

1 Samuel 12

1 Samuel 12:1–25

Samuel's Address at Saul's Inaugural

Outline of Chapter 12:

- v. 1–5 Samuel Calls Upon the People to Witness His Faithfulness
- v. 6–11 Samuel Reminds Israel of God's Faithfulness to Them in the Past
- v. 12–15 Samuel Gives the People of Israel Their Alternatives
- v. 16–19 Samuel Calls For a Great Thunderstorm and God Provides One Frightening the People
- v. 20–25 Samuel Instructs the People as to His Responsibilities and Their Responsibilities

Charts and Maps:

- Introduction The Scope and Sequence of the Life of Samuel
- v. 9 The Book of the Judges—Domestic Issues (Judges 17–21)
- v. 9 The Book of the Judges—Foreign Relations (Judges 3–16)
- v. 10 Israel Under Discipline: Compare and Contrast
- v. 11 The Oppressors and the Deliverers of Israel
- v. 13 Did God Choose Saul or Did the People Choose Saul?
- v. 14 What the Problem is in v. 14 with the Hypothetical Particle
- v. 14 Six Interpretations of the Conditional of 1 Samuel 12:14
- v. 15 The Protasis and the Apodosis
- v. 17 God's Judgments of Severe Weather
- v. 21 The Results of Hate Crime Legislation
- v. 24 The Responsibilities of God, Samuel and the People
- v. 25 Warnings from Spiritual Atlas's
- v. 25 A Summary of 1 Samuel 12

Doctrines Covered

The Doctrine of *ḥēth*

Introduction: 1 Sam. 12 is simply a continuation of 1 Sam. 11:14–15. Samuel has directed Israel to go to Gilgal to celebrate their victory over Nahash, king of the Ammonites, to thank God for what He has done, and to publically recognize Saul as king over all Israel. This is Samuel's convocation speech. He will interact with the people and with God. Interestingly enough, Saul will be mentioned, but he will not speak, except for one word at the end of v. 5 (although, this is not what *your* Bible will say).

As I work through the exegesis of this chapter, two of my sources seem to be pretty much the antithesis of one another. J. Vernon McGee is down-home Southern; he speaks in a language that almost anyone understands; he rarely appears to get technical; and his homespun approach is even belied by his writing style (I think, actually, that his books are transcripts from his radio programs). On the opposite side of the fence, we have Keil and Delitzsch, whose vocabulary is extensive, difficult and sometimes abstruse. Their knowledge of languages is an integral part of their teaching, and rarely do they ever put anything into layman's terms. However, their writings are in almost full accord when it comes to theological matters. Furthermore, their approach is complementary rather than antagonistic. Therefore, I will quote from both commentaries extensively. God uses all kinds of men, with all kinds of backgrounds, with many different approaches. The reason that I bring this up is so that you

recognize that God can and will use you. It does not matter what your personality is like; it does not matter what your background is. God can use anyone; however, two things: (1) you must be filled with the Holy Spirit (and I don't mean in some Pentecostal, holy roller, speaking in tongues kind of way); and (2) you must know the Word of God. These are key to being successful in the Christian way of life.

You will recall how I have pointed out that Jewish thought tends to be more topical than chronological. These chapters are a perfect example of this. We have a consistent, chronological thread which runs through these chapters 11–13, but each chapter is more of a topical exposition which stands on its own. In 1Sam. 11, we have the attack of Nahash upon eastern Israel, their cry for help, and the response of Saul. Saul leads Israel in victory and is publically acclaimed as king over Israel. In 1Sam. 12, we have Samuel's address to the people at the convocation that recognizes Saul as king. Samuel is barely mentioned in chapter 11; Saul is barely mentioned, by name, in chapter 12. In 1Sam. 13, we have Saul's kingship, including Saul's first big mistake.

As an aside, I have occasionally said that the author of much of this book (or, at least, the first portion of it) is Samuel. What we should expect of Samuel's speech is that it be in fairly simple Hebrew. We would expect a lot of wâw consecutive, a lot of simply constructed phrases, and a lot of very common Hebrew words, as this is what we have found in most of this book so far. We will, on occasion, run into a word not used before in the book of Samuel. This does not mean that it is a different author, but that there was no reason to use those words before (there are examples of this increased vocabulary at the end of v. 4 and early in v. 5). Interestingly enough, although Samuel begins with fairly simple Hebrew connected with a bunch of wâw conjunction's and wâw consecutive's, his Hebrew becomes a bit more eloquent near the end. In fact, it is as though he is caught up in his own message, and his passion overtakes his limitations.

What would be helpful, at this time, would be a chart which would give us a rough idea as to the time frame, scope and sequence of the life of Samuel.

The Scope and Sequence of the Life of Samuel		
Samuel's Age	The Pertinent Events	Approximate Date
1–3	Samuel's mother raises Samuel at home, with the intent of bringing him to Eli and the Tent of God to be raised up. 1Sam. 1:19–23	1125–1122 B.C.
4–25	Samuel is raised up by Eli in the Tent of God, with the likely result that he would succeed Eli (1Sam. 1:24–3:19).	1122–1101
25–30	Samuel replaces Eli, who dies at the capture of the Ark. It is clear that Samuel is the rightful successor to Eli and his authority is accepted. 1Sam. 3:19–4:1a, 14–18	1101–1096
30–50	Despite Samuel's authority being accepted, Israel spiritually goes astray. The Ark remains in Kiriath Jearim, the Tent of God is moved, Shiloh is razed, the Philistines make great inroads into Israel's territory, and the house of Israel begins to lament after Jehovah their God. Therefore, Samuel plays very little part in the history of Israel during this time. 1Sam. 4:1–7:4	1096–1076
50	Samuel holds a revival for the people and they respond. An unexpected war breaks out between Israel and the Philistines, and Israel enjoys a great victory (1Sam. 7:5–11).	1076
51–75	Israel enjoys an extended period of peace and Samuel's ministry is active, recognized and productive (1Sam. 7:12–17).	1075–1051

The Scope and Sequence of the Life of Samuel		
Samuel's Age	The Pertinent Events	Approximate Date
75–76	Samuel has set up his sons as judges in Beersheba. Nahash the Ammonite threatens eastern Israel. The people of Israel demand that Samuel appoint a king over them. 1Sam. 8:1–22 (compare 1Sam. 12:12)	1051–1050
76	Samuel anoints Saul as king over Israel. Saul defeats the Ammonites. The people recognize Saul as their king. Samuel addresses the nation for what he expects to be his last message to the people. 1Sam. 9:15–12:25	1050 B.C.

In case you are wondering from whence I derived the ages of Samuel and the dates; I first of all set up what seemed to be reasonable ages for Samuel that corresponded with these various events in his life and in the history of Israel. I could be as far off as 20 years (although I suspect that I am within 10 years throughout the left hand side of this chart).

With regards to the approximate date—ZPEB has Saul's kingship beginning in 1020 B.C.¹; Reese² (of Reese's Chronological Bible) says 1065 B.C.; and the Narrated Bible³ and the Bible Almanac⁴ have it at 1043. 1050 B.C. was essentially an arbitrary average date that I began with and worked backwards.

The purpose of this chart is to simply give you some numbers and actions on which to hang your hat. Although I of course attempted to be accurate, the dates and ages in this chart are simply reasonable approximations.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

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

Samuel expects that this is going to be his last speech before Israel. For the previous 40 years,⁵ he has been the spiritual leader of Israel. For the 20 prior to that, he was a youth being raised up in the Tent of God with the intention of becoming a slave to God (that he would lead Israel spiritually was not immediately apparent).⁶ During this time, we would expect that Samuel has read and reread and read again the Scriptures which were available to him. He knows what the final speech of a spiritual leader should be, as he has read many times the final words of both Moses and Joshua. Therefore, we should not be surprised that his final words are very similar to the final words of those two great men.

There are some who teach that these are different speeches which have been later put together in the same chapter as one speech. While this is not entirely out of the question, this theory is essentially based upon the fact that Samuel covers different topics. Just because a great man in his last words in a public speech covers more than one topic, it does not mean that we are looking at more than one speech. Furthermore, everything that Samuel says can be tied together. He begins by teaching Israel that their desire for a king was unwarranted. In

¹ *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; ©1976; Vol. 3, p. 757.

² *The Reese Chronological Bible*; KJV translation; Editor: Edward Reese; ©1977 by Edward Reese and Klassen's dating system ©1975 by Frank R. Klassen; ©1980 by Bethany House Publishers, South Minneapolis, MN; p. 437.

³ *The Narrated Bible In Chronological Order*; narrated by F. LaGard Smith; ©1984 by Harvest House Publishers; Eugene, Oregon; (NIV ©1984 by the International Bible Society); p. 1693.

⁴ *The Bible Almanac*, J.I. Packer, Merrill C. Tenney, William White, Jr.; ©1980 Thomas Nelson Publishers; p. 53. Both *The Narrated Bible* and *The Bible Almanac* appear to have the same ultimate source for their chronology.

⁵ This is simply a rough guess.

⁶ The only actual time frame that we are given was that there was a period of 20 years after the Ark of God came to rest in Kiriath-jearim that Israel fell into spiritual destitution (1Sam. 7:1–2). Although Samuel apparently was established as a spiritual leader prior to this time (see 1Sam. 3:19–4:1a), we have this 20 years of spiritual decline. My educated guess is that this was, for Samuel, age 25 to 45. After this, we have 20–30 years of clear spiritual authority and impact (summarized in 1Sam. 7:12–17), taking Samuel to about age 70 (which is where we pick things up in 1Sam. 8).

this approach, he must put his integrity to the test (vv. 1–5) and God’s integrity to the test (vv. 6–11). That Israel required a king from Samuel was a mistake (vv. 12–13). However, this is not the sort of mistake which will sever the relationship of God and Israel (vv. 14–15). Samuel reaffirms God’s present and active power (vv. 16–18), causing the people to realize their great mistake (v. 19). Then, with all the cards on the table, Samuel tells the people what their responsibility is and what his responsibility will be. In other words, there is no way that we are looking at two different speeches because all of this is tied together. What we have (and I will spend more time with this later) is a Pauline approach to a complex situation. That is, Paul would lay everything out and then say, *to what conclusion are we forced?*, after which, he would state the logical conclusion.

Now, also throughout the first fifteen or so verses, there will be a half-dozen places where there is a significant difference between the Greek Septuagint and the Massoretic text. The Greek tends to smooth out some sentences and, in some cases, adds what appears to be missing in the Hebrew. This should not cause us any concern. Although we could stand upon the Hebrew text alone (although there are some places where we would run into translational difficulties), the Greek is quite helpful in providing what appears to have been lost. Throughout the years, I have struggled with how to translate the Hebrew into English, and I have faced exactly what thousands of translators have faced in the past—just how literal and just how understandable do I want the translation to be? The result of this has been three translations, an approach with which I am very satisfied. However, another issue is, *what about the Greek?* If there is reason to believe that the Greek insertions represent what was originally found in the autographs, then how do I deal with that? What I have done in my most literal of translations is that I have usually stayed with the Hebrew. Occasionally, if I decided to add a word or two which are not in the Hebrew, I place those words in brackets. If I believe the Greek to be undeniably correct, then I often will insert it into the most literal of my translation, but generally in brackets. In the less literal but still literal second rendering into the English, I have almost always included the Greek (when I believed it to be probably the best rendering of the original manuscripts), but I have still placed it in brackets to indicate that this is what is found in the Greek of the Septuagint (circa 200 B.C.), but not in the Masoretic texts (circa 900 A.D.), which are in the original Hebrew language.

To give you a bit more detail on what is to come: Samuel, Saul and the victorious army of Israel have gone to Gilgal to celebrate their victory and to *renew* the kingdom. What is occurring is that Saul is being received as king by popular acclaim. He will actually begin ruling Israel immediately after this assemblage, even though he had been chosen as king by God several months previous to this.

What Samuel will say in his address to these men is quite impressive. As I got half-way through his address, I realized that he reminded me of Paul. Now, this is a surprise to me, given Paul’s outstanding skills in the realm of debate and given Samuel’s fairly basic vocabulary. What Samuel has to say is essential, but subtle. First off, he cannot call this whole *king thing* off. That Saul is king over Israel is a given. His victory in the previous chapter gives him popular acclaim. That does not mean that these men were right from the beginning to demand a king. So Samuel first interacts with the men from a podium. He puts himself, his character and his ministry on trial before Israel. He demands to know whether Israel views him as having served honorably or not—the men in the crowd are forced to admit that Samuel has been honorable in all of his dealings with Israel. Then he cites Israel’s history as proof of God’s faithfulness to Israel. So, God is now on trial. Has God done anything or not done anything to indicate that He is no longer faithful to Israel? You see, Israel demanded a king because they felt militarily threatened. They felt that a king was necessary to organize them to fight their battles. This position would be valid if Samuel did not properly administer his government; or, this position would be valid if God did not properly protect and guide Israel. Samuel illustrates from history that God has always guided them, regardless of the circumstances. So, the fact that Nahash, the king of Ammon, threatened them, was nothing new. He was not some menace which God had not foreseen. Nevertheless, the people demanded and received a king and that king led them to victory (this latter point was *not* a part of Samuel’s recorded speech). Samuel’s point should have been well-taken: he had not been unfaithful in any way to Israel; and God had not been unfaithful in any way to Israel.

Next point that Samuel makes—is the God of Israel today the same God of the past? Samuel calls for a tremendous storm, and God provides a storm, even though this is the dry harvest time. This causes the people great concern and they ask that Samuel pray on their behalf so that they do not die the sin unto death. Samuel

assures them that God will not forsake them, as He would never abandon His own people. He has not in the past; therefore, there is no reason to think that He would abandon them at that time. What is unsaid, but certainly a part of what should be considered—Israel has been faithless in its demand for a king. Does this mean that Samuel will desert Israel? Does this mean that the God of their fathers will desert Israel? At the end of his speech, Samuel indicates that he will continue to play a role in Israel’s future; furthermore, he assigns specific responsibilities to the population of Israel as well. And he concludes that God will also continue to play a part in Israel’s history. Their unfaithfulness does not mean that God would abandon them. If they now turn again toward God, God will lead and protect them. If they continue in faithlessness, then God will discipline them and their king. This is the summary of what is to come; now, onto the exegesis:

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

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

Samuel Calls Upon the People to Witness His Faithfulness

Slavishly literal:

And so says Samuel unto all of Israel, “Behold, I have hearkened in your voice, to all which you have said to me and so I have made king over you a king,...

1Samuel
12:1

Moderately literal:

Then Samuel said to all Israel, “Hear me! I have listened to your voice, to all that you have said to me, and therefore I have caused a king to rule over you.

Then Samuel spoke to all Israel: “Hear me! I have listened to all that you have said to me and have therefore caused a king to rule over you,...

First, what others have done:

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so says Samuel unto all of Israel, “Behold, I have hearkened in your voice, to all which you have said to me and so I have made king over you a king,...

Septuagint

And Samuel said to all Israel, “Behold, I have hearkened to your voice in all things that you have said to me, and I have set a king over you.

Significant differences:

No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV
NLT

Samuel told the Israelites: I have give you a king, just as you asked.
Then Samuel addressed the people again: “I have done as you asked and give you a king.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God’s Word™

Then Samuel said to all Israel, “I have listened to everything you have said to me and appointed a king over you.

JPS (Tanakh)

Then Samuel said to all Israel, “I have yielded to you in all you have asked of me and have set a king over you.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB

Then Samuel said to all Israel, "Behold, I have listened to your voice in all that you said to me, and I have appointed [lit., *made*] a king over you. .

Young's Updated LT

And Samuel says unto all Israel, "Lo, I have hearkened to your voice, to all that you [all] said to me, and I cause to reign over you a king,...

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel is speaking to Israel during the inauguration of Saul. He tells them that he has listened to all that they have said to him and he has placed a king over them.

1Samuel 12:1a			
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>	wāw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾāmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Sh°mûw'êl (שָׁמוּאֵל) [pronounced <i>sh°-moo-ALE</i>]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>el</i>]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
Yis°râ`êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

Translation: *Then Samuel said to all Israel...* Vv. 14–15 of the previous verse have set up the situation or the scenario for Samuel's speech. They are in Gilgal celebrating their victory, offering sacrifices to God and *renewing* the kingdom there.

1Samuel 12:1b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i>]	<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

1Samuel 12:1b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shâma' (שָׁמַע) [pronounced shaw-MAHG]	<i>to listen, to hear, to listen intently, to listen and obey, to listen and act upon, to listen and give heed to, to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and take note of, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	1 st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
qôwl (קוֹל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 rd masculine plural suffix	Strong's #6963 BDB #876

Translation: “Hear me! I have listened to your voice...” Samuel acknowledges that he has listened to what the Israelites have said to him. They requested a king and Samuel supplied them a king (see 1Sam. 8, particularly vv. 5, 7, 9, 20–22).

1Samuel 12:1c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l ^e)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l ^e)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to</i>	preposition (with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix)	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: “...to all that you have said to me...” This tells us that a delegation did not simply approach Samuel at one time and tell him that they wanted a king. Certainly, this did occur in Ramah when he was approach by the elders of Israel. However, Samuel interacted a great deal with the people. He apparently was still on his judges circuit, as we find him in Ramah, in Gilgal and in Gibeah, which would mean that there would be a lot of interaction between himself and other Israelites. No doubt did he occasionally speak to individual Israelites and hear again

and again that they all desired a king. The delegation which originally spoke to Samuel was a result of strong public support for a king.

1Samuel 12:1d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mâlak ^e (מָלַךְ) [pronounced maw-LAHK ^e]	<i>to reign, to become king or queen</i>	1 st person singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #4427 BDB #573
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced gahl]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity (with a 2 nd person masculine plural suffix)	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: "...and I have caused to rule over you a king." The Israelites have approached Samuel for a king and he provided them with one. God chose Saul, clearly indicated this choice to Samuel, and Samuel presented Saul to the people as their king (1Sam. 10:1, 24 11:14–15).

...and now behold, your king is walking to your faces. And I, [even] I have aged and greyed and my sons behold them with you [all]. And I have walked to your faces from my youthful years until the day the this.

1Samuel 12:2

And now, look, your king walks before you. Furthermore, I have become old and gray and look, my sons [are] with you. And I have walked before you from my youth until this day.

...and right before you is your king. Furthermore, I am old and grey-headed and my sons are among you. And you know I have walked in your sight from my youth until now.

Next verse as others have rendered it:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text ...and now behold, your king is walking to your faces. And I, [even] I have aged and greyed and my sons behold them with you [all]. And I have walked to your faces from my youthful years until the day the this.

Septuagint And now, behold, the king goes before you; and I am grown old and I will rest, and, behold, my sons are among you. And, behold, I have gone about before you from my youth to this day.

Significant differences: There is a minor difference whether Samuel says he has greyed (MT, Peshitta, Vulgate) or that he would rest (LXX). As mentioned in previous chapters, it is the norm for the Hebrew, Syriac and Latin to be in agreement.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV You have seen how I have led you ever since I was a young man. I'm already old. My hair is gray, and my own sons are grown. Now you must see how well your king will lead you.

NLT I have selected him ahead of my own sons, and I stand here, an old, gray-haired man. I have served as your leader since I was a boy.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ And now, here is the king who will lead you. I am old and gray, but my sons are with you. I have led you from my youth until this day.

JPS (Tanakh) Henceforth the king will be your leader. As for me, I have grown old and gray—but my sons are still with you—and I have been your leader from my youth to this day.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB “And now, here is the king walking before you, but I am old and gray, and behold my sons are with you. And I have walked before you from my youth even to this day.
Young's Updated LT ...and now, lo, the king is walking habitually before you, and I have become aged and gray-headed, and my sons, lo, they are with you, and I have walked habitually before you from my youth till this day.

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel points out that Saul is the king which will rule over them. Then he begins a personal message, telling Israel that he is old and his sons are known to all Israel; and he has been known by all Israel from his earliest youth.

1Samuel 12:2a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ˁattâh (אתָּה) [pronounced <i>gaht-TAWH</i>]	<i>now, at this time, already</i>	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i>]	<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
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	Hithpael participle	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229

1Samuel 12:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) (pronounced ^e)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

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

Translation: “*And, behold, your king walks before you.*” Samuel, no doubt, looks off to the side toward Saul and gives a nod of the head in Saul’s direction.

1Samuel 12:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾânîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced <i>aw-NEE</i>]	<i>I, me; in answer to a question, it means I am, it is I</i>	1 st person singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #589 BDB #58
zâqên (זָקֵן) [pronounced <i>zaw-KANE</i>]	<i>to become old, to become aged</i>	1 st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #2204 BDB #278
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
sîy ^b v (סֵיבַּ) [pronounced <i>see^bv</i>]	<i>to be hoary, to be old, to grow a lot of white hair</i>	1 st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7867 BDB #966

⁷ Choon-Leong Seow, *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew (Revised Edition)*; Abingdon Press, Nashville; ©1995, pp. 298–299.

⁸ Now, after seeing all this information about a simple verb state, you may wonder if Samuel is really that simplistic with the Hebrew. Samuel has used this verb state several times so far, just as he has used his small vocabulary over and over again.

Translation: “*And I, even I, have become old and I have grayed...*” Interestingly enough, our knowledge of Samuel has been him in his youth and him as an old man. In 1Sam. 1–3, we get Samuel’s birth, his parents, and his youth. In 1Sam. 4–6, we follow the Ark of God, and Samuel’s name is never mentioned (recall that 1Sam. 4:1a belongs with chapter 3). In 1Sam. 7, we have our only exposition of Samuel during his prime, along with what he expected was to be his swan song. His leadership had obviously gone by the wayside for about 20 years and the people returned to him and to God for guidance. This led to the sound defeat of the Philistines. And then, for an extended period of time, there was peace in the land. The Philistines were kept within their borders; the Amorites did not encroach on the cities of Israel. Samuel had grown old and he felt as though he had come to the end of his useful life at the end of 1Sam. 7. He wrote that chapter as though he was completing the information about his life and service to God and Israel. With 1Sam. 8, it is as though Samuel is writing an epilogue (that is, if he wrote this a little at a time). At least twice in chapter 8, Samuel makes reference to his old age (vv. 1, 5). He is at the end of his life, he believes; Israel is desirous of a king, and Samuel records this information, as it is extremely important to the history of Israel. After all, Israel is now in the stage of changing from being a theocracy to being a monarchy.

1Samuel 12:2c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
bên (בְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine plural noun (with the 1 st person singular suffix)	Strong’s #1121 BDB #119
hên (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hayn</i>]	<i>lo!, behold, observe, look, look here, get this, listen, listen up</i>	interjection (with a 3 rd person masculine plural suffix)	Strong’s #2005 BDB #243
’êth (אִתָּם) [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 rd person masculine plural suffix)	Strong’s #854 BDB #85

Translation: “*...and my sons, behold them [they are] with you!*” I think the implications of the CEV and the NLT are both apropos here. Samuel is going on about how he is old and gray, and he adds to this that his grown sons are among those listening to him. It is a further statement as to his age and his time of retirement. He has grown sons with whom Israel is familiar. The fact that his sons are worthless as leaders is not a part of what Samuel is saying (see 1Sam. 8:3). Now, Barnes incorrectly suggests that Samuel is again holding out his sons as possible leaders of Israel or that he is indicating some sort of disappointment that they have not been chosen by Israel to lead. This is silly. There is no possibility that his sons will lead Israel; Samuel himself does not want that. The little authority that he gave his sons was abused. Therefore, the only reason that he mentions his sons is a further illustration of his advanced age and their existence is a testimony to Saul’s personal integrity (that is, Samuel did not set things up so that one of his sons would rule over Israel). Samuel is passing the torch of leadership to Saul and not to his sons. This is probably on Samuel’s mind (as well as in the thoughts of his audience), but there is no direct statement in his recorded speech regarding that sentiment (i.e., that his integrity is also borne out by the fact that he does not appoint either of his sons as king of Israel). That Israel would go to Samuel and request him to appoint a king over them, and that he would not consider his own sons for this position is remarkable in itself (even given their corrupt behavior).

1Samuel 12:2d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾânîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced <i>aw-NEE</i>]	<i>I, me; in answer to a question, it means I am, it is I</i>	1 st person singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #589 BDB #58
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	1 st person singular, Hithpael perfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l^e</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	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> .			
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
n ^e ʾûrîym (נְעֻרָיו) [pronounced <i>n^eʾôo-REEM</i>]	<i>youth (it is always found in the plural, so we might render it youthful years)</i>	masculine plural noun with a 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #5271 BDB #655
ʿad (עַד) [pronounced <i>gahd</i>]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i>]	<i>day, today (with a definite article)</i>	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i>]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	demonstrative adjective with a definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260

Translation: "...and I have walked before you [all] from my youthful years until this day." Israel has observed Samuel and his behavior up until this time period. They know that he is an honorable man. This is the focus of Samuel's speech in vv. 2–5.

Behold me! Answer in me before Y^ehowah and before His anointed: an ox of whom have I taken? And a donkey of whom have I taken? And who have I exploited? Who have I oppressed? And from a hand of who have I taken a ransom and I conceal my [two] eyes in him? And I will restore [it] to you [all].”

1Samuel
12:3

Here I am! Testify against me before Y^ehowah and in front of His anointed: Whose ox have I taken and whose donkey have I taken? Furthermore, who have I exploited? Who have I oppressed? From whose hand have I taken a bribe—even a sandal [Hebrew: *that I conceal my eyes (from judging correctly) because of it (the bribe)?*] [Testify against me] and I will restore [it] to you.”

Now that I am right here in front of you, tell me—in fact, testify before God and before His anointed: Have I taken anyone’s personal possessions? Have I exploited or oppressed anyone though a misuse of my authority? Have I taken a bribe—even a sandal—to blind my eyes to that which is just? Tell me and I will return the item or right the wrong.”

Here is what others have done with v. 3:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	Speak of me before the Lord, and before his anointed, whether I have taken any man's ox, or ass: if I have wronged any man, if I have oppressed any man, if I have taken a bribe at any man's hand: and I will despise it this day, and will restore it to you.
Masoretic Text	Behold me! Answer in me before Y ^e howah and before His anointed: an ox of whom have I taken? And a donkey of whom have I taken? And who have I exploited? Who have I oppressed? And from a hand of who have I taken a ransom and I conceal my [two] eyes in him? And I will restore [it] to you [all].”
Peshitta	Behold, I am standing before you: testify against me before the LORD and before His anointed: whose ox have I taken? Or whose ass have I taken? Or whom have I defrauded? Or whom have I oppressed? Or of whose hand have I taken a bribe to look upon him with favor? Tell me, and I will restore it to you.
Septuagint	Behold, <i>here am I</i> —answer against me before the Lord and before His anointed: whose calf have I taken? Or whose ass have I taken? Or whom of you have I oppressed? Or whom have I been violent with? Or from whose hand have I taken a bribe, even a sandal? Bear witness against me, and I will make restitution to you.”

Significant differences: You will note that the MT and the Peshitta are in almost full accord—Samuel is a judge, so the things which can impugned to a judge are dealt with: Saul has not exploited or defrauded anyone, despite the fact that he had the power to do so. Furthermore, he has not oppressed anyone—i.e., thrown them in jail, had them executed, or anything like this, without a reason. The Greek’s notion that Samuel has not been violent with anyone is fine, but not really in keeping with Samuel’s position. The Latin here is closer to the actual meaning—Samuel has not *wronged* any man.

The Peshitta also gives us a better idea as to *what is the exchange for* Samuel (or anyone) taking a bribe. An unjust judge would look upon a defendant with favor after receiving a bribe from the defendant. This is what we find in the Syriac and, more or less, in the Hebrew. What is found in this place in the Vulgate and in the Septuagint make little sense. My guess is, they were trying to interpret the meaning of the Hebrew, but only the Syriac seems to have gotten that correct.

Interestingly enough, both the Greek and Syriac ask for a testimony from the crowd, in case Samuel is guilty of not dispensing justice from his position as judge.

Whether there is manuscript evidence for this, or whether they inserted this by implication, we do not know. In most similar cases, I lean toward the Greek translators having found this in the Hebrew manuscripts which they worked with. Equally interesting is that we do not find this phrase in the Latin.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Let me ask this. Have I ever taken anyone's ox or donkey or forced you to give me anything? Have I ever hurt anyone or taken a bribe to give an unfair decision? Answer me so the LORD and his chosen king can hear you. And if I have done any of these things, I will give it all back.
NLT	Now tell me as I stand before the LORD and before his anointed one—whose ox or donkey have I stolen? Have I ever cheated any of you? Have I ever oppressed you? Have I ever taken a bribe? Tell me and I will take right whatever I have done wrong.”

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word™</i>	Here I am. Testify against me in front of the LORD and in front of his anointed king. Did I take anyone's ox? Did I take anyone's donkey? Did I cheat or oppress anyone? Did I take a bribe from anyone to look the other way? [if so,] I will give it all back.”
JPS (Tanakh)	Here I am! Testify against me, in the presence of the LORD and in the presence of His anointed one: Whose ox have I taken, or whose ass have I taken? Whom have I defrauded or whom have I robbed? From whom have I taken a bribe to look the other way? I will return it to you.”

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	“Here I am; bear witness against me before the LORD and His anointed. Whose ox have I taken, or whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed, or from whose hand have I taken a bribe to blind my eyes with it? I will restore <i>it</i> to you.”
NRSV	Here I am; testify against me before the LORD and before his anointed. Whose ox have I taken? Or whose donkey have I taken? Or whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed? Or from whose hand have I taken a bribe to blind my eyes with it? Testify against me and I will restore it to you.” [the second <i>testify against me</i> is found in the Greek but not the Hebrew].
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	“Lo, here <i>am</i> I; testify against me, over-against Jehovah, and over-against His anointed; whose ox have I taken, and whose ass have I taken, and whom have I oppressed; whom have I bruised, and of whose hand have I taken ransom, and hide my eyes with it? —and I restore to you.”

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel is about to tell the people that if he has ever done anything illegal or immoral to them in his position as judge, and that it is time to let him know, as he stands right before them in this public forum, if they believe him to be guilty of these infractions.

1Samuel 12:3a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i>]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle (with the 1 st person singular suffix)	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
ʿânâh (עָנָה) [pronounced <i>gaw-NAWH</i>]	<i>to answer, to respond</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #6030 BDB #772
It is reasonable to render this <i>speak [or, answer] loudly, speak up [in a public forum]</i> . ʿânâh occasionally has a very technical meaning of giving a response in court, and could be rendered <i>testify</i> .			
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity (with the 1 st person singular suffix)	Strong's #none BDB #88
neged (נֶגַד) [pronounced <i>NEH-ged</i>]	<i>what is conspicuous</i> when it is a substantive and, as a preposition, <i>in front of, in the sight of, opposite to, before</i> (in the sense of being <i>in front of</i>)	preposition	Strong's #5048 BDB #617
YHWH (יְהוָה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3069 BDB #217
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
neged (נֶגַד) [pronounced <i>NEH-ged</i>]	<i>what is conspicuous</i> when it is a substantive and, as a preposition, <i>in front of, in the sight of, opposite to, before</i> (in the sense of being <i>in front of</i>)	preposition	Strong's #5048 BDB #617
mâshîyach (מָשִׁיחַ) [pronounced <i>maw--SHEE-ahkh</i>]	<i>anointed</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4899 BDB #603

Translation: "Here I am! Testify against me before Y^ehowah and before His anointed." *Anointed*, in the Greek, is *Christos*. Although some might like to make this a reference to God the Father and God the Son, Y^ehowah and His anointed actually refer to Jehovah, the God of Israel (Jesus Christ) and to Saul, who is God's anointed one (1Sam. 10:1 24:6 26:9, 11 2Sam. 1:14). This is the first instance of a king of Israel being called *God's anointed*; however, the High Priest has been so designated in the past (see Lev. 4:3, 5 6:22 1Sam. 2:35).⁹

Up until this time, Samuel has been the visible administrator of God's government. Now Samuel gives examples of areas where one could have defrauded the people from his position.

⁹ The exegesis of 1Sam. 2:35 requires about a page just to interpret this verse. However, in three of the interpretations, the *anointed* refers to a *priest* (or *priests*).

1Samuel 12:3b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated	untranslated mark of a direct object with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
shôwr (שׁוֹר) [pronounced <i>shohr</i>]	<i>an ox, a bull, a head of cattle</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #7794 BDB #1004
mîy (מִי) [pronounced <i>mee</i>]	<i>who; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i>]	<i>to take, to take from, to take in marriage, to seize</i>	1 st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
chămôwr (חֲמֹר) [pronounced <i>khuh-MOHR</i>]	<i>ass, male donkey, he-ass</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #2543 BDB #331
mîy (מִי) [pronounced <i>mee</i>]	<i>who; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i>]	<i>to take, to take from, to take in marriage, to seize</i>	1 st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542

Translation: "Whose ox have I taken? And whose donkey have I taken?"¹⁰ In the ancient world, the ox and the donkey were two of the most valuable possessions that a person could own.¹¹ Samuel has never decided a court case in such a way as to defraud some person of their possessions merely so that Samuel could take them.

There are, in the Houston area, neighborhood associations. Some of those who work for these associations are quite honorable and others behave like little Nazi's. There have been neighborhood associations who have *legally* taken property from others for a piddling amount of fees. These men would not stand before a crowd of people like Samuel here and ask whom have they defrauded.

1Samuel 12:3c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated	untranslated mark of a direct object with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84

¹⁰ Compare Num. 16:15 where Moses makes a similar claim under very different circumstances.

¹¹ Robert Gordon, *I & II Samuel A Commentary*; Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI; ©1986; p. 127.

1Samuel 12:3c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mîy (יִי) [pronounced mee]	<i>who; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
ʿâshaq (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ġaw-SHAHK]	<i>to exploit, to oppress, to wrong, to extort</i>	1 st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6231 BDB #798

Translation: “[And who have I exploited?](#) Samuel is a judge in Israel. Men have stood before him day after day, some of whom face criminal charges and some of whom are being sued. Samuel, on numerous occasions, could have exploited this situation—could have asked for a bribe, could have sided with a friend against someone that he did not know. Samuel could have abused his position of power, but he did not.

Could you imagine a contemporary political figure taking such a stand before his constituents in a public forum? “If I have defrauded anyone or stolen anything, I am standing before you—you tell me what I have taken, and I will restore it.” There would be a mob. People would submit long lists of things taken from them. There would be hundreds and hundreds of people who were defrauded and stolen from in legal proceedings.

