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FIRST SAMUEL: A STUDY IN SOURCES,

PERSONALITIES AND POLITICS

STUART G. WEINBLATT

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for Ordination

Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion

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Referee, Rabbi David Weisberg

to my parents,

who led me to the fountain of Judaism and who

encouraged me to drink of its wonders.

who taught me to draw strength from its teachings

and sustenance from its beauty.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DIGEST

This thesis is a multi-faceted study of the first Book of Samuel. It attempts to analyze the composition of the book and the historical reality of the period of the monarchy. The book is studied from the literary perspective as well as the perspective of political and personal motivations.

It has long been recognized that the Book of Samuel is the product of more than one source. The first chapter presents the textual difficulties which makes various theories and explanations necessary. Once we have shown the need for a theory to explain these problems, a systematic review of the wide range of hypotheses scholars have offered over the years is presented.

The second chapter is a critical evaluation of the sholarship presented in chapter one. It critiques each of the various theories and shows their merits and shortcomings. This chapter also questions several long held notions about the compilation of I Samuel. For one, it questions the extent of the influence of the Deuteronomistic redactors on the Book of Samuel. Furthermore, contrary to the opinion of most scholars, I contend that a specifically anti-monarchical trend cannot be detected in the book. Rather, it is my contention that if anything, a concern that is woven into almost each episode and narrative strand is the tendency to explain and justify the events of the period in Israel in theocentric terms.

Finally, chapter 3 analyzes the factors leading to the rise of the monarchy and the reasons for Samuel's adamant opposition to the

introduction of the monarchy in Israel. The effect of these feelings

determined the nature of Samuel's relationship with the first king,

and set the two on an inevitable collision course as they struggled

for power.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AASOR — Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research

AJSL — American Journal of Semitic Languages

BASOR — Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research

BJRL — Bulletin of the John Rylands Library

CQR — Church Quarterly Review

HUCA — Hebrew Union College Annual

ICC — International Critical Commentary

IDB — Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible

JBL — Journal of Biblical Literature

JJS — Journal of Jewish Studies

JNESt — Journal of Near Eastern Studies

JPS — Jewish Publication Society

JQR — Jewish Quarterly Review

OT — Old Testament

OTL — Old Testament Library

ThStKr — Theologische Studien und Kritiken

ZAW — Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft

INTRODUCTION

Ever since I was a child studying the Bible in Hebrew school, the Book of Samuel has always been one of my favorite books. The images of Samuel, Saul, and David have fascinated me. Yet it was always Saul, in particular who aroused my sympathy.

As Israel's first king he had a most difficult task. His life was so sad and tragic because he was so noble and yet so pitiful. Yet Saul is usually analyzed and criticized for his faults by most historians. I wanted to discover for myself if this perception of Saul was fair.

After countless readings of the Book of Samuel and the secondary literature certain things remain as confusing as before. It is clear, however, that Samuel opposed the introduction of the monarchy in Israel, and that he reexpressed this opposition in his final address to the people. His attitude in the interim was not any different. He was anatagonistic towards the new king, and it is likely that Samuel never wanted Saul to succeed. Samuel was really no different from political leaders of today. He perceived the people's request for a king as a rejection of him and he took it very personally. He wanted to retain his control over Israel.

The sources do not cover up or conceal this reality. They merely wanted to show that these events did not occur in a happenstance manner, but that the developments during the formative stages of the monarchy unfolded as they did because this was according to God's consent.

CHAPTER ONE

PROBLEMS IN I SAMUEL: A SOURCE ANALYSIS

It has long been recognized that the books of Samuel contain several passages which appear in more than one form. Some sections contradict what appears elsewhere in the book. A number of explanations for the discrepancies have arisen over the years. The purpose of this chapter will to be review the theories which have been suggested to explain the problems arising from the repetitions and contradictions in Samuel. First, however, let us examine what the textual problems are.

The first book of Samuel is a chronicle of the development of the monarchy in Israel. It covers the fall of Shiloh, the rise of Samuel, the selection of Saul as king over Israel, his downfall, and the rise of David. The central figures of the drama are Samuel, variously described as a prophet, a priest, a judge and a seer; Saul, the man who becomes Israel's first king; and David, the young fighter who is destined to succeed Saul.

There are three different stories which tell how Saul became King. In the first story (9:1-10:16) Saul is a lad in search of his father's lost asses. Upon the recommendation of the young servant accompanying him, they go to consult the local seer, Samuel. God reveals to Samuel that this young man, Saul is the one to be anointed King. In a private scene which takes place after a banquet, Samuel anoints Saul as "nagid." Following his anointment, Saul comes upon a band of prophets and prophesies with them.

1

The second story (10:17-27) begins with the elders repeating their request of Samuel that a king be appointed. Samuel reluctantly consents and conducts a lottery among the tribes. Saul, who is hiding among the baggage is the one who is chosen. A third story (11) tells of the attack on Jabesh Gilead by the Ammonites. They send out a message to their fellow countrymen asking for help. Saul hears of the call and rallies troops to their defense. After he prevails in the battle, the people decide to take him to Gilgal to proclaim him King. Samuel is present in this narrative and is involved in the "renewal" of the kingdom.[1]

Saul's rejection is preserved in two different accounts. In the first one (13) he is told by Samuel that his descendants will not succeed him as rulers of Israel. This occurs because Saul angered Samuel by offering a sacrifice before going into battle against the Philistines. The other rejection story is predicated upon Saul's failure to carry out the ḥerem against the Amalekites. Here again Samuel is the one who is displeased with Saul. Both incidents occur at Gilgal, are centered around a battle, involve a clash between Saul and Samuel, and are a form of rejection of the first king. Yet neither story's dialogue refers to the other. Although the stories can be viewed as complementing one another, as one tells merely that none of his offspring will sit on the throne and the other reveals that Saul's reign is taken from him and that he will be replaced by someone worthier, they cannot be seen as a unit from the same source. There is no indication that they are segments designed to form a whole.

Another instance of something appearing more than once is the saying, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"[2] Both of the explanations

accompanying this popular saying (chapters 10 and 19) link Saul with the prophetic bands which practiced ecstatic prophesy. In the first version Saul meets the prophets on the road after his anointment by Samuel and joins them in their activity. In the second, Saul begins prophesying after he arrives at Naioth in the pursuit of David. David sought refuge from Saul by joining Samuel. Saul's messengers are unsuccessful in apprehending David as they are each brought under the influence of a prophetic trance. Finally, Saul decides to go out after David on his own, and he too is stricken by the prophetic spirit. After each instance, the narrative states that because of that particular incident people say,

הגם שאול בנביאים

"Is Saul also among the prophets?"

(10:12, 19:24)

Whereas the first of these stories shows that the prophetic spirit is a manifestation of the infusion of the spirit of God in the newly designated leader, the second shows Saul in a derogatory way.[3]

David is introduced to Saul on three occasions, and under different pretenses each time. At first, David is introduced to Saul as a young musician who will soothe the king's moods (16:14-23). When no one comes forth to fight Goliath the Philistine, David steps forth and offers his services. The exchange between David and Saul is not one of two who know each other (17:31-40). Then after David has slain Goliath, Saul asked his commander,

מי-זה הנער אבנר

" Whose son is that boy, Abner? "

When Saul speaks with David after his victory over Goliath, it is as if the two have never met before (17:55-58).

3

There is also another subtle form of duplication in the stories detailing the selection of Saul and of David. Both the story of the selection of Saul by lot (10:17-27) and the account in which Samuel sets out to anoint David (16:1-13) have a similarity in style. An element, which I call the "Cinderella factor" is present in both stories. When Samuel conducts the lottery among the people, the choice is narrowed down to the tribe of Benjamin and then to the family of the Matrites. Although Saul was indicated, he was not present at the time, and so Samuel asks, "Has anyone else come here?" (10:22). Similarly, when Samuel goes out to Jesse's family, Jesse shows him all of his sons except David. Samuel asks, "Are these all the boys you have?" (16:11). The chart below shows how the story of David's anointment by Samuel in chapter 16 resembles two of the stories of Saul's selection as king.

9:1-10:16	10:17-27	16
Samuel has come to the village to participate in a sacrificial feast. (9:12)		Samuel goes to Bethelem to make a sacrificial feast. (16:2-5)
Saul went on a journey and found Samuel.		Samuel set out on a journey and found David.
Without specifically indicating who it will be, God tells Samuel that someone has been chosen to be king. (9:15-16) Then when the designee arrives, God reveals to Samuel, "This is the man that I told you would govern my people." (9:17)		Without specifically indicating who will be chosen, God tells Samuel to go to the family of Jesse, for one of the members of family will become king. (16:1) When David arrives, God tells Samuel, "Rise and anoint him, for this is the one." (16:12)

	Saul's height distinguishes him from others. (10:23-24)	God tells Samuel not to pay attention to stature or appearance. (16:7)
	Saul is not on the scene at the time of the selection, as he was hiding in the baggage. Samuel asks, "Has anyone else come here?" Saul had to be summoned. (10:21-22)	David was not present when Samuel arrived to select a king from Jesse's sons. Samuel asks David's father, "Are these all the boys you have?" David who is not present, had to be summoned. (16:10-13)
Saul is searching for his father's asses when chosen by Samuel.		David is tending to his father's flock when he is chosen.
Saul is from the smallest of the tribes, and is therefore an unlikely candidate. (9:21)		David is the youngest of the sons. He is presented to Samuel last, because he is an unlikely candidate. (16:10-12)
	The selection process is one which relies on narrowing down the choices by a process of elimination. The lot first indicates the tribe, then the family of Matrites, and finally Saul.	David is selected only after the other brothers have been eliminated. First Eliab is presented, then Shammah, and finally David.
The "Spirit of the Lord" rested on the new king after his selection. (10:6, 9-10)		The "Spirit of the Lord" overwhelms David after his anointment. (16:13)

Other aspects of David's life are also related more than once.

Three times David is offered a daughter of Saul to marry (18:17-19; 28:21b;

28:22-29a). He flees from Saul, who is trying to kill him, more than

once. Michal, Saul's daughter and David's wife, helped David by placing

terraphim in his bed. She disguised them to look like a body and

thus deceived Saul's messengers into believing that a body was in

the bed   (20:27-33). Yet Saul is offended that David is absent from

the king's table in another scene. The King acts as if he has not tried to kill David, and as if David has not already escaped (20:27-33).[4] On three separate occasions David made a covenant with Jonathan (18:3; 20:16, 42; 23:18).

During his adventures as a fugitive from Saul in the wilderness, David goes to Achish, the king of Gath twice. In one version (21:11-16) he seems to have wandered into the hands of Achish accidentally, without any intention of remaining with him. In order to get away from a dangerous situation, he feigned insanity. In the other version of David's stay with Achish of Gath, David actually defected to the Philistine leader. David and his men fought loyally with Achish's troops. Achish was so sure of David's loyalty that he appointed David as his peronal bodyguard for life. He was prepared to commission his vassal to lead a battle against Israel. Luckily for David, the other Philistine warlords would not allow it, because they did not have as much faith in David (27:1-28:2;29:1-11). Once again, the second story bears similarities to the first one in that David is in the Philistine camp of Achish, yet its context differs substantially. Once again, there is no overlapping reference in one story to the other one.

Elsewhere in I Samuel, David displayed magnanimity towards Saul on two occasions. David spared Saul's life twice, when he easily could have killed the king. When in pursuit of David at En-gedi, Saul entered a cave to relieve himself. Unbeknownst to him, it was the very cave where David and his men were hiding (24:2-23). David cut a corner of Saul's coat to leave a sign that he had been there, and to indicate that the harm could have been much greater. David overruled his men who urged him to harm Saul. He then spoke directly with Saul in a touching dialogue

(24:2-23). A similar incident occurs at Jeshimon in the wilderness of Ziph. Again David counselled one of his men not to harm the Lord's anointed. This time, however, Saul is encamped with his men. David again left a sign that he was in a good position to attack his pursuer. He took Saul's spear and water jar to serve as a sign of his proximity to Saul. Again the two have a touching dialogue in which Saul admits that he has been wrong to try to take David's life and suspect his loyalty (26:1-25). As in the previous examples, there is no indication of any connection between the two incidents, despite their obvious similarities.

At the end of the first book of Samuel, Saul commits suicide atop Mt. Gilboa to avoid capture by the Philistines. The story is sensitively told and captures the sense of drama, abandonment, and tragedy of the scene. The following chapter (II Samuel 1) contains a report of an Amalekite who tells David that he was the one who slayed Saul. He says that Saul was lingering and had not yet expired. Saul requested that the Amalekite, who happened to be at Mt. Gilboa at the time end his suffering.[5]

Some of the stories, such as the Goliath story are woven together very well and it is difficult to separate the various strands. The crowning of Saul at Gilgal contains several harmonizing elements, namely the inclusions of Samuel in 11:7 and 11:12-14. For the most part, however, there is little or no attempt to harmonize the variations.

Immediately after David spares Saul's life, the two reach an understanding and reconciliation. The last words of the scene are:

ויאמר שאול אל דוד   ברוך אתה בני דוד גם עשה תעשה וגם

יכול תוכל, וילך דוד לדרכו ושאול שב למקומו.

Saul answered David, "May you be blessed my son
David. You shall achieve, and you shall prevail."
David then went his way, and Saul returned home.
(26:25)

Yet the words which immediately follow this scene make it seem as if

there has not been any reconciliation.

ויאמר דוד אל לבו עתה אספה יום אחד ביד שאול
אין לי טוב כי המלט אמלט אל ארץ פלשתים ונואש
ממני שאול לבקשני עוד בכל גבול ישראל ונמלטתי
מידו.

David said to himself, "Some day I shall certainly
perish at the hands of Saul. The best thing for me
is to flee to the land of the Philistines; Saul will then
give up hunting me throughout the territory of Israel,
and I will escape him." (27:1)

David then defects to the Philistines to avoid Saul's reach, despite the

reconciliation achieved in the previous chapter.

Although the reader is informed,

ולא יסף שמואל לראות את שאול עד יום מותו.

Samuel never saw Saul again to the day of his death.
(15:35)

19:18-24 tells of what happened when Saul went out to meet Samuel at

Naioth and how Saul prophesied in his presence there.

As a result of these difficulties in the text, numerous theories

have been developed to account for the problems. All of them recognize

that the books of Samuel are composites of some sort. Beyond that

area of agreement which is a basis of all research into the sources of

Samuel, there is great variation. Let us now see what theories have been

developed to resolve these issues.

The first to suggest that the repetition of passages could be

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understood in terms of the existence of parallel strands of material in parts of the book were Eichorn in 1824[6] and Thenius in 1842.[7] Wellhausen (1871)[8] took their initial observations one step further and postulated that two main strands were at work, not just in certain areas of Samuel, but throughout the entire first book. He determined that one was an early source and one was a later source. The early material is typified by a neutral attitude towards the institution of the monarchy, and is the more reliable of the two strands. Saul's selection by Samuel in 9:1-10:16 and chapter 11 represent the position of this source. The later strand depicts the request for a king as sinful (7;8; 10:17-27; 12; 15). The later source was deuteronomically influenced, and thus post-exilic. Wellhausen introduced the notion that the sources were redacted by a Deuteronomistic editor who shaped the narratives to conform to his outlook of history.

The theories which accord a role to the Deuteronomists state that a group of editors influenced by the ideas of the Book of Deuteronomy redacted   the major historical books of the Bible. They wrote in the post-exilic period, and sought to implant within the historical books their own theological perspective.[9]

Building on Wellhausen's work, Karl Budde's commentary to the Book of Samuel (1902)[10] also divided the material into two parallel strands. Budde's monumental work linked the two sources to the J and E authors of the Pentatuech. Budde likewise claimed that the older document was the more reliable one. According to the older document, identified with   J , a leader is needed to deliver Israel from the Philistine threat. Saul's appointment is regarded favorably. Samuel the seer is famous in a particular district. He anoints Saul and inspires him to act when

the occasion arises, which occurs when Jabesh Gilead is threatened a month later. It consists of 9:1-10;16,27b LXX; 11:1-11,14,15; 13; 15.

The later narrative, associated with E is critical of the monarchy. Here, Samuel is a judge who rules all of Israel. Due to the corruption of Samuel's sons and the desire to be like all the other nations, the people ask for a king. The proposition is viewed negatively. Samuel says that the demand is a repudiation of God. After much protest, he reluctantly consents to grant them a king. This source is prejudiced by an anti-monarchical attitude which developed later in Israel. It is deemed less reliable as a result of the later coloring of its outlook. In this account Saul is chosen by sacred lot at a national assembly convened by Samuel. It contains two speeches by Samuel pleading with the people in opposition to the monarchy (7; 8; 10:17-27; 12).

The J and E strata were combined by the Deuteronomist who shortened and left out portions of the material available to him. Some of the deleted portions were then re-inserted during the post-exilic period. According to Budde the Deuteronomist introduced the passages that point to Zadok in II Samuel and the second rejection of Saul in I Samuel 15.

