

I SAMUEL 7

1Samuel 7:1–17

Samuel Assumes Spiritual Leadership Over Israel

Outline of Chapter 7:

- vv. 1–2a **The Ark is Taken to Kiriath-jearim** [properly placed with 1Samuel 6]
- vv. 2b–6 **Israel Has a Change of Heart Before God**
- vv. 7–11 **The Philistines Clash with the Israelis**
- vv. 12–14 **Israel’s Victory is Long-Term**
- vv. 15–17 **Samuel’s Ministry is Summarized**

Charts and Maps:

- Introduction **What has Happened in Israel over the Past 20+ Years**
- vv. 1–2a **Options for the Chapter Break between Chapters 6 and 7**
- v. 3 **Samuel Is a Type of Christ**
- v. 3 **Ashtoreth vs. Ashtaroth**
- v. 3 **“If You Return to Jehovah” Speech by Moses and Samuel**
- v. 10 **God’s Protection of Israel**
- v. 12 **Ebenezer vs. Ebenezer**
- v. 13 **Israeli-Philistine Aggressions**
- v. 13 **A Summary of 1Samuel 7:13**
- v. 14 **I Samuel 7:13–14 Summarized**
- v. 16 **The City of Bethel**
- v. 16 **A Map of the Territory of Benjamin**
- v. 17 **The Long List of Unanswered Questions**
- v. 17 **Why Is There No Contemporary Recording of the Destruction of Shiloh?**
- v. 17 **Where is the Tent of God?**
- v. 17 **Why Is the Tent of God Not Set up and Functioning?**
- v. 17 **Why Is the Tent of God Not Set up and Functioning after Samuel Assumes Political and Spiritual Leadership of Israel?**
- v. 17 **Why Did Samuel Allow the Ark of God to Remain in Kiriath-jearim Apparently Without Function?**
- v. 17 **Why Didn’t Samuel Simply Take over the Position of High Priest?**
- v. 17 **Why Are There at Least 4 Altars Set up Throughout Israel?**

Doctrines Covered		Doctrines Alluded To		
Cities of Mizpah	Fasting	Amorites	Ark of God	Bethel
		Gilgal		

Introduction: 1Sam. 7 begins with the Ark being returned to Israel and then kept in Kiriath-jearim for safekeeping. Eli and his two sons have died. Eli’s grandson is too young to take over his ministry. Samuel has been trained since his youth to take over Eli’s responsibilities, both political and spiritual, but he is young and suddenly, almost without warning, he finds himself as the last man standing. Samuel leaves the Ark where it is taken in

1Sam. 7:1–2, more than likely because he is in awe of the Ark, and possibly afraid for his own life. In any case, God never seems to call upon Samuel to restore the Ark to the Tabernacle (which may or may not be set up at this time). The duties that Samuel takes on are probably primarily political ones. He continues handling mostly Eli's political responsibilities, judging Israel, and developing a circuit to travel. Twenty years pass. The Philistines were probably devastated by the Ark being in their country for seven months, and they have finally recovered. Israel falls into idolatry during this time period. 20 years later, the Ark is still in Kiriath-jearim, the Philistines are a serious threat and probably have some control over Israel. The Philistines probably own some of the border cities and it is possible that Israel pays them tribute. Also, Israel is playing the harlot with the Canaanite gods. It is now time for Samuel to step in as the spiritual leader of Israel.

In fact, it would be best to simply list in points:

What has Happened in Israel over the Past 20+ Years

1. The Philistines soundly defeated Israel in battle 20 years ago.
2. The Philistines even took the Ark of God from them during this time.
3. Simultaneous with or soon after taking the Ark, the Philistines probably marched into Shiloh and burnt it down. However, it appears as though the Tabernacle of God had been taken down prior to this time.
4. The Philistines appear to have some control of Israel. It is not clear whether Israel pays them tribute or whether they occupy any of Israel's cities; however, they clearly control some border cities.
5. Even though the Philistines clearly lost huge portions of their population when the Ark was in Philistia, they were able to maintain control over Israel or reestablish this control at the point at which we begin this chapter.
6. Israel apparently does not have a functioning Tabernacle and the Ark of God is in storage.
7. Israel has also fallen into great idolatry.
8. Israel also has a yearning to renew her relationship with God.
9. Samuel has been growing in grace and the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

So that you don't become confused, it is important to recognize that, even though the Philistines suffered some great losses when the Ark was in their land, this did not keep them from exerting some sort of authority over Israel.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

To give you a brief preparation for that which is not in this chapter, Samuel has, for about 20 years, been in training. For at least 20 years, he has ministered in some way at Shiloh (or somewhere, as Shiloh was probably burnt to the ground by this time). It is unclear as to how much his authority was respected and followed during the past 20 years.¹ Samuel did not have the Ark in the Tent of Meeting—that was taken when Eli was still alive and the High Priest; and it is not clear that Samuel had the authority to bring it back to the Tent of God; that is, it is not clear that Samuel could have simply dispensed some servants to go get the Ark. Furthermore, we do not know exactly what has happened in Shiloh at this time. Presumably, the Philistines burned Shiloh to the ground, although the Tent of God was apparently dismantled and saved (we covered this at the end of the previous chapter). Given what will occur in this chapter and given the fact that there will be peace between Israel and the Amorites (v. 14 of this chapter), the trashing of Shiloh would have reasonably taken place during this 20 years period of time alluded to in 1Sam. 7:2. This would explain the obvious spiritual hunger in Israel (1Sam. 7:5–8).

¹ Yes, I have read 1Sam. 3:19–21 ([Samuel grew, and Yahweh was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. All Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of Yahweh. Yahweh appeared again in Shiloh; for Yahweh revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of Yahweh](#)). This passage gives us an overall view of Samuel's ministry; this kind of respect from the people does not occur over night. When Samuel is age 13 or age 15, we really don't know how the public viewed him. However, it is 20 years later, and he is around 32. At this point in time, it is clear that Israel respects Samuel as a political and spiritual leader.

The bulk of this chapter deals with the repentance of Israel and God's blessing upon them as a result. Samuel is also clearly presented as a judge, prophet and priest with authority. We begin with Israel gathering to ask God's forgiveness. Obviously, this was long in coming, and Samuel initiated the place of meeting in v. 5. When Israel gathered and lamented her sins, Samuel also offered up a young whole lamb on behalf of the errant nation. When Philistia got wind of this gathering, they had assumed that Israel was gathering to revolt against Philistine oppression (v. 7). Even though that was not the intention, that turned out to be the result. The Philistines swiftly moved against Israel during this time of repentance and God showed His allegiance to Israel in no uncertain terms. The Philistines were routed by the elements themselves and Israel, not really prepared for war, became the aggressor and chased the Philistines back to their original territory (vv. 10b–14). The end result was a time of peace between Israel and the various groups of people within the Land of Promise. This chapter concludes with a note on Samuel's circuit, indicating that his authority was well-established, and that it continued throughout his life (vv. 15–17).

There are those who believe that this portion of Scripture was added sometime later.² In fact, there are a lot of scholars (and I use the term as referring to someone who has been to college) who do that with a great many portions of Scripture. Their reasoning here is this: (1) the previous passage dealt with the Ark and its movement and this passage does not; (2) the next section deals with the selection of Saul as the new king of Israel and this passage does not. Therefore, 1Sam. 7:2–17 is not connected to the passages on either side of it; therefore, someone must have added it hundreds of years later. Now let me explain why the subjects covered in 1Sam. 7:2–17 are separate from those on both sides of this passage: (1) The movement of the Ark is finished with v. 7:1; it is not going to move again until the time of David. Therefore, there would be no reason to further discuss the movement of the Ark no matter what came next because there is no further movement of the Ark. (2) Samuel apparently has a great deal of authority, **which authority is explained in this chapter**. Now, even though Samuel tells Israel not to place their hopes upon some king and yet they do; he still is the one who searches Israel for a suitable candidate based upon God's direction. Without a clear spiritual and political authority, this function of Samuel would appear to come out of the blue, had it not been for this chapter we are going to study.

The big theme of 1Sam. 6 was the movement of the Ark. The Ark is moved one more time to Kiriath-jearim in 1Sam. 7:1–2, and I therefore covered the exegesis of those verses there. I will include the corrected translation and only brief commentary here:

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to the Chart and Map Index](#)

The Ark is Taken to Kiriath-jearim

And so come men of Kiriath-jearim and so they take up an Ark of Y^ehowah and so they brought him unto a house of Abinadab in the hill and Eleazar his son they consecrated to keep of an Ark of Y^ehowah. And so he was from a day a lodging of the Ark in Kiriath-jearim.

1 Samuel
7:1–2a

So the men of Kiriath-jearim came and they took up the Ark of Y^ehowah and brought it to the house of Abinadab on the hill. Furthermore, they consecrated Eleazar, his son, to keep the Ark of Y^ehowah. So the Ark was, from the day of [its] lodging, in Kiriath-jearim.

So men from Kiriath-jearim came out and they took up the Ark of Jehovah, taking it to the house of Abinadab, which was on a hill. Then they consecrated Eleazar, his son, to take responsibility for the Ark of Jehovah. Therefore, the Ark remained for an indefinite period of time in Kiriath-jearim.

Typically, v. 1 properly belongs with this previous chapter; v. 2, on the other hand, is a transitional verse. V. 2a properly belongs with the previous chapter and v. 2b belongs with chapter 7. We have gone from following the Ark (which we have done since 1Sam. 4) to Israel's spiritual condition. The Ark will not be mentioned after this verse

² I found this in Gnana Robinson, *1 & 2 Samuel; Let Us Be Like the Nations*; International Theological Commentary, Eerdmans's Publishing Co., Grand rapids, ©1993; p. 43.

for a long, long time. However, we will still be dealing with Samuel as the leader of Israel and with the Philistines as the thorn in the side of Israel. The lamentation of Israel is what prompts Samuel to step forward as a national leader in the realm of the spirit.

What you need to do now is to put a big old, hankin' period at the end of the second *Kiriath-jearim*, place an asterisk before the *and*, and then, off to the margin put another asterisk and write, *the beginning of 1Sam. 7*. We have discussed in the previous chapter how arbitrary the chapter and verse divisions were.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

My commentary concerning the break between chapters 6 and 7 is all over the place; therefore, let us examine at least three different approaches to this chapter break.

Options for the Chapter Break between Chapters 6 and 7

Approach	Arguments For and Against
<p>So they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kiriath-jearim, saying, "The Philistines have brought back the ark of the LORD; come down and take it to you." (1Sam. 6:21; NASB)</p> <p>And the men of Kiriath-jearim came and took the ark of the LORD and brought it into the house of Abinadab on the hill, and consecrated Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the LORD. And it came about from the day that the ark remained at Kiriath-jearim that the time was long, for it was twenty years; and all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD. (1Sam. 7:1–2; NASB).</p>	<p>There are actually two major problems with this approach:</p> <p>(1) The Ark of Jehovah is covered in most of 1Sam. 6 and only in the first couple verses of chapter 7 (and, as I will argue later, not necessarily even in the latter portion of v. 2). Therefore, this particular division makes no sense from a topical standpoint.</p> <p>(2) The second problem is, this rendering makes it appear as though the Ark only remained in Kiriath Jearim for 20 years. This does not match the history which follows. We will have Samuel become an old man during this time period; Saul will become king and rule for what appears to be a fairly long time; finally, David will become king, after a considerable amount of time in exile. Then, after consolidating his kingdom (northern and southern Israel), then David brings the Ark of God to Jerusalem. These are far too many events to place within the space of 20 years. Furthermore, there is a passage in Acts which has Saul ruling for 40 years—again, none of this makes chronological sense when taken in this way.</p>

Options for the Chapter Break between Chapters 6 and 7

Approach	Arguments For and Against
<p>So they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kiriath-jearim, saying, "The Philistines have brought back the ark of the LORD; come down and take it to you." And the men of Kiriath-jearim came and took the ark of the Lord and brought it into the house of Abinadab on the hill, and consecrated Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the Lord. (1Sam. 6:21–7:1; NASB)</p> <p>And it came about from the day that the ark remained at Kiriath-jearim that the time was long, for it was twenty years; and all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD. (1Sam. 7:2; NASB)</p>	<p>(1) Placing the chapter break after v. 1 leaves us with the exact same two problems as noted above; the Ark is barely mentioned in chapter 7, yet is the focal point of chapter 6.</p> <p>(2) Again, the second problem is the fact that the events which follow cannot fit into 20 years.</p>
<p>Therefore, they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kiriath-jearim, saying, "The Philistines have caused the Ark of Y^ehowah to be returned. Come down and take it up to you." So the men of Kiriath-jearim came and they took up the Ark of Y^ehowah and brought it to the house of Abinadab on the hill. Furthermore, they consecrated Eleazar, his son, to keep the Ark of Y^ehowah. So the Ark was, from the day of [its] lodging, in Kiriath-jearim. (1Sam. 6:9–7:2a; Kukis)</p> <p>And the days increased and they became twenty years. And all the house of Israel lamented after Y^ehowah. (1Sam. 7:2b; Kukis)</p>	<p>(1) This particular break allows us to complete the discussion of the Ark of Jehovah, which is the focal point of 1Sam. 6. Since it is not mentioned after 1Sam. 7:2, there is no reason for the disjunction to occur anywhere else but v. 2.</p> <p>(2) Secondly, there is no reason to confine the Ark's disuse to a period of 20 years.</p>
<p>They sent messengers to the people living at Kiriath Jearim to say, "The Philistines have brought back the ark of the LORD. Come and take it back with you." The men of Kiriath Jearim came to take the LORD'S ark and brought it into Abinadab's house on the hill. They gave Abinadab's son Eleazar the holy occupation of guarding the LORD'S ark. A long time passed after the ark came to stay at Kiriath Jearim. (1Sam. 6:9–7:2a*; God's Word™)</p> <p>For 20 years the entire nation of Israel mournfully sought the LORD. (1Sam. 7:2b*; God's Word™)</p>	<p>This is a nice way to break up these two chapters. The Ark of Jehovah is fully dealt with in 1Sam. 6 and the new topic begins with 1Sam. 7:2b*, which is the spiritual poverty in the Israelite people. Samuel will deal with their lack of spirituality in this chapter (which is emphasized by the fact that the Ark of Jehovah remained in state for a long period of time).</p>
<p>Stop 1Sam. 6 at the end of v. 2 and begin chapter 7 with v. 3.</p>	<p>We cure the topical problem with this approach; however, we are still squeezing an incredible amount of history down into 20 years. However, <i>the Emphasized Bible</i> manages to begin a new section with v. 3 without making it sound as though the Ark's entire stay in Kiriath-jearim was 20 years.</p>

By the way, the Ark actually remains in Kiriath-Jearim somewhere between 60 and 100 years.

* Indicates a slightly different break than what we find above.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to the Chart and Map Index](#)

Here is where we should properly begin 1Sam. 7:

Israel Has a Change of Heart Before God

Slavishly literal:

And so were increasing the days and so they were twenty years. And so lamented all a house of Israel after Y^ehowah.

1 Samuel
7:2b

Moderately literal:

So the days increased and they became twenty years. And all the house of Israel lamented after Y^ehowah.

The days continued and after 20 years passed, the house of Israel began to cry out to Jehovah.

Here is how others have translated the latter half of v. 2:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	Days were multiplied (for it was now the twentieth year) and all the house of Israel rested, following the Lord.
Masoretic Text	And so were increasing the days and so they were twenty years. And so lamented all a house of Israel after Y ^e howah.
Peshitta	The time was long,—for it was about 20 years—and all the house of Israel yearned after the LORD.
Septuagint	The days were multiplied, and it was twenty years; and all the house of Israel looked after the Lord.

Significant differences: In the MT, the Israelites lament or mourn after Jehovah; in the LXX, they look for Him. The rendering of this verb into the Greek and into the Syriac may simply be interpretation. In all four cases, it is reasonable to end chapter 6 at 1Sam. 7:2a. The rendering of the final verb in the Latin makes little sense, given the gist of this chapter.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	...and it stayed there for twenty years. During this time, everyone in Israel was very sad and begged the LORD for help. Or, "Israel turned to the Lord and begged him for help." [I kept all of v. 2 in this one place].
NLT	The Ark remained in Kiriath-jearim for a long time—twenty years in all. During that time, all Israel mourned because it seemed that the LORD had abandoned them. [This is all of v. 2].
TEV	The Covenant Box of the LORD stayed in Kiriath Jearim a long time, some twenty years. During this time all the Israelites cried to the LORD for help. [All of v. 2].

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

*God's Word*TM A long time passed after the ark came to stay at Kiriath Jearim. For 20 years the entire nation of Israel mournfully sought the LORD. [God's Word keeps a portion of v. 7a and 7b together; however, the time frame is clearly and correctly explained].

JPS (Tanakh) A long time elapsed from the day that the Ark was housed in Kiriath-jearim, twenty years in all; and all the House of Israel yearned after the LORD. [The JPS translation keeps portions of 7a and 7b together].

HCSB Time went by until 20 years had passed since the ark had been taken to Kiriath-jearim. Then the whole house of Israel began to seek the LORD. [This is all of v. 2 from the HCSB. However, there is nothing wrong with the gist of this verse and it would be a good beginning for chapter 7].

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible And the Ark remained in Kiriath-jearim for a very long time [nearly 100 years, though Samuel's entire judgeship, Saul's reign, and well into David's, when it was brought to Jerusalem]. for it was twenty years before all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord. [1Chron. 13:5–7]. [This is all of v. 2 from *The Amplified Bible*].

NASB And it came about from the day that the ark remained at Kiriath-jearim that the time was long, for it was twenty years; and all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD. [I kept all of v. 2 here].

Young's Updated LT And it comes to pass, from the day of the dwelling of the ark in Kiriath-Jearim, that the days are multiplied—yea, they are twenty years—and wail do all the house of Israel after Jehovah. [All of v. 2 is here].

What is the gist of this verse? About 20 years pass during which the Ark is in storage and the people lament after Jehovah.

1Samuel 7:2b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, then	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râbâh (רָבָה) [pronounced raw ^b -VAWH]	to become much, to become many, to multiply, to increase in population and in whatever else	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7235 BDB #915
yâmîym (יָמִים) [pronounced yaw-MEEM]	days, a set of days; time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

Translation: *And the days increased...* Although most translations put v. 7a with 7b, note that this portion could be the beginning of chapter 7; and this first portion could be the end of chapter 6.

Obviously, keeping the Ark in Kiriath-jearim was thought to be a temporary measure at first. However, time just continued to increase and the Ark stayed there. Neither Abinadab nor his son Eleazar had the authority to remove the Ark or to ship it elsewhere. Nothing is said about Samuel *and* the Ark—ever. He is not a part of the Aaronic priesthood, per se, although he has stepped in as a Levitical priest. However, given all of the deaths which have been closely associated with the Ark, it appears to be Samuel's choice to simply leave the Ark where it is being stored.

1Samuel 7:2c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced hâw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
ʿesʿrîym (עֶשְׂרִים) [pronounced ʿesʿ- REEM]	<i>twenty</i>	plural numeral adjective	Strong's #6242 BDB #797
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced shaw-NAW]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040.

Translation: ...and they became twenty years. This time represents a period of time where the Ark was returned to Israel and taken to Kiriath-jearim, during which the people of Israel lamented for God. This does not mean that everything went back to normal at the end of 20 years. What will happen is, Samuel will speak to the people after 20 years (1Sam. 7:3).

I first of all need to deal with the time element, which I have already covered in the **Doctrine of the Ark of God** (1Sam. 4:11). At least two sources mention that the Ark stays in Kiriath-jearim for a period of 20 years and then King David sends for it. Immediately, that is a problem. We still have some time during which Israel will mix it up with the Philistines; we have a portion of Samuel's ministry to consider (there is no reason to assume that he is anything other than a young man at this point in time). Then Israel will desire a king and they will choose Saul. During this time period, Samuel becomes an old man (1Sam. 12:2) and he eventually dies (1Sam. 25:9). Saul appears to reign for 40 years (Acts 13:21), and there is a lot of interaction between himself and David during approximately the final 10–20 years of his reign (David's patience with God's plan would seem fairly namby-pamby if he only had to wait 5 or fewer years to rule over Israel). In fact, we have nearly 30 chapters of the Word of God in 1 and 2Samuel which will transpire over this time period. Therefore, the Ark did not remain in Kiriath-jearim for the short period of 20 years. Furthermore, we have no indication that it was taken anywhere else. My point in all of this? My point is that the Ark did not stay in Kiriath-jearim for only 20 years, and this verse does not say that it remained in Kiriath-jearim for only 20 years. The Ark was taken to Kiriath-jearim; it remains there for what seems to be a very long time, and, after 20 years, the people of Israel began to yearn for God, as there is no Tabernacle of God functioning (because Shiloh is destroyed and the Ark is in storage). After the Ark was in Kiriath-jearim for 20 years, then the people gather at Mizpah in a meeting called by Samuel. This gathering at Mizpah, however, will not result in the Ark coming out of storage. **The 20 year time period in v. 2 begins with the Ark being taken to Kiriath-Jearim and ends when Samuel gathers the people in Mizpah.** Many of the freer translations are extremely misleading at this point.

The Ark did not stay in Kiriath-jearim for only 20 years, and this verse does not say that it remained in Kiriath-jearim for only 20 years

In all, this gives us: **And the days increased and they became twenty years...** Now we are speaking of a passage of time between the events of chapter 6 and Samuel speaking to the people of Israel in 1Sam. 7:3.

1Samuel 7:2d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâhâh (נָחַח) [pronounced <i>naw-HAW</i>]	<i>to wail, to lament; to mourn, to be in a state of mourning</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #5091 BDB #624
Nâhâh is an onomatopoetic word. Although JPS calls the meaning of this verb into question (it does disagree with the Septuagint), it is found also in Ezek. 32:18 and Micah 2:4 and it clearly means the same thing. There are also several cognates which are in agreement with this meaning.			
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced <i>BAH-yith</i>]	<i>house, household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
Yis ^e râ`êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
`achârêy (אַחֲרָי) [pronounced <i>ah-kuh-RAY</i>]	<i>hinder parts; behind, after; following; after that, afterwards</i>	preposition; plural form	Strong's #310 BDB #29
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: [And all the house of Israel lamented after Y^ehowah.](#) For 20 years, the house of Israel mourns for her God. This means, the Ark is kept at Kiriath Jearim; there do not appear to be any services carried on there; it appears to be simply kept in storage. Furthermore, there does not appear to be any activity at Shiloh (otherwise, why not transport the Ark to there?). So, for 20 years, we have no proper spiritual activity in Israel.

I hope that you note that when the end of v. 2 is properly placed at the beginning of 1Sam. 7, then there is no reason to explain much of anything. When v. 2 was one unit, it appeared as though the Ark remained in Kiriath-jearim for 20 years, which was certainly not the case.³ However, what we are speaking of in this verse is the time which passes after the Ark is moved to Kiriath-jearim. It makes a perfect beginning for this chapter, just as 1Sam. 7:2a is a perfect end for the previous chapter.

Now, in this verse, the people of God begin to cry out for God once again. McGee comments: *In this day in which we are living there is a renewed interest in the Word of God. I rejoice in this because it is my firm conviction that God's people must get back to the Bible. I believe that all sixty-six books—all the way from Genesis to Revelation—are the word of God. I believe in the Bible's integrity and inerrancy, and in the fact that we need to get back to its teachings. We have been a long time getting back to God's Word. Progress has been slow. How many more years will it take? Many people today are getting very tired*

³ Otherwise the battle with the Philistines, the latter half of Samuel's ministry, the selection of Saul as king, the reign of Saul, the several years of conflict between David and Saul, and the first couple years of David's reign would all need to fit within a 20 year period of time. That dog just won't hunt.