1Samuel 12:3d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
The Greek and Syriac both insert a conjunction at this point.			
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated	untranslated mark of a direct object with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
mîy (יִי) [pronounced mee]	<i>who; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
râtsats (רָצַט) [pronounced raw-TSAHTS]	<i>to crush, to bruise, to oppress</i>	1 st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7533 BDB #954

Translation: [[And](#)] [who have I oppressed?](#) This latter verb is a reference to an act of violence which a person in power might be able to get away with (which explains the translation of the LXX). The idea is, someone has come to court and Samuel did not like the way they looked, or their background, or they were enemies of Samuel's friends, and so, for these reasons, he levied a heavy sentence or fine against the defendant. He oppressed the defendant not for justice, but for other considerations. Samuel asks this crowd, “Have I ever been guilty of doing this? Have I ever oppressed someone unjustly?”

I've been in court before, taken there by a neighborhood association. I did not think much of it at first, as the nearest judge in the nearest courtroom was a very just and honorable man. However, I later found out that we would go to court half way across town, which confused me. So, I went half way across town. The judge there had been very active in his own neighborhood association and had been president of his neighborhood association, so his mind was made up before we even walked into the courtroom. It made no difference what I said. Now, an honorable judge would have recused himself at this point. He should have said, “I am biased toward the neighborhood association, because I have been very actively involved with my own association.” This

judge did not have that sort of personal integrity. Now, you may think that this is sour grapes on my part, but that is incorrect—this same judge was removed from the bench within two years of this court case for some sort of judicial impropriety. He was a man who oppressed others apart from the facts of the case put before him; Samuel, on the other hand, was not that sort of man.

1Samuel 12:3e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i>]	<i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
mîy (מִי) [pronounced <i>mee</i>]	<i>who; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i>]	<i>to take, to take from, to take in marriage, to seize</i>	1 st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
kôpher (כֹּפֶר) [pronounced <i>KOH-fer</i>]	<i>price of a life, ransom</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3724 BDB #497

In this context, the idea that Samuel is expressing is a *bribe*. So, why do we interpret this as a *bribe* and not a *ransom*? Actually, in a way, we could interpret this as a ransom. If a criminal faces execution, he might try to give the judge money for his life, which would be both a bribe and a ransom. Of course, this could be further extended to any man who offered Samuel money for a favorable ruling. This would be different than a fine which might be levied against someone (e.g., Ex. 21:30).

Translation: *And from whose hand have I taken a bribe...* Samuel has been very honorable in his dealings with Israel. He has not taken a bribe from any man in his tenure as a judge over Israel. As a judge, one common temptation is to take a bribe in order to render this or that judgment. In fact, Samuel's own sons did this (1Sam. 8:3).

When Jethro suggested to Moses that he delegate some of his work, one of the qualifications for a judge was a man who hated dishonest gain (Ex. 18:21). Of course, you recall Samuel's sons who were not above taking bribes in order to influence their judicial decisions (1Sam. 8:3). The idea is that the bribe has caused Samuel to not look at what he is supposed to. He is blind to an infraction or to correct judgment because of this bribe.

In life, you are always going to find out that you just don't seem to have enough money. Very few millionaires suddenly stop working, saying, "Hell, I've got more money than I know what to do with; I quit." They continue to make money. People who are a lot richer than you or I defraud others, take money, and do so to increase their own personal wealth, even though millions of others look upon them as being incredibly rich already. The problem is not the money—it is legitimate to make money and it is legitimate for a wealthy person to continue to work and make more money each hour than others of us make in a lifetime. However, what is not legitimate is the lust one has for wealth—when one is willing to do a number of illegal things in order to gain wealth. It is the **love of money which is the root of all evil**.

By the way, just because you are poor, this does not mean that you can apply this verse to every rich person you come in contact with. Again, it is not the money, but the *love* of money which is sinful. You can be as poor as the proverbial church mouse, and suffer from a lust for money. You need to be able to trust God for what He has given you. As Paul said, **I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I find myself** (Philip. 4:11b).

Application: Your focus should never be on wealth or on personal possessions, but upon God. God can provide the things which you need. Can you think of some item that you would like right now that you don't have the money for? Certainly. Maybe a house that is three times larger than the one you live in now; or, simply for a house, because you are now renting an apartment. However, what you do and do not have should not be your primary focus—Bible doctrine should be your focus.

1Samuel 12:3f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿâlam (אָלַם) [pronounced <i>ah-LAWM</i>]	<i>to hide, to hide from the eyes, to turn away from</i>	1 st person singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5956 BDB #761
ʿayin (אֵינַי) [pronounced <i>ĠAH-yin</i>]	<i>spring, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes, spring</i>	feminine dual noun (with the 1 st person suffix)	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity; with the 3 rd masculine singular suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88

Translation: ...—**even a sandal** [Hebrew: *that I conceal my eyes (from judging correctly) because of it (the bribe)?* This describes what a judge might do for a bribe—instead of delivering a just sentence, he might look the other way, so to speak. That is the idea behind this statement. The Peshitta interprets this as *looking upon a defendant with favor*, which is a reasonable interpretation (although not exactly what we find here).

In the LXX, we have that Samuel has not taken a bribe, *not even a sandal*. Obviously, they either are dealing with a different text or have assumed that there was a minor mistake in the Hebrew text, which was thus corrected. The specific idea is quite different than what we find in the Hebrew; however, the general sentiment is the same: Samuel has not taken any bribes for any reason. In the Hebrew and Syriac, Samuel has not taken any bribes to affect the outcome of a judgment; and in the Greek, Samuel has not taken even the smallest of bribes.

The Greek, according to Brenton, reads: “...**or from whose hand have I taken a bribe—even a sandal?**” Obviously, there is some disagreement here, but nothing which dramatically changes the general meaning of the verse. There are also two different interpretations of this taking a sandal—Brenton, and others, indicate that such a bribe is insignificant, almost a gift. However, Samuel has not had his judgement impaired because someone has given him a gift or something relatively insignificant. The idea is that the bribe may have been something which *flew beneath the radar*; that is, was insignificant enough to be taken as an innocent gift or to not be noticed at all. The second interpretation is that a sandal could represent a token payment which is made in order to validate certain legal transactions.¹²

¹² Robert Gordon, *I & II Samuel A Commentary*; Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI; ©1986; p. 127. Gordon points us toward E. A. Spenser, *BASOR* 77 (1940), pp. 15–20 for more material on this. He also suggests reading a highly critical discussion of the RSV (and, therefore, NRSV) text here found in O. T. Allis, *Revised Version or Revised Bible?* (Philadelphia, 1953), pp. 19f. I lean toward the interpretation of the sandal representing a small, almost insignificant bribe (see

However, neither reading nor interpretation should cause us any sort of problem. In either case, a man who would take a bribe or who would defraud someone of their personal property—such a person violates the tenth commandment: “You will not desire you neighbor’s house; you will not desire your neighbor’s wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.” (Ex. 20:17). And no one will accuse Samuel of such a thing.

As Xander might say, “That’s just crazy talking.” Samuel was extremely honorable and no one can fault him for his work or behavior.

1Samuel 12:3g			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
The Greek has an additional <i>testify against me</i> right here (which would be in keeping with the context and properly placed here). ¹³			
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced <i>shoo^bv</i>]	<i>to cause to return, to bring, to be caused to turn back mentally, reminisce, to return something, to restore, to bring back, to regain, to recover, to make restitution, reconsider, think again, or to be caused to return</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong’s #7725 BDB #996
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l^e</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to</i>	preposition (with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix)	No Strong’s # BDB #510

Translation: [Testify against me] and I will restore [it] to you.” Samuel has been very honorable in his dealings with Israel.

Notice what Samuel has done: *Whereas the tribal elders had used the venality of the prophet’s sons as a pretext for constitutional change, Samuel ensures that on this occasion the spotlight falls on himself and his record of probity in public affairs.*¹⁴

In reality, the human authority that the elders are replacing is Samuel. Therefore, Samuel focuses the attention on his own personal integrity. The sons could have been sorted out at the urging of the people. Samuel, since he vindicates himself before the people by his acknowledged character, would have dealt with his sons appropriately (or, so we would hope).

A reasonable question that might be asked right now is, *why is Samuel justifying himself here?* We are not told in Scripture to run to every person who has ever imagined that we have done something wrong and clear ourselves in their eyes. There is not enough time in our lives to do that. Plus, very often, someone will imagine that we have done some wrong and this will be a legitimate observation. There are times that we will slight one person or another. So our lives should not be centered on self-justification. However, Samuel is setting a high

Amos 2:6 8:6).

¹³ In fact, I myself had inserted that phrase there prior to carefully examining the Greek. The structure seemed to cry out for such a placement.

¹⁴ Robert Gordon, *I & 11Samuel A Commentary*; Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI; ©1986; p. 126.

bar for Saul to meet. He has set up rules and regulations for the function of a king; however, he drives this home with his own life. From his youth to his old age, he has stood in a position of power before Israel. During those many years, Samuel did not abuse his power.¹⁵ Now, before Saul, who is about to assume power over Israel, Samuel makes public his spotless record of service. Saul is not to think that now that he is king, he can take advantage of this situation. Samuel holds himself out as an example as to the sort of conduct to which Saul should aspire.

There is a second reason that Samuel justifies himself publically. He does not want there to be any appearance of impropriety in the installation of Saul as king. It may have appeared to some that Saul was simply Samuel's boy who Samuel hand-picked for this position, but that was clearly not the case. Samuel did not rig the choice of Saul in 1Sam. 10 to put in his own golden boy. Saul was God's choice, not Samuel's, and Samuel's personal character which testified to this.

And so they say, "You have not exploited us and you have not oppressed us and you have not taken from a hand of a man anything."	1 Samuel 12:4	And they answered [him], "You have not exploited us and you have not oppressed us; you have not taken anything from [any] man's hand."
---	------------------	---

They answered him, "No, you have not exploited us or oppressed us in any way; nor have you taken anything from anyone."

Here is what others have done with v. 4:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so they say, "You have not exploited us and you have not oppressed us and you have not taken from a hand of a man anything."
Septuagint	And they said to Samuel, "You have not injured us, and you have not oppressed us, and you have not afflicted us, and you have not taken anything from anyone's hand."

Significant differences: The LXX has a few additional words; the Syriac and Latin are, as is most often the case, in agreement with the Hebrew.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	"No," the Israelites answered, "You've never cheated us in any way!"
NLT	"No," they replied, "you have never cheated or oppressed us in any way, and you have never taken even a single bribe."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word</i> TM	They answered, "You didn't cheat us, oppress us, or take anything from anyone."
JPS (Tanakh)	They responded, "You have not defrauded us, and you have not robbed us, and you have taken nothing from anyone."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	And they said, "You have not defrauded us, or oppressed us, or taken anything from any man's hand."
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	And they say, "You have not oppressed us, nor have you crushed us, nor have you taken from the hand of anyone anything."

¹⁵ Setting up his sons as judges was not an abuse of his power. Samuel apparently misjudged them, expecting more integrity from them than they had.

What is the gist of this verse? The people respond to Samuel, saying, “You have not oppressed or exploited us; you have never taken a bribe in order to distort justice.”

1Samuel 12:4a

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; so, that, yet, therefore</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lôʾ (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
ʿashaq (אָשַׁח) [pronounced <i>gaw-SHAHK</i>]	<i>to exploit, to oppress, to wrong, to extort</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect; with the 1 st person plural suffix	Strong's #6231 BDB #798

Translation: *And they answered [him], “You have not exploited us... Again, you will note slight differences between the Hebrew and the Greek. The general meaning of the verse is unchanged. Obviously, there are different words and individual meanings, but the overall thrust of the verse is the same. The first verb is the 2nd person masculine singular, with the 1st person plural suffix, Qal perfect of ʿashaq (אָשַׁח) [pronounced gaw-SHAHK] again, which means to exploit, to oppress, to wrong, to extort. With this verb is the negative. The elders present acknowledge that Samuel has not exploited them.*

1Samuel 12:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lôʾ (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
râtsats (רָצַח) [pronounced <i>raw-TSAHTS</i>]	<i>to crush, to bruise, to oppress</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect; with the 1 st person plural suffix	Strong's #7533 BDB #954

Translation: *...and you have not oppressed us;... Altogether, this gives us: And they said, “You have not exploited us and you have not oppressed us...” The response uses the exact same words that Samuel used, except with negatives. It is clear to those in this group that Samuel has never defrauded them in anyway.*

1Samuel 12:4c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (לו' or לא') [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i>]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
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
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i>]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
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
m ^e ʾûwmâh (מְאוּמָה) [pronounced <i>m^e-oo-MAW</i>]	<i>anything, and it is usually found in negative sentences; therefore, with the negative, it is often rendered nothing</i>	indefinite singular pronoun/adverb	Strong's #3972 BDB #548

Translation: ...you have not taken anything from [any] man's hand." The affirming testimony of the elders continues: "...and you have taken nothing from the hand of [any] man." It is clear to the public that Samuel has been completely honest and fair with the Israelites. How many men could stand before their constituents or before their congregation and allow for such a public examination? How would you feel about all those who have known you standing before you judging you with respect to your character. You might be able to stand up to it, but quite frankly, I have known too many people and have made too many mistakes. I don't know that I could survive such close public scrutiny. Samuel was a man of great faith and great integrity. He has lived his life in a glass house, so to speak. He has expressed the interests of his personal volition again and again from its earliest inklings. Still, he can stand before these men and ask them to come forward if he has cheated them in any way. What Samuel has achieved here is that he has gotten the men of Israel to acknowledge by oath that they had no grounds for *dissatisfaction with Samuel's administration, and, consequently, no well-founded reason for their request for a king.*¹⁶

As I have made clear, there are some exegetes who simply make my blood pressure rise because of the goofy things they say and the conclusions that they come to. And I have made no secret that Gnana Robinson is one of those. However, now and again he makes an observation which is unique and important. *The religion of the Bible is a down-to-earth religion; it speaks about mundane things of the world here and now—stealing, defrauding, oppression, bribery, and corruption, and it does not speak about other-worldly eschatological things alone.*¹⁷

¹⁶ Quoted and paraphrased from Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 442.

¹⁷ Gnana Robinson, *1 & 2 Samuel; Let Us Be Like the Nations*; International Theological Commentary; Eerdmans's Publishing Co., Grand rapids, ©1993; p. 68.

There are many times in the history of the church (and I am referring to any denomination now), where things would have been better if someone had simply stopped and said, "Is this moral? Is this righteous? Am I doing that which is right? Am I responding to this situation honorably?" The same questions which we should ask ourselves, those in the clergy should ask of themselves as well (and, quite obviously, there are pious men everywhere where such self-examination is at the forefront of their deliberations). Samuel is able to do this in a public forum and remain unscathed.

And he says to them, "Witness [is] Y^ehowah in you [all] and a witness [is] His anointed the day the this that you have not found in my hand anything." And so he says, "Witness." 1Samuel 12:5

And he said to them, "Y^ehowah [is] a witness against you and His anointed [is] a witness [against you] this day that you have not found anything in my hand." And he [Saul] said, "Testimony [confirmed]." [or, "I am a witness to this."]

Then he said to them, "Jehovah and His anointed are both witnesses against you that you have not found any illicit thing in my possession this day." And they replied, "We are witnesses." [or, *Saul interjected, "I am a witness to this."*]

Here's what has been done with v. 5:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And he says to them, "Witness [is] Y ^e howah in you [all] and a witness [is] His anointed the day the this that you have not found in my hand anything." And so he says, "Witness."
Septuagint	And Samuel said to the people, "The Lord [is] a witness among you, and His anointed [is] a witness this day, that you [all] have not found anything in my hand." And they said, "Witness."

Significant differences:

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Samuel said, "The LORD and his chosen king are witnesses to what you have said." "That's true," they replied.
NLT	"The LORD and his anointed one are my witnesses," Samuel declared, "that you can never accuse me of robbing you."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word</i> TM	Samuel told them, "The LORD is a witness to what you've said, and his anointed king is a witness today that you've found nothing in my hands." "He is a witness," they answered.
JPS (Tanakh)	He said to them, "The LORD then is witness, and His anointed is witness, to your admission [lit., <i>against you</i>] this day that you have found nothing in my possession." They [Heb., <i>he</i>] responded, "He is!"

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	And he said to them, "The LORD is witness against you, and His anointed is witness this day that you have found nothing in my hand." And they said, " <i>He is</i> witness."
------	--

Young's Updated LT

And he says unto them, "A witness is Jehovah against you; and a witness is His anointed this day, that you [all] have not found anything in my hand." And they say, "A witness."

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel says that Jehovah God is a witness to his testimony and to their mistake in demanding a king; also, even their king, God's anointed, is a witness to this.

1Samuel 12:5a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>e]</i>	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
ʿêd (עֵד) [pronounced <i>gayde</i>]	<i>witness, testimony, solemn testimony, evidence; a statement of truth, something which stands as a testimony or memorial to a fact (e</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5707 BDB #729
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88

Translation: And he said to them, "Y^ehowah [is] a witness against you... We have some minor discrepancies between the Greek and the Hebrew at first. However, what surprises me is that Young does not agree with the literal Hebrew (compare the JPS translation). We will sort that out when the time comes.

The first phrase, **And he said to them, "Jehovah [is] a witness against you [all]..."** does not mean that these people have done something wrong in their testimony to Samuel. Samuel is just saying that what they have said before God stands as a witness against them; his point is going to culminate in their mistaken notion that they need a king.

1Samuel 12:5b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

1Samuel 12:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿēd (עֵד) [pronounced gayde]	<i>witness, testimony, solemn testimony, evidence; a statement of truth, something which stands as a testimony or memorial to a fact (e</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5707 BDB #729
māshîyach (מָשִׁיחַ) [pronounced maw-SHEE-ahkh]	<i>anointed, anointed one, transliterated Messiah</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4899 BDB #603
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	<i>day; time; today (with a definite article)</i>	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260

Translation: ...and His anointed [is] a witness [against you] this day... The witness of God in heaven is supplemented by an earthly witness. Jehovah God is the heavenly witness to what these men have said; Saul is the earthly witness to what these men have said. The irony here is quite amusing—the people desire a king, which means that they have rejected Samuel and they have rejected God; and the earthly witness to all of this is the king they desire.

1Samuel 12:5c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
mâtsâ' (מָצָא) [pronounced maw-TSAW]	<i>to attain to, to find, to detect, to happen upon, to come upon, to find unexpectedly, to discover</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #4672 BDB #592
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
m ^e ʿûwmâh (מְאוּמָה) [pronounced m ^e -oo-MAW]	<i>anything, and it is usually found in negative sentences; therefore, with the negative, it is often rendered nothing</i>	indefinite singular pronoun/adverb	Strong's #3972 BDB #548

Translation: ...that you have not found anything in my hand.” This is what God and Saul are witnesses to. The idea is, there is no evidence of any impropriety on Samuel’s part. Not finding something in Samuel’s hand means, there is no evidence of him doing anything which is unjust.

1 Samuel 12:5d

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; so, that, yet, therefore</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #559 BDB #55
ʿêd (עֵד) [pronounced gayde]	<i>witness, testimony, solemn testimony, evidence; a statement of truth, something which stands as a testimony or memorial to a fact (e</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong’s #5707 BDB #729

Translation: *And he [Saul] said, “Testimony [confirmed].”* [or, “I am a witness to this”]. Literally, this reads: *And so he says, “Witness.”* Witness, used by itself here, means an affirming testimony. Now, like everyone else, and as most have rendered this verse, I look at this and I am thinking that whatever group of people that Samuel is talking to (whether it is face to face with thousands of men or with a smaller delegation of men); whoever—these are the ones who respond to Samuel. They say, in so many words, “Our words are a witness to this.” However, the Hebrew has this as a masculine singular subject,¹⁸ which made me think, perhaps this is Saul’s contribution. He is affirming that he is a witness to this. Samuel just said, “*And His anointed is witness this day..*” That is a reference to Saul. Therefore, it is reasonable for Saul to interject, “I am a witness to this.” That is the gist of this latter portion of this verse. There are no contradictions of any sort. It is a simple matter of interpretation, and the Hebrew makes it more likely that Saul interjects that he is a witness, confirming what Samuel and the people have just said. The other alternatives are: (1) we have a spokesman for the men there answering Samuel. (2) There is an official who is making a transcript of what was said; or any other assistant of Samuel’s and he is the one who speaks. (3) The third option is that a copyist, at one time, went to write down what was here, but wrote down, by accident, the first *and he says* rather than *and they said*. This is a common error found in the Hebrew manuscripts. However, none of these alternatives ring as true as Saul simply affirming, as God’s anointed, what Samuel has said and the people have affirmed.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

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

Samuel Reminds Israel of God’s Faithfulness to Them in the Past

As we delve into the next several verses, we need to keep the following in the back of our minds: Israel, by asking for a king, has questioned God’s faithfulness. They have essentially said to Samuel that God was unable to continue to take care of them and therefore they needed a king to do what God was unable to do. Now, they certainly do not state their case like that—that would be the absolute wrong approach to take with Samuel. However, what they do is state why they need a king according to their human viewpoint, without making mention of God. What Samuel will do is give these men several illustrations of how God has faithfully taken care of Israel in the past; and then, to show them that this is the God Who is over them now, he will call for proof from God to let these men know that they have defied the Living God of Israel.

¹⁸ This is plural in the Aramaic, Septuagint, Syriac and Vulgate codices. The problem with them is probably one of interpretation, rather than of translation. They assumed this group of men are the ones that Samuel is asking to confirm his testimony.

I must admit that I, as a young person, had very little interest in history. I was interested in the now; but mostly in myself and my own personal desires. As a young person, I had very little personal history; so history, I believed, did not concern me. As I have become older and just a little less egocentric, I recognize the importance and validity of history. In Samuel's day and time, more people had a more profound respect for history; and Samuel—like Moses, like Joshua, and like Gideon—will now review Israel's history so that they can get a clear understanding of God's involvement in Israel's history. The point is, the people can trust and depend upon their God. At the end of Samuel's speaking, he will make it clear that, even though the people screwed up and required a king, still God was faithful to them and would remain faithful to them.

**And so says Samuel unto the people,
“Y^ehowah Who made Moses and Aaron and
Who brought up your fathers out from a land
of Egypt.**

1Samuel
12:6

**Then Samuel said to the people, “Y^ehowah,
Who fashioned Moses and Aaron and Who
brought your fathers up out of the land of
Egypt.**

Then Moses said, “Jehovah, Who appointed Moses and Aaron to their positions and brought your fathers up out of Egypt, also stands as a witness.

As we have seen several times before, Israel's redemption history begins with the exodus (compare Acts 13:17). Here's is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text **And so says Samuel unto the people, “Y^ehowah Who made Moses and Aaron and Who brought up your fathers out from a land of Egypt.**

Septuagint **And Samuel spoke to the people, saying, The Lord who appointed Moses and Aaron [is] witness, who brought our fathers up out of Egypt.**

Significant differences: In the LXX, the idea is, Jehovah God is a witness as well; and in the Hebrew, this is not the emphasis. That Jehovah God is a witness is already found in v. 5. This begins a new section which deals with God's faithfulness to Israel.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV **Then Samuel told them, The LORD brought your ancestors out of Egypt and chose Moses and Aaron to be your leaders.**

NAB **Continuing, Samuel said to the people: “The LORD is witness, who appointed Moses and Aaron, and who brought your fathers up from the land of Egypt.**

NLT **“It was the LORD who appointed Moses and Aaron,” Samuel continued. “He brought your ancestors out of the land of Egypt.**

REB **Samuel said to the people, ‘The LORD is witness, the LORD who appointed Moses and Aaron and brought your fathers up from Egypt.’¹⁹**

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh) **Samuel said to the people, “The LORD [is witness], He who appointed Moses and Aaron and who brought your fathers out of the land of Egypt.**

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Emphasized Bible **And Samuel said unto the people: ||Witness|| is Yahweh, who wrought with Moses and with Aaron, And who brought up your fathers out of the land of Egypt.**

¹⁹ You will notice that *to the Emphasized Bible*, the NAB, NJB, REB and the NRSV generally tend to follow the lead of the Septuagint **And Samuel said to the people, “The Lord, who appointed Moses and Aaron, [is] witness, who brought our fathers up out of Egypt.**

NASB Then Samuel said to the people, “It is the LORD who appointed Moses and Aaron and who brought your fathers up from the land of Egypt.
NRSV Samuel said to the people, “The LORD is witness, who appointed Moses and Aaron and brought your ancestors up out of the land of Egypt.
Young's Updated LT And Samuel says unto the people, “Jehovah—He who made Moses and Aaron, and who brought up your fathers out of the land of Egypt!

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel begins talking about Jehovah God, who sent Moses and Aaron to the people and brought them up out of Egypt.

1Samuel 12:6a			
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; so, that, yet, therefore</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Sh ^e mûwʾêl (שמ׳וּאֵל) [pronounced sh ^e -moo-ALE]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028
ʾel (אל) [pronounced e]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
ʿam (עם) [pronounced gahm]	<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: Then Samuel said to the people,... As you may gather from the other translators, this appears to be a rather simple verse. There are some nuances, however. We begin with *and so says Samuel unto the people*.

1Samuel 12:6b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʾasher (אשר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81

1Samuel 12:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿāsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced gaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
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
Mosheh (מֹשֶׁה) [pronounced moh-SHEH]	<i>to draw out [of the water] and is transliterated Moses</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #4872 BDB #602
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so 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
ʿAhārôn (אֲהָרֹן) [pronounced ah-huh-ROHN]	transliterated <i>Aaron</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #175 BDB #14

Translation:...“Y^ehowah, Who fashioned Moses and Aaron... The confusing part of this verse is the relative pronoun (which will also occur once more in the second half of the verse). Here is what we have so far: [And Samuel then said to the people, “Jehovah, Who fashioned Moses and Aaron...”](#) We generally use a relative pronoun when we introduce a subordinate clause. We expect to have already had the main verb or to soon introduce the main verb. However, we do not have that here.

However, in the Greek, prior to the word *Lord*, we have the word *witness*. The Hebrew feels unfinished in this verse; the addition of the word *witness* completes this verse: “[Jehovah, Who fashioned Moses and Aaron, \[is\] a witness,...](#)” This does not mean that this word dropped out of the Hebrew by accident; there is enough inference in this and the previous verse for *witness* to be inserted by the principal of ellipsis—at least in the eyes of the translators of the Greek Septuagint.²⁰ I see this instead as a new topic, one which deals with the faithfulness of God. However, the problem with my view is, the two relative pronouns which clamor for a main verb. Some deal with this by adding *it is* to beginning of this sentence: “[It is Y^ehowah Who fashioned Moses and Aaron...](#)”

1Samuel 12:6c

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; so, that, yet, therefore</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

Although this is written as a wâw consecutive in the Masoretic text (I checked two sources), Owen calls it a wâw conjunction. Furthermore, it is in a place where we would expect a wâw conjunction. The difference is the vowel point, which was added by the Masoretes long after the first advent of Christ.

²⁰ *Ellipsis* means that an author or a speaker leaves out certain words, often from speaking excitedly, which may be inferred by the context.

1Samuel 12:6c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced āsh-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
ʿălâh (עָלָה) [pronounced ġaw-LAWH]	<i>to cause to go up, to lead up, to take up, to bring up</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾâb (אָב) [pronounced aw ^b v]	<i>father</i> , both as the head of a household or clan	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
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
ʾerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #776 BDB #75
Mitz ^e rayim (מִצְרַיִם) [pronounced mits-RAH-yim]	<i>Egypt, Egyptians</i>	proper noun	Strong's #4714 BDB #595

Translation: ...and Who brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt, [is witness]. Or, "...and [it is Jehovah God] Who brought your fathers up out from the land of Egypt." God, through Micah, testified to this many years later in Micah 6:4: "Indeed, I brought you up from the land of Egypt and ransomed you from the house of slaves. And I sent before you Moses, Aaron and Miriam."

Barnes writes: *Samuel's purpose is to impress the people with the conviction that Jehovah was their God, and the God of their fathers; that to Him they owed their national existence and all their national blessings, and that faithfulness to Him, to the exclusion of all other worship (v. 21) was the only safety of the newly-established monarchy. Observe the constant reference to the Exodus as the well-known turning-point of their national life (see iv. 8, vi. 6).*²¹

If you read the correct translation of this verse from the Hebrew, it appears to be incomplete. Even with the addition of the word *witness* from the Greek, it appears to be discombobulated. This is because, in the English, we tend to place our participles first and our main verb last; this is because the action of the participle is coterminous with or precedes the action of the main verb. We need that main verb. Being the chronologically-oriented people that we are, we put our sentences together in that same way—the action which occurs first is the action which comes first in the sentence. Since we do not have a main verb, in either the Greek or the Hebrew, we will need to insert the verb *to be*. Furthermore, to place everything in the order that we would expect it to be, we need to move the word *witness* to the end of the verse. Therefore, in the English, the entire verse would read: **And Samuel then said to the people, "Jehovah, Who fashioned Moses and Aaron, and Who brought your fathers up out from the land of Egypt—[it is He who stands as] a witness."**

Now, it may appear as though Samuel is repeating himself, but he is not. He is not simply re-emphasizing that Jehovah God is a witness to this testimony of his character. Samuel's point is this: this is not the witness of some

²¹ *Barnes' Notes; 1Samuel to Esther; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 29.*

god who is represented by an idol, but this is the living Jehovah God who chose Moses and Aaron to lead the people out of Egypt. This is a God Who is alive and operates in the life of Israel. Later on in this chapter, Samuel will make it clear that this same God is still a part of the history and function of Israel.

Bear in mind, this is one interpretation of the meaning here. I think it more properly reads: **And Samuel then said to the people, "It is Jehovah, Who fashioned Moses and Aaron, and Who brought your fathers up out from the land of Egypt."** Samuel is certainly going on to a different topic; the word *witness* simply allows us to relate this back to what has already been said. The addition of the words *it is* allows this verse to stand on its own, apart from what has gone before.

And now take a stand and I may be judged with you to faces of Y^ehowah with all [the] righteous acts of Y^ehowah which He has done with you and with your fathers.

1Samuel
12:7

Now, therefore, take a stand, that I may be judged with you before Y^ehowah [and I will declare] the righteous acts of Y^ehowah which He has done among you and among your fathers.

Now, therefore, take a stand, that I may be judged along with you before Jehovah in connection with the righteous acts which Jehovah has done before you and your fathers.

Here is how v. 7 is handled by others:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And now take a stand and I may be judged with you to faces of Y^ehowah with all [the] righteous acts of Y^ehowah which He has done with you and with your fathers.

Septuagint

And now stand still, and I will judge you before the Lord; and I will relate to you all the righteousness of the Lord; the things which He has done among you and your fathers.

Significant differences:

The additional phrase found in the Greek is not found in the Hebrew, Syriac or Latin. However, it does not significantly change the meaning of this verse.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

Now the LORD will be your judge. So stand here and listen, while I remind you how often the LORD has saved you and your ancestors from your enemies.

NLT

Now stand here quietly before the LORD as I remind you of all the great things the LORD has done for you and your ancestors.

REB

Now stand up, and here in the presence of the LORD I shall put the case against you and recite all the victories which he has won for you and for your forefathers.

TEV

Now stand where you are, and I will accuse you before the LORD by reminding you of all the mighty actions the LORD did to save you and your ancestors. [*by reminding you is according to one ancient translation*]²²

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™

Now, stand up while I put you on trial in front of the LORD and cite all the righteous things the LORD did for you and your ancestors.

JPS (Tanakh)

Come, stand before the LORD while I cite against you all the kindnesses that the LORD has done to you and your fathers.

NIV

Now then, stand here, because I am going to confront you with evidence before the LORD, as to all the righteous acts performed by the LORD for you and your fathers.

²² The TEV, unfortunately, never identifies which particular ancient translation is in view in these alternate readings.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

- The Emphasized Bible* || Now || therefore take your stand and let me plead with you, before Yahweh,—and tell you all the righteous acts of Yahweh, which he wrought with you and with your fathers;... [Rotherham sticks with the Septuagint here, saying that the Masoretic text is difficult]
- NASB* “So now, take your stand, that I may plead with you before the LORD concerning all the righteous acts of the LORD which He did for you and your fathers.
- NRSV* Now therefore take your stand, so that I may enter into judgment with you before the LORD, and I will declare to you all the saving deeds of the LORD that he performed for you and for your ancestors.
- Owen* Now therefore stand still that I may plead with you before Yahweh concerning all the saving deeds of Yahweh which He performed for you and for your fathers.
- Young's Updated LT* And now, station yourselves, and I judge you before Jehovah, with all the righteous acts of Jehovah, which He did with you and with your fathers.

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel tells the people to listen while he puts forth the case of Jehovah as their proper ruler and king; Samuel will recount the faithfulness of Jehovah in all that He has done for Israel.

The NIV (and to a lesser extent, the REB and the NRSV) have captured the gist of this verse. Samuel wants these men to take a moment and concentrate on what he is about to say. He is going to present evidence to prove that the God of their fathers is the God Who is taking care of them today. Now, we will set the gist of the verse aside for a moment and delve into the exegesis of it.

This may appear to be a fairly simple verse, but it is one of the most difficult that we will run into in this book of Samuel. The key, I believe to this verse, is Samuel's limited vocabulary and his emotional involvement in what he is saying. We have him using one particular word in three different ways, which causes a translator some problems (the Greek may help to partially straighten this out). Since the word *êth* is found four times in this verse, we ought to first take a careful look at the word in question; therefore, you need to examine **The Doctrine of *êth***.

1Samuel 12:7a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
attâh (אתה) [pronounced <i>gah-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 ^e + 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.			
yâtsab (צב) [pronounced <i>yaw-TSAHB</i>]	<i>to set oneself [in a place], to take a stand</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Hithpael imperative	Strong's #3320 BDB #426
The Hithpael imperative is translated variously as <i>station yourselves, stand still, take your stand, stand up, stand here</i> .			

Translation: *Now, therefore, take a stand,...* Although Samuel has just finished justifying his own authority and integrity in the past, he still has more to say. Perhaps the crowd began to get a little restless, thinking that Samuel

was done speaking, I don't know. But here, Samuel tells them to stand still for a moment and he will explain to them their own history.

