

1 Samuel 8 Commentary

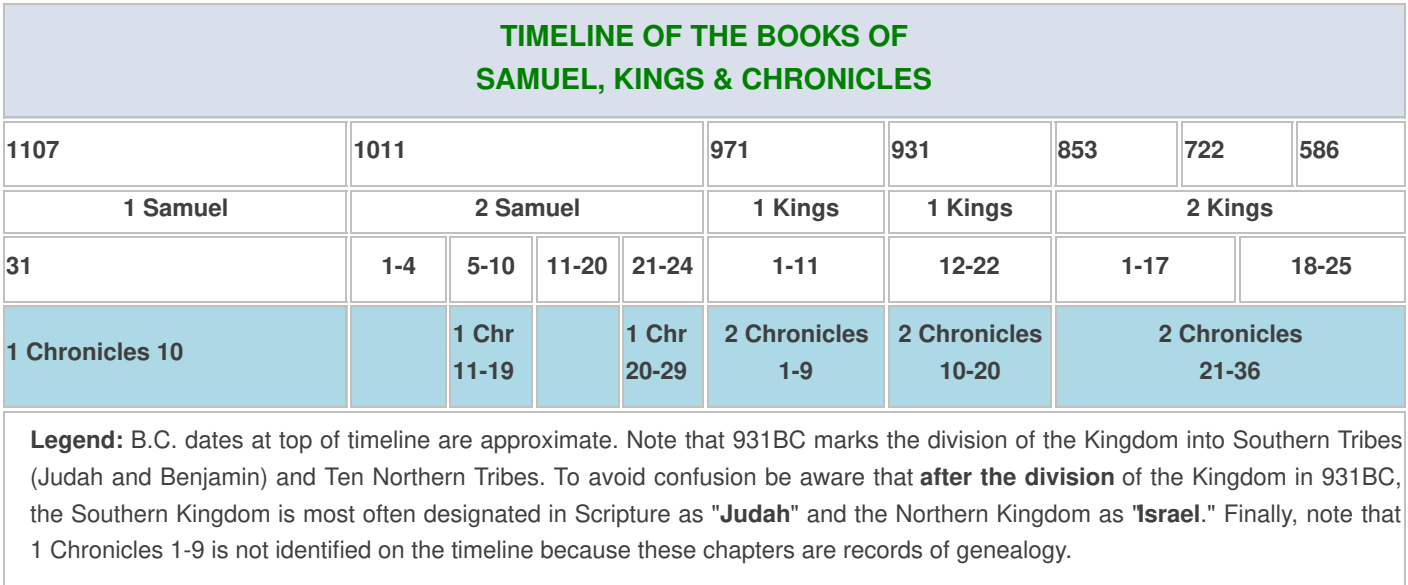
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Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission
[1 Samuel Chart](#), from Charles Swindoll



The Man Samuel in 1 Samuel 1-8

1 Samuel 8	1 Samuel 9	1 Samuel 10	1 Samuel 11	1 Samuel 12
A King Requested	A King Chosen		King Goes Forth	The Kingdom Admonished
People request a king	Saul comes to Samuel	Saul Anointed	Saul's call to arms	Samuel's call to commitment

1 Samuel 8:1 And it came about when Samuel was old that he appointed his sons judges over Israel.

KJV 1 Samuel 8:1 And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel.

NET 1 Samuel 8:1 In his old age Samuel appointed his sons as judges over Israel.

CSB 1 Samuel 8:1 When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons as judges over Israel.

ESV 1 Samuel 8:1 When Samuel became old, he made his sons judges over Israel.

NIV 1 Samuel 8:1 When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons as judges for Israel.

NLT 1 Samuel 8:1 As Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons to be judges over Israel.

NRS 1 Samuel 8:1 When Samuel became old, he made his sons judges over Israel.

RSV 1 Samuel 8:1 When Samuel became old, he made his sons judges over Israel.

- **he appointed** De 16:18,19 Jud 8:22,23 2Ch 19:5,6 Ne 7:2 1Ti 5:21
- **sons judges:** Jdg 5:10 10:4 12:14
- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Carl Laney's outline - (Borrow [First and Second Samuel](#))

ISRAEL'S DEMAND FOR A KING (1Sa 8:1–22)

The Demand of the People (1Sa 8:1–9)

The Price of Kingship (1Sa 8:10–18)

The Decision of the People (1 Sa 8:19–20)

The Sovereign Permissiveness of Yahweh (1 Sa 8:21–22)

SAMUEL'S POOR JUDGMENT REGARDING SON'S

If you look at the chart above, you will notice that 1 Samuel 8 marks the second major segment of this book, and a major turning point in the history of Israel, transitioning from judgeship to kingship. Heretofore Yahweh had been their King and it was He Who raised up judges to deliver them from their enemies.

There is an overarching application we should not miss in chapter 8 that God Is Still In Control When I Make Poor Choices!

Ponder this point somewhat obscured by the chapter break (chapter breaks should always force us to check the preceding context because they were not inspired!) - What had God done for Israel in chapter 7? Only defeat their powerful enemy the Philistines! And what had Samuel done to create a "memory jogger"? In 1Sa 7:12 "Then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpah and Shen, and named it Ebenezer, saying, "Thus far the LORD has helped us."" What is sad about Israel in the OT (and this same malady afflicts all of God's people through the ages) is that they had a short memory. They seemed to have forgotten that it was God Who had gone to battle for them and given them the victory. Memory joggers are great, but only if we remember them!

And it came about when Samuel was old - Recall in 1Sa 2:22 we read "Eli was very old." (and this is when he heard about the

evil of his sons)! How old was Samuel? We cannot really say, but this "time phrase" points to the fact that there were a number of years between the remarkable events in Chapter 7 and the sad event in Chapter 8. Presumably there was relative peace in Israel during these years Samuel served as judge. It seems that the nation was content with Samuel as their leader. Now that he was old the peace Israel had experienced was in jeopardy, and as we soon discover, there was no suitable replacement for him.

MacArthur - Samuel was about 60 years of age (1043 b.c.) (ED: SOME SAY 65). He appointed his two sons to serve as judges in Beersheba, a city about 57 mi. S of Ramah. (Borrow the [MacArthur Study Bible](#))

Given that Samuel is now an old man, [Brian Bell](#) makes an interesting comment that might indeed explain Israel's request - This is a new generation. They have only heard from their parents how the Lord delivered them from their enemies. They have been reared in comparative peace & safety. They took for granted the privileges of the Theocracy w/o properly understanding the source of their many benefits!

That he appointed his sons judges over Israel - His sons were taking bribes...unraveling justice instead of upholding it. Keep in mind these judges were not like the "delivering" judges in the book of Judges, but are "deciding" judges, rendering decisions regarding disputes, a function that calls for righteous judges (Ex 18:13-27, Dt 16:18-20), something his sons proved not to be! Samuel was the chief judge of Israel and apparently had the authority to appoint his sons as judges over a smaller area (1Sa 8:2). One could postulate that Samuel appointed his sons as judges because he realized his days were numbered. Samuel's appointments of his sons would prove to be a poor choice and would also prove to be a catalyst (so to speak) for Israel's demand for a king like all the other pagan, godless nations! The people saw Samuel as stepping out of his role of judge because of his old age and not replacing his void with honest, effective judges.

THOUGHT - Choices do have consequences and this one was a poor choice for godly Samuel. As believers, we live in a fallen world, and bring forth fallen offspring and too often make poor parental choices that yield poor, often painful consequences, speaking from personal experience as the father of 2 sons and 2 daughters. How often I have thought, if I could just go back in time and reverse my mistakes! But undoubtedly I would have still made "new" mistakes. I am sure most of your reading can identify with my sentiments.

John Woodhouse asks "Why, then, did Samuel make his sons judges? It is difficult to know, although it seems that it was less a dynastic arrangement that he had specifically in mind than a practical sharing of the burdens of the work in the present. It is worth noting that Joel and Abijah were judges in the far south, in Beersheba, some fifty miles from Samuel's home in Ramah. It is reasonable to see in Samuel's appointment of them an attempt to see the justice of the judge extended throughout the land. Samuel's annual circuit from Ramah to Bethel, Gilgal, Mizpah, and back to Ramah (1 Samuel 7:16, 17) covered a relatively small central area of Israel's territory.

[Paul Apple](#) summarizes 1 Samuel 8 - God's People Have A Tragic History Of Rejecting God's Leadership Model For A Pragmatic, Worldly Model Of Their Own Choosing....However, God is gracious to continue to work and bless in a program that at best can be called "Second Best." Deviation in this one area is not a fatal flaw for either the nation of Israel or the local church. There are many other criteria for God's favor and blessing. However, that doesn't excuse us from seeking God's best in this area as well and expecting that despite our natural pragmatic thinking to the contrary, God's way will actually turn out to be most fruitful when judged from God's perspective.

Henry Morris - Since Samuel was a judge in Israel as long as he lived (1 Samuel 7:15), here is a specific case when there were contemporaneous judges in Israel; Samuel had a circuit, but his main "court" was in Ramah (1 Samuel 7:17). His two sons served as judges in Beersheba, about fifty miles south of Ramah.

Matthew Henry - It does not appear that Samuel's sons were so profane and vicious as Eli's sons; but they were corrupt judges, they turned aside after lucre. Samuel took no bribes, but his sons did, and then they perverted judgment. What added to the grievance of the people was, that they were threatened by an invasion from [Nahash](#), king of the Ammonites.

1 Samuel 8:2 Now the name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judging in Beersheba.

BGT 1 Samuel 8:2 κα τα τα τ ν ματα τ ν υ ν α το πρωτ τοκος Ιωηλ κα νομα το δευτ ρου Αβια δικαστα ν Βηρσαβε

KJV 1 Samuel 8:2 Now the name of his firstborn was Joel; and the name of his second, Abiah: they were judges in Beersheba.

NET 1 Samuel 8:2 The name of his firstborn son was Joel, and the name of his second son was Abijah. They

were judges in Beer Sheba.

CSB 1 Samuel 8:2 His firstborn son's name was Joel and his second was Abijah. They were judges in Beer-sheba.

ESV 1 Samuel 8:2 The name of his firstborn son was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba.

NIV 1 Samuel 8:2 The name of his firstborn was Joel and the name of his second was Abijah, and they served at Beersheba.

NLT 1 Samuel 8:2 Joel and Abijah, his oldest sons, held court in Beersheba.

NRS 1 Samuel 8:2 The name of his firstborn son was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beer-sheba.

RSV 1 Samuel 8:2 The name of his first-born son was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba.

- **Joel:** 1Ch 6:28,38
- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Beersheba in Tribe of Simeon

Now the name of his firstborn was Joel - Samuel's oldest son [Joel](#) had a God honoring name with meant "Jehovah is God," which one would have thought would lead such a son to God honoring behavior that lives up to his beautiful name.

THOUGHT - On a personal note, my firstborn is named Joel and he is a godly father of 4, a physician and an elder in a Bible church, so I must praise God for his life and his walk as one who acknowledges "Jehovah is (his) God." Thank You Lord. And we actually named him with this God honoring name more that 10 years before my wife and I were born again. God knew who he would turn out to be. And as an aside, at age 49 (2021) he was discovered to have a 99% occlusion of the "[widow maker](#)" coronary artery ([his angiogram looked worse than the wikipedia picture](#)) and God used a Jewish doctor name Ithamar to save his life and place 4 coronary stents. Amazingly, he suffered no myocardial damage! God is good!

and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judging in Beersheba - Mark it down that having even a godly father (Samuel's integrity 1Sa 12:3, 4) in a high office does not qualify his son for a similar office! There is ever an inherent danger (or problem) in hereditary positions of responsibility. We see this truth played out in the chronicles of the kings of Judah (e.g., [Jehoiakim](#) did evil in the sight of the LORD his God, even though he was the son of godly King [Josiah](#) - 2Ch 36:4, 5) See [Beersheba](#) above in the land belonging to the tribe of Simeon. This location is often mentioned as the "southern-most" location is the statement "from Dan to Beersheba." (Jdg. 20:1; 2Sa 24:2; 2Sa 24:15) Abijah's name means "my father is Jah (Jehovah)" but sadly he did not live in the light of this glorious name. The name of a person in Scripture many times describes their life or life purpose (best example - Mt 1:21+ "Jesus...He will save His people from their sins."), but that individual still has self-will and can deviate from the course that their name may have dictated or suggested. Such was the case with Abijah (and Joel). Instead of listening to and following the lead of Jehovah, both of Samuel's sons turned to the right and the left (so to speak). There is another significant point about the two sons judging some 50 miles south of Samuel's home base in Ramah. So it could have been a case of "[out of sight, out of mind](#)," or "Dad's not around so what's wrong with making a little extra money?"

THOUGHT - Dear believer, you have a new name, "[Christian](#)," follower of Christ, which begs the question "Can others discern from your words and actions that you are a follower of Christ?" If not, today is a good day to consider a "[course correction](#)" in your life and adopt the heart attitude of Paul who declared "Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, **to be pleasing to Him.**" (2Cor 5:9+) Ultimately only Jesus pleases the Father, but followers of Jesus, those who walk like Jesus walked, have the high and holy privilege of walking in the Spirit of Jesus and thus walking like Jesus in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. Are your thoughts, words and deeds pleasing to your [eternal Father](#)? Paul went on to give us the motivating that should enable us to order our steps like Paul (cf 1Co 11:1+) - "For (TERM OF EXPLANATION - WHAT IS PAUL EXPLAINING IN CONTEXT?) we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. (2Cor 5:10+) Could I suggest a "[course correction](#)" of your heart's GPS (global positioning system), oriented more toward "Vertical Vision" and less toward "Horizontal Vision?" May the Holy Word and the Holy Spirit be your guide and your power in Jesus' Name. Amen

[ESV Study Bible](#) ([borrow](#)) on **Beersheba** - Beersheba was the extreme south of Israel in traditional descriptions (cf. 3:20). It appears in stories of the patriarchs (Gen. 21:31; 22:19; 26:33; 46:1), and Amos denounced it, together with Bethel and Gilgal (Amos 5:5). **A fortress has been discovered at Beersheba** (Stratum VII) that belongs to the period of the judges. Its length is about 164 feet (50 m), and it is surrounded by a double fortification wall. It was destroyed in the second half of the eleventh century b.c. The remains indicate that Beersheba was an important administrative center at this time.

Kay Arthur - You know most all of us have something in our lives that we deeply regret, a place that we wish we had never gone, a thing that we wish that we had never done, a decision that we made that now we know is wrong. What do we do with that? How do we live with that? Well we're going to find out as we look at 1 Samuel, as I said, chapters 8 through 12. And most of our time is going to be spent in 8 and then in chapter 12. So in the light of that I want to remind you of where we are in 1 Samuel. Remember my little ditty that I gave you on 1 Samuel to help you remember the content of this book. Priesthood corrupts, prophet erupts, theocracy denied, judges subside and kings arise, God abides, the merciful sovereign, the Lord of hosts. Well we've come to the point in that ditty where it is that judges subside and kings arise. (Precepts for Life June, 2003)

- Priesthood corrupts,
- Prophet erupts
- Theocracy denied,
- Judges subside and kings arise
- God abides, the merciful sovereign, the Lord of hosts

1 Samuel 8:3 His sons, however, did not walk in his ways, but turned aside after dishonest gain and took bribes and perverted justice.

BGT 1 Samuel 8:3 κα ο κ πορε θησαν ο υ ο α το ν δ α το κα ξ κλιναν π σω τ ς συντελε ας κα λ μβανον δ ρα κα ξ κλινον δικαι ματα

KJV 1 Samuel 8:3 And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.

NET 1 Samuel 8:3 But his sons did not follow his ways. Instead, they made money dishonestly, accepted bribes, and perverted justice.

CSB 1 Samuel 8:3 However, his sons did not walk in his ways-- they turned toward dishonest gain, took bribes, and perverted justice.

ESV 1 Samuel 8:3 Yet his sons did not walk in his ways but turned aside after gain. They took bribes and perverted justice.

NIV 1 Samuel 8:3 But his sons did not walk in his ways. They turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice.

NLT 1 Samuel 8:3 But they were not like their father, for they were greedy for money. They accepted bribes and perverted justice.

NRS 1 Samuel 8:3 Yet his sons did not follow in his ways, but turned aside after gain; they took bribes and perverted justice.

- **his sons:** 2Sa 15:4 1Ki 12:6-11 2Ki 21:1-3 Ec 2:19 Jer 22:15-17
- **but turned aside:** Ex 18:21 De 16:19 Ps 15:5 26:10 Isa 33:15 1Ti 3:3 6:10
- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Exodus 23:6-8 **"You shall not pervert the justice** due to your needy brother in his dispute. 7 **"Keep far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent or the righteous, for I will not acquit the guilty.** 8 **"You shall not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of the just.**

Deuteronomy 16:18-19 **"You shall appoint for yourself judges** and officers in all your towns which the LORD your God is giving you, according to your tribes, and **they shall judge the people with righteous judgment** **"You shall not distort justice;** you shall not be partial, and **you shall not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the**

eyes of the wise and perverts the words of the righteous.