Budde's work was of major importance in the scholarship on the Books of Samuel. His division of the sources and understanding of the composition of the narratives was widely accepted by scholars of the early 1900's. The basic premises of his evaluation served as the foundation for the work of scholars who followed him. Their theories had to be explained in light of his work. One lasting aspect of Budde's work was that most students of Samuel see an anti-monarchical trend in the narratives of chapters 8, 10:17-27, and 12. The material is seen as

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historically unreliable, in contrast to the earlier pro-monarchical source.

H. P. Smith's commentary of 1899[11] accepted the documentary hypothesis and identified the strands as early and late. But he rejected the belief that they were the product of J and E. Smith also believed that the earlier sources were the most reliable. The work of the Deuteronomist was minor, as he found the sources already adjusted to his philosophy.

S.R. Driver (1897)[12] says that the narratives were written by sources "allied" with J and E, but not by the same hands that were responsible for the Pentatuech. Two independent narratives were woven together. The later narrative was expanded by a writer whose style and point of view was similar to those of Deuteronomy and Judges.

As outlined at the outset of this chapter, some sections appear not twice, but thrice. Otto Eissfeldt feels that a two source theory was inadequate to explain all the variations in the text. He applied his three source theory of the Pentatuech to the books of Samuel.[13]

The E sections of chapters 7-15 are 7,8 and 12. They were at one time an uninterrupted sequence, to which other material was later added. The E source, a continuation of the E of the book of Judges and of the Hexateuch was colored by theological presuppositions. "E may be recognized, even more clearly in the books of Samuel than previously, as the reshaping into religious form of an older secular presentation."[14]

The rest of the material is divided between J and what Eissfeldt calls L, a lay source. L and J are nearer to the events than E. L is

the oldest narrative source in the Hexateuch. It is the most reliable
of all the sources, and views the monarchy as a divine gift from God.
It tells of the victories over the Ammonites and Philistines (10:21b-27;
11:1-5; 13; 14). The J material also views the monarchy as a gift
from God (9:1-10:16; 11:6a; 13:3ba, 4b-5, 7b-15a).

Other scholars also revised the Documentary Theory to account
for three sources. A. Lods[15] said that there are two sources contained
within the early source, the one favorable to the monarchy. In one of
these two, Saul overthrew the stele which the Philistines had erected
in his native town of Gibeah. As a result of the victory, the tribes
proclaimed him king at Gibeah. The coronation part of the story (14)
was lost. The story was accompanied by the type of popular legend
which people tell about the beginning of great leaders. Saul set out
to find his father's asses, and found the kingdom. Samuel, who secretly
anointed Saul implanted within him the idea of attacking the triumphal
stele of Gibea.

According to the second pro-monarchical version, Saul distinguished
himself by an encounter with Nahash, the king of the Ammonites.
After saving the city of Jabesh, the people hailed him as king at Gilgal.
After this success in his initial foray into the realm of battle he proceeded
to take on the Philistines, which is woven into chapter 14. One or both
of these histories may have had the story of Saul's birth (1:1ff). Saul's
birth story was later transferred to Samuel by the writers of the anti-
monarchical account.

The anti-monarchical account was influenced by the ideas of
later prophets. Here the request for a king came from the people. An

assembly at Mizpah was called, and the sacred lot indicated Saul as the choice to be king. Samuel's victory over the Philistines was devised (7) in order to show that the monarchy was an unnecessary intrusion. Included in these writings was the sparing of the Amalekite king by Saul (15) and the unfortunate consequences for Saul. In a similar vein, A.R.S. Kennedy's commentary[16] had already divided both the early and the late sources in two, and found four separate strands.

R.H. Pfeiffer believes that the original layer of the text was written by a single author who lived during the time of David and Solomon. The original parts included the Ark Narrative, the stories which show Saul's appointment in a favorable light, and other extensive portions of the narrative.[17] A secondary source reworked the original layer, making additions and emendations to the text. He labeled the later layers as hagadic, legends, stories, speeches. This material was inserted to glorify Samuel and David and to villify Eli and Saul.[18] Rather than view the late sources as a separate document, he prefers to see them as inserts, made to the original strata.

> It seems better to regard the late source not as a separate
> and independent document, even though several of its
> stories may have been in circulation before being incorporated
> in our book, but as the inception of that pious tampering
> with ancient historical work of which Chronicles, three
> or four centuries later, is the classical example.[19]

Rather than write a separate work, like Chronicles, they added their own improvements to the narrative as it existed. Due to the nature of the late emendations, it was unnecessary for the Deuteronomists to do much revising of the books.

Another school of scholars takes a different approach to the books of Samuel. They take the Deuteronomic theory of history a step further

than Wellhausen or Budde. According to the adherents of this theory, the books of Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings bear no connection to the books of the Pentatuech which precede them. Deuteronomy-Kings is one unified historical unit compiled in Judah about 550 B.C.E. It was composed of material which had existed in independent sections. These segments were subjected to a redaction which incorporated the Deuteronomistic perception of history.

The Deuteronomists would insert editorial comments or summaries of a period which evaluated the performance of the leaders and the people. The criteria for the evaluation was whether or not they had been loyal and zealous for Yhwh. Speeches by major leaders were also used to teach their ideas. A major concern of theirs was that the people remain loyal to God's ways and not adopt the practices of the Canaanites.

Martin Noth was the major advocate of the existence of a Deuteronomistic school of editors which composed a work which was separate from the first four books of the Pentatuech.[20] The compilers used material already available to them and reworked it into one continuous narrative tracing Israel's history from Horeb.

Both the theorists who follow Budde and Wellhausen and those who follow Noth assign substantial sections of Samuel to a Deuteronomistic hand. They both contend that the Deuteronomists omitted certain material which was later re-inserted. Whereas Budde would assign material which preceded the Deuteronomist to J and E, Noth would say that these were independent stories which were gathered by the Deuteronomist.

Most scholars do not go as far as Noth in ascribing so much of a role to the Deuteronomists in Samuel. Many scholars who believe

that the Deuteronomists did redact major portions of the historical books of the Bible question the extent of the work of the Deuteronomists in Samuel. Since there are so few clearly identifiable Deuteronomistic sections, some even wonder if they were at all involved in the editing and compiling of I Samuel.[21]

Some have sought to solve the problems in the text of Samuel by a method which does not rely on the traditional documentary analysis.

J. Schäfer (1907)[22] and A. Schulz (1923)[23] said that the first book of Samuel was the product of a Mizpah source and a Gilgal source. These two sources were reworked into a Deuteronomistic framework and were subsequently edited. Most of the scenes in the book involving Samuel and Saul center around major localities. The story wherein Saul is selected by lot (10:17-27) is a reluctant concession by Samuel to the people's wishes. Chapter 7 which describes Samuel as the supreme ruler of Israel takes place at Mizpah also. The Mizpah sanctuary was the seat of the anti-monarchical tradition.

Saul is crowned as king by the people of Gilgal after his stunning victory over the Ammonites (11). This place was the seat of the pro-monarchical tradition. Yet Saul's rejection also occurred at Gilgal (13,15).

H. W. Hertzberg traced a bulk of the narratives of Samuel to various sources. He links chapter 8 to the preceding chapter which takes place at Mizpah. The stories emanating from Mizpah were particularly critical of the first king and monarchy in general.[24] In addition to the major strands of Mizphah and Gilgal, he identified chapter 14, the defeat of the Philistines and the incident with Jonathan and Saul to Gibeah, another source favorable to Saul. The selection

of David by Samuel (16:1-13) probably came from Bethlehem by way of Gilgal. Furthermore, the villages in the north saw the tragic element in Saul's life. Thus the story of his visit to the witch of En Dor is told with sympathy towards the first king.

A. Bentzen[25] said that in addition to the Mizpah and Gilgal strands, there was a bulk of material containing the Ark Narrative and the story of David's succession, known as David's Court History. These two stories were linked with a cultic origin.

Those who accepted the "locale theory" do not rely on it exclusively. They attribute a role to the Deuteronomists or to other sources as well.

Another direction the scholarship has taken has been to evaluate the sources in terms of smaller unrelated segments rather than continuous strands. In an essay published in 1892, Kittel[26] said that Samuel and Kings were a complex of stories of larger and smaller size. He contended that the books were a compilation of hero stories, royal stories, ark stories, prophet stories, and the like.

In a similar vein, Hugo Gressman developed a "fragment hypothesis."[27] According to his perception, the books of Samuel are a loose compilation of narratives of varying sizes. The stories existed first as independent units, and were not combined into sources. He de-emphasizes study of the evolutionary stages of development of the book. He ignores the problem of how the narratives came into existence and came together. Since he avoided the issue of how the book assumed its final form, his theory did not gain wide acceptance. Caspari[28] is one who follows his line of reasoning.

In a somewhat similar line of analysis, Weiser[29] and Fohrer[30] contended that the book contains traditions from various circles which were later linked together without any attempt to harmonize the differences. Weiser does not see the book as the product of a few narratives devoted to covering a span of time and events. He sees the book as the conglomeration of smaller fragments confined to a particular theme.

Historical consciousness increased during the Davidic period. Groups of narratives may have been recited orally within the framework of the royal court. The rise of the prophetic groups was another factor which focused attention on Israel's past, and helped to shape the literature. The prophetic interpretations of history state that the monarchy was an aberration and undesirable in Israel. There was little need for Deuteronomistic revision of the work since the prophetic circles shared a similar outlook on history. Weiser identified stages of development of the narratives which eventually came together to form the book of Samuel.

1. Formation of individual traditions by the people, and the court--Saul's wars, 11:14; the Ark Narrative, 4-6.
2. Comprehensive accounts based on existing traditions-- rise of Saul, 9; 13; 16:14-II Samuel 5.
3. Collection and combination of accounts and arranging them chronologically, forming a consecutive narrative from Eli to the death of David.
4. The all-important reshaping of the traditions by the prophetic school into a complete, theologically interpreted history--1-3; 7; 8; 10:17-27; 12; 15; 16:1-II Samuel 13:28.
5. Deuteronomistic revision.
6. Finally, any later expansions added to the text, such as the poetic pieces--Hannah's psalm, 2:1-10, David's songs in II Samuel.

Weiser writes:

In view of the diversity of motives and points of view in the passages under discussion we must take into account a many stranded process of utilizing and shaping the traditions which developed over a long period and set in

at different points and different times...Therefore we
must start to explain the formation of the books of
Samuel by beginning, not as in the case of the Pentatuech
with vertical sections out of the traditional material,
but rather with horizontal literary sections, i.e. with
greater or smaller groups of narratives which are not
so much intermingled with each other as strung after
each other, partly on a very loose thread.[31]

In addition to the theories already mentioned, there are some scholars who attribute the various narrative strands to a Samuel, a Saul, and a David source. Thenius said that l-7 was a history of Samuel, and that there were two Saul sources, one favorable, and the other one not favorable.

M.H. Segal said there were three sources, each one preoccupied with a major character.[32] Saul was viewed by his contemporaries as an outstanding leader, and was subordinated to Samuel and David by a later evaluation. Saul was anointed privately and then later publicly proclaimed king after the Ammonite victory. The stories about Saul (9-10:16; ll; 13-14; 28; 31) were written by a Benjamite who wrote during the reign of David or Solomon.

The author of the David source is identified as Jehoshaput ben Ahilud,"מזכיר" to David and Solomon. The writer has a great deal of admiration for David, but feels no compunctions about relaying unfavorable tales about David. Because of its honesty, Segal says the material should be regarded as authentic and not invented. The stories of Saul, David, and also the Ark narrative each had a separate existence before being incorporated into the final compilation. The final compiling of the sources was done by the same person who was the author of the Samuel document.

The Samuel source was composed by a member of the prophetic

school. The author adapted the stories before him. One of the main emphases is Samuel's persistent opposition to the rule of Israel by a human king. The anti-Saul feelings expressed in this account were genuine ones which go all the way back to Samuel. They were not fabricated by the author or redactor.

Much of the second book of Samuel is written from a perspective contemporaneous with the events. As a result, many scholars believe that I Samuel 16 on comprises a Court History of David. T.C.G. Thornton[33] goes one step further and contends that the major motive behind the composing of books of Samuel was to assert the right of the Davidic dynasty to rule over Israel.

About the only source of certain agreement among these different theories is that there are problems in the text, and that the book is the result of a composite of sources. There is a wide range of opinion as to who those sources were, what motivated them to write, and when they wrote. The next chapter will consider these theories and evaluate them in light of this writer's considerations.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. The inclusion of Samuel in this chapter is widely recognized as
    a later insertion. The narrative reads well without the verses
    which bring in Samuel, and it is obvious that a later editor
    wanted to harmonize this chapter with those which preceded it.

2. All quotations from the Bible are from I Samuel unless otherwise
    specified. The translations are from The Prophets, the New JPS
    translation of the Holy Scriptures, H. Louis Ginsberg, editor-in-
    chief, Jewish Publication Society of America: Philadelphia, 1978.

3. For a good thorough discussion of the sections associating Saul
    with ecstatic prophecy, see, Victor Eppstein, "Was Saul also among
    the Prophets?" ZAW, 8 (1969), pp. 287-304. See also James
    Williams, "The Prophetic Father," JBL 85 (1966), pp. 344-348.

4. John Mauchline notes that 19:10 should be included as an escape
    by David, thus bringing to three the number of times that David
    escapes from Saul's presence. John Mauchline, I and II Samuel.
    (New Century Bible), Butler and Tanner: London, 1971, p. 149.

5. This is about the only instance when a repeated passage has a
    connection with its companion passage. In this instance the two
    accounts do not necessarily contradict each other, but may complement
    one another. It is possible that the Amalekite's story is not another
    version of the death of Saul. It could be what an Amalekite
    messenger actually told David of the death of Saul. He may have
    thought that by making up the account that he was the one who
    rid David of Saul, he would be thanked by David and receive
    a reward.

6. Johann Eichorn, Einleitung ins Alte Testament, 1824.

7. Otto Thenius, Die Bücher Samuel, 1842.

8. Julius Wellhausen, Der Text der Bücher Samuelis untersucht, 1871.

9. For more on the Deuteronomists, see below, pp. 13 -15 .

10. Karl Budde, Die Bücher Richter und Samuel, J.C.B. Mohr; Tübingen,
    1902.

11. H.P. Smith, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books
    of Samuel (ICC), 1899.

12. S.R. Driver, Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament,
    1897, (Meridian Library Edition: New York, 1956), pp. 178 ff.

13. Otto Eissfeldt, The Old Testament: An Introduction, translated
by Peter Ackroyd, Harper and Row: New York, 1965. pp. 271-281.

14. Ibid, p. 273.

15. A. Lods, Israel, from its Beginnings to the Middle of the Eighth
Century, translated by S. H. Hooke, Alfred A. Knopf: New York,
1932, pp. 352-356.

16. A.R.S. Kennedy, Samuel, (Century Bible), Henry Fronde: New York,
1905.

17. He identified the following sections as the original layer:
4:1-7:1; 9:1-10:16; 10:27b-11:11, 15; 13:2-7a, 15b-18, 23;
14:1-46, 52; 16:14-23; 18:6-9, 20,22-29a; 19:11-17; 20(?);
21:1-10; 11:6-23; 23:1,5-14a; 25:2-44; 26; 27; 29; 30; 28; 31.
R.H. Pfeiffer, "Midrash in the Books of Samuel," Quantulacumque,
Waverly Press: Baltimore, 1937, pp. 303-316.

18. Pfeiffer in the above study identifies the following sections as the
later additions of the secondary source:
1; 2:11-26; 3; 7:3-17; 8; 10:17-27a; 11:12-13; 15; 17; 18:1-6a,
10-16, 21, 30; 19:1-10, 18-24; 21:11-16; 22:1-5; 23;19-25.

19. R. H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, Harper and
Brothers: New York, 1941, pp. 365-366.

20. Martin Noth, "Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien," (2nd edition),
Max Niemeyer: Tübingen, 1957.

21. Driver, Introduction; Eissfeldt, The OT; Pfeiffer, Introduction;
are a few of the many scholars who accept the existence of a
Deuteronomistic school of redactors, but who minimize their
involvement in the books of Samuel.

22. After extensive searching, I was unable to find the specific
source where Schäfer's work appeared.

23. A. Schulz, Die Bücher Samuel, Aschendorff: Munster, 1919/1920.

24. H. W. Hertzberg, I and II Samuel, (Old Testament Library),
translated into English by J.S. Bouden, SCM Press: London,
1964.

25. A.Bentzen, "The Cultic Use of the Story of the Ark in Samuel,"
JBL 67 (1948), pp. 37-53.

26. R. Kittel, "Die pentateuchischen Urkunden in den Büchern Richter
und Samuel," ThStKr 65, (1892) pp. 47-71.

27. Hugo Gressman, _Schriften des Alte Testament_, (Vol. I, part 2).
Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht: Göttingen, 1921.