1Samuel 12:7b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shâphaṭ (שָׁפַט) [pronounced <i>shaw-FAHT</i>]	<i>to be judged; to litigate, to contend; to enter into controversy [with], to plead [a case, or with]</i>	1 st person singular, Niphal imperfect; with the voluntative hê	Strong's #8199 BDB #1047
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 2 nd person plural suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, they mean <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> .			
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: ...that I may be judged with you before Y^ehowah... In this portion of v. 7, we have the 1st person singular, Niphal imperfect (with a voluntative hê) of shâphaṭ (שָׁפַט) [pronounced *shaw-FAHT*], which means *to judge, to govern*. The Niphal can (1) indicate that the verb is to be used in the passive sense (*to be judged*); however, the Niphal can also (2) refer to an action in a state of progress or development; therefore we add in the word *being*. Finally, the Niphal (3) can express adjectival ideas and, in plural forms, stress the individual effect upon each member of the group. According to Gesenius, shâphaṭ in the Niphal, means *to litigate*. According to BDB, in the Niphal, shâphaṭ means *to enter into controversy, to plead*. This gives us: "Now, therefore, take a stand and I will be judged with you before Jehovah..." Interestingly enough, none of the translators render this verb in its most simple passive form. The reason that they do not will become more clear as we move along in this verse. Samuel is still a bit miffed that the Israelites have demanded a king. Here, they will have a king, but he sets them up to be judged along with himself before God. What Samuel is asking them to do is to stand with him before God as if they were on trial, and Samuel will review the evidence of God's faithfulness, which they doubt.

What Samuel is asking them to do is to stand with him before God as if they were on trial, and Samuel will review the evidence of God's faithfulness, which they doubt.

1Samuel 12:7c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾêth (את) [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 (ל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of, all; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ts ^e dâqâh (צדקה) [pronounced <i>ts^edaw-KAW</i>]	<i>righteousnesses, executed righteousnesses and justice, righteous acts, righteous vindication</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #6666 BDB #842
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: ...[and I will declare] the righteous acts of Y^ehowah... Or, "...[along] with all the righteous acts of Jehovah..." Note that in the Greek (which is followed by the NRSV and the REB), we have something along the lines of "Now, therefore, take a stand and I will be judged with you before Jehovah, and I will declare all the righteous acts of Jehovah..." With the insertion of this verb of declaration, we are no longer troubled by the sign of the direct object, which would naturally follow such a verb. You see, the direct object calls out for a main verb somewhere.

1Samuel 12:7d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾăsher (אשר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
ʿâsâh (עשה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
ʾêth (את) [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 2 nd person plural suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾêth (את) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object)	Strong's #854 BDB #85

1Samuel 12:7d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾāb (אָב,) [pronounced aw ^b v]	<i>father</i> , both as the head of a household or clan	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

Translation: ...which He has done among you and among your fathers. The NIV Study Bible comments: *These righteous acts (see vv. 8–11) demonstrate the constancy of the Lord's covenant faithfulness toward his people in the past and, by way of contrast, serve as an indictment of their present apostasy.*²³

Essentially, Samuel is telling those present to stop for a moment and take stock of what has occurred. They have admitted to the integrity of Samuel. Here, Samuel says, “Stop, now lets allow ourselves to be judged together before God in view of the righteous acts of God.” In the desert wilderness and in the times of the judges, the fathers of those standing there witnessed God's faithfulness. At this point in time, these men themselves had witnessed their own victory over the Ammonites, of whom they would have been afraid had Saul not led them into battle. Samuel will now give these men examples, but most of his examples will deal with the judges who have delivered Israel. His point is that, God is still in charge; given the Ammonite situation, God would have still provided a judge and deliverer for Israel (which would have been Saul) and there was no reason for them to have gotten panicked to the point of demanding a king.

The NIV Study Bible points out an important shift in these verses. Samuel, in the first several verses, stood before the people and suggested several areas where he could have been remiss in his duties to Israel and he asked the people to judge him before God. In these verses, there is a role reversal. Now he asks them to judge God's faithfulness to Israel. If he, Samuel, was not unfaithful to Israel, then perhaps Jehovah God has been unfaithful to Israel. Then Samuel covers a very abbreviated history of God's dealings with Israel.²⁴ The idea is thus: “You people have requested a king? Is this because I have been unfaithful or unethical in my dealings with you? Then, how about God—do you have evidence that He has been unfaithful in His dealings with you?”

What will follow in vv. 8–11 will be a list of historical reasons why Israel cannot fault God for being unfaithful or inattentive. In these verses, Samuel will give two sets of reasons to affirm God's faithfulness. (1) The most commonly cited indication that God functions with His great power on behalf of Israel is the exodus. God took a large handful of Israelites (i.e., the sons of Israel) to Egypt, and, when Egypt exploited them by slavery, God sent Moses and Aaron to take them out of Egypt and to bring them to the Land of Promise (which story is the bulk of the narrative found in Exodus through Joshua). (2) Cited less often is God's involvement with Israel post-inhabitation of Palestine. However, Samuel names several examples from the times of the judges (which is continuing even until now, in the context of our chapter, as Samuel is a judge—1Sam. 7:15–17). What we will find in vv. 9–11 is proof positive that God remains active in the life of Israel.

According as went Jacob [and his sons] [into] Egypt [and so Egypt oppressed them] and so cries our [Heb., *your*] fathers unto Y^ehowah and so sends Y^ehowah Moses and Aaron and so they bring forth our [Heb., *your*] fathers from Egypt and so they cause them to dwell in the place the this.

1Samuel
12:8

For example, Jacob went down to Egypt and the Egyptians oppressed them, then our fathers cried out to Y^ehowah so [that] Y^ehowah sent Moses and Aaron to bring [lit., *and they bring*] our fathers out of Egypt and to cause them to live [lit., *and they cause them to dwell*] in this place.

²³ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 387.

²⁴ My interpretation here is somewhat different than theirs. They suggest that Samuel has become the accuser and the people are the defendants. *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 387.

For example, after Jacob went down to Egypt, your fathers later cried out to Jehovah because of their hardships and Egyptian oppression. Jehovah, therefore, sent Moses and Aaron, who brought your fathers out from Egypt and brought them to this place.

Let's see how others have dealt with this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text According as went Jacob [into] Egypt and so cries your fathers unto Y^ehowah and so sends Y^ehowah Moses and Aaron and so they bring forth your fathers from Egypt and so they cause them to dwell in the place the this. In the most literal text above, I included the Greek text in brackets.

Septuagint When Jacob and his sons went into Egypt, and Egypt humbled them, then our fathers cried to the Lord, and the Lord sent Moses and Aaron; and they brought our fathers out of Egypt, and He made them to dwell in this place.

Significant differences: In the MT, it is *your fathers* as verses *our fathers* in the Greek. Furthermore, the Greek adds a few details—that Jacob went into Egypt *with his sons* and that Egypt *humbled them*. As usual, the Syriac and Latin are in agreement with the Hebrew. However, the Greek has important details, albeit minor, which appear to better hold this verse together.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV After Jacob went to Egypt, your ancestors cried out to the LORD for help, and he sent Moses and Aaron. They led your ancestors out of Egypt and had them settle in this land.

NLT “When the Israelites were in Egypt and cried out to the LORD, he sent Moses and Aaron to rescue them from Egypt and to bring them into this land.

REB After Jacob and his sons had gone down to Egypt and suffered at the hands of the Egyptians, your forefathers appealed to the LORD for help, and he sent Moses and Aaron, who brought them out of Egypt and settled them in this place.

TEV When Jacob and his family went to Egypt and the Egyptians oppressed them, your ancestors cried to the LORD for help, and he sent Moses and Aaron, who brought them out of Egypt and settled them in this land. [*and the Egyptians oppressed them comes from an ancient translation—it is not found in the Hebrew*]

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ When you ancestors went with Jacob to Egypt [and were oppressed], they cried out to the LORD, who sent Moses and Aaron to bring them our of Egypt. The LORD settled them in this place.

JPS (Tanakh) “When Jacob came to Egypt, your fathers cried out to the LORD, and the LORD sent Moses and Aaron, who brought your fathers out of Egypt and settled them in this place.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Emphasized Bible How that <when Jacob had come into Egypt,—and your fathers had made outcry unto Yahweh> then Yahweh sent Moses and Aaron and they brought forth your fathers' out of Egypt, and he caused them to dwell in this place.

NASB “When Jacob went into Egypt and your fathers cried out to the LORD, then the LORD sent Moses and Aaron who brought [lit., *and they brought*] your fathers out of Egypt and settled them in this place.

NRSV When Jacob went into Egypt and the Egyptians oppressed them, then your ancestors cried to the LORD and the LORD sent Moses and Aaron, who brought forth your ancestors out of Egypt, and settled them in this place.

Young's Updated LT “When Jacob had come in to Egypt, and your fathers cry to Jehovah, then Jehovah sends Moses and Aaron, and they bring out your fathers from Egypt, and cause them to dwell in this place,...

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel now reminds Israel of God’s faithfulness to them. He begins by telling them about their predecessors who lived in Egypt, whom the Lord brought out by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

1Samuel 12:8a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
kaph or k ^e (כּ) [pronounced k ^e]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong’s # BDB #453
’āsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong’s #834 BDB #81
Together, ka’āsher (כּ אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced kah-uh-SHER] means <i>as which, as one who, as, like as, just as; because; according to what manner</i> . I’ve rendered this <i>for example</i> .			
bōw’ (בּוֹ) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong’s #935 BDB #97
Ya’āqōb (יַעֲקֹב) [pronounced yah-ġuh-KOH ^b V]	<i>supplanter; insidious, deceitful; to circumvent and is transliterated Jacob</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong’s #3290 BDB #784
The Greek adds here <i>and the sons of his</i> (or, <i>and his sons</i>).			
Mitz ^e rayim (מִצְרַיִם) [pronounced mits-RAH-yim]	<i>Egypt, Egyptians</i>	proper noun; pausal form	Strong’s #4714 BDB #595

Translation: *For example, Jacob went down to Egypt...* Or, more precisely: “*According as, Jacob went to Egypt...*” Now, in my opinion, what Samuel is doing now is giving an example. He’s emotionally stirred up and it is possible that the words here are not used with complete linguistic correctness. We might better understand this as reading: “*For example, Jacob went to Egypt...*”

The Greek adds *and his sons* after the word *Jacob*. “*For example, Jacob and his sons went to Egypt...*” This is probably the correct text. Most of this verse cannot be read in the Dead Sea Scrolls; however, there is enough space where the text should be to indicate that the expanded version that we find in the Greek is the more accurate text.

We do not know how much detail Samuel will go into here. Samuel is famous in his recollections for leaving out a great deal of detail, particularly when it comes to what he has said. Therefore, it would not be out of character for Samuel to spend 10 minutes on God’s faithfulness in the exodus while speaking to these men, but to record just the barest outline of what he said here in Scripture. Furthermore, since the exodus is mentioned so many

times throughout Scripture, including several descriptions in the psalms, God the Holy Spirit knows that we do not need a full dissertation right here.

1Samuel 12:8b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
The Greek adds in here: <i>...and humbles them Egypt...</i> or <i>...and Egypt humbled them...</i>			
Although we do not find this verse fully reproduced in the Dead Sea Scrolls, there is enough spacing found in the damaged manuscript to indicate that the expanded text of the Greek is probably the correct text.			
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
zâ'âq (צָעַק) [pronounced zaw-GAHK]	<i>to cry out, to call, to cry</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2199 BDB #277
'âb (אָב, אַב) [pronounced aw ^b v]	<i>father, both as the head of a household or clan</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
This reads <i>our fathers</i> in the Greek.			
'el (עַל) [pronounced e]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: *...and the Egyptians oppressed them, then our fathers cried out to Y^ehowah...*

At this point, the Greek also adds *and the Egyptians oppressed them* or *and Egypt humbled them*. Again, this is likely the most accurate text.

Both the Greek and Hebrew then read: *“...and then your fathers cried out to Y^ehowah...”* This is one of the most commonly quoted incidents from the early history of the Jews. The Jews were in a hopeless, helpless situation. They were slaves to the Egyptians and forced to work impossible hours under impossible circumstances. The idea that anything could take them out of this seemed improbable. However, **with God, all things are possible** (Matt. 19:26).

1Samuel 12:8c			
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; so, that, yet, therefore</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced shaw-LAKH]	<i>to send, to send for [forth, away], to dismiss, to deploy, to put forth, to stretch out</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018

1Samuel 12:8c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʿêth (את) [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
Mosheh (משה) [pronounced <i>moh-</i> <i>SHEH</i>]	<i>to draw out [of the water]</i> and is transliterated <i>Moses</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #4872 BDB #602
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when;</i> <i>since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿêth (את) [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
ʿAhārôn (אהרן) [pronounced <i>ah-huh-</i> <i>ROHN</i>]	transliterated <i>Aaron</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #175 BDB #14

Translation: ...so [that] Y^ehowah sent Moses and Aaron... Nothing gets done apart from leadership. You may hate the authority over you or dislike authority in general, but Israel was not going anywhere apart from God leading them through Moses and Aaron.

One indication that a nation is going down is that they begin to lose authority orientation as a whole. Now, there are always some who have problems with authority orientation (I will admit that this is certainly not one of my strong points); however, when a significant portion of a nation's youth lacks this authority orientation, then that nation is in for a fall.

God does not operate through mobs. God does not gather together a group of people and inspire them to do what is in their hearts. Satan does that. God organizes a group of people and places them under authority in order to guide them into His will. Without the authority figures Moses and Aaron, there would be no exodus. Now, Israel may have rioted, and there may have been a great loss of life on both sides, and the Jews might have destroyed a great deal of property; but God would not have been in it. There must be authoritative leadership.

1Samuel 12:8d

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

1Samuel 12:8d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yâtsâ' (יָצַא) [pronounced yaw-TZAWH]	to cause to go out, to lead out, to bring out, to carry out, to draw out, to take out; [of money:] to put forth, to lay out, to exact; to promulgate; to produce	3 rd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; occasionally to, toward	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'âb (אָב) [pronounced aw ^b]	father, both as the head of a household or clan	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

This reads *our fathers* in the Greek.

min (מִן) [pronounced min]	from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
Mitz ^e rayim (מִצְרַיִם) [pronounced mits-RAH-yim]	Egypt, Egyptians	proper noun	Strong's #4714 BDB #595

Translation: ...to bring [lit., and they bring] [our fathers out of Egypt...](#) Literally, "...and they brought your fathers out of Egypt..." This is the story of the first half of the book of Exodus, edited somewhat here. Again, I suspect that Samuel went into much greater detail than we see here.

1Samuel 12:8e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâshab (יָשַׁב) [pronounced yaw-SHAH ^b]	to cause to remain [stay, inhabit, sit, dwell]; to cause [a woman] to live [with someone]; to cause [a land] to be inhabited	3 rd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect; with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3427 BDB #442
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
mâqôwm (מְקוֹמ) [pronounced maw-KOHW]	place, situated; for a soldier, it may mean where he is stationed; for people in general, it would be their place of abode (which could be their house or their town)	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4725 BDB #879

1Samuel 12:8e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	here, this, thus	demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260

Translation: ...and to cause them to live [lit., and they cause them to dwell] in this place. Literally, "...and they caused them to dwell in this place." This is principally the books of Exodus, Numbers and Joshua (there is some movement in the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy, but not as much).

The theme of what Samuel will say to the people is that when the Jews called out to God, God answered them and provided for them. Now, although what God did in the exodus is often recounted, and it is likely that the Israelites have heard this illustration many times. In fact, some of them might be rolling their eyes right now, saying, *yeah, I just want to hear about Moses and Aaron one more time.* But then Samuel takes this further and gives Israel a more up-to-date accounting of God's provisions. He continues with God's provision into the time of the judges. In fact, the next three verses will be a summary of the book of Judges (or, at least the first 16 chapters).

And so they forget Y^ehowah their God and so He sells them in a hand of Sisera commander of [the] army of [Greek inserts, *Jabin, king of*] Hazor and in a hand of Philistines and in a hand of a king of Moab. And so they fight in them. 1Samuel 12:9

But they forgot Y^ehowah their God so that He sold them into the hand of Sisera, the commander of the army of Jabin, king of Hazor; and into the hand of the Philistines; and into the hand of the king of Moab. Therefore, they engaged in war with them.

They had forgotten Jehovah their God so that he finally sold them into the hands of Sisera, the commander-in-chief for the army of King Jabin of Hazor; the Philistines; and the king of Moab. Therefore, they were forced to go to war with them.

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

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text And so they forget Y^ehowah their God and so He sells them in a hand of Sisera commander of [the] army of Hazor and in a hand of Philistines and in a hand of a king of Moab. And so they fight in them.

Septuagint And they forgot the Lord their God, and He sold them into the hands of Sisera, captain of the host of Jabis, king of Asor, and into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the king of Moab; and He fought with them.

Significant differences: Who Sisera is the commander of the army for is different in the Hebrew and Greek. The Syriac and Latin are in agreement with the Hebrew. Note that there is not actually a difference here, except that, apparently some of the words dropped out of the Hebrew manuscript. *Hazor = Azor.* Jabin's name simply was lost in the Hebrew.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV But your ancestors forgot the LORD, so he let them be defeated by the Philistines, the king of Moab, and Sisera, the commander of Hazor's army.

NLT But the people soon forgot about the LORD their God, so he let them be conquered by Sisera, the general of Hazor’s army, and by the Philistines and the king of Moab.
 REB But they forgot the LORD their God, and he abandoned them to Sisera, commander-in-chief of King Jabin of Hazor, to the Philistines, and to the king of Moab, and they had to fight against them.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God’s Word™ But they forgot the LORD their God. So he handed them over to Sisera, who was the commander of the army of Hazor, to the Philistines, and to the king of Moab. All of them fought against you ancestors.

JPS (Tanakh) But they forgot the LORD their God; so He delivered them into the hands of Sisera the military commander of Hazor, into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the king of Moab; and these made war upon them.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Emphasized Bible And <when they forgot Yahweh their God> he sold them into the hand of Sisera, prince of the host of Jabin, king of Hazor, and into the hand of the Philistines and into the hand of the king of Moab, and they fought against them;...

NASB “But they forgot the LORD their God, so He sold them into the hand of Sisera, captain of the army of Hazor, and into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab, and they fought against them.

NRSV But they forgot the LORD their God; and he sold them into the hand of Sisera, commander of the army of King Jabin of Hazor, and into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab; and they fought against them.

Young’s Updated LT ...and they forget Jehovah their God, and He sells them into the hand of Sisera, head of the host of Hazor, and into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab, and they fight against them,...

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel, a judge, begins to remind these Israelites of God delivering them when they were a true theocracy under various judges. He first mentions how Israel was under the thumb of Sisera, the Philistines and the king of Moab.

1Samuel 12:9a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
shâkach (שָׁכַח) [pronounced shaw-KAHKH]	to forget; to forget and leave	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #7911 BDB #1013
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; occasionally to, toward	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong’s #853 BDB #84
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as Jehovah, Yahweh, Y ^e howah	proper noun	Strong’s #3068 BDB #217

1Samuel 12:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<p>ʿĒlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]</p>	<p><i>gods, foreign gods, god; God; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i></p>	<p>masculine plural noun with the 3rd person masculine plural suffix</p>	<p>Strong's #430 BDB #43</p>

Translation: [But they forgot Y^howah their God...](#) This is the story of the Israelites in a nutshell. *They forgot Jehovah their God.* Throughout the book of the Judges, this was the repeated theme. Actually, there are two interrelated themes. Most of the book of Judges deals with Israel's international relations, whereas, the final few chapters deals with domestic issues. In the final few chapters of the book of Judges (not in view here), we read the phrase [and the people did what was right in their own eyes](#). However, in the bulk of this book, God allowed Israel to be oppressed again and again by this or that foreign power, because they continually forgot the Lord their God.

Before we examine Samuel's recollection of the incidents from the book of the Judges, we should get a brief overview of this book ourselves:

The Book of the Judges—Domestic Issues (Judges 17–21)

The book of the Judges only records two historical incidents, both of which indicate the state of degeneracy within the nation Israel. Both of these incidents probably took place during the early portion of Israel's history.

Israel was to conquer the land which God gave them, and the tribe of Dan was smack dab in the middle of Israel on the western side of west Israel. This made them prime targets for Philistine aggression. In fact, time and time again, we see the Philistines push through the territory of Dan in order to drive a wedge between northern and southern Israel (which was possibly one of the causes for the split in the nation Israel).

Instead of rising to the occasion; instead of banding with his brothers; Dan moved northward and destroyed a peaceful people far in the north of Israel and took their land. They also fell into idolatry up there, taking a graven image from a degenerate Levite in Judges 17.

The second incident recorded in the book of the Judges is about the degenerate tribe of Benjamin. They were a sexually charged people (some of them, anyway) who often preyed on innocent victims who traveled through their land. They first wanted to violate a Levite male who was spending the night there, but settled for his mistress, whom they repeatedly raped until she died (Judges 19).

This incident so horrified the rest of Israel, yet caused the tribe of Benjamin to stand behind these degenerate perverts. Israel brought in troops against Benjamin and almost completely wiped them out. When they realized what they had almost done, and when they knew that no woman from any of their cities should be involved with the tribe of Benjamin, the other tribes knew they had to do something to preserve the tribe of Benjamin. One city did not participate in this attack: Jabesh Gilead (do you recall 1Sam. 11?). So, Israel destroyed the male population of this city for not joining them, and then put their females with the few remaining males of the tribe of Benjamin in order to preserve the tribe of Benjamin (Judges 20–21).

Of course, you the reader, should be thinking, *none of this makes any sense; their actions seem to be so mixed up*. This is because [every man did what was right in his own eyes](#). That is the theme of the final 5 chapters of the book of the Judges—the domestic issues.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

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

However, what is in view in Samuel's message is God's dealing with the faithlessness of Israel throughout the time of the Judges.

The Book of the Judges—Foreign Relations (Judges 3–16)

And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals. And they abandoned the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. They went after other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed down to them. And they provoked the LORD to anger. They abandoned the LORD and served the Baals and the Ashtaroth. So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers, who plundered them. And he sold them into the hand of their surrounding enemies, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies. Whenever they marched out, the hand of the LORD was against them for harm, as the LORD had warned, and as the LORD had sworn to them. And they were in terrible distress. Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those who plundered them. Yet they did not listen to their judges, for they whored after other gods and bowed down to them. They soon turned aside from the way in which their fathers had walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the LORD, and they did not do so. Whenever the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge, and he saved them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge. For the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who afflicted and oppressed them. But whenever the judge died, they turned back and were more corrupt than their fathers, going after other gods, serving them and bowing down to them. They did not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways. So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he said, "Because this people have transgressed my covenant that I commanded their fathers and have not obeyed my voice, I will no longer drive out before them any of the nations that Joshua left when he died, in order to test Israel by them, whether they will take care to walk in the way of the LORD as their fathers did, or not." So the LORD left those nations, not driving them out quickly, and he did not give them into the hand of Joshua (Judges 2:11–23).

Or, to summarize:

1. Israel did that which was wrong in the sight of God and began to worship other gods.
2. God allowed surrounding nations to come in and plunder and oppress Israel, the idea being, if you want to serve their gods, then maybe you should serve the people of those gods.
3. Israel would cry out to God for deliverance. Here is what we should focus on: the Jews were completely unworthy and undeserving, yet God, time after time, would come and deliver them.
4. God would raise up a judge to lead Israel in war. This judge would throw off the shackles of the nation who oppressed them.
5. Often Israel would enjoy a time of spiritual refreshment, both during and after this deliverance.
6. Then, this cycle would begin all over again.

This will be Samuel's topic for the next couple verses. He is going to mention what the Jews faced by way of international threats, and the judges which God raised in order to quell these threats. His point is, God always was faithful; God always raised up a man to deliver Israel. This was very recent history and all of the elders standing there listening to Samuel knew these things were true.

I believe that Samuel went into much greater detail than what we find here in 1Sam. 12:9–11.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

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

What is not in view here is the Book of Ruth, which took place during the time of the Judges. This is one of the very few bright spots of this degenerate age, and so, this book is separate from the book of the Judges.

1Samuel 12:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

1Samuel 12:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mâkar (מָכַר) [pronounced <i>maw-KAHR</i>]	<i>to sell, to sell [betroth] [a daughter]; to sell [deliver over] [a people]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4376 BDB #569
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	affixed to a 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i>]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
Çîyç ^e raʾ (חֵי צֵרָא) [pronounced <i>sees^e-RAW</i>]	<i>battle array</i> [according to BDB]; and is transliterated <i>Sisera</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #5516 BDB #696
sar (שָׂר) [pronounced <i>sar</i>]	<i>chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince, leader, commander</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8269 BDB #978
tsâbâʾ (צָבָא) [pronounced <i>tsaw^b-VAW</i>]	<i>army, war, or warfare</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6635 DB #838
labis (Ἰαβίς) [pronounced <i>ee-ah-BEECE</i>]	which is translated <i>Jabis, Jabin</i>	indeclinable proper noun	Strong's #none
basileus (βασιλεὺς) [pronounced <i>bahs-ee-loose</i>]	<i>leader of the people, prince, commander, lord of the land, king</i>	masculine singular noun; genitive/ablative case	Strong's #935

This makes more sense for these couple words to be found in the original text. It gives us a more complete background.

Châtsôr (חָצוֹר אוֹ חָצוֹר) [pronounced <i>khaw-SOHR</i>]	<i>enclosure, court, settled abode, settlement, village; transliterated Hazor</i>	proper noun; location	Strong's #2674 BDB #347
---	---	-----------------------	----------------------------

Châtsôr comes from an Hebrew word meaning *enclosure, court, settled abode, settlement, village*; therefore, we should expect to see this particular name in several places referring to several different cities, which is the way the find it; transliterated *Hazor*

Translation: ...so that He sold them into the hand of Sisera, the commander of the army of Jabin, king of Hazor;... In the Hebrew, this reads: "...so He sold them into the hand of Sisera, the commander of the army of Hazor;..." The Septuagint mentions both of the leaders who menaced Israel. In the Greek, we have: "...so He sold them into the hand of Sisera, commander of the army of King Jabin of Hazor;..." What Samuel will do is list several powerful men and/or countries who menaced Israel. We studied Sisera and Jabin back in Judges 4.

Hazor was a city in northern Naphtali, 12 miles north of the Sea of Chinnereth (later known as the Sea of Galilee). The Canaanites lived side by side the Israelites in the land, because they had not been completely destroyed and

because God chose to leave them in the land to test and discipline Israel (Judges 1:27–36 2:20–23). Hazor was one of their many strongholds and King Jabin was looking to expand his land holdings and increase his slave labor. He ruled over northern Israel for 20 years and eventually he and his commander-in-chief Sisera were defeated by Deborah and Barak (see Judges 4–5).

1Samuel 12:9c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i>]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
P ^e lish ^e tîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p^e-lish-TEE</i>]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

Translation: ...and into the hand of the Philistines;... The Philistines were a continual thorn in the side of Israel. They lived along the western coast of the Land of Promise, along the Mediterranean Sea, and they continually encroached upon the land which was held by the Israelites. Interestingly enough, God did not put a savior in Israel to drive out the Philistines, but He gave them someone who became a thorn in their side. The Philistines are mentioned in Judges 3:31 10:7 13:1–16:31. Their presence was felt even to the time of Samuel (1Sam. 4–7 13–14 17) and beyond (1Sam. 27–29 31). Their mention catches the attention of even the most hardened of heart.

1Samuel 12:9d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i>]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MĒH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
Mô`âb (מֹאָב) [pronounced <i>moh-AW^eV</i>]; also Môw`âb (מוֹאָב) [pronounced <i>moh-AW^eV</i>]	transliterated <i>Moab</i>	Masculine proper noun; gentis and territory	Strong's #4124 BDB #555

Translation: ...and into the hand of the king of Moab. As these conquerors of Israel come to Samuel, he names them. They are not in any particular order. Recall the Moab and Ammon are the incest-begotten sons of Lot through his two daughters. Moab was located directly below Reuben, east of the southern half of the Dead Sea. Eglon, the King of Moab, collected tribute from eastern and central Israel early in the time of the judges (see Judges 3:12–30). Israel has just defeated Ammon, and now Samuel looks back and mentions Moab.

These three groups mentioned by Samuel—Sisera and his army, the Philistines, and the king of Moab—are examples of the various nations which persecuted Israel from without and within. Barnes discusses the time frame of these groups, saying that the oppression of Sisera appears to have occurred prior to that of Eglon, despite their order in Judges.²⁵ However, there is no reason to assume that Samuel is naming these various nations in order of their aggressions against Israel. Again, recall that Jews of that time thought thematically rather than chronologically. Given the time frames alluded to several times in the book of Judges, we would more reasonably conclude that the book of the Judges was in chronological order (although the wars with the Ammonites and Philistines appear to be coterminous).

1Samuel 12:9e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâcham (לָחַם) [pronounced law-KHAHM]	to engage in battle, to engage in war, to wage war; to fight, to battle	3 rd person masculine plural, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #3898 BDB #535
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within	a preposition of proximity; with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88

Translation: Therefore, they engaged in war with them. The book of judges is a witness to God's faithfulness to Israel at a time when Israel was faithless. This illustrates the point that Samuel is making. Samuel simply names three groups of people who attacked Israel during the Israel's most recent history.

And so they cry unto Y^ehowah and so they say, 'We have sinned for we have forsaken Y^ehowah and so we serve the Baalim and the Ashtaroth—and now deliver us from a hand of our enemies and we will serve You.'

1Samuel 12:10

So they cried out to Y^ehowah and said, 'We have sinned because we have forsaken Y^ehowah and have served the Baalim and the Ashtaroth. Therefore, deliver us from the hand of our enemies and we will serve You.'

So they cried out to Jehovah, saying, 'We have sinned in that we forsook Jehovah God and instead serve the Baals and the Ashtaroth. Therefore, please deliver us from the hand of our enemies and we will return to serving You.'

Here is what others have done with this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so they cry unto Y^ehowah and so they say, 'We have sinned for we have forsaken Y^ehowah and so we serve the Baalim and the Ashtaroth—and now deliver us from a hand of our enemies and we will serve You.'

²⁵ Barnes' Notes; 1Samuel to Esther; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 29.

Septuagint And they cried to the Lord, and said, "We have sinned, for we have forsaken the Lord and have serve Baalim and the groves. And now deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, and we will serve You."

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV And again your ancestors cried out to the LORD for help. They said, "We have sinned! We stopped worshiping you, our LORD, and started worshiping Baal and Ashtarte. But now, if you rescue us from our enemies, we will worship you."

NLT "Then they cried to the LORD again and confessed, 'We have sinned by turning away from the LORD and worshiping the images of Baal and Ashtoreth. But we will worship you and you alone if you will rescue us from our enemies.'

TEV Then they cried to the LORD for help and said, 'We have sinned, because we turned away from you, LORD, and worshiped the idols of Baal and Astarte. Rescue us from our enemies, and we will worship you!'

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ Then they cried out to the LORD and said, 'We have sinned. We have abandoned the LORD and served other gods and goddesses—the Baals and the Astartes. But rescue us from our enemies now, and we will serve you.'

JPS (Tanakh) They cried to the LORD, 'We are guilty, for we have forsaken the LORD and worshiped the Baalim and the Ashtaroth. Oh, deliver us from our enemies and we will serve You.'

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB "And they cried out to the LORD and said, 'We have sinned because we have forsaken the LORD and have serve the Baals and the Ashtaroth; but now deliver us from the hands of our enemies, and we will serve Thee.'

Young's Updated LT "...and they cry unto Jehovah, and say, 'We have sinned, because we have forsaken Jehovah, and serve the Baalim and Ashtaroth, and now, deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, and we will serve You.'"

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel is still speaking and he remind Israel of what she has promised God, "Deliver us from our enemies and we will serve you, and forsake our religious idolatry."

1Samuel 12:10a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
zâ'âq (צָעַק) [pronounced zaw-GAHK]	to cry out, to call, to cry	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2199 BDB #277
'el (עַל) [pronounced e]	unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39

1Samuel 12:10a

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

Translation: *So they cried out to Y^ehowah...* This happened over and over again. One question which many people have is, *why is there pain and suffering in this world?* Of course, the most basic reason is, we have old sin natures and we manage to bring much of this upon ourselves; a second reason is, the earth is the primary battleground for the angelic conflict, so we should expect casualties to litter the landscape. However, even more important than these two reasons is, some people will not turn to God apart from suffering. From the standpoint of adoration, fame, power and material blessings, there are a few people in this world which possess all or some of these things. Many times, they even think that they had something to do with it—that is, their great talent, ability, intelligence and hard work (or any combination of these attributes) brought their great blessings upon them. And, because they are the reason for their success and prosperity, they often will not look to God for anything. Sometimes, the only way to reach a person is to knock them down, and then knock them down again. Only then, will that person actually look up. My salvation experience is similar to many others—I was in a low point in my life, and blamed God to some degree (when we are successful, we see ourselves as the cause; when we are brought low, we then see God as the cause); and so, I, with much reservation, looked to God for his guidance and direction. This led to my eventual salvation. However, had I not been knocked down, I don't know if I would have looked to God for deliverance.

This was Israel. Israel would continually, even as God's people, stray from Him and stray from the truth, and God had to allow other nations to knock them down in order to get them to depend upon Him again. Now, you may think, "How stupid can these people be? God showed them great signs and delivered them time and time again, beginning with the Egypt and working forward." Well, first off, that is the point which Samuel is making here. But secondly, just look at the United States—we are a nation which has been greatly blessed by God, and delivered by God on a number of occasions. However, again and again, we stray from God. How far will God have to knock us down in order for us to see Him again?

1Samuel 12:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
châtâ' (חטא) [pronounced <i>khaw-TAW</i>]	<i>to sin, to miss, to miss the mark, to violate the law, to err; to do wrong; to deviate [from], to stray from, to go astray from [with an object]</i>	1 st person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #2398 BDB #306

Translation: *...and said, 'We have sinned...* The pain and suffering which Israel suffered brought them to the realization that they had sinned against God. Altogether, this reads, *So they cried to Y^ehowah and said, "We have sinned..."*

1Samuel 12:10c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
ʿâzab (עָזַב) [pronounced <i>gaw-ZA^BV</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>	1 st person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #5800 BDB #736
ʿêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: ...because we have forsaken Y^ehowah... Then we have the explanation as to *why* or *how* they had sinned. Their problem was, basically, that they had moved away from God; they had forsaken God; they had deserted God. For them, in that day, that meant to ignore His feast days, to ignore His sacrifices, to ignore the teaching of the Law and to ignore gathering in the place which God designated for gathering (which was primarily in Shiloh and Bethel during the time of the Judges). Instead, these Israelites worshipped Baal and Molech and the other false gods of those who surrounded them. Again, it was poetic justice: if Israel decided to serve the gods of the surrounding nations, then God let Israel served the surrounding nations as well.

