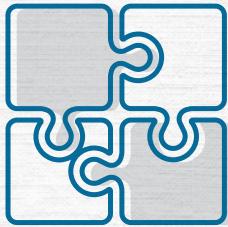


1 Samuel

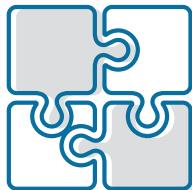


2 Samuel



NOTES & OUTLINES WITH

J. Vernon McGee



1 & 2 Samuel

I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath. (Hosea 13:11)

The books of 1 and 2 Samuel give us the origin of the kingdom. The two books of Samuel were classified as one in the Jewish canon. They are the first two of four books of Kings in the Latin Vulgate.

WRITER: The name of Samuel is identified with these two historical books, not because he was the writer primarily, but because his story occurs first and is so prominent. He anointed as king both Saul and David. Samuel is considered the author up to 1 Samuel 25 (his death). Nathan and Gad completed the writing (1 Chronicles 29:29 ASV).

FEATURES:

- 1 – The rise of the kingdom.
- 2 – The story of Hannah.
- 3 – The story of little Samuel.
- 4 – The story of David and Goliath.
- 5 – The friendship of David and Jonathan.

- 6 – King Saul's visit to witch of Endor.
- 7 – God's covenant with David in 2 Samuel 7.
- 8 – David's great sin—Bathsheba.
- 9 – David's rebellious son—Absalom.

THEME:

Prayer	1 Samuel opens with prayer; 2 Samuel closes with prayer.
Kingdom	The change of the government from a theocracy to a kingdom; God's covenant with David.
Prophet	The rise of the office of prophet, who became the messenger of God in place of the priest.

KEY VERSE: 1 Samuel 10:25

COMMENT: There is a striking contrast between the characters in the book of Judges and those in the two books of Samuel. The men in Judges seem to be ordinary and average, while here the characters are outstanding and above the average. There are six who stand out in 1 Samuel. They are Hannah, Eli, Samuel, Saul, Jonathan, and David. First Samuel is a transitional book from the era of the judges to the kingdom. The kingdom foreshadows the coming millennial kingdom in some respects. There are certain profound global lessons for us in the setting up of the kingdom. The world needs:

- 1 - A king with power who exercises his power righteously
- 2 - A king who will be in full dependence upon God and who can be trusted with power
- 3 - A king who is in full obedience to God

CHAPTERS AND VERSES WORTH REMEMBERING:

1 Samuel 15:22	Samuel's word about obedience
1 Samuel 25:29	Abigail's word about David's relationship to God
2 Samuel 3:33	Abner's epitaph
2 Samuel 7	God's covenant with David (note the seven "I wills")
2 Samuel 18:33	David's grief over Absalom
2 Samuel 22	Song of David (Psalm 18)
2 Samuel 24:24	David's rebuke against a cheap religion

1 SAMUEL

COMMENT:

I. SAMUEL: God's prophet, priest, and judge, Chapters 1-8

CHAPTER 1—This First book of Samuel opens with a cry of a godly woman. While the people cry for a king, Hannah cries for a child. God builds the throne on a woman's cry. When woman takes her exalted place, God builds her a throne.

Eli, the high priest, thinks Hannah is drunk as she prays before the tabernacle in Shiloh. When he discovers her true anxiety is for a child, he blesses her. Samuel is born to Hannah and she brings him to Eli in fulfillment of her vow.

CHAPTER 2—Hannah's prayer of thanksgiving is prophetic, as she mentions the Messiah for the first time (v. 10).

Eli's sons are evil and not fit for the priests' office. An unnamed prophet warns Eli that his line will be cut off as high priest and that God will raise up a faithful priest (v. 35). Notice verse 26—spoken only of Samuel and Jesus.

CHAPTER 3—The story of the call of Samuel as a prophet-priest is ordinarily reserved for children. It is not only for the junior, but for the senior. Bring it out of the nursery and into the adult department, for it is not only a beautiful story but marks one of the great transitional periods in Scripture—the change from theocracy to monarchy, from priest to king. God spoke to a king through prophets. Samuel was not a wee child. Josephus says he was 12 years old (2:18 gives the wrong impression). Solomon was a grown man when he prayed, "I am but a little child" (1 Kings 3:7). Jeremiah was called to prophetic office when he wrote, "I am a child" (Jeremiah 1:6). There were a total of four calls to Samuel: first and second were the call of God to salvation (v. 7); the last 2 calls were to service (v. 10).