28. W. Caspari, _Die Samuelbücher_, A. Deichertsche: Leipzig, 1926.

29. Arthur Weiser, _The Old Testament: Its Formation and Development_,
translated by Dorothea Barton, Association Press: New York, 1961,
pp. 161-162.

30. Georg Fohrer, _Introduction to the Old Testament_, translated by
David Green, Abingdon Press: New York, 1968.

31. Weiser, _The OT_, pp. 161-162.

32. M.H. Segal, "Studies in the Books of Samuel," _JQR_, 6 (1915-1916),
pp. 267-302, 555-387;8 (1917-1918), pp. 75-100. _The Pentatuech_,
Magnes Press: Jerusalem, 1967.

33. T.C.G. Thornton, "Studies in Samuel," _CQR_, 168 (1967), pp. 416-423.

CHAPTER TWO

PREVIOUS SCHOLARSHIP: A CRITIQUE AND SOME NEW PROPOSALS

With such a wide variety of hypotheses, it is difficult for a student to choose a theory which adequately explains the questions raised by the difficulties in the text. It is no small wonder that some scholars have thrown up their hands in frustration. In a speech at Hebrew Union College, Professor William Albright said:

> After plodding through many efforts to analyze the sources of the Samuel tradition I have given up on literary analysis; we simply do not possess the necessary data for such analysis... What is the truth? Obviously we cannot simply distribute these discordant points of view among artificial "sources," or flatter ourselves that we can select among them to suit our notion of historical probability...In the absence of a fixed Hebrew text it is simply impossible to analyze the literary composition of Samuel with any hope of success. [1]

With these words of caution in mind, let us proceed to evaluate the merits of the theories already suggested.

One of the first major trends in Samuel scholarship was to divide the book into an early and late source. The early source was then identified with J and the late source with E. There are a number of reasons for discarding this theory.

The major pillar of the documentary theory is the use of different names for the deity by different authors. The J source can be identified by his use of Yhwh and the E source by his use of Elohim when referring to God. M.H. Segal has shown that the names are actually

used interchangeably and synonymously.[2] The story of Samuel meeting Saul for the first time and anointing him employs the name Yhwh three times and once in a compound expression. Elohim appears three times in the same story, and eight times in compound expressions. The supposedly anti-monarchical account of the selection of 10:17-27 is attributed to E, the later source. Yet this section contains the name Yhwh seven times, and Elohim occurs only once. In 14:45 both divine names appear. He cites other numerous examples showing the interchangeability of the pronouns. A passage such as 28:15 which says "Elohim is departed" is followed by 28:16, "Yhwh is departed." The words "The spirit of God rested on him," or a similar phrase are used ten times in I Samuel. Here, too we see the interchangeability of the names for God. 10:6 and 10:10 are in the same narrative unit (10:1-10:16), yet the first reference is to "the spirit of Yhwh," and the second is to "the spirit of Elohim." Chapter 16 employs the term in four succeeding verses. In the first two, we read, "the spirit of Yhwh," (16:13,14), and in the second two verses of this same section we read, "the spirit of Elohim " (16:15,16). Lest one object by pointing out that these latter two references are to "an evil spirit," and therefore they are used here with Elohim, it should be noted that 19:19 speaks of an evil spirit also, but says that Yhwh is the source. Different verbs are used in conjunction with the term for God without any consistent pattern.

Another major assumption of the documentary theory is that all the passages opposing the monarchy stemmed from one source and that all the passages favoring it come from another source. Yet it is not right

to assume such a monolithic approach to literature. Surely, an author or compiler of traditions is capable of presenting more than one perspective. There may have been more than one reason the people wanted a monarchy, and the same narrator could have presented more than one opinion on this score as well.

The J and E theorists accredit a great deal of creativity to the Pentatuechal work of the E authors. It is unusual therefore that these same authors who wrote the epoch of Israel's history were mere compilers of material from the time of Samuel. For according to Budde, et al, in the books of Samuel, J and E merely brought together already existing tales.

Furthermore this explanation does not clarify why the final redactor did not eliminate the repetitive portions or harmonize the contradictory ones. If the earlier, pro-monarchial strand was subjected to a final redaction by an anti-monarchial source, why were any vestiges of the positive position left at all?

R.H. Pfeiffer has concluded:

> How the early and late source were joined together is not perfectly clear. In any case, the result is quite different from the union of J and E in Genesis and Judges. In no cases are the two sources closely woven into a single narrative, and little if anything has been lost in the process of combining them. Moreover, no effort was made to harmonize the divergent characterizations and stories of the two documents or to explain, as R^{JE} does, the presence of parallel accounts of identical events such as the coronation of Saul, and in the final escape of David from the court.
>
> It is true that in numerous harmonistic notes an attempt is made to eliminate some of the worst inconsistencies, but these notes lack the finesse of R^{JE}'s explanation as to why Hagar was driven out twice by Abraham...They are far too abrupt, clumsy, and obvious to be editorial.[3]

A. Weiser remarks that the presentation of history in the Torah

by J and E differs from the manner in which the history is told in Samuel. Rather than "vertical sections" tracing an entire period of time, there are "horizontal literary sections." Each of the narratives is concerned with a specific incident, and does not seem to be part of a larger scheme.[4]

Eissfeldt's J,E,L theory is untenable for the same reasons already mentioned in relation to the J,E hypothesis. If the lines of distinction between J and E are fuzzy, they are not any clearer if another source is added, especially since Eissfeldt's views are dependent on the existence of a J and an E source.

Martin Noth's Deuteronomistic Theory of history says that the J and E sources were not at all involved in the composition of Deuteronomy-Kings. Even those who do not accept as radical a view as Noth, believe that the Deuteronomists were involved in the final stages of the editing of Samuel. Yet just as we saw that one of the pillars of the J,E theory, the distinctions between usage of Yhwh and Elohim by the different authors does not apply to Samuel, so too the major dimensions of the Deuteronomistic Theory do not hold up when applied to Samuel.

The Deuteronomistic style is easily identifiable because it is used so extensively in the historical books of the Bible. Editorial comments which pass judgment on the king or the people are frequently used. Through these comments the Deuteronomists evaluate whether or not the behavior of the kings and the people measure up to their standards. Typical of the type of statement found in Joshua and Judges is:

ויספו בני ישראל לעשות הרע בעיני ה׳ ויחזק ה׳
את עגלון מלך מואב על ישראל על כי עשו הרע בעיני
ה׳.

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> The Israelites again did what was offensive to the
> Lord and because they did what was offensive to the
> Lord, the Lord let King Eglon of Moab prevail over
> Israel. (Judges 3:12).[5]

This statement shows the way they described the actions of the people,

and it also shows how they interpreted historical events. King Eglon

prevailed over Israel because the people did what was offensive to God.

An example of the type of statement found in Kings is:

<div dir="rtl">

ויעש שלמה הרע בעיני ה׳ ולא מלא אחרי ה׳

כדוד אביו,

</div>

> "Solomon did what was displeasing to the Lord and did
> not remain loyal to the Lord like his father David."
> (1 Kings 11:6)[6]

Despite the wide use of these types of comments in the Books of

Joshua, Judges, and Kings, they are curiously absent in the books

of Samuel. Not only are these types of statements not found in Samuel,

but the philosophy and outlook they express are also not found in Samuel.

A major concern of the Deuteronomists was to show that failure to

worship <u>Yhwh</u> exclusively brings national disaster, as illustrated by the

above citation from Judges. Yet none of the troubles that befell Israel

during the period of Saul's reign are described as resulting from

infidelity. The total devotion to the Lord and the repentance for any

sins that may have been committed were of fundamental importance to

the Deuteronomists. Saul displayed unquestionable loyalty to the

belief that <u>Yhwh</u> is God   (11:6-7; 13:8-12). He repented for not

executing all of the Amalekites as he had been commanded to do

(15:24-31). Despite the fact then that Saul acted in accordance with

the Deuteronomistic code of conduct, by his devotion to God and his

repentance for his wrongdoings, he was not favorably presented in

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the sources. There is an incongruity here, for if the book was subjected to a Deuteronomistic redaction, and if Saul acted in accordance with their standards, then he should have received a more favorable portrayal in the book. There is no concluding evaluation of Saul or David in terms of the zealousness for Yhwh, as there is for the other kings.

Another frequent comment by the Deuteronomists is to say that the people practiced idolatry. This was a means of condeming their way of life, as in Joshua (Joshua 24), Judges (Judges 10:6), Kings (1 Kings 15:4-5). It is interesting to note the absence of any reference to a reversion to idolatry during Saul's or David's reign. Its absence could be an oversight, but that is unlikely because the Deuteronomists were so consistent in applying this judgment to show that a particular reign was disfavored.

Only two passages in Samuel can be linked with any certainity to the style of the Deuteronomists. Chapter 13 opens with the type of chronological note that is frequently used by the Deuteronomists.

> בן שנה שאול במלכו ושתי שנים מלך על ישראל
> Saul was...years old when he became king, and he
> reigned over Israel two years. (13:1)[7]

Chapter 14 ends with the type of conclusion that is a trademark of the Deuteronomists. It is a summary of the battles of Saul, and supplies chronological and genealogical information (14:47-52). With the exception of these two sections, however, it is hard to find any other verses in 1 Samuel which was written in the Deuteronomistic style.

Even those who believe there was a Deuteronomistic redaction of the historical books of the Bible recognize that the proof of their activity in Samuel is nil. Driver,[8] Pfeiffer,[9] and Fohrer,[10] to name a

few, are scholars who question the exent of the influence of the Deuteronomists on Samuel. Fohrer typifies the thinking of these scholars, "The traces of Deuteronomistic revision which the books of Samuel underwent are less in evidence than in the books of Joshua and Judges."[11] Fohrer also raises a valid point when he observes that the contradictory views expressed in Samuel were not subordinated to a controlling principle by framework passages as was done in Judges and Kings.[12]

It cannot be denied that similar ideas are represented in parts of I Samuel and Deuteronomy. Samuel's speeches in 8 and 12 are unequivocally opposed to the institution of kingship in Israel. Yet rather than assume that these speeches were influenced by Deuteronomistic editors, the converse could just as well be true—Perhaps these very speeches by Samuel influenced the ideas of the later prophets and the Deuteronomists.[13] It is possible that Samuel made these speeches, or a very similar message to his people.[14]

It is clear that the first book of Samuel does not fit the pattern of the other books in the Deuteronomy-Kings series in either style or content.

The locale theory introduced by Schäfer and Schulz, and developed by Hertzberg holds that the different cultic sites preserved their own accounts of the story of Samuel and Saul. The theory is appealing because so many of the episodes have strong associations with one geographic location or another. Much of the action revolves around the major areas–Mizpah, Gilgal, Ramah, and Gibeah. Yet a major flaw exists with this theory as well.

The problem arises especially in relation to the traditions of Gilgal.

Of all three of the accounts of the selection of Saul, the one which takes place at Gilgal is the one most favorable to him. Hertzberg says that Gilgal was the site of the pro-Saul feelings.[15] And yet Gilgal is also the place where Saul is rejected by Samuel, in two different stories. Although there are inserts into the narratives which afford Saul the chance to explain his actions, he is presented as in the wrong in both episodes.

Furthermore, if the point of this theory is that each cultic site had its own set of traditions about the rise of the monarchy, it is unclear why the same place would have the only two versions, of Saul's fall. It is conceivable that a story about Saul's inauguration and rejection would be preserved at the same site because they would comprise a full unit in a saga about King Saul. But why would the same place have two distinct versions of this event--two stories which are similar and yet significantly dissimilar.

One final difficulty with this theory is that it does not present a full picture of the development of the narratives. It does not explain how the various sources were brought together. We also have no way of determining which parts of the various traditions were used in the final edition and which were discarded. A. Lods, for example, says that the coronation of Saul at Geba has been lost.[16]

It is unlikely that the book is a compilation of a Samuel, a David and a Saul source. Each individual is presented in many different ways. Samuel alone appears as a prophet, a seer, and a judge.

Having found fault with so many of the theories, we wonder, what remains? The suggestion that the narratives existed first as individual fragments, i.e. as independent units and then went through later stages

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of revision is the most plausible explanation of how the book of Samuel came into being.

> There can hardly be any other explanation than that here quite dissimilar literary traditions originating in different circles have been placed side by side without adjusting the differences between them.[17]

The book shows a keen awareness of the topography of the areas described (24:3), and seems to be written contemporaneous with the events.[18] And yet, the narratives have obviously gone through some editing and are not in their original form. The sudden intrusion of the Ark Narrative in chapters 4-6, and its subsequent conclusion in the second book, the weaving together of the several sources who composed the story of David and Goliath, are a few examples of late editing.[19]

It is difficult to determine with any degree of certainity who was responsible for preserving or composing the individual fragments. It may have been cultic localities, or prophetic circles, or court historians, or factional elements who were the originators of the traditions. Indeed, we may never satisfactorily unravel the layers of this great book. Form criticism enables us to divide the narratives into literary units. It allows us to see breaks within the narrative and determine which verses may be secondary inserts.[20] Yet this limited information and subjective method does not let us see who was responsible for writing and relaying the literature.

The attempts to harmonize differences in the sections are rare. For the most part, there is a stringing together of the sources. Chapter 11 is the only chapter that seems to have been consciously reworked with the purpose of achieving a consistency with what precedes it. Although 15:35 reads:

<div dir="rtl">

ולא יסף שמואל לראות את שאול עד יום מותו

</div>

> Samuel never saw Saul again to the day of his death.
> (15:35).

The two met again at Naioth when David goes there to escape Saul

(19:18-24). This lack of concern for contradictions is the norm.

But perhaps our efforts are misdirected. It may be wrong to

assume that harmonization should be a primary concern for the redactor.

It may have been his purpose, or his mandate to transmit the traditions

as he received them. After all, by the time the material reached

the final redactor, it had already gone through the changes made by

previous editors.[21]

> Now what definite results can be expected from all
> this intensive criticism? Where is it likely to lead us?
> Can we hope for anything definite or satisfying? Even
> if we can succeed in integrating the material into two,
> three, or four or more narrative strands or sources, does
> its accomplishment solve anything? We know that the
> compiler has made use of material drawn from a number of
> sources, but do not know whether he has made use of the
> whole of each source. If not, how much has he left out,
> and might not that abandoned material, had it been :
> introduced, have thrown an entirely new light on the
> whole subject? That possibility must overshadow any
> results obtained, and fill us with apprehension. Would
> it not be wiser to try and discover what the compiler had
> in mind when he arranged his material, as he has done,
> and what picture of the relations existing between Samuel
> and Saul he wished to present? And after all there is
> every likelihood that the view he presents, whatever
> the method of compilation will be   the traditional one.[22]

Indeed what is the overall view of the monarchy presented in the

Book of Samuel? Is the purpose of the book to serve as a polemic

against kingship, as many assume? We will deal with the specific point

of whether or not the book has an anti-monarchical slant later in this

chapter. In the meantime, let us consider a theme that is consistently

woven into the entire book in its present form.

Inserted into all the narratives is the point that the events of

that era did not unfold in a haphazard or accidental fashion, but that all that transpired was the will of God. This consideration dictated the manner in which all the events are presented. The rise of Samuel, the selection of Saul, his demise, and David's subsequent selection--all the major events of I Samuel are presented in light of this perspective.

Samuel's rise to prominence is portrayed as having been predestined. Samuel's birth story indicates that he will play an important role in Israel's history.[23] As a young apprentice at Shiloh he received a vision. Its uniqueness is highlighted because we are told that this was a time when visions were rare (3:1). The point is explicity made by the narrator:

ויגדל שמואל וה' היה עמו ולא הפיל מכל דבריו
ארצה: וידע כל ישראל מדן ועד באר שבע כי נאמן
שמואל לנביא ולה': ויסף ה' להראה בשלה כי נגלה
ה' אל שמואל בשלו בדבר ה': ויהי דבר שמואל לכל
ישראל.

Samuel grew up and the Lord was with him: He did not leave any of Samuel's predictions unfulfilled. All Israel from Dan to Beersheba, knew that Samuel was trustworthy as a prophet of the Lord. And the Lord continued to appear at Shiloh: the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel at Shiloh with the word of the Lord; and Samuel's word went forth to all Israel. (3:19-4:1a)

As the story is presented then, it was not coincidental that Samuel should become such an important leader. Right from the beginning, it is clear that his role as a deliverer of Israel has been determined by God.

Let us consider the selection of Israel's first king and see if the same criterion was applied to him in the multiple accounts of his rise to prominence.

Of the three stories of Saul's selection as king over Israel, chapter 11 is generally considered to be the most reliable.[24] This is

the story wherein Saul rallies Israel's forces to battle the Ammonites.

He is victorious and is swept into office by the tide of popular opinion.