1Samuel 12:10d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿâbad (עָבַד) [pronounced <i>gaw^b-VAHD</i>]	<i>to work, to serve, to labor; to be a slave to</i>	1 st person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #5647 BDB #712
ʿêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
baʿal (בַּעַל) [pronounced <i>BAH-gah</i>]	<i>owner, lord, husband; transliterated Baal when referencing the heathen god</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #1167 BDB #127
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

1Samuel 12:10d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿash ^e târôwth (עַשְׁתָּרוֹת) [pronounced ʿahsh ^h -taw-ROHTH]	transliterated <i>Ashtaroth</i> , <i>Ashtartes</i> , <i>Ashtaroths</i>	Feminine proper noun; with the definite article	Strong's #6252 BDB #800

Translation: ...and have served the Baalim and the Ashtaroth. We have here the masculine plural noun *Baalim*, which could refer to a single god, as the term *Elohim*, or to a plethora of gods. This is followed by the proper noun *Ashtaroth*. Often, these are the figurines which represent the goddess Ashtoreth, although that may not be always be the case (see 1Sam. 7:3). This gives us: **So they cried to Y^ehowah and said, “We have sinned because we have forsaken Y^ehowah and we serve the Baalim [or, if you would rather, *the Baals*] and the Ashtaroth.”** The perfect tense of *to forsake* indicates that in a point of time, they forsook God; the imperfect tense of *to serve* indicates that they continue to serve the heathen gods and figurines. I think that Samuel here uses the term generally applied to figurines in order to emphasize that they worshiped that which was made by the hand of men.

Samuel has spent a great deal of his life studying the Word of God. Generally speaking—and I have made mention of this on several occasions—Samuel’s vocabulary is limited. He is not a naturally brilliant man (for instance, his vocabulary is nothing like that of Moses or Job, whose writings were presumably available to him). However, Samuel was a solid *B* student who worked for what he got. He read and reread the Word of God. When necessary, however, he is able to make logical and irrefutable arguments as he does in vv. 3–12. It is a passage like this (along with his knowledge of history revealed in vv. 9–11) which tells us that Samuel has spent long and fruitful hours studying the Word of God. This portion of 1Sam. 12:10 is almost a direct quotation from Judges 10:10 (**Then the sons of Israel cried out to Jehovah, saying, “We have sinned against You, for indeed, we have forsaken our God and have served the Baals”**).

Application: The application to us is short and simple: study and know the Word of God. Our lives are often centered around making money or buying things or giving our children as much as we possibly can. These things should never be priorities in our lives. The Word of God should be the priority in our lives.

1Samuel 12:10e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿattâh (עַתָּה) [pronounced ʿah ^t -TAWH]	<i>now, at this time, already</i>	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773

When followed by an imperative or an interrogative, w^e + 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.

nâtsal (לָצֵד) [pronounced naw-TSAHL]	<i>to snatch away, to deliver, to rescue, to snatch out of danger, to preserve, to recover</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperative; with the 1 st person plural suffix	Strong's #5337 BDB #664
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

1Samuel 12:10e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
ʿâyab (אֵיבָב) [pronounced aw-YA ^B V]	<i>enemy, the one being at enmity with you; enmity, hostility</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle; with the 1 st person plural suffix	Strong's #340 BDB #33


Translation: [Therefore, deliver us from the hand of our enemies...](#) Samuel is giving what was standard back in the day. The Israelites would forsake God; they would serve the gods of other nations; and they would fall prey to attacks from their enemies. Then, of course, they would cry out to their God for deliverance. This is the typical cycle given in much greater detail in [Judges 2:11–20, quoted previously](#).

Application: I believe strongly in the teaching of the Old Testament. Even though we do not find Church Age doctrine in these pages, we do find a great deal of important information which serves to guide us. Whereas, we do not participate in the same time of idolatry as Israel, we still place things before God. I recall visiting with a gal who gave me her list of priorities, and God was there at the top. However, she still lived with a man outside of wedlock. This is not placing God first. In our priorities, we have millions of people who put their jobs, money, home, career, school, sports, hobbies, various interests, vacations, marriage, certain people, entertainment, television, sex, family, self-righteousness and a whole host of other things before God. We have a great many more options in the United States than the Israelites had in the ancient world. They placed other things before God, but generally speaking, as a nation, this was the worship of other gods (as we will see in the life of Solomon, what got him in the realm of idolatry was his wives—they were foreign women who worshipped other gods, and this lured him away from the True God of Israel). God comes first. Now, this does not mean that, at every opportunity we blather on and on about God to people who are not the least bit interested. It means that our focus is upon God—i.e., we keep filled with the Holy Spirit and we study His Word. It is His Word which is our life and guidance. We do not do these things apart from what else life offers, but they are the first priority and everything else comes second. Although I was never too thrilled with some of the evangelizing of Campus Crusade, they had a picture which often accompanied their literature. This would be a throne surrounded by all these dots, which represented the various details of life (called *interests* in the pamphlet). When we placed ourselves on the throne, these interests were in discord and competed for our attention, resulting in personal frustration. When God was on the throne, these interests are balanced and in harmony.

Application: One of the difficult issues that we face at the time that I write this is *time*. There are so many families who are *good Christian families* where both parents work and they keep their kids involved in many activities in order to keep them away from the greatest distractions of this time (premarital sex, drugs and drinking). However, in all of this, what is lost is time. There is never enough time to lead a balanced life; even *good Christian families* have a difficult time finding the time to do what is right. It is simple: you need to focus on the Word of God. That needs to be first and foremost the priority in your lives. Then you worry about the other things. Doctrine guides you and gets you balanced and

Self-Directed Life

- Legalistic attitude
- Impure thoughts
- Jealousy
- Guilt
- Worry
- Discouragement
- Critical spirit
- Frustration
- Aimlessness
- Fear



- Ignorance of his spiritual heritage
- Unbelief
- Disobedience
- Loss of love for God and for others
- Poor prayer life
- No desire for Bible study

<http://www.tenbasicsteps.org/english/images/illustration-on-self-directed-life2.gif>

Christ-Directed Life

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness
- Faithfulness
- Goodness



- Life is Christ-centered
- Empowered by Holy Spirit
- Introduces others to Christ
- Has effective prayer life
- Understands God's Word
- Trusts God
- Obeys God

<http://www.tenbasicsteps.org/english/images/illustration-christ-directed-life1.gif>

keeps you balanced. It is like that drawing above. We do not set up some chair in the living room, put God on poster board and set that on the chair and then hang around and look at it. That is not putting God first. We know God through His Word; so we put God first by putting His Word first.

Application: Please do not think that you are responsible to go through the Bible and dig out everything for yourself. All that will get you is confused. You need an excellent pastor-teacher to guide you at this point. Now, I don't mean someone who is well-liked by everyone in your family; I don't even mean someone who is generally well-respected. I mean someone who teaches the Word of God carefully in church several times a week (3 times, by the way, is too few times; messages which are less than 30 minutes in length are far too short). If you have a pastor and he puts this off on you ("Hey, why don't you host a young couples fellowship in your home on Thursday nights?") then you are in the wrong church. If you do not see your church as a classroom where you learn the Word of God, then you are in the wrong place. If the teaching of the Word of God is moderately important, and right up there with giving or with singing, then you are in the wrong church. There is nothing more important than the teaching of the Word of God; and any church which indicates otherwise, either in their doctrine or practice, is the wrong church.

1Samuel 12:10f			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿâbad (אָבַד) [pronounced <i>gawb-VAHD</i>]	<i>to work, to serve, to labor; to be a slave to</i>	1 st person plural, Qal imperfect; with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5647 BDB #712

Translation: *...and we will serve You.* You will note the similarities and differences: in the past, Israel had forsaken God and served other gods. Prior to this invasion by Ammon, we are not really told of flagrant idolatry. In the past, Israel turned to God for deliverance, forsaking the gods of their enemies. This time, the elders of Israel went to Samuel and demanded a king; they did not go to him and ask him to request from God a deliverer to lead them against Ammon. What Samuel has done is given them a pattern which Israel had always followed in the past and God's faithfulness is revealed. However, this time they seek a human solution. Let's look at this as a chart:

Israel Under Discipline: Compare and Contrast		
	In the Book of Judges	During the Latter Time of Samuel
Israel's Sin	Israel turned from God and worshiped heathen gods. Judges 2:11–13, 17, 19 3:7, 12 4:1 6:1 10:6 13:1	It is not clearly stated that Israel fell into idolatry. My thinking is that was the problem some times, and at others, they chose to depend upon man rather than upon God. 1Sam. 8:5–6 12:12, 19
Israel's Crisis	God would send a nation against them. Judges 2:14–15, 20 3:8, 14 4:2–3 6:2–5 10:7–8	Nahash and the Ammonites had invaded Israel and were decimating everyone in their path. 1Sam. 11:1–2 12:12

Israel Under Discipline: Compare and Contrast		
	In the Book of Judges	During the Latter Time of Samuel
Israel's Request	They turned to God and asked for deliverance. Judges 3:9, 15a 6:6 10:10, 15	Israel requested that Samuel place a king over them, so that they could be like other nations and so that the king could deliver them in times of national disaster. 1Sam. 8:5-6 19-20
God's Response	God would send Israel a deliverer who would deliver Israel from their most recent woe. Judges 2:16, 18 3:10, 15b-16 4:4-10 7:1-22. Occasionally, God sent Israel a prophet to tell them how they had gone astray (Judges 6:7-10).	God sent Israel Saul, to rule over them as a king and to deliver them from the hand of the Ammonites. 1Sam. 9:27-10:1 11:6-11 12:13
God's Expectation of Israel	Israel was to forsake other gods and to serve the God of Israel (Judges 10:10-16). Sometimes this would be the work of one man (Judges 6:27-28). He often would send them into war against these enemies. Judges 3:28-30	Israel was to turn toward God and serve Him. 1Sam. 12:14, 20-21
God's Deliverance	The savior would always deliver Israel from the hands of their enemies and then often he would often rule over them for a time. Judges 3:16-29 4:14-24	Saul organized the armies of Israel and defeated the people of Ammon. (1Sam. 11:6-11). God would not abandon His people (1Sam. 12:22).
The Epilogue	There would be a time of peace and independence from the other nations. Judges 3:30 5:31b 8:28	Israel continued to have almost continual conflicts with the surrounding nations. 1Sam. 13:1-14:52 (see especially 14:47-52).

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

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

And so sends Y^ehowah Jerubbaal and Barak [Bedan in the Hebrew] and Jephthah and Samuel [Samson in some ancient versions] and so he delivered you [all] from a hand of your enemies from round about and you dwell safely. 1Samuel 12:11

So Y^ehowah send Jerubbaal, Barak, Jephthah and Samuel [possibly, Samson] and [thereby] delivered you from the hand of your enemies from every side [with the result] that you dwelt in safety.

So Jehovah sent you Gideon, Barak, Jephthah and Samson and by them, delivered you from the control of your enemies who surrounded you. Therefore, you would then live in safety.

Here is what others have done with this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

And the LORD sent Jerubbaal and Barak and Jephthah and Samuel and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side, and you lived in safety.

Masoretic Text	And so sends Y ^e howah Jerubbaal and Bedan and Jephthah and Samuel and so he delivered you [all] from a hand of your enemies from round about and you dwell safely.
Peshitta	And the LORD sent Deborah and Barak and Gideon and Jephthah and Samson, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies round about you, and you dwell in safety.
Septuagint	And He sent Jerobaal and Barac and Jephthæ and Samuel [<i>Samson?</i>] and rescued us out of the hand of our enemies round about and you all dwell in security. [another version of the Septuagint has <i>Samson</i> instead of <i>Samuel</i>]. Apparently, the Syriac codex has <i>Jerubbaal, Deborah, Barak and Simson</i> , ²⁶ although my Peshitta (which I assumed was the Syriac codex lists 5 names—see above).
Significant differences:	The primary difference is exactly who is placed in this list. However, this is not a big problem as any of them could be cited as sent by God (apart from Bedan, as we don't know who he is). When Israel called out to God, He sent them a judge-deliverer.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	The LORD sent Gideon, Bedan, Jephthah, and Samuel to rescue you from your enemies, and you didn't have to worry about being attacked.
NAB	Accordingly, the LORD sent Jerubbaal, Barak, Jephthah, and Samson; he delivered you from the power of your enemies on every side, so that you were able to live in security.
NLT	Then the LORD sent Gideon, Barak, Jephthah, and Samuel to save you, and you lived in safety.
REB	The LORD sent Jerubbaal and Barak, Jephthah and Samson, and delivered you from your enemies on every side; and you lived in security.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word</i> TM	"Then the LORD sent Jerubbaal, Bedan, Jephthah, and Samuel and rescued you from your enemies on every side so that you could live securely.
JPS (Tanakh)	And the Lord sent Jerubbaal and Bedan and Jephthah and Samuel , and delivered you from the enemies around you; and you dwelt in security.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	"Then the LORD sent Jerubbaal and Bedan and Jephthah and Samuel, and delivered you from the hands of your enemies all around, so that you lived in security.
NRSV	And the LORD sent Jerubbaal and Barak, and Jephthah, and Samson, and rescued you out of the hand of your enemies on every side; and you lived in safety.
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	"And Jehovah sends Jerubbaal and Bedan and Jephthah and Samuel and delivers you out of the hand of your enemies round about, and you all dwell confidently.

What is the gist of this verse? God has faithfully sent the people of Israel judge/deliverers whenever they called out to Him.

²⁶ New King James Version; Thomas Nelson Publishers; ©1994; p 249.

1Samuel 12:11a

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; so, that, yet, therefore</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced <i>shaw-LAKH</i>]	<i>to send, to send for [forth, away], to dismiss, to deploy, to put forth, to stretch out</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
ʿêth (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
Y ^e rubba'al (יֵרֻבְעֵל) [pronounced <i>y^e-roob-bah-AHL</i>]	<i>let Baal contend with him; and is transliterated Jerubbaal</i>	proper noun; masculine	Strong's #3378 BDB #937

Translation: So Y^ehowah sent Jerubbaal,... Then we have the wâw consecutive followed by the 3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *to send* followed by the subject of the verb, Y^ehowah. Then we have the sign of the direct object and the proper noun *Jerubbaal*. You will note that the Peshitta and the New Living Translation have *Gideon* instead and you may recall that Gideon was also known as *Jerubbaal* (see Judges 8:35).

Israel had been oppressed by Midian, who would come into Israel in great numbers and destroy their crops. It appears that some of these attacks were often done in conjunction with Amalekites and other tribes east of Israel. Jesus Christ (the Angel of God) spoke to Gideon and you may recall that Gideon put Him through some tests, to make certain that He was really the God of Israel. After Gideon puts Jesus Christ through a few tests, then He puts Gideon to the test and pared his army from 22,000 to 300 to go against the Midianites. By the way, you may want to bear this in mind the next time you put God to the test. Their battle against the Midianites was unconventional and extremely successful. Judges 6–8.

1Samuel 12:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿêth (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
B ^e dân (בְּדָן) [pronounced <i>b^eDAWN</i>]	transliterated <i>Bedan</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #917 BDB #95

The Greek reads instead...

Barak (Βαράκ) [pronounced <i>bah-RAHK</i>]	<i>lightning</i> and is transliterated <i>Barak</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #913
---	---	-----------------------	---------------

This is also in agreement with the Arabic, Syriac and the Latin.

BDB assumes that the reading here should be Barak.

Translation: ...Barak,... Then we have the proper noun Bedan, or, more properly B^edân, which is, in the Hebrew, בְּדַן [pronounced *b^eDAWN*]. We only find this name twice in the Old Testament—here and in 1Chron. 7:17 (which refers to a different *Bedan*). Some believe this to be equivalent to Abdon ben Hillel who was a judge in Israel for eight years (Judges 12:13). However, Abdon is barely a footnote in the book of the Judges, and certainly not one to whom Samuel would make reference to in a public speech like this (unless, of course, he was discussing the *nearly nobodies* from Scripture). In the Latin, Syriac and Greek we have the name Barak, a man whom we know from the book of the Judges (Judges 4–5). In the Hebrew, *Barak* is bârâq (בַּרַק) [pronounced *baw-RAWK*]. Some degradation of the manuscript could result in a confounding of this name. If Samuel (or anyone after Samuel) misspelled *Barak*, using the more common word bârak^e (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced *baw-RAHK^e*] (which means *to bless, to make happy, to prosper*), it is even easier to see how בְּדַן, with a degraded manuscript, might be mistaken for בָּרַךְ. This opinion is supported by both the Syriac and Arabic codices. The upshot of all this is that the name here should be *Barak*.²⁷

Barak and Deborah’s story is found in Judges 4–5. Jabin, the king of Canaan reigned in Hazor, which is far northern Israel. His general is Sisera, both of whom are mentioned back in 1Sam. 12:9. They came from the north with their chariots and oppressed Israel for 20 years. When Israel turned to God, God sent them Barak, who demanded that Deborah, a prophetess-judge, accompany him. They routed Sisera’s chariots and defeated his army. All of this is covered in Judges 4, and Deborah appears to have written the psalm which is Judges 5, which recounts their victory.

The Syriac Peshitta, by the way, lists Deborah and Barak as the first two names in this list, and then Gideon.

1Samuel 12:11c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
’êth (את) [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
Yiph ^e tâch (יִפְתָּח) [pronounced <i>yif-TAWHKH</i>]	<i>he [God] opens</i> and is transliterated <i>Jephthah</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong’s #3316 BDB #836

Translation: ...Jephthah... Again, Israel falls into idolatry and they are afflicted by both the Philistines and the Ammonites (Judges 10:7–8). My thinking is that these were coterminous but uncoordinated attacks which are dealt with separately. The man who stood in the gap against the Ammonites is Jephthah, the ninth judge over Israel. Interestingly enough, Jephthah first attempted to negotiate with the Ammonites, rather than launching into a full-scale war against them. Since this did not work, Jephthah made a vow to God which resulted in his victory over the Ammonites, but was tragically linked to his daughter, who, because of his vow, remained a virgin to her death. Judges 11.

²⁷ Keil and Delitzsch write: *Some of the commentators suppose Jair of Gilead to be the judge intended. But such a supposition is perfectly arbitrary, as it is not rendered probably by any identify in the two names, and Jair is not described as having delivered Israel from any hostile oppression. Moreover, it is extremely improbable that Samuel should have mentioned a judge here, who had been passed over in the book of Judges on account of his comparative insignificance.* Keil & Delitzsch’s *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 443.

1Samuel 12:11d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Sh ^e mûwʾêl (שִׁמְוֵאל) [pronounced <i>sh^e-moo-ALE</i>]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028

In the Peshitta and in Lucian's Edition of the Septuagint, we find here instead...

Sampsôn (Σαμψών) [pronounced <i>sam-PSOHN</i>]	<i>like the sun</i> and is transliterated <i>Samson</i> or <i>Sampson</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #4546
---	---	-----------------------	----------------

Although it is unlikely that one name was confounded with the other, what likely happened was a copyist began to write *Samson* and wrote *Samuel* instead, possibly looking up at one of the many previous verses with the name *Samuel* in it. This is not an uncommon type of error in the Hebrew manuscripts.²⁸

Translation: ...and Samuel [possibly, Samson]... In the Hebrew and Latin (as well as in most of the manuscripts), this is *Samuel*. However, in one Greek manuscript (*Lucian's Edition of the Septuagint*), we have *Samson* instead, which, in the Hebrew, would have been Shîm^eshôwn (שִׁימְשׁוֹן) [pronounced *shim-SHOHN*], which is transliterated *Samson*. Although it is unlikely that one name was confounded with the other, what likely happened was a copyist began to write *Samson* and wrote *Samuel* instead, possibly looking up at one of the many previous verses with the name *Samuel* in it. This is not an uncommon type of error in the Hebrew manuscripts.²⁹ Samson's name is found in the Arabic and Syriac codices as well as in one manuscript of the Septuagint.³⁰ This gives us: "Then Y^ehowah sent Jerubbaal [Gideon], Barak [Bedan in the Hebrew], Jephthah and Samson [*Samuel in the Hebrew*]..."

We could also muse, maybe some scribe just did not feel that Samuel would be so conceited as to place his own name into this mix and changed Scripture. This seems highly unlikely as the scribes had a great respect for the Scripture which they copied. The consistency of Scripture (which is remarkable when compared to any other ancient manuscript). We may not have much of an appreciation for it while going through this book, as Samuel probably has more variant readings per chapter than any other book in the Bible.

Obviously, with the differences found in the Syriac codex, the Hebrew manuscripts and the Greek manuscripts, it would be difficult to determine definitely who is found in this verse, as most versions of the LXX have *Samuel* rather than *Samson*; and the Vulgate, Chaldean and Hebrew versions are in agreement with this. This could indicate a very early error in manuscript transmission. However, which names are found here is immaterial. Samuel is teaching a principle, which is, when Israel called out to God for help, God always sent them a deliverer.

²⁸ There is not a problem if *Samuel* is the name which belongs here; nor is it a problem for Samuel to refer to himself in the 3rd person. Sometimes the president of the United States will refer to himself in the 3rd person and often refers to his office in the 3rd person.

²⁹ There is not a problem if *Samuel* is the name which belongs here; nor is it a problem for Samuel to refer to himself in the 3rd person. Sometimes the president of the United States will refer to himself in the 3rd person and often refers to his office in the 3rd person.

³⁰ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 443.

In any case, God did send Israel deliverers, and those named by Samuel are among them. And if Samuel had placed his own name into this group, there is nothing wrong with that. He will always stand in history as one of the great judges of Israel. Recall that he was the catalyst which led Israel to overthrow and push back the Philistines (1Sam. 7:10–14). Listing himself as an example of God sending a deliverer to Israel is particularly reasonable from a logical standpoint—this would indicate that God was still, up until that day, delivering Israel through various judges. So, who belongs there, *Samuel* or *Samson*? I don't know. It is easy to see how a copyist could have made the mistake, accidentally writing *Samuel* when he should have written *Samson*; it is also easy to see why a later copyist might choose to replace *Samuel* with *Samson* on purpose. I would actually like to see both of their names here. So that my preference does not seem completely without merit, the writer of Hebrews gives us a similar, but slightly more extensive list: **Time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, [and] of David and Samuel and the prophets** (Heb. 11:32b). In our context, it really does not make any difference whether Samson or Samuel is named—Samuel's point remains the same.

Allow me to insert the arguments of Keil and Delitzsch, who believe that *Samuel* is the name which should be found in this passage: *There is not critical ground for rejecting Samuel...[asserting] that Samuel would not have mentioned himself...Samuel could very well class himself with the deliverers of Israel, for the simple reason that it was by him that the people were delivered from the forty years' tyranny of the Philistines, while Samson merely commenced their deliverance and did not bring it to completion. Samuel appears to have deliberately mentioned his own name along with those of the other judges who were sent by God, that he might show the people in the most striking manner...that they had no reason whatever for saying to him, "No, but a king will reign over us," as soon as the Ammonites invaded Gilead...Jehovah your God...has [consistently] proven Himself to be your King by sending judges to deliver you.*³¹

Before we go on, it would be instructive to have the oppressors and the saviors of Israel from the days of the judges listed. Surprisingly enough, the middle of the book of Judges, which is the heart of this book, consists of a relatively small number of judges and oppressors:

The Oppressors and the Deliverers of Israel		
The Passage	The Oppressors of Israel	The Deliverers of Israel
Judges 3:1–11	Cushan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia	Othniel ben Kenaz
Judges 3:12–30	Eglon, king of Moab *	Ehud
Judges 3:30	The Philistines	Shamgar ben Anath
Judges 4–5	Jabin , king of Canaan who ruled in Hazor and his general Sisera	Deborah and Barak (along with Jael, the wife of Heber)
Judges 6:1–8:28	Midian	Gideon (also known as Jerubbaal)
Judges 10:6–12:7	Ammonites	Jephthah
Judges 10:6–7 13–16	Philistines	Samson

*Obviously, the ones emboldened are those mentioned by Samuel in this speech.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

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

What we have is a listing of a representative group of oppressors in 1Sam. 12:9: **"But they forgot Y^howah their God so that He sold them into the hand of Sisera, the commander of the army of Hazor; and into the hand of the**

³¹ Taken from Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 443. I slightly paraphrased and updated their work.

Philistines; and into the hand of the king of Moab. Therefore, they engaged in war with them.” We have the eventual response of the oppressed Israelites, who realize their mistakes, in the next verse: “So they cried out to Jehovah and said, ‘We have sinned because we have forsaken Jehovah and served the Baalim and the Ashtaroth; but now deliver us from the hand of our enemies and we will serve You.’ ” In v. 11, we have a representative sampling of the saviors/judges of Israel: “Therefore, Jehovah sent **Gideon, Barak, Jephthah and Samuel and He delivered you from the hand of your enemies on every side with the result that you lived in safety.**” What we have here is a short, simple lesson of God’s faithfulness to Israel. Very likely, Samuel went into more detail than what we read here.

1Samuel 12:11e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
nâtsal (לָצַל) [pronounced <i>naw-TSAHL</i>]	<i>to snatch away, to deliver, to rescue, to snatch out of danger, to preserve, to recover</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong’s #5337 BDB #664
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	affixed to a 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong’s #853 BDB #84
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong’s #4480 BDB #577
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i>]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong’s #3027 BDB #388
’âyab (אֵיב) [pronounced <i>aw-YA^BV</i>]	<i>enemy, the one being at enmity with you; enmity, hostility</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle; with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong’s #340 BDB #33
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
çâbîyb (סָבִיב) [pronounced <i>saw^b-VEE^BV</i>]	<i>around, surrounding, circuit, round about, encircle</i>	adverb	Strong’s #5439 BDB #686

The min preposition and çâbîyb mean *from round about, from every side*.

Translation: ...and [thereby] delivered you from the hand of your enemies from every side [with the result]... This portion of the verse gives us the general conclusion: because Israel called out to God, God sent them deliverer judges and these men, in the power of God, delivered Israel from her enemies all around her.

It might be instructive to think of Israel then much like Israel is today—surrounded by several different nations, all which do not like the Jews living in their midst. They want the land that these Jews sit upon and periodically, they attack Israel and attempt to take it (or, they attempt to enslave or subjugate Israel). Today, God also protects Israel, although He no longer sends them judge-deliverers, as one who judged and deliver Israel was one who was a shadow of Jesus Christ to come.

It is also important to recognize the two-fold character of those who delivered Israel. We often like to over-emphasize one aspect of God’s character over another. People love the love of God—to them, this is the greatest

thing. However, they are not nearly so thrilled over the justice of God. They may concentrate on all of those passages which speak of God’s love and the love of Jesus, and ignore the many more passages which deal specifically with God’s perfect righteousness and justice. After all, most Christians know all about the healings which Jesus did and how much He spoke of love; but then, they do not realize that the person who spoke more about eternal burning than anyone else is Jesus Christ. You cannot overemphasize one prominent characteristic over another. Therefore, those who were shadows of Jesus to come were both judges and deliverers. They would deliver Israel from her sin and from her enemies; but the same person would judge Israel as well—a more complete view of the Christ Who is to come.

1Samuel 12:11f			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
Although Owen lists this as a wâw conjunction, it is actually a wâw consecutive.			
yâshab (יָשָׁב) [pronounced yaw-SHAH ^β V]	to remain, to stay; to dwell, to live, to inhabit; to sit	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #3427 BDB #442
b ^ê tach (בְּטָח) [pronounced BEH-tahkh]	as an adverb, safely, without fear, securely, confidently	adverb	Strong’s #983 BDB #105

Translation: ...that you dwelt in safety. The adverb which we find here, which describes how they live means, safely, without fear, securely, confidently.

I had mentioned in the introduction how much this portion of Samuel’s address reminded me of the Apostle Paul. Samuel’s argument is cogent and irrefutable. His mental organization is tremendous, despite his limited vocabulary (which, given that I am translating, is not a problem for me). Samuel first has the people and their newly-appointed king affirm that he, Samuel, has not illegally taken advantage of his position of authority. That is, the people cannot later say, “Well, we had to have a king because of how crooked Samuel was.” All affirm that Samuel exhibited great integrity in the administration of his duties. So, from that standpoint, the people had no reason to demand a king. Then Samuel launches into his second argument, which concerns the involvement of God in Israel’s political life. First, all present can agree that God brought Israel out of Egypt with great power, which power he channeled through His servants, Moses and Aaron. In part B of this argument, Samuel provides more recent proof that God has continued in Israel’s history to provide protection and deliverance. In fact, Samuel is very careful to note, *the only reason that Israel required deliverance in the first place was that they became unfaithful to God, not vice versa*. I hope you recognize that Samuel has very carefully and cleverly argued that Israel had absolutely no reason to require from Samuel a king. Samuel doesn’t stop there—this allows him make it absolutely clear that Israel has sinned and has failed by requesting that a king be put over them.

Application: Now, allow me to digress: two of the great men of Scripture, Samuel and Paul, both used logical proofs and sensible arguments to state theological viewpoints. It is truly unfortunate that I rarely have observed this sort of approach from the pulpit. There are many who give great devotionals, but provide very little thought to go with them. There are many who use this Scripture or that from which to springboard into some pet topic of theirs. And then there are those who absolutely abuse logic by taking preconceived doctrines or views and then *prove* said tenets via *proof texts*. In case you did not realize, anyone can prove anything by first

What we need in the pulpit are men who are trained in the original languages of Scripture and in mathematical logic; after they are given these tools, then they may be trained in theological doctrines.

making a statement, and then citing a Scripture out of context which appears to prove their point. This is like the evil step-sister of the logic employed by Samuel and Paul. Or, more accurately, this is a Satanic distortion of the logic that we see in Paul's writings. What we need in the pulpit are men who are trained in the original languages of Scripture and in mathematical logic; after they are given these tools, then they may be trained in theological doctrines. Unfortunately, too many pastors are first trained in their denomination's dogma, then they are given the *proof* texts, and then, they get a little exposure to the languages. A congregation needs a pastor who can think logically and sequentially like Paul or Samuel, so that their teachings from Scripture can be unlocked. You need the correct key to unlock any given door; you need training in logical thinking and thought progression in order to unlock the arguments of Paul and Samuel. And let me give you my standard example. I have never, ever seen anyone properly exegete I Cor. 13:1 because they all approach it from their preconceived notions. If you approach this passage from the standpoint of a Greek logician, its meaning becomes very clear and is very different from that presented from any pulpit or in any exegetical study.³²

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

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

Samuel Gives the People of Israel Their Alternatives

And so you see that Nahash, a ruler of [the] sons of Ammon has come upon you and so you say to me, 'No, for a ruler will rule upon us' and Y^ehowah your Elohim [is] your Ruler!

1Samuel
12:12

So when you saw Nahash, the king of the sons of Ammon come upon you, you said to me, 'No, but a king will rule over us!' when Y^ehowah your God [is] your King!

When you saw that Nahash, the king of the Ammonites, was coming against you, you said to me, 'No, but a king will rule over us!' when Jehovah God is your King!

Here is how others treated v. 12:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so you see that Nahash, a ruler of [the] sons of Ammon has come upon you and so you say to me, 'No, for a ruler will rule upon us' and Y^ehowah your Elohim [is] your Ruler!

Septuagint

And you saw that Naas, king of the children of Ammon, came against you, and you [all] said, 'No, none but a king will reign over us;' whereas the Lord our God [is] our king.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

Then you saw that King Nahash of Ammon was going to attack you. And even though the LORD your God is your king, you told me, "This time it's different. We want a king to rule us!"

NLT

"But when you were afraid of Nahash, the king of Ammon, you came to me and said that you wanted a king to reign over you, even though the LORD your God was already your king.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

³² The most common interpretation is, God has given some people the gift of the tongues of angels so that they speak in gibberish (sometimes this is applied to today and sometimes it is applied to just the 1st century). Paul is *not* teaching in this passage that some people receive the gift of speaking in gibberish that only angels understand.

God's Word™

But when you saw King Nahash of Ammon coming to attack you, you told me, 'No, a king should rule over us,' though the LORD your God was your king.

JPS (Tanakh)

But when you saw that Nahash king of the Ammonites was advancing against you, you said to me, 'No, we must have a king reigning over us'—although the LORD your God is your King.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB

“When you saw that Nahash the king of the sons of Ammon came against you, you said to me, ‘No, but a king shall reign over us,’ although the LORD your God was your king.

Young's Updated LT

“And you [all] see that Nahash king of the sons of Ammon has come against you, and you say to me, ‘No, but a king does reign over us;’ and Jehovah your God is your king!

What is the gist of this verse? When the people saw that Nahash was attacking east Israel, they came to Samuel and asked for a king to reign over them, when Jehovah God is their true king.

1Samuel 12:12a			
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; so, that, yet, therefore</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râ`âh (רָאָה) [pronounced <i>râw-AWH</i>]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
Nâchâsh (נָחָשׁ) [pronounced <i>naw-KHAWSH</i>]	<i>serpent</i> and is transliterated <i>Nahash</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #5176 BDB #638
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
bânîym (בָּנִים) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i>]	<i>sons, descendants; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
‘Ammôwn (עַמּוֹן) [pronounced <i>gahm-MOHN</i>]	transliterated <i>Ammon</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #5983 BDB #769
bôw ⁷ (בָּוֹ) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
‘al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752

Translation: *So when you saw Nahash, the king of the sons of Ammon come upon you,...* Or, *“And now you see that Nahash, the king of the sons of Ammon, has come upon you...”* The Qal perfect of *to come* here indicates that this is a past, completed event. *And now* indicates that just recently the Israelites made this decision (which decision is to follow). In the previous few chapters, it was not clear what was going on—that is, it was not clear how Nahash’s attack fit in with the people’s request for a king. However, here, it is clear that Nahash’s attack was a motivating factor. When Nahash invaded eastern Israel, then the children of Israel began to become extremely concerned, and went to Samuel requesting that he install a king over them.

