

## **The Beginnings of a King – 1 Samuel 8:1–10**

The objective for studying Scripture is to gain understanding of the Bible and its message. This enterprise can be difficult as one realizes that there are many different methods within hermeneutics. These various methods can cause the Bible to become bewildering, because one realizes that everyone has been left to his own interpretation.

The Bible was written over a vast amount of time, by various people, each providing his own message from God. Since the writing of the Bible, there have been countless writers who have offered additional thoughts about what God intended in the origin of writing the Bible. Many of these interpretations have made readers question the authorial intent, and the veracity of God's word. Yet, the Bible is a united account telling how God set out to have a personal relationship with mankind.

The Bible informs humanity that God reveals Himself by communicating through His word. The proclaim of His word allows man to hear God's call upon his life. The call is an invitation to live life unto God. Yet, the calling is only the beginning of the relationship with God; a relationship with God develops over time. However, the Bible warns that there is the possibility of failure in the relationship if one begins to pursue outside sources of leadership. 1 Samuel 8:1–10 is a passage used to display how one can initially follow God, and then become impressed with other worldviews so that God loses His significance within the clan. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to do an exegetical analysis of 1 Samuel 8:1–10, considering the reason that the writer used 1 Samuel 8:1–10 as a message to Israel. This paper is to display that the original author of 1 Samuel 8:1–10 wanted to show that a flawed worldview mars one's obedience to God. The first section of this paper discusses the historical context of 1 Samuel 8:1–10 by first considering the writer and his audience. The second part of this paper provides the reason that the author of this paper sets the limitation of the passage as 1 Samuel 8:1–10. The third portion of this paper examines the historical hermeneutical context of 1 Samuel 8:1–10, and

then provides an overview of the literary context of 1 Samuel 8:1–10. The fourth segment of this paper is a hermeneutical analysis that provides an overview of a current reflection of 1 Samuel 8:1–10. The fifth section of this paper provides a conclusion summarizing the findings of this paper and showing how these findings reach the intended goal of this paper – to describe that the original author wanted to demonstrate that a faulty worldview impairs one’s obedience to God.

## **Historical Context – The Author and His Audience**

*The Author:* The author(s) of the Book of 1 Samuel is not stated within the Book of 1 Samuel.<sup>1</sup> This fact alone can create various considerations.<sup>2</sup> Yet, authorship is not the issue that this paper attempts to resolve.<sup>3</sup> The concern for this paper is to examine the final message as found in 1 Samuel 8:1–10.

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Bergen remarks, “In recent years scholarly works about 1, 2 Samuel . . . as a literary unity having been produced by an individual or group of individuals collectively known as the Deuteronomistic editors. The so-called Deuteronomistic (or Deuteronomic) school of writers was believed by many scholars to have produced a connected history of Israel that interpreted the course of events in the nation’s history in light of the teachings found in the Book of Deuteronomy. Their writings ‘stressed centralization of worship in Jerusalem, obedience to Deuteronomic law, and the avoidance of any kind of apostasy, all according to a rigid system of reward and punishment.’” Robert D. Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel, The New American Commentary*, vol. 7 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1996), 24–25.

<sup>2</sup> The considerations are: 1) did one author write 1 Samuel; 2) did various authors write 1 Samuel, and if there were various authors, when did the various redactions occur.

<sup>3</sup> The argument from silence is a near impossible issue to resolve. However, Ronald J. Youngblood observes: “According to the Babylonian Talmud, ‘Samuel wrote the book that bears his name’ (Baba Bathra 14b). The same Talmud also asserts that the first twenty-four chapters of 1 Samuel were written by Samuel himself (1 Samuel 25:1 reports his death) and that the rest of the Samuel corpus was the work of Nathan and Gad (Baba Bathra 15a). First Chronicles 29:29 is doubtless the source of the latter rabbinic assessment: ‘As for the events of King David’s reign, from beginning to end, they are written in the records of Samuel the seer, the records of Nathan the prophet and the records of Gad the seer.’” Ronald J. Youngblood, *1, 2 Samuel, The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 553–554.

An overarching theme that the author seems to imply is that Israel had a varied history, but God had sovereignly led them. In fact, Robert Bergen contends, “Certainly a central purpose for writing 1 Samuel was to communicate and reinforce religious beliefs of profound importance to the writer and his community.”<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, for the author of 1 Samuel, Israel was a religious community, and this called for them to live by a certain standard. However, an issue for the author of 1 Samuel 8 was that Israel had come to a place that they desired to be like the other nations – they wanted a king.<sup>5</sup> According to the author of 1 Samuel 8:1–10, the king, if he resembled the other kings, would cause them to draw apart from God. Therefore, their desire for a king caused anguish for Samuel, and God. The distress was probably created by the manner that other kingdoms viewed the king. Helmer Ringgren explains: “The king is god and the son of a god, but is so only by virtue of his office.”<sup>6</sup> John Walton contends that kingship was not viewed well

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<sup>4</sup> Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, 43.

<sup>5</sup> J. Gordon McConville presents: “When the people demand that Samuel give them a king, there is a hostile response both from Samuel himself and from Yahweh, who regards it as a rejection of him as their King (1 Samuel 8:4–9; see also Dt 33:5; Judg 8:23; 9:7–15). It was long customary to interpret 1 Samuel 8–12 as containing a debate with early Israel about the rightness of kinship, and the chapters were divided into alleged pro- and anti-monarchical sources. Today this source division seems less likely because of more careful studies of the narrative. Nevertheless, it remains probable that the recorded hostility to the institution of kingship represents actual resistance to its acceptance into an Israel that had a strong tribal, non-monarchical tradition.” J. Gordon McConville, *Grace in the End: A Study in Deuteronomistic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993), 69–70.