*of listening to politicians make promises, promises, promises, and they don't fulfill them. I want to say in their behalf that they cannot fulfill them—yet they promise. We also have all kinds of new nostrums coming from college professors and leaders in every field. There is only one thing wrong: they won't work. Maybe in desperation America will turn to God. That is what happened to Israel after twenty years.*⁴

More than time passed. This was not some sort of purgatory where Israel remained for twenty years, and then it was all over. There was a problem—idolatry, and Samuel told the people that their idols had to go (v. 3). The people responded by removing their idols (v. 4); then Samuel prayed on their behalf to God (vv. 5, 9–10a) as they confessed their sins (vv. 6, 8). After all of this, then God gave them victory over the Philistines (vv. 10b–14).

Edersheim writes: *Twenty years had passed since the return of the ark—a period, as we gather from the subsequent history, outwardly of political subjection to the Philistine, and spiritually of religious depression, caused by the so lateness of their sanctuary, and the manifest absence of the Lord from among His people.*⁵

Now, what appears to be the case is, a delegation of elders have come to Samuel, recognizing his spiritual authority, and tell him of the spiritual condition of the people of Israel. This will make perfect sense, as Samuel will eventually say, "**Gather all of Israel to Mizpah.**" (v. 5). He has to be speaking to someone; so my guess would be, to a delegation of elders who represent the people of Israel.

And so says Samuel unto all house of Israel to say, "If in all your heart you [all] are returning unto Y^ehowah, put away gods, the foreign, from among you and the Ashtaroth and prepare your hearts unto Y^ehowah and serve Him to Him alone and He may deliver you [all] from a hand of Philistines."

1Samuel
7:3

Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, "If, with all your heart, you are returning to Y^ehowah, [then] put away the foreign gods and the Ashtoreth figurines from your midst and prepare your hearts unto Y^ehowah and serve Him [and] Him alone, that He may deliver you [all] from the hand of the Philistines."

Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, "If you desire to return to Jehovah, then you must eliminate the foreign gods and Ashtoreth figurines from your midst and you must prepare your hearts to serve Jehovah and to serve Him alone, so that He might deliver you from the power of the Philistines."

According to Keil and Delitzsch, vv. 2–3 should be run together. Although I don't see that, v. 3 does follow after v. 2. 20 years pass, Israel laments after God, and Samuel then speaks to the house of Israel.⁶ If this is the sense in which this is meant—to define the ending event of the 20 year time period, then that is reasonably accurate. Obviously, if Israel is distressed over her idolatry then it would follow that they would listen to their spiritual leader, Samuel. It would be quite illogical to separate these two thoughts.

First, let's see what others have done with this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so says Samuel unto all house of Israel to say, "If in all your heart you [all] are returning unto Y^ehowah, put away gods, the foreign, from among you and the Ashtaroth and prepare your heart unto Y^ehowah and serve Him to Him alone and He may deliver you [all] from a hand of Philistines."

⁴ J. Vernon McGee; *I & I1 Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 41.

⁵ Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 426.

⁶ Keil and Delitzsch make a big deal out of this because there was another exegete (Thenius) who saw a gap between these two verses. That is illogical and they go to great lengths to dispel this idea of a gap. Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 410.

Septuagint And Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, “If you [all] do with all your heart return to the Lord, take away the strange gods from the midst of you, and the groves, and prepare your hearts to [serve] the Lord, and serve him only; and He will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines.”

Significant differences: Since *Ashtoreth* can be rendered *groves*, there are no significant differences between the Greek and the Hebrew.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

TEV Samuel said to the people of Israel, “If you are going to turn to the LORD with all your hearts, you must get rid of all the foreign gods and the images of the goddess Astarte. Dedicate yourselves completely to the LORD and worship only him, and he will rescue you from the power of the Philistines.”

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God’s Word™ Samuel told the entire nation of Israel, “If you are returning to the LORD wholeheartedly, get rid of the foreign gods you have, including the statues of the goddess Astarte. Make a commitment to the LORD, and serve only him. Then he will rescue you from the Philistines.”

JPS (Tanakh) And Samuel said to all the House of Israel, “If you mean to return to the LORD with all your heart, you must remove the alien gods and the Ashtaroth from your midst and direct your heart to the LORD and serve Him alone. Then He will deliver you from the hands of the Philistines.”

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, “If you return to the LORD with all your heart, remove the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth from among you and direct your hearts to the LORD and serve Him alone; and He will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines.”

Young’s Updated LT And Samuel speaks to all the house of Israel, saying, ‘If with all your heart you [all] are turning back unto Jehovah—turn aside the gods of the stranger from your midst, and Ashtaroth; and prepare your heart unto Jehovah, and serve Him only, and He does deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.’

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel tells those of Israel to turn away from idols and towards God; the result will be their deliverance from the Philistines.

1Samuel 7:3a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced waw]	and so, and then, then, and	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #559 BDB #55
Sh ^o mûw`êl (שמ׳וּאֵל) [pronounced sh ^o -moo-ALE]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong’s #8050 BDB #1028

1Samuel 7:3a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿel (אל) [pronounced e]l]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced koh]l]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced BAH-yith]	<i>house, household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
Yisʿrâʿêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l̄]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55

Translation: Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying,... Or, to integrate this with the previous verse: Then [after the 20 years passed], Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying,... Israel had not been defeated by the Philistines for no reason. They were at a low spiritual ebb, which was common for Israel during that time period (the period of the judges). Theirs was a roller coaster of spiritual highs and spiritual lows; when they hit a spiritual low, a foreign country would come in and defeat them in war or control them. Philistia was expanding her borders and taking chunks out of Israel. Philistia had a sent back while the Ark was within her borders, but she removed the Ark, some of her population believed in Jehovah-God, and now Philistia was going strong again. It is likely that Shiloh, once home to the Ark of God, had been burned to the ground by the Philistines, although apparently not the Tent of God (this was all discussed in the previous chapter in great detail).

Now, interestingly enough, we have not heard from Samuel in 20 years (v. 2). He is mentioned in 1Sam. 4:1a, and, since then, the focus has been on the Ark of God and Israel's war with Philistia. Israel realizes that it is in terrible condition, spiritually speaking, and they turn to the only man in Israel who can guide them—Samuel. It is not entirely clear what Samuel has been doing these past 20 years. In my opinion, he had taken Eli's place as a judge/governor and that was his primary function. He may have been raised up in the Tent of God, but his spiritual authority appears to have been limited (up until this time). Samuel was not an Aaronic priest, although he was probably, in part, a Levite. I have, in the previous chapter, mused as to why Samuel did not set up the Tent of God and reunite it with the Ark of God. The answer may be as simple as the realm of his authority. People were willing to accept him as a judge over judicial matters, as he followed in Eli's footsteps, having been trained by Eli. However, regardless of his training, Samuel was not in the line of Aaron, thus separating him from the priesthood by ancestors. He may not have felt completely comfortable exerting any sort of spiritual authority—up until this point in time—and it is possible that Israel was not ready to give him any spiritual authority—at least, not for 20 years. Israel has spent the past 20 years under God's discipline, indicating their low spiritual ebb. Even though Samuel is their perfect spiritual leader, it takes them 20 years to realize this.

There is a point I need to make now, which is often ignored by believers. There are so many people who are saved who are immediately put to work doing this or that. Particularly celebrities—if an evangelical group can get their hands on someone of notoriety, that someone is out giving speeches and giving his testimony before as many groups as possible—and with minimal training. "I don't need to be trained to speak from my heart." Bullcrap.

When you speak God’s truth, you need some training; and the more you speak, the more training that you need. Samuel was raised up in the Tent of God by priest-judge Eli. Samuel got to watch things being done wrong over and over with the sons of Eli. So, did Samuel, at age 20, spring into action? Not at all. 20 years after the Ark was placed in Kiriath-jearim; 20 years after the Philistines took the Ark from Israel; 20 years after the death of Eli—then Samuel springs into action. How old is Samuel? Somewhere between 30 and 50 (I would guess 32).⁷ He is raised in the Tent of God, but his ministry does not really begin until this chapter, 20 years after the Ark was returned. My point in all of this is that you do not go directly from salvation to serving God. Okay, maybe *you* think that you do, but Samuel, whose ministry was a hundred times greater than yours—he didn’t make such a quick transition. Like any believer worth his salt, Samuel grew spiritually before he functioned as a spiritual leader. He grew in grace and the knowledge of God’s Word (1Sam. 3:21).

Application: By the way, let's talk about this for a moment: would you want a doctor with 2 week's intensive training evaluating you? Would you want your lab work done by a lab assistant who has had a week's worth of training? Do you want the pilot of your airplane to have only spent a total of 20 hours simulated flight training before taking off with you and 180 other passengers? Despite the innate abilities of these men, their prior training is what gives them the ability to diagnose your illness or to fly the plane that you are in. Our vocation as believers in Jesus Christ is much more important than being a pilot or being a doctor. Therefore, our training should be intensive and thorough as well. The idea of anyone going from salvation to a pastorate in 2 years is ridiculous; the idea of anyone going from salvation to public speaking in a month is ridiculous. Your service to God as a spiritual baby is negligible. Your service to God as a mature believer filled with God the Holy Spirit has great impact.

We do not know the exact occasion of Samuel's speech. We do not know to whom Samuel spoke specifically. Did he organize the elders of the land? Did he call together a meeting of the elders of the land. Was he on his circuit as a judge (see the end of this chapter) and a crowd gathered to ask him about spiritual matters? The end result was that he spoke to all of Israel. That is, no matter who exactly the first crowd was—there could have been several gatherings—or no matter how they were gathered, all of Israel received this message of Samuel's. In fact, the import of his message was moot unless all of Israel heard and responded.

Barnes comments: *Twenty years of Samuels life had passed away since the last mention of him (iv 1). Now he appears in the threefold character of Prophet, Judge, and the acknowledged leader of the whole people. His words were an answer to a profession of repentance on the part of Israel, the practical proof of which would be putting away all their false gods.*⁸

I should add that, in this wearing of these three hats, Samuel is a shadow of the Lord to come, Who will be the Great Prophet, the Judge of man, and the Leader of Israel.	
Samuel Is a Type of Christ	
Samuel is a prophet; that is, he speaks from God and his words carry spiritual authority.	Jesus is the Great Prophet of Whom Moses spoke. Deut. 18:17–18 Matt. 21:11 Luke 4:24 John 1:21 4:19
Samuel has been a judge over Israel and will judge Israel all of his life (1Sam. 7:15).	God the Father gave to Jesus the Son all judgement. Gen. 18:25 John 5:22, 26–27 Acts 10:42

⁷ God calls Samuel in 1Sam. 3; we may reasonably assume that Samuel is around 10–18 at this time (he is called a *boy* in this passage). We discussed Samuel’s age in 1Sam. 3:1, reasonably concluding that he was probably a teenager (although the word *boy* would have allowed him to be older or younger). Sometime later (1Sam. 4), we have the incident with the Philistines and the Ark. We do not know if that occurred a month later or 10 years later. Israel turning back to God occurs 20+ years after that. In other words, Samuel is probably no younger than 30, and he was raised to serve God.

⁸ *Barnes’ Notes; 1 Samuel to Esther*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 19.

Samuel Is a Type of Christ	
Samuel is the acknowledged leader of Israel. They respond to his dictates in this passage (1Sam. 7:3–6).	Our Lord is the acknowledged Leader of Israel. Isa. 6:1–5 compared with John 12:41. Isa. 9:6–7 Philip. 2:10 (as King over all, Jesus is thus the leader of Israel as well).
Samuel will pray and make intercession to God on behalf of Israel (1Sam. 7:5).	Jesus our Lord is forever at the right hand of God making intercession for us (Rom. 8:34 Heb. 7:25 9:24).

We have covered this doctrine in much greater detail in 1Sam. 2:36.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to the Chart and Map Index](#)

1Samuel 7:3b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾim (אִם) [pronounced eem]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when</i> (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced koh]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
lêbab (לִבָּב) [pronounced lay-BAHB ^v]	<i>mind, inner man, inner being, heart</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3824 BDB #523
ʾattem (אַתֶּם) [pronounced aht-TEM]	<i>you all, you guys, you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 nd person masculine plural, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced shoo ^b v]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced el]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation:...“If, with all your heart, you are returning to Y^{ehowah},... The idea is that Israel, as a nation, has called out to God for deliverance from the Philistines, and God has sent them Samuel to straighten them out—to guide them in the measures needed in order for God to bless the nation again.

1Samuel 7:3c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
çûwr (וּרָ) [pronounced <i>soor</i>]	<i>to cause to depart, to remove, to cause to go away; to turn away from</i>	2 nd person feminine singular, Hiphil imperative	Strong's #5493 (and #5494) BDB #693
êth (תָּ) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
êlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>gods, foreign gods, god; God; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #430 BDB #43
nêkâr (נֶכָר) [pronounced <i>nay-KAHR</i>]	<i>foreign, that which is foreign, foreignness, alien, that which is alien; foreign gods</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5236 BDB #648
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
tâvek ^e (תְּבַע) [pronounced <i>taw-VEK^e</i>]	<i>midst, among, middle</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #8432 BDB #1063

Translation:...[then] put away the foreign gods...from your midst... Samuel then lists the requirements—the visible proofs which should be submitted to God to prove that they are turning toward Him again. Samuel will give them two Hiphil imperatives followed by a Qal imperative, listing the three things which must be done by Israel as a nation. The first thing they must do is, *to cause to depart, to remove, to take away*. What they are to remove is that which is foreign among them—in this case, foreign gods.

Men in the ancient world were somewhat different than man today—their idolatry was often some sort of worship which involved inanimate objects (although, this is not completely missing from our society, given the statues of Mary, the symbol of the cross, the pictures of Jesus). However, essentially, idolatry is whatever you put before God; whatever takes precedence over God. In this regard, we have hundreds of things which are considered to be more important than the Word of God.

1Samuel 7:3d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^é (or v ^é) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿash ^é târôwth (עַשְׁתָּרוֹת) [pronounced <i>gahsh-taw-ROHTH</i>]	transliterated <i>Ashtaroth, Ashtartes, Ashtaroths</i>	Feminine proper noun; with the definite article	Strong's #6252 BDB #800

Translation: ...and the Ashtoreth figurines [from your midst]... Then we have a very common Hebraism, where an additional item is also supposed to be taken away from their midst: we begin with the wâw conjunction, the definite article and the feminine plural noun ʿash^étârôwth (עַשְׁתָּרוֹת) [pronounced *gahsh-taw-ROHTH*], and these are apparently the figurines which represent the goddess Ashtoreth. We studied her back in Judges 2:13; suffice it to say that she was a heathen goddess who represented sex and fertility (though not always). Now might be a good time to briefly revisit the two different words:

What I have noticed with most people and Scripture is, there is a tremendous temptation to be sloppy and to mix things up. Therefore, we need to examine two terms which could easily be confused for one another:

Ashtoreth vs. Ashtaroth

English Transliteration	Ashtoreth	Ashtaroth
English Transliteration	ʿashtôreth	ʿash ^é târôwth
Hebrew	עַשְׁתָּרֵת	עַשְׁתָּרוֹת
Pronunciation	pronounced <i>gahsh-TOH-reth</i>	pronounced <i>gahsh-taw-ROHTH</i>
Meaning	Singular form of the word. Refers to a pagan goddess.	Plural form of word. It actually has two meanings: (1) it refers to figurines of the goddess.; and, (2) it stands for the several female deities of the heathen.
Justification of meaning	In 1Kings 11:5, Solomon pursues Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians. If this were a figurine, this verse would make little sense.	Actually, even though many reputable Bible translators hold to the first definition exclusively, ⁹ there is actually no Scriptural evidence which demands that interpretation. However, in v. 5 of this chapter, Israel <i>puts away her Baals and Ashtoreth</i> , which implies that they are figurines. The second understanding of this meaning is apropos for Judges 10:6 1Sam. 12:10; the first meaning reasonably applies to our passage. The other passages might be taken either way.
Identifying Numbers	Strong's #6253 BDB #800	Strong's #6252 BDB #800

⁹ See Scofield note for Judges 2:13 in *The New Scofield Reference Bible*; Dr. C.I. Scofield; ©1967 New York-Oxford University Press; pp. 290–291. See margin notes for 1Sam. 7:3–4 in New King James Version; Thomas Nelson Publishers; ©1994; p 245.

English Transliteration	Ashtoreth	Ashtaroth
Location in Scripture	1Kings 11:5, 33 2Kings 23:13	Judges 2:13 10:6 1Sam. 7:3–4 12:10 31:10
There is also a city of Ashtaroth found in Deut. 1:4 Joshua 9:10 12:4 13:12, 31 I Chron. 6:71		

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to the Chart and Map Index](#)

This gives us: “...remove the foreign gods and the Ashtoreth figurines from your midst...” During this time period, the Israelites had fallen into idolatry, which was a thing that they did often, particularly during the time of the judges (see Judges 2:11–12 3:7, 12 4:1 6:1 10:6). Israel never completely removed the Canaanites from their land, and therefore, the Canaanites and their idolatry remained there. We may wonder how Israel, tied so closely to the God of the Universe, would stray from truth. The United States was founded by men who were closely tied to the truth of Scripture, our schools were principally founded by men of faith, and we send out more missionaries from the US than all other countries combined; yet we have drifted further and further away from our historical roots, even in our fundamentalist churches. Israeli men would be seduced by foreign women and then by their gods. Those who were not tied closely to God’s Word (which was not nearly as available to the Israelites as it is to us), could be easily led astray. As we examined in previous studies, the Ashtoreth appear to be the actual figurines which represent the demon-backed deities. Israelites had become accustomed to keeping these figurines in addition to what they had learned in the Tent of God. It is not unlike the Catholic today who has a statue of Mary, the mother of the humanity of Jesus. It really is not far from these pictures of this long-haired Jesus which are found hung in churches all over. Not only do we not have much of an idea of what Jesus looks like—about the only things we could reasonably guess is that (1) He had short hair; (2) He was physically very strong; and (3) He was decidedly non-Caucasoid. In other words, He did not look at all like the picture that we traditionally display. So we have these things which border on idolatry and the Israelites had them as well. They may or may not have prayed to these figurines; they may or may not have done anything out of the ordinary with the figurines, apart from giving them a prominent place in the house or on their automobile’s dashboard. But they did represent demonic deities and believers were not to make physical representations of things which were in heaven or things which are a part of the unseen world. “You will not make for yourself an idol or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.” (Deut. 5:8). As we found in our examination of the book of Joshua, the religious practices of the Canaanites was deplorable enough to call for their extinction (not simply of the practices but of the Canaanites themselves). These practices included human sacrifice, religious prostitution, homosexual activity and self-mutilation. Such activity was practiced by their gods, so it was deemed reasonable for the Canaanites themselves. Israel fell into this more and more often in this cycle of the judges which we studied in the book of the Judges.

Quite obviously, since only a very small percentage of those reading this are Catholics, you may believe that this does not pertain to you. Incorrect. If you place other things before God, then that is idolatry. If you place work, school, family, money, sex, anyone or anything before God, that is idolatry. And it is more than simple verbal ascent. I recall a woman who decided to give me a list of the important things in her life, and, of course, God was number one. However, the same woman, a couple years later, chose to live with a man apart from the institution of marriage. That is not placing God first. If you are too busy to attend Bible class or too busy to study God’s Word each and every day, than whatever has taken up your time is idolatry.

1Samuel 7:3e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (i) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251

1Samuel 7:3e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kûwn (כּוּן) [pronounced koon]	<i>to erect (to stand up perpendicular), to set up, to establish, to prepare, to strengthen, to be stabilized</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperative	Strong's #3559 BDB #465
lêbab (לִבָּב) [pronounced lay-BAHB ^v]	<i>mind, inner man, inner being, heart</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3824 BDB #523
ʿel (עַל) [pronounced e]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: ...and prepare your hearts unto Y^ehowah... To prepare one's heart means to name one's sins to God in order to restore fellowship with God. At this point in time, this was often done before a priest, who represented Jesus Christ (although, not always, as we have David writing, *Against You and You only have I sinned*). I suspect that Samuel was going to do a little teaching (more than we have recorded in this chapter), and that they were to prepare for that.

Application: Okay, so how do you prepare for the teaching of the Word of God? Obviously, naming your sins to God is first. However, other things then require individual choices. In some cases, you will turn on and turn down the volume for your answering machine; you may set your cell phone on vibrate and leave it in the car or in the other room. You might turn off your Blackberry or other small computer/communication device. For me, if I am being taught at night, and I have had an active day, then I often need a short nap, 5–15 minutes long, in order to keep from falling asleep while being taught. The idea is, you want to minimize or, preferably, eliminate all distractions from your mind and from your periphery so that you can concentrate on the most important part of your day.

1Samuel 7:3f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿâbad (עָבַד) [pronounced gâw ^b -VAHD]	<i>to work, to serve, to labor; to be a slave to</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #5647 BDB #712
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^o]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bad (בַּד) [pronounced bah]	<i>separation, by itself, alone</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #905 BDB #94

Together, the lâmed preposition and bad (בַּד) mean *in a state of separation, by itself, alone, apart*.

Translation: ...and serve Him [and] Him alone,... This exclusive devotion to Jehovah God is found throughout Scripture: **And Jesus answered and said to him, "It stands written, 'You will worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.'**" (Luke 4:8 Deut. 6:13). Joshua said, "Now, therefore, fear Y^ehowah and serve Him in sincerity and truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River [Euphrates] and in Egypt and serve Y^ehowah...put away the foreign gods which are in your midst and incline your hearts to Y^ehowah, the God of Israel." (Joshua 24:14, 23; see also Deut. 13:4 Judges 10:16). There is no place in Scripture for a man to have faith in anyone other than Jesus Christ (Jehovah Elohim of Israel). Buddha is not another name for God; he was a man and he is dead. Moses, Mohammed and Confucius were all men, and they are all dead (although Moses is in Abraham's bosom at this time). Allah of Islam is an idol representing a demon. The Bible does not teach that sincerity is good enough; our faith must be in Jesus Christ in order to be efficacious. It is quite simple: neither Buddha, Moses, Mohammed nor Confucius died for your sins. Adhering to some religious doctrine or an attempt to be moral, while better for society as a whole, does nothing to improve your relationship with God. God is specific and demands faith in Christ alone, because only Jesus died for our sins.

"If You Return to Jehovah" Speech by Moses and Samuel

Moses in Deut. 30:2–9

Samuel in 1Sam. 7:3

"And you will return to Yehowah your God and you will listen and obey in the proximity of His voice according to all that I command you today—you and your children—with all of your mind and with all of your soul. And Y^ehowah your God will turn about your captivity and He will have compassion on you and He will change His mind [lit., turn back] and He will gather you out from all the peoples from whence Y^ehowah your God has distributed you. Even if you have been banished to the most distant land under the heavens, from there Y^ehowah your God will gather you and from there He will take you. And Y^ehowah your God will bring you into the land which your fathers once possessed and you will possess this land; furthermore, He will cause you to do well and He will cause you to be multiplied beyond your fathers. And Y^ehowah your God will circumcise your heart and the hearts of your descendants with the result that you will love Y^ehowah your God with all of your heart and all of your soul. And Y^ehowah your God will place all of these curses upon your enemies even those who hate you and have persecuted you. And you will return to the voice of Y^ehowah and you will listen [and obey] the voice of Y^ehowah your God and you will do all of His mandates which I have commanded you this day. And Y^ehowah your God will cause you to be blessed with excess in all of the work of your hands, in your descendants, and in the offspring of your cattle and in the production of your soil, for prosperity, as Y^ehowah will now return to rejoice in you for prosperity as He rejoiced over your fathers."

Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, "If, with all your heart, you are returning to Y^ehowah, [then] put away the foreign gods and the Ashtoreth figurines from your midst and prepare your heart unto Y^ehowah and serve Him [and] Him alone, that He may deliver you [all] from the hand of the Philistines."

The context of Moses' speech was off to a day in the future when Israel has been scattered. The events surrounding Samuel's speech were (1) idolatry on the part of the people of Israel and (2) the constant pressure of the Philistines upon the Israelites.

“If You Return to Jehovah” Speech by Moses and Samuel

Moses in Deut. 30:2–9

Samuel in 1Sam. 7:3

Joel also had a *return to Me* speech, which was actually a direct quotation from God to Israel: “Yet even now,” declares Y^ehowah, “Return to Me with all your heart and with fasting, weeping and mourning; and tear your heart and not your garments. Now return to Y^ehowah your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in grace and relenting of evil.” (Joel 2:12–13).

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to the Chart and Map Index](#)

As Moses said to Israel, “But from there you will seek Y^ehowah your God and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul. When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in the latter days, you will return to Y^ehowah your god and you will listen to His voice. For Y^ehowah your God is a compassionate God; He will not fail you nor destroy you nor forget the covenant with your fathers which He swore to them.” (Deut. 4:29–31).

1Samuel 7:3g

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâtsal (נָצַל) [pronounced <i>naw-TSAHL</i>]	<i>to snatch away, to deliver, to rescue, to snatch out of danger, to preserve, to recover</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect; apocopated form	Strong's #5337 BDB #664
Apocopated means that the verb has been shortened. Generally, this means that the final hê (ה) and the vowel which precedes it are dropped. Apocopation is used when the verb functions as a jussive. A jussive expresses the speaker's desire, wish or command. We often add into the translation <i>may</i> or <i>let</i> . ¹⁰			
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	affixed to a 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i>]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
P ^h ilish ^{im} tîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּים) [pronounced <i>p^e-lish-TEE</i>]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

Translation: ...that He may deliver you [all] from the hand of the Philistines. Or, “...and then He may deliver you [all] out of the hand of the Philistines.” In the previous 20 years, the Philistine control over the Israelites and the Philistine persecution of the Israelites had increased to grave proportions. As we studied, they captured the Ark of God, and, although they returned it, it was no longer a part of the Tent of God until the time of David. We may

¹⁰ This is all taken from *Biblical Hebrew*; by Page Kelley, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, pp. 131, 292.

infer that the Philistines also marched into Shiloh and burned it to the ground (this would reasonably be simultaneous to the time that the Ark was in Philistia). Israel was in desperate straights, feeling the pressure which God had placed upon them.

The book of the Judges is based upon this cycle, and herein is the final cycle of the era of the judges. It is originally summarized in Judges 2:18–20a: *And when Y^ehowah raised up judges for them, Y^ehowah was with the judge and delivered them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for Y^ehowah was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed and afflicted them. But it came about when the judge died, that they would turn back and act more corruptly than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them and to bow down to them; they did not abandon their practices or their stubborn ways. So the anger of Y^ehowah burned against Israel.*

And so removed, sons of Israel, the Baals and the Ashtaroth and they serve Y^ehowah to Him only.

1 Samuel
7:4

So the sons of Israel removed [or, *caused to go away, departed from*] the Baals and the Ashtoreth figurines and they served Y^ehowah [and] Him only.

So the sons of Israel put away the Baals and the Ashtoreth figurines and they began to serve Y^ehowah and Him alone.

First, what others have done:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so put away, sons of Israel, the Baals and the Ashtaroth and they serve Y ^e howah to Him only.
Septuagint	And the children of Israel took away Baalim and the groves of Astaroth, and served the Lord only.

Significant differences: The LXX inserts *groves of*, which is not found in the Hebrew, Latin or Syriac.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

<i>The Message</i>	They did it. They got rid of the gods and goddesses, the images of Baal and Ashtoreth, and gave their exclusive attention and service to GOD.
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Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Complete Jewish Bible	So the people of Isra'el banished the <i>ba'alim</i> and the <i>'ashtaroth</i> and served only <i>ADONAI</i> .
<i>God's Word</i> [™]	So the Israelites got rid of the statues of Baal and Astarte and served only the LORD.
JPS (Tanakh)	And the Israelites removed the Baalim and Ashtaroth and they served the LORD alone.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	So the sons of Israel removed the Baals and the Ashtaroth and served the LORD alone.
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	And the sons of Israel turn aside the Baalim and the Ashtaroth, and serve Jehovah alone;...

What is the gist of this verse? The people of Israel did get rid of their idolatrous practices and turned to Jehovah God.

1Samuel 7:4a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
çûwr (וּרַחַק) [pronounced soor]	<i>to cause to depart, to remove, to cause to go away; to turn away from</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5493 (and #5494) BDB #693
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yis ^{ra} êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ba'al (בַּעַל) [pronounced BAH-ğah]	<i>owner, lord, husband; transliterated Baal when referencing the heathen god</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #1167 BDB #127
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ash ^{târôwth} (אֲשֵׁת־רֹחַת) [pronounced ġahsh-ıaw-ROHTH]	transliterated <i>Ashtaroth, Ashartes, Ashtaroths</i>	Feminine proper noun; with the definite article	Strong's #6252 BDB #800

Translation: So the sons of Israel removed [or, caused to go away, departed from] the Baals and the Ashtoreth figurines... Recall that *Ashtaroth* is plural and may be reasonably transliterated *Ashtoreths*. The use of the plural of Baal and Ashtoreth in this verse and the action of Israel—removing them—indicates that we are speaking of statuettes and figurines which stood for the gods and goddesses of the heathen. During the time of the judges, this was a common cycle, and Israel had suffered in the past and then they put away their idols as a spiritual response (Judges 2:13 10:16).

1Samuel 7:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

1Samuel 7:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿâbad (עָבַד) [pronounced <i>gaw^b-VAHD</i>]	<i>to work, to serve, to labor; to be a slave to</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5647 BDB #712
ʿêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bad (בַּד) [pronounced <i>bah</i>]	<i>separation, by itself, alone</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #905 BDB #94

Together, the lâmed preposition and bad (בַּד) mean *in a state of separation, by itself, alone, apart*.

Translation: ...and they served Y^ehowah [and] Him only. Or,...and they served Y^ehowah only. As we saw in the book of the Judges, this was typical of Israel. Israel would fall into idolatry, God would put them under the control of a foreign nation and they would return to God. We are still in the time period of the judges, as Samuel himself will be a judge over Israel. The period of the judges will end when Saul becomes king over Israel. There is another transition here at work as well. Eli was a *priest-judge*; Samuel, although he did things that a priest might do, was more of a *prophet-judge*. That is, the spiritual authority of Israel, once the domain of priests and judges, will soon become the possession of the prophet, whom God will send to Israel more and more.

And so says Samuel, “Gather all of Israel the Mizpah-ward and I will pray in you [all] unto Y^ehowah.”

1 Samuel
7:5

Then Samuel said, “Gather all Israel to the Mizpah and I will intercede [via prayer] with you [all] unto Y^ehowah.”

Then Samuel commanded, “Gather all of Israel to Mizpah and I will intercede with prayer to God for all of you.”

First, the other translations:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so says Samuel, “Gather all of Israel the Mizpah-ward and I will pray in you [all] unto Y^ehowah.”

Septuagint

And Samuel said, “Gather all Israel to Massephath, and I will pray concerning you to the Lord.”

Significant differences:

None, the prepositions which are noted above are more a matter of translation than actual difference.

You may have noted that, for a chapter and a half, there have been many problems with the text of Samuel. The manuscripts from the Greek and Hebrew differed

considerably. However, when it comes right down to it, there are actually few problems with the understanding of a passage. Now, from this point on, and for some time, there will be far fewer differences between the Greek and Hebrew.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

The Message Next Samuel said, "Get everybody together at Mizpah and I'll pray for you."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh) Samuel said, "Assemble all Israel at Mizpah, and I will pray to the LORD for you."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB Then Samuel said, "Gather all Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray to the LORD for you."
Young's Updated LT ...and Samuel says, "Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I pray for you unto Jehovah."

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel speaks to those who come to him and tells them to gather all Israel to Mizpah; there, he would pray to Jehovah concerning them.

1Samuel 7:5a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Sh ^e mûw`êl (שְׁמוּאֵל) [pronounced <i>sh^e-moo-ALE</i>]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028
qâbats (קָבַץ) [pronounced <i>kaw-BATS</i>]	<i>to take, to grasp with the hand; to collect; to congregate</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #6908 BDB #867
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
Yis ^e râ`êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

Translation: Then Samuel said, "Gather all Israel to the Mizpah... Samuel was an extremely important man in God's work in Israel. He is the last judge of the time of the judges. He is a prophet. A psalmist recognizes his authority and groups him with Aaron and Moses (Psalm 99:6). Since most of the Psalms were composed during the time of David and soon thereafter, this indicates that there was a very early acceptance of the true authority of

Samuel. Obviously, the people of Israel of this time recognize Samuel's leadership; but this indicates that, in retrospect, Samuel's authority had been God-given. In speaking to Jeremiah, God also recognizes Samuel's authority. In fact, Samuel will become known for praying on behalf of Israel and God promises that, even if Moses and Samuel stood before Him, His heart would not be with His people (Jer. 15:1).

Now, here is an interesting place to gather. Recall that Shiloh was the spiritual center for Israel, wherein was the Ark and the Tent of God. Israel removed the Ark from Shiloh and the Philistines took the Ark from Israel. When the Ark was returned to Israel, it was not returned to Shiloh, but first to Beth-shemesh (which was the choice of the Philistines) and then to Kiriath-jearim (which was the choice of the people of Beth-shemesh). Since Israel is not gathering at Shiloh and since the Ark was not taken to Shiloh, we may assume that this is the time that Shiloh had been destroyed. Surprisingly, we do not have the actual destruction of Shiloh recorded by an eyewitness (perhaps there were no eyewitnesses?). Suddenly, when we would expect the name of Shiloh to be mentioned, we have instead *Kiriath-jearim* (for the place where the Ark is kept) or *Mizpah* (for a gathering of the sons of Israel for spiritual renewal). We have touched on *Mizpah* (or, *Mizpeh*) several times in the past; it is probably time that we examine the **Doctrine of the Cities of Mizpah**. What we need to get from this is that Mizpah is centrally located in Benjamin and that it was a common meeting place for the tribes of Israel during the period of the judges (Judges 20:1 1Sam. 7:5 10:17).

1Samuel 7:5b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
pâlal (לָלַל) [pronounced <i>paw-LAHL</i>]	<i>to pray, to intercede, to make intercession for, to ask for a favorable determination</i>	1 st person singular, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #6419 BDB #813
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʿel (אֵל) [pronounced <i>e]</i>	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: ...and I will intercede [via prayer] with you [all] unto Y^ehowah.” I realize that every translation says that Samuel will pray *for* the Israelites, but it does not say that in the Hebrew or in the Greek and it would be a long stretch to make it mean that. Samuel will pray *among* the Israelites or *in* the Israelites or *with* the Israelites, but not *for* the Israelites. In other words, this is a joint venture. Samuel does this hand-in-hand with his brothers. The spiritual revival of Israel depends upon the volition of the people of Israel. Samuel can pray all he wants to; however, unless the people of Israel are involved, his prayers will have limited results.

And so they are gathered the Mizpah-ward and so they draw waters and so they pour [it] out to faces of Y^ehowah and so they fast in the day the that and so they say there, “We have sinned to Y^ehowah” and so judges Samuel sons of Israel in the Mizpah.

I Samuel
7:6

So they were gathered at Mizpah and they would draw water and they would pour [it] out before Y^ehowah. Furthermore, they fasted on that day and they said there, “We have sinned with reference to Y^ehowah.” And Samuel governed [or, *judged*] the sons of Israel at Mizpah.

They then were gathered together at Mizpah and there they drew out water and then poured it out before Jehovah. They also fasted on that day and they said, “We have sinned before Jehovah.” Samuel acted as a ruler over the sons of Israel there.

First, what others have done:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so they are gathered the Mizpah-ward and so they draw waters and so they pour [it] out to faces of Y ^e howah and so they fast in the day the that and so they say there, “We have sinned to Y ^e howah” and so judges Samuel sons of Israel in the Mizpah.
Septuagint	And they were gathered together to Massephath, and they drew water, and poured it out upon the earth before the Lord. And they fasted on that day, and said, “We have sinned before the Lord.” And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Massephath.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

NLT	So they gathered there and, in a great ceremony, drew water from a well and poured it out before the LORD. They also went without food all day and confessed that they had sinned against the LORD. So it was at Mizpah that Samuel became Israel’s judge.
TEV	So they all gathered at Mizpah. They drew some water and poured it out as an offering to the LORD and fasted that whole day. They said, “We have sinned against the LORD.” (It was at Mizpah where Samuel settled disputes among the Israelites.)

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh)	They assembled at Mizpah, and they drew water and poured it out before the LORD; they fasted that day, and there they confessed that they had sinned against the LORD. And Samuel acted as chieftain of the Israelites at Mizpah.
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Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	And they gathered to Mizpah, and drew water and poured it out before the LORD, and fasted on that day, and said there, “We have sinned against the LORD.” And Samuel judged the sons of Israel at Mizpah.
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	And they are gathered to Mizpeh, and draw water, and pour out before Jehovah, and fast on that day, and say there, ‘We have sinned against Jehovah;’ and Samuel judges the sons of Israel in Mizpeh.

What is the gist of this verse? Israel did some acts of contrition; they drew out water and then poured it out before God. Also, they fasted and admitted to God their sin. As what appears to be a result of all this, Samuel functions as a judge in Mizpah.

1Samuel 7:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qâbats (קָבַטְו) [pronounced <i>kaw-BATS</i>]	<i>to be gathered, to be collected, to be congregated, to congregate selves</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #6908 BDB #867
Mits ^e pâh (מִצְפֵּה) pronounced <i>mitz^e-PAW</i>	<i>outlook point, watchtower; transliterated Mizpah</i>	proper noun with the definite article and the locale hê	Strong's #4708 (& #4709) BDB #859

According to Owen, this is the locale hê, which does not appear to be any different to me than the directive hê.

Translation: [So they were gathered at Mizpah...](#) In the Hebrew, we have the definite article and the locative hê hung on the end of *Mizpah*, which essentially gives us *Mizpah-ward* (i.e., *in the direction* or *in the area* of Mizpah). In the English, this makes most sense as a prepositional phrase, just as the passive verb sounds best as a past tense. Again, note, they are not gathering together in Shiloh, which would makes sense, if it had been burned to the ground.

1Samuel 7:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâ`ab (שָׁאֵב) [pronounced <i>shaw-AH^BV</i>]	<i>to draw [water]; to take from the surface</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7579 BDB #980
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâphak ^e (שָׁפַק) [pronounced <i>shaw-FAHK^e</i>]	<i>to pour, to pour out, to shed</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8210 BDB #1049
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

Together, they mean *upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of*. When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning *in the judgment of*.

1Samuel 7:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: ...and they would draw water and they would pour [it] out before Y^ehowah. This was a great sacrifice before God. Although water is the most important thing to us in this environment after air, we tend not to appreciate it, as it is so easy for us to go to the faucet and fill a glass of water. In Israel, this was not an easy thing to do. One had to have a well (which was a great deal more work for them then than it is now); and then one had to bring the water up bucket by bucket. If they were by a wadi, then water could be brought from the wadi to where it was needed. That would be a good and convenient location for water (and recall that the wadis often dried up after the rainy season). This indicated that they knew that their basic provisions were given them by God. I have read several commentaries on this event, and most of them take the position that this was representative of Israel pouring out her heart before God (apparently, the Chaldee paraphrase is rendered that way¹¹). 1Sam. 1:15 Psalm 62:8 and Lam. 2:19 are often given as references. Now, certainly the pouring out of the water may have been indicative of their sorrow, but it was not an hyperbole—they literally drew water and poured it out—there is no reason to think otherwise. As for these three passages—they mention the pouring out of one's heart before God; the last reads: *Pour out your heart like water before the presence of Y^ehowah.*" That is clearly a simile. However, a simile found elsewhere does not make our passage an hyperbole. Since there is no other instance prior to this of pouring out water before God,¹² I believe that this spontaneous act was more closely tied to fasting,¹³ which is the next line:

1Samuel 7:6c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
tsûwm (צום) [pronounced <i>zoom</i>]	<i>to abstain from food, to fast</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6684 BDB #847
yôwm (יום) [pronounced <i>yohm</i>]	<i>day; time; today</i> (with a definite article)	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
hûw' (הוא) [pronounced <i>hoo</i>]	<i>that</i>	masculine singular, demonstrative pronoun (with a definite article)	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

Translation: Furthermore, they fasted on that day... The verb here is the 3rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect of tsûwm (צום) [pronounced *tzoom*], which means *to abstain from food, to fast*. Surprisingly enough, this word is not found anywhere in the Law of Moses, and makes its first appearance in Judges 20:26 when the tribe of Benjamin was all but wiped out. Here we find the word again, making its second appearance in Scripture, still during the time of the judges. Although this verb is found 21 times in Scripture, this amounts to a total of 12

¹¹ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 411.

¹² David does this himself in 2Sam. 23:15–16 under completely different circumstances.

¹³ We don't know what is going on in the heads of the Israelites, apart from a reasonable sense of fear and recognition of their sin before God. Therefore, either position is simply an educated guess.

incidents, some incidents whose spiritual merit is questionable. My point is that fasting in the Old Testament was something which was nurtured and pushed by the pharisees and other religious types. One would be hard-pressed to find an Old Testament reference which was commanded or suggested by God for the people of Israel to fast.

This fasting is not far removed from the pouring out of the water before God. The fact that they fasted makes the literal understanding of the previous phrase more reasonable. They had done wrong, they were ashamed, and their way of showing this was pouring out their precious water before God and not eating. It was an approach of self-sacrifice. Given this mention of *fasting* and given that Christians have typically misinterpreted the concept of fasting, either over-emphasizing it or ignoring it; it would be time for us to examine the **Doctrine of Fasting**.

1Samuel 7:6d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
`amar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
shâm (שָׁמָּה) [pronounced <i>shawm</i>]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
châtâ' (חָטְאוּ) [pronounced <i>khaw-TAW</i>]	<i>to sin, to miss, to miss the mark, to violate the law, to err; to do wrong, to commit a transgression</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #2398 BDB #306
lâmed (לְ) [pronounced <i>l'</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Additional meanings of the lâmed preposition: <i>with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to.</i>			
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yohh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: ...and they said there, “We have sinned with reference to Y^ehowah.” Here is something we would expect: they acknowledged their sins before God. This was a common occurrence in Israel—to sin as a nation, to face divine reproof and then to cry out to God that they have sinned. See Judges 10:10 1Sam. 12:10 1Kings 8:47. This restores fellowship between the individuals and God and appears to restore a sort of corporate fellowship as well—between God and the national entity Israel. Don't be confused here—I am not saying that each and every citizen of Israel poured out their heart before God and confessed their sin before Him. It seems reasonable that there are many who do not. However, there are enough there to count as the national entity turning toward God.

I want you to very carefully note the procedure followed here. Samuel stands between God and Israel and the men of Israel name their sins to Samuel before God. Whereas, this does authorize some sort of a New Testament intercessor, that does not mean that there should be celibate male priests at every corner church. There is an intercessor between man and God, and that such a thing is necessary is found throughout the Old Testament. However, once Jesus came in the flesh, He was the intercessor between God and man. It is through Him that we have access to God, not through some flawed human priest. **But when Christ appeared as a high Priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and ore perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is, to**

say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, Who through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this reason, He is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance...For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; nor was it that He should offer Himself often, as the High Priest enters the holy place year by year with blood not his own. Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself (Heb. 9:11–15, 24–26). Even from that time, it was necessary to recognize one's sins and confess them before God. Today, we also, as God's people, need to confess our sins to Him. That approach to Him has never changed: **If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness** (I John 1:9). We do not go to a priest, because our High Priest has already made intercession for us. We go directly to God and name our sins to Him. This is how we restore our temporal fellowship—we name our sins and He forgives us our sins and He then cleanses us from all unrighteousness. One of the most amazing things about Christianity today is how few people actually realize that this is a part of their daily walk. So many believers sin, and then wander about aimlessly out of fellowship, posing as religious types. For us, confession of sin should be daily or hourly, depending upon how we conduct our lives. **If we judge ourselves rightly, then we should not be judged** (I Cor. 11:31).

1Samuel 7:6e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâphaṭ (שָׁפַח) [pronounced shaw-FAHT]	<i>to judge, to condemn, to punish; to defend [especially the poor and oppressed], to defend [one's cause] and deliver him from his enemies; to rule, to govern</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8199 BDB #1047
Sh°mûw`êl (שָׁמוּאֵל) [pronounced sh°-moo-ALE]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028
`êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
bên (בְּנֵי) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yis°râ`êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
b° (בְּ) [pronounced b°]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #88

1Samuel 7:6e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Mits ^e pâh (מִצְפָּה) pronounced <i>mitz^e-PAW</i>	<i>outlook point, watchtower;</i> transliterated <i>Mizpah</i>	proper noun with the definite article	Strong's #4708 (& #4709) BDB #859

Translation: **And Samuel governed** [or, *judged*] **the sons of Israel at Mizpah.** The idea here is that his spiritual and civil authority was officially recognized by the men of Israel who had gathered there. He called Israel together in Mizpah and he led Israel in its repentance before God. Through his intercession, he secured for Israel forgiveness of its sin and a renewal of the favor of God, thus restoring the proper relation between Israel and God, thus allowing God to proceed to vindicate His people's rights against their enemies.¹⁴

Samuel actually took upon himself a three or four-fold role at this point: (1) he was a religious leader, if not the High Priest, then akin to the High Priest. He would pray to God on behalf of Israel, as did Moses (Ex. 17:11–12) and the High Priest on the Day of Atonement; and as would Elijah (1Kings 13:36, 42), Ezra (Ezra 9:51) and as does our Lord Jesus Christ, sitting on the right hand of God making intercession for us.¹⁵ In v. 8, Israel will ask Samuel to pray to God on their behalf; and in vv. 9–10, Samuel will make offerings to Jehovah on behalf of Israel. These are precisely the functions of an intercessor between man and God. Psalm 99:6 reads: **Moses and Aaron were among His priests; and Samuel was among those who called on His name. They called upon Y^ehowah and He answered them.** Although it is not clear from this passage that Samuel is called a priest, the idea of a priest is a man who represents his fellow men to God; in this respect, Samuel is clearly a priest. God later told Jeremiah, **“Even if Moses and Samuel were to stand before Me, My heart would not be with this people.”** (Jer. 15:1b). Samuel, like many Old Testament heroes, was a shadow of our Lord to come. Samuel was a mediator between God and man; he was an intercessor, just as our Lord intercedes for us. (2) Samuel was also a civil/political leader, as is testified to in this verse and in vv. 15–17. (3) Samuel was a prophet, a man who spoke the Word of God (1Sam. 3:19). (4) Finally, Samuel was a military leader over Israel. He organizes and marshals the people of Israel for effectual resistance against their oppressors, and leads them to victory, as did the military leaders before him (Othniel, Ehud, Barak and Gideon).¹⁶ This latter role is not as certain as the first two. We are making some assumptions here; however, there is no indication in this passage that there is another military leader apart from Samuel (although, if he occupies this position, it will apparently be temporary). The first military leader introduced in this book will be Saul, who will come on the scene in 1Sam. 9.

