

**LECTURE 11: 1–2 SAMUEL**  
**“The God who protects, blesses, & assesses”**  
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## I. Orienting Data

- A. Synthesis:** Building off the evident need for a king in Judges, 1–2 Samuel outlines the rise of kingship, stresses the Davidic kingdom hope, and clarifies the importance of honoring Yahweh above all else—something especially important for Israel’s king. The book traces Samuel’s growth, Saul’s appointment, failure, and rejection as king, and David’s rise and fall as king, all in order to awaken hope for the ultimate messianic king-priest.
- B. Key Characters:** Yahweh, Samuel, Saul, David
- C. Historical Coverage:** From Samuel’s birth (ca. 1100 B.C.) to the end of David’s kingship (970 B.C.)
- D. Content:** the transition from the last judge, Samuel, to the first king, Saul; the rise, reign, and demise of David
- E. Title and Composition:**
1. Traditional: “Samuel” – Attributed to the principle human agent involved in the transition from tribal rule to monarchy in Israel
  2. Better title: “David” – Samuel never shows up in 2 Samuel, and David is anticipated from the beginning of 1 Samuel and dominates the narrative from 1 Samuel 16 through 2 Samuel and into 1 Kings
  3. LXX: 1 and 2 Kingdoms
  4. 1 Sam 10:25 speaks of a book in which Samuel wrote “the rights and duties of the kingship” of Saul. We also learn that David’s lament over Saul and Jonathan’s deaths were recounted in the Book of Jasher (2 Sam 1:17). Alongside these internal references, the Chronicler notes, “Now the acts of King David, from first to last, are written in the Chronicles of Samuel the seer, and in the Chronicles of Nathan the prophet, and in the Chronicles of Gad the seer, with accounts of all his rule and his might and of the circumstances that came upon him and upon Israel and upon all the kingdoms of the countries” (1 Chr 29:29–30). Such sources likely shaped 1–2 Samuel.
- F. Connection with 1–2 Kings:**
1. The parallel poems in the introduction (1 Sam 2) and conclusion (2 Sam 22) of 1–2 Samuel suggest that the 1–2 was a completed book before 1–2 Kings was added. It was likely updated into its final form after being linked with 1–2 Kings.
  2. LXX treats 1–2 Samuel and 1–2 Kings as one long “Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah” = 1, 2, 3, 4 Kingdoms. Support for this view is two-fold:
    - a. One long story from the monarchies beginning to end with artificial divisions at each seam:
      - i. Natural sequel to Saul’s death is David’s lament, which appears in 2 Samuel.
      - ii. 2 Samuel is devoted entirely to David, but his death and transfer of power to Solomon are delayed to 1 Kings.

- iii. 1–2 Kings divides in the middle of the Elijah narratives.
- b. Comparable word counts throughout:
  - i. 1 Samuel (19,007 wds) from birth of Samuel to death of Saul
  - ii. 2 Samuel (15,801 wds) from death of Saul to end of David’s reign
  - iii. 1 Kings (18,635 wds) from rise of Solomon to death of Ahab
  - iv. 2 Kings (17,348 wds) from Ahaziah to fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC

### G. Theological Emphases:

1. God’s ideal picture of kingship for Israel—an image of covenant loyalty
2. God’s presence and a central sanctuary—the ark of the covenant and the desire to build a “house/temple” for God
3. The choice of Jerusalem as the “City of David”
4. The Davidic covenant with its messianic overtones

### H. Structure of 1–2 Samuel

1. Introduction: Samuel’s Growth and the Hope for a King-Priest (1 Sam 1–7)
  - a. The birth, call, and early career of Samuel (1:1–4:1a)
    - Anticipation of the messianic king (2:10) and priest (2:35–36)
    - Samuel the prophet (3:1; 3:19–4:1a)
  - b. The departure of God’s glory presence from Israel (4:1b–7:1)
  - c. Covenant renewal and victory over God’s enemies (7:2–14)
2. Saul’s Rise and Rejection and the Hope for a King-Priest (1 Sam 8–14)
  - a. Yahweh’s affirmations of and warnings about the monarchy (8:1–12:25)
  - b. The beginning of Saul’s reign and rejection (13:1–14:52)
3. Saul’s Demise, David’s Rise, and the Hope for a King-Priest (1 Sam 15–2 Sam 8)
  - a. Saul’s ruin declared (15:1–35)
  - b. David’s anointing as king (16:1–13)
  - c. David’s elevation in Israel and Saul’s demise (16:14–30:31)
  - d. Death of Saul and Jonathan (31:1–13)
  - e. The glory of David’s reign (2 Sam 1:1–8:18)
    - Davidic Covenant (ch. 7)
4. David’s Fall and the Hope for a King-Priest (2 Sam 9–21)
5. Conclusion: David’s Life and Hope Point to the Coming Messianic King-Priest (2 Sam 22–24)
  - a. David as *priest*, making atonement that ends a famine (21:1–14)
  - b. David as *king*, defeating the Philistines (21:15–22)
  - c. A messianic psalm about the coming *king-priest* (ch. 22)
  - d. David’s last words of messianic hope about a coming *king-priest* (23:1–7)
  - e. David as *king*, overseeing his mighty men (23:8–39)
  - f. David as *priest*, making atonement that ends a plague (ch. 24)

## II. Key Introductory Issues for 1–2 Samuel

### A. Some Anticipations of a Coming King-Priest

- Gen 1:28; 2:15. And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion.... The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it [i.e., the land].
- Gen 3:15. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

- Gen 17:6, 16. I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you.... I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.
- Gen 22:17–18. I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.
- Gen 49:8–10. Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons shall bow down before you. Judah is a lion's cub; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He stooped down; he crouched as a lion and as a lioness; who dares rouse him? The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.
- Num 24:5–9. How lovely are your tents, O Jacob, your encampments, O Israel! Like palm groves that stretch afar, like gardens beside a river, like aloes that the LORD has planted, like cedar trees beside the waters. Water shall flow from his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters; his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted. God brings him out of Egypt and is for him like the horns of the wild ox; he shall eat up the nations, his adversaries, and shall break their bones in pieces and pierce them through with his arrows. He crouched, he lay down like a lion and like a lioness; who will rouse him up? Blessed are those who bless you, and cursed are those who curse you.”
- Num 24:17–19. I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near: a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the forehead of Moab and break down all the sons of Sheth. Edom shall be dispossessed; Seir also, his enemies, shall be dispossessed. Israel is doing valiantly. And one from Jacob shall exercise dominion and destroy the survivors of cities!
- Deut 17:14–20. When you come to the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you possess it and dwell in it and then say, “I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me,” you may indeed set a king over you whom the LORD your God will choose. One from among your brothers you shall set as king over you. You may not put a foreigner over you, who is not your brother. Only he must not acquire many horses for himself or cause the people to return to Egypt in order to acquire many horses, since the LORD has said to you, “You shall never return that way again.” And he shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away, nor shall he acquire for himself excessive silver and gold. And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests. And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them, that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel.
- Judg 21:25. In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

## B. Important Transitions:

1. *Historical*: Periodic, partial rule of judges to an institutionalized, hereditary monarchy
2. *Theological*: From a monarch who looks like the typical Near Eastern king (cf. 1 Sam 8:10–18) to one who is loyal to Yahweh
3. *Geographical*: The “place of Yahweh’s name” (Deut 12:11) shifts from a roaming central sanctuary to an established central sanctuary in Jerusalem.
  - Recall Exod 33:15–16 and the need for God’s presence in Israel’s midst.
  - Destruction of the house of Eli and Shilo (1 Sam 2:29).
  - God’s glory departing from Israel with the capture of the ark of the covenant (4:22).
  - The ark returns to Israel and rests in Kiriath-jearim for years (7:1–2).
  - David brings the ark to Jerusalem (2 Sam 6), where he desires to build a temple for God’s presence but is forbidden (7:2–6).

- David builds an altar on the threshing floor of Araunah (24:18-25), which the intent reader would know is the place where temple would eventually stand.

### C. Main Themes and Verses:

1. Yahweh exalts the humble but despises the self-sufficient.
  - 1 Sam 2:9. He will guard the feet of his faithful ones, but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness, for not by might shall a man prevail.
  - 1 Sam 2:30. Those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed.
  - 2 Sam 22:26. With the faithful you show yourself faithful; with the blameless man you show yourself blameless; with the purified you deal purely, and with the crooked you make yourself seem tortuous.
2. Yahweh brings salvation to and through his anointed king-priest.
  - 1 Sam 2:1, 10. My heart exults in the LORD, my horn is exalted in the LORD. My mouth derides my enemies, because I rejoice in your salvation.... The adversaries of Yahweh shall be broken to pieces; against them he will thunder in heaven. the LORD will judge the ends of the earth; he will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed.
  - 1 Sam 2:35. And I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who shall do according to what is in my heart and in my mind. And I will build him a sure house, and it shall go in and out before my anointed forever.
  - 2 Sam 7:16, 19. *Yahweh*: And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.... <sup>19</sup> *David*: You have spoken also of your servant's house for a great while to come, and this is instruction for mankind, O Lord GOD!
  - 2 Sam 22:2–3. Yahweh is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge, my savior; you save me from violence.... Great salvation he brings to his king, and shows steadfast love to his anointed, to David and his offspring forever.

## III. Samuel's Growth and the Hope for a King-Priest (1 Sam 1–7)

### A. The Call to Honor Yahweh and the Promise of a King-Priest (1 Sam 1:1–4:1a)

1. Holy Yahweh honors those who honor him and promises a coming king (1 Sam 1:1–2:11)
  - a. Days past: Prelude to holy Yahweh's help of Hannah (1:1–3)
    - i. The makeup of the dysfunctional family (1:1–2)
    - ii. The annual (dysfunctional) worship experience in Shiloh (1:3)
  - b. One day in Shiloh: The setting for holy Yahweh's help of Hannah (1:4–19)
    - i. The crisis context for Hannah's honoring Yahweh (1:4–10a)
    - ii. The expression of Hannah's Yahweh-honoring plea and vow: A cry for help (1:10b–11)
    - iii. The God of Israel's promise to help Hannah (1:12–18)
    - iv. Narrative shifts expressing hope (1:19)
  - c. A new day in Shiloh: The nature of holy Yahweh's help of Hannah (1:20–2:11)
    - i. Preparations for the fulfillment of Hannah's Yahweh-honoring vow (1:20–24)
    - ii. Praise for holy Yahweh's help: The fulfillment of Hannah's Yahweh-honoring vow (1:25–2:11)
    - iii. *Excursus*: Hannah's Song—Encountering Yahweh's holiness should result in honor and humility, praise and not pride (2:3–10).
      - (1) Hannah's call to praise in light of Yahweh (2:1)

- (2) The ultimate ground for Hannah’s praise and charge against pride: Yahweh’s holiness (2:2)
  - (3) Hannah’s charge against pride in view of Yahweh (2:3–10)
    - (a) The charge against pride (2:3a–c)
    - (b) The reason for the necessity of humility: Yahweh’s knowledge and evaluation of all things (2:3d–e)
    - (c) Clarification on Yahweh’s knowledge and oversight of all things (2:4–10)
      - (i) General reversals in all of life (2:4–8)
      - (ii) Specific promises for all of life (2:9–10): Yahweh’s guardianship of the faith and destruction of the wicked, ultimately through the agency of his anointed king. This is the first time in all of Scripture that the hoped-for king is tagged *the Messiah*.
2. Holy Yahweh will destroy those who dishonor him but still promises a coming priest (2:12–3:21)
- a. Dark days in Shiloh: The kindling of Yahweh’s anger against priestly dishonor (2:12–3:21)
    - i. Darkness due to the dishonor of Yahweh by Eli’s sons (2:12–17)
      - (1) The priest’s dishonor described: Contempt for Yahweh’s offerings (2:12–16)
      - (2) The priest’s dishonor declared: Contempt against Yahweh—His Word and Witness—is a great sin! (2:17)
    - ii. Glimmers of light (Narrative Interlude): Update on Yahweh’s sustained honoring of those who honor him (2:18–21)
    - iii. Darkness due to the dishonor of Yahweh by Eli (2:22–25)
      - (1) The context of Eli’s hypocrisy (2:22)
      - (2) The nature of Eli’s hypocrisy: Confrontation without examination (2:23–25d)
      - (3) The result of Eli’s hypocrisy: Hardness and judgment (2:25e–f)
    - iv. More glimmers (Narrative Interlude) (2:26)
  - b. Deadly storms foretold in Shiloh: Yahweh’s declaration of the destruction of Eli’s house due to priestly dishonor (2:27–36)
    - i. The context for Eli’s sin: God’s gracious priestly promises (2:27–28)
    - ii. The nature of Eli’s sin (2:29)
    - iii. The sentence for Eli’s sin (2:30–36)
      - (1) The earlier declaration of favor (2:30a)
      - (2) The new declaration of judgment (2:30b–36)
        - (a) The judgment declared (2:30b)
        - (b) The reason for the judgment defined (2:30b)
        - (c) The judgment described (2:31–36)
          - (i) The long-range demise of Eli’s priestly house (2:31–34)
          - (ii) God’s promise to build a new priestly (-royal) house (2:35–36): A faithful priest and a sure (i.e., faithful)

house that will serve the anointed king-priest (i.e., David) forever.