<sup>6</sup> H. Ringgren, “*mlk*,” in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 349. Ringgren notes: “The king’s task is to make the land flourish again as it did in primeval times. In this respect he embodies the creator-god. . . . The king is the shepherd of his people, and is to care for them just as a shepherd does for his flock. And effective reign of a king also enhances the fruitfulness of nature.” *Ibid.* Later he states, “Kingship itself comes down from heaven, and is thus a divine institution. . . . The gods have chosen the king for his office even before his birth and have predetermined his destiny; he is sent by them. He is called the son of a particular god or goddess, referring in this case probably more to divine protection – every person, after all, is (symbolically) the son (daughter) of his own particular god. The king can be called the shadow or representation of the god.” *Ibid.*, 350.

in the beginning days.<sup>7</sup> What appears to make Walton have this opinion is the varied history that Israel had. This varied history has caused scholars to provide various ideas for transmitting Israel's past. Some of these scholars (Martin Noth originated this notion), have suggested an idea called Deuteronomistic History<sup>8</sup> as an answer to seemingly anti-monarchical sentiments in 1 Sam 8:1–10.<sup>9</sup> However, it is not the full intent of this paper to resolve the issue, but rather to acknowledge that the original author had a key role in communicating information to his audience whether he was a part of the notion of Deuteronomistic History or not.<sup>10</sup> The general information that the original author

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<sup>7</sup> John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 280–281. Walton continues: “The people request kingship, and Yahweh grants it grudgingly (1 Samuel 8) Deuteronomy 18 presents a negative view of kingship rather than lauding it as the highest form of humanity. In the early chapters of Genesis, kingship is noticeably absent. Archetypal humanity bears the image of God rather than this being a distinctive of the king. Likewise, they are charged with subduing and ruling. When we first encounter individuals playing out the role of king in one form or another (without the title) they offer negative depictions—the violent arrogance of Lamech and the imperialism of Nimrod.” *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> A Deuteronomistic Historical reading suggests: The various narrators behind the stories “compile and compose a story that not only allows theological and ironic readings, it actually demands them in combination. The Deuteronomists’ greatness lies in their ability to prioritize the theological reading while at the same time incorporating an ironic awareness of the opposite and yet complementary attitudes of the story’s human protagonists within the divine plan.” K. M. Heim, “Kings and Kingship,” in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Historical Books* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2005), 620.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* 615–621. Philip Nel comments, “According to the Deuteronomistic history (2 Samuel 7:11; 23:5) and the theology of Zion (Psalm 132) an eternal covenant was made between Yahweh and David. Yahweh elected David and established the monarchy (2 Samuel 7). According to Ps 132 David’s election was corollary to his concern for the establishment of the cult home for Yahweh in Jerusalem. Zion was then considered to be the cosmic center from where Yahweh’s rule could be expanded to the whole world.” Philip J. Nel, “*mlk*,” in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 959.

<sup>10</sup> Ralph Klein comments, “Steven L. McKenzie has examined the Deuteronomistic interpretation of 1 Samuel 8–12 and disagrees with Martin Noth on two fundamental issues: McKenzie does not believe that these chapters as a whole are anti-monarchy, and he proposes that the editorial intervention into these

seemed to want to convey was that political unrest had created social discontent in Israel at the end of Samuel's life. This turbulence had grown to the point that Israel needed (wanted) to make a change. In stressing this point, K. H. Heim notes, "The texts reflect a general frustration among the population with the previous system of judges, which over time had led to moral degeneration, social injustice, and political vulnerability."<sup>11</sup>

Thus, from a historical perspective, it seems that the author of 1 Sam 8:1–10 was concerned about the social order of the Jewish community.<sup>12</sup> As a consequence, it is the opinion of the author of this paper that 1 Sam 8:1–10, from a historical point, is early data, and not information provided by a later redactor. It appears that the author seemed to be more disturbed with the direction that Israel was heading, by wanting to choose a king than kingship itself. In other words,

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chapters was not dissimilar to the Deuteronomistic Historian's composition techniques for the entire history. Rather, McKenzie believes that the Deuteronomistic Historian was ambiguous or even ambivalent about kingship. The people's request for a king was a sin only because it showed a lack of faith in Yahweh, but 1 Samuel 8–12 never says that kingship itself is sinful." Ralph W. Klein, *1 Samuel*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 10 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), xli.

<sup>11</sup> Heim, "Kings and Kingship," 617. Heim further notes that "judges had abused their position. Since there was no established system of succession, each vacancy created a power vacuum that had regularly been exploited by Israel's political neighbors. Even exemplary judges like Samuel had not guaranteed the integrity of the office. It was concern over the abusive and exploitative behavior of Samuel's sons—appointed by him as judges who would succeed him—that prompted the decisive step toward monarchy." Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> John Goldingay observes, "In reality, settling in the land leads to the situation of moral, religious, and social collapse described in Judges, when 'there was no king in Israel' (Judg 21:25). Judges thus implies that the nation needed to become a state because the lack of firm central government meant everyone was doing what was right in their own eyes. Likewise, part of the logic of the people's desire for a king is that Samuel's sons and prospective successors do not walk in his ways but twist *mispāt* (1 Samuel 8:1–5). If a constitution is 'the means of bringing the government of a state under law,' the teaching in the Torah is indeed Israel's constitution, and it does bring the king under law; the vocation of the state and the king itself is to bring the nation under that law." John Goldingay, *Old Testament Theology: Israel's Life*, vol. 3 (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2009), 543.

Samuel was stating: “We have not done this, and God will be displeased with our actions!” A judge, for all intents and purposes, acted as a king. The issue that the writer of 1 Sam 8:1–10 seemed to have had was that Israel needed a strong theocentric worldview.<sup>13</sup> As a corollary, the author appeared to want his audience to realize that a warped understanding of God’s directives harmed their walk and faith with God.

*The Reader:* The issue concerning the authorship of the 1 Samuel 8:1–10 is needs to be considered. The other factor to be deliberated is the recipients of 1 Samuel 8:1–10. The manner in which one is spoken to, reflects the way that a person was addressed. In 1 Sam 8:1–10, the author appears to be stating that Israel’s leaders made a progressively, unwise decision at the conclusion of Samuel’s life. However, one wonders to whom did the author address? The various possibilities are: the Jewish Community in general, the leaders of the Jewish community, or was it a rebuttal to the elders that addressed Samuel. While the argument from silence cannot be fruitful, a portion of the message to be considered is the meaning within the stated text (1 Sam 8:1–10). A major portion of the message was to encourage them not to forsake the assembling of themselves or their faith before God. It seems

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<sup>13</sup> Gerald Eddie Gerbrandt contends that “the Deuteronomist was not opposed to the institution of kingship. This does not imply, however, that he simply accepted or affirmed kingship without realizing its weaknesses or potential pitfalls. As the Deuteronomistic evaluations of the different kings indicate, most kings did not fulfill the position adequately according to the Deuteronomist’s standards. One reason for this lay in the very nature of the institution. Before kingship could be adopted in Israel it had to be adapted to fit into Israel’s particular relationship with Yahweh. Since the kingship of the Canaanites and other surrounding peoples was somewhat different from this adapted form, there was always the temptation that kinship in Israel would become like that of the other nations. This was a temptation not only for the kings, but also for the people. The Deuteronomist uses these accounts of the origin of kingship to warn the people of the dangers of the new institution.” Gerald Eddie Gerbrandt, *Kingship According to the Deuteronomistic History* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1986), 146.

by the manner in which 1 Sam 8:1–10 was written, that the author wanted the reader to learn to wait on the Lord.

