COVENANT AND KINGSHIP IN ANCIENT ISRAEL

A READING OF 1 SAMUEL 1-12

By

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IN

ANCIENT ISRAEL

ABSTRACT

Chapters 8-12 of 1 Samuel have long been studied as a source of information about the development of a monarchy in ancient Israel. In modern scholarship the narrative in these chapters has usually been approached from the methodological perspective of historical criticism, in which an attempt is made to reconstruct both the historical events described in the narrative and the historical process of composition that resulted in the narrative. The result of 200 years of such study is that 1 Sam 8-12 is no longer read as a literary unit; individual units of the text are ascribed to various authors writing in various times and places, with various opinions about the concept of an Israelite monarchy.

The hypothesis explored in this dissertation is that it may yet be possible, perhaps even necessary, to read 1 Sam 8-12 as a literary whole in order to understand it properly. Moreover, initial surveying of the literary and rhetorical features of the narrative suggest that it is necessary to read 1 Sam 8-12 in the light of 1 Sam 1-7. Taken together, the various scenes in 1 Sam 1-12 constitute an episode in the continuing story of the theological-political experiment that was

ancient Israel's national existence. When these twelve chapters are read together, they are found to contain a coherent exploration of a single problem experienced by ancient Israel as it attempted to live in a covenantal relationship with its national God, Yahweh.

The methodological approach used in this dissertation may be characterized as a close reading of the text that attempts to discover the literary techniques of Hebrew narrative, to describe these techniques, and to use the resulting understanding of Hebrew narratology to understand and interpret the ideas presented by the narrative. The basic premise of this approach is that in order to understand an ancient text from a foreign culture, the modern reader must allow his reading to be guided and educated by the literary conventions of the text. The most basic requirement for this type of reading is that the reader describe the narrative, rather than evaluating it, either as literature or history.

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heavily, it was also Gloria who showed me that "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up" (Eccl 4:9-10).

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CHAPTER I

THE LITERARY ANALYSIS OF 1 SAMUEL 8-12

1. Review of Scholarship

The modern interpretation of 1 Sam 8-12, the conventional delimitation of the narrative describing the rise of the Israelite monarchy, has usually been undertaken using the methodology of historical criticism. The goal of historical criticism is to answer the questions "What actually happened?" and "Why?" about events reported in the Bible (E. Krentz 1975:37). In view of this ultimate goal it is necessary that the historical critic be circumspect about his narrative sources, the biblical books, which also have a history that must be investigated.

> The writer's position as an observer, his internal consistency, his bias or prejudices, and his abilities as a writer all affect the accuracy of what he knows and the competence of the report. Where more than one report exists, they must be compared. If they disagree, this does not automatically mean that one is wrong. Differences may arise from the writers' position for

1

observation (Krentz 1975:44).

Before one can approach "what happened and why it happened," one must penetrate through the socio-historical context of the narrator who has filtered "what happened and why" in constructing his own narrative account.

The history of historical critical reckoning with 1 Sam 8-12 shows a continual focus on two features of the narrative that block the path to "what happened and why." First, there seem to be three conflicting accounts of Saul's inauguration as king: 1. Chapters 9:1-10:16, Saul is anointed to be nāgîd, "designate"; 2. Chapter 10:17-27, Saul is chosen by lot to be king; 3. Chapter 11:1-15, Saul is made king in Gilgal after proving himself in battle (A. Weiser 1961:159-60). The perception of redundancy and inconsistency among these three accounts has led to the explanation that separate traditions or redactors have contributed to the narrative in the course of its transmission. This approach is evident in the Einleitung of J.G. Eichhorn, "So sind die Bücher durch die Beiträge verschiedener Zeitalter entstanden, auch durch die Hände verschiedener Überarbeiter gegangen und unter verschiedenen Gestalten und Ausgaben im Umlauf

gewesen, bis sie ihre jetzige Form erhalten haben"
(paraphrased by H.J. Stoebe 1973:35).

Secondly, these separate accounts or tradi-
tions in 1 Sam 8-12 seem to display markedly different
attitudes towards the monarchy as an institution and
towards King Saul himself. For example, in 8:7-8
the people's request for a king is characterized as
rejection of God and equated with idolatry. This
negative perception of the monarchy is also evident
in 10:17-19 and 12:1-25. On the other hand, in
9:1-10:16 God himself sends a man to Samuel to be
anointed nāgîd. The task of the nāgîd is strikingly
reminiscent of Moses' task in Exod 3:7-10. He is to
save Israel from the hand of the Philistines (9:16).
Saul himself is praised in 9:2 and 10:23-24 but dis-
paraged in 10:27.

Historical criticism has accounted for this
multiplicity of opposing viewpoints on "what actually
happened" with a hypothesis of multiple authorship
from various periods of Israelite literary history.
So J. Wellhausen, who discerns only two separate
literary sources in 1 Sam 8-12, suggests, "In the
great difference which separates these two narratives
we recognize the mental interval between two different

ages" (1973:253).

The history of modern critical examination of 1 Sam 8-12 before Wellhausen exhibits several variations on the hypothesis of multiple successive authorship.[1] Wellhausen wove the separate strands of his predecessors' hypotheses into one unified account of the narrative's development.

Wellhausen was able to correlate the two basic problems in 1 Sam 8-12—the three varying accounts of the inauguration of a monarchy and the two conflicting views of that institution—by dividing the narrative into what he saw as two separate versions (1899:240). One, anti-monarchic in viewpoint, appears in chs. 8, 10:17-27, and 12. The other, pro-monarchic, is seen in chs. 9:1-10:16 and 11.

It is obvious from the number of Wellhausen's literary strands—two—that he has subsumed the problem of three varying accounts to the criterion of pro- or anti-monarchism. He accomplishes this conjunction of two of the accounts, 9:1-10:16 and ch. 11, by noting that 9:16 is, literarily-speaking, inconclusive, and requires the events of ch. 11 for a satisfactory resolution of events initiated in 9:1-10:16 (1973:251). What seemed, therefore, to be two

accounts of Saul's rise to power is in fact one; in
9:1-10:16 Saul is only king de jure, he becomes king
de facto when he proves himself in ch. 11 (1973:250).

Having resolved the literary problems of the
narrative, Wellhausen proceeds to explain the rela-
tionship between the two versions. He relates the
two by setting each version within the context of
Israelite history and the history of Israelite liter-
ature. The pro-monarchic version is earlier and
expresses ancient Israel's gratitude to the men and
institutions that ended the anarchy and oppression
characteristic of the period of the judges (1973:254).
The anti-monarchic version presented in chs. 8, 10:17-
19, and 12 is the product of the exilic or post-exilic
religious community. Those people knew nothing of
government or statehood and so retrojected their
theocratic concerns back to the early history of the
monarchy (1973:255-56). The anti-monarchic version is
much later than the pro-monarchic and is dependent on
the latter; the anti-monarchic is unhistorical, the
pro-monarchic is the genuine tradition (1973:255).

For Wellhausen, the establishment of an
historical setting for each strand of the narrative
takes the place of specific textual interpretation.

Any statement or view in either version is understood in the context of the historical milieu of its author rather than in its existing literary context. The two versions are compared and contrasted but the explanation of their differences is always traced to their separate historical contexts.[2]

Wellhausen's analysis of 1 Sam 8-12 is the classic formulation of scholarship in his day, but it is even more important for the paradigmatic role it has played in subsequent scholarship. Although there have been two broad shifts in hypotheses about the mechanisms of literary growth and accretion in the narrative—from Wellhausen's two separate versions, to three separate and possibly contemporary traditions (e.g., A. Weiser 1962; G. Wallis 1968; C. Hauer 1967) to complexes of one, two or even three redactions of earlier traditions (e.g., Noth 1967; Boecker 1969; Birch 1976; Veijola 1977; Langlamet 1978; McCarter 1980)—few examinations have stepped outside Wellhausen's paradigm.

Wellhausen's Paradigm

1. The separate components that together make up 1 Sam 8-12 must be isolated. This first step presupposes that the two problems of conflicts and

redundancy in the narrative are the result of composite authorship over an extended period of time. The theoretical framework of historical criticism is so heavily dependent on the literary dissection of narratives exhibiting conflicts or redundancies that it is almost impossible for any alternative explanation of these literary phenomena to occur. That these conflicts and redundancies might be functional exemplifications of narrative conventions is ruled out <u>a priori</u>.[3]

2. Each component is analyzed to determine its author's intention and point of view.

3. A particular group or stratum of Israelite society is tenatively assigned authorship. In addition, a date and purpose for the composition is suggested.

The whole of the narrative can now be said to have been interpreted. All aspects of the text, especially the problems of conflicting viewpoint and redundancies, have been explained as the product of a particular school or view in a particular period of Israelite history. According to O. Eissfeldt it is only after determining the extent and nature, date, place, and purpose of the narrative components that

the structure and composition of a biblical book become intelligible (1965:130). The extrinsic nature of the historical approach is apparent. The narrative is explained and accounted for by tracing its origins.[4]

The historical critical approach has endured, albeit with modifications. Instead of literary sources, one speaks of "traditions" and "redactions." More importance is now given to the redactor's control over the content and shape of traditions that he uses. Nevertheless, interpretation is decidedly historical; the meaning of the sources (or traditions, or redactions) is uncovered by finding the particular time and place in Israelite history in which they were supposedly composed.

In the following review of works on 1 Sam 8-12, the dominance of the historical critical paradigm will be illustrated by schematization of each treatment according to the three steps described above. Rather than aiming at exhaustive treatment of all studies of the narrative, the review is thematically structured. Representative examples are reviewed under the headings of the three major varieties of historical criticism: source, tradition

and redaction criticism.[5] .

1. Source Criticism

a. <u>K. Budde</u>

i) Budde divides the narrative into two
parallel independent sources (1902:xii, xviii, xix).
His primary criterion for this division is the pro-
or anti-monarchic viewpoint of the narrative components
(1902:xii). Budde finds the pro-monarchic source in
9:1-10:16; 11:1-11, 15; 13; 14:1-46, and the anti-
monarchic in 7:2ff; 8; 10:17-24a; 12; 15 (1902:xii).
These two sources were combined by a deuteronomistic
redactor, whose hand is apparent in 1 Sam 7:13-17;
14:47-51; 2 Sam 8 (1902:x). Although Budde agreed
that his two sources were aggregates of pre-exilic
traditions, he saw no visible evidence that would
allow for a division of these sources into their
respective components. "Weder Redaktionsspuren noch
Unterschiede des Sprachgebrauchs noch sachliche
Widersprüche innerhalbe jeder der beiden Quellen-
schriften, noch gar selbständige anderweitige
Überlieferungen stehn dafur zur Verfügung" (1902:xvii).

ii) Budde's analysis of the content of each
source and their respective vocabularies brings him
to recognize them as the Hexateuchal sources J and E

(1902:xviii-xix). The contents and tendencies of each source, J being the pro-monarchic and E the anti-monarchic, are explained with reference to the hypothetical characteristics of J and E in the Hexateuch (1902:xviii-xix).

iii) The identification of the two sources as J and E supplies a previously established place and date for them. Budde's identification of the anti-monarchic source with E caused him to date it much earlier than Wellhausen's post-exilic dating (Wellhausen 1973:254). The tone of the anti-monarchic E is prophetic in viewpoint with particular dependence on Hosea (1902:xix). The pro-monarchic source reveals its identity in its exact correspondence with preceding J narratives in Joshua and Judges, and in its extensive agreement with the viewpoint and vocabulary of J (1902:xix).

Budde's examination follows Wellhausen's division of the narrative into two sources. His main contribution is to demonstrate the feasibility of other datings and social settings, besides Wellhausen's post-exilic Judaism, that can explain the anti-monarchic stance of what he called E.

b. O. Eissfeldt

i) Eissfeldt is the most recent and probably
the last proponent of a purely source-critical expla-
nation of the narrative. Eissfeldt agrees with Budde
that the narrative sources J and E make up most of
1 Sam 8-12, but makes further subdivision in J, the
pro-monarchic source. To J, he ascribes 9:1-10:15;
11:6a; 13:3-15, and to his L, ch. 11 (excluding v.
6a); 13:1-2, 16-23; 14 (1965:275). (The two parallel
strands J and L stand against E, and relate to one
another like J and L in the Pentateuch (1965:208-09).
L presents older, cruder, more historically credible
narratives (1965:275).

ii) Eissfeldt's comments on the contents of
the narrative are almost exclusively devoted to
showing how the narrative components assigned to each
source exhibit the typical characteristics of their
respective sources. For Eissfeldt, these observations
confirm the validity of the divisions made in the
narratives and the ascription of the resultant
components to the pentateuchal sources. An order of
dependence is established from available pre-formed
materials to L, to J (with subsidiary reliance on
"living popular tradition"), to E, who undertakes a
religiously biased reshaping of L and J, again, with

access to "popular tradition" (1965:279-80). Points
of view and intentions of the narrative components
are, of course, identical with those previously
established for L, J, and E.

iii) For Eissfeldt, as for Budde, the task of
determining a date and social setting for each source
is solved by pointing to the prior determination of
this information in the analysis of the Pentateuch.
The division of 1 Sam 8-12 into the sources L, J, and
E (in order of dependence) reveals the structural
evolution of the narrative. For Eissfeldt the latter
result is equally as important as the analysis of
single narrative components, in which it is presumed
that Samuel can be understood as a simple collocation
of numerous individual narrative components (1965:270).
There is no question, however, in Eissfeldt's view,
of any narrative unity in 1 Sam 8-12.

2. Tradition History

According to Stoebe, a change in approach to
the books of Samuel took place after H. Gunkel
inaugurated his methods of tradition history and form
criticism (1973:47). Gunkel attempted to come to
terms with the long and varied history of the
traditional elements that had been combined to form a

narrative, or for that matter, any of the supposed sources. It was his goal to compile a historical catalogue of the literary types represented in the Old Testament. "We must take the writings of the Old Testament, and, as many of these are collections of writings, we must take their constituent parts out of the order in which they happen to appear in our Canon and in which 'Old Testament Introduction' usually studies them, and then rearrange them according to the type to which they belong" (1928:59). Such literary history, "will only merit the title it claims when it can show how the literature emerged from the national history and was the expression of its spiritual life" (1928:67).[6] The text as it now exists is, therefore, comprehensible only when the long history of traditions—the separate narrative components—has been traced and comprehended as a product of changing historical and social contexts. Speaking of the Genesis sagas Gunkel says, "...the sagas have already had a history in oral tradition before literary fixation; and this prehistory, ultimately of sole importance, is not to be reached through literary criticism" (quote from D.A. Knight 1975:79).

a. H. Gressmann

Gressmann developed Gunkel's views on the importance of an examination of the prehistory of narrative components in order to understand both the features of the resulting conglomerate narratives and the historical information purportedly contained therein.

i) Gressmann suggests that the conflicts and redundancies in the books of Samuel are not the result of a combination of sources such as is the case in the Hexateuch. He sees the isolated conflicts (verein-zelte Widersprüche) and mutually exclusive redundan-cies (ausschliesslich Wiederholungen) as the product of variant manuscript readings that have been combined in the present MT (1921:xviii). As the recension represented by LXX shows, these manuscript variants represent variant traditions which are more or less valuable.

> Dann sind die hebräischen Handschriften
> zu irgend einer Zeit miteinander verglichen
> und die Lesarten, nicht wie es gegenwärtig
> die Herausgeber zu tun pflegen, am Rande
> sondern in den fortlaufenden Text aufgenommen
> worden.... Sie sind einem allzu pedantischen
> Bedürfnis nach Deutlichkeit entsprungen

(1921:xviii).[7]

The MT has been further complicated by a long history of glossing, the effects of which must be eliminated by excluding these later additions to the traditional material (1921:xviii).

1 Samuel 8-12 is divided into two groupings of traditions according to their attitudes to the monarchy and Samuel. 7:2-8:22, 10:17-27, and 12:1-25 are anti-monarchic and in them Samuel is a judge and central administrator (1921:46). 9:1-10:16 and 11:1-15 are pro-monarchic and Samuel plays only a minor role (11:1-15) or is simply a seer (9:1-10:16).

Although in the present text ch. 11 is required as a resolution and conclusion of 9:1-10:16, they were originally separate; 9:1-10:16 is a Sage, while ch. 11 is a Geschichtserzählung, which gives us the only reliable information on the rise of the Israelite monarchy (1921:43).

ii) Gressmann understands the intent and point of view of a narrative component according to its generic traits. Once each tradition is generically categorized, it may also be dated and placed within the general framework of the Israelite literary periods established by Gunkel.[8] It is primarily the place of a tradition (narrative component) in

Israelite literary history that allows modern readers
to understand its nature and intent.

Gressmann finds three genres in the narrative:
1. historical narrative represented by ch. 11;
2. saga represented by 9:1-10:16; and 3. legend in
7:2-8:22; 10:17-27; and 12:1-25.

1. Historical narrative presents contemporary
material or material from the immediate past. It
deals, by Gressmann's definition, with leading
political figures and events (1921:xiv). Only ch. 11
fits this definition while also fulfilling the
requirement of agreement with the facts of Israelite
history as known from the general history of the
A.N.E.[9]

2. Saga primarily portrays events from the
past. The focus is on individuals, personal relation-
ships, and only incidentally on political events
(1921:xiv). While historical narrative portrays what
really happened, saga only simulates such relation to
reality, "...weil ihr der Wirklichkeitssinn fehlt"
(1921:xiv). Chapters 9:1-10:16 fit this category
admirably, "...in der nicht die Gesetze der Wirklich-
keit, sondern die des Wunders herrschen" (1921:34).

3. Legend is Gressmann's third generic

category. It is distinguished from saga by its
tendentious edifying purpose. "Die Religion, die in
der Sage also der naturliche hintergrund der Wörte
und Handlungen erscheint und deren zarter Duft uns
überall erfreut, drängt sich in der Legende sehr
stark und bisweilen unangenehm auf. Das Wunder, das
in der Sage nur eine Nebenrolle spielt, ist von der
Legende völlig unabtrennbar, da sie in seiner
Atmosphére lebt" (1921:xvi). The legend cycle of
Samuel (7:2-8:22; 10:17-27; 12:1-25) fits easily here,
"denn die Art, wie gerade hier von Samuel berichtet
wird, trägt durchaus den Stempel religiöser Erbauung"
(1921:26).