Yet because of the important theme that God was behind all that happened

in Israel, it was necessary to reinterpret this event. This revision

is achieved by the inserting of Samuel in verses 7,13 and 14. Samuel

is not included here merely to harmonize this account with the previous

stories. If that were the case, why then is there no similar attempt

to harmonize the other versions? The reason that Samuel is artificially

added to this narrative is to show that it was not just the will of

the people that Saul should become king, but the will of God that

he should rule! Without these inserts, the story would lead us to

the conclusion that Saul was selected by the people and not by God.

This conclusion was unacceptable for the final authors.

The other stories about Saul's selection, which came later and

do not reflect history, make the point that Saul was hand-chosen

by God, even clearer. In the first story, 9:1-10:16, Samuel anointed

Saul after he is told by God:

כעת מחר אשלח אליך איש מארץ בנימין ומשחתו
לנגיד על עמי ישראל... ושמואל ראה את שאול
וה' ענהו הנה האיש אשר אמרתי אליך זה יעצר
בעמי.

"At the this time tomorrow, I will send a man to you
from the territory of Benjamin, and you shall anoint
him ruler of My people Israel..." As soon as Samuel saw
Saul, the Lord declared to him, "This is the man that
I told you would govern My people." (9:16-17)

The point is clearly made in this story that God is the one who is behind

Saul's selection.

The third story, where Saul is chosen by lot (10:17-27) also is

designed to demonstate this same point. The selection of the king from

all the people by means of a lottery is a means of showing who merits

divine sanction.

ויאמר שמואל אל כל העם, הראיתם אשר בחר בו ה׳
כי אין כמוהו בכל העם. ויראו כל העם ויאמרו יחי
המלך.

> And Samuel said to the people, "Do you see the one
> whom the Lord has chosen? There is none like him among
> all the people." And all the people acclaimed him, shouting,
> "Long live the king!" (10:24)

All three of the selection stories have this one element in common--they

all show that Saul's election was divinely inspired. It is not possible

to determine at what stage of development of the narratives this filter

was applied to the material, but it is clear that it was the only point

applied consistently throughout the book.

When the people first approach Samuel for a king, in chapter 8,

God tells Samuel three times in the chapter to appoint a king. Despite

Samuel's opposition, God tells Samuel to appoint a king. Again, it is

as if the point is being deliberately made that God favored a monarchy.

The comment about the בני בליעל "worthless people," in 10:27

is also now comprehensible in light of this interpretation. These people

who were opposed to the monarchy were referred to in negative terms

because they were not just opposing a human innovator, but because

they were opposing God's plan. The development of the monarchy is

no longer viewed as the creation of the people that it surely was, but as

an institution sponsored by God. As such, anyone who opposes it is

opposing God, and is therefore a worthless individual.

This type of theologically oriented interpretation of events is

consistent with what is done elsewhere in the Bible. The brilliance

and ingenuity of the prophets is seen in the way they interpreted the

events of their day to their people. When Israel suffered defeat or exile, the prophets told their fellow compatriots that God had not abandoned them. They stressed that God had not been defeated, but rather that he was merely using Israel's enemies to teach the people a lesson. They believed and taught that God was the driving force behind the development of all history.

Similarly, the writers of the book of Samuel interpreted the historical reality of the period and the traditions to show that what occurred to Israel or within Israel was the product of God's plans. The kingship was not an aberration, but something that stemmed from God. Once something occurred, there was a need to justify it. Since Israel had a king, and the first one was Saul, it was necessary to show that his selection was approved of by God. Although we read in I Samuel of opposition to the kingship, we will see that the opposition came from the time of Samuel. God is depicted as supporting the implementation because it was important to show that God is the one responsible for all of the developments in Israel's history.

That David, and not Saul's sons succeeded Saul also had to be explained. David's rise is juxtaposed with Saul's decline. Saul's failure is not presented as the failure of a desperate leader. His decline is explained as precipitated by religious considerations. In chapter 13 Samuel is angry with Saul for offering a sacrifice without waiting for him.

ויאמר שמואל אל שאול נסכלת לא שמרת את מצות ח' אלהיך
אשר צוך כי עתה הכין ה' את ממלכתך אל ישראל עד עולם.
ועתה ממלכתך לא תקום . בקש ה' לו איש כלבבו ויצוהו ה'
לנגיד על עמו כי לא שמרת את אשר צוך ה'.

> Samuel answered Saul, "You acted foolishly in not
> keeping the commandments that the Lord your God
> laid upon you! Otherwise, the Lord would have established
> your dynasty over Israel forever. But now your dynasty
> will not endure. The Lord will seek out a man after
> His own heart, and the Lord will appoint him ruler over
> His people, because you did not abide by what the Lord
> had commanded you." (13:13-14)

The reason according to this interpretation that Saul's sons did not

succeed him is not because they were unable to prevail over David,

but because God had determined that they would not.

II Samuel tells us that Saul's offspring did try to succeed him.

> ותהי המלחמה ארכה בין בית שאול ובין בית דוד
> ודוד הלך וחזק ובית שאול הולכים ודלים.

> The war between the House of Saul and the House of
> David was long, drawn-out; but David kept growing
> stronger while the House of Saul grew weaker.
> (II Samuel 3:1)

Since Saul's house was unsuccessful, and since David was the one who

prevailed in the struggle, later historians had to explain why Saul's

descendants were not the heirs to the throne. Thus chapter 13 tells

us that Saul's sons will not follow him on the throne, and chapter 15

informs us that Saul is rejected as king over Israel because God has

rejected him for not having followed his orders.

It was incumbent upon the historians of Israel to see to it that

the people understood the events of Israel's history as having been

engineered by God. David's rise, like Saul's rise and fall was explained

in terms of divine destiny.

The association of David with Samuel is for this specific purpose.

David may have become popular after the battle with Goliath.[25] He

led a group of marauders, as is described in the latter chapters of

I Samuel. David was made king of Judah at Hebron after Saul's death.

Just as it was necessary to show that Saul became king, because God wanted him to become king, so too was it necessary to explain that God was involved in the selection of David as king. Thus, the story in chapter 16 serves precisely that purpose, of filling that gap. This story links David with Samuel and shows that Samuel anointed David as king, even though Saul was still king at the time. David did not become king until Saul died.

The anointment probably never took place, but was created to show that David was sanctioned by God.[26]

ויאמר ה' של שמואל עד מתי אתה מתאבל אל שאול
ואני מאסתיו ממלך על ישראל מלא קרנך שמן ולך
אשלחך אל ישי בית הלחמי כי ראיתי בבניו לי
מלך.

And the Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and set out; I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have decided on one of his sons to be king." (16:1)

After David is brought before the prophet, we read:

ויאמר ה' קום משחהו כי זה הוא.

And the Lord said (to Samuel), "Rise and anoint him, for this is the one." (16:12b)

David is shown by this story to be the Lord's chosen. At the same time the spirit of the Lord departs from Saul and is replaced by an evil spirit (16:14). Meanwhile, David's star is rising.

ויהי דוד לכל דרכו משכיל וה' עמו.

David was successful in all his undertakings, for the Lord was with him. (18:14)

That Saul's reign lost divine sanction is further relayed in chapter 23.

Saul consults an oracle and is met by silence (23:7), while David

is shown to be the one with access to the Lord (23:2, 10-12).

The compilers skillfully weave the theme that David is the Lord's

chosen throughout the tales of David's escapades. Saul's efforts to

do away with David are futile. He has been abandoned, even when

working on behalf of the people.

וירא שאול את מחנה פלשתים וירא ויחרד לבו
מאוד. וישאל שאול בה' ולא ענהו ה' גם בחלומות
גם באורים גם בנביאם.

> When Saul saw the Philistine force, his heart trembled
> with fear. And Saul inquired of the Lord, but the Lord
> did not answer him, either by dreams or by <u>urim</u> or by
> prophets. (28:5-6)

The writers show Saul as abandoned by God even though he still has

much popular support (23:1-8, 26:1-5).

Samuel, Jonathan, Abigail, and even Saul are quoted as saying

that they recognize that David will one day become king. So much

emphasis on this implies that there must have been a strong need to

prove the legitimacy of his rise.

Theodore Robinson concludes that the stories of I Samuel are told

from David's point of view.[27] T.C.G. Thornton believes that a major

motive behind parts of the books of Samuel is the desire to assert the

right of the Davidic dynasty to rule over Israel.[28] The writers in

the Judah court circles wanted to show that the Davidic dynasty alone

was the divinely ordained one. It was necessary to explain why David

was not the first king. His acceptance as king was a long, bloody,

drawn-out process (II Samuel 1-5). Since the writers were not far

removed from the period, as was the Chronicler, they could not delete facts or episodes that the people still remembered.

Raphael Hallevy says that the first book of Samuel was written with the intention of stressing David's superiority over Saul. It is essentially propagandistic, designed to consolidate the loyalty of the tribes to David, who was in fact no more than an "upstart."[29]

This approach has some merits, especially in II Samuel. Chapters 9-20 in particular may well be a court history of David's reign, but that does not mean that this source has a history of the entire period. Even if he did, it may well have been excluded from the final edition. Beyond the story of David's attainment of power, there is no indication that this theme was the dominant one of Samuel. Even greater than the need to show that David's dynasty was a legitimate one was the need to show that whatever happened came about because it was God's intention.

Thornton claims that Saul's accension is presented as a concession by God to the misguided demands of the people. "Saul's accession is almost a religious error from the start...so that the overall impression is that it is with great reluctance that God has allowed Saul to become king at all."[30]

It is precisely to this point that the book addresses itself. The first book of Samuel is far more a chronicle of the development of kingship in early Israel than a history of the period. For if it were such a concession to the "mistaken will of the people," then how is it any more justified that David should become king? Furthermore, how is it possible that something that God did could be a mistake?

The text shows that Saul was chosen by God, and that he was also rejected by God for a specific reason. It is equally clear that David

has been chosen by a similar process. David is not presented in an

exclusively positive way. His faults and failures are described in

addition to his great accomplishments. David's affair with Bathsheba,

his joining the Philistine forces, his promise to Saul that he will not

bring any harm to the king's offspring (24:21-23) and his subsequent

violation of that promise---all show David's negative side and speak

against a one-sided presentation of the times. None of these actions

is covered up or rationalized. No apoletic explanations are given for

any of these exploits which impugn his reputation. On the other hand,

Saul is not presented in an entirely negative light. 11:12-13 shows his

magnaminity towards his opponents. The stories of his rejection

allow him to defend his actions.

The major concern of the writers was to justify the status quo,

or what had preceded it. Consequently, the history will point to

David as the heir of Saul and as the one who legitimately occupies

the throne. This does not imply that the history was written in order

to portray David in a favorable light. H. W. Hertzberg writes,

"It is not men who make history; history is shaped by a higher hand

and it should be clearly understood that not only is David the instrument

of the Lord; he is, and means to be nothing else."[31]

According to my understanding, once the kingship was introduced

in Israel, it was necessary to explain that the development occurred

because God wanted it to happen that way. We see that Yhwh wanted

Saul to be the first king, later came to favor his removal, and finally

decided that David was the one to follow Saul.

How then are we to understand all the seemingly anti-monarchical statements of I Samuel? Ever since Budde, scholars have assumed that the book has a strong anti-monarchical bias. Most scholars believe that the later generations suffered under the rule of Kings. They contend that the prophets aroused the people's opposition to the individual kings and the institution itself. When the history of Israel was composed, these feelings were projected onto the narratives describing the early development of kingship. Some prefer to view this interpolation as the product of Deuteronomistic influence rather than prophetic.

A representative statement of this kind of thinking is made by R. Kittel:

> The second version is erroneous in portraying Samuel as advising against a king or, indeed, as being roused to anger by their desire for one. A later generation having unsatisfactory experiences with the monarch may have thought thus. We must remember that unfortunate decay that was so soon to be the fate of the kingdom, especially the northern partial state of Israel...The narrator does not conceal his opinion about republics and monarchies, as we call them today.[32]

Yet upon closer examination this long held contention cannot be sustained. The first assumption that this approach is based on is that just because something is against the monarchy, it must have been a late development. Yet recent scholarship has questioned the prudence of prima facie acceptance of such an assumption.[33]

In reality the only resistance to the initiation of the kingship in Israel comes from Samuel and the "worthless people." The speech by Samuel in chapter 8 is a campaign speech pleading with the people not to establish a monarchy. The speech in chapter 12 is Samuel's farewell address, delivered after the monarchy has already been formed. He expresses one last time his opposition to this new form of government.

But does the opposition go beyond Samuel?

כי לא אתך מאסו כי אתי מאסו ממלך עליהם. בכל
המעשים אשר עשו מיום העלתי אתם ממצרים ועד היום
הזה ויעזבני ויעבדו אלהים אחרים כן המה עשים גם
לך.

"For it is not you they have rejected; it is Me they have
rejected as their king. LIke everything else they have done
ever since I brought them out of Egypt to this day–forsaking
Me and worshipping other gods–so they are doing to you."
(8:7-8)

Although God agrees with Samuel, it must be pointed out that three times

during this chapter God tells Samuel to appoint a king for the people.

If the author opposed the monarchy, it is hard to understand why he

would make it so clear and even emphasize that God told Samuel to

appoint a king.

These two speeches are often linked to Deuteronomy 17.

Deuteronomy 17 gives limitations on royal activities, but it is not against

the monarchy as such. It recognizes the need for such a throne and

provides guidelines for its occupants. It is also possible that Deuteronomy

17 is based on Samuel 8.[34]

Who else do we know of who opposed the introduction of the monarchy?

The בני בליעל "worthless people" are shown in 10:27 to stand in

opposition to Saul. 10:17-27 is part of the so-called anti-monarchical

narratives. The people were called by Samuel to Mizpah, where Saul

is chosen by lot to become king. After Saul has become king the people

are sent home by Samuel.

ובני בליעל אמרו מה ישענו זה ויבזהו ולא הביאו
לו מנחה ויהי כמחריש

But some scoundrels said, " How can this fellow save
us?" So they scorned him and brought him no gift.
But he pretended not to mind. (10:27)

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This phrase, "scoundrel" is used elsewhere in the book of Samuel.
In chapter 2 it refers to Eli's two sons in a derogatory manner.
In Judges 9:22 and 20:13 it is used to refer to men who slander God
and who break the sacral law. The words have a similar meaning in
Nahum 1:11 and in Deuteronomy 13. In Proverbs 16:27 a worthless man
is described as one who digs up evil. II Samuel 20:1 uses the word
in regard to one who rebels against the king. The reference is most
definitely a negative one. It is used to describe one who is not
favorably regarded by the author. Those who oppose Saul are referred
to negatively in this supposedly anti-monarchical chapter! If the reference
were intended to be against Saul or the monarchy, then those who oppose
Saul would be praised rather than referred to negatively!

The redactor further made the point that those who oppose the
monarchy are in disfavor by connecting this section with the story of
the coronation at Gilgal (11). Here we see the general feeling of the book
towards those who did not want Israel to have a king.

ויאמר העם אל שמואל מי האמר שאול ימלך עלינו
תנו האנשים ונמיתם. ויאמר שאול לא יומת איש
ביום הזה כי היום עשה ה׳ תשועה בישראל.

> The people then said to Samuel, "Who was it said,
> 'Shall Saul be king over us?' Hand the men over and we
> will put them to death!" But Saul replied, "No man
> shall be put to death this day! For this day the Lord
> has brought victory to Israel!" (11:12-13)

Those who oppose the monarchy are regarded as scoundrels.
Where is the anti-monarchical trend of 10:17-27? Where is this attitude
in I Samuel?

The episodes which tell of the rejection of Saul are also usually
regarded as part of the anti-monarchical thrust of the book. Yet in

both instances, it is clear that the rejection is of Saul, and not of the kingship as a whole. In fact, the stories are not totally critical of Saul. They are told in a tone that is sometimes sympathetic towards the monarch. Saul offers a rational explanation of his actions.

כי ראיתי כי נפץ העם מעלי ואתה לא באת
למועד הימים ופלשתים נאספים מכמש. ואמר עתה
ירדו פלשתים אלי הגלגל ופני ה' לא חליתי ואתאפק
ואעלה העלה.

> "I saw the people leaving me and scattering; you had
> not come at the appointed time, and the Philistines
> had gathered at Michmas. I thought the Philistines
> would march down against me at Gilgal before I had
> entreated the Lord, so I forced myself to present the
> burnt offering."   (13:11-12)

His offering of a sacrifice seems justified under the circumstances.

Samuel is the one who seems to overreact to the situation.

ויאמר שמואל אל שאול נסכלת לא שמרת את מצות ה'
אלהיך אשר צוך כי עתה הכין ה' את ממלכתך אל
ישראל עד עולם. ועתה ממלכתך לא תקום.