### **The Limit of the Passage – 1 Samuel 8:1–10**

1 Sam 8:1–10 appears to be a form of a textual publication. This is determined because it starts with a waw consecutive.<sup>14</sup> Normally, a waw consecutive signifies a continuation of a story.

However, in this case, it opens the storyline; yet, it also provides the recognition of other narratives – God established judges to rule over Israel. Once the initial waw in this storyline is initiated, the following nine verses contain a waw consecutive as a continuation of thought; so as to say: “and we, and we, and we.” It is the opinion of the writer of this paper that these ten verses were an original pericope that share the notion that tension had arisen within Israel. The conflict was whether or not to crown a king. Yet, even though this was a new debate – tension was a major part of the life of Israel (i.e., spies entering Canaan; sons of Korah; idolatry). Thus, 1 Sam 8:1–10 were used to convey a reoccurring problematic theme for Israel – God’s leadership.

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<sup>14</sup> P. Jouon and T. Muraoka explain the significance of a waw consecutive: “A Waw preceding a finite verbal form (qatal, yiqtol, jussive, cohortative, imperative) may have various semantic values; consequently, a group consisting of Waw and a verbal form may have different values. While retaining the basic meaning of *et* ‘and,’ Waw can have certain concomitant nuances which some languages neglect or can only express with the addition of a word. Thus, whereas Latin uses the word *et* in exactly the same way in *comedit et bibit* ‘he ate and drank’ (where both actions are assumed to be simultaneous) and in *comedit et ivit cubitum* ‘he ate and went to bed’ (where the second action is subsequent to the first), Hebrew distinguishes between these two *et*’s, the second of which is equivalent to *et postea* ‘and thereafter.’ In a sentence such as *divide et impera* ‘Divide and rule!’, where the *et* is logically equivalent to *ita ut* (sic) *imperes* ‘so that you may rule’ = *et sic imperabis* ‘you will thus rule’ (consecution), and (in consequence) you will rule or *to ut imperes* (purpose), so that you may rule, Hebrew distinguishes a modal nuance of the Waw (consecutive or final). P. Jouon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Roma: Gregorian and Biblical Press, 2013), 350–351.

It appears that 1 Sam 8:1–10 is an account for how Israel came to have a king. They decided that they wanted kingship over judgeship. Yet, it seems that there was a legitimate reason for their request notes the word formula (“in those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes”), found in Judges (17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25). However, this formula seems to be connected to another word formula (“then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baals”). This formula or similar wording can be found several times in Judges (2:11–13, 17; 3:6, 7, 12; 4:1; 6:1; 8:33, 34; 10:6, 10, 13–14). These two formulas allow one to see that there was no unification in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes, and even the judges followed suit (Hophni and Phinehas; Joel and Abihah), and practiced evil. Thus, as Jonathan Walton keenly states: “it is not Samuel and the institution of judgeship that is abandoned but rather YHWH and the institution of theocracy, which are to be replaced with a leader who is incidentally a monarch but emphatically a human.”<sup>15</sup> Israel wanted a king that resembled the kings of the other nations. A human being that was specifically placed in a position of leadership. The king would not reign in one region, but he would be responsible to all of Israel.

The purpose of 1 Sam 8:1–10 was to show that the elders of Israel had a specific goal. They wanted a human being to lead them, especially into battle.<sup>16</sup> David Toshio Tsumura notes, “The people wanted to become like all other nations, but God had called them uniquely to be his people, under his special care.”<sup>17</sup> God called Israel to be His unique

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<sup>15</sup> Jonathan H. Walton, “A King Like the Nations: 1 Samuel 8 in Its Cultural Context,” *Biblica* 92/6 (2015): 184.

<sup>16</sup> Jonathan Walton argues that Israel wanted a king and not a symbol, i.e., the Ark of the Covenant to lead them into battle.

<sup>17</sup> Tsumura explains the problem: “But they are exchanging their true glory for status in the eyes of the world. Just as the Israelites were the people of a God who is unique and incomparable with any other god (1 Samuel 2:2); so they were supposedly incomparable with any other nations: that is, ‘a kingdom of priests and a holy nation’ (Ex 19:6), ‘set apart for service to their divine monarch.’ So, what they hoped to do was exactly to throw away their special status as the chosen people of God in order to identify themselves with the nations of the



people; they were to be unlike the other nations. The issue for this narrative was that Samuel was old. This fact, alone, seems to be part of the reason for wanting change in Israel. Walton comments, “The elders of Israel believe that they can manipulate their God into serving them. They have tried this before in ch. 4, using the ark of the covenant to drag God into battle.”<sup>18</sup> However, Joel and Abijah seem to resemble Hophni and Phinehas in that they were evil children of good judges, who did not walk in the ways of their father’s. Israel had decided that a lack of good leadership was costly.

### **Historical Hermeneutical Context of 1 Samuel 8:1–10**

1 Sam 8:1–10 records that Israel wanted a king. But, there was concern by God and Samuel for this request. William Dumbrell states, “Dynastic kinship would eliminate from Israel Yahweh’s spontaneity and direction, which judgeship had provided, thus cutting the cord of such spiritual guidance by providing for an ordered succession.”<sup>19</sup> It does not seem plausible that a religious community that had seen the work of their God would want to reject Him. Maybe the children of Israel thought that Samuel had come to resemble Eli. In order to make sense of the request, a word study is needed. There seem to be three key words in 1 Samuel 8:1–10.

The first word *zqn* is used 178 times in the Old Testament. The word means “old,” or “elder.” In this passage, the word is used to refer to Samuel and it is also utilized to refer to the elders of Israel. J. Conrad illustrates the two ideas as he states: “An old man is the embodiment of long experience (Dt 32:7; cf. Ps 37:25) and the consequent ability to

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world.” David Toshio Tsumura, *The First Book of Samuel*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 249.