Having categorized each narrative component,
Gressmann continues his exegesis by noting how genre
and contents manifest the particular style and view-
point of a certain period in Israelite literary
history. The great detail and leisurely pace of
9:1-10:16 are, for example, the result of a poet's
immersion in his heroic subject, of a folk perception
of folk heroes. The numerous similarities of this
section to fairytales are characteristic of Sage,
which is governed by "die Gesetze des Wunders" (1921:
34).

c

iii) Chapter 11 is a sober, factually based account of the rise of the monarchy (1921:44). It stands close in time to the events described and little critical sifting is required to determine what actually happened. Since by definition ch. 11 represents the earliest of the three genres present in 1 Sam 8-12 and since it is pro-monarchic, the anti-monarchic viewpoint of the legends must be later and unhistorical (1921:46).

Second in reliability and age is the saga in 9:1-10:16. Many details in this narrative are embroidery of a basic historical kernel, the result of a process of oral transmission in which beliefs became imperceptibly mixed with fact (1921:xii-xiv). Nevertheless, it is the oldest of the sagas and legends in 1 Sam 8-12 and stands relatively close to the events.

Finally, the legends in 7:2-8:22; 10:17-27; and 12 are late deuteronomistic reflections on the narrative (1921:xvi-xvii). Hosea was the first prophet to voice similar anti-monarchic sentiments (1921:28). Gressmann's opinion of these legends is clearly reflected in his comment on 10:17-27.

Wie Saul König wurde in Israel,

> berichtet zuverlassig K.11. Da unsere
> Erzählung dazu nicht stimmt, kann sie
> keinen Ausspruch auf Glaubwurdigkeit
> erheben, sondern muss als Legende
> betrachtet werden....Ein frommes Gemut
> verlangt, dass der Kõnig durchs Los
> bestimmt werde, was die Geschichte auf
> andere Weise entscheidet (1921:41).

All important in Gressmann's exegesis is the narrative component's historical content, the value of the component varying proportionally with its historicity. His analysis of the literary history of the narrative is in fact a by-product of his attempt to obtain what he considers to be true historical knowledge about the rise of the monarchy from the traditions found in the text. Given that even the literary history of 1 Sam 8-12 is secondary to the goal of historical knowledge, it is obvious that the meaning of the narrative in its existing shape is totally irrelevant to Gressmann.

In Mose und seine Zeit, Gressmann summarizes his approach to texts that are "unreadable and incomprehensible" in their final form because they are simply a chaotic conglomeration of recensions,

variations and glosses:

...lesbar und verständlich wird sie erst,
wenn man sie in die zusammengehörigen
Abschnitte zerlegt und diese dann stereo-
skopisch hintereinander schaut. Bisweilen
wird freilich gefordert, man dürfe die
Schichten nicht nur abtragen, sondern man
müsse sie auch wieder an ihren ort zurück-
bringen, oder ohne Bild gesprochen, man
solle die Quellenschriften nicht nur in der
Vereinzelung betrachten, sondern auch den
jetzigen Zusammenhang würdigen, in dem sie
uns überliefert sind. Diese Forderung ist
prinzipiell abzulehnen, weil sie Unmögliches
verlangt. Man kann sich das an dem eben
gebrauchten Bilde der Ausgrabung klar
machen. Wer einen Trümmerhügel ausgräbt,
tut es, um die Trümmer zum Reden zu
bringen und ihre Geschichte festzustellen.
Zu diesem Zweck trägt er Schicht um Schicht
ab; denn nur die genaue Kenntnis der
einzelnen Schichten und ihre chronologischen
Aufeinanderfolge hat wissenschaftliche
Bedeutung. Wenn er diese Aufgabe geleistet,

die Ergebnisse daraus gezogen und alle
Einzelfunde sorgfältig eingeordnet hat,
dann ist sein Werk schlechterdings
vollendet. Jene Forderung aber besagt,
dass er seine Ausgrabungen wieder
zuschütten, ja sogar dass er den wieder-
hergestellten Trümmerhaufen würdigen
und den Wirrwarr sinnvoll erklären soll!
Die Wissenschaft hat mit einer solchen
Aufgabe nichts zu tun (1913:22-23).

b. M. Noth

Gressmann's work set the stage for alterna-
tives to the source-critical approach to the nar-
rative, but it was not until the publication of
M. Noth's Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien (1967)
that a traditio-historical approach to this narrative
found wider acceptance. According to Birch,
Gressmann's analysis was found unacceptable because
it lacked an adequate explanation of how the indepen-
dent narrative components came together (1976:2). In
Noth's case, it appears that at least part of his
success was due to his emphasis on the conglomerative
process and on the redactional meaning thereby
imposed on the traditions. One could view the

scholarly rejection of Gressmann in favour of Noth
as an indication that interpretation of narrative is
more satisfactory when it includes the final form in
its purview.

i) Noth agrees with Wellhausen's literary-
critical divisions in the narrative, and so his
analysis conforms to the paradigmatic explanation of
conflicts and redundancies as indications of multiple
authorship. On the basis of characteristic vocabu-
lary and perspective, 7:2-8:22, 10:17-27a and 12:1-25
are identified as deuteronomistic (1967:54-55). In
these sections, the deuteronomistic redactor (dtr)
has attempted to modify the older traditions in
9:1-10:16 and 11:1-15.

ii) Again Noth follows Wellhausen's reading
of the viewpoints expressed in the narrative. Dtr
is anti-monarchic. The request for a king in 8:5 is
portrayed as an expression of the people's sinful
desire not to be dependent on God and his missionary
judge for protection against enemies (1967:57). On
the other hand, the older traditions (9:1-10:16,
11:1-15) "...of the election of Saul to the throne
obviously refer to the event with unfeigned satis-
faction; they see in it a work of the God of Israel

and they show an obvious delight in the personality
and the first actions of the new king" (1960:172).

iii) Noth accepts the relative dating of
the pro- and anti-monarchic traditions established by
Wellhausen. Nowhere does he explicitly say why the
pro-monarchic traditions are to be regarded as older.
Noth does say, of dtr's anti-monarchic viewpoint,
that "...it is likely that in this an attitude to
the monarchy as such was being expressed which was
certainly later confirmed time and again by the
experiences which the people had of the institution,
but which had, however, existed from the very begin-
ning and had made itself felt even before the rise
of the monarchy" (1960:172-73). By implication, the
only time in Israelite history when a pro-monarchic
view would have been possible was its birth.[10] As
.Noth observes, "For the time being, however, the
emergency was so great that there was hardly time
for detailed discussion, and the hope placed in the
new king, who had proved his worth so brilliantly in
the battle against the Ammonites, was so great that
all doubts about him faded into the background"
(1960:173). Noth's most basic interpretation of the
pro-monarchic elements of 1 Sam 8-12 is, therefore,

historical. The views expressed in 1 Sam 9:1-10:16 and 11:1-15 are the product of specific situations in Israelite history. We understand them by understanding the events that they describe.

The anti-monarchic stance of dtr's redactional sections in the narrative is congruent with the remainder of the dtr history, the purpose of which, according to Noth, is to collect Israel's historical traditions and compile them in such a way as to illumine the course of Israelite history in light of its conclusion. To explain Israel's catastrophic end from his exilic vantage, the dtr portrays the nation's history as a continual sequence of Israelite defections from the covenant with God. The terms of the covenant and the justice of God both require the punishment of Israel for the continual apostasy, and so Israel was destroyed and its people sent into exile.

> Einen gewissen Höhepunkt erreichte der
> Abfall nach Dtr in der Forderung des
> Volkes einen menschlichen König zu bekommen
> (I Sam 8:4ff). An diesem Punkte hat
> jedoch Dtr nun der ihm vorliegenden
> Überlieferung dadurch Rechnung getragen,

dass er jetzt die Verantwortung vom Volke
auf das Königtum überträgt und damit zugleich
das Königtum, das seinerseits ja an der
gottlosen Forderung des Volkes nicht
beteiligt gewesen war, als noch unbelastete
Grösse in die Geschichte einführt und so
die Möglichkeit gewinnt, sich der über-
kommenen positiven Bewertung besonders
des auf die kurze Saulepisode folgenden
Königtums Davids anzuschliessen, um dann
freilich von diesem Punkte aus wiederum die
Linie des immer wachsenden Verfalls zu
verfolgen bis zu dem bitteren Ende, das
ihn selbst als Ereignis der jüngsten
Vergangenheit unmittelbar berührte und
dessen deutlich abschliessender Charakter
ihn zu dieser ernsten Gesamtauffassung von
der Geschichte seines Volkes veranlasste
(1967:91-92).

Once again, Noth's interpretation of the anti-
monarchic sections of the narrative is historical;
the text is the product of an individual (dtr) trying
to comprehend his own historical situation by compos-
ing an historical etiology. All of Noth's literary

observations and interpretations of the text are
directed toward one end: the history of Israel (cf.
Knight 1975:166-67).

> Wer daher die einzelnen Elemente dieser
> geschichtlichen Überlieferung untersuchen
> und weiter von da aus zu einer sachgemässen
> Kritik der historischen Quellen und
> schliesslich zu einer quellenmässig
> begründeten Darstellung der Geschichte
> des Volkes Israel verstossen will, der
> muss sich zunächst ein exaktes Bild
> machen von Umgang und Art dieser
> Sammelwerke und von dem Masse, in dem
> diese die ihnen bestimmten Zusammenhang
> in ein besonderes Licht gerückt haben;
> nur so kann die Entwicklung der geschicht-
> lichen Überlieferung selbst geklärt
> werden (1967:1).

c. <u>A. Weiser</u>

Weiser's views on 1 Sam 8-12 represent a
reaction to both Wellhausen's source criticism and
Noth's redaction-critical adaptation of Wellhausen.
Weiser labels these views of the apparent conflicts
of viewpoint a "Schulbeispiel der Literarkritik"

(1962:28). He proposes instead, a "traditions-
geschichtlichen Untersuchung" in which, "...die
Fragen nach der Entstehung, der Eigenart und Tendenz,
dem Ort und den Trägern der jeweiligen Überlieferungen
soweit möglich geklärt werden, ehe ihre geschichtlichen
Bezüge erkennbar werden, und der Rahmen heraustritt,
in den ein Gesamtbild eingeordnet werden kann"
(1962:1).

It is evident that Weiser rejects only the
hypothetical division of the narrative into pro- and
anti-monarchic strands, whether the latter are con-
ceived as literary sources (Wellhausen et al.) or as
traditions and redaction (Noth). His exegetical goal
is still to establish an historical context in which
the text can be set and from which it is comprehen-
sible.

i) Weiser begins from the same observations
as his predecessors. The narratives of Samuel "are
not all of a piece" (1961:159). The "books of
Samuel must be regarded as a compilation of
heterogeneous literary compilations" (1961:159). The
narrative complex is not explicable, as in the
Pentateuch, as a compilation of continous parallel
strands running throughout the complex. Rather,

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narrative complexes such a.1 Sam 8-12 are composed of
groups of narratives "...which are not so much inter-
mingled with each other as strung after each other,
partly on a very loose thread" (1961:162).

Weiser, like Gressmann, uses a generic
criterion to divide 1 Sam 8-12 into its component
traditions: 1. 9:1-10:16, a popular saga; 2.
11:1-15, a historical narrative; and 3. chs. 7, 8;
10:17ff., 12, cultic and prophetic formulations and
reshapings of earlier traditions (1961:162-63, 169-70).

ii) Weiser finds one central concern in each
narrative component: in ch. 7, to honour Samuel as
an authoritative and powerful prophetic figure and to
outline his role in the religious and political crisis
posed by the Philistine threat (1962:23, 28); in ch. 8,
to describe the proceedings leading to the establish-
ment of a specifically Israelite monarchy (1962:43-44);
in 9:1-10:16, to narrate the anointment of Saul
(1962:49), in 11:1-15, to portray the connection
between Saul's heroic deeds in the Ammonite war and
his subsequent elevation to kingship (1962:72); in
10:17-26, to point out that Saul was elected by lot
(1962:65); and in 12:1-25, to show how Samuel managed
the transition from theocracy to monarchy (1962:81).

Throughout his investigation, Weiser attempts to demonstrate that neither the so-called anti-monarchic nor the pro-monarchic source exhibits the unitary characteristics and point of view that it should if it really were a separate literary source.[11] For example, the starting point and primary criterion for specifying 7-8:22, 10:17-27a, and 12 as one literary source is the so-called anti-monarchic viewpoint common to these narrative components. Yet in Weiser's reading, ch. 7 reveals no anti-monarchic tendencies (1962:27). Chapter 8 rejects only the non-Israelite monarchic model proposed by the people (8:5, 20) and not kingship per se (1962:27). Chapter 10:17-27a portrays the choice of Saul as the will of God and differs from ch. 8 in the representation of the historical motivation for the people's request for a king (1962:62). Chapter 12 differs from both chs. 8 and 10:17-27 in its recollection of the setting and reason for the request (1962:80). In Weiser's view, the disagreements far outweigh any commonality of viewpoint these traditions are said to share.

Although he is able to discern the efforts of a redactor to impress a single chronological and

factual context on the disparate traditions, Weiser is
more concerned with the specific and idiosyncratic
details of each separate tradition (1962:25). The
differing details of each tradition are the product of
the different social and religious contexts from which
the traditions arose. The narrative, therefore, as
well as the individual traditions and the apparent
conflicts between them is best understood from the
combined historical, sociological, and anthropological
perspective that Weiser calls Traditionsgeschichte
(1962:48).

iii) Weiser's explanation for the development
of such markedly different recollections of the same
basic historical events is historical.

> Die auffallende Tatsache des ursprünglichen
> Nebeneinanders der in Rama, Mizpa, und
> Gilgal beheimateten Traditionen, das vom
> Sammler mühsam genug in ein zeitliches
> Nacheinander umgewandelt wurde, und sich
> der Gewinnung eines Bildes des historischen
> Ablaufs hemmend entgegengestellt, hat ihren
> Grund wohl darin, dass in der Zeit seit
> dem Verlust der heiligen Lade bis zu deren
> Einholung nach Jerusalem durch David in

Israel kein Zentralheiligtum existierte,
an dem sich eine einheitliche Tradition
über die Entstehung des Königtums hätte
bilden und durchsetzen können. Die
Jahweverehrung und deren Überlieferung
fand damals, wie wir aus I Sam 7:16f.
wissen vielmehr an den verschiedenen
Lokalheiligtumern von Betel, Gilgal,
Mizpa und Rama ihre durch Samuel
geförderte Pflege; und an diesem Zustand
wird sich auch während der Regierung
Sauls nichts Wesentliches geändert haben.
Er erklärt hinreichend die Tatsache, dass
sich an diesen Orten verschiedene vonein-
ander abweichende Traditionen unabhängig
voneinander gebildet haben, und dass
diese Traditionen längere Zeit für sich
bestanden und jeweils an ihrem Ort
Geltung beansprucht haben, so dass es
nicht zu einer einheitlichen Ausformung
der Überlieferung über die Entstehung
des Königtums kommen konnte (1962:79).

Chapter 7, with its emphasis on cultic
interests, points to a setting in a Yahwistic cult at

Mizpah (7:5) (1962:13, 22). Chapter 8 stems from "den Kreisen gleichgesinnter Vertrauter des Samuel in Rama" (1962:44). Chapter 9 is the combined result of Benjaminite tribal conceptions of the rise of Saul, and sacral elements from the circle of Samuel's successors (1962:57). Chapter 10:1-16 contains several different traditions on the question of the "Königscharisma" (1962:59). Chapter 10:17-27 is the product of an Israelite assembly at Mizpah and is shaped in accordance with the sacred covenant traditions (1962:67). Chapter 11 is a cult tradition of Gilgal (1962:78). Chapter 12 is also a product of the Gilgal cult and like 10:17-27, is closely linked with Israel's covenant ideology (1962:88, 91). In each case, Weiser's understanding of each tradition's significance is contingent upon the correct determination of its time and place of origin.

3. Redaction Criticism

a. <u>B.C. Birch</u>

i) Birch rejects the customary divisions of 1 Sam 8-12 because, for the most part, they are based on content and not critical analysis (1976:132). Instead, he divides the narrative into fragmentary old traditions,[12] a pre-deuteronomistic edition of the old

traditions that unified them in a coherent theological perspective (1976:141), and finally the deuteronomistic redaction supplementing the prior redaction (1976:135).

ii) The old traditional narrative fragments are functionally categorized by Birch as aetiological (7:7-12; 10:10-12), folkloristic (9:1-14, 18-19, 22-24; 10:2-4, 91, 14-16a), archival (14:47-51), historical (13:19-22), and military encounters (11:1-11) (1976:132). Generally the old traditions are favourable to the monarchy although they also give evidence of some opposition (1976:134). Samuel plays a less prominent role in the old traditions, either as a judge (magistrate) (7:15-17; 8), or seer/ man of God (chs. 9 and 10) (1976:134-35).

The first edition of the old traditions gives indications of prophetic interest lying behind the edition. Certain characteristic prophetic genres such as the call narrative and judgement speech are found in the narrative (1976:142). The prophetic editor used the old traditions to illustrate his theological viewpoint. The king as the anointed of God bears special responsibility to fulfill God's law (1976:148).

The deuteronomistic redaction allows that God

has granted Israel a king, but is not enthusiastic
about this fact (1976:137). "His main concern, how-
ever, is to fit the kingship into the larger framework
of covenant obedience....The kingship is not in itself
a sin, but it contains a potential for sin" (1976:137).
The deuteronomist is, therefore, not an anti-
monarchist viewing kingship as inherently evil.
(1976:138).

    iii) Birch is cautious when it comes to
dating each contribution to the narrative. In general
it may be said that the traditio-historical approach
as a whole, of which Birch's study is one example,
is more concerned to establish a sociological context
for any given tradition or narrative component, than
to establish an exact historical context. This cau-
tion is a product of both the great uncertainties in
Israelite history and literary history, and an
increasingly sophisticated awareness of the complexity
and diversity of Israelite society. Even having
established a date for a tradition, the latter cannot
be correctly understood until it has been placed in
particular social context.

    Of the old traditions, Birch says that little
more can be said than that there is no reason to date

them at any great distance from the time of Saul
(1976:133). The prophetic edition exhibits forms
dating to the second half of the 8th c. B.C. The
picture of the king accords better with the northern
kings and so would be composed not much later than
721 when the northern kingdom fell (1976:152). The
prophetic edition's concern to demonstrate Saul's
failure to live up to his charismatic designation
is possibly an attempt at theological interpretation
of the fall of Samaria (1976:153). Saul, a northern
king, failed in obedience and was rejected. David,
a southern king, received the boon of an eternal
royal dynasty (1976:153).