Deuteronomy 27:25 **'Cursed is he who accepts a bribe to strike down an innocent person.'** And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'

Isaiah 1:23 Your rulers are rebels And companions of thieves; **Everyone loves a bribe** And chases after rewards. They do not defend the orphan, Nor does the widow's plea come before them.

Isaiah 5:23 **Who justify the wicked for a bribe**, And take away the rights of the ones who are in the right!

Micah 3:11 **Her leaders pronounce judgment for a bribe**, Her priests instruct for a price And her prophets divine for money. Yet they lean on the LORD saying, "Is not the LORD in our midst? Calamity will not come upon us."

NOT LIKE FATHER LIKE SON!

"Like father, like son" is an idiom used when a son shows similarities to his father in mannerisms, interests, behavior, etc. Fathers and sons resemble each other, and sons tend to do what their fathers did before them. The sons exploited their positions of responsibility and loyalty to the people they served. "They were users, not servers; they were takers, not givers." (Woodhouse)

Brian Bell - Eli's sons yielded to the lust of the flesh; Samuel's sons, were lovers of money. Turned aside - How many degrees does a plane have to turn aside to be off course & miss its destination? Just 1! I see a big difference between Samuel's fathering/parenting, & Eli's. Eli was judged for his poor fathering skills, Samuel never was. I think this is a case of children going bad, "choosing their own way", yet not because of the parents. Sometimes it is the parents fault...but likewise, sometimes it isn't. Don't be so quick to judge other peoples children! Also, a good name is to be chosen - but isn't a guarantee they will walk with the Lord. [Joel = Jehovah is God & Abijah = Jehovah is my Father] Train up a child in the way that he should go. And when he is old he will not depart from it. Prov.22:6 [is a principle not a promise] We all know of some kids where this didn't happen - This may be because of the self-will or deliberate disobedience of an individual who chooses to go the way of folly, instead of the way of wisdom. Yet parents, this is a generally true principle, for most children.

His sons, however, did not walk in his ways - Here is the key that seems to result in the national mood swinging from accepting a judge to desiring a king. His ways describes the standard Israel had become accustomed to in a judge and the standard by which other judges (in this case his sons) would be judged. And they fell woefully short! **Walk** in Scripture describes one's behavior or lifestyle. Everyone has a few missteps each day, but walk is speaking of the course of their lives, which was not Godward, not God-honoring. Only one life, twill soon past, only what is done in Christ will last. Watch where (and how) you walk! Samuel was a man dedicated to Yahweh and ordered his steps (**walk**) accordingly, but his sons did not follow in his (godly) steps, but in their (fleshly) steps! The Scripture does not state specifically why they did not imitate their father. Were they not brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? Was their mother not a godly influence? The text is silent. Note the text does not condemn Samuel for being a poor example or a bad father.

THOUGHT -Faithful followers of Christ who have manifested Christ-like character can have children who lack similar integrity. This problem is not limited to leaders like godly Samuel, but haunts every parent who seeks to pass on to children moral and spiritual values.

But turned aside (**natah** - deviated from the "**straight and narrow**") **after dishonest** (unjust, illicit) **gain and took bribes** (**shochad**; inducements) **and perverted** (**natah**) **justice** (Hebrew = **mishpat/mispat**; cf Amos 5:7) - **Turned aside** and **perverted** are the same Hebrew verb (**natah**) and are like cause and effect in this passage - since they turned aside to **dishonest gain**, the effect or result was that they literally "turned aside justice" which is a figurative way of saying they **perverted justice**. "Judges for sale" might be a good subtitle for Samuel's two sons, for instead of pursuing justice, they pursued personal gain! Mark it down that religious authority and power bring strong temptation to unqualified, inept religious leaders (and even to strong, capable leaders)! The privilege of judging left the sons open to the pressure to compromise their integrity in lieu of personal gain fostered by personal greed. Samuel surely had the same temptations, but enabled by God's Spirit (yes, I believe the Spirit was "alive and well" in the lives of the OT saints!), he was able to resist them! **Took bribes** is a direct, even presumptuous sin in view of God's clear instruction in Ex 23:8+ that ""You shall not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of the just." O, the temptations that enter fallen men's hearts when they have authority over others (cf **Absalom** [father of peace!] 2Sa 15:4). Authority tests one's character. Each man is unique and makes his personal choices. A godly father, even one with the integrity of Samuel (1Sa 12:3,4) does not guarantee godly sons.

Woodhouse - The clear parallel that the narrator has presented between the situation toward the end of Eli's life and the situation now in Samuel's old age makes one thing clear. **Israel's well-being cannot be guaranteed by the sons of their leaders.** The best

of leaders can have the worst of sons. The old age of a great leader like Samuel was, therefore, a serious crisis. The peace, security, and prosperity of the years under Samuel were in jeopardy if his sons were to play any role in Israel's future. In these circumstances a proposal emerged for establishing the security of the nation that was to change Israel forever. The proposal came from the people, via their elders.

[ESV Study Bible \(borrow\)](#) - When leaders use their office for self-enrichment, and as a result distort their decisions, they betray the fundamental purpose of judges and are a danger in all societies. Such practices are denounced over and over in the Bible (cf. Deut. 16:19; Ps. 26:10; Prov. 15:27; 17:23; Isa. 33:15; Ezek. 22:12; Amos 5:12; Hab. 1:2-4).

As an aside the Mosaic Law gave a strong warning against accepting a bribe declaring "**Cursed is he who accepts a bribe to strike down an innocent person.**" And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'" (Dt 27:25).

Turned aside...perverted (05186)(**natah**) means to extend, stretch out, spread out, pitch, turn, pervert, incline, bend, bow, to extend; to pay attention. This verb is translated more than 30 different ways in the KJV and NASB. **Natah** is used some 60 times of extending or stretching out something such as a hand, an arm is extended or a staff or javelin is pointed (Ex. 6:6; 7:5, 19; 9:22, 23; 10:12, 13, 21, 22; Josh. 8:18), spreading sackcloth for mourning (2Sa 21:10), Yahweh extending His arm or hand to deliver His people (Ex 6:6; Dt. 4:34; Jer. 32:21) or bring judgments on them and the nations (Isa 5:25; 23:11; Ezek. 6:14). To stretch out one's hand against someone means to act in a hostile manner (Job 15:25). Natah is used of setting up a tent, pitching it by stretching it out (Ge 12:8; 26:25; Ex. 33:7; 2Sa 6:17; 16:22). Figuratively Yahweh stretched out the heavens (Jer. 10:12). God figuratively stretches out a plumb line in judgment (2Ki 21:13). Natah can describe turning something, inclining to as when Balaam's donkey turned aside (Nu 22:23), of a person turning (or not turning) aside (2Sa 2:19). Figuratively, natah describes inclining one's heart and mind a certain way, of giving attention, negatively of turning from being loyal as in 1Ki. 2:28 or of turning and thus perverting justice (Ex. 23:2; 1Sa 8:3); or preventing it (Pr 18:5). It is used of turning one's heart (mind) in a certain direction (1Sa 14:7); of being loyal (Josh. 24:23). Natah can mean to turn or show love (ḥesed) to someone (Ezra 7:28). It described the apostasy of Solomon turning after other gods and foreign women (1Ki 11:2, 4). Natah is used of sin turning away the blessings of God from His people (Jer. 5:25). Natah can describe those who turn away to crooked ways (Ps. 125:5).

Gilbrant - The verb *nātāh* has three primary meanings: "to spread out," "to turn aside" or "to bend down." All three nuances are attested in Jewish Aramaic and Middle Hebrew. From these basic meanings, the word takes on various other ideas depending on the context. For example, to spread out a tent means to pitch it (Gen. 12:8); to turn aside justice means to pervert it; to turn aside the ear means to listen; and a bending wall is one which is leaning (Ps. 62:3).

The first meaning of the word refers to spreading or stretching things. Both people and God spread things out. Rizpah literally spread out sackcloth upon a rock (2 Sam. 21:10), and God told Jeremiah that Nebuchadnezzar would spread out his royal canopy in Egypt, symbolizing he had conquered the land (Jer. 43:10). The Lord's spreading out the heavens is a common expression for creating them (Isa. 42:5; 44:24). In Isa. 40:22, *nātāh* appears in parallel with *māthach* (HED #5145), also meaning "to spread out." The prophet parallels the idea of God spreading out the heavens with spreading out a tent to dwell in (see also Ps. 104:2).

Land is also spoken of as spreading out, meaning the land extends to a certain location. The slopes of the hills near Moab are said to extend to Ar (Num. 21:15), and river valleys spread out (Num. 24:6).

The idea of spreading something out extends to the idea of stretching something out, like when a carpenter stretches a line over wood (Isa. 44:13). Though the KJV says Samson "bowed" with his strength, since Samson was pressing against the two pillars of the house, the idea of the verb is rather about stretching forth his arms with his strength (Judg. 16:30). Shadows also stretch out (2 Ki. 20:10). This nuance is attested in the Arabic cognate.

Outstretched arms often represent power and the miraculous in the OT. The Lord's outstretched hand or arm was a symbol of his might (Deut. 4:34), and his outstretched arm redeemed Israel from the land of Egypt (Exo. 6:6); thus, though God's outstretched arm was a sign of deliverance for Israel, it was a sign of judgment for Egypt (Exo. 7:5). When God commanded people to stretch out their hands in preparation for a miracle, it was as though they were paralleling and visibly demonstrating God's act. Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod over the waters of Egypt so they turned to blood (Exo. 7:19); Joshua stretched out the javelin in his hand toward the city of Ai, which Israel was about to conquer (Josh. 8:18). This nuance is attested in the Akkadian cognate.

The idea of stretching things out also took on other symbolic meanings. The prophet Isaiah said the daughters of Zion walked with outstretched necks (Isa. 3:16), which was a symbol of pride. He also called people to stretch out the curtains of their tents, symbolic of growth and prosperity (Isa. 54:2). Today we would say, "Put

an addition on your house." In Ps. 17:11, the image is of the intent to slay the enemy and leave their bodies spread out on the ground. In Ps. 21:11, this verb appears in parallel with *chāshav* (HED #2913), meaning "to plan," so that "to spread out evil against someone" means "to plot." In another symbolic context, the Lord said He would stretch out a measuring line over Jerusalem (2 Ki. 21:13), which symbolized his judgment. The Lord stretched out three judgments upon David, which means He set three options before him (1 Chr. 21:10).

A second primary meaning of *nātāh* is "to turn aside." This use of the verb points to an alteration in the present course of action. Israel promised Edom they would remain on the King's Highway ([map](#); [another map showing all major highways through ancient Israel](#)) and would not turn aside to the right or left, meaning neither humans nor animals would damage their fields (Num. 20:17). When Edom still denied Israel access through their land, Israel turned aside and took a different route (Num. 20:21). Balaam's donkey is another example of something turning aside; when it saw the angel with his drawn sword standing in the road, it turned aside from the path (Num. 22:23). Further, though David intended to bring the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, after the death of Uzzah, he turned it aside to the house of Obed-Edom (2 Sam. 6:10). Lastly, Joab took Abner aside into a gate to kill him (2 Sam. 3:27). All these passages indicate that this use of the verb points to a change in an object's course of direction. Thus, the use of this verb in Gen. 38:1 would indicate that Judah was not initially headed toward Hirah's house, but that he was on a journey and came to Hirah's house and decided to turn aside from his present course. The same idea applies with Judah and Tamar in Gen. 38:16. To turn aside the feet is an expression for stumbling (Ps. 73:2).

To turn aside justice means to pervert it or to deny access to justice (Ex 23:6). This is changing the course of the law. People also can turn aside their heart, which implies a change in allegiance. The people of Shechem turned their heart to follow Abimelech (Jdg. 9:3). Joshua called the people to put away their foreign gods and turn their heart to the Lord (Josh. 24:23). Joab turned aside after Adonijah, but he had not turned aside after Absalom (1 Ki. 2:28).

To incline the ear means to begin listening. Hezekiah prayed that the Lord would incline his ear and hear the words of Sennacherib as he mocked God (2 Ki. 19:16). The prayer implies that God's lack of action in behalf of Judah made it seem that He had not been listening to all that was being said. Jeremiah accused the people of not inclining their ear, but instead they continued to walk in the stubbornness of their own heart (Jer. 11:8). In this case, the people refused to change their course of direction and would not begin listening to the Lord.

This idea of changing direction is also applied to the day. The turning of the day is the time when the sun begins its decline in the sky. This phrase then designates the afternoon (Jdg. 19:8).

A third primary meaning of this verb is "to bend." A person bends down a jar so as to pour water from it (Gen. 24:14). The tribe of Issachar bent down their shoulder to take up a burden (Gen. 49:15). The Lord bent down to feed his people (Hos. 11:4). The heavens' "bending down" and touching the earth refers to God manifesting himself in splendor (2 Sam. 22:10; Ps. 144:5). ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

Natah - 207 verses - afternoon*(1), bend down(1), bent(1), bent down(1), bow(1), bowed(3), came to stumbling(1), cast down(1), decline(1), defraud(1), deprive(2), deviated(1), distort(1), distorts(1), entices(1), extend(1), extended(3), extends(2), followed*(2), held high(1), incline(27), inclined(7), intended(1), leaning(1), lengthen(1), lengthened(1), lengthens(1), let down(1), offer(1), outstretched(17), pervert(4), perverted(1), pitch(1), pitched(11), push aside(1), spread(3), stretch(28), stretched(32), stretched-out(1), stretches(5), stretching(2), thrust aside(1), took aside(3), turn(6), turn back(1), turn aside(9), turn away(3), turned aside(6), turned...away(1), turning(1), turns(1), visited(1). Gen. 12:8; Gen. 24:14; Gen. 26:25; Gen. 33:19; Gen. 35:21; Gen. 38:1; Gen. 38:16; Gen. 39:21; Gen. 49:15; Exod. 6:6; Exod. 7:5; Exod. 7:19; Exod. 8:5; Exod. 8:6; Exod. 8:16; Exod. 8:17; Exod. 9:22; Exod. 9:23; Exod. 10:12; Exod. 10:13; Exod. 10:21; Exod. 10:22; Exod. 14:16; Exod. 14:21; Exod. 14:26; Exod. 14:27; Exod. 15:12; Exod. 23:2; Exod. 23:6; Exod. 33:7; Num. 20:17; Num. 20:21; Num. 21:15; Num. 21:22; Num. 22:23; Num. 22:26; Num. 22:33; Num. 24:6; Deut. 4:34; Deut. 5:15; Deut. 7:19; Deut. 9:29; Deut. 11:2; Deut. 16:19; Deut. 24:17; Deut. 26:8; Deut. 27:19; Jos. 8:18; Jos. 8:19; Jos. 8:26; Jos. 24:23; Jdg. 4:11; Jdg. 9:3; Jdg. 16:30; Jdg. 19:8; 1 Sam. 8:3; 1 Sam. 14:7; 2 Sam. 2:19; 2 Sam. 2:21; 2 Sam. 6:17; 2 Sam. 16:22; 2 Sam. 19:14; 2 Sam. 21:10; 2 Sam. 22:10; 1 Ki. 2:28; 1 Ki. 8:42; 1 Ki. 8:58; 1 Ki. 11:2; 1 Ki. 11:13; 1 Ki. 11:4; 1 Ki. 11:9; 2 Ki. 17:36; 2 Ki. 19:16; 2 Ki. 20:10; 2 Ki. 21:13; 1 Chr. 13:13; 1 Chr. 15:1; 1 Chr. 16:1; 1 Chr. 21:10; 1 Chr. 21:16; 2 Chr. 1:4; 2 Chr. 6:32; Ezr. 7:28; Ezr. 9:9; Job 9:8; Job 15:25; Job 15:29; Job 24:4; Job 26:7; Job 31:7; Job 36:18; Job 38:5; Ps. 17:6; Ps. 17:11; Ps. 18:9; Ps. 21:11; Ps. 27:9; Ps. 31:2; Ps. 40:1; Ps. 44:18; Ps. 45:10; Ps. 49:4; Ps. 62:3; Ps. 71:2; Ps. 73:2; Ps. 78:1; Ps. 86:1; Ps. 88:2; Ps. 102:2; Ps. 102:11; Ps. 104:2; Ps. 109:23; Ps. 116:2; Ps. 119:36; Ps. 119:51; Ps. 119:112; Ps. 119:157; Ps. 125:5; Ps. 136:12; Ps. 141:4; Ps. 144:5; Prov. 1:24; Prov. 2:2; Prov. 4:5; Prov. 4:20; Prov. 4:27; Prov. 5:1; Prov. 5:13; Prov. 7:21; Prov. 17:23; Prov. 18:5; Prov. 21:1; Prov. 22:17; Isa. 3:16; Isa. 5:25; Isa. 9:12; Isa. 9:17; Isa. 9:21; Isa. 10:2; Isa. 10:4; Isa. 14:26; Isa. 14:27; Isa. 23:11; Isa. 29:21; Isa. 30:11; Isa. 31:3; Isa. 34:11; Isa. 37:17; Isa. 40:22; Isa. 42:5; Isa. 44:13; Isa. 44:20; Isa. 44:24; Isa. 45:12; Isa. 51:13; Isa. 54:2; Isa. 55:3; Isa. 66:12; Jer. 5:25; Jer. 6:4; Jer. 6:12; Jer. 7:24; Jer. 7:26; Jer. 10:12; Jer. 10:20; Jer. 11:8; Jer. 14:8; Jer. 15:6; Jer. 17:23; Jer. 21:5; Jer. 25:4; Jer. 27:5; Jer. 32:17; Jer. 32:21; Jer. 34:14; Jer. 35:15; Jer. 43:10; Jer. 44:5; Jer. 51:15; Jer. 51:25; Lam. 2:8; Lam. 3:35; Ezek. 1:22; Ezek. 6:14; Ezek. 14:9; Ezek. 14:13; Ezek. 16:27; Ezek. 20:33; Ezek. 20:34; Ezek. 25:7; Ezek. 25:13; Ezek. 25:16; Ezek. 30:25; Ezek. 35:3; Dan. 9:18; Hos. 11:4; Amos 2:7; Amos 2:8; Amos 5:12; Zeph. 1:4; Zeph. 2:13; Zech. 1:16; Zech. 12:1; Mal. 3:5

Dishonest gain ([01215](#))(**betsa** from **batsa** to cut off, break off, gain by violence) describes gain made by violence (Jdg 5:19; Mic 4:13), unjust gain, gain obtained illicitly. Unjust gain was to be avoided (Ge. 37:26; Ex. 18:21; 1 Sam. 8:3; Ps. 119:36; Prov. 28:16). The sense is "a piece that is cut off, (illegal) profit or gain." A basic requirement of a judge in the days of Moses was to hate "dishonest gain" (Ex 18:21, same Hebrew word [esv has "a bribe"]; cf. Pr 28:16 [esv, "unjust gain"]). All twenty-three occurrences of this noun refer to illegitimate or violent profit or gain, including bribes, e.g. Ge 37:26 (esv, "profit"); Jdg 5:19 (esv, "spoils"); Pr 1:19; Isa 33:15; 56:11; 57:17; Jer 6:13; 22:17; Ezek 22:13, 27.