Application: As I read through this, I had a thought—there are going to be times when no one around you understands the world as you do, as they do not believe in the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice and they do not recognize the spiritual warfare which is taking place on this earth. We have many instances in the Old Testament where one man's head rises above the crowd to proclaim the truth of God and often to lead the nation Israel. Now, let's apply that to your life—you may be the only person in your periphery who understands the truth. That is not abnormal and can be justified historically and psychologically (man's natural self is to be against God). The key is, do you behave like a self-righteous ass? Do you silently keep the truth, thinking to yourself, "Hey, too bad for them; but their spiritual choices are their spiritual choices." Here is where spiritual maturity plays a part. Jesus has told us not to hide our light. However, this does not mean that you go to your family's Thanksgiving dinner offer up a prayer, and slip in give a 20 minute evangelistic message. There is a time to speak and a time to be silent. Matt. 5:14–16 reads: **You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a covering [lit., grain-measure], but on a lampstand. And it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in Heaven.** Leading your life so that you do not come off as a self-righteous ass and yet so that you can be seen by others as having some spiritual quality is not an easy walk. We have a natural tendency to sin, which might include flagrant

¹⁴ Paraphrased from Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 412.

¹⁵ Taken from *Barnes' Notes; I Samuel to Esther*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 19.

¹⁶ Paraphrased from *Barnes' Notes; I Samuel to Esther*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 19.

sins and might include self-righteousness (or both). Now, are you beginning to grasp the importance of spiritual maturity? You might be out there alone, in a mission field surrounded by unbelievers (and I do not mean in a foreign country); surrounded by those who are resistant to the truth. Do you say to yourself, "Hey, it's just too damn bad they did not believe in Jesus Christ." Or do you act like an obnoxious self-righteous ass whom everyone avoids at family gatherings? This is where maturity kicks in. This is where you learn who to talk to, how to approach this or that person. This is where you learn to step back and not be offended if someone rejects the truth.

When I first believed in Jesus Christ, I began to study the literature of various groups, including the Jehovah Witnesses, the Armstrong cult, the *children of God* cult. This study also included the teaching of the truth, most notably by J. Vernon McGee and R. B. Thieme Jr. As a new believer, I was confused at first; and certainly put off by McGee's very southern, down-home approach, and put off by Thieme's personality. However, in a relatively short amount of time, I recognized, to a limited degree, what is truth; and I began to grow spiritually, principally through tapes from Bob. Now, after a few months of growing, I realized, *hey, this is incredible; this is exactly what I had been looking for*. Then, just assuming that all Christians were searching for truth in the same way, I began to share these tapes with others. Well, I must admit to being shocked by how few people were interested in any sort of clear Bible teaching. I attended a church of primarily Christians and the pastor was intelligent and accurate in what he taught; but there just was not enough of it and there did not seem to be enough by way of mechanics (i.e., just what do you do in this circumstance or that?). There was a Bible study at my house and I played a tape. But you know, not everyone there said, "Hey, that's great! Where can I get more of these to study?" In fact, *no one* was even the least bit interested. In fact, there were times when I was the only person I knew who had any interest in the actual teaching of the Word of God. I have since learned, that is not abnormal. You will often be surrounded by unbelievers or by believers who are very negative toward good, expository teaching. What you do and what you say and to whom you speak then becomes a matter of spiritual growth in your own life.

I mentioned some cults along with a couple of Bible teachers. What is one way to tell the difference? A cult will emphasize your relationship to the cult and your adherence to the cult and its teachings in order to be saved. Someone who teaches the Bible will emphasize your relationship to Jesus Christ and your belief in Him in order to be saved. For instance, if you walk away from a cult, they are going to wonder whether or not you were truly converted. You can leave a Christian church, and that should not be the thinking of the pastor or any of the congregation (if it is, then that church and its teachings are suspect).

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to the Chart and Map Index](#)

The Philistines Clash with the Israelis

And so they hear Philistines that gathered [themselves], sons of Israel, the Mizpah-ward, and so they go up, lords of Philistines, unto Israel and so they hear, sons of Israel, and so they fear from faces of Philistines.

I Samuel
7:7

Then the Philistines heard that the sons of Israel had gathered [themselves] at Mizpah, so the lords of the Philistines go up against Israel. When the sons of Israel heard, they feared because of the Philistines.

When the Philistines heard that the sons of Israel had gathered themselves together at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines mobilized their forces against Israel. When Israel heard this, they became fearful because of the Philistines.

From what we have seen, it is obvious that Israel is gathering as a sign of repentance before God. Israel recognizes its sins and recognizes that it is being punished by God. *The Assembly had met in Mizpah, not with any thought of war, far less in preparation for it.*¹⁷ There is no clear intention here to gather and form some sort of military resistance against Philistia. However, Philistia interprets this large gathering as a military gathering and Philistia simultaneously plans a pre-emptive strike.

¹⁷ Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 427.

First, what others have done:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text And so they hear Philistines that gathered [themselves], sons of Israel, the Mizpahward, and so they go up, lords of Philistines, unto Israel and so they hear, sons of Israel, and so they fear from faces of Philistines.

Septuagint And the Philistines heard that all the children of Israel were gathered together to Massephath; and the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel; and the children of Israel heard, and they feared before the Philistines.

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

NLT When the Philistine rulers heard that all Israel had gathered at Mizpah, they mobilized their army and advanced. The Israelites were badly frightened when they learned that the Philistines were approaching.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ When the Philistines heard that the Israelites had gathered at Mizpah, the Philistine rulers came to attack Israel. The Israelites heard [about the Philistine plan] and were afraid of them.

JPS (Tanakh) When the Philistines heard that the Israelites had assembled at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines marched out against Israel. Hearing of this, the Israelites were terrified of the Philistines...

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB Now when the Philistines heard that the sons of Israel had gathered to Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the sons of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines.

Young's Literal Translation And the Philistines hear that the sons of Israel have gathered themselves to Mizpah; and the princes of the Philistines go up against Israel, and the sons of Israel hear, and are afraid of the presence of the Philistines.

What is the gist of this verse? The Philistines obviously notice this gathering of the people of Israel, and they become concerned that this is an uprising against them. Therefore, the lords of the Philistines gather together an army and advance toward Mizpah.

1Samuel 7:7a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâma' (וּ שָׁמְעוּ) [pronounced shaw-MAHG]	to listen [intently], to hear, to listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and be cognizant of	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033

1Samuel 7:7a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
P ^h lish ^t tîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p ^e -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>when, that, for, because, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
qâbats (קָבַצְ) [pronounced kaw-BATS]	<i>to gather selves together, to be gathered together, to be collected</i>	3 rd person plural, Hithpael perfect	Strong's #6908 BDB #867
bên (בְּנֵי) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yis ^e râ ^h êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
Mits ^e pâh (מִצְפֵּה) [pronounced mitz ^e -PAW]	<i>outlook point, watchtower; transliterated Mizpah</i>	proper noun with the definite article and the locale hê	Strong's #4708 (& #4709) BDB #859

According to Owen, this is the locale hê, which does not appear to be any different to me than the directive hê.

Translation: [Then the Philistines heard that the sons of Israel had gathered \[themselves\] at Mizpah,...](#) As has been mentioned, there are a lot of things that we do not know, that we have had to reasonably determine using a little logic. Even though capturing the Ark caused the Philistines a great deal of trouble, they also seemed to maintain some kind of control over Israel. As I have suggested, Shiloh was probably burned to the ground immediately after the capture of the Ark (one detachment of soldiers took the Ark to Ashdod while the bulk of the Philistine army marched into Shiloh and burned it down). Even though, after the short 7 month period of time, the Philistine cities were infested with rats and disease, and they were forced to return the Ark to the Israelites, they still seem to have some sort of control over Israel at this time. Whether this control was never completely lost or whether it was reestablished is not made clear to us. However, this tells us that, no matter what happened during the 20 years mentioned in v. 2, at this point in time, there is Philistine control over Israel. To what extent is not revealed to us. That is, we don't know if the Israelites paid tribute (which they probably did). We don't know if the Philistines had established military bases throughout Israel (they probably had some smaller military installations which reported continually to their lords). No matter what the case, this great gathering of Israel to Mizpah is a cause for alarm in the Philistine community. Anytime large groups of Israelites gather, there is the possibility that Israel is going to revolt against Philistine control, and that becomes their concern.

1Samuel 7:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
âlâh (אָלַח) [pronounced gaw-LAWH]	<i>to go up, to ascend, to come up, to rise, to climb</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5927 BDB #748

1Samuel 7:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
צָרָנִים (צָרָנִים) [pronounced s ^e -RAW-neem]	<i>warlords, lords, princes, czars, generals, officers; officials, VIP's</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #5633 BDB #710
פְּלִשְׁתִּים (פְּלִשְׁתִּים) [pronounced p ^e -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
עַל (עַל) [pronounced e]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
יִשְׂרָאֵל (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

Translation: ...so the lords of the Philistines go up against Israel. During the past 20 years, Philistia has clearly ruled over Israel in some form. All of the details are not known to us, but Israel was under the domination of the Philistines. When the Philistines heard that Israel had gathered together, they assumed that it was to get their forces together in order to fight the Philistines, even though this was not what the Israelites had in mind. This simply means that, although the Philistines had spies who could report movement, or they simply had military installations of men who reported regularly back to Philistia.

What definitely appears to be the case is that the Philistines are holding a great deal of land which was Israel's not too far back. That will come out in the context of this chapter. There appears to be a lull in their relations and that an equilibrium had been reached. All of a sudden, the Philistines observe this great gathering of Israel. Their intelligence is not good enough to tell them the reason that Israel has gathered; only that Israel has an inordinate number of males all in one place. What is implied here is that Philistia gathers a strike force large enough to stand against the number of men gathered at Mizpah. However, this Philistine force does not simply stand at their borders waiting for Israel; they cross into Israel, and move swiftly toward Mizpah. I am assuming here, of course, that the bulk of the Philistine military is not stationed in Israel.

1Samuel 7:7c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
וּ (or וַ) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
שָׁמָעַ (שָׁמָעַ) [pronounced shaw-MAHG]	<i>to listen [intently], to hear, to listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
בָּנִים (בָּנִים) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

1Samuel 7:7c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Yis ^e rá`êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-row-ALE</i>]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

Translation: [When the sons of Israel heard,...](#) In other words, Israel has some limited covert intelligence. Israel realizes that the Philistine forces were now mobilized against them. Israel's response is somewhat different.

1Samuel 7:7d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yârê` (יָרַע) [pronounced <i>yaw-RAY</i>]	<i>to fear, to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3372 BDB #431
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
pânîym (פְּנֵים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, mipânîym mean <i>from before your face, out from before your face, from one's presence</i> . However, together, they can also be a reference to the cause, whether near or remote, and can therefore be rendered <i>because of, because that</i> .			
P ^e lish ^e tîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p^e-lish-TEE</i>]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

Translation: [...they feared because of the Philistines](#). Or, [...and so they were afraid because of the Philistines](#). If the Philistines were simply gathered at their borders in case of attack, there would be less reason for the Israelites to be afraid. However, this huge force has cross over into Israeli territory and the men of Israel have gathered at Mizpah for spiritual reasons. Very few of them brought with them weapons of war. Therefore, they have good reason to be afraid.

What we have are two simple reactions. The Philistines hear that Israel has gathered together a large number of males, and they respond by gathering their armies to fight against the Israelites. When the Israelites hear that Philistia has mobilized forces against them, they become fearful.

Edersheim writes: *As rebellion had caused their desertion, so would return bring them help from the Lord. As so generally in this history, all would happen naturally in the ordinary succession of cause and effect; and yet all would be really and directly of God in the ordering and arrangement of events. Israel must*

not go to war, nor must victory be due to their own prowess. It must be all of God, and the Philistines must rush on their own fate. Yet it was quite natural that when the Philistines heard of this grand national gathering at Mizpeh, after twenty years of unattempted resistance to their rule, they should wish to anticipate their movements; and that, whether they regarded the assembly as a revival of distinctively national religion or as preparatory for war. Similarly, it was natural that they would go on this expedition not without serious misgivings as to the power of the God of Israel which they had experienced during the stay of the ark in their land; and that in this state of mind they would be prepared to regard any terrible phenomenon in nature as His interposition, and be affected accordingly.¹⁸

And so say, sons of Israel, unto Samuel, “Do not be silent from us to cry unto Y^ehowah our God and He will deliver us from a hand of Philistines.”

1 Samuel
7:8

Then the sons of Israel said to Samuel, “[We ask] do not be silent on account of us to call out to Y^ehowah our God; then He will deliver us from the hand of the Philistines.”

Then the sons of Israel said to Samuel, “Please, do not cease to call out to Y^ehowah our God on our behalf, so that He will deliver us.”

First, what others have done:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text And so say, sons of Israel, unto Samuel, “Do not be silent from us to cry unto Y^ehowah our God and He will deliver us from a hand of Philistines.”

Septuagint And the children of Israel said to Samuel, “Cease not to cry to the Lord your God for us, and He will save us out of the hand of the Philistines.”

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

NLT “Plead with the LORD our God to save us from the Philistines!” they begged Samuel.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh) ...and they implored Samuel, “Do not neglect us and do not refrain from crying out to the LORD our God to save us from the hands of the Philistines.”

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB Then the sons of Israel said to Samuel, “Do not cease to cry to the LORD our God for us, that He may save us from the hand of the Philistines.”

Young's Updated LT And the sons of Israel say unto Samuel, ‘Keep not silent for us from crying unto Jehovah our God, and He does save us out of the hand of the Philistines.’

What is the gist of this verse? The sons of Israel ask Samuel to pray to God to deliver them out of the hand of the Philistine army.

¹⁸ Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 427.

1Samuel 7:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾāmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
bên (בְּנֵי) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yisʿrâʾêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced el]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Shʿmûwʾêl (שְׁמוֹנֵי אֵל) [pronounced shʿ-moo-ALE]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028

Translation: Then the sons of Israel said to Samuel,... The men of Israel are gathered at Mizpeh. They look to Samuel for guidance and direction.

1Samuel 7:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾal (אֵל) [pronounced al]	<i>not; nothing; none</i>	adverb of negation; conjunction of prohibiting, dehorting, deprecating, desire that something <i>not</i> be done	Strong's #408 BDB #39.
chârash (חָרַשׁ) [pronounced chaw-RASH]	<i>to be silent, to exhibit silence, to keep silent; to cause to be silent; to be deaf, to be dumb; to bear silently; to hold one's peace</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #2790 BDB #361
Perhaps the tie of this verb to Strong's #2790 BDB #360 is this means <i>to cut off speech [speaking or hearing]</i> .			
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation with the 1 st person plural suffix	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577

1 Samuel 7:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
zâ'âq (קָעַק) [pronounced zaw-GAHK]	<i>to cry out, to call, to cry</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #2199 BDB #277
ʿel (לְ) [pronounced e/]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʿĕlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced el-o-HEEM]	<i>gods or God; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 st person plural suffix	Strong's #430 BDB #43

Translation:...“[We ask] do not be silent on account of us to call out to Y^ehowah our God;... The idea is that they are going to gather together to go to war against the Philistines; they do not anticipate winning, but they ask Samuel to continue to pray on their behalf that God might deliver them. They request this of Samuel again in 1Sam. 12:19.

1 Samuel 7:8c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
yâsha' (עָשָׂה) [pronounced yaw-SHAHĠ]	<i>to deliver, to save; to set free, to preserve; to aid, to give relief</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect with the 1 st person plural suffix	Strong's #3467 BDB #446
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
P ^h lish ^{tîy} (פְּלִשְׁתִּים) [pronounced p ^e -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

Translation: ...then He will deliver us from the hand of the Philistines.” There is a clear element of hope and faith in their request to Samuel. They have gathered together as Samuel requested; they have put away the idols from their homes; and now, suddenly, they find themselves going into battle against their most fearsome enemy (to that time). Their request also recognizes Samuel's spiritual place as their intercessor.

At this point, the only thing which Israel lacked was a prepared military. They had gathered before God because of their crass idolatry. They had named their sins before God. They had changed their mind about their personal idols (that is true repentance). They recognized God's power, authority and ability to deliver. They recognized that Samuel was their intercessor, the one who stood between them and God. Finally, and possibly most importantly, they recognized the hopelessness of their situation. Every believer should find him or herself in a hopeless situation so that they can stand back and view the power and reality of God.

And so took Samuel a lamb of milk one and so he caused him to ascend a burnt offering whole to Y^ehowah and so cried out Samuel unto Y^ehowah for Israel and so answered him Y^ehowah.

I Samuel
7:9

So Samuel seized a particular lamb of milk and he caused it—a whole burnt offering—to ascend to Y^ehowah. Then Samuel cried out to Y^ehowah on behalf of Israel and Y^ehowah answered him.

So Samuel grabbed a lamb that was still nursing and sacrificed it to Jehovah. Then he cried out to Jehovah on behalf of Israel and Jehovah answered him.

First, what others have done:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text And so took Samuel a lamb of milk one and so he caused him to ascend a burnt offering whole to Y^ehowah and so cried out Samuel unto Y^ehowah for Israel and so answered him Y^ehowah.

Septuagint And Samuel took a sucking lamb and offered it up as a whole burnt-offering with all the people to the Lord; and Samuel cried to the Lord for Israel, and the lord heard him.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

The Message Samuel took a young lamb not yet weaned and offered it whole as a Whole-Burnt-Offering to GOD. He prayed fervently to GOD, interceding for Israel. And GOD answered.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ Then Samuel took a lamb, one still feeding on milk, and sacrificed it as a burnt offering to the LORD. Samuel cried to the LORD on behalf of Israel, and the LORD answered him.

JPS (Tanakh) Thereupon Samuel took a suckling lamb and sacrificed it as a whole burnt offering to the LORD; and Samuel cried out to the LORD in behalf of Israel, and the LORD responded to him.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB And Samuel took a suckling lamb and offered it for a whole burnt offering to the LORD; and Samuel cried to the LORD for Israel and the LORD answered him.

Young's Updated LT And Samuel takes a fat lamb, and causes it to go up—a burnt offering whole to Jehovah; and Samuel cries unto Jehovah for Israel, and Jehovah answers him;...

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel offers up a young lamb to God as a whole burn offering, and then calls out to God. God answers Samuel.

1Samuel 7:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i>]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
Sh ^e mûw ^{êl} (שִׁמְוֵאל) [pronounced <i>sh^e-moo-ALE</i>]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028
ṭâleh (טֶלֶה) [pronounced <i>ṬAW-leh</i>]	<i>lamb</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #2924 (#2922 for plural) BDB #378
This word is surprisingly found only twice in Scripture—1Sam. 7:9 and Isa. 65:25. Its plural is found once in Isa. 40:11 (Strong gives the plural a separate number).			
châlâb (חֶלֶב) [pronounced <i>khaw-LAW^{BV}</i>]	<i>milk; cheese</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2461 BDB #316
ʿechâd (אֶחָד) [pronounced <i>eh-KHAWD</i>]	<i>one, first, certain, only</i> ; but it can also mean a <i>composite unity</i> ; possibly <i>particular</i>	numeral adjective	Strong's #259 BDB #25

Translation: [So Samuel seized a particular lamb of milk...](#) Or, [And Samuel took a particular lamb of milk...](#) This, of course, refers to a lamb that is very young and still nursing and one which has no defects. This is in accordance with Lev. 22:27, which reads: [When an ox or a sheep or a goat is born, it will remain seven days with its mother, and from the eighth day on it will be accepted as a sacrifice of an offering by fire to Y^howah.](#) Now, why was a very young lamb selected as opposed to, say, a bull or an ox of 2 years? The young lamb indicates a new Israel, an Israel whose relationship is beginning afresh with God. The sacrifice of the suckling lamb represents that *the nation had wakened up to new life through its conversion to the Lord, and was, as it were, new-born.*¹⁹ Now, the sacrifice in general refers to Jesus Christ, and it is upon His sacrifice and His resurrection that all is built. Israel is nothing apart from this.

1Samuel 7:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿâlâh (אָלַח) [pronounced <i>ḡaw-LAWH</i>]	<i>to cause to go up, to lead up, to take up, to bring up</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
ʿôlâh (אֹלֹת) [pronounced <i>ḡo-LAW</i>]	<i>burnt offering, ascending offering</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong #5930 BDB #750

¹⁹ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 412.

1Samuel 7:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kâlîyl (כָּלִיִּל) [pronounced kaw-LEEL]	<i>the whole, the entirety; altogether</i> [as an adverb]	Adjective/substantive; also used as an adverb	Strong's #3632 BDB #483
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^o]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: ...and he caused it—a whole burnt offering—to ascend to Y^ehowah. Or, ...and he caused it to ascend—the whole burnt offering—to God... Keil supposes that this *whole burnt offering* meant that the animal was offered on the altar in one piece—it was not cut up. Edersheim believes this means that the lamb is offered in its entirety to God.²⁰ This latter view makes sense, as we do not have people gathered here to take part in the consumption of this lamb—since much of Israel is herein assembled, and we are speaking of one baby lamb which is being offered.

Recall that we do not know exactly where the Tent of God is at this time. The Ark is in Kiriath-jearim, Shiloh is probably destroyed and the location of the Tent of God is not given to us in Scripture—in fact, its move from Shiloh to wherever is not mentioned in Scripture, although that appears to be the case. Now, here is what is particularly odd: eventually, the original Tent of God will be located in Gibeon (2Chron. 1:3–4); the Ark is now in Kiriath-jearim, where it will remain until the time of David (1Sam. 7:1–2 2Sam. 6:1–4); and Israel is, at this time, meeting in Mizpah. Now, I realize that for most of you, these are just proper names which mean very little to you. These three cities are very close to one another on a northeast line, with Mizpah furthest into Israel and Kiriath-jearim on the other end of the line, with Gibeon almost in the middle. This northeast line is just slightly over 10 miles long. In other words, it is a relatively short walk from one of these cities to another. Now, much further into Israel is Shiloh. What the Philistines have done is cut a path between northern and southern Israel. Their forces separate these two parts of Israel. It is unlikely that Philistine forces are stationed along a east-west line, but they at least traveled that way to take out Shiloh (again, this is inferred by Scripture—the time, date and actual sequence of events are never told to us). And although we know the Ark is in Kiriath-jearim, it is highly unlikely that the Tent of God is in Gibeon yet. These cities are far too close for the Ark and the Tent to remain separated. It would not make sense. In other words, we do not know where the Tent of God is, although it had to have been moved from Shiloh, which, again, appears to be destroyed at this time. It might be up in Shechem (which is a bit further north) and it may be in some newly established city where a handful of priests (and/or Levites) are hiding (like Nob). It is possible that the Tabernacle of God is in storage, much like the Ark is. My guess is that, when Shiloh was marched upon by the Philistines, that the Tent was quickly disassembled and carried off into to the north somewhere. It possibly was not reassembled because the priestly authority was unclear (Samuel, who was not a Levite, was in charge of spiritual functions). The line of Eli had almost been wiped out (there is one baby, his grandson, who is now a young man, but not quite old enough to act as a priest). So we have a bunch of Levites (who are *not* priests to God) who have taken it upon themselves to move the Tent of God, in the face of a Philistine assault, to the north. However, since there is no High Priest, per se, there is really no one to function in the Tent of God. If the Levites set up the Tent of God, there is the chance that the Philistines will come and attack that city. Finally, given the power of the Philistines, and given that the Tent of God is probably in the north and the Ark is in central Israel, they are not brought together.

²⁰ Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 427. Edersheim calls Keil's view untenable, citing Lev. 6:22 Deut. 33:10 Psalm 51:19. Although these passages are by no means decisive, I do not recall any instances of an animal being specifically offered and not cut up. However, there are several instances in Scripture of an animal being offered to God and not eaten.