<sup>18</sup> Walton, “A King Like the Nations,” 199.

<sup>19</sup> William J. Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel: A Theological Survey of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 83.

give prudent counsel in political matters (1 Kgs 12:6–8).”<sup>20</sup> In other words, elders were a group of men that help lead Israel because they were experienced in matters of life. Conrad contends that “the elders were old men; they clearly constitute a distinct committee, probably composed of the wealthy and respected citizens, especially the heads of the important major families.”<sup>21</sup> Yet, it was the elders of Israel that approached Samuel to notify him that he was too old to judge Israel. They seem to think that they had the privilege to challenge Samuel.

The second word is the verb *shpt* “to judge” and it occurs 144 times in the Old Testament.<sup>22</sup> Jerry Hwang notes, “This chapter’s repetition of *shpt* and its derivatives vividly display the literary importance of the *Leitwort*.”<sup>23</sup> He asserts that *shpt* is used on various points in 1 Sam 8:1–10.<sup>24</sup> These usages are as follows: 1) Samuel appointed his sons as judges; 2) the sons took bribes and perverted justice; 3) the elders wanted a king to judge them; the last two are implied, but not stated<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> J. Conrad, “*zqn*,” in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 124.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 125. Conrad insists, “Undoubtedly the members of this committee were for the most part but not entirely of advanced years.” *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> H. Niehr states, “In a few pre-Dtr passages within DtrH, the verb *sapat* in the syntagma *sapat 'et yisrae'el* refers to the exercise of a leadership office in the premonarchic period (Judg 10:2 ,3; 12:7–15). Since *sapat* has no discernible forensic connotation in these texts, it should be translated ‘lead’ or ‘rule.’” H. Niehr, “*jp̄v*,” in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. 15 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 419. Niehr observes, “The Mari letters contain the earliest occurrences of the root *spt*. Where it occurs, the verb *spt* has as its subject an official or the king; it denotes an exercise of authority.” *Ibid.* 415. Niehr explains: “With a personal direct object, *spatum* means ‘give someone an order;’ the same notion is expressed by the formula *siptam sapatum*. The noun *siptu* means ‘command, order, edict.’ It refers to authoritative pronouncement of the king or a governor.” *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Jerry Hwang, “Yahweh’s Poetic *Mishpat* in Israel’s Kingship: A Reassessment of 1 Samuel 8–12,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 73 (2011): 346.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Hwang comments, “While most commentators notice that the pun on *mishpat* and *shpt* adds a special, almost bitter nuance to Samuel’s rejection, they typically neglect to trace the wordplay further in the chapter. Indeed, the poetic *mishpat* perpetuated in this chapter extends beyond Samuel to the people of Israel. The wordplay on *shpt* continues with Yahweh’s repeated command to Samuel to

4) Samuel was a judge; 5) God was their judge.<sup>26</sup> An example of a judge is witnessed between Hagar and Sarai. After Hagar had conceived Ishmael, tension rose between Sarai and Hagar. Sarai became angry and blamed Abram for the haughtiness of Hagar toward her. Abram told Sarai to treat Hagar as she pleased. Once Sarai began dealing with Hagar harshly, Hagar fled. God instructed Hagar to return Sarai and be her slave. The intent was for restoration. God was the Judge.<sup>27</sup> The concept of judge meant God-led leadership.<sup>28</sup> The children of Israel appear to have decided that God's leadership was not what they wanted.

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'listen to the voice' of the people and warn the people of the *mishpat hamlk* (8:9, 11)." Ibid., 347.

<sup>26</sup> G. Liedke explains the manner that this took place: "The *spt* act transpires in a 'triangular relationship:' two people or two groups of people whose interrelationship is not intact are restored to the state of *salom* through a third party's *spt*." G. Liedke, "*shpt*," in *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, vol. 3 (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), 1393. Liedke notes, "The restoration of community order should be understood not only as a one-time act but also as a continuous activity, as a constant preservation of the *salom*; thus the meaning 'to govern, rule.'" Ibid., 1394. Richard Schultz argues that *shpt* has "a range of actions that restore or preserve order in society, so that justice, especially social justice, is guaranteed. Whether achieved by God (ca. 40 percent of the occurrences) or by a human agent as a continuous activity it can be translated as rule, govern; as a specific activity it can be translated as deliver, rescue, or judge." Richard Schultz, "*shpt*," in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 214.

<sup>27</sup> Michael McKelvey explains: "Israel was officially constituted as a nation at Sinai (Exodus 19–20) with a theocratic political system. A theocracy is a system of government whereby God rules over a people group as King, and the leadership is carried out by priests and other divinely chosen authority figures such as judges and prophets." Michael G. McKelvey, 1–2 Samuel, in *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2016), 208. God as Judge: Gen 16:5; 18:25; Ex 5:21; Judg 11:27; 1 Samuel 24:13, 16; 2 Samuel 18:19, 31; Is 33:22; Jer 11:20; Ezek 7:3, 8, 27; Ps 7:9; 9:9, 20; 10:18; 26:1; 35:24; 43:1; 50:6; 51:6; 58:12; 67:5; 75:3, 8; 82:1, 8; 94:2; 96:13; 98:9; Job 21:22; 22:13; 23:7; Lam 3:59; 1 Chron 16:33; 2 Chron 20:12).

<sup>28</sup> Schultz, "*shpt*," 216. Schultz interjects: "To establish judgment through punishment, God's specific actions toward individuals and nations in establishing and maintaining justice more frequently involved punishment. This is what is implied when the psalmist recognizes God's chastening hand in his own life (Ps 51:4) and what is expected when the people call upon God to judge their leader (Ex 5:2, regarding Moses) or their enemy (2 Chron 20:12), in the ensuing battle, and when God announces that he will judge according to the

It appears that the elders wanted a new opportunity for themselves. Apparently, they judged for themselves that a king could bring them the prospect for a new beginning.<sup>29</sup> Evidently, they had determined that justice had not been practiced to their satisfaction, for they told Samuel that his sons were not the leaders that they wanted.<sup>30</sup> The children of Israel wanted a king because the dangers around them had grown.<sup>31</sup> Their assumption seems to have been that a king would act as an arbitrator, bringing peace and prosperity. As the king brought peace and prosperity to Israel they would “become like the other nations.” Yet, Samuel’s anger was not against a king, but the attitude – “being like other nations.” Dumbrell contends, “Israel in the future will be tempted to look for deliverance from its king, ignoring leadership from the kingdom of God, and this would be its covenantal undoing.”<sup>32</sup>

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offenders’ deeds (1 Samuel 3:13, regarding Eli; Ezek 7:3, 8, 27; 16:38; 18:30; 24:14; 33:20; 35:11; 36:19), such punishment being intended to lead to the acknowledgment of Yahweh’s sovereignty (Ezek 11:10–11).” *Ibid.*, 217.