John Oswalt - Profit, unjust gain, covetousness. Personal advantage derived from some activity. Used largely in the negative sense, as in the case of the racketeer who takes his "cut" from the profits of an otherwise legitimate business. In seven

occurrences (out of a total of 23) the negative connotation is less apparent. E.g., Judah queries his brothers as to the "profit" in killing Joseph (Genesis 37:26) and Job's comforters argue that it is no gain to God even if Job were blameless (Job 22:3), etc. But the predominance of the negative usages indicates that it is very easy for the acquisition of personal gain to become the ruling motive of one's life, obscuring duty, honesty and the rights of others.

The contexts in which *bāṣa'* and *beṣa'* occur emphasize two points concerning the lust for personal gain. First, it is a special temptation to leaders, and those showing any predilection in that direction should be disqualified (Exodus 18:21). The leader who succumbs to this temptation to use his position for his own ends will certainly play his people false (Ezekiel 22:27). Again and again in the OT, it was the desire of the leaders for personal gain which led Israel into disaster (cf. 1 Samuel 8:3; Isaiah 56:11; Jeremiah 8:10; Jeremiah 22:17, etc.).

Secondly, lust for personal gain is in direct opposition to unselfish devotion to God (Psalm 10:3; Psalm 119:36; Isaiah 33:15) and must inevitably destroy the person who succumbs to it (Proverbs 1:19; Proverbs 15:27; Habakkuk 2:9). Perhaps its most disastrous result is its tendency to dull the hearing of God's word (Ezekiel 33:31). (See [TWOT](#) online)

Betsa - 23x/23v - dishonest gain(4), end(1), gain(7), illicitly(1), plunder(1), profit(4), unjust gain(4), unjust* (1). Ge 37:26; Ex 18:21; Jdg. 5:19; 1 Sam. 8:3; Job 22:3; Ps. 30:9; Ps. 119:36; Prov. 1:19; Prov. 15:27; Prov. 28:16; Isa. 33:15; Isa. 56:11; Isa. 57:17; Jer. 6:13; Jer. 8:10; Jer. 22:17; Jer. 51:13; Ezek. 22:13; Ezek. 22:27; Ezek. 33:31; Mic. 4:13; Hab. 2:9; Mal. 3:14

Bribes (07810)(**shochad** from **shachad** = to give a present, to bribe) refers to a "gift," "present" or "bribe," especially one to free someone from punishment, to corrupt a judge or to take a reward. Given to pervert justice and to blind the judgment of even good persons (Ex. 23:8; Deut. 16:19).

Victor Hamilton - One may begin by observing that prohibitions on receiving bribes (presumably on the part of judges) are found in the legal sections of the Pentateuch: Exodus 23:8; Deut. 16:9. Although both verses begin similarly, Exodus 23:8 ends, "For a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise (*hākāmīm*)."
Cf. Isaiah 1:23; Isaiah 5:23; Micah 3:11.

If the price is right a bribe can even produce a "hit-man" who will assassinate an innocent person: Deut. 27:25; Ezekiel 22:12; Psalm 26:10, or at least pervert judgment: Proverbs 17:23.

Only he who desists from such flagrant violation of both moral and criminal law can stand in God's presence: 2 Chron. 19:7; Psalm 15:5; Isaiah 33:15. God himself is above reproach on this point: Deut. 10:17 (cf. 1 Peter 1:17).

Given the greed of man in any age and any civilization it is interesting that only three specific cases of bribery are alluded to (using *shohad*) in the OT: the sons of Eli (1 Samuel 8:3): kings Asa and Benhadad (1 Kings 15:19): and kings Ahaz and Tiglath-pileser (2 Kings 16:8).

Once again we see the uniqueness of the OT in contrast to pagan nations. In his study of Mesopotamian texts Finkelstein can state, "There is no known cuneiform law outlawing bribery specifically" (p. 79); "it (i.e. bribery) was not only a common practice, but was recognized as a legal transaction" (p. 80). (See [TWOT](#) online)

Shochad - 21v - bribe(15), bribes(3), corrupt(1), gifts(1), present(2), reward(1). Ex 23:8; Dt. 10:17; Dt. 16:19; Dt. 27:25; 1Sa 8:3; 1 Ki. 15:19; 2Ki. 16:8; 2Chr. 19:7; Job 15:34; Ps. 15:5; Ps. 26:10; Pr 6:35; Pr 17:8; Pr 17:23; Pr 21:14; Isa. 1:23; Isa. 5:23; Isa. 33:15; Isa. 45:13; Ezek. 22:12; Mic. 3:11

Justice ("procedure" in 1Sa 8:9, 11)(04941) [mishpat/mispat](#) from **shaphat** = to judge, govern) is a masculine noun used over 400x in the OT and has general meanings including a judgment, a legal decision, a legal case, a claim, proper, rectitude. **Mishpat** appears frequently in Samuel -- 1Sa 2:13+ refers to the **mishpat** or "customs" of the priests, 1Sa 8:3 Samuel's sons "perverted **mishpat**" and in 1Sa 10:25+, Samuel writes the **mishpat** of the king in a book. **Vine** adds that [mishpat/mispat](#) "has two main senses; the first deals with the act of sitting as a judge, hearing a case, and rendering a proper verdict. Eccl. 12:14 is one such occurrence. **Mishpat** can also refer to the "rights" belonging to someone (Ex 23:6). This second sense carries several nuances: the sphere in which things are in proper relationship to one's claims (Ge 18:19—first occurrence); a judicial verdict (Dt. 17:9); the statement of the case for the accused (Nu 27:5); and an established ordinance (Exod. 21:1). ([Vine's Expository Dictionary](#))

Mishpat uses in First and Second Samuel - 1 Sam. 2:13; 1 Sam. 8:3; 1 Sam. 8:9; 1 Sam. 8:11; 1 Sam. 10:25; 1 Sam. 27:11; 1 Sam. 30:25; 2 Sam. 8:15; 2 Sam. 15:2; 2 Sam. 15:4; 2 Sam. 15:6; 2 Sam. 22:23;

1 Samuel 8:4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah;

BGT 1 Samuel 8:4 κα συναθρο ζονται νδρες Ισραηλ κα παραγ νονται ε ς Αρμαθαιμ πρ ς Σαμουηλ

KJV 1 Samuel 8:4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah,

NET 1 Samuel 8:4 So all the elders of Israel gathered together and approached Samuel at Ramah.

CSB 1 Samuel 8:4 So all the elders of Israel gathered together and went to Samuel at Ramah.

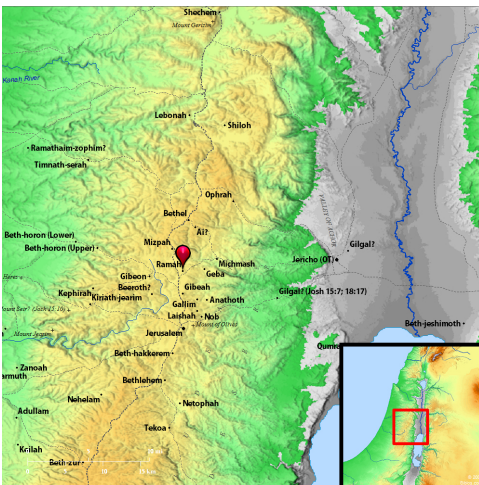
ESV 1 Samuel 8:4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah

NIV 1 Samuel 8:4 So all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah.

NLT 1 Samuel 8:4 Finally, all the elders of Israel met at Ramah to discuss the matter with Samuel.

NRS 1 Samuel 8:4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah,

- **All the elders:** Ex 3:16 24:1 2Sa 5:3
- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Ramah - Samuel's Centrally Located Home

Then - **Then** is an important time sensitive word that signals progression in a narrative (Always pay attention to the **then's** as they can be especially helpful in the sequence of events in prophetic passages!). So when is **then**? Clearly in context the **"then"** is when the sons of Samuel demonstrated that they were unjust judges. This fact coupled with Samuel's age stirred the people to look for a king who could run the nation and assure continuation of the peace and security they had experienced under the leadership of Samuel.

All the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah- **All the elders** indicates this was a consensus! No dissenters are mentioned! Sadly, there were no elders calling for corporate prayer about regarding what they saw as a dilemma! This is the second "elder meeting" mentioned in 1 Samuel. Recall the first "elder meeting" in 1Sa 4:3 likewise did not turn out very well for the nation (Israel defeated by Philistines and Ark captured!), and perhaps was a harbinger of things to come in Israel as a result of this crucial meeting with Samuel.

William Blaikie adds "The help of Jehovah (cf meaning of [Ebenezer](#)) was no longer regarded as the palladium (A safeguard, especially one viewed as a guarantee of the integrity of social institutions) of the nation. A new generation had risen up that had only heard from their fathers of the deliverance from the Philistines, and what men only hear from their fathers does not make the same impression as what they see with their own eyes (ED: THIS SAME SPIRITUAL DYNAMIC IN Judges 2:7-9, 10-14+). The privilege of having God for their king ceased to be felt, when the occasions passed away that made His interposition so pressing and so precious. **Other things began to press upon them, other cravings began to be felt, that the theocracy did not meet. This double process went on—the evils from which God did deliver becoming more faint, and the benefits which God did not bestow becoming more conspicuous by their absence—till a climax was reached.** Samuel was getting old, and his sons were not like himself; therefore they afforded no materials for continuing the system of judges. None of them could ever fill their father's place. The people forgot that God's policy had been to raise up judges from time to time as they were needed. But would it not be better to discontinue this hand-to-mouth system of government and have a regular succession of kings? Why should Israel contrast disadvantageously in this respect with the surrounding nations? This seems to have been the unanimous feeling of the nation. "All the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and said to Samuel, Make us a king to judge us like all the nations.""

1 Samuel 8:4-20 Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel to Ramah,...

For are we not all in the same condemnation? The life of faith, which relies on an unseen arm, and hearkens to the law of an unseen King, is difficult, the sense cries out for something that it can realise and cling to. Luther, in one of his letters, has a parable that tells how he looked at the vault of the sky, and sought in vain for the pillars that held it up, and how he feared that, having no visible supports, it must fall. We all would like to see the upholding columns. An Alpine path without a parapet seems to us more dangerous than if a wall, however low, fenced it on the side of the precipice. "Give us a king" is but the ancient form of the universal craving for something "more substantial" than the bare word of a God whom sense cannot grasp. How many of us would rather have a good balance at our banker's than God's promise, "Thy bread shall be given thee, and thy water made sure"! How many of us call the visible supports "solid realities," and the unseen strengths "mystical," meaning thereby unreal! How few of us believe that the Unseen is the real and solid, and the visible and transient and phantasmal! Let us scrutinise our governing ideas, and we shall find them very like those that sent the elders to Samuel, crying for a king.

1 Samuel 8:5 and they said to him, "Behold, you have grown old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations."

BGT 1 Samuel 8:5 κα ε παν α τ δο σ γε γ ρ α κ α ς κα ο υ ο σου ο πο ρ ε ο ν τ α ι ν τ δ σου κα ν ν κα τ σ τ η σ ο ν φ μ ς βα σ ι λ α δ ι κ ζ ει ν μ ς κα θ κα τ λ ο ι π τ θ ν η

KJV 1 Samuel 8:5 And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

NET 1 Samuel 8:5 They said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons don't follow your ways. So now appoint over us a king to lead us, just like all the other nations have."

CSB 1 Samuel 8:5 They said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not follow your example. Therefore, appoint a king to judge us the same as all the other nations have."

ESV 1 Samuel 8:5 and said to him, "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."

NIV 1 Samuel 8:5 They said to him, "You are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have."

NLT 1 Samuel 8:5 "Look," they told him, "you are now old, and your sons are not like you. Give us a king to judge us like all the other nations have."

NRS 1 Samuel 8:5 and said to him, "You are old and your sons do not follow in your ways; appoint for us, then, a king to govern us, like other nations."

- **now appoint:** 1Sa 8:6-8,19,20 1Sa 12:17 Nu 23:9 De 17:14,15 Ho 13:10,11 Ac 13:21
- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Acts 13:20-21+ (**STEPHEN'S SERMON TO THE HARD-HEARTED JEWS WHO WOULD SOON STONE HIM**) "After these things He gave them judges until Samuel the prophet. Then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years.

Genesis 17:1-6 (**SAMUEL WOULD NOT BE CAUGHT OFF GUARD BY THEIR REQUEST FOR A KING**) Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless. 2 "I will establish My covenant between Me and you, And I will multiply you exceedingly." 3 Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying, 4 "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And you will be the father of a multitude of nations. 5 "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. 6 "I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and **I will make nations of you, and kings will come forth from you.**

Genesis 35:10-11 (**SAMUEL WOULD NOT BE CAUGHT OFF GUARD BY THEIR REQUEST FOR A KING**) God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; You shall no longer be called Jacob, But Israel shall be your name." Thus He called him Israel. 11 God also 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 forth from you.**

Deuteronomy 17:14-20 "When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, and you possess it and live in it, **and you say, 'I will set a king over me like all the nations who are around me,'** 15 **you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses**, one from among your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman. 16 "Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, since the LORD has said to you, 'You shall never again return that way.' 17 "He shall not multiply wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself. 18 "Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. 19 "It shall be with him and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes, 20 that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left, so that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel.

Judges 8:22-23 Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, "Rule over us, both you and your son, also your son's son, for you have delivered us from the hand of Midian." 23 But Gideon said to them, **"I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; the LORD shall rule over you."**

HUMAN REASONING FOR KING OTHER THAN YAHWEH

And they said to him, "Behold, you have grown old, and your sons do not walk in your ways- All the elders voice their apparently unanimous desire. **Behold** is a marker signaling "Listen up!" The elders sought Samuel's full attention! And now they give three reasons (the third in 1Sa 8:20) for why they desired a king: (1) you are old (this is the second time Samuel's advanced age has been mentioned, so clearly this is key motivator for the elders!), (2) your sons do not walk in the ways of Samuel (presumably had the sons been two young "godly Samuels" the elders would not have seen a need to replace a system that had allowed them to experience peace during their father's judgeship - but now instead of asking for Samuel's sons to be removed, they reject a hereditary judgeship in lieu of a hereditary kingship!) and (3) we need a military leader. It is notable that even though the sons were judging in a remote, southern city, their evil practices became known to all the elders (cf the truth of Nu 32:23b+).

Believer's Study Bible - The failure of Samuel to profit by the mistake of Eli is inexplicable. Having observed the agony of Eli, the degradation of Hophni and Phinehas, and the censure of the Lord, **Samuel should have had ample motivation to discipline his sons**. However, the same excesses found in Eli's sons were found also in Samuel's sons. Conceivably, the absence of a holy pattern and example was determinative. Samuel's parents were not close by, and Eli provided only a misbegotten example. The only blotch on the public record of God's prophet Samuel is the despicable behavior of his sons.