1Samuel 7:9c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
zâ'âq (קָעַץ) [pronounced zaw-GAHK]	<i>to cry out, to call, to cry</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2199 BDB #277
Sh ^e mûw`êl (שִׁמְוֵאל) [pronounced sh ^e -moo-ALE]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028
`el (אל) [pronounced e]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ba'ad (בְּאַד) [pronounced BAH-gad]	<i>by, near; because of; behind, after; about, round about; between [two things], through; into, among; pro, for; away from, behind; on behalf of</i>	generally a preposition of separation or nearness	Strong's #1157 BDB #126
Yis ^e râ`êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

Translation: [Then Samuel cried out to Y^ehowah on behalf of Israel...](#) Until the New Testament, there is always an intermediary between God and man—in the New Testament, there is an intermediary between God and man as well—the man Christ Jesus. In fact, He is the only intermediary between God and man. Samuel represents Christ in this way—as one who mediates between man and God.

1Samuel 7:9d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
`ânâh (עָנָה) [pronounced gaw-NAWH]	<i>to answer, to respond; to speak loudly, to speak up [in a public forum]; to testify; to sing, to chant, to sing responsively</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6030 BDB #772
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: ...and Y^ehowah answered him. I am assuming that we have had 20 years of silence from God, and now we will have a response from God, although it won't be an audible response in words. We have a parallel situation in 1Sam. 12:16–20—again the people of Israel have done wrong and they go to Samuel. Samuel will pray to God and God will answer him. In that case, it will be with thunder and a great storm. And again from Psalm 99:6: Moses and Aaron were among His priests, and Samuel was among those who called on His name. They called up Y^ehowah and He answered them. Can you imagine calling out to God in front of an assembly of believers, and for God to answer with thunder, lightning and a great storm? Samuel had this happen on at least two occasions (here and 1Sam. 12).

And so is Samuel causing ascension [of] the burnt offering and Philistines have drawn near for the battle in Israel—and so causes to thunder Y^ehowah in a voice mighty in the day the that against Philistines and so he confuses them and so they were struck down to faces of Israel.

1 Samuel
7:10

So, [while] Samuel is causing to ascend the burnt offering, the Philistines draw near for the battle with Israel; and Y^ehowah causes a thunder with a mammoth volume in that day against the Philistines; so He confuses them and they were struck down before Israel.

While Samuel was offering up a burnt offering, the Philistines moved closer and closer for battle—then, suddenly, Y^ehowah thundered this incredible thunder that day, completely confounding the Philistines, and they were struck down in front of Israel.

Let's see what others have done with this verse first:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so is Samuel causing ascension [of] the burnt offering and Philistines have drawn near for the battle in Israel—and so causes to thunder Y^ehowah in a voice mighty in the day the that against Philistines and so he confuses them and so they were struck down to faces of Israel.

Septuagint

And Samuel was offering the whole-burnt-offering; and the Philistines drew near to war against Israel; and the Lord thundered with a mighty sound in that day upon the Philistines, and they were confounded and overthrown before Israel.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

NLT

Just as Samuel was sacrificing the burnt offering, the Philistines arrived for battle. But the LORD spoke with a mighty voice of thunder from heaven, and the Philistines were thrown into such confusion that the Israelites defeated them.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™

While Samuel was sacrificing the burnt offering, the Philistines came to fight against Israel. On that day the LORD thundered loudly at the Philistines and threw them into such confusion that they were defeated by Israel.

JPS (Tanakh)

For as Samuel was presenting the burnt offering and the Philistines advance to attack Israel, the LORD thundered mightily against the Philistines that day. He threw them into confusion, and they were routed by Israel.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB

Now Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, and the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel. But the LORD thundered with a great thunder [lit., *voice*] on that day against the Philistines and confused them, so that they were routed [lit., *smitten*] before Israel.

Young's Updated LT

...and Samuel is causing the burnt-offering to go up—and the Philistines have drawn nigh to battle against Israel—and Jehovah thunders with a great noise, on that day, upon the Philistines, and troubles them, and they are smitten before Israel.

What is the gist of this verse? While Samuel offers up the burnt offering, and as the Philistines move closer to do battle with Israel, God strikes down the Philistines with thunder (and, presumably, a storm?).

1Samuel 7:10a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הַיָּה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
Sh ^o mûw`êl (שִׁמְוֵאל) [pronounced <i>sh^o-moo-ALE</i>]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028
‘âlâh (הָלָא) [pronounced <i>gaw-LAWH</i>]	<i>to cause to go up, to lead up, to take up, to bring up</i>	Hiphil participle	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
‘ôlâh (הָעֹלָה) [pronounced <i>go-LAW</i>]	<i>burnt offering, ascending offering</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong #5930 BDB #750

Translation: So, [while] Samuel is causing to ascend the burnt offering,... Samuel offers up the burn sacrifice, which represents Jesus Christ. This is the foundation upon which Israel is built.

1Samuel 7:10b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
P ^o lish ^{tiy} (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p^o-lish-TEE</i>]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
nâgash (נִגַּשׁ) [pronounced <i>naw-GASH</i>]	<i>to bring near, to bring here; to approach</i> [all with intensity of emotions of intention]	3 rd person plural, Piel perfect	Strong's #5066 BDB #620
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^o</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

1Samuel 7:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mil ^e châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced <i>mil-khaw-MAW</i>]	<i>battle, war</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4421 BDB #536
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #88
Yis ^e râ`êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis'-raw-ALE</i>]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

Translation: ...the Philistines draw near for the battle with Israel;... A confrontation had not yet broken out. Samuel is at the altar offering up sacrifices on behalf of Israel and the Philistines are moving closer and closer to Israel in order to attack. In a movie, we would be cutting back and forth between the two scenes: from Samuel's selection of the sacrifice, to the calling to attention the Philistine troops; back to the cutting of the neck of the sacrifice, then to the bearing of arms of the Philistine troops; back to the preparation of the fire, then to the final orders to the Philistine soldiers to move out; and Samuel speaks to God and the Philistine soldiers move closer and closer to Israel. Not unlike the ending to *The Godfather*. Except that there would be true spiritual meaning in what Samuel did.

1Samuel 7:10c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râgam (רָגַם) [pronounced <i>raw-GAHM</i>]	<i>to thunder, to roar from heaven; to provoke to anger, to cause to be angered</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #7481 BDB #947
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
qôwl (קוֹל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6963 BDB #876
gâdôwl (גָּדוֹל) [pronounced <i>gaw-DOHL</i>]	<i>large, great or mighty [in power, nobility, wealth; in number, or magnitude and extent], loud, older, important, distinguished; vast, unyielding, immutable, significant, astonishing</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #1419 BDB #152

1Samuel 7:10c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yōwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	<i>day; time; today (with a definite article)</i>	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
hūw' (הוּא) [pronounced hoo]	<i>that</i>	masculine singular, demonstrative pronoun (with a definite article)	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced gahl]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 1 st person plural suffix	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752
P ^h ilish ^t iy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p ^e -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

Translation: ...and Y^howah causes a thunder with a mammoth volume in that day against the Philistines;... The Jehovah, the God of Israel, enters into history. Here's is how you should understand this: the people of Israel have put away their idols after 20 years of suffering, probably under Philistine terrorism. Samuel assembles the people and speaks to them; simultaneously, the Philistines mobilize their troops to move out against Israel, sensing that their assembly is not peaceful. Samuel offers up the sacrifices and the Philistine army moves closer and closer. Then God causes this great peal of thunder from heaven. Here is what I think is cool: God caused this thunder back in eternity past. He set the winds and temperatures in motion millions of years ago to thunder this incredible thunder just at this time exactly. Now, I lived in California for 25 years and heard it thunder many times and it was no big deal. When I moved out to Texas, I heard some real thunder—thunder so loud and jarring that I can even recall specific instances of thunder which shook me up, even caused me to jump; thunder that made me exclaim, *what the hell was that?* My point is that God caused some incredible thunder here, beyond a volume intensity that we have ever heard.

God can choose for storms to be very particular. In California, I recall that if was raining in Sacramento, that it was likely raining throughout the entire central valley. You could drive for 4 hours down highway 5, and the rain would continue at the same intensity for the entire drive. However, I have noticed storms of a more particular nature in Texas. I have driven down the freeway and seen it rain literally on one side of the freeway, while the other was dry, for over a half mile of freeway. I've known of parts of Houston to receive 35 inches of rain in a day, while other parts may have seen 5–10 inches. Here we have the Israelites gathered, the Philistines gathered as well and advancing toward the Israelites; and God brings a storm specifically upon the Philistines. It is a storm of magnificent proportions, with tremendous displays of lightning and soul-jarring thunder.

There is a reason that God chose a storm and great thunder to derail the Philistines. The gods of the ancient world were primarily gods of agriculture, which included the weather, as agriculture was dependent upon the weather. Therefore, when the God of Israel strikes the Philistines with the weather, this throws them into a great panic, as their gods—Baal in particular, the god of thunderstorms—are powerless by comparison.

Now realize where the Philistines are coming from. They had the Ark in their territory for 7 months and this completely devastated them. Sometime during the past 20 years, they burned down Shiloh, although the Tent of Meeting apparently escaped destruction. Furthermore, over the past 20 years, they had enjoyed great power over Israel; however, in the back of their minds, they knew of God's involvement with Israel and what God would do on

behalf of Israel. So, their troops move forward in solemn resolute to put down a possible insurrection, and suddenly—mindful of Israel's relation to their God, and mindful of Jehovah God's great power—there is this tremendous thunder from heaven and it shakes them up. And the imperfect voice indicates that it did not simply thunder once. It was this ongoing thing with thunder so loud that it shook the Philistine troops up as they marched. Although the Philistines tended to think that the God of Israel was inconsistent in His protection of Israel, they were also fully cognizant that, when Jehovah God chose to step in, it was deadly serious.

Now, I should point out that, this may have only been thunder. There may not have been a storm associated with it. For some of you, you may think, "How can they be scared by a little thunder." Such a statement simply means that you have never heard much by way of thunder. You need to hear thunder which shakes your house and makes you jump, and then you might have some kind of notion as to what the Philistine soldiers heard.

1Samuel 7:10d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châmam (חָמַם) [pronounced <i>chaw-MAHM</i>]	<i>to put to flight, to route; to put into a commotion; to make a noise, to move noisily, to confuse, to discomfit, to destroy utterly, to make extinct (taking all of the meanings given by BDB and Gesenius)</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #2000 BDB #243

Translation: *...so He confuses them...* This does not have to be supernatural, although it could be. The Philistines are no doubt a well-oiled fighting machine, with great discipline and authority orientation. However, as they begin to advance toward Israel, the incredible thunder, unlike anything they had ever heard, came down right upon them, and confused them. They could not hear their orders; they could not maintain their military discipline. All of the soldiers knew about the God of Israel Who would step into history and overpower all the other gods of the universe. Now there are perhaps a few soldiers who want to move forward and a large number who would like to retreat.

1Samuel 7:10e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâgaph (נָגַף) [pronounced <i>naw-GAHF</i>]	<i>to be struck down, to be smitten, to be hit</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #5062 BDB #619
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced <i>l</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

Together, they mean *upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of*. When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning *in the judgment of*.

1Samuel 7:10e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Yis ^e ra ^l `el (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-row-ALE</i>]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

Translation: ...and they were struck down before Israel. With the previous phrase, we have: [Then He confused them and they were struck down before Israel](#). Israel was not prepared for battle. They knew the Philistines were advancing toward them and they put together a quick response force using whatever weapons could be procured at the last moment.

Please appreciate this: Israel has not even drawn a sword. The Philistines approach Israel, and Israel can see them coming; and Samuel is offering up a burnt sacrifice to God; and suddenly, there is this incredible burst of thunder which shakes the souls of the aggressive Philistines. Some of them drop dead right in front of Israel, which further shakes up the remaining troops. It is like they suddenly, without invite, stepped onto hallowed ground, and God is letting them know in no uncertain terms that they cannot do that. Israel has not even drawn a sword, and their enemies are falling down before them.

It is clear in Scripture that Israel is God's chosen nation and that He will defend them.

God's Protection of Israel

- God has clearly allied Himself with Israel. ["But if you will truly obey his \[Moses'\] voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries."](#) (Ex. 23:22). Moses also told the people: ["When you go out to battle against your enemies and see horses and chariots and people more numerous than you, do not be afraid of them, for Jehovah your God, Who brought you up from the land of Egypt, is with you. Now it will be that when you are approaching the battle, the priest will come near and speak to the people. And he will say to them, 'Hear, O Israel, you are approaching the battle against your enemies today. Do not be fainthearted. Do not be afraid or panic or tremble before them.'](#)" (Deut. 20:1-4).
- God clearly helped Joshua against the five king coalition. Joshua 10:1-14
- When Deborah and Barak fought against Jabin and Sisera, God was clearly with them. [The stars fought from heaven from their courses they fought against Sisera. The torrent of Kishon swept them away, the ancient torrent, the torrent Kishon. O my soul, march on with strength](#) (Judges 5:20-21; see Judges 4-5).
- When David was made king over all Israel, the Philistines lodged a complaint, so to speak. They gathered themselves together to fight against David and God gave David the proper battle strategy to defeat them. 2Sam. 5:4, 17-25
- We even have the case of the four Israeli lepers who put to flight an entire camp of Syrians, because God went before them. 2Kings 7:3-7
- Another of the man examples is the Moabite-Ammonite coalition against Israel during the time of King Jehoshaphat. 2Chron. 20:1-18
- Probably the most incredible demonstration of God's alliance with Israel is the morning that He struck dead 186,000 Assyrians. ["For I will defend this city to save it for My own sake and for My servant David's sake."](#) (2Kings 19:34; see 2Kings 19:32-36).

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to the Chart and Map Index](#)

And so went out men of Israel from the Mizpah and so they pursue Philistines and so they strike them as far as below Beth-car.

1 Samuel
7:11

Then the men of Israel went out from Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, striking them as far as below Beth-car.

Then the Philistines advanced from Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, chasing them down and striking them as far as below Beth-car.

Let's look at what others did first:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so went out men of Israel from the Mizpah and so they pursue Philistines and so they strike them as far as below Beth-car.
Septuagint	And the men of Israel went forth out of Massephath, an pursued the Philistines, and struck them to the parts under Bæth-chor.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

The Message Israel poured out of Mizpah and gave chase, killing Philistines right and left, to a point just beyond Beth Car.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word</i> TM	Israel's soldiers left Mizpah, pursued the Philistines, and killed them as far as Beth Car.
JPS (Tanakh)	The men of Israel sallied out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, striking them down to a point below Beth-car.
NIV	The men of Israel rushed out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, slaughtering them along the way to a point below Beth Car.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	And the men of Israel went out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, an struck them down as far as below Bethcar.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	And the men of Israel go out from Mizpah, and pursue the Philistines, and smite them unto the place of Beth-Car.

What is the gist of this verse? Israel's citizen army then attacked the Philistines and pursued them to south of Beth-car.

1Samuel 7:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâtsâ' (אָצַא) [pronounced yaw-TZAWH]	to go out, to come out, to come forth; to rise; to flow, to gush up [out]	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422

1 Samuel 7:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾānâsîym (אֲנָשִׁים) [pronounced uh-NAW-seem]; also spelled ʾîyshîym (אִישִׁים) [pronounced ee-SHEEM]	<i>men; inhabitants, citizens; companions; soldiers, followers</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #376 BDB #35
Yisʿrâʾêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
Mitsʿpâh (מִצְפֵּה) pronounced mitzʿ-PAW]	<i>outlook point, watchtower; transliterated Mizpah</i>	proper noun with the definite article	Strong's #4708 (& #4709) BDB #859

Translation: [Then the men of Israel went out from Mizpah...](#) The Philistines advanced first on Israel, but when the thunder sounded, they scattered, and Israel was right behind them. The Israelites were not there prepared with weapons of war—they had gone to worship God and to ask forgiveness for what they had done. They apparently had enough by way of weaponry to pursue the Philistines (perhaps they even picked up some weapons dropped by the Philistines). Perhaps, they picked up rocks and whatever could be used as a weapon. Whatever they had, God was with them. The Philistines were in retreat the Israel pursued them.

1 Samuel 7:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced naw-KAWH]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Hiphil perfect; with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong #5221 BDB #645
ʿad (אֲדָ) [pronounced ʿahd]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577

1Samuel 7:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
tachath (תַּחַת) [pronounced TAH-khahth]	<i>underneath, below, under, beneath, in the place [in which one stands]</i> [when found in accusative position]	preposition	Strong's #8478 BDB #1065
lâmed (ל) (pronounced ʿ) ʿ)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Min + tachath + the lâmed preposition together all mean <i>below, beneath or under</i> [anything].			
Bêyth-kâr (בֵּית כָּר) [pronounced bayth-KAWR]	<i>house of pasture</i> and is transliterated <i>Beth-car</i>	proper noun locality	Strong's #1033 BDB #111

Even though this does read *Beth-horon* in the Greek, a city situated correctly for this scenario, the Hebrew would have had to have been changed greatly to go from *Beth-car* to *Beth-horon*. Also, the Latin and Syriac are in agreement with the Hebrew (however, they do all come from the same family of manuscripts).

Translation: ...and pursued the Philistines, striking them as far as below Beth-car. *Beth-car* is only mentioned here and nowhere else in Scripture. We would assume that this would be a Philistine city which stood between Mizpeh and the Mediterranean Sea. In the Septuagint, we have *Beth-chor*, which is equivalent to *Beth-horon*, which is the next major city west of Mizpeh. However, in the Hebrew, there would have been several changes in order for this to read *Beth-horon*; furthermore, the Syriac and other Semitic manuscripts agree with the Hebrew.²¹ Chasing the Philistines until they are south of Beth-horon would not have been that impressive of a feat, all circumstances considered. This would have placed them back barely into their territory and this incident would have given them serious pause before they attempted to do it again. Barnes suggests that *Beth-car* is correct (we have no reason other than its lone appearance here to assume otherwise). He suggests that Beth-car is on a hill overlooking the road from Mizpah to Philistines territory, and relatively close of the Ebenezer of 1Sam. 4:1.²² In any case, despite the uncertainty of the city, the idea is the same.

McGee: *God gave Israel a great victory, and it is the first one they have had for a long time. These people had lapsed into idolatry; they had been in sullen rebellion. When they began to turn to God, Samuel exacted a confession of sin and a promise to return to God. As a result, God gave them a signal victory over the Philistines.*²³

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to the Chart and Map Index](#)

Israel's Victory Is Long-term

²¹ *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill Tenney, ed., Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976; Vol. 1, p. 530.

²² *Barnes' Notes; 1 Samuel to Esther*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 20. Obviously, Barnes takes the Ebenezer of 1Sam. 4:1 and of the next vers to be identical.

²³ J. Vernon McGee; *1 & 11 Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 43.

And so takes Samuel a stone one and so he places [it] between the Mizpah and between the Shen and so he calls her name a stone of help [or, *Ebenezer*], and so he says, “As far as this time, has helped us Y^ehowah.”

1 Samuel
7:12

Then Samuel took a certain stone and placed [it] between Mizpah and Shen and he called its name *the stone of help* [or, *Ebenezer*], and he explained, “Thus far, Y^ehowah has helped us.”

Then Samuel took a particular stone and set it upright between Mizpah and Shen and he called the stone *Ebenezer*, which means *the stone of help*, explaining, “At this time, Jehovah has helped us.”

What others have done:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text And so takes Samuel a stone one and so he places [it] between the Mizpah and between the Shen and so he calls her name a stone of help [or, *Ebenezer*], and so he says, “As far as this time, has helped us Y^ehowah.”

Septuagint And Samuel took a stone, and set it up between Massephath and the old *city* [or, *Anameshon*] and he called the name of it Ebenezer, stone of the helper; and he said, “So far has the Lord helped us.”

Significant differences: The differences are minor. The Greek gives both the transliteration and the meaning of the name given to the stone. Also, the second city mentioned may not match up.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

NLT Samuel then took a large stone and placed it between the towns of Mizpah and Jeshanah [As in the Greek version; Hebrew reads *Shen*]. He named it Ebenezer—“the stone of help”—for he said, “Up to this point the LORD has helped us!”

REB There Samuel took a stone and set it up as a monument between Mizpah and Jeshanah, naming it Eben-ezer. ‘This is a witness’, he said, ‘that the LORD has helped us.’

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh) Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen, and named it Eben-ezer: “For up to now,” he said, “the has helped us.”

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Emphasized Bible And Samuel took a certain stone and set it between Mizpah and Yeshanah, and called the name of [it] Eben-ezer, and said, ||Hitherto|| has Y^ehowah helped us.

NASB Then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpah and Shen, and named it Ebenezer [i.e., *The stone of help*], saying, “Thus far the has helped us.”

Young's Updated LT And Samuel takes a stone, and he sets *it* between Mizpah and Shen, and calls the its name Eben-Ezer, saying, ‘Thus far, Jehovah has helped us.’

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel sets up a stone between Mizpah and Shen, and calls it *the stone of help*, indicating that Jehovah helped them up to that point.

1Samuel 7:12a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i>]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
Sh ^e mûw ^{êl} (שִׁמְוֵאל) [pronounced <i>sh^e-moo-ALE</i>]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028
ʿeben (אֶבֶן) [pronounced <i>EH^b-ven</i>]	<i>stone</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #68 BDB #6
ʿechâd (אֶחָד) [pronounced <i>eh-KHAWD</i>]	<i>one, first, certain, only</i> ; but it can also mean a <i>composite unity</i>	numeral adjective	Strong's #259 BDB #25

Translation: [Then Samuel took a certain stone...](#) When a significant event takes place, a man of authority would often designate that a stone be set up to note that event. Since the stone is being *seized*, we may assume that a stone may have been turned over or half buried, and Samuel orders men to unearth the stone and to possibly even set it upright.

1Samuel 7:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
sîym (שָׂם) [pronounced <i>seem</i>]; also spelled sûwm (שָׂמוּ) [pronounced <i>soom</i>]	<i>to put, to place, to set, to make</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7760 BDB #962
bêyn (בֵּין) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>in the midst of, between, among</i> ; when found twice, it means <i>between</i>	preposition	Strong's #996 BDB #107
Mits ^e pâh (מִצְפֵּה) [pronounced <i>mitz^e-PAW</i>]	<i>outlook point, watchtower</i> ; transliterated <i>Mizpah</i>	proper noun with the definite article	Strong's #4708 (& #4709) BDB #859
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bêyn (בֵּין) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>in the midst of, between, among</i> ; when found twice, it means <i>between</i>	preposition	Strong's #996 BDB #107

1Samuel 7:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Bêyth-kâr (בֵּית כָּר) [pronounced bayth-KAWR]	house of pasture and is transliterated <i>Beth-car</i>	proper noun locality	Strong's #1033 BDB #111
Shên (שֵׁן) [pronounced shayn]	tooth, sharp rock; and is transliterated <i>Shen</i>	feminine proper noun	Strong's #8129 BDB #1042

Translation: ...and placed [it] between Mizpah and Shen... The verb is in the Qal; however, I would have expected for this to have been in the Hiphil, meaning that Samuel did not do it himself, but had someone else do it. However, given the circumstances, it is reasonable to assume that Samuel did this. As we have seen in Scriptrue, it is very common for ancient man to take a stone to mark a particular event or agreement (Gen. 28:18 35:14 Joshua 4:9 24:26).

