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# 1 SAMUEL 8

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## 1 Samuel 8:1–22

## The Elders of Israel Demand a King

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**Introduction:** You may know a family where their last child was born 10 years after the previous child. Generally, this is the unplanned for child. What we have here is the unplanned for chapter. When Samuel was reaching the end of his life (in his opinion), he completed 1Sam. 7. He discussed a revival in Israel, the battle against the Philistines (which appeared to be their final battle at that point); and Samuel even added somewhat of an epilogue to chapter 7 (vv. 15–18). At that time, Samuel figured that his ministry was pretty much over. He was even training his sons to take over for him. Then, suddenly in chapter 8, it is like a family has given birth to a son long after their family was completed. Samuel thought that he had completed his divine assignment, and, suddenly, in 1Sam. 8, there's more. I mention this, because it helps us to put a time frame to this. In 1Sam. 7:15–17, we have Samuel summing up what he thinks are his final days ministering to Israel. He had developed a circuit which he completed every year; he built his final home in Ramah; and he was living out the final years of his life. At the beginning of 1Sam. 8, Samuel has reached a point in his life when he feels that he should retire. He begins to groom his sons to take over his ministry (1Sam. 8:1).

During this time period, we must have enough time for Israel to *fall off the wagon*, so to speak. So, from the writing of 1Sam. 7, where everything is hunky dory at the end (see 1Sam. 7:13–14), to 1Sam. 8, where we have the implied degeneration of Israel (compare 1Sam. 8:5–6 12:12, 19<sup>1</sup>). So, after 1Sam. 7:11, we may assume that we have, say, 10–40 years of peace and prosperity, which takes us up to the end of 1Sam. 7, when all of these things were recorded. Then we need time for Israel's volition to go negative and for Israel to go into idolatry (and I am merely assuming this is what happened; degeneracy can take many forms). This time of negative volition will certainly start during the time of peace and prosperity. So, figure 10–20 years of that peace and prosperity time where Israel began her downhill slide. This takes us to 1Sam. 8. The point of all this is that between the *writing* of 1Sam. 7

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<sup>1</sup> v. 19 must be examined in the Hebrew to understand this comparison of verses). The key is the word *added to*, which may or may not be in your translation.

(which Samuel assumed would be the last stuff that he would write) to the events of 1Sam. 8, there were a minimum of 10 years; and that the events of 1Sam. 8 could have occurred as much as 10–40 years *after* the events of 1Sam. 7:3–12). Returning to the analogy which I began with, 1Sam. 8 and following is the unexpected and unplanned for son which Samuel had very late in life.<sup>2</sup>

**Application:** It was clear that, at the end of 1Sam. 7, Samuel figured that his ministry had been completed; it was over. However, listen carefully: Samuel was not dead, he was spiritually mature, and he was in fellowship most of the time. Therefore, Samuel still had a ministry before God. In fact, Samuel's ministry will continue probably for decades. My point? It does not matter how old you are. Your final years as a believer could be the most productive of your life. In fact, given that you will probably have more free time and that, ideally speaking, you will be more spiritually mature and less after to get out of fellowship, it would make sense that your final years on this earth could be very productive.

It has been interesting to follow the life of Samuel. We got a lot of information about him prior to his birth (1Sam. 1–2a); we examined his growth under Eli (1Sam. 2b–3); we then jumped to the pivotal point in his life when Israel recognized his authority (the previous chapter). Now, already, we are looking for his replacement. Samuel, by the time of this chapter, has grown old. He cannot do all that he did before and has gotten help from his two sons. However, they lack personal integrity and are willing to subvert justice for money. The people of Israel complain about that, but what they are after is a king. The major nations around them are all ruled by kings and they believe that they should be too. For hundreds of years, Israel has been a theocracy. God has ruled over Israel with a variety of intercessors, some with more authority than others. The Israeli people now call for a man with absolute power over them. This is not a sudden desire. Back as far as the days of the judges, the people called upon Gideon to rule over them. “Rule over us, both you and your son; and your son’s son, for you have delivered us from the hand of Midian.” (Judges 8:22b). Gideon responded with, “I will not rule over you, nor will my son rule over you; Jehovah will rule over you.” (Judges 8:23b). Gideon understood enough to realize that he was not the man to rule over Israel; and that it was not yet time for a man to rule as king over Israel.

Israel began as a nation under God, a theocracy. “Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you will be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine. And you will be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” (Ex. 19:5–6a). It is imprecise to conclude that Israel will no longer be a theocracy because, in this chapter, the elders request Samuel to install a king over them. God will allow this choice, although it is not His perfect will for Israel. Israel will still remain a theocracy and Israel will remain, as Thieme coined the phrase, a *client nation to God*.<sup>3</sup>

You may recall that I mentioned one of the theories floating around that portions of 1Sam. 7 (specifically vv. 3–4 and vv. 13–14) were added after the rest of the chapter had been written.<sup>4</sup> I believe that I need to occasionally address the more flaky theories out there in *Christiandom*. Gnana Robinson also points out that there is a pro and anti-king sentiment shown throughout this portion of 1Samuel (and in the chapters which follow), which he dutifully separates for us (Pro-king: 1Sam. 9:1–10:16 11 12:1–5 13–14. Anti-king: 1Sam. 8 10:17–27 12:6–25 15).<sup>5</sup> Because both sentiments are found, it appears as though Robinson’s opinion is that these either represent different eras (although

<sup>2</sup> One of the niceties of writing during this time period is the use of computers. I am actually exegeting 1Sam. 12 at that time that I write this. By 1Sam. 12, the time frame of these past 5 chapters has become clear to me. Since all of this is produced on a computer rather than a typewriter, this allows me to come back and insert the information which I have gathered that allows me to properly give a chronology to this and the previous chapter.

<sup>3</sup> I don’t have right before me his exact definition of a client nation; but the gist of this is, a client nation is a nation through which God works. This nation will be responsible for preserving His Word and evangelizing the world. In the past two centuries, the United States has been a client nation to God (prior to that, England was a client nation to God). Now England possibly remains a client nation even until today; however, I doubt that God’s true presence is quite as pronounced in England as it is in the United States.

<sup>4</sup> Gnana Robinson, *1 & 2 Samuel; Let Us Be Like the Nations*; International Theological Commentary, Eerdmans’s Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, ©1993; p. 43.

<sup>5</sup> Which sets of passages represent the pro-king and anti-king sentiment are not set in stone. *Hard Sayings of the Bible* includes 1Sam. 12:1–5 in the antimonarchial group.

it was unclear whether we are speaking of different authors having their works woven together). His only disagreement with the infamous Julius Wellhausen is which tradition is oldest.<sup>6</sup> Once we exegete this portion of Scripture, along with what is coming up, it will be clear that there are two stances that one could take. This in no way implies that there are two authors whose stories are interwoven, nor does it mean that we are faced with two irreconcilable viewpoints. There are simply pluses and minuses, and Scripture tends to deal with most issues even-handedly. This chapter will cause us to ask, *what is the best form of national government?* And, *what is the best form of church government?* Not only will we ask these questions, but we will answer them. The answer to these questions will make the idea of two authors having their stories interwoven a baseless theory.

The breakdown of this chapter is fairly simple. Samuel grows old and his sons begin to take over some of his responsibilities, but they were corrupt and were willing to pervert justice for a bribe (vv. 1–3). In part, because of this, the elders of Israel go to Samuel at his home in Ramah, complaining about his sons, and that they want a king over them (vv. 4–5). Samuel goes to God in prayer over this and God tells him they are just following their own corrupt nature, which has great historical precedent (vv. 7–8). Then God tells Samuel to listen to the people, but to first give them a solemn warning as to what the results of this request would be (v. 9). The lengthiest portion of this chapter is Samuel's warning to the people of Israel as to what a king would do against them (vv. 10–18). The people answer, "Yeah, but we want a king over us." (vv. 19–20). Samuel goes back to God in prayer and God tells Samuel to appoint a king over them (v. 21). Samuel returns to the elders and tells them to go home (v. 22).

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## Samuel's Miscreant Sons

Slavishly literal:

Moderately literal:

**And so was as which old Samuel and so he made his sons judges to Israel.** 1Samuel 8:1 **And so when Samuel was old, he made his sons judges over Israel.**

**When Samuel became old, he appointed his sons as judges over Israel.**

Apparently, we have a period of time during which Israel enjoyed some peace and prosperity. There is no narrative in Scripture which covers this period of time, apart from the short description found in 1Sam. 7:13–17: **So the Philistines were subdued and they did not continue any more to enter into the territory of Israel; furthermore, the hand of Y<sup>e</sup>howah was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. 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 Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. 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 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<sup>e</sup>howah.** Barnes suggests that at least 20 years of peace and prosperity have passed, not unlike similar periods of time of peace and prosperity enjoyed by Israel during the time of the judges.<sup>7</sup> Although we really have no clue as to the actual time period, it cannot be too long (say, 50 years), or it will exceed the life of Samuel; and it cannot be too short (say, 5 years), as it would not be significant enough to note.

Here is what others have done with this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

<sup>6</sup> Gnaa Robinson, *1 & 2 Samuel; Let Us Be Like the Nations*; International Theological Commentary, Eerdmans's Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, ©1993; pp. 49–50.

<sup>7</sup> *Barnes' Notes; 1 Samuel to Esther*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 21. Examples: Judges 3:30 5:31b 8:28.

Masoretic Text                      And so was as which old Samuel and so he made his sons judges to Israel.  
 Septuagint                              And it came to pass when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel.

Significant differences:              None.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

NAB    In his old age Samuel appointed his sons judges over Israel.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

JPS (Tanakh)                              When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons judges over Israel.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

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

Young's Updated LT                      And it comes to pass, when Samuel *is* aged, that he makes his sons judges over Israel.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Samuel becomes old and appoints his sons as judges over Israel.

<b>1Samuel 8:1a</b>			
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
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
Notice that the verb <i>to be</i> is the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; and, at times, it is rendered <i>and so it was, and it came to pass</i> . Our only problem here is that when there appears to be a masculine singular subject nearby, this verb is often put in the feminine singular so that there is no confusion. For this reason, I believe this to be the main verb rather than an introductory phrase to this chapter.			
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כְּ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
`āsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i> ]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, ka`āsher (אֲשֶׁר כְּ) [pronounced <i>kah-uh-SHER</i> ] means <i>as which, as one who, as, like as, just as; because; according to what manner</i> .			
zâkên (זָקֵן) [pronounced <i>zaw-KANE</i> ]	<i>old, elderly, aged</i>	masculine singular adjective often used as a substantive	Strong's #2205 BDB #278

## 1Samuel 8:1a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Sh <sup>e</sup> mûw <sup>èl</sup> (לִשְׁמוּאֵל) [pronounced <i>sh<sup>e</sup>-moo-ALE</i> ]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028

**Translation:** *And so when Samuel was old,...* The NIV Study Bible suggests that approximately 20 years have passed since the previous chapter and that Samuel is about 65 years old.<sup>8</sup> With regards to age; we have left that period of time when man lived for a long time before growing old. Around the time of the patriarchs and before, the ages of their fathers decreased as time progressed, where men at one time lived to be 900; and, in Abraham's day, only into their early 100's. By the time of Samuel, we would expect their lifetimes to be roughly parallel to ours. In the psalm of Moses, who wrote prior to this era, said that man's days on this earth were 70–80 years (Psalm 90:10).<sup>9</sup> Therefore, the estimate of 65 years old seems reasonable.

Samuel will continue to play a part in Israel's history, as Israel's spiritual conscience; and as a confidant to King Saul, whom Samuel will choose, albeit unwillingly. He will also choose David as Saul's successor, following God's guidance. Through this time period, Samuel will function as an old man (1Sam. 8:1–12:2). Some time during Saul's reign, Samuel will die; and, interestingly enough, his age will not be given (1Sam. 25:1).<sup>10</sup>

## 1Samuel 8:1b

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 (סִיַּם) [pronounced <i>seem</i> ]; also spelled sûwm (סוּוּם) [pronounced <i>soom</i> ]	<i>to put, to place, to set, to make</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7760 BDB #962
'êth (אֵת) [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
bên (בְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
shâphaṭ (שֹׁפְטֵי) [pronounced <i>shaw-FAHT</i> ]	<i>those judging, the ones judging [governing]; judges, governors</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #8199 BDB #1047
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

<sup>8</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 382.

<sup>9</sup> Moses himself lived considerably longer—he lived to be 120 years old (Deut. 34:7).

<sup>10</sup> I say, *interestingly enough*, as he was raised in the Tent of God by Eli, who knew the year in which Samuel was born; and Samuel was raised with the idea that he would become Eli's successor. Why his age was not given is one of those interesting questions for which I may or may not develop an hypothesis.

## 1Samuel 8:1b

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

**Translation:** ...he made his sons judges over Israel. When I was younger, I recall how difficult that it was for me to sit just in one place and to relax. I worked constantly, as many as four jobs at one time. Now, as age has started to get the best of me, I hold the limit at working two jobs at a time. As I go through and revise this chapter, a few years later, I am now working, essentially, half a job. Samuel was also getting older; traveling was more taxing; the newness of his responsibilities had long since worn out. He enjoyed sitting quietly as much as he did working. His energy level was much lower. Therefore, he appointed his sons as judges in his stead. He apparently retained some authority, but they began to assume his duties.

Interestingly enough, in the Law of God, there was no particular political system devised for the selection of judges. Deut. 16:18 reads: “You will appoint for yourself judges and officers in all your towns which Jehovah your God is giving you, according to your tribes, and they will judge the people with righteous judgment.” Even though Moses was addressing all of Israel (Deut. 5:1), most of what he said, including this verse, was in the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular. Whether one would interpret this as Moses speaking to Israel (“You, Israel, will appoint for yourselves judges and officers...”) or if one would interpret this as speaking to each individual (“You, an individual citizen in Israel—you will choose for yourselves judges and officers...”); it is not clear as to what the mechanics would be. You must realize that the concept of the democracy was pretty foreign to the ancient world (at least, until the Greeks came along, and even then it was quite limited). What we have recorded is that Moses chose men under him to judge and dispense justice; Samuel chose his sons to judge. One might allow for this verse to mean that the elders of Israel were to choose their judges (which would make sense). However, what I believe is being said is that, the actual form of the government is not the essential element. These judges could be appointed by spiritually wise men (e.g., Moses and Samuel); they could be elected by a popular vote (we have no instances of this except, perhaps, in Acts 1); or, they could be chosen by the elders of Israel (which would have been a representative form of government).

**Application:** Listen to this, and read this well: If there were a superior *form* of government which would *guarantee* that superior judges would be chosen, God would have given us an unambiguous outline for that *form* of government. However, it is not the *system*, but the people in the system. At this point, apart from God coming down a choosing specific new leaders every 30–40 years (which, to a certain extent, He did), there is not one system of government which is superior over another system of government. As Thieme was wont to say: “People get the leaders that they deserve.” They might be chosen by a democracy, by a representative form of government, or they might be appointed. Even God might appoint these leaders (God *did* appoint Saul as king over Israel). Still, people get the kind of rulers that they deserve.

**Application:** So we completely understand what is going on here: the elders have come to Samuel thinking that the problem is the system of government. What is the real problem? The elders of Israel—they are the problem; the people of Israel—they are the problem. Haven't you heard over and over again, *it is the system that is corrupt*. A system does not become corrupt out of thin air. A system becomes corrupt because of the people in the system. During the time of the 1<sup>st</sup> advent of Jesus Christ, the two greatest systems of jurisprudence at that time were the Roman and Jewish courts; and yet, both courts condemned Jesus Christ, a completely innocent man, innocent of all sin, to death. It was not the system, but those in the system.

**Application:** Now, let's apply this. There are a lot of people who get hung up on the form of government found in the local church. Who is in charge? Who can veto who? Who makes the big decisions? How many elders should there be? What power should they have? How many pastors should a church have? Should their be assistant

pastors? Not only do we have these questions (which are reasonable questions, by the way), but there are men who are adamant about which form is divinely mandated. You cannot go to the New Testament and clearly find one form of local church government as recommended over another. Who had authority over any pastor and any local church in that day? The Apostles. Where are the Apostles now? Face to face with our Lord Jesus Christ. There are no Apostles walking on this earth today. So who is in charge? God left this open. There are denominations and millions of people belong to these various denominations; and there are thousands of men, if not hundreds of thousands, who are detractors of the denomination. Does God's Word clearly define a denomination as a form of Church government? Not really. But, does God's Word clearly prohibit such a form of Church government? Not really. If a denomination recognizes that people are saved by believing in Christ Jesus, as opposed to being, say, *Baptists*, and if, whenever necessary, there can be reasonable fellowship with other believers of different denominations, there I don't personally have a problem with them. My own personal choice would be a more autocratic Church government, e.g. what R. B. Thieme has going; but there is nothing in the New Testament which specifically defines that form of local church government. My point is, it is not the *system* but the people. I believe that J. Vernon McGee was, more or less, a Presbyterian<sup>11</sup>; however, in his later years, his ministry was over the radio and his local church became a much different sort of gathering and structure. Personally, the bulk of my spiritual growth occurred outside of a conventional church; it occurred as I sat next to a tape recorder copiously taking notes. Eventually, a local church was established where we sat around the same tape recorder taking notes; but still, my growth occurred elsewhere. My pastor was Bob Thieme and the structure was rather loose compared to the structure of his own local church. Now, I will guarantee that I progressed spiritually much faster than the average person did going to the average church. The important issues are positive volition, personal commitment, dedication, and correct priorities. What is not *the* issue: the system of church government. Does your congregation vote as a whole? Do your elders make all the decisions (or, your board of deacons)? Does your pastor run the show? Are there rules and regulations imposed from an organization in a different city? These are issues, but not important ones. Let me give you an analogy: you are traveling through an unfamiliar city and you are hungry. Do you stop at Midtown's Ma and Pa Café or do you stop at a familiar chain where the food tastes the same, no matter what city you are in? Is one better than the other? It depends upon the people who are in charge. Just because a restaurant is a chain, that does not make it better or worse than a restaurant which is absolutely independent. Similarly, just because a local church is part of a denomination, that does not make it any better or worse than a church that is independent. I have been to denominational churches which wasted my time in church; and I have been to independent churches who wasted my time of worship. The problem was not the organization or the structure of church government or the system of election and authority—it was the people in charge. In our context, the problem is not whether or not Israel has a king—the problem is the shoddy justice dispensed by Samuel's sons. The problem is that there are ordinary people in Israel who have chosen to bribe Samuel's sons. No longer is there a concern for justice; the concern is money.<sup>12</sup> Now, if this is a major concern, does the Bible specifically address it? Certainly: **"You will not distort justice; you will not be partial; and you will not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and perverts the words of the righteous."** (Deut. 16:19). So, is the method of selection an issue? No, and therefore, it is not addressed. Is the personal integrity of the judges an issue? Absolutely, and Moses addressed that issue as quoted.

Okay, so now you are thinking...you've either come up with great reasons in favor of denominations or against them. So let's discuss this further. A denomination can have a great doctrinal statement. Although I have never read the doctrinal statement of the Southern Baptist Association (or, whatever it is called), I suspect that it is very well written and quite accurate. Now, if a pastor in that organization studies and teaches the Word of God, then I do not see a big problem with him being a southern Baptist. However, if that pastor is lazy and if his primary focus is simply what he learned in a southern Baptist university, then his ministry is going to be crap. The independent church is very similar: I know that R. B. Thieme Jr. and J. Vernon McGee were independent<sup>13</sup> and they both had excellent ministries. However, there are thousands of independents who head lousy churches because they do not teach

<sup>11</sup> McGee attended Dallas Theological Seminary, which is nondenominational; however, he then pastored several Presbyterian churches before becoming the pastor of the Church of the Open Door in Los Angeles.

<sup>12</sup> To go off on a tangent: our system of justice is all about money, good lawyers, winning, and a multitude of laws, rules and regulations which no longer expedite justice, but hinder it.

<sup>13</sup> As I said, I don't recall how long McGee was a Presbyterian minister. From what I have read, it appears to be somewhere between 10–30 years. [http://www.thruthe bible.org/site/c.hvKSLdMYIsG/b.403743/k.96C7/Dr\\_J\\_Vernon\\_McGee.htm](http://www.thruthe bible.org/site/c.hvKSLdMYIsG/b.403743/k.96C7/Dr_J_Vernon_McGee.htm)

correct doctrine. They themselves are unteachable; and therefore, what they teach is generally, inaccurate. Again, the key is the actual pastor, and not the actual organization.

**And so was a name of his son, the firstborn, Joel; and a name of his second, Abijah—judges in Beersheba.** <sup>1Samuel 8:2</sup> **Now the name of his firstborn son was Joel, and the name of his second [was] Abijah—[they were both] judges in Beersheba.**

**He named his firstborn Joel and the second, Abijah. They governed over Israel and acted as judges in Beersheba.**

Let me dispense with a question often raised at this point: Since 1Sam. 7:15 tells us that Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life, doesn't the appointment of his sons as judges contradict this? No. Moses ruled over Israel, in a manner of speaking, all of his life. He still had an assistant, Joshua, who seamlessly stepped in at his death and led Israel (Joshua also seamlessly stepped in as a recorder of Israel's history in Scripture). Furthermore, Moses still appointed others to help him judge various matters brought before him (Ex. 18). Similarly, Samuel was the undisputed judge over Israel; his two sons were also appointed judges in a different part of Israel (southern Judah) to take some of the burden off of Samuel as he got older. I recall going from four jobs to two jobs as I got older; and to half a job after that. A man just has so much energy and that diminishes with age. Samuel simply slowed down and passed some of the work along to his sons. This does not contradict 1Sam. 7:15.

First, the other translations:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text	And so was a name of his son, the firstborn, Joel; and a name of his second, Abijah—judges in Beersheba.
Septuagint	...and these <i>are</i> the names of his sons: Joel, the first-born, and the name of the second: Abia, judges in Bersabee.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

<i>The Message</i>	His firstborn son was named Joel, the name of his second, Abijah. They were assigned duty in Beersheba.
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**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Complete Jewish Bible	His firstborn was named Yo'el, while his second son was named Aviyah; they were judges in Be'er-Sheva.
JPS (Tanakh)	The name of his first-born son as Joel, and his second son's name was Abijah; they sat as judges in Beer-sheba.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB	Now the name of his first-born was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; <i>they</i> were judging in Beersheba.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	And the name of his first-born son is Joel, and the name of his second, Abiah, judges in beer-Sheba;...

**What is the gist of this verse?** Samuel had two sons who functioned as judges: Joel and Abijah, his first and second born.



## 1Samuel 8:2a

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
hâyâh (הַיָּה) [pronounced hâw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
b <sup>e</sup> kôwr (בְּכוֹר) [pronounced b <sup>e</sup> KOHR]	<i>firstborn</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1060 BDB #114
Yôw'êl (יֹאֵל) [pronounced yoh-ĀL]	<i>to whom Jehovah is God or worshiper of Jehovah; and is transliterated Joel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3100 BDB #222

**Translation:** [Now the name of his firstborn son was Joel,...](#) *Joel* means *to whom Jehovah is God or worshiper of Jehovah*. At this point, you probably are not the least confused. Your Bible reads pretty much what I have here. However, if you have a Scofield Bible, there is a margin note on *Joel* which gives the name *Vashni* and cites 1Chron. 6:28. And, anyone who has a KJV, turns to 1Chron. 6:28 and you see that Joel's firstborn son is named *Vashni*. This should prompt you to wonder...

## Just Who the Hell is Vashni?

Now, I covered this question back in 1Chron. 6:28, but, since that chapter was just a lot of names, you may not have studied that. Therefore, here is the explanation:

In our passage, 1Sam. 8:2, the name of the firstborn son is *Joel*; which is what we find in virtually every translation, as that is what is found here. However, in 1Chron. 6:28, the name of Samuel's firstborn son in the Hebrew is *Vashni* (you probably do not find that in your Bible, if you have a modern translation). In the Greek Septuagint, he is *Sani* and the second son is *Abia*. In 1Chron. 6:28, both the Tanakh and Young call the firstborn *Vashni* and the second son *Abijah*. The NASB inserts the name *Joel*, as do most other modern translations.

If you own a NRSV, you might be quite confused at this point. In 1Chron. 6:28, the firstborn son is *Joel*; and their footnote reads: *Greek Syriac Compare verse 33 and I Sam. 8:2; Hebrew lacks Joel.\** So, to make this crystal clear: the Greek reads *Sani*; the Hebrew reads *Vashni* (to be explained); and the Syriac reads *Joel* (and, again, we are not speaking of 1Sam. 8:2 but of 1Chron. 6:28). Interesting enough, the NJB does not insert a name for the firstborn in 1Chron. 6:28 (and they follow the verse numbering of the Hebrew rather than of the Greek, which is quite rare for a modern language version—by the way, we will find out that their approach is one of the most sensible approaches).

Here's the deal: *Vashni* is the transliteration of the wâw conjunction and the Hebrew numerical adjective *shenîy* (שֵׁנִי) [pronounced *sheh-NEE*], which means *second, the second, the other [one]*. Strong's #8145 BDB #1041. Together, the wâw conjunction and the word *shenîy* make *Vashni*, and is taken, in some circles, to be someone's name. Therefore, we actually have us two literal options for 1Chron. 6:28: *...the firstborn Vashni and Abijah* or

### Just Who the Hell is Vashni?

*...the firstborn and the second and Abijah.* Taking this as a proper noun certainly allows the text to make more sense. However, when we do that, we have this inexplicable name, where we expect the name *Joel*.