1Samuel 12:12b

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; so, that, yet, therefore</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) (pronounced ^l)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition; with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong’s # BDB #510
lôʾ (אֵל or לוֹ) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong’s #3808 BDB #518
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MĒH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong’s #4428 BDB #572
mâlak ^e (מָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>maw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>to reign, to become king or queen</i>	3 rd 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 1 st person plural suffix	Strong’s #5920, #5921 BDB #752

Translation: *...you said to me, ‘No, but a king will rule over us!’...* This verse helps us with a time line. Recall that the Hebrew mind is one which views things thematically rather than sequentially. So various clumps of Scripture will have a general theme, although portions of it may not be in exact chronological order. Such as, we find out here in this speech of Samuel that the Israelites began demanding a king when Nahash was moving towards them. He had devastated the Israelites in Transjordanian Israel, and Israelites on the other side of the river had begun to panic and they approached Samuel in a group demanding a king. Now, when we exegeted this passage (1Sam. 8), nothing about the Ammonites or Nahash was mentioned. All we saw was this delegation coming to Samuel demanding a king. Then we have the process of finding this king. What led up to the selection of Saul is left out of the narrative of 1Sam. 8—however, in this passage, which deals with the attack of Nahash upon Israel, we find that his original troop movement was the basis for Israel requesting a king from Samuel. This is why, no matter what Samuel said, the response was *“No, but there will be a king over us, so that we may be like all the nations, that our king may judge us and go out before us and right our battles”* (1Sam. 8:19b–20). The actual threat of Nahash, although very real at that time, and chronologically appropriate was not thematically appropriate, so that detail was left out until now.³³ As we continue to exegete the Word of God, bear in mind that

³³ There is actually a term given to a reflection of previous events which have not been recorded; this is called *historical hysteresis* and is covered in *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*; E. W. Bullinger; ©originally 1898; reprinted 1968 Baker Books; p 709. That Nahash had encroached on the territory—that had been covered; that Israel had asked Samuel to give

it was written by Jewish men who approached their subject matter thematically. Therefore, some of the niceties of chronology will be missing and sometimes they will double-back and add details which were not there before. In no way does that indicate that we have two separate traditions whose stories are woven together by some editor years later. It is simply a difference in theme. Israel’s political response, a desire for a king, was a separate issue thematically from the attack of Nahash, even though the latter was a precursor for the former. Therefore, the advance and eventual defeat of Nahash is handled apart from Israel’s whining for a king. However, when Samuel speaks of Israel’s request for a king, the basis for Israel’s request is now pertinent to the theme, so Nahash is mentioned.

Allow me another tangent here: because of this particular quirk of Hebrew writing, some *scholars* believe that what we find is various accounts of the same incidents woven together by a later redactor (read *editor*). This is silly. Just because the general writing style of the Hebrew mind is different than that of the modern Gentile mind, this does not mean that these are several documents which were gathered and then carefully woven together by some ancient, unnamed editor. Whereas, I do not have a problem with there being several authors of the book of Genesis and the book of Samuel, I do not believe that these original documents were shuffled together like a deck of cards, but rather placed end-to-end and possibly held together by a verse here or a verse there (e.g., Gen. 10:1 11:10). Nor do I think it unlikely that occasionally a geographical point might be updated or clarified (e.g., Gen. 14:3, 7). What we do *not* have are various documents, some true and some false, some accurate, some mythological, all woven together as some patchwork quilt, with the editor making factual changes here and there to suit his own sensibilities (which is actually taught by some, hypothesized by others, and assumed to be true by some believers and unbelievers). To the point, there is no reason to suppose that one author wrote 1Sam. 8–11 and another 1Sam. 12 because there is an additional detail in 1Sam. 12 which was not found in the previous 4 chapters. That detail of what the delegation went to Samuel in the first place was not thematically pertinent, and was therefore left out of 1Sam. 8–11. However, here this fact is a part of Samuel’s speech to Israel, and therefore is very pertinent.

1Samuel 12:12c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong’s #3068 BDB #217
ʾĒlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>gods, foreign gods, god; God; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong’s #430 BDB #43
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong’s #4428 BDB #572

Translation: ...when Y^ehowah your God [is] your King! What Samuel has said is quite clever, from a linguistic standpoint, although even with a literal rendering, it loses most of its punch: “And so you see that Nahash, a ruler of [the] sons of Ammon has come upon you and so you say to me, ‘No, for a ruler will rule upon us’ and Y^ehowah your Elohim [is] your Ruler!” However, the cleverness is lost when we give this a less literal, but more powerful rendering, e.g.: “When you saw that Nahash, the king of the Ammonites, was coming against you, you said to me, ‘No, but a king will rule over us!’ when Jehovah God is your King!” That Jehovah Elohim ruled over Israel is a

them a king—that had also been mentioned. However, we just find out here that these two events are tied together.

sentiment which is repeated throughout Scripture (Judges 8:23 1Sam. 8:7 Psalm 59:13). We have the Ammonites moving on Israel from the east and the Philistines in the west and the Israelites felt quite uneasy with the fact that their status quo could be so easily shaken.

The NIV Study Bible: *The Israelite desire for and trust in a human leader constituted a rejection of the kingship of the Lord and betrayed a loss of confidence in his care, in spite of his faithfulness during the time of the exodus, conquest and judges.*³⁴

Keil and Delitzsch summarize these past few verses: *Samuel closed this solemn confirmation of Saul as king with an address to all Israel, in which he handed over the office of judge, which he had hitherto filled, to the king, who had been appointed by God and joyfully recognized by the people. The good however, which Israel expected from the king depended entirely upon both the people and their king maintaining that proper attitude towards the Lord with which the prosperity of Israel was ever connected. This truth the prophet felt impelled to impress most earnestly upon the hearts of all the people on this occasion. To this end he reminded them, that neither he himself, in the administration of his office, nor the Lord in His guidance of Israel thus far, had given the people any reason for asking [for] a king when the Ammonites invaded the land.*³⁵ Samuel makes two points here: (1) nothing that Samuel has done as a spiritual leader and nothing that God has done has given Israel reason to ask for a king (this point was made in the previous verses); and (2) Israel's blessing is still dependent upon their behavior and (now) the behavior of their king (this point will be made vv. 13–15 and v. 25).

What should be understood here is that Samuel is thinking, *you stupid idiots*. After all, why clamor for a king when the God of the Universe is your king? And Samuel did more than merely state this as a doctrine—he proved this assertion with a recollection of agreed upon historical facts, bringing his argument from past history right into the present time.

Keil and Delitzsch summarize what is to come in the next half-dozen verses: *After the prophet had thus held up before the people their sin against the Lord, he bade them still further consider, that the king would only procure for them the anticipated deliverance if they would fear the Lord, and give up their rebellion against God.*³⁶

And now behold, the king whom you have chosen, whom you have asked [for]; and, behold, has set Y^ehowah over you a king.

1Samuel
12:13

Therefore, look up here, the king whom you have chosen [and the king] for whom you petitioned! Furthermore, Y^ehowah has set over you [this] king!

Jehovah God has placed this man over you, the king whom you have chosen and the office for which you have petitioned.

Here is how 1Sam. 12:13 has been translated:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And now behold, the king whom you have chosen, whom you have asked [for]; and, behold, has set Y^ehowah over you a king.

Septuagint

And now behold the king whom you have chosen; and behold, the Lord has set a king over you. The Alexandrian Septuagint reads: And now behold the king whom you have chosen and for whom you have asked; and behold, the Lord has set a king over you.

³⁴ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 388.

³⁵ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 441.

³⁶ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 443.

Significant differences: There is one missing phrase in one version of the LXX. That short phrase (for whom you have asked) is found in the Alexandrian LXX, the MT, the Latin and the Syriac.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV You asked for a king, and you chose one. Now he stands here where all of you can see him. But it was really the LORD who made him your king.
NLT All right, here is the king you have chosen. Look him over. You asked for him, and the LORD has granted your request.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ "Now, here is the king you have chosen, the one you asked for. See, the LORD has put a king over you.
JPS (Tanakh) "Well, the LORD has set a king over you! Here is the king that you have chosen, that you have asked for.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB "Now therefore, here is the king whom you have chosen, whom you have asked for, and behold, the LORD has set a king over you.
Young's Updated LT And now, lo, the king whom you [all] have chosen—whom you [all] have asked! And, lo, Jehovah has placed over you a king.

What is the gist of this verse? The Israelites requested a king from God, so Samuel at this point presents to them their king.

1Samuel 12:13a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿattâh (עַתָּה) [pronounced <i>gáht-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 ^e + the adverb ʿattâh 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.			
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MĒH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
ʾăšher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
bâchar (בָּחַר) [pronounced <i>baw-KHAHR</i>]	<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 nd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #977 BDB #103

Translation: [Therefore, look up here, the king whom you have chosen...](#) The Israelites are taken with Saul. He has led them to victory against the man whom they fear—Nahash. Therefore, the Israelites are ready to see Saul as their ruler. Saul as king had to be chosen by God and by the people.

1 Samuel 12:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
In the Alexandrian Septuagint as well as the Vulgate and the Syriac codices, there is an additional conjunction prior to ... <i>whom you have petitioned</i> .			
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
shâ'al (שָׁאַל) [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>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #7592 BDB #981

Translation: ...[\[and the king\] for whom you petitioned!](#) This gives us: “[Therefore, look, the king whom you have chosen \[and\] whom you have petitioned for...](#)” They had petitioned Samuel to place a king over them, without having any particular person in mind. The Israelites did not really choose Saul until now. They wanted a king to insure their security and his victory over the Ammonites was what sealed the deal for them (although they ratified God’s choice of Saul back in 1Sam. 10:24). It was, of course, back in 1Sam. 8:5 where the people first requested a king.

1 Samuel 12:13c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i>]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw- THAHN</i>]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
YHWH (יְהוָה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: Furthermore, Y^ehowah has set over you [this] king! The entire verse reads: Therefore, look up here, the king whom you have chosen [and the king] for whom you petitioned! Furthermore, Y^ehowah has set over you [this] king! Note that there is no chronological order in this particular verse. *The king whom you have chosen* refers to the popular acceptance of Saul, which sentiments were expressed after the defeat of Nahash and his Ammonite horde (1Sam. 11:12–13). *...and whom you have petitioned for...* goes back before this time when Nahash had just begun to attack eastern Israel (1Sam. 8:15–20 12:12). *...and Y^ehowah has placed a king over you.* actually refers to four points of time: (1) eternity past, when God chose Saul to begin with; (2) when God informed Samuel that Saul was coming to his city and had Samuel anoint him as king over Israel (1Sam. 9:15–10:1); (3) when Saul was chosen king over Israel by lot (1Sam. 10:20–23); and (4) right at this time, when Saul will actually assume the duties of his office with great popular acclaim.

Now, just exactly who chose Saul and who set Saul as a king over Israel? At first, it appears as though Saul is God's choice as a response to what the people of Israel required of Him. Then it appears as though Saul is simply the popular choice. If Saul is God's choice, where exactly does Samuel get off reprimanding the people? And if Saul is God's choice, how did he end up being such a crappy king? Let me explain:

Did God Choose Saul or Did the People Choose Saul?

1. The people demanded a king when God was actually their king. This was a mistake.
2. In retrospect, it is clear that Saul would have made an outstanding short-term leader. Had he gone to war against the Ammonites and the Philistines and then served for a few years as judge, that would have been God's ideal choice.
3. God, allowing the Israelites their negative volition (this is God's permissive will), chose a man who was the proper and correct choice for king over all Israel. Requiring a king in the first place was a bad choice; however, if Israel demanded a king, God was willing to provide the best one who was alive at that time.
4. God first had Samuel anoint Saul as king over Israel, where Saul was a guest of honor at a banquet.
5. Then, by lots presumably, or, in an elaborate ceremony, Samuel showed the people that Saul was the choice of God for them.
6. However, apart from popular acceptance, Saul was not going to be the ruler over anything.
7. It is after his victory over the Ammonites that Israel, as a whole, recognizes Saul as their king; and that is the point at which he begins his rulership.
8. Therefore, understand exactly what God had to do: He had to choose a man who was a great military leader and a man who would reveal this leadership within the near future. God also had to make it clear that Saul was His choice. God had to make it clear to Samuel, before anyone else, that Saul was His choice. In other words, all of these things had to be considered in order for the result to be Saul to be made king over Israel. God, Who knows the end from the beginning and knows the hearts of all men, was the only One able to make such a choice.
9. Why was Saul eventually such a big failure? Did God make a mistake? Certainly not. Israel should not have demanded a king in the first place. Given this demand, and given that God would choose to acquiesce to their demand, Saul was the best choice *at that time*. There was no natural leader of Israel in the realm of the military like Saul. The fact that he was the best choice does not mean that we could expect for him to have an unblemished reign. Given the fact that he was the best choice, this does not mean that we should expect perfection from him.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

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

If you [all] fear/respect Y^ehowah and you have served Him and you have hearkened in His voice and you do not rebel [against] [the] mouth of Y^ehowah and you [all] have been, both you [all] and your ruler who has ruled over you, after Y^ehowah your Elohim [then you have done well].

1Samuel
12:14

If you fear [and respect] Y^ehowah and [if] you serve Him and [if] you listen to [and obey] His voice; and [if] you do not rebel against the word of Y^ehowah, and [if] you and your king who rules over you will follow after Y^ehowah your God [then the hand of Y^ehowah will be with you].³⁷ [see alternate renderings below]

If you have a healthy fear and respect for Jehovah; and if you serve Him and listen to His voice; and if you do not resist His commands; and if you and your king follow after Jehovah your God, then the strength of Jehovah will be with you.

Here is what others have done with v. 14:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	If you [all] fear/respect Y ^e howah and you have served Him and you have hearkened in His voice and you do not rebel [against] [the] mouth of Y ^e howah and you [all] have been, both you [all] and your ruler who has ruled over you, after Y ^e howah your Elohim [then you have done well].
Septuagint	If you should fear the Lord, and serve him, and listen to his voice, and not resist the mouth of the Lord, and you and your king that reigns over you should follow the Lord.

Significant differences: The Hebrew, Latin and Syriac all add *your God* at the end of this verse.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	If you and your king want to be followers of the LORD, you must worship him and do what we says. Don't be stubborn!
NLT	"Now if you will fear and worship the LORD and listen to his voice, and if you do not rebel against the LORD's commands, and if you and your king follow the LORD your God, then all will be well.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word</i> TM	If you fear the LORD, serve him, obey him, and don't rebel against what he says, then you and your king will follow the LORD your God.
JPS (Tanakh)	"If you will revere the LORD, worship Him, and obey Him, and will not flout the LORD's command, if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the LORD your God, [well and good].

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	"If you will fear the LORD and serve Him, and listen to His voice and not rebel against the command of the LORD, then both you and also the king who reigns over you will follow the LORD your God.
NRSV	If you will fear the LORD and serve him and heed his voice and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, and if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the LORD your God, it will be well;...

³⁷ I guess that I must be catering to the ADD crowd by inserting all those additional *if*'s in this verse. I blame this on the influence of having been a high school teacher for so many years.

Owen

“If you will fear Yahweh and serve him and hearken to his voice and not rebel against the commandment of Yahweh and will follow (be) both you and the king who reigns over you after Yahweh your God...”

Young's Updated LT

“If you [all] fear Jehovah, and have served Him, and hearkened to His voice, then you [all] do not provoke the mouth of Jehovah, and you [all] have been—both you [all] and the king who has reigned over you—after Jehovah your God.

What is the gist of this verse? If the people and their king fear Jehovah, serve Him and listen to His voice; and do not rebel against Him, then they will be following the Lord.

1Samuel 12:14a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced eem]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when</i> (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
The particle ʾîm (אִם) can be used as a demonstrative (<i>lo, behold</i>), an interrogative (usually expecting a negative response and often used with other particles and rhetorically), and as a conditional particle (<i>if, though</i>); an indication of a wish or desire (<i>oh that, if only</i> ; this is a rare usage).			
When following an oath, either stated or implied, ʾîm, by itself, functions as an emphatic negative.			
yârêʾ (אִרְאֵ) [pronounced yaw-RAY]	<i>to fear, to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3372 BDB #431
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: *If you fear [and respect] Y^ehowah...* You would think that this is reasonably simple. That is, Samuel is beginning with a very simple, *If you fear [and respect] Jehovah*. What could be more simple than that, right? Well, it just is not that simple. We have a problem here in this verse, and that is determining where the protasis and apodosis belong. This is discussed below in much greater detail than you might expect:

The hypothetical particle found here is problematic, which is evident if you carefully compare the various English translations above.

What the problem is in v. 14 with the Hypothetical Particle

When we find an *if*, then we expect to find a *then*. In the Hebrew, this is not so easy as we do not have a specific word for *then*, but we simply follow with a *wâw* consecutive. In fact, the standard is to begin a sentence with a hypothetical particle and then follow it with a imperfect verb (this is called the protasis, or the *if* portion of the conditional). The apodosis (the *then* portion) is continued with a *wâw* consecutive and a perfect tense. The problem here is threefold: (1) we cannot expect a standard in the Hebrew when it comes to a conditional (you would not believe the various points of view expressed in my many texts on this); (2) the difference between a *wâw* consecutive and a *wâw* conjunction is simply a vowel point, which was added millenniums later;

What the problem is in v. 14 with the Hypothetical Particle

and, (3) even if there were a fairly standard and predictable set up for a conditional, remember that this is Samuel, whose Hebrew is rather weak and limited. Rotherham, the NASB and God's Word™ all set up the *if...then...* in the same place. Their translations are, essentially: **"If you fear Jehovah and serve Him and obey His voice and do not rebel against the commandments of Jehovah, then both you and the king who reigns over you will follow after Jehovah your God."** The *wâw* consecutive (the *then*) followed by a main verb (*will follow*) in the conclusion (or the apodosis) are not actually there in the Hebrew. There is no *wâw* consecutive and the main verb is *to be* when we would expect something like *to follow*. Now, *to follow* is reasonably implied (to some), but, given that we find a plethora of verbs in this verse, it is amazing that Samuel cannot muster up the strength to give us just one more final verb that makes sense for his apodosis.

However, even though these are three translations who lean toward being very literal, there are other literal translations which disagree: *The Amplified Bible*, Owen, the NRSV and the JPS. Even Brenton who gives us an English translation of the Septuagint disagrees. These five sources (along with the less literal NLT) assert that the apodosis is completely implied. **"If you and your king do all this stuff [fear Jehovah, obey, et al], [then all will be well and good]."** Everything's cool, if you are a part of all the conditions in this verse. Now, both positions are valid. Because an *if* expects a *then*, and because Samuel is not linguist-extraordinaire, we would expect a fairly simple and straightforward construction. But, because Samuel is not a scholar of the Hebrew language, and because this is public speaking, he may not give us the perfect example of Hebrew grammar.

The upshot of all this is, there are two basic interpretations: (1) Samuel has a not-so-simple *if...then* statement here or (2) he has an *if statement* when an implied *then statement*.

Bear in mind, this is not necessarily a problem with the particle *ʾîm*, but possibly the greater problem is the verb which we find and the verb we expect to find. We do not have the perfect set up: *if + an imperfect verb* followed by the *wâw consecutive + a perfect verb*. Furthermore, the final verb (*to be*) is not what we expect to find either.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

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

In fact, given the two main viewpoints, let me give you a list of six interpretations of this conditional statement (there are way more than two interpretations here and the most common two interpretations I believe are the worst):

Six Interpretations of the Conditional of 1Samuel 12:14

Interpretation	Explanation and Translation	Problems with this Interpretation
The most common interpretation:	The apodosis is completely inferred. "If you fear Jehovah and serve Him and obey His voice and do not rebel against the commandments of Jehovah, and both you and the king who reigns over you [follow] after Jehovah your God, [then you have done well]." When we have a conditional with no clear result, could we not assume that the outcome of obeying the conditional (or the conditions laid down in the conditional) as being positive or beneficial?	This conditional is filled with imperfect and perfect verbs in the protasis (perfect verbs belong in the apodosis). Also, this verse is followed by an almost normal conditional, with a relatively clear <i>if...then</i> format.

Six Interpretations of the Conditional of 1Samuel 12:14

Interpretation	Explanation and Translation	Problems with this Interpretation
<p>The protasis of the first conditional is inferred by the second conditional.</p>	<p>The apodosis is inferred by the second conditional. "If you fear Jehovah and serve Him and obey His voice and do not rebel against the commandments of Jehovah, and both you and the king who reigns over you follow after Jehovah your God, [then the hand of Jehovah will be with you]." One may take this approach based upon the next verse, where we have a more clear apodosis. The idea is that the apodosis of v. 15 <i>implies</i> the apodosis for v. 14. The protasis of v. 14 is the opposite of that in v. 15, so we should expect the same of their apodoses (i.e., we should expect them to also be the opposite). I am not aware of any translation which takes this approach, but I consider it to be the best interpretation.</p>	<p>Apart from the mixture in vv. 14–15 of perfect and imperfect verbs in the apodosis, this is a reasonable and unfortunately unused rendering.</p>
<p>The second most common interpretation:</p>	<p>There is an apodosis in this verse; one needs to properly interpret the verse to identify it. "If you fear Jehovah and serve Him and obey His voice and do not rebel against the commandments of Jehovah, then both you and the king who reigns over you will [follow] after Jehovah your God." V. 15 is a conditional and it does not follow the exact expected form either.</p>	<p>We do not find the wâw consecutive that we expect (which is indicated by a vowel point, added much later into the text) and we find perfect verb tenses in the apodosis (which is the case in the verse which follows).</p>
<p>׃ִימ (דן) [pronounced eem] is mistranslated <i>if</i>.</p>	<p>The hypothetical particle is not an hypothetical particle; Gesenius claims that its most common use is as a demonstrative; i.e., it should be rendered <i>lo! behold!</i> "Listen you will fear Jehovah and serve Him and obey His voice and you will not rebel against the commandments of Jehovah, and both you and the king who reigns over you will follow after Jehovah your God."</p>	<p>Given that the Israelites chose Saul as king, a choice which is against God, this is a less reasonable translation. That it is reasonably rendered <i>if</i> in the next verse is in keeping with Samuel's limited vocabulary.</p>
<p>׃ִימ (דן) [pronounced eem] should be translated as an interrogative.</p>	<p>The particle ׃ִימ can be used as an interrogative, which would make sense here. "Will you fear Jehovah and serve Him and obey His voice and will you not rebel against the commandments of Jehovah, and will both you and the king who reigns over you [follow] after Jehovah your God?" Samuel, in other words, asks them, "Is this what you have in mind for your future relationship with God now that you have a king?" This is the third mostly likely interpretation, in my opinion.</p>	<p>Bear in mind that, even though this is a reasonable interpretation, the <i>if</i> which follows in the next verse will not be interpreted in this way.</p>

Six Interpretations of the Conditional of 1Samuel 12:14

Interpretation	Explanation and Translation	Problems with this Interpretation
There are two conditionals in this verse. That is, we should let the verbs tell us how to construct this sentence.	If we go by the tenses, we could take the imperfect tenses as the protoses and the perfect as the apodoses. Then the second <i>if</i> would be implied. The resultant verse would be rendered: “If you fear Jehovah then you will serve Him and obey His voice and [if] you do not rebel against the commandments of Jehovah, then both you and the king who reigns over you will [follow] after [or, pursue] Jehovah your God.” Although I have not found any translation which gives this approach to this verse, I see no reason why it is not any less valid than the previous interpretations. In fact, I believe this to be the second most reasonable interpretation.	The strongest argument against this is that an actual <i>ʾim</i> is found once again in the next verse; however, that <i>if...then</i> construction is the negative approach, whereas, this verse is the positive approach.

Notice, in the final interpretation, Samuel is explaining to these men of Israel *how* they demonstrate their fear/respect for God: by serving Him and obeying His voice. Therefore, if they do not rebel against God’s commandments (which implies, they must know His commandments), then that means they are following after (or, *pursuing*) Jehovah.

I need to admit that, I am not sure of any of my interpretations, even though I essentially ranked them.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

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

Fearing Jehovah indicates that one trusts God and His power, and recognizes God’s fierce justice. Maybe we simply like making God more palatable to others, so our churches emphasize God’s love. But bear in mind, even though Jesus spoke often of God’s love and how we should emulate it, He also spoke of God’s perfect righteousness: **“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell”** (Matt. 10:28).

Application: A child who has good parents who are attempting to guide him in this life will occasionally fear his parents. He will fear making his parents mad; he will fear disappointing them; and he will fear being disciplined by them. These are normal responses to good parents. Now, if you, as a parent, want to always play the good guy, then your children are going to grow up to be both miserable and disappointing (as well as being a handful once you get into the teen years).

1Samuel 12:14b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
ʿâbad (עָבַד) [pronounced <i>gawb-VAHD</i>]	<i>to work, to serve, to labor; to be a slave to</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong’s #5647 BDB #712
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	affixed to a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong’s #853 BDB #84

Translation: ...and [if] you serve Him... Recall the several interpretations above—this either begins the apodosis or it continues the protasis (I have translated this in the latter sense). Altogether, this gives us: “If you fear Y^ehowah and serve Him,...

Please understand what serving God means: God would tell Israel to do specific things—at times, this would be to wipe out a degenerate group of people who practiced child sacrifice (and, there were times when all of their possessions were to be destroyed as well). There were commandments found throughout the Law: about the sacrifices the people were to bring, about how often they were to gather at the Tabernacle of God—following these commands were serving God (although, quite frankly, I doubt that the Tabernacle was completely functioning and I doubt that all of the rituals were being followed). God, even in the time of Israel, was very particular about His Word. Portions of the Word of God were to be memorized. Then, as now, there is nothing which is more important than knowing and obeying the Word of God.

1Samuel 12:14c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shâma ^c (שָׁמַעַ) [pronounced shaw-MAHĠ]	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	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
qôwl (קוֹל) [pronounced kohl]	sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6963 BDB #876

Translation: ...and [if] you listen to [and obey] His voice;... Then we have the wâw conjunction and the 2nd person masculine plural, Qal perfect of to listen, to listen [and obey] followed by in his voice (which we would render to His voice). “...and listen [and obey] His voice...”

1Samuel 12:14d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô ^c (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced low]	not, no	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
mârâh (מָרָה) [pronounced maw-RAWH]	to resist, to oppose, to rebel, to rebel against, to be contentious	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #4784 BDB #598

1Samuel 12:14d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿêth (את) [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
peh (פה) [pronounced <i>peh</i>]	<i>mouth [of man, animal; as an organ of speech]; opening, orifice [of a river, well, etc.]; edge; extremity, end</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6310 BDB #804
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: ...and [if] you do not rebel against the word of Y^ehowah,... This gives us: “If you fear Y^ehowah and serve Him, and you do not rebel [against] the mouth of Y^ehowah...” The mouth of Jehovah is the Word of God. It is in our nature to rebel against the truth, and yet Samuel is telling those before him not to rebel against the Word of God. Bear in mind, this is just as applicable to Saul as to anyone else. Saul's problem, at least to begin with, is that he will disobey the Word of God on several occasions.

1Samuel 12:14e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (היה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224

Since the verb *to be* is not exactly what we would have expected to find here, please allow me to give you a rundown on the basic meanings of this verb. BDB breaks this down into 3 categories (1) *to fall out, to come to pass, to become, to be*; (2) *to come into being, to become*; (3) *to be*. Under the second category, BDB lists to meanings *to come, to go, to follow*.³⁸

gam (גם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>both...and, furthermore...as well as, also...also, that...so; either...or (but not used disjunctively)</i>	when gam is repeated	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
ʿattem (אתם) [pronounced <i>ahT-TEM</i>]	<i>you all, you guys, you (often, the verb to be is implied)</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

³⁸ *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*; Hendrickson Publishers; ©1996; p. 225.

1Samuel 12:14e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gam (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>both...and, furthermore...as well as, also...also, that...so; either...or</i> (but not used disjunctively)	when gam is repeated	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
melek ^e (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, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
mâlak ^e (מָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>maw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>to reign, to become king or queen</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	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 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752
ʾachar (אַחַר) [pronounced <i>ah-KHAHR</i>]	<i>after, following, behind</i>	preposition	Strong's #310 BDB #29
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʾĒlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>gods, foreign gods, god; God; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #430 BDB #43

Translation: ...and [if] you and your king who rules over you will follow after Y^ehowah your God [then the hand of Y^ehowah will be with you].³⁹ Altogether, this gives us: If you fear Y^ehowah and serve Him, and you do not rebel [against] the mouth of Y^ehowah and [if] you and your king who rules over you will follow after Y^ehowah your God [then the hand of Y^ehowah will be with you]. [see [alternate renderings above](#)] As has been discussed, it is difficult to determine how we are to properly interpret the conditional here, as conditionals in the Hebrew are not as well-defined as they are in the English. I lean toward the conclusion of the second *if* of a double conditional as implying the conclusion to the first conditional. By reading ahead, and taking this as being the proper interpretation, our implied conclusion would be: "...[then the hand of Y^ehowah will be with you]." This makes the most sense, as all of the things mentioned in v. 14 are things which the Israelites have the power to do from their own volition. Therefore, we should not view any of these things as results but as mandates for their personal and collective behavior. The only action which is outside the realm of their volition is the final clause of v. 15, the opposite of which I have added to this verse.

Interestingly enough, this is very similar to Joshua's last few words to Israel:⁴⁰ "Now, therefor, fear Y^ehowah and serve Him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt

³⁹ I guess that I must be catering to the ADD crowd by inserting all those additional *if*'s in this verse. I blame this on the influence of having been a high school teacher for so many years.

⁴⁰ These don't appear to be his final words, but that which he expected to be his final words. His final message is in a previous chapter. See the exegesis for details.

and serve Y^ehowah.” (Joshua 24:14). In both cases, Joshua and Samuel had figured that their time as leaders was over and these were to be their last words of advice to Israel (compare Ex. 19:5–6 Deut. 8:19 11:13–15, 22–28 30:17–20). This final passages was one of the last from Moses as well: “But if your heart turns away and you do not obey, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you will certainly perish. You will not prolong your days in the land wherein you are crossing to possess. I call upon heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Therefore, choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, by loving Jehovah your God and by obeying His voice and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which Jehovah swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give to them.”

Application: I should hope that it would be obvious that you cannot obey the voice of God and you cannot do what God wants you to do without knowing the Word of God. You cannot function in this spiritual life apart from knowledge. You cannot get knowledge of the Word of God by reading it or studying for yourself, nor can you get this by listening to a pastor for 20 minutes at a time, 1–3 times per week. That just won’t cut it.

And if you do not hearken in a voice of Y^ehowah and you have rebelled [against] a mouth of Y^ehowah and has been a hand of Y^ehowah against you [all] and against your fathers.

1 Samuel
12:15

And if you do not listen to the voice of Y^ehowah and if you rebel against the commands of Y^ehowah, then Y^ehowah’s hand will be against you, [as it was] against your fathers [or, as per the Greek, ...against you and against your king].

And if you do not listen to the voice of Jehovah and continue to rebel against His commands, then the hand of Jehovah will be against you, just as it was against your fathers.

Let’s see what has been done with this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And if you do not hearken in a voice of Y^ehowah and you have rebelled [against] a mouth of Y^ehowah and has been a hand of Y^ehowah against you [all] and against your fathers.

Septuagint

But if you should not hearken to the voice of the Lord, and you should resist the mouth of the Lord, then the hand of the Lord will be upon you and upon your king.

Significant differences:

The Latin, Hebrew and Syriac are all in agreement here that this should read ...against your fathers. However, it would make more sense to read, Jehovah’s hand will be against you as it was against your fathers. Given the construction that we find, the Greek appears to make the most sense, where God’s hand would be against the Israelites gathered there as well as against their newly appointed king. We will discuss this in greater detail in the actual exegesis.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV If you’re stubborn and refuse to obey the LORD, he will turn against you and your king.’

NLT But if you rebel against the LORD’s commands, and refuse to listen to him, then his hand will be as heavy upon you as it was upon your ancestors.

REB ...but if you do not obey the LORD, and if you rebel against his commands, then his hand will be against you and against your king.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ But if you don't obey the LORD, if you rebel against what he says, then the LORD will be against you as he was against your ancestors.

JPS (Tanakh) But if you do not obey the LORD and your flout the LORD's command, the hand of the LORD will strike you as it did your fathers.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB "And if you will not listen to the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the command of the LORD, then the hand of the LORD will be against you, as it was against your fathers.

NRSV ...but if you will not heed the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then the hand of the LORD will be against you and your king.

Owen's Translation But if you will not hearken to the voice of Yahweh but rebel against the commandment of Yahweh, then will be the hand of Yahweh against you and against your fathers.

Young's Updated LT "And if you [all] do not hearken to the voice of Jehovah—then you have provoked the mouth of Jehovah, and the hand of Jehovah has been against you, and against your fathers.

What is the gist of this verse? If the Jews do not listen to the voice of Jehovah, then they will be provoking Him and His hand will be against them and their king (or, in the MT, against them and their ancestors).

1Samuel 12:15a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when</i> (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
When following an oath, either stated or implied, ʾîm, by itself, functions as an emphatic negative.			
lôʾ (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
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 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
qôwl (קוֹל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6963 BDB #876

1Samuel 12:15a

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

Translation: [And if you do not listen to the voice of Y^ehowah...](#) You will recall that in the previous verse, we spent a great deal of time dealing with the protasis and the apodosis. Well, that is not quite over yet.

In this verse, the protasis and the apodosis are much easier to distinguish, even though we cannot depend entirely upon the Hebrew to do it.

The Protasis and the Apodosis

Okay, to review: the *protasis* is the *if* part of a conditional clause (*if...then...*) and the *apodosis* is the *then* part. Whereas, we can read this clearly in the English and in the Greek (which has actually 4 kinds of conditional clauses), it is not as easy to read in the Hebrew. My guess is that there was something in the inflection of the voice which keyed the apodosis, something which would be lost in the translation. What we might like to find is the hypothetical particle followed by a series of verbs which are in the same imperfect tense strung together by some *wâw* conjunctions—that is, for an hypothesis with multiple conditions. The imperfect tense would indicate potential behavior which has not been consummated yet (i.e., incomplete action) and the *wâw* conjunctions would simply string these hypotheses together. Then we would like to see a *wâw* consecutive, which indicates a resultant action (or, even better yet, something equivalent to a *then*, such as an alternate use of *kîy*), followed by a perfect tense, indicating not completed action but action which is assured based upon the action (or actions) of the hypothesis. Unfortunately, we do not have anything that neat and tidy to deal with.