Now we have a problem with the proper noun Shên (שֵׁן) [pronounced *shayn*], which is transliterated *Shen* and is found only in 1Sam. 7:12. This is generally considered to be identical with Jeshanah (note the NLT, the REB and Rotherham's translation), even though the latter city is found only in 2Chron. 13:19 and has two additional letters (plus additional vowel points). I do not see any reason that the two cities must be taken as identical and the Greek in both passages is not identical either (or even close). The word means *tooth*, which is not much help. What occurred to me was perhaps this was *Beth-shan*, but that is too far north, in northern Ephraim. Shen would reasonably be a relatively new settlement, probably west or southwest of Mizpah, as that would have been the direction of the pursuit. Obviously, its location was known to the writer but lost to us today.

1Samuel 7:12c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, then	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lâmed]	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	name, reputation, character	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
'Eben (אֶבֶן) [pronounced EH ^B -ven]	stone and is transliterated <i>Eben</i>	proper masculine noun with the definite article (meaning that it is not a construct here)	Strong's #68 BDB #6

1Samuel 7:12c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿêzer (עֵזֶר) [pronounced GAY-zer]	<i>help</i> and is transliterated <i>Ezer</i>	proper masculine noun with the definite article	Strong's #72 BDB #7
Together, these are transliterated either <i>Ebenezer</i> or <i>Eben-ezer</i> . The definite articles are ignored in the transliteration.			
We find this same designation in 1Sam. 4:1 5:1.			

Translation: ...and he called its name *the stone of help* [or, *Ebenezer*],... The name simply indicates that God had helped them there. Although it is not stated here, it would be reasonable for the name to be engraved into the stone at this time.

Let's first clear up that this is not necessarily the same as the Eben-ezer found back in 1Sam. 4:1, when Israel fought against the Philistines. Even though there are several cities named Aphek (which is close to Ebenezer in 1Sam. 4:1) and there are several Mizpah's in Scripture (all of which we have covered), most maps show these two cities to be about 25 miles apart, which is a huge distance in the ancient world. Secondly, we have another reason to differentiate these two *Ebenezer*'s, which is found in what Samuel next says.

1Samuel 7:12d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʿad (עַד) [pronounced gahd]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
hênnâh (הֵנְנָה) [pronounced HAYN-naw]	<i>hither, here</i>	adverb	Strong's #2008 BDB #244
Together, ʿad hênnâh mean <i>thus far, so far, hitherto, up until this time</i> . This prepositional phrase does not extend backward into time indefinitely, but sets up some relatively close parameters.			
ʿâzar (עִזַּר) [pronounced gaw-ZAHR]	<i>to help, to aid</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect; with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #5826 BDB #740
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: ...and he explained, "*Thus far, Y^ehowah has helped us.*" The preposition and adverb found here together mean *thus far, hitherto, up until this time*. My thinking is that the prepositional phrase does not extend backward into time indefinitely, but actually sets up some close parameters. *Jehovah has helped us*, extends back

to this particular battle with the Philistines, and not further back. It is a result of Israel's change of heart and of Samuel's calling out to God.

This would not have been the proper response back at the other *Ebenezer*, where Israel's troops were beaten twice, and the Ark was taken from them. Samuel was not at that battle; he was not consulted for that battle. It is even possible that one of the men in that previous battle set up a stone himself, when the Ark was brought into the camp, and called the camp *Ebenezer*. However, the prepositional compound which we find here sets this up as a point in time.

As mentioned, there is also an Ebenezer in 1Sam. 4:1. Let's simply sum up the reasons for and against these being the same location:

Ebenezer vs. Ebenezer

Reasons why these refer to the same area:

1. The chief reason for these two references as being the same is that they have the same name and they are found in the same book not too far apart and probably written by the same person.
2. The previous mention of *Ebenezer* does not even have to be a gloss. Since we are probably dealing with the same author, they author recognized that the place where the Philistines gathered before was the same location as here, and, that being the accepted name when he wrote, applied it prior to it actually being named. Since this does occur throughout Scripture, particularly in the Old Testament, we call it an *anachronism*.



This was scanned from the NASB.

Reasons why these are different locations:

1. *Ebenezer* in 1Sam. 7:11 received its name right here. The other city had a name given back in 1Sam. 4:1.
2. The *Ebenezer* found here is between Mizpah and Shen; the *Ebenezer* found in 1Sam. 4:1 is probably east of Aphek. I realize that these are simply names of cities to most readers and that, once one hears that they are both in Ephraim, would conclude that the *Ebenezer's* are identical. However, my maps place Aphek in the northwest corner of Ephraim, near the intersection of Ephraim, Manasseh and Dan. Mizpah is in south central Ephraim, right on the border of Ephraim and Benjamin. Now, you might offer that Israel pursued the Philistines; sure, they did, and we would expect that to be toward the southwest, as that is the direction of the Philistine settlements. In other words, the pursuit would likely not be toward Aphek, which would be northwest from Mizpah. As you can see from the map, these cities are just too far apart to make these *Ebenezer's* the same.
3. There is nothing wrong with there being two *Ebenezer's*. For Samuel to call this area *Ebenezer* might even be somewhat ironic. The Philistines encamped in a place called *Ebenezer* and Israel was involved in a mission totally apart from true spiritual concerns. Here, God has helped Israel, as Israel has turned to Him; therefore, the name *Ebenezer* is appropriate here.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to the Chart and Map Index](#)

Now, to explain the name *a stone of help*, even though it seems obvious to you. This name looks backward to Israel's defeat by the Philistines, when the Ark was soon after taken from them. Israel was camped at the other Ebenezer; but there was no Rock of Help for them there. The Philistines defeated them and, when they went back

to get the Ark of God, the Philistines defeated them again and took the Ark. This is because Israel was in a pathetically sad spiritual state. This name recognizes Israel's spiritual state and that they remained in this state for over 20 more years. This name looked back and recognized that Israel could not call upon Jehovah God if they worshipped other gods. The name *Ebenezer* also was a recognition of what God had done for them there. God was their *Stone of Help*, their *Rock of Deliverance*. Israel clearly did not cause the defeat of Philistia. God struck them down and Israel picked up the pieces. Finally, this name, *Rock of Deliverance*, looked forward to the coming of Christ. **I can do all things through Him Who strengthens me** (Philip. 4:13). Jesus told His disciples: **"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in Him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me, you can do nothing."** (John 15:5).²⁴ Throughout Scripture, from early on, **Jesus Christ is the Rock of Israel: And all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ** (I Cor. 10:4; referencing the events of Ex. 17:1–7).

And so are subdued [or, receiving subjugation] the Philistines and did not add as far as to enter in a territory of Israel; and so is a hand of Y^ehowah in the Philistines all days of Samuel.

1Samuel
7:13

So the Philistines are subdued and they did not continue any more to enter into the territory of Israel; furthermore, the hand of Y^ehowah was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.

So the Philistines were subdued at this time and they no longer entered into the territory of Israel for the hand of Jehovah was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel's political leadership.

Thus far, we have had it pretty easy in the translation department. We have had a series of imperfect verbs tied together with wâw consecutive's in a relatively simple sentence structure. In this verse, we have some difficulties—nothing which suggests a problem with the Hebrew, but a more complex arrangement of words than found previously. First, let's see how others have rendered this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text **And so are subdued [or, receiving subjugation] the Philistines and did not add as far as to enter in a territory of Israel; and so is a hand of Y^ehowah in the Philistines all days of Samuel.**

Septuagint **So the Lord humbled the Philistines, and they did not any more come into the border of Israel; and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.**

Significant differences: **Even though the context makes it clear that God subdued the Philistines, the Greek specifically states that in this verse. Apart from that, there are no significant differences.**

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV (vv. 12–13) **The Philistines were so badly beaten that it was quite a while before they attacked Israel again. After the battle, Samuel set up a monument between Mizpah and the rocky cliffs. He named it "Help Monument" to remind Israel how much the LORD had helped them.**

NLT **So the Philistines were subdued and didn't invade Israel again for a long time. And throughout Samuel's lifetime, the LORD's powerful hand was raised against the Philistines.**

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ **The power of the Philistines was crushed, so they didn't come into Israel's territory again. The LORD restrained the Philistines as long as Samuel lived.**

²⁴ I took this outline from McGee, who, in his book, did not really expand on it. J. Vernon McGee; *I & II Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 43.

JPS (Tanakh) The Philistines were humbled and did not invade the territory of Israel again; and the hand of the YHWH was set against the Philistines as long as Samuel lived.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

- NASB So the Philistines were subdued and they did not come any more within the border of Israel. And the hand of the YHWH was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.
- Owen So were subdued the Philistines and did not again enter the territory of Israel and was the hand of Yahweh against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.
- Young's Literal Translation And the Philistines are humbled, and have not added any more to come into the border of Israel, and the hand of Jehovah is on the Philistines all the days of Samuel.

What is the gist of this verse? The Philistines were clearly subdued before God, and they no longer encroach on the border of Philistia-Israel (this probably is from the perspective of the human writer of Scripture). I will explain this more fully in the exegesis.

1Samuel 7:13a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
kâna' (כָּנָעוּ) [pronounced kaw-NAHG]	to be subdued, to be brought low; to submit oneself, to behave submissively	3 rd person masculine plural, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #3665 BDB #488
P ^h ilish ^{im} (פְּלִשְׁתִּים) [pronounced p ^h -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun); with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

Translation: So the Philistines were subdued... The present tense of the verb here means that they *continue to be subdued*. That is, God subdued them at this point, but they continue being in subjection to Jesus Christ, the God of the Universe.

1Samuel 7:13b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (לֹא) [pronounced low]	not, no	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
yâçaph (וַיַּצֵּף) [pronounced yaw-SAHPH]	to add, to augment, to continue to do a thing	3 rd person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3254 BDB #414

1Samuel 7:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿōwd (עוּד) [pronounced <i>gohd</i>]	<i>still, yet, again, besides, in addition to, even yet</i>	adverb	Strong's #5750 BDB #728
lāmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bōwʾ (בּוֹא) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #935 BDB #97
bē (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
g ^e bûl (גְּבוּל) [pronounced <i>g^{eb}-VOOL</i>]	<i>border, boundary, territory</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1366 BDB #147
Yisʿrāʾêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-row-ALE</i>]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

Translation: ...and they did not continue any more to enter into the territory of Israel; furthermore,... Or, ...and they did not continue again to enter in the border of Israel. This is the difficult portion of this verse. What the Philistines had done, up until that time, was to go into Israel, bite off a chunk of property, move further into Israel and bite off another chunk of property. As we have talked about earlier, it is unclear how much control the Philistines had over Israel at this point in time, but, at the very least, the Philistines were in possession of the border cities between Israel and Philistia. Whenever Israel did something which the Philistines did not approve of—e.g., this gathering in Mizpah—the Philistines were quick to come in and indicate the disapproval with military action. However, at this point, these continued and successful acts of aggression were stopped. Now, this does not mean that there was an end to Philistine-Israeli warfare? The next line makes that clear.

Geisler and Howe give us three possible explanations: (1) the Philistines came no more *for some time*; (2) the Philistines came no more *at that time*; or (3) the Philistines came no more to occupy and dwell in the territory of Israel, which did not exclude them from coming back to fight Israel in the future.²⁵ It is clear that viewpoints 1 and 2 settle this problem; and #3 is also probably true. Again, the second half of the verse makes it clear that Philistine-Israeli aggression was not over in its entirety. What I think we should recognize is that we are looking at this from the perspective of the writer of Scripture, indicating that this portion of Scripture was put together near the end of Samuel's career (in the mind of the writer, who was probably Samuel). To his thinking, he was old, he was partially retired, and he was handing over the reigns of political power in part to his sons. At this time, Samuel writes, and all of this from his perspective is true. In his own mind, he probably does not realize that he still has a place in Israel's future. What he says here does not indicate that he has no future with Israel nor does it indicate that the Philistines will never again engage Israel in war. It simply means, at the point that this was written, the Philistines were held in check by God.

²⁵ Quoted and paraphrased from *When Critics Ask*; Geisler and Howe, ©1992, Victor Books, p. 157.

1Samuel 7:13c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced hâw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
P ^e lish ^{tîy} (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p ^e -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun); with the definite article	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced koh]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
yâmîym (יָמִים) [pronounced yaw-MEEM]	<i>days, time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
Together, kôl + yâmîym are literally rendered <i>all the days</i> ; together, they can also mean <i>in all time, all the time, perpetually, forever, always</i> .			
Sh ^e mûw ^{èl} (שְׁמוֹן אֵל) [pronounced sh ^e -moo-ALE]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028

Translation: ...the hand of Y^ehowah was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. The remainder of the verse is much easier. If the Philistine remained within their borders at all time and never ever entered into the territory of Israel, then this final line would make no sense. Why would God's hand need to be against the Philistines if they are not attempting to encroach on Israel's property? What we have is that, for a definite period of time (probably until Saul was anointed king by Samuel), the Philistines remained within their borders. However, after he became king, the Philistines began to move again into Israel's territory. Still Samuel was alive, and God's hand was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel, which continued through the time of Saul. However, the Philistines remained within their borders only during the time that Samuel was Israel's spiritual and political leader. About the time that Samuel was in semi-retirement and Saul became the king over Israel, then the Philistines began to move out of their territory and into Israel's (see 1Sam. 13).

It might be helpful to simply outline Israeli-Philistine aggressions up over a short period of time.

Israeli-Philistine Aggressions

1. At the beginning of the life of Samuel, the Philistines were a strong force against Israel, constantly a thorn

Israeli-Philistine Aggressions

- in Israel's side.
2. Prior to Samuel's life, Samson irritated the Philistines, who had power, at that time, over portions of the Israelites (Judges 13:1).
 3. While Eli and his sons were still alive, the Philistines moved against Israel, taking the Ark and, during some point in their hostilities, burning down Shiloh.
 4. After the Ark had been in Philistia for seven months, it was returned to Israel because God's hand struck the Philistines severely.
 5. This was followed by 20 years of discipline by God against Israel. We don't know exactly what happened, as the details of this discipline are not recorded. There may have been continued attacks by the Philistines; Israel might be paying tribute to the Philistines; it was probably during this time that Shiloh was burned to the ground (and who knows how many other cities?).
 6. In any case, Israel, on the urging of Samuel, returned to God. The result was this great battle victory over Philistia, after which, the Philistines kept out of Israel's territory for a relatively longer period of time (perhaps 10 or 20 years?). This would have been up to the point that this was recorded and entered into the official record, probably by Samuel. Samuel possibly even figured that this was near the end of his own ministry, accounting for the phrase *all the days of Samuel*. As we will later see, Samuel is called *old man* several times in subsequent chapters of 1Samuel.
 7. The Philistines did not necessarily stay out of Israel for the entire life of Samuel (see 1Sam. 13:5); they did, however, stay out of Israel up until the point that he recorded this verse. Once Saul was anointed as king (which represented a diminishing of Samuel's power), the Philistines again became a thorn in the side of Israel.

It is interesting at the time that I write this. For months, I have heard news about modern Israel handing over a portion of their territory to the Palestinians. On the news, the territory is called *settlements*, as if some temporary travelers wandered into this area and pitched some tents—however, these are actually neighborhoods with houses, houses which Israelis paid for and houses which some had lived in for decades (from what I can tell—the news rarely gives a complete picture). The idea of letting this area be given to the Palestinians is to end Israeli-Palestinian aggressions. And, the big news on the radio yesterday? Israeli-Palestinian aggressions. What a surprise!

My point is, any amount of time, whether it be a decade or two, is significant when it comes to peace between Israel and any foreign aggressor. Recall that Jews are God's chosen people and the Satan will do all in his power to rouse others against them. If Satan could destroy the Jews, he would, as that would make false much of the prophecy of Scripture.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

As Barnes put it: *Not...all the days of his life, but all the days of his government, when as Judge, he ruled over Israel, before they asked for a king.*²⁶ To be more specific, when Samuel began allowing his sons to judge Israel, the Philistines probably made inroads again. This would coincide with the time that Israel began to demand a king.

The sense which Keil and Delitzsch give this verse is that the Philistines *made attempts to recover their lost supremacy, but that so long as Samuel lived they were unable to effect anything against Israel. This is also manifest from the successful battles fought by Saul (ch. 13 and 14), when the Philistines had made fresh attempts to subjugate Israel during his reign. They defeats inflicted upon them by Saul also belonged to the days of Samuel, who died but a very few years before Saul himself.*²⁷

²⁶ *Barnes' Notes; 1Samuel to Esther*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 20.

²⁷ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, pp. 412–413.

A Summary of 1Samuel 7:13

The Philistines were allowed by God a specific territory in accordance with Judges 2:23 (because of Israel's faithlessness, God was going to leave some of the heathen in the land to test Israel). However, over the past several decades, the Philistines had encroached upon Israel's land and had put Israel in subjugation to them (exactly what this entailed is unclear; they probably seized various choice properties, possibly set up outposts in some Israeli cities and possibly collected tribute). God, because Israel returned to Him, pushed the Philistines back to their original property lines and held them to this territory all the days of Samuel as of this writing (where he assumes that his ministry is complete—probably because Saul had just become king). However, when Israel chose to have a king over them rather than Samuel, this represented some spiritual digression, and the Philistines again attacked. However, Saul still kept the Israelites in their territory all the days of Samuel because the hand of God was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

And so are returned the cities which had taken Philistines from Israel to Israel, from Ekron and as far as Gath and their territory was caused to be rescued Israel from a hand of Philistines; and so is peace between Israel and between the Amorites.

1Samuel
7:14

And so the towns, which the Philistines had taken from Israel, were restored to Israel—from Ekron even as far as Gath—and Israel had rescued her territory from the hand of the Philistines. And [there] was peace between Israel and the Amorites.

So the towns which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron to Gath; and the territory which had been under the control of the Philistines was taken back as well. And there was peace between Israel and the remaining people in the land.

Like the previous verse, there are going to be some difficult portions to translate in this verse. It is as though another author has begun to record these events, as the sentence structure is slightly more complex and filled with a greater variety of prepositions than in the previous portion of the book of Samuel. One possible explanation is that Samuel, after years of study (which would have included the writings of Moses, which are more complex in sentence structure), returned to writing Scripture, and the benefits of this education are beginning to show. Besides sentence structure and the exercise of a greater vocabulary, topically these two verses are somewhat different. In vv. 1–12, we are dealing with the gathering of Israel, the fact that this threatens the Philistines, and the Israeli-Philistine conflict. At vv. 13–14, we summarize, as if from a distance. If you notice, vv. 1–12 could have been written immediately after the actual conflict. However, v. 13 is written with some perspective; it could not have been written immediately after the conflict.

Now, the translations:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so are returned the cities which had taken Philistines from Israel to Israel, from Ekron and as far as Gath and their territory was caused to be rescued Israel from a hand of Philistines; and so is peace between Israel and between the Amorites.

Septuagint

And the cities which the Philistines took from the children of Israel were restored; and they restored them to Israel from Ascalon to Azob; and they took the coast of Israel out of the hand of the Philistines; and there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.

Significant differences:

Apart from the city names, there are no significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

NLT The Israelite towns near Ekron and Gath that the Philistines had captured were restored to Israel, along with the rest of the territory that the Philistines had taken. And there was also peace between Israel and the Amorites in those days.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh) The towns which the Philistines had taken from Israel, from Ekron to Gath, were restored to Israel; Israel recovered all her territory from the Philistines. There was also peace between Israel and the Amorites.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were returned to Israel, from Ekron even to Gath; and Israel delivered their territory from the hand of the Philistines. So there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.

Owen's Translation Then were restored the cities which had taken the Philistines from Israel to Israel from Ekron to Gath and their territory rescued Israel from the hand of the Philistines and there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.

Young's Updated LT And the cities which the Philistines have taken from Israel are restored to Israel—from Ekron even unto Gath—and their border has Israel delivered out of the hand of the Philistines; and there *is* peace between Israel and the Amorites.

What is the gist of this verse? The Philistines had taken some cities from Israel in past skirmishes and these cities were returned to Israel. The end result is, there is peace between Israel and the peoples indigenous to the land.

1Samuel 7:14a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced <i>shoo^bv</i>]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	3 rd person feminine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
îyr (עִיר) [pronounced <i>geer</i>]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5892 BDB #746
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i>]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	3 rd person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
P ^h ilish ^t îy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p^e-lish-TEE</i>]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

1Samuel 7:14a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʿêth (עִתְּךָ) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object)	Strong's #854 BDB #85
Together, min ʿêth mean <i>from proximity with, from with, from close proximity to, to proceed from someone</i> . A good up-to-date rendering might be <i>directly from</i> .			
Yisʿrâʿêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Yisʿrâʿêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

Translation: [And so the towns, which the Philistines had taken from Israel, were restored to Israel—...](#) Part of the difficulty of understanding this verse is the word order. We have the phrase *from Israel to Israel*, which sounds as though it belongs together, but is really a part of two different ideas and sentence portions. The verb associated with *to Israel* is 3rd person feminine plural, Qal imperfect of *to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution*. What is being returned *to Israel* is the cities. This gives us: [And so the towns were restored to Israel...](#)

Associated with *from Israel* is the 3rd person plural, Qal perfect of *to take, to take from, to take in marriage, to seize*. The subject of the verb is *Philistines*, and a preposition combination which means *from proximity with, from with, from close proximity to, directly from*. This gives us: [...which \[towns\] the Philistines had taken directly from Israel...](#) So during this time, the Philistines kept moving across established borders, taking more and more land, a little here and a little there. However, with this battle, these hostilities ceased for a time, and the land they grabbed was restored to Israel. You may recall earlier in this chapter where the Israelites chased the Philistines back as far as Beth-car, and discussion about whether Beth-car was equivalent to Beth-horon. Recall that would have pushed the Philistines back perhaps 7 miles, and no cities were taken back in this process. Unless Israel kept up a war against the Philistines, this would not have been enough of a setback of the Philistines to result in Israel taking back all of her land. What we must take as typical is that the writer of this portion of Samuel (which probably is Samuel) did not record all of the military events. That Shiloh was taken and burned to the ground is not even mentioned, although this is the logical time period for that to have occurred. It does not seem reasonable that, after one skirmish, that the Philistines simply give back all that they had taken to the Israelites. Certain, it was an important battle, but what is most reasonable is that Israel kept up the offensive and took back her cities in several more battles, all unrecorded by Samuel. The other option is, the Philistines were so taken aback by God's attack upon them, that they voluntarily withdrew from any disputed territory. The boundary line is given next:

1Samuel 7:14b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
Ḳrōwn (עֲקְרוֹן) [pronounced <i>ḡek^e-ROHN</i>]	transliterated <i>Ekron</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #6138 BDB #785
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿad (אֲדַ) [pronounced <i>ḡahd</i>]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
Together, min...wa ʿad (וַ אֲדַ מִן) mean <i>from...to</i> or <i>both...and</i> ; as in <i>from soup to nuts</i> or <i>both young and old</i> .			
Gath (גַּת) [pronounced <i>gath</i>]	<i>wine-press</i> and is transliterated <i>Gath</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1661 BDB #387

Translation: ...from Ekron even as far as Gath—... Recall that Ekron is about 10 miles inland in the territory of Benjamin, and that 20 or so miles south of Ekron is Gath, which is about 20 miles inland. These cities were given by God to Israel, although the Philistines occupied those cities. What appears to be the case is that, for the past 20 or more years, the Philistines have advanced *from* this north-south line, taking large chunks of Israel's property. In v. 11, Israel apparently pushed the Philistines back either to these cities or even past these cities. By the time of David, these cities will be in the hands of the Philistines again, which leads me to believe that these cities from this point in time mark the border of Israel and Philistia once again. That is, it is possible that Israel took these cities as well and the Philistines recaptured them. However, it is just as reasonable, if not more so, that Israel took back its land right up to these cities and that Ekron and Gath remained in the hands of the Philistines and that this north-south line marked a fairly constant border between the two mid-eastern powers.²⁸

1Samuel 7:14c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object)	Strong's #854 BDB #85

²⁸ Keil and Delitzsch also see the border as being exclusive of those cities. Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 413.