CHAPTER 4—Israel, without consulting Samuel, goes out to battle against the Philistines—which leads to defeat. Then they bring the ark of the covenant into battle, thinking its presence will bring victory. This reveals the superstitious paganism of the people who thought there was some merit in an object. The merit was in the presence and person of God.

Verse 5 reveals gross idolatry.

Verses 6 through 8 show that the Philistines were both superstitious and ignorant.

Verse 10 tells Israel's defeat again. The ark is captured.

Verse 18—The capture of the ark causes Eli to collapse and fall backward, breaking his neck (he was a fat man).

CHAPTER 5—The captured ark is placed in the house of Dagon, idol of the Philistines. The idol falls over and breaks. In fear, they send the ark to Gath where it is then transferred to Ekron.

CHAPTER 6—Philistines return the ark to Israel, carried on a cart, to the field of Joshua at Bethshemesh. The ark is transferred to Kirjathjearim.

CHAPTER 7—After 20 years Israel prepares to receive the ark. Israel turns from Baalim and Ashtaroth to serve the Lord (v. 4).

After Israel's victory over the Philistines, Samuel sets up a stone at Ebenezer, which means "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

Verses 15 through 17 give Samuel's extensive ministry as prophet, priest, and judge.

CHAPTER 8—Hosea 13:11 can be written over the remainder of 1 Samuel:

I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath.

Samuel made the mistake of making his own sons judges to succeed him. They were wholly unworthy and incompetent (v. 3). Samuel was a failure as a father.

Israel demanded a king and rejected God and Samuel. Israel was influenced by surrounding nations.

II. SAUL: Satan's man, Chapters 9–15

CHAPTER 9—The people chose Saul. He looked like a king (v. 2). He was out looking for the asses of his father (v. 3), but the asses of Israel were looking for him (v. 20). God granted their request but sent leanness to their souls (v. 17). Is Saul (v. 21) genuinely humble?

CHAPTER 10—Samuel anoints Saul king (v. 1). Was Saul (v. 6) converted? This verse is not the final proof. The Spirit of God came upon Balaam also, but he was not converted. Succeeding events in Saul's life indicate that he was not. Verse 9 does not mean he had a *new* heart, only *another* heart. God equipped him for the office of king.

The reception of Saul as king was their rejection of God (v. 19). Saul's conduct (v. 22) is evidence of a false modesty. Verse 25 gives the message of 1 Samuel.

CHAPTER 11—Saul began well, as he gained a victory over the Ammonites at Jabesh-gilead. All Israel accepted Saul as king (v. 15).

CHAPTER 12—Samuel transfers all authority to Saul and turns in his report as judge over Israel. Verse 3 is Samuel's autobiography—he was a remarkable man. Although Saul was Israel's choice (v. 13), God would still bless if the people would obey (v. 14). The people begin to see and acknowledge their mistake (v. 19). Verse 22 is the revelation of the marvelous grace of God.

CHAPTER 13—The real nature of Saul begins to show. His son Jonathan got the victory at Michmash, but Saul blew the trumpet and took credit for it (vs. 3, 4). In presumption Saul intrudes into the priest's office (vs. 8-10). Samuel rebukes and rejects Saul (vs. 13, 14). The disarmament of Israel is revealed (vs. 19, 22).

CHAPTER 14—Again Jonathan gains a victory, but Saul takes credit for it (vs. 14, 15). “Saul took credit for victory ... modesty gone now” (Young). Saul's jealousy is revealed (vs. 37-45). He actually would destroy his son if he stood in the way.

CHAPTER 15—Saul's glaring rebellion is revealed in his disobedience regarding Agag. He wants to cover up his sin before the people (v. 30). Saul is rejected now as king with no hope of recovery (v. 35). Samuel loved Saul for he mourned for him. Was he Samuel's choice? A great spiritual principle is enunciated by Samuel (vs. 22, 23).

God has given Saul an opportunity to make good after his first failure, but he failed the second time. This is God's method all the way through Scripture (cf. Jacob, Jonah, Peter, Mark, etc.). God did not need to wait for the result—He already knew. However, the individual needed to know, and we need to know (Psalm 51:4; Romans 3:19; Revelation 15:3). We shall be tested, and we need the help of the Holy Spirit (James 1:12).

Why the extreme surgery in slaying the Amalekites and Agag? Move ahead about 500 years. Haman was an Agagite (Esther 3:1). God was protecting multitudes of the future, as He did at the Flood.