We would hope that with Samuel, challenged in matters linguistic, that he would follow a simple formula; however, the challenges to his Hebrew are apparently threefold: (1) he has a limited vocabulary and (2) he uses words whose meanings are close to what he wants but not always right on target (this is obviously due to his limited vocabulary); and (3) his grammatical constructions, rather than simply being simple (which they often are), they are sometimes just wrong—or, at least, they do not match the grammatical standards of the Hebrew.

Despite all of that, identifying the protasis and apodosis here will be easy.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

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

So, our protasis is: [“But, if you do not listen to the voice of Y^ehowah...”](#) The hypothetical particle and the negative indicate that we are looking on the other side of this coin as compared to the previous verse where the Israelites were encouraged to listen to the Word of God.

1Samuel 12:15b

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

1Samuel 12:15b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mârâh (מָרָה) [pronounced <i>maw-RAWH</i>]	<i>to be bitter; to be disobedient, to be rebellious; to resist, to oppose, to rebel, to rebel against, to be contentious</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #4784 BDB #598
ʿêth (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
peh (פֶּה) [pronounced <i>peh</i>]	<i>mouth [of man, animal; as an organ of speech]; opening, orifice [of a river, well, etc.]; edge; extremity, end</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6310 BDB #804
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: ...and if you rebel against the commands of Y^ehowah,... This gives us: “But, if you do not listen to the voice of Y^ehowah or [if] you rebel against the mandates of Y^ehowah...” It appears as though Samuel is giving us two complementary phrases. There are some of those who will not listen to the commandments of God in the first place—they just are not interested. That covers the first phrase. Then there are those who listen, but then they obey that which they want to obey, and ignore or disobey whatever they choose to. This is to whom Samuel speaks now.

1Samuel 12:15c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	2 nd person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
Whenever we find this verb completely removed morphologically from the surrounding nouns, we render it: <i>and it will be</i> or <i>and it will come to pass</i> .			
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i>]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #none BDB #88

Translation: ...then Y^ehowah's hand will be against you,... Then we have the apodosis, which is identified topically rather than grammatically. Everything in so far in vv. 14–15 were things which the Jews were able to do or were being encouraged not to do. Everything so far in these verses was a matter of the volition of the Jews—therefore, all of these conditions should be seen as the *if* part of a conditional (or, more accurately, of two conditionals). What we find in this phrase is something which depends upon the volition of God, and is therefore the apodosis of the second conditional (as well as providing us with an implied apodosis to the first conditional). If the Jews chose to not listen to God's voice and if they chose to disobey Him, then His hand would be against them. That is, God would make choices which would result in dire consequences for the Jews (which consequences for disobedience are outlined in Lev. 26).

1Samuel 12:15d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʾâb (אָב, אַב) [pronounced aw ^b v]	<i>father</i> , both as the head of a household or clan	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

Translation: ...[as it was] against your fathers [or, as per the Greek, ...against you and against your king]. *The allusion to the fathers is very suitable here, because the people were looking to the king for the removal of all the calamities, which had fallen upon them from time immemorial.*⁴¹ This fact has not changed even 3000 years later.

In the Hebrew, we have a possible problem. The phrase which we find here is *and against your fathers*. In the Septuagint, we have *and against your king*. Bear in mind that those who translated the Septuagint were men and that no translation is perfect. Even though the Apostles used the Septuagint (which legitimizes the use of a translation instead of the actual text), this does not mean that every translation will be accurate in every respect. I suppose that there are even problems very occasionally with my translation, as difficult as that might be to believe. Since the Septuagint was translated by men, there will be occasional errors and it is even possible that they interpreted some words so that the translation made sense to them (the KJV did this innumerable times). It is possible that they changed *against your fathers* to *against your king*, as that fits more with the context (see v. 14b). It is also possible, and more likely, that is how their Hebrew manuscript read. If this properly reads *against your king*, this all fits neatly together. Samuel is warning the people and King Saul at the same time, both of whom should be warned.

However, on the other hand, if this reads *against your fathers*, then what Samuel is emphasizing here is that, if the present generation of Israelites rebel against God, then God's hand will be against them, just as it was against their fathers. He has given examples of oppression and examples of those who have delivered Israel. So, the idea is that, those who know history know that God can be for or against them. In some generations, God's hand was with the people; and in others, His hand was against them. That there is now a king over Israel is immaterial to the relationship between God and Israel—if Israel disobeys God and falls into idolatry, they can expect cursing, just as their fathers were cursed. **“But, if you do not obey Me and do not carry out all these commandments, and if, instead, you reject My statutes, and if your soul abhors My ordinances so as not to carry out all My commandments, and thereby, you break my covenant, I will, in turn, do this to you: I will appoint over you sudden terror, consumption and fever that will waste away the eyes and cause the soul to pine away. Furthermore, you will sow your seed uselessly, for your enemies will eat it themselves.”** (Lev. 26:14–16). That is the point that

⁴¹ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 444.

Samuel is making. Now, I will admit that I like the Greek rendering better; however, what we find in the Hebrew is not out of line with the context of Samuel's message—recall that Samuel said back in v. 7: [Now, therefore, take a stand, that I may be judged along with you before Jehovah in connection with the righteous acts which Jehovah has done before you and your fathers.](#) In the verse which follows, Samuel will use the same language ("[Now, therefore, take a stand...](#)"), which brings us full circle.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

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

Samuel Calls for a Great Thunderstorm and God Provides One, Frightening the People

[Now therefore stand and see the word the great the this which Y^ehowah is doing to your eyes.](#)

1Samuel
12:16

[Now, therefore, take a stand and watch this astonishing \[or, **great**\] thing which Y^ehowah is doing before your eyes.](#)

[Now, therefore, stand still and watch this tremendous thing which Y^ehowah is about to do before your eyes.](#)

With this verse, Samuel needs to make a point with Israel. For them at that time, many of them did not see God as a vibrant, meaningful part of the history of Israel. Samuel was going to have to disabuse them of that notion. Here is how the others handled v. 16:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	Now therefore stand and see the word the great the this which Y^ehowah is doing to your eyes.
Septuagint	And now stand still and see this great thing, which the Lord will do before your eyes.
Significant differences:	None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Just stand there and watch the LORD show his mighty power.
-----	--

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word™</i>	Now then, stand still and watch this great thing the LORD is going to do right before your eyes.
JPS (Tanakh)	"Now stand by and see the marvelous thing that the LORD will do before your eyes.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	"Even now, take your stand and see this great thing which the LORD will do before your eyes.
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	"Also now, station yourselves and see this great thing which Jehovah is doing before your eyes;...

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel tells the Israelites, "Now, watch this!"

1Samuel 12:16a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gam (גַּם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
ʿattâh (עַתָּה) [pronounced ʿahht-TAWH]	<i>now, at this time, already</i>	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773
yâtsab (צַבֵּי) [pronounced yaw-TSAHBʻ]	<i>to set oneself [in a place], to take a stand</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Hithpael imperative	Strong's #3320 BDB #426

The Hithpael imperative is translated variously as *station yourselves, stand still, take your stand, stand up, stand here*.

Translation: [Now, therefore, take a stand...](#) Samuel is about to call upon God for a miracle. Therefore, he needs to let the people know that is what he is doing. Again, recall, that Samuel has used this exact same phrase earlier in v. 7: [Now, therefore, take a stand, that I may be judged along with you before Jehovah in connection with the righteous acts which Jehovah has done before you and your fathers.](#) There are a couple of things which is meant by this phrase: (1) The Israelites were to stand firm, right where they were. In the first case, it was to listen to what Samuel had to say. They perhaps wanted to go off and party and celebrate having a new king. Samuel was going to lay it out for them what was kosher and what was not. (2) In this verse, Samuel tells them to stand firm, right where they are, because God is going to perform a sign to indicate His power and willingness to intervene in Israel's history. (3) The Israelites are being expected to stand firm in the doctrine which Samuel has taught them and is teaching them.

1Samuel 12:16b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that, so that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
râ`âh (רָאֵה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
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
dâbâr (דְּבַר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAWR]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
gâdôwl (גָּדוֹל) [pronounced gaw-DOHL]	<i>large, great or mighty [in power, nobility, wealth; in number, or magnitude and extent], loud, older, important, distinguished; vast, unyielding, immutable, significant, astonishing</i>	masculine singular adjective with the definite article	Strong's #1419 BDB #152

1Samuel 12:16b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	demonstrative adjective with the definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260

Translation: ...and watch this astonishing [or, great] thing... The NIV Study Bible: *Samuel calls the people to observe as the Lord himself demonstrates his existence and power and authenticates the truthfulness and seriousness of Samuel's words.*⁴²

What is going to occur is not necessarily a miracle, and the words used here do not indicate that what is going to happen is a miracle. However, it will be great; it will be astonishing. The Israelites will be amazed.

1Samuel 12:16c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʿāsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced gaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l ^e)	<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
ʿayin (עַיִן) [pronounced ĠAH-yin]	<i>spring, fountain; eye, spiritual eyes</i>	feminine dual noun with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744

Translation: ...which Y^ehowah is doing before your eyes. What Samuel says is reminiscent of the time that the pharaoh of Egypt and his men had Israel trapped with their backs against the Sea of Reeds. *Moses then said to the people, "Do not fear! Stand by and see the deliverance of Jehovah, which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever." And when Israel saw the great power which Jehovah had used against the Egyptians, the people feared Jehovah and they believed in Jehovah and in His servant Moses (Ex. 14:13).*

What Samuel is telling the people is that there is about to be a great demonstration of God's power done before their very eyes. This great act of God will confirm what Samuel has been saying—that God has a place in the lives of these Israelites. This is rather interesting because we now would speculate: (1) Had God already spoken to Samuel and did He direct Samuel to say this? There is no language which indicates that, but we don't always get the full conversations or orations in Scripture. (2) Another possibility is that Samuel, completely from his own

⁴² The NIV Study Bible; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 388.

volition, decided that Israel must see a sign from God and he announced and fully expected a sign from God concerning this confirmation of Saul as king. If this is the latter, then Samuel has got quite an impressive faith.

[Is it] not a harvest of wheat stalks? The day I will call unto Y^ehowah and He will send [loud] voices [or, *sounds*] and rain and know and see that your iniquity [is] great, which you have done in eyes of Y^ehowah to ask to yourselves a king.

1Samuel
12:17

[Is this] not the [season of the] harvest of wheat? Today, I will call upon Y^ehowah and He will send thunderings and rain and you will know and see how great your iniquity [is], which you have done in the sight of Y^ehowah in asking [for] a king for yourselves.

Is it not the harvest season of wheat? Therefore, today, I will call upon Jehovah and He will send a tremendous thunderstorm and you will then know and see how great is your iniquity; which transgression you have committed openly in the sight of God by asking for a king.

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

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

[Is it] not a harvest of wheat stalks? The day I will call unto Y^ehowah and He will send [loud] voices [or, *sounds*] and rain and know and see that your iniquity [is] great, which you have done in eyes of Y^ehowah to ask to yourselves a king.

Septuagint

[Is it] not wheat-harvest today? I will call upon the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain; and know ye and see that your wickedness [is] great which you have done before the Lord, having asked fo yourselves a king.

Significant differences:

Apart the *today*, these two versions are almost identical.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

Isn't this the dry season? I'm gong to ask the LORD to send a thunderstorm. When you see it, you will realize how wrong you were to ask for a king.

NLT

YOU know that it does not rain at this time of the year during the wheat harvest. I will ask the LORD to send thunder and rain today. Then you will realize how wicked you have been in asking the LORD for a king!"

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

*God's Word*TM

Isn't the wheat being harvested today? I will call on the LORD, and he'll send thunder and rain. Then you will realize what a wicked thing you did in the LORD s presence when you asked for a king."

JPS (Tanakh)

It is the season of the wheat harvest. I will pray to the LORD and He will send thunder and rain; then you will take thought and realize what a wicked thing you did in the sight of the LORD when you asked for a king."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB

"Is it not the wheat harvest today? I will call to the LORD, that He may send thunder and rain. Then you will know and see that your wickedness is great which you have done in the sight of the LORD by asking for yourselves a king.

Young's Updated LT

...is it not the what-harvest today? I call unto Jehovah, and He will give voices and rain; and know and see that your evil is great which you [all] have done in the eyes of Jehovah, to ask for you a king."

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel tells the people that he will call out to Jehovah to produce great thunder, to indicate that they should not have asked for a king. Samuel mentions the wheat harvest, as a rain storm will ruin the harvest.

What might be a small point of interest, and mostly to me, is it is at this point when I decided to set up the Hebrew into tables, so that I did not make constant reference to it in every paragraph. A friend of mine commented on how clunky and distracting it was to have the Hebrew as a part of almost every paragraph. This idea is, you can easily skip over the Hebrew table to the translation, and then go back in case you have doubts about my translation. Obviously, I have gone back and have redone previous chapters in this book in order for all of Samuel to have Hebrew tables.

1Samuel 12:17a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hă (הַ) [pronounced <i>heh</i>]		acts almost like a piece of punctuation, like the upside-down question mark which begins a Spanish sentence. Sometimes, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied.	Strong's #none BDB #209.
lô' (לוֹ' or לֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	generally negates the word immediately following it. This is the absolute negation.	Strong's #3808 BDB #518.
qâtsîyr (קִצֵּיר) [pronounced <i>kaw-TZEER</i>]	<i>harvesting, harvest</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #7105 BDB #894
chîttâh (חִטָּה) [pronounced <i>kheet-TAW</i>]	<i>wheat, wheat stalks</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #2406 BDB #334

This gives us: “[Is it] **not the harvest of the wheat?**” There is a point which Samuel is making. The harvesting of the wheat takes place in what is traditionally dry weather (it occurs sometime between mid-April to mid-June).⁴³ Prov. 26:1 tells us **Like Snow in the summer and like rain during the harvest, so honor is not fitting for a fool.** The idea is that the idea of being a fool does not go hand-in-hand with having personal honor, just as one does not expect to find rain during the harvest period. In fact, Jerome, as an eyewitness, testified “I have never seen rain in the end of June, or in July, in Judea.”⁴⁴ Furthermore, the harvesting of the wheat is a time of celebration, as God has blessed them with this harvest. So, to the Israelites, everything is good right now and they are looking forward to a bountiful harvest. We do not know how Samuel phrased this question, whether the word *today* (found below) belongs with this phrase or the following phrase (I think that it acts more like a connective, which I will explain in the next phrase).

⁴³ This is according to *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 380. Barnes places the time between mid-May to mid-June (*Barnes' Notes; 1Samuel to Esther*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 29). In any case, this is a dry time of the year for Israel.

⁴⁴ *Barnes' Notes; 1Samuel to Esther*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 29. This observation is confirmed year after year in modern times.

1Samuel 12:17b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i>]	<i>day, today</i> (with a definite article)	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i>]	<i>to call, to proclaim, read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
'el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>el</i>]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3069 BDB #217
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i>]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
qôwl (קוֹל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering</i>	masculine plural	Strong's #6963 BDB #876
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
mâtâr (מָטָר) [pronounced <i>maw-TAWR</i>]	<i>rain</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4306 BDB #564

Translation: “Today, I will call unto Y^ehowah and He will give thunderings and rain...” One of the things which I have noticed in the Hebrew, which is quite different from the English is that narrative does not necessarily require complete sentences. What is most common with Samuel is to have a lot of very short phrases all strung together with wâw consecutive's. What we have in these first two phrases is the word *today* which pulls them together. That is, for us in the English, we need to see *today* either with this phrase or at the end of the previous one. However, in the Hebrew, that simply ties the two thoughts together. What we generally expect from Samuel is for him to tie v. 17a with 17b using a wâw conjunction (or a wâw consecutive). However, he ties these together with an uncharacteristic use of the word *today*, which is quite unusual for Samuel. I believe that this reveals some control over him by the Holy Spirit, or indicates inspired speech which goes a bit beyond his normal speaking. Another interpretation is that he is excited and what he is saying causes Samuel to take leave of his normal speaking pattern.

Now, the idea that he would simply call upon God to send rain and thunder right at this moment is rather dramatic and gutsy. As I have mentioned, we don't know if he discussed this with God aforetime or not. I should like to think that Samuel, caught up in this highly emotional time (for him), and filled with the Holy Spirit, suddenly came out with this, “I will call upon Jehovah to give us a thunderstorm.” In the past, a sudden or incredible rainstorm is associated with God and His judgment. In fact, let me give you some examples:

God's Judgments of Severe Weather		
Passage	Circumstance	Judgment was Directed Against
Gen. 7:17–24	This is the great flood when God sent rainstorms upon the earth for 40 days and 40 nights	Mankind, which had become corrupted
Ex. 9:18–34	God sent thunder, lightning and hail down upon Egypt. The hail struck all that was in the fields throughout all the land of Egypt, both man and beast; the hail also struck every plant of the field and shattered every tree of the field. Only in the land of Goshen where the sons of Israel were, there was no hail (Gen. 9:25–26).	The Pharaoh and people of Egypt, who would not release their Jewish slaves
Joshua 10:6–11	Joshua defeated an Amorite coalition which attacked Israel's new allies, the Gibeonites. God sent destroyed much of the Amorite army with great hailstones from heaven.	The Amorites, who chose to attack those who are allied with God's people
1Sam. 12:16–18	God sends a great thunderstorm during the harvest season.	The people of Israel for demanding a king from God.
1Kings 18:30–39	Elijah called upon God to send fire from heaven to burn up a sacrificial animal. It reasonably appears that this <i>fire</i> (the word found in this passage) is lightning.	This judgment of the animal was representative of the ultimate judgment placed upon our Lord.

A general statement of God's use of weather is found in the book of Job: "Listen closely to the thunder of His voice and the rumbling that goes out from His mouth. Under the whole heaven, He lets it loose and His lightning to the ends of the earth. After it, a voice roars—He thunders with His majestic voice, and He does not restrain the lightning when His voice is heard. God thunders with His voice wondrously, doing great things which we cannot comprehend. For to the snow, He says, 'Fall upon the earth.' And to the downpour and the rain, [he says], 'Be strong.' He seals the hand of every man, that all men may know His work. Then the beast goes into its lair and remains in its den. Out of the south comes the storm, and out of the north the cold. From the breath of God, ice is made, and the expanse of the waters is frozen. Also, with moisture, he loads the thick cloud; He disperses the cloud of His lightning and it changes direction, turning around by His guidance, that it may do whatever He commands of it on the face of the inhabited earth, whether for correction or for His world, or for grace, He causes it to happen." (Job 37:2–13).

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

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

1Samuel 12:17c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
yâda' (יָדָעַ) [pronounced <i>yaw-DAHG</i>]	<i>to know</i>	end person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

1 Samuel 12:17c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
râ`âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to see, to look; look, see, behold, view (in the Qal imperative)</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because, when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory conjunction	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
râ`âh (רָעָה) [pronounced raw-ĠAW]	<i>evil, misery, distress, disaster, injury, iniquity, aberration, that which is morally reprehensible</i>	feminine singular noun with a 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #7451 BDB #948.
ra ^b v (רַב) [pronounced rahv]	<i>many, much, great (in the sense of large or significant, not acclaimed)</i>	feminine singular adjective	Strong's #7227 BDB #912

Translation: "...and know and see that your iniquity [is] great..." The adjective ra^bv demands the verb *to be*. Samuel is not about to let go of the fact that the Israelites have demanded a king out of lack of faith in Jehovah.

1 Samuel 12:17d

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
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ġaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿayin (עַיִן) [pronounced ĠAH-yin]	<i>spring, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes, spring</i>	feminine dual construct	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3069 BDB #217

This gives us: "...which you have done before the eyes of Y^ehowah..." The evil which the Israelites did—asking for a king to rule over them—this was done clearly in the sight of God and Samuel. There was no reasoning with them—they were faithless, decided that God was not enough of a factor in their lives, so they chose to demand a king of Samuel, regardless of what he had to say (see 1Sam. 8, which we have already exegeted). Samuel here tells us that God observes all the evil that these people have done, which is essentially demanding a king out from their faithlessness.

1Samuel 12:17e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) (pronounced ^l)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
shâ'al (שאל) (pronounced <i>shaw-AHL</i>)	<i>to ask, to petition, to request, to inquire, to question, to interrogate</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7592 BDB #981
lâmed (ל) (pronounced ^l)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to</i>	preposition with a 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
melek ^e (מלך) (pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>)	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

This would be rendered: "...to ask for yourselves a king." Samuel makes it very clear that their sin is in asking God for a king.

And so called Samuel unto Y^ehowah and so sent Y^ehowah voices and rain in the day the that. Therefore, fear all of the people greatly Y^ehowah and Samuel. 1Samuel 12:18

Then Samuel called to Y^ehowah and Y^ehowah sent thunderings and rain in that day; therefore, all the people greatly feared Y^ehowah and Samuel.

Then Samuel called out to Jehovah and Jehovah sent down incredible thundering and devastating storms that day. Therefore, all of the people greatly feared Jehovah and Samuel.

Let's first see how others have dealt with this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text And so called Samuel unto Y^ehowah and so sent Y^ehowah voices and rain in the day the that. Therefore, fear all of the people greatly Y^ehowah and Samuel.

Septuagint And Samuel called upon the Lord, and the Lord sent thunders and rain in that day; and all the people feared greatly the Lord and Samuel.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Samuel prayed, and that same day the LORD sent a thunderstorm. Everyone was afraid of the LORD and of Samuel.

NLT So Samuel called to the LORD, and the LORD sent thunder and rain. And all the people were terrified of the LORD and of Samuel.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh) Samuel prayed to the LORD, and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day, and the people stood in awe of the LORD and of Samuel.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB

.So Samuel called to the LORD, and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day; and all the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel.

Young's Updated LT

And Samuel calls to Jehovah, and Jehovah gives voices and rain, on that day, and all the people greatly fear Jehovah and Samuel.

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel called out to God for rain and thunder, and God sent them rain and thunder on that day. The end result was, the people feared both Jehovah and Samuel.

1Samuel 12:18a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to call, to proclaim, read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon</i>	3 rd person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
Sh ^e mûw'êl (שִׁמוּאֵל) [pronounced sh ^e -moo-ALE]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028
'el (אֵל) [pronounced el]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
YHWH (יְהוָה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3069 BDB #217

Translation: *So Samuel called upon Y^ehowah...* This appears to indicate that Samuel did not set this up beforehand with God, but that he suddenly thought of what he should request in order to make an impression on the people who were gathered there; and this is what he came up with.

Despite the fact that God told Samuel to go ahead and allow Israel to have a king—Samuel is clear that this is not God's directive will but His permissive will.

1Samuel 12:18b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
YHWH (יְהוָה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3069 BDB #217

1Samuel 12:18b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
qôwl (קוּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering</i>	masculine plural	Strong's #6963 BDB #876
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
mâtâr (מָטָר) [pronounced maw-TAWR]	<i>rain</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4306 BDB #564
b ^e (בּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	<i>day, today (with a definite article)</i>	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
hûw ⁷ (הוּא) [pronounced hoo]	<i>that, those</i>	demonstrative adjective with a definite article	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

Translation: ...so Y^ehowah sent thunder and rain on that day... Whether God and Samuel had hashed this out in advance or whether Samuel took it upon himself to promise this to the people, God responded. As I have said before, I believe the Samuel just decided this on his own, knowing that God would respond as per his prayer.

Like many of God's mighty works, this was conceived and put into motion in eternity past. We have seen freakish weather now and again. That is what God did here. He saw to it that this sort of weather would manifest itself at this time in Israel. He did not necessarily create the storms right then and there on demand. Now, whereas we are often very impressed by that which is a miracle (e.g., a storm created out of nothing); it is far more amazing that God, in eternity past, would put all the things into motion to guarantee that there would be a storm on the day that Samuel asked for it.

Samuel, Joshua and Moses were all closely associated with the miracles of God. Even Aaron, in his association with Moses during the exodus, was identified with the miracles of God. [Moses and Aaron were among His priests, and Samuel was among those who called upon His name. They called upon Jehovah and He answered them](#) (Psalm 99:6). You recall Moses calling out to the children of Israel, "[Stand still and watch the deliverance of Jehovah!](#)" (Ex. 14:13b). This is Samuel's equivalent moment.

1Samuel 12:18c

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
yârê ⁷ (יָרַע) [pronounced yaw-RAY]	<i>to fear, to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3372 BDB #431

1Samuel 12:18c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʿam (עַם) [pronounced ġahm]	<i>people</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
m ^o ôd (מְאֹד) [pronounced m ^o -ODE]	<i>exceedingly, extremely, greatly, very</i>	adverb	Strong's #3966 BDB #547
YHWH (יְהוָה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3069 BDB #217
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Sh ^e mûw'êl (שְׁמוּאֵל) [pronounced sh ^e -moo-ALE]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028

Translation: [Therefore, all of the people greatly feared Y^ehowah and Samuel.](#) Samuel stated what he was going to do during a season when rain storms were unheard of. The fact that Samuel was able to call upon God to do this and the fact that God responded to him with this thunder and storming, made the people realize the great power that God had, and how easily Samuel was able to tap into that power. Sometimes, one simply has to see what God can do first-hand in order to appreciate His power. [So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal state at daybreak, while the Egyptians were fleeing right into it; then Jehovah overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned and veered the chariots and the horsemen, even Pharaoh's entire army that had gone into the sea after them; not even one of them remained. And when Israel saw the great power which Jehovah had used against the Egyptians, the people feared Jehovah and they believed in Jehovah and in His servant Moses \(Ex. 14:27–28, 31\).](#) Because Moses was so closely tied to the miracles of God, and because Joshua succeeded him and was also closely tied to the miracles of God, the people feared both of them as well: [On that day, Jehovah exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel, so that they feared him just as they had feared Moses all the days of his life \(Joshua 4:14\).](#)

[And so say all the people unto Samuel, "Pray for your servants unto Y^ehowah your Elohim and we will not die for we have added upon all of our sins evil to ask for ourselves a king."](#)

1Samuel
12:19

[Then all of the people said to Samuel, "Intercede on behalf of your servants unto Y^ehowah your Elohim so that we will not die, because we have added evil upon all of our sins to ask for ourselves a king."](#)

[Then all of the people requested of Samuel, "Please intercede on our behalf to Jehovah your God so that we will not die the sin unto death, because we realize that we have placed additional evil upon all of our sins when we asked for a king."](#)

First, what others have done:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text And so say all the people unto Samuel, "Pray for your servants unto Y^ehowah your Elohim and we will not die for we have added upon all of our sins evil to ask for ourselves a king."

Septuagint And all the people said to Samuel, "Pray for your servants to the Lord your God, and let us not die; for we have added to all our sins this iniquity, in asking for us a king."

Significant differences: No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV They told Samuel, "Please, pray to the LORD your God for us! We don't want to die. We have sinned many times in the past, and we were very wrong to ask for a king."

NLT "Pray to the LORD your God for us, or we will die!" they cried out to Samuel. "For now we have added to your sins by asking for a king."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ All the people pleased with Samuel, "Pray to the LORD your God for us so that we will not die. We have added [another] evil thing to all our other sins by asking for a king."

JPS (Tanakh) The people all said to Samuel, "Intercede for you servants with the LORD your God that we may not die, for we have added to all our sins the wickedness of asking for a king."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB Then all the people said to Samuel, "Pray for your servants to the LORD your God, so that we may not die, for we have added to all our sins *this* evil by asking for ourselves a king."

Young's Updated LT ...and all the people say unto Samuel, "Pray for your servants unto Jehovah your God, and we do not die, for we have added to all our sins evil to ask for us a king."

What is the gist of this verse? The people ask Samuel to pray on their behalf to Jehovah that they are not killed for their sins (which includes the sin of demanding a king).

1Samuel 12:19a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʿam (אָם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>people</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

1Samuel 12:19a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿel (לָאֵל) [pronounced <i>el</i>]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Sh ^e mûwʿêl (שִׁמוּוְעֵל) [pronounced <i>sh^e-moo-ALE</i>]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028

Translation: *Then the people said unto Samuel,...* The people give a little thought to what they have done and what they have chosen—the storm no doubt gets their attention.

1Samuel 12:19b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
pâlal (לָפַל) [pronounced <i>paw-LAHL</i>]	<i>in the Hithpael to pray, to intercede, to make intercession for, to ask for a favorable determination</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hithpael imperative	Strong's #6419 BDB #813
baʿad (בְּאַד) [pronounced <i>BAH-ġad</i>]	<i>for, for the sake of, on account of, on behalf of, behind, upon, round about</i>	preposition	Strong's #1157 BDB #126
ʿe ^b ved (עֲבֵד) [pronounced <i>ĠE^b-ved</i>]	<i>slaves, servants</i>	masculine plural noun with a 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
ʿel (לָאֵל) [pronounced <i>el</i>]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3069 BDB #217
ʿălôhîm ⁴⁵ (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>gods or God</i> ; transliterated <i>Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with a 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #430 BDB #43
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿal (לֹא) [pronounced <i>a/</i>]	<i>not</i>	adverb of negation	Strong's #408 BDB #39
mûwth (מוֹת) [pronounced <i>mooth</i>]	<i>to die</i>	1 st person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #4191 BDB #559

⁴⁵ Since this is so commonly referred to in reference books, we will use the designation *Elohim* as well.

Translation: “Intercede for the sake of your servants to Y^ehowah your God and we will not die...” Notice that they do not refer to Jehovah as *our God*, even though that is actually proper. It is unclear whether they would like Samuel to pray *unto Jehovah* (which is the most common meaning) or *regarding Jehovah*, which is a reasonable translation. Their expectation is that they have screwed up so badly that God will take them out by the sin unto death.

On the plus side, they are finally asking Samuel to pray to God on their behalf. Samuel has issued a scathing indictment against them in vv. 5–15. Apparently, they did not stand there and roll their eyes, as I have observed many a child do, but many of them listened to what Samuel had to say and some took it to heart. Then Samuel called upon God to deliver a thunderstorm upon them, which was apparently strong enough to get the attention of those who did not take Samuel’s message to heart.⁴⁶ The thunderstorm from God brought on immediately after this blistering speech by Samuel caused these men to reevaluate their relationship to God.

Allow me to explore a short tangent here. In the Old Testament, a key to understanding Israel’s relationship with God is the concept of a mediator. These people do not begin praying to God on their own behalf. They look to Samuel to do that. When the Israelites feared that God would speak His Word aloud directly to them, they asked for God to speak only to Moses and that Moses speak to them instead of God (Ex. 20:19). The key was that there needed to be a man who would stand between Israel and God. Later, it was clear that this was all a part of God’s plan and that this Mediator was to be Christ Jesus. **For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus** (I Tim. 2:5). This relationship between Israel and God was a shadow of the Messiah to come.

Back to the request of the people. They asked Samuel to pray to God on their behalf. It has actually been some time since they asked Samuel to do that. You may recall that they had 20 years during which they were entrenched in idolatry (1Sam. 7:2–3), which resulted in an attack by the Philistines. Rather than demand a king at that point, they went to Samuel (who did not seem to play a major part in Israel’s life until then) and they requested for him to petition Jehovah, Whom they called, by the way, *our God* (1Sam. 7:8). The result of this intercession was that Israel was able to defeat the Philistines in battle. In fact, they were so soundly defeated that they had not encroached on Israel’s territory up until the time that 1Sam. 7 was recorded (1Sam. 7:13, 15–17). Since then, things have changed for the worse. You may recall the introduction to 1Sam. 8 where I put together a rough chronology of these events. 1Sam. 7 was recorded when Samuel thought his life and ministry had been completed. Things were great, Israel had defeated the Philistines, and there had been many years of peace and prosperity which followed that battle. 1Sam. 8 and followed are the chapters that Samuel never expected to write. Just to throw out some numbers, he may have been age 60 when he wrote 1Sam. 7, and life in Israel had been good for 10–40 years prior to his writing of that chapter. You will notice that chapter 7 appears to be the end of something—the final three verses are sort of an epilogue to Samuel’s life, even though he is still alive and writing them. In 1Sam. 8, say 10 years have passed, and, instead of Samuel’s sons succeeding him as he expected them to do, they abused their positions of authority. On the east, Nahash, an Ammonite general, had begun to encroach on the territory of Israel. We have gone from a time of great peace and prosperity into a time of testing and discipline. In between, obviously, was a time of degeneracy, which is not really examined (except for the request of the elders for Samuel to appoint a king over Israel). It is as though Samuel wrote the final words of 1Sam. 7, went to bed, and woke up 10 years later and he asks himself, “Holy crap, what has been happening?” What we have in this verse is an indication that Israel is returning from whatever sins they have been committing⁴⁷ and are now turning back toward Jehovah their God.

⁴⁶ Now, to those in California, where, during a rainy year, you might get 10 inches of rain that year; you do not really understand the concept of a thunderstorm, and how a thunderstorm might affect the psyche of these people might be out of your range of perception. However, if you have spent over 20 years in the Midwest or in the South, you have seen a few thunderstorms that brought down 10 inches of rain in an afternoon; you have a frame of reference for this passage.

⁴⁷ I have been assuming that it was initially idolatry, which has generally been the case for Israel, followed by a time when Israel sought political solutions to their resultant problems.

1Samuel 12:19c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because, when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory conjunction	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
yâçaph (יָצַף) [pronounced yaw-SAHPH]	<i>to add, to augment, to continue to do a thing</i>	1 st person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #3254 BDB #414
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ʿahl]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
chattâ`th (חַטָּאת) [pronounced khat-TAWTH]	<i>sin or sin-offering</i>	feminine plural noun with a 1 st person plural suffix	Strong's #2403 BDB #308
râ`âh (רָעָה) [pronounced raw-ĠAW]	<i>evil, misery, distress, disaster, injury, iniquity, aberration, that which is morally reprehensible</i>	feminine singular noun with a 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #7451 BDB #948.
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l ^e)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
shâ`al (שָׁאַל) [pronounced shaw-AHL]	<i>to ask, to petition, to request, to inquire, to question, to interrogate</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7592 BDB #981.
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l ^e)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to</i>	preposition plus a 1 st person plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

Translation: "...for we have added upon all of our sins distress to ask for ourselves a king." They recognized that they have compounded their evil by asking God for a king. The reason that God had allowed Ammon to attack the Israelites was that they were out of line to begin with, which was generally a result of idolatry. Now, that evil was compounded by their asking for a king.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

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

Samuel Instructs the People as to His Responsibilities and Their Responsibilities

And so says Samuel unto the people, “Fear not—you, [even] you have done all the evil the this; only do not turn aside from [following] after Y^ehowah and you have served Y^ehowah in all your mind.