Birch notes that the deuteronomist is dated
anywhere from Josiah in the late seventh century to
550 B.C. He maintains that the "wait and see"
attitude towards the monarchy excludes the view that
the anti-monarchic views in 1 Sam 8 and 12 support
an exilic date (1976:140). Beyond this suggestion,
Birch does not attempt to interpret the deuterono-
mistic sections of the narrative by dating them.

b. T.N.D. Mettinger

i) Mettinger follows divisions of the text
customary since Wellhausen: the framework, consisting

of 7:2-8:22 and ch. 12, is an important part of the
dtr composition, separable by vocabulary and ideology
from 9:1-10:16, 10:17-27, and 11:1-15 (1976:64-98).

ii) According to Mettinger the dtr framework
exhibits a negative attitude to Saul's kingship. The
placement of ch. 7 before the request for a king in
ch. 8 makes the request seem unwarranted; Israel has
Yahweh and Samuel to deliver it from its enemies
(1976:80). Chapter 8:11ff. criticizes certain
aspects of the monarchy and denigrates Saul and his
kingship (1976:81). Chapter 12 demonstrates Yahweh's
continued preservation of his people and consequently
the willfullness of their request for a king.

Chapters 9:1-10:16 are a composite narrative
consisting of an old tale about Saul's search for his
father's asses reworked to include an anointing by
Samuel. The original tale testifies to the concep-
tion of the divine election of the king. Its
exhortation to the new king to perform a deed of
valour (10:7) reveals a martial ideal of kingship
(1976:79). The reworking of the old tale adds
further emphasis to the concept of a divinely
elected king by adding the official designation of
Saul as nāgîd (1976:79).

Chapter 10:17-27 presents Samuel as the last·
of the pre-monarchic saviours and supplies a link
between those figures and the monarchy of Saul. "The
presentation of Samuel as having personally arranged
the lot-casting at Mizpah serves to create something
of an 'apostolic succession': Saul is brought into
line with the great pre-monarchic leaders" (1976:90-
91).

Chapter 11:1-15 presents a very ancient con-
ception of the divine election of a king in which the
divine choice is revealed in the course of events
that occurred in the rescue of Jabesh (1976:87). Saul
is seen to be the same type of man as the earlier
saviours (1976:96). Chapter 11:1-5 is the oldest
and historically most reliable tradition of the
beginning of Saul's kingship.

iii) Mettinger is among those scholars who
prefer to speak of multiple deuteronomistic redactions
(1976:20). Although he remains non-committal on the
exact dating of these redactions he does say that the
dtr redactions are the last elements in the process
of development of traditions that resulted in 1 Sam 8-
12 (1976:96).

The original tale of 9:1-10:16 is dated from

the reign of Saul. "When Saul had proved to be a good warrior and had established his reputation as a hero of Israel his youth became an interesting topic for tradition" (1976:75). Mettinger explains the text as a product of historical events. The interpretive strand of 9:1-10:16 indicates a date near Solomon's death and a social setting in northern prophetic circles (1976:79).

Chapter 10:17-27 was shaped "not by the actual historical circumstances in connection with the beginning of Saul's kingship but by the needs of a later time characterized by a tension between different ideals of kingship" (1976:87). Mettinger suggests that many of the features of 10:17-27 are explicable if the tradition is dated in the reign of Solomon and interpreted as a northern polemic against Solomon's kingship (1976:92-95).

Chapter 11:1-15 is the oldest and most historically reliable tradition. It is to be read as an account of actual events (1976:86-88).

c. T. Veijola

Veijola's redactional analysis of the narrative signals a return to an interpretation of the individual narrative components along the lines established by

Wellhausen. Rather than explaining the pro- and anti-
monarchic tensions and the redundancies in the nar-
rative as the result of the confluence of various
traditions from different times, places, and social
situations, Veijola sees the tensions and redundancies
in the narrative as the product of two dtr redactors,
one pro-monarchic and the other anti-monarchic.

i) Veijola, basing his hypothesis upon the
prior studies of Smend (1971) and Dietrich (1972),
suggests that it is possible to discern two different
layers in the dtr history by paying careful attention
to the vocabulary of the redactor (1977:12-13).
Veijola makes the following divisions in 1 Sam 8-12:
1. DtrG - Judg 17-21; 1 Sam 7:5-15, 17; 8:1-5, 22b;
9:1-10:16 (a pre-dtr composition used by DtrG);
10:17-18aα, 19b-27a; 10:27b LXX-11:15 (pre-dtr),
2. DtrN - 1 Sam 7:2-4; 8:6-22a; 10:18aβ b-19a;
12:1-25 (1977:115-16, 119).

ii) After dividing the narrative between the
two dtr redactors and claiming that division to be
based upon discernable differences in vocabulary
(1977:13), Veijola proceeds to suggest that the
tensions and redundancies in 1 Sam 8-12 are the
result of two consecutive redactions of the narrative.

The first dtr redactor made use of old pro-
monarchic traditions to compose a narrative with the
intention of portraying the monarchy as the answer to
the anarchy and official corruption prevailing in
pre-monarchic Israel (1977:68). Veijola calls this
redactor "der eigentliche Geschichtsschreiber, DtrG"
(1977:115). King Saul is for DtrG:

> ...eine Gestalt der Heilsgeschichte:
> Jahwe hatte ihn auf den Plan gerufen, weil
> er 'die Not seines Volkes sah' (1 Sam
> 9:16b), und DtrG wies ihm eine zentrale
> Rolle in der Rettungsgeschichte seines
> Volkes zu, als er ihm die Befreiung
> des Volkes nicht nur 'aus der Hand der
> Philister', wie die alte Überlieferung
> wusste (1 Sam 9:16a), sondern 'aus der
> Hand seiner Feinde ringsum' in Aussicht
> stellte (1 Sam 10:1b LXX) und in der
> Fortsetzung auch die volle Verwirklichung
> dieser Zusage mit historisch aussehendem
> Material ausdrücklich bestätigte (1 Sam
> 14:47-48) (1977:118).

The second dtr redaction is a supplementary
modification of DtrG's work. Veijola calls the second

redactor DtrN (Nomistic) due to the characteristic
way this redactor evaluates all characters and events
from the perspective of deuteronomic law (1977:119-22).
For DtrN, the "spätere Schüler" of DtrG, the monarchy
had become highly suspect (1977:115). "Als Gegner
des Königtums hat sich im Laufe dieser Untersuchung
der spätere nomistische Redaktor DtrN erwiesen, der
den königtumsfreundlichen Ton in der Erzählung des
DtrG über die Anfänge des Königtums (1 Sam 8-11) durch
eine tiefgreifende Revision fast unkenntlich gemacht
hat" (1977:119).

Armed with this explanation of the chronolo-
gical development of the narrative, the exegetical
difficulties posed by the narrative are quickly over-
come. Read separately the two redactions are coherent,
if contradictory, presentations of the place of the
monarchy in Israel. All that remains to be done in
order for us to understand these two presentations is
to determine, if possible, who made them and when.

iii) Veijola does not offer specific datings
for DtrG and DtrN. He does place DtrN after DtrG
based upon his analysis of dependency between the
redactions. The lack of specific datings for DtrG
and DtrN is not an indication that these are unimportant

to Veijola's approach, but rather that he has taken

them for granted as established by his previous work

(1975:137-42). Veijola's concern in <u>Das Königtum in

der deuteronomistischen Historiographie</u> is to supply

further confirmation of the validity of the multiple

deuteronomist hypothesis developed to explain the

Davidic traditions.

d. F. Crüsemann

Crüsemann's primary interest in 1 Sam 8-12

lies in the anti-monarchic expressions. The purpose

of his book is to interpret anti-monarchic texts

throughout the O.T. as the product of a particular

group or social class in a particular period of

Israelite history. Speaking of the anti-monarchic

texts, Crüsemann says, "Ihnen ihr Recht widerfahren

zu lassen, bedeutet in erster Linie die Situation,

der sie entstammen, den Widerstreit, in dem sie stehen,

zu rekonstruieren." (1978:16). Crüsemann outlines

four steps leading to an understanding of the anti-

monarchic texts: 1. The literary analysis of

individual texts; 2. The development of a hypothesis

about the possibility and locality of an anti-

monarchic movement in Israelite history; 3. An

analysis of the pro-monarchic texts and comparison

with the anti-monarchic texts. (As polemical politi-
cal writings they may only be objectively interpreted
in comparison with each other.); 4. The construction
of a sociological model in which the sociological,
political, and theological aspects of the text may be
correlated (1978:16-17).

    i) Crüsemann divides 1 Sam 8-12 between two
redactors, each of whom has made use of pre-existing
materials. The first redaction is found in chs. 9-11.
Three separate traditions, 9:1-10:16, 10:21bβ-27, and
ch. 11, have been roughly incorporated, joined by
redactional links (9:2b; 10:13b-16, 26b, 27a; 11:12-
13) (1978:58). Subsequently a dtr redactor has
inserted material in 10:17-21bα, 24aα, and 25, which
alters the meaning of this first redaction and links
it with the dtr redaction of chs. 8 and 12 (1978:55).
The dtr redaction of chs. 8 and 12 presupposes the
prior redaction of chs. 9-11 and includes within
itself older traditions in 8:1-3, 7, 11-17; 12:3-5,
12 (1978:61-62, 75). The remainder of chs. 8 and 12
exhibit the vocabulary and ideology that characterizes
the dtr history.

    ii) The intention of the pre-dtr redaction in
chs. 9-11 is, "...die Legitimität des saulidischen

Königtums zu begründen. Es soll über alle Zweifel deutlich werden, dass Jahwe Saul und keinen anderen zum König über Israel bestimmt hat" (1978:59). Of the dtr redaction in chs. 8 and 12, Crüsemann says, "Hier besonders entfältet der Dtr seine kritische Sicht und dialektische Beurteilung des Königtums und seiner Entstehung" (1978:60). Even some of the traditional material used in the dtr redaction is anti-monarchic. Chapter 8:11-17 is "...wohl nur zu verstehen als eindringliche Polemik gegen das Königtum" (1978:65) as are 8:7 and 12:12 (1978:84).

iii) Crüsemann's interpretations of the traditions and redactions that comprise the narrative are particularly conditioned by the effort to define the historical and social settings of the individual units.

Wenn Israel ja und nein gesagt hat, muss man entweder—wie Wellhausen und Budde—zu einem klaren zeitlichen Nacheinander kommen, oder zu einer Unterscheidung innerhalb dieser Grösse. Das aber bedeutet, dass soziologisch gefragt, werden muss, ja dass das theologische Problem vom sociologischen untrennbar ist. Wann haben warum welche Gruppen in Israel

zu dieser Institution nein gesagt, wann welche
warum sie bejaht? Wie also hängen die ver-
schiedenen Theologien für und wider das
Königtum mit einem sociologisch fassbaren
Gegeneinander in Israel selbst zusammen?
(1978:15).

Crüsemann says that the question against whom
the redactor of chs. 9-11 directed his polemical
legitimation of Saul is at the same time the question
of the date of this redaction (1978:59). He dates
the redaction to the period of the Davidic-Solomonic
regime and suggests that it was an appeal to anti-
monarchists to join forces with partisans of the
Saulides, the legitimate and deserving claimants to the
throne (1978:59-60). Crüsemann does not offer a
specific dating for the dtr redaction but seems to
concur with H.J. Boecker's post-monarchic dating
(1978:12, cf. Boecker 1969:98).

The pre-dtr unit 8:11-17 is an early attempt
to arouse opposition to the monarchy among the
"relativ wohlhabende grundbesitzende israelitische
Bauern" (1978:73). According to vv. 11-17, this
group of well-established Israelites can only lose
from a monarchy; the economic consequences of the

monarchy for the landed gentry are used as an exhorta-
tion to anti-monarchic agitation (1978:73). Crüsemann
states, therefore, "Nur aus der Situation des frühen
Königtums, aber von hier aus auch im allen Einzelheit-
en, wird das Stück verstandlich" (1978:72). Chapters
8:7 and 12:12, which express the unique view that
divine kingship and human kingship are mutually
exclusive options for Israel, require explanation of
"...wie es zu einer solchen Entgegensetzung kommen
konnte und was mit ihr eigentlich geschieht. Das
ist zugleich der Versuch, zu einer jedenfalls
annähernden Zeitbestimmung zu gelangen" (1978:76).
Crüsemann, however, thinks it impossible to be more
'specific than the Solomonic period as a <u>terminus a</u>
<u>quo</u> and the fall of the northern kingdom as a <u>terminus</u>
<u>ad quem</u> (1978:83). "Es hat also während der Königs-
zeit in bestimmten Kreisen eine Vorstellung vom
Königtum Jahwes gegeben, die deutlich im Gegensatz
zur Jerusalemer Konzeption steht und Jahwe allein
Funktionen zuschreibt, die sonst in dieser Zeit
über den irdischen König vermittelt sind" (1978:83).

2. <u>Summary and Critique</u>

The historical critical interpretations of
1 Sam 8-12 regard the narrative as composite and

incomprehensible in its present form. This judgement
is based upon an initial sequential reading of the
text. The historical critic approaches the text in
search of the historical realities which are also
supposed to be the object of biblical narrative.
Historical truth becomes the criterion with which
biblical narrative is evaluated. Whether one is a
conservative historical critic, expecting revelation
in scripture to be truthful and accurate, or simply a
historian desirous of understanding the events
described, the principle of historical analogy requires
that biblical narrative give a correct, logical,
sequential representation of what happened.[13]

When a narrative does not seem to meet this
criterion and, like 1 Sam 8-12, contains conflicting
evaluative statements and repetitions such as could
not conceivably have taken place, the historical
critic temporarily turns his attention from the
subject matter of the narrative to the level of the
narrative itself. The narrative, as a source for
historical knowledge, has shown itself to be in need
of preliminary examination and evaluation.

This evaluation takes the form of a shift
from historical analysis of the narrative to literary

analysis of the separate narrative components. The
perceived lack of narrative logic is replaced with an
historical logic by explaining the separate narrative
components as products of separate socio-historical
contexts. Once each component is reset in its new
non-narrative context it may be evaluated for its
suitability as a historical source (cf. Mettinger
1976:16-17).

In the course of historical critical studies
of 1 Sam 8-12 the literary disunity of these chapters
has become axiomatic. Differences of opinion arise,
but only on where to divide the narrative, and on what
hypothetical socio-historical context best explains
any given narrative component. M. Buber's reading of
1 Sam 7-12 as essentially a unity (with some accretion)
has not been seen as a serious enough threat to warrant
extensive refutation.[14]

Despite the fact that dissenting voices have
been almost non-existent there is a relatively
unexplored alternative to the historical-critical
reading. It is possible that the historical-critical
impression of literary disunity is not the result of
any inherent quality of the narrative, but of the
literary standards by which the historical critics

have judged the narrative. It is even conceivable
that the methodological predisposition to fragmentary
reading of biblical narratives has barred the way to
any reasonable attempts to read the narrative as a
unit. A reading of scholarly works on 1 Sam 8-12
reveals that the theoretical and empirical basis for
the literary fragmentation of the narrative has been
based at best on suggested differences in vocabulary,
and in ideological and geographical horizons in the
material, and at worst on impressionistic evaluations
of what constitutes a unitary narrative.[15]

Speaking of the tensions in 1 Sam 8-12,
H.P. Smith stated, "So great a discrepancy, not in
details of the narrative only, but also in the whole
view of the same period, is not conceivable in one
author. It can be accounted for only on the hypothe-
sis that various works have been combined in one"
(1899:xvi). Smith's view, characteristic of the
majority of critical readings of the narrative, fails
to examine the possibility that the differing view-
points within 1 Sam 8-12 may be subordinate to a
single encompassing authorial point of view that is
expressed and can only be heard in the narrative as
a whole.

Within the study of literature, literary critics have perceived ideological tensions differently. T.E. Hulme, for instance, suggests, "A powerful imaginative mind seizes and combines at the same instant all the important ideas of its poem or picture, and while it works with one of them, it is at the same instant working with and modifying all in their relation to it and never losing sight of their bearings on each other—as the motion of a snake's belly goes through all parts at once and its volition acts at the same instant in coils which go contrary ways" (cited from A. Preminger et al. 1974:846). Before passing judgement on the literary continuity of 1 Sam 8-12, the applicability of Hulme's comment should be tested.

J.R. Vannoy (1978) has, in fact, recently suggested that the apparently diverging pro- and anti-monarchic tendencies are reconciled in a final covenant renewal ceremony in ch. 12. In ch. 12, the relations and respective roles of theocracy, monarchy, and people are defined and any ideological conflicts between pro- and anti-monarchic factions are resolved. The aim of such a narrative would be to explore all sides of the theological-political

problems of government in the special case of Israel,
people of Yahweh. Such a purpose is far from the
tendentious purposes that have been suggested for the
separated narrative components.

F. Crüsemann notes the existence of many
other biblical texts that are uniformly either pro-
or anti-monarchic (1978:19-53, 85-193). The polemics
of such texts are manifest and straightforward, as
is expected from literature that is designed to
persuade its audience to accept a particular perspec-
tive on the topic of discussion. When, on the other
hand, we are faced with a text that holds the two
contrary views in a state of narrative tension, and
we read unencumbered by the theoretical predisposi-
tion to regard such tension as prima facie evidence
of a composite text, the possibility that a neutral
perspective—a study of a debated problem—is being
voiced cannot be overlooked. In fact, the tables can
be turned. The existence of a text containing
contradictory views should be assumed to present an
examination of a controversy. Only when such an
assumption proves unfruitful should genetic explana-
tions be considered as a last resort.

A small number of scholars have recently

suggested that the interweaving of pro- and anti-
monarchic voices is intentional and meaningful.[16]
What is lacking in all existing assertions of the
unity of 1 Sam 8-12 is a detailed descriptive reading
of the narrative to support the assertions, which
otherwise remain hypothetical and are consequently
ignored by supporters of the traditional historical
critical position. A detailed demonstration of
coherent plot and a formal (rhetorical) overall
narrative design in 1 Sam 8-12 should obviate the
resort to hypothetical sources, traditions, or
subsequent redactions on the principle of parsimony.[17]
A comprehensive attempt at reading the narrative as
a unity, that is, at interpretation of the existing
narrative, is therefore necessary and desirable.