<sup>29</sup> G. Liedke comments, “the ‘basic meaning’ of the root *spt* has long been disputed. It has been suggested that the basic meaning is ‘to carry out one’s will,’ which resulted in ‘to decide, judge (once)’ and ‘to rule, govern (continuously).’ It has also been proposed that the word means ‘to decide between.’ And, it has been advocated that *spt* means to ‘decide juristically, judge.’ It has also been implied to mean to have ‘dominion in civil and legal administration.” Liedke, “*shpt*,” 1393.

<sup>30</sup> McKelvey comments, “Toward the end of Samuel’s judgeship, the people apparently grew tired of the political arrangement . . . they asked him to anoint a king over the house of Israel.” McKelvey, *Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament*, 208.

<sup>31</sup> Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987), 190–191.

<sup>32</sup> Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel*, 83. Dumbrell asserts, “The Sinai covenant (Ex 19:3–6) had foreshadowed a separated Israel, who would witness to her world through her distinctiveness. Clearly the demand for kingship as other nations have identifies Israel with the world and must be adjusted to become compatible with covenant. The statement ‘make us a king to judge us’ illustrates Israel’s failure to recall the theocratic nature of the judge’s appointment and her inability to see that such a request was incompatible with kingship, which would, in the manner of Israel’s world, be dynamic.” *Ibid.*

The third key word is *mlk* which means king.<sup>33</sup> A king was a ruler that acted for God.<sup>34</sup> The reason why a king was appealing was because he directly appeased the gods, and did not act as a judge toward the people.<sup>35</sup> Nel remarks, “It is evident that the kingship of Judah had a sacral character, shared common formulations with neighboring countries, and reflected mythopoetic features.”<sup>36</sup> It seems that a king was appealing to Israel because it appeared to bring unity and strength to the various communities.<sup>37</sup> Youngblood notes, “The king would ‘go out before us and fight our battles.’ They were looking for a permanent military leader who would build a standing army powerful enough to repulse any invader.”<sup>38</sup>

God created man to be king. He was created to rule over every living thing (Gen 1:28–30). The notion of a king was not corrupt, for it allowed one ruler to unite all of Israel before God. The issue for Israel

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<sup>33</sup> J. A. Soggin contends: “The monarchy appears as a political entity relatively late in Israel, toward the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium or beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup>, a few centuries after the conquest and settlement; consequently, it was hardly an element of Israel’s basic ideological stance or an existential necessity.” J. A. Soggin, “*mlk*,” in *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, vol. 2 (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), 674.

<sup>34</sup> Heim, “Kings and Kingship,” 610.

<sup>35</sup> Walton states that “in ancient Near Eastern religion, humans were supposed to provide for the needs of the gods. ‘The literature from throughout the ancient Near East clearly addresses the fact that the gods have needs that are met by human beings (rituals and other cultic activities were designed to address those needs). The king and the priests each had duties in the process.’ The neediness of the gods and their dependence (at least partially) on the services of the king – offering sacrifices, building and repairing temples, maintaining civic order so that ritual activity could proceed efficiently gave the king some leverage with which to ‘negotiate’ for the favor of the gods.” Walton, “A King Like the Nations,” 196.

<sup>36</sup> Nel, “*mlk*,” 960.

<sup>37</sup> Niehr observes, “In the period before the establishment of the monarchy, we can identify three different spheres within which the administration of justice took place: with the family, through the paterfamilias (Gen 16:1–6; 31:25–53; 38:24–26; Ex 21:2–6, 7–11); at the local level, through the elders, who were drawn from the heads of families (Ex 21:18–19, 28–32; 22:1–14; 23:1–3, 6–8; Judg 6:25–32); and finally through priests (1 Samuel 2:25).” H. Niehr, “jpv,” 424.

<sup>38</sup> Youngblood, *1, 2 Samuel*, 613.

was the manner in which they tried to procure a king. Eugene Merrill states, “The king must be the man of Yahweh’s choice and must govern the people according to the principles of Torah.”<sup>39</sup>

### **Literary Context of 1 Samuel 8:1–10**

The Book of 1 Samuel is a narrative that starts by continuing to tell the story of the disorder of Israel. However, the story seems to be written to prepare the reader for the realization that a change for Israel is on the horizon. God in his sovereignty did not want to continue the vicious cycle as found in Judges. Therefore, God was going to appoint a new leader, and provide a new transition. The shift that the reader needed to know was from the old way of life going to a new way of life – judges to kings. Yet, it seems that God wanted Israel to know that the old paradigm was not faulty, but it was the approach toward God that was wrong. Thus, as the paradigm shift takes place, the reader is encouraged to watch the development of it.

Chapters 1–4 of 1 Samuel present Eli as an old judge, and his two sons as corrupt (1 Sam 2:22). Eli was not able to control his sons. However, there was a time when Eli was good judge,

but as he had aged his eyes for the Lord had grown dim (1 Sam 3:1–3). As a consequence, during a battle with the Philistines, God killed all three. The exploits of the judges appeared to continue. However, there is a subplot in the distance. This same type of subplot can be witnessed in the Book of Isaiah. God provided new life where life did not seem to exist.

Verse 1 begins by stating that Samuel was old.<sup>40</sup> It appears that part of the literary significance of the Book of 1 Samuel is that the old way of

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<sup>39</sup> Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, 190.