III. DAVID: God's man, and SAUL: Satan's man, Chapters 16–31

CHAPTER 16—God chooses David as king to succeed Saul and sends Samuel to Bethlehem to anoint him as king. Another great principle is enunciated (v. 7). This is God's method of choosing men for a particular office and task. Because Saul is forsaken of God (v. 14), David is brought into court to play upon his harp to soothe the evil spirit of Saul.

CHAPTER 17—This chapter contains the familiar episode of David slaying Goliath with a slingshot. Why did David take five smooth stones to slay Goliath (v. 40)? Did he expect to miss? No, Goliath had four sons, and David expected them to come out also. In fact, he did slay them (2 Samuel 21:22); David did not expect to miss (Judges 20:16).

CHAPTER 18—David and Jonathan become fast friends, and they make a covenant for life. Saul becomes jealous of David because of the people's applause (vs. 8, 9) and twice attempts to slay him. David becomes the favorite of the people (v. 16). Saul gives his daughter Michal to David as wife in order to trap David.

CHAPTER 19—Saul openly attempts to have David slain; he personally attempts to slay him with a javelin as David plays upon his harp (vs. 9, 10). David escapes and becomes as a hunted animal.

CHAPTER 20—Jonathan proves his love for David by protecting him (vs. 16, 17). Jonathan communicates with David the intentions of Saul by means of the shooting of arrows. Saul determines to kill David, and David flees.

CHAPTER 21—David flees to Ahimelech the priest and feeds his young men with the showbread from the holy place. Then David flees to Achish, king of Gath, in Philistine country.

CHAPTER 22—David begins to gather his mighty men. Those who came to him were in dire need—in distress, in debt, and discontented. David is hunted as a criminal. Saul slays Ahimelech and the other priests for helping David (vs. 16-23).

CHAPTER 23—David continues to flee with 600 men (v. 13). Jonathan contacts David and recognizes that David will be the next king (vs. 16, 17). Jonathan is a great man, and his attitude and action remind us of John the Baptist.

CHAPTER 24—David spares Saul's life at En-gedi because he honors his office, not the man (v. 6).

CHAPTER 25—Death of Samuel in his retirement. David encounters Nabal and Abigail. David in anger is prevented from the rash act of murdering Nabal and his servants by the presence and diplomacy of Abigail, Nabal's beautiful wife. Nabal dies after a night of drunkenness, and David takes Abigail as wife. She was a good influence in the life of David (vs. 29, 32-34).

CHAPTER 26—David again spares Saul in the wilderness of Ziph. Note the contrast between Saul and David. Obviously, Saul knows that David is God's choice, but he seeks to slay him (v. 25). David recognizes that Saul is the anointed king, and he spares him. God must deal with Saul (vs. 9-11). Is David being sarcastic with Abner (v. 15)?

CHAPTER 27—David in fear retreats to Philistia (v. 1). Achish of Gath gives David and his men the city of Ziklag.

CHAPTER 28—Saul's interview with the witch of Endor poses and provokes many questions. The primary one relates to Samuel. Did she bring Samuel back from the dead? If so, this is the only instance in Scripture. Scripture positively condemns such practices of necromancy (Deuteronomy 18:9-14). The New Testament account of Lazarus and a rich man indicates there can be no return (Luke 16:19-31). Paul was silenced about his experience of being caught up to the third heaven (2 Corinthians 12:2-4). Scripture warns of these practices and predicts a future outbreak (Matthew 24:24; 2 Thessalonians 2:9; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; Revelation 16:13, 14).

Saul was abandoned of God (vs. 6, 15). Because heaven was silent, Saul turned to hell. We maintain that Samuel did not appear. There are two possible explanations: (1) It was a fraud, the witch was a ventriloquist (this is the position of G. Campbell Morgan); (2) an overweening desire to communicate with dead loved ones makes people victims of deceit. We believe a false spirit appeared—not Samuel. Even the witch was deceived and frightened (vs. 12-15). The false spirit communicated nothing that was not previously revealed.

CHAPTER 29—The Philistines do not trust David to fight against Israel.

CHAPTER 30—David fights against the Amalekites because of destruction of Ziklag. Note David's refuge (v. 6).

CHAPTER 31—Saul, mortally wounded in battle, tries to commit suicide. See 2 Samuel, chapter 1, for the answer to the question: "Who killed King Saul?"