3. The exaltation of God’s Word through Samuel (1 Sam 3)
  - a. The absence of prophetic revelation and the blindness of Israel’s leaders (3:1–3)
  - b. The reasserted prediction of the downfall of Eli’s house (3:11–14)
  - c. The establishment of Samuel as prophet of Yahweh (3:19–4:1a)

#### **Excursus: The Faithful Priest and Sure House in 1 Sam 2:35–36**

- 1. Faithful priest:** Of David’s faithfulness (1 Sam 22:14; cf. 1 Sam 13:14; 16:7); of David’s priestly-character:
  - 1 Sam 21—David’s eating the priestly holy bread
  - 2 Sam 5—David’s anointing as king and reign at Hebron, one of the Levitical cities (see Josh 21:11–13)
  - 2 Sam 6—David’s commissioning the ark to be brought to Jerusalem: he brings the ark (2 Sam 6:2, 10), he wears a linen ephod (2 Sam 6:14; cf. 1 Sam 2:28), he offers sacrifices and blesses the people (2 Sam 6:13, 17–19)
  - 2 Sam 24—David builds an altar and offers sacrifices
- 2. Sure house:**
  - Prophetic prediction in the mouth of Abigail regarding David (1 Sam 25:28).
  - Yahweh’s dynastic promise to David declared and recognized (2 Sam 7:16, 21).
  - Yahweh’s promise to Solomon in accordance with what he accomplished for David (1 Kgs 11:38).
- 3. Go in and out before the anointed:**
  - While the ESV has the “faithful priest” going in and out before the anointed (thus suggesting the priest and king are two different individuals), it seems more likely that the 3ms verb after “sure house” finds its subject in the house itself, which means it is the “house” (i.e., David’s kingdom) that shall go in and out before the anointed. Therefore, the “faithful priest” and “anointed” king may indeed be the same individual, typologically captured in the character of David and pointing ultimately to Jesus as the great king-priest. Support for the “house” being what goes in and out before the anointed is seen in v. 30 where Eli’s “house and the house of your father should go in and out before me forever,” with language directly aligned with the wording of v. 35.
- 4. Further support for seeing the anointed one as a single priest-king:**
  - We read in the words spoken over Joshua the high priest, who with Zerubbabel the governor and Davidic descendent provide a portrait of messianic hope to the post-exilic community (Zech 6:12–13): “Thus says Yahweh of hosts, ‘Behold, the man whose name is the Branch: for he shall branch out from his place, and he shall build the temple of Yahweh. <sup>13</sup> It is he who shall build the temple of Yahweh and shall bear royal honor, and shall sit and rule on his throne. And there shall be a priest on his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.’” Here the priest is the one who wears the throne and bears royal honor.
  - Ps 110 further blends the imagery of a ruling king-priest from the line of Melchizedek who can be called David’s “Lord” and who will reign with Yahweh as his agent until

his crushes all the enemies of God (cf. Matt 22:44//Mark 12:36//Luke 20:42–43; Acts 2:34–35; Heb 1:13).

**THINK!**

In 1 Samuel 2:25 we read of Eli's sons, "But they would not listen to the voice of their father, for it was *the will* [from Hebrew: *hps*//Greek: *boulomai*] of Yahweh to put them to death" (cf. Deut 28:63). In contrast, we read in Ezekiel 33:11, "As I live, declares the Lord Yahweh, I have *no pleasure* [from *hps*//*boulomai*] in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (cf. 18:23). Similarly, 2 Peter 3:9 declares, "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, *not wishing* [from *boulomai*] that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance." In what way can God will or find pleasure in the death of the wicked, while also not will or find pleasure in the same deaths?

**B. The Need to Honor Yahweh: Lessons on Divine Glory (1 Sam 4:1b–7:17)**

1. *Question:* Why would God choose to kill Eli's sons rather than allow them to repent (2:25)? *Base Answer:* It must be for his own glory. This is the answer given in chs. 3–7.
2. Lesson 1 for Israel (4:1–9, 18–22): Israel has taken God's glory too lightly; God is to be honored at all times, not used occasionally as if he is our pawn!
  - a. *The problem:* The people are "heavy," glorifying themselves (4:18 with 2:29 = self-exaltation); God is not heavy/glorified.
  - b. *The result:* With the capture of the ark, God's throne, some recognize their state: "No glory!" (4:21; Ps. 78:56–64; cf. Exod. 33:3; Ezek. 8:4; 9:3; 10:18–19; 11:23; Lam. 2:7; Ps. 51:11).
3. Lesson 2 for Philistia (5:1–7, 11–12; 6:5–6): God is supreme in all the world; people should not be hard ("heavy") hearted but give glory to God!
  - a. *The problem:* The Philistines thought Israel's God could be captured.
  - b. *The result:* The hand of God was "heavy" on the Philistines (5:6, 11) until they gave God "glory" (6:5).
4. Lesson 3 for Israel (6:13–16, 19–20; 7:3–4): Yahweh, the holy God, must be revered (see 2:2)!
  - a. *The problem:* Some in Israel gave no respect to God (6:19).
  - b. *The result:* They died, and others turned back to Yahweh (6:20; 7:3–4; cf. Mal. 3:2; Rev. 6:16–17; Joel 2:11–13; Ps. 24:3–6).
5. Lesson Learned (7:7–11): God gives Israel victory, because he honors those who honor him (2:30).

**C. Conclusion:** God is passionate to preserve and display his glory; we should be passionate about the same thing!

**IV. Saul's Failure and Rejection and the Hope for a King-Priest (1 Sam 8–14)**

**A. The Thread of Messianic Royal Hope from Genesis to Samuel:**

- Gen. 3:15. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.
- Gen. 15:3–6. And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir." And behold, the word of Yahweh came to him: "This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir." And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." And he believed Yahweh, and he counted it to him as righteousness.



- Gen. 17:6, 16. I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you.... I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.”
- Gen. 22:17–18. I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.
- Gen. 35:11. And God said to him, “I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come from your own body.”
- Gen. 49:10. The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.
- Num. 24:5, 7. How lovely are your tents, O Jacob, your encampments, O Israel! . . . .<sup>7</sup> Water shall flow from his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters; his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted.
- Num. 24:17–19. I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near: a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the forehead of Moab and break down all the sons of Sheth. Edom shall be dispossessed; Seir also, his enemies, shall be dispossessed. Israel is doing valiantly. And one from Jacob shall exercise dominion and destroy the survivors of cities!”
- Deut 17:14–20. When you come to the land that Yahweh your God is giving you, and you possess it and dwell in it and then say, ‘I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me,’ you may indeed set a king over you whom Yahweh your God will choose. One from among your brothers you shall set as king over you. You may not put a foreigner over you, who is not your brother. Only he must not acquire many horses for himself or cause the people to return to Egypt in order to acquire many horses, since Yahweh has said to you, ‘You shall never return that way again.’ And he shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away, nor shall he acquire for himself excessive silver and gold. And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests. And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear Yahweh his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them, that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel.
- Judg. 17:6; 21:25. In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.
- 1 Sam 2:10. The adversaries of Yahweh shall be broken to pieces; against them he will thunder in heaven. Yahweh will judge the ends of the earth; he will give strength to his king and exalt the power of his anointed.
- 1 Sam 2:35. And I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who shall do according to what is in my heart and in my mind. And I will build a sure house, and it shall go in and out before my anointed forever.
- 1 Sam 8:5, 7, 19–20. And [the elders of Israel] said to [Samuel], “Behold, you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations.... ” And Yahweh said to Samuel, “Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them.... But the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel. And they said, “No! But there shall be a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles.”

### **B. The Deuteronomic Royal-Priestly Paradigm (Deut 17:14–20):**

1. Israel’s call for a king (v. 14)
  - a. What type of king-priest will Israel want?
  - b. When will such a request come?
2. Yahweh’s qualifications for a king-priest (v. 15)
  - a. Divinely chosen (v. 15)
  - b. Israelite / no foreigner (v. 15)
3. Yahweh’s instruction for a king-priest (vv. 16–20)

- a. Prohibitions (vv. 16–17):
    - i. No *militarism* (war horses: reliance on human strength) (v. 16)
    - ii. No *marriage alliances* (women: foreign influence) (v. 17)
    - iii. No *materialism* (wealth: self-exalting gain) (v. 17)
  - b. Singular Command (vv. 18–20): Have your own copy of the *torah* and read it daily so that you may fear Yahweh; this fear will be expressed positively in a life of loyalty to God’s word and negatively in not being domineering and not turning from God’s commandments. All of these instructions are so that his dynasty may continue in Israel.
4. Summary:
- a. Israel’s king-priest is to be a man who solely trusts in Yahweh and looks to him for satisfaction (vv. 16–17).
  - b. Israel’s king-priest is to be a man of the Word (vv. 18–19), not replacing Yahweh but representing Yahweh to the people—i.e., showing them what it means to have Yahweh on the throne of your life; the king is Yahweh’s “son” (Ps. 2:7; 2 Sam 7:14) and “servant” (2 Sam 7:8, 19–21, 28–29). As the overseer of the community, he also governs proper communal worship, and from this he bears both a royal and priestly role.
  - c. Israel’s king-priest is not to be a ruler *over* the people but a ruler *of* the people, operating out of service rather than domination (Deut 17:20).
- C. Israel’s Desire for a King-Priest Other than Yahweh (1 Sam 8):**
1. Question: In view of what Deuteronomy was anticipating, why are Yahweh and Samuel disappointed with Israel’s request for a king? What type of royal figure did Israel desire?
  2. The people want “a king to judge us like all the nations” (1 Sam 8:6). While somewhat echoing Deut 17:14 (“I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me”), the addition focus of “to judge us” stands out. In the book Judges, the *six* judges were principally deliverers (Othniel, Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson). Intriguingly, one would have expected *seven* judges, so Samuel appears to be this figure, and he plays a comparable role in 1 Sam 7:3–17. Samuel also includes himself among the judges, saying, “And the LORD sent Jerubbaal and Barak and Jephthah and Samuel and delivered you” (1 Sam 12:11). It also appears that he feels “rejected” through the people’s request. God, however, sees a higher-level rejection.
  3. God’s perspective on their desire:
    - a. They have rejected him as their King
      - 1 Sam 8:7. And Yahweh said to Samuel, “Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them.
    - b. They have rejected their true Protector.
      - 1 Sam 10:19. But today you have rejected your God, who saves you from all your calamities and your distresses, and you have said to him, “Set a king over us.”
    - c. They have rejected their true Provider.
      - 1 Sam 12:17–19. “Is it not wheat harvest today? I will call upon Yahweh, that he may send thunder and rain. And you shall know and see that your wickedness is great, which you have done in the sight of Yahweh, in asking for yourselves a king.” So Samuel called upon Yahweh, and Yahweh sent thunder and rain that day, and all the people greatly feared Yahweh and Samuel. And all the people said to Samuel, “Pray

for your servants to Yahweh your God, that we may not die, for we have added to all our sins this evil, to ask for ourselves a king.”