<sup>40</sup> Conrad comments that old age “appears as the limit of human potential. Formally, this notion is expressed by the phrase *ba’ baiyamim*. It occurs primarily in contexts in which a previously responsible party must resign his position, and a new generation receives his testament (Gen 24:1; Josh 13:1; 23:1; 1 Kgs 1:1).

life is changing; for verse 1 notes Samuel's age. Yet, Samuel, as an old leader, should have been honored.<sup>41</sup> In fact, Paul Wegner states that "in the Ancient Near East culture older men were given authority and leadership because of their accumulated wisdom and experience."<sup>42</sup> But, Samuel was not honored or given leadership. Instead, his age seemed to cause Samuel to feel vulnerable. Perhaps, because his age was in question, Samuel decided to place his sons as judges. According to the author, it was when Samuel was old that he appointed his sons, Joel and Abijah, as judges.

Verse 3 states that Joel and Abijah were not like their father, for they did not walk in the ways of the Lord. Instead, they perverted justice by taking bribes in the hopes of financial gain. It appears that the author of 1 Sam 8:1–10 made an uncanny observation – Samuel and Eli were analogous to one another. They both had two sons that did not follow the Lord. Instead, they did what was right in their eyes, and as a result placed Israel in jeopardy. Even though their fathers had been faithful judges in following God's commandments, the lure power and wealth

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Passages that characterize old age as a time when virility or fertility ceases make this limitation clear (Gen 18:11f; 1 Kgs 1:4; 2 Kgs 4:14; Ruth 1:12). At this point there is no longer any possibility of having any influence on the continuance of the family. Many passages accordingly characterize old age directly or indirectly as a time of weakness and decline, both physical and psychological (physical weakness: Gen 27:1f; 48:10; 1 Samuel 4:18; 2 Samuel 19:33–36; 1 Kgs 1:1, 15; 14:4; 15:23; Is 46:4; Ps 71:9, 18; cf. Hos 7:9; Eccl 12:1–7; weakness of will: 1 Kgs 11:4; cf. 1 Samuel 2:22; 8:1, 5)." Conrad, "zqn," 125.

<sup>41</sup> Wegner shares: "The Hebrews accorded honor to the person who attained old age for the following reasons: (a) their belief that God granted long life as a sign of his blessing to people who were righteous and pleasing to him; (b) their belief that person of greater age acquired knowledge and wisdom from which others could benefit; and (c) if the Israelite culture was largely illiterate, as some have suggested, older people were the main source of oral history and traditions. By and large the biblical picture of aging is not one of fear and worthlessness, but respect, honor, and the knowledge that God will not abandon the aging person whose body begins to fail (Job 12:12; 15:10; 32:6; Ps 71:9, 18; Prov 16:31; 20:29; Is 46:4; etc.)." Paul D. Wegner, "zqn," in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 1136.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 1135.

was too much for them.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, the sons, according to the author, created some type of turmoil.<sup>44</sup> Apparently, the unrest caused the elders to become uncomfortable.

In verses 4 and 5, the Bible states that Samuel's sons created distress. Samuel's sons had moved against him to the point where the elders of Israel felt that they needed to exercise authority.<sup>45</sup> This same type of

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<sup>43</sup> Stephen Andrews and Robert Bergen contend, "Joel and Abijah did not walk in Samuel's ways. They perverted justice by accepting bribes. But to Samuel's credit they turned aside only after they were appointed. Their immoral behavior was certainly a departure from God's will, and it was bound to create problems. It could not be ignored." Stephen Andrews and Robert D. Bergen, *I and II Samuel*, Holman Old Testament Commentary, vol. 6 (Nashville: Holman Reference, 2009), 69.

<sup>44</sup> David Firth states, "Samuel's sons are like Eli's, and their actions are the opposite of what is expected of a judge in Israel." David G. Firth, *I and 2 Samuel*, Apollos Old Testament Commentary (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2009), 113. Tsumura adds: "Judges were supposed to be 'incorruptible' (see Ex 18:21; Dt 16:19) and Samuel himself could claim that he was impeccable in this regard (12:3–5), his two sons are reported not to have followed his example. Although, unlike Eli, Samuel kept faithful to his God, his two sons were perverting justice (*mispāt*); note that Eli's two sons did not know the *mispāt* of the priests (2:13)." Tsumura, *The First Book of Samuel*, 246.

<sup>45</sup> Kenneth Aitken states, "The office of elder has its roots in the tribal structure of early Israelite society. Elders were the heads of the families and the leaders and representatives of the tribes. They exercised a patriarchal authority based on kinship and the wisdom of experience. Reference is sometimes made to the elders of an individual clan or tribe (Judg 11:5; 2 Samuel 19:11), but more frequently to a national council of 'the elders of Israel,' once described as 'all the elders of your tribe' (Dt 31:28) and said to comprise 'all the heads (*ra'sim*) of the tribes and the chiefs (*nasi'*) of the Israelite families' (1 Kgs 8:1)." Kenneth T. Aitken, "zqn," in *New International*

*Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 1138. Wegner states, "It appears that as far back as the Egyptian captivity the Israelites were led by elders (Ex 3:16), and it is commonly accepted that this concept originated in the Hebrew patriarchal family institution. . . . It does not appear that the elders created laws or established precedents, but were there to administer and maintain societal standards." Paul D. Wegner, "zqn," 1135. Conrad contends, "As members of the upper class they were also particularly exposed to influences from outside of Israel, which were favored by the monarchy, and were therefore subject to criticism on the part of the prophets." Conrad, "zqn," 128. Bergen remarks, "An influential delegation of Israel's tribal leaders (lit., 'all the elders of Israel') came to Samuel at his home in Ramah to



approach was taken by, Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, when he was taking on too many responsibilities. Ronald Youngblood remarks, "Because of Samuel's age, and because they want nothing to do with a dynastic succession that would include his rebellious sons, the elders in their collective wisdom decide that a king would best suit their needs."<sup>46</sup> Yet, there seems to be more to the narrative than Samuel, his rebellious sons, and the want of a king.<sup>47</sup> Earlier in the storyline, the Bible states that God became displeased with Eli. However, God used Hannah to bring her son to Eli. There appears to be a parallel in the two storylines. 1) Eli and Samuel are called old; 2) their sons were implied as being corrupt; 3) an antagonist(s) approaches the protagonist about their sons. Their ages had become a matter of concern; and in this narrative the elders approached him, and suggested that he appoint a king for Israel.<sup>48</sup> The elders were leaders of local community.<sup>49</sup> They

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confront him with the failures of the existing form of government and to propose an alternative." Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, 114–115.