> Samuel answered Saul, "You acted foolishly in not
> keeping the commandments that the Lord your God
> laid upon you! Otherwise the Lord would have
> established your dynasty over Israel forever. But
> now your dynasty will not endure..."   (13:13-14a)

In chapter 15 it is clearer that Saul is in the wrong, but it too has a sympathetic understanding of Saul.

These two stories are explanations of the failure of the first king. They are limited in scope to a specific instance and to a specific king. The stories are not polemics against the monarchy; but designed to tell a specific chapter in the history of Israel.

It is also significant to note that the stories which tell of Saul's

rejection are not followed by calls for a change in the form of government. Not even Samuel suggests an alternative. The arrangement of the sources is not done in a manner that suggests that the monarchy is a failure. In fact, Saul's second and final rejection is followed by the selection of David! If the compilers wanted to present an anti-monarchy view, they would not have linked Saul's rejection as king with David's selection as king. At present 15:11 reads:

נחמתי כי המלכתי את שאול למלך כי שב מאחרי ואת
דברי לא הקים.

"I regret that I made Saul king, for he has turned away from Me and has not carried out my commands."

If the authors wanted it to be a diatribe against kingship in Israel, this would have been the perfect place for such a message. The verse would have read, "I regret that I gave a king to Israel, for he has turned away from Me and has not carried out My commands." All of the supposedly anti-monarchical passages upon closer examination, are really not anti-monarchical.

It is also interesting to see the respect accorded to both Saul and later David because they are king. In both of the stories in I Samuel in which David had the opportunity to kill or harm Saul, David refuses:

ויאמר לאנשיו חלילה לי מה׳ אם אעשה את הדבר הזה
לאדני למשיח ה׳ לשלח ידי בו כי משיח ה׳ הוא.
וישסע דוד את אנשיו בדברים ולא נתנם לקום אל שאול.

He said to his men," The Lord forbid that I should do such a thing to my lord—the Lord's anointed—that I should raise my hand against him, for he is the Lord's anointed." David rebuked his men and did not permit them to attack Saul. (24:7-8b)

In the other version he says:

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חלילה לי מה' משלח ידי במשיח ה' ועתה קח נא
את החנית אשר מראשתו ואת צפחת המים ונלכה
לנו.

</div>

> "But the Lord forbid that I should lay a hand on the
> Lord's anointed! Just take the spear and the water jar
> at his head and let's be off." (26:11)

The respect given to Saul becaue he is king is the opposite of what we would expect from a writer who would want to show that it is wrong for Israel to have a monarch.

Yehezekel Kaufmann writes that later ages were not hostile to the institution of kingship. "Once introduced, the monarchic principle became firmly rooted in Israel. Kings were deposed and slain, but not even the prophets attacked the institution of kingship."[35] The prophetic ideal of the future kingdom of God was intimately associated with a king of the line of David. Pre-monarchical Israel is portrayed as idolatrous, but this is not the case once the people are ruled by a king, according to Kaufmann. Yhwh's anointed brings victory over the enemies. Although the prophetic community was frequently at odds with the kings, they always advocated specific steps to correct the situation. They would often predict the downfall of various rulers, but they did not abandon the system. They supported a candidate for the throne who was a strong Yhwhst.[36] Thornton notes, "One main difficulty about assigning these passages to an anti-monarchical school of thought is that there are no clear traces elsewhere in post Davidic Jewish writing that any group of people was ever opposed in principle to the monarchy as an institution.[37] The revolutions after David were not

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attempts to replace the monarchy with some other form of government.

M.H. Segal remarks that the king was idealized in post-exilic Israel. The people looked back nostalgically on the days of the united kingdom, and the prophets spoke of a time when the line of David would reign forever. He concludes that it is inconceivable that an anti-monarchical attitude could have originated during an era when the institution was so highly regarded.

Like Kaufmann, Segal concludes that the source of the anti-monarchical feelings predates the monarchy and originated with Samuel.[38]

The Book of Chronicles was clearly written in post-exilic times. It is an idealization of the Davidic dynasty. It shows how the people longed for the reestablishment of the Davidic line at that time. In later Israel, God is believed to be intricately involved in the development of the monarchy. Once the institution has been established, it is wrong to oppose it. Psalms 2:7, 89:27 refer figuratively to the king as a son of God. II Samuel 1:14 and 5:2 show that the king's authority comes from God.

It is unfair to conclude that I Samuel is an anti-monarchical book, or that one of the sources was particularly opposed to the monarchy, or even that the final redactors felt this way. The only real opposition to establishing a monarchy comes from Samuel. In the next chapter we will consider the possible reasons for his vehement opposition. Other than that, however, the book is designed with a theological orientation to explain how these important events in Israel's history unfolded. It is not intended to be pro-David, anti-monarchical, or anti-Saul. The compilers simply took the traditions before them and saw to it that the

crucial point was brought out--that God was the one responsible for all that occurred during this period.

We may never know where these sources came from. All we can conclude is that the book is a compilation of fragments from uncertain origins which went through several layers of redaction. We can break parts of the narrative sequences into units, but it is harder to determine what influence acted upon them at different stages. We can also conclude that the book is not anti-monarchical or anti-Saul, and that the work of the Deuteronomists on it was minimal. Its purpose is to tell the events of the early monarchy within the confines of a particular scheme of history. The overriding theme which appears throughout the entire book is that God was the one who caused the events to occur as they did.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. W. F. Albright, "Samuel and the Beginnings of the Prophetic Movement," Goldenson Lecture at Hebrew Union College, 1961. pp. 10-11.

2. M. H. Segal, The Pentatuech, Magnes Press: Jerusalem, 1967. p. 110.

3. R.H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 364.

4. A. Weiser, The Old Testament: Its Formation and Development. p. 161.

5. Some typical other Deuteronomistic references in Judges are: Judges 6:1-2; 8:33-35; 10:6-9; 13:1.

6. Some typical other Deuteronomistic references in Kings are: I Kings 16:29-33, II Kings 13:1-9; 14:1-3.

7. The exact words of this verse are uncertain. The New J.P.S. translation comments in a footnote, "The number is lacking in the Hebrew text; also, the precise context of the 'two years' is uncertain. The verse is lacking in the Septuagint." The Prophets, A new translation of the Holy Scriptures, p. 124.

8. S.R. Driver, An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament, p. 177.

9. R. H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, pp. 365-369.

10. G. Fohrer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 225.

11. Ibid, p. 225.

12. Ibid. p. 218.

13. For a full discussion of how Samuel influenced prophecy and the later prophets, see Albright, "Samuel and the Beginnings of the Prophetic Movement."

14. I. Mendelsohn, "Samuel's Denunciation of the kingship in the light of the Akkadian Documents from Ugarit," BASOR 143 (1956), pp. 17-22. This point is considered in some detail in chapter 3 of this thesis.

15. H. W. Hertzberg, I and II Samuel, (O.T.L.), pp. 105-107.

16. A. Lods, Israel, from its Beginnings to the Middle of the Eighth Century, pp. 352-353.

17. A. Weiser, The O.T., p. 161.

18. G. Fohrer, Intro. to O.T., p. 220.

19. Other examples of late inclusions in I Samuel are Hannah's prayer of 2:1-10 and the summary of Saul's reign in 14:47-52.

20. The commentaries of H.P. Smith (ICC), H.W. Hertzberg (OTL), John Mauchline, (New Century Bible), indeed most all the critical work on Samuel divide the literature into units. Each scholar's division and criteria for identification are different. They also ascribe the units to different sources, but the methodology is similar.

21. Fohrer, Intro. to OT, and Weiser, The OT, say that the book is the composition of various traditions, "circles." The traditions were later linked together in the end without any attempt to harmonize the differences. See also E. Robertson, "Samuel and Saul," BJRL, 28 (1944), pp. 175-206.

22. E. Robertson, "Samuel and Saul," BJRL 28, (1944), pp. 179-180.

23. See below p. 86, note 28 for more on the birth story associated with Samuel.

24. Among the many scholars who agree that chapter 11 is the authentic account of Saul's selection are, Fohrer, Intro. to the OT; A. Lods, Israel; H.P. Smith, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Samuel, (ICC), Charles Scribner's Sons: New York, 1902; W.A. Irwin, "Samuel and The Rise of the Monarchy," AJSL, 58 (1941), pp. 113-34; Bruce Birch, The Rise of the Israelite Monarchy: The Growth and Development of I Samuel 7-15, Scholars Press: Montana, 1976, and many others.

25. John Bright, History of Israel, second edition, The Westminister Press: Philadelphia, 1972, pp. 187-188.

26. Those scholars who see chapter 16 as fictitious include, T. H. Robinson, Prophecy and the Prophets in Ancient Israel, p. 206; J. Pedersen, Israel: Its Life and Culture, Oxford University Press: London, 1926, vol. 3 and 4, p. 50; A. Weiser, The OT, p. 63. Those who believe it is an authentic event include Rodney Cloud, The Pre-Literary Prophets and the Rule of Kings, H.U.C. Ph.D. thesis, 1970. Meek, Hebrew Origins, p. 160. H.P. Smith, I and II Samuel, p. 143.

27. Theodore Robinson, A History of Israel, Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1932, pp. 200-209.

28. T.C.G. Thornton, "Studies in Samuel," CQR, 168 (1967), pp. 416-423.

29. Raphael Hallevy, "Charismatic Kingship in Israel," Tarbiz 30 (1960-1961), pp. 231-241, 314-340.

30. T.C.G. Thornton, "Studies in Samuel," p. 414.

31. H.W. Hertzberg, I and II Samuel, p. 209.

32. R. Kittel, Great Men and Movements in Israel, Ktav: New York, 1968, p. 99.

33. See M. H. Segal, The Pentatuech; I. Mendelsohn, "Samuel's Denunciation of Kingship," BASOR, 143 (1956), pp. 17-22; and chapter 3 of this thesis.

34. E.I.J. Rosenthal, compares the use of כל הגויים "all the nations" here and in Deuteronomy 17, the double function of the leader as judge and military leader in both chapters, and concludes that Deuteronomy 17 is based on Samuel 8. E.I.J. Rosenthal, "Some Aspects of the Hebrew Monarchy," JJS 9. (1958), pp. 1-19.

35. Yehezkel Kaufmann, The Religion of Israel, abridged and translated by Moshe Greenberg, Shocken: New York, 1972, p. 264.

36. R. Cloud, "Pre-Literary Prophets and Kings," p. 78.

37. T.C.G. Thornton, "Studies in Samuel," p. 417.

38. M.H. Segal, The Pentateuch, pp. 205-206, 214-218.

CHAPTER THREE

THE RISE AND FALL OF SAUL: PERSONALITIES AND POLITICS

In order to understand adequately the development of kingship
in Israel it is necessary to have an understanding of the period which
immediately preceded its inception, the period of the Judges.[1] Most of
what we know of this era comes from the Book of Judges.[2] The penetrations
by the Israelites into Canaan during the 13th century were mainly
peaceful, as they settled in sparsely populated areas not controlled
by the Canaanite city-states.[3] This settlement was a gradual process
that was carried out in separate operations by tribal region, and spanned
several centuries.[4] Archaeological finds dating back to the 12th and
11th centuries indicate that there were many military conflicts in Canaan
at that time.[5] Some of the Canaanite cities were conquered by force.[6]
The native population was concentrated in numerous fortified cities
which were located in the fertile plains. The Israelites settled mainly
into those areas which were less populated, occupying the highlands
of the Transjordanian plateau, the hilly parts of the Galilee, and the
hill-country of Ephraim and Judah. The people adapted to agricultural
life as they settled into villages and cities.

The influx of people into Transjordan was widespread. Nelson
Glueck found that southern Transjordan was extensively cultivated and
that many new settlements were begun in that area at the beginning of

the Iron Age.[7] In the northern part of   Transjordan, Aramean tribes
expanded alongside the Israelites. The Israelite tribes in the north were
minorities within the native population. The success of each Israelite
tribe in adapting to their own new environs varied.[8] The relations
varied according to time and place.[9] In many places, the Israelites
had friendly neighborly relations with the Canaanites.

"On the whole, the Israelite tribes, who had come from quite
different circumstances, regarded the Canaanite way of life as alien
and it remained alien so long as the independent character of the
Canaanite survived in the land."[10] The religious practices of the native
population, with their emphasis on sexuality were repulsive to the
Israelites. The Canaanite religion was viewed as morally inferior and
was condemned as lustful and unprincipled.[11] The Israelites considered
anything alien to them "Canaanite." This included industry, commerce,
and profit-making. Nevertheless, a certain degree of assimilation was
bound to occur, and did.

The skirmishes engaged in by Israel were usually regional,
involving only a few tribes at the most at any one time.[12] There
was no central government, capital city, or administrative machinery.
The only time when all of the tribes are described as acting in concert
was when they sought to punish one of the other tribes.[13] Because
of the common set of beliefs and the unity of purpose among the tribes,
Martin Noth speculated that they were united into a loose-knit confederation,
which he called an "amphictyony."[14] Alt and many others accepted this
theory. Recently, however, that there was even that much unity
among the diverse heterogeneous elements of early Israel has been

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questioned by Orlinsky and others.[15]

It is clear that there was no central government at this time. The people meandered from one crisis to the next without any centralized plan of defense. In times of peril, a שופט , judge, would arise who would lead the battle against the enemy. This word שופט means ruler as well as administer and regulate.[16] The authority of these individuals was limited to the crisis to which they responded and their leadership role did not extend beyond the specific conflict.[17] Their authority was not absolute or permanent, nor was it hereditary or transferrable. It rested solely on personal qualities.

The Book of Judges tells us that after the success of one of these military leaders, the people asked him to become their king. After Gideon's defeat of the Midianites:

ויאמרו איש ישראל אל גדעון משל בנו גם גם אתה
גם בנך גם בן בנך כי הושעתנו מיד מדין.

> Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, "Rule over us—
> you, your son, and your grandson as well; for you have
> saved us from the Midianites." (Judges 8:22)

Gideon declined the offer.

ויאמר אלהם גדעון לא אמשל אני בכם ולא ימשל
בני בכם ה' ימשל בכם.

> But Gideon replied, "I will not rule over you myself, nor
> shall my son rule over you; the Lord alone shall rule over
> you." (Judges 8:23)

This exchange marked the introduction of the request by the people for a king. Once the seed had been planted, it would only be a matter of time before the wish would evolve into a full fledged movement which would demand a king.

It is interesting to note the actions of one of his sons,

Abimelech.[18] Abimelech slaughtered his brothers and set himself up as king in Shechem, his mother's town.[19] His rule was limited to only three years and covered only a small geographical area. The Book of Judges called him neither judge nor king, but says of him:

וישר אבימלך על ישראל שלש שנים
Abimelech held sway over Israel for three years.
(Judges 9:22)

The experiment had failed and not caught on in Israel, but its failure was due in large part to the nature of the individual who occupied the position and the ruthless way that he administered justice.[20]

Generally, the period was one of intermittent battles in various parts of the country. Israel was on the defense most of the time. Egypt's influence in the region was at an ebb, and the new threat came from the Sea Peoples, the Philistines.

The Philistines arrived in the land from Asia Minor at the beginning of the 12th century B.C.E. They were the remains of the "Sea Peoples" who had been expelled from Egypt by Ramses III about 1192 B.C.E.[21] They originally came to Canaan as vassals of the Pharoah, but as a result of the decline of Egypt's power they became independent of Egypt's control.[22]

By the end of the 11th century, by setting up garrisons and confining their expansion to western Palestine, they had consolidated their control of the land of Canaan. They were divided into five principal cities—Ekron, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gaza, and Gath. Each city had a prince-like military governor, called in the Bible a "seren".[23] They were expanding in the same places that Israel was.

Their control of the coastal plain was of strategic importance. By gaining control of Western Palestine, they dominated the trade routes leading inland from the coast. Their technology gave them a distinct military advantage—they had developed the use of iron and maintained a monopoly on it, and introduced the chariot into the region.[24]

We learn from the Ark Narrative in the first Book of Samuel (4-6), that they acted in their military adventures as a unified front. Although they co-ordinated their efforts, each city-state maintained a degree of autonomy. Thus, David could work for Achish (27:1-12), the seren of Gath, but when all the Philistines went out in battle, the other seranim objected to David's joining them in battle and vetoed his participation (29:1-11).

The Philistines were a significant threat to the Israelites. The Tribe of Dan was forced to relocate because of the pressures exerted upon them (Judges 18). The Sea-Peoples control of the land was well established.

וירדו שלשת אלפים איש מיהודה אל סעיף סלע
עיטם ויאמרו לשמשון הלא ידעת כי משלים בנו
פלשתים.

Thereupon three thousand men of Judah went down to the cave of the rock of Etam, and they said to Samson, "Do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us?" (Judges 15:11a)[25]

Noth noted that the Israelites were subjected to Philistine rule in at least a de jure fashion.[26] The Ark Narrative of 4-6 tells how the Philistines routed Israel at Aphek. They destroyed the leadership, killing Eli's sons and capturing the ark. They successfully instilled fear into the Israelites.[27] It is no wonder then that the Philistines

are depicted in the Hebrew literature with such contempt.