#### D. The Prospect of Kingship in Israel

1. In the context of covenant renewal, the prophet Samuel affirms the possibility of a king for Israel:
  - 1 Sam 10:25. Then Samuel told the people the rights and duties of the kingship, and he wrote them in a book and laid it up before Yahweh.
  - 1 Sam 12:14–15, 23. If you will fear Yahweh and serve him and obey his voice and not rebel against the commandment of Yahweh, and if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow Yahweh your God, it will be well. But if you will not obey the voice of Yahweh, but rebel against the commandment of Yahweh, then the hand of Yahweh will be against you and your king.... Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against Yahweh by ceasing to pray for you, and I will instruct you in the good and the right way.
2. Central issues: What kind of king would Israel have? Would the king be *faithful* to Yahweh and display Yahweh’s character or would he become what Samuel promised (1 Sam 8:10–18) and Deuteronomy prohibited (Deut 17:16–17)?

Fig. 11.1. Saul’s Kingdom



### E. Textual Anticipations of Saul’s Demise

1. The people, not God, “chose” the first king “for themselves” (1 Sam 8:18; 12:13; cf. 8:5; 10:24), whereas God stressed the he himself had to choose Israel’s king (Deut 17:14). In contrast, his replacement is chosen by God “for” God (13:14; cf. 16:1, 3).
2. The one text where Samuel declares Yahweh “chose” Saul is highly polemical (1 Sam 10:24) and given in a context that stresses Israel’s rejection of God (10:19). God is giving Israel what they want.
3. We are told that Saul is a Benjamite from Gibeah (9:1; 10:21, 26), a clear signal of a bad heritage (Judg 20:13).
4. From his outward appearance, Saul looks like a leader—a head taller than all others (1 Sam 9:2; 10:23–24) and a Spirit-empowered leadership (11:6–11). However, from the beginning he can’t even find his father’s donkeys (9:3; 10:14–16), and he quickly shirks the opportunity to be king (10:22). In contrast, we first find David successfully shepherding his father’s sheep (16:11; cf. 2 Sam 5:2), with God stressing, “Yahweh sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but Yahweh looks on the heart” (1 Sam 16:7).
5. While Saul is initially successful militarily, he quickly proves to have a rebellious spirit that is unwilling to obey when called upon and unwilling to wait when told.
  - a. It appears that Samuel intended for Saul to overpower the garrison of Philistines at Gibeah (1 Sam 10:5) and then to wait for him to offer burnt offers and to sacrifice peace offerings to the Lord (10:8).
  - b. However, Saul did not act, and his son Jonathan ended up defeating the Philistine garrison (13:3; cf. 14:1–23), and then Saul did not wait for Samuel to offer the sacrifice (13:8–12).
  - c. Thus, God declares: 1 Sam 13:13–14. You have done foolishly. You have not kept the command of Yahweh your God, with which he commanded you. For then Yahweh would have established your kingdom over Israel forever.<sup>14</sup> But now your kingdom shall not continue. Yahweh has sought for himself a man according to his own heart, and Yahweh has commanded him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what Yahweh commanded you.
    - i. Most interpreters have assumed the prepositional phrase *klbbw* (כלבבו) “like/according to his heart”) in 1 Sam 13:14 functions adjectivally and points to the king-elect’s like-mindedness to God (i.e., David’s heart was aligned with Yahweh’s heart). At least since the late 1800s scholars have suggested that it instead points to Saul’s replacement’s divine election, telling us nothing explicit about the king-elect.
    - ii. Your professor has written about this issue in “The Heart of YHWH and His Chosen One in 1 Samuel 13:14,” *BBR* 24.4 (2014): 467–89. By assessing syntactic and semantic parallels, comparative ANE data, and the Deuteronomic context of 1–2 Samuel, the study argues that the prepositional idiom is best rendered adverbially and understood to clarify the norm or standard by which Yahweh sought a king to replace Saul—he did so according to his own will. This being established, the

paper then explores whether God’s showing discretion and seeking one man in contrast to others necessitates that there was something about the king-elect that matched the royal image he had in mind. Specifically, while *klbbw* (כלבבו “like/according to his heart”) should be read adverbially, the resulting meaning in 1 Sam 13:14 may in fact align with both the numerous texts that emphasize David’s special divine election in contrast to Saul and the many passages that stress David’s greater like-mindedness to Yahweh when compared to Saul.

**V. Excursus: Character Sketches of Samuel and Saul** (adapted from DeRouchie, “Samuel and Saul,” *Archaeological Study Bible*, 410)

The prophet Samuel and King Saul were transitional leaders in Israel’s history in the dismal period between the time of the Judges and the United Monarchy (roughly 1070–1000 B.C.). “And the word of Yahweh was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision” (1 Sam 3:1), but the miraculous conception of Samuel to the barren Hannah (ch. 1) along with his unique prophetic call (3:4–14) marked a special work of God on behalf of his people. Though not of Aaronic stock (1 Chr. 6:49–53), Samuel was in the Levitical line (6:27–28, 33–34; cf. 1 Sam 1:1) and grew up at Shiloh, Israel’s main worship center, where he was trained under the high priest Eli (1 Sam. 1:27–28; 2:11; 3:1). His life ministry was a mixture of priest and prophet (3:20–4:1a; 9:6–13; ch. 12; cf. 7:9, 17; 10:8; 11:15; 13:9–14). He was a messenger of Israel’s Great King, Yahweh, who spoke on God’s behalf and called the nation back to him (7:3; 8:10–18; 10:18–19; 12:6–25; 13:13–14; 15:1–2, 17–23). Samuel appointed earthly kings (10:1, 24; 16:12–13) and denounced them (13:13–14; 15:22–23; 28:17–19), and he enforced God’s covenant in Israel all the days of his life (7:15–17).

As for Saul, he was a tragic expression of Israel’s waywardness. Under enemy oppression, Israel began to question God’s presence and power with them (see 4:21–22) and to think that only a visible warrior-leader could bring them deliverance (8:20; 12:12). In doing so, they rejected God as their King (8:7; 12:12). Saul was head and shoulders above all his peers (9:2; 10:23–24), and he had a Spirit-empowered courage and might to match his physique (11:6–11). The people chose him as king without hesitation (8:18; 9:16; 12:13), for he was the human royal ideal. But his tribal connection with Benjamin (1 Sam 9:1 with Gen 49:9) and his home location in Gibeah (1 Sam 10:26 with Judg. 19–20) were both signals that he was far from the ideal candidate, and his own reign would prove this to be true.

God commissioned Saul to fight the Philistines (1 Sam 9:17; 10:7; 17:11) and the Amalekites (15:2–3), but he continually failed to follow all of God’s directives (e.g., 13:13; 15:17–19; 17:11; cf. Deut 17:14–20). Two confrontations with Samuel made clear Yahweh’s verdict: Saul’s kingship was rejected and he would be replaced by one hand-picked by God (13:14; 15:28; cf. 28:17). The remaining years of Saul’s reign were scarred with fear, treachery, and anger, as David, the shepherd boy turned king-elect, rose to prominence in Israel. Saul’s tragic death at the hands of the Philistines proved a just conclusion to his unfaithful existence (31:1–4).

## VI. David's Rise and Fall and the Hope for a King-Priest (1 Sam 15–2 Sam 21)

### A. The Elevation of David in Contrast to Saul

#### 1. An Overview:

- a. Saul's problem: failure to keep God as king of his life
  - 1 Sam 15:22–23. And Samuel said, "Has Yahweh as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Yahweh? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of Yahweh, he has also rejected you from being king."
- b. David's difference: heart orientation
  - 1 Sam 15:28. And Samuel said to Saul, "Yahweh has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you."
  - 1 Sam 16:1, 6–7, 12–13. Yahweh said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go. I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons."... When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely Yahweh's anointed is before him." But Yahweh said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For Yahweh sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but Yahweh looks on the heart."... And he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. And Yahweh said, "Arise, anoint him, for this is he." Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of Yahweh rushed upon David from that day forward. And Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.
- c. An example of David's God-honoring life: David's battle with Goliath
  - i. The chapters leading up to 1 Sam 17 supply a lens for helping us understanding the character of David.
    - (1) Upon God's rejection of Saul in 15:28, Samuel asserts, "The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you" (cf. 28:17–18).
    - (2) Then in chapter 16 God explicitly declares that he has rejected Saul (16:1) and sends Samuel to anoint Saul's replacement. At this, we meet some of David's seven brothers, the eldest of whom is Eliab, who, like both Saul (9:2) and later Goliath (17:4), is identified as tall (17:7), an outward feature that pointed to the "highness" of pride of their hearts (see 2:3). Like Saul (16:1), God "rejects" Eliab (16:7) and likewise declares that he has "not chosen" Abinadab, Shammah, or any other of Jesse's seven eldest sons. Instead, Yahweh calls Samuel to "anoint" David (16:12), identifying that "the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart" (16:7).
  - ii. The portrayal of David in 1 Sam 17:
    - (1) *David has royal qualities and a God-honoring heart.* In contrast to Saul, whom the narrator introduces as one unable to find asses (9:3; 10:14), we first encounter David as one shepherding sheep (16:11; 17:15), a vocation of provision and protection that the ancients related to the role of the king (2 Sam 5:2). Furthermore,

when David journeys to the war front, he is confronted by Eliab, the one whom the previous chapter declared “rejected” like Saul was rejected” (1 Sam 16:1, 7). Eliab views his younger brother as having an “evil heart” (17:28), which is quite ironic in light of the way God chose David in contrast to Eliab in light of their “hearts” (16:7).

- (2) *David has readied skill for battle, which he recognizes is grace-given.* David’s interest in fighting Goliath is peaked both because the Philistine was defying the armies of the living God (17:26) and because of the king was promising to bestow both riches and his daughter to the victor (17:25). That such motivations worked on him identifies the level of David’s manly maturity. We are *not* supposed to view him as a mere boy. Furthermore, when David engages Saul, he forthrightly draws attention to his experience and ability in battle and why he must confront the Philistine (17:34–36): “Your servant used to keep sheep for his father. And when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb from the flock,<sup>35</sup> I went after him and struck him and delivered it out of his mouth. And if he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and struck him and killed him.<sup>36</sup> Your servant has struck down both lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, for he has defied the armies of the living God.” Significantly, though, while David does not push aside his skill and readiness, he also clearly exalts God as the decisive agent in all of his victories: “*The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine*” (17:37).
  - (3) *David engages Goliath for the fame of God’s name among the nations.* The longest speech-act in the chapter occurs when David confronts Goliath, and it testifies to the God-glorifying purpose of the victory and its inclusion in the book (17:45–47): “David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.<sup>46</sup> This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head. And I will give the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth, that *all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel,*<sup>47</sup> and that all this assembly may know that the LORD saves not with sword and spear. For the battle is the LORD’s, and he will give you into our hand.”
- iii. The battle of champions and the overcoming of the Serpent:
- (1) David and Goliath’s encounter was a “battle of champions,” wherein each power supplied a representative warrior, upon whom the entire future of the people rested; as such, David, as representative of Israel and whose life and kingship would

anticipate the Christ, went head-to-head with a serpent-like figure who wanted to destroy God’s corporate son; the victory in the Elah Valley anticipate the greater victory by which Christ would defeat the grizzly powers of darkness.