<sup>46</sup> Youngblood, *1, 2 Samuel*, 613. Bergen notes, "The elders began their meeting with Samuel by delineating the facts of the present: Samuel had entered his years of physical decline, and his successors did 'not walk in [his] ways.'" Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, 115. Earlier, Bergen states, "Perhaps the belief was that Levites, members of the tribe divinely entrusted with the task of preserving the divine revelation and providing spiritual leadership over Israel, were uniquely qualified to provide the sort of leadership Israel truly needed." *Ibid.*, 114.

<sup>47</sup> Andrews and Bergen note: "The elders chose to correct a wrong with another wrong. There was no praying and seeking of the Lord's face. There were no solemn assemblies—no crying out to God. The elders simply demanded that Samuel appoint a king to lead the nation, such as all the other nations." Andrews and Bergen, *I and II Samuel*, 69. Tsumura comments that the elders "appear to tell Samuel that the problems would be solved if they had a king over them. If they were seeking a stable leadership through hereditary succession like the monarch, Samuel had already established it by appointing his sons as judges." Tsumura, *The First Book of Samuel*, 248.

<sup>48</sup> Conrad explains: "According to the Mari texts, the elders in regions on the periphery of the centralized state, still dominated by an organization along tribal lines, exercised substantially greater authority, especially in the political realm. They were the representatives of their cities or tribes and as such functioned more as advisers to the king than as his executive agents, knowing quite well how to preserve their autonomy to a greater or lesser degree." Conrad, "zqn," 126.

<sup>49</sup> Aitken remarks, "During the monarchic period, elders chiefly appear as the leaders of their local communities. They are commonly referred to as 'the elders of the

were not bad people, trying to make poor decisions. Mary Evans offers insight as she contends, “Maybe there really was a spiritual motivation also, a desire for the kind of government that would better enable the nation to live in the way that God intended.”<sup>50</sup>

Verses 6–8 appear to be a warning to Israel.<sup>51</sup> A king would not correct their problems. Andrews and Bergen state, “The rejection of God and his covenant involved serious consequences (Josh 24:19–20). God wanted to remind them that covenantal promise of the land was conditional. Finally, God wanted them to know the actions and deeds of the king who would reign over them like the other nations.”<sup>52</sup> A theme within the life of Israel is their rejection of

God.<sup>53</sup> Bergen comments that the problem “lay in their troubled relationship with God; Israel had rejected the Lord as their king (cf.

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town’ (1 Samuel 16:4; cf. Lam 2:10), esp. in Deuteronomy in connection with their juridical authority in family matters (Dt 19:12; 21:19; cf. Ruth 4:1–12). They were also responsible for giving wise counsel (‘*esa*). The ‘counsel of the elders’ is set alongside the teaching of the priests and the vision of the prophets as sources of direction within the life of the community and for the maintenance of its well-being (Ezek 7:26).” Aitken, “*zqn*,” 1138.

<sup>50</sup> Mary Evans, *The Message of Samuel* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004), 56. Evans further states, “They were not seeking to bypass the current system. Samuel was recognized a ‘a prophet of the Lord’ (3:19), as one who was able to discern God’s will and speak God’s words. That they came to God’s representative to ask for a king suggests they were not primarily, at least at a conscious level, seeking to replace God as their true national King. The concern that the elders expressed about the inadequacy of Samuel’s sons and the fact that they are looking for a king to judge them seems to confirm this.” Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Youngblood asserts, “God, graciously condescending to the people’s desire (a desire not in itself wrong but sullied by the motivation behind it), told Samuel to warn them what the ‘regulations of the kingship’ would demand of them.” Youngblood, *I, 2 Samuel*, 613.

<sup>52</sup> Andrews and Bergen, *I and II Samuel*, 70.

<sup>53</sup> Klein observes, “Choice of a king is also considered a rejection of Yahweh’s rule in other Deuteronomistic passages (1 Samuel 10:19 and 12:12).” Klein, *I Samuel*, 75. Klein notes, “Israel’s rejection of Yahweh continued a pattern of behavior practiced ever since the Exodus (cf. 1 Samuel 10:18–19). In noting that Israel’s misdeeds lasted until ‘this day,’ the redactor wants to express not only an indictment of the people at Samuel’s time, but an indictment of Israel extending to the time of the book’s composition. That is, Israel’s sin continued

Num 14:11). The people's demand for an earthly king represented the political manifestation of a spiritual problem."<sup>54</sup> Israel was no longer concerned about the things of God, for they were more interested in political, economic, and social prestige.

Verse 9 was a notice from God to the children of Israel. They thought that they knew what they wanted, but they had an idealistic view – a king would bring prosperity. Andrews and Bergen note: "The request was self-centered and carnal. They wanted a king like 'all the other nations.' What was in operation here was a long-standing pattern of sinful rejection. Israel had continuously rejected God. From the day he rescued them out of Egypt until then they had turned their backs on him and served other gods."<sup>55</sup> Their desire was to be autonomous.

### **Hermeneutical Outlook of 1 Samuel 8:1–10 from a Current Analysis**

How well did the original authors understand what they were writing when they first wrote? One may never know. However, there does appear to be a certain amount of confidence that the King (God's Son) will reign upon Zion. But, the initiation of the new king is unlike the request of coronation of the king in Samuel's day. R. E. Clements remarks, "Yahweh is their true

king, and it is his voice that they must obey. In this way the Deuteronomists undoubtedly seem to be concerned to show that the monarchy, as an institution, was not essential to Israel's role as

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from the Exodus to the exile. Dtr goes on to spell out the details of Israel's rejection in characteristic vocabulary. The people abandoned Yahweh (1 Samuel 12:10; 2 Kgs 17:16) and they served other gods (Josh 23:16; cf. 2 Kgs 17:16). Their long-term rejection of Yahweh is matched now by their mistreatment of Samuel. Taking vv 7–8 together, we can see that Yahweh is not denying that the people have opposed Samuel, but he urges Samuel to see this opposition as a manifestation of their far more serious rejection of Yahweh himself." Ibid., 76.

<sup>54</sup> Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, 116–117.

<sup>55</sup> Andrews and Bergen, *I and II Samuel*, 70.

