

The Half Hour That Changes the World

2 Samuel

Book 10

Basic Questions behind the book:

What does it mean to be a person after God's own heart?

Summary of book:

The story in 2 Samuel runs on from 1 Samuel and the story is paralleled in 1 Chronicles. It tells of David's life from his accession to his old age.

David has spent a decade on the run from Saul, living as a soldier of fortune. As the book is read, we see David as he is crowned king over Judah and then king over all of Israel. We meet David who is called 'a man after God's own heart'. Yet, David was human, and there were those dark times when he stumbled and fell into sin. The record of lust, adultery, and murder is not easy to read and reveals that even great people who try to follow God are susceptible to temptation and sin.

The book says little about God, but shows how a person can relate to God and others. David's first act was to bring the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem. It symbolised God's presence; so David was putting God at the centre of his reign, city and country.

Vital Statistics:

Purpose: To record the history of David's reign; to demonstrate effective leadership under God; to reveal that one person can make a difference; to show the personal qualities that please God; to depict David as an ideal leader of an imperfect kingdom.

Author: Unknown. Some have suggested that Nathan's son Zabud may have been the author. The book also includes the writings for Nathan and Gad.

Recipients: The people of Israel and all people everywhere.

Dating: The date is believed to have been around 930 BC, soon after David's reign, 1050 - 970 BC.

Setting: The land of Israel under David's rule.

'And David knew that the Lord had established him as king over Israel and had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.' (5:12)

'David sang, 'The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation.' (22:2, 3)

'He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and how shall he be my son.' (7:13-14)