- (2) The text highlights Goliath’s anti-God, serpent-like qualities:
  - (a) He has “scale” armor (1 Sam 17:5), recalling Pharaoh’s “scaly” skin (Ezek 29:3–4) and Egypt’s destruction under Pharaoh as an example of the serpent’s defeat (Isa 27:1; 50:9–10).
  - (b) His armor and weapons were “bronze” (*n<sup>e</sup>hōšt*) (4x in 1 Sam 17:5–6), which may be a wordplay on “serpent” (*nāhās*) (Gen 3:15).
  - (c) Goliath is tagged “the man of the betweens” (ESV = “a champion”), an unusual title that may allude to the four times “between” shows up in Gen 3:15.
  - (d) Goliath’s “cursing” (*qll*) of David by his gods (1 Sam 17:43) recalls God’s promise to Abraham in Gen 12:3 that “him who *dishonors* [*qll*] you I will curse.” Curse in Genesis directly relates to the death-dealing activities of the serpent in the garden and its tragic results. Thus Goliath, as one of the offspring of the serpent (cf. Gen 3:15; John 8:44), is imaging his “father,” taking on the role of the serpent as one trying to snuff out the corporate and representative son of God.
- (3) We know that “the reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil” (1 John 3:8), and it was at the cross that God through Christ “disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them” (Col 2:15). Jesus died at Golgatha, which all four Gospels tag “Place of a Skull” (Matt 27:33; Mark 15:22; Luke 23:33; John 19:17). The point seems to be significant. We have not uncovered any extra-biblical evidence that records such a location, but the fact that all four Gospel writers mention it suggests the title is significant. The only skull associated with Jerusalem in the OT was Goliath’s head, which David took there after he defeated the giant (1 Sam 17:54). Along with the fact that Goliath’s head/skull in Jerusalem, the name **Gol-gatha** includes the same consonants as **Goliath** of **Gath** (1 Sam 17:23). Whether the etymology of Golgatha should be traced backwards in this way is unknown, but the parallels are noticeable, and it may suggest that the NT authors were all reading the David’s defeat of Goliath as typological of Christ’s ultimate defeat of the serpent in the greater battle of champions. And because Christ Jesus was “obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross,” “God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name” (Phil 2:8–9). And now the redeemed rest in hope,



ensured that “the God of peace will soon Satan under your feet”  
(Rom 16:20).

2. Pro-David Perspective in 1 Samuel 15–2 Samuel 8 (adapted from M. Z. Brettler, *The Creation of History in Israel*, 102–105)
  - a. Foundational contrast texts:
    - 1 Samuel 13:13–14. And Samuel said to Saul, “You have done foolishly. You have not kept the command of Yahweh your God, with which he commanded you. For then Yahweh would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. <sup>14</sup> But now your kingdom shall not continue. Yahweh has sought out a man after his own heart, and Yahweh has commanded him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what Yahweh commanded you.”
    - 1 Sam 15:28. And Samuel said to him, “Yahweh has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you.
    - 1 Sam 16:7. But Yahweh said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For Yahweh sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but Yahweh looks on the heart.”
  - b. Boldness vs. fear of man.
    - 1 Sam 15:24. Saul said to Samuel, “I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of Yahweh and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice.
    - 1 Sam 17:11, 26. When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid. . . . <sup>26</sup> And David said to the men who stood by him, “. . . Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?”
    - 1 Sam 28:5. When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly.
  - c. Military success vs. failure.
    - 1 Sam 18:7. Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands.
    - 1 Sam 14:52. There was hard fighting against the Philistines all the days of Saul. And when Saul saw any strong man, or any valiant man, he attached him to himself.
    - 2 Sam 8:1, 14–15. After this David defeated the Philistines and subdued them, and David took Metheg-ammah out of the hand of the Philistines. . . . <sup>14</sup> Then he put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom he put garrisons, and all the Edomites became David’s servants. And Yahweh gave victory to David wherever he went. <sup>15</sup> So David reigned over all Israel. And David administered justice and equity to all his people.
  - d. Divine presence and favor vs. divine abandonment and angst.
    - 1 Sam 16:13–14. And the Spirit of Yahweh rushed upon David from that day forward. . . . <sup>14</sup> Now the Spirit of Yahweh departed from Saul, and a harmful spirit from Yahweh tormented Saul.
    - 1 Sam 18:12. Saul was afraid of David because Yahweh was with him but had departed from Saul. Cf. 1 Sam 16:3, 18; 17:37; 18:12, 14, 28.
    - 1 Sam 28:16. And Samuel said, “Why then do you ask me, since Yahweh has turned from you and become your enemy?”
  - e. Lack of royal presumption and refusal to murder vs. paranoia of kingdom loss and murder or attempted murder.
    - 1 Sam 18:10–11. The next day a harmful spirit from God rushed upon Saul, and he raved within his house while David was playing the lyre, as he did day by day. Saul had his spear in his hand. <sup>11</sup> And Saul hurled the spear, for he thought, “I will pin David to the wall.” But David evaded him twice. Cf. 1 Sam 19:1–2, 9–10, 11–24; 20:33; 22:16–19, chs. 23–26; 28:20.
    - 1 Sam 21:11–12. And servants of Achish said to him, “Is not this David the king of the land? Did they not sing to one another of him in dances, ‘Saul has struck down his

thousands, and David his ten thousands’?”<sup>12</sup> And David took these words to heart and was much afraid of Achish the king of Gath.

- 1 Sam 24:6, 17–18, 20. [David] said to his men, “Yahweh forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, Yahweh’s anointed, to put out my hand against him, seeing he is Yahweh’s anointed.” . . .<sup>17</sup> [Saul] said to David, “You are more righteous than I, for you have repaid me good, whereas I have repaid you evil.”<sup>18</sup> And you have declared this day how you have dealt well with me, in that you did not kill me when Yahweh put me into your hands. . . .<sup>20</sup> And now, behold, I know that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand.”
  - 1 Sam 26:9. But David said to Abishai, “Do not destroy him, for who can put out his hand against Yahweh’s anointed and be guiltless?” Cf. 1 Sam 26:23; 2 Sam 1:14, 16.
- f. Frequent prayers for guidance and oracles vs. no petitions or words from God.
- 1 Sam 23:2. David inquired of Yahweh. . . . And Yahweh said to David, “Attack.” Cf. 1 Sam 23:4, 11; 30:7–8; 2 Sam 2:1; 5:19, 23.
  - 1 Sam 28:6. And when Saul inquired of Yahweh, Yahweh did not answer him, either by dreams, or by Urim, or by prophets.
- g. Obedience vs. disobedience.
- 1 Sam 15:22, 24. And Samuel said, “Has Yahweh as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Yahweh? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams. . . .”<sup>24</sup> Saul said to Samuel, “I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of Yahweh and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice.”
  - 1 Sam 28:16–19. And Samuel said, “Why then do you ask me, since Yahweh has turned from you and become your enemy?<sup>17</sup> Yahweh has done to you as he spoke by me, for Yahweh has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David.”<sup>18</sup> Because you did not obey the voice of Yahweh and did not carry out his fierce wrath against Amalek, therefore Yahweh has done this thing to you this day.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, Yahweh will give Israel also with you into the hand of the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons shall be with me. Yahweh will give the army of Israel also into the hand of the Philistines.”
- h. Strength vs. weakness.
- 2 Sam 3:1. There was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David. And David grew stronger and stronger, while the house of Saul grew weaker and weaker.
- i. The accounts narrating David’s anointing (1 Sam 16) and the dynastic promise (2 Sam 7), which fall near the boundaries of the section, emphasize his legitimacy. With this, the verses that envelope the section highlight David’s uprightness and experience of God’s blessing over Saul’s.
- 1 Sam 14:52. There was hard fighting against the Philistines all the days of Saul. And when Saul saw any strong man, or any valiant man, he attached him to himself.
  - 2 Sam 8:1, 14–15. After this David defeated the Philistines and subdued them. . . . Then he put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom he put garrisons, and all the Edomites became David’s servants. And Yahweh gave victory to David wherever he went. So David reigned over all Israel. And David administered justice and equity to all his people.
3. Conclusion: In this middle section of the book (1 Sam 15–2 Sam 8), David is being portrayed as the ideal royal figure who waits for God’s timing and pursues God with his whole heart.
- B. David’s Kingship and a Pointer to One Greater than David (2 Sam 5, 9)**
1. While the life of David has emulated many traits that anticipate the coming Messiah, there is a significant characteristic that contrasts greatly.

2. When David becomes king of all twelve tribes (2 Sam 5:3), he soon seeks to shift his capital from Hebron to Jerusalem, which was controlled by the Jebusites. Resting secure in their fortress and thinking David could never take the city, this Canaanite band used to say to David, “You will not come in here, but the blind and the lame will ward you off” (5:6). Nevertheless, David took the city via the water shaft, sarcastically charging his warriors to “attack the lame and the blind who are hated by David’s soul” (5:8). We then read, “Therefore it is said, ‘The blind and the lame shall not come into the house’ (5:8). Just as the blind and lame were not allowed to draw near to God at his tabernacle (Lev 21:18), so too the blind and lame were not permitted into David’s presence.
3. This remains true until after God’s covenant with David in 2 Sam 7. Thereafter, from chs. 8–10 there are numerous pointers that anticipate the king greater than David. One relates to his treatment of Saul’s grandson Mephibosheth, son of Jonathan. We learned in 2 Sam 4:4 that Mephibosheth became lame when, upon hearing of Saul and Jonathan’s death, his nurse fled in haste and dropped him. Now, following David’s many victories and his rising desire to “show kindness for Jonathan’s sake” to any survivors of Saul’s house (9:1), he extends mercy to Mephibosheth, restores all the land of Saul to him and invites him to eat continually at his table (9:7). Saul’s servant Ziba and his sons and servants were in charge of taking care of Mephibosheth’s land (9:10), and Mephibosheth himself “lived in Jerusalem, for he was always at the king’s table” (9:13). The text ends, “Now he was lame in both his feet.”
4. Significantly, when Isaiah envisions the messianic era of salvation, he sees God moving toward the blind and lame and healing them, ultimately through his Servant.
  - Isa 29:18. In that day the deaf shall hear the words of a book, and out of their gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind shall see.
  - Isa 35:5–6. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert.
  - Isa 42:6–7, 16. I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations,<sup>7</sup> to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness....<sup>16</sup> And I will lead the blind in a way that they do not know, in paths that they have not known I will guide them. I will turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground. These are the things I do, and I do not forsake them.
5. Similarly, when other prophets envision the new covenant age of restoration, they envision God both welcoming and healing the blind and lame.
  - Jer 31:8. Behold, I will bring them from the north country and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, the pregnant woman and she who is in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here.
  - Mic 4:6–7. In that day, declares the LORD, I will assemble the lame and gather those who have been driven away and those whom I have afflicted;<sup>7</sup> and the lame I will make the remnant, and those who were cast off, a strong nation; and the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion from this time forth and forevermore.
  - Zeph 3:19. Behold, at that time I will deal with all your oppressors. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth.
6. When Jesus arrived, he both welcomed and healed the blind and lame, thus identifying himself as the saving arm of YHWH and as David’s greater son. If

someone could give sight to the blind, it was believed he must even be able to raise the dead (John 11:37).