MacArthur - The sins of Samuel's sons became [the pretext](#) for Israel's demand for a king (1Sa 8:4, 5). (Borrow the [MacArthur Study Bible](#))

Wycliffe Bible Commentary ([borrow](#)) has an interesting comment - The institution of the monarchy involved the separation of the civil from the religious leadership. And this in turn meant that Israel now began to have a political history independent of her religious history, and therefore, of her true calling. Israel was called to religious leadership of the world, and the verdict of history is on the side of those who regarded her entry into world politics as a fundamental mistake.

Now - Although a third reason (military leader) will be mentioned in 1Sa 8:20, the decline of Samuel coupled with the dissipation of Samuel's sons was the major motivation for seeking a king.

Appoint a king for us to judge (govern, lead) **us like all the nations** - The elders clearly respect Samuel's role as the leader of the nation or otherwise they would have simply said that they would find a king themselves be their judge and leader. This is an interesting sentence, not a king to rule but **"a king for us to judge us."** While Israel often shows herself to be ignorant of God's laws, in this case they seem to be knowledgeable of the Mosaic Covenant. In Dt 17:14-15 God had actually prophesied Israel would make this request of Samuel...

When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, and you possess it and live in it, and you say, **I will set a king over me like all the nations who are around me,** you shall surely set **a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses**, one from among your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman."

ESV Study Bible ([borrow](#)) - They want to exchange their unique glory as the people of the incomparable God (1Sa 2:2), who had

brought them out of Egypt (1Sa 8:8) and was even now protecting them (1Sa 10:19), for status in the world, in order to be **"like all the nations."**...God intends Israel to have a king (Dt. 17:14–20), but the people's desires and the kings themselves fall short. Saul's failure contrasts with David's success. But eventually David too fails (2 Samuel 11:1-27). **The failure of merely human kings points to the need for the perfect King, Christ, Who will be divine and human** (Isa. 9:6–7).

Brian Bell - Was it really wrong to ask for a king? No! A Monarchical form of the Theocracy had been foreseen & planned for by God. Gen.35:11 Also God said to him: "I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body. 3. Read Deut.17:14,15. **So, why were they wrong for asking?** They were rejecting God's leadership. They lacked faith in God. They wanted to be like other nations. They wanted a king to lead them into battle.

Like all the nations - This is a key phrase, which tells us about the hearts of the people -- they were focused horizontally (earthly, worldly, and godless) rather than vertically (Godward)!

THOUGHT- Lest we are too hard on Israel, we all do well to look at the man or woman in the mirror and ask ourselves, "Do my daily choices and my general lifestyle say I would rather **be like the Jones** or would I rather be more like Jesus ([Walking Like Jesus Walked](#))?!!!"

Chafin - This passage has particular significance because it tells the story of the transition from the time of the judges to the time of the kings. This is the time of Samuel's old age. Yet when many would have been spending their time reminiscing, Samuel was about to begin the most significant part of his life. Even a casual reader of 1 Samuel will notice that the establishment of the monarchy in Israel is frequently pictured as an act of rebellion against God, but at times the monarchy seems to be a divinely ordained institution. This passage seems to favor what has been called the theocratic form of rule, which heretofore has been represented by the divinely appointed charismatic judge or ruler such as Samuel. In chapter 9, however, God tells Samuel that He is sending "a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him commander over My people Israel" (1 Sam. 9:16). That these views are both recorded indicate that there was never unanimity about having a king.....Israel was feeling the effect of being a people surrounded by hostile forces, and the people wanted stability and security. Up to now Israel's life had been characterized by disunity, with each tribe going its own way. There seemed to be no pattern for the emergence of the judges. Therefore the request for a king made good sense, except that it left God entirely out. This omission, coupled with Israel's tendency toward idolatry, flawed the plan. (Borrow [The Communicator's Commentary: 1, 2 Samuel](#))

MacArthur - When Israel entered the land, they encountered Canaanite city-states that were led by kings (see Josh 12:7–24). Additionally, during the period of the judges, Israel was enslaved by nations that were led by kings (Jdg. 3:8, 12; 4:2; 8:5; 11:12). However, at the time of the judges there was no king in Israel (Jdg. 17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25). As Israel lived in the land surrounded by nations that had kings, the desire arose for a king in Israel also. According to Deut. 17:14, God knew this would be their desire and He would allow it to occur. However, 1Sa 8:20 revealed a motive which was definitely counter to the Lord's will. (Borrow the [MacArthur Study Bible](#))

Gordon - The story of Saul's emergence as Israel's first king proceeds by a number of stages which may be summarized as: (i) a request for a king by the tribal elders of Israel (1Sa 8:1–22); (ii) the private anointing of Saul (1Sa 9:1–10:16); (iii) divine nomination and public presentation (1Sa 10:17–27); (iv) military success and public acclamation (1Sa 11:1–15); (v) final speech by Samuel (1Sa 12:1–25). (Borrow [1 & 2 Samuel](#))

Paul Apple sums up the problems with Israel's request for a king...

1. A sense that under theocratic rule they were missing out on something;
2. A preference for the visible and the impressive over the invisible and the spiritual
3. A lack of discernment over the dangers of monarchy
4. A denial of their mission to be a holy people ruled directly by God

Judge (08199) [shaphat](#) is a verb that means to judge or govern. While it frequently translated judge, this is somewhat misleading as shaphat is not typical of the modern concept of judge (as in a court of law), but is much more inclusive -- to function as ruler or governor - individuals (Jdg. 16:31; 1 Sa 7:16), king (1 Ki. 3:9); even God Himself (Ps. 50:6; 75:7) because He is the source of authority and will eventually conduct all judgments (Ps. 96:13). In a judicial sense shaphat could refer to the arbitration of civil, domestic, and religious disputes (Dt. 25:1), fulfilled by the congregation (Nu 35:24), by individual judges (Ex 18:16; Dt. 1:16), by the king (1 Sa 8:5, 6, 20) or by God Himself (Ge 16:5; 1 Sa 24:12, 15).

Shaphat is used in 1Sa 3:13; 1Sa 4:18; 1Sa 7:6; 1Sa 7:15; 1Sa 7:16; 1Sa 7:17; 1Sa 8:1; 1 Sa 8:2; 1Sa 8:5; 1Sa 8:6; 1Sa 8:20; 1Sa 12:7; 1Sa 24:12; 1Sa 24:15

QUESTION - [Was it wrong for the Israelites to ask for a king?](#)

ANSWER - In 1 Samuel 8:5 the Israelites ask [Samuel](#) to appoint a king, saying, "You are old, and your sons do not follow your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have." Was this wrong? The following verses make clear that it was. Samuel was displeased and prayed to the Lord concerning the matter. God answered, "Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king. As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are doing to you" (1 Samuel 8:7–8). God said the Israelites' request was a rejection of Him, that they had forsaken Him and were serving other gods.

Later, Samuel gave a farewell speech that would also address this issue, saying, "I will call on the Lord to send thunder and rain. And you will realize what an evil thing you did in the eyes of the Lord when you asked for a king" (1 Samuel 12:17). In verse 19 the people responded, "Pray to the Lord your God for your servants so that we will not die, for we have added to all our other sins the evil of asking for a king."

Interestingly, God had already predicted that the Israelites would one day ask for a king. In Deuteronomy 17:14–15, for example, God said, "When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, 'Let us set a king over us like all the nations around us,' be sure to appoint over you a king the Lord your God chooses."

Other passages also predicted that the Israelites would one day ask for a king. For example, God promised [Jacob](#), "A nation and a community of nations will come from you, and kings will be among your descendants" (Genesis 35:11). Similar references to future kings can be found in Genesis 36:31; 49:10; Numbers 24:7–9; and Deuteronomy 28:36.

Why was asking for a king wrong? The Lord was to be the ruler of Israel. God led the people through Moses and Aaron, and then through priests and judges raised up to govern the people. In Samuel's time, the people began to worry about who the next leader would be, since Samuel's sons did not follow the Lord. **Their request for a king was a rejection of God's way of leadership over them.**

Another reason it was wrong to ask for a king is that the Israelites did so in order to be like "all the other nations." God had created Israel as a unique people. He was their leader. When the Israelites wanted a king like other nations had, they were rejecting their unique, set-apart position as God's people. The nation whose God was to be the Lord alone was envious of the nations who followed false gods. [GotQuestions.org](#)

David O'brien - Question 75 What made Israel want a human king when God had taken care of them ever since they left Egypt? Why couldn't they just trust God (1 Samuel 8)?

A little boy who was having trouble getting to sleep at night made repeated nocturnal visits to his parents' room. His mother finally managed to ferret out the problem: he was afraid of the shadows in his dark room.

Being a good Christian, she prayed with the terrified tyke. Thinking that would take care of his fear, she rolled over to capture what was left of a night's sleep. Unsuccessfully.

"What is it this time?" she grumbled.

"I'm still scared," he whimpered.

"But honey, didn't we pray together?"

"Yes."

"And don't you know that Jesus is there in the room with you?"

"Yes."

"Then what's wrong?"

"I think I'd rather have somebody with some skin on," he replied.

Israel wanted someone with skin on. They wanted somebody who was physically there when they needed him. They wanted a king who could be reached at a moment's notice and whose action they could observe.

They had lived through a long, painful period with God as king, and none of those qualifications fit. All Israel wanted in the time of Samuel was a physical, human redeemer. They asked for a king like the nations had. Samuel explained all the negative aspects of having a human king (1 Samuel 8:10–18), but they wouldn't listen. Their attention was focused on the benefit. It was singular, and it was the same benefit they had received from the judges. In times of danger, there would be a strong, warlike man to come to their rescue.

The Israelite's unwillingness to trust God is at the core of their demand for a king. Why would they trade the God who loved them for a human king who would exploit them? Before we're too hard on those Israelites, though, remember that the same urge rests in all of us. We want a president who will return prayer to the classroom and morality to the streets. We want a banker who will stand

ready to step in and smooth out our financial reverses, and the cost in this case is considerably less than the Israelites were willing to pay. We want an insurance agent to pay us back if we lose anything through accident, theft, storm, or flood. We, too, would rather rely on “someone with skin” than put our affairs and our futures in the Lord’s hand. ([Today's Handbook for Solving Bible Difficulties](#))

G Campbell Morgan - Make us a king to judge us like all the nations.—1 Sam. 8.5.

In this chapter we come to the dividing-line in the national history of the children of Israel. They had been created by God a Theocracy. That was the peculiar character and glory of their national life. They had no king other than Jehovah. In proportion as they had realized the ideal, they had witnessed to other nations as to the perfection of His government. Their realization had been, so far as they were concerned, most imperfect. Through persistent deflections, they had created the necessity for the raising up of the judges, and thus had approximated towards a human king. Now the hour came when they definitely asked for such a king. The very terms of their request revealed the evil of it. They asked for a king like the nations. Their glory and their power had 'consisted in their unlikeness to the nations in this very fact. By reason of their failure to submit them-selves completely to the rule of God, they had failed, themselves, to realize all the breadth and beneficence of that rule. And so they sought conformity to the ways of the nations. It was a sad fall. There is but one King who is able to govern humanity perfectly, and that is God. Man's only hope of realizing all freedom and all fulness of life is that of return to the Kingdom of God. Never will there be final peace and prosperity on earth, until humanity has rid itself of all human kings, and yielded to God as the one and only King. God has appeared in human history as Man, and He has appointed a day in which He will govern the world in righteousness through that Man. That is the fact which makes it certain that men will find liberty and life in all strength and fulness. (Borrow [Life applications from every chapter of the Bible](#))

1 Samuel 8:6 But the thing was displeasing in the sight of Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." And Samuel prayed to the LORD.

BGT 1 Samuel 8:6 καὶ ἐν πονηρίᾳ τῶν φθάλμων αὐτῶν Σαμουὴλ ὅτι ἐπεὶ ἠγάπησαν αὐτοὶ βασιλεῖν ὡς καὶ οἱ Ἕλληνες, οὐκ ἤθελεν αὐτοὺς Σαμουὴλ ἰσχυροποιῆσαι.

KJV 1 Samuel 8:6 But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD.

NET 1 Samuel 8:6 But this request displeased Samuel, for they said, "Give us a king to lead us." So Samuel prayed to the LORD.

CSB 1 Samuel 8:6 When they said, "Give us a king to judge us," Samuel considered their demand sinful, so he prayed to the LORD.

ESV 1 Samuel 8:6 But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." And Samuel prayed to the LORD.

NIV 1 Samuel 8:6 But when they said, "Give us a king to lead us," this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the LORD.

NLT 1 Samuel 8:6 Samuel was displeased with their request and went to the LORD for guidance.

NRS 1 Samuel 8:6 But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to govern us." Samuel prayed to the LORD,

- **displeasing:** Heb. was evil in the eyes of, 1Sa 12:17
- **prayed:** 1Sa 15:11 Ex 32:21,32 Nu 16:15,22,46 Ezr 9:3-5 Ps 109:4 Lu 6:11,12 Php 4:6 Jas 1:5
- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries'

Related Passage:

Psalm 95:1-3 O come, let us sing for joy to the LORD, Let us shout joyfully to the rock of our salvation. 2 Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms. 3 For the LORD is a great God And **a great King above all gods,**

**SAMUEL UPSET BY
REQUEST FOR KING**

But the thing was displeasing in the sight of Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us"- Literally this says, "the thing was evil in Samuel's eyes." (1Sa 8:6YLT) Samuel was the judge of Israel (1Sa 7:15-17+), so this request is somewhat of a personal affront! "The Discerning Ear of the Prophet of God Immediately Recognizes Deviation from God's Program." ([Apple](#))

Remember that these are the tail end of the days of Judges where the "national motto" had been "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes." (Jdg 21:25) It was not that the people really needed a king to "judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles" (1Sa 8:20). God Himself had been their King, and had gone before them and fought their battles whenever they were faithful to Him. But they deliberately rejected this **theocratic kingdom**, and the judges that God had raised up, in order that they "may be like all the nations" (1Sa 8:20). As a result of their complaining, God "gave them their request; but sent leanness into their souls" (Ps 106:15), just as He had done in the wilderness when they complained about their food. Discontent often leads to disobedience.

Wycliffe Bible Commentary ([borrow](#)) comments that "Samuel was personally affected by the request. To be told, after a lifetime of service, that his sons were unworthy to succeed him was most distressing. And to be superseded by another after years of faithful service was a terrific blow to his sensitive spirit."

John Walton - The leaders of Israel have decided that they want a permanent head of government empowered with centralized authority over the tribes and commanding a standing army. They have concluded that their organization as a federation of tribes has put them at a military disadvantage. They believe that a king with a trained standing army at his command will level the playing field and enable them to successfully defend their land. They have been mistaken in assessing their problem as a political problem and consequently opting for a political solution. What Samuel seeks to clarify for them is that their problem is not political but spiritual. Their political solution will solve nothing unless it is accompanied by a spiritual solution. ([IVPBBC - OT](#))

Brian Bell - Forced retirement because of his age. No one ever had a complaint about him (1Sa 12:2-5). He had faithfully discharged his duties. What ingratitude! The thing displeased Samuel - How do you handle rejection? How would you forced retirement? Let's draw the comparison between how 2 bible characters handled rejection! **Cain - The Wrong response to Rejection!** Some common responses to rejection are: aggression, resentment, negative attitudes. God approved Abel's sacrifice but did not accept what Cain had offered to him. He gave Cain the opportunity of discussing his feelings. Gen.4:6,7 Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it." By doing this God gave him the chance to benefit from talking matters out & settings things right. "Cain, you can deal w/your resentment. You can offer the proper sacrifices & enjoy My acceptance as before." But, Cain would not admit his error, nor offer the proper sacrifices. He wanted acceptance on his own terms. (def. for religion) Cain had 3 courses of action before him: (1) Go-In! (Internalize) - Bottle it. Turn the hurt of rejection inward & inflict punishment for his feelings of guilt upon himself. This self-inflicted hurt might have made him feel (temporarily) that he had atoned for the wrong he had done. It sounds like this..."I feel bad, what else do you want from me?" (2) Go-Out! (Externalize) - Blame others. This is when you project your attitude outward. He could have blamed his damaged emotions on someone/something else. (3) Go-Up! (Revitalize) - See himself as God sees him. Cain could have sought to restore his relationship with the Lord. Cain choose curtain #2 - He chose to project his anger outward. The person who is angry is always right in his/her own eyes. The final act of the drama takes place when God appeared & asked Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" He said he didn't know, but then projected his blame for Abel's death on God, "Am I my brothers keeper?" meaning, "aren't you supposed to be?"

