowingly commits his spirit to the Lord.

3.Christ is in the process of dying on the cross and by the committal of his spirit actually dies by the Word of God. This initiates his expiry. The commitment of his spirit to His Father actually marks the end of his dying and brings on death. This is what the Roman centurion saw and lead him to the conclusion that Jesus was the Son of God. Jesus now looks to a ransom after death which will be effected in His resurrection.

4.The cross, from man's side, was an infliction of dying. It was a slow process and lead to a prolonged experience of dying. Whereas the cross from God's side was a place of dying which could be thwarted as a place of death by Jesus entering a voluntary death by an act of His own will. The cross did not inflict death on Him, He died at His own will – a matter which was already settled before He got to the cross.