1Samuel 7:14c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
g ^e bûl (גְּבוּל) [pronounced g ^{eb} -VOOL]	<i>border, boundary, territory</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person feminine plural suffix	Strong's #1366 BDB #147
nâtsal (נָצַל) [pronounced naw-TSAHL]	<i>to snatch away, to deliver, to rescue, to snatch out of danger, to preserve, to recover</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5337 BDB #664
Yis ^e râ`êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis ^{-raw} -ALE]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
P ^e lish ^e tîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p ^e -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

Translation: ...and Israel had rescued her territory from the hand of the Philistines. The verb here is the 3rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect of *to snatch away, to deliver, to rescue, to snatch out of danger, to preserve*. This phrase implies that there were more skirmishes between Israel and Philistia, which result in the taking back of the land that the Philistines had been taking from Israel.

1Samuel 7:14d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
shâlôwm (שָׁלוֹם) [pronounced shaw-LOHM]	<i>completeness, soundness, welfare, peace, safe, secure, tranquil, undisturbed, unagitated</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7965 BDB #1022
bêyn (בֵּינַי) [pronounced bane]	<i>in the midst of, between, among; when found twice, it means between</i>	preposition	Strong's #996 BDB #107

1Samuel 7:14d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Yis ^ə ra ^ˈ êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
w ^é (or v ^é) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bêyn (בֵּינַי) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>in the midst of, between, among; when found twice, it means between</i>	preposition	Strong's #996 BDB #107
ʿĔmōrîy (אֲמֹרִי) [pronounced <i>eh-moh-REE</i>]	<i>mountaineer (possibly); and is transliterated Amorites</i>	proper collective noun	Strong's #567 BDB #57

Translation: [And \[there\] was peace between Israel and the Amorites.](#) I must admit to temporarily being thrown by this last line. After all, as Num. 11:29 tells us: “[Amalek is living in the land of the Negev and the Hittites and the Jebusites and the Amorites are living in the hill country, and the Canaanites are living by the sea and by the side of the Jordan.](#)” We are essentially concerned with the Philistines (concerning whom this chapter is about) and the Amorites (who suddenly are mentioned here). The Philistines were to the west of Israel, located, more or less, along the Gaza strip; and the Amorites were to the east of Israel. Between the Amorites and Israel was the Dead Sea and the Jordan River and a lot of land. Reuben now occupied the southern portion of Amorite country and Gad occupied the northern portion of their territory. The Amorites lived throughout Israel proper as well. As we have seen in our study of the **Amorites** in Gen. 10:16, this will mark the end of any incidents between the Amorites and the Israelites, although there will continue to be war between Israel and Philistia. How much of a breather at this point is unclear. However, there were two names used to refer to the people of the land in general; they were called *Canaanites* and *Amorites*. The former name emphasized the racial background of most of the inhabitants of Canaan and the latter emphasized their independence as groups of people. The Philistines and the Amorites were related, but just barely and from a long time back (see Gen. 10:6–16). However, this statement means that the Israelites lived for some time after this point without internal aggressors.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to the Chart and Map Index](#)

Because I sense some confusion, let me summarize these last few verses:

1Samuel 7:13–14 Summarized

1. The Philistines, Amorites and Canaanites refer to specific groups of peoples. The Philistines were on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea; the Amorites were east of the Jordan (mostly defunct by this time) and the Canaanites were scattered throughout Israel.
2. The Amorites had suffered a great defeat at the hands of Israel prior to the Jews even entering into the land. However, they continued to plague Israel, being found as recently as Judges 10–11 (roughly 140 years prior to the time of this passage). Judges 11 appears to be the last time that the Amorites actually were a problem for Israel (if there are any other conflicts, Scripture does not mention them).
3. The Amorites are mentioned occasionally afterward, but primarily in retrospect (see the **Doctrine of the Amorites** in Gen. 10:16 for a fuller explanation of the Amorites). In any case, we have no instances of the Amorites threatening Israel after this time. However, this in no way explains why they are mentioned here, apropos of nothing.

1 Samuel 7:13–14 Summarized

4. One possible explanation is that the material found here was edited from a manuscript which had Judges 10–11 in it, and in close proximity to this information. Therefore, mentioning the Amorites would be reasonable. For us, Judges 11 was a *long* time ago. However, in terms of actual time, the incidents of this chapter and Judges 11 are separated by less than 150 years. Therefore, the mention of these two groups of people would be an apropos summary, had the Amorites been spoken of in the same manuscript (or roll or set of rolls).
5. The second option is based upon the fact that the names *Amorites* and *Canaanites* were also general terms used to refer to the itinerant population of the Land of Promise. What we may have here is the general usage of the term *Amorite*. When speaking of the people of the land, there were two general terms given to them—*Amorites* and *Canaanites*. Certainly, Scripture names the various specific groups from time to time, but also the general terms are used. From this sound defeat of the Philistines by God, Israel will probably enjoy about 20 years of complete peace within and without. I have theorized that the general use of *Canaanite* is in reference to the people inside the borders of Israel and that the general use of the term *Amorite* might refer to the enemies of Israel, without and within. Given that the Philistines are on the outskirts of the territory which Israel occupies, even though this property was given to Israel from God, the term *Amorite, enemies of Israel who live within and without Israel*, is a very apropos designation.
6. In the study of the Amorites, this is a designation which is generally given to western tribes of nomads who may or may not be related. In fact, *Amorite* means *westerner*. This would be their designation by those from the Euphrates valley, given centuries before the Jews went into the Land of Promise. So, the name sticks with this general group of people, who, for the Israelites, are actually to the east and north of them. Some of the Amorites would be in the land as well.
7. Another opinion is that the terms *Canaanites* and *Amorites* are general terms, but refer to two separate groups of enemies—those west of the Jordan and those east of the Jordan.*
8. The use of this term indicates that Israel went for a period of time without being attacked by anyone from without or within. For 20 years, the Philistines will no longer encroach on Israel's secured property. For 20 years, no other powers will seriously threaten Israel. Therefore, [There was peace between Israel and the Amorites](#).
9. Now, this does not mean that we suddenly have 20 years of peace which follow this judgment from God. What appears to be the case is that Israel, in a series of confrontations, took back the land which the Philistines had taken from them. Whether this went on for a year or for five years, we do not know. During this time, [the hand of Jehovah was against the Philistines](#). During the remainder of the days of Samuel, God clearly stood with Israel against the Philistines. This show of great power apparently caused the other Canaanites in the land to take notice and they ceased their aggressions as well, which is the point of v. 14.
10. If Samuel is the author, then such a summary would be very apropos. For as long as Samuel could remember, Israel has been in a constant war with the Philistines and other groups of peoples. In my lifetime, Israel has been in almost constant conflict with the Palestinians. So, if warlike behavior between these two groups ceased for 20 years (recall that this is simply a number that I pulled out of the air), then this would be particularly remarkable to me. In fact, if there were no aggressions against Israel for 10–20 years, or if Israel pushed the Philistines back to their original land in a couple of years and this was followed by a period of peace, then this would be worth mentioning as an important point. Furthermore, had Samuel written this line 20 years after this incident and the Philistines remained within their borders for that period of time, such a thing would have been remarkable to him and he would have remarked on it. Had no other group caused a disruption within the Land of Promise, then this would be doubly remarkable.
11. This is all in keeping with the final verses of this book. It is as though Samuel had gone through a long period of peace (20+ years), he had grown old, and he figured that God was finished with him. So he writes the final three verse of this book as though he was closing the chapter of his life. From this perspective, the Philistines had been kept within their early borders throughout Samuel's life. There had been no other problems at this time with other peoples. Samuel figured that he would put his sons in charge, he would die of old age, and life would go on. Boy, was he mistaken!
12. You may recall back in the book of the Judges that the Philistines were said to have persecuted the Israelites for 40 years (Judges 13). It is possible that we have had 40 years of Philistine tyranny over central

1Samuel 7:13–14 Summarized

and western Israel, and that this was followed by several years of conflict, which was followed by 20 years of relative peace with the Philistines being pushed back in their former territory. This would require that the rule of Samson overlap the rule of Eli, as Samson judged Israel for 20 years (Judges 16:31) and Eli judged Israel for 40 years (1Sam. 4:18). We have another 20 years mentioned in 1Sam. 7:2 where Israel appears to be at a low spiritual ebb. It is not clear whether this 20 years are in addition to the 40 years of Philistine oppression or whether they mark a time of Philistine regrouping and Israelite degeneracy. The former seems to be the most likely, as this additional 20 years occurs after the death of Eli, who would not have necessarily been considered a judge up until the day he died.

- a. As an aside, we should not be concerned if Biblical dates do not all easily fall into place. Scripture is represented as being produced by different men at different times. Whoever wrote the book of Judges is not necessarily the same person (or persons) and those who wrote the book of Samuel. Therefore, the dates are not necessarily contradictory, but they are not easy to put together either. The writers of Samuel did not necessarily look back into the book of Judges to make certain that they produced a narrative that would continue seamlessly in all respects. Had there been one author of both books, then the dates would fall together more easily. We can conclude from this tangent that the Philistines persecuted Israel for 40 years. There was also a period of 20 years when Israel was in a spiritual funk after the Ark had been moved to Kiriath-jearim. Whether there is an overlap here or not is simply a matter of speculation.
13. I should add that Barnes offers a fourth possibility: he suggests that the Amorites, finding the Philistines to be crueller masters than the Israelites, allied themselves with the Israelites against the Philistines.** The only support for this point of view would be this verse alone.
14. That we have four possible explanations of this final line ([And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites](#)) is indicative of the fact that it has caused not just a few to ponder its significance.

* So it is with the New Living Translation; however, they use *Philistines* to refer to those west of the Jordan and *Amorites* for those east of the Jordan.

** *Barnes' Notes; 1Samuel to Esther*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 20.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to the Chart and Map Index](#)

Samuel's Ministry Is Summarized

These last three verses help to explain vv. 13–14 and why a later Philistine presence (1Sam. 10:5) does not mean that there is a contradiction. Vv. 15–17 have a sound of finality and completion. We have Samuel writing this at what he believes to be the end of his life. He either has or is about to appoint his sons to judge in Beersheba with the idea that they would eventually take over his responsibilities. So, insofar as Samuel is concerned, at the time of this writing, he is nearing or at retirement. He writes this information down, looking back over his life and its highlights, and observes that God had held the Philistines and other antagonistic groups in check for all of his ministry up until that point in time. The subsequent chapters in this book are chapters that Samuel did not anticipate writing. With these three verses, Samuel believed that he was closing out this chapter of Israel's history along with his life as its spiritual and political leader. He also sees that Israel has enjoyed peace for a considerable period of time (20–40 years would be my guess). What you may notice is, there really is remarkably little about Samuel thus far in the book of Samuel. That is, given that we are coming up on what he perceives as his twilight years, we have less than a handful of incidents alluded to. For instance, in 1Sam. 3:21, we have God regularly revealing Himself to Samuel in Shiloh. However, we know little else about these times. That is, we don't really find out how God revealed Himself; and in dreams or verbally, we know nothing about these things. With regards to Samuel's leadership, we really only have, so far, this one incident mentioned (1Sam. 7:1–14) with what appears to be a summary of Samuel's ministry to Israel to follow. I have gone on and on about the destruction of Shiloh, the movement of the Tabernacle—never mentioned at all in Scripture (it would fall upon Samuel to be responsible to

record this information, and yet he did not). Obviously, the Holy Spirit did not require Samuel to do so; however, the point that I am making is, there is a lot which is missing from this portion of Israel's history.

And so judges Samuel Israel all days of his lives. 1Samuel 7:15 **So Samuel judged [or, governed] Israel all the days of his life.**

And Samuel continued as a judge over Israel for the remainder of his life.

With this verse, we continue summarizing the next several years. First, what others have done with this short verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text And so judges Samuel Israel all days of his lives.
 Septuagint And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Samuel was a leader in Israel all his life.
 TEV Samuel ruled Israel as long as he lived.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh) Samuel judged Israel as long as he lived.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB Now Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.
 Young's Updated LT And Samuel judges Israel all the days of his life,...

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel functioned as a judge in Israel for all of his life.

1Samuel 7:15			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâphaṭ (שָׁפַט) [pronounced shaw-FAHT]	to judge, to condemn, to punish; to defend [especially the poor and oppressed], to defend [one's cause] and deliver him from his enemies; to rule, to govern	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8199 BDB #1047
Sh ^e mûw`êl (שִׁמְוֵאל) [pronounced sh ^e -moo-ALE]	which means heard of El; it is transliterated Samuel	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028

1Samuel 7:15

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object)	Strong's #854 BDB #85
Yisʿrâʿêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
yâmîym (יָמִים) [pronounced <i>yaw-MEEM</i>]	<i>days, time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
Together, kôl + yâmîym are literally rendered <i>all the days</i> ; together, they can also mean <i>in all time, all the time, perpetually, forever, always</i> .			
chayyîym (חַיִּים) [pronounced <i>khay-YEEM</i>]	<i>life, lives, living, being alive, having life, immortality, a long life, sustenance, sustaining life; refreshment; being vigorous; prosperity, welfare, happiness, living prosperously</i>	masculine plural substantive with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2416 BDB #313

Translation: *So Samuel judged [or, governed] Israel all the days of his life.* We have here the masculine plural noun *chayyîym* means *being alive, being vigorous, having life, sustaining life, living prosperously*—it is life as opposed to death. This is the plural abstract emphatic word for *life*; although it is in the plural, in the English, we usually translate it in the singular. There is possibly another couple of ways of looking at this noun. We have a spiritual, a physical and a soulish life; an unbeliever has only a physical and a soulish life. Our human spirit is our immaterial portion which can commune with God; when our physical being, our soulish expressions to others and our spiritual lives all reflect God's glory and praise to Him, then we are singing to him in our lives.

Samuel was specifically a spiritual leader and a civil judge (or, *civil governor*). Although he was loosely involved with military matters, there is nothing which indicates that he took part in any military aggression apart from the pre-battle spiritual preparation of the troops.

A question which might be posed at this time is, *did Samuel rule over Israel all of his life or just until Saul took over as king?* Samuel never gave up his spiritual leadership, and in this leadership, he actually had authority over Saul (Saul went to Samuel on many occasions for guidance—even after his death). There was always a separation of powers in Israel, even after the establishment of the monarchy. We will have David reproved by a prophet. We will have priests object to a king trying to assume spiritual function in their stead (2Chron. 26:16–23). Therefore, just because Saul will become king, this does not eliminate or abrogate Samuel's power and authority. The most important arena of authority is the spiritual arena, and Samuel continued in that realm for the remainder of his life and for even a little bit after his death. Now, it is not clear whether Samuel continued after Saul was anointed king as a judge over civil matters. Given the size of Israel, there would be nothing to preclude Samuel from continuing

this aspect of his authority, although Saul could certainly overrule any judgment that he made.²⁹ This is, again, one of the many things that we do not really know about this period of history.

And he went from enough of a year of in a year and he had gone around [to] Beth-el and the Gilgal and the Mizpah and he had judged Israel among all of the places the these.

1Samuel
7:16

And he went according as year to year and he went around to Beth-el, Gilgal and Mizpah and he governed Israel from all these places.

And Samuel went on a circuit each year from Beth-el to Gilgal to Mizpah, governing Israel in all these places.

First, what others have done:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text And he went from enough of a year of in a year and he had gone around [to] Beth-el and the Gilgal and the Mizpah and he had judged Israel among all of the places the these.

Septuagint And he went year by year, and went round Bethel, and Galgala, and Masephath; and he judged Israel in all these consecrated places.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

NAB He made a yearly journey,, passing through Bethel, Gilgal and Mizpah and judging Israel at each of these sanctuaries.

NJB Each year he went on circuit through Bethel and Gilgal and Mizpah and judged Israel in all these places.

REB [Samuel acted as judge in Israel as long as he lived,] and every year went on circuit to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah; he dispensed justice at all these places.

TEV Every year he would go around to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah, and in these places he would settle disputes.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh) Each year he made the rounds of Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah, and acted as judge over Israel at all those places.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB And he used to go annually on circuit to Bethel and Gilgal and Mizpah, and he judged Israel in all these places.

NRSV He went on a circuit year by year to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah; and he judged Israel in all these places.

Young's Updated LT ...and he has gone from year to year and gone round Beth-El and Gilgal and Mizpah, and judged Israel *in* all these places;...

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel gives us an overview of his judgeship. He was a circuit judge, going from Bethel to Gilgal to Mizpah.

²⁹ This was taken from *When Critics Ask*; Geisler and Howe, ©1992, Victor Books, p. 157 and expanded upon.

1Samuel 7:16a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
day (יָדָה) [pronounced <i>dahy</i>]	<i>sufficiency, a large enough quantity, enough, abundance</i>	substantive which can act like an adverb	Strong's #1767 BDB #191
When <i>day</i> is preceded by <i>min</i> , the meaning is <i>according as, as often as, whenever</i> when followed by an infinitive; also, <i>according to the multitude, abundance; every month, every year, monthly, yearly</i> [in the right context].			
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced <i>shaw-NAW</i>]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040.
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced <i>shaw-NAW</i>]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040.
Shânâh repeated with the bêyth preposition in between indicates a circle or a return; the idea is, this means <i>yearly</i> . See Deut. 15:20 1Sam. 7:16.			

Translation: *And he went according as year to year...* You will note that I quoted liberally from various translations to indicate that we do not have a thoroughly agreed upon translation for this portion of the verse; however, the general thinking is the same. Each year, Samuel had a circuit that he went on, going through those three cities. I don't think that this means that Samuel would, in a year's time, travel to each of these cities just one time. That may be an average year. The idea is, Samuel traveled about, from city to city, until the disputes in that city had been settled; and he did this year after year.

1Samuel 7:16b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
çâbab (סָבַב) [pronounced <i>saw^b-VAH^bV</i>]	<i>to turn oneself, to go around, to surround, to encompass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5437 BDB #685
Bêyth-`êl (בֵּית־אֵל) [pronounced <i>bayth-AYHL</i>]	<i>house of God; transliterated Bethel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1008 BDB #110

Translation: ...and he went around to Beth-el,... The verb here is the 3rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect of *turn oneself, to go around, to surround, to encompass*. The idea is that he went on this circuit of cities. Samuel is simply a circuit judge. The first city is Bethel.

We examined the **Doctrine of Bethel** back in Gen. 28:19, but let me summarize our findings:

The City of Bethel

1. Bethel is located about 10 miles north of Jerusalem on the border of Ephraim and Benjamin.
2. Bethel is one of the first cities that we hear about in the Bible. Abraham traveled there from Ur of the Chaldees. Gen. 12:8
3. Interestingly enough, Jacob apparently named this city; it means *House of God*, as God revealed Himself to Jacob here. When the history of Genesis was recorded, the name *Bethel* was used rather than *Luz*. Gen. 28:19 35:7, 15
4. Jacob, in fact, is associated on several occasions with this city. Gen. 13:3 31:13 35:1–16
5. When Joshua enters the Land of Promise to conquer it, then we hear a lot more about the city of Bethel. In fact, Joshua conquers this city, along with Ai, its neighbor. Joshua 8 12:16
6. However, it apparently needed to be re-conquered in Judges 1:22
7. Bethel will continue to be a prominent city in Israel for many years to come.
8. Bethel, prior to this, was essentially, the spiritual center for Israel, where the Ark of God had been kept. Judges 20–21

This, of course, is a bare-bones examination of this city; but it is given just to give you an idea about Bethel.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

1Samuel 7:16c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Gil ^e gâl (גֵּלְגַּל) [pronounced <i>gile-GAWL</i>]	<i>sacred circle of stones and is transliterated <i>Gilgal</i></i>	proper noun, location with the definite article	Strong's #1537 BDB #166
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Mits ^e pâh (מִצְפֵּה) pronounced <i>mitz^e-PAW</i>	<i>outlook point, watchtower; transliterated <i>Mizpah</i></i>	proper noun with the definite article	Strong's #4708 (& #4709) BDB #859

Translation: ...Gilgal and Mizpah... The cities are then named; there are no prepositions, just wâw conjunction's between each of them, and the second two have definite articles, which is common with those two cities: **...and he went around [to] Beth-el and [to] the Gilgal and [to] the Mizpah...** Interestingly enough, all three cities were within the boundaries of Benjamin, which was a centrally located territory. Gilgal³⁰ was across the Jordan River from the eastern tribes of Israel, which allotted to them some access to legal adjudication. The other two cities are both on the northern border of Benjamin, within 10 miles of one another, bordering Ephraim. If this circuit was given in the order in which the cities were gone to, he would have gone north to Beth-el, then east a significant distance to Gilgal, and then back to the Beth-el/Mizpah area. In doing this, he would have gone in a complete circle. Recall in the book of the Judges that we spoke of the very local aspect of the various judges. Samuel, if anyone, would have been a nation-wide judge; however, even his circuit was very limited (if this was a different Gilgal, then it would have been found due north in Ephraim). Samuel therefore remained entirely within the territory of Benjamin (or at least the territories of Benjamin and Ephraim). It is also worth recalling that Samuel's father was an Ephraimite. The implication is not that Benjamin was the dominant or leading tribe at this time, but that this was almost a neutral area in a sense, as the tribe of Benjamin had been thinned out considerably.



Taken from NASB maps. You will note that from Bethel to Gilgal to Mizpah is somewhat of a circular route.

1Samuel 7:16d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shâphaṭ (שָׁפַט) [pronounced shaw-FAHT]	<i>to judge, to condemn, to punish; to defend [especially the poor and oppressed], to defend [one's cause] and deliver him from his enemies; to rule, to govern</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8199 BDB #1047
ʿêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object)	Strong's #854 BDB #85
Yisʿrâʿêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
ʿêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object)	Strong's #854 BDB #85
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481

³⁰ The exact location of Gilgal is a conundrum; some place it much further north; others claim that there are several different *Gilgal*'s. Edersheim disparages the idea that this would be Gilgal in the Jordan valley. This was all covered in the **Doctrine of Gilgal** back in Joshua 4:20.

1Samuel 7:16d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mâqôwm (מִקְוֹם) [pronounced <i>maw-KOHM</i>]	<i>place, situated</i> ; for a soldier, it may mean where he is <i>stationed</i> ; for people in general, it would be their <i>place of abode</i> (which could be their house or their town)	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #4725 BDB #879
'êlleh (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced <i>KEHLeh</i>]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural adjective with the definite article	Strong's #428 BDB #41

Translation: ...and he governed Israel from all these places. Samuel's authority as a civil leader is emphasized here. He was a circuit judge. Bear in mind that, for reasons already discussed, the Tabernacle of God does not appear to be functioning at this time; and the Ark of God is in storage.

<p>And his return the Ramah-ward for there his house and there he judged Israel; and so he builds there an altar to Y^ehowah.</p>	<p>1Samuel 7:17</p>	<p>And his returning [was] to Ramah, for his house [was] there; also, there he judged [or governed over] Israel. Furthermore, he built there an altar to Y^ehowah.</p>
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He would then return to Ramah, as he had a house there. He also judged Israel there as well. In addition, he built an altar to Jehovah there.

First, what others did with this final verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text And his return the Ramah-ward for there his house and there he judged Israel; and so he builds there an altar to Y^ehowah.

Septuagint And his return was to Armathaim, because there was his house; and there he judged Israel; and he built there an altar to the Lord.