Brian Bell - Samuel - The Right response to Rejection! This displeased Samuel...so Samuel prayed! He immediately took matters to the Lord. He didn't argue w/them & pray afterwards! He 1st retreated where he laid the whole matter before the One who had commissioned him to lead his people. By praying he was able to let go of the problem, reassure himself of his standing before the Lord, & receive a new perspective on the situation. In Samuel's attitude & actions we have the secret of overcoming the debilitating effects of rejection! (1) By prayer we are able to discuss everything w/the Lord. By prayer we are able to tell him exactly how we feel & why. (3) By prayer we are able to receive an entirely new perspective that keeps us from harboring resentment & blaming others for our situations. (4) By prayer we are able to receive new direction. As Samuel prayed, the Lord was able to encourage him. (See 1Sa 8:7) This new perspective took the sting out of what had happened & kept Samuel from nursing a grievance. Samuel also received explicit instructions from the Lord (1Sa 8:9) 3. All too often we argue first & pray later!

And Samuel prayed to the LORD - Instead of arguing with the people, Samuel "prayed to the LORD" Samuel was a man of prayer as we have seen and so he speaks to the heavenly King about Israel's request for an earthly king. Samuel did was what his mother did, what he saw his mother do, and what he had learned to do all his life -- he prayed - when he led the revival early in his ministry (1Sa 7:5), when he underwent this crisis midway in his ministry (1Sa 8:6), and when he bid them farewell in his twilight years (1Sa 12:19, 23). Samuel was attested by prophet Jeremiah as a great man of prayer (Jer 15:1).

THOUGHT - What an example Samuel presents! When you don't know what to do, who do you go to? Do you go to other men or do you go to God? What do you do when someone argues with you over a relatively "big"

decision (buying a house in a certain neighborhood, etc). Next time why don't you (and I).....Practice the prophet's pattern - pray to the LORD!

F B Meyer - 1 Samuel 8:6 But the thing displeased Samuel... , And Samuel prayed unto the Lord.

A little further down in the chapter we learn that Samuel rehearsed the words of the people unto the Lord. His prayer, to a large extent, was a rehearsal of all the strong and unkind things that the people had said to him; and in this way he passed them off his mind, and found relief. There is a suggestion of close communion with God in the expression, "He rehearsed them in the ears of the Lord." It had been the habit of his life to be on intimate terms with his God.

Things do not always turn out as we had hoped, and we get displeased for our own sakes and God's. We had planned in one direction, but events have issued in another; and the results have threatened to become disastrous. There is but one resource. If we allow vexations to eat into our heart, they will corrode and injure it. We must rehearse them to God — spreading the letter before Him as Hezekiah did; making request like Paul; crying like Samuel.

Surely it is the mistake of our life, that we carry our burdens instead of handing them over; that we worry instead of trusting; that we pray so little. The grass grows thick on the pathway to our oratory; the cobwebs hang across the doorway. The time we spend in prayer is perhaps better spent than in any other way. It was whilst Samuel prayed thus, that he saw the Divine program for Israel:

"And he who at the sixth hour sought The lone house-top to pray, There gained a sight beyond his thought— The dawn of Gentile day. Then reckon not, when perils lour, The time of prayer misspent; Nor meanest chance, nor place, nor hour, Without its heavenward bent."

Before the Face of God (Ligonier) - A King for Israel

And the LORD told him [Samuel]: Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king." [1 Sam. 8:7]

After the victory over Philistia at Mizpah, Samuel judged Israel for a number of years. Eventually Nahash, king of Ammon, began to move against Israel. The people used this occasion to demand a human king (1 Sam. 12:12). They used as their excuse the fact that Samuel's sons, who judged at Beersheba, were taking bribes (1 Sam. 8:1–5). This was only a pretext because Beersheba was far out on the fringes of the nation, and all that was needed was for the two men to be deposed as judges. There was no need for a king.

God had told Israel through Moses that eventually he would give them a king—when he was ready (Deut. 17:14–15). Until then the nation was to regard Yahweh as king. Gideon had rejected the crown offered him, saying, "Yahweh will rule over you" (Judg. 8:23). Gideon's son Abimelech took the crown for a short time, becoming Israel's first king (in name at least), but after three years his kingdom was demolished (Judges 9).

The last five chapters of Judges show that anarchy reigned in Israel, "when there was no king," meaning when the people refused to honor Yahweh's authority over their lives as King.

Once they had rejected Yahweh they soon demanded a human king. God told Samuel to give them one, accompanied with the warning that, because they had not properly honored Yahweh as High King, their national king would be no more righteous than they had been (1 Sam. 8:9–18). First, the king would draft their sons into his army, an army whose function was not only national defense but also personal service to the king. The army would be a corps of slaves.

Second, the king would take their daughters to be bakers. Third, the king would use his military power to steal the best of their land to give it to his favorite bureaucrats. Fourth, the king would take a tithe of their grain and wine. This was a pregnant prophecy, for it meant that the king would put himself in the place of God, receiving the tithe. Finally, the king would reduce the nation to slavery, and the people would find themselves in a new Egypt—one of their own choosing. On that day they would cry out to Yahweh, the true High King, but he would not hear them.

Coram Deo God's plan requires God's timing. Israel was not ready for a king. Perhaps there are similar circumstances in your life. Spend the time today considering where your plans might be in conflict with God's: job advancement, marriage, prosperity, or some other area in which you have declined to trust him fully. If necessary, ask God's Spirit to slow down your personal agenda.

1 Samuel 8:7 The LORD said to Samuel, 'Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them.'

BGT 1 Samuel 8:7 καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν κριὸς πρὸς Σαμουὴλ κούε τὸ φωνεῖν τὸ λαὸν καὶ οὐ λαλῶσιν σοὶ τί οὐκ ἔρουθεν κασὶν ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ξουδεν κασὶν τὸ μὴ βασιλεῖν ἐν πᾶτιν

KJV 1 Samuel 8:7 And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.

NET 1 Samuel 8:7 The LORD said to Samuel, "Do everything the people request of you. For it is not you that they have rejected, but it is me that they have rejected as their king.

CSB 1 Samuel 8:7 But the LORD told him, "Listen to the people and everything they say to you. They have not rejected you; they have rejected Me as their king.

ESV 1 Samuel 8:7 And the LORD 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.

NIV 1 Samuel 8:7 And the LORD told him: "Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king.

NLT 1 Samuel 8:7 "Do everything they say to you," the LORD replied, "for it is me they are rejecting, not you. They don't want me to be their king any longer.

NRS 1 Samuel 8:7 and the LORD said to Samuel, "Listen to 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.

- **Hearken:** Nu 22:20 Ps 81:11,12 Isa 66:4 Ho 13:10,11
- **they have not:** 1Sa 10:19 12:17-19 Ex 16:8 Mt 10:24,25,40 Lu 10:16 19:14,27 Joh 13:16 15:20,21
- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

1 Samuel 10:19 **"But you have today rejected your God,** Who delivers you from all your calamities and your distresses; yet you have said, 'No, but set a king over us!' Now therefore, present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes and by your clans."

YAHWEH EXPLAINS WHY SAMUEL IS TO HEARKEN TO THE PEOPLE

The LORD said to Samuel, "**Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for**(term of explanation) **they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them-** Why did Yahweh order Samuel to listen to the wishes of the people? Was it because everything would be just fine? Clearly this was not the case as we see all manner of sins associated the subsequent kings of Israel, not the least of which was the sin of idolatry in their wisest king, Solomon, resulting in a division of the entire nation! It is interesting that this was actually not the first time Israel sought a king, for in Judges 8:22-23+ we read "Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, "Rule over us, both you and your son, also your son's son, for you have delivered us from the hand of Midian." But Gideon said to them, "I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; **the LORD shall rule over you.**" While Gideon had his flaws as a judge, here he gave the God honoring response to the people and they withdrew their request. The most serious problem with Israel's request was exactly what Gideon had alluded to -- their desire for an earthly king demonstrated that they did not want the Holy God as King ruling over their nation or their personal lives! Things have not changed much have they? Men reject the holy God because they don't want Him ruling over their unholy lives (cf Jn 3:19, 20+). They seek self (Sin) to be seated on the throne of their hearts! (cf Ro 6:12-13+).

THOUGHT - Have you ever had a someone who professes to know Jesus and you have warned them about some course of action that is against the word and will of God and yet they rejected your counsel? Then take heart, for you are in good company, the company of God's prophet Samuel. They are not rejecting you, but they are rejecting God, God's Word and God's authority! And sadly (and don't gloat!), you can rest assured that they will reap the rotten that comes from sowing godless seed (Gal 6:7-8+, Hos 8:7).

Rejected on earth.

Accepted in heaven.

-- God to Samuel

ESV Study Bible ([borrow](#)) - The people's rejection of God's ways prefigures the rejection of Christ (Acts 3:13–15; Acts 7:51–53).

Brian Bell - Heed their voice (1Sa 8:7,9) - How scary when God says "listen to the people". 1. How often do you want God to listen

to you? 2. Yet, we ask Him to heed our voice often! 3. Go ahead & heed, but warn!

J D Greear - Their request represents a complete lack of trust in God and satisfaction with Him. God was supposed to be their real King. They were supposed to depend on Him for everything. But from the beginning that had never been enough for them. They never trusted Him enough to say, "God, I am just going to do Your will, and I will let You worry about everything else."....It is still rebellion to claim to follow God but to insist on a number of other things being present in your life before you will feel secure. This is not just an ancient Israelite problem. This is our problem. Is it not easier to "trust God" when everything that you feel like you need for life is right in front of you? Your job is secure, your marriage is fulfilling, everyone you care about is healthy. But when one of those things is missing, do you not have this feeling of insecurity or anxiety or unhappiness? Israel is not content to lean back and trust God. So they feel they need something they can get their hands on and control.(See [Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Samuel](#))

John Walton - The fact that God was seen as raising up military leaders and that God was the one who brought the victories demonstrates that God was the One Who was the King leading out the armies in battle. Victory in battle was assured if the Lord was pleased with Israel. By making their request, the leaders are implying that God has been less than successful in bringing victory and that somehow a king will do a better job. ([IVPBBC - OT](#))

Recall that God had predicted on a number of occasions that Israel would have a king...

Genesis 17:6 "I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and **kings will come forth from you.**

Genesis 35:11; God also 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 forth from you.**

Genesis 36:31 Now these are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom **before any king reigned over the sons of Israel.**

Genesis 49:10 "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.

Numbers 24:7-9+ "Water will flow from his buckets, And his seed will be by many waters, **And his king shall be higher than Agag, And his kingdom shall be exalted.** 8 "God brings him out of Egypt, He is for him like the horns of the wild ox. He will devour the nations who are his adversaries, And will crush their bones in pieces, And shatter them with his arrows. 9 "He couches, he lies down as a lion, And as a lion, who dares rouse him? Blessed is everyone who blesses you, And cursed is everyone who curses you."

Numbers 24:17+ (**PROPHECY OF THE FUTURE REIGN OF MESSIAH AS KING OF KINGS**) "I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near; A star shall come forth from Jacob, A scepter shall rise from Israel, And shall crush through the forehead of Moab, And tear down all the sons of Sheth.

Deuteronomy 17:14+ "When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, and you possess it and live in it, and you say, '**I will set a king over me like all the nations who are around me,**'

Deuteronomy 28:36+ "**The LORD will bring you and your king, whom YOU set over you, (NOTE THE CHANGE - WHOM YOU SET OVER YOU NOT WHOM I YAHWEH SET OVER YOU!)** to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone.

Walter Kaiser - Did God Want Israel to Have a King? - [Hard Sayings - scroll to page 174](#)

What makes this section a hard saying is not the fact that it contains what some have unfairly labeled the ramblings of a disappointed prophet. Instead, it is the fact that up until very recent times, most nonevangelical Old Testament scholars strongly believed that they detected an ambivalent attitude toward kingship in the narratives of 1 Samuel 8–12, in light of the covenantal tone of 1 Samuel 11:14–12:25.

It has been fairly common to find 1 Samuel 8–12 characterized as a collection of independent story units or tradition complexes, some being promonarchical and others antimonarchical. This division was supposedly evidenced in different attitudes and responses to the idea of a monarchy and kingship in Israel. Generally an antimonarchical orientation was attributed to 1 Samuel 8:1–21, 10:17–27 and 12:1–25, while a promonarchical stance was seen in 1 Samuel 9:1–10:16 and 11:1–15. Endorsing this analysis of the material would leave us with a dilemma: how could Scripture both approve and reprove the concept of a monarchy?

A second problem in the debate surrounding 1 Samuel 8–12 is the sequencing of events presented in the book. It has been widely alleged that the present sequence is an artificial device imposed by a late editor as a result of the growth of tradition.

Finally, many scholars have said that the antimonarchical sections show indications of editorial revisions arising from Deuteronomic

influence; this argument is based on a late dating of Deuteronomy in the postexilic period of the fifth or fourth century B.C.

Each of these three allegations must be answered. There is no doubt that a tension of sorts does exist in the narratives of 1 Samuel 8–12. The prospect of establishing a kingship in Israel elicited numerous reservations, and these are fairly aired in 1 Samuel 8:1–21, 10:17–27 and 12:1–25.

Yet it cannot be forgotten that kingship was also within the direct plan and permission of God. God had divulged that part of his plan as far back as the days of Moses (Deut 17:14–20). Accordingly, when Samuel presented Saul to the people, it was as the one whom the Lord had chosen (1 Sam 10:24). Saul's appointment was the outcome of the twice-repeated guidance that Samuel received: "Listen to all that the people are saying" (1 Sam 8:7, 22). In fact, 1 Samuel 12:13 specifically says, "See, the LORD has set a king over you."

But here is the important point. These five chapters of 1 Samuel cannot be neatly divided into two contrasting sets of narratives; the ambivalence is present even within the units that have been labeled as corresponding to one side or the other! The problem, in fact, is to explain this ambivalence at all. What is the cause for this love-hate attitude toward kingship in Israel?

My answer is the same as Robert Vannoy's.¹ It is the covenantal relationship expressed in 1 Samuel 11:14–12:25 that explains this ambivalence. The issue, then, is not the presence of kingship so much as it is the kind of kingship and the reasons for wanting a monarchy.

There is no question but that the presence of a king in Israel was fully compatible with Yahweh's covenant with Israel. What hurt Samuel and the Lord was the people's improper motive for requesting a king in the first place: they wanted to "be like all the other nations" (8:20) and have a king to lead them when they went out to fight. This was tantamount to breaking the covenant and rejecting Yahweh as their Sovereign (8:7; 10:19). To act in this manner was to forget God's provision for them in the past. Hadn't he protected them and gone before them in battle many times?

Since the people were so unfaithful in their motivation for desiring a king, it was necessary to warn them about "the manner of the king" (literal translation of *mišpaṭ hammelek*—8:11). If what the people wanted was a contemporary form of monarchy, then they had better get used to all the abuses and problems of kingship as well as its splendor.

Five serious problems with the contemporary forms of kingship are cited in 1 Samuel 8:11–18. That these issues were real can be attested by roughly contemporaneous documents from Alalakh and Ugarit.² The problems they would experience would include a military draft, the servitude of the populace, widespread royal confiscation of private property, taxation and loss of personal liberty.

This delineation of "the manner of the king" served to define the function of kings in the ancient Near East. But over against this was the gathering that took place at Mizpah (1 Sam 10:17–27). Here Samuel described "the manner of the kingdom" (literal translation of *mišpaṭ hammelukâh*—10:25). In so doing Samuel began to resolve the tension between Israel's improper reasons for desiring a king, their misconceptions of the king's role and function, and Yahweh's purpose in saying that he also desired Israel to have a king. Samuel's definition of "the manner of the kingdom" clearly distinguished Israelite kingship from the kingship that was practiced in the surrounding nations of that day.

In Israel, the king's role was to be compatible with Yahweh's sovereignty over the nation and also with all the laws, prescriptions and obligations of the covenant given to the people under Moses' leadership. Thus "the manner of the kingdom" was to be normative for the nation of Israel rather than "the manner of the king."

The issue of the sequencing of the narratives is less difficult. Given the tensions of the time—the various attitudes toward kingship and the legitimacy of establishing it—one can easily see how the text does reflect the back-and-forth unfolding of the process at various geographic locations and on different days. Each phase of the negotiations dramatized the seesaw nature of this battle between those holding out for the sovereignty of Yahweh and those wanting a more visible and contemporaneous model of kingship.

The most critical problem in connection with the sequencing of the events is the relationship between 1 Samuel 11:14–15 and 1 Samuel 10:17–27, particularly in connection with the statement in 1 Samuel 11:14, "Come, let us go to Gilgal and there reaffirm the kingship."

This phrase constitutes the most compelling evidence for the argument that several accounts have been put together in these chapters. The simplest, and best, explanation for the meaning of this debated phrase, however, is that the reference is not to Saul, but to a renewal of allegiance to Yahweh and his covenant. It is a call for the renewal ceremony that is described in greater detail in 1 Samuel 12. This explanation makes the most sense and makes possible the best harmonization of the parallel accounts of Saul's accession to the throne in 1 Samuel 10:17–27 and 11:15.

The third and final objection concerns the alleged Deuteronomic influence on the so-called antimonarchial sections. Bear in mind that those who raise this objection also date Deuteronomy to the fifth or fourth century B.C. rather than attributing it to Moses as it

properly should be.