1Sam. 8:2 1Chron. 6:33, Lagarde’s Greek Old Testament and the Syriac codex for this verse, all have *Joel* as the firstborn of Samuel. What probably happened is, the name *Joel* probably was dropped out of the Hebrew text due to homœoteleuton. Homœoteleuton [pronounced *ho-me-OP-to-ton*] means that the copyist would look to a word that he was copying, and then go back to the text that he had copied, see a word which was similar or ended in a similar fashion, and more or less assume that he had just written that word down. The ending of *Joel* and *Samuel* are fairly close; this means, when he went to write down the word *Joel*, his eye traveled back to what he was copying, saw the end of the name *Samuel*, thought he copied it, and then went back to get the next word or words to copy.\*\* I placed the name *Joel* in 1Chron. 6:28 where it should reasonably be placed, considering the wâw conjunction which precedes the name of Samuel’s second son, Abijah (*The sons of Samuel were Joel, his firstborn, and Abijah, his second*—1Chron. 6:28).

You may wonder, *just why did you spend all of that time telling us that there was a typo in 1Chron. 6:28?* From the earliest times, there are those who assert that there are real and serious contradictions in Scripture, and these pair of verses (1Sam. 8:2 and 1Chron. 6:28) are sometimes quoted in support of this. Whereas, I quite agree that the explanation for this is quite boring to most; it tells us clearly why such an apparent, but not real, contradiction, exists; it is simply the mistake of a copyist. I simply told you in great detail how the mistake was made.

\* *The Complete Parallel Bible*; NRSV, REB, NAB, NJB; Oxford University Press; ©1993; p. 850.

\*\*This comes from both *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill Tenney, ed., Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976; Vol. 5, p. 862 and *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*; E. W. Bullinger; ©originally 1898; reprinted 1968 Baker Books; p 1003.

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### 1Samuel 8:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
shêm (שׁוֹם) [pronounced <i>shame</i> ]	<i>name, reputation, character</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong’s #8034 BDB #1027
mish <sup>e</sup> neh (שׁוֹנֵה) [pronounced <i>mish<sup>e</sup>-NEH</i> ]	<i>double, copy, second</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong’s #4932 BDB #1041
ʿĀbîyyâh (אֲבִיָּיָה) [pronounced <i>u<sup>h</sup>-vee-YAW</i> ]	<i>Yah is [my] father; transliterated Abijah</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong’s #29 BDB #4
shâphaṭ (שׁוֹפְטִים) [pronounced <i>shaw-FAHT</i> ]	<i>those judging, the ones judging [governing]; judges, governors</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong’s #8199 BDB #1047

## 1Samuel 8:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<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
B <sup>e</sup> êr Shâba <sup>c</sup> (בְּעֵר שֶׁבַע) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ayr SHAW <sup>B</sup> -vahg]	<i>well of the oath and is transliterated Beersheba</i>	proper noun; location	Strong's #884 BDB #92

**Translation:** ...and the name of his second [was] Abijah—[they were both] judges in Beersheba. The masculine plural, Qal active participle of the verb should be rendered *those judging, judges, governors*. This simply means that Samuel had trained both of his sons to take his place. We are told nothing about God's dealings with Samuel at this point. The implication is, God did not tell Samuel, "Hold on there, buddy; we aren't setting up your sons to rule as judges after you." God did not have to guide Samuel's every step with divine guidance from heaven. Samuel did not have to stop at a fork in the path and ask God, *should I go to the left or to the right?* And clearly, if Samuel lives during a time of the audibly revealed Word of God, and not every step of his is guided by God; then surely we can function in our lives without stopping every minute or two to ask Gods guidance.

**Application:** Yes, the Bible does say *Pray without ceasing*. This refers to being in fellowship at all times, which means that you have unbroken fellowship with God. Therefore, you can, at any given time, speak to God. However, do not think that you need to ask God for a sign every time there is a fork in the road. If you do not know what to do 95% of the time without begging God in prayer for guidance, then you are not getting sound Bible teaching where you are. Now, does this mean that you should not have an ongoing conversation with God, which may include elements of guidance? Of course not; there are times when you will function in life and be in prayer at the same time, and some of your prayer will be asking God for guidance. What I am speaking of is, the idea that, you are at a crossroads, and you are immobilized because you cannot figure out what to do. That should not happen several times a week. During a time when you face a lot of important decisions, you might have to momentarily stop and especially pray for guidance once a month. However, do not function in a state of guidance-confusion for most of your life. That simply means, you are in the wrong church; you are not learning enough.

Beersheba was in southern Judah, which is pretty much the southernmost you can get in Israel and still be in a populated area. It is even possible that Beersheba was, at one time, in Philistine territory (when Philistia became more and more aggressive, taking more and more territory from the Israelites). However, even if that were the case, Israel had pushed the Philistines back considerably to the east-west line which ran through the cities Ekron and Gath (1Sam. 7:14). So Samuel trained his sons in sort of an out of the way place; however, given his own responsibilities and the circuit that he traveled, Samuel was apparently unable to properly train his sons in personal integrity (and it is possible that he tried and it didn't take). I think that it is important to notice that, Samuel did not starts his sons out on the main circuit. He gave them freedom and yet kept them at a distance from the primary court system. This suggests to me that, Samuel also had doubts about his own kids.

As a side note, Josephus tells us that these sons governed in both Beersheba and in Bethel (one son in each city—*Antiquities*, 6:3,2). However, there is no other support for this notion.<sup>14</sup>

**And have not walked his sons in his ways and so turn aside after the [dishonest] gain and so they take a bribe and so they [cause to] turn aside justice.**

1Samuel  
8:3

**However, his sons did not walk in his ways, but they inclined toward unjust gain; they would take a bribe and so they caused justice to be derailed.**

<sup>14</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 428.

**However, his sons did not walk in his ways, but they typically leaned toward unjust gain; they would take bribes and then render biased verdicts.**

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

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text                      And have not walked his sons in his ways and so turn aside after the [dishonest] gain and so they take a bribe and so they [cause to] turn aside justice.  
 Septuagint                              And his sons did not walk in his way; and they turned aside after gain, and took gifts, and perverted judgments.

Significant differences:              Essentially, the same.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

NEB    His sons did not follow in their father's footsteps but were intent on their own profit, taking bribes and perverting the course of justice.  
 NJB    His sons did not follow his example but, seduced by the love of money, took bribes and gave biased verdicts.  
 TEV    But they did not follow their father's example; they were interested only in making money, so they accepted bribes and did not decide cases honestly.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God's Word™                              The sons didn't follow their father's example but turned to dishonest ways of making money. They took bribes and denied people justice.  
 JPS (Tanakh)                              But his sons did not follow in his ways; they were bent on gain, they accepted bribes, and they subverted justice.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB    His sons, however, did not walk in his ways, but turned aside after dishonest gain and took bribes and perverted justice.  
 Young's Literal Translation              ...and his sons have not walked in his ways and turn aside after the dishonest gain, and take a bribe, and turn aside judgment.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Samuel's sons did not have the personal integrity which he did. They were willing to forgo justice if they got money for doing so.

1Samuel 8:3a			
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
lô' (אֵין or אֵין) [pronounced low]	not, no	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518

## 1Samuel 8:3a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
bên (בָּנַי) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></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
derek <sup>e</sup> (דְּרָכָיו) [pronounced <i>DEH-rek<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>way, distance, road, path; journey, course; direction, towards; manner, habit, way [of life]; of moral character</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1870 BDB #202

**Translation:** However, his sons did not walk in his ways,...

Samuel was an honorable man who pursued after righteousness. It would never occur to him to take a bribe; it would never occur to him to show favoritism in court. However, his sons did not walk in his ways. McGee comments: *Samuel made his own sons judges to succeed him although they were unworthy and incompetent for the job. This was a mistake. Samuel was a great judge, a wonderful prophet, and a great man of God—but he was a failure as a father just as Eli had been.*<sup>15</sup>

Elsewhere, McGee refers to Samuel as a *howling failure as a father*.<sup>16</sup> Those are remarkable and provocative statements that McGee makes. We don't know a great deal about Eli, and we know only a little more about Samuel's ministry (so far). What is interesting is that they both appear to be lousy fathers; or, at the very least, they raised sons who had no personal integrity. We might suggest that Samuel learned everything from Eli, including how to be a poor father—however, Eli's sons were probably middle-aged about the time that Samuel was brought to the Tabernacle. It does tell us at least two things: (1) no one is perfect. Although we know very little about Eli, what we know about Samuel is positive. He is a man of God who communicates with God, who apparently studies the Word of God (and, probably records the Word of God). Yet he has two sons whose lack of integrity brings Samuel's parenting skills into question. What is unmistakably clear is that no man of God is assured of having children who revere God as well. (2) All men have free will. It is possible that Samuel's two sons received an outstanding childhood, replete with great training and examples. They probably attended court and observed Samuel's decisions, the criminals brought before him, and the consequences of poorly chosen actions. However, whatever their background and training was, they chose to commit these criminal acts. Taking a bribe to subvert justice is a conscious, criminal act.

Now, let's look at this from a slightly different perspective. For all intents and purposes, Eli raised Samuel and Samuel, obviously, came out okay. We don't know what the difference was. Samuel was not his own son, so perhaps he was less indulgent. However, given their relative ages and given the fact that Eli's sons were grown when Samuel was little, we might assume that Eli would take more of a hands off approach, as some older parents do. Think about this: Samuel, when he was old enough to recognize what was going on, realized that Eli had himself some loser sons. He may have even quietly judged Eli as being a weak parent because of his sons'

**What is unmistakably clear is that no man of God is assured of having children who revere God as well.**

<sup>15</sup> J. Vernon McGee; *I & II Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 47.

<sup>16</sup> J. Vernon McGee; *I & II Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 64.

behavior. However, when Samuel himself had children, they grew up to be as corrupt as Eli's sons. I believe that God saw to it that the souls of Samuel's sons were similar to the souls of Eli's sons. In other words, despite their training and exposure to truth, both sets of sons chose self-indulgence instead. When taking an objective view of his own sons, Samuel could not longer think negatively about Eli, as both sets of sons rejected the faith and integrity of their fathers. The key is negative volition. Having taught for years, I can certainly confirm that there are many families with a good son and a bad son; and, in talking to the parents, they gave equal effort to both children, tried the same tricks, and, in one case, appeared to succeed, and in the other, appeared to fail. But the deciding factor was the volition of the individual children. Now, do not misunderstand me to be saying that it does not matter how you parent; nor am I saying that kids are going to do what they are going to do. That is not my point at all. There is a strong correlation between good kids and good parents. My point is, in some cases, it does not matter what you do—the child's volition will overrule your every attempt to correct and guide them. You have to do that which is right, allow the young adult child to begin making some of their own decisions, and then let the chips fall where they may.

### 1Samuel 8:3b

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
nâṭâh (נָטָה) [pronounced <i>naw-TAWH</i> ]	<i>to stretch out, to spread out, to bow, to extend, to incline, to turn</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5186 BDB #639
ʿachărêy (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
betsaʿ (בִּצְעַ) [pronounced <i>BEH-tsaḥg</i> ]	<i>greed, materialism lust; unjust gain or profit [taken by bribery, violence, looting]</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article; pausal form	Strong's #1215 BDB #130

**Translation:** *...but they inclined toward unjust gain;...* Interestingly enough, the weakness of Samuel's sons was very similar to the weakness of Eli's. Eli's sons ignored their spiritual responsibilities (after all, they were unbelievers), and took whatever they could get as priests. Samuel's sons ignored their civic responsibilities and took whatever they could get as judges. They got greedy. Law at that time, just as now, dealt in part with money and possessions. Samuel's sons recognized immediately that there was a buck to be made where their decisions affected the outcome.

### 1Samuel 8:3c

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
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i> ]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542

## 1Samuel 8:3c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shôchad (שׁוֹחַד) [pronounced <i>SHOW-khahd</i> ]	<i>a present, a gift; a bribe; bribery</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7810 BDB #1005

**Translation:** ...they would take a bribe... The Qal imperfect of *to incline to* or *to turn aside after* refers to what they typically would do (v. 3b). It describes a routine; therefore, when it is followed by another Qal imperfect, *to take*, again, this is descriptive of what they typically did.

The end results here are quite obvious—a criminal would offer one of Samuel's sons money, and it would be decided that there was not enough evidence to convict the criminal. Or, there would be a lawsuit involving money or possessions, and Samuel's sons would take the side of those who paid them. When the judge is willing to take a bribe, there is no justice.

## 1Samuel 8:3d

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
nâṭâh (נָטָה) [pronounced <i>naw-TAWH</i> ]	<i>to extend, to stretch out, to spread out, to expand; to incline downwards; to turn, to turn away [aside, to one side]; to push away, to repel, to deflect; to decline; to seduce</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5186 BDB #639
mîsh <sup>o</sup> pâṭ (מִשְׁפָּט) [pronounced <i>mish<sup>o</sup>-PAWT</i> ]	<i>judgement, justice, a verdict rendered by a judge, a judicial decision, a judicial sentence, a verdict, the judgement of the court</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4941 BDB #1048

**Translation:** ...and so they caused justice to be derailed. The verb here is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect of nâṭâh, but in the Hiphil, where it means *to cause to turn aside*. We might modernize the term somewhat to mean *to derail*. What their actions cause is the *turning aside of* or *the derailment of* the masculine singular noun mish<sup>o</sup>pâṭ (מִשְׁפָּט) [pronounced *mish<sup>o</sup>-PAWT*], which means *judgement, a verdict rendered by a judge, a judicial decision, a judicial sentence, a verdict, the judgement of the court; as well as the act of deciding a case, the place where a judgement is rendered*. It can also mean *manner, custom, fashion*. Strong's #4941 BDB #1048. We have already had the verbal cognate of this noun in vv. 1 and 2. Samuel's sons are *judges* in v. 1 and they are *judging* in Beersheba in v. 2. The end result is, they pervert justice in this verse. Their actions would be cited by the elders of Israel to support the need for a king to be appointed over Israel.

To look at all of v. 3 so far: ...and they turned aside after the gain [or, profit] and [habitually] take a bribe, so causing to derail justice. Typically, when one was offered, and where things seemed reasonable to them, the sons of Samuel would take bribes. They would turn aside from their paths as judges toward unjust gain and thus, they would cause the derailment of justice. One can't help but think back to Eli's worthless sons who treated the sacred animal sacrifices to God as personal barbeques. Samuel's sons were not concerned with justice or with that which

is right or wrong; if it lined their pockets, then that was right. They believed in taking care of #1 first. God’s Word was explicit in this case: “You will not pervert justice of your needy brother in his dispute. Keep far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent or the righteous, for I will not acquit the guilty. And you will not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of the just.” (Ex. 23:6–8). These were the words of God being spoken directly to Moses.

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### The People of Israel Ask Samuel for a King

And so gathered together [themselves] all elders of Israel and so they came unto Samuel the Ramah-ward.

1Samuel  
8:4

So all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together and came to Samuel at Ramah.

So the elders of Israel gathered themselves together and came to Samuel at Ramah.

First what others have done:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text	And so gathered together [themselves] all elders of Israel and so they came unto Samuel the Ramah-ward.
Septuagint	And the men of Israel gather themselves together, and come to Armathaim to Samuel,...

Significant differences:

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

*The Message* Fed up, all the elders of Israel got together and confronted Samuel at Ramah.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

JPS (Tanakh) All the elders of Israel assembled and came to Samuel at Ramah,...

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB	Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah;
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	And all the elders of Israel gather themselves together, and come in unto Samuel to Ramath.

**What is the gist of this verse?** The elders of Israel gathered themselves together and went to speak with Samuel in Ramah.

1Samuel 8:4a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (l) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253



## 1Samuel 8:4a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
qâbats (קָבַטְ) [pronounced kaw-BATS]	<i>to gather selves together, to be gathered together, to be collected</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Hithpael perfect	Strong's #6908 BDB #867
The Hithpael is the reflexive of the Piel. The Hithpael's primary use is reflexive—the verb describes action on or for oneself. That is, the subject of the verb is also the object of the verb. The Piel denotes the importance and solemnness of this gathering, and the reflexive means that these men gathered themselves together.			
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
zâkên (זָקֵן) [pronounced zaw-KANE]	<i>old, elderly, aged</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #2205 BDB #278
Yis <sup>e</sup> râ`êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

**Translation:** [So all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together...](#) The elders of Israel saw a problem and believed that they had a solution, so they gathered themselves together to be heard by Samuel, their spiritual leader. Apparently, elders began to talk, perhaps informally, with one another, maybe on the golf course; and they compared notes with those whom they knew from other cities. The first reports probably originated in Beersheba when it was observed that there was no justice to be had in the courts of Samuel's sons. The situation needed attention, as Samuel was, in their opinion, too old to continue much longer. Samuel had, at that time, clear spiritual authority, and the ability to communicate with God. However, if they waited too much longer, all of this could be lost. Therefore, the elders gathered together, either in Ramah or nearby. They gathered as a group, so that it was clear to Samuel that there was a consensus of opinion. Two or three elders could not show up and expect this idea to fly before Samuel.

## 1Samuel 8:4b

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
bôw' (בָּוֹ) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
`el (אֶל) [pronounced e/]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Sh <sup>e</sup> mûw`êl (שְׁמוֹן אֵל) [pronounced sh <sup>e</sup> -moo-ALE]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028

## 1Samuel 8:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Râmâth (רָמַת) [pronounced <i>raw-MATH</i> ]	<i>height, high place</i> ; transliterated <i>Ramah</i>	feminine noun used primarily as a proper noun; with the definite article and the locale hê	Strong's #7413 BDB #928

Also spelled Râmâh (רָמָה) [pronounced *raw-MAW*]. I have no idea if there is any difference between the directional hê and the locale hê; both look the same.

**Translation:** ...and came to Samuel at Ramah. Samuel had a circuit that he followed; then he would go home to Ramah to his home and, presumably, his wife. His sons were located quite a distance away in Beersheba. Suddenly, there was a knock at his door and he looks outside to see a gathering of the elders or statesmen of Israel.

And so they said unto him, “Behold, you [even] you have become old and your sons have not walked in your ways. Now place for us a king to judge [or, govern] us like all the nations.”

1Samuel  
8:5

Then they said to him, “Listen, you yourself have become old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to govern us like all the [other] nations.”

Then they said to him, “Listen, you are growing old and your sons are not following your example. Therefore, set a king over us, so that we will be like the other nations.”

Here is what others have done:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so they said unto him, “Behold, you [even] you have become old and your sons have not walked in your ways. Now place for us a king to judge [or, govern] us like all the nations.”
The Septuagint	...and they said to him, “Behold, you are grown old, and your sons walk not in your way; and now set over us a king to judge us, as also the other nations.”

Significant differences:

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

NLT	“Look,” they told him, “you are now old, and your sons are not like you. Give us a king like all the other nations have.”
TEV	...and said to him, “Look, you are getting old and your sons don’t follow your example. So then, appoint a king to rule over us, so that we will have a king, as other countries have.”

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh)	...and they said to him, “You have grown old, and your sons have not followed your ways. Therefore appoint a king for us, to govern us like all other nations.”
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#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB

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

Young's Updated LT

...and say unto him, 'Lo, you have become aged, and your sons have not walked in your ways; now, appoint to us a king, to judge us, like all the nations.'

**What is the gist of this verse?** The elders point out to Samuel that he is old and that his sons are not just as he is. They suggest that the solution would be to appoint a king to reign over them.

1Samuel 8:5a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced e]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced hin-NAY]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
ʾattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced aht-TAW]	<i>you (often, the verb to be is implied)</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
zâqên (זָקַן) [pronounced zaw-KANE]	<i>to become old, to become aged</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #2204 BDB #278

**Translation:** Then they said to him, "Listen, you yourself have become old... The elders begin to reason with Samuel. He is getting older and he cannot deny this. In fact, recognizing that fact, Samuel sets up his sons in Beersheba, probably to train them. That is, they are given a court right near the outskirts of Israel in order to practice justice.

Now, even though the elders make a good point here concerning Samuel's age, do they not grasp that any king that is appointed to rule over Israel would also grow old? Do they not grasp that, if Samuel's own sons are corrupt, what about a king? Could he not become corrupt as well?

1Samuel 8:5b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

## 1Samuel 8:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bên (בְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
lô' (לֹא or לֹאֵל) [pronounced <i>low</i> ]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></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
derek <sup>e</sup> (דֶּרֶךְ) [pronounced <i>DEH-rek<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>way, distance, road, path; journey, course; direction, towards; manner, habit, way [of life]; of moral character</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1870 BDB #202

**Translation:** ...and your sons do not walk in your ways. This is probably the poorest reason for desiring a king. The elders point out to Samuel that they should have a king, and one of their reasons for this request is that his sons are looser-judges. They're corrupt. Money buys their judgment. Now, is Samuel a good judge? Certainly. Nowhere in Scripture is his personal function as a judge ever questioned. Is Samuel a great man of God? Definitely. Here he is, old and needing to be replaced, and yet the elders go to him specifically to appoint a king. They trust Samuel's judgement and his relationship with God enough to take this request to him. The people aren't saying that they have a king candidate in their pocket and they are running this by Samuel as a matter of respect. They are ready for Samuel to choose this king. This indicates great trust in Samuel as a judge and man of God. Now think about this for a moment. Let's say that Samuel finds a great man to be king over Israel, what can we expect? (1) The king will grow old, just as Samuel grew old. However, instead of appointing someone to take his place, kings tend to rule until they die. This often makes their final years, unless they are assassinated, unproductive and chaotic. (2) Who typically succeeds the king in office? One of his sons, often his eldest. So, had Samuel become king 40 years ago, he would now be too old to rule over Israel, but, as kings do, he would continue to rule over Israel and no group of elders who valued their own lives would come to him and ask for a new king. Secondly, one of his corrupt sons, whom they are complaining about, would succeed him in office. Therefore, the arguments of the elders in favor of a king are even better arguments against appointing a king over Israel. Their solution is a solution which might be good for the next 20–40 years; however, this solution is fraught with problems—the very same problems which they see as reasons for needing a king. Generally speaking, man's solutions rarely solve man's problems.

Let me give you a down-to-earth example. One of the great changes in society over the past 40 years is the use of the court system. There are court cases of people against other people nowadays that would not go before a judge 40 years ago. Lawyers then wouldn't take the cases that lawyers take now. Today, if you have any possessions, then you can expect to be sued. You don't have to break the law; you don't have to intentionally do harm to anyone else. You don't even have to behave immorally to be taken to court. All you need to have is a little money, and someone will figure out a way to sue you. Celebrities face this all the time. They often face nuisance suits and they often settle these suits because otherwise, they, and everyone they know, will be subpoenaed, they will be required to face a lengthy deposition, they will be asked to produce a myriad of documents which have little or no relation to the case at hand, and then hauled into court. Even if they are 100% right and the one filing suit is

100% wrong, it may cost them \$50,000 or more to defend themselves. So often, you see these suits being filed against celebrities, some with cause and most without; and they are often settled out of court. It is cheaper and quicker. Is justice done? Of course not! Now, how did these changes come about? There are lawyers in public service who have decided if there is some matter which need resolving, then it should go to court. However, for every real case that the doors of court are opened for, there are an additional dozen cases without merit being taken to court and then settled.

Why do you think your insurance and your doctor's care are so expensive? In part, the court system. Do doctors make mistakes and do people die because of it? Of course. Doctors are human. They simply happen to be in the position of dealing with life and death situations. Doctors can do everything right and everything possible to save a person's life and yet their patient can still die—and the doctor may find himself being sued, despite doing nothing wrong. And what about the doctor who decides to go this route of treatment rather than that route? If there are various options, and the option that the doctor chooses is not successful, then the doctor may find himself being sued simply because he chose one option over the other.

When the United States was the victim of attacks by terrorists on 9/11/2001, what happened? Hundreds of lawsuits were filed against airlines, against owners of the Twin Towers, against various Arab interests. What could be more appalling or opportunistic than that? This was an unprecedented type of attack. I've traveled all over on planes, and, although I guess that I realized in the back of my mind that I could run into the pilot's cabin, it never occurred to me to do so; nor did it every occur to me that someone else would do so. There have certainly been some hijackings, but probably fewer hijackings than plane crashes. Personally, I thought more about planes crashing than I ever did about hijackers. So the thought of a group of hijackers taking over a plane on a suicide mission never occurred to me and doubtfully to anyone else in government. Now certainly, in retrospect, we could have prevented those attacks and made the planes more secure. In fact, it would have taken very little to have done so. However, this does not mean that someone is liable. It simply means that pretty much any accident can be theoretically prevented *after* the fact. It is easy to come up with an inexpensive scenario which would have prevented this or that accident. When you take a sympathetic victim into court and a more successful defendant; add to this that the accident could have been theoretically avoided had the successful defendant done this or that; the defendant risks losing the suit. And once again, he may have broken no laws and meant no harm. What happened could have been completely unforeseen—and yet, not only can he be sued, but he can expect to lose money on the deal even if he wins. There are people who intentionally hurt themselves in order to sue; there are those who intentionally rent a home or apartment with the intention of suing the own prior to anything occurring. There are those who get into car accidents with the intention of suing the other person, even though, for all intents and purposes, the other person is the actual victim.

Now, I want to emphasize that these changes in the court system, which have essentially allowed for more and more lawsuits, were not necessarily incorporated with the intention of the court system being misused. There was probably some self-interest involved (a lawyer making law with the idea that another lawyer would *solve* the problem) but it is highly unlikely there was any thought of malice. No doubt, the idea was to fix a problem or two. In fact, this seems to be the all-purpose solution—wherever there is a disagreement, then allow the case to be taken to court. It is simply one lawyer providing a solution by means of a few other lawyers. My point is, people, when they attempt to solve problems, often create more problems than they solve.