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Complete Jewish Bible Then he would return to Ramah, because that's where his home was, and he would judge Isra'el there to. He also built an altar there to ADONAI.

JPS (Tanakh) Then he would return to Ramah, for his home was there, and there too he would judge Israel. He built an altar there to the LORD.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB Then his return was to Ramah, for his house was there, and there he judged Israel; and he built there an altar to the LORD.

Young's Updated LT

...and his returning *is* to Ramath, for there *is* his house, and there he has judged Israel, and he builds there an altar to Jehovah.

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel made his permanent residence in Ramah, where his birth parents were from, and he built an altar to Jehovah there.

1Samuel 7:17a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
t ^e shûwbâh (תשובה) [pronounced t ^e -shoo ^b -VAW]	<i>a return; a replay, an answer</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8666 BDB #1000
Also spelled Râmâh (רמה) [pronounced <i>raw-MAW</i>]	<i>height, high place; transliterated Ramah</i>	feminine noun used primarily as a proper noun; with the definite article and the locale hê	Strong's #7413 BDB #928

Râmâth (רמת) [pronounced *raw-MATH*]. I have no idea if there is any difference between the directional hê and the locale hê; both look the same.

Translation: *And his returning [was] to Ramah,...* This is interesting. Samuel was originally from Ramah, although he only lived there for about 2–3 years. Recall that prior to his birth, his mother was barren and she prayed to God in Shiloh to give birth to a son. She promised to dedicate him to the service of Jehovah-God. Once he was born and weaned, she brought him to Shiloh and left him with Eli, the priest. At the same time, Eli's sons were not working out as priests. They did not believe in the God of Israel and sacrifices simply meant that they got to have a barbeque. So Samuel grew up in the Tent of God under the tutelage of Eli and he eventually replaced Eli as a judge/governor. Now, his contact with his mother was not cut off. That is, Samuel was not taken to some cult and dropped off. His mother could visit him as often as she wished, and she apparently went to see him once a year, having made him a new robe to wear for the following year (1Sam. 2:19). The most likely reason that Samuel kept a home in Ramah is that his surrogate father, Eli, was dead, and his birth parents and brothers and/or sisters were probably still alive and living in Ramah. Samuel had a mission in life; he had a three-fold responsibility as prophet, priest and judge (like Moses); however, this did not completely remove him from his genetic family. If a religious group pushes you to break all ties with your family, citing a few quotations from our Lord in the New Testament (taken out of context), then you are in a cult and you need to leave, no matter how nice and spiritual everyone seems. Samuel, although raised almost entirely apart from his birth family, has made his home in the city of his birth family.

Although we would have expected Samuel to remain in Shiloh for his ministry, this was not the case. We suspect that during the time of the continued Philistine invasions that Shiloh got burnt to the ground, and that the Tent of God escaped. It appears as though the Tent of God was not put back up in the time of Samuel and that the Ark of God was also not placed back into service after its return (it remained in Kiriath-jearim). Samuel, during this time period, established a home for himself in Ramah, the home of his parents, along with an altar. The fact that he built an altar in Ramah suggests that the Tent of God had not been set up anywhere. We really don't know any of this for certain, as the location and function of the Tent of God during the time of Samuel is unknown. However, as we will study the movement of the Ark and the Tent of God when we get to 1Sam. 10, and it will appear as though neither the Ark and the Tent were not used during the lifetime of Samuel. A little further down in this verse we will discuss the location of the Tent of God.

1 Samuel 7:17b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>when, that, for, because, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
shâm (שָׁמָּה) [pronounced <i>shawm</i>]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced <i>BAH-yith</i>]	<i>house, household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1004 BDB #108

Translation: ...for his house [was] there;... The complete verse, so far: [And his returned \[was then\] to Ramah, for his house \[was\] there...](#) Ramah, as Samuel's hometown, also became a place in which he judged and spiritually ministered to the people. For his spiritual and political reign, this appears to be the new spiritual center of Israel.

1 Samuel 7:17c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wê (or vê) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shâm (שָׁמָּה) [pronounced <i>shawm</i>]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
shâphaṭ (שָׁפַט) [pronounced <i>shaw-FAHT</i>]	<i>to judge, to condemn, to punish; to defend [especially the poor and oppressed], to defend [one's cause] and deliver him from his enemies; to rule, to govern</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #8199 BDB #1047
êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Yis ^{ra} êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

Translation: ...also, there he judged [or governed over] Israel. Ramah became Samuel's hometown. The family that he knew, which was primarily Eli, was gone. We do not know anything about Levitical women who may have helped raise Samuel, or there whereabouts. We don't know if they were slaughtered when Shiloh was burned down or whether they escaped or whether Samuel found a place for them in Ramah. However, Samuel's birthplace was Ramah, so this became his headquarters.

Edersheim explains: he “judged Israel,” —not in the sense of settling disputes between individuals, but in that of the spiritual and national administration of affairs, as the centre and organ of the religious and political life of the people.³¹ In my opinion, Samuel also settled disputes. I suspect that this was one of

³¹ Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 428.

the most important aspects of his political rulership (the references to his sons in the next chapter will support this).

1Samuel 7:17d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bânâh (בָּנָה) [pronounced <i>baw-NAWH</i>]	<i>to build, to rebuild, to restore</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1129 BDB #124
miz ^{eb} bêach (מִזְבֵּחַ) [pronounced <i>miz-BAY-ahkh</i>]	<i>altar; possibly monument</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4196 BDB #258
lâmed (ל) (pronounced ʿ) ʿ)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: [Furthermore, he built there an altar to Y^ehowah](#). Recall that we are not supposed to have Israel littered with altars. In fact, there is supposed to be one main functioning altar in Israel. Given that the Tent of God is not in service at this time, this would make sense that Samuel would construct an altar himself for the offering of sacrifices to God.

So, why wasn't the Tent of God restored? The things of God had endured some problems. First of all, the Ark of God was taken by the Philistines in battle. Once it was returned to Israel, a significant number of Israelites died because of their contact with the altar. Furthermore, sometime during this time, Shiloh was burned to the ground, but the Tent of God was saved. Insofar as Samuel was concerned, none of this was very encouraging. For a significant period of time, the Tent of God and the altar of God had been profaned—the Tent of God and the altar had been profaned by the sons of Eli. The holy city of Shiloh had been burned to the ground by this time, although the Tent was rescued. The Ark itself had been profaned by the Philistines. And when returned, the treatment of the Ark of God resulted in the deaths of many Israelites (1Sam. 6:19). Samuel was not certain whether he wanted to be a part of any of this. His response was that he did not know exactly what the problem was, but he did not want to exacerbate the situation. So he performed his assigned duties, but he did not appear to do anything to restore the service of the Tent of God, nor did he bring the Ark to wherever the Tent was. What he did do was set up an altar, which was the bare minimum of spiritual contact between Israel and God. In fact, it appears as though Samuel had to set up several altars. In 1Sam. 7:5–10, Samuel offers animals in Mizpah. It will be implied that sacrifices are being offered in Bethel in 1Sam. 10:3–7 (the three prophets are carrying kids—i.e., baby goats). In the next verse, sacrifices would be offered from Gilgal. My guess is that Samuel had set up altars in each of the three cities that he functioned as a circuit judge in (Mizpah, Bethel and Gilgal) as well as in his hometown of Ramah. Now, doesn't that violate the idea that there should only be one altar in Israel (as there is only one sacrifice of Jesus Christ)? My guess is, only Samuel offered up sacrifices, so that we do not have sacrifices being offered up on different altars simultaneously. Such an approach (of simultaneous sacrifices) would violate the type.

Let me allow Barnes to weigh in on these issues: *Whether this altar was in connexion with the Tabernacle or not we have no means of deciding, since we are in complete ignorance as to where the tabernacle was at this time, or who was High Priest, or where he resided. It is quite possible that Samuel may have removed the Tabernacle from Shiloh to some place near to Ramah; and indeed it is in itself improbable*

that, brought up as he was from infancy in the service of the Tabernacle, he should have left it. At the beginning of Solomon's reign, we know it was at Gibeon, close to Ramah (1 K. iii. 4; 2 Chr. I. 3–6). If the Tabernacle had been at Shiloh at this time, it is likely that Shiloh would have been one of the places at which Samuel judged Israel. But Shiloh was probably waste, and perhaps unsafe on account of the Philistines.³²

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to the Chart and Map Index](#)

At this point, we have a long list of unanswered questions: why is there no contemporary statement concerning the destruction of Shiloh? What happened to the function of the Tent of God? In fact, where is the Tent of God? Why did Samuel allowed the Ark to remain in Kiriath-jearim? Why are there several altars throughout Israel? These questions, in part, anticipate passages that we will study, but it will be worthwhile the raise the questions now and attempt to answer them. Also, do not expect that I will satisfactorily answer these questions. I ask them as they occurred to me, not necessarily knowing the answers. By the way, I am not aware of any other exegete who asks all of these questions (although the destruction of Shiloh and the location of the Tent of God are often spoken of).

The Long List of Unanswered Questions

1. Why is there no contemporary recording of the destruction of Shiloh?
2. Where is the Tent of God?
3. Why is the Tent of God not set up and functioning?
4. Why is the tent of god not set up and functioning after Samuel assumes political and spiritual leadership of Israel?
5. Why did Samuel allow the Ark of God to remain in Kiriath-jearim apparently without function?
6. Why didn't Samuel simply take over the position of High Priest?
7. Why are there at least 4 altars set up throughout Israel?

Why Is There No Contemporary Recording of the Destruction of Shiloh?

1. First of all, I believe that we have reasonably proven the fact that Shiloh was destroyed during this time period. This was covered in 1Sam. 7:2a (which really belonged with the previous chapter, so we covered it at that time).
2. What happened during the time of Samuel was a great shock to everyone. The capture and return of the Ark and the destruction of Shiloh, the holy city of that time period. This did not occur, however, under Samuel's watch. Eli was still alive and his sons more or less functioned as priests in Israel. That the Ark was captured did not reflect negatively upon Samuel, as he was a priest-in-training at this time.
3. We suspect that Shiloh was destroyed soon after the capture of the Ark. Although the Ark caused great devastation in the land of Philistia, they still had a functioning army which was removed from that land and operating in Israel. Here is the tough question: we have a detailed report of what happened to the Ark while in Philistia, a land of mostly heathen. We do not have any contemporary report of what happened in Shiloh, a place where we would expect to find mostly believers. Why the information about the Ark and not about the destruction of Shiloh?
 - a. Apparently, there was information from Philistia as to what occurred with the Ark of God. This information is so detailed, that it appears as though we have an eyewitness account. As I suggested at that time, the ravages caused by the Ark resulted in many Philistines becoming believers. This helps to explain the relationship that David later enjoys with certain men of royalty in Philistia.
 - b. On the other hand, we have no information about the destruction of Shiloh. My guess is that the priests had enough time to dismantle and move the Tent of God (probably to Nob?). However, they were not observers at the time that Shiloh was destroyed. They were gone.
 - c. The people of Shiloh who remained were probably slaughtered.

³² Barnes' Notes; 1 Samuel to Esther; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 20.

Why Is There No Contemporary Recording of the Destruction of Shiloh?

- d. Those who destroyed Shiloh were most certainly unbelievers with great Satanic influence.
- e. Therefore, we have no witnesses to this event who would record Scripture. So, whereas we have believers (Philistines) who observed the destruction caused by the Ark of God (and who became believers as a result), we do not have believers who witnessed the destruction of Shiloh and who were alive in the aftermath.
- f. Another possibility is that Samuel was too embarrassed to record this information. Now, it is true that the believers who wrote Scripture present us with a very candid view of themselves. However, recall that Scripture was written equally by the hand of man as well as by the hand of God—therefore, it should not be out of the question that a believer would leave out an incident in his life which was a severe embarrassment to him. Samuel had the Tent of God placed in his care and the Philistines burned down the city of Shiloh and the Tent was never put up again during the life of Samuel.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to the Chart and Map Index](#)

Where is the Tent of God?

1. We do not know for certain where the Tent of God is.
2. For a long time, the Tent of God was set up in Shiloh. It was there at the beginning of Samuel's life, as he was raised in and around the Tent of God. 1Sam. 1–3
3. However, once the Ark is removed from the Tent of God (1Sam. 4:3–5), the Tent of God is no longer spoken of for a long time.
4. We can trace the movement of the Ark of God, which we did in great detail in the **Doctrine of the Ark of God** (1Sam. 4:11).
5. We know, in retrospect, that Shiloh was burned to the ground and destroyed. The incident is never actually covered historically in Scripture, but there are passages which look back on its destruction. Psalm 78:60 Jer. 7:12–14 26:4–6
6. We know that David and his men ate consecrated bread at Nob, the city of the priests. The only likely place to have consecrated bread would be at the Tent of God. Therefore, we can reasonably assume that the Tent of God was in Nob after it was in Shiloh. 1Sam. 21:1–6 1Sam. 22:11–22
7. We also know that the Tent of God was apparently rescued, as, when Solomon went to worship at the Tent of God, it was set up in Gibeon and it was the original Tent built by Israel in the wilderness desert (1Chron. 16:39 2Chron. 1:3–6).
8. Where the Tent was and whether or not it was set up in between Shiloh and Nob is a matter of speculation, which we covered in great detail in 1Chron. 7:2 (which we placed at the end of 1Chron. 6) and will cover again in greater detail in 1Sam. 10:3.
9. Solomon would bring the original Tent of God to Jerusalem as he builds the Temple of Jehovah.
10. I will cover the movement of the Tent of God in greater detail in the next chapter, but the short version goes like this: the Tent was in Shiloh, but was removed prior to Shiloh's destruction. The Tent was eventually moved to Nob, where it was set up. Solomon worshiped at the Tent in Gibeon and then moved the Tent to Jerusalem when he built the Temple. In between Nob and Shiloh, it is anyone's guess as to the Tent's location.

Why Is the Tent of God Not Set up and Functioning?

1. The city of the Tent of God was destroyed on Samuel's watch. My thinking is that during these 20 years alluded to in 1Sam. 7:2, Shiloh was destroyed.
2. Samuel did not have complete political and religious authority at the time that the Tent was destroyed.
3. We do not have any details as to who removed the Tent of God and the articles of furniture nor to where they were moved. As Samuel grew up, there was a man in the line of Phinehas, his older son, who may have had something to do with moving the Tent of God (although he would have probably been too young at the time to have an involvement). Another reasonable guess is that the Levites who were associated with the Tent of God moved it. It would not be unlikely that God would have communicated by prophet to the Levites associated with the Tent, giving them advance warning to dismantle and move the Tent.

Why Is the Tent of God Not Set up and Functioning?

4. One problem is that we have two sons of Phinehas, neither of whom is old enough to serve as the High Priest. Because of the activities of Phinehas, they probably enjoyed little support for this office. Therefore, there was no clear-cut priest-leader from the line of Eli.
5. Samuel, although he became a religious and political leader (which appears to take place in 1Sam. 7:3 after 20 difficult years for Israel), he probably enjoyed little power prior to this. To us, it is obvious that he is the leader for Israel. The people of Israel, on the other hand, while they respected his abilities as a prophet, were not necessarily eager to embrace him as a political leader or even as a leader of all things spiritual. In fact, respect due Samuel as a prophet did not necessarily come immediately during these 20 years. It was a respect which he probably slowly earned which culminated in a position of respect and power in 1Sam. 7:3. In other words, you have a set of Levites who have taken the Tent of God and spirited it elsewhere prior to the destruction of Shiloh, but there is no clear-cut High Priest or spiritual leader while this takes place.
6. Without a High Priest, why set up the Tent of God? Would you open up a Burger King if there was no manager?
7. The priesthood will undergo a dramatic change. The line of Ithamar is about to be replaced by the line of Eleazar. However, this will not happen overnight. We are at a time period where the city of God has been destroyed; the line of Ithamar, the recognized line at that time for the High Priest's office, has two young men who are not old enough to lead, nor do they have popular support. There is another completely different line of priests who will take over, but this does not simply happen overnight. The result is that this change from the line of Ithamar to the line of Eleazar takes place during the reigns of Saul, David and Solomon. It is a slow process during which we almost have a pair of High Priests, one from each line.
8. Again, we have no recognized spiritual leader; no recognized High Priest. Therefore, setting up the Tent of God would be a moot point. Furthermore, the Ark of God, the most sacred article of furniture in the Tent of God, is in a different city.

Why Is the Tent of God Not Set up and Functioning after Samuel Assumes Political and Spiritual Leadership of Israel?

1. Samuel was a prophet who became a spiritual and political leader.
2. It is possible, in fact, likely, that he was in the Levitical line, but unlikely that he was in the line of Aaron.
3. Therefore, with respect to the Tent of God, he was not necessarily considered the High Priest of Israel, even though he was raised by Samuel to participate in priestly functions.
4. Samuel was likely a Nazarite, which is not the same thing as being a High Priest.
5. We have nothing by way of Scripture which conveys to Samuel the office of High Priesthood.
6. There would not necessarily be a popular support for Samuel to assume the office of High Priesthood for several reasons:
 - a. There were already two males available in the line of Ithamar to assume this office.
 - b. There was another major branch of the line of Aaron, the sons of Eleazar, who could have assumed this office.
 - c. Samuel was raised by Eli, who did not have the best of reputations, as his sons probably led to the dismantling of this office and the loss of the spiritual integrity of the Tent of God.
 - d. There is no clear message from God that Samuel is to assume the position of High Priest.
7. Conclusion: Samuel became a religious and political leader of Israel. This is not equivalent to him becoming High Priest.
8. So again, we have the Tent of God in the hands of a certain group of Levites (including those in the line of Eleazar); and there is no undisputed candidate for the office of High Priest. No High Priest means no function of the Tent of God. Therefore, the Tent of God would not be set up.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to the Chart and Map Index](#)

Why Did Samuel Allow the Ark of God to Remain in Kiriath-jearim Apparently Without Function?

1. This actually become the easiest of all questions to answer, given what has come before. We have no

Why Did Samuel Allow the Ark of God to Remain in Kiriath-jearim Apparently Without Function?

- functioning Tent of God.
2. We have no clear-cut High Priest.
 3. Even though Samuel was raised as a Nazarite in the Tent of God, this did not give him special authority. The movement of the Tent prior to Shiloh was a decision made apart from the direction of Samuel. Therefore, he would not necessarily have the authority to then take control and call the shots.
 4. So without a High Priest, without a functioning Tent of God, there is no reason to move the Ark of God.
 5. The Ark of God was responsible for the deaths of thousands of Philistines and Israelites. When it was moved to Kiriath-jearim, the house of Abinadab enjoyed great prosperity and there were no problems. You don't fix what ain't broken.

Why Didn't Samuel Simply Take over the Position of High Priest?

1. Also a relatively easy question to answer: Nowhere did God call upon Samuel to be the High Priest to Israel.
2. Samuel was a man of God.
3. If God did not call upon him to be the High Priest, then why on earth would he try to assume that office?
4. In a way, the Ark was taken from Israel during his watch and Shiloh was destroyed when Samuel was consolidating his power (perhaps I should say, while Samuel was earning the respect of the people of Israel). Samuel assumed a hands-off policy. He was not the High Priest; he had not been called to be the High Priest. He therefore did not take any action with respect to the Tent or the Ark and, as a man of God, he certainly would not have assumed the authority of the High Priest.
5. Let's go with a contemporary example: despite his popular support in the United States, former president Bill Clinton would not go over to France during a time of political change and assume the position of president there. Nor would George Bush Jr., despite having tremendous popular support and an open side of spirituality, go to the Vatican and assume the position of Pope, even though Pope Paul is getting on in years. For a person in one position of power to simply assume another position of power would, in most cases, seem ridiculous. So it would be with Samuel. He was a political and spiritual leader. This did not give him the right or the ability to walk into the Tent of God (or to where it was being kept) and say, "I'm taking over."
6. Such a move would have been blasphemous and Samuel would probably have suffered the sin unto death.

Why Are There at Least 4 Altars Set up Throughout Israel?

1. We have altars in Ramah, Mizpah, Bethel and Gilgal. Although it is possible that not all 4 were functioning at the same time, it is not unlikely that they were.
2. We are in a time of spiritual change in Israel. The Ark of God is temporarily retired, as is the Tent of God.
3. We are in a time of partial compromise. There seems to be an association between the high places and the worship of the True God of Israel. Although this may be no more than terminology, we really do not know.
4. God is often indulgent. We have good Christian people who celebrate Christmas with a spiritual focus, even though our Lord was not born on Christmas and even though Christmas is not a true Christian holiday. Still, God does not strike down a church which has a Christmas celebration or special Christmas services; nor does God destroy a family that celebrates Christmas.
5. Samuel had a circuit that he traveled in order to judge Israel. It is not out of the question that, while dispensing justice, that he also saw to the spiritual needs of the people. Now, this was not necessarily God's first choice for the spiritual activity of Israel. However, we do not have a functioning Tent of God with the Brazen Altar; therefore, Israel made do. God apparently honored these sacrifices; or He at least tolerated this situation.
6. This is not the only incident in the Bible where God is indulgent. The Apostles, filled with steam and fervor, who had been told to simply wait on God for Pentecost, decided to elect a twelfth Apostle. There was no real justification for this and God essentially ignored this election. However, God did not strike them dead, nor did he remove Matthias via the sin unto death.
7. It is reasonable to suppose that only Samuel offered up animals as sacrifices; and therefore, only one altar

Why Are There at Least 4 Altars Set up Throughout Israel?

would be used at a time, which would preserve them as types of Jesus Christ.

8. Finally, we have come to the end of the period of the judges, one of the darkest periods in the history of Israel. That Samuel established four altars is probably one of the most innocuous things to occur with respect to spiritual matters in the nation of Israel.

I have mentioned on several occasions that I believe that Samuel was the author of the first portion of this book which bears his name. He has obviously read and studied Scripture and, at this point, he believed that he had reached the end of his useful life. With the end of chapter 7, we could expect that Samuel would disappear from history and that all we would hear about him again would be a mention of his death and the mourning of all Israel. Samuel himself expected that, which explains the end of this chapter. He is writing his obituary, for all intents and purposes. He was successful in leading his people to victory over the Philistines; the Amorites which were within the borders of Israel stopped their aggressive behavior. Samuel had set up a circuit wherein he judged the people for 20–40 years afterward. He built his house in Ramah.

The application is obvious—it does not matter how old you are or how old you feel. You may retire from your job; but you do not retire from service to God.

He installed his sons as judges in Judah (1Sam. 8:1), to train them to take over his spiritual and governmental authority. Insofar as Samuel was concerned, he was old and he had completed the work which God had for him to do. And this is how this chapter reads. However, Samuel was still alive. Samuel was still filled with the Spirit of God. Samuel was still growing spiritually. Therefore, God was not done with him yet. Samuel recorded a little about his life in 4 of the previous 7 chapters. And he figured that he was done. Wrong! From the next chapter all the way through 1Sam. 25, we will hear about Samuel. His greatest influence in Israel will be from age 60 on (or 70 on—however old he is at this time). And, as of writing this chapter, he does not have even a clue. He's old, he's gray, he is retiring, he is setting up his children to rule in his stead; and his greatest ministry lies ahead of him, not behind him. In fact, God will even bring Samuel back after he is dead for an encore ministry, something which God has done only with three men in history (Samuel, Moses and Elijah). The application is obvious—it does not matter how old you are or how old you feel. If you are growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, then God has a plan for your life which extends as far ahead of you as your life is. You may retire from your job; but you do not retire from service to God. God has a place for you in this world; your age is irrelevant.

In fact, as Samuel printed these last few words of this chapter, thinking that this would be the end of his contribution to Scripture and to Israel, God must have looked down on Samuel and smiled. "Son, you have just begun to serve Me."