The approach to any biblical text as a
narrative unit does not deny the possibility that
there are redactional additions or modifications in
the text. But it must be stressed that the act of
labelling any part of the narrative as secondary
and contextually incoherent is a last resort and
may be a failure of interpretation rather than the
narrative itself (cf. J.P. Fokkelman 1975:2). David
Gunn suggests that even if a narrative has a complex

redactional history, the perceivable unity of the
text is a product of mutual interacting influence
between existing narrative elements (plot, character,
insights, and values) and those who have worked with
the narrative. Subtlety in the story, says Gunn, is
not necessarily the intentional contrivance of one
author; "rather it may be a subtlety created uncon-
sciously in the dialectical process by which the
story is created, a subtlety which is the logical
resolution of the variously nuanced contributions
and not a property of the contributions themselves"
(1980:15).[18] Gunn's view is helpful in directing the
focus of interpretation away from tangential diachro-
nic hypothesis, which is inherently non-verifiable,
back to the interpretation of the existing text.

Another weakness of historical critical
literary analysis, as B.S. Childs has suggested, is
that the practise of isolating individual components
of the narrative may lead to an unbalancing and
overemphasis of certain aspects contained in those
sections:

> the final form of the text performs a
> crucial hermeneutical function in establishing
> the peculiar profile of a passage. Its

shaping provides an order in highlighting

certain elements and subordinating others,

in drawing features to the foreground and

pushing others into the background (1979:77).

The practise of dividing a narrative such as 1 Sam

8-12 into separate redactional sections followed by

an interpretation of the individual sections as

separate expressions of different socio-historical

situations may mistakenly attribute independent

status and even socio-historical existence to themes,

viewpoints, and concepts that owe their existence and

particular nuances solely to their actual setting in

the context of the whole narrative, the final form

of the text.[19] The only pro- and anti-monarchists

that we become acquainted with in 1 Sam 8-12 are

those voices that find complementary expression in

their intertwined appearance in the narrative. It

is the whole text that supplies the formal and

semantic context that is necessary for interpretation.

3. A New Approach to 1 Samuel 8-12

The purpose of the present reexamination of

1 Sam 8-12 is to try to interpret the narrative by

reading it as a unity, without ruling out the

possibility that there may be some aspects that may

not, or cannot be comprehended. The method employed can be broadly described as close reading of the text, a reading strategy recently studied and used by "new criticism."

The label "new criticism" has been applied to a practical and theoretical approach to English literature that was concerned with close readings of the individual work rather than with its socio-historical milieu. New criticism explored the structure of a work rather than attempting to divine the mind and personality of the author or audience; it attempted to deal with the literary object rather than its origins and effects (Preminger 1974:568). Each text is treated as a structural whole made up of many contributing and participatory parts. A close reading of a text seeks to uncover and describe the intricate reticular connections that unite the narrative (or poem), making it into a singular entity, however complex or devious its plot may be.

Though "new criticism" is now seen as a phase in literary study that has rightly been superceded as an overreaction to a previous overconcentration on historical criticism (F. Lentricchia 1980), its methods and theoretical emphases are still of great

value to biblical studies, where scholarship is just beginning to explore avenues outside of historical criticism.

Descriptions of structure in narrative are often divided into two categories. Seymour Chatman, for example, first describes the "what" of narrative, which he calls its "story." "Story" is composed of events and existents, character and setting (1978:9). Chatman's second analytical category is the "way" or "discourse" of narrative. Narrative discourse is the means by which a story is transmitted. Similarly, Conroy divides narrative analysis into two categories, the text as narrative ("what") and as language system ("how") (1978:viii-ix). Under "text as narrative," Conroy describes macro- and micro-contextual narrative patterns, plot of action and character, meaning and theme, narrator and reader (primarily point of view).[20] Under "text as language system" he places sound stratum (phonology), vocabulary, uses of direct speech (grammar and syntax), and techniques of organization (rhetorical structure).

Although this twofold division is well-suited to Chatman's purpose, which is to generate a general theory of narrative, it is not as useful when the

goal is a comprehensive understanding of the meaning
of a single work.[21] As P.M. Wetherill notes with
regard to his own typology of the textual features
that contribute to a text's meaning, "these categories
should not be interpreted narrowly, nor should they
be seen as watertight compartments: [they] represent
different angles from which a text may be approached.
They are therefore independent" (1974:xvi). The
meaning of a narrative arises from the union of
content (Chatman's story or "what") and form (dis-
course or "way"). The line between form and content
is indefinite; the events of a narrative are part of
its content and, arranged in a plot, they constitute
its form (Wellek and Warren 1975:140). Since it is
the goal of this study to understand the meaning
of 1 Sam 8-12, the form/content division, though
taken into consideration in all analysis, cannot be
studied sequentially as first "form" and then "con-
tent," or vice versa. To arrive at meaning of a
scene, sermon, or sentence we must view form and
content together. As Ellis says, "the attempted
distinction between 'what is said' and 'how it is
said' when analyzed turns out to be no more than
a distinction between 'gross surface meaning' and

'more differentiated investigated meaning'" (1974:183).

An interpretation produced by close reading
will follow the order of presentation given in the
text, noting along the way the various contributions
of linguistic[22] and literary[23] devices to the
developing meaning of the text. At the same time,
the close reading of any biblical text, and especially
of 1 Sam 8-12 must be a retrospective reading carried
out in the light of the previous historical critical
readings of the text. We have been cued to the
tensions, doublets and varying points of view and
their location in the narrative by historical criti-
cism. A close reading will have to describe the
contextual role of such phenomenon if the hypothesis
that the narrative can be read as a unity is to
be maintained.[24]

CHAPTER II

DEFINING THE LITERARY UNIT

A major difficulty facing the biblical inter-
preter is to determine the appropriate contextual
boundaries within which to interpret the particular
story or concept that has been chosen for study. A
basic convention of communication is to build inter-
pretation on a completed communication. The meaning
of a sentence can only be apprehended by taking all
the words together. The same holds true for a para-
graph, a chapter or an entire book. Any interpreta-
tion that disregards this rule cannot be accepted by
other members of the communicating community. The
traditional division of the Bible into books, chapters,
and even verses has posed problems with respect to
this convention, by separating material that often
seems should be read together,[1] or uniting material
that should be separate.[2]

A response to the problem of determining
context in biblical interpretation that has received
some acceptance is what D. Robertson calls, "a
literary approach" to context. The contextual
decision is determined by the question the interpreter

puts to the text, which is in turn conditioned by the
potential of the text to respond (Bar-Efrat 1980:185).
Robertson gives the example of an interpretation of
Job as a Greek tragedy. Such an interpretation may be
judged valid if there are certain conventions in Job
that function as the conventions of Greek tragedy do
(1977:10).

The reversal in the role of the interpreter—
from a passive recipient of a completed communication
to an active questioner who sets contexts—is only
apparent. No matter what the communicative situation,
contextual determination is always the product of two
inputs, objective determinants (completed communica-
tions and the possibilities of texts) and the audience's
subjective input (a decision as to what context,
generic or thematic, is appropriate to a given ut-
terance).

Central to the reading of every
literary work is the interaction between its
structure and its recipient. This is why the
phenomenological theory of art has emphat-
ically drawn attention to the fact that the
study of a literary work should concern
not only the actual text but also, and in

equal measure, the actions involved in
responding to that text. The text itself
simply offers 'schematized aspects' through
which the subject matter of the work can
be produced, while the actual production
takes place through an act of concretiza-
tion [by the reader] (Iser 1978:20-21).

With regard to the interpretation of a text,
the would-be interpreter must first pose a question
such as, "What happened when Israel's government
changed from theocracy to monarchy?", before the
answer of "schematized aspects" in the text can be
heard. The definition of the literary unit, then, is
part of the question and part of the answer. The
interpreter has a specific question in mind when he
seeks to determine what part of the text answers his
question and the text simultaneously begins its
answer by presenting structural and semantic features
that influence the interpreter's contextual determina-
tions. The definition of the literary unit is the
beginning of the interpretational dialectic and there
is no set point of entrance into this hermeneutical
circle.

As Bar-Efrat notes, biblical narrative is

particularly intractable when it comes to establish-
ing the boundaries of a literary unit. Narratives,
complete in themselves, are linked with others to
compose large literary units such as the patriarchal
cycles. The larger units comprise books which in
turn make up the Bible (1980:156). Bar-Efrat responds
by suggesting that structure may be legitimately
discerned and analysed in both small sections and
comprehensive units (1980:56). We may find an idea
completely presented in a sentence, a verse, a
chapter, or a book.

Similarly, R. Knierim suggests that the text
contains different possible units depending on the
way a question is put to it and on the structural
characteristics of the text. The number of contextual
delimitations of any text is only limited by the
number of the various themes and concepts in the
text (1968:25). Knierim's suggestion may also be put
in different terms. A text may be viewed from the
analytical perspective of story and scenes that
comprise story. An interpreter of story must read
all scenes in proper order if he wants to understand
story. It is, nevertheless, a valid enterprise to
analyse a single scene by itself as long as the

interpreter bears in mind that the scene and its
interpretation should ultimately be reintegrated
with the story. In fact, as a reader progresses
through a story composed of several scenes, he takes
the course just described, that is, he interprets
each new scene as he comes to it, but then integrates
it into his reading of subsequent scenes.

A practical limitation also imposes itself
on all biblical interpreters in their attempts to
determine the correct literary context for interpre-
tation. The amount of time and the great amount of
writing space necessary to the composition of a good
close reading of a text do impose real limitations on
the amount of biblical text that can be encompassed
in any single examination. Faced by such limitations
"it is enough to be aware of the incompleteness
implied in this approach and to accept it with good
grace" (Conroy 1978:7).

The accepted boundaries for the narrative
treating the rise of Israel's monarchy are from
chs. (7)8 to 12 of 1 Sam.[3] The central theme of
these chapters has been seen as a history of the
inauguration of the Israelite monarchy.[4] The primary
criterion for this textual delimitation has been

perceived differences in content, along with the
assumption that thematic unity is basic to any narra-
tive. This thematic concern has also been used to
distinguish chs. 8-12 from their immediate context.
A. Schulz, for example, suggests the following
thematic division of 1 Sam 1-15:

1. Samuel's youth, chs. 1-3;

2. The Ark, 4:1-7:1;

3. Samuel and the monarchy, 7:2-12:15; and

4. Saul, the victorious king, and his rejection,
    chs. 13-15 (1919:vii):

Whether or not chs. 7, 13-15 are included
in the narrative on the rise of the monarchy or the
rise of Saul's monarchy as the case may be, there is
virtual unanimity that at least chs. 1-6 must be
treated separately. Although stylistic observations
and arguments are advanced to support this division,[5]
the principle evidence is the seeming lack of
thematic continuity between accounts of Samuel's
birth and youth, the "ark narrative" (1 Sam 4-6),
and 1 Sam 8-12. So, for example, H.W. Hertzberg
states that chs. 1-3 show how Samuel replaces the
Elides, chs. 4-6 are a history of the ark, and chs.
7-15 are the history of the beginnings of Israelite

monarchy (1964:43, 62, 130).

Hertzberg's separation of chs. 1-3 and chs.
4-6 within chs. 1-6 exemplifies a scholarly consensus
that has only recently been criticized as too frag-
mentary. In a series of articles, J.T. Willis has
suggested that chs. 1-7 must be viewed as a meaningful
whole that is thematically and stylistically unified
(Willis 1971, 1972, 1979). According to Willis, the
theological concern expressed in chs. 1-7 is presented
in a well-attested biblical literary pattern:
1. Yahweh prepares a man to lead Israel through some
crisis (1:1-4:1a); 2. The crisis is described (4:16-
7:1); 3. The successful guidance of Israel out of
the crisis is accomplished by the chosen man (7:2-17)
(1971:298). The character of Samuel is obviously
an important unifying element in Willis's reading,
and yet it is partly because of Samuel's absence in
4:1b-7:1 that scholars have separated all or part of
chs. 1-3 from chs. 4-6. Willis suggests that
Samuel's absence from chs. 4-6 emphasizes that,
without him, Israel's situation was rapidly
deteriorating under the Elides. The failure of the
Elides in chs. 4-6 is contrasted with the deliverance
accomplished by Samuel in ch. 7 (1971:299). Whether

Willis's analysis is judged right or wrong, the
ability of his interpretation to include ch. 4-6,
where the main character does not appear, is based
on a more sophisticated understanding of narrative
technique and character. The most important justifi-
cation of Willis's reading of chs. 1-7 as a whole
is that he can suggest a theme that unites the
narrative. The numerous rhetorical connections
between those parts of the narrative separated in
the conventional historical critical reading are
used by Willis to buttress his argument for unity
upon thematic grounds (1979:208 n.29).

If Willis's reading of chs. 1-7 is more
satisfactory as an interpretation than reading in
which the chapters represent a series of discon-
nected events and conglomerate historical descrip-
tions, it is because his interpretation reveals
meaning and order in the sequential combination of
chapters. Willis's reading of 1 Sam 1-7 does not
differ in logic of the reading process from histori-
cal critical readings. Just as Hertzberg used an
argument of thematic unity to justify his claim
that chs. 1-3 were a unit, Willis uses the same
argument to support the unity of chs. 1-7. Willis's

reading does differ, however, quantitatively. His
reading unites seven chapters; Hertzberg's units
only three.

M. Perry describes the reading process as
the construction of a system of hypotheses or frames
to create the greatest amount of correlation between
the various data of a text. These frames or hypo-
theses explain the "co-presence" of data in the text
in reference to models derived from "reality," or
from literary or cultural conventions (1979:43).
Willis's "frame" for chs. 1-7, for example, is a
literary convention (1971:298-99). Perry describes
the logic of frame construction in the reading
process as a hierarchy of three considerations:
1. The reader prefers a frame that links the highest
number of textual data; 2. The frame that connects
the data most closely allowing them the least degree
of "freedom" takes precedence; 3. The simpler, more
conventional and more typical a frame is, the more
acceptable it is. "The validity of a hypothesis will
increase in a direct ratio to the variety of the items
it organizes and to the heterogeneity of the textual
dimensions where they originate" (1979:45). Perry's
three considerations are in the nature of self-evident

descriptions of what we find acceptable in interpretation rather than being hypotheses about the reading process. It is unlikely that anyone would dispute the claim that the goal of interpretation in any field of human inquiry is an explanation (frame) that is comprehensive, provides a single explanatory structure for all or most of the data, and last, but not least, elegant. Yet these three qualities of a superior interpretation are simply adjectival paraphrases of Perry's three considerations. Willis's reading of 1 Sam 1-7 is more valid in Perry's terms because it has greater organizing powers, granted that the text does exhibit the features of Willis's "OT hero narrative."[6]

Valid as Willis's reading of chs. 1-7 may be, it is possible to construct a more valid interpretational frame that is preferable to Willis's reading in all three of Perry's considerations. The hypothesis to be tested in this study is that <u>neither chs. 1-7 nor 8-12 can be properly understood in isolation from each other</u>. The narrative extending through chs. 1-12 should be interpreted as a coherent theological-political exploration of human and divine leadership in Israel. This exploration is presented

in the form of a literary representation of the events
leading to the establishment of a monarchy in Israel.[7]

In the context of the deuteronomistic history
this important narrative is thematically distinguished
from the preceding events, the period of the judges,
and from the following events, the period of the
monarchies. Chapters 1-12 belong wholly to neither
of these periods, and focus, instead, on the moment
of transition lying between the two periods.
Although there are obvious connections between chs.
1-12 and the stories of subsequent monarchs,
especially Saul, in the deuteronomistic history, it
is legitimate to study this narrative as a self-
contained unit focused on one particularly important
moment within the history.

The description of Israel's transition from
theocracy to a theocratically subordinate monarchy
is an _episode_, which differs from preceding _scenes_
in that it is a _digression_ in the story of Israel's
theological-political relationship with God.[8] As
an episode, the description of the movement away
from theocracy towards monarchy is separable from
the on-going story of covenant and theocracy, yet
it also arises naturally from that story. And,

subsequently (1 Sam 13ff.) the book of Samuel returns to the theocratic story. Ultimately, of course, the interpretation of chs. 1-12 will have to be incorporated, and thereby certainly modified, into an interpretation of the whole of the deuteronomistic history. Such a task, however, is far beyond the scope of a single study, especially in view of the novelty of this approach.[9]

Several stylistic features distinguish the episode from its context. The unit occupies the important position of the opening of a book. Perry cites a number of psychological experiments studying the "primacy effect"—the effect of information situated at the beginning of a message—that have shown that the beginning of a message receives more attention than its continuation (1979:50-58; cf. Sternberg 1978, index under "Primacy effect"). The literary text can exploit the "primacy effect" for rhetorical purposes by placing first information that will guide the reader's construction of hypotheses about the story so that subsequent material is always read in light of these interpretations.

As K. Budde observed, 1 Sam 1:1 differs from

the opening verses of the two preceding books of
the deuteronomistic history, Judges and Joshua.
"Das Buch knüpft nicht ausdrücklich an das Buch der
Richter an, wie dieses an Josua und Josua an den
Pentateuch (vgl. Richt. 1,1. Jos. 1,1)" (1890:167).
The opening verse thereby sets the following episode,
which it introduces, apart from the previous series
of scenes in Israel's theocratic history. The
small stylistic difference between 1 Sam 1:1 and the
introductory verses of Joshua and Judges is a subtle
hint about the special significance of the _episode_
that follows.

An obvious guideline for the establishment
of the proper opening contextual boundary is the
simple fact that the book begins at 1:1. "Begin at
the beginning" (L. Carroll 1963:158).

The episode ends in ch. 12 with Samuel's
great oration in which he surveys Israel's history
of deflection and lays down the law for the future.
As Noth suggests, ch. 12 is one in a series of
speeches made by the Israelite leaders in the
deuteronomistic history (1967:5). These speeches
punctuate the narrative; they are placed at the
close of important epochs in Israel's theocratic

history. In the view of Noth, and most scholars since, 1 Sam 12 constitutes a summary and conclusion to the period of the judges, which in the biblical narrative, stretches from Judg 1:1 to 1 Sam 12:25.

One function of the formula in 13:1 is that it is the dtr's customary way of introducting the beginning of a king's reign by stating the king's age at accession and the length of his reign (cf. S.R. Driver 1913:96-97; P.K. McCarter 1980:222-23). The placement of this introductory formula immediately after Samuel's speech indicates that the period of the judges is, indeed, finished and that the age of the kings has begun.

Chapter 12 also functions more specifically as the conclusion of the narrative begun in 1:1. Samuel, the last of the judges (7:8, 12:11) is introduced in ch. 1, and in ch. 12 he makes his retirement speech as sole political representative. In the speech, he specifically mentions the length of his service, which reaches back to events narrated in 2:11. Another link to the narrative prior to ch. 8, the accepted introductory limit for the interpretation of chs. 8-12, is provided by 12:10-11, which refer, among other things, to the events of ch. 7.