- *Saul failed in ruling God's property.*
- *The end is self-destruction.*
- *God and His authority are rejected.*
- *Saul spared the Amalekites; Saul was killed by Amalekites.*

OUTLINE:

I. **SAMUEL: God's prophet, priest, and judge**, Chapters 1–8

A. Birth of Samuel, Chapters 1, 2

1. Hannah's prayer and answer, 1
2. Hannah's prophetic prayer; boy Samuel in temple, 2

B. Call of Samuel, Chapter 3

C. Last judge and first prophet (prophetic office), Chapters 4–8

1. Ark captured by Philistines; Word of God to Samuel fulfilled; Eli dies and his sons slain, 4
2. God judged Philistines because of the ark; ark returned to Bethshemesh, 5, 6
3. Samuel leads in revival (put away idols and turn to Jehovah); victory at Ebenezer, 7
4. Israel rejects God and demands a king; Samuel warns nation but promises a king, 8

II. **SAUL: Satan's man**, Chapters 9–15

A. Saul received, Chapters 9, 10

1. Saul chosen as king, 9
2. Saul anointed as king, 10

B. Saul reigning, Chapters 11, 12

1. Saul's victory over Ammonites, 11
2. Transfer of authority from Samuel to Saul, 12

C. Saul rejected, Chapters 13–15

1. Saul's rebellion against God, 13
2. Jonathan responsible for victory over Philistines; Saul took credit, 14
3. Saul's glaring rebellion and disobedience regarding Agag, 15

III. DAVID: God's man, and SAUL: Satan's man, Chapters 16–31

A. David anointed, Chapter 16

B. David trained, Chapters 17, 18

1. David slays Goliath, giant of Gath, 17
2. Jonathan and David make covenant; Saul gives daughter Michal to David, 18

C. David disciplined, Chapters 19–30

1. Saul attempts to kill David again, 19
2. Jonathan helps David escape, 20
3. David escapes to Nob and Gath, 21
4. David gathers his men; Saul slays priests of God, 22
5. David fights Philistines; Saul pursues David; Jonathan and David make covenant, 23
6. David spares Saul's life at En-gedi, 24
7. Samuel dies; David and Abigail, 25
8. David again spares Saul's life in wilderness of Ziph, 26
9. David retreats to land of Philistia (Ziklag), 27
10. Saul goes to witch of Endor, 28
11. Philistines do not trust David in battle, 29
12. David fights Amalekites because of destruction of Ziklag, 30

D. Saul, mortally wounded in battle, commits suicide, Chapter 31



2 SAMUEL

COMMENT: The book of 2 Samuel continues the message of 1 Samuel. It is given over entirely to the reign of David. The life and times of David are important because he is the ancestor of Jesus (Matthew 1:1). It shows that government of this world in the hands of man is a failure. Many new characters appear in this book with whom the student of the Bible should familiarize himself.

I. TRIUMPHS of David, Chapters 1–10

David mourns the deaths of Saul and Jonathan.

CHAPTER 1—The question of who killed King Saul may not be answered in this chapter, but it adds another suspect. A young Amalekite, escaping out of the camp of Israel, reports to David the death of Saul (v. 8). He claims credit for slaying Saul (vs. 9, 10). David executes the young man for the crime (vs. 14–16).

David's grief over the deaths of Saul and Jonathan is touching, poetic and dramatic. It is a striking lamentation (vs. 17–27).

CHAPTER 2—David made king over Judah. Abner, captain of Saul, made Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, king over the remaining 11 tribes. Civil war ensues. David defeats Abner and the army.

CHAPTER 3—A long civil war weakens the nation, but David gradually gains in strength. David makes Hebron his home at this time. Abner, after falling out with Ish-bosheth, deserts to David. Joab, David's captain, suspects him and, seeking revenge for his brother Asahel's death, murders Abner. Abner had brought Michal to David previously as a condition of making peace with David. Note the epitaph of David to Abner (v. 33). Abner had left the city of refuge where he was safe.

CHAPTER 4—Ish-bosheth is murdered, as he lay on his bed, by his own leaders. David executes the murderers.

CHAPTER 5—After much bloodletting, David finally is made king over all Israel and moves his capital to Jerusalem. Note the approach of the 11 tribes to David (v. 2). David takes Jerusalem from the Jebusites. Hiram, king of Tyre, furnished men and materials to build David a palace in Jerusalem.

CHAPTER 6—David does a right thing in a wrong way. He tries to bring up the ark on a cart, although God had given implicit directions for moving it. The Kohathites of the tribe of Levi were to carry the ark on their shoulders (Numbers 3—7). Uzzah was smitten dead because he should have known better than to touch it. “Hands off” was made abundantly clear in God’s instructions concerning it. David then brings up the ark in a right way (v. 13). Michal rebukes David for his enthusiasm and devotion to God in bringing up the ark.