It is in light of this background that we must consider the request for a king. The decentralized form of government could not cope with the Philistine challenge. Its ad hoc nature was adequate for local skirmishes, but now the opponent was better organized and a more potent and aggressive foe. It is understandable that the people would long for: the security of a king, the certainity that comes from knowing there is a line of succession, the feeling of confidence that is provided by an army under the command of a commander-in-chief.

But before a king could be selected there was one important leader who stood between the world of the judges and the new proposal—Samuel.

Samuel was a powerful figure who dominated the administration of Israel's affairs for quite some time. He differed in many respects from the judges who immediately preceded him. His rise to power was not predicated upon a military victory. We also know more about him than an episode or two of military exploits. A special story about his birth indicates that he was chosen before he was born for his task and responsibility as a man of God (I:I-27).[28] We learn that he was devoted to the service of Yhwh from a young age, serving as an apprentice at the shrine at Shiloh. When he was a young man, he and not Eli, the chief priest received a vision from God. By contrasting his behavior with the conduct of Eli's sons, (2:I2-26), he stood out as being even more exceptional.

The opening chapters of the story of Samuel tell of the rise of cultic priests and their struggle to acquire hegemony over the people.

A natural development after the conquest and settlement was the growth

of a cultic priesthood with all the ritual practices associated with such

an institution. Shiloh had already acquired importance during the time

of Joshua. All of Israel came there to cast lots for the division of

Canaan after the conquest (Joshua 18:1). People made an annual

pilgrimage to Shiloh for a festival, (Judges 21, I Samuel 1:3,21).

Shiloh housed the Ark of the Covenant and was more important than

the other local shrines.[29] The shrine was administered by a staff of

priests, headed by a chief priest whose office was hereditary. At

this early stage of the cult, the clergy was not exclusively Levites

or Aaronides. Samuel was able to supplant the original leadership

there and to use his position as priest to become a national figure.

We learn a great deal about Samuel from chapter 7. It is

difficult to discern which parts of this chapter were authentic and which

were later additions to those who wanted to enlarge Samuel's importance

and further enhance his image in Israel.[30] He is shown as having had

a multi-faceted role in the political life of the people. He convened

the people at Mizpah and admonished them for their sins. He directed

a ritual act there to purify them and purge them of these sins.

He interceded with the Lord on their behalf. When the Philistines

threatened, Samuel offered a sacrifice, and thereby rallied God and

the Israelites to repel the Philistine advance. He acted not as a

charismatic leader, but as the "prophetic agent of God's victory in

the holy war."[31] This important chapter also reveals that he served

as a circuit judge who made the rounds between Bethel, Gilgal,

and Mizpah. Finally we learn that he built an altar to God at his

village in Ramah.

Elsewhere in the book of Samuel, Samuel is described as a local seer, as one associated with prophetic bands, and as the person whose support is essential if the monarchy is to succeed. It is difficult to sort out which Samuel is the real Samuel. John L. McKenzie commented that the book presents four different images of Samuel.[32] He is shown to be a priest, a prophet, a seer, a judge. E. Robertson says Samuel was the leader of the sons of the prophets. This group opposed the kingship and saw themselves as the spokesmen for the will of Yhwh.[33] Theodore Robinson identifies Saul with the ecstatic prophets, and says Samuel was a seer.[34] Birch says Samuel was an official of the tribal league, thus explaining his many travels to the various parts of the country and the cultic centers.[35] Harry Orlinsky, and later, Martin Cohen claimed that Samuel was a seer-priest of the Shilonite priesthood.[36] Albright saw Samuel as the first prophet.[37] In a related position, Noth described Samuel as a "man of God."[38]

The diversity of opinion about Samuel stems from the many ways he is presented in the book bearing his name. All of the above descriptions are based on elements of the narratives of the book. Samuel may be presented differently by different sources. Nevertheless, it is clear that he was a leader who had the power to lead and inspire the people. R. Kittel said that Samuel was the one who revived Mosaic thought and traditions.[39] He was equivocated by Jeremiah and the Psalmist with Moses.[40] He is obviously the single most important and powerful leader in Israel since Joshua. He influenced later prophets in their attitude towards kingship and sacrifice, as well as their position vis-a-vis the king, and their use of the term "nagid."[41]

He dominated the government of Israel as no previous judge ever had. He appointed his sons as judges, with the understanding that they would succeed him (8:1-2). Unfortunately, however, they took bribes and abused their position (8:3-5). It was clear that Samuel's sons could not be expected to provide the leadership for this time of crisis. Samuel was aging and the old request for a king resurfaced.

The Philistine attacks had not let-up, and the people were feeling more desperate. The elders approached Samuel:

ויתקבצו כל זקני ישראל ויבאו אל שמואל הרמתה.
ויאמרו אליו הנה אתה זקנת ובניך לא הלכו בדרכיך
עתה שימה לנו מלך לשפטנו ככל הגוים.

> All the elders of Israel assembled and came to Samuel
> at Ramah, and they said to him, "You have grown old, and
> your sons have not followed your ways. Therefore, appoint
> a king for us, to govern us like all other nations." (8:4-5)

The elders constituted an important part of the tribal leadership.[42] Martin Cohen believes that they were the dominant and controlling faction in Israel at the time. He associated them with the Shilonite priesthood and observes, "Indeed, it was clearly because Samuel's function was not military that the chieftains of the individual tribes found it necessary to appoint a leader who like Samuel, could command the loyalty of all the Israelites, but who, unlike him, could lead their troops into battle against the Philistines."[43] The plea for the establishment of a monarchy was a natural outgrowth of the political situation created by the subjugation of the tribal territory by the Philistines.

In addition to the pressure of the Philistines and the urgency of the situation because of the incompetency of Samuel's sons, another

external influence played a part in Israel's history at this juncture. Israel's immediate neighbors, Ammon, Moab, Edom, and Aram had all established kingdoms. The El-Amarna letters inform us that the political organization of Canaan around the time of Israel's invasion was of city-states ruled by kings. The internal factors and the external influences moved the elders to make their appeal.

Samuel's reaction to the elders' request was swift and strong:

וירע הדבר בעיני שמואל כאשר אמרו תנה לנו מלך
לשפטנו ויתפלל שמואל אל ה'.

> Samuel was displeased that they said, "Give us a king
> to govern us." Samuel prayed to the Lord. (8:6)

His reaction indicates that he was offended that the people asked for a king. He took it as a personal affront to him and his administration.

The previous chapter evaluated theories suggested as explanations for the textual problems of I Samuel. I concur with M. Tsevat's view of the historicity of the sources which chronicled the struggle over the development of the monarchy.

> The literary tension between the two views of the monarchy
> corresponds to a similar tension in the historical reality.
> The reality is attested in numerous passages in different
> books...The reason that these issues are expressed in Samuel
> with such vigor is that they first arose with vigor and urgency,
> in the period reported there.[44]

The ideas attributed to Samuel may well be an accurate reflection of Samuel's feelings.[45] His indignation was that of a political leader who felt that the value of his lifelong efforts had been challenged. His sons were maligned and he thought that his ability to lead was questioned. He perceived the request for a monarchy as a rejection of his form of government. In political terms, we see a powerful figure who dominated both the religious cult and the governing structure of the country for

several decades who was reluctant to relinquish any of his power. How else can we account for Samuel's opposition during a time which demanded strong and effective leadership?

Samuel's reaction to the suggestion that a monarchy be formed is recorded in the speech   appearing in chapter 8. Many scholars see the address as representative of the anti-monarchical tone expressed by the late source or the Deuteronomists.[46] The speech is very much a campaign speech against the introduction of a monarchy into Israel. Samuel told the people of the ways of the king, and of what to expect if a monarchy is formed. Recently, a growing number of scholars have come to see the speech as dating back to Samuel, and relating his true feelings.[47] I. Mendelsohn was the first to study parallels between Samuel's plea and the semi-feudal structure of neighboring societies of that period.[48]

The crucial verses of Samuel's message are verses 11-18. He warned his fellow countrymen of the sacrifices they will have to make and the personal hardships they can expect to bear. He cautioned that the king will:

1) establish an army
2) confiscate people's lands and give it to members of his court
3) impose heavy taxes on them
4) force the people to perform corvee labor

Mendelsohn compared the language and points of Samuel's arguments with the finds at Alalakh and Ugarit from the 18th-13th century B.C.E. On the basis of his analysis, he concluded that the speech was not written by a later author and directed to a later audience, but that Samuel was appealing to the people of his own day in terms familiar to them. The speech was an accurate description of the

monarchies that surrounded Israel! Thus, Samuel was speaking of
his generation's contemporary experience, and was not the mouthpiece
for some later redactor's complaints against kings. Mendelsohn analyzed
each verse and showed how it related to the Canaanite practices.

The military conscription described in vs. 11-12 had a Canaanite
parallel. The taking of the people's fields as outlined in vs. 14 was
the main source of income for the Canaanite kings. These properties
were then turned over to members of his court.   In vs. 15 and 17,
Samuel told the people that a _ma'aser_, a tenth of each person's vineyard,
flocks, and other possessions would be given to the king's officers.
The Ugaritic texts refer specifically to a _ma'šaru_ and _mešertu_.[49]
This was a tenth of all belongings which were then given to the king
to distribute among his officers. Samuel also informed the people that
the king would take their sons, daughters, and slaves to work for him
as corvee labor (12, 13, 16). Three documents from Alalakh from the
15th century list people who worked in the palace and in various
communities under supervision. Inhabitants of rural settlements were
liable to be summoned for _dikûtu_, corvee duty. Mendelsohn wrote
that, "This was an accurate description of the corvee as it was practiced
in the Canaanite city-states prior to and during the time of the prophet."[50]
Other scholars have agreed with his findings.

> The Ugaritic parallel strongly militates against the view
> held by some scholars that the anti-monarchical passage in
> I Samuel 8 represents a projection from the time of the late
> monarchy back into its beginning.[51]

Additional considerations compel us to conclude that the speech
was not the creation of some later writer, but an accurate representation
of Samuel's times and feelings. Samuel argued:

ויאמר זה יהיה משפט המלך אשר ימלך עליכם את
בניכם יקח ושם לו במרכבתו ובפרשיו ורצו לפני
מרכבתו.

He said, "This will be the practice of the king who will
rule over you. He will take your sons and appoint them
as charioteers and horsemen, and they will serve as outrunners
for his chariots." (8:11)

His reference to the chariots is significant because the Philistines

terrified the Israelites by their military superiority, which came

in part from their use of the chariot. The chariot was also part of

the Canaanite and Hittite arsenal.[52]

Some point to Samuel's admonition that the king will be able

to confiscate private property at will, and say that the reference is

in response to a later practice in Israel. This line of reasoning claims

that since this reference was to a post-Samuel practice, the verses must

have been written after Samuel. In reality, however, this was not

a practice of Israel's later kings. When Jezebel told Ahab to take

Naboth's vineyard, the king told his wife that he has no right to

seize someone else's property. When finally they did take possession of

Naboth's property, it is clear that his action was a violation of the

provisions of the law, and was not a normal occurrence at all![53]

The dangers that Samuel warned against in 8:11-17 were never realized

in Israel. Consequently, it is wrong to view this section as a later

polemical insertion.

Y. Kaufmann drew attention to the different references by

Hosea and Samuel to the king's administrative bureaucracy. Samuel merely

spoke about servants, avadim. Hosea (13:20ff) spoke against officers,

sarim and a far more complex system of his time. Had this speech in

Samuel been written after the monarchy was already founded, and when

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the bureaucracy was developed and despised, then the speech would

have used the later vocabulary.[54]

In later Israel, the ultimate deliverer was patterned on the

model of the monarch, par excellence. It would be most unusual for

a negative portrayal of the institution to have developed at the very

time when the king had been idealized. A people who believed that

their ultimate deliverance would come from a descendant of the line

of King David would not have produced the following statement:

וזעקתם ביום ההוא מלפני מלככם אשר בחרתם לכם
ולא יענה ה׳ אתכם ביום ההוא.

"The day will come when you cry out because of the
king whom you yourselves have chosen; and the Lord
will not answer you on that day." (8:18)

This comment expresses the genuine feeling of a man who saw his power

eroding, and who was desperate to retain it. It is the response of

a bitter, defeated leader. This speech captures his sense of disappointment.

Otto Eissfeldt wrote about the use of speeches as a vehicle

of major addresses in Ancient Israel, "In Israel, as elsewhere, speech

played a large part as a means of influencing larger or smaller groups

of people..."[55]

Samuel concluded his speech with the words:

ויאמר ה׳ אל שמואל שמע בקולם והמלכת להם מלך
ויאמר שמואל אל אנשי ישראל לכו איש לעירו.

And the Lord said to Samuel, "Heed their demands and
appoint a king for them." Samuel then said to the men
of Israel, "All of you go home." (8:22)

The leader's solitude, rejection, and defeat are all captured in these

words. Having campaigned vigorously against the institution of the

monarchy, and having presented his recommendation to the people, his

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position has been rejected. Like many political leaders, he takes it very personally, and uses the occasion to express his feelings.

Finally on the point of authenticity, if this chapter was tampered with by the Deuteronomist or an anti-monarchist, how could it possibly have maintained the sanction by God for the establishment of a monarchy, not once or twice, but three times in this very important chapter? God told Samuel to listen to the vox populi, and do as they wish. On three occasions in this chapter God told Samuel to establish a kingship in Israel. These references make it hard to see how this could have been the work of individuals who saw the monarchy as a curse and an apostasy.

In conclusion, it is clear that the opposition to the introduction of kingship in Israel came from Samuel, not God; from Samuel, not later writers. Samuel offered no alternatives to the request for a king-- because he never wanted to give up his control.

Samuel's arguments did not persuade the people. The subjugation of Israel's territory by the Philistines demanded a strong response from the tribes.

> If the thesis is correct that these people were so determined
> to have a king that they would not listen to their leader's
> voice, then it follows that the prophet hardly had any
> alternative. He could yield to circumstance and to the
> insistence of the people, however distasteful that might be,
> and play a key role in the new order, or he could refuse
> to grant their request and run the risk of being overridden.
> The latter course would certainly have meant diminishing
> of his influence.[56]

Samuel had no choice and so he selected a candidate and anointed him as king according to Cloud.[57] An analysis of the three stories relating to the selection of Saul, however, leads one to an uncertain conclusion

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about the extent of the involvement of Samuel in the selection process.

The nature of the relationship between Samuel and Saul is enigmatic and has puzzled many. W. A. Irwin wrote that Samuel never anointed Saul, and that all the passages mentioning Samuel are fictitious.[58] M.H. Segal said that the main concern of the book is Samuel and David, and that Saul is only an incidental character.[59] R.H. Pfeiffer said that the early source mentioned Samuel only incidentally in connection with Saul, but that Samuel was the principle character of the late source.[60] Needless to say, on this as well as on the other crucial points in the Samuel narratives, there is little agreement among scholars. It is my belief that the people took the initiative after seeing that Samuel was delaying and anointed Saul. Samuel never resigned himself to the new institution or to its first occupant and tried to antagonize Saul. Let us examine the different versions of how Saul became king, and see if Samuel ever overcame his initial opposition to the kingship.

9:1-10:16 is the story in which Saul sets out to find his father's asses, and meets Samuel. The prophet Samuel anointed Saul in a private ceremony. The second story, 10:17-27 relates that Saul was chosen by means of a lottery taken among all the people at a gathering at Mizpah. Chapter 11 is the story of the assault on Kiriath Jearim by Nahash the Ammonite. After leading troops in battle, Saul was made king by the people at Gilgal, in Samuel's presence and with his participation.

Each version has its adherents. For many scholars the story of the innocent lad who went looking for his father's asses and found a kingdom is a combination of fact and fantasy. Gressman first pointed

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out the elements of folk-tale and fantasy in the story--the unspecified time and place, the style of the plot, and the basic theme all point to an imaginary story.[61]

This account contains the most positive attitude by Samuel towards Saul of the three stories. It appears to me that the story was a later fabrication because of the "mysterious" way in which events unfolded. Saul was not chosen by Samuel because of anything he had done, nor because of any leadership qualities he had displayed. He is chosen because God revealed to Samuel that this is the man whom Samuel should anoint as king. The anointing is performed in private.[62] When Saul's uncle asked the lad what Samuel said, Saul was curiously silent. It is unlikely that the ceremony would have been conducted in a secretive private setting as the elders had already asked Samuel to appoint a king. It is hard to see any kernel of historical truth in this story, whose main purpose seems to be to link Samuel with Saul.

