**Kings of Israel I: The Last Judge to the House of David**

Instructor-Pat Reeder

Wednesday evenings, 7pm-9:30pm

**Course description**

This is the first of a three-part series, running from 1 Samuel through 2 Chronicles, exploring the history of the Kings of Israel.  This massive stretch of the Old Testament contains shocking family dramas, gruesome violence, court intrigue and interminable struggles for power.   Behind it all stands God’s sovereignty over Israel and the nations.  In part 1, we will examine the first “chapter” of the kingship in 1st and 2nd Samuel, running from the last judge in Samuel through to David’s rule of the united kingdom of Israel.

**Course goals**

1. Enable students to see how major biblical doctrines play out vividly over a period of centuries.
2. Help students understand generally how to read narrative more broadly, examining the ways in literary technique is wielded to point in a theological direction.

**Course Requirements**

*Attendance* Students must attend at least 4 of 5 classes to pass. Everyone has 1 “excused absence” before receiving an incomplete. Any other absence is negotiable, to be discussed with the instructor.

*Readings, Homework* There will be weekly readings to keep in step with the material being covered each week. Questions on the readings can be found on the back of this sheet. These are strictly completion based.

**Calendar**

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| Date | Session | Readings | Homework Due | Content |
| 5/8 | Week 1 | N/A |  | Introduction, Samuel the Judge |
| 5/15 | - | - | - | NO CLASS 🏄‍♂️ |
| 5/22 | Week 2 | 1 Sam 1-15 | 1 | Saul’s Anointing and Foolishness |
| 5/29 | Week 3 | I Sam 16-31 | 2 | Fall of Saul, Rise of David |
| 6/5 | Week 4 | II Sam 1-10 | 3 | Consolidation of House of David |
| 6/12 | Week 5 | II Sam 11-24 | 4 | Chaos in David’s Family, Epilogue |

**Miscellaneous**

Students will be responsible for their own notes. We will provide notebooks and the powerpoints will be available upon request.

For each week, read the weekly selection. Reflect on and answer the questions to follow.

**Homework 1** (Due Week 2)

1. Why do you think God’s reaction to Samuel’s bad sons is much less severe than his reaction to Eli’s sons?
2. In 1 Sam 15:11, God says he regrets making Saul king. In 1 Sam 15:29, Samuel says God is not like man that He changes His mind. How do you reconcile these?

**Homework 2** (Due Week 3)

1. Evaluate David’s decision to go live in Philistine territory (1 Sam 27:1). Argue your case.
2. In 1 Sam 28, did Samuel’s actual ghost appear to Saul? Why or why not? If not, what is this apparition?

**Homework 3** (Due Week 4)

1. Compare and contrast the two episodes in 2 Sam 6 of transporting the ark. Bonus if you can cite the law violated in the first attempt to bring the ark to Jerusalem.
2. In 2 Samuel 11 and 2 Samuel 24, we see David gravely sinning (Bathsheba and the census, respectively). And yet, well before this, God says he will establish David’s dynasty forever––*unlike Saul!* Name at least two reasons why God might have treated them so differently.

**Homework 4** (Due Week 5)

1. It is sometimes claimed that David “power-raped” Bathsheba. That is, she had no choice but to sleep with him because he was the king. What bearing does Deuteronomy 22:23-27 have on this interpretation. What is your assessment of this claim?
2. Why do you think David is so passive with his family? Compare and contrast David’s youthful zeal regarding to Goliath and his impotence regarding his wicked sons.