Their argument runs into several problems of its own. Long ago Julius Wellhausen (1844–1918) noted its basic flaw: for all of Deuteronomy's alleged antimonarchial views, it had put forth a positive "law of the king" (Deut 17:14–20) long before any of the Israelites thought of having a king! Furthermore, the pictures of David, Hezekiah and Josiah in 1 and 2 Kings (other books often alleged to be Deuteronomic in viewpoint and influence) were likewise promonarchial.

There is no doubt that Deuteronomy had a profound influence on the events described in 1 Samuel 8–12, but none of them can be shown to have resulted from a late editorializing based on an exilic or postexilic revisionist view of how kingship had come about in Israel.

Thus we conclude that none of these three problems can be used as evidence for a lack of unity, coherence or singularity of viewpoint. Most important of all, the covenantal perspective of 1 Samuel 11:14–12:25 provides the best basis for the unity and historical trustworthiness of these accounts as they are known today.

Gleason Archer - Why did God condemn the Israelites' request for a king (1 Sa 8:7–9) after He had laid down rules for future kings of Israel to follow (Deut. 17:14–20)? - [Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties - scroll to page 173](#)

There can be no doubt that God's plan for Israel included a king, a specially chosen dynasty from the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49:10), and that in anticipation of that event He laid down certain basic guidelines for such a theocratic king to follow (especially the avoidance of multiplying riches, horses, or wives), as recorded in Deuteronomy 17. But this furnishes no problem at all in regard to the establishment of a monarchic form of government for Israel in the latter days of Samuel's career. After his own two sons, Joel and Abijah, had proved to be unworthy and incompetent for leadership, the Israelite people requested Samuel to choose out and anoint for office a ruler over them who should serve as a permanent king with full authority as a monarch (1 Sam. 8:5).

In view of the fluctuating fortunes of Israel under the long succession of "judges" who had followed after the death of Joshua, it was not altogether surprising for the people to look to such a solution for their ineffectiveness and disunity as a nation. But the reason why their request displeased the Lord was that it was based on the assumption that they should follow their pagan neighbors in their form of government. Their motive was to conform to the world about them rather than to abide by the holy and perfect constitution that God had given them under Moses in the form of the Pentateuchal code. There was a definite sense in which they were setting aside the laws of God as inadequate for their needs and falling in step with the idolatrous heathen. They expressed their desire to Samuel thus: "Now appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations" (NASB). They had forgotten that God had called them out of the world, not to conform to the world, but to walk in covenant fellowship with Yahweh as a testimony of godliness before all the pagan world.

Nevertheless, it is also clear that the Lord had in mind from the very beginning a monarchic form of government for His people. Even to Abraham He had promised, "I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you" (Gen. 17:6, NASB). He had also decreed that the chosen line of royalty should come from the tribe of Judah: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes" (Gen. 49:10, NASB) (i.e., until the coming of the Messiah, who would Himself be a descendant of the Judean royal line).

So it came about that when Samuel's contemporaries came clamoring for a king, God granted them their request, even though He rebuked them for their worldly motive in making it. He also warned them that the greater unity and efficiency of government they might achieve under a monarchy would be offset by the loss of their liberties under the oppressive and demanding rule of an autocratic king. Because of his supreme and concentrated power, he would not be as accountable to the personal and civic rights of his people in the same way the Judges had been; so the nation would have reason to regret their choice. Rather than being governed by the laws of God, they would fall under the autocratic rule of a single man and become subject to heavy taxation, corvée labor, military draft, confiscation of property, and all the rest (1 Sam. 8:11–18).

In the sequel, God first chose out for them an able and gifted ruler in the person of King Saul, but one who was basically carnal, willfully disobedient, insanely jealous, and bloodthirsty in the later years of his reign. The purpose of Saul's reign was to prepare Israel to appreciate all the more the reign of a true man of God, David son of Jesse, who came from the tribe of Judah, and who was determined to serve as a faithful theocratic ruler and an obedient servant of Yahweh.

Norman Geisler - 1 SAMUEL 8:7–9—How could God condemn Israel's request for a king when the rules for selecting a king were given by God in Deuteronomy 17? - [When Critics Ask - scroll to page 143](#)

PROBLEM: The Scriptures testify to the fact that God had planned for Israel to have a king. Deuteronomy 17:14–20 specifically lays down the rules for selecting a king in Israel. However, when the people of Israel requested that Samuel appoint a king, the Lord told Samuel that the people "have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them" (1 Sam. 8:7). How

could God condemn Israel's request for a king when He had already given them the guidelines for selecting a king?

SOLUTION: The context of 1 Samuel 8 indicates that the people had the wrong motive and employed the wrong method in seeking a king for themselves. First of all, the people had the wrong motive for seeking a king. In the first verse of chapter 8 we read that Samuel was old when he appointed his sons to be judges in Israel. However, Samuel's sons did not do right in the eyes of God. When the people came to Samuel they requested that he appoint a king, not because they wanted to have God's man to rule over them. Rather, they wanted to have a man rule over them. The people had mistaken God's administration through Samuel for Samuel's acts. At Saul's inauguration, Samuel reminded the people that it was "your God, who Himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations" (1 Sam. 10:19). They completely ignored the fact that it was God who protected them and led them, not Samuel or any human king whom Samuel would appoint. Consequently, it was not Samuel whom they were rejecting. Rather it was God whom they were rejecting.

Second, they failed to seek the Lord concerning a king to rule over them. They did not bother to ask for God's guidance. They simply requested that Samuel appoint a king. When the elders of Israel came to Samuel, they said, "Now make for us a king to judge us like all the nations" (8:5). However, in Deuteronomy 17:15 God specifically stated that the people would set a king over them "whom the Lord your God chooses." The request of the people in 1 Samuel betrays their lack of consideration for God's part in the process. They had truly rejected God from ruling over them. The Lord was displeased with the people because they did not seek God's man, and they did not employ God's method.

1 Samuel 8:8 "Like all the deeds which they have done since the day that I brought them up from Egypt even to this day--in that they have forsaken Me and served other gods--so they are doing to you also."

BGT 1 Samuel 8:8 κατὰ πάντα τὰ ποιήματα ποιεῖν μοι φέρετε ἄλλους θεοὺς ὡς τὸν θεόν σου
ταῖς καὶ γὰρ λίπεν με καὶ ὁ κύριος ὁ θεός σου οὕτως αὐτοὶ ποιοῦσιν καὶ σοί

KJV 1 Samuel 8:8 According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee.

NET 1 Samuel 8:8 Just as they have done from the day that I brought them up from Egypt until this very day, they have rejected me and have served other gods. This is what they are also doing to you.

CSB 1 Samuel 8:8 They are doing the same thing to you that they have done to Me, since the day I brought them out of Egypt until this day, abandoning Me and worshiping other gods.

ESV 1 Samuel 8:8 According to all the deeds that they have done, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt even to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are also doing to you.

NIV 1 Samuel 8:8 As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are doing to you.

NLT 1 Samuel 8:8 Ever since I brought them from Egypt they have continually abandoned me and followed other gods. And now they are giving you the same treatment.

NRS 1 Samuel 8:8 Just as they have done to me, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so also they are doing to you.

- Ex 14:11,12 Ex 16:3 Ex 17:2 Ex 32:1 Nu 14:2-4 Nu 16:2,3,41 De 9:24 Jdg 2:2,3,20 4:1 6:1 13:1 Ps 78:56-59 106:14-21,34-40 Ac 7:51-53
- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Exodus 14:11-12+ Then they said to Moses, "Is it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you dealt with us in this way, bringing us out of Egypt? 12 "Is this not the word that we spoke to you in Egypt, saying, 'Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness."

Exodus 16:3+ The sons of Israel said to them, "Would that we had died by the LORD'S hand in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat, when we ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

Exodus 17:2+ Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water that we may drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?"

Exodus 32:1+ Now when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people assembled about Aaron and said to him, "Come, make us a god who will go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him."

Numbers 14:2-4+ All the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron; and the whole congregation said to them, "Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! 3 "Why is the LORD bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become plunder; would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?" 4 So they said to one another, "Let us appoint a leader and return to Egypt."

Acts 7:51-53+ "You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did. 52 "Which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed those who had previously announced the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become; 53 you who received the law as ordained by angels, and yet did not keep it."

ISRAEL'S REJECTION OF YAHWEH IS "NOTHING NEW!"

Like all the deeds which they have done since the day that I brought them up from Egypt even to this day--in that they have forsaken Me and served other gods--so they are doing to you also - NLT = "Ever since I brought them from Egypt they have continually forsaken me and followed other gods. And now they are giving you the same treatment." Don't miss who is making this condemnatory pronouncement - not Samuel but God! Do you see what Yahweh is saying about Israel, the Chosen People? For 300+ years they have rejected and rebelled against the rule of the true and living (loving) God and instead continually made the sinful, foolish choice of bowing down to lifeless idols! How deceitful is sin? (That's rhetorical beloved! It deceives me every time I fall for it! See Heb 3:13+).

J D Greear - They want a king they can see and touch and control because they do not fully trust God. And God rightly calls this rejection because everything about His character proves that they should be able to trust Him. (See [Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Samuel](#))

1 Samuel 8:9 "Now then, **listen to their voice; however, you shall solemnly warn them and tell them of the procedure of the king who will reign over them."**

BGT 1 Samuel 8:9 καὶ νῦν κούετε τὴν φωνὴν αὐτῶν· πλὴν τί διαμαρτυρῆμενος διαμαρτυρᾶτο· καὶ παγγέλες αὐτοῖς τὸ δίκαιον τοῦ βασιλεῦς καὶ βασιλεῖσει πρὸς αὐτοὺς

KJV 1 Samuel 8:9 Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.

NET 1 Samuel 8:9 So now do as they say. But seriously warn them and make them aware of the policies of the king who will rule over them."

CSB 1 Samuel 8:9 Listen to them, but you must solemnly warn them and tell them about the rights of the king who will rule over them."

ESV 1 Samuel 8:9 Now then, obey their voice; only you shall solemnly warn them and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them."

NIV 1 Samuel 8:9 Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will do."

NLT 1 Samuel 8:9 Do as they ask, but solemnly warn them about the way a king will reign over them."

NRS 1 Samuel 8:9 Now then, listen to their voice; only-- you shall solemnly warn them, and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them."

RSV 1 Samuel 8:9 Now then, hearken to their voice; only, you shall solemnly warn them, and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them."

- **however:** etc. or, notwithstanding when you have solemnly protested against them, then thou shall show, etc. Eze 3:18
- **tell them of the procedure:** 1Sa 8:11-18 2:13 10:25 14:52 Eze 45:7,8 46:18
- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Exodus 19:21 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, "Go down, **warn the people**, so that they do not break through to the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish.

Deuteronomy 32:46 he said to them, "**Take to your heart all the words with which I am warning you today**, which you shall command your sons to observe carefully, even all the words of this law.

2 Chronicles 24:19 Yet He sent prophets to them to bring them back to the LORD, **though they testified against (WARNED) them, they would not listen.**

Nehemiah 9:26. 29 "But they became disobedient and rebelled against You, And cast Your law behind their backs And killed Your **prophets who had admonished them** So that they might return to You, And they committed great blasphemies. 29 **And admonished (WARNED) them in order to turn them back to Your law.** Yet they acted arrogantly and did not listen to Your commandments but sinned against Your ordinances, By which if a man observes them he shall live. And they turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their neck, and would not listen.

YAHWEH COMMANDS SAMUEL TO HEARKEN BUT ALSO FOREWARN

Now then, listen (KJV = hearken ~ obey) **their voice** - God commands Samuel because He knows that in his heart Samuel is upset for God's sake.

However, you shall solemnly warn (Hebrew = [ûd](#); Lxx = [diamarturomai](#) - twice in the Greek for extra emphasis!) **them and tell them of the procedure of the king who will reign over them."** - BBE paraphrases it "but make a serious protest." **To solemnly warn** functions like a legal expression implying the hearer is being given "**full disclosure!**" Samuel gives the "small print" at the bottom of some of those contracts that in bold print look too good to be true! And truth be told, this was not really warning in "small print," but warning from a sure prophet, a prophet that had led Israel admirably as judge for decades. But their ears were closed, because their hearts were "singing Frank Sinatra's song '[I Did it My Way](#),'" and they were determined to have it "their way."

THOUGHT Have you ever been down that bumpy road (way)? (That's rhetorical and speaks to you and me!)

J D Greear "Listen to them," God says, and give them a king (v. 9). God calls their request for a king disobedience, but then He acquiesces. This is a little confusing. If this request was so bad, why did God give it to them? Why not simply say no? This is why: **God will sometimes answer your prayers to let you learn the hard way that what you were asking for was wrong** Have you ever had that happen? Have you ever wanted something so badly that you worked for it, you obsessed over it, and you prayed about it—but then when you got it, it was not what you thought it would be? What you had hoped would be a blessing turned out to be more of a curse in your life....One of the worst judgment statements in the Bible is Romans 1:26: God turned them over to the desires of their heart. In other words, God's judgment on them was to answer all their prayers with a yes. The reverse is also true. Some of God's greatest mercies to us come in the form of unanswered prayers...But the greatest blessing God could ever give is the ability to be happy in Him alone. Sometimes He has to teach us that lesson by withholding blessings we think would be beneficial. (See [Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Samuel](#))

Solemnly warn ([05749](#)) ([ûd](#)) is a verb that means to admonish, to counsel in terms of someones behavior. It means to bear witness, to testify. Specifically, it can either to serve as a witness or to testify against someone, falsely (1Ki 21:10, 13) or in favor of (Job 29:11). It can also mean either to **admonish** someone (Gen. 43:3; Neh. 9:26, 30); or to **warn solemnly** (Ge. 43:3; Ex 19:21; Dt. 32:46; 1Sa. 8:9; 1Ki. 2:42; 2Chr. 24:19; Neh 9:29; 13:15, 21; Jer. 42:19; Amos 3:13). Such warnings frequently came from the Lord (2 Kgs. 17:13, 15; Jer. 11:7); but they were also mediated through His prophets (2 Chr. 24:19; Jer. 42:19). In the causative form, it can mean to call to witness, to take as a witness (Deut. 4:26; Isa. 8:2); or to obtain witnesses, that is, authentication (Jer. 32:10, 25, 44). Schultz - It is used relative to a business transaction in Jer 32:10, 25, 44 where Jeremiah obtained witnesses for the deed to his newly acquired property in Anathoth.

1 Samuel 8:10 So Samuel spoke all the words of the LORD to the people who had asked of him a king.

BGT 1 Samuel 8:10 κα ε πεν Σαμουηλ π ν τ μα κυρ ου πρ ς τ ν λα ν το ς α το ντας παρ α το βασιλ α

KJV 1 Samuel 8:10 And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king.

NET 1 Samuel 8:10 So Samuel spoke all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking him for a king.

CSB 1 Samuel 8:10 Samuel told all the LORD's words to the people who were asking him for a king.

ESV 1 Samuel 8:10 So Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking for a king from him.

NIV 1 Samuel 8:10 Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking him for a king.

NLT 1 Samuel 8:10 So Samuel passed on the LORD's warning to the people who were asking him for a king.

NRS 1 Samuel 8:10 So Samuel reported all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking him for a king.

- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SAMUEL OBEYS YAHWEH AND SPEAKS GOD'S WORD TO PEOPLE

So - This term of conclusion signals Samuel's obedience to Yahweh's words.

Samuel spoke all the words of the LORD to the people who had asked of him a king- Hannah had asked for a son, Israel asked for a king! Hannah's son Samuel is a prophet, and so as God's "mouthpiece" he repeats God's words of willingness (to accept their request) but also includes God's warnings about a monarchy. There is a saying "[forewarned is forearmed](#)," but this saying is not apropos for Israel, for they would be unable to prepare for the evil of the future kings -- 100% of the kings of the northern kingdom of Israel were evil and only a few of the kings of the southern kingdom were good. Israel was being forewarned!

Future events are affected by present decisions.

-- Brian Bell

Brian Bell on 1Sa 8:10-18 - This was the typical behavior of oriental despots of that day. The people had every right to be dissatisfied with the administration of Samuel's sons, but the system of government the whole nation was now requesting...would be much worse. Solomon & others would place heavy taxes on the people. We learn here, future events are affected by present decisions. Note how many times he uses, "**he will take**" (6 x's) Q. **What's it worth to you?** Ready to give up your grain & grapes; your olives & animals; your boys & girls? Ready to basically become his slaves? (sounds just a little like big gov?) **Both Satan & The World System is always ready to take: your innocence, your reputation, your integrity; your purity, your virginity, your best from you! Wrong Timing:** They were about 10 years too soon in asking for a king. **Wrong Tribe:** Judah not Benjamin. **Wrong Temperament:** this king would have the wrong nature, spirit, & character. **Wrong to Take:** Saul will oppress his people with this system of arbitrary spoliation. He will not be a king that gives, but a king that takes. What a contrast between this exacting king & the true King of Kings, who "loved me & gave himself for me"! (Titus 2:14+) Saul will take all he can; Jesus will give all that is His & give all that He is!

1 Samuel 8:11 He said, "This will be the procedure of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and place them for himself in his chariots and among his horsemen and they will run before his chariots.