Samuel makes Saul "nagid" over Israel in this story. The use of this word has generated much controversy among scholars. Albright says it was intentionally used by Samuel because he meant for Saul to be a military leader of the tribal federation.[63] On the other hand, Stephen Yonick, demonstrated that "nagid" means one who is in front, as in prince or overseer. He contended that "nagid" and king are synonymous.[64] E.I.J. Rosenthal came to the same conclusion, from a different analysis.[65] Yet all of this discussion may well be irrelevant if Samuel was not the one who anointed Saul as leader of Israel.

The next account of 10:17-27 is usually considered an anti-monarchical version of how Saul became king. Reluctantly, Samuel

submitted to the people's requests and consented to select a king.
A lot is taken among the tribes, families, and individuals, until Saul
is the one indicated. Saul was hiding in the baggage at the time of
his selection. The process is designed to show once again that Saul
is God's choice as ruler of Israel. This story is similar to the first
in that the underlying purpose is to show that Saul's selection as
king was sanctioned and engineered by God.

The reason there was such a great need to present multiple
stories linking Saul with divine approval was because in reality Saul
became king in some other manner. Chapter 2 of this thesis analyzed
the need to explain the events of Israel's history in theo-centric
terms. All three of the stories about Saul's selection connect Saul's
election with Samuel and God. The first two stories have little basis
in historical fact. The third story, chapter 11 probably preserves
the true way in which Saul became king.

Nahash the Ammonite attacked the village of Jabesh Gilead.
Just before the final siege, the village asked Nahash to give them
seven days to send messengers throughout the land to see if anyone
from their fellow tribes will be able to help them. Israel's tribes
were so weak and ineffective that Nahash was confident that no one would
come to their aid. He consented to their request. The messengers
happened to come to Saul's village, and he overheard their plea as he
came in from the field. If he were in fact king at the time, then the
messengers would certainly have come directly to him for his assistance.
Rather, it was coincidental that Saul overheard of the imminent tragedy.
Saul was incensed that such an attack could take place, and responded

immediately to the appeal. He challenged the rest of the nation to join him in battle and mustered up a force which surprised the complacent overconfident Ammonites. The battle was a stunning victory for Israel. It served as a great morale boost to the depressed and hard-pressed tribes.

Saul had delivered his people from a perilous situation, just as the judges had done in the past. Although he responded to the challenge just as his predecessors had done, the circumstances were different this time. The Philistine aggression continued to plague the people. The religious leader, Samuel had been asked to appoint a king and delayed acting on their request. The people made the offer to the new found hero to become king, just as they had offered the position to Gideon--only this time, the hero accepted the title.

E.A. Speiser wrote, "The actual king-makers were the leaders of the people; and such authority on the part of the people is literally 'democracy.'"[66] He cited the following examples of king-making in Israel, and noted that "the authenticity of the instances...cited has never been disputed by the leading critical schools."[67]

ויאמרו איש ישראל אל גדעון משל בנו גם אתה
גם בנך גם בן בנך

Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, "Rule over us-you, your son, your grandson as well." (Judges 8:22)

וילכו כל העם הגלגל וימלכו שם את שאול לפני ה׳

So all the people went to Gilgal, and there at Gilgal they declared Saul king before the Lord. (I Samuel 11:15)

ויבאו אנשי יהודה וימשחו שם את דוד למלך על
בית יהודה

The men of Judah came and there they anointed David king over the House of Judah. (II Samuel 2:4)

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ויבאו כל זקני ישראל אל המלך חברונה ויכרת
להם המלך דוד ברית בחברון לפני ה' וימשחו את
דוד למלך על ישראל.

All the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron,
and King David made a pact with them in Hebron before
the Lord. And they anointed David king over Israel.
(II Samuel 5:3)

וילך רחבעם שכם כי שכם בא כל ישראל להמליך
אותו.

Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to
Shechem to acclaim him as king. (I Kings 12:1)

Noth also came to the same conclusion.[68] Martin Cohen wrote recently

that the elders wanted to appoint a leader whom they could control.

He concocted a somewhat outlandish scenario wherein the Shilonite

priesthood was the instrument of the elders of the tribes.[69]

In nearby Mesopotamia, the kings were also proclaimed in a

similar manner. T. Jacobsen studied the early Mesopotamian myths.[70]

These myths which were based on the experiences of the writers and

the society showed that the ultimate authority was a general assembly

of citizens. The assembly would be convened to deal with a crisis,

and a temporary organizer would be selected to serve as "lord."

In some instances these temporary war leaders attempted to expand

their influence to a more permanent nature.

David had been chosen by representatives of the people to become

king, despite the fact that he was supposedly selected already by

Samuel and God (16:1-13). The truth is that David was probably chosen

in the accepted manner, just like all the other examples cited above,

but the compilers of I Samuel felt it necessary to show that he was

anointed by God, thus the story in chapter 16. Similarly, Samuel

was brought into the stories about Saul in order to show that there was a legitimate transfer of power, i.e., that God had approved of the transaction.

Most all scholars agree that vs. 12-14 in chapter 11 were later inserts designed to harmonize this account with the ones that preceded it. But, as pointed out in chapter 2, this was not the only reason Samuel was included in the story. He was included in order to fit this episode in Israel's history with the compiler's perception of the over-all scheme of the way events unfolded.

> In the final analysis scholars are generally agreed that I Samuel 11 is perhaps the most reliable historical tradition in the materials on the rise of kingship in Israel, and that its viewpoint is positive to Saul and to the monarchy. They also point out the minor role of Samuel here and stress the fact that even his limited appearance is mostly confined to vs. 12-14 where most see the influence of an editorial hand.[71]

To summarize up to this point then, Samuel, the most powerful figure in recent times was the religious leader of the tribes. His authority extended beyond the realm of the cult and into other dimensions of Israel's society. When asked to establish a monarchy by the people, he was reluctant to do so and campaigned vigorously against it. The people remained steadfast in their demand. When war broke out some time later at Jabesh Gilead, Saul a previously untested leader, rose to the occasion. He successfully led the people, and as a result of the victory, the people offered him the kingship. The internal and external situation both made the mood ripe for such an initiative. Saul accepted, and was euphorically acclaimed Israel's first king. Although Samuel is present in all three of the narratives about Saul's election, he most likely had little to do with the outcome of the events.

Samuel was presented with a fait accompli. Having opposed the monarchy at the outset, let us see how he adapted to the new development, and if he resolved himself to work with the new king.

The chapter which follows the Jabesh Gilead story of Saul's coronation at Gilgal is Samuel's Farewell Speech (12). Although it may be out of order chronologically here, since Samuel continues to play a role in Israel's affairs, we shall nevertheless consider it at this point.

Some scholars approach the speech with the same skepticism they have towards chapter 8. They see it as an anti-monarchical or Deuteronomistic message inserted into the mouth of Samuel.[72] Yet there are others who feel that the speech is an accurate representation of Samuel's feelings, and not a later fabrication.

> It is Samuel's own personal opposition which was handed down by tradition to the author as a factor. Samuel naturally resented the rejection by the people in his old age of himself and of his system of government. It was for him a painful break with the cherished old past. He also saw in the people's demand a repudiation of the ancient doctrine of the divine kingship in Israel (Exodus 15:18; Judges 8:23b). But the people had a more realistic perception of the situation in Israel: the decay of the tribal system and the emergence of an Israelite nation, the failure of the administration of justice (8:5,20), above all the urgent necessity (which, though for some reason the people did not mention expressly) of grappling with the political problems, the Philistine operation in the west (9:16) and the Ammonite invasion of the east (12:12).[73]

I would only add that the speech seems to be in the words of a hurt man, one who could not understand why his people preferred a king to his form of ruling, and who probably went to his death feeling it was a personal rejection. He was so hurt that he could not even refer to Saul by name during the speech. Samuel admitted that Israel has a king, claimed a role for himself in bringing it about, and used the roots "shaal" and "shaul" several times.

ועתה הנה המלך אשר בחרתם אשר שאלתם

> "Here is the king that you have chosen, that you have
> asked for." (12:13)

But he does not use the name Saul (shaul) at all in the whole speech.

This does not seem to me to be coincidental, but a conscious choice

of the retiring leader not to employ Saul's name in his final remarks.

In referring to his sons, he skillfully brushes aside the

accusations of their corruption. In the verse which follows mention

of his sons, Samuel defuses the issue by challenging his listeners:

את שור מי לקחתי וחמור מי לקחתי ואת מי עשקתי את מי
רצותי ומיד מי לקחתי כפר ואעלים עיני בו
ואשיב לכם.

> "Whose ass have I have 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." (12:3)

Not surprisingly, the people reassure the departing prophet that he is

not suspected of any corruption or wrongdoing. In this manner, he

has expunged his and his family's record.

After the exoneration, he reviews the nation's history and

their lapses of unfaithfulness to the Lord. Even in reviewing the

events of the past, the human feelings of rejection come through very

strongly.

ותראו כי נחש מלך בני עמון בא עליכם ותאמרו
לי לא כי מלך ימלך עלינו וה' אליהכם מלככם.

> "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'—though the Lord your
> God is your King." (12:12)

It is no accident that the reference to the Ammonite invasion of Nahash

and his forces should stir up such ill feelings in Samuel. This after

all, was the act which precipitated Saul's selection as king.

While we may not have here a word for word manuscript of the speech, it most likely reflects the message Samuel delivered at the close of a long and illustrious career. Such speeches were typical of the style of the time.

> A farewell speech by the political leader appears to have been a normal occurrence. This is an address which often has the character of a testament, in which the leader, facing the prospect of approaching death, or handing over his office for some other reason, says farewell to his people or to his followers.[74]

Samuel will not rest his case until he extorted an admission from the people that they sinned by asking for a king. He called upon God to deliver a thunder storm in the middle of the wheat and harvest season.

> הלא קציר חטים היום אקרא אל ה' ויתן קלות
> ומטר ודעו וראו כי רעתכם רבה אשר עשיתם בעיני
> ה' לשאול לכם מלך.

> "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." (12:17)

Somewhat scared and frightened by the prospect of what would happen if they did not agree with Samuel, the people confessed that they had sinned in asking for a king. After hearing what he wanted to hear, Samuel then reassured his fellow countrymen that the Lord will not abandon them and that he will continue to pray on their behalf. To the very end, he wanted to impress upon his people how wrong it was to ask for a king. He was not content until he heard their confession.

It would be reasonable to conclude that the chapter reflects the attitude of Samuel and not those of a later editor. At the beginning

of the period and at the end of his reign, Samuel expressed his

staunch opposition to kingship. Let us examine how he interacted

with the king during the interim to see if he ever supported Saul.

Most scholars believe that there was a common sense of purpose

among the two leaders, and that they cooperated with each other.

Representative of this assessment is Kaufmann's analysis.

> Samuel's opposition to the monarchy was a passing cloud.
> Even in the moments of fiercest antagonism toward Saul,
> Samuel never again suggests that the monarchy itself is
> a sin. [75]

Kittel is also indicative of those who thought that the conflict between

the two leaders was projected back onto the sources from a later period.

> A later generation having unsatisfactory experiences
> with the monarch may have thought thus...The narrator
> does not conceal his opinion about republics and monarchies,
> as we call them today. He imagines Samuel thought as he
> thinks, but this is not the case...As far as we can see it,
> it was not a question of power with Samuel and Saul. Not
> as opponents in a struggle for power or control over the
> people did Samuel face Saul, but as opponents in a struggle
> for God. [76]

Although the books of II Samuel and I and II Kings vividly portray

the struggles for power and supremacy in Israel, it is not recognized

that just as fierce a battle to retain power was waged by Samuel. He

clearly opposed the monarchy at the outset and at the end of his life.

Why should we assume that he acted any differently in between? The little

information that we have about the dealings between the king and

prophet reveal that there was an irreconcilable tension between them.

It is significant that there is no record in the sources of the two leaders

working together.

Chapter 13 and 15 tell in parallel versions of the major confrontation

between Samuel and Saul. In one account the altercation led Samuel

to tell Saul that his dynasty would not be established, and in the other that he would not continue as king. It is difficult to determine which story is closer to the actual events, but we can see that they both seek to convey a similar message.

Chapter 13 tells of the battle led by Saul against the Philistines at Gilgal. Hard-pressed by the onslaught of the Philistine attack, and with his men beginning to disperse in the face of such formidable opposition, Saul tried to salvage the situation by acting swiftly and decisively. He had already waited for Samuel for seven days, the amount of time Samuel told him to wait. Saul realized that he could not wait for Samuel any longer, and so he decided he must act. He decided that before attacking, it would be wise to offer a sacrifice to Yhwh. In so doing, he followed the example set by Samuel in his jaunt against the Philistines (7).

Samuel was furious about what Saul had done. Arriving immediately after the sacrifice, he said in no uncertain terms:

ויאמר שמואל אל שאול נסכלת לא שמרת את מצות ה'
אלהיך אשר צוך כי עתה הכין ה' את ממלכתך אל
ישראל עד עולם. ועתה ממלכתך לא תקום.

Samuel answered Saul, "You acted foolishly in not keeping the commandments that the Lord your God laid upon you! Otherwise the Lord would have established your dynasty forever. But now your dynasty will not endure." (13:13-14)

The punishment was a harsh overreaction to the situation. It seems especially harsh when one tries to determine what sin Saul has committed. The sin cannot be that Saul offered a sacrifice on his own. The Bible shows numerous instances at this period when sacrifices were offered by non-Levites.[77] Saul's successor, David offered sacrifices but was not punished (II Samuel 6:13, 17). Samuel

himself is not a Levite! What then was the sin? If the event did actually occur in this manner, the reaction can only be understood as motivated by his desire to see Saul fail. Martin Cohen wrote, "It is apparent that the commandment that Saul transgressed was the unwritten order not to attempt an usurpation of the prerogatives of the priest-diviners by performing their special symbolic rites."[78] By acting as he had, Saul was threatening the established order which had empowered him.

Let us move on to the other account of Saul's rejection, the one found in chapter 15. This is usually considered the more historically reliable version.

Whereas chapter 13 relates the rejection of Saul's offspring as punishment for his wrong-doing, chapter 25 is the rejection of Saul's sovereignty. Once again, the setting was Gilgal, only this time the opponents were the Amalekites and not the Philistines. The pretense for Samuel's anger this time was that Saul did not fully carry out the <u>ḥerem</u> (total annihilation) of the Amalekites, as he was ordered to do. Saul spared the king and allowed the people to take some of the spoils to be offered as sacrifices to <u>Yhwh</u>.

Certain passages in this chapter also reveal the depth of animosity felt by Samuel towards Saul. In the opening verse, Samuel said to the king:

<div dir="rtl">
ויאמר שמואל אל שאול אתי שלח ה׳ למשחך למלך
על עמו על ישראל ועתה שמע לקול דברי ה׳.
</div>

> Samuel said to Saul, "I am the one the Lord sent to anoint you king over His people Israel. Therefore, listen to the Lord's command!" (15:1)

By placing the pronoun in the emphatic position as is done in this sentence, the emphasis is placed on the pronoun, "I." It is intended to impress upon Saul that he is subservient to Samuel. Driver wrote on this verse,

"A pronoun in the emphatic position should always be noted by the student."[79]

When Samuel arrived at the scene of the battle, he did not inquire how the troops were faring. As in the previous episode, he expressed his anger immediately. He spoke to the king in a very belittling and insulting manner.

ויאמר שמואל הלוא אם קטן אתה בעיניך ראש
שבטי ישראל אתה.

> Samuel said, "You may look small to yourself, but you are the head of the tribes of Israel." (15:17)

The vehemence and extent of the anger may well reflect the depth of Samuel's true feelings.

Saul recognized that he was wrong for not having carried out the herem. He repented for his error and pleaded with Samuel for forgiveness. Unlike Nathan who forgave David, or Moses who forgave the people, Samuel refused to have mercy on Saul. He declined to pray with him or appear in public with him. After Saul makes another plea, Samuel consented reluctantly to go with Saul, but remained silent as Saul bowed before God.

Both of these stories preserve and convey the nature of the clash between Samuel and Saul. They both show that Samuel came to the scene of a battle in which Saul had victoriously led Israel's troops. In both stories, Samuel was displeased with Saul and rebuked him for some reason. Saul's appeals for mercy and understanding were unheeded by Samuel who adamantly denied a reprieve. Samuel did not allow Saul another opportunity to prove his loyalty or worthiness. We can conclude, on the basis of the common points of the stories that such a split probably did occur. It is unclear which of the two accounts

preserved the correct reason for the division. It also appears as if Samuel was looking for a reason to reprimand and dispose of Saul.

Only two sentences out of both stories indicate any sympathy or empathy by Samuel towards Saul. When God told Samuel that he regrets that he made Saul king, we read:

נחמתי כי המלכתי את שאול למלך כי שב מאחרי ואת
דברי לא הקים ויחר לשמואל ויזעק אל ה' כל הלילה.