The renewal of the covenant relationship in
ch. 12 satisfactorily resolves the covenantal tensions
that begin in 2:12ff. with the Elide abuses. At that
time, Yahweh was provoked to annul his promise of a
priestly dynasty to Eli's forefathers (2:30-31). The
covenantal issue continues through chs. 2-7, in which
Yahweh's apparent abandonment (4:3) and open rejection
of Israel (6:20) lead Israel to a reluctant worship
of other gods (7:2-3). A reconciliation is achieved
in ch. 7. Israel is repentent (7:3-9), and Yahweh
is acting again to save Israel from its enemy (7:9-12).
Immediately thereafter, however, the covenant is
again in jeopardy (8:7-8), although this time, in
contrast to chs. 4-6 where Yahweh abandoned Israel
(4:3; cf. Exod 23:22-23), it is Israel that expresses
a wish to have a king like the nations and to be like
the nations (8:5, 20). Yahweh and Samuel correctly
interpret the request as an attempt to break free from
the theocratic covenant (8:7-8; 10:19; 12:12).
Yahweh takes the initiative in chs. 9-20 and makes
an effort to avoid a covenantal breech by granting
the people's request for a human king. It is impor-
tant to note, however, that Yahweh gives them a king
and a monarchy that remain within the covenantal

framework. Saul is not a king "like all the nations";
on the contrary, he is described in the same words as
Moses, the paradigmatic theocratic representative
(cf. Exod 3:7, 9), as a deliverer given to Israel by
its all-seeing, protective God (1 Sam 9:16). Saul's
victory in 11:11 is described as deliverance wrought
by Yahweh in 11:13.[10] Finally, the covenantal incon-
stancies are disposed of in ch. 12 which redefines
(vv. 13-15) and reestablishes the covenant (vv. 6-15)
in terms that emphasize Yahweh's initiative in the
original covenant (v. 22; cf. Deut 7:6; 14:2). It
was Yahweh who decided to elect Israel and to
covenant with them; it is also Yahweh, therefore,
who will say whether the covenant ends or continues,
and not Israel.

This brief survey of the causal linkage
provided by the theme of covenant relationship re-
veals that the section comprised by chs. 1-12 is also
distinguished as an integral unit by internal con-
siderations. A problem is introduced in ch. 2 and a
resolution is not reached until ch. 12. And ch. 1,
as Willis has demonstrated (1979), cannot be
separated from the rest. Taken together, the
internal causal concatenations and the external

stylistic boundary markers permit the exploration of
the hypothesis that chs. 1-12 may be fruitfully
explored as an episode in Israel's theocratic history.

CHAPTER III

SUMMARY OF THE NARRATIVE AND ITS STRUCTURE

In studies of this nature, where methodological emphasis is placed on a persistent attempt to discover and trace the narrative logic of the existing text by conducting a minute examination of various literary features, there is a recognized need to provide the prospective reader with a "map" of the narrative so that he does not get lost in the course of a lengthy discussion of a single detail (cf. Conroy 1978:10). Armed with a summary description of the narrative and some of its more important literary devices, the reader should be able to maintain a proper perspective on the place and purpose of all the details and the descriptions thereof, within the framework of the narrative as a whole.

The following summary is the result of several complete readings of chs. 1-12, during which my own reading experience of the narrative developed from an unschooled manipulation by each voice heard in the narrative towards an appreciation for the various structures of such things as plot and voice that shape the narrative into a unified, logical

whole. The reader who has not had the opportunity to read 1 Sam 1-12 several times prior to reading my description can use the summary both as a quick introduction and as a guide with which to check his understanding at any point in the study.

In particular, I have tried to highlight the parallel plot structure of chs. 1-7 and chs. 8-12 so that the reader will have at least some idea beforehand of the intricate patterns of relationship that exist between chs. 1-7 and chs. 8-12. A cursory reading through chs. 1-7 would not likely give the reader the idea that chs. 1-7 are of any importance at all to the subject of Israel's monarchy, as numerous studies of ch. 1-7 as a separate (fragmentary) narrative section indicate. The provision of a brief introduction to the plot structure of chs. 1-12 is also of practical significance, since in the detailed description, which follows the narrative's own logic of expositional logic, the patterns of relationship and the relevance of chs. 1-7 for chs. 8-12 do not surface until ch. 8. It would be neither fair nor prudent to ask any reader of a study written in the scholarly genre to plow through hundreds of pages without the foreknowledge that there was some

connection between the discussion and the topic of the study.

As noted above, most studies of 1 Sam 1-12 see a definite break between ch. 7 and ch. 8, though some have suggested that ch. 7 reinforces the anti-monarchic polemic of ch. 8 (e.g. McCarter 1980:150-51). The extent of scholarly agreement on this division suggests that the text itself must promote this reading. In fact, as will be shown below, chs. 1-12 do contain a momentary resolution of the tensions created in chs. 1-6 in ch. 7, which describes a renewed participation in the covenant by both Israel and Yahweh.

Chapters 1-6 trace the development of a major crisis in the covenantal relationship between Israel and Yahweh. Israel's priestly leadership becomes corrupt (2:12, 23-25, 29; 3:13-14) and debilitated (2:22, 25; 3:2, 13). Yahweh decides to punish the Elide priests by annulling his promise to them of a perpetual priestly dynasty (2:28-30; 3:12-14). Yahweh inflicts the promised punishment (2:31-34; 4:11, 18) but his use of the undiscriminating Philistine army as a tool brings suffering to innocent Israelites as well (4:2-3, 10).

Yahweh's responsibility for the indiscriminate
slaughter of innocent people along with the guilty
priests is made manifest by chs. 5-6. The defeat at
Aphek/Ebenezer was not a result of Yahweh's powerless-
ness—he is more than equal to Dagon (5:1-5, cf.
Miller and Roberts 1977:46). To make matters worse,
Yahweh caps his victorious return to his own people
by smiting them for looking "in," or "at" the ark;
Yahweh makes a "great slaughter" amongst the people
(6:19). The Israelites seem to be worse off for the
return of their victorious God than they were without
him. This warring God smites Israelites (nākâ, 5:6,
9, 12); he makes a great slaughter (makkâ g^{e}dôlâ,
6:19) amongst them after his victory over the Phili-
stines just as he allowed or, in view of chs. 5-6,
caused a great slaughter (hammakkâ g^{e}dôlâ m$^e\hat{\,}$ōd, 4:10)
of Israelites in his effort to punish the Elides
before his Philistine conquest. The question in
6:20, "And to whom shall he go up away from us?"
parallels the Philistine view of the ark and its God
(5:8, 10; 11; 6:2). Yahweh's unfriendly greeting
forces the Israelites to respond like the Philistines
did (6:19-20), and their covenant with Yahweh has
become a farce.

Yahweh had joined forces with the Philistines in the battle at Aphek (ch. 4) in contradiction to his sworn promise to make Israel's enemies his enemies (e.g. Exod 23:22). He has treated them like Philistines and consequently they have come to view him as the Philistines do—as a foreign deity (6:19-20).

In fact, Yahweh treats the Israelites as if he were bringing the covenant curse on them for some transgression. According to the formulation of Deut 28:25, Israel would be defeated before its enemies (niggāp lipnê ᵓoyᵉbeykā) and forced to flee before them (tānûs lᵉpānāyw) exactly as in 1 Sam 4:2 (wayyinnāgep yisrāᵓēl lipnê pᵉlištîm) and 4:10 (wayyānusû).

The question of the Beth-shemeshites, "Who is able to stand before this holy God?" (6:20) may reflect an interpretation of Israel's misfortune as enactment of the covenantal curse. The expression "to stand before Yahweh" appears several times in contexts where it has covenantal connotations.[1] When the men of Beth-shemesh pose their question, then, at least one implication of this ambiguous utterance is that Israel finds it very difficult to maintain a covenant relationship with a holy, incomprehensible

God, who punishes where no apparent wrong has been
done (cf. 4:3) and who treats his own people as if he
had annulled his covenant with them. Like the Phili-
stines, who finally realized that the ark of Israel's
God should not be kept around (5:7ff.), the men of
Beth-shemesh ask on whom they may unload the burden
of Yahweh and his ark.[2]

The covenant relationship is at a low point.
The ark (and its God) is put into "cold storage"
(7:1-2, Hertzberg 1964:61). Israel mourns Yahweh
"...wie um einen Toten" (Buber 1956:118, cf. Ezek
32:18; Mic 2:4 and the noun form in Jer 9:9, 17-19;
Amos 5:16). From Samuel's statement in 7:3, it seems
that Israel believed the covenant was finished, and
that Yahweh was no longer a viable option as a
national god. Accordingly, they turned to the worship
of other gods.

Samuel proposes a scheme for a renewal of
relations between Israel and Yahweh. Israel is to
return to the service of Yahweh only, and in return
Yahweh will deliver Israel from the Philistines (7:3).
Both Israel and Yahweh accept Samuel's mediating
suggestion and the covenantal relationship is restored.
Israel's enemies are once again Yahweh's enemies

(7:13; cf. Exod 23:22), Israel serves Yahweh alone
(7:4), and everything functions smoothly again under
Samuel's guiding mediation (7:5, 9-10) and judgeship
(7:15-17).

Chapter 7 concludes with a peaceful scene.
Yahweh is once again on Israel's side, lost terri-
tories are regained (7:14), and there is even peace
with the Amorites (7:14). The havoc wrought by
Yahweh's decision to punish Israel's priestly leaders
has been repaired. Order and regularity prevail.
Samuel judges Israel as circuit-judge, making his
rounds "year by year" (7:16). All is once again well
with Israel.

Scholars are, therefore, correct to suggest
that ch. 7 presents a resolution of conflicts, as
they are correct to observe that, surprisingly, ch. 8
introduces a new problem and series of tensions
almost immediately after the resolution achieved in
ch. 7. They are not correct, however, in the view
that we see in chs. 7 and 8 the end and the beginning
of two separate and unrelated literary complexes.
According to Stoebe, ch. 7 contains a far reaching
rejection of the monarchy, yet there is not even an
allusion to ch. 7 in ch. 8. The lack of references

to ch. 7 in ch. 8, which is supposed to be outspokenly anti-monarchic, is said to be the strongest argument for the later and separate origin of this chapter (Stoebe 1973:175). As several scholars have noted, however, ch. 7 is an important introduction to chs. 8-12. McCarter, for example, suggests, "We have seen a major crisis met and surmounted under Samuel's leadership. Our narrator would have us believe that at this point in history the people of Israel could perpetrate no greater breach of trust, no more arbitrary exercise of self-will, no more senseless deed of vanity than to demand for themselves a human king" (1980:151; cf. Birch 1976:11). Though I disagree with McCarter's understanding of the narrator's intention, he has correctly apprehended the importance of ch. 7 as an introduction to ch. 8. It is not only ch. 7, however, that establishes the terms of reference according to which ch. 8, or more precisely chs. 8-12, must be understood. Rather, it is all of chs. 1-7 that establishes a paradigmatic plot-structure which is mirrored in the events of chs. 8-12 with many parallels in narrative structure, events, characters, motifs, locations, and vocabulary.

McCarter's observations that ch. 7 ends with

all well in Israel is correct. Before taking this
situation as an aspersion on the elders' request for
a change in the Israelite political structure (8:5),
however, one must reckon with 8:1-3. In vv. 1-3,
the narrator describes an unacceptable state of affairs
in the family of Israel's theocratic leadership. The
most remarkable thing about this situation is that it
is virtually identical to the previous state of
affairs in the Elide household, which also happened
to hold a position of mediation between Israel and
God.

In 8:1-3, Samuel has grown old just as his
predecessor Eli had grown old (2:22; cf. 3:2; 4:18).
Samuel's sons, whom he has established as judges for
Israel, are not walking in his ways (8:3) just as
Eli's sons are described as $b^e n\hat{e}$ $b^e l\hat{i}y\bar{a}^c al$ who do
not know Yahweh (2:11).[3] Samuel's sons pursue violent
gains ($b\bar{a}sa^c$) just as Eli's sons customarily require
their servants to commit acts of violence against
Israelite worshippers (2:16). Although the wrong-
doing of Eli's sons is cultic and that of Samuel's
sons is connected to their duties as judges, the
parallel is, as McCarter notes, striking (1980:160).
In both cases the leadership of Israel, whether

responsible for the maintenance of cultic or civil
order—both stipulated requirements of the covenant—
has failed in the transition to a new generation.[4]

The elders' request (8:5) is not, therefore,
presented as an "arbitrary act of self-will" or a
"senseless deed of vanity" (McCarter 1980:151); or
"as in line with the people's customary depravity"
(Smith 1899:55). Rather, it seems a perceptive
evaluation of an __actual__ situation (supported by the
narrator's description in 8:1-3), and an attempt to
forestall any recurrence of a divine reaction such
as that precipitated by the Elide family. The elders
of Israel ask Samuel to accomplish the change peace-
fully before Yahweh intervenes with another of his
own bloody solutions to the problem posed by sinful
theocratic officials.

The second half of the elders' request is
also conditioned by the events of the Elide affair
and the possibility of the same threat to the Israelite
people from a God provoked by a mediator's sinful
sons. The theocratic form of government poses a
problem for Israel when its covenant mediators are
unfit. Under a theocracy, the danger of unfit leaders
is not limited to Israel's relationship with Yahweh,

but also affects the nation's political and economic stability. The misdeeds of Eli's sons were in the area of the cult yet the punishment came in the area of external defense; Israel suffered politically for the cultic sins of its priests. As long as the theocracy continues it is impossible to isolate the effects of bad representation.

The people's request for a king to govern Israel as the other nations were governed is an attempt to secularize Israel's political structure in order to remove it from the perils inherent in the theocratic structure. The covenant had made Israel "a people dwelling alone, not reckoning itself among the nations" (Num 28:9). Israel became Yahweh's own possession, unique and separate from all the other peoples and nations on the earth (Exod 19:4-6; 33:16; Deut 7:6, 14:2; 26:18-19; 32:8-9). The desire to have a king to govern Israel as the other nations is a desire to limit or perhaps even to annul the covenant by making Israel's political system profane. The advantages are obvious in view of the events of chs. 1-7. The abuses of Israel's covenantal officials would no longer affect political stability. Israel's national defense would not be subject to

the vagaries of the theocratic defense system (1 Sam
4). The request for political identity with the
nations is particularly suitable in view of Yahweh's
treatment of Israel at Beth-shemesh (6:13-19). There
he treated Israelites like he had treated Philistines,
that is, he treated Israel "like the nations." Before
Yahweh has a chance to do so again, Israel wants to
become "like the nations" only without the pain.
Yahweh correctly perceives the intent of the elders'
.request; they have rejected his theocratic kingship
(8:7).

Yahweh decides to accede to the elders'
request and Samuel warns them of the costs of the
mundane security provided by a king (8:11-18). In
spite of Samuel's gloomy predictions, the people
express their preference for drudgery under a human
king (8:17, 19-20) just as their ancestors had
expressed their preference for servitude under the
Egyptians over the uncertainties of freedom in the
wilderness (Exod 14:10-12; 16:2-3; 17:1-4; Num 14:1-4)
with Yahweh as their deliverer and king (Exod 15:18;
cf. Buber 1958:74-79).

The narrative continues with a detailed
description of the selection and establishment of

a human king. As Buber points out the peoples'
request is granted but only in a vitiated form (1956:
121). At Yahweh's command Saul is anointed as nāgîd
and not as king (cf. Buber 1956:127-28). Saul's
mission as nāgîd is described in the same words as
Moses's mission to the enslaved Israelites in Egypt
(9:15-16; cf. Exod 3:7-10). Yahweh refuses to allow
the removal of Israelite politics from the covenantal
sphere. The king who was supposed to govern a pro-
faned Israel becomes, in fact, an instrument of
Yahweh, a new Moses sent to save Yahweh's people.[5]
Though he was, by way of the Philistines, the actual
cause of Israel's outcry (4:13-14), and so also a
contributory cause of Israel's request for a king
like all the nations, Yahweh presents himself and his
"designate" (nāgîd) as the answer to the "cry of his
people" (9:16), which is, by implication, the request
for a king. Yahweh's response to Israel's request
for a profane government is to reaffirm more strongly
his own commitment to the covenant. Saul is anointed
as nāgîd over Yahweh's "heritage", (nah^alātô) which
Yahweh provided for himself by bringing Israel out
of Egypt (10:1; cf. Deut 4:20; 9:26, 29; 32:9). The
events of 9:1-10:16 make it clear that Yahweh

relinquishes none of his covenantal claims or respon-
sibilities to Israel. The people will have their king,
but he will be a king under Yahweh. As Buber says,
"Für den Erzähler bedeutet dieser Vorgang die von Gott
befohlene Ablösung der unmittelbaren primitiven
Theokratie durch die mittelbare" (1956:128).

The description of the aged Samuel and his
miscreant sons (8:1-3) parallels and develops the
sketch of the Elides (esp. 2:11-25). The elders'
request for a king (8:5) to replace Samuel and his
sons parallels God's judgement on the Elides (2:27-36;
3:11-14), differing from the latter in being an
anticipation of divine judgement with a view to pre-
-cluding another national catastrophe. The request,
especially when the people reaffirm it by adding that
their king will go out before them and fight their
battles, calls Yahweh's kingship into question (cf.
8:7), and so parallels and develops the same question
posed by the defeat of Israel in ch. 4.[6] Likewise,
9:1-10:16 parallels and develops the reaffirmation
of Yahweh's kingship made in chs. 5-6. In chs. 5-6,
Yahweh demonstrated that he had not been defeated by
Dagon and, consequently, that the Israelite defeat
was initiated by him (cf. Campbell 1975:210; Miller

and Roberts 1977:70-72).

In ch. 8, the threat to Yahweh's sovereignty is a direct result of the Elide punishment/Israelite defeat in ch. 4. The Israelites fear another reprisal and their request attempts to preclude a new disaster. Chapters 9:1-10:16 describe Yahweh's measures to reassure the Israelites of his intentions toward them by reasserting his covenantal commitment. While 9:1-10:16 parallels chs. 5-6 in reasserting Yahweh's sovereignty, it also corrects the implications of chs. 5-6, and especially of 6:19-21, that he had ever repudiated his covenant. Scholars since Gressmann have commented on the providential unfolding of events that guide Saul from ass-seeking to the position of "designate" (e.g. Gressmann 1921:34; McCarter 1980: 184-86). Four times in the course of directing Samuel to anoint Saul, Yahweh calls Israel my people, ʿammî (9:16-17; cf. Buber 1956:127). The word of God (9:27) in 10:1 describes Israel as Yahweh's inheritance (naḥªlātô). Yahweh has not forgotten the covenant, nor does he relinquish it.