BGT 1 Samuel 8:11 κα ε πεν το το σται τ δικα ωμα το βασιλ ως ς βασιλε σει φ μ ς το ς υ ο ς μ ν λ μψεται κα θ σεται α το ς ν ρμασιν α το κα ππε σιν α το κα προτρ χοντας τ ν ρμ των α το

KJV 1 Samuel 8:11 And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots.

NET 1 Samuel 8:11 He said, "Here are the policies of the king who will rule over you: He will conscript your sons and put them in his chariot forces and in his cavalry; they will run in front of his chariot.

CSB 1 Samuel 8:11 He said, "These are the rights of the king who will rule over you: He will take your sons and put them to his use in his chariots, on his horses, or running in front of his chariots.

ESV 1 Samuel 8:11 He said, "These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen and to run before his chariots.

NIV 1 Samuel 8:11 He said, "This is what the king who will reign over you will do: He will take your sons and make them serve with his chariots and horses, and they will run in front of his chariots.

NLT 1 Samuel 8:11 "This is how a king will reign over you," Samuel said. "The king will draft your sons and assign them to his chariots and his charioteers, making them run before his chariots.

NRS 1 Samuel 8:11 He said, "These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen, and to run before his chariots;

- **This will:** 1Sa 10:25 De 17:14-20
- **He will take:** 1Sa 14:52 1Ki 9:22,23 10:26 12:4,10 2Ch 26:10-15
- **Will run:** 2Sa 15:1 1Ki 1:5 18:46
- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE KING WILL DRAFT YOUR SONS

He said - Note the repetition of "**will**" in this section which signals a successive of prophecies.

This will be the procedure (NET - policies; Hebrew = [mishpat/mispat](#) = "judgment, decision, rule, justice, custom") **of the king who will reign over you** - Samuel begins listing a host of negative aspects that will be associated with a human king reigning over Israel. The demands of a king would be [demanding](#)!

He will take your sons and place them for himself in his chariots and among his horsemen and they will run before his chariots - Prior to the monarchies, Israel had no centralized standing army and no [chariots](#), but were ultimately reliant upon the LORD as their Warrior (cf Ex 15:1, Isa 42:13, 59:17, Ps 78:65, Ps 110:5,6) and His myriads of [chariots](#) (Ps 68:17) to bring them victory! Is this same principle not also true in our lives beloved? (Rhetorical!) David used [chariots](#) some (2Sa 8:4), and Solomon used them regularly (1Ki 4:26). Men who would **run before his chariots** was a status symbol (like driving the highest number Mercedes - cf Absalom's "Mercedes" in 2Sa 15:1, and Adonijah in 1Ki 1:5)! The first negative is "drafting" men for his military. Presumably there will be no draft dodging allowed. Beginning in 1Sa 8:11 through 1Sa 8:17, the personal possessive pronoun "**his**" is used 12 times and "**for himself**" is used 2 times. God is speaking through Samuel explaining essentially that what the king wants, the king gets and there is no mention of recompense for what he takes from the people. One would have thought this fact alone might have shaken them into the realization that a human king might not be the best idea!

Note that the dominant verb in Samuel's warning is **TAKE**. A king will not be a [give and take](#) situation, but will continually be a "**take**" situation. And so we see "**will take**" 6x in 6v - 1 Sam 8:11 1 Sam 8:13 1 Sam 8:14 1 Sam 8:15 1 Sam 8:16 1 Sam 8:17

J D Greear - The irony here is tremendous. The Israelites look to a king to guarantee prosperity and security. What they receive instead is a king who would take those things from them. They wanted a king whom they could control. Instead, that king ends up controlling them. This is an Old Testament version of a New Testament principle: when you have other kings besides God, those kings do not save you; they tyrannize you....(for example) If you have to be successful to find fulfillment, you become the slave of success. You overwork; you get jealous of other successful people; you resent others their opportunities, promotions, and praise...Every life has a king. A king in your life is whatever you must have in order to be happy and secure. And kings make all their subjects into servants. The apostle Paul says it this way: "But in the past, when you didn't know God, you were enslaved to things that by nature are not gods" (Gal 4:8); and "Don't you know that if you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of that one you obey ...?" (Rom 6:16). Or as Bob Dylan says, "You're gonna have to serve somebody"...Everybody serves something. There are no exceptions. You are either enslaved to something that brings life (God), or you are enslaved to something that brings death. (See [Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Samuel](#))

Play Bob Dylan's [You Gotta Serve Somebody](#) - "It may be the devil or it may be the Lord, but you're gonna have to serve somebody!"

1 Samuel 8:12 "He will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and of fifties, and some to do his plowing and to reap his harvest and to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots.

BGT 1 Samuel 8:12 καὶ θήσεται αὐτὸς αὐτοῖς χιλιάρχους καὶ κατόντων ἑκατοντάρχους καὶ θέσειν ἐν αὐτοῖς ἀροῦντας καὶ θερίαντας καὶ ποιήσονται ὅπλα πολέμου καὶ ἵππων ἅρματα

KJV 1 Samuel 8:12 And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots.

NET 1 Samuel 8:12 He will appoint for himself leaders of thousands and leaders of fifties, as well as those who plow his ground, reap his harvest, and make his weapons of war and his chariot equipment.

CSB 1 Samuel 8:12 He can appoint them for his use as commanders of thousands or commanders of fifties, to plow his ground or reap his harvest, or to make his weapons of war or the equipment for his chariots.

ESV 1 Samuel 8:12 And he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and some to plow his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his implements of war and the equipment of his chariots.

NIV 1 Samuel 8:12 Some he will assign to be commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and others to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and still others to make weapons of war and equipment for his chariots.

NLT 1 Samuel 8:12 Some will be generals and captains in his army, some will be forced to plow in his fields and harvest his crops, and some will make his weapons and chariot equipment.

NRS 1 Samuel 8:12 and he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and some to plow his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his implements of war and the equipment of his chariots.

- **appoint:** 1Ch 27:1-22
- **and some:** 1Ki 4:7,22,23,27,28 2Ch 32:28,29
- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE KING WILL FORCE ENFORCE SLAVE LABOR

He will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and of fifties - NLT = "Some will be generals and captains in his army."

And some to do his plowing and to reap his harvest - The men will not get to choose what they do for the king. He will decide and the implication is that his word as head of the state is like law and is final. Some of the men will be forced to plow and some to reap (literally "plow his plowing" "reap his reaping")

and to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots - Other men will be forced to outfit his professional (standing) army with the most up-to-date armaments.

1 Samuel 8:13 "He will also take your daughters for perfumers and cooks and bakers."

BGT 1 Samuel 8:13 καὶ τὰς θυγατέρας μὴ λαμβύσεται εἰς μυρεψοὺς καὶ εἰς μαγείρσας καὶ εἰς πέσσοσας

KJV 1 Samuel 8:13 And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers.

NET 1 Samuel 8:13 He will take your daughters to be ointment makers, cooks, and bakers.

CSB 1 Samuel 8:13 He can take your daughters to become perfumers, cooks, and bakers.

ESV 1 Samuel 8:13 He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers.

NIV 1 Samuel 8:13 He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers.

NLT 1 Samuel 8:13 The king will take your daughters from you and force them to cook and bake and make perfumes for him.

NRS 1 Samuel 8:13 He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers.

- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE KING ENSLAVES DAUGHTERS FOR ROYAL KITCHEN

He will also take your daughters for perfumers and cooks and bakers- Note the verb "**will take**" means those he chooses have no say in their choice and must obey.

1 Samuel 8:14 "He will take the best of your fields and your vineyards and your olive groves and give them to his servants."

BGT 1 Samuel 8:14 κα το ς γρο ς μ ν κα το ς μπελ νας μ ν κα το ς λαι νας μ ν το ς γαθο ς λ μψεται κα
δ σει το ς δο λοις α το

KJV 1 Samuel 8:14 And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants.

NET 1 Samuel 8:14 He will take your best fields and vineyards and give them to his own servants.

CSB 1 Samuel 8:14 He can take your best fields, vineyards, and olive orchards and give them to his servants.

ESV 1 Samuel 8:14 He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his servants.

NIV 1 Samuel 8:14 He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves and give them to his attendants.

NLT 1 Samuel 8:14 He will take away the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves and give them to his own officials.

NRS 1 Samuel 8:14 He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his courtiers.

- 1Sa 22:7 1Ki 21:7,19 Eze 46:18
- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE KING TAKES THE "CREAM OF THE CROP"

The idiom "[cream of the crop](#)" means the very best of all. The implication is the "leftovers" are less than the best!

He will take the best of your fields and your vineyards and your olive groves and give them to his servants- Here is a major negative prophecy that what the king desires the king acquires. There is nothing said about him paying a fair price for their land, etc. Again we see that the king will exert absolute authority over the people.

ESV Study Bible ([borrow](#)) - The **will take the best of your fields and your vineyards and your olive groves** goes beyond what is needed for the administration of a government and predicts the corrupting influence of a king's power. Rather than serving the people without seeking self-enrichment (as Samuel did, 1Sa 12:3–5), the king would use his power to "take" the best for himself (1Sa 8:11–13) and those around him (1Sa 8:14–15). **Servants** refers to high-ranking officials, as can be seen by seals that have been found inscribed with "servant of [King] X." As 1Sa 22:7 shows, Saul would indeed make his "**servants**" commanders and give them agricultural properties.

1 Samuel 8:15 "He will take a tenth of your seed and of your vineyards and give to his officers and to his servants."

BGT 1 Samuel 8:15 κα τ σπ ρματ μ ν κα το ς μπελ νας μ ν ποδεκατ σει κα δ σει το ς ε νο χοις α το κα
το ς δο λοις α το

KJV 1 Samuel 8:15 And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants.

NET 1 Samuel 8:15 He will demand a tenth of your seed and of the produce of your vineyards and give it to

his administrators and his servants.

CSB 1 Samuel 8:15 He can take a tenth of your grain and your vineyards and give them to his officials and servants.

ESV 1 Samuel 8:15 He will take the tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and to his servants.

NIV 1 Samuel 8:15 He will take a tenth of your grain and of your vintage and give it to his officials and attendants.

NLT 1 Samuel 8:15 He will take a tenth of your grain and your grape harvest and distribute it among his officers and attendants.

NRS 1 Samuel 8:15 He will take one-tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and his courtiers.

- **officers:** Heb. eunuchs, Ge 37:36 Isa 39:7 Da 1:3,7-10,18
- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE KING TAKES HIS TENTH FOR HIS TENANTS

He will take a tenth of your seed and of your vineyards and give to his officers and to his servants- Note that this 1/10th is in addition to the 1/10th that was to be given to Yahweh! So basically they would in effect be "taxed" at the rate of 20%.

Wycliffe Bible Commentary ([borrow](#)) comments that "This is the only reference in the OT to the exaction of tithes by the king. However, in the East it was not unusual for the revenue of the sovereign to be derived in part from tithes, as, for example, in Babylon and Persia."

1 Samuel 8:16 "He will also take your male servants and your female servants and your best young men and your donkeys and use them for his work.

BGT 1 Samuel 8:16 κα το ς δο λους μ ν κα τ ς δο λας μ ν κα τ βου κ λια μ ν τ γα θ κα το ς νους μ ν λ μ ψεται κα πο δε κα τ σει ε ς τ ρ γα α το

KJV 1 Samuel 8:16 And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work.

NET 1 Samuel 8:16 He will take your male and female servants, as well as your best cattle and your donkeys, and assign them for his own use.

CSB 1 Samuel 8:16 He can take your male servants, your female servants, your best young men, and your donkeys and use them for his work.

ESV 1 Samuel 8:16 He will take your male servants and female servants and the best of your young men and your donkeys, and put them to his work.

NIV 1 Samuel 8:16 Your menservants and maidservants and the best of your cattle and donkeys he will take for his own use.

NLT 1 Samuel 8:16 He will take your male and female slaves and demand the finest of your cattle and donkeys for his own use.

NRS 1 Samuel 8:16 He will take your male and female slaves, and the best of your cattle and donkeys, and put them to his work.

- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

PREDICTION OF MORE SLAVE LABOR

He will also take your male servants and your female servants and your best young men and your donkeys and use them

for his work - More "forced labor," which is a major component of human monarchies. This prediction would adversely affect the lifestyle of the people, as it would have significant economic ramifications. Note the repetition of the verb "**take**" in these "regal warnings," the implication being this would be a "**one way street**," all "**take**" and no "give!" (see 1Sa 8:11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and "appoint" in 1Sa 8:11)

1 Samuel 8:17 "He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his servants."

BGT 1 Samuel 8:17 κα τ πο μνία μ ν ποδεκατ σει κα με ς σεσθε α τ δο λοι

KJV 1 Samuel 8:17 He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants.

NET 1 Samuel 8:17 He will demand a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will be his servants.

CSB 1 Samuel 8:17 He can take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves can become his servants.

ESV 1 Samuel 8:17 He will take the tenth of your flocks, and you shall be his slaves.

NIV 1 Samuel 8:17 He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his slaves.

NLT 1 Samuel 8:17 He will demand a tenth of your flocks, and you will be his slaves.

NRS 1 Samuel 8:17 He will take one-tenth of your flocks, and you shall be his slaves.

- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

MORE PREDICTIONS OF COST TO THE PEOPLE

He will take a tenth of your flocks - More taxation was predicted

You yourselves will become his servants ('[ebed](#); Lxx =) -This signifies that all the people of Israel would lose their personal freedom. This should have been their proverbial "wake up" call but again it fell on deaf, self-seeking ears! In contrast to God's law that freed indentured slaves after 6 years of service, the king's rule would last for their entire lifetime! The Greek word for **servant** is [doulos](#) which speaks of absolute submission to one's master. The [doulos](#) had no life of his own, no will of his own, no purpose of his own and no plan of his own. All was to be subject to his master. The [doulos](#)' every thought, breath, and effort was subject to the will of his master, the king. In sum, the picture of a bondservant is one who is to be absolutely surrendered to his master, in this case his human king!

Servants ([05650](#)) '[ebed](#) from '[abad](#) = work in any sense) means a slave or bondservant. Slavery in Israel amounted to indentured servitude. A fellow Israelite could not be held indefinitely against his will. In fact, his time of service was limited to 6 yr (Ex 21:2). The master could be punished if evil intent against the slave was proven (Ex 21:14) or if the slave died (Ex 21:20). These types of servants held a position of honor (Ge 24:2ff; 41:12, 15:2).

Ebed in First Samuel - 1 Sam. 3:9; 1 Sam. 3:10; 1 Sam. 8:14; 1 Sam. 8:15; 1 Sam. 8:16; 1 Sam. 8:17; 1 Sam. 12:19; 1 Sam. 16:15; 1 Sam. 16:16; 1 Sam. 16:17; 1 Sam. 17:8; 1 Sam. 17:9; 1 Sam. 17:32; 1 Sam. 17:34; 1 Sam. 17:36; 1 Sam. 17:58; 1 Sam. 18:5; 1 Sam. 18:22; 1 Sam. 18:23; 1 Sam. 18:24; 1 Sam. 18:26; 1 Sam. 18:30; 1 Sam. 19:1; 1 Sam. 19:4; 1 Sam. 20:7; 1 Sam. 20:8; 1 Sam. 21:7; 1 Sam. 21:11; 1 Sam. 21:14; 1 Sam. 22:6; 1 Sam. 22:7; 1 Sam. 22:8; 1 Sam. 22:9; 1 Sam. 22:14; 1 Sam. 22:15; 1 Sam. 22:17; 1 Sam. 23:10; 1 Sam. 23:11; 1 Sam. 25:8; 1 Sam. 25:10; 1 Sam. 25:39; 1 Sam. 25:40; 1 Sam. 25:41; 1 Sam. 26:18; 1 Sam. 26:19; 1 Sam. 27:5; 1 Sam. 27:12; 1 Sam. 28:2; 1 Sam. 28:7; 1 Sam. 28:23; 1 Sam. 28:25; 1 Sam. 29:3; 1 Sam. 29:8; 1 Sam. 29:10; 1 Sam. 30:13

1 Samuel 8:18 "Then you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the LORD will not answer you in that day."

BGT 1 Samuel 8:18 κα βο σεσθε ν τ μ ρ κε ν κ προσ που βασιλ ως μ ν ο ξελ ξασθε αυτο ς κα ο κ πακο σετ αι κ ριος μ ν ν τα ς μ ρ αι ς κε ν αι ς τι με ς ξελ ξασθε αυτο ς βασιλ α

KJV 1 Samuel 8:18 And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD will not hear you in that day.

NET 1 Samuel 8:18 In that day you will cry out because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the LORD won't answer you in that day."

CSB 1 Samuel 8:18 When that day comes, you will cry out because of the king you've chosen for yourselves, but the LORD won't answer you on that day."

ESV 1 Samuel 8:18 And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the LORD will not answer you in that day."

NIV 1 Samuel 8:18 When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, and the LORD will not answer you in that day."

NLT 1 Samuel 8:18 When that day comes, you will beg for relief from this king you are demanding, but then the LORD will not help you."