1Samuel
12:20

Then Samuel answered the people, “Do not fear, [even though] you have done all this evil. Only, do not turn aside from [following] after Y^ehowah; furthermore, serve Y^ehowah with all your inner being.

Then Samuel answered the people, saying, “Do not fear what is going to come to pass, even though you have done that which is wrong. Regardless of the past, do not cease from following after Jehovah and serve Jehovah with all your heart and mind.

Here is what others have done with v. 20:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text And so says Samuel unto the people, “Fear not—you, [even] you have done all the evil the this; only do not turn aside from [following] after Y^ehowah and you have served Y^ehowah in all your mind.

Septuagint And Samuel said to the people, “Fear not—you [all] have done all this iniquity. Only turn not from following the Lord, and serve the Lord with all your heart.

Significant differences:

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Samuel answered: Even though what you did was wrong, you don’t need to be afraid. But you must always follow the LORD and worship him with all your heart.

NLT “Don’t be afraid,” Samuel reassured them. “You have certainly done wrong, but make sure now that you worship the LORD with all your heart and that you don’t turn your back on him in any way.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

*God’s Word*TM “Don’t be afraid,” Samuel told the people. “You did do all these evil things. But don’t turn away from the LORD. Instead, serve the LORD wholeheartedly.

JPS (Tanakh) But Samuel said to the people, “Have no fear. You have, indeed, done all those wicked things. Do not, however, turn away from the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB And Samuel said to the people, “Do not fear. You have committed all this evil, yet do not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart.

Young’s Updated LT And Samuel says unto the people, “Fear not; you [all] have done all this evil; only, turn not aside from after Jehovah—and you have served Jehovah with all your heart,...

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel tells the people not to become worried; but, from this point forward, to follow Jehovah Elohim.

Okay, the people have screwed up. They engaged in idolatry (we have assumed), and that resulted in the attack of Nahash and the Ammonites. The initial attacks by Nahash caused them to come to Samuel desirous of a king. Now, after Samuel’s speech and particularly after the freakish thunderstorm, the people are repentant. Here is where people make a major mistake—they understand that they have screwed up big time, but they think that this is the end. If the dust has settled and they are still alive, then God has a plan for their lives. God is not going to

disregard His people. Samuel is going to make it clear that their relationship with Jehovah God has not been completely destroyed. Here, of course, is our application, because Scripture is not merely ancient history: we will fail, and sometimes our failures will be both appalling and horrendous. This is not the end of the world. If we are alive once the dust settles, then God has a plan for our lives. We are to stand up, dust ourselves off, and then pursue God and His Word. That is the gist of the first part of this passage to come (vv. 20–22).

1 Samuel 12:20a

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
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55.
Sh ^e mûwʾêl (שִׁמוֹעַ אֵל) [pronounced <i>sh^e-moo-ALE</i>]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>e/</i>]	<i>in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
ʿam (עַם) [pronounced <i>ġahm</i>]	<i>people</i>	masculine singular collective noun with a definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

Translation: *So Samuel said unto the people,...* It is amazing that most believers do not have a clue as to how they grow and what is spiritually significant. Let's look at it from a different perspective: let's say that Samuel castigates these people, God sends the rainstorm, and then everyone goes home. What would we get out of that? What would they have gotten out of that? The key is that Samuel now speaks and communicates Bible doctrine. This is the key to spiritual growth. It would be way stupid to think that they need to have a song service right now or they need to get each other worked up emotionally; Samuel will just lay on the line the pertinent doctrines. He will tell them what they need to *know*.

1 Samuel 12:20b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾal (אֵל) [pronounced <i>a/</i>]	<i>not</i>	adverb of negation	Strong's #408 BDB #39
yârêʾ (יָרַע) [pronounced <i>yaw-RAY</i>]	<i>to fear, to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3372 BDB #431
ʾattem (אַתֶּם) [pronounced <i>ahT-TEM</i>]	<i>you all, you guys, you</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>ġaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793

1Samuel 12:20b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated	untranslated mark of a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
râ'âh (רָעָה) [pronounced <i>raw-GAW</i>]	<i>evil, misery, distress, disaster, injury, iniquity, aberration, that which is morally reprehensible</i>	feminine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #7451 BDB #948.
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i>]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	demonstrative adjective with a definite article	Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260

Translation: “Do not fear—you [even] you have done all the this evil...” Then idea may be better expressed by “Do not fear, even though you have done all of this evil...” The CEV and NLT convey that idea. Samuel must convey simultaneously that Israel did wrong in choosing a king; but that God is not going to destroy them as a nation for doing so.

McGee comments: *Friend, don't let past sins and mistakes spoil your life. Regardless of who you are or what you have done, if you will turn to the Lord for salvation and forgiveness, God will accept and richly bless you. Don't let the past destroy the future and ruin the present for you. Move out for God today, my Christian friend.*⁴⁸

Application: Bob Thieme Jr. expressed this as *rebound and keep moving*. When you sin, or if you spend a great deal of your life out of fellowship, you name this sin (or sins) to God, He forgives you, and you move on with your spiritual life. If you are alive, no matter what you have done wrong, no matter how much you have screwed up your life and your testimony, you pick up your life after rebound (naming your sins to God) and begin moving toward the objective of the Christian life, which is spiritual maturity. You will fail in this life. In fact, some of your failures will be quite spectacular, which may even cost you your livelihood, your friends and/or your family. It is not unheard of for a Christian to screw up this badly. These Israelites have clearly screwed up big time; and, it is too late to say, “Okay, forget about it; we don't need a king.” However, despite this failure, Samuel tells them, “Don't be afraid, despite the fact that you have done this evil.” So, after you screw up, name your sins to God—which does not mean that you need to promise Him anything—and then you start back with Bible doctrine and spiritual growth, one day at a time.

1Samuel 12:20c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾakē (אֵכֶּה) [pronounced <i>ahkē</i>]	<i>surely, certainly, no doubt, only, only this once</i>	adverb of restriction, contrast, time, limitation, and exception	Strong's #389 BDB #36
ʾal (אֵל) [pronounced <i>a</i>]	<i>not</i>	adverb of negation	Strong's #408 BDB #39

⁴⁸ J. Vernon McGee; *I & II Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 66.

1Samuel 12:20c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
çûwr (סור) [pronounced soor]	<i>to turn aside, to depart, to go away</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5493 (and #5494) BDB #693
mê'achar (מֵאַחַר) [pronounced may-ah-KHAHR]	<i>from, from after, from (being) after, from behind, from following after</i>	Compound preposition	Strong's #4480 BDB #577 and Strong's #310 BDB #29
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3069 BDB #217

Translation: "...but do not depart from following after Y^ehowah..." The Israelites have screwed up and screwed up badly. Notice what Samuel tells them: "Do not cease from following after Y^ehowah." We do not seem to realize that, no matter how badly we have screwed up our lives and choices, still we are told not to cease from following after God. We are not at the end of our journey until God takes us out of this world. Therefore, it does not matter how badly you have ruined your life, you are never to stop following after God. Many years previous, Moses gave the flip side to this command: "Beware, so that your hearts are not deceived and you turn away and serve other gods and worship them." (Deut. 11:16).

1Samuel 12:20d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
âbad (עָבַד) [pronounced gâw ^b -VAHD]	<i>to work, to serve, to labor</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #5647 BDB #712
êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated	untranslated mark of a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3069 BDB #217
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
kôl (כָּל) [pronounced koh]	<i>every, each, all of, all</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481

1Samuel 12:20d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lê ^b va ^b v (לֵבַב) [pronounced lay ^b - V ^b AHV]	<i>mind, inner man, inner being, heart</i>	masculine singular noun with a 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3824 BDB #523

Translation: "...and serve Y^ehowah in all your inner being." Regardless of the fact that these Israelites have made a mistake and they have not done what Samuel had directed them to do (to forget about getting a king and to depend upon God instead). They were to turn their hearts toward God and serve Him completely. Even though there has been a change of government, God has not deserted Israel. Israel is to continue with their focus upon God.

Application: I have listened to hundreds of arguments concerning various governments in relationship to Christianity. These forms of government extend from the running of the Church all the way up to running an independent nation. One of the issues which splits our denominations is the form of hierarchy which they institute. I have heard Bob Thieme teach that there should be one pastor over each church and that he is the one who runs the show (unless removed by the board of deacons). "There's no plurality of elders" he would say. However, we have various people teaching in the same church; and the size of the various local churches at that time was generally small. Therefore, historically, we would expect to see one pastor at a time. Does that mean that today, we cannot have an assistant pastor or a youth pastor? Not necessarily. The government of a church is immaterial. My thinking is that, if a church is run correctly, there will be more involvement of the parishioners, as each of them has a spiritual gift and there is no reason to expect that the pastor is going to marry, bury, visit the sick, visit those in jail, counsel and teach the Word of God; and then administrate as well. Any church recognizes that it is reasonable to have teachers of the Bible for various age groups, including women teachers. Therefore, it should not be that big of a leap to recognize that there are duties which are traditionally heaped upon a pastor (and I am thinking of marriage ceremonies, funerals and counseling sessions in particular) which are not necessarily a part of his duties.

Application: Now let's expand this somewhat. We were founded as practically a Christian nation. Our Declaration of Independence makes reference to a Creator Who has given us certain unalienable rights—that is, there are certain rights that cannot be taken away by government, because God has given them to us. Governments are instituted for the purpose of securing these rights and not for the purpose of taking them away. This does not mean that our representative form of government with its checks and balances, with its Bill of Rights, is the only government under which Christianity can function. Prior to this, Christianity was found in Rome, in England, in Scotland, in Ireland. You can follow the prosperity and dominance of the various nations throughout history and very often, there will be a strong correlation between that nation's prosperity and the function of Christianity within that nation. The type of government is not the key. Rome and Judea were centers of Christianity and of prosperity for a long period of time, even though the latter was antagonistic toward Christianity and the former was indifferent at best. Nowhere does Scripture indicate that there is one form of government which is better than another. The type of government is immaterial. Israel's change from the theocracy to a monarchy is significant; it represents some retrogression; but it will not remove God from Israel. In fact, under the rule of David and then Solomon, Israel will enjoy a great period of spiritual and national prosperity. The key is not the form of government, but the relationship of the people to God.

And do not turn aside for following the emptiness which does not profit and does not deliver, for emptiness they;...

1Samuel
12:21

And do not turn aside when following after emptinesses [or, vain things] that do not profit nor do [they] deliver, for they [are] emptiness.

And do not turn aside as your chase after worthless and empty political solutions to your problems, which solutions are vain and empty.

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

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And do not turn aside for following the emptiness which does not profit and does not deliver, for emptiness they;...
Septuagint	And turn not aside after that which are nothing, who will do nothing, and will not deliver, because they are nothing.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Don't worship idols! They don't have any power, and they can't help you or save you when you're in trouble.
NLT	Don't go back to worshiping worthless idols that cannot help or rescue you—they are really useless!

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word™</i>	Don't turn away to follow other gods. They can't help or rescue you, because they don't exist.
JPS (Tanakh)	Do not turn away to follow worthless things, which can neither profit nor save but are worthless.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	...and turn not aside after vanities, that can neither profit nor deliver, because <vanities> they are.
KJV	And turn ye not aside: for then should ye go after vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver; for they are vain.
NASB	"And you must not turn aside, for <i>then you would go</i> after futile things which can not profit or deliver, because they are futile.
NKJV	"And do not turn aside; for <i>then you would go</i> after empty things which cannot profit or deliver, for they <i>are</i> nothing.
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	...and you [all] do not turn aside after the vain things which do not profit nor deliver, for they <i>are</i> vain,...

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel warns the Jews not to turn aside from following after God, as the alternative is to follow idols, which cannot profit or deliver them, as they are nothing.

I know that there are times when you might ask, *why the hell do we deal with so much Hebrew? Why not choose a good translation and run with it?* This passage is one of thousands of examples. An outstanding translation is *God's Word™*; it is written in a modern vernacular, it does a minimum of interpretation, and it is very literal. However, right here, it makes an interpretation which only partially explains this passage. Certainly, Israel is not to pursue heathen gods, which has been the source of her many downfalls in the past. However, that is not the key to this passage. When I give you the proper interpretation, then you may want to look back at the Hebrew and determine, *is this the proper understanding?* What I provide for you are several checks on these words so that you can see that I am not just making something up which goes along with my religious beliefs.

Let me give you another reason to examine the Hebrew. Take a look at the NKJV, which is an exceptional translation. Look at all of those italicized words. One of the great things about the KJV, the NKJV and the NASB is that the words which are italicized are not found in the original Hebrew, so we can, at a glance, see what has been added to a passage in order for the verse to make reasonable English sense to the translators. Now note

how many words are italicized: five! Nearly one out of four words are italicized! That means that a translator made up nearly 25% of this verse in the NKJV. For this reason, you need to have this verse dissected so that you can see just what is there, what is not there, and how do we pull it all together and still make some sort of sense out of it. After all, if you do not understand the passage, how can you interpret the passage?

1Samuel 12:21a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (לו' or לא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	lô' generally negates the word immediately following it	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
çûwr (סור) [pronounced <i>soor</i>]	<i>to turn aside, to depart, to go away</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5493 (and #5494) BDB #693
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because, when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory conjunction	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
ʿachar (אחר) [pronounced <i>ah-KHAHR</i>]	<i>after, following, behind</i>	preposition	Strong's #310 BDB #29
tôhûw (תהו) [pronounced <i>TOE-hoo</i>]	<i>desolate, an empty waste, chaos, trashed, formlessness, confusion, unreality, vain, nothingness, emptiness</i>	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #8414 BDB #1062

Translation: *And do not turn aside when following [after] emptinesses [or, vain things]...* You will note that the first problem word here is *kîy*, which does not seem to fit. We would expect a *lâmed* preposition followed by the Qal infinitive construct of *to follow after*. However, recall that Samuel does not have the best command of the Hebrew language (which is, in no way, an argument against inspiration). *Do not turn aside because following emptiness* seems to point to a conclusion or a result of following after emptiness. However, we do not easily fall into a conclusion later in this verse or in the next verse. I would expect that *kîy ʿachar* would yield for us a separate meaning for the combination of these words, but I cannot find a common usage either in Gesenius or in BDB. *Do not turn aside when following emptiness* makes the most sense. The two actions are tied together—the action of following emptiness along with turning aside from God.

Secondly, what is this *emptiness* which is being followed? Actually, it is not necessarily a reference to idols, although that is a reasonable interpretation (as per the CEV or God's Word™); and this is in line with 1Sam. 7:3, where Samuel tells these men to put away their idols. However, the people of Israel did put away these idols and they had a great military victory afterwards over the Philistines. Although it is definitely possible that Israel had fallen into idolatry again, this is not what is occurring, and this is why we do not find an actual clear reference to idolatry here. The emptiness that Israel is following is the idea of political solutions. They have placed their faith in a man, in an office, in the office of king. They believe that will be the solution to their problems. Samuel tells them to not turn aside from God when following after this sort of emptiness. We have a much greater support for this interpretation in 1Sam. 8:19–20. *Nevertheless, the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel, and they said, "No, but there will be a king over us, that we may also be like all the other nations, that our king may judge us and go out before us and right our battles."* This is their emptiness. This is the wind that they reach out to for support.

According to Rotherham, this should read *...and turn not aside after vanities...* which actually makes more sense. This is in keeping with the Alexandrian Septuagint, the Syriac and the Vulgate codices. It also is in keeping with the masculine plural verbs which follow and refer back to *vanities* or *empty things*. In my version of the Septuagint, *vanity* (or, *emptiness*) is singular both times (v. 21a and 21c), but with plural verbs (including the very end of the verse, where we find the present plural indicative of *to be*). I would lean toward *vanity* being plural in the beginning and singular in the end, insofar as its meaning goes. *Emptinesses* would refer back to all human solutions and human values and human philosophies, which would include political solutions, monetary solutions, philosophical solutions, etc. None of these things can ultimately profit or ultimately save.

Obviously, this interpretation is valuable for us as well. Some of you are tremendously involved in political solutions. You propound your political vies and candidates in the lunchroom; you call friends and talk politics with them; at the dinner table, you discuss these issues with your family; during parties, you freely proclaim the qualities and attributes of your candidate. I myself get involved in political debate now and again, as politics is interesting to me. But, when my candidate is elected, I don't go out and celebrate, thinking that the next several years are going to be great; and when that godless, womanizing candidate is elected, I don't fall apart, thinking that my world is going to end. You know that it makes so little difference if this candidate or that candidate is elected? It makes so little difference which party is in power. I recall *listening* to two Christian friends of mine debate certain political issues via email, and even though I was predisposed to one's view over the other, the person with whom I disagreed still made very many good and valid points. These were two people whose dedication to the God of our fathers seemed real and heartfelt; however, they were on opposite sides of the political spectrum. My point, and certainly Samuel's point, is that we are not to chase after vanities, emptinesses and mist. The promise of these political systems, candidates and issues is vanity and emptiness.

1Samuel 12:21b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾăšher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
lô' (לוֹ' or לֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	generally negates the word immediately following it	Strong's #3808 BDB #518.
yâ'al (יֵאָל) [pronounced <i>yaw-GAHL</i>]	<i>to profit, to avail, to benefit</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #3276 BDB #418
wê (or vê) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (לוֹ' or לֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	generally negates the word immediately following it	Strong's #3808 BDB #518.
nâtsal (נָצַל) [pronounced <i>naw-TSAHL</i>]	<i>to deliver [from], to rescue, to recover</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5337 BDB #664

Translation: *...which cannot profit and cannot deliver...* The emptinesses which cannot benefit Israel and cannot deliver Israel are the emptinesses of political solutions; or, more accurately, the emptinesses of all human solutions. Human and political solutions will never solve any of Israel's problems ever. And, if political solutions are not the key to Israel's deliverance, then they are not the key to your deliverance either.

I don't know if you have ever noticed, but, for every law which is passed, no matter how well-intentioned, there are often many results, most unforeseen, which end up being negative. The "career criminal" legislation—that is the *three strikes and you're out*—has certainly resulted in murders that a 3rd strike criminal might commit in order to avoid prosecution, knowing that his career criminal career will be parlayed into a career prisoner career. There are no doubt those who commit a 3rd felony upon whom some mercy should be shown; that is, the required sentencing is not in keeping with the actual level of crimes committed. In theory, it is a good law, but it is a human solution, which introduces a host of problems which are not always offset by the good the law does.

When the first lawsuit was filed for *pain and suffering*, there might have been some valid reason for this lawsuit and it is possible that the outcome was just. Originally, this may have been a doctor who made egregious errors, resulting in the death of a wonderful person or a motorist who was severely drunk and ended up crippling someone for life. The judge or jury involved must have felt that this was a blow struck for personal integrity and justice. However, this has led us to a suit-happy society. Rather than a suit being the last possible avenue to resolve a solution, it is often the first, as the potential for gain is often much higher than resolving a situation between the two parties apart from a suit. Our courts are littered with thousands of frivolous lawsuits based upon accidents where, when the facts are carefully considered, the actual defendant had little or nothing to do with the prevention of said accident. A lawyer sues whoever has the deepest pockets; and generally sues as many people as possible in any given lawsuit. The trick is to show that the accident was preventable (and *all* accidents are preventable retrospectively) and then to come up with a scenario by which the defendant could have prevented the accident. Any accident can be prevented *after* the fact. Anyone can come up with a scenario by which the accident that could have been *prevented* retroactively. Then, all you need to do is imply that the defendant can easily have prevented this accident, is made out of money; and show the victim to be extremely sympathetic.

Let me give you another example: I have personally been involved in a lawsuit where, in the final rebuttal argument of opposing counsel, the lawyer flat out lied about me and my practices. And, according to my lawyer, I had no recourse (apparently, the law passed here or judicial decision made was to prevent one lawsuit from spiraling into many lawsuits—again, a reasonable human solution which has many negative results).

Another example: we have had a Black man here in Texas tied to the back of a truck and the truck was driven around until he died. In another state, a young homosexual male was tied to a fence and killed. Both of these crimes brought on great empathy and voters cried out for justice. One of the results was some *feel-good* hate crime legislation. After all, who could not be opposed to hate? When a Christian sees the opportunity to support legislation which is against hatred, how can he not support it? Is this not the essence of Christianity? Politicians from both sides have voted for all kinds of hate legislation, increasing the penalties for a crime which is motivated by hatred. However, what we have seen in some countries is, very similar legislation has been used to sue pastor teachers for teaching Scripture. A pastor would teach Rom. 1:26–27, which declares homosexuality to be a sin; and that pastor would be sued for teaching hatred. In both of the cases mentioned, the death penalty should have been applied, and the hate legislation ignored. New laws were not needed. When one intentionally kills, then he should be executed by the state. We do not need additional legislation for that.

In fact, it may be instructive to see some of the results of *hate crime* legislation:

The Results of Hate Crime Legislation

A **Canadian** court has upheld a fine against a Saskatchewan newspaper publisher for running an advertisement that listed various Bible verses dealing with homosexuality. This was considered a "hate crime."

In **Sweden**, a pastor was arrested at his church after he began reading Bible verses about homosexuality.

In **Britain**, an Anglican bishop was placed under criminal investigation for suggesting that homosexuals can change their sexual orientation.

The **Spanish** government threatened to arrest a Roman Catholic bishop for violating the nation's law when he spoke out against the legalization of same-sex "marriage."

The Results of Hate Crime Legislation

In **France**, an 82-year-old priest was convicted of "provoking discrimination" after telling his congregation that Muslims promote an "ideology that threatens the whole world." Also in **France**, Brigitte Bardot was charged with a "hate crime" and fined for writing a book that highlights the pitfalls of homosexuality and Islam.

In **Australia**, pastor Daniel Scot was arrested, convicted, and imprisoned for committing a so-called "hate crime." Pastor Scot had merely exposed the faults and the hostility of the Koran. The Australian law reads, "A person must not, on the ground of the religious belief or activity of another person or class of persons, engage in conduct that incites... severe ridicule of that other person or class of persons."

In **Brazil**, two Christians were arrested and charged with a "hate crime" for distributing Bible tracts during a Spiritist festival honoring Iemanjá, the African goddess of the sea.

In **Italy**, controversial journalist Oriana Fallaci is facing a trial for allegedly insulting the Muslim faith in her latest book, *The Rage and the Pride*. Specifically, she has been targeted for suggesting that Muslims have "multiplied like rats" throughout Europe.

Already, there is great evidence that an erosion of religious liberty is taking place in America. In **Philadelphia**, a group of Christians faced the possibility of 47 years in prison after being arrested for protesting at a homosexual parade. They were charged with various crimes, including "ethnic intimidation." The charges were eventually dismissed. In **Tennessee**, two men were arrested for carrying large wooden crosses during a "Gay Day" Parade. The men were charged with "interfering with a special event." In **Vermont**, a family-owned inn is facing a state lawsuit after its Christian owners expressed a lack of interest in hosting a same-sex civil union ceremony. **California** has already enacted hate crimes legislation.

You see? Human solutions, no matter how well intentioned, do not solve human problems. So, the next time that you become enthusiastic over a particular candidate or a particular piece of legislation, bear in mind that the final results may be far different than we would expect.

These were taken verbatim from <http://www.reclaimamerica.org/Pages/News/newspage.asp?story=2918>

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

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

I recall listening to a news report one day of a female politician who was upset because a particular bill hadn't gotten out of committee. The problem was the wording of the bill. She argued that, we know what this bill is supposed to do; so why kill the bill just because it wasn't worded correctly? The reason is that some lawyer or some judge will take this poorly-worded bill and interpret it as they choose to interpret it, which interpretation might be diametrically opposed to the original intent of the bill. This is what many lawyers do—they distort and twist words in order to get what they want. Did this politician have good motives and intentions? Probably. However, the result would not have been what she intended. Again, human solutions rarely solve human problems.

1Samuel 12:21c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory conjunction	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
tôhûw (תֹּהוּ) [pronounced TOE-hoo]	<i>desolate, an empty waste, chaos, trashed, formlessness, confusion, unreality, vain, nothingness, emptiness</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #8414 BDB #1062

1Samuel 12:21c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hêmmâh (הֵמָּאָה) [pronounced haym-mawh]	they, these	3 rd person masculine plural personal pronoun	Strong's #1992 BDB #241

Translation: ...because these things are empty. The personal pronoun often demands the use of the verb *to be*. All political solutions are empty and vain solutions. Emptiness and nothingness cannot deliver because of the simple fact that they are empty and nothing. You can't pay your bills with an imaginary checking account. You cannot drive to work in an imaginary car. These things are nothingness, and therefore they cannot perform the function that you may ask them to perform.

Now, let's talk about the Hebrew once again. You will note that the proper interpretation of this passage could include idols, but that was not the primary meaning. The meaning of these verse depended upon correctly rendering a couple of words; that correct understanding resulted in a myriad of applications.

When driving around with a friend of mine, I happened to hear J. Vernon McGee on the radio, and I left it there for a minute, but she complained—I assume because of his folksy vocabulary and southern drawl. McGee was always deceptively brilliant. What he said rarely seemed difficult to understand, although he took it upon himself to teach the entire Bible in daily half hour chunks over a period of 5 years. I am not aware of any Bible teacher (or any Christian, for that matter), who so fully understood the importance of the Word of God as to approach the Word in this way on the radio. Scripture is filled with difficult doctrines, yet McGee could take some of the most difficult theological topics (for instance, the free will of man vs. the sovereignty of God) and make them understandable and seem, if possible, simple. What was more important, when he explained a passage, rarely did he get it wrong. For instance, this passage, where so many translators have interpreted it incorrectly to refer to idolatry.

*McGee comments: Hold to the Lord alone. Let the gimmicks alone. Today the church is experimenting with methods. The church does not seem to realize that only God can bless. We need to hold on to the Lord and His Word. I don't think the Bible needs defending. It needs explaining; it needs to be proclaimed. We need more of the exclamation point and the declaration mark than we need a question mark.*⁴⁹

<p>...for will not forsake Y^ehowah His people because of His name the great for willingly chose Y^ehowah to make you [all] for Himself to a people.</p>	<p>1Samuel 12:22</p>	<p>For Y^ehowah will not forsake His people because of His great name, for Y^ehowah willingly chose to make you a people for Himself.</p>
--	--------------------------	---

For Jehovah will not forsake His own people on this basis of His character and reputation. For, realize that Y^ehowah willingly chose you to be His people.

Here is what others have done:

Ancient texts:

<p>Masoretic Text</p>	<p>...for will not forsake Y^ehowah His people because of His name the great for willingly chose Y^ehowah to make you [all] for Himself to a people.</p>
<p>Septuagint</p>	<p>For the Lord will not cast off His people for his great name's sake, because the Lord graciously took you to Himself for a people.</p>

⁴⁹ J. Vernon McGee; *I & II Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 66.

Significant differences: The verbs in the second sentence seem to be different.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

- CEV But the LORD has chosen you to be his own people. He will always take care of you so that everyone will know how great he is.
- NLT The LORD will not abandon his chosen people, for that would dishonor his great name. He made you a special nation for himself.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

- God's Word™ For the sake of his great name, the LORD will not abandon his people, because the LORD wants to make you his people.
- JPS (Tanakh) For the sake of His great name, the LORD will never abandon His people, seeing that the LORD undertook to make you His people.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

- NASB "For the LORD will not abandon His people on account of His great name, because the LORD has been pleased to make you a people for Himself.
- Young's Updated LT ...for Jehovah does not leave His people, on account of His great name; for Jehovah has been pleased to make you to Him for a people.

What is the gist of this verse? God would not abandon His own people because this would violate His integrity; God was pleased to take the Jews to Himself as His people.

The fate of the Jews is tied directly to the character of God. God cannot allow the Israelites to die off or to become insignificant, because that is simply not in His nature. God cannot abandon His own people; that would violate God's character. Allowing the destruction of the Jews runs contrary to His plan and purpose. Why do you think the Jews are a viable entity today even though they went existed for nearly two millennia without a nation of their own. How many other groups of people of that era do we have today? How many Canaanites do you know? Or Midianites, Ammonites, Amorites, Girgashites, Hurrians, Philistines, Edomites? They are not tied to God's plan and purpose—not like the Jews are. Therefore, when they die out or become amalgamated, it is to be expected, as such is the end for all groups of people. But not for God's people. This is what Samuel will say to the Israelites.

1Samuel 12:22a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory conjunction	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	generally negates the word immediately following it	Strong's #3808 BDB #518.
âṭash (אַתָּשׁ) [pronounced <i>naw-TASH</i>]	<i>to leave, to forsake, to permit</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5203 BDB #643
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3069 BDB #217

1Samuel 12:22a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated	untranslated mark of a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʿam (אָם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people</i>	masculine singular collective noun with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

Translation: For Y^ehowah will not forsake His people... The Jews cannot seem to fathom that they are God's people, a people that He has chosen apart from all others. Many years later, Peter will write: **But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the virtues of Him Who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy** (I Peter 2:9–10 Deut. 10:19 Isa. 43:20–21 61:6 66:21 Ex. 19:6 Deut. 7:6; compare 2Sam. 7:23). He has made a commitment to His people and, God's character being perfect, He will maintain that commitment throughout all eternity. They have made a mistake by requiring that Samuel provide them with a king. This does not end the relationship between Jehovah and the Jews. God will not forsake His people. This was not their first mistake; nor was it even their first major mistake. It was simply a national mistake for which discipline will be meted out, but only because they are God's people. And when the dust settles, God will not forsake them. As Moses said to the people prior to entering into the Land of Promise: **"Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for Jehovah your God is the One Who goes with you. He will not fail you nor will He forsake you."** (Deut. 31:6).

Again, the application is simple and obvious. You are a child of God because you have believed in Jesus Christ. Maybe you were a child of 8 and you believed in Him during daily vacation Bible school; maybe a friend told you and you took a few seconds and believed; maybe you watched Bill Graham on television and you believed in Jesus Christ. Once that occurred, you became a child of God, which relationship you cannot do anything to change or remove. God will not forsake you. You might sin, you might make incredible mistakes, you might renounce God and Christianity and live a life of great debauchery. It doesn't matter. God will not forsake you. You might even become religious, self-righteous, and pursue all of these goofy activist politics—it doesn't matter. God will not forsake you. He chose you and He is not changing His mind. We, as believers, are all destined for glory (Rom. 8:28–30). God does not look at us and decide, *now, Charlie Brown—he was a mistake; I'm throwing him back in with the unbelievers*. Won't happen. God's people are tied directly to His perfect character. For that reason, He will not forsake you.

1Samuel 12:22b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bağābūwr (בְּגַבְוּר) [pronounced <i>bah-gūp-VOOR</i>]	<i>because of, for, that, for the sake of, on account of, in order that</i>	a preposition combined with a conjunction that Strong gave its own number	Strong's #5668 BDB #721

Actually a combination of the bēyth preposition (*in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before*) and ʿēber (עֵבֶר) [pronounced *GAY-ber*] which means *region across, beyond, side*. Strong's #5676 BDB #719.

1Samuel 12:22b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
gâdôwl (גָּדוֹל) [pronounced gaw-DOHL]	<i>great in quantity, great in magnitude and extent, mighty, vast, unyielding, immutable, significant, astonishing</i>	masculine singular adjective with a definite article	Strong's #1419 BDB #152

Translation: ...on account of His great name... God has a reputation and character, both of which are represented by the word *shêm*. God will not forsake His Own people, if for no other reason than *His character and reputation*. There are numerous churches where so much is placed on the shoulders of the believer. There are churches which believe that we can lose our salvation. They are taught that if they sin too much or commit the sin unto death, or if they flagrantly live a lifestyle which the pastor doesn't like, that God will take away their salvation. Not true. Our salvation is tied to God's character, which is here called *shêm gâdôwl*. We do not keep God faithful to us; His character keeps Him faithful to us. This is because of His great name or His great character.

No doubt, when David was under discipline, he remembered this passage, and wrote: **For Your name's sake, O Jehovah, pardon my iniquity, for it is great** (Psalm 25:11). Whenever we fail; whenever we sin; whenever we fall apart, we should pray, as did the Jews: **"We know our wickedness, O Jehovah—the iniquity of our fathers, for we have sinned against You. Do not despise us, for Your own name's sake. Do not disgrace the throne of Your glory; remember and do not annul Your covenant with us."** (Jer. 14:20–21). Because we are His chosen ones, we know that God cannot completely cast us down. This would run contrary to His name (see also Psalm 106:8 Isa. 48:9–11 Jer. 14:7 Dan. 9:19).

1Samuel 12:22c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory conjunction	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
yâ'al (יָאָל) [pronounced yaw-AHL]	<i>to willingly chose, to be willing to, to give ascent to</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect (not found in the Qal)	Strong's #2974 BDB #383
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3069 BDB #217
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced gaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	Qal infinitive construct with a lamed preposition	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated mark of a direct object	affixed to 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84

1Samuel 12:22c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) (pronounced ^l)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to</i>	preposition with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâmed (ל) (pronounced ^l)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿam (אָמ) [pronounced ^{gahm}]	<i>people</i>	masculine singular collective noun with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

Translation: ...for Y^ehowah willingly chose to make you [all] for Himself a people. The final lâmed preposition really acts more like the sign of a direct object and does not necessarily need to be rendered in the English.

Let's let McGee give his explanation of this verse: *Why did God choose the nation Israel? When you are looking for the answer, look to God and not to the people. God did it and that is enough. Perhaps God chose you, and some of your friends are wondering why. The important thing is that God chose us and that is enough. Thank God for that. He could have passed me by, but I rejoice in the fact that He did not.*⁵⁰

God, from His own sovereignty, chose to construct for Himself a people for whom He would be responsible. This was God's choice, not Israel's. Therefore, Israel's future is dependent upon the character of God, not upon some king or the fact that Israel now has a national leader. The past of the Jews is not some sort of accident. Their history is commingled with the plan of God and their future will be as well. Therefore, they do not need to depend upon that which is not part of God's provision. The parallel passage is Deut. 7:6–13, which reads: "For you are a holy people to Jehovah your God; Jehovah your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. Jehovah did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples; but because Jehovah loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, Jehovah brought you out by a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Know, therefore, that Jehovah your God, He is God, the faithful God, Who keeps His covenant, His grace to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments; but repays those who hate Him to their faces, to destroy them; He will not delay with him who hates Him; He will repay him to his face. Therefore, you will keep the commandment and the statues and the judgments which I am commanding you today, to do them. Then it will be, because you listen to these judgments and keep and do them, that Jehovah your God will keep with you His covenant and His grace, which He swore to your forefathers. Furthermore, He will love you and bless you and multiply you. He will bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, your grain and your new wine and your oil, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock, in the land which He swore to your forefathers to give you."