> "I repent that I have made Saul king for he has not
> performed my commandments." And Samuel was angry,
> and he cried to the Lord all night. (15:11)

Yet we do not know why Samuel was angry, or why he cried out all night. He could have been angry with the Lord. Perhaps he was crying because he thought Samuel was so incapable of handling the job, or perhaps he was just saddened by the whole affair. Significantly, however, he did not plead with God to change his mind as his earlier counterpart Moses had done on numerous occasions. He placidly accepted God's decision to remove Saul and implemented it.

The other sentence which shows sympathy towards Saul is:

ולא יסף שמואל לראות את שאול עד יום מותו כי
התאבל שמואל אל שאול וה' נחם כי המליך את שאול
על ישראל. ויאמר ה' אל שמואל עד מתי אתה מתאבל
אל שאול ואני מאסתיו ממלך על ישראל מלא קרנך
שמן ולך אשלחך אל ישי בית הלחמי כי ראיתי בבניו
לי מלך.

> Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of
> his death, but Samuel grieved over Saul. And
> the Lord repented that he had made Saul king over
> Israel. The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will
> you grieve for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from
> being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and
> set out; I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite,
> for I have decided on one of his sons to be king."
> (15:35-16:1)

Samuel then proceeded to go and anoint David. Here again Samuel's grievance is associated with the statement that God regretted that he had appointed Saul. The word התאבל may just reflect sadness on the part of Samuel, but it does not mean that he did anything to act on Saul's behalf or to defend him.

Is it reasonable to surmise on the basis of these few words that there was a close relationship between the two leaders? Is this enough evidence to believe that the two cooperated with each other?

The chapters that follow tell of the introduction of David to Saul's court and of David's exploits and rise in popularity after slaying Goliath. Samuel did not aid Saul, and Saul was very much alone. The king's orders went unanswered. Saul became increasingly paranoid and suspicious of the popular new hero David. On several occasions Saul tried to kill David. David was forced to flee from the court for fear of his life. At one point, David escaped to Samuel at Naioth.

Samuel was associated in this story with a group of ecstatic prophets at Naioth. (19). The messengers sent by Saul to capture David were unable to apprehend him because they came under the influence of ecstatic prophesy. Saul went out on his own, and he also began to prophesy when he arrived at Naioth. Once again, Saul is linked with the saying:

הגם שאול בנביאים

Is Saul also among the prophets?

The account shows Saul in a negative way. What is interesting for our analysis is the implication that David, who was seeking refuge from Saul is able to take shelter with Samuel. Once again, Samuel

worked against Saul, this time by harboring someone that Saul was pursuing. Again, we wonder, when did Samuel ever help Saul?

The final exchange recorded between the two comes in chapter 28, when Saul seeks out the ghost of Samuel through the witch of Endor, who acts as a medium. In this final desperate scene, Saul has been abandoned by God and faces a crucial battle against the Philistines. He appealed to Samuel, as a man of God, who is now deceased but who should care about the fate of his compatriots, to give him some advice. Once again, however, Samuel was cold and angry with Saul. He refused to help him in any way. Saul was emotionally shaken by the experience and became very weak, for he was told that he will be defeated in battle and will die along with his sons the next day. This scene obviously has an element of fiction in it. It is however, perfectly consistent with the type of behavior displayed by Samuel towards Saul throughout his reign. Saul goes out to battle bravely, and faces the Philistines. He dies alone, atop a mountain, in a scene dramatically and sensitively told.

In conclusion, we have seen that one thread that appears consistently throughout the entire book is the hostility of Samuel towards Saul. Regardless of the fact of various sources, all the narratives present a basic animosity by Samuel towards the introduction of the monarchy to Israel. This attitude dictates the nature of his relationship with the first king. Samuel was a leader who never wanted the monarchy to succeed, and actually worked to see to it that its first occupant would be doomed by contributing to his downfall.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

1. Sean Warner has challenged the conventional chronology of the
   period. He suggests that the period of the Judges came before
   the Conquest and not after it. Sean Warner, "The Period of the
   Judges within the structure of early Israel," HUCA 47 (1976),
   pp. 57-79. Warner's major contention is that the unity during the
   conquest would not have been replaced by the disunity of the period of
   the Judges only to be followed by the unity of the monarchy.
   Yet there is little to support his notion that history always
   moves in a logical, evolutionary way. He points to the lack of
   mention of the ark during the period of the Judges, and its
   re-emergence during the period of the monarchy. Yet W. Arnold
   Task, The Ephod and the Ark, has shown demonstratively that
   the references in Judges to the ephod are actually referring to the
   ark. Also, it is directly mentioned in Judges 20:26-28 and
   21:12, 19. Warner does not address himself to why Israel's historians
   would present the history as Conquest-Judges-Kings if it did not
   occur in that order; nor does he answer how or when this change
   was made. And what of the Philistine threat? It was because
   they were such a menace to Israel that the people had to abandon
   their autonomy and unite. The Philistines began to invade and
   subjugate Israel during the time of the Judges. How does Warner
   account for their activity if the scenario was Judges-Conquest-Kings?
   Did the Philistines take an extended vacation during the conquest?
   Furthermore, it is unclear how unified the people were during the
   Conquest (see below). He says the tribes were non-existent at
   the time of the monarchy. This assumption is not at all supported
   by the sources which show that the people still retained tribal
   associations. Finally, if we were to use an analogy to Warner's
   thesis, a student of the history of the United States would be
   baffled by the Civil War, since that period was wedged between the
   federalist period. One would be forced to conclude, using Warner's
   reasoning that the Civil War preceded American independence and was
   followed by a period of unity.

2. The Book of Judges has a well defined perspective of history
   which it imposes on each episode of that era. The stories of
   the judges are probably based on ancient traditions. The two
   major overriding principles which dominate the stories are:
   a) that Israel was a unified entity. The imposition of this pan-
   Israelite concept elevated tribal events and the actions of
   the individual judges to a national level. b) that the events of
   the period occurred in recurring cycles. Each cycle had the following
   stages--the reversion by the people to idolatrous practice; oppression
   by another people; an appeal to God for deliverance; deliverance

2. (continued): by a "judge" who led a military triumph; a period of peace. See, A. Malamat, "The Period of the Judges," in B. Mazar, The World History of the Jewish People, volume 3, pp. 129-163.

3. G.E. Mendenhall believes that the "conquest" was actually more of an internal revolution with elements of the native population joining forces with the incoming Hebrews. G. E. Mendenhall, "The Hebrew Conquest of Palestine," The Biblical Archaeologist, 25 (1962), pp. 66-87.

4. A. Lods, Israel, pp. 328-348.

5. W. F. Albright, Archaeology of Palestine, Penguin Books: Middlesex, 1949, pp. 110-122. G.E. Wright, Biblical Archaeology, Westminster Press: Philadelphia, 1962, chapter 6.

6. John Bright, A History of Israel, pp. 117-120, 171-174. G.E. Wright, Biblical Archaeology, pp. 69-84.

7. Nelson Glueck, "Explorations in Eastern Palestine I-IV," AASOR, 14 (1933-34); 15 (1934-35); 18-19 (1937-38); 25-28 (1945-49).

8. A. Lods, Israel, pp. 328-348.

9. Martin Noth, The History of Israel, pp. 141-153, Judges 1:13-36.

10. Ibid, p. 142.

11. Ibid, pp. 142-144, Judges 1:28, 17-18.

12. Judges 4. For a good concise overview, see John Bright, History of Israel, pp. 171-174.

13. Judges 19-20.

14. Martin Noth, History of Israel, pp. 85-109, 242-263.

15. Bruce Donald Rahtjen, "Philistine and Hebrew Amphictyonies," JNESt 24 (1965) pp. 100-104 writes that amphictyony is more applicable to the organization of the Philistine city-states in Palestine than to the Hebrew confederation. For a good analysis of the scholarship on this subject and a critique of Noth's work, see the work of Noth's student, H. J. DeGeuss, The Tribes of Israel, Van Goraem: Amsterdam, 1976. See also William Hallo, "A Sumerian Amphictyony," Journal of Cuneiform Studies, 14 (1960), pp. 88-114.

16. E. A. Speiser, "The Manner of the King," Mazar, World History of the Jewish People, pp. 280-282.

17. Deborah may have been an exception; she may have judged Israel for some length of time. Judges 4:4-23.

18. Abimelech was Gideon's son by a Shechemite concubine. A. Lods notes that Gideon's sons contested who should succeed him after his death. He attaches significance to Gideon naming his son "Abimelech" because he says that means "my father is king." He concludes that Gideon actually did become a regional king and that he established an ephod at Ophrah. A. Lods, Israel, pp. 342-343. G. Henton Davies, Vetus Testamentum 13 (1963) pp. 151-157.

19. Judges 9.

20. For more on this, see A. Malamat, "The Period of the Judges," Mazar, World History, pp. 149-151.

21. A. Lods, Israel, p. 348.

22. J. Bright, History of Israel, p. 169.

23. This word seren is not used elsewehre in the Bible. It is believed to be related to the Greek word "tyrant," which is of non-Greek origin.

24. J. Bright, History of Israel, pp. 180-181. A. Lods, Israel, pp. 348-351. Yigal Yadin, The Art of Warfare in Bibilical Lands, McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc.: New York, volume 2, 1963.

25. This is my translation.

26. Noth, History of Israel, pp. 163-165, 167.

27. For more on the Philistines see, J.C. Greenfield, "Philistines," IDB, volume 3, pp. 793 ff.

28. Hylander in 1932 first recognized that 1:1 ff was actually Saul's birth story. The constant recurrence of the root שאל and the puns on it show how שאול is a derivative of שאל . The child is "asked" for "by a barren wife." He is then "borrowed" by YHWH and "lent" to YHWH. A more logical explanation of Samuel's name would be שמו אל perhaps such an aetiology did exist at one time, Jastrow in JBL 29,92 says that the name Samuel comes from שמע אל , hearer of El, or heard by El. Pfeiffer, Introduction, p. 344.

29. The other shrines in Israel at that time were, Shechem, Gilgal, Beth El, and Mizpah.

30. Birch, The Rise of the Israelite Monarchy, sees verses 5-6a, 7-12, 16-17 as part of the original account. He cautions against being misled by vs. 13-14 into believing that the whole chapter is fictitious. Rodney Cloud refers to Weiser and Seebass who see the description in 7 as basically true. Rodney Cloud, The Pre-Literary Prophets and the Rule of Kings, pp. 86-87.

31. Birch, Rise of Israelite Monarchy, pp. 18-19.

32. John McKenzie, "The Four Samuels," Biblical Research 7 (1962), pp. 3-18.

33. E. Robertson, "Samuel and Saul," BJRL, 28 (1944), pp. 175-206.

34. Theodore Robinson, A History of Israel, p. 180-181.

35. Birch, Rise of Israelite Monarchy, p. 134.

36. H.M. Orlinsky, "The Seer-Priest," Mazar, World History, pp. 268-279. Martin Cohen, "The Role of The Shilonite Priesthood in the United Monarchy of Israel.", HUCA, 36 (1965), pp. 59-98.

37. Albright, "Samuel and the Beginnings of the Prophetic Movement," Goldenson Lecture at H.U.C.

38. Noth, History of Israel, p. 170.

39. R. Kittel, Great Men and Movements in Israel, p. 95.

40. Jeremiah 15:1, Psalms 99:6.

41. Albright, "Samuel and the Prophetic Movement."

42. I Samuel 4:3, 8:4, II Samuel 3:17, 5:3.

43. Martin Cohen, "The Role of the Shilonite Priesthood," p. 67.

44. M. Tsevat, "Samuel, Books of," IDB, Supplement, p. 781.

45. J. Bright believes the anti-monarchial expressions may well be of historical value. J. Bright, History of Israel, pp. 166-167. John Mauchline writes, "A strong case can be presented for the view that the antipathy to kingship could have been expressed by Samuel himself." John Mauchline, I and II Samuel (New Century Bible), pp. 91-91.

46. Ever since Budde, it has been widely associated with the late source. Noth links it to the Deuteronomist.

47. A. Weiser, M.H. Segal, Rodney Cloud, E.I.J. Rosenthal, and John Bright are all scholars who see the chapter as based on reliable sources.

48. I. Mendelsohn, "Samuel's Denunciation of Kingship in the Light of the Akkadian Documents from Ugarit," BASOR 143 (1956), pp. 17-22; "On Corvee Labor in Ancient Canaan and Israel," BASOR 167 (1962), pp. 31-35.

49. I. Mendelsohn, "On Corvee Labor," BASOR 167 (1961), pp. 31-35.

50. Ibid, p. 33.

51. E.I.J. Rosenthal, "Some Aspects of the Hebrew Monarchy," JJS. 9 (1958), pp. 1-19.

52. Joshua 17:18, Judges 1:19; 4:3,13. Yigal Yadin, The Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands, volume 2, pp. 248-253.

53. I Kings 21:1-29.

54. Y. Kaufmann, The Religion of Israel, p. 264.

55. Otto Eissfeldt, The Old Testament: An Introduction, pp. 13.

56. Rodney Cloud, The Pre-Literary Prophets and the Rule of the Kings, p. 96.

57. Ibid.

58. W. A. Irwin, "Samuel and the Rise of the Monarchy," AJSL 58 (1941), pp. 113-134.

59. M.H. Segal, The Pentatuech, pp. 210, 218-219.

60. R.H. Pfeiffer, "Midrash in the Books of Samuel, "Quantulacumque, pp. 303-316.

61. W. A. Irwin, "Samuel and the Monarchy," AJSL 58 (1941), p. 120.

62. Hertzberg writes that it seems that Samuel does not want witnesses present because of the remote location, the early hour, and that he sent away the servants. H.W. Hertzberg, I and II Samuel, p. 84.

63. W.F. Albright, "Samuel and the Beginnings of the Prophetic Movement." pp. 15-16.

64. Stephen Yonick, Rejection of Saul as King of Israel, Franciscan Press: Jerusalem, 1970, pp. 21-27.

65. E.I.J. Rosenthal, "Aspects of the Hebrew Monarchy," pp. 1-19.

66. E. A. Speiser, "The Manner of the King," Mazar, World History, p. 284.

67. Ibid.

68. Martin Noth, The Laws in the Pentatuech and Other Studies, Thomas Oliver and Boyd: London, 1966, p. 163.

69. Martin Cohen, "The Role of the Shilonite Priesthood in the
    United Monarchy of Ancient Israel," HUCA 36 (1965) pp. 59-98.
    One of the major flaws in Cohen's theory is that there is no
    evidence that the elders used the Shilonite priests to faciliate
    David's rise to power. If they did transfer power to him, as
    Cohen contends, why then did David have to fight off other
    challengers to the throne? They did not exercise any authority
    or support for David at this crucial moment. Finally, it is hard
    to understand what leads Cohen to conclude that David was a weak
    leader whom the elders and the priests thought they could control.
    He was a proven warrior who was anything but weak and controllable.

70.   Thorkild Jacobsen, Toward the Image of Tammuz and other
    Essays on Mesopotamian History and Culture, Harvard University
    Press: Cambridge, 1970, pp. 132-172, especially
    pp. 137-138.

71. Bruce Birch, The Rise of the Israelite Monarchy, pp. 54-55.

72. H.P. Smith, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of
    Samuel, (ICC) pp. xvi ff.

73. M.H. Segal, The Pentatuech, p. 215.

74. Otto Eissfeldt, The OT, p. 13.

75. Y. Kaufmann, Religion of Israel, p. 265.

76. R. Kittel, Great Men and Movements in Israel, pp. 99, 106.

77. Judges 6:19-21; 11:30 ff; 13:19-23. I Samuel 6:15b. II Samuel
    6:13,18, 8:16b.

78. Martin Cohen, "Shilonite Priesthood and the Rise of the Monarchy,"
    p. 74.

79. S.R. Driver, Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Samuel,
    p. 121.

CONCLUSION

Israel's first king lived a simple life. He lived in simple conditions without a palace or court. Israel was in the process of emerging from tribal entities into a nation.

His life was devoted to fighting Israel's main foe of the time, the Philistines, as well as the Arameans and the Amalekites. To that end, he gathered a force of soldiers and successfully led expeditions on behalf of Jabesh Gilead and other towns. He was a religious man devoted to the worship of Yhwh.

Samuel never wanted to accept the lessening of his own power and opposed the institution of the monarchy and Israel's first king. With Samuel making a clear break with Saul, by removing any semblance of support, Saul was left alone. Saul acted in a manner understandable in light of the circumstances. He became suspicious of all those around him, particularly David. His paranoia led to jealousy and this became an obsession with him, as he pursued the elusive David.

Saul was a tragic figure. Yet he was also a noble individual who fought bravely and led his people through difficult times. He was motived by purpose and zeal to properly fulfill his role as Israel's first king. That he was not more of a success was due in part to the circumstances: he was the first king and thus a transitionary figure. The key factor responsible for his failure, however, was the lack of support and outright opposition towards his efforts by Samuel.

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