- Matt 11:3–6. And [John’s disciples] said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?”<sup>4</sup> And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see:<sup>5</sup> the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them.<sup>6</sup> And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”
  - Matt 15:30–31. And great crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute, and many others, and they put them at his feet, and he healed them,<sup>31</sup> so that the crowd wondered, when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled healthy, the lame walking, and the blind seeing. And they glorified the God of Israel.
  - Matt 18:8. And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire.
  - Matt 21:14. And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them.
  - Luke 4:17–21. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,<sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed,<sup>19</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”<sup>20</sup> And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him.<sup>21</sup> And he began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”
  - Luke 7:21–22. In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight.<sup>22</sup> And he answered them, “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them.
  - John 9:31–33. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him.<sup>32</sup> Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind.<sup>33</sup> If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.”
  - John 11:37. But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?”
  - Cf. Mark 8:22–23; 9:45; 10:51–52; Luke 7:21–22; 14:21–22; John 5:2–9; 9:6–7.
7. While on earth, Jesus gave his apostles power and authority to heal (Luke 9:1–2), and he gave a comparable power and authority to the rest of his disciples (10:17–19). After Jesus’s ascension and pouring out of his Spirit upon his church, the apostles were used to bring heal the lame
- Luke 9:1–2. And he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases,<sup>2</sup> and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal.
  - Luke 10:17–19. The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!”<sup>18</sup> And he said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.<sup>19</sup> Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you.”
  - Acts 3:2, 7–8. And a man lame from birth was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple that is called the Beautiful Gate to ask alms of those entering the temple....<sup>7</sup> And [Peter] took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong.<sup>8</sup> And leaping up, he stood and began to walk, and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God.
  - Acts 14:8–10. Now at Lystra there was a man sitting who could not use his feet. He was crippled from birth and had never walked.<sup>9</sup> He listened to Paul speaking. And Paul, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith to be made well,<sup>10</sup> said in a loud voice, “Stand upright on your feet.” And he sprang up and began walking.

### C. God's Covenant with David (2 Sam 7; cf. Pss. 89; 132; 1 Chr 17)

#### 1. Overview:

- a. Yahweh's unwavering promises (2 Sam 7:8–16):
  - i. What has already been accomplished:
    - (1) David has become Israel's prince (2 Sam 7:8)
    - (2) God's presence has been with David (2 Sam 7:9)
    - (3) Rest from enemy oppression (2 Sam 7:9)
  - ii. What is still to be accomplished in David's lifetime:
    - (1) David's name exalted (2 Sam 7:9; Ps. 89:27)
    - (2) Israel's kingdom established in rest without hostility or oppression from without (2 Sam 7:10–11; Ps. 89:21–23)
  - iii. What will be accomplished after David's lifetime:
    - (1) David's own son will build a temple for Yahweh and will know perpetual divine favor and sonship, even in the wake of sin (2 Sam 7:14–15; Ps. 89:28, 30–33).
    - (2) David and his son's dynasty and kingdom and throne will be sure/established forever (2 Sam 7:12–13, 16; Ps. 89:4, 29, 35–37).
- b. David's response (2 Sam 7:18–29): David prays, "You have spoken also of your servant's house for a great while to come, and *this is the law for mankind*" (7:19).

#### 2. Is This a Messianic Prophecy?

- a. The anticipation of David's son sinning (2 Sam 7:13–15) strongly suggests that this prophecy is indeed pointing first to Solomon, who would build a temple for Yahweh. Solomon's own words confirm this (1 Kgs. 8:18–20): "Yahweh said to David my father, 'Whereas it was in your heart to build a house for my name, you did well that it was in your heart. <sup>19</sup>Nevertheless, you shall not build the house, but your son who shall be born to you shall build the house for my name.' <sup>20</sup>Now Yahweh has fulfilled his promise that he made. For I have risen in the place of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as Yahweh promised, and I have built the house for the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel."
- b. Nevertheless, the text is messianic in its trajectory, for an eternal throne suggests either (1) a sustained succession of Davidic kings in perpetuity or (2) a single king whose reign will last forever. Scripture teaches that God employed the second option as realized in the person of Jesus (see Heb. 1:5; cf. Matt. 1:1; Luke 1:69; Rom. 1:3; Rev. 22:16).
  - Heb. 1:1–5. Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup> but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. <sup>3</sup> He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, <sup>4</sup> having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. <sup>5</sup> For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son"?"
  - Luke 1:68–75. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people <sup>69</sup> and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in *the house of his servant David*,

<sup>70</sup> as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, <sup>71</sup> that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us; <sup>72</sup> to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, <sup>73</sup> the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us <sup>74</sup> that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, <sup>75</sup> in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

- Matt. 1:1. The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.
  - Rom. 1:1–4. Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, <sup>2</sup> which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, <sup>3</sup> concerning his Son, who was *descended from David according to the flesh* <sup>4</sup> and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,
  - Rev. 22:16. I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. *I am the root and the descendant of David*, the bright morning star.
3. Was the Davidic Covenant *Unconditional*? How did the promise of a perpetual kingdom relate to the call for loyalty?
- a. Royal grant covenant type: Promises of provision from suzerain to loyal vassal provided perpetually for the family without qualification but provided conditionally for each individual in the family given they stay loyal within the covenant.
  - b. Key texts that speak of the perpetual nature of the covenant yet the necessity for individual obedience:
    - i. The original promise.
      - 1 Sam 7:13–16. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.
    - ii. David's view of God's words.
      - 1 Kgs. 2:2–4. I am going the way of all the earth. Be strong, therefore, and show yourself a man. Keep the charge of Yahweh your god, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, his commandments, his ordinances, and his testimonies, according to what is written in the Torah of Moses, that you may succeed in all that you do and wherever you turn, so that Yahweh may carry out his promise which he spoke concerning me, saying, "If you sons are careful of their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel."
    - iii. Solomon's view of God's words.
      - 1 Kgs. 8:25. Now therefore, O Yahweh, God of Israel, keep for your servant David my father what you have promised him, saying, "You shall not lack a man to sit before me on the throne of Israel, if only your sons pay close attention to their way, to walk before me as you have walked before me."
    - iv. Yahweh's view of his own words.
      - 1 Kgs. 9:4–5. And as for you, if you will walk before me, as David your father walked, with integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you, and keeping my statutes and my rules, then I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, "You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel."
    - v. The psalmist's view of God's words.

- Ps. 132:11–12. Yahweh swore to David a sure oath from which he will not turn back: “One of the sons of your body I will set on your throne. If your sons keep my covenant and my testimonies that I shall teach them, their sons also forever shall sit on your throne.”
- c. Synthesis:
- i. Some later texts addressing the Davidic covenant stress the faithfulness of Yahweh, the covenant father (2 Sam 22:51; 1 Kgs 3:6; 8:15, 24–26; 1 Chr 17:13; 2 Chr 1:8; 6:4, 10, 14–15, 16; 7:10; Ps 89:28–37; Jer 33:19–26), whereas others stress the need for faithfulness on the part of the son (1 Kgs 2:2–4; 6:12; 8:25; 9:4–9; 2 Chr 6:42; 7:17; Ps 132:11–12).
  - ii. While the text stresses the sure nature of Yahweh’s promises, also highlighted is the fact that these promises will only be fully realized through an obedient son. In light of the waywardness of all humanity, “for there is no one who does not sin” (1 Kgs. 8:46), God himself will have to provide the obedient son in order for his covenant to be maintained.
    - Gal. 4:4–5. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup> to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.
    - Isa. 55:3–4. Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, the steadfast loyalties of David. <sup>4</sup> Behold, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples.
    - Phil. 2:5–11. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup> Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
4. What Does David Mean by Referring to the Dynastic Promise as, “This Is the Law of Humanity” (2 Sam 7:19)?
- a. Overview: The King Leads Israel in Fulfilling Her Calling
    - i. The “rule of the king” in Deut 17:18–20 stressed the central place of the law in Israel’s kingship. We are told that only by reading the *law* would the (messianic) king grow to fear and obey God and by this represent Yahweh, standing as a leader not over the people but among the people, persevering in surrender to Yahweh’s will, and enjoying lasting dominion. An implication of all this is that his internalization of the law would guide his administration and instruction in the land, making him a servant-leader.
    - ii. Because Israel’s responsibility was to be covenant keepers, so as to fulfill their global calling of serving as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exod. 19:5–6; Deut 4:5–8), the king’s obedience and teaching would play a central role in enabling the global realization of kingdom blessing. Such was already anticipated in Genesis when the general statements that through Abraham and his offspring all the world would

be blessed (Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 26:4) were focused on the single, male, royal offspring of Abraham who would be the agent of reconciling the world to God (22:17b–18; 24:60; 49:8–10; cf. 3:15).

- iii. The following quote from Peter Gentry will help place the issue within its biblical context (*Kingdom through Covenant*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 457–58):

As the divine son, the Davidic king was to effect the divine instruction or torah in the nation as a whole and was, as a result, a mediator of the Mosaic Torah. However, since the god whom the Davidic king represented was not limited to a local region or territory, but was the creator God and Sovereign of the whole world, the rule of the Davidic king would have repercussions for *all* the nations, not just for Israel. This is developed in Psalm 2 and many other psalms, but is *already* suggested in 2 Samuel 7. Thus, faithfulness on the part of the Davidic Son would effect the divine rule in the entire world, much as God intended for humanity in the covenant of creation as indicated by the divine image in Genesis 1:26ff. This, I submit, is the logic behind David’s response in verse 19, and this is why he claims that a covenant that makes the Davidic king son of God is the instrument of bringing Yahweh’s Torah to all the nations. . . . 2 Samuel 7:19 is the key to the universalization of the messianic vision in the psalms and prophets.

What is not answered here is specifically *how* “the Davidic Son would effect the divine rule in the entire world.” That is, how will the Davidic covenant, bound up in the dynastic promise, serve as “the law for mankind”? I suggest it has something to do with the Davidic son’s obedience to and instruction of the law. *His radical life of surrender stipulates the pattern and supplies the power by securing pardon and sanctioning promises for God’s people to live in relation to him and for his global calling to be fulfilled.* The Davidic covenant will become “the law for mankind” in the way the ultimate Davidic and divine son will (1) meet God’s demands on behalf of the many, (2) model the life of dependence, (3) mandate the path of godliness, and (4) motivate and empower right living.

- b. Foundation—Texts That Anticipate This Trajectory:

- i. Before 2 Samuel 7, we learn that the anticipated royal deliverer’s authority would be universal, beyond the bounds of the ethnic offspring of Abraham, and it would include victory over the sinister serpent himself, thus bringing life out of death for the world. Through this male, royal, offspring of the woman, Abraham, Jacob, and Judah, all hostility against God would be put down, enemy territory would be reclaimed, universal justice and peace secured, all curse overcome and thus blessing established.

- Gen. 3:14–15, 20. And Yahweh God said to the serpent, “. . . I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.” . . .<sup>20</sup> The man called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.



- Gen. 17:4–6. Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. <sup>5</sup> No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. <sup>6</sup> I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you.
  - Gen. 22:17b–18. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, <sup>18</sup> and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed because you have obeyed my voice.
  - Gen. 24:60. And they blessed Rebekah and said to her, “Our sister, may you become thousands of ten thousands, and may your offspring possess the gate of those who hate him!”
  - Gen. 26:3–4. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you, for to you and to your offspring I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father. <sup>4</sup> I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.
  - Gen. 49:8, 10. Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father’s sons shall bow down before you. . . . <sup>10</sup> The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.
  - Num. 24:7, 17–19. [Jacob’s] king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted. . . . <sup>17</sup> I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near: a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the forehead of Moab and break down all the sons of Sheth. <sup>18</sup> Edom shall be dispossessed; Seir also, his enemies, shall be dispossessed. Israel is doing valiantly. <sup>19</sup> And one from Jacob shall exercise dominion and destroy the survivors of cities!
- ii. This priestly royal son would restore Sabbath rest and serve as an agent of blessing and life only by obeying Yahweh and instructing others—a role pointed to in the life of Abraham as covenant head. Stated differently, the hoped-for king would properly image God as a royal son by living in dependence on God’s blessing and resembling, reflecting, and representing his divine Father.
- Gen. 1:26–28. Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” <sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. <sup>28</sup> And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”
  - Gen. 5:1–3. This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. <sup>2</sup> Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created. <sup>3</sup> When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.
  - Gen. 12:2–3. And you shall be a blessing <sup>3</sup> so that I may bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I may curse, and so that in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.
  - Gen. 18:17–19. Yahweh said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, <sup>18</sup> seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? <sup>19</sup> For I have known him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of

Yahweh by doing righteousness and justice, so that Yahweh may bring Abraham what he has promised him.”