Our passage speaks of God *choosing* the Jews over all other peoples of the earth. We often struggle with the theology of God's election and there are several points of view which deal with just that. There is a great continuum book-ended by the Armenians and the hyper-Calvinists. Given that we have an allusion here to God's choosing of Israel, it might be good for us to examine briefly the concept of election. Rom. 8:28–30: **We know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to a pre-determined plan. For whom He foreknew, He also foreordained conformed to the image of His Son, that He**

⁵⁰ J. Vernon McGee; *I & II Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 67.

might be the first-born among many brothers; and whom He foreordained, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. Consequently, to what conclusion are we forced? If God is for us, who can be against us? First of all, we have to understand Paul's mind and reasoning. Paul reasons like a logician, which is why even today, many things that he wrote are misunderstood and misinterpreted. Paul first makes the statement that all things work together for good to those who love God. Now, apart from faith, there would be times that I would look at my life and mutter, *not always*. There are injustices in our lives, people do us wrong, we get the short end of the stick. There are innumerable things in our lives which occur that we would look upon as being negative. But Paul says, *No, that is incorrect. All things work together to result in the good.* Now, what is the requirement? *To those who love God.* Now, I don't know about you, but there are times when I don't have feelings for God. Intellectually, I realize that God has given me far more grace than I could ever deserve; that He has given me great blessings; but I know that I don't even begin to give back a tiny percentage of what He gives me. And there are times when I don't feel as appreciative as I know I should feel. However, by our position *in Christ*, we love God. When we are filled with the Spirit, we love God. When we pursue Bible doctrine, we love God. Now, so that we don't get hung up on *do I really love God?*, Paul adds *to those who are called according to a pre-determined plan.* Now, who is that? All believers. Every believer in Jesus Christ was called by God in eternity past according to His pre-determined plan. This was the call which, for some of us, was unmistakable. We may have heard the gospel or some semblance of the gospel a hundred times; but suddenly, at some point, we recognize that this is not just some philosophical or religious view, but that God is calling us. We may not think that exactly, but we realize that there is a decision to be made and that decision is of utmost importance to our lives. That is the call of God. He knew us in eternity past, and according to His plan from eternity past, He called us. Now, who did God foreknow? God knew in eternity past each and every person who would believe in His Son and His provision Jesus Christ. He foreknew us and He called us at the proper time; and we responded with our positive volition in eternity past.⁵¹ God knew that we would respond with positive volition. That is *foreknowledge*. What He determined to do in eternity past was to foreordain us to be conformed to the image of His Son—*We shall all be like Him* (I John 3:2b; also see Rom. 6:5 I Cor. 15:49 Phillip. 3:21). This means that the human characteristics that our Lord has in His resurrection body, we will share, e.g., the lack of an old sin nature, the resurrection body itself, the reflected glory. Our Lord is *the first-born of many brothers*, indicating that our conformity to Him has to occur after He has walked this earth and been resurrected. God first knew us from eternity past; then He predestined us to be conformed to His son. Then He called us in time, having already foreknown us. When we responded with positive volition, He justified us; and then, having been justified, He glorified us (which is a fulfillment of foreordaining us *to be conformed to the likeness of His Son*). Consequently, given all of this, it is obvious that all things must work together for good. There is no other result which we could expect. Furthermore, given that passage, there is no reason to assume that everything in our Christian life, including our calling, occurs completely apart from our volition. The example that I have given in the past is this: you have a three-year-old child and you know how that child is going to behave under certain conditions. This is foreknown. This does not mean that you have reached into that child's volition and have forced him to behave in this way or that. Foreknowledge, is not the same as a person, apart from their own volition, subjugating their free will to another. A careful reading of this passage, keeping in mind the many passages which relate to free will, gives us all the basic information that we need about our free will and God's pre-determined plan. We have free will; God knows in eternity past how we will behave. When He knows that we will choose to believe in His Son, God pre-destines us to be conformed to the image of His Son. This simple understanding eliminates the previously-alluded-to bookends: (1) hyper-Calvinism, which indicates that we are merely puppets behaving as God determined for us to behave, and that our believing in Christ was a result of God putting that faith into our souls; that is not supported by this or any other passage. (2) However, on the other hand, the idea that we can do something to fall outside of God's plan after believing in Christ is also eliminated by this passage. In fact, if we continue reading, we find: *Consequently, to what conclusion are we forced? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things? Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the One Who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died; furthermore, He Who was raised, Who is at the right hand of God, Who also intercedes for us. Who can separate us from the love of Christ? Will*

⁵¹ Our response is not a part of the point of this passage that we are examining. Paul is making a point which stands apart from human volition, so human volition is left out of this passage, except in terms of calling us *those who love God*. That is the only actual reference to our free will. Now, elsewhere, there is abundant references to our believing in Christ and that resulting in salvation (John 3:16, 18 Rom. 3:22–24 4:1–5, 16).

tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril or the sword? For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord! (Rom. 8:31–35, 38–39). There is nothing which can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. Therefore, neither you nor anyone else can separate you from the plan of God.

There are a great many Christians who believe in covenant theology. The idea behind covenant theology is, the Jews made so many errors and rebelled against God so many times that God finally threw up His hands, said, “To hell with this noise” and ushered in gentile believers to take the place of the Jews. “I just did not sign on for *this* much rebellion. These Jews are history. Gentiles rule now.” Now, might you and I take that sort of attitude if we were Moses leading the Jews? Of course. When God told Moses that He was ready to kill off the Jews and start from scratch, and or I might say, “Excellent idea, God. Why did you wait so long to suggest it?” However, this was not Moses’ position (nor was it God’s, by the way). The Old Testament is nothing but failure after failure after failure on the part of the Jews. And time after time, God comes back and takes the Jews back to Himself. In covenant theology, even God has His limits. He might be more patient than you or I; but, even His patience has limits. Even He will put up with just so much. The Jews had pushed against Him for just too long, and God finally had His fill (I am speaking from the viewpoint of covenant theology). For us, we might have rejected the Jews after their 10th failure. For God, He finally rejected them after their 100th failure (again, I am speaking from covenant theology). But this is not the way it is—God is not simply super-human; God is not simply more patient than we are—God is infinitely more patient than we are. The Jews are God’s chosen people and they will remain His chosen people. The Jews began as a part of God’s plan, and the Jews will always play a great part in God’s plan.

Do you see how these two doctrines are tied together? If someone does not believe in eternal security, then they are going to generally adhere to the doctrine of covenant theology. He figures that a person can only fail so many times that even God’s patience runs its course. In his view, people who do not maintain some minimal Christian life (and this particular standard will vary from being extremely strict to fairly lax), lose their salvation. The Jew, because he rejected God again and again and again would eventually be dropped from the plan of God—that is covenant theology. To covenant theologians, you can just screw up so many times, and there is a point at which God is going to drop you from the lineup roster. Excessive failure means that you are dropped from the plan of God.

Do not be deceived! God’s character is more important than our failures. What Jesus Christ did for us on the cross is greater than any sin or group of sins that we can commit. Grace is not grace if some modicum of works are involved. In no way do we deserve or earn what God gives us. You may not like that. You may think that you lead a fairly decent Christian life and you know a couple of other people in your church who don’t really meet your standards. If it was up to you, you’d bounce their sorry asses out of your church. It is lucky for all of us that God’s grace is much greater than we are. I’d bounce you out of God’s plan for your legalism so quick, it would make your head spin. But, God’s plan does not begin or end with me. God does not come and consult me when it comes to dropping someone from the roster. This is because no one is dropped from the roster. Now, some sin so often that God finally removes them from this life under the principle the sin unto death; but they don’t lose their salvation. It is because of God’s grace that His plan includes losers as well as winners; that no one deserves what they receive.

And there is another tangent: people talk today about what they deserve. They deserve to have a decent boyfriend or girlfriend; they deserve a job that pays a decent wage; they work so hard at their job that they deserve some recognition; they work so hard that they deserve some time off. Or, they have such qualifications as to deserve a decent job in the first place. They deserve to drive this or that car; they deserve to live in this or that neighborhood. When we get hurt, physically or emotionally, we think we deserve to get paid for it; remunerated for our pain. God’s plan does not work that way, and you should be damn glad of it. God’s plan is based upon grace, not upon what we deserve. You and I deserve death; we deserve eternal separation from God; we deserve hellfire painfully burning our bodies for all eternity. This is what we deserve. God gives us what we do not deserve. God is patient when we do not deserve His patience. God is kind and generous when we do not deserve it.

I know that I have gone pretty far afield; however, this verse tells us that God will not abandon His people. Never forget Heb. 13:5b: **He has said, "I will never, ever leave you, and I will never, no not ever, forsake you!"** Not only is God's promise here extremely strong in the Greek, but this same sentiment is found in Deut. 31:6 1Sam. 12:22 Psalm 37:25, 28 Isa. 41:17. My point is, this is not some idle or half-hearted promise from God.

Furthermore, me—far be it from me from sinning to Y^ehowah from ceasing to pray in you [all] and I have instructed you [all] in a way of the good and the right. 1Samuel 12:23

Furthermore, [with respect to] me, far be it from me to sin with reference to Y^ehowah by ceasing to pray for you; and I [will continue to] instruct you in the way of the good and the accurate.

With regards to my place in Israel, I will not sin before Jehovah by ceasing to pray on your behalf; furthermore, I will continue to instruct you in what is good and accurate.

First, what others have done:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	Furthermore, me—far be it from me from sinning to Y ^e howah from ceasing to pray in you [all] and I have instructed you [all] in a way of the good and the right.
Septuagint	And far be it from me to sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you; but I will serve the Lord and show you the good and the right way.

Significant differences: The Greek adds an additional phrase not found in the Hebrew, Syriac or Latin.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	I would be disobeying the LORD if I stopped praying for you! I will always teach you how to live right.
NAB	As for me, far be it from me to sin against the LORD by ceasing to pray for you and to teach you the good and right way.
NJB	For my part, far be it from me to sin against Yahweh by casing to pray for you or to instruct you in the good and right way.
NLT	As for me, I will certainly not sin against the LORD by ending my prayers for you. And I will continue to teach you what is good and right.
REB	As for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD by ceasing to pray for you. I shall show you what is right and good:...
TEV	As for me, the LORD forbid that I should sin against him by no longer praying for you. Instead, I will teach you what is good and right for you to do.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word</i> TM	It would be unthinkable for me to sin against the LORD by failing to pray for you. I will go on teaching you the way that is good and right.
JPS (Tanakh)	"As for me, far be it from me to sin against the LORD and refrain from praying for you; and I will continue to instruct you in the practice of what is good and right.
NIV	As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by failing to pray for you. And I will teach you the way that is good and right.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	"Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by ceasing to pray for you; but I will instruct you in the good and right way.
------	---

Young's Updated LT

"I, also, far be it from me to sin against Jehovah, by ceasing to pray for you, and I have directed you in the good and upright way;...

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel himself would not sin against God—this means, he would continue to pray on behalf of the Jews and he would continue to teach them what is good and right.

You will note that I have included many of the *less-literal* versions of Scripture because this would have been a verse where they could shine. There is a thought that Samuel is trying to get across to his listeners which is not completely clear in the Hebrew and, in many cases, not clear in the English. The key is how do the translators handle the first couple of words. As a preview of coming attractions, the JPS, NAB, NASB, NIV, NJB, NLT, REB and TEV all give a pretty good rendering of these first few words. More on that later.

Israel has done wrong and Samuel has made them aware of that several times. However, this does not mean that God will abandon His people. Furthermore, neither will Samuel end his relationship with this people. He will continue to do what God has instructed him to do. A pastor might have a congregation where there are several cases of gross neglect of the Word of God. Does this mean that the pastor should say *to hell with you* and walk out the door? Absolutely not. He is to continue to pray for his congregation and continue to teach them what is good and right. Samuel has a place and responsibilities in the new order of things. So do the people of Israel, as Samuel will make clear in this verse.

1Samuel 12:23a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gam (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
ʾānôkîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced <i>awn-oh-KEE</i>]	<i>I, me</i>	1 st person singular personal pronoun (sometimes a verb is implied)	Strong's #595 BDB #59
châlîylâh (חַלִּילָהּ) [pronounced <i>khaw-LEE-law</i>]	<i>far be it [from me or you], to profane [something]</i>	adverb, substantive, interjection	Strong's #2486 BDB #321
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced <i>l</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to</i>	preposition with a 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
châtâ' (חָטָא) [pronounced <i>khaw-TAW</i>]	<i>to sin, to miss, to miss the mark, to violate the law, to err; to do wrong, to commit a transgression</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #2398 BDB #306
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced <i>l</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

1Samuel 12:23a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3069 BDB #217

Translation: “Furthermore, with regards to me, far be it for me from sinning with respect to Y^ehowah...” Just because Israel has become faithless and has pursued the wrong objectives, this does not mean that Samuel will behave similarly. He has personally guided the Israelites for many years, and he will not desert them even though they have behaved faithlessly toward God.

1Samuel 12:23b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
châdal (חָדַל) [pronounced <i>khaw-DAHL</i>]	<i>to cease and desist, to leave off, to cease, to leave, to forsake</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #2308 BDB #292
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced <i>l^e</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pâlal (פָּלַל) [pronounced <i>paw-LAHL</i>]	<i>in the Hithpael to pray, to intercede, to make intercession for, to ask for a favorable determination</i>	Hithpael infinitive construct	Strong's #6419 BDB #813
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88

Translation: “...from ceasing to pray with you...” Again, Samuel’s use of various prepositions is difficult to fathom. We would have expected that final preposition to be a lâmed preposition. None of the translations really caught the significance of what Samuel was saying. We are at a point where Saul will actually assume his position as king. The question in some people’s minds is, *where does that leave Samuel? Will Samuel retire and leave the scene?* After all, the primary purpose of having a king was a military one. The king would organize the people to respond to military threats. However, a king’s power is nearly absolute. So where does that leave Samuel? Where is Samuel’s place under this new system of government? These first few words, although clunky in the English, indicate that Samuel still sees himself as having a place in the nation Israel. “Furthermore, with respect to my place in Israel, I will not sin with regards to Y^ehowah by ceasing to pray for you...” gives us a good idea as to what Samuel was attempting to convey here. What Samuel is emphasizing is his proximity to the people of Israel. He is going to remain an integral part of Israel’s future.

Twice, we have had the *min* preposition with an infinitive construct. In searching through my grammar books, I do not find anything specific about this combination (although the *lamed* preposition, for instance, has very specific uses with the construct). I don't recall seeing this very often (in fact, I don't recall seeing this used before; however, Samuel does this twice). I stand by my translation as reasonable and am assuming that there is no hidden meaning in the use of *min* with a construct.

Now you may think to yourselves, *Samuel is going to continue to pray—big deal!* However, it is a big deal. When a prophet's prayers cease, usually that coincides with great unretractable discipline. As God said to Jeremiah, "Therefore, do not pray for this people, nor lift up a cry or a prayer for them; for I will not listen when they call on Me because of their disaster." (Jer. 11:14; see also Jer. 14:11).

McGee relates to us what prayer to God has done on His behalf: *I have found in my radio ministry that many people have a gift. It is a gift of prayer, and I believe it is from God. There are some people in Southern California on beds of sickness and pain—some who will never leave their beds—who have a ministry of prayer. I wouldn't take anything for their prayers. I need their prayers.*

*Now that I am retired I have more opportunity to move out across the country. I am enjoying my greatest ministry today, and it is largely because of the prayers of God's people. For example, in Chicago a man shook hands with me and said, "You know, I have been praying for you for years." When I heard something like this, I feel like weeping and getting down on my knees before Him. It is a privilege to pray for others.*⁵²

In the Church Age, there are some who have the gift of prayer. These are people with whom we may have little or no actual contact, yet they run interference for us. A quarterback is nothing apart from his offensive line; and he is not going to get anywhere on foot or by passing unless his blockers are there taking out his opposition. The offensive line rarely gets any real praise or individual recognition, but they are everything when it comes to the so-called star attaining yardage. The quarterback gets all the glory; but without a good offensive line, the best quarterback in the world is nothing. It is the same for those who pray on our behalf—we may not know them very well, and possibly not at all; however, it is their prayers which run interference for us. And, if you suspect that you have the gift of prayer, you need to engage in that gift as often as possible and you must recognize that you may never be recognized for what you have done in this lifetime. Now, all believers in the Church Age are given the ability to pray; and some from the previous age were given that ability as well. Samuel was able to reach God by prayer, as we observed in vv. 16–18 when Samuel called upon God to send a great rainstorm. Samuel, in this verse, tells the men of Israel that, despite what has happened, he will not discontinue praying on their behalf. Paul wrote: *First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world. For God, Whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of His Son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God I may succeed in coming to you* (Rom. 1:8–10; compare Col. 1:9 | Thess. 3:10 | II Tim. 1:3).

Since I mentioned Paul, allow me to go off on a tangent here. Paul prays on behalf of the Roman believers and it is apparent that they have responded with great positive volition. The result of this combination is the Letter to the Romans, which is one of the most incredible theological dissertations ever. There are even 4-volume commentaries on this epistle because it is so dense with theological material. Now, Paul would continue to pray and to teach the Corinthians and other groups of believers who progress was minimal at times; however, when believers moved spiritually, Paul moved with them. Since they showed great spiritual progression, Paul was able to take them further than his other congregations.

⁵² J. Vernon McGee; *I & II Samuel*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1976, La Verne, CA; p. 67.

1Samuel 12:23c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
yârâh (יָרָה) [pronounced yaw- RAWH]	<i>to cast, to sprinkle, to water, to send out the hand, to teach, to instruct</i>	1 st person singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #3384 BDB #434
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated	untranslated mark of a direct object with a 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
b ^e (בַּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
derek ^e (דֶּרֶךְ) [pronounced <i>DEH-rek^e</i>]	<i>way, distance, road, journey, manner, course</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1870 BDB #202
tôw ^b v (טוֹב) [pronounced <i>toe^bv</i>]	<i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better</i>	feminine singular adjective which acts like a substantive	Strong's #2896 BDB #373
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
yâshâr (יָשָׁר) [pronounced yaw- SHAWR]	<i>right, correct, accurate, lacking in contradictions, upright, straight, uniform, having internal integrity, even</i>	feminine singular adjective which acts like a substantive; with a definite article	Strong's #3477 BDB #449

Translation: "...and I will instruct you [all] in the way of the good and the accurate." Here is Samuel's most important contribution to the Israelites. He will accurately instruct them. We find a parallel passage in Prov. 4:10–13: *Hear, my son, and accept my sayings, and the years of your life will be many. I have directed you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in upright paths. When you walk, yours steps will not be impeded; and if you run, you will not stumble. Take hold of instruction; do not let go; guard her, for she is your life.* It is impossible to overemphasize how important the teaching of the Word of God is to you.

In taking this position, Samuel is setting an example for all prophets and priests to follow. Samuel was not at all keen on the idea of Israel asking for a king, and, even in this final message, he tells them that. However, Samuel is not going to just pick up his toys and go home. He will continue to function as a man of God and intervene on behalf of the people. He also, in this, sets an example for rulers which will follow, indicating *that they should not be led astray by the ingratitude of their subordinates...and to give up on that account all interest in their welfare, but [that they] should rather persevere all the more in their anxiety for them.*⁵³ Samuel could easily say, *to hell with this noise*, and walk off. However, he will continue to function on behalf of the people, despite the fact that they had essentially rejected his leadership in asking for a king.

⁵³ Berleb, *Bible*; quoted from Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 445.

Only fear Y^ehowah and serve Him in faithfulness in all your mind for see that which He has caused to make great with you [all]. 1Samuel 12:24 **Only fear Y^ehowah and serve Him in faithfulness by means of all your inner being, for observe that which He has made great with you.**

Furthermore, you will fear Jehovah and you will serve Him with all the faithfulness of your inner self because you have seen all the great things that He has done for you.

Here is what others have done:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text Only fear Y^ehowah and serve Him in faithfulness in all your mind for see that which He has caused to make great with you [all].
Septuagint Only fear the Lord, and serve Him in truth and with all your heart, for you see what great things He has done with you.

Significant differences: No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV You also must obey the LORD—you must worship him with all your heart and remember the great things he has done for you.
NLT But be sure to fear the LORD and sincerely worship him. Think of all the wonderful things he has done for you.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ Fear the LORD, and serve him sincerely. Consider the great things he did for you.
JPS (Tanakh) Above all, you must revere the and serve Him faithfully with all your heart; and consider how grandly He has dealt with you.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB “Only fear the LORD and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you.
Young's Updated LT ...only, fear Jehovah, and you [all] have served Him in truth with all your heart, for see that which He has made great with you;...

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel warns the Jews to fear Jehovah God in doctrine with all their hearts, based upon all that He has done for them.

1Samuel 12:24a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾak ^e (אֵךְ) [pronounced <i>ahk^e</i>]	<i>surely, certainly, no doubt, only, only this once</i>	adverb of restriction, contrast, time, limitation, and exception	Strong's #389 BDB #36
yârê ^ʿ (אֲרִי) [pronounced <i>yaw-^{RAY}</i>]	<i>to fear, to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #3372 BDB #431

1Samuel 12:24a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3069 BDB #217
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿâbad (עָבַד) [pronounced <i>ġaw^b- VAHD</i>]	<i>to work, to serve, to labor</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #5647 BDB #712
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated	untranslated mark of a direct object with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
ʿēmeth (אֱמֶת) [pronounced <i>EH-meth</i>]	<i>firmness, faithfulness, truth, certainty, stability, perpetuity, fidelity, reliable, stable, dependable</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #571 BDB #54

The Israelites also have a part to play in this new order. Translation: “[Surely fear Y^ehowah and serve Him in faithfulness \[stability and truth\]...](#)” “This is your part under a monarchy: you must continue to serve Jehovah God in faithfulness and in truth...” is what Samuel is conveying. Just because the Israelites have a king, that does not mean that they no longer have any responsibilities in this life. Samuel laid out his responsibilities in the previous verse and now he lays out the people’s responsibilities in this verse.

The people of Israel are to serve God in the ʿēmeth, which is *faithfulness, truth, certainty, stability, perpetuity*. The people are to serve God by means of ʿēmeth, which is *faithfulness, truth, certainty, stability, perpetuity*. They will require doctrine (truth) in order to do this. They will need to use the faith-rest technique (faithfulness). They will need to spiritually mature, so that their service to God is certain, stable and continued.

1Samuel 12:24b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's #none BDB #88
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481

1Samuel 12:24b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lê ^b va ^b v (לֵבָב) [pronounced lay ^b -V ^b AHV]	<i>mind, inner man, inner being, heart</i>	masculine singular noun with a 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3824 BDB #523

Translation: "...with all your inner being..." God is not to be an afterthought to the Israelites. They aren't to have this complete life appended with a little spirituality every Saturday. Their whole being was to be dedicated to God. Recall Solomon's writing of Ecclesiastes, where he pursues all of these other avenues which were to bring him happiness, each of which caused him to declare that way empty and fleeting. At the end of this book, Solomon concludes [Fear God and keep His commandments, because this \[is to\] every person](#) (Eccles. 12:13b). We find the diametrically opposed activity in Isa. 5:2: [And their banquets are with lyre and harp, and tambourine and flute, and with wine. But they do not discern the deeds of Jehovah nor do they consider the word of His hands.](#)

People are often confused about serving God with *all their heart*. What does that mean, really? A person is either in fellowship or he is not. There is no middle ground; there is no half-heartedness when it comes to fellowship with God. If you have unconfessed sin in your life, then you are not serving God with all of your heart. If you have named your sins and you have no outstanding sins, then you are serving God with all of your heart. In the church age, we are either filled with the Holy Spirit or we are not. Unconfessed sin means that we are not filled with God the Holy Spirit; confessed sin means that we are.

After this, what we require is spiritual growth. Let's say you had the opportunity to employ a 7th grader with great potential to work in a nuclear power plant or you could select a university graduate who has had training in nuclear reactors—who would you choose? Of course, the person who has the training. Do you want your pilot to be a 12 year old kid who has always dreamed of being a pilot or would you prefer him to have had the proper amount of training in order to qualify for his position? When it comes to serving God, it is the same deal—some people have not grown at all, they have little or no spiritual training, and most of their life is spend out of fellowship with God; then there is the believer who rebounds (names his sins) regularly and spends copious amounts of time studying God's Word under a pastor-teacher; just which of these persons can God use? Which of these persons can serve God most effectively? So service to God requires two things: being filled with the Holy Spirit and having had some spiritual growth. That is serving God with all of your heart.

1Samuel 12:24c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory conjunction	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
râ ^ʾ âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to see, to look; look, see, behold, view (in the Qal imperative)</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>together, they mean how, that which, what, whatever; whom, whomever</i>	untranslated mark of a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]		relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81

1Samuel 12:24c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gâdal (גָּדַל) [pronounced <i>gaw-DAHL</i>]	<i>to make great, to cause to be lifted high, to magnify, to do great things (in a good or bad sense)</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #1431 BDB #152.
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i>]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity with a 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767.

Translation: "...for see that which He has made great with you." Samuel has recalled for the people some of the many great things which God has done on their behalf. Moses pointed out the same things to the Israelites in a parallel passage: "You will fear Jehovah your God; you will serve Him and cling to Him and you will swear by His name. He is your praise and He is your God, Who has done these great and awesome things for you which your eyes have seen." (Deut. 10:20–21). The Israelites have also just observed a terrific storm which God had brought down upon them.

In short, Samuel has promised the Israelites that God would not forsake them, despite their demand for a king. Therefore, they are to continue to worship and serve Him with all of their soul. And Samuel would continue to serve Israel as well.

In the past three verses, we have a summation of the responsibilities of all those in attendance, except the king.

The Responsibilities of God, Samuel and the People	
God	Y ^e howah will not forsake His people because of His great name, for Y ^e howah willingly chose to make you a people for Himself. (1Sam. 12:22). God will not forsake His people Israel, despite their lack of faith and bad decisions.
Samuel	Furthermore, [with respect to] me, far be it from me to sin with reference to Y ^e howah by ceasing to pray for you; and I [will continue to] instruct you in the way of the good and the accurate (1Sam. 12:23). Samuel will continue to pray on behalf of Israel and he will continue to instruct them in good and accurate doctrine.
The People of Israel	Fear and respect Y ^e howah and serve Him in faithfulness by means of all your inner being, because of that which He has done with you (1Sam. 12:24). The Jews are to fear and respect Jehovah Elohim and to serve Him, based upon the great things that He has done for them.

Samuel, in a few short sentences, outlines the responsibilities of all parties involved, except he does not assign any specific duties for Saul (who would be included with the people of Israel).

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

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

And if you [in evil] do evil, both you and your king will be swept away." 1Samuel 12:25 "However, if both you and your king do [great] evil, then you will perish."

"However, if your and your king choose to do that which is flagrantly evil, then you will both perish."

First, what others have done:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text And if you [in evil] do evil, both you and your king will be swept away.”
 Septuagint But if you continue to do evil, then you and your king will be consumed.”

Significant differences: No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV But if you and your king do evil, the LORD will wipe you out.
 NLT But if you continue to sin, you and your king will be destroyed.”

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God’s Word™ But if you go on doing what is evil, you and your king will be wiped out.
 JPS (Tanakh) For if you persist in wrongdoing, both you and your king shall be swept away.”

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB “But if you still do wickedly, both you and your king shall be swept away.”
 Young’s Updated LT ...and if you [all] really do evil, both you and your king are consumed.”

What is the gist of this verse? If Israel continued to do that which is wrong, both they and their newly appointed king would be swept away.

1Samuel 12:25			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
w ^o (or v ^o) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
ʾîm (וְאִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)</i>	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong’s #518 BDB #49
râʿaʿ (וַעַל) [pronounced <i>raw-GAHG</i>]	<i>to be evil, to be bad, displeasing, injurious</i>	Hiphil infinitive absolute	Strong’s #7489 BDB #949
râʿaʿ (וַעַל) [pronounced <i>raw-GAHG</i>]	<i>to be evil, to be bad, displeasing, injurious</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong’s #7489 BDB #949
gam (וְגַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong’s #1571 BDB #168
ʾattem (וְאַתֶּם) [pronounced <i>ahT-TEM</i>]	<i>you all, you guys, you</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, personal pronoun	Strong’s #859 BDB #61
gam (וְגַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>both...and, furthermore...as well as, also...also, that...so</i>	when gam is repeated	Strong’s #1571 BDB #168

1Samuel 12:25			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	king, ruler, prince	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
çâphâh (חָפַח) [pronounced saw-PHAWH]	to be taken away, to be swept away, to perish; to hide away [in one's house]	2 nd person masculine plural, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #5595 BDB #705

Translation: “And if you, [in] evil, do evil, both you and your king will be swept away.” Israel is not off the hook. Just because they, in their evil, asked for a king and God gave them a king. Furthermore, this does not mean that they can continue to do evil. If they and their king act in evil, then God will sweep them away—they will perish. Keil and Delitzsch comment: *The good, however, which Israel expected from the king depended entirely upon both the people and their king maintaining that proper attitude towards the Lord with which the prosperity of Israel was ever connected.*⁵⁴

We have similar warnings given throughout Scripture; therefore, let's list some of them below:

Warnings from Spiritual Atlas's	
Saint	Warning
Moses	“Jehovah will bring you and your king, whom you will set over you, to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you will serve other gods, wood and stone. And you will become a horror, a proverb, and a taunt among all the people where Jehovah drives you.” (Deut. 28:36–37).
Joshua	“If you forsake Jehovah and serve foreign gods, then He will turn and do you harm and consume you after He has done good to you...now, therefore, put away the foreign gods which are in your midst, and incline your hearts to Jehovah, the God of Israel.” (Joshua 24:20, 23).
Samuel	“If both you and your king do [great] evil, then you will all die.” (1Sam. 12:25). Unfortunately, Saul will not heed these warnings, and he will die the sin unto death (1Sam. 31:1–5).
Isaiah	“But if you refuse and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword.” Truly, the mouth of Jehovah has spoken (Isa. 1:20).

Scripture is filled with carefully worded warnings to believers in both the Old and New Testaments.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

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

Interestingly enough, the sins of Israel are never really examined in the latter half of the book of Samuel—at best, they will be implied. However, it is clear that they exhibited degeneracy as well, because, not only will Saul and his sons eventually fall in battle, but central Israel will be captured and controlled by Philistines at the end of Saul's reign (1Sam. 31:7)—just as Samuel warns them here.

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

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

⁵⁴ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 441.

A Summary of 1Samuel 12

1. It is this chapter where Samuel speaks publically after Saul has been officially recognized as king.
 - a. In 1Sam. 9:15–10:16, Samuel privately recognizes Saul as king and gives him several signs so that Saul will know that what Samuel says is true. Nothing immediately comes of this—Saul does not even tell his family what occurred.
 - b. In 1Sam. 10:17–25, Saul is publically chosen as king; however, the final result is that Saul heads back to his house and the next time we see him, he is coming in from working a field.
 - c. It is finally in 1Sam. 11:14–15 where Saul is recognized and accepted by the people of Israel as their king. Therefore, when Samuel begins to speak to the people in this chapter, he realizes that he is ushering in a new national order.
2. Samuel acknowledges his age (which he does many times throughout this book; not realizing that he has many more years of service to God and Israel) and presents Saul as king over Israel.
3. Then Samuel asks—and not rhetorically—if he has, at any time, behaved in such a way as to seek personal gain through dishonorable means. The people publically acknowledge that he has never done so.
4. Then Samuel gives the Israelites a history lesson, not only mentioning Aaron and Moses, but he speaks of several of the judges and the continued oppression of Israel by other peoples. It is very likely that we only got a small portion of this message and that Samuel went into far greater detail than we read here.
5. The upshot of this trip through Israel's past is that God has always been faithful to them. When Israel recognized her sin and turned from her idolatry, God delivered them—again and again and again.
6. Now they had been faced with another terror—Nahash the Ammonite. This time, they called for a king. This time they did not trust in God. God still delivered them.
7. Then Samuel comes to the climax of his message—the installation of a king did not relieve Israel in any way of her responsibility as God's chosen people. If they fear and respect God; if they obey the mandates of God; if they and their king follow God, then God will continue to deliver them. If they turn against God, His hand will be against them.
8. Then, to drive this point home, rather than wait for a crowd reaction or ask some questions (e.g., “Do you now recognize that it was God Who delivered you?”), Samuel calls upon God to bring a tremendous storm, which God did. This shook the people up.
9. The people then called to Samuel to intercede for them and they acknowledged that their request for a king was a heinous sin (they were depending upon a political solution to their problems).
10. Then Samuel reassures the people. He tells them again not to turn aside from following their God and he assures them that God will not abandon them, because they are His people.
11. He further reassures them that he will continue to serve as both a teacher and an intermediary (which sets up Saul as a shadow of the Christ to come).
12. The last two verses set before the people two options—serve God or choose to do wickedly.
 - a. These last few words call to mind the last words of Joshua in Joshua 24. Joshua also gave those who heard him a history lesson and reminded them of what part God had played in Israel's history (vv. 2–13). Joshua will give the people two options—they can follow God, or they can follow the idols (vv. 14–20). And in the end, Joshua calls upon the people to stand as witnesses to their own vows (vv. 22–25).
 - b. The entire book of Deuteronomy is Moses's last speech to the people of Israel (actually, he spoke to several groups on several occasions prior to their going over into the Land of Promise). Deut. 31, however, appears to be one of the final speeches made by Moses. Just like Samuel, Moses introduces a new national order (Joshua would take his place—vv. 7–8). Moses also gives them a brief history lesson (vv. 3–4) and he points out that he is old (v. 2).
 - c. As an aside, I should point out—despite the similarities of the speeches of these three men, there is no foundation for the idea that we are dealing with three different historical accounts of the same thing (because some events of Scripture are similar, such a thing is alleged). However, given that Joshua studied the words of Moses and that Samuel studied the words of both Moses and Joshua, we would expect to see some similarities in their presentations and content. Such a viewpoint, albeit simple and logical, is the most reasonable to believe.
13. Option #1 is to serve the Lord, based upon considering what He has done for Israel. Love is responding

A Summary of 1Samuel 12

to love.

14. The second option is to persist in doing evil, which would result in Israel and her king being swept away.