

1 & 2 SAMUEL

GOD STATEMENT FOR 1 & 2 SAMUEL: THE **GOD** _____ (a), _____ (b) **AND** _____ (c)

The books of 1 and 2 Samuel in our English Bibles are just one book in the Hebrew Bible, and it's named after the prophet who dominates the story. The books cover about _____ (d) years of Israel's history (from roughly _____ (e) BC to _____ (f) BC), and it documents the nation's transition from a group of tribes ruled by judges into a unified _____ (g) ruled by a _____ (h).

Three people are front and center in these books: _____ (i), _____ (j), and _____ (k) and their stories are woven together throughout the books. The combined content of 1 & 2 Samuel can be divided into four parts.

THE RISE OF _____ (l) (1 Sam 1-7)

First Samuel begins in the closing days of the era of the judges with the spotlight on a godly woman struggling with infertility. Her name is _____ (m), and she begs God for a son. She vows to God that if He would give her a son, she would dedicate him to God's service all the days of his life. God graciously granted Hannah's request and the great _____ (n) Samuel is born. Not only does Samuel become God's great mouthpiece (1 Sam 3:19-21), but he's also the last of the judges who led Israel (1 Sam 7:15-17).

As a judge-prophet, Samuel led Israel as the _____ (o) rose to power and made war on Israel. In one crucial battle with the Philistines, the Israelites brought the _____ (p) of the _____ (q) to the battlefield because they thought of it as a magic wand or charm that would guarantee victory. They were wrong. The ark was a symbol of God's _____ (r), not a device to manipulate and control Him. Consequently, God allowed the Philistines to defeat Israel and capture the ark.

The Philistines believed their capture of the ark showed that God can't _____ (s) His honor or people. So, they placed the ark in the temple of their number one deity, _____ (t). This was a

common practice in the ancient near east to symbolize that the god/gods of the losers (Israel) were subject to the god/gods of the winners. The Philistines quickly learned, however, that, even if Israel was subject to them, the God of Israel was not subservient to Dagon. When they found Dagon “_____ (u)” to Yahweh (1 Sam 5:1-5), they sent the ark back to Israel where it was placed in storage and basically disappeared from national life (1 Sam 7:1-2).

After about two decades of spiritual drift, Samuel sensed the time was right for _____ (v) revival. He called on Israel and told them that their oppression at the hands of the Philistines was due to their rejection of God and subsequent idolatry. His preaching struck a chord, and they responded by ditching their idols and once again pledged themselves to God (1 Sam 7:3-8). Then God, as usual, responded by leading the Israelites to a route of the Philistines (1 Sam 7:9-11).

THE FALL OF SAUL AND RISE OF DAVID (1 Sam 8-3)

When Samuel was old, the people of Israel went to him and demanded a _____ (w) “like all the nations” (1 Sam 8:5). At first Samuel was angry, but God reminded him that He—that is, God—is the one the people have rejected. So, a king they wanted, a king they got; but Samuel warned them to be prepared for the inevitable consequences of having a king (1 Sam 8:10-18). Then Samuel _____ (x) Saul as Israel’s first king.

Saul seemed to be everything anyone could want in a king. He was tall. He was good looking. He was tough. He was courageous. He was humble (at least early in life). But things went south fast.

Saul’s downfall unfolds in couple of acts of _____ (y). First, he personally offers _____ (z) himself before a major battle when Samuel didn’t show up at the precise time he had promised. Samuel then informs Saul that his foolish disobedience had cost him his kingdom. In other words, Saul would be the last of his line to sit on the throne of Israel. Instead, Samuel told Saul that God is going to appoint “a _____ (aa) after His own _____ (bb)” to rule His people (1 Sam 13:8-14).

Saul’s second famous (or infamous) act of _____ (cc) was launched when Samuel brought him an explicit command from God to completely destroy the _____ (dd) and all of their possessions (1 Sam 15:1-3). Saul, however, chose to spare their king, Agag, and he only destroyed their worthless booty. He kept the good stuff (1 Sam 15:7-9).