CHAPTER 7—God’s covenant with David makes this one of the great chapters of the Bible. The message of the Bible from this point on rests upon the promise God here makes to David. David desires deeply to build the temple to house the ark of God, and Nathan the prophet concurs with him in the plan. God appears to Nathan to correct him, for God will not let David build the temple because he is a bloody man. God gives him credit for his desire and promises in turn to build David a house. God promises a king and a kingdom to come in the line of David (vs. 12, 13, 16). Verse 14 not only refers to Solomon, but to Christ—“Christ was made sin for us.” Bishop Horsley translates this, “When guilt is laid upon him, I will chasten him with the rod of men.”

God confirms this with an oath (Psalm 89:34-37). David understands that a king is coming in his line who will be more than a man. Bishop Horsley translates verse 19, “O Lord God, Thou hast spoken of Thy servant’s house for a great while to come, and hast regarded me in the arrangement about the Man that is to be from above, O God Jehovah.” (See also 2 Samuel 7:25 and 23:5.)

The Old Testament prophets based the kingdom on this promise (Jeremiah 23:5).

The New Testament opens at this point (Matthew 1:1).

This was the angel Gabriel’s message to Mary (Luke 1:32, 33).

Peter began here on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:25-31; 34-36).

Paul began here in Romans (Romans 1:3).

The New Testament closes here (Revelation 22:16).

(59 references to David in the New Testament)

CHAPTER 8—David consolidates his kingdom, he gains victories over the old enemies of Israel (v. 12) and enlarges his kingdom (v. 15).

CHAPTER 9—David befriends Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, whose feet were lame. David brings him into his palace and gives him a place at his table (vs. 7, 10, 13). This reveals the kindness of David.

CHAPTER 10—David defeats both the Ammonites and Syrians to avenge the insult to his messengers sent to Hanun, king of Ammon.

II. TROUBLES of David, Chapters 11–24

CHAPTER 11—David's two great sins were committed when David remained in Jerusalem instead of being out with his army where he should have been (v. 1). David first commits adultery with Bathsheba, then plots the murder of her husband Uriah. David thought he had gotten by with it, but he had not (v. 27).

CHAPTER 12—Nathan faces David about his sins, and David repents. Nathan applies the parable about the little ewe lamb to David's sin (v. 7). Nathan pronounces God's judgment upon David (vs. 10-12), and David acknowledges his sin (v. 13). David must learn that man reaps what he sows (v. 14). Solomon is the second son born to Bathsheba.

CHAPTER 13—David's daughter Tamar, sister to Absalom, is raped by Amnon, another son of David. David did nothing about it (v. 21). Absalom kills Amnon and flees to his mother's father, king of Geshur.

CHAPTER 14—Joab plots the return of Absalom when he sees David's love for him (v. 1). Absalom is permitted to return, but David refuses to see him (v. 24). Finally David receives him (v. 33).

CHAPTER 15—Absalom heads a rebellion against David after winning the affection of Israel (vs. 6, 10, 12). David is forced to flee from Jerusalem. David refuses to take the ark with him as a superstitious or good luck charm (v. 25, 26). David leaves, perhaps to avert bloodshed and the slaying of Absalom (v. 30).

CHAPTER 16—Ziba, Mephibosheth's servant, betrays his master and deceives David. Shimei, of the house of Saul, curses David, yet David refuses to let Abishai slay him. Absalom takes Jerusalem.

CHAPTER 17—Absalom's advisors, Ahithophel and Hushai, disagree about the attack against David. Hushai argues that David and his men were veterans in the field of battle and Absalom was no match for them (vs. 8, 10).

CHAPTER 18—The people refuse to let David go into battle. David reveals his tender love for Absalom by urging all his captains to protect the life of his son (v. 5). Absalom is slain by Joab in battle. David's deep grief at the death of Absalom is a masterpiece of mourning (v. 33).

CHAPTER 19—David returns to Jerusalem and is restored to his throne after Joab rebukes him for his deep mourning for Absalom. Obviously, Absalom was the favorite son of David and his choice for the throne. David was a great king but a very poor father. David spares the life of Shimei.

CHAPTER 20—Sheba, a Benjamite, leads a revolt against David. The revolt is put down by Joab after he slays Amasa who showed no inclination to put down the rebellion.

CHAPTER 21—Three years of famine come as a judgment upon the nation because of Saul's zeal in slaying the Gibeonites with whom Joshua had made a treaty of peace. David continues warring against the Philistines.