- Gen. 22:17b–18. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies,<sup>18</sup> and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed because you have obeyed my voice.
  - Deut 4:1. And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the rules that I am teaching you, and do them, that you may live, and go in and take possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving you.
  - Deut 6:25. And it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to do all this commandment before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us.
  - Deut 8:1. The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers.
  - Deut 17:18–20. And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests.<sup>19</sup> And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them,<sup>20</sup> that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel.
- iii. Where God’s chosen servant and royal son leads with justice and righteousness, the implication is that God’s people will do what is right in God’s eyes and thus fulfill their missional mandate and support the sustained enjoyment of a lasting dynasty with global impact and influence.
- Judg. 21:25. In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.
  - Exod. 19:5–6. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant and be to me a treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine;<sup>6</sup> then you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.”
  - Deut 4:5–8. See, I have taught you statutes and rules, as Yahweh my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it.<sup>6</sup> Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’<sup>7</sup> For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as Yahweh our God is to us, whenever we call upon him?<sup>8</sup> And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today?
  - Deut 17:18–20. And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests.<sup>19</sup> And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear Yahweh his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them,<sup>20</sup> that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel.
  - Deut 26:16–19. This day Yahweh your God commands you to do these statutes and rules. You shall therefore be careful to do them with all your heart and with all your soul.<sup>17</sup> You have caused Yahweh to declare today to be your God and to walk in his ways and to keep his statutes and his commands and his rules to heed unto his voice.<sup>18</sup> And Yahweh has caused you to declare today to be a people for a treasured possession, as he spoke to you, and to keep all his

commands,<sup>19</sup> and to place you most high over all the nations that he made for praise, for a name, and for beauty, and to be a holy people to Yahweh your God just as he spoke.

- iv. Hannah’s prayer stresses that it is Yahweh’s own justice and strength that is manifest in and through the messianic, royal deliver. The anticipated earthly king, therefore, is a true image of God who resembles, reflects, and represents on earth the supreme King of the universe.
  - 1 Sam 2:9–10. He will guard the feet of his faithful ones, but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness, for not by might shall a man prevail.<sup>10</sup> The adversaries of Yahweh shall be broken to pieces; against them he will thunder in heaven. Yahweh will judge the ends of the earth; he will give strength to his king and exalt the power of his anointed.
- c. The Challenge and Divine Response Anticipated: “Because the intention of man’s heart is evil from his youth,” God must determine to “never again curse the ground because of man” (Gen. 8:21). Apart from divine mercy, the world would be bound for destruction by divine judgment. This raises two related questions, and two significant responses.
  - i. If even the hearts of Noah and his family after the flood were evil from their youth, how will the anticipated obedient king ever arise from the ranks of humanity? The answer: God will have to provide an obedient son. This is all but made explicit in Hannah’s prophecy, where she declares that the God who protects his faithful ones but judges rebels will “give strength to his king and exalt the power of his anointed” (1 Sam 2:10).
  - ii. But this leads us to the next question. How can a God who is perfectly faithful, just, and upright (Deut 32:4) reconcile himself to a sinful and cursed humanity, even through an obedient son? The answer: God introduces the doctrine of penal substitutionary atonement, which provides the means for God’s people and in turn all the world to enjoy the glory of Yahweh’s presence without dying. Most directly, the stories of divine provision in Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac and of Yahweh’s preservation of his national son Israel through Passover link the offspring-royal sonship promise with the imagery of substitution, thus forcing the reader to look beyond the OT types to the antitype and suggesting the possibility that the obedience required of the royal deliver would directly relate to his offering of himself as a penal substitute.
    - Gen. 22:12–13. [The angel of Yahweh] said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.”<sup>13</sup> And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son.
    - Exod. 3:22–23; 12:5–7, 12–13. Then you [Moses] shall say to Pharaoh, “Thus says Yahweh, Israel is my firstborn son,<sup>23</sup> and I say to you, “Let my son go that he may serve me.” If you refuse to let him go, behold, I will kill your firstborn son. . . .<sup>12:5</sup> Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats,<sup>6</sup> and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of

Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight. <sup>7</sup> Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. . . . <sup>12</sup> For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am Yahweh. <sup>13</sup> The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.

- Lev. 9:3–6. [And Moses said to Aaron,] “Say to the people of Israel, ‘Take a male goat for a sin offering, and a calf and a lamb, both a year old without blemish, for a burnt offering, <sup>4</sup> and an ox and a ram for peace offerings, to sacrifice before Yahweh, and a grain offering mixed with oil, for today Yahweh will appear to you.’” <sup>5</sup> And they brought what Moses commanded in front of the tent of meeting, and all the congregation drew near and stood before Yahweh. <sup>6</sup> And Moses said, “This is the thing that Yahweh commanded you to do, that the glory of Yahweh may appear to you.”

d. Fulfillment in Isaiah’s Vision of the Everlasting Covenant: Isaiah builds on 2 Sam 7:19 by highlighting that the eschatological restoration of God’s people—termed the everlasting covenant—would be established on the basis of a new David’s radical, God-centered obedience and teaching.

i. His obedience:

(1) Key Texts:

- Isa. 55:3–4 (ESV). Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. <sup>4</sup> Behold, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples.
- Isa. 50:5, 9. The Lord Yahweh has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious; I turned not backward. . . . <sup>9</sup> Behold, the Lord Yahweh helps me; who will declare me guilty? Behold, all of them will wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up.
- Isa. 53:9–10. And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. <sup>10</sup> Yet it was the will of Yahweh to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of Yahweh shall prosper in his hand.
- Rom. 5:18–19. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification of life for all men. <sup>19</sup> For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.
- Phil. 2:8. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
- Heb. 5:8–9. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. <sup>9</sup> And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him.
- 1 Pet. 2:22. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.

(2) The interpretation of Isa. 55:3 as a potential application of 2 Sam 7:19.

(a) Subjective or objective genitive?

- (i) The first question is whether the “faithful kindnesses” or “sure mercies” are *by* David or *for* David. If the former, Isa 55:3 may be an expansion of 2 Sam 7:19 by which we are told *how* the law will reach the nations through the eternal dynasty of the son—

namely, it will come through his covenant obedience displayed in Isaiah’s servant songs, climaxing in the penal substitutionary work of Isaiah 53.

- (ii) While the ESV reads the last phrase as an objective genitive (“my steadfast, sure love for David”), there is no “my” in the text, and the most natural reading would be subjective, pointing to the loyalty performed by a new David. Building off the findings of both A. Caquot (“Les <<Graces de David>>. A Propos d’Isaie 55/3b,” *Semitica* 15 [1965]: 45–49) and H. G. M. Williamson (“The Sure Mercies of David’: Subjective or Objective Genitive?” *Journal of Semitic Studies* 23 [1978]: 31–49), Peter Gentry notes that apart from Gen. 32:11, the plural noun *hesed* is always in a bound phrase and the free member is always subjective—aside from the disputed passages, Isa 55:3 and 2 Chr 6:42. Furthermore, out of 228 occurrences of the singular *hesed*, only six can be found that may possibly or probably be read as objective.
- (iii) I suggest, therefore, that the phrase is best read as a subjective genitive, pointing the covenant loyalties of the new David.
- (b) The faithful loyalties of this new David clarify how God makes an everlasting covenant with his people (Isa. 55:3). Then we learn that by his obedience, the new David will serve as “a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples” (v. 4). This combination seems to echo both obedience to God’s law pointed to in Deut 17:18–20 and “the law of mankind” mentioned 2 Sam 7:19. What God is doing through the David covenant promises will have global effects, bringing about nothing less than the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promises of blessing to the world. In this context, God’s royal son will reign and be the agent of global blessing.
- Ps. 1:7–9. I will tell of the decree: Yahweh said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you. <sup>8</sup> Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. <sup>9</sup> You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”
  - Ps. 72:17. May his name endure forever, his fame continue as long as the sun! May people be blessed in him, all nations call him blessed!
- ii. His teaching:
- (1) Key texts:
- Isa. 42:4. He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his law.
  - Isa. 50:4. The Lord Yahweh has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with a word him who is weary.

Morning by morning he awakens; he awakens my ear to hear as those who are taught.

- Isa. 51:4. Give attention to me, my people, and give ear to me, my nation; for a law will go out from me, and I will set my justice for a light to the peoples.
  - Matt. 7:24–27. Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. <sup>25</sup> And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. <sup>26</sup> And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. <sup>27</sup> And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.
  - Matt. 17:5. He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.”
  - Matt. 28:20. . . . teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.
  - Heb. 1:1–2. Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup> but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.
  - Jam. 2:8. If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well.
- (2) Isaiah envisioned the day when the nations would gather to Jerusalem to hear God’s law (Isa. 2:3)—a law that we learn later would ultimately come through lips of his servant king (42:4; 50:4; 51:4). The new covenant focuses all disciples’ obedience on the teaching of Christ (Matt. 7:24–27; 17:5; 28:20; cf. Heb. 1:1–2) and considers his “royal law” to be synthesized in the love command (Jas. 2:8).
- (3) Jesus promised that upon his departure, “all truth” would come to his disciples through the Holy Spirit (John 16:12–14; cf. 17:8), and these apostles in turn relayed Christ’s truth to us through the NT (John 17:8, 18, 20), and we are now called to hold fast to this “tradition” (2 Thess. 2:15).
- John 16:12–14. I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. <sup>13</sup> When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. <sup>14</sup> He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.
  - John 17:8, 18, 20. For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. . . . <sup>18</sup> As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. . . . <sup>20</sup> I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word,
  - 2 Thess. 2:15. So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.

iii. Synthesis:

- (1) As the king obeys God’s law, he models for Israel what it means to have God on the throne of one’s life; he thus serves as a holy priest-king, fulfilling his God-ordained mission of serving as a

divine image-bearer and pointing Israel as a whole to their missional responsibility in the world. And as the nations become associated with God's people in the eschatological age, the king's example of obedience provides the pattern for a life of love.

- (2) Also, as the king administers and teaches God's law, he affirms the instruction of the priests (Lev. 10:11) and supplies tangible guidance of how to live in God-honoring ways.
- (3) Thus the Davidic promises of an eternal dynasty can directly be regarded as "the law/instruction for mankind" (2 Sam 7:19).

## VII. David's Dishonoring Act and the Demise of His Reign (2 Sam 9–21)

### A. Introduction

1. The pro-David middle of the book climaxes with the high point of the Davidic covenant in 2 Samuel 7 and the section conclusion in ch. 8 that stresses how "Yahweh gave victory to David wherever he went" and that "David administered justice and equity to all his people" (2 Sam 8:14–15).
2. Apparently to heighten the messianic hope bound up in David, the new section begins by highlighting that David confronted and defeated Hanun the son of *Nahash*, whose name means "serpent." The first successful battle in the book was against *Nahash* (1 Sam 11:1), and now we read of the last successful battle against his son. Saul defeated the serpent in order to remind the reader of the messianic promise of Gen 3:15, but Saul's victory was soon followed by stress on his disloyalty in order to highlight that he was not the ultimate serpent killer. Similarly, David defeated the offspring of *Nahash* (the "serpent"), but this story is followed directly by the Bathsheba episode, also in order to highlight that even David, the OT's ideal royal figure, is not the anticipated messianic deliver. Both Saul and David were only pointers to or types of the more ultimate curse-overcomer, whose obedience and covenant loyalty would remain perfect for his entire life and eternal reign.
3. David's sins are tragic, and the narrator makes it clear that David's actions were direct sins against God and violations of the covenant.
  - a. He details David's sins of adultery or rape, murder, and arrogance (2 Sam 11; 24:1–10), and he casts them as "evil in the sight of Yahweh" (11:27; cf. Judg 3:1, 12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1).
  - b. He stresses David's recognition of his own sins (2 Sam 12:13; 24:10).
  - c. The prophet Nathan declares David's actions to be "evil" and an affront to the word of Yahweh (12:9).

