

1 SAMUEL AND 2 SAMUEL

AUTHOR:

We don't know who wrote down the contents of these books. They were originally one big book which tells of events too spread apart for one person to have lived through all of them. The written events were put together, as part of the Deuteronomic History, by the 6th century B.C.

DATE:

1 and 2 Samuel are named after Samuel, the judge and Prophet, God used to establish the monarchy (Israel having a king). The events of Samuel occur during the monarchy around the 10th and 11th century B.C.

AUDIENCE:

The original audience was the generations of Israelites after the time of the judges, who read this book as a reminder of their ancestors' rebellion against God and of their own need of divine deliverance.

CONTENTS:

The books of Samuel tell of Israel's demand for a king to rule over them in a Monarchy. Israel was envious of the wealth, security, and power of Egypt and Assyria, who had kings, and wanted one for themselves instead of only having God as their king. Saul, David, and Solomon were the only kings of the monarchy. After Solomon, Israel split up into the Northern Kingdom (Israel) and the Southern Kingdom (Judah).

CULTURAL FACTS:

During this period (11th century B.C.) no superpower overshadowed the region of Israel. This created an opportunity to look inward at their own government, instead of just trying to defend themselves and survive, and form a monarchy. The Philistines (living on the western coast of Israel), however, were a constant threat and problem for the Israelites. King Saul generally disobeyed God, while King David and King Solomon furthered the dissension between the North and the South leading to the split of the United Kingdom of Israel.