The conditional accession to the request, conditional by giving a nāgîd instead of a king, contains an implicit affirmation of the validity of

the request. The leadership is again corrupt and
that situation could lead to another untoward overflow
of divine wrath on Israel such as that experienced in
the Israelite defeat (ch. 4; cf. Campbell 1975:199-200).

Again a parallel exists between Yahweh's
implicit admission and the events following the
return of the Ark in ch. 6. There the Israelite
people were the injured party. Yahweh had apparently
rejected them, slaying them first along with their
corrupt priests (ch. 4) and then again at Beth-she-
mesh (6:19-20). Yahweh was responsible for the
disruption of covenantal relationship, although there
was partial justification for his acts in the provo-
cation by the corrupt Elides. Yet the Israelites,
as the offended covenantal party, make the first
move toward reconciliation in 7:4.[7] Similarly in
8-10:16, Yahweh is the rejected party. Israel rejects
Yahweh at the reappearance of corrupt leadership.
Israel's act is justifiable, but it is just as over-
zealous as Yahweh's punishment of the Elides. In
both cases, the attempt to remove corrupt inter-
mediaries, once by God and once by man, mushrooms into
a rejection of the covenantal partner. And, once
again we see, in the case of Israel's rejection of

Yahweh, that it is the offended party, Yahweh, who
makes the conciliatory gesture (chs. 9-11).

As Samuel had called all Israel to assemble
at Mizpah when they desired to repair the damage to
their relationship with Yahweh (7:5), so he recon-
venes the assembly at Mizpah, this time with the
object of presenting Yahweh's proposal for mending
the relationship (10:17). Both the use of the
lottery to select the person (I0:20-21) as well as
the second question put to Yahweh about the whereа-
bouts of Saul (10:22) emphasize that the selected
person is chosen by Yahweh (cf. Gressmann 1921:41;
Stoebe 1973:218).

In spite of this emphasis on the divine
choice of Saul (cf. 10:24), the people are initially
unaware that the new monarchy is not exactly what
they asked for. All the people respond affirmatively
to the choice (10:24). Their unanimous acclamation,
$y^e\hat{h}\hat{i}$ hammelek, expresses recognition and affirmation
of the new royal authority (De Boer 1955:231). But
the people realize what manner of king and monarchy
God has granted only after Samuel reveals the con-
stitution of the monarchy (mišpat $hamm^e luk\hat{a}$) (10:25).

The emphasis in v. 25 falls, not surprisingly,

on the sacral nature of this new monarchy. The
monarchic constitution is written down and installed
before Yahweh in an open declaration that the new
monarchy is not the profane monarchy that was
requested.

It is no accident that Samuel waited until
all the people acclaimed the king before telling them
what kind of monarchy it would be.[8] The reaction to
Samuel's announcement is mixed. Some accept the
arrangements and go with Saul. The narrator tells us
why these individuals accept a monarchy that remains
squarely in the sphere of theocratic domination—God
had "touched their hearts" (10:26).[9]

The $b^e n\hat{e}$ $b^e l\hat{i}ya^c al$, on the other hand, remain
firm in their resolve to have a secular monarchy
(10:27). Their criticism of Saul, "How will this one
deliver us?", is not a personal attack on Saul, who
stood head and shoulders above any other candidate
(9:2; 10:23-24). Rather, this group of Israelites,
which apparently consists of all those whose hearts
had not been touched, sees that Yahweh has not given
them the secular monarchy that they regarded as
necessary to national security (8:20). A monarchy
in which the king is chosen by God and in which the

constitution is written by a theocratic official and installed before Yahweh could not be farther from the type requested.

The question put by the $b^e n\hat{e}$ $b^e l\hat{i}ya^c al$, "How can this one deliver us?" (mah-$y\bar{o}\check{s}i^c \bar{e}n\hat{u}$, 10:27), recalls the similar words and concerns of the Israelites at the previous Mizpah convention (7:8). There they had requested that Samuel not cease to cry to Yahweh so that he might deliver them ($w^e y\bar{o}\check{s}i^c \bar{e}n\hat{u}$) from the Philistines. In both cases, the certainty of Israel's deliverance by the theocratic institution, whether the human agent be Samuel the judge qua priest or Saul the $n\bar{a}g\hat{i}d$, is questioned or doubted.

In ch. 7, Yahweh does answer Samuel and leads Israel to a stunning victory over the Philistines. The losses of the prior defeat (ch. 4) are completely reversed (cf. McCarter 1980:149). The parallel to the victory of ch. 7 is the defeat of the Ammonites in ch. 11. Both victories demonstrate the sufficiency of the theocratic government of Israel, thereby renewing Israel's faith in Yahweh and allegiance to his chosen intermediary.

Saul attributes the victory of ch. 11 to Yahweh (v. 13). Saul acts like a charismatic judge

(11:6) with Yahweh's support (11:7). The doubts of the $b^e n \hat{e}$ $b^e l \bar{i} y a^c a l$ are answered by the victory and by Saul's statement that Yahweh has wrought victory ($t^e \check{s} \bar{u}^c \hat{a}$) for Israel. The people's desire to execute those who had questioned Saul's monarchy is a modest expression of their gratitude and acceptance of the type of monarchy offered by Yahweh.

Samuel's suggestion that they go to Gilgal to renew the monarchy ($hamm^e l \hat{u} k \hat{a}$, 11:14) offers the opportunity for all Israelites to leave behind doubts about the efficacy of the theocratic monarchy and to express their allegiance to it. The division that split the people when Samuel explained the type of ' monarchy that they had unwittingly accepted is now healed. All the people go to Gilgal to renew the kingship (11:15) in contrast to 10:25, where only those whose hearts God had touched went with Saul.

At Gilgal the people make Saul king (wayyamlikû) before Yahweh (11:15). The description of the location, "before Yahweh", uses the verbal cue lipnê yhwh to recall 10:25, which described the installation of the monarchic constitution lipnê yhwh. The renewal of the monarchy at Gilgal constitutes a conscious acceptance by all the people

of the theocratic monarchy proposed by Yahweh.

Once again a covenantal crisis has been over-
come. The leadership of Israel has passed from priest
to judge to king, but the overarching rule of Yahweh
has remained intact. In ch. 12, Samuel rehearses the
events that have led to the establishment of a monar-
chy in Israel. He outlines the conditions and
covenantal stipulations that will govern monarchic
Israel in the future. In vv. 1-5, Samuel responds
specifically to the request for a king. He
emphasizes that he had fulfilled his office as judge
blamelessly and the people agree. He does not deal
openly with the real cause for their request, namely
the recurrence of a state of affairs in Israel's
leadership that had provoked Yahweh's wrath. Instead,
Samuel merely mentions his age and the presence of
his sons in passing (12:2). Samuel's point is that
there was no cause for the request as far as he or
his sons were concerned.

In the repetition of the request (8:20) the
people had implied that Yahweh was unreliable in
warfare by asking for a secular king who would go out
and fight for them. Samuel responds to this side of
the request in 12:6-12. The recollection of Yahweh's

"saving deeds" (ṣidqôt) on Israel's behalf is designed to vindicate Yahweh on this charge. Again Samuel's recollection is somewhat biased; he forgets the Ark episode, the real cause for Israel's doubts about Yahweh's reliability in battle, and attributes the request directly to the Ammonite threat (12:12). While it is correct that the request for a king who would fight for Israel was made in view of future possibilities, it was not an exterior military threat per se that provoked it.

With these "proofs" for the needlessness of the newly established monarchy, Samuel goes on to make strong claims on the future behaviour of king and people. The fact of the matter is that Yahweh's accession to the people's request contains an implicit admission to the validity of their claim, and so the position and role of the new monarchy must be defined with respect to the covenant. Verse 13 emphasizes that the new king is Yahweh's gift and "vv. 14-15 place the people (and the king) under a renewed possibility of blessing or curse, which is the equivalent of the renewal of the covenant state" (McCarthy 1974:102). Although the monarchy is incorporated into the covenantal structure it does

not modify that structure; it is merely a unnecessary
appurtenance. The new covenantal arrangements are
no different than the pre-monarchic covenant.
J. Muilenberg observes that ch. 12 exhibits the same
literary form and the same requirements as the
Sinaitic (Exod 19) and Shechemite (Josh 24) covenants
(1959:361-65). Nothing has changed (12:14; cf. Exod
19:5).

    As a demonstration of Samuel's continuing
vitality as a covenant mediator and of Yahweh's
agreement with Samuel's characterization of the
request for a king, Yahweh sends thunder and rain at
Samuel's signal (12:17-18). The people respond
appropriately with fear for Yahweh and Samuel.[10]
The show of divine force turns the people to Samuel
rather than their new king. Just as they relied on
Samuel to pray on their behalf before they had a
king (7:8), they must turn to him even when they
have one. This time, however, they fear Yahweh's
wrath (12:19) rather than simply the Philistines.

    In the same words he had used in 7:3, Samuel
exhorts the people to be single-minded in their
service and devotion to Yahweh.[11] Just as they had
to return to Yahweh for rescue (nāsal) from danger

in 7:3 and 8, so they must now. No king could conceivably save them from the wrath of Yahweh. Samuel characterized the request for a king as exceedingly evil (rā‘atkem rabbâ, v. 17) and now he describes it as turning after uselessness (hattōhû) (v. 21). It is Yahweh who can deliver (nāsal) Israel, and no one else (7:3; 10:18; 12:10, 11).

In 12:22, Samuel supplies the key to an understanding of the turn of events of chs. 8-12. Israel is not at liberty to become like the nations (8:5, 20). The covenant with Yahweh exists because Yahweh was pleased to make Israel a people for himself (cf. Exod 19:5; Deut 32:9; 1 Sam 10:1). Israel's raison d'être is the covenant which came into being at Yahweh's initiative. Yahweh cannot be evaded. Therefore, the idea of an Israelite monarchy was indeed a profitless, empty attempt to become like the nations. Israel as Israel, the political body made by Yahweh, cannot become like the nations; that would be a logical contradiction for a nation constitutionally defined as a priestly kingdom and holy nation (Exod 19:6; cf. Buber 1958:105-07). Samuel offers Israel only one assurance of Yahweh's continuing beneficence, that he will not ruin his

reputation by abandoning his people (12:22).

Samuel himself will continue in his mediatory role as intercessor to Yahweh on behalf of Israel and instructor of Israel on behalf of Yahweh, as he had done before the issue of monarchy had arisen (ch. 7). Once again he reiterates the covenantal demand that Israel serve God with all heart (12:24). Any further wickedness[12] on the part of Israel or its king and they will be swept away (v. 25). No matter what has happened in the past, Israel is still required to live in accordance with the stipulations of the covenant and the nation's future as well as the future of the monarchy are totally dependent on that condition. The monarchy has changed none of that.

Structural Outline of Plot Structure in 1 Samuel 1-12

On the basis of the preceding summary of chs. 1-12 it is now possible to outline the structural contours of the narrative without a danger of the schematization seeming to be an imposition with no basis in the text. The structure can be described as a series of scenic parallels. The parallelism between chs. 1-7 and chs. 8-12 consists of two basic relationships between the events (actions,

occurrences) and existents (characters, settings) of chs. 1-7 and chs. 8-12. The relationship may be one of simple repetition of a situation in chs. 8-12 that occurred first in chs. 1-7, or it may be that the parallel in chs. 8-12 responds to or develops the prior events or existents. The result of such development in chs. 8-12 is that tensions introduced in chs.1-7 are resolved in chs. 8-12:

chs. 1-7	chs. 8-12
1. Introduction to Samuel, the primary human character (chs. 1-3).	
2. Old Eli the priest (1:9; 2:22) and his wicked sons (2:12-17, 22-25).	Old Samuel (8:1, 5) and his corrupt sons (8:2-3, 5).
3. Yahweh reacts to the Elide abuses (2:25, 30-36; 3:12-14).	The elders of Israel act in anticipation of Yahweh's reaction (8:5).
4. Yahweh punishes the Elides and seems himself to have been defeated (ch. 4).	The people request a secular human king who can fight Israel's battles (8:20).
5. Yahweh displays his powers in a manner similar to the Exodus display (chs. 5-6). Israel's divine warrior has not been defeated.	Yahweh brings Saul to Samuel to be anointed nāgîd and new Moses. Saul is enlisted in the service of Yahweh, who does not renounce his claims on Israel (9:1-10:16).

6.	Yahweh treats Israel in a manner similar to his treatment of the Philistines. Israel responds as the Philistines did (6:19-20; cf. chs. 5-6).	Yahweh seeks to reassure Israel of his commitment to them as his people, his inheritance (9:16, 27; 10:1). He commissions a new Moses to save them (9:1-10:16).
7.	Israel, the rejected covenantal party, makes the first move to renew the relationship (7:3-8).	Yahweh, the rejected party, makes the first move towards reconciliation (9:1-10:16).
8.	The rapprochement takes place at Mizpah, where Samuel gathers all the people (7:5).	Cf. 10:17.
9.	Yahweh gives Israel the victory over the Philistines (7:9-14).	Yahweh gives Israel under Saul and Samuel the victory over the Ammonites (11:7, 11-15).
10.	Samuel acts as covenant mediator for Israel in both political and religious spheres (7:17).	Samuel leads Israel in a covenant renewal that incorporates the monarchy. He pledges continued prayer and instruction to Israel on his part (ch. 12).

CHAPTER IV

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE NARRATIVE

Rather than discussing under separate cate-
gories the different aspects of narrative composition
that create its meaning, as Conroy (1978) has done in
his innovative study of 2 Sam 13-20, the following
description of 1 Sam 1-12 will follow the order of
the text and any feature of the narrative that seems
important will be discussed as the occasion arises.
Separate treatment of the various literary phenomena,
though suitable for attempts to compose a biblical
narratology, detract from the comprehensive under-
standing of a narrative when the goal is interpreta-
tion, as it is in this study. The focus of this study
is not biblical narrative in general, but the speci-
fic narrative in 1 Sam 1-12 for which Buber's label,
the "biblical Politeía" is an appropriate title
(1964:734).

1. 1 Samuel 1

Verse 1

The narrative begins with an introductory
phrase also found in the stories of the judges

(Judg 13:2; 17:1; 19:1). "There once was a man"
(way^{e}hî ʾîš ʾehād), is a common formula that cues the
reader to understand the following narrative as a new
story (cf. Stoebe 1973:92). McCarter's suggestion to
follow the opening in LXX^B (anthrōpos ēn) instead of
MT, which has supposedly been influenced by Judg 13:2,
bypasses the significance of this parallel in MT.
McCarter offers a genetic explanation for the form of
the introductory formula in MT and uses this explana-
tion as an argument in favour of the reading of LXX
(1980:51). Such explanations are common enough in
textual criticism, but their adequacy is questionable.[1]

The fact that the opening of MT uses the
sequence way^{e}hî ʾîš, which regularly introduces new
stories in a series, arouses certain expectations in
the reader about the nature of the material that
follows, and about how he is to approach it. Buber's
observations about repeated Leitwörter are pertinent;
"wer diesen Wiederholungen folgt, dem erschliesst oder
verdeutlicht sich ein Sinn des Textes oder wird auch
nur eindringlicher offenbar" (1964:1131). The same is
true of the influence of Samson's birth narrative on v.
1 and elsewhere in ch. 1.

Already with the first three words of Samuel's

birth story, construction of a framework is begun, and it is within this framework that the reader understands the narrative. If the narrative begins like the Samson birth narrative, do we gain more knowledge about it by speculating about the "superiority" of versional alternatives that do away with the parallel, or by noting the effects of the similarity on the reading process? Given the other similarities between Samuel's and Samson's birth stories (cf. McCarter 1980:64-66), and the fact that one of the four roles (priest, judge, prophet, and seer) that Samuel plays is that of a judge (ch. 7, esp. vv. 6, 15-17; 8:1-5 (by implication); 12:11), the connection between 1:1 and the stories of the judges seems to be in accord with the conventions of the scene as a whole. The story about to be told should, therefore, be read in the light of the prior stories of the judges (cf. Schulz 1919:2).

The place of Elkanah's origin has sparked many vexed topographical discussions. According to Driver, Ramathaimzophim is gramatically indefensible. He suggests that the final m of sôpîm is a dittographic repetition of the initial m of the following words (1913:1). Driver's reading is coincidentally

supported by LXX and provides a balanced appositional
sentence, roughly translated:

There once was a man from hārāmātayim,

a Zuphite from har ᵓeprāyim.

Driver's suggestion receives further support from the
name and tribal affiliation of Elkanah's great-great-
grandfather. He is sûp, an ᵓeprātî. Driver's reading
suitably identifies Elkanah as a sûpî mēhār ᵓeprāyim.

The dual ending on hārāmātayim creates a
rhyme with the word ᵓeprāyim, which supports the
parallelism of the two lines.[2] Both geographical
names serve to locate Elkanah and concretize the
story from the very beginning.

Paradoxically, the names in Elkanah's genealo-
gy are important because of their unimportance. They
are all names of insignificant obscure people.[3] This
type of genealogy, labelled a "linear" genealogy by
Wilson, traces a single line of descent from a given
ancestor (1977:9). Linear genealogies are normally
used to link a descendant with an earlier ancestor
for social, political, or religious legitimation
(Wilson 1977:40-45, 155, 164). The Elkanah genealogy
is so employed in 1 Chr 6:11-13. There the genealogy
places the family amongst the Levites, thereby making

Samuel a Levite.

As it appears in 1 Sam 1:1, however, the genealogy accomplishes anything but legitimation. Samuel's natural lineage grants him no claim to any important rank. If he has or attains any status at all it is not because of his family tree.

This reading of the genealogy is reinforced by the fact that Samuel, the son of a barren woman, only comes into being as a miraculous grant of God. He may be well-connected, but his connections are definitely not drawn from any Israelite social structures.[4] Besides introducing the reader to Elkanah, v. 1 also establishes the "narrative situation" from which the narrator will relate the story. By framing his introduction to Elkanah in the preterite (way^{e}hî $^{\jmath}$îš), the narrator reveals, or rather states, that he views the events at some temporal remove from their occurrence. At this point the length of the intervening period of time between the events and the situation of the narrator, that is the narrative distance, is left undetermined.

A second, very important implication of the temporal distance between the events of the narrative and the event of narration is that the narrator

thereby indicates his position <u>outside</u> the world that he describes. Stanzel observes that this exterior position of the "authorial" narrative situation—a situation in which author and narrator are usually indistinguishable—"enables the authorial narrator to assume a position of superiority over his figures" (1971:38-39). The reader, who perceives and comes to understand the narrated events only as they are presented by the narrator is thereby also placed in a conscious position of superiority to the characters and exteriority to the story.