### B. David, the Ideal Israelite?

1. We have already highlighted the pro-David perspective that dominates 1 Samuel 15–2 Samuel 8.
2. 1–2 Kings treats David as the ideal king, the standard by which all other kings are judged.
  - 1 Kgs. 9:4–5. And as for you [Solomon], if you will walk before me, as David your father walked, with integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you, and keeping my statutes and my rules, then I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, 'You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.'

- 1 Kgs. 14:8. You [Jeroboam I] have not been like my servant David, who kept my commandments and followed me with all his heart, doing only that which was right in my eyes.
  - 1 Kgs 15:3–5. And he [Abijam] walked in all the sins that his father did before him, and his heart was not wholly true to Yahweh his God, as the heart of David his father. Nevertheless, for David’s sake Yahweh his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, setting up his son after him, and establishing Jerusalem, because David did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh and did not turn aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life, *except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite*.
  - Cf. 1 Kgs 3:6; 11:4-6; 2 Kgs 14:3; 18:3; 22:2
3. How can David be the ideal or standard in view of the forthright sins captured in 2 Samuel 11 and 24? Furthermore, in view of the fact that the narrator selected which events in David’s life he would include, why was a sin like “the case of Uriah the Hittite” (2 Sam 11–12; cf. 1 Kgs. 15:4–5) included in the narrative? (Note: The David and Bathsheba episode is *not* found in 1–2 Chronicles.)

**THINK!**

How does one theologically reconcile the wording difference between 2 Sam 24:1 and 1 Chr. 21:1—“The anger of *Yahweh* incited David” vs. “Satan incited David”? How do commentators suggest the different wordings align with or impact the overall message of each book? (For a developed discussion of God’s sovereign control of both natural and moral evil, see John Piper, “Is God Less Glorious Because He Ordained that Evil Be,” in *Desiring God: Meditations of a Christian Hedonist* [Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2003], 335–52.)

**C. David, the Real Israelite—Why His Sins are Included in the Narrative:**

1. *Message of Warning*: In view of the intense consequences of David’s sin portrayed in 2 Sam 12–20, all Israel would have been warned to act properly in their covenant relationship with God. Yahweh takes sin seriously, and sin has consequences, even when it involves the king.
2. *Message of Challenge*: The contrast between the ideal and the real stresses David’s humanness, represents him as a model of repentance after sin, and proclaims the grace of God in restoration and covenant renewal.
  - a. There is a clear distinction in the book between David the ideal king and the David the real king: David’s kingly exploits are overviewed in 1 Samuel 15–2 Samuel 8, with a summary in the latter; the story of his sin and of the evil it let loose in the kingdom is narrated in considerable detail in 2 Sam 10–20.
  - b. The two great poems of David’s devotion and praise to Yahweh (2 Sam 22:1–51; 23:1–7) are placed as the center-piece of his summarizing appendix (chs. 21–24), so a picture of the man of faith and his hope for one greater than himself (21:15–17; 23:13–17) is placed in the context of the man of weakness (24:1–17).
  - c. In contrast to Saul, David is consistently shown to reestablish Yahweh’s supremacy in his life after sin (2 Sam 12:13–20; 24:10–25; Ps. 51; cf. 1 Sam 15)
  - d. For Psalm 51 put to music, see Charlie Peacock, “Psalm 51,” on *West Coast Diaries, Volume 2* and Keith Green, “Create in Me a Clean Heart.”
3. *Message of Hope*: The contrast between the ideal and the real stresses the need for one greater than David—i.e., the Messiah (see below).



**D. Synthesis:**

1. In his loyalty, David represents all that God intends for his people.
2. In his repentance, David portrays the need of all Israel before a holy God.
3. In his whole life, David shows the need to anticipate one greater than David who can in whole represent God to the people and the people to God.

**VIII. Conclusion: David's Life and Hope Point to the Coming Messianic King-Priest (2 Sam 22–24)****A. Introduction:**

1. Main themes of the book: (1) a passion for Yahweh's glory is the only means to exaltation; (2) divine salvation comes to and through God's anointed
2. The whole book is bookended with the thematic juxtaposition of humility and divine favor vs. self-reliance / pride and divine judgment:
  - Initial Poem (Hannah): 1 Sam 2:9. He will guard the feet of his faithful ones, but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness, for not by might shall a man prevail.
  - Final Poem (David): 2 Sam 22:26–28. "With the faithful you show yourself faithful; with the blameless man you show yourself blameless; with the purified you deal purely, and with the crooked you make yourself seem tortuous. You save a humble people, but your eyes are on the haughty to bring them down."
  - NOTE: David attributes Yahweh for making him humble and enabling him to honor God (2 Sam 24:32–41).
3. The theme of salvation to and through Yahweh's anointed is also highlighted at the beginning and end.
  - 1 Sam 2:1, 10. My heart exults in Yahweh, my horn is exalted in Yahweh. My mouth derides my enemies, because I rejoice in your salvation.... The adversaries of Yahweh shall be broken to pieces; against them he will thunder in heaven. Yahweh will judge the ends of the earth; he will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed.
  - 2 Sam 22:2–3. Yahweh is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge, my savior; you save me from violence.... Great salvation he brings to his king, and shows steadfast love to his anointed, to David and his offspring forever.
4. The "last words of David" in 2 Sam 23 affirm both themes, and the final two stories portray highlight the first.

**B. God's "Glory" and the "Messiah" in 2 Sam 22**

1. 2 Sam 22 is a lament psalm reproduced in Psalm 18. We are told in both texts that this song arose "when Yahweh delivered [David] from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul" (2 Sam 22:1 // Ps 18:1). The placement of 2 Sam 22 *after* the story of David's decline highlights that this psalm, which portrays the ideal king enjoying the favor of God, is *not* first about David. 2 Sam 22 / Ps. 18 paint the ideal picture of Israel's king, who honors God wholly with his life and thus enjoys sustained blessing (see esp. 2 Sam 22:21–28, 51). This ideal predictively looks beyond David to his greater Son—the Messiah, in whom David himself places his hope and finds refuge. Only the one greater than David who would forever lead the people in obedience (imaging God to the people) and represent before God the ideal picture of humanity (representing the people before God). And the favor the king would enjoy would in turn be enjoyed by all who follow the king.

2. In 2 Sam 22:21, David writes, “The LORD dealt with me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands he rewarded me.” Does such a statement *require* a messianic reading?
  - a. It is possible at some level for a redeemed sinner like David to say such a statement in relation to himself.
    - i. The whole book is driven by a principle highlighted in 2 Sam 22:26–27: “With the faithful you show yourself faithful; with the blameless you show yourself blameless; <sup>27</sup> with the purified you deal purely; and with the crooked you make yourself seem tortuous.” Earlier, Hannah had said something similar: “He will guard the feet of his faithful ones, but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness, for not by might shall a man prevail” (1 Sam 2:9). And again, Yahweh declared to Eli through the man of God, “Those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed” (2:30). These texts are saying no more than Peter says elsewhere: “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble” (1 Pet 5:5; cf. Jas 4:6). The texts stress that the “righteousness” that is being celebrated is an alignment with God’s definition of right order, wherein Yahweh is supreme and humanity is dependent and humble. The righteousness is *not* a self-exalting obedience but a thanks-be-to-God obedience. This is made clear elsewhere in 2 Sam 22:28, 31, 33, where David asserts: “You save a humble people, but your eyes are on the haughty to bring them down. . . . He is a shield for all those who take refuge in him. . . . This God is my strong refuge and has made my way blameless.”
    - ii. Similar declarations of innocence were made by Job (see ch. 31), whom both the narrator and Yahweh declared to be blameless and upright (Job 1:1, 8; 2:3; cf. Gen 6:9). Job’s integrity was genuine and his suffering was, in God’s words, “without [human] reason” (Job 2:3). His problem later in the book does not appear to have been the inaccuracy of his own claim to innocence but the fact that “he justified himself rather than God” (32:2), asserting that God was somehow unjust to inflict the righteous.
    - iii. The statement asserts divine judgment *according to* works and not *on the basis of* them, which is exactly what Paul says God will do at the final judgment: “Who will render to each person according to his deeds” (Rom 2:6).
    - iv. Nevertheless, the challenge is that *no one* but the Christ—and certainly not David—is perfectly righteous or blameless. Because God does oppose the proud—and all are proud, we need an alien righteousness *first* before our redeemed imperfections can honor God at all.
  - b. As will be seen, 2 Sam 23:1–7 explicitly highlights David’s own hope in one greater than himself—the anointed ruler that Hannah predicted in 1 Sam 2:10. The Messiah alone could declare that the Lord God’s favor with him, *because* he perfectly honored God with his life. David’s hands, while washed, had been dirty, whereas the Messiah’s hands were never dirty (Heb 4:15; 1 Pet 2:22; 1 John 3:5).

- c. The victory David enjoyed over Saul was but a typological taste of the favor God would display in giving his Son victory over all enemies. David’s song points first to the Messiah and only through him applies to himself.

**C. God’s “Glory,” the “Messiah,” and “the Sweet Songs of Israel” in David’s Last Words (2 Sam 23:1–7)**

1. 2 Samuel 23 records “the last words of David” (23:1). After an extended discussion of David’s rise, the Davidic covenant, and David’s fall, the book culminates here supplying a lens into David’s life and hopes and into his own writings.
2. The OT was originally written without vowels. It was only some 1,000 years after Christ that the Jewish Masoretes supplied the vowels. At times, whether consciously or unconsciously, their anti-Christian bias appears to have influenced their vowel pointing, resulting in non-messianic readings that were originally messianic and retained in other texts and versions. We may have one such example in 2 Sam 23:1.

<b>2 Sam 23:1</b>
<u>ESV (2011)</u> : “Now these are the last words of David: The oracle of David, the son of Jesse, the oracle of the man who was raised <b>on high</b> , the anointed of the God of Jacob, the sweet psalmist of Israel:”
<u>NIV (2011)</u> : “These are the last words of David: ‘The inspired utterance of David son of Jesse, the utterance of the man exalted <b>by the Most High</b> , the man anointed by the God of Jacob, the hero of Israel’s songs:”
<u>LXX</u> : Καὶ οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι Δαυὶδ οἱ ἔσχατοι Πιστὸς Δαυὶδ υἱὸς Ἰεσσαὶ, καὶ πιστὸς ἀνὴρ, ὃν ἀνέστησεν κύριος ἐπὶ <b>χριστόν</b> θεοῦ Ἰακωβ, καὶ εὐπρεπεῖς ψαλμοὶ Ἰσραηλ.
<u>NETS</u> : And these are the last words of David: Faithful is David, son of Iessai, and faithful the man whom the Lord raised up to be the anointed of Iakob’s God, and fitting are Israel’s melodies.
<u>Douay-Reims (1610)</u> : “Now these are David’s last words. David the son of Isai said: The man to whom it was appointed <b>concerning the Christ</b> of the God of Jacob, the excellent psalmist of Israel said:”
<u>Young’s Literal (1898)</u> : “And these [are] the last words of David: — ‘The affirmation of David son of Jesse — And the affirmation of the man raised up — <b>Concerning the Anointed</b> of the God of Jacob, And the Sweetness of the Songs of Israel:”

3. The ESV and NIV follow the Hebrew MT. In contrast, where the Hebrew text reads “on high” or “Most High,” the LXX has *epi* “concerning,” which keeps the same Hebrew consonants and alters only a single vowel ( ‘*āl* = “high”; ‘*al* = “concerning”). The result is a messianic reading: “The utterance of David, son of Jesse, and the utterance of the mighty man raised up—concerning the Messiah of the God of Jacob and the sweet songs of Israel.” The LXX reading suggests that the oracle that follows addresses two things: the Messiah of God and the sweet psalms of Israel. The ESV and NIV have David’s final words speaking about himself, whereas the LXX has his final words speaking about the one in whom he is hoping—the Christ. Indeed, it is this Christ that the “sweet songs of Israel” are also about.