When Samuel confronted Saul about his egregious, defiant disobedience, Saul pushed back and tried to _____(ee) himself. It is then that Samuel uttered these famous words: “to _____(ff) is better than _____(gg)” (1 Sam 15:10-22).

The “man after His heart” that God was preparing to raise up was a young, insignificant _____(hh) named David. There wasn’t anything particular about David that screamed “kingly!” But God sees what people can’t, and what He saw in David was an intensely humble young man who had an intensely radical _____(ii) for God.

Starting with the famous Goliath episode (1 Sam 17) God’s presence with David began a cascade of battlefield victories and fame. At the same time, as David’s star rose, Saul descended into _____(jj). In his raging _____(kk), Saul was consumed with eliminating this potential rival. And so, with murder on his mind, he began to hunt David down. While on the run, David’s _____(ll) character was on full display as he passed up multiple chances to kill Saul. David continued to stay one step ahead of Saul until Saul and his sons died in battle with the Philistines.

THE _____(mm) AND _____(nn) OF DAVID (2 Sam 1-20)

2 Samuel picks up after Saul’s death. After a few years of civil war between David’s supporters and Saul’s (seven-and-a-half years to be exact), all of the tribes of Israel declare their allegiance to David as their king. His first act as king is to conquer _____(oo) and make it the _____(pp) capital of the kingdom (2 Sam 5:1-9).

David was also determined to make Jerusalem the _____(qq) center of the kingdom. To do that he had to bring the _____(rr) to Jerusalem, and he expressed to God his passionate desire to build God a permanent _____(ss) to house the ark (2 Sam 7:1-7). God’s response to David was, in effect, “Thanks for the thought, but I’ll let your son build Me a temple and I’ll establish his throne forever” (2 Sam 7:12-14). David will later apply that promise to _____(tt) (1 Chr 22:10), but the New Testament writers apply it to _____(uu) (Heb 1:5 quotes 2 Sam 7:14).

David’s first attempt to bring the ark to Jerusalem resulted in one of the most shocking moments in the Bible—_____ (vv) is struck down by God for touching it in a well-meaning attempt to protect it (2 Sam 6:1-11). It was an important lesson that God expects covenant

loyalty even from David. In other words, God expects all His people to _____(ww) the commands of the _____(xx).

God blessed David and he went on to lead many successful campaigns against the Philistines, the Moabites, the Ammonites, the Edomites, and more. Their lands became part of his vast empire, and for the first time (and last) Israel was in possession most of the land God had promised them.

And then, as David stood at the pinnacle of success and greatness, he stumbled and tumbled into _____(yy). He made a horrible choice. It's the second most famous sin in the Bible (next the Adam and Eve's). From the roof of his palace he watched the wife of one of his greatest officers take a bath. The more he watched Bathsheba, the more inflamed he became, and soon his passion became an unstoppable force. He summoned her to the palace, slept with her, and got her pregnant (2 Sam 11:1-5). He then tried to cover up the whole sordid episode by engineering her husband's death and marrying her (2 Sam 11:6-27).

When God confronted David through the prophet Nathan, David owned his sin and found _____(zz). But forgiveness doesn't erase _____(aaa), and the consequences of his sin would be both far-reaching and tragic. From this point on, David's family started to fall apart, and the nation began to struggle. The baby conceived with Bathsheba died (2 Sam 12:15-18). His son Amnon sexually abused his half-sister Tamar (2 Sam 13:1-23). Another son, Absalom, avenged Tamar by having Amnon assassinated, and then fled for his life (2 Sam 13:24-39). Later Absalom hatched a plot and launched a full-blown rebellion to oust David from power (2 Sam 15:1-12). Absalom almost pulled-off the coup but was finally stopped by three spears through the heart (2 Sam 18:9-14). David's throne was spared, but his heart was crushed (2 Sam 18:19-33).

DAVID'S REFLECTIONS (2 Sam 21-24)

The last four chapters of 2 Samuel is an appendix to the book. The contents come from different periods of David's life and serve as a fitting conclusion to his " _____(bbb), _____(ccc), and return."

Chapters 21 and 24 remind us that the _____(ddd) of sin is immeasurable. Whether Saul was the one who made the bad decision (1 Sam 21) or David (1 Sam 24), the consequences of those sinful choices hurt a lot of people.