NRS 1 Samuel 8:18 And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves; but the LORD will not answer you in that day."

- **cry out:** Isa 8:21
- **and the Lord will not answer:** Job 27:9 Ps 18:41 Pr 1:25-28 21:13 Isa 1:15 Mic 3:4 Lu 13:25
- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE COST OF A KING WILL CAUSE CRYING OUT

Then - Always observe this term for it marks progression in a narrative, in this case in the prophetic narrative.

You will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the LORD will not answer you in that day - God knows that an earthly king will not always rule justly and in a godly manner and under the king's harsh rule the people **will cry out** to God. Samuel is warning the people here that their cries to God will **fall on deaf ears!**" Of course, God could hear, but He now He would let Israel experience the rotten fruits of rejecting Him as their true King. Samuel warned Israel. Normally forewarned is forearmed, but not if the warning is ignored or rejected as in the case of the elders of Israel. They ignored the stern warnings (1Sa 18:19), and God ignored their cries. Psalm 66:18 reminds us "If I regard wickedness in my heart, the Lord will not hear." Woe!

THOUGHT - Be careful what you ask for, because God might just give it to you! And if it is a request not in keeping with His good and acceptable and perfect will (Ro 12:2+), the results of the request granted can be very painful!

1 Samuel 8:19 Nevertheless, the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel, and they said, "No, but there shall be a king over us,

BGT 1 Samuel 8:19 κα ο κ βο λετο λα ς κο σαι το Σαμουηλ κα ε παν α τ ο χ λλ βασιλε ς σται φ μ ς

KJV 1 Samuel 8:19 Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us;

NET 1 Samuel 8:19 But the people refused to heed Samuel's warning. Instead they said, "No! There will be a king over us!

CSB 1 Samuel 8:19 The people refused to listen to Samuel. "No!" they said. "We must have a king over us.

ESV 1 Samuel 8:19 But the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel. And they said, "No! But there shall be a king over us,

NIV 1 Samuel 8:19 But the people refused to listen to Samuel. "No!" they said. "We want a king over us.

NLT 1 Samuel 8:19 But the people refused to listen to Samuel's warning. "Even so, we still want a king," they said.

NRS 1 Samuel 8:19 But the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel; they said, "No! but we are determined to have a king over us,

- **the people refused to listen:** Ps 81:11 Jer 7:13 Jer 44:16 Eze 33:31
- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

ISRAEL REFUSES TO HEED THE WARNINGS

Nevertheless - This word means notwithstanding, despite what has just been said! It is as if their hearts are so made up that they that it is as if Israel had put their hands over their ears. They did not care about the prophets prophetic warnings. It is generally a very bad idea to ignore a true prophet of God!

the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel- Their refusal to **listen** to voice of Samuel was equivalent of their refusal to listen to Jehovah, for Samuel was God's mouthpiece. God was warning Israel. To reject Samuel's words was to reject God's words of warning. Their rejection speaks of their hardness of heart toward God and His will for their lives! Compare the words of the people to God's prophet Jeremiah (Jer 44:16)! Responses such as these by the elders of Israel helps us understand Stephen's condemning words in Acts 7:51 "You men (Jewish leaders) who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did (JUST LIKE THEY DO HERE IN VERSE 19)."

And they said, "No, but there shall be a king over us - No is their final word. No thank you prophet of God! We want is our way and will not be dissuaded! Israel was manifesting behavior somewhat like the old saying "[It's my way or the highway](#)."

J D Greear - The problem comes when a person craves those things and feels like they could not be happy or secure without them. That sort of passion is what the Bible calls [epithumia](#)—a desire that has taken on so much weight that it drives everything about a person. It is the "lust" for worldly goods in 1 John 2:16–17. [Epithumia](#) is a craving that controls (Rom 1:24). This is what Israel feels about a king. Their desire for a king is a craving they could not live without. Israel was not supposed to avoid having a king at all costs. They were supposed to avoid being consumed by the idea. Whenever life is consumed with things—even good things—then it shows that God has been displaced. He has been outweighed by some lesser thing. (See [Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Samuel](#))

Brian Bell - FORCED RETIREMENT! (1Sa 8:19-22) Their request in 1Sa 8:5 now becomes a demand in 1Sa 8:19. They would not wait for God's appointed time. They desired to be like the other nations. **They had forgotten that to be different from the other nations was their glory.** They feared the strength of the Ammonites (1Sa 12:12). Though they had trouble following their heavenly king, they still ask for an earthly monarch. Maybe they thought a shiny golden crown or flowing robes might intimidate their enemy in battle? Much that Samuel worked for & prayed for seems to have turned out differently from what he expected. Yet, he remained faithful to the Lord to the end! **Leaders who are faithful to God may not always appear successful to men.** (ED: TAKE THE PROPHET JEREMIAH) The people failed to give Samuel the recognition that should crown an honorable career. And they turned him out of office to make room for another whose gifts & abilities had not been proven. Ingratitude is hard to bear. He did the only thing he knew to do...he again takes the matter to the Lord in prayer! (1Sa 8:21)

1 Samuel 8:20 that we also may be like all the nations, that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles."

BGT 1 Samuel 8:20 κα σ μεθα κα με ς κατ π ντα τ θνη κα δικ σει μ ς βασιλε ς μ ν κα ξελε σεται
μπροσθεν μ ν κα πολεμ σει τ ν π λεμον μ ν

KJV 1 Samuel 8:20 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.

NET 1 Samuel 8:20 We will be like all the other nations. Our king will judge us and lead us and fight our battles."

CSB 1 Samuel 8:20 Then we'll be like all the other nations: our king will judge us, go out before us, and fight our battles."

ESV 1 Samuel 8:20 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."

NIV 1 Samuel 8:20 Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and to go out before us

and fight our battles."

NLT 1 Samuel 8:20 "We want to be like the nations around us. Our king will judge us and lead us into battle."

NRS 1 Samuel 8:20 so that we also may be like other nations, and that our king may govern us and go out before us and fight our battles."

- 1Sa 8:5 Ex 33:16 Lev 20:24-26 Nu 23:9 De 7:6 Ps 106:35 Joh 15:19 Ro 12:12 2Co 6:17 Php 3:20 1Pe 2:9
- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

ISRAEL'S PURPOSE FOR SEEKING A KING

That - (term of purpose) - This introduces the purpose of their recalcitrant attitude toward the clear warnings and gives us the third reason they sought a king (see 1Sa 8:5+). This passage explains what the LORD meant when He said they had rejected Him.

We also may be like all the nations- This is an interesting phrase because in 1Sa 7:3-4 it was clear that Israel had become like all the nations around them in regard to their idolatrous practices. Now they propose to be like all the nations in regard to their leadership! The net effect of this new proposal was similar to the former situation, for in both scenarios Israel essentially abandoned Jehovah in lieu of the ways of the pagan nations!

Woodhouse adds that this phrase **may be like all the nations** "was a remarkable rejection of Israel's calling to be the Lord's "treasured possession among all peoples," "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation," "separated ... from the peoples," a "great nation," "in praise and in fame and in honor high above all nations," "a people for himself" (Ex 19:5, 6; Lev 20:26; Deut 4:6; 26:19; 1Sa 12:22). **It was, in other words, the political equivalent to pursuing foreign gods and Ashtaroah** (1Sa 7:3)!.....The proposal was anticipated centuries earlier in the laws given by Moses in Deuteronomy 17:14-20 (SEE BELOW). There Moses spoke of the day when Israel would say, "I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me" (Dt 17:14). Moses, perhaps surprisingly, said that Israel may indeed have a king, but on certain very specific conditions, which amounted to the fact that the arrangement **would not be "like all the nations."** The elders' request, therefore, while specifically anticipated in the Law, was a direct challenge to the Law.

Deuteronomy 17:14-20 "When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, and you possess it and live in it, and you say, 'I will set a king over me like all the nations who are around me,' 15 you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses, one from among your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman. 16 "Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, since the LORD has said to you, 'You shall never again return that way.' 17 "He shall not multiply wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself. (**ED: THESE WERE THINGS THAT THE KINGS OF "ALL THE OTHER NATIONS" DID!!!**) 18 "Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. 19 "It shall be with him and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes, 20 that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left, so that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel.

That our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles- Note "us" occurs 8x in 5v (1Sa 8:5, 6, 16, 19, 20). This one sentence would radically change the history of the nation of Israel and in a sense would change the history of the world (because Israel is God's centerpiece and what happens in Israel affects the entire world, even though the pagan world would deny that is the case!) Everyone else is doing it so why shouldn't we. What could be so wrong with mimicking the godless, pagan, idol worshipping nations! As we learn later one of the reasons they seek a king to lead their battles is that [Nahash](#) (Heb = "serpent"), an Ammonite king, was beginning to come against Israel. 1Sa 12:12+ says "When you saw that [Nahash](#) the king of the sons of Ammon came against you, you said to me, 'No, but a king shall reign over us,' although **the LORD your God was your King**"

ESV Study Bible ([borrow](#)) - The king's functions are (1) to give influence and status like all the nations; (2) to judge us—the fundamental function (2Sa 14:4; 15:2–4; 1Ki 3:16–28; Psalm 72); and (3) to go out before us and fight our battles—i.e., be a war leader (e.g., 1Sa 11:1–11; 14:47–48; 23:27–28; 2Sa 5:19).

Woodhouse offers an interesting analysis of the elders' request - The elders failed to see the point that is so obvious to us as we read this narrative. One lesson that the recent history of Israel should have taught unambiguously is that the best of leaders can have the worst of sons. The elders themselves have drawn this fact to our attention again by their opening words. And yet their proposal in the present circumstances was to institute a new form of leadership in Israel that was based on the hereditary principle

of a father being succeeded by his son! This inner contradiction in the elders' proposal had obviously escaped their attention. Their failure to see that the proposal was undermined by their own analysis of the crisis it was meant to address is stunning in its stupidity!

Israel needed to hear and heed the words of the apostle John - "Beloved, **do not imitate** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#) - but Israel was resisting the Holy Spirit!) what is evil, but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God (NLT = "and those who do evil prove that they do not know God.")" John's words sadly tell the tale of most of Israel - they had no personal relationship with Jehovah!

THOUGHT - How many of our troubles arise because we want to be like others or want what others have, especially the "rich and famous" (who are largely the "godless and lost")? We do not care that these others are not godly, but they seem to be "happy," or "prosperous" and so we envy them. This mindset is often a recipe for personal problems and even disaster much as it was in the nation of Israel who wanted to be like all the other nations! Beloved, we must continually remind ourselves that this world is not our home and "our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;" (Php 3:20-21+) This begs a simple question, are you eagerly waiting for Jesus? Are you living like He could return today or have you begun to live that the lost world around you? Paul had a good antidote for envy of this world, commanding believers "Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, Who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory (OUR FUTURE GLORY SHOULD BE OUR PRESENT MINDSET!)." (Col 3:2-4+)

Woodhouse on what constitutes a **king** - Kingship is not an easy concept to define. It can take many different forms. The common features of these seem to be: (a) the rule of one man over a larger group where his authority derives simply from his being the king rather than from some other source (such as position in family, some other form of seniority, or appointment) and (b) the hereditary principle that the kingship is passed down from father to son. A king therefore offered a strong, stable, and predictable center of political authority for a nation that otherwise had to depend on an unseen God to unite them. Furthermore, kingship held out the promise of efficient central organization to a nation that, lacking such structures, tended to lurch from one crisis to the next. After many years of such instability, it is not difficult to see how reasonable the proposal must have seemed to the elders. I cannot help thinking of some proposals that come forward today to make the church more efficient, strong, and effective. The proven experience of the world of business management offers methods that have made other organizations strong and growing. If only the churches would implement some of the strategies of the business schools or recruit leaders like some of the successful companies, the churches could make an impact! They could expand their market share! I wonder whether you can hear a faint echo of the elders of Israel: "Give us a king ... like all the nations."

1 Samuel 8:21 Now after Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the LORD'S hearing.

BGT 1 Samuel 8:21 κακουσεν Σαμουηλ πντας το ς λ γους το λαο κα λ λησεν α το ς ε ς τ τα κυρ ου

KJV 1 Samuel 8:21 And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of the LORD.

NET 1 Samuel 8:21 So Samuel listened to everything the people said and then reported it to the LORD.

CSB 1 Samuel 8:21 Samuel listened to all the people's words and then repeated them to the LORD.

ESV 1 Samuel 8:21 And when Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the ears of the LORD.

NIV 1 Samuel 8:21 When Samuel heard all that the people said, he repeated it before the LORD.

NLT 1 Samuel 8:21 So Samuel repeated to the LORD what the people had said,

NRS 1 Samuel 8:21 When Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the ears of the LORD.

- **he repeated them:** Jdg 11:11
- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**THE PROPHET REPORTS
TO THE KING OF KINGS**

Now after Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated(KJV = "rehearsed") **them in the LORD'S hearing** - This is an interesting passage. Obviously God had heard Israel's response and yet Samuel gives his first-person report. In essence he is in prayer with Yahweh.

Wycliffe Bible Commentary ([borrow](#)) comments that "**Rehearse** is derived from [Old French rehercier](#), "to [harrow](#) over again." Samuel once more went over the matter as a farmer harrows again a plot before planting it."

Brian Bell - Of course God knew perfectly well what had taken place. This is called giving vent to your feelings. [to which God gives further direction] Note also...Samuel's prayer did not change his circumstances. So often when we pray we expect that God will suddenly & miraculously bring about a reversal of what is unpleasant to us. We are then disappointed when He does not act in accordance with our expectations

1 Samuel 8:22 The LORD said to Samuel, "Listen to their voice and appoint them a king." So Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Go every man to his city."

BGT 1 Samuel 8:22 κα ε πεν κ ριος πρ ς Σαμουηλ κουε τ ς φων ς α τ ν κα βα σ λευσον α το ς βασι λ α κα ε πεν Σαμουηλ πρ ς νδρας Ισραηλ ποτρεχ τω κα στο ς ε ς τ ν π λιν α το

KJV 1 Samuel 8:22 And the LORD said to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, Go ye every man unto his city.

NET 1 Samuel 8:22 The LORD said to Samuel, "Do as they say and install a king over them." Then Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Each of you go back to his own city."

CSB 1 Samuel 8:22 "Listen to them," the LORD told Samuel. "Appoint a king for them." Then Samuel told the men of Israel, "Each of you, go back to your city."

ESV 1 Samuel 8:22 And the LORD said to Samuel, "Obey their voice and make them a king." Samuel then said to the men of Israel, "Go every man to his city."

NIV 1 Samuel 8:22 The LORD answered, "Listen to them and give them a king." Then Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Everyone go back to his town."

NLT 1 Samuel 8:22 and the LORD replied, "Do as they say, and give them a king." Then Samuel agreed and sent the people home.

NRS 1 Samuel 8:22 The LORD said to Samuel, "Listen to their voice and set a king over them." Samuel then said to the people of Israel, "Each of you return home."

- 1Sa 8:7 Ho 13:11
- 1 Samuel 8 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SAMUEL ACCEPTS ISRAEL'S REQUEST

The LORD said to Samuel, "Listen to their voice and appoint them a king." - Yes they have rejected Yahweh as their King, but in His boundless mercy and His sovereign, omnipotent power (to bring about a "Romans 8:28 ending"), Jehovah would choose David, a man after His own heart, and from whose line would come the great King, the One Who is both Human and Divine, Christ Jesus, the King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev 19:16+).

So - Term of conclusion again demonstrating Samuel's unquestioning, unhesitating obedience, even though he did not not favor the people's request for a king. Samuel's prayerful obedience is a good model to imitate.

Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Go every man to his city." - This clearly implies Samuel, in obedience to His God, acquiesced with the people's request and sent them home.

Brian Bell - Go home until God makes known His choice. In effect, God said, "they shall have their king. And when they see how poorly he reigns, they'll wish they had stuck with Me" Samuel remained loyal to the people of Israel in spite of their rejection of him. His role was reduced, but his lightened responsibility gave him the opportunity to spend more time training promising young men in the schools of the prophets. I like what the 16yr old who attempted to sail around the world, [Abby Sunderland](#), said in her blog, "The long and the short of it is, well, one long wave, and one short mast." G. Campbell Morgan(pastor of Westminster Chapel) was

one of 150 young men who sought entrance to the Wesleyan ministry in 1888. He passed the doctrinal examinations, but then faced the trial sermon. In a cavernous auditorium that could seat more than 1,000 sat 3 ministers and 75 others who came to listen. When Morgan stepped into the pulpit, the vast room and the searching, critical eyes caught him up short. Two weeks later Morgan's name appeared among the 105 **REJECTED** for the ministry that year. Jill Morgan, his daughter-in-law, wrote in her book, [A Man Of The Word \(Borrow\)](#), "He wired to his father the one word, **Rejected,**' and sat down to write in his diary: **'Very dark everything seems. Still, He knoweth best.'** Quickly came the reply: **'Rejected on earth. Accepted in heaven. Dad.'**" But, rejection is rarely permanent, as Morgan went on to prove.