This definition of the relationship between the narrator and reader, on the one hand, and the narrative and its characters, on the other, is an important function of the preterite introduction. The importance of this definition for the proper understanding of the narrative cannot be overemphasized. All subsequent features of the narrative, such as the presence of conflicting evaluations and viewpoints within the narrative, are subject to this basic framework.

Verse 2

Verse 2 continues to sketch the background for the events of the birth story. A similar pattern

of gradually increasing specificity lies behind both
vv. 1-2. The characters are gradually brought into
focus by beginning with general specifications followed
by ascending lists of particularizations.

		Verse 1	Verse 2
1.	gender and number	$way^e h\hat{\imath} \, \bar{\jmath}\bar{\imath}\check{s} \, \bar{\jmath}eh\bar{a}d$	$w^e l\hat{o} \, \check{s}^et\hat{e} \, n\bar{a}\check{s}\hat{\imath}m$
2.	place	$min \, h\bar{a}r\bar{a}m\bar{a}tayim$	Women assume the situation of their husband.
3.	name	$\hat{u}\check{s}^em\hat{o} \, \bar{\jmath}elq\bar{a}n\hat{a}$	$\check{s}\bar{e}m \, \bar{\jmath}ahat \, hann\hat{a}$ $w^e\check{s}\bar{e}m \, ha\check{s}\check{s}\bar{e}n\hat{\imath}t \, p^eninn\hat{a}$
4.	progenitors/ progeny	genealogy	Peninnah has children, Hannah does not.

The specifications in v. 1 end with Elkanah's genealogy,
which is not illustrious. In v. 2, the final concern
is again with the family lines. In this case, however,
it is with respect to their potentialities as pre-
servers of Elkanah's line that Hannah and Peninnah are
characterized. With respect to Samuel, v. 1 suggests
his unimportance in Israel's social hierarchy, and now

v. 2 suggests that it is unlikely that he should
even become an insignificant character. At this point
he "is" the son of a barren woman.

In conjunction with the introduction of char-
acters, v. 2 also introduces the biblical motif of two
wives, one barren and one fruitful.[5] This motif
serves as the impetus for the main events of the
chapter. Hannah is explicitly called the "first" wife
while Peninnah is the "second" (McCarter 1980:58).
Elkanah's love for Hannah is stated explicitly; the
contrasting lack of such a statement about his feelings
for Peninnah is conspicuous in absence. It seems that
she is "second" and unloved. As in the Jacob cycle,
the barrenness of the favorite wife is attributed to
Yahweh's direct intervention (v. 5; cf. Gen 29:31).
Hannah may be the first wife, but the chiastic
patterning of names in v. 2 places her last with her
barrenness. Peninnah comes first with her children.

$$\text{šēm ᵓaḥat ḥannâ} \qquad \text{wᵉšēm haššēnît pᵉninnâ}$$

$$\text{wayᵉhî lipninnâ yᵉlādîm} \qquad \text{ûlᵉḥannâ ᵓēn yᵉlādîm}$$

The combination of contrasting fortunes in one woman
is also a recurring element in this motif.

Any reader who is familiar with the motif will im-
mediately become suspect that the reversal of for-
tunes elegantly represented by the chiastic syntax of
v. 2 is a result of divine intervention (cf. Gen 29:
30-31; Matt 19:30). The reader who detects the con-
ventional usage of the motif does not receive explicit
confirmation of his suspicions until v. 5. The
narrator withholds confirmation to perk reader interest
with an element of suspense. Even the suspicion of
divine intervention in the lives of these characters
is enough to begin to stir the reader's interest and
speculation about the larger significance of the rather
simple tale that has thus far been introduced.

Verse 3

Elkanah's character receives further specifi-
cation. The wāw consecutive perfect verb, w^e^{c}ālā, has
a frequentative force (Driver 1913:5; GKC #112dd),
which along with the expression miyyāmîm yāmîmâ, "from
days to days" (cf. below p. 135), depicts Elkanah
first and foremost as a pious observer of sacrificial
duties.

Two important new characters, Hopni and Pinhas,
are unobtrusively introduced as the priests at Shiloh,
where Elkanah regularly went to worship. Eli is also

introduced here as the father of the two priests (cf.
Willis 1979:206). Bourke sees this introduction of
the Elides in conjunction with the description of
Elkanah's piety as the first instance in a series of
contrasts drawn between Samuel (and Israel) and the
Elides throughout chs. 1-3 (1954:82).

At least one may say that the reader is pre-
pared for future contrasts by the paralleling of
Elkanah "at Shiloh" (b^{e}šilōh) and the Elides "there"
(w^{e}šām). The topographical parallelism is made promi-
nent by placing w^{e}šām first in its own sentence,
immediately following b^{e}šilōh, which is last in its
sentence. Elkanah actively sacrifices and worships
at Shiloh in contrast to the Elide priests, who are
just there. The contrast is reinforced by using an
active verb taking two infinitive constructs with l
as object to describe Elkanah's action. The Elide
priests, on the other hand, do not even get a single
verb to describe their functioning as priests; in their
case the verb "to be" is simply assumed.

Elkanah's sacrificial activity is further
highlighted by the numerous alliterations in the
description of his activity: 1. hā^{ɔ}îš hahû^{ɔ};
2. miyyāmîm yāmîmâ; 3. l^{e}hiš... w^{e}liz... lay...

(underlining only the alliterations). The Elides'
inactivity receives similar treatment: 1. w^eam
$\check{s}^e n\hat{e}$ $b^e n\hat{e}$ - $^c\bar{e}l\hat{i}$; 2. $\d{h}opn\hat{i}$ $\hat{u}pin\d{h}\bar{a}s$.

The inclusion of the name of God, yhwh
$\underline{s}^e\underline{b\bar{a}}$ $\bar{o}t$, in v. 3a introduces the reader to the warrior
god who will play such an important role in connection
with the ark in chs. 4-6 (cf. Budde 1902:4). Verse 3
concludes the reader's introduction to the major
characters appearing in chs. 1-3.

Verses 4-5

The portrait of Elkanah's piety is even more
definite in v. 4. Here, again, he is sacrificing. The
introductory temporal clause specifies the action to
follow as an example of one of the days when Elkanah
would sacrifice (GKC #126s; Schulz 1919:10).

The narrator continues to develop the theme
of tension between the wives. Elkanah gives portions
of the sacrifice first to Peninnah and to all her sons
and daughters. To Hannah he gives only one portion,
"for though he loved Hannah, Yahweh had sealed her
womb."[6] Elkanah is fair in his dealings with his
wives even though he loves Hannah more.

Verses 4-5 continue to stress the difference
between Hannah and Peninnah. Peninnah is described as

Elkanah's wife; she and all her sons and daughters receive portions first.[7] Only then does Hannah, who unable to fulfill her childbearing role as a wife, is not called his wife, get her single portion. Prominent here is the ignominy of Hannah's position. Although she is the number one wife, ᵓahat (v. 2), she receives only a single portion, mānâ ᵓahat.

  The final sentence of v. 5 provides the anticipated confirmation that Yahweh is indeed responsible for the recurrence of this typical familial situation in biblical narrative. Hannah's sterility is explicitly attributed to the fact that Yahweh sealed her womb. The statement is an unusual way to describe sterility. (The usual term for sterility is ᶜāqār, "barren," e.g. Gen 11:30; 25:21; 29:31; Exod 23:26; Deut 7:14; Judg 13:2-3; 1 Sam 2:5, etc.) The narrator, who now reveals his omniscience for the first time, tells us that Yahweh has intervened to close Hannah's womb. This expositional comment is addressed to the reader alone, and encourages him to continue to speculate about the larger significance of these events. The reader can now be certain, as he could not be on the basis of the convention alone, that Yahweh is working behind the scenes and probably directing events toward some goal,

as is his custom.

Why has Yahweh closed Hannah's womb? What
is the goal towards which divine guidance is leading?
The answers to these and similar questions are
obviously available to the omniscient narrator, but
he temporarily withholds them from the reader. The
simple technique of withholding information, which is,
by implication, available to his own omniscience, is
the narrator's principal means of achieving "one of
the primary aims of fiction—the creation and mani-
pulation of narrative interest" (Sternberg 1978:45).
At this point in the narrative interest is increasing-
ly directed onto the question of the meaning of
Hannah's sterility. Where mystery goes, the reader's
curiosity will invariably follow.

Verse 6

Hannah's vexation is made complete in v. 6.
The tension between the two women is brought to the
surface. Peninnah is Hannah's rival who sorely vexes
Hannah until the latter vociferates. It is the fact
that Yahweh has sealed Hannah's womb that provides
Peninnah with the ammunition to vex Hannah to the
point of vocal thunderings: The kî of v. 6b is,
therefore, causal (GKC #158ab; R.J. Williams 1976 #444).

The emphatic repetition of the final sentence in both vv. 5 and 6 links the two verses, both of which focus on Hannah's infertility.[8] Elkanah, though he loves her, can only give her one portion because Yahweh has sealed her womb.[9] Peninnah is able to vex Hannah both with her inabilities as a wife and with her resultant single portion, because Yahweh has, so far, sealed her womb. Even the verb harr^{ec}imâh, "vociferate," by its phonetic similarity to rahmân, Hannah's "womb," points to her sterility as the cause of her distress (cf. Dhorme 1910:19).

Bourke has also suggested that Hannah and Peninnah are stylized characters conforming to conventional themes in Hebrew literature. A barren woman is oppressed by a cruel rival blandishing her own fecundity. Hannah belongs to the ^{ca}nāwîm, the humble, afflicted, poor, and righteous whom Yahweh loves. She is described in ^{ca}nāwîm terms such as bitterness of soul (v. 10), afflicted (v. 11), pouring out her soul (v. 16), and having an abundance of complaint (v. 16). (Bourke 1954:84 supplies comparative examples.) By drawing these lines between the heroine of ch. 1 and her opponent, the narrative begins the process of associating Samuel with the side of

right and just causes, here through his oppressed
mother. Although the oppression of Hannah by the
vindictive Peninnah is not central to the narrative—
Peninnah and the conflict leave the narrative after
v. 7—it introduces an important thematic contrast
between two characters. Such contrasts will come to
occupy a central position in chs. 2-3.

The final sentence of v. 6 is introduced by
a conjunctive kî; "Because (kî) Yahweh had sealed
up her womb." The ostensible function of this sen-
tence is to explain the behaviour of the two wives in
v. 6. Peninnah is successful at taunting Hannah
because Hannah is sterile.

The sentence also achieves less obvious
ends; however, as a repetition of the last sentence
in v. 5 it is foregrounded and the reader's attention
is firmly directed towards its content. Events on
the plane of the human characters in the story are
being manipulated by God, who operates from the
divine plane.

The repeated sentence is almost identical to
the last sentence of v. 5 except for the addition of
the preposition b^{ec}ad, which functions idiomatically
with the verb sgr (cf. BDB p. 126, col. 1 #1b). The

addition of the preposition seems to stress the total-
ity of Hannah's barrenness; whereas v. 5b might be
translated "Yahweh sealed her womb," v. 6b would be
"Yahweh sealed up her womb." As in v. 5, the narrator
does not reveal the reason for Yahweh's intervention
in the regular course of biological events; his
repeated address to the reader simply stresses that
events on the human plane of the narrative are the
product of an initiative from the divine plane.

The effect on the reader of this repeated
exposition address by the narrator is to divert a
large amount of attention away from the plane of
events on the human plane towards the divine and onto
the as yet unrevealed goal that is the presumable
object of the divine initiative. On the level of the
story, then, the narrator's exposition creates
distance between the reader's and the human characters'
perceptions so that the reader begins to perceive the
larger meaning in these events. As Booth says,
"distance is never an end in itself; distance along
one axis is sought for the sake of increasing the
reader's involvement on some other axis" (1961:123).

Booth's observation is also applicable to
the effect of the expositional comment on the reader's

relationship with the narrator. When the narrator addresses the reader with a piece of exposition such as this, he temporarily elevates the reader to his own level of omniscience. The information conveyed—that Yahweh had closed Hannah's womb—is privileged as both omniscient and after the fact. Possession of such information distances the reader from both human and divine characters, and even from involvement in the effort to decipher the divine manipulation of the human characters. In return, the reader's involvement and identification with the level and perspective of the omniscient narrator—the level of discourse—is greatly increased. Here, after all, the reader recognizes the answer to all puzzles and riddles not answerable from a reading that views from the plane of human characters or even from the level of the divine character. The expositional comment in v. 6b functions as one of the explicit invitations for the reader to perceive from the broadest perspective available in this narrative world, namely the perspective of the omniscient narrator who is the source and creator of narrative meaning.

Verse 7

The verse provides a summary of the events of

vv. 4-6, and notes that such was the regular sequence
whenever the Elkanahs went to Yahweh's house. The
parallel (with a difference) between the two phases
of action is made prominent by the twofold repetition
of kēn, and captured by Keil and Delitzsch. "So did
he from year to year as often as she went up to the
house of the Lord. So did she (Peninnah) provoke
her (Hannah), so that she wept and did not eat" (1880:
22-23). Hannah's sorrow is such that she cannot even
eat the single portion that she gets.

Verse 8

.Elkanah is dissociated from Peninnah's mis-
treatment of Hannah. Hannah may not be able to ful-
fill her role as childbearer, but Elkanah is still her
husband and cares for her.

.The narrator emphasizes the special relation-.
ship between Hannah and Elkanah by attaching the
seemingly redundant description "her husband" to the
proper name Elkanah in v. 8. In contrast, Elkanah is
never described as Peninnah's "husband." The allitera-
tive complex of names at the beginning of the verse
also emphasizes the bond between them: (wayyōʾmer)
lāh ʾelqānā ʾîšāh hannā.

Elkanah's threefold repetition of lāmeh,
"why," stresses that in terms of their marriage she
has nothing to worry about. "Am I not better to you
than ten sons" expresses his reassurance. No matter
how many sons Peninnah may have, Elkanah's love for
Hannah will continue. In human terms, Elkanah's love
for Hannah should be worth more to her than ten sons
without his love. Peninnah's vindictiveness supports
Elkanah's claim.

Verse 9

Hannah appears to humour Elkanah by eating
for we next see her getting up "after she had eaten"
($^{\mathfrak{a}}ah^{a}r\hat{e}$ $^{\mathfrak{a}}\bar{a}k^{e}l\hat{a}$, cf. GKC #91e, against Stoebe's
repointing to $\bar{a}k^{e}l\hat{a}h$, 1973:91).[10] As v. 10 shows,
however, her eating does not signify any change of
heart over her childlessness.

Verse 9b is contemporaneous with v. 9a
(Driver 1913:12; cf. GKC #116d; R.J. Williams 1976 #237).
The verse structure recalls v. 3:

3. The man goes up from his city to worship
   and sacrifice to Yahweh at Shiloh.

9. Hannah gets up after eating and drinking
   at Shiloh.

3. There Eli's two sons are priests to
   Yahweh.

9. ~Eli the priest is sitting on his throne
   beside the doorpost of Yahweh's temple.

The statement that Hannah was at Shiloh when
she got up after eating is not "oddly repetitious"
(McCarter 1980:53), but meaningfully so. As in v. 3
the Elide priests are specifically associated with
Shiloh. In both cases, we see the beginnings of the
contrast schema that governs chs. 2-3 (cf. Bourke
1954:82ff.; Willis 1971:289). Elkanah actively goes
up to worship and sacrifice at Shiloh; Eli's sons,
the priests, are simply there. Hannah rises after
eating and drinking at Shiloh; Eli is sitting at the
doorpost. The contrast is not yet developed into
an opposition of right and wrong, or good and evil,
but is simply one of active and passive roles at the
temple.

The narrator introduces these vestigial con-
trasts between the Elide priests and the family of
Elkanah as foreshadowings of the coming contrasts
between the Elides and Samuel, Hannah's son. The
narrator leaves the full significance of this fore-
shadowing implicit, thus increasing narrative interest

in the attentive reader.

Verses 10-11

In desperation, Hannah turns as a last resort
to Yahweh. As the reader reads about her bitterness
of soul and about her cries and prayers to Yahweh he
is being allowed to share the narrator's knowledge
that, ironically, Hannah is seeking help from exactly
the right source. Though Hannah does not know it,
Yahweh is the one who sealed her womb (vv. 5, 6) and
he is, therefore, the logical choice to open it.

Hannah's dedicatory vow of any forthcoming
offspring to Yahweh has attracted attention because
of the Nazirite element in it. McCarter suggests
that the additional note, "wine or strong drink he
will not drink," of LXX[B] is supported by space con-
siderations in 4QSam[a] (1980:53-54). Whether the
variant is included or not, the allusion to the
Nazirite status of any offspring is present.[11] If
Yahweh will give to his maid-servant the seed of men,
she will give to Yahweh one upon whose head a razor
has not gone.[12] The act of dedication will turn an
ordinary "seed of men" into a Nazirite, set apart
from the rank and file, if Yahweh agrees.[13]

The emphasis on the uniqueness and

distinction of the requested child is made even
stronger by the way Hannah phrases her vow in terms
drawn from Exod 3:7. Samuel will be the answer to
Hannah's affliction as Moses was the answer to the
Israelite's affliction in Egypt:

v. 11   ʾim rāʾōh tirʾeh baʿonî ʾamātekā

Exod 3:7   rāʾōh rāʾêtî ʾet-ʿonî ʿammî

This allusion to the exodus material and the Mosaic
role of Hannah's future son begins a process of
legitimating Samuel as a worthy replacement for the
Elides. Not only is he to be born of a barren woman,
but he will even be a new Moses. The verbal remini-
scence brings the exodus event to the mind of the
reader, who will be reminded of the paradigmatic
significance of the exodus throughout the narrative.

Verses 12-13

The two verses are connected as one single
event by a syntactic chiasmus of verb forms:

Hannah, active verb ⟍ ⟋ Eli, participle
Hannah, participle ⟋ ⟍ Eli, active verb

Hannah fervently multiplies her prayers
while Eli is watching her mouth. Hannah's prayer is

silent, only her lips move and Eli takes her for a
drunk. Eli's mistaken identification provides Hannah
with the opportunity to proclaim her abstinence from
alcoholic beverages, a basic requirement for a woman
who would bear a Nazirite (cf. Judg 13:4; Stoebe 1973:
97).