Chapters 22 and 23 contain the final songs of David. He writes and sings of God as his rock, his fortress and his deliverer. _____(eee) was clearly important in David's life, and he confesses that God deserves all the _____(fff) for the positive things in his life.

THE LESSONS OF 1 & 2 SAMUEL

- God is there and He is not _____(ggg). God is very active and involved in the world. He is still working. He still causes things to happen (Rom 8:28)
- God's work is normally done _____(hhh). His work is normally done just beyond our ability to see Him working. He usually works quietly and invisibly.
- A good _____(iii) doesn't guarantee a good _____(jjj). Saul looked so promising in the early days of his reign. Unfortunately, by the end of his reign, he was a moral and spiritual disaster. If we neglect our heart, our end will be a disaster too.
- People may _____(kkk) us and we're not to blame. Saul made David's life miserable, and it wasn't David's fault. He was faithful, humble, loyal, trustworthy, hard-working, reliable, and productive and Saul still abused him.
- When other turn against us, God remains _____(lll). If other turn on us, we can take comfort in knowing that God is with us (1 Sam 18:12, 14, 28).
- When others _____(mmm) us, we must continue to behave the way God wants us to behave. There was no "eye-for-an-eye" stuff with David. He kept being loyal and faithful to Saul even though Saul mistreated him.
- _____(nnn) is evil. Pride will cause us to do really stupid things and sink to unimaginable depths of evil. It is a spiritual cancer that destroys love, contentment, and common sense. Pride convinces us that we're in competition with everyone else. Saul didn't want David to be more popular and it ate him up.
- When the bottom falls out of life, don't lose your _____(ooo). When David's world collapse, he knew that God would help him recover. He didn't turn on God. He continued to obey without

reluctance. He continued to trust that God would bring him through the storm.

- God cares about the _____(ppp) of His covenant. David learned the hard way to be attentive to the details of God’s will. After Uzzah died for touching the ark (2 Sam 6), David learned to seek God’s will in everything (1 Chron 15:2, 11-15).
- _____(qqq) is at the top of God’s list for His people.
- David prefigures _____(rrr). David, an obscure man from Bethlehem, is raised to the most extraordinary position of all and Israel blossomed. Another obscure man from Bethlehem was also raised to the most extraordinary position of all, and the TRUE ISRAEL (the church) will blossom and never be the same.

KEY PASSAGES IN 1 & 2 SAMUEL

- 1 Samuel 1:19-20
- 1 Samuel 5:1-6
- 1 Samuel 15:22
- 1 Samuel 17:37
- 2 Samuel 6:1-7
- 2 Samuel 12:13-14

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK ANSWER KEY:

[a] PROTECTS	[o] Philistines	[cc] disobedience	[qq] spiritual	[eee] worship
[b] BLESSES	[p] ark	[dd] Amalekites	[rr] ark	[fff] credit
[c] ASSESSES	[q] covenant	[ee] justify	[ss] temple	[ggg] silent
[d] 150	[r] presence	[ff] obey	[tt] Solomon	[hhh] providentially
[e] 1120	[s] defend	[gg] sacrifice	[uu] Jesus	[iii] start
[f] 970	[t] Dagon	[hh] shepherd	[vv] Uzzah	[jjj] finish
[g] kingdom	[u] bowed	[ii] heart	[ww] obey	[kkk] mistreat
[h] king	[v] spiritual	[jj] madness	[xx] covenant	[lll] faithful
[i] Samuel	[w] king	[kk] jealousy	[yy] sin	[mmm] mistreat
[j] Saul	[x] anoints	[ll] godly	[zz] forgiveness	[nnn] Pride
[k] David	[y] disobedience	[mm] SUCCESS	[aaa] consequences	[ooo] faith
[l] SAMUEL	[z] sacrifices	[nn] SIN	[bbb] rise	[ppp] details
[m] Hannah	[aa] man	[oo] Jerusalem	[ccc] fall	[qqq] Obedience
[n] prophet	[bb] heart	[pp] political	[ddd] fallout	[rrr] Christ