<b>2 Sam 23:1–7, ESV</b>	<b>NIV</b>	<b>DeRouchie</b>
Now these are the last words of David: The oracle of David, the son of Jesse, the oracle of the man who	These are the last words of David: “The inspired utterance of David son of Jesse, the utterance of the	These are the last words of David—the utterance of David, son of Jesse, and the utterance of the mighty man

<p>was raised on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, the sweet psalmist of Israel: 2 “The Spirit of the LORD speaks by me; his word is on my tongue. 3 The God of Israel has spoken; the Rock of Israel has said to me: When one rules justly over men, ruling in the fear of God, 4 he dawns on them like the morning light, like the sun shining forth on a cloudless morning, like rain that makes grass to sprout from the earth. 5 “For does not my house stand so with God? For he has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and secure. For will he not cause to prosper all my help and my desire? 6 But worthless men are all like thorns that are thrown away, for they cannot be taken with the hand; 7 but the man who touches them arms himself with iron and the shaft of a spear, and they are utterly consumed with fire.”</p>	<p>man exalted by the Most High, the man anointed by the God of Jacob, the hero of Israel’s songs: 2 “The Spirit of the LORD spoke through me; his word was on my tongue. 3 The God of Israel spoke, the Rock of Israel said to me: ‘When one rules over people in righteousness, when he rules in the fear of God, 4 he is like the light of morning at sunrise on a cloudless morning, like the brightness after rain that brings grass from the earth.’ 5 “If my house were not right with God, surely he would not have made with me an everlasting covenant, arranged and secured in every part; surely he would not bring to fruition my salvation and grant me my every desire. 6 But evil men are all to be cast aside like thorns, which are not gathered with the hand. 7 Whoever touches thorns uses a tool of iron or the shaft of a spear; they are burned up where they lie.”</p>	<p>raised up—concerning the Messiah of the God of Jacob and the pleasant songs of Israel. 2 “The Spirit of Yahweh spoke by me, and his word was on my tongue. 3 The God of Israel said, to me the Rock of Israel spoke: ‘With the man of righteousness who rules, who rules in the fear of God—4 even like the light of morning the sun will rise—a morning without clouds: from brightness, from rain—grass from the earth.’ 5 For is not thus my house with God? [<i>or</i> For not so is my house with God.] For [<i>or</i> But] an eternal covenant he made for me/him, arranged in all and kept. For all my salvation and all delight in me will he not cause to sprout? 6 ‘But as for worthless—all of them are like a thorn thrown away, for will not with a hand they be taken, 7 and the man strike at them? He will be armed with an iron and wood spear, and with a consuming fire they will be burned in the end.’”</p>
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4. Support for the messianic readings comes from a number of fronts:
  - a. In only three texts in the OT do we reading “the utterance of the . . . man,” and both of the other two are messianic oracles (Num 24:3; Prov 30:1).
  - b. Vv. 3–4 depict the blessed reign of the Messiah who will establish light out of darkness and birth a new creation.
  - c. In v. 5 David then likely affirms (so ESV/NIV) that such are the promises given to his house. However, the evidence David sees of God’s favor is *not* his faithful reign but rather God’s covenant promises through which God will cause to sprout new creational salvation and joy. NOTE: The Hebrew does not include the interrogative particle, so some have proposed that we should not read v. 5 as a question but as an assertion, “Surely not so is my house with God, but he has made with me an everlasting covenant. . . .” While intriguing, the passage is loaded with unmarked questions, and it seems strange that David would contrast his *house* with the promises made *to his house* (e.g., 2 Sam 7:16; cf. 1 Sam 2:35). As such, I think David is portraying the promised hope given to his house, even though at present it is broken.
  - d. Vv. 6–7 then return to the oracle. Whereas the man of righteousness will honor God and know God’s favor (vv. 3–4), the worthless will pass away. How, because the very man of righteousness will “strike at them . . . with an iron and wood spear” and then toss them into the “consuming fire.” The imagery here recalls both the contrast of Psalm 1 between the righteous one

and the wicked and Psalm 2 where the Anointed of God will “break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel” (Ps 2:9).

5. The messianic reading calls us not only to see David hoping in the coming “man” but also to view the Psalms of David as principally *about this man* and not about David. That is, the Psalms are best read as the tribulations and triumphs of the eschatological Christ and not about any Israelite king. They become “the sweet psalms of Israel” only when they are first read as the psalms of the Christ. For those us in him, his prayers—whether lament, thanksgiving, or praise—become our prayers, our hopes, our songs.
6. Significantly, even if the proposed reading of the LXX is misguided with respect to 2 Sam 23:1, the prophecy that David declares in vv. 3–7 is grounded in the Davidic covenant *promises* and points beyond David himself to one who will overcome all worthlessness and curse, rule with an iron shaft, and generate new creation.

**D. Positive Example of the First Theme: David’s “Mighty Men” (2 Sam 23:8–39)**

1. The general exploits of the three (23:8–12) are spoken of in much the same manner that those of the other mighty men are mentioned (23:18–39); but while other men of David are great, their greatness “did not attain to the three” (23:19, 23).
2. The reason that three have more honor appears to be due to their self-sacrificing venture through enemy lines to supply King David with a drink of water, regardless of the cost (23:13–17).
3. This is the type of loyalty for which God is seeking from his own. The humble, other-exalting actions of the three magnified before the world the greatness of David, God’s chosen, in their eyes, and on this basis the king set them apart. Similarly, God is looking for those who will seek his honor even above their own, and only in this context will he bestow honor. True glory is experienced only where service is central.

**E. Negative Example of the First Theme with a Reversal: David’s Census (2 Sam 24)**

1. In contrast, 2 Samuel 24 tells the story of David’s self-exaltation, fall, and recovery. Earlier, Yahweh’s passion for his own glory within Israel (1 Sam 2:30) resulted in his destroying Eli’s house; only through this tragedy were the Philistines and Israelites ultimately awakened to the weightiness of his glory (cf. the root *kbd* in 1 Sam 2:8, 29, 30; 4:18, 21–22; 5:6, 11; 6:5, 6 with 6:20 and 7:3–13). Now, with the mention of “Yahweh’s anger” (24:1) bringing about a new tragedy in Israel (2 Sam 24:1), the narrator gives us a clue that God is at work to rekindle a passion for God’s supremacy.... And so he does.
2. Censuses are normally taken preceding battle, so David’s “sin” is likely that he is failing to rely on God and is trusting in his own strength. Recognizably, this is a problem, “for not by might shall a man prevail” (1 Sam 2:9).
3. David’s affirmation of guilt (2 Sam 24:10, 17) and of God’s being merciful (24:14) provide ballast in the story. David’s desire to “fall into the hand of Yahweh” (24:14), David’s obedience to Gad’s direction to build an altar to Yahweh (24:18–19), David’s other-exalting, relentless commitment to pay Araunah for his field and cattle (24:24), and David’s worship of Yahweh (24:25) all point to the king’s recovery of the Deuteronomic ideal (Deut 17:18–20) and to

his realignment with a God-dependent, God-exalting lifestyle, regardless of the cost. Therefore, as the God-ordained principle of 1 Samuel 2:30 demands, “Yahweh responded to the plea for the land, and the plague was averted from Israel” (2 Sam 24:25).

- F. Foundational Theme:** 1 Sam 2:9, 30. [Yahweh] will guard the feet of his faithful ones, but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness, for not by might shall a man prevail.... Those who honor me, I will honor (whether barren woman, shepherd boy, or king), and those who despise me will be lightly esteemed (whether priest, king, or warrior).

**IX. Book Summary:** The promised son of David will exceed Samuel, Saul, and David by being a God-honoring priest-king who, by defeating the serpent, will reestablish God’s reign from his newly built temple and rule over Israel forever in the new creation.

**X. Guided Reading for 1–2 Samuel:**

**A. Points of Focus:**

1. Key chapters: 1 Sam 1–3, 8, 12, 15–17; 2 Sam 7, 11–12, 24
2. Key people: Amalekites, Bathsheba, David, Eli, Eliab, Gad, Goliath, Hannah, Jesse, Joab, Jonathan, Nathan, Philistines, Samuel, Saul, Uriah, Yahweh
3. Key places: Bethlehem, Hebron, Jerusalem, Ramah, Shiloh, threshing floor of Arauna

**B. Questions:**

1. Who, more than any other person, provided for covenant continuity in the transition from the rule of the judges to that of the monarchy?
2. Define “theocracy.”
3. 1–2 Samuel deals principally with the reigns of what two kings in Israel? What are the general dates for their reigns?
4. Why is the last verse of Hannah’s “Song of Thanksgiving” so theologically significant in the light of the rest of 1–2 Samuel and the NT?
5. In 1 Samuel 2, what does the prophet (“man of God”) state was the nature of the priests’ sin against God? How does 1 Samuel 3:1 explain the darkness of the period during the early days of Samuel (cf. Prov. 29:18)?
6. According to 1 Samuel 8, why did Israel want a king?
7. What chapter in Israel’s Constitution (i.e., Deuteronomy) anticipates and gives direction regarding the day Israel would call for a human king over them? What are the qualifications and responsibilities for kingship?
8. According to 1 Samuel 12, why did Yahweh not reject Israel after they rejected him from being their king?
9. “Has Yahweh as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Yahweh? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of Yahweh, he has also rejected you from being king.” By whom and to whom were these words spoken, and in what chapter were they recorded?
10. “You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of Yahweh of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day Yahweh will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike

you down and cut off your head. And I will give the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that Yahweh saves not with sword and spear. For the battle is Yahweh's, and he will give you into our hand." By whom and to whom were these words spoken, and in what chapter were they recorded?

11. "Moreover, Yahweh declares to you that Yahweh will make you a house. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever." To whom did Yahweh speak these words, and in what chapter are they recorded?
12. What unwavering promises does God make in the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam 7:8–16; Ps. 89:1–4, 19–37)? How did the promise of a perpetual kingdom relate to the call for loyalty (1 Kgs. 2:2–4; 3:14; 8:25; 9:4–9; Ps. 132:11–12)? What the Davidic Covenant *unconditional*?
13. After the remarkable promises God made to David and his family, the king of Israel sinned gravely. What did he do? And how can he be viewed as Israel's ideal king and the standard upon which to evaluate kingship, as in 1 Kings 14:8: "You [Jeroboam I] have not been like my servant David, who kept my commandments and followed me with all his heart, doing only that which was right in my eyes" (cf. 1 Kgs. 11:6, 38; 15:3, 5; 2 Kgs. 14:3; 18:3; 22:2)? In wrestling with your answer, be sure to consider 2 Samuel 12:13 and Psalm 51.
14. What role did the prophet play in the story of the census in 2 Samuel 24? Make a list of things we learn about Yahweh in the story of the census. What is significant about the land David purchased from Araunah (Ornan) the Jebusite to build an altar to God (see 2 Chr. 3:1)?
15. Who was the great-grandmother of King David and who was the mother of King Solomon?
16. Essay: Discuss the anticipation, role, and legitimacy of kingship in Israel. What is the relationship between Deuteronomy 17:14–20 and 1 Samuel 8, and what was wrong with Israel's request for a king? (After wrestling on your own, read "The Legitimacy of Kingship in Israel" in Appendix 11.1.)
17. Essay: In light of the fact that David was "better than" Saul (1 Sam 15:28), having something about his "heart" that distinguished him from his peers (16:7), does this mean David in some way merited Yahweh's choice of him as king? (After wrestling on your own, read "David's Heart and Election as King" in Appendix 11.2 and DeRouchie's "The Heart of YHWH and his Chosen One in 1 Samuel 13:14" on Populi.)
18. Essay: How does one theologically reconcile the wording difference between 2 Samuel 24:1 and 1 Chronicles 21:1—"Yahweh incited David" vs. "Satan incited David"? How do commentators suggest the different wordings align with or impact the overall message of each book? (For a developed discussion of God's sovereign control of both natural and moral evil, see John Piper, "Is God Less Glorious Because He Ordained that Evil Be," in *Desiring God: Meditations of a Christian Hedonist* [Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2003], 335–52.)