Yahweh's people."<sup>56</sup> This message was initially given to Abraham passed on to Moses, and then presented to David by Nathan. All the Davidic kings in some form were understood to be "anointed" as the earthly sovereignty for Israel who had been placed there by God, Himself.<sup>57</sup> Richard Belcher contends, "Although the human king is never considered divine, there is a close relationship between the human king and God as king. Christ is the human king, the son of David, who has come to fulfill the promises of the Davidic covenant; but he is also divine and what is said about God as king also relates to him."<sup>58</sup> What makes 1 Samuel 8:1–10 so striking is that it appears that the elders were making the decision for a king. However, it appears that 1 Sam 8:1–10 was a prelude to the establishment of God's king – His Son.

Psalm 2 appears to be the culmination of the preamble that is found in 1 Sam 8:1–10. James Mays states that "it is the only text in the Old Testament that speaks of God's king, messiah, and son in one place, the titles are so important for the presentation of Jesus in the

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<sup>56</sup> R. E. Clements, "The Deuteronomistic Interpretation of the Founding of the Monarchy in 1 Samuel 8," *Vetus Testamentum* 24/4 (1974): 406. He explains: "Nevertheless they were concerned to leave room for their belief that the Davidic kingship did represent for Israel a special feature of its divinely given order and purpose, most especially through the person of David himself. Thus the wrongfulness of the action of Israel in requesting a king from Samuel lay not simply in that in consequence it brought them an institution outside the divine purpose, but more specifically in that it brought them in the person of Saul a king who could not save them, and would himself prove to be a major hindrance to the succeeding king whom Yahweh would himself choose 'after his own heart.' Thus the sharpness of the criticism of the kingship expressed here is not in order to reject the institution altogether, which would make nonsense of the sequel in Yahweh's acceding to the request. Rather it is to condemn the precipitate action of the people in pressing their desire, when Yahweh himself was able to do all that was necessary in order to ensure the people's salvation, as the preceding Deuteronomistic narrative of the victory won by Samuel over the Philistines illustrates." Ibid. 406–407.

<sup>57</sup> Delmar L. Jacobson, "The Royal Psalms and Jesus Messiah: Preparing to Preach on a Royal Psalm," *Word and World* 5/2 (1985): 192.

<sup>58</sup> Richard P. Belcher Jr., *The Messiah and the Psalms, Preaching Christ from all the Psalms* (Ross-shire: Mentor, 2006), 201–202.

Gospels.”<sup>59</sup> In other words, from its Old Testament usage, Psalm 2 has the idea of a Davidic king who, as an Israelite king, would have been closely associated with God. Thus, God would use the Davidic king as a vice-regent, but it would be God that would ultimately protect them because He was their “Divine Warrior.”<sup>60</sup> Thus, their messiah was directly connected to God, because he had been chosen by God. “But from the NT we learn that the meaning of *mashiah* in Ps 2 cannot be limited to a king about to be enthroned, but is a reference to the unique vice-regent, Jesus Christ (Acts 13:32ff; cf. Heb 1:5; 5:5).”<sup>61</sup> Therefore, in the New Testament the understanding of “son” progresses to the forefront as the classification of the ONE in whom God has chosen to exemplify His Kingdom in the world. The concept of “son” more than any other title, accentuates the association between Kingly sovereignty and the Personhood of man.<sup>62</sup> James Mays asserts, “Sonship is created by sacral-legal action. Its reality is an identity and status of special right and special responsibility to God in analogy to the special right and responsibilities a son has in relation to a father in Israel’s culture.”<sup>63</sup> Nathan’s message was that his seed had been chosen to be the ideal ruler for God’s kingdom. Thus, there can be little question that there was and is to be a dynastic kingdom. This dynastic kingdom will not come from just anywhere but comes from the line of David. This Davidic king will be unlike any other, for He will be a just ruler who will truly provide protection for His people. Haney sums up the linkage between the Old and New Testaments with Psalm 2 when he states that

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<sup>59</sup> James L. Mays, *Psalms in Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*. (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1994), 44.

<sup>60</sup> William P. Brown, *Seeing the Psalms: A Theology of Metaphor*. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 189.

<sup>61</sup> Victor P. Hamilton, “*mashiah*,” in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 1. (Chicago: Moody, 1980), 531. Hamilton further mentions, “The Psalm statements underline the just administration, the saving function and the universal rule of Jesus Christ.” Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Mays, *Psalms*, 49.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 47. Mays later maintains, “The psalm is based on the faith that the Lord was throned in heaven is the ultimate power. The dominion of the son must correspond to the sovereignty of the father.” Ibid.

“David wanted to build a house for Yahweh the exact opposite would actually occur. It would be Yahweh who builds a house for David.”<sup>64</sup> There can be little question that the disciples and the early Church took this psalm and explained to the world that Jesus was the One in Whom was to come and fulfill the words of the prophets and psalms.<sup>65</sup> Gromacki sums up the virgin birth well as he says, “To confess the virgin birth is to confess the deity of Christ; to confess the deity of Christ is to confess the virgin birth. They are inseparable, Siamese twins. Conversely, to deny the virgin birth is to deny the deity of Christ; to deny the deity of Christ is to deny the virgin birth. No person can logically accept one and reject the other. Christ is not God because He was virgin born, but because He was and is God, He had to be virgin born to obtain a real humanity.”<sup>66</sup> This appears to be the historical message of Matthew – one either acknowledges Jesus as God through the enlightenment of the Old Testament or one rejects Him. However, either way JESUS is truly the historical Son of the Living God.

## Conclusion

1 Sam 8:1–10 is a narrative that conveys a story of change. The elders of Israel thought that Samuel was no longer effective as a leader/judge. As a result, they made a decision to request a king. The king was to revolutionize aspects of life for the children of Israel. Yet, the change that they sought after was unsuitable for it neglected God. 1 Samuel 8:1–10 becomes a passage of how one can initially follow God, and then become mesmerized by other worldviews to the point that God loses His significance within the clan. The Bible informs humanity that God reveals Himself by communicating through His word. The

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<sup>64</sup> Randy G. Haney, “And All Nations Shall Serve Him,” Text and Concept Analysis in Royal Psalms. Ph. D. Dissertation (Claremont: California, 1999), 229.

<sup>65</sup> J. Barton Payne, “Psalms,” in *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 256–275.

<sup>66</sup> Robert G. Gromacki, *The Virgin Birth: Doctrine of Deity* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984), 189.

proclaim of His word allows man to hear God's intention for man's life. God wants to be Lord of all.

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