Willis suggests that Eli's misjudgement of
Hannah's mental state is the beginning of the contrast
between Hannah/Samuel/Israel and the Elides (1971:289).
Perhaps it is better to regard this mistake as the
first instance where the reader is led to favour
Hannah over against Eli. The contrast between Elkanah
and Hanna and the Elides has already appeared twice
(vv. 3, 9) although with less explicit differentiation.
The reader knows from vv. 11-12 that Hannah's outward
appearance is the expression of deep inner distress
and piety. When Eli takes Hannah for a drunk the
reader takes him for an ignoramus. The narrator leads
the reader to favour Hannah by allowing him a privi-
leged insight into Hannah's thoughts but only an
external view of Eli (cf. Booth 1961:245-49).

Verses 14-15

Hannah's polite response to Eli's mistaken
rebuke strengthens the reader's favourable impression

of her.[14] The forwardness of Eli's rebuke is fore-
grounded by the assonance in the second two words of
v. 14 and is contrasted to Hannah's submissiveness,
similarly highlighted by assonance:

v. 14   wayyō'mer 'ēleyhā 'ēlî

v. 15   watta'an hannâ wattō'mer

Eli is completely mistaken. As Hannah points out, her
actions are not the manifestation of drinking (šātîtî)
spirits, but of pouring out ('ešpōk) her spirit; not
of pouring into herself, but of outpouring of herself.

Thenius's widely accepted suggestion to read
Hannah's self-description as qᵉšat yôm, "one in mis-
fortune," instead of qᵉšat rûah, "hard-spirited," is
unnecessary (1864:6). The entire episode between
Hannah and Eli is a result of her fervent multiple
prayers (v. 12), which are in turn the result of an
embittered soul (mārat nāpeš, v. 10). Hannah explains
her behaviour by the fact that she is a "determined"
woman ('iššâ qᵉšat rûah) pouring out her soul
(Ahlström 1979:254). Eli's question 'ad-mātay, "how
long," also implies that it was the incessancy of her
prayer that provoked him (v. 14).

Verse 16

The continuation of Hannah's answer confirms

this reading of $q^e\check{s}at$ $r\hat{u}a\d{h}$. She continued speaking
for so long (^{c}ad $h\bar{e}nn\hat{a}$) because of the greatness of
her complaint (cf. v. 12) and vexation (cf. v. 10).

The introduction of the term bat $b^e l\hat{i}y\bar{a}^c al$
here prepares for the subsequent occurrence of the
expression in 2:12 (cf. Willis 1979:207). Hannah
interprets Eli's rebuke as making her out to be a
worthless woman (bat $b^e l\hat{i}y\bar{a}^c al$).

Verse 17

Eli accepts Hannah's explanation, though
without apology for his error in judgement. He then
sends Hannah off with his approval, "May the God of
Israel grant you your request." Although neither
he nor the reader know it, Eli has approved a request
for his successor. Eli's endorsement of his own
replacement is suitably a result of his lack of
awareness of what is really going on in the worship
at the temple. He demonstrates the need for a
successor at the same time that he gives his blessing
on the request for one.

Verse 18

Schulz suggests that Hannah's reply, "be-
deutet weiter nichts als die Bitte, Heli möge ihr die

freundliche Gesinnung, die er ihr jetzt gezeight,
weiter bewahren" (1919:17). Hannah's actions agree
with Schulz's reading. She goes "her way," meaning
that she takes up her regular activities again (cf.
Koch 1978:276). Her renewed eating is a sign, as
before (v. 9), that she has accepted consolation.
Most commentators read the word pāneyhā in the final
sentence as "sad" or "troubled countenance." The
parallel in Job 9:27 supports this reading (Thenius
1864:6; Nowack 1902:6; Driver 1913:15-16; Schulz
1919:18).

The adverb $^c\hat{o}d$ positioned last in v. 18 is
another temporal hint that Hannah's troubles will be
resolved sometime in the future. Hannah's firm
resolve to have a child has been sufficiently
described so far for the reader to surmise that if
she is not sad anymore ($^c\hat{o}d$) it is because her wish
eventually comes true.

Verse 19

Verse 19 concludes the events begun in v. 3,
where the man (Elkanah) had left his city ($w^ec\bar{a}l\hat{a}$
$m\bar{e}^c\hat{i}r\hat{o}$) to worship ($l^ehi\check{s}tah^a\hat{o}t$) and sacrifice
($w^elizb\bar{o}ah$) to Yahweh at Shiloh. In v. 19, they
worship ($wayyi\check{s}tah^a\hat{w}\hat{u}$) before Yahweh and return home

to Ramah (wayyāšubû wayyābōʾu ʾel-bêtām hārāmātâ).
The inclusio between vv. 3 and 19 shows that Elkanah
has accomplished all that he set out to do. The
events may be schematically outlined in correlation
with Hannah's troubles as follows:

v. 2	Introduction to Hannah's problem.
v. 3 wᵉʿālā haʾiš hahûʾ meʿiro 1ᵉhištaḥᵃwōt wᵉlizbōaḥ	That man alone, signifying division in the family.
v. 4 wayyizbaḥ	Intensification of Hannah's difficulties.
v. 18b	Indication of a future resolution to Hannah's problem (ʿōd).
v. 19a wayyištaḥᵃwû wayyāšubû wayyābōʾu ʾel bêtām hārāmātâ	They worship together and return home. Division disappears.
v. 19b	Hannah's problem is resolved.

As the outline shows, v. 19 describes both
Elkanah's accomplishment of his purposes and the
unification of the family, in worship and in their

return home. The statement that they return speci-
fically to their home contrasts with Elkanah's
departure in v. 3, which is simply from his city. The
contrast emphasizes that previous alienation amongst
family members has received some measure of resolution.

The narrator immediately goes on to relate
the consummation of the resolution to Hannah's problem,
a resolution he has so far only hinted at. No sooner
has he traced the families' return journey home, than
the narrator describes Elkanah in action, "And Elkanah
knew Hannah, his wife." Elkanah's role, while essen-
tial, is not a sufficient cause to end Hannah's
barrenness. Without further ado, the narrator adds
the vital piece of information for the reader, and
the efficient cause to end Hannah's sterility; Yahweh
remembers (zkr) Hannah, just as she had asked (cf.
zkr in v. 11). The latter statement is the actual
climax of the story, and the description in v. 20a
simply works out the details of the birth process.

Verse 20

In due time Hannah becomes pregnant and bears
a son.[15] The key element, which makes the birth
possible, is Yahweh's remembrance of Hannah. Elkanah

may know her, but Yahweh remembers her. Hannah recognizes this fact and commemorates it by naming her son Samuel. She explains the name in a recollection of her request for Samuel from Yahweh. The explanation of the name also expresses Hannah's understanding that her son is evidence that Yahweh has agreed to the terms of the vow in v. 11. Hannah has not forgotten that Samuel is the rightful property of Yahweh.

The name Samuel and Hannah's explanation have provoked many lengthy examinations of the connection between them (cf. Driver 1913:16-19; VanZyl 1969:125). Several studies have proposed the traditio-historical hypothesis that the birth story originally applied to Saul, whose name seems to fit the explanation better than Samuel (Hylander 1932:11-13; McCarter 1980:62, 65-66; cf. Zakovitch 1980:41 n.45). Given the focus of the present study on the existing narrative, however, discussion of the traditio-historical hypothesis about the text's prehistory is unnecessarily hypothetical.[16] In addition, Zakovitch notes that all of the details concerning the family of Elkanah are applicable to the story of Samuel but not to that of Saul (1980:41). Even historical critics

sympathetic to the endeavour have either regarded the supposed underlying Saul story with suspicion or rejected it (Hertzberg 1964:26; Noth 1963:395 ["so unwahrscheinlich wie möglich"]; Stoebe 1973:97-98).

As Driver notes, the relationship between the name and the explanation is alliterative; the name šᵉmûᵓēl "recalls" the word šāᵓal (1913:16). Kimche's reasoning supplies semantic explanation of the connection that Driver regards as assonantal: "For among the letters of Samuel (šmwᵓl) there is Saul (šᵓwl), and among these letters there is also "of the Lord" (mᵓl), as if she had said šᵓl mᵓl ("lent of the Lord")" (cited from Zakovitch 1980:42). Hannah's explanation emphasizes that Samuel is from Yahweh by placing myhwh before šᵉᵓiltîw. Here, at last, is Samuel's real genealogy; he is from Yahweh.

In biblical etymologies Zakovitch suggests that we can discern a trend from an earlier derivatory explanation that did not aim at exact resemblance between a name and its derivation, to a later form in which attempt was made to embed all the sounds and elements of the name in the explanatory derivation (1980:31). Zakovitch suggests that Hannah's explanation of Samuel's name falls into the earlier, less

precise class. Hannah's explanation of the name,
however accurate or inaccurate it may be from a
linguistic perspective, gives an accurate assessment
of the miraculous element in the birth of her son.
She calls her son Samuel, which may be explained as
"his name is God" (VanZyl 1969:125-26), or more
simply "the name of God" (Weingreen 1976:64).
Samuel's name forever identifies him as standing in
close relation to God. Hannah's explanation of the
name is very simple; Samuel gets a name that cele-
brates and identifies the divine because he is the
answer to Hannah's request from Yahweh.

Samuel exists and his name celebrates his
existence as a unique and special boon from Yahweh
who is God. The traditional motif of the barren
woman who is granted a son by God is used here, as
elsewhere (Judg 13; and especially Luke 1), to
characterize and legitimate the son who results.
Elkanah's genealogy, nondescript in the first place,
fades into the background in the presence of Samuel's
true genealogy. The name Hannah gives to Samuel
thus focuses the entire chapter on two things, the
amazing divine capacities of Yahweh and the special
character of her son Samuel.

Verse 21

A new stage in the history of Elkanah's sacri-
ficial pilgrimages, v. 21 parallels v. 3 but also
exhibits some differences:

1. Elkanah is mentioned by name; instead of hā᾽îš
hahû᾽ we read hā᾽îš ᾽elqānâ. In the preceding
description of v. 3, I suggested that the narrator
described Elkanah as simply "that man" and sent him
off alone to sacrifice as a means of supporting the
general impression of strife and division in the
family. Between v. 3 and v. 21, however, Samuel is
born and the source of conflict in the family thereby
disappears. Domestic disputes being settled, the
narrator evokes the opposite associations of
familiarity and intimacy by using the proper name,
Elkanah, in place of the pronominal description, that
man.

2. Verse 21 explicitly states that Elkanah's whole
family goes with him. Again the contrast with v. 3
creates the impression of a unified family. The
entire household now acts in unison.

3. The family goes only to sacrifice and not to
worship, as Elkanah did in v. 3. By leaving out one
part of the hendiadys l^ehištaḥ^awōt w^elizbōaḥ the

narrator separates this particular occasion from the previous practise, which occurred "from days to days." The sacrifice in v. 21 is more specific than that of v. 3.

4. Instead of having Elkanah go up to sacrifice "from days to days," the narrator says he went to sacrifice "the sacrifice of the days."[17] The expression zebaḥ hayyāmîm is much more specific than miyyāmîm yāmîmâ of v. 3. The only previous mention of yāmîm with the definite article comes in v. 20, where it refers to the completion of days associated with Hannah's pregnancy and delivery. As noted by Wellhausen (1871:40) and Driver (1913:16), these two occurrences of hayyāmîm are related, as one would expect given their close proximity (cf. Stoebe 1973:99). In view of the emphasis in v. 21 on the united household (kōl-bētô) going up with Elkanah to offer a special sacrifice, it seems likely and especially appropriate that the sacrifice be a celebration of the "completion of the days." Hannah's successfully completed pregnancy resolves the tensions between the two wives. Therefore, they can all go, kōl-bētô, to celebrate the sacrifice of "the days." The zebaḥ hayyāmîm celebrates both the birth of Samuel and the family

reunion.

5. Elkanah also "sacrifices" a vow in v. 21 in contrast to v. 3, which makes no mention of vows. There is no previous mention of any vow made by Elkanah. Noting that <u>neder</u> is not the object of <u>zābaḥ</u> elsewhere, McCarter suggests that LXX[L] gives a clue to the meaning of "his vow" (1980:55). He restores "and to redeem his vow and all the tithes of his land," supposedly lost by haplography. The LXX[L] reading does not, however, solve the difficulty of what vow Elkanah is redeeming. The reference to land tithes has no obvious contextual contact and seems designed to ease the oddity of a vow that Elkanah did not make.

Hertzberg suggests that perhaps the narrator assumes that Elkanah has taken on Hannah's vow in accordance with the regulations for vows in Num 30: 1ff. (esp. v. 14). A husband could confirm or invalidate any vow made by his wife. "Elkanah even went beyond a confirmation of this nature by his personal participation in the vow" (1964:28). Aside from the difficulty of what "participation in the vow" might mean and how that would relate to the text's "to sacrifice...his vow," Hertzberg's

explanation does not take serious account of Hannah's vow. She vowed to give back Samuel. It is hard to see how Elkanah's "sacrifice of" (MT), or "participation in" (Hertzberg) his vow has anything to do with Hannah's vow. Yahweh "remembered" Hannah because she vowed to return Samuel, not to sacrifice for him or to elicit Elkanah's "participation" in the vow.

Verse 22

In the case of a nonsensical text, the way lies open for a judicious use of emendation. Supposing a dittography of a $w\bar{a}w$, a contextually suitable reading may be obtained: $w^e{}^{\circ}\bar{e}t$(!)-$neder(w)$ $w^e\underline{hann\hat{a}}$ $l^{\circ}\bar{o}$ $^c\bar{a}l\hat{a}$; "But with a vow, Hannah did not go up." The narrator reverses the usual word order to emphasize the important fact that Hannah is not quick to fulfill her vow (cf. R.J. Williams 1976:96 #573). "And the man Elkanah and all his household went up to offer the sacrifice of the days [in celebration of Samuel's birth], but with a vow Hannah did not go up." The chiastic juxtaposition of the actions of the household and the non-action of Hannah captures the reader's attention:

wayya^{c}al hā$^{\jmath}$īš $^{\jmath}$elqānâ w^{e}kol-bêtô lizbōaḥ lyhwh $^{\jmath}$et-zebaḥ hayyāmîm

w$^{e\jmath}$ēt(!)-neder w^{e}hannâ lō$^{\jmath}$ ^{c}ālātâ

Hannah's procrastination contradicts the
reader's expectations of her. All along she has been
the protagonist and Peninnah the antagonist. In v.
21, however, Peninnah is included among the "entire
household" going up to celebrate Samuel's birth while
Hannah stays back with the vow. Will Hannah shirk the
responsibility and so defeat the mysterious purpose of
Yahweh? He was after all the real cause of her steril-
ity in the first place. The resolution of Hannah's per-
sonal difficulty has unexpectedly jeopardized
Yahweh's purpose. Ironically it is the very maternal
instinct that drove Hannah to make her vow that now
appears as a potential source of frustration for the
divine purpose.

By reading "But with a vow" as the first part
of v. 22 instead of v. 21 the syntax and meaning of
v. 22 become less problematic than they have appeared
in previous studies (e.g. Cross 1953:18; McCarter
1980:55-56). The verse may be translated, "But with a
vow Hannah did not go up for she told her husband
(wait) until the boy is weaned. (Then) I will bring

him and he will appear before Yahweh and remain there forever" (cf. GKC #112a, d).

Hannah seems to be stalling for time. Although her action is completely understandable and captures the reader's sympathies (Hertzberg 1964:28), she is obligated, as she recognizes, to present Samuel as she vowed.

Verse 23

Hannah is allowed a period of grace but, as the threefold repetition of the words ^{c}ad gāmal in vv. 22-23 emphasizes, only until Samuel is weaned. Elkanah respects his wife's wishes, trusting her judgement to do what is right (hattôb b^{e}c^{c}ênayik).

Elkanah's reminder to Hannah about her vow and petition, to which the birth of Samuel corresponds as the divine answer, also serves to remind the reader that the entire series of events evolves as the manifestation of a divine plan, initiated by God himself as we know already in v. 5. When Elkanah says, "Only may Yahweh establish his word," he expresses his understanding that the birth of Samuel after the vow indicates that the vow is in accord with Yahweh's purpose. The vow irrevocably establishes the future actions of Hannah and especially of Samuel. Yahweh's

assent to Hannah's request signals that the vow is his
plan for the future; it becomes "his word." Hannah
would·not have given up her son had she not been made
sterile by Yahweh. We have proof of this in her
actions after the birth, when she hesitates to fulfill
the vow. Hence from the beginning to end, the narr-
ative reveals that Samuel is "from Yahweh" (v. 20),
"for Yahweh" (v. 11).

The deuteronomistic concept of Yahweh's word
in historical manifestation has been suggested to lie
behind Elkanah's words in v. 23 (von Rad 1965:vol. 2,
94 n.23). Samuel's future life of sanctified devo-
tion to Yahweh has become Yahweh's word. Thereby the
birth and future life of Samuel are incorporated into
a historical perspective in which the word of Yahweh
is "the real motive force and creator of Israel's
history" (von Rad 1965:vol.2, 95).

Elkanah's words reinforce the narrator's
presentation of preceding events—Hannah's sterility
her vow, and Samuel's birth—which affords the reader
a few glimpses of the divine hand working behind the
scenes. The sketchiness of these few insights into
the larger significance of the birth story serves to
increase narrative interest. The reader wants to

know why God has arranged to have this boy dedicated to his service.

So far the narrator has given the reader no real clues as to the historical cause or situation that has prompted Yahweh to this course of action. Instead of explaining these historical antecedents with a piece of preliminary exposition, the narrator plunges his reader directly into the outworkings of the divine plan in progress. The reader can only speculate on the wider context that brings about this miraculous birth, and must patiently wait for further developments and narratorial exposition in order to completely understand the birth of Samuel.

The final sentence of v. 23 summarizes the brief period of Hannah's time with the child. The poignancy of the scene is sharpened by the choice of words. Hannah nurses the child, now specifically "her son" (b^enâh), until he is weaned. The physical bond, about to be broken, between mother and child is in the forefront.

Verse 24

Hannah makes good her promise; the first sentence of v. 24 stands in clear contrast to vv. 21/ 22:

vv. 21/22   wᵉʔēt-neder(!) ḥannâ lōʔ ʕālātâ...ʕad yiggāmēl

v. 24   wattaʕªlēhû ʕimmâh kaʔªser gᵉmālattû

Hannah's forthright action lays to rest any doubts
created by her hesitation in vv. 21/22.

Both Cross (1953:18) and McCarter (1980:56)
see kaʔªser gᵉmālattû as redundant and syntactically
awkward here and