### 1Samuel 8:5c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿattâh (הַתָּה) [pronounced <i>gaht-TAWH</i> ]	<i>now, at this time, already</i>	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773

When followed by an imperative or an interrogative, *w<sup>e</sup>* + the adverb ʿattâh mean *and so, thus, things being so, therefore, now therefore*. Sometimes, the concept of time is lost when this combination is used to incite another.

## 1 Samuel 8:5c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
sîym (שׂוּם) [pronounced <i>seem</i> ]; also spelled sûwm (שׂוּמ) [pronounced <i>soom</i> ]	<i>to put, to place, to set; to make; to appoint</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative; with the Voluntative hê	Strong's #7760 BDB #962
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <sup>l</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

**Translation:** [Now appoint for us a king...](#) What the elders have done is that they have stated the problem, as they see it (and it was a legitimate concern); and they have come up with a solution—at least one in their own minds. Their solution is, Samuel should appoint a king over Israel. All of the problems of Israel as they stand could be prevented by simply appointing a king. This is, of course, in the thinking of the elders.

## 1 Samuel 8:5d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <sup>l</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
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>	Qal infinitive construct with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #8199 BDB #1047
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of, all; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
K <sup>e</sup> kôl (כֹּל כֵּן) appear to mean <i>according to all, just as all, exactly as all</i> . The idea is that they said to Nabal exactly that which David had instructed them.			
gôwyîm (גוֹיִם) [pronounced <i>goh-YEEM</i> ]	<i>Gentiles, [Gentile] nation, people, peoples, nations</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #1471 BDB #156

**Translation:** [...to govern us like all the \[other\] nations.](#) It is clear that Samuel has a great deal of power in Israel. He appointed his sons to judge and they are still judging, despite the fact that it is well known that they take bribes. These elders do not want to bypass Samuel or his spiritual integrity. If he appoints a king, the population in general will probably go for it. If these elders appoint a king, there would be civil unrest. Samuel, because of his communication with God, would be able to appoint a worthy king—or at least that is one of their assumptions.

Realize that there is a lack of logic in their reasoning. Samuel has already appointed his sons as judges, and that was a bad appointment.

It is important to point out that this demand of the people did not come out of nowhere. They did not decide one day that the judicial system in Israel was poorly run, and therefore they needed a king. There was another and more urgent influence on this demand. At this time, eastern Israel had been viciously invaded by Nahash the king-general of Ammon. This will not be mentioned until 1Sam. 11 and we actually will not be told of the relationship between this demand for a king and Nahash's invasion until 1Sam. 12:12. My point is to indicate that there is more here than meets the eye. You may wonder why is that not mentioned here. We have several themes intertwined here. We tend to organize our thoughts chronologically in the western world; in the eastern world, their thinking is thematic instead. Therefore, we pursue various themes in these chapters. Right now, we are discussing Israel's demand for a king. This will lead us, logically, to Saul being chosen as king over Israel. Now, despite the fact that God will choose Saul as king over Israel publically, this is not enough to confirm him as king. He will have to prove himself a leader, which he will do against Nahash. At that point, Nahash the Ammonite will be introduced, even though he is playing a significant part in all of this at this point in time. So much for coming attractions.

Recall that this was not the first time that Israel had asked God for a king to rule over them. When Gideon had delivered them, the Israelites asked him to be king over them (Judges 8:22). His response was "Hell, no!" (Judges 8:23).

Now, I want you to recognize how faithless these men are. They live in a theocracy, the only theocracy which has ever been established. That means that God ruled over them. Roughly a century ago, the Israelites were in the same spot. Their judge, Eli, had grown old and his sons did not walk in his ways. God still provided. God saw to it that Israel was given a great leader, a man of great spiritual character, even though He had to go outside the family of Levi to find such a one. God provided Samuel, who essentially came out of nowhere. Now Israel is faced with the exact same dilemma and these elders, who respect Samuel greatly, are faithless. They do not believe that God can provide them with a spiritual leader/judge.

What should the elders have done? They should have approached Samuel with evidence that his sons were taking bribes and subverting justice, and they should have been executed and replaced. Samuel possibly would not have seen to their execution, but it would have been reasonable to expect him to replace them. I had another thought: they could have gone to Samuel and requested a king over Israel and then say that Israel under judges has not worked out. After all, the period of the judges is one of the dark periods of Israel's history. However, the reason that there were so many problems under the judges is Israel's unexemplary behavior. It wasn't a problem with their judges/deliverers. When Israel needed deliverance, God sent them a deliverer. However, the reason Israel needed deliverance was that they would fall into idolatry and then God would allow outside nations to punish them. A more reasonable approach might have been, "Talk to God and see if He will appoint a king of His choosing over us." Samuel couldn't really argue with that.

Moses knew long before this that the people of Israel would ask God for a king. "[When you enter the land which Jehovah your God gives you, and you possess it and live in it, then you will say, 'I will set a king over me like all the nations who are around me.'](#)" (Deut. 17:14). Therefore, this request is not a surprise to God; He had planned for it in eternity past.

Then the elders add this reason for requesting a king: so that Israel can be "[...like all the \[other\] nations.](#)" That's the kicker. These elders think that the solution to their problems is to be like all the other nations. This shows a complete misunderstanding of their place in history. What sets Israel apart as a nation is the fact that it is not like all the other nations. Israel is a theocracy—God rules over Israel. God chose their temporal judge, who was subservient to Him. The elders, in speaking to Samuel, cite his old age and the unscrupulous behavior of his sons as reasons for requesting a king, but in this last phrase, we start getting the real reason for their request: so that Israel could be like other nations. One of the worst reasons for doing anything is so that you can be like everyone else. God did not make all mankind identical; and the nation Israel, God chose and developed from the loins of one man. God's nation, if anything, should stand out as different from the other nations; God's man, if anything, should

stand out as different from other men. Now, as Scofield points out,<sup>17</sup> Israel will remain a theocracy. Even though there will be a king over Israel, God is sovereign over their king (and this sovereignty is often illustrated by the king bowing to the authority of a prophet).

Now, many times when conversation in Scripture is recorded, not every word is quoted from the conversation. That should be obvious. We do not have a gathering of all the elders of Israel who meet with Samuel, say one sentence and split. We do not know the length of the meeting or what arguments were advanced or how they were countered, or whether they were countered. I mention this because, in the next verse, the verbiage is slightly different. It is possible that this is a direct quote of one thing which was said or whether it is simply the gist of the elders request (as was v. 5). In any case, this is not the entirety of what the elders said to Samuel.

From some of the comments which I have made, you realize that there are certain commentaries which make me grimace, and I often quote from them as examples of how people have screwed up what should be easy to understand. Gnana Robinson is one of those commentators. However, once and awhile, Robinson says something which makes sense and is quotable. Concerning the desire of these elders, Robinson writes: *Monarchy was felt to be a historical necessity in Israel. To defend the people from enemies and to deal with their neighbors on economic and political matters, the Israelites needed a proper administrative structure on a permanent basis. The rule of judges, the charismatic leaders who rose from time to time, proved to be inadequate. While looking for an alternative model, the Israelites were attracted by the kingship model of their neighbors, but they could not foresee the pitfalls in that model. In that Canaanite model of kingship, the king, instead of becoming the servant or shepherd of the community, could easily arrogate power to himself and become the ruler/oppressor of the community, as among Israel's neighbors. This was what the prophetic tradition feared and what later proved to be true in Israel.*<sup>18</sup>

**Robinson: The king, instead of becoming the servant or shepherd of the community, could easily arrogate power to himself and become the ruler/oppressor of the community**

Let's approach this in a different way. You understand what a rationalization is, right? A person has already determined their course of action or their opinion, but then they have to back it up. So then they spend time thinking of things that would back up their position. Understand that they have already made up their minds. Their viewpoint, their opinion, their course of action is not the issue to them—how can they support this position is the issue. If you are in an argument or a debate with someone, while you are presenting your most cogent argument, look them in the eye. They are not listening carefully to your argument and considering it with an open mind; at best, they are listening to your argument in order to think of a counter argument; and, at worst, they are taking this time to put together another argument to support their own position. Surely you have had the experience when someone presented an argument and you ask yourself *now where the hell did that come from?* It had nothing to do with the point you were making. It is because, while you were talking, they devised another argument to present, and as soon as you stopped speaking, they offered up their argument, apropos of nothing which you said. Now, turn this around—the next time you are in a debate, look at what is going on in your own mind when someone is presenting their position. Are you listening and considering their argument, or are you using that time to formulate your own argument? Why did I bring this up? The people of Israel had wanted a king for a long time. If you went through the book of the Judges with me, you saw that Gideon and Jephthah had both been approached to become kings over Israel (Judges 8:22 11:6, 11—Jephthah was approached more to become a local ruler). So, these elders who approached Samuel had wanted a king for a long time. They had thought about it and they had made up their minds. They mention to Samuel that his sons are taking bribes and that they do not follow in his way, but that is

<sup>17</sup> *The New Scofield Reference Bible*; Dr. C.I. Scofield; ©1967 New York-Oxford University Press; p. 329.

<sup>18</sup> Gnana Robinson, *1 & 2 Samuel; Let Us Be Like the Nations*; International Theological Commentary; Eerdmans's Publishing Co., Grand rapids, ©1993; p. 50.



a rationalization, and one that could (as I have shown you) be used as a good reason not to appoint a king over Israel. However, the elders have made up their minds and they are willing to offer any argument which might tip the scale in their favor.

Now, that Israel would at some time ask for a king was anticipated by Moses, as inspired by God the Holy Spirit: “When you enter the land which Jehovah your God gives you, and you possess it and live in it, and you say, ‘I will set a king over me like all the nations who are around me.’ Then you will certainly set a king over you whom Jehovah your God chooses, one from among your countrymen.” (Deut. 17:14–15a).

According to Canaanite beliefs, the king is a representative of Baal on earth. That is, Baal chose him to rule over their nation. Those who view fascism from the political ideological stance, see the ruler of a country as the man which God has placed there. Like all philosophies, there is some truth and some falsehood to this belief. A country gets the ruler it deserves; God places men in power and removes others. However, rarely do we ever have a man in power who represents God to man (there are exceptions like Moses, Samuel and David). Israel will have a series of monarchs, some good and many who are awful—but only a handful actually represent God to the people. Only a handful will record Scripture.

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## Samuel Goes to God about this Request

And so displeasing the word in [the two] eyes of Samuel in which they said, “Give to us a king to judge us.” And so pray Samuel unto Y<sup>e</sup>howah. 1Samuel 8:6

So this thing was displeasing in the eyes of Samuel, when they said, “Give to us a king to govern us.” Therefore, Samuel prayed to Y<sup>e</sup>howah.

And this opinion was displeasing in the sight of Samuel, that is, when they said, “Give us a king to rule us.” Therefore, Samuel prayed to Jehovah.

Here is what others have done:

### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text And so displeasing the word in [the two] eyes of Samuel in which they said, “Give to us a king to judge us.” And so pray Samuel unto Y<sup>e</sup>howah.

Septuagint And the thing [was] evil in the eyes of Samuel, when they said, “Give us a king to judge us;” and Samuel prayed to the Lord.

Significant differences: None.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

NLT Samuel was very upset with their request and went to the LORD for advice.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God’s Word™ But Samuel considered it wrong for them to request a king to judge them. So Samuel prayed to the LORD.

JPS (Tanakh) Samuel was displeased that they said, “Give us a king to govern us.” Samuel prayed to the LORD,...

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB

But the thing was displeasing [or, evil] in the sight of Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." And Samuel prayed to the LORD.

Young's Updated LT

And the thing is evil in the eyes of Samuel, when they have said, 'Give to us a king to judge us;' and Samuel prayed unto Jehovah.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Samuel is upset by this request for a king, and goes to God in prayer about it.

1Samuel 8:6a			
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
râ'â' (רָעָע) [pronounced raw-GAHG]	<i>to make a loud noise; to be evil [from the idea of raging or being tumultuous]; to be bad, to displease; possibly to be unpleasant and embittering; to break, to shatter</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7489 BDB #949
dâbâr (דְּבַר) [pronounced daw <sup>b</sup> -VAWR]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<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
'ayin (עֵינַי) [pronounced GH-yin]	<i>spring, fountain; eye, spiritual eyes</i>	feminine dual construct	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
Sh <sup>e</sup> mûw'êl (שְׁמוּאֵל) [pronounced sh <sup>e</sup> -moo-ALE]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028

**Translation:** *So this thing was displeasing in the eyes of Samuel,...* Or, (and I am taking some liberties here): *And this opinion was displeasing in the eyes of Samuel; i.e., when they said,...* Realize that Samuel was the authority here. He was the one who, for all intents and purposes, ruled over Israel (under the guidance of God, of course). He had devoted his entire life to serving God and serving Israel, and now this group of elders comes to him and says, *it's not good enough*. So Samuel has two problems here: (1) the people are requesting a king which God had not expressly mandated from His directive will; and (2) the people are rejecting Samuel's authority and dedication, which he no doubt took personally (we will see that in the next verse). Samuel devoted his entire life to public service, with very little by way of remuneration. Some people retire from public office as multi-millionaires or become multi-millionaires soon thereafter. This was not Samuel. His personal dedication and integrity were irreproachable. Sure, maybe his sons did not walk in his ways, but that is not necessarily Samuel's fault, nor is it a problem which cannot be fixed apart from radical surgery (i.e., removing the sons from office).

## 1Samuel 8:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כּ) [pronounced k <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
ʿāsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, kaʿāsher (אֲשֶׁר כּ) [pronounced kah-uh-SHER] means <i>as which, as one who, as, like as, just as; because; according to what manner</i> .			
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
nāthan (נָתַן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative; with the Voluntative hê	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
lāmed (ל) (pronounced l <sup>e</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
lāmed (ל) (pronounced l <sup>e</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
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>	Qal infinitive construct with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #8199 BDB #1047

**Translation:** ...when they said, “Give to us a king to govern us.” In the previous verse, it read, “Place for us a king to judge [or, govern] us like all the nations.” In this verse, it reads: “Give to us a king to judge us.” And, as I said, the entire text of what they had to say was not covered in the previous verse, nor was it covered here. What we are getting is the gist of what the elders had to say to Samuel.

Notice the verse to this point: **So this opinion displeased Samuel, when they said, “Give to us a king to govern us.”** Note that Samuel is not upset that his sons have been accused of subverting the law—he does not take that personally. As mentioned before, Samuel may have put them in an out of the way place with that idea in mind. What bothers him is, these people are requesting that he put a king over them, and that is clearly outside of the plan of God—or, at least, clearly outside the directive will of God.

## 1Samuel 8:6c

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

## 1 Samuel 8:6c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
pâlal (לָלַל) [pronounced paw-L AHL]	<i>to pray, to intercede, to make intercession for, to ask for a favorable determination</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #6419 BDB #813
Sh <sup>e</sup> mûw <sup>l</sup> êl (שָׁמוּאֵל) [pronounced sh <sup>e</sup> -moo-ALE]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028
êl (אֵל) [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 (יְהוָה) [pronunciation is possibly yohoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

**Translation:** *Therefore, Samuel prayed to Y<sup>e</sup>howah.* Samuel is somewhat frustrated over this. He understands the problems and no doubt sympathizes with the sentiment of the elders—he is old and his sons are worthless pieces of crap. However, Samuel also understands that God rules over Israel, and he knows that a king is not necessarily a good thing.

**Application:** Now, for a little application. It is easy to recognize a problem and to expound on this problem. We live in the devil's world. There is something wrong with just about everything. It is also easy to propose a solution. This does not mean, however, that every solution suggested to a problem will solve the problem. Often, solutions make the problem much worse. The best illustration of that is Congress. For the past century, Congress has seen it their job to pass law after law after law to solve problems. Many people would agree absolutely with this. However, in most cases, even when a new law solves or begins to solve a problem, two more (or ten more) problems crop up in place of the first problem. Where Israel is at this moment is a problem. Even Samuel would fully agree that he is getting old and that his sons are not his successors. However, that does not mean that the elders have the solution in proposing a king be appointed over them. You may recall from the first chapter of Acts that the disciples counted their number, realized that they were one short, and they elected a twelfth Apostle. That was foolish. Sure, they were one Apostle short. However, God did not give them authorization or leading to elect another Apostle. God chose the twelfth Apostle and possibly even a couple more. The man that they chose, Matthias, went nowhere. Matthias, who was probably very spiritual and a heck of a nice guy, was elected as the twelfth apostle, and after the election, we never hear from him again. Why? Because he was not God's choice. He was not a solution to their problems. What am I saying to you? *You do not always solve a problem by attempting to solve the problem.* I know for some, that is a completely foreign concept. But this is a case in point (these elders coming to Samuel and proposing a king rule over Israel) and the election of the twelfth Apostle was a case in point. By the way, the twelfth Apostle was Paul, who persecuted Christians at the very early part of the Apostles' ministry. Would the Apostles of Jesus elect Paul? Not in a million years. Most Christians did not even want to be in the same city as Paul, let alone elect him as an Apostle. That's because we do not know what God knows. God could see the positive volition on the inside of Paul and God used Paul like He used no other Apostle. That is because God alone solved the problem of the lack of one Apostle.

**Application:** Let's take this to a political level. I recall hearing one woman on public radio who supported a particular piece of legislation and it had been rejected because it was not written well enough. Everyone knew the intention of the law, but it had not been stated as well as it should be. Therefore, the bill was rejected. She was upset and said that some minor problems with the language should have not prevented the bill from passing, and that everyone knew the intention of the bill. Listen, our high courts are legendary in their ability to take a law and

the language of a law and to twist it in such a way as to further their own agenda. They pass laws and make policies without ever having to pass a law through the normal channels. They just take a law already in existence and interpret it as per their own agenda. Our court system today is in virtual chaos because of that very power which the courts have they themselves misappropriated. So, when a law is passed, no matter how noble the cause; if the language is not just so, it allows the courts to come in and use that law for ways that the original authors could have never expected. One problem partially solved and ten problems created.

**And so says Y<sup>e</sup>howah unto Samuel, “Listen in a voice of the people to all which they say unto you for not you have they rejected, for Me they have rejected from ruling over them.** 1Samuel 8:7

**So Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Samuel, “Listen to the voice of the people, to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from ruling over them.**

**And Jehovah said to Samuel, “Listen to the people and all that they say to you, for they are not rejecting you, but they have rejected Me from ruling over them.**

In the few verses, the *literary style*, so to speak, will change. There will be more adverbs, more prepositions and more verb forms. Throughout most of Samuel, the sentence structure is fairly simple and straightforward. Although the Hebrew which follows is not difficult, it is more complex than what has come before.

First, what others have done:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text	And so says Y <sup>e</sup> howah unto Samuel, “Listen in a voice of the people to all which they say unto you for not you have they rejected, for Me they have rejected from ruling over them.
Septuagint	And the Lord said to Samuel, “Hear the voice of the people, in whatever they will say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from reigning over them.

Significant differences: None.

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

REB	...and the LORD told him, ‘Listen to the people and all that they are saying; they have not rejected you, it is I whom they have rejected, I whom they will not have to be their king.
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#### **Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God’s Word™	The LORD told Samuel, “Listen to everything the people are saying to you. They haven’t reject you; they’ve rejected me.
JPS (Tanakh)	...and the LORD replied to Samuel, “Heed the demand of the people in everything they say to you. For it is not you that they have rejected; it is Me they have rejected as their king.

#### **Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB	And the LORD said to Samuel, “Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them.
Young’s Updated LT	And Jehovah says to Samuel, ‘Hearken to the voice of the people, to all that they say to you, for you they have not rejected, but Me they have rejected, from reigning over them.

**What is the gist of this verse?** God tells Samuel to listen to the voice of the people (which means, to go along with what they desire); and to bear in mind, they have not rejected Samuel, but they have rejected Jesus Christ.

<b>1Samuel 8:7a</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong's Numbers</b>
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 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i> ]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>eI</i> ]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Sh <sup>e</sup> mûwʾêl (שְׁמוֹ וְאֵל) [pronounced <i>sh<sup>e</sup>-moo-ALE</i> ]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028
shâmaʿ (שָׁמַע) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAHG</i> ]	<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>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></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
qôw (קוֹל) [pronounced <i>kohI</i> ]	<i>sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6963 BDB #876
ʿam (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

**Translation:** So Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Samuel, “Listen to the voice of the people,... It is not clear how God spoke to Samuel, whether it was through inspired writing or whether there was an actual audible voice as you and I would use to communicate. Samuel is spiritually mature—he understands the issues in the choice of the elders, and recognizes that they come from a spiritually bereft position. He goes to God in prayer, as he is old and the elders could easily override his veto.

The verb in this portion of v. 7 is the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative of *to hear, to listen, to hearken*. One of the great words from the King James' era is *hearken*, which is an outstanding one-word rendering of this word. The implication is that God expects Samuel to listen *and* to obey the voice of the people. So, God does not

expect Samuel to simply go back and lend a sympathetic ear to these elders; and then offer up a better solution. Samuel is to listen to them and go along with their request.

By the way, you see the word *people* here? But recall, it is the *elders* who have come to speak to Samuel. This indicates to us that the will of the elders is the will of the people. That is, they did not simply come up with this notion of a king out of their heads; this is a mandate from the people.

### 1Samuel 8:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>koh</i> ]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʿăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i> ]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Literally, they mean <i>to [for, towards, in regard to] all which [that, who]...</i> However, together, various literal translations give the following renderings: <i>to all that, in all that, to everything, and everything</i> . These are taken from over a half-dozen literal translations for 1Sam. 8:7. Neither BDB nor Gesenius give us a rendering for this combination.			
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʿel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>e</i> ]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39

**Translation:** *...to all that they say to you,...* This gives us: [So Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Samuel, "Listen to the voice of the people and all that they said to you..."](#) This is a surprise to Samuel. What the people are proposing to him is absolutely wrong, yet God tells him to listen to what the people have to say. And it will be clear that this is not simply to placate the people—that is, Samuel isn't simply to just listen to the people and say some nice things and then ignore what they have to say. Samuel is to listen to and *obey* their voice.

### 1Samuel 8:7c

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
lô' (לֹא or לֹא') [pronounced <i>low</i> ]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518

## 1 Samuel 8:7c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	affixed to a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
mā`aḥ (מֵאָח) [pronounced <i>maw-AHS</i> ]	<i>to reject, to despise, to lightly esteem, to refuse</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect; pausal form	Strong's #3988 BDB #549

**Translation:** ...for they have not rejected you,... The verb is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect of *reject, despise, lightly esteem, refuse*. The verb is accompanied by a negative. Samuel is taking this situation personally, and God is telling him not to. God has the full perspective, and Samuel can only see what is going on at that time.

## 1 Samuel 8:7d

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
The two <i>kîy</i> 's in close proximity mean <i>for...for...</i> However, here, we have the negative preceding the first <i>kîy</i> , which gives us <i>for not...but...</i>			
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	affixed to a 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
mā`aḥ (מֵאָח) [pronounced <i>maw-AHS</i> ]	<i>to reject, to despise, to lightly esteem, to refuse</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect; pausal form	Strong's #3988 BDB #549
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
mâlak <sup>e</sup> (מֵלַךְ) [pronounced <i>maw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to reign, to become king or queen</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #4427 BDB #573
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752

**Translation:** ...but they have rejected Me from ruling over them. Or, more completely, "...for they have not rejected you but they have rejected Me from ruling over them." What God says here indicates that Samuel himself took all of this a bit personally. God had put him in charge, the people were now unhappy with some of the results (specifically, the lack of integrity on the part of his sons), and Samuel takes it personally. God tells him not to. He simply tells Samuel that there is no personal rejection involved regarding Samuel. The people are expressing a faithlessness in God, Who provided them with Samuel in the first place. God is telling Samuel to objectively focus on the issue and upon what God would allow.

God has three *will*'s with respect to our volition. There is God's *directive will*: He has a perfect decision for our life, and we choose that decision. We also have God's *permissive will*. When given a choice between right and wrong, we choose wrong. God allows us to choose wrong, which allowance is His *permissive will*. There are also occasions where we want to choose wrong over right, but God intervenes in some way with this decision. For



instance, when I moved here to Texas, I had two different jobs that, had I a choice, I would have taken the worst of the two (not really knowing which would be the better place for me to work at the time). God overruled my decision and did not give me a choice. That third will of God is known as His *overruling will*.

To summarize in table form...

The Three Wills of God	
Type	Explanation
<b>Directive Will</b>	God tells us what to do and we do it. This would be His directive will. In this situation, God will direct Samuel to listen to the elder delegation who have come to him, and to obey them.
<b>Permissive Will</b>	This is when God wants us to do one thing, but we want to do something else. God allows us to do that something else. God does not want these elders to request a king and it is outside of God's directive will to give them a king. However, God will give the people of Israel a king via His permissive will.
<b>Overruling Will</b>	We want A; God wants for us to have B; God gives us B. For instance, it is apparent that some people wanted a king over Israel for some time. This goes back to the middle of the book of Judges. However, God did not give Israel a king until this point in time. So, prior to this, those in Israel who desired a king experienced God's <i>overruling will</i> .

You will note, most importantly, that God does not change the actual volition of man in any of these cases.

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God has known from the very beginning that there would eventually be a king over Israel. In fact, God promised Abraham “I will make you exceedingly prolific and I will make nations of you and kings will come forth from you.” (Gen. 17:6). Jacob summoned his sons and predicted that the scepter (a symbol of rulership) would not depart from Judah until Shiloh comes (Gen. 49:10). David and Solomon were both from the tribe of Judah. The ruling family over the southern kingdom was Judah. In fact, given this passage, a good argument could be made that God would have instituted a monarchy over Israel beginning with David. Saul was a result of the demands of the people; but David was wholly God’s choice—Saul was given to Israel by God's permissive will. A king of Israel is mentioned in the prophecy of Balaam in Num. 24:7, 17. Moses warns that Israel will desire a king over them back in Deut. 17:14–15 and he includes guidelines for the behavior of a king over Israel (Deut. 17:16–20), which includes being certain to have a copy of the Law transcribed for himself to study. So, from circa 1440 B.C. until this time (roughly 1000 B.C.), Israel has no king over her, yet has survived as a nation (although, not always admirably so). At this point, the elders have requested a king and God will grant this request. This will be God’s permissive will. However, Israel’s having a king in general did not have to be a result of God’s permissive will. Given some time, God would have directed Samuel (or some later representative in the choosing of a king).