CHAPTER 22—This is David's song of deliverance after God delivered him from all his enemies. This is the same as Psalm 18. It would seem a reasonable probability that David wrote Psalm 23 about this time.

CHAPTER 23—These are David's final words. Verse 5 was David's hope. David's mighty men are listed. These are the men who came to David during the days of his rejection. They did exploits for God (vs. 13-17) and performed courageous feats beyond the call of David (v. 20). There is one blot on the escutcheon of David, as Uriah the Hittite was one of the mighty men of David (v. 39).

CHAPTER 24—David commits another sin in taking a census. By now he should trust God instead of numbers (see 1 Chronicles 21:1-7). God again punishes David but permits him to choose his punishment. David casts himself upon the mercy of God (v. 14). God sends a pestilence. David buys Araunah's threshing floor on which to rear an altar to God. David's refusal to accept it as a gift reveals his deep dedication and devotion to God (v. 24). This spot became the place where Solomon erected the temple. Although the Mosque of Omar stands there today, Israel again controls that area.

2 Samuel continues the message of 1 Samuel. Government of this world in the hands of man is a failure.

I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him. (Ezekiel 21:27)

Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. (Isaiah 32:1)

OUTLINE:

- I. TRIUMPHS of David, Chapters 1–10**
 - A. David mourns the deaths of Saul and Jonathan, Chapter 1
 - B. David made king over Judah, Chapter 2
 - C. Civil war—Abner joins with David but murdered by Joab, Chapter 3
 - D. Ish-bosheth, son of Saul, killed, Chapter 4
 - E. David made king over all Israel; moves his capital to Jerusalem, Chapter 5
 - F. David's wrong and right attempts to bring the ark to Jerusalem, Chapter 6
 - G. God's covenant to build the house of David, Chapter 7
 - H. David consolidates his kingdom, Chapter 8
 - I. David befriends Mephibosheth, Chapter 9
 - J. David wars against Ammon and Syria, Chapter 10
- II. TROUBLES of David, Chapters 11–24**
 - A. David's two great sins, Chapter 11
 - B. Nathan faces David with his sins; David repents, Chapter 12
 - C. David's daughter Tamar raped by Amnon, David's son; Amnon murdered by Absalom, David's son, Chapter 13
 - D. David permits Absalom to return with half-hearted forgiveness, Chapter 14
 - E. Absalom rebels against David, Chapter 15
 - F. Ziba, Mephibosheth's servant, deceives David; Shimei curses David, Chapter 16
 - G. Absalom's advisers (Ahithophel and Hushai) disagree on attack against David, Chapter 17
 - H. Absalom slain and David mourns, Chapter 18
 - I. David restored to throne, Chapter 19
 - J. Sheba revolts against David, Chapter 20
 - K. Three years of famine; Gibeonites take vengeance on house of Saul; war with Philistines, Chapter 21
 - L. David's song of deliverance (Psalm 18), Chapter 22
 - M. David's last words; David's mighty men, Chapter 23
 - N. David's sin in taking census; chooses punishment and buys threshing floor of Araunah, Chapter 24

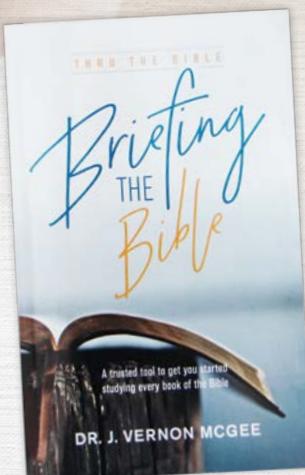
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Although it is not alleged that the arrangement of the books of the Bible is inspired, it is a historical fact that spiritual and scholarly men superintended the arrangement of the books of the New Testament canon. Therefore, it is no accident that the Gospel of Matthew is first. Even Renan, the most skeptical of this Gospel, "... the most important book in Christianity, the most important book that ever has been written." This Gospel stands like a surmounting door between the two Testaments. It swings back into the Old Testament and gathers up prophecies fulfilled at the first. It swings into the New Testament and speaks of God, "Upon this rock I will build my church."

WRITER: Matthew was a converted publican (tax collector) chosen to write to the Jews concerning their Messiah.

KEY: Matthew presents the program of God. A proper understanding of the phrase "kingdom of heaven" is essential to the proper interpretation of the Bible. The Kingdom of heaven is the same. The Jews of the first century in Palestine had a better understanding of the term than the average church



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