You may wonder, if God has already given guidelines for a king and now the people are requesting a king, what exactly is the foul? How is this God’s permissive will when a king is clearly a part of Israel's future? The people had the wrong motivation for their desire of a king. They wanted to be like the other nations. Furthermore, they did not ask Samuel’s guidance or, for that matter, God’s will in this matter. They simply presented their demand to Samuel. Even after Samuel clearly explains what a king would do to them (vv. 11–18), they pretty much ignore everything that he says as unimportant and further demand a king (v. 19). Given that Samuel represents divine viewpoint to them, ignoring his arguments and demanding what he clearly presents as a poor choice is indicative of their negative volition toward God’s directive will. Therefore, the allowing of Israel to have a king is God’s permissive will. Now, God was going to place a king over Israel, because such a king would point toward the Eternal King to come; however, Israel chose to have this occur at the time that the elders desired as opposed to the time table of God. The difference? I suspect that God would have, 40 years or so hence, placed David as the

first king over Israel. Saul could have still led Israel in battle, yet we would not have had 10+ years of crazy Saul on the throne over Israel. Samuel would have still been in charge and, prior to his death, he would have anointed David king over all Israel.

Archer explains: *...the reason why their request displeased the Lord was that it was based on the assumption that they should follow their pagan neighbors in their form of government. Their motive was to conform to the world about them rather than to abide by the holy and perfect constitution that God had given them under Moses in the form of the Pentateuchal code. There was a definite sense in which they were setting aside the laws of God as inadequate for their needs and falling in step with the idolatrous heathen. They expressed their desire to Samuel thus: "Now appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations" (NASB). They had forgotten that God had called them out of the world, not to conform to the world, but to walk in covenant fellowship with Yahweh as testimony of godliness before all the pagan world.*<sup>19</sup>

**"As all of the deeds which they have done from a day my bringing them out from Egypt and to the day the this and so they are forsaking Me and so they are serving gods others so they [even they] are doing also to you.**

1 Samuel  
8:8

**"As all of the deeds which they have done since the day I brought them out of Egypt even to this day, they [continue to] forsake Me and serve other gods. Thus they also keep doing to you.**

**"It has been typical of them to forsake Me and to serve other gods—even from the day that I brought them out of Egypt and to this day. Just as they reject of My leadership they also reject yours.**

Samuel was named in the essentially list of problem that Israel had with being without a king, so God briefly explains the hard-headedness of His people. Here's what others have done:

#### **Ancient texts:**

##### Masoretic Text

"As all of the deeds which they have done from a day my bringing them out from Egypt and to the day the this and so they are forsaking Me and so they are serving gods others so they [even they] are doing also to you.

##### Septuagint

According to all their doings which they have done to Me, from the day that I brought them out of Egypt until this day, even as they have deserted Me, and served other gods, so they do also to you.

##### Significant differences:

No significant differences.

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

##### *The Message*

From the day I brought them out of Egypt until this very day they've been behaving like this, leaving me for other gods. And now they're doing it to you.

#### **Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

##### *God's Word™*

They're doing just what they've done since I took them out of Egypt—leaving me and serving other gods.

##### JPS (Tanakh)

Like everything else they have done ever since I brought them out of Egypt to this day—forsaking Me and worshiping other gods—so they are doing to you.

#### **Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

<sup>19</sup> *The Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*; Gleason L. Archer; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1982; p. 170.

NASB

“Like all the deeds which they have done wince the day that I brought them up from Egypt even to this day—in that they have forsaken Me and served other gods—so they are doing to you also.

Young's Updated LT

According to all the works that they have done from the day of My bringing them up out of Egypt, even to this day, when they forsake Me, and serve other gods—so they are doing also to you.

**What is the gist of this verse?** God tells Samuel that this is typical of the Jews throughout their history. From the time that God brought them out of Egypt to that day, the Jews would continually forsake God and serve other gods. Their negative volition is here being made clear to Samuel.

### 1Samuel 8:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כ) [pronounced k <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of, all; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
K <sup>e</sup> kôl (כֹּל כ) appear to mean <i>according to all, just as all, exactly as all.</i>			
ma <sup>ʿ</sup> āseh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced mah-ġa-SEH]	<i>deeds, works, production, that which is done</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #4639 BDB #795
ʾāsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
ʾāsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ġaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793

**Translation:** “As all of the deeds which they have done... Here, God begins to summarize the history of Israel in relation to Him. God speaks of all the actions which Israel has done. The idea is, Israel has consistently done the same thing over and over again, as made obvious in all of their deeds. They have consistently shown to have negative volition toward God.

### 1Samuel 8:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yôwm (יּוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	<i>day; time; today (with a definite article)</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
ʾâlâh (אֵלָהּ) [pronounced ġaw-LAWH]	<i>to cause to go up, to lead up, to take up, to bring up</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #5927 BDB #748

## 1 Samuel 8:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿêth (תָּא) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	affixed to a 3 <sup>rd</sup> 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</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
Mitz <sup>o</sup> rayim (מִצְרַיִם) [pronounced <i>mits-RAH-yim</i> ]	<i>Egypt, Egyptians</i>	proper noun	Strong's #4714 BDB #595

**Translation:** ...since the day I brought them out of Egypt... Then God gives a period of time over which the Israelites have exhibited this behavior. The negative volition of the nation of Israel dates back to the time that God led them out of Egypt. God show Israel marvelous signs through Moses, and still, much of the Torah is a case history of Israel rebelling against God.

## 1 Samuel 8:8c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>o</sup> (or v <sup>o</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿad (עַד) [pronounced <i>gahd</i> ]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
Together, min...wa ʿad (עַד וּ 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> .			
yōwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i> ]	<i>day; time; today</i> (with a definite article)	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i> ]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260

**Translation:** ...even to this day... Or, more fully: "...as all the deeds which they have done from the day of my bringing them out of Egypt even to this day..." God assures Samuel that this is typical Israeli behavior. Even when God brought them out of Egypt with great signs and wonders, they continually bitched in the desert about this thing and that thing to a point where God was ready to kill them all and start over with Moses. "They are behaving no differently than when I brought these ingrates out of Egypt, out of bondage, and performed signs and miracles in their presence." Then God adds, "And they continue in this same behavior problem even up until today."

Let me speak now concerning...

### Covenant Theology vs. Dispensations

There is an evil doctrine out there known as covenant theology. The idea is, Israel, because of her unfaithfulness, either morphed into the church or became the Church; and that the nation Israel has been set aside permanently. Throughout the books we have studied, Israel fails again and again and again. At a time

## Covenant Theology vs. Dispensations

when we would expect Israel to believe God, when observing signs and wonders, they are still in rebellion against Him. So, don't get this idea that somehow Israel turned from good to bad, and God rejected Israel for being bad. Israel has always fallen short of God's expectations; Israel has continually expressed negative volition toward God. The Church, however, does not replace Israel; but only temporarily supplants them. The Age of Israel still has 7 years to play out. God did not grow so disgusted with Israel as to just flat out reject her; God will set Israel aside, but not permanently. God will fulfill all of His promises to Israel. He is not going to change things up, and propose, "Well, Israel was just so damn bad, that the church is going to get all of the promises that I made to Abraham." God is faithful, even when we are not. God is faithful to Israel, even when Israel is not. It is one of the great truths of Scripture that God has not forsaken the Jews and He will never forsake the Jew. Why do you think there are Jews today? We don't find Philistines; we don't find Girgashites; we don't find Edomites. But God has preserved the Jewish race, because God is not finished with them yet.

And maybe you are thinking, *well, no matter what you say, I don't believe in dispensations*. If you attend a church where there are no animal sacrifices, then you believe in dispensations. If you attend a church where the Sabbath (Saturday) is not observed, then you believe in dispensations. If you don't have one altar and one altar alone that men from all over the world come to in order to offer up animal sacrifices, then you believe in dispensations. Even the most staunch of the covenant theologians believes in dispensations. Dispensation simply indicates that God handles things in one time period in a slightly different fashion than He did during another time period. In the nation Israel, God has one altar, one priesthood, one High Priest; He has designed a Tabernacle and an Ark to speak of Jesus Christ; He has designed holy days and feast days, all of which point to Jesus Christ. All of this takes place in one central location. However, when it comes to the Church Age, we can come from any nation, speak any language, and we meet in a variety of places, all over the world. There is no altar, there is no Sabbath, there are no feast days. We enjoy the filling of God the Holy Spirit; we enjoy being a part of spiritual progress, regardless of what position we play. We can be poor, borderline retarded, have no friends, and barely be tolerated in church, and we can still have spiritual impact. We can appear to be the least of all brothers in the church, in every respect, by every single way men judge other men, and we can still have spiritual impact. That is a big difference between the previous dispensation and this dispensation.

This is obviously not a complete examination of these two viewpoints; it is simply a short dissertation. However, I mention this because, God here speaks about the complete unfaithfulness of Israel, something which is observed again and again, even back to when He brought them out of Egypt. I mention this because, Covenant Theology presumes that God gave all of Israel's blessings to the church because of Israel's unfaithfulness. Israel's unfaithfulness is legend, throughout the entire Age of Israel.

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### 1Samuel 8:8d

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
ʿâzab (אַזַּב) [pronounced <i>gaw-ZA<sup>B</sup>V</i> ]	<i>to loosen ones bands; to let go [one from being in bonds]; to leave [forsake, desert]; to leave off, to cease from [anything]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #5800 BDB #736

**Translation:** ...they [continue to] forsake Me... Then God gives them a simple example, which is His primary beef with Israel (but certainly not the only one). God tells Samuel that Israel forsakes Him and His leadership. After all,

Israel is, at this point in time, a theocracy, a nation under God; however, they desire to the a monarchy instead. This is a forsaking of God.

### 1Samuel 8:8e

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
ʿâbad (עָבַד) [pronounced <i>âw</i> <sup>b</sup> -VAHD]	<i>to work, to serve, to labor; to be a slave to</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5647 BDB #712
ʿĒlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i> ]	<i>gods, foreign gods, god; God; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #430 BDB #43
Context inevitably points out whether this is the God, the Creator of the Universe, or foreign gods, which are the result of fertile imagination at best and representative of demons at worst. They are distinguished in a variety of ways (1) there will be the word <i>other</i> associated with the Hebrew word (Ex. 20:3 23:13 Joshua 24:2); (2) there will be a modifying word to indicate that <i>gods</i> is different from the God (Ex. 18:11); (3) the word <i>gods</i> is specifically differentiated from Y <sup>h</sup> owah in the immediate context (Ex. 22:19); (4) God would be associated with a singular verb (Deut. 4:34) and gods with plural verbs (Ex. 32:1, 23); (5) or gods will be modified by <i>foreign</i> or <i>of the Gentiles</i> (Gen. 35:2, 4 Deut. 31:16 1Kings 18:33).			
ʿachêr (אַחֵר) [pronounced <i>ah-KHEHR</i> ]	<i>another, following, other as well as foreign, alien, strange</i>	adjective/substantive	Strong's #312 BDB #29

**Translation:** *...and serve other gods.* Or, more fully: *“...and they forsake me and serve other gods...”* With all that God had done for Israel, one would think that this would be the easiest thing for an Israelite to grasp—he was to serve the One Who brought him out of Egypt. However, Israelites again and again deserted the God Who bought them and served heathen gods. When it came to worship of the True God, they continually chose to worship an idol or a false, non-existent god. You may wonder, *how is it possible for the Jews of the first century A.D. to reject Jesus Christ?* It was in their nature to do so. You may wonder, *how can Jews, given the historical perspective, reject their God and Savior Christ Jesus?* It is in their nature; they turned from God when they were in the desert wilderness and they continued to turn away from God again and again even until today. Okay, the other side of the coin: *didn't some of the Jews remain faithful?* Yes, a number of them did, from time to time, followed the God of Glory; just as there are Jews now and again who believe in Christ Jesus. Negative volition toward Jesus Christ is negative volition toward God. For probably the majority of Jews, they know only the most fundamental things about their origins and little if anything about Christ Jesus (except that they should not believe in Him). The Old Testament is filled with parallels to the new, from Abraham's aborted sacrifice of his only son to Moses' intercession on behalf of Israel, to the Suffering Servant of Isa. 53.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Which passage, by the way, gives as detailed a look at the cross as any New Testament passage.

## 1Samuel 8:8f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced <i>kane</i> ]	<i>so, thus; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted;</i>	properly, an active participle; used primarily as an adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485
hêmmâh (הֵמָּה) [pronounced <i>haym-mawh</i> ]	<i>they, those; themselves; these [with the definite article]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural personal pronoun	Strong's #1992 BDB #241
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i> ]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
gam (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

**Translation:** *Thus they also keep doing to you.* The gist of this verse is that God has been faithful to the Jew and has led them out of Egypt, as had never before occurred in history. Yet, they continued to reject Him and to serve other gods. Samuel has provided good and faithful leadership to Israel, under God's authority, and now—typical of the Jew—they reject his leadership as well. God simply tells Samuel that this is characteristic of His people.

**And now hearken in their voice—only that you a testimony testify against them and you have made conspicuous to them a custom of the king who reigns over them.”**

1Samuel  
8:9

**“Therefore, listen to their voice [and acquiesce to their request]; only solemnly testify against them [after] you have made conspicuous to them the customs of a king who would reign over them.”**

**“Therefore, listen to the voice of the elders and acquiesce to their demands. However, first solemnly testify against them and acquiesce only after you have made it clear to them the customs and behavior of a king who reigns over them.”**

Again, the text is somewhat more difficult here than elsewhere in this chapter. The gist of this verse is rather simple: God tells Samuel to listen to what the people request, grant this request, but make it clear to them what will happen if they demand a king. First, here is what others have done with this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

##### Masoretic Text

*And now hearken in their voice—only that you a testimony testify against them and you have made conspicuous to them a custom of the king who reigns over them.”*

##### Septuagint

*And now hearken to their voice; only you will solemnly testify [or, report] to them, and you will describe to them the manner [or, judgment] of the king who will reign over them.”*

##### Significant differences:

No significant differences.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

NAB	Now grant their request; but at the same time, warn them solemnly and inform them of the rights of the king who will rule them.”
NLT	Do as they ask, but solemnly warn them about how a king will treat them.”
REB	Hear what they have to say now, but give them a solemn warning and tell them what sort of king will rule them.’
TEV	“So then, listen to them, but give them strict warnings and explain how their kings will treat them.”

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

JPS (Tanakh)	Heed their demand; but warn them solemnly, and tell them about the practices of any king who will rule over them.”
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**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB	“Now then, listen to their voice; however, you shall solemnly warn [lit., <i>testify to</i> ] them and tell them of the procedure [lit., <i>custom</i> ] of the king who will reign over them.”
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	And now, hearken to their voice; only, surely you do certainly protest to them, and have declared to them the custom of the king who does reign over them.’

**What is the gist of this verse?** God tells Samuel to listen (and obey) the voice of these elders; just make it clear what they are in for when it comes to having a king.

**1 Samuel 8:9a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
‘attâh (ה ת ע) [pronounced <i>gaht-TAWH</i> ]	<i>now, at this time, already</i>	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773
When followed by an imperative or an interrogative, w <sup>e</sup> + the adverb ‘attâh mean <i>and so, thus, things being so, therefore, now therefore</i> . Sometimes, the concept of time is lost when this combination is used to incite another.			
shâma‘ (ו נ ש) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAHG</i> ]	<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>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></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 (ל ק) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	<i>sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #6963 BDB #876



**Translation:** “Therefore, listen to their voice [and acquiesce to their request];... God already told Samuel to listen to what the elders had to say, the implication of the words meaning *to listen and obey*. So God for a second time tells Samuel to go along with what they want. It is obvious that Samuel is digging in his heels now, and God is making it as clear as possible that he is going to have to give in to the request of the elders at this point.

1Samuel 8:9b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾak <sup>e</sup> (אָךְ) [pronounced <i>ahk<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>surely, certainly, no doubt, only, but; only now, just now, scarcely; only this once; nothing but, merely [before a substantive]; quite, altogether [before an adjective]</i>	adverb of restriction, contrast, time, limitation, and exception. Also used as an affirmative particle. Expanded meanings given here.	Strong's #389 BDB #36
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
gûwd (עָוַד) [pronounced <i>good</i> ]	<i>to take as a witness, to call [someone] to witness; to bear witness, to testify, to solemnly affirm; to solemnly admonish [or, enjoin]</i>	Hiphil infinitive absolute	Strong's #5749 BDB #729
gûwd (עָוַד) [pronounced <i>good</i> ]	<i>to take as a witness, to call [someone] to witness; to bear witness, to testify, to solemnly affirm; to solemnly admonish [or, enjoin]</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5749 BDB #729
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></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 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #88

**Translation:** ...*only solemnly testify against them*... So God puts a restriction upon what Samuel is to do, even though he is to listen and to acquiesce to the requests of the elders. We have the doubling of a verb, which increases the intensity of the verb. Notice that the JPS, the NASB and the Septuagint all have *solemnly* added to the verb. Samuel is going to make it clear what the consequences are of having a king. God is letting these people make a mistake with open eyes (although, it will be apparent that they do not listen very well).

1Samuel 8:9c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâgad (נִגַּד) [pronounced <i>naw-GAHD</i> ]	<i>to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to explain, to declare, to inform, to confess, to make it pitifully obvious that</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5046 BDB #616

## 1Samuel 8:9c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <sup>e</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
mîsh <sup>e</sup> pâṭ (שׁוֹפֵט) [pronounced <i>mish</i> <sup>e</sup> -PAWT]	<i>judgement, justice, a verdict rendered by a judge, a judicial decision, a judicial sentence, a verdict, a judgement of the court</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4941 BDB #1048
<p>Gesenius organizes the meanings as follows:</p> <p>(1) <i>a judgement</i>; including:            (a) <i>the act of judging</i>; (b) <i>the place of judgment</i>; (c) <i>a forensic cause, the setting forth of a cause, to appeal a judgment</i>; (d) <i>the sentence of a judge</i>; (e) <i>the fault or crime one is judged for</i>;</p> <p>(2) <i>a right, that which is just, lawful according to law</i>; which set of meanings would include:            (a) <i>a law, a statute; a body of laws</i>; (b) <i>that which is lawfully due a person, a privilege, a legal privilege, the right of redemption, the right of primogeniture</i>; (c) <i>a manner, a custom</i>; (d) <i>a fashion, a kind, a plan</i>.</p> <p>We could possibly add the meanings for the plural: <i>laws, responsibilities, privileges</i>. From the standpoint of the one under judgment, mîshepâṭ could mean <i>appeal</i>.</p>			
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH</i> -lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

**Translation:**...[after] you have made conspicuous to them the customs of a king... Note that we have a very familiar noun in v. 9c: the masculine singular construct of mîsh<sup>e</sup>pâṭ (שׁוֹפֵט) [pronounced *mish*-PAWT], which means *judgement, a verdict rendered by a judge, a judicial decision*; etc. It can also mean *manner, custom, fashion*. The complete story is found in the Hebrew exegesis.

God is telling Samuel to clearly state to the elders just exactly what it is they are getting themselves into. We have a lot of ideas about how things would be much better if only we could have this or that; or do this or that. In this world, given the old sin nature, there are a myriad of things which occur when we have this or that or we have the freedom to do this or that. That is, there are logical results, and God wants Samuel to make these logical results clear to the elders. God already knows that the elders will not be dissuaded; He simply is going to see to it that they know, at least intellectually, the results of their decisions.

**Application:** Have you ever said to yourself, *if I only had a million dollars (or, ten million dollars)*? You think that all of your problems could be solved, if only you have some big bucks in your bank account. These elders figured, all of their problems would be solved, if only they could talk Samuel into letting them have a king over them, as the other surrounding nations had. Do you see how they are the same things? *If only this or that thing were different; then everything would be alright*. As you will read as we go along—Samuel's warnings to Israel—it will be clear than, this *great idea* just isn't all that great.

**Application:** Maybe your mind is still back with the *ten million dollars*. Please realize that, when you have money, then there are a lot of people who want that money and they will do almost anything to get it. I am not talking about a stone cold street punk who will rob you at gunpoint; I am talking about others who will do whatever they can to separate you from your money, and they will attempt to do that legally. Even if they cannot get their hands on it, they will do everything they can to make your life miserable in the process. You may think that ten million dollars will solve all of your problems; however, you may suddenly find hundreds more problems than you ever anticipated.

In any case, even without covering the warnings which these elders will receive; think about the consequences of Saul becoming king over Israel as we study the life of Saul in the chapters to come (1Sam. 9–31). Remember all of the problems that having a king is supposed to solve, and then line this up against the reign of Saul and observe that for every problem his kingship solves, two more problems spring up.

### 1Samuel 8:9d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾāsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
mālak <sup>e</sup> (מָלַךְ) [pronounced maw-LAHK <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to reign, to become king or queen</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4427 BDB #573
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ʿahl]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752

**Translation:** *...who would reign over them.* More completely: *“...only you will solemnly testify against them and [once] you have made known to them the custom of a king who rules over them.”* The people are making a choice here to which God will assent. However, He wants Samuel to make it clear to them just what exactly they are getting into. It is like you want to touch a hot stove and God says, “Okay, first you need to understand the concept of burning flesh and pain, then I will let you touch it.” Most of the stupid mistakes we make is with open eyes. We know that we are about to screw up and we go ahead and do it anyway.

### Keil and Delitzsch Explain Why the Request of the Elders was Displeasing

Keil and Delitzsch explain: *...the reason why the petition for a king displeased the prophet, was not that he regarded the earthly monarchy as irreconcilable with the sovereignty of God, or even as untimely; for in both these cases he would not have entered into the question at all, but would simply have refused the request as ungodly or unseasonable. But Samuel prayed to the Lord, i.e., he laid the matter before the Lord in prayer, and the Lord said (v. 7) “Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee.” This clearly implies, that not only in Samuel’s opinion, but also according to the counsel of God, the time had really come for the establishment of the earthly sovereignty in Israel. In this respect the request of the elders for a king to reign over them was perfectly justifiable, and there is no reason to say, with Calvin, “they ought to have had regard to the times and conditions prescribed by God, and it would no doubt have come to pass that the regal power would have grown up in the nation. Although, therefore, it had not yet been established, they ought to have waited patiently for the time appointed by God, and not to have given way to their own reasons and counsels apart from the will of God.” For God had not only appointed no particular time for the establishment of the monarchy; but in the introduction to the law for the king, “When you will say, I will set a king over me,” He had ceded the right to the representatives of the nation to deliberate upon the matter. Nor did they err in this respect, that while Samuel was still living, it was not the proper time to make use of the permission that they had received; for they assigned as the reason for their application, that Samuel had grown old; consequently they did not petition for a king instead of the prophet who had been appointed and so gloriously accredited by God, but simply that Samuel himself would give them a king in consideration of his own age, in order that when he should become feeble or die, they might have a judge and leader of the nation. Nevertheless, the Lord declared, “They have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them. As they have always done from the day that I brought them up out of Egypt unto this day, that they have forsaken Me and served other gods, so do they also unto you.” This verdict on the part of God refers not so much to the desire expressed, as to the feelings from which it had sprung. Externally regarded, the elders of Israel had a perfect right to present the request; the wrong was in their hearts. They not only declared to*

*the prophet their confidence in his administration of his office, but they implicitly declared him incapable of any further superintendence of their civil and political affairs. This mistrust was founded upon mistrust in the Lord and His guidance. In the persons of Samuel they reject the Lord and His rule. They wanted a king, because they imagined that Jehovah their God-king was not able to secure their constant prosperity. Instead of seeking for the cause of the misfortunes which had hitherto befallen them in their own sin and want of fidelity towards Jehovah, they searched for it in the faulty constitution of the nation itself. In such a state of mind as this, their desire for a king was a contempt and rejection of the kingly government of Jehovah, and was nothing more than forsaking Jehovah to serve other gods. See ch. 10:18, 19 and ch. 12:17 ff, where Samuel points out to the people still more fully the wrong that they have committed.<sup>21</sup> Okay, then, what would have been the proper approach?*

*Calvin suggests They might, indeed, have reminded Samuel of his old age, which rendered him less able to attend to the duties of his office, and also of the avarice of his sons and the corruptness of the judges; or they might have complained that his sons did not walk in his footsteps, and have asked that God would choose suitable men to govern them, and thus have left the whole thing to His will. And if they had done this, there can be no doubt that they would have received a gracious and suitable answer. But they did not think of calling upon God; they demanded that a king should be given them, and brought forward the customs and institutions of other nations.<sup>22</sup>*

So, the problem with the elders was in their motivation, and not with their request. They were motivated to ask for a king because they did not trust God to take care of Israel, despite the fact that He had for hundreds of years. Their request revealed a general distrust in God and was a rejection of God, and that was the problem. As I have discussed before, the key is not the type of government, but the hearts of the people being governed.

In any case, God tells Samuel to acquiesce to the demands of the elders; however, prior to granting any such request, Samuel is to make it clear to these same elders what a king would do. Actually, the bulk of this chapter, vv. 10–18, will be devoted to the downside of Israel choosing a king to be over her. What Israel will gain in security and organization will be far offset by their loss of liberties and personally acquired capital.

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## Samuel Warns the People about the Consequences of Their Petition

**And so says Samuel all words of Y<sup>e</sup>howah unto the people the ones asking from him a king.** 1Samuel 8:10

**So Samuel communicated all the words of Y<sup>e</sup>howah to the people, the ones petitioning from him a king.**

**So Samuel communicated all the words of Jehovah to the people who were petitioning for a king.**

First, what others have done:

### Ancient texts:

**Masoretic Text** And so says Samuel all words of Y<sup>e</sup>howah unto the people the ones asking from him a king.

**Septuagint** And Samuel spoke every word of the Lord to the people who asked of him a king.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

<sup>21</sup> Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, pp. 418–419.

<sup>22</sup> Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 419.

**NAB** Samuel delivered the message of the LORD in full to those who were asking him for a king.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

**JPS (Tanakh)** Samuel reported all the words of the LORD to the people, who were asking him for a king.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

**NASB** So Samuel spoke all the words of the LORD to the people who had asked of him a king.

**Young's Updated LT** And Samuel spoke all the words of Jehovah unto the people who are asking form him a king,...

**What is the gist of this verse?** Samuel tells the elders all that God told him.

### 1Samuel 8:10a

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 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Sh <sup>e</sup> mûw'êl (שִׁמְוֵאל) [pronounced <i>sh<sup>e</sup>-moo-ALE</i> ]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028
ʾêth (אֵת) [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> ]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of, all; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
dâbâr (דְּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAWR</i> ]	<i>words, sayings, doctrines, commands; things, matters, reports</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i> ]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

**Translation:** So Samuel communicated all the words of Y<sup>e</sup>howah to the people,... Even though we have a myriad of spiritual functions in the Old Testament, the end result was the man of God was to communicate the word of God to the people of God.

I want to point out that Samuel was much different in style than Moses. Moses would record every single word of God, carefully, and indicate that these are the words spoken by God. It is actually unclear where vv. 7–9 comprise all of God's words to Samuel, or whether God had more to say on this subject. Samuel clearly speaks these words

to the elders (v. 10) and then adds a few of his own (v. 11a). Whether the words he adds are from doctrine in his soul or from what God said to him is unknown; however, given that God appeared to Samuel on several occasions at Shiloh (1Sam. 3:21), it is clear that we are never told everything that God said to Samuel.

<b>1Samuel 8:10b</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong's Numbers</b>
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
`el (לְ) [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
`am (אָם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
shâ`al (שָׂאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-AHL</i> ]	<i>to ask [petition, request, inquire]; to demand; to question, to interrogate; to ask [for a loan]; to consult; to salute</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #7592 BDB #981
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
`êth (עִתְּ) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85
Together, min `êth 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> .			
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

**Translation:** ...the ones petitioning from him a king. Samuel speaks to God, then he returns to the elders and communicates to them what God has said. There are a lot of particulars left out—how exactly did God communicate to Samuel? What sort of a time frame are we talking about here? Did Samuel simply go to a private place to pray and return an hour later? Did he sleep on it, during which time he listened to God? However, even though we lack the particulars, we have the information that we need. Samuel was confronted with a request that he knew was wrong; he took this request to God and God sent him back to the elders with a granting of this request, accompanied by a stern warning. What the NIV Study Bible suggests is that Samuel will draw this information from the behavior of the Canaanites kings who lived in the land.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, after saying these things to the elders, then Samuel will write them down as a witness against the people of Israel (1Sam. 10:25).

<sup>23</sup> The NIV Study Bible; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 382.

In the next several verses, Samuel will list the reasons why having a king is not the best political choice. This has been neatly summed up. *The problems they [the Israelites] would experience would include a military draft, the servitude of the populace, widespread royal confiscation of private property, taxation and loss of personal liberty.*<sup>24</sup> So Samuel does not even approach this problem from a spiritual stance. What he presents to the elders of Israel is simply a list of civil problems associated with the appointing of a monarch over Israel. Like so many other human solutions, one problem is solved and five more problems take its place.

And so he says, “This is [the] judgment of the king who reigns over you: your sons he takes and he has placed for himself in his chariot and in his horsemen and they have run from faces of his chariot;...

1Samuel  
8:11

Then he said, “These are the customs of a king who would rule over you: he will seize your sons and appoint [them] to himself as [manning] his chariots and as his horsemen and they will be mobilized before his chariots.

And then he began to explain, “This is how a king who ruled over you would behave—he would seize your sons and use them in his army—they would man his chariots, they would be his horsemen, and they would be foot soldiers who walk before the chariots.

Let’s see how others dealt with this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so he says, “This is [the] judgment of the king who reigns over you: your sons he takes and he has placed for himself in his chariot and in his horsemen and they have run from faces of his chariot;...
Septuagint	And he said, “This will be the manner [or, <i>judgement</i> ] of the king that will rule over you; he will take your sons and put them in his chariots, and among his horsemen, and running beside his chariots,...

Significant differences: No significant differences. The final phrase is simply a problem of translation.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

<i>The Message</i>	He said, “This is the way the kind of king you’re talking about operates. He’ll take your sons and make soldiers of them--chariotry, cavalry, infantry,...
NLT	This is how a king will treat you,” Samuel said, “The king will draft your sons into his army and make them run before his chariots.
TEV	“This is how your king will treat you,” Samuel explained. “He will make soldiers of your sons; some of them will serve in his war chariots, others in his cavalry, and others will run before his chariots.”

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God’s Word™</i>	Samuel said, “These are the rights of a king: He will draft your sons, make them serve on his chariots and horses, and make them run ahead of his chariots.
JPS (Tanakh)	He said, “This will be the practice of the king who will rule over you: He will take your sons and appoint them as his charioteers and horsemen, and they will serve as outrunners for his chariots.

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<sup>24</sup> *Hard Sayings of the Bible*; Walter Kaiser Jr., Peter Davids, F.F. Bruce, Manfred Brauch; InterVarsity Press; ©1996; p. 203.

NASB

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

Young's Updated LT

...and says, 'This is the custom of the king who does reign over you: You sons he does take, and has appointed for himself among his chariots, and among his horsemen, and they have run before his chariots;...

**What is the gist of this verse?** A king would draft many of the young men of Israel for a personal army.

1Samuel 8:11a			
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
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i> ]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	demonstrative adjective	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
mîshpâṭ (מִשְׁפָּט) [pronounced <i>mîsh-PAWT</i> ]	<i>judgement, justice, a verdict rendered by a judge, a judicial decision, a judicial sentence, a verdict, the judgement of the court</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4941 BDB #1048
melek (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i> ]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
mâlak (מָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>maw-LAHK</i> ]	<i>to reign, to become king or queen</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4427 BDB #573
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752

**Translation:** Then he said, "These are the customs of a king who would rule over you:... From this point on, for several verses, Samuel will make it clear what a king would do as a part of his rulership over Israel.

Samuel now presents a very organized list of what a king will do to those in Israel:

### What a King would Do in Israel



1. First, Samuel explains what will happen to their sons. The young men of Israel would be drafted into an army, possibly during peace time; and they would function as virtual slaves of the king, even to plowing his fields and reaping his harvests. They would also build weapons, although these weapons are clearly for the king, and not for them. That is, they may or may not get to use the weapons that they construct. 1Sam. 8:11–12
2. Then Samuel tells the elders what would be done with their daughters—their daughters would also function as virtual slaves of the king, as his cooks, bakers and perfumers. 1Sam. 8:13
3. The king will take from their fields and vineyards. In essence, this would be an additional 10% tax over and above their responsibilities to the Tabernacle and the Levites. 1Sam. 8:14–15
4. The king would also take from their labor force—their slaves and all that comes with the slaves (their work animals, for instance). 1Sam. 8:16
5. Finally, the king would take a portion of their livestock. 1Sam. 8:17

In v. 18, we hear the reaction of the people to having a king over them. The people respond, “[Still, we want a king who will fight our battles for us.](#)” What we have is the classic tradeoff between perceived security and personal freedom. There is a lot to pay for human security, which may not be very secure.

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### 1Samuel 8:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾêth (אֵת) [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
bên (בָּנִים) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i> ]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; pausal form	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
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
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 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7760 BDB #962
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced <i>lê</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

**Translation:** [...he will seize your sons and appoint \[them\] to himself...](#) The most important thing in a family in Israel was its sons. The first thing that a king must do is put together a standing army. So he will take the sons for this. [Now the war against the Philistines was severe all the days of Saul; and when Saul saw any mighty man or any valiant man, he attached him to his staff](#) (1Sam. 14:52). This was a draft and there would be few if any exceptions.

The Law gives us some exceptions; however, it is doubtful that Saul (Israel's next king) ever paid much attention to those, as he appeared to pay very little attention to the Word of God.

1Samuel 8:11c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<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
mer <sup>e</sup> kâbâh (מֶרְכָבָה) [pronounced mer <sup>e</sup> -kâw <sup>b</sup> -VAW]	<i>chariot, war chariot</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4818 BDB #939
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<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>The slight problem is that we have the bêyth preposition here rather than a lâmed. My thinking is that the bêyth simply points to the object of the verb, much like a direct object; however, I do not have much by way of documentation to stand on. A second and more likely possibility is that bêyth may be rendered <i>as</i>, which would solve all of our problems here. Then, it would not be a bêyth preposition (בְּ), but a kîy preposition (כִּי), a mistake which occurs occasionally. We do have the possibility that the bêyth preposition may itself be rendered <i>as</i>.<sup>25</sup></p>			
pârâsh (פָּרָשׁ) [pronounced paw-RASH]	<i>horse, steed; horseman</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6571 BDB #832

**Translation:** *...as [manning] his chariots and as his horsemen...* An army must have mobility, and a king would call for men to make up his mobile force. David, when he had defeated the Philistines in battle, took 100 chariots and the horses for those chariots as the prize of his victory (2Sam. 8:4).<sup>26</sup> Solomon had 4000 stalls for his chariot horses (1Kings 4:26) and 1400 chariots (1Kings 10:26).

Samuel continues with how the children of Israel will be inducted into the armed forces. The preposition is a little confusing here, as mentioned above in the Hebrew exegesis: *"...and for his horsemen..."* We really do not have either the preposition *as* or *for* here. Some discussion of this is above.

1Samuel 8:11d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

<sup>25</sup> See H. W. F. Gesenius, *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*; ©1979 by Baker Books; p. 98, which this usage of bêyth is confirmed.

<sup>26</sup> In the passage, it is unclear whether the chariots were taken from the Philistines or whether David simply took enough horses for 100 chariots which he already had or had planned to have built.

## 1Samuel 8:11d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
rûts (רוץ) [pronounced roots]	<i>to run, to hasten to; to move quickly [and with purpose]; to rush upon [in a hostile manner]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #7323 BDB #930
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, they mean <i>upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of</i> . When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning <i>in the judgment of</i> .			
mer <sup>e</sup> kâbâh (מֶרְכָּבָה) [pronounced mer <sup>e</sup> -kaw <sup>b</sup> -VAW]	<i>chariot, war chariot</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4818 BDB #939

**Translation:** ...and they will be mobilized before his chariots. Or, "...and they will run before his chariot [or, chariots]." The reference here is that they will be foot soldiers running before the chariot army, or that they will surround and run before the chariot of the king. The former is more in line with the context and previous use of the word *mer<sup>e</sup>kâbâh*. Also, the idea of them *running* before these chariots is really a reference to the foot soldiers; therefore, these are the men who will be mobilized before the chariots of the king's army. Those attached to the king's chariot also functioned as body guards and enforcers; they are almost a retinue or an entourage to satisfy the vanity of the charioteer. [Now it was after this that Absalom provided for himself a chariot and horses, and fifty men as runners before him \(2Sam. 15:1\).](#) [Now Adonijah ben Haggith exalted himself, saying, "I will be king." So he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen with fifty men to run before him. \(1Kings 1:5\).](#) This same word for *runners* in 2Sam. 15:1 is found in connection with Saul's personal guards in 1Sam. 22:17 (see also 1Kings 14:27–28 and 1Kings 10:25 for a similar usage).

Therefore, if the Israelites have a king over them, then he will take their sons and put them into all three branches of their military: charioteers, horsemen and foot soldiers. However, this is not the only place where he will use these men. There is also the support for the military, which in part supports the king himself. That is, the king is commander-in-chief of the armed forces. One of the reasons that the elders will cite for desiring a king will be his ability to quickly mobilize a defense force when needed. Well, these men do not just pop out of nowhere, nor are their supplies free. You should grasp how in previous battles, the term citizen-soldier was no more apt than when applied to Israel. All males were conscripted into military service. They all had whatever weapons they found necessary to conduct their lives with, they put those weapons on their backs, and showed up when it was necessary. They rode their own horses. These men who went to war did not get a government-issued uniform or government-issued horse or government-issued horse or even government-issued c-rations. All of these things were provided by the soldiers themselves (when David will visit his brothers on the front lines in 1Sam. 18, we will see that he also brings them food).

...and to place for himself leaders of thousands and leaders of fifties; and to plow his plowing and to harvest his harvest and to make articles of his war and articles of his chariots.

1Samuel  
8:12

Furthermore, he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties; and to plow his ground [lit., *plow his plowing*] and to reap his harvest and to manufacture his articles of war and his chariot parts.

**“Furthermore, he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and sub-commanders over fifties; and he will appoint others to plow his ground, to reap his harvest and to manufacture weapons for war and chariot parts.**

The king of Israel, as mentioned, is commander-in-chief over the armed forces of Israel. These armed forces will become organized and the government will provide some of the weapons, supplies and the armored division (their chariots). As commander-in-chief, the king will also reap some of the benefits of government-issued supplies. In the government of the United States, the budget for the military is separate from the budget for the White House. One budget provides for the necessary supplies of the military, along with all of its staff, provisions and armaments. The other budget sees to the staffing and provisions of the executive branch of the government. In both cases, this money comes from the same place: the taxpayer.<sup>27</sup> In this verse, we will look at the supplying of the needs of the armed force of Israel, which will include the needs of the king himself and his own personal staff. At that time, this would not be seen as a separate or different expense.

Now the other translations:

#### **Ancient texts:**

**Masoretic Text** ...and to place for himself leaders of thousands and leaders of fifties; and to plow his plowing and to harvest his harvest and to make articles of his war and articles of his chariots.

**Septuagint** ...and to make them to himself captains of hundreds and captains of thousands; and to reap his harvest, and gather his vintage, and prepare his instruments of war, and the implements of his chariots.

**Significant differences:** The LXX adds that these young men will also harvest the grapes for the king's wine. Also, the numbering is somewhat different. Apart from these things, there are no significant differences.

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

**The Message** ...regimented in battalions and squadrons. He'll put some to forced labor on his farms, plowing and harvesting, and others to making either weapons of war or chariots in which he can ride in luxury.

**NEB** Some he will appoint officers over units of thousand and units of fifty. Others will plough his fields and reap his harvest; others again will make weapons of war and equipment for mounted troops.

#### **Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

**JPS (Tanakh)** He will appoint them as his chiefs of thousands and of fifties; or they will have to plow his fields, reap his harvest, and make his weapons and the equipment for his chariots.

#### **Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

**NASB** “And he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and of fifties, and *some* to do his plowing [lit., *to plow his plowing*] and to reap his harvest and to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots.

<sup>27</sup> By the way, for those still struggling for the use of the singular noun *chariot* to stand for a mobilized chariot force, note here the English notion of *taxpayer* here, in fact, refers to a *plethora of taxpayers*.

Young's Updated LT

‘...also to appoint for himself heads of thousands, and heads of fifties; also to plow his plowing, and to reap his reaping; and to make instruments of his war, and instruments of his charioteer.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Some men would be drafted as leaders; and some men would be drafted to function as servants in the fields and factories of the king.

1Samuel 8:12a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
sûwm (שמׁ) [pronounced <i>soom</i> ]	<i>to put, to place, to set, to make</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7760 BDB #962
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
sar (רשׁ) [pronounced <i>sar</i> ]	<i>chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince, leader, commander</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #8269 BDB #978
ʿălâphîym (אלפׁים) pronounced <i>uh-law-FEEM</i>	<i>thousands, families, [military] units</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #505 (and #504) BDB #48
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
sar (רשׁ) [pronounced <i>sar</i> ]	<i>chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince, leader, commander</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #8269 BDB #978
chămishîym (חמׁשׁים) [pronounced <i>kheh-mih-SHEEM</i> ]	<i>fifty</i>	plural numeral	Strong's #2572 BDB #332

**Translation:** Furthermore, he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties;... We essentially continue the previous verse. Samuel names the other places where the sons of the Israelites will be put into public service (most of it on behalf of the king and the military).

For personal reasons, I would not be surprised if this word turned out to refer to a much lower amount, e.g., *five hundred*. We have beat into our brains a system based upon *tens*. This was not the case for all ancient civilizations. Given the Roman notation for 5's, 50's, 500's and 5000's, there is no reason to suppose that the ancient Hebrews functioned on a base-10 numbering system. The Arabic numbering system, which we use today, was not commonly used until the late 1500's.<sup>28</sup> This gives us: “And to appoint leaders of thousands and leaders

<sup>28</sup> *The World Book Encyclopedia*; ©1983 by World Book, Inc.; Vol. 16, p. 395.

of fifties;...” Every army requires strong organization. Men’s lives are constantly being put at risk, and their blood is used to purchase land, time and victory. Apart from training, it is not normally one’s predilection to run into battle; therefore, careful organization is necessary for the movement of troops. This particular organization was at least as old as the time of Moses (Num. 31:14 Deut. 1:15) and was practiced by the Canaanites as well (1Sam. 29:2). When Saul realized that he was losing the loyalty of the people of Israel, he said to the men (concerning David): “Listen now, O Benjamites! Will the son of Jesse also give to all of you fields and vineyards? Will he make you all commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds?” (1Sam. 22:7b).

### 1Samuel 8:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>le</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
chârash (חָרַשׁ) [pronounced <i>chaw-RAHASH</i> ]	<i>to cut in, to engrave, to inscribe; to fabricate [out of wood or metal]; to fabricate, devise or plot [evil]; to plough (cutting furrows)</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #2790 BDB #360
chârîysh (חָרִישׁ) [pronounced <i>khaw-REESH</i> ]	<i>plowing, plowing-time</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2758 BDB #361

**Translation:** ...and to plow his ground [lit., plow his plowing]... It is unclear whether this is for the king himself or to provide rations for his troops. It is probably a task which will provide for both, given the context.

### 1Samuel 8:12c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>le</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
qâtsar (קָצַר) [pronounced <i>kaw-TSAR</i> ]	<i>to be short, to come short of, to cut off [with regards to grain], to reap, to harvest</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7114 BDB #894
qâtsîyr (קָצִיר) [pronounced <i>kaw-TZEER</i> ]	<i>harvesting, harvest</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7105 BDB #894

**Translation:** ...and to reap his harvest... As in v. 12b, it appears by context that these men would be employed to serve both the king and his armies by harvesting his crops. There is no indication that they would be reasonably remunerated for their services.

## 1Samuel 8:12d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿāsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i> ]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
k <sup>e</sup> lîy (כְּלִי) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup>lee</i> ]	<i>manufactured good, artifact, article, utensil, vessel, weapon, armor, furniture, receptacle; baggage, valuables</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #3627 BDB #479
mil <sup>e</sup> châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced <i>mil-khaw-MAW</i> ]	<i>battle, war</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4421 BDB #536
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
k <sup>e</sup> lîy (כְּלִי) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup>lee</i> ]	<i>manufactured good, artifact, article, utensil, vessel, weapon, armor, furniture, receptacle; baggage, valuables</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #3627 BDB #479
mer <sup>e</sup> kâbâh (מֶרְכָבָה) [pronounced <i>mer<sup>e</sup>-kaw<sup>b</sup>-VAW</i> ]	<i>chariot, war chariot</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4818 BDB #939

**Translation:** ...and to manufacture his articles of war and his chariot parts. You will note in both cases we have the masculine singular suffix *his*, indicating that not all wars will be those which are popular. When a king has a standing army, he does not have to enter into wars which make sense—he can go to war for any reason that he feels. We will see that Saul will gather up his entire army on several occasions to go after David, a man who is not seditious or dangerous to the national security of Israel. In fact, David will be one of the most patriotic and loyal men in Israel.

One also must get a grasp of the idea of a chariot back then. There are celebrities who collect cars and may own 20–30 cars of a varied vintage. A king would be able to so indulge himself and own as many *ancient cars* as he chose to. **And Solomon amassed chariots and horsemen. He had 1400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen, and he station them in the chariot cities and with the king at Jerusalem.** (11Chron. 1:14; see 11Chron. 9:25 as well). These chariots do not have to be necessarily used in war. Men love to collect gadgets and large toys; there is no reason to assume that any king of Israel will be genetically different.

**And your daughters he will take for perfumers and for cooks and for bakers.** 1Samuel 8:13 **And he will take your daughters to [be] perfumers, cooks and bakers.**

**And he will also take your daughters to function as his own personal servants—as perfumers, cooks and bakers.**

The king will also press some of the daughters into civil service. Here are some translations of this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text                      And your daughters he will take for perfumers and for cooks and for bakers.  
 Septuagint                              And your daughters he will take to [be] perfumers, and to [be] cooks and to [be] bakers,...<sup>29</sup>

Significant differences:              None.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

*The Message*                              He'll put your daughters to work as beauticians and waitresses and cooks.  
 NAB    He will use your daughters as ointment-makers, as cooks, and as bakers.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

JPS (Tanakh)                              He will take your daughters as perfumers, cooks, and bakers.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB    "He will also take our daughters for perfumers, and cooks and bakers.  
*Young's Updated LT*                      'And your daughters he does take for perfumers, and for cooks, and for bakers;...

**What is the gist of this verse?** It will not just be sons who are used by the king, but daughters as well, who will function as cooks, bakers and perfumers.

1Samuel 8:13a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
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
bath (תָּ) [pronounced <i>bath</i> ]	<i>daughter; village</i>	feminine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #1323 BDB #123
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i> ]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; pausal form	Strong's #3947 BDB #542

<sup>29</sup> Unfortunately, Brenton does not always give us a literal English translation from the Greek. Most of the time, I simply update his translation; however, occasionally, as in this verse, I give a more accurate rendering. The Greek Septuagint is very close to the Hebrew in both word order and word usage. Brenton gave the more readable (but less literal) *And he will take your daughters to be perfumers, and cooks, and bakers.* I mention that simply to indicate that the English given for the Septuagint is not always on target.



**Translation:** *And he will take your daughters...* Any future king would have carte blanc with relation to the people. He can take anyone that he finds and use them how he wishes. The king would certainly have women around him just as he would have men around him.

### 1Samuel 8:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) (pronounced ʿ)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
raqqâchâh (רַקַּחָה) [pronounced <i>rahk-kaw-KHAW</i> ]	<i>a female perfumer, a female ointment maker</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #7548 BDB #955

**Translation:** *...to [be] perfumers,...* I don't think that anyone really appreciates the smells of the modern world (or lack thereof) which we have come to take for granted. We have toilets which flush away our waste; garbage companies which take away our garbage; air conditioning which removes humidity, and therefore removes many odors from the air. Those in the ancient world did have some of these conveniences to a limited degree; however, nothing as we have today. I am fully aware that my living conditions are far better than the living conditions of even a king or a president of 200 years ago. In the ancient world, the smells could be quite repugnant and I suspect that many of us, if we were instantly transported into the ancient world, would be most displeased with how the average residence smells. So, what a king did is, he would have those who would mask the smells of the ancient world; to make them easier to handle. So, some women would be drafted into the service of simply making the king's residence more livable. It should be obvious that this function has nothing whatsoever to do with protecting Israel from external threats.

### 1Samuel 8:13c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) (pronounced ʿ)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ṭabbâchâh (טַבְּבָחוֹת) [pronounced <i>tahb-baw-KHAW</i> ]	<i>female cook</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #2879 BDB #371
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) (pronounced ʿ)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾâphâh (אֲפָה) [pronounced <i>aw-FAW</i> ]	<i>to bake, to cook</i>	feminine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #644 BDB #66

**Translation:** *...cooks and bakers.* In case you ever thought that the woman's place is in the home, the philosophy of some kings would be that the woman's place is in *his* home. Here, what we are looking at is a king who simply

presses women into civil service, which does not mean that they work for the benefit of the state, but that they work for the state, but for the benefit of the king and his staff.

The king is certainly not going to give to his armed forces all kinds of support, and yet withhold things from himself. When you are in the position of being able to acquire material wealth, you tend to do this. If we had the ability to acquire servants and material wealth, we would do this as well. This is simply what a king would do.

Interestingly enough, although we would expect a mention in this passage about accumulation of wives, that is not mentioned. A king, in many instances, is going to be a normal male—except a normal male with great power and loads of money, each of which is a great attraction to women. David, Israel's second king, had a handful of wives and was often on the prowl for more. His son and Israel's third king, Solomon, collected wives as most men collect CD's. He had a thousand women (wives and mistresses). Although we would expect for this to be mentioned, it is not. However, Deut. 17:17 mentions this prohibition: **“Neither shall he [the king] multiply wives for himself, so that his heart is not turned away; nor will he greatly increase silver and gold for himself.”** A king is in a unique position of power; whatever he sees, he can have. Whatever wants or desires that he has, he can fulfill. Much of the book of Ecclesiastes is that of King Solomon having money, power and intelligence and searching for a way to satiate his soul. **All that my eyes desired, I did not refuse them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart was pleased because of all my labor and this was my reward for all my labor. So I considered all my activities which my hands had done and the labor which I had exerted, and behold, all was vanity and striving after wind and there was no profit under the sun** (Eccles. 2:10–11). Solomon completed a great many public projects; he built buildings, he employed the people of Israel; and, as a reward for that, he took whatever it was that he wanted. And in satiating every desire and lust, and having virtually unlimited resources, Solomon concluded that it was not satisfying. Now, on the one hand, we have the testimony of this sort of life given in Ecclesiastes; on the other hand, those under the rule of Solomon were taxed excessively so that Solomon could do whatever it was that he wanted to do.

One of the very goofy theories proposed is that part of this chapter was written much later, during the reign of Solomon, and that the excesses of his reign were in view here. There are things which he did that would be objectionable to the average person's sensibilities which are not mentioned here. The collection of wives and mistresses for one. If some self-righteous, religious type was adding his own ideas to this narrative, you can be damned sure he's tell us about how bad it is for kings to multiply wives to themselves. He might further point out how these women will lead the king astray (which they did to King Solomon). This author would probably mention Solomon's building projects as well, as Solomon must have pressed thousands of men into public service in order to build all that he built. However, none of this is alluded to—and do you know why? None of this is mentioned, because no one during the time of Solomon (or after his time) wrote this material. It would be illogical to think that someone else added this material a hundred years later and yet left out commenting on a king multiplying wives to himself.

There are so many goofy theories out there, and yet none of them really examine themselves very carefully. That is, they don't really explore their own theories any further than to discredit Scripture. As you study Scripture further and read various commentators, you are going to find a whole host of goofy theories of when this or that book was written; that there were several people involved; and, invariably, the authorship is never by the person credited with authorship, but it is always written hundreds of years later to reflect some theological bias. Where does this come from? Negative volition. This comes from rebellion against God. Theological students can rebel against God just like you or me. They can reject Jesus Christ as Savior; they can reject Jesus Christ as God; and then, they can go to great lengths to justify their negative volition. Simply recognize what they are doing. Simply examine their theories further than they do themselves. As I mentioned, one popular theory is that no prophet could have foreknown this stuff; that someone during the time of Solomon must have written these things. However, as pointed out, if this happened, then that alleged writer of Scripture (or adder to Scripture), skipped the things which come to our mind first about Solomon. Samuel's predictions here are reasonable and not necessarily a result of God revealing this information to him directly. *Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.* Even people without spiritual understanding have some grasp of this. *Why on earth would anyone come up with these fanciful theories when there is no need for them in the first place?* The answer is, negative volition—pure and simple.

And your field and your vineyards and your olive trees—the good ones—he will seize and he has given [them] to his servants.

1Samuel  
8:14

And he will seize your best fields, vineyards, and olive orchards and he will give [them] to his servants.

Furthermore, he will seize your very best fields, vineyards and olive orchards and he will give these lands to his own servants to keep.

Now, not only do we have the insult that the king will press into personal service the sons and daughters of Israel, but that he will then take the choicest of the fields and orchards of the populace and give these over to these new servants. The translations:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text                      And your field and your vineyards and your olive trees—the good ones—he will seize and he has given [them] to his servants.

The Septuagint                      And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your good olive orchards, and give them to his servants.

Significant differences:            None.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

*The Message*                      He'll conscript your best fields, vineyards, and orchards and hand them over to his special friends.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Complete Jewish Bible            He will expropriate your fields, vineyards and olive groves—the very best of them!—and hand them over to his servants.

JPS (Tanakh)                      He will seize your choice fields, vineyards, and olive groves, and give them to his courtiers.

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB                                  “And he will take the best of your fields and your vineyards and your olive groves, and give *them* to his servants.

*Young's Updated LT*              ...and your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive yards—the best—he does take, and has given to his servants.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Not only would the king draft men and women into civil service, but we will even take whatever fields or vineyards appeal to him.

### 1Samuel 8:14a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
êth (ת) [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

## 1 Samuel 8:14a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
sâdeh (הַדֶּשׁ) [pronounced saw-DEH]	field, land, country, open field, open country	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #7704 BDB #961
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
êth (תּוֹ) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; occasionally to, toward	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
kerem (כַּרְמֵי) [pronounced keh-REM]	vineyard, orchard	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3754 BDB #501
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
zayith (תְּרִי) [pronounced ZAH-teeth]	olive orchard	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #2132 BDB #268
to'wb (טוֹבִים) [pronounced toh <sup>b</sup> v]	pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better; approved	masculine plural adjective which acts like a substantive; with the definite article	Strong's #2896 BDB #373
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced law-KAHKH]	to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; pausal form	Strong's #3947 BDB #542

**Translation:** [And he will seize your best fields, vineyards, and olive orchards...](#) The king, as I said before, has carte blanc in relation to his country—he can go anywhere and take anything. He might see a piece of land which he likes; he can simply take it. He might see a field with great crops and wonderful yields—and he can simply take it. Recently, this has been a point of contention in our own government (the US government). The Supreme Court (if memory serves) has ruled that the government can seize land and allow it to be developed in a different way than it is at this point in time. This is in direct violation to the Bill of Rights. However, when one has power, one often exercises that power.

One older illustration of this is from the Old Testament—Jezebel, wife of Ahab, takes Naboth's vineyard for Ahab: [And Jezebel his wife said to him, "Do you now reign over Israel? Arise, eat bread, and let your heart be joyful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."](#) (1Kings 21:7; see also Ezek. 46:18).

## 1 Samuel 8:14b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

## 1Samuel 8:14b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l)	to, for, towards, in regards to	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced ʿE <sup>B</sup> -ved]	slave, servant	masculine plural noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

**Translation:** ...and he will give [them] to his servants. This is what the king will do with these farmlands: "...and he will give [them] to his servants." And who are his servants? Either the young men and women whom the king has taken into service or slaves captured by the young men or purchased with tax money. We have a similar provision in our law called Eminent Domain. Our approach is a bit more reasonable, as, although it allows the government to seize private land for public use, it also stipulates that a price must be paid for the land which is taken. What the price should be, of course, is problematic—but anytime there is a government, there will be powers of that government which encroach personal freedom and private property. The bigger the government, often the greater the encroachment on personal freedom.

This gives us an idea as to the loyalties of a king. He sees his servants each and every day. His loyalty to them will tend to be far greater than his loyalty to the people of Israel, whom he is appointed to serve. Therefore, it will be nothing to a king to seize whatever he wants from a citizen and to give that to a personal servant.

**And your seeds and your vineyards—he will take a tenth and he has given [it] to his warlords and to his servants.**

1Samuel  
8:15

**Furthermore, he will take a tenth of your seeds and your vineyards and give [it] to his warlords and his servants.**

**Furthermore, he will seize a tenth of your raw materials and your land and turn around and give it to his own warlords or to his own servants.**

First, what others have done:

#### Ancient texts:

##### Masoretic Text

And your seeds and your vineyards—he will take a tenth and he has given [it] to his warlords and to his servants.

##### The Septuagint

And he will take the tithe of your seeds and your vineyards, and give to his eunuchs, and to his servants.

##### Significant differences:

There is one major difference between the Greek and the Hebrew; in the Greek, some of what the king takes in as revenue will go to *eunuchs*. In the Hebrew (and Syriac), this goes to his army officers.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

##### The Message

He'll tax your harvests and vintage to support his extensive bureaucracy.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™  
JPS (Tanakh)

He will take a tenth of your grain and wine and give it to his aids and officials.  
He will take a tenth part of your grain and vintage and give it to his eunuchs and courtiers.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB

“And he will take a tenth of your seed and of your vineyards, and give to his officers and to his servants.

Young's Updated LT

And your seed and your vineyards he does tithe, and has give to his eunuchs, and to his servants.

**What is the gist of this verse?** The king would take some of the taxes (which could include 10% of the seed which is harvested to use again) and give this to his own servants and officers.

1 Samuel 8:15a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
zera <sup>r</sup> (זרע) [pronounced <i>ZĒH-rahg</i> ]	<i>a seed, a sowing, an offspring</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #2233 BDB #282
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kerem (כרם) [pronounced <i>keh-REM</i> ]	<i>vineyard, orchard</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3754 BDB #501
ʿâsar (עשר) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAHR</i> ]	<i>to take a tenth of, to take a tithe of, to decimate, to tithe</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6237 BDB #797

**Translation:** *Furthermore, he will take a tenth of your seeds and your vineyards...* Given the context, this would not refer to people but to actual seed, which would be the basic resource for one's crops. The king is the absolute ruler. Many of us believe that happiness occurs with the accumulation of things; a king has the ability to accumulate whatever it is that he wants to accumulate—he simply takes it from the subjects of his country.

Now, don't get this tenth part confused with the amount that Israel was to give to God. Israel supported the Levites and the priesthood through a tenth of their possessions (Lev. 27:30–32 Num. 18:26 Deut. 14:22). In addition to this, every third year, an additional tenth was brought to support the poor (Deut. 14:28 26:12). However, what the king would take would be an additional tenth part of what the people had accumulated, and this would be for himself. NIV Study Bible: *In fact, the demands of the king would parallel all that Israel was to consecrate to the Lord as her Great King (persons, lands, crops, [and] livestock).*<sup>30</sup> That is, the king would take to himself the same as God requires.

<sup>30</sup> The NIV Study Bible; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 382.

## 1Samuel 8:15b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l <sup>e</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ç <sup>e</sup> rânîym (סָרְנִים) [pronounced s <sup>e</sup> -RAW-neem]	<i>warlords, lords, princes, czars, generals, officers; officials, VIP's</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5633 BDB #710
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l <sup>e</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced Ê <sup>B</sup> -ved]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

**Translation:** ...and give [it] to his warlords and his servants. One of the nouns here is the very common masculine noun *çeren* (סָרַן) [pronounced SEH-ren], which means *warlord, tyrant, lord, princes, czar, potentate, despot*. As already mentioned, the Greek has *eunuchs* here instead.

The seeds are the raw material needed for produce and the land is needed to plant the produce on. Any king of Israel will take a tenth of that (this is essentially income tax). We have already made mention of 1Sam. 22:7b, which reads: "Listen now, O Benjamites! Will the son of Jesse also give to all of you fields and vineyards? Will he make you all commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds?" Saul used the fields of his people to bribe the loyalty of his own supporters.

Now, for some real life application: this passage is a warning as to what will happen when a king is placed over Israel. However, we also have some guidance here with respect to government. Just as a case could be made for spiritual giving to be about 10%<sup>31</sup> (I grimace to say that); a case could also be made, from this passage, for government to cost 10% of our income. When government begins to exceed this amount, then we have gone even beyond what Samuel is warning.

<sup>31</sup> I don't want to get into this here, but the church has no right to enforce a tithe (that is, to send out statements to members of its congregation) nor is 10% to be any more than a very rough guide. The concept of tithing is nowhere to be found in the New Testament. The tithe in the Old Testament was specifically for a theocracy. Spiritual giving in the New Testament was to be based upon God's blessing. If a person has no idea what he should give in the Church Age, 10% is a good place to start. There would be instances where one would give considerably more and instances where one would give considerably less. Thieme has an excellent booklet which deals with this called *Giving Gimmick or Grace*.

And your [male] servants and your maidservants and your young men—the best—and your donkeys—he will take them and he has made them to his work. 1Samuel 8:16 And he will take the best of your male servants, female servants and young men—and your donkeys—and he will make them [do] his work.

And he will take the best of your male and female servants as well as your young men and your donkeys, and he will put them to work for himself.

First, what others have done:

**Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text                      And your [male] servants and your maidservants and your young men—the best—and your donkeys—he will take them and he has made them to his work.  
 Septuagint                              And he will take your servants and your handmaids and your good herds and your asses, and he will take a tenth of them for his works.

Significant differences:

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

*The Message*                              Your prize workers and best animals he'll take for his own use.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

*God's Word™*                              He will take your male and female slaves, your best cattle, and your donkeys for his own use.  
 JPS (Tanakh)                              He will take your male and female slaves, your choice young men [Septuagint reads *cattle*] and your asses, and put them to work for him.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB    "He will also take your male servants and your female servants and your best young men and your donkeys and use [lit., *make*] *them* for his work.  
*Young's Updated LT*                      And your male servants and your maidservants, and your young men—the best, and your asses, he does take, and has prepared for his own work;...

**What is the gist of this verse?** The king could seize anyone that he chose, including any servant, no matter what had been paid for that servant; and employ these people directly.

<b>1Samuel 8:16a</b>			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>veh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
êth (ת) [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



## 1Samuel 8:16a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced ĠE <sup>ē</sup> -ved]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
shiph <sup>e</sup> châh (שִׁפְחָה) [pronounced shif-KHAW]	<i>maid, maid-servant, household servant</i>	feminine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #8198 BDB #1046
ṭôwb (טוֹב) [pronounced toh <sup>b</sup> ṽ]	<i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better; approved</i>	masculine plural adjective which acts like a substantive; with the definite article	Strong's #2896 BDB #373
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
chămôwr (חֲמֹר) [pronounced khuh-MOHR]	<i>ass, male donkey, he-ass</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #2543 BDB #331
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced law-KAHKH]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; pausal form	Strong's #3947 BDB #542

**Translation:** [And he will take the best of your male servants, female servants and young men—and your donkeys—...](#) Although the first noun can be simply rendered *servants*, many most translations go with *male servants* (or a similar gender bearing noun) in order to contrast with the next noun, which is the feminine plural *maid, maid-servant*. The 3<sup>rd</sup> noun is *young men*.<sup>32</sup> Instead, the Septuagint has *cattle* here. My thinking is that this verse parallels v. 14 where we have three items followed by the same adjective. These three items are modified by the definite article and the masculine plural adjective *pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better*. If this sounds familiar, it is because we had exactly the same thing in v. 14. Literally, this gives us: [“And your male servants and your female servants and your young men—the best, and your donkeys...”](#) These will become the king's personal

<sup>32</sup> Keil and Delitzsch suggest that this was a copyist's error and that instead of בְּחֹרֵיכֶם (*your young men*) we should have בְּבָרִים (*your oxen*). The Septuagint agrees with this. My only problem is the addition of the adjective which follows, *the best*, which includes these three things (which is at odds with including *your oxen* with *your male and female servants*). The Septuagint, again, renders this differently, applying the adjective just to *oxen* (or *herds*). We would lose the parallelism with v. 14 (and possibly not); but we would return to this verse more of a literary balance: [...and your male servants and your female servants and your best oxen and your asses—he will take them and put them to his work](#). Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 420.

servants; there is no remuneration paid for any of them. So the king would take sons and daughters, male and female servants, and they will become his servants. He will take land and seed and produce, and this will be used to support his huge staff.

<b>1Samuel 8:16b</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong's Numbers</b>
w <sup>ə</sup> (or v <sup>ə</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿāsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i> ]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
m <sup>ə</sup> lâ`kâh (מְלָאכָה) [pronounced <i>m<sup>ə</sup>lâw-KAWH</i> ]	<i>work, occupation, labor, workmanship, items produced by work?</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4399 BDB #521

**Translation:** ...and he will make them [do] his work. We have an illustration of this in 1Kings 5:13–16: [Now King Solomon levied forced laborers from all Israel; and the forced laborers numbers 30,000 men. And he sent them to Lebanon, 10,000 a month in relays; they were in Lebanon a month and two months at home. And Adoniram was over the forced laborers. Now Solomon had 70,000 transporters and 80,000 hewers of stone in the mountains, besides Solomon's 3300 chief deputies who were over the project and who ruled over the people who were doing the work.](#) Of these people taken by the king, there are a significant number of them which have nothing to do with national security. The king simply has the power and ability to induct whoever he wants into personal service, and what man would not be tempted by this kind of power?

**Your flock he will take a tenth and you [even] you are to him for slaves.** 1Samuel 8:17 **He will take a tenth of your flock and even you are slaves to him.**

**He will take a tenth of your flock and even you are as slaves to him.**

Interestingly enough, this is one of the very few verses which does not begin with a wāw conjunction. Here is what others have done with it:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text                      Your flock he will take a tenth and you [even] you are to him for slaves.  
Septuagint                            And he will tithe your flocks; and you will be his servants.

Significant differences:            No significant differences.

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

*The Message*                        He'll lay a tax on your flocks and you'll end up no better than slaves.  
NEB                                      He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his slaves.

#### **Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

JPS (Tanakh)

He will take a tenth part of your flocks, and you shall become his slaves.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB

"He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his servants.

Young's Updated LT

...your flock he does tithe, and you are to him for servants.

**What is the gist of this verse?** The king would take a tenth of the flocks of the people and they themselves (the population of Israel), for all intents and purposes, would be his servants.

### 1Samuel 8:17a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
tsôn (צֹן) [pronounced <i>tzohn</i> ]	<i>small cattle, sheep and goats, flock, flocks</i>	feminine singular collective noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #6629 BDB #838
ʿâsar (אַסַּר) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAHR</i> ]	<i>to take a tenth of, to take a tithe of, to decimate, to tithe</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6237 BDB #797

**Translation:** He will take a tenth of your flock... A king would tax all that he could get away with. In general, he would take a tenth of all that belonged to the Israelites. Here, he is taking a tenth of their flocks.

### 1Samuel 8:17b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿattem (אַתֶּם) [pronounced <i>ahT-TEM</i> ]	<i>you all, you guys, you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
hâyâh (הִיאֵה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced <i>ĠE<sup>B</sup>-ved</i> ]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

**Translation:** ...and even you are slaves to him. The Israelites were not supposed to enslave one another (Lev. 25:39–46); that is, if one Israelite became so indebted to another that he chose to *work off his debt* as a slave, he still was to maintain his dignity and the *owner* was to treat his *slave* as a hired hand; and that, after a certain

period of time, he was to be manumitted, debt-free. What Samuel is speaking of here is that the entire nation becomes indebted to the king. Whatever belongs to them that he wants, he takes, whether it is land, produce, animals or people—in essence, all of Israel is enslaved to their king.

Throughout this passage, we have what a king would take from the people. Israel did have a financial responsibility to the Levitical tribe and to the priesthood. 10% of their wealth went to support the Levites. Furthermore, an additional 10% every third year was given for the poor. Although we have instances of giving in the Old Testament, I do not recall the actual enforcing of this particular law anywhere. Given that Israel ignored its seven-year Sabbaths, I would not be surprised if they also went through periods of time where they did not support the priests and the Levites. The addition of a king increased the financial burden. An additional 10% of every form of wealth would be given to the king. My guess is that the percentage found throughout—10%—was a number pulled out of the air by Samuel, although he was inspired by God the Holy Spirit in doing so. Pretty much what this means is, if a king were placed into power over Israel, then the least they should expect to contribute is 10%. We have found that our contribution to government in the United States to be much, much higher (our total tax liability is not far from 50%).<sup>33</sup> So Samuel's point is that having a king is going to cost the general population of Israel. "You go home and look around your house; you might have 3 or 4 servants—the king is going to take one. You may have been blessed with many sons and daughters. The king will take a couple of them and press them into public service. You may have some beautiful land and great farm and grazing land. The king will look it over and take the best of it from you. Take a look at your livestock—your sheep, your cattle, your chickens—whatever it is that you have. The king is going to take a look and take a 10<sup>th</sup> of your livestock. Look at all your possessions of all sorts, and realize that a king is going to take 10% of them from you."

What the king would do is quite interesting. When a country would oppress Israel and take money from them, it was often not much different than we find here. Their best lands would be seized; they would sometimes have to give up their sons or their daughters or their servants; and they would often pay tribute. This occurred occasionally with an antagonistic power; however this would occur all of the time with a king.

**Application:** Those in positions of power and those who seek to be in a position of power have often two different approaches to their power. The view most often taken is, "I'm now in charge and I am going to make some changes." Or, "I'm in charge and you are going to do my bidding or else." This person has power lust and is the worst type of person to be under (as I and many of you can attest to). There is also the one in charge who takes responsibility for those under him and sees himself as their servant. I recall working in a system where several principals saw their job as doing whatever they could to make it possible for me to teach. They were in authority over me, but they saw their function as making my job easier. That was so damn close to being in the millennium and I have never forgotten those few years. Most people who aspire to power or positions of authority have no concept of doing the best that they can for those under them. This does not mean that there is no place for an autocratic ruler. Moses was autocratic. However, he was also irreproachable in his behavior and he had a direct line to God, something which could not be said of most other leaders.

**And you have cried out in the day the that from to faces of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves and will not answer Y<sup>e</sup>howah you in the day the that."** 1Samuel 8:18

**And [when] you have cried out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, Y<sup>e</sup>howah will not answer you in that day."**

**And when you cry out in that day because of the king whom you have chosen, Y<sup>e</sup>howah will not answer you."**

First, what others have done:

#### Ancient texts:

<sup>33</sup> At present, our income tax is roughly 17–33% (and more). However, we also pay property taxes, sales tax; and, in many items that we buy, there is a built-in tax to the purchase price (e.g., gas and liquor).

Masoretic Text	And you have cried out in the day the that from to faces of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves and will not answer Y <sup>e</sup> howah you in the day the that.”
Septuagint	And you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen to yourselves, and the Lord will not year you in those days, because you have chosen to yourselves a king.”

Significant differences: The LXX essentially repeats a statement, which could have been a scribal error in the manuscript that they used. Its being left out of the MT could be a scribal error as well. In either case, the meaning of this verse is essentially the same.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

*The Message* The day will come when you will cry in desperation because of this king you so much want for yourselves. But don't expect GOD to answer.”

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh) The day will come when you cry out because of the king whom you yourselves have chosen; and the LORD will not answer you on that day.”

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB “Then you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the LORD will not answer you in that day.”

*Young's Updated LT* And you have cried out in that day because of the king whom you have chosen for yourselves and Jehovah does not answer you in that day.

**What is the gist of this verse?** Israel would eventually cry out to God because of their king, but God would not answer them.

Throughout Israel's history, when faced with great oppression or discipline, the people of Israel would call out to their God and He would hear them and answer them (e.g., Ex. 2:23–25 Judges 3:15). However, in this verse, Samuel warns them that they would cry out to God because of the king whom *they had chosen*, and God would not answer them. You see, it is their choice to have a king to take the place of God.

### 1Samuel 8:18a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
zâ <sup>ʿ</sup> aq (צֹאֵק) [pronounced <i>zaw-GAHK</i> ]	<i>to cry out, to call, to cry</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #2199 BDB #277
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></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
yōwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i> ]	<i>day; time; today (with a definite article)</i>	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

## 1Samuel 8:18a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hûw' (הוּ) [pronounced hoo]	<i>that</i>	masculine singular, demonstrative pronoun (with a definite article)	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
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
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l')	<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
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, the two prepositions and pânîym mean <i>from before, from the presence of, a from a position before a person or object, from before a place</i> . However, this also expresses source or cause, and is also rendered <i>because of, on account of</i> .			
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

**Translation:** [And \[when\] you have cried out in that day because of your king...](#) The verb means *to cry out, to call, to cry*. This is a word which is used for an utterance of horror, anxiety, alarm, distress, sorrow. At some point in time, Israel would call out to God because of their king. His oppression and his actions will become as awful as the oppression he was put in power to cure.

## 1Samuel 8:18b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
bâchar (בָּחַר) [pronounced baw-KHAHR]	<i>to choose; Gesenius also lists to prove, to try, to examine, to approve, to choose, to select; to love, to delight in [something], to desire</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #977 BDB #103.
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l')	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

**Translation:** ...whom you have chosen for yourselves,... So far, this verse reads: “And [when] you cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves,…” God has given a long list of grievances which the people will have about their king. It will come to the point of great oppression to where they call out to God for help.

Also, do you see how the choices of this generation would affect the lives of the many generations to follow? This generation is requiring Samuel to give them a king. However, there will be a king over Israel from now until 586 B.C. when Assyria will overrun Israel. The choice of this generation would affect Israel for the next 500 or so years.

1Samuel 8:18c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (אֵל or לֹא) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
ʿânâh (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 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6030 BDB #772
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	affixed to a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<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
hûw' (הוּא) [pronounced hoo]	<i>that</i>	masculine singular, demonstrative pronoun (with a definite article)	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

**Translation:** ...Y<sup>ehowah</sup> will not answer you in that day.” In previous situations, Israel might get out of fellowship through idolatry and then God would allow antagonistic peoples to impose their will over the Jews. However, when they turned to God, He would then deliver them. However, here, they are choosing a king, knowing full well what the end result would be. God warns them through Samuel that, under these circumstances, He would not deliver them from their own king. This is the choice of Israel, and Samuel is making certain that they know what they are choosing. *They cried for help, but there was none to deliver. They cried even to Jehovah, but He did not answer them (Psalm 18:41). And you neglected all My counsel, and did not want My reproof. I will even laugh at your calamity. I will mock when your dying fear comes, when your dying fear comes like a storm, and your calamity comes on like a whirlwind, when distress and anguish come on you. They will call on Me, but I will not answer; they will seek Me diligently, but they will not find Me. Because they hated knowledge, and did not chose the fear of Jehovah, they would not accept My counsel, they spurned all My reproof. So they will eat the fruit of their own way, and be satiated with their own evil conspiracies (Prov. 1:25–31). “So when you spread out your hands [toward God in prayer, or to God in helpless desperation], I will hide My eyes from you. Furthermore, even though you multiply prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are full of bloodshed.” (Isa. 1:15). Then they will cry out to Jehovah and He will not answer them. Instead, He will hide His face from them at that time, because they have practiced evil deeds*

(Micah 3:5). Note that, in these passages, the reason that God does not listen to the Israelites is not based upon their asking for a king. That was simply one illustration of their negative volition toward Him. Their acts which followed were all indicative of their negative volition toward Him.

There is always the anti-prophetic approach to Scripture. There are apparently those who allege that this passage was written long after the establishment of the monarchy (and later the split monarchy) in Israel.<sup>34</sup> They allege that these problems mentioned could not have been foretold, and therefore one writing from the time of the divided kingdom would have, in retrospect, listed these problems, and then inserted them into Scripture. There are a couple of problems with this interpretation which go beyond simple theological differences. (1) If that sort of cheating was to take place, we would expect to later find in Scripture the people crying out to God over Ahab and Jezebel (or because of some other degenerate and evil king); but we do not. If you are going to add to Scripture, why not do it right? (2) This prediction is not a difficult one to make. The Israelites were surrounded by heathen nations with heathen kings. When entering into Canaan, the Jews had destroyed city after city where the city was ruled by a city king. We would be foolish to think that it was beyond Samuel's ability to suggest these things when he lives in the midst of example after example of kings doing these things to their own nation. In other words, we are not speaking of some great, hidden theological insight, but a reasonable expectation of the results of Israel being ruled by a king. In other words, even apart from God's guidance and counsel, any reasonably bright person could have predicted what Samuel predicts here. Therefore, there is no reason to assume that some future author wrote this stuff down and inserted into Scripture.

Those who make these suggestions have this agenda, so to speak, which we should recognize. They want to remove all vestiges of the supernatural from Scripture, and they will use any and all means to do so, including theories who convulsion is legendary. What they completely ignore is the incredible reverence with which the Jews gave to the Holy Scriptures. Given the fact that the Old Testament manuscripts used in the translation of the Septuagint (circa 100 B.C.) and those which we have today (from 800–1000 A.D.), the differences are few and can generally be attributed to errors in transmission. There are very, very few additions which crept into Scripture. If one wants to counter with the argument that we treat the Scriptures with reverence now, but they did not way, way back when. If they were not Scriptures back then, why make changes in the first place? That would presuppose that one who altered Scripture by adding to it would be doing so to manuscripts not seen as holy during his time, but would later be seen as from God. Therefore, such a one who would add to Scripture would have to recognize that what he was adding to would become revered hundreds of years later, even though it was not so revered at that time. That would make no sense at all, particularly to one who was anti-supernatural.

Let's take this in points...

### Why is it Illogical that Someone Added Long Passages to the Scriptures?

1. We know that, through most of Israel's history, there was a great reverence of the Scriptures.
2. This is clearly shown when we compare the Septuagint, a translation made in 300–200 B.C. to the MT of 900–1000 A.D. The differences are trivial and often easy to explain (the book of Samuel has probably the greatest number of differences of any book).
3. This same reverence can be confirmed with the Dead Sea Scrolls, also from the same era roughly as the Septuagint. There is very little variance between the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Masoretic text.
4. So, this gives us two options: these Scriptures were always revered, or, sometime prior to the translation of the LXX, they were not so revered.
5. If these Scriptures were revered, then it is unlikely that anyone would have added huge portions to them. The priests had access to the Scriptures as did the king, and the addition of large portions of Scripture would have caused these Scriptures to be less revered. So, instead of reaching a point to where every word was seen as inspired, they would have felt just the opposite. The end result would have been a much less accurate transmission of Scripture.

<sup>34</sup> See Gnana Robinson, *1 & 2 Samuel; Let Us Be Like the Nations*; International Theological Commentary; Eerdmans's Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, ©1993; p. 53. Robinson claims that the author was simply writing about Solomon's rulership (and conveniently forgets that this was Israel's golden age).



## Why is it Illogical that Someone Added Long Passages to the Scriptures?

6. The other option is, these historical records were not seen as inspired. So, an author who intended to add to these records would have to both go back and insert passages to indicate that these records are inspired and then add whatever viewpoint he wants to add. Then, the author has to wait hundreds of years for these records to become revered, so that his viewpoint can become the Law of God.
7. This is illogical. Why would such an author want his influence to kick in long after he is dead? And, how would this author be able to predict that these historical records, which he has partially forged, will become so revered that his additions will be seen as God's Word?
8. If people viewed this as God's Word to begin with, then how is someone going to make changes and additions to Scripture without this being noticed?
9. If people did not view this as God's Word, then why go to so much effort to make these changes and additions in the first place?
10. Furthermore, liberal theologians who cannot believe that there is real prophecy in Scripture, have to believe that this did not occur on just one occasion by one author, but that several different men made these additions and changes over a period of a thousand years—so these objections hold each and every time for each and every unknown author who supposedly made these changes.
11. Also note what is missing: men who have the idea that their philosophy is so great that everyone should listen to them tend to be egotistical enough to want their name affixed to their philosophy. However, if all of these changes and additions were made after the fact, and on several occasions, somehow, not one single person got his name inserted in such a way as to give him credit for his great religious and philosophical thinking? All the credit falls into the laps of the historical figures whose lives they have supposedly distorted. In this passage, Samuel is seen as the great prophet, and no credit is given to the person who supposedly added vv. 11–18.
12. My point is, what is proposed by liberal theology—that huge portions of Scripture were written long after the fact and with a specific viewpoint, and that these huge portions of Scripture were interwoven into what was already written—this is illogical. It does not make sense that people would, a century later, suddenly blindly follow these doctored records as Scripture; and it does not make sense that this would have been done on several occasions by several different men, but without any of them getting credit and without any of their ideas of philosophies coming to light until after their deaths.

Liberal theology particularly dislikes the idea that Samuel really was a prophet—that he really could see into the future and make the predictions that we find here, and that he could really be accurate in these predictions. What they propose is, someone inserted this passage a century later, and then, somehow, no one noticed.

Furthermore, some theologians, like Robinson, suggest that these inserted prophecies came from the time of Solomon. Solomon, although he did use a lot of the resources of the people of Israel also ruled during a very prosperous time for Israel. This was Israel's golden age. Someone would have to be high up in office to be able to get to the Scriptures of God during Solomon's time. He would have to be dissatisfied with Solomon in order to use Solomon as an example of what a king should not be. It is illogical that he would have come to such a high position and, at the same time, would be unhappy about it. And, most importantly, he would have had to have made changes in Scripture which Solomon had learned as a child and had reviewed from time to time throughout his life. How on earth did he pull that off? Again, it is illogical to think that this passage got added into the Scriptures sometime after it was written.

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To quote from Keil and Delitzsch, who present the correct view of this passage: *This description, which contains a fearful picture of the tyranny of the king, is drawn from the despotic conduct of the heathen kings, and does not presuppose, as many have maintained, the times of the later kings, which were so full of painful experiences.*<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 420.

King Solomon was a mixed blessing to Israel. Because of his father David, he lived during a time of great prosperity and peace. Because of the people's love for King David, Solomon enjoyed unprecedented power. He went in for a great many experiments, the cost of which fell upon the shoulders of the people of Israel. The book of Ecclesiastes, a great book of Scripture, reveals Solomon chasing after happiness in a number of different ways. His building projects—leaving behind great buildings to testify to his greatness after his death—did not come cheap. They involved great expense and a tremendous amount of labor. All of this fell upon the shoulders of the working class in Israel, as well as upon the shoulders of the slaves and those Solomon pressed into civil service. His collection of things and women also required great daily provisions (1Kings 4:22–25). After Solomon's death, when his son Rehoboam was to rule, the people spoke to him about Solomon: [“Your father made our yoke hard; therefore, lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you.”](#) (1Kings 12:4).

On the other hand, one must balance this with the fact that, Israel enjoyed great prosperity during Solomon's reign. There was no war and the people were free to plant, tend to their orchards and flocks, and enjoy life. So, even though Solomon did press many of them into service, he also did it during a time when the end result would not be that they would lose their lives in battle, but that they would be involved in huge building projects for buildings which would last for centuries.

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### Samuel's List of the Ill Effects of Having a King

Summation	Historical Example
1. The king would seize the sons of his subjects for the king's army (vv. 11a, 12a).	<a href="#">Now the war against the Philistines was severe all the days of Saul; and when Saul saw any mighty man or any valiant man, he attached him to his staff (1Sam. 14:52).</a>
2. The king would seize the sons of his subjects for his personal entourage (v. 11b).	<a href="#">Now it was after this that Absalom provided for himself a chariot and horses, and fifty men as runners before him (1Sam. 15:1). Now Adonijah ben Haggith exalted himself, saying, “I will be king.” So he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen with fifty men to run before him.</a>
3. The king would takes the sons of Israel to plow, plant and harvest that land which he seized from the people in the first place (v. 12b).	<a href="#">(1Kings 1:5). See also 1Sam. 22:7b.</a>
4. The king would take the sons of Israel to manufacture the implements of war, as well as his chariots (v. 12c).	<a href="#">And Solomon amassed chariots and horsemen. He had 1400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen, and he station them in the chariot cities and with the king at Jerusalem. (1Chron. 1:14; see 1Chron. 9:25 as well).</a>
5. The king would takes the daughters of Israel as his own personal servants (v. 13).	
6. The king would seize the property which belonged to others for his own (vv. 14–15).	<a href="#">And Jezebel his wife said to him, “Do you now reign over Israel? Arise, eat bread, and let your heart be joyful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.” (1Kings 21:7).</a>
7. The king would seize a tenth of one's servants as his own (v. 16).	<a href="#">Now King Solomon levied forced laborers from all Israel; and the forced laborers numbers 30,000 men. And he sent them to Lebanon, 10,000 a month in relays; they were in Lebanon a month and two months at home. And Adoniram was over the forced laborers. Now Solomon had 70,000 transporters and 80,000 hewers of stone in the mountains, besides Solomon's 3300 chief deputies who were over the project and who ruled over the people who were doing the work. (1Kings 5:13–16).</a>
8. The king would seize a tenth of the cattle belonging to the people for himself (v. 17).	

## Samuel's List of the Ill Effects of Having a King

Summation	Historical Example
9. Finally, the people would call out to God and He would no longer hear them (v. 18).	

In order to draw these conclusions, Samuel had many examples of the Canaanite kings to use. He also had common sense and foresight. Therefore, he could reasonably predict that many kings would become *oppressive, greedy and self-serving*.<sup>36</sup> What would have no doubt surprised Samuel is the greatness of King David, who would rule 40 or so years hence. What Samuel rightly envisioned was someone more like Solomon, who, although he was a believer, abused his position of power. However, Solomon was really not an embodiment of the sort of king which Samuel is predicting because life in Israel under Solomon was prosperous and good. What Samuel predicts is more like King Ahab or King Manasseh.

As an addendum, as I have mentioned, there are those who believe this portion of Scripture was written after the monarchy had been established and that these were predictions which were written after the fact. And, again I say, if someone was going to mess with Scripture, then why not do it right? Why not list things which already had mention in Scripture? Why not add to Scripture those things predicted in here. For instance, it was clear that Solomon, in order to maintain his wives, mistresses and staff, had to have a tremendous support staff taken from the people of Israel at a tremendous cost. Being the kind of man that he was, he probably pressed many women into personal service and some he probably made wives or mistresses of. A mention of this in Scripture would help to match up with v. 13, which warns that a king would take the daughters of Israel as his personal servants. So, whereas this undoubtedly happened; it is not mentioned per se in Scripture except here as a prophecy. All of these warnings of Samuel came to pass; but not all of them are mentioned specifically. If one was appending Scripture to make everything come together, why not do a good job of it? Why not see to it that each of these predictions has a specific fulfillment? Or, assuming that these were written after the fact, why not make predictions which had been already specifically stated in Scripture? My point is that we have no reason to make any assumption that this was written after the fact. Any intelligent and observant believer could have predicted these things would come to pass.

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### The People Still Want a King and God Grants Them this Request

**And so refuse the people to listen to a voice of Samuel. And so they said, "No, for if a king is over us...."**

1Samuel  
8:19

**Still, the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel, and they said, "No! For, if a king was over us..."**

**Despite what Samuel had to say, the people did not heed his warnings. Instead, they said, "We don't care what you say; if there was a king over us,..."**

Again, this is one of those screwy verses which stops in mid-thought. They ignore what God has said, and they list their reasons, which they believe to be valid and persuasive. Here is how others have rendered this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so refuse the people to listen to a voice of Samuel. And so they said, "No, for if a king is over us..."

<sup>36</sup> *The Open Bible*; the New Living Translation; Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN; ©1996, p. 375.

Septuagint But the people would not hearken to Samuel; and they said to him, "Nay, but there will be a king over us.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

*The Message* But the people wouldn't listen to Samuel. "No!" they said. "We will have a king to rule us!

NAB The people, however, refused to listen to Samuel's warning and said, "Not so! There must be a king over us.

TEV The people paid no attention to Samuel, but said, "No! We want a king,...

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

JPS (Tanakh) But the people would not listen to Samuel's warning. "No," they said. "We must have a king over us,...

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB Never the less, the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel, and they said, "No, but there shall be a king over us,...

*Young's Updated LT* And the people refuse to harken to the voice of Samuel, and say, 'Nay, but a king is over us,...

**What is the gist of this verse?** Despite Samuel's explanation as to what would happen with a king over Israel, the elders still say, "We want a king over us."

1Samuel 8:19a			
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
mâ`ên (מֵאֵן) [pronounced maw-AIN]	<i>to refuse, to be unwilling; to cease, to leave off</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Piel imperfect	Strong's #3985 BDB #549
‘am (אָם) [pronounced ‘ahm]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l̄)	<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
shâma` (שָׁמַע) [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>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033

## 1Samuel 8:19a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b <sup>e</sup> (בּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<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
qôw (קוּ) [pronounced koh]	<i>sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6963 BDB #876
Sh <sup>e</sup> mûw <sup>êl</sup> (שְׁמוּאֵל) [pronounced sh <sup>e</sup> -moo-ALE]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028

**Translation:** Still, the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel,... This was typical of the Israelites throughout their history. They are legend in this regard. They continually rebelled against the voice of God. “So I will choose their punishments and I will bring on them what they dread; because I called, but no one answered; I spoke, but they did not listen. Furthermore, they did evil in My sight, and they chose that which I did not delight in.” (Isa. 66:4). “And now, because you have done all these things,” declares Jehovah, “and I spoke to you, rising up early and speaking, but you did not hear; and I called you, but you did not answer.” (Jer. 7:13). “Were they ashamed because of the abomination they had done? They certainly were not ashamed. And they did not know how to blush; therefore, they will fall among those who fall, at the time of their punishment, they will be brought down,” declares Jehovah (Jer. 8:12). “This wicked people, who refuse to listen to My words, who walk in the stubbornness of their hearts and have gone after other gods to serve them and to bow down to them, let them be just like this waistband, which is totally worthless. For as the waistband clings to the waist of a man, so I made the whole household of Israel and the whole household of Judah cling to Me,” declares Jehovah, :that they might be for Me a people, for renown, for praise, and for glory; but they would not listen.” (Jer. 13:10–11). “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings; but you would not!” (Luke 13:34).

## 1Samuel 8:19b

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
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lô <sup>ʾ</sup> (לֹא or לֹא) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518

**Translation:** ...and they said, “No! The first word that comes out of their mouths is lô<sup>ʾ</sup> (לֹא or לֹא) [pronounced low], which means *no*. This word represents the absolute negation. Whereas, ʾal (אַל) might be dehortative,<sup>37</sup> lô<sup>ʾ</sup> is prohibitive. ʾAl denies subjectively as one would wish and lô<sup>ʾ</sup> denies objectively as a fact. We might render this: **And they said, “Hell no!”** What Samuel was saying, they weren't having. What Samuel was selling, they weren't buying. They had made their minds up. They were going to have a king, regardless of what Samuel said.

<sup>37</sup> Dehort means *to dissuade, to persuade against*.

I have taught teenagers for years and occasionally, because they are practically people, I have reasoned with individuals. There is something that they want or something that they want to do, and I will explain to them the consequences of putting their plan into action. Invariably, they respond with, "Yeah, but I want to do it." There is a concert and your kid wants to go and you have over a dozen reasons why he can't go (it's a school night; you don't know the people he is going with to the concert; there will be drugs available there; etc.). His response, "Yeah, but I want to go, and my friends are going." In the short time that I have dealt with kids on the intermediate level, such an approach is even more pronounced.

God knew from eternity past the reaction of these elders. He knew that Samuel would clearly explain to them the problems inherent with having a king over Israel and that they would either half-listen to Samuel, or that they would give very little weight to his arguments. When all is said and done, the elders respond, "Yeah, but we want a king over us so that we can be like the other nations." Samuel is their spiritual authority. He is the only man in Israel who speaks to God and to whom God speaks. If the people should listen to anyone, it should be Samuel. Yet, as far as they are concerned, the plan that they have come up with—to install a king over Israel—is the path they choose. Their mind is made up. ["As for the message which you have spoken to us in the name of Jehovah, we are not going to listen to you!"](#) (Jer. 44:16).

New believers often look toward Israel or look to the Jew and wonder, *why don't they believe in Jesus?* There are passages in the Old Testament which speak of Jesus. When Abraham offered up his son, this was analogous to God giving His Son on our behalf. The millions of sacrifices as originally set forth in the books of Moses, all which point to the sacrifice of our Lord. When Isaiah spoke of the suffering servant in Isa. 53, this passage better described the cross and what Jesus did for us on the cross than any gospel passage. When God spoke through Zechariah, crying out to Israel, ["And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication, so that they will look on Me Whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a firstborn."](#) (Zech. 12:10); this speaks of Jesus. The Old Testament parallels and prophecies are incredibly numerous and stand alone in religious literature as an unprecedented pointing toward the Son of God to come and to deliver this world, first through His blood and then, later, through the blood of His enemies. To the believer—particularly to the believer who has studied Old and New Testaments—it is almost inconceivable that a Jew could view this and not see that Jesus is the Suffering Servant, the Son of Abraham, the Son of David, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace. But what we find again and again in Scripture is the strong negative volition of the Jew—their negative volition is practically legend in the Old Testament; despite all evidence to the contrary, they would still reject their God again and again; they would continue to reject His Word; they would not only reject God's prophets but the Jews would execute them. So, we should not be surprised when Jews, in general, reject Jesus as their Lord and Savior. From the day that God led them out of Egypt to the day that our Lord walked the earth, we see great negative volition expressed on the part of the Jew toward God and God's will. Earlier, I quoted a handful of passages which testify to that. Therefore, their negative volition toward the Lord of Glory, the Lord Who bought them, has great precedent in Scripture—and this is one of the many passages which testifies to this negative volition. Furthermore, the negative volition of the Jew toward Jesus is even predicted. [He was despised and we did not esteem Him](#) (Isa. 53:3b).

Please allow me this tangent: no matter how much liberal theologians want to remove prophecy from Scripture, what they cannot take out of Scripture are the hundreds of prophecies about Jesus Christ. The Old Testament was clearly in existence and in the possession of a people and a priesthood who were clearly antagonistic toward Jesus Christ. However, even though they had every reason in the world to change Scripture—to remove every passage which could be taken as a prophecy of Jesus, they did not. Despite their spiritual blindness, the Scriptures were too holy to simply go in and change in order to separate themselves from the man Christ Jesus. So, even though liberal theologians think that the Jews have gone in on several occasions and changed their Scriptures, when it comes to the thing which is most abhorrent to them—Jesus Christ—they make no changes there. Again, the position of the liberal theologian is a very illogical position to take.

## 1Samuel 8:19c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>when, that, for, because</i>	explanatory conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i> ]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though</i>	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
Together, kîy ʾîm (אִם כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee-eem</i> ] act as a limitation on the preceding thought, and therefore should be rendered <i>but, except, except that, unless</i> and possibly <i>only</i> . However, these particles are not used in a limiting way <i>if</i> they follow an oath, a question or a negative. Then they can be rendered <i>that if, for if, for though, that since, for if, but if, indeed if, even if</i> .			
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752

**Translation:** *For, if a king was over us...* Right now, at this juncture, we should have a new verse. They will reiterate their arguments and this portion of v. 19 should be tied directly to v. 20. Since most translators ignore one of the words in this next portion of v. 19, the direct connection of the two verses is less pronounced in most translations.

Then we have the kîy conjunction (*for, when, because*) followed by the hypothetical particle ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced *eem*], which means *if*. Strong's #518 BDB #49. Then we have *a king* followed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *to be* followed by *over us*, giving us: “*For if [there] was a king over us...*”

It might be good to understand a few things about prayer:

### The Petitions of Prayer

- Every time you petition God for this or that, there is the thing that you ask God for, and behind it is what you actually want.
- For instance, you might pray to God for money, but what you are looking for is happiness or financial security.
- The people here petitioned God for a king, but what they wanted was national security (1Sam. 8:20).
- So, for every petition, there is the thing that you pray for, and then there is the desired effect of getting what you have prayed for.
- Sometimes God says yes to both things: you get what you prayed for and you get the desire effect. They may or may not be related.
  - For instance, you can pray for a wife, and God sends you a woman. The desire behind your petition is happiness, which you think you will get by having the companionship of a woman or by having sex with this woman.
  - God can give you a wife and she can be the source of a great deal of your happiness; but God could also send you a wife, and she could be a thorn in your flesh.
  - This does not mean you can't be happy. You might find your happiness and solace in God, despite

## The Petitions of Prayer

the fact that you married this bitch that you prayed for.

6. Sometimes God gives you what you petition for, but not the desire behind the petition. The Israelites here pray for a king, but they desire national security. At first, their king, Saul, will provide Israel with some national security. He will be very successful in war. However, mental illness will plague Saul, and, the end result will be that Israel has no national security. At this end of this book, the Philistines will soundly defeat Saul and his army and occupy central Israel.
7. Sometimes God does not give you what you pray for, but gives you the desire behind what you are praying for. You might pray for a new car, because you see in that new car a certain self-satisfaction and happiness. God may not give you the car, but with doctrine and spiritual growth, you get the happiness and peace which a good relationship with God will give you.
8. Sometimes God says *no* to your petition and to the desire behind your petition.
  - a. This may seem to be excessively cruel, but it is not.
  - b. You may be out of fellowship and you refuse to get back into fellowship. God does not hear your petitions and God therefore has no reason to grant your petitions.
  - c. You might be under the sin unto death, meaning you are dying a horrible and painful death. Unless you get back into fellowship and start getting doctrine in order to grow, you are going to continue to die this horrible death.
  - d. It is possible that the petition is in God's hands (and He refuses), but the desire behind the petition is in your hands. So many believers want happiness and peace, but they are unwilling to exhibit any positive volition toward God and His Word in order to get it. They will pray for money, a new car, a new house; or they will chase after these things themselves; but what they are after is happiness. **“Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all things will be added to you.”** (Matt. 6:33). Your being happy is more up to you than it is up to God.
  - e. Sometimes, you might pray for God to remove suffering, but God has put that suffering on you for blessing. We have receive a great deal of blessing from Paul's prison epistles. However, this meant that Paul had to spend time in prison in order to slow him down so that he could write to these various churches. Although we are never told whether Paul prayed to get out of prison or not, this is not the point. It is because of his personal suffering that we are blessed; and, we can be certain that, even in prison, Paul was blessed as well.

I should mention that I learned most of this doctrine in Berachah Church (under R. B. Thieme Jr.). The points come from memory, so I cannot point you to a particular series at Berachah where this is covered. However, they do publish a pamphlet called *Prayer*, and these points should be found there, although the illustrations may be different.

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One of the negative aspects of breaking up Scripture into verses is not simply the mess made of the context and the breaking off of thoughts, but that some translators are then inspired to improperly translate some words because they don't make sense when one looks at Scripture as a verse by verse rendering. V. 19b is closely tied to the next verse. V. 19b is the *if* and v. 20 is the *then*. This is lost in many translations. So, as we move into the next verse, bear in mind, it is not a new thought, but a continuation of the second half of v. 19.

It is in the next verse that they give their reasons why having a king is better than not having a king.

**...and we have been also we as all the nations and has governed us our king and has gone out to our faces and has waged war our battles.”**

1 Samuel  
8:20

**...then we, even ourselves, will also be like all the [other] nations and our king will judge [and govern] us. Furthermore, he will go out before us and fight our battles.”**



**...then we will finally be like the other nations with a king to govern us and a king who will go out before us to fight our battles.”**

So their idea is, put quite simply, is that a king will govern over them and fight their battles for them. Somehow it does not seem to occur to them, from the sound of this verse, that a king would draft them and their sons into the armed forces during a war. The king does not go out there and fight these battles alone or with a mercenary army. Here is how others have rendered this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text                      ...and we have been also we as all the nations and has governed us our king and has gone out to our faces and has waged war our battles.”

Septuagint                              And we also will be like all the nations; and our king will judge us, and he will go out before us and fight our battles.”

Significant differences:              No significant differences.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

*The Message*                              Then we'll be just like all the other nations. Our king will rule us and lead us and fight our battles." .

TEV    ...so that we will be like other nations, with our own king to rule us and to lead us out to war and to fight our battles.”

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh)                              ...that we may be like all the other nations: Let our king rule over us and go out at our head and fight our battles.”

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB    ...that we also may be like all the nations, that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles.”

*Young's Updated LT*                      ...and we have been, even we, like all the nations; and our king has judged us, and gone out before us, and fought our battles.’

**What is the gist of this verse?** This is a continuation from the latter half of v. 19, and the elders state the reasons for wanting a king: they will be like other nations, the king will rule over them and the king will lead them into battle.

### 1Samuel 8:20a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</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>	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
gam (גַּם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168

## 1Samuel 8:20a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾănach <sup>h</sup> nûw (אֲנַחְנוּ) [pronounced <i>uh-NAHKH-noo</i> ]	we	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural pronoun	Strong's #587 BDB #59
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כּ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
gôwyîm (גּוֹיִם) [pronounced <i>goh-YEEM</i> ]	<i>Gentiles, [Gentile] nation, people, peoples, nations</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #1471 BDB #156

**Translation:** ...then we, even ourselves, will also be like all the [other] nations... Or, "...[then] we [even] we are also like all the [Gentile] nations..." The whole point of what God did in creating Israel was to create a nation, a theocracy, which was *not* like all the other nations. And, once again, demanding a king will not actually change the fact that Israel is a theocracy—it will simply be less apparent to the surrounding nations. That is, in the past, a foreigner could ask an Israelite: "But, how do you function without a king?" And the Israelite could answer, "We do not require a king as God rules over us." Such a testimony, stated or implied by the nature of Israel's government, will be obscured because Israel will have a king. Let me give you an example. Let's say that you have become a believer in Jesus Christ, but you then choose to continue sinning in some very spectacular and visible ways. Now, you will spend eternity with God the Father and God the Son; you are eternally saved. However, your testimony is going to be lacking somewhat. Some one will not be able to look at your life and see Jesus. One of my oldest friends one time many years ago paid me probably the highest complement that he could—he reiterated his disinterest in becoming a Christian, but told me if he were to become one, it would be a Christian like me. Israel, as a nation without a king, is a greater testimony to being ruled by God.

## 1Samuel 8:20b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
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 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect; with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #8199 BDB #1047
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

**Translation:** ...and our king will judge [and govern] us. This is the second reason given: there would be a king to judge and govern over Israel. What happened in the past was, a man would arise now and again, and he would judge Israel. The area over which he ruled could be small or large; it just depended. For the Israelite, this was not

consistent enough; they wanted to know there would always be somewhere there to make these judgments. What they ignored was, sometimes, such a man is going to make a series of poor judgments.

### 1Samuel 8:20c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced <i>yaw-TZAWH</i> ]	<i>to go out, to come out, to come forth; to rise; to flow, to gush up [out]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
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 <i>upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of</i> . When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning <i>in the judgment of</i> .			
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâcham (לָחַם) [pronounced <i>law-KHAHM</i> ]	<i>to engage in battle, to engage in war, to wage war; to fight, to battle</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #3898 BDB #535
'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
mil'châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced <i>mil-khâw-MAW</i> ]	<i>battle, war</i>	feminine plural noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #4421 BDB #536

**Translation:** Furthermore, he will go out before us and fight our battles.” You may not realize it, but this statement is a real slap in the face to Jehovah, the God of Israel. Jehovah went to battle on behalf of Israel. God saw to their victories. “Jehovah will fight for you while you keep silent.” (Ex. 14:14). “Jehovah your God, Who goes before you, will Himself fight on your behalf, just as He did for you in Egypt before your eyes.” (Deut. 1:30). “Listen, 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, for Jehovah your God is the One Who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to deliver you.” (Deut. 20:3–4; see also Deut. 3:22 Joshua 23:10). Do you see how this desire of the elders is an expression of their lack of faith? Do you see the negative volition that this reveals? Israel does not need a king to fight her battles—Jehovah God has already promised to do that on behalf of Israel.

**Israel does not need a king to fight her battles—Jehovah God has already promised to do that on behalf of Israel.**

Together, these verses should read: Still, the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel, and they said, “No! For, if a king was over us, then we, even ourselves, will also be like all the [other] nations and our king will judge [and govern] us. Furthermore, he will go out before us and fight our battles.” Unfortunately, even most of the newer translations do not properly render these two verses as an *if...then...* statement.

#### Modern Renderings of 1Sam. 8:19–20

CEV	The people would not listen to Samuel. “No!” they said. “We want to be like other nations. We want a king to rule us and lead us in battle.”
God’s Word™	But the people refused to listen to Samuel. They said, “No, we want a king! Then we, too, will be like all the other nations. Our king will judge us, lead us out [to war] and fight our battles”.
NIV	But the people refused to listen to Samuel. “No!” they said. “We want a king over us. Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles.”
NJB	The people, however, refused to listen to Samuel. They said, ‘No! We are determined to have a king, so that we can be like the other nations, with our own king to rule us and lead us and fight our battles.’
NLT	But the people refused to listen to Samuel’s warning. “Even so, we still want a king,” they said. “We want to be like the nations around us. Our king will govern us and lead us into battle.”
REB	The people, however, refused to listen to Samuel. ‘No,’ they said, ‘we must have a king over us; then we shall be like other nations, with a king to rule us, to lead us out to war and fight our battles.’
TEV	The people paid no attention to Samuel, but said, “No! We want a king, so that we will be like other nations, with our own king to rule us and to lead us out to war and to fight our battles.”

It is unfortunate; one of the advantages of having a modern translation is, they tend to put less emphasis upon the verse and chapter separations and attempt to get the meaning across, even when it is found in several verses. However, in this case, most of these translators dropped the ball, in my estimation.

Actually, I am not aware of any translation which has an *if* in v. 19 (except perhaps the Septuagint, which appears to have an *if* in the classical Greek). However, the NRSV and the REB both imply the *if* with the word *then*.

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What would be a reasonable question is, *why are the elders of Israel coming forth to speak to Samuel right now about this issue?* Please realize that a bunch of elders were not sitting around, and suddenly one elder pounds his fist as the light goes on in his brain, and he says, “Dammit, what we need right now is a king!” “Yeah, a king—good idea! Let’s go talk to Sam about it.” Apparently, Nahash, the king of Ammon, was mobilizing his troops for an assault on eastern Israel. The elders did have some sort of an intelligence network and it became clear that Nahash was about to attack or was already attacking. In 1Sam. 12:12, we read: “When you saw that Nahash, the king of the sons of Ammon, came against you, you said to me, ‘Now, but a king will reign over us.’ although Jehovah your God was your king.” The actual attack will be found in 1Sam. 11.

Obviously, we have a problem with the request of the people. Keil and Delitzsch explain: *The people of Israel traced the cause of the oppression and distress, from which they had suffered more and more in the time of the judges, to the defects of their own political constitution. They wished to have a king, like all the heathen nations, to conduct their wars and conquer their enemies. Now, although the desire to be ruled by a king, which had existed in the nation even from the time of Gideon, was not in itself at variance with the appointment of Israel as a kingdom of God, yet the motive which led the people to desire it was both wrong and hostile to God, since the source of all the evils and misfortunes from which Israel suffered was to be found in the apostasy of the nation from its God, and it coquetting with the gods of the heathen.*

Consequently their self-willed obstinacy in demanding a king, notwithstanding the warnings of Samuel, was an actual rejection of the sovereignty of Jehovah, since He had always manifested himself to His people as their king by delivering them out of the power of their foes, as soon as they returned to Him with simple penitence of heart. Samuel pointed this out to the elders of Israel, when they laid their petition before him that he would choose them a king. But Jehovah fulfilled their desires. He directed Samuel to appoint them a king, who possessed all the qualifications that were necessary to secure for the nation what it looked for from a king, and who therefore might have established the monarchy in Israel as foreseen and foretold by Jehovah, if he had not presumed upon his own power, but had submitted humbly to the will of God as made known to him by the prophet. Saul, who was chosen from Benjamin, the smallest but yet the most warlike of all the tribes, a man in the full vigour of youth, and surpassing all the rest of the people in beauty of form as well as bodily strength, not only possessed “warlike bravery and talent, unbroken courage that could overcome opposition of every kind, a steadfast desire for the well-being of the nation in the face of its many and mighty foes, and zeal and pertinacity in the execution of his plans.” (Ewald), but also a pious heart and an earnest zeal for the maintenance of the provisions of the law, and the promotion of the religious life of the nation.<sup>38</sup> Keil and Delitzsch cut theological hairs here, but with great accuracy. The desire for a king was not really the problem; the problem was Israel’s reasons for wanting a king—it was their motivation which revealed a lack of faith. The reasons which they enumerate reveal faithlessness on the part of Israel.

**And so hears Samuel all words the people and so speaks them in [two] ears of Y<sup>e</sup>howah.** 1Samuel 8:21 **So [after] Samuel heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the ears of Y<sup>e</sup>howah.**

**After hearing the words of the people, Samuel repeated them to Jehovah.**

Here is what others have done:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text	And so hears Samuel all words the people and so speaks them in [two] ears of Y <sup>e</sup> howah.
Septuagint	And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and spoke them in the ears of the Lord.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV <i>The Message</i>	Samuel listened to them and then told the LORD exactly what they had said. Samuel took in what they said and rehearsed it with GOD.
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#### **Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

<i>God’s Word</i> <sup>TM</sup>	When Samuel heard everything the people had to say, he reported it privately to the LORD.
JPS (Tanakh)	When Samuel heard all that the people said, he reported it to the LORD.

#### **Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB	Now after Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the LORD’s hearing.
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<sup>38</sup> Keil & Delitzsch’s *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, pp. 415–416.

Young's Updated LT

And Samuel hears all the words of the people and speaks them in the ears of Jehovah;...

**What is the gist of this verse?** Samuel does hear what the elders tell him, and he communicates these things to God.

### 1Samuel 8:21a

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
shâma' (שָׁמַע) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAHĠ</i> ]	<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 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
Sh'mûw'êl (שָׁמוּאֵל) [pronounced <i>sh<sup>e</sup>-moo-ALE</i> ]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028
'am (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

**Translation:** So [after] Samuel heard all the words of the people,... So, Samuel gritted his teeth and listened to all that the people said, the gist of which is given in vv. 19–20. He was dead set against this, but, God had told him to listen, and so he did.

### 1Samuel 8:21b

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
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>p</sup>-VAHR</i> ]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel imperfect; with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></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

## 1Samuel 8:21b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾōzen (אָזֵן) [pronounced OH-zen]	ears	feminine dual construct	Strong's #241 BDB #23
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

**Translation:** ...he repeated them in the ears of Y<sup>e</sup>howah. The verb here is the Piel imperfect of *to speak, to declare, to proclaim, to announce*. The Piel of this verb is not simply an intensifier but alters the meaning of the verb. Most often, the Piel could be simply rendered by *to speak*. I do not find anything in Gesenius which indicates that this should be rendered *to repeat*, although that is not too far from the intention of this sentence. More accurately, this reads: ...and he spoke them in the ears of Y<sup>e</sup>howah.

When these elders showed up, Samuel may have realized that they were coming with some lame idea; however, he still listens to them, and, even though he is angered, he speaks to Jehovah God first. He has already heard the request of the people. He spoke to God about it. Then he returned to the people and told them why their idea was bad; they nevertheless held to it. And now Samuel returns to speak to God. There are times when you are going to speak to people whose lack of spiritual growth is apparent—and when we do, then note what Samuel did in this situation. He listened to them; he went to God. He returned and told them why their proposal was a poor idea. They would not relent. And then he goes to God again. Did you notice that nowhere does Samuel stop them mid-sentence and say, “That is the stupidest, lamest suggestion that I have ever heard! This talk is over.” It was a serious request made by a politically-strong contingent. Had Samuel said *no*, it is not clear that they would not have overridden his power and sponsored a king anyway. Samuel goes to God twice on this matter and returns with careful and measured speech. Samuel is nothing, if not diplomatic. He does not go off half-cocked. He has made it clear to the people the problems with their choices.

**Robert Gordon's summary of this verse: God does not need informants, but Israel needed an intermediary** (Robert

Gordon, *1 & 2 Samuel A Commentary*; Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI; ©1986; p. 111).

**And so said Y<sup>e</sup>howah unto Samuel, “Hearken in their voice and cause to make a king for them a king. And so said Samuel unto men of Israel, “Go a man to his city.”** 1Samuel 8:22

**Then Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Samuel, “Listen to their voice and cause a king to reign for them.” Then Samuel said to the men of Israel, “Go each one to his city.”**

**Then Jehovah said to Samuel, “Listen to the voice of the people and find a king to reign over them.” Then Same said to the men of Israel, “Return to your cities, each one of you.”**

First, what others have done:

#### Ancient texts:

##### Masoretic Text

And so said Y<sup>e</sup>howah unto Samuel, “Hearken in their voice and cause to make a king for them a king. And so said Samuel unto men of Israel, “Go a man to his city.”

##### Septuagint

And the Lord said to Samuel, “Hearken to their voice, and appoint them a king.” And Samuel said to the men of Israel, “Let each man depart to his city.”

Significant differences: No significant differences.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV "Do what they want," the LORD answered. "Give them a king." Samuel told the people to go back to their homes.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

God's Word™ The LORD told him, "Listen to them, and give them a king." Then Samuel told the people of Israel, "Go [back] to your own cities."

JPS (Tanakh) And the said to Samuel, "Heed their demands and appoint a king for them." Samuel then said to the men of Israel, "All of you go home."

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

NASB And the said to Samuel, "Listen to their voice, and appoint them a king [lit., *cause a king to reign for them*]." So Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Go every man to his city."

Young's Updated LT ...and Jehovah says unto Samuel, 'Hearken to their voice, and you have caused to reign over them a king.' And Samuel says unto the men of Israel, 'Go each to his city.'

**What is the gist of this verse?** God tells Samuel to listen to (and to go along with) the elders. When Samuel returns to speak with them, he tells them to disperse and return to their home cities.

1Samuel 8:22a			
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
ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʾel (אל) [pronounced el]	unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Sh <sup>e</sup> mûwʾêl (שמ׳ו אל) [pronounced sh <sup>e</sup> -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 Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Samuel,... We begin with the wâw consecutive followed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *to say* followed by the subject of the verb, which is Y<sup>e</sup>howah followed by *unto Samuel*. God speaks with respect to Samuel, as indicated by the preposition used here.



Although we do not know the mechanics by which God spoke to Samuel, we do know that the first time was through a dream, when Samuel was very young. Here, and previously in this chapter, we do not really know exactly how God spoke to Samuel.

1Samuel 8:22b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shâma <sup>c</sup> (שָׁמַע) [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>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<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 kohl]	<i>sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #6963 BDB #876
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
mâlak <sup>e</sup> (מָלַךְ) [pronounced maw-LAHK <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to make king, to cause to reign, to cause to rule over</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #4427 BDB #573
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced l <sup>e</sup> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MĒH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

**Translation:**...“Listen to their voice and cause a king to reign for them.” God has already told Samuel twice to listen to the people: And Jehovah said to Samuel, “Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have reject Me from being king over them.” (1Sam. 8:7); and again in 1Sam. 8:9: “Now, then, listen to their voice—however, solemnly warn them and tell them the expected protocol of a king who reigns over them.” You will note that God is even more patient with Samuel than He is with this contingent of elders. God makes it crystal clear that Samuel must go along with their request.

I should add that, although this does appear to be a second time that God speaks to Samuel on this matter, this portion of v. 22 could simply be a continuation of the conversation between them in 1Sam. 8:7. You will notice the similarity of the beginning. What we could be getting here and in v. 9 are simply excerpts from one conversation between God and Samuel.

Barnes: [This repetition of God's will to Samuel indicates] ...*Samuel's great unwillingness to comply with the people's request. Besides the natural aversion which he felt to being thrust aside after so many years of faithful and laborious service, and the natural prejudice which he would feel at his age against a new form of government, he doubtless saw how much of the evil heart of unbelief there was in the desire to have a visible king for their leader, instead of trusting the invisible Lord Who had hitherto led them. But*

God had His own purpose in setting up the kingdom which was to be typical of the kingdom of His only begotten Son.<sup>39</sup>

God respects our free will and often allows us to follow this free will, even when it is not good for us. I know that many have exclaimed, "Why has God let this happen to me?" when, in truth, it was their own damn fault. God just allowed them to suffer the consequences of their own free will.

### 1Samuel 8:22c

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
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Sh <sup>e</sup> mûwʾêl (שִׁמוּאֵל) [pronounced sh <sup>e</sup> -moo-ALE]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced e]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
ʾânâsîym (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
Yis <sup>e</sup> râʾêl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

**Translation:** *Then Samuel said to the men of Israel,...* The gist of Samuel said follows (and he may not have said much else, being probably angry at the people). We can imagine that Samuel is just gritting his teeth here. He is thinking, "These stupid sons-of-bitches; can't they listen to a word I say?" Recall that Samuel had become known far and wide as a prophet from God and that Samuel had led these people in revival. Now, despite what he tells them, they said, "No, we don't really care what you have to say; we want a king over us." The words used here indicate that Samuel spoke respectfully to these men, but you can tell that he did not like it.

In the previous chapter, I spoke of Samuel pretty much wrapping up his ministry, writing even an epilogue, if you will, in the final few verses of the previous chapter. Samuel was pretty much ready to call it quits. All of this happens, and these stupid Israelites do not seem to have the sense which God gave them. So, he records in writing what he recalls of his life, appending it all with a summary at the end. My guess is, Samuel did this writing either at this time. He figured, *this is it; my ministry is over; and these people are too stupid to guide anyway*. He's an old man, his sons are not really following in his footsteps; these people want God to give them a king, even though this is not God's desire (and Samuel made this clear to them). So Samuel knows, what has happened in his life is important; and that communication with God is important, as he grew spiritually by reading what Scripture had already been written. My guess is, Samuel went back to Ramah and wrote 1Samuel 1–7 at this time, expecting

<sup>39</sup> Barnes' Notes; 1Samuel to Esther; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 22.

it to be the record of his entire ministry. This attempt to record his life, perhaps even when a little perturbed, might explain why we do not have anywhere near a complete record of his life; and certainly not a complete record of God's communications with him. He is an old man, so he will recall the most recent past; he will definitely recall the earliest days; and the one incident which stands out in his mind, more than any other, is the loss of the Ark of God (and this may have been recorded by a believer Philistine already; and integrated into the narrative either at this time or later by David).

### 1Samuel 8:22d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>go, come, depart, walk; advance</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i> ]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #376 BDB #35
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i> )	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾîyr (עִיר) [pronounced <i>geer</i> ]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5892 BDB #746

**Translation:...**“Go each one to his city.” You will note that Samuel says very little upon his return to the men of Israel. He is pissed off. Haven't you ever worked with a group of people and you have made the only good suggestion on a course of action, and they treat you with contempt? They act as though your thoughts and ideas are unimportant? Samuel knows what is proper for the people and he knows why. Even God concurs with his sentiment. However, the will of the people is listened to. Here, God simply allows the people what they want, even though it is not necessarily in their best interests. As I have mentioned earlier, God's will can be separated into three categories: (1) His directive will for your life: There is a direction to take which God knows is best, and you move in that direction. Insofar as Samuel is concerned, God will require him to anoint a king. Even though Samuel does not want to do this, he will go ahead and do it because it is God's will. (2) God's permissive will: you choose to do something which is contrary to His will, but He allows you to do it anyway. That is what we have here with regards to the elders. What they want—a king—is not God's directive will for them. However, God *allows* them to have a king. That this is God's *permissive* will is clear in Hosea 13:11: “I gave you a king in My anger, and took him away in My wrath.” (3) God's overruling will: there are occasions where you demonstrate great negative volition, and God does not allow you to go through with your idea. When I moved to Texas, there were two other opportunities in two other states which appealed to me—God did not open either of those doors. When I arrived in Texas, I had four interviews, but was only offered one job immediately, and that job was my second choice. Of course, I took that job. That was God's overruling will. Had I been given a choice here, I would have taken the wrong job (something which I have since found out).

The second half of this verse reads: **Then Samuel said to the men of Israel, “Depart each [of you] to his city.”** It is even possible that Samuel did not tell them that they would get what they wanted. He simply tells them, “Get the hell out of here.” Now, bear in mind, he has just spoken to God and they realize this, so the convocation leaves.

A question that you should be asking yourself is, *why give in to the wishes of the people?* It is clear that they want a king for all the wrong reasons. It is clear that a king who rules over them will abuse his power. Samuel knows that and God knows that. Therefore, *who really cares what the people want? If their reasons for wanting a king are wrong; if a king placed over Israel would abuse the nation Israel as Samuel has rightly said, then why does God*

*tell Samuel to listen to the people and appoint a king for them?* The answer is simple: placing a king over Israel was a part of God's great plan. There was a King-to-come, [For a Child will be born to us, a Son will be given to us; and the government will rest upon His shoulders. And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace on the throne of David and over his king come, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness, from then on and forevermore, the zeal of Jehovah of the armies will accomplish this \(Isa. 9:6–7\).](#) Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. And the Spirit of Jehovah will rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding; the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of Jehovah. He will delight in the fear of Jehovah and He will not judge by what His eyes see, nor make a decision by what His ears hear; but with righteousness, He will judge the poor and He will decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth and He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth and with the breath of His lips, He will slay the wicked. Also, righteousness will be the belt around His loins, and faithfulness the belt about His waist (Isa. 11:1–5). The setting of a king over Israel looked forward to the King Who would come, Who would rule over Israel in righteousness and justice. Therefore, even though His human counterpart would often fail as a king (the great exception is King David, who became the gold standard of kings); God needed a king in place to point to the One Who would come as King of Israel.

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Throughout this chapter, I have mentioned some of the false theories associated with this chapter and chapters to come; now let's deal with this issue point-by-point:

### Dealing with the False Theories of Authorship and Time of Writing

1. It is alleged by some that the book of Deuteronomy was written long after the time of Moses and that this section of Samuel (1Sam. 8–15) can be divided into two different sections written at two different times by two different authors (and perhaps combined and edited by a third person).
2. Their reasoning is as follows:
  - a. There appears to be times that the book of Samuel is favorable towards the notion of a king and there are places where this book seems to treat the idea negatively.
  - b. The Bible cannot be God's Holy Divine Word,
  - c. The Bible was written with the purpose of swaying the opinion of the population of Israel toward this political viewpoint or that, usually written long after the events themselves occurred.
  - d. Since there are passages which treat the notion of a king negatively and positively, there must be two authors whose writings were combined later and presented as ancient.
3. There are also two historical reasons for this view:
  - a. Originally, it was thought that writing did not exist until much later in the history of Israel. Therefore, books like Genesis through Judges were thought to have been transmitted orally. Remove their authors and there is no reason to associate any other book with its traditional author. It has since been shown that writing goes way back into human history.
  - b. There are those who are fundamentally opposed to anything supernatural. Therefore, prophecies, communications from God and miracles are routinely dismissed as myths carried down through oral tradition (if not devised later in someone's imagination). For these reasons, those historically associated with the various writings of Scripture were therefore suspect in the eyes of the skeptic.
4. Now, I hope that it is clear how convoluted this theory is. Let me give you an example: on the one hand, I believe that I live in the greatest country in the world under the greatest system of government and freedom ever. On the other hand, I have very little respect for most politicians (apart from certain local ones) and believe that our court system has entered into territory not specifically granted to it by the United States constitution. If I were of a mind to, I could write a political examination of the government of the United States articulating both positive and negative viewpoints. This does not mean that I am two different people nor does it mean that I am schizophrenic. Therefore, it is not necessary for a writer to be completely pro this or completely anti that. When it comes to rule by a king, there are positive and negative aspects. The Bible tends to be even-handed, if anything, and presenting both sides of the king issue should be something

## Dealing with the False Theories of Authorship and Time of Writing

that we would expect, not be surprised by.

5. Now, think about it: the theory is that two different men from two different eras write both positive and negative comments about an issue, long after that issue was resolved and no longer an issue. Then a third person comes along, whose viewpoint about this is ambivalent, but he decides to combine the writings of these two other guys, and then somehow slip it into the chronicles of Scripture as ancient, so that he can get his viewpoint across, even though he apparently does not have one. How whack is that? When someone has a strong view that they are attempting to present as Scripture, why on earth would they use opposing viewpoints within their own editing if one is not clearly predominant? Mary Baker Patterson Glover Eddy did not do this. Joseph Smith did not do this. Nor did Charles Taze Russell or Judge Rutherford. The motivation of someone who would try to present something as Scripture which is not is clear with various cultist figures; but it is not very clear if one ascribes this to the editing of 1Samuel. Some people are motivated by power and contro, but ambivalence about an issue clearly does not gain a person power.
6. There is another theory that some of the portions of Samuel were extent and accepted as history and that there was a Deuteronomic influence who inserted bits and pieces of his writings. This was to have taken place during the 5<sup>th</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. while Israel was in exile.\*
7. Again, the problem is that you have possibly two different viewpoints and the addition of the second viewpoint comes off as being ambivalent at best. Again, this does not really move forward a person's views nor does it give power to the person who added the material. Israel isn't even a nation when these portions of Scripture were supposedly added to, so the political viewpoints presented are moot.
8. Furthermore, these portions of Scripture cannot be neatly separated into the writings of two different men. Not only would scholars not agree who wrote what, but the narrative would be meaningless without both sides presented. If you remove the antimonarchial portions of 1Sam. 8–15 (which were supposedly added centuries later), then there is no longer a cohesive narrative.
9. My point is that:
  - a. There is no inherent problem with the presentation of the pros and cons of rulership by a king. We should expect an even-handed approach in Scripture.
  - b. Furthermore, solving this alleged problem with this convoluted theory introduces a host of new problems which the theory does not solve.
10. The explanation for opposing viewpoints is simple:
  - a. The elders approach was from the wrong motivation. They wanted a king for all the wrong reasons. Samuel presents to them the downside of having a king. Is there tension and disagreement presented? Absolutely. You have Samuel, who feels that they have rejected him despite his faithful service to Israel; you have the elders, who cite Samuel's reprobate sons as reason the system needs changing. You have God, Who sees that their motivation of the elders is wrong, but also that a king must be over Israel to foreshadow Jesus Christ. There is tension and disagreement simply because there is more than one viewpoint presented.
  - b. It is clear that God anticipated in the future that Israel would be ruled by a king. In fact, more than anticipated it; it was His will for that to happen, as a king over Israel would point to the True King of Israel, His Son, Jesus Christ. Therefore, there are good aspects of having a king.
  - c. The political model of a king and a kingdom, even apart from all spiritual considerations, has pluses and minuses. Therefore, we should not be surprised to find both sides presented in God's Word.\*\*

\* *Hard Sayings of the Bible*; Walter Kaiser Jr., Peter Davids, F.F. Bruce, Manfred Brauch; InterVarsity Press; ©1996; p. 202.

\*\* This very question is dealt with in greater detail in *Hard Sayings of the Bible*; Walter Kaiser Jr., Peter Davids, F.F. Bruce, Manfred Brauch; InterVarsity Press; ©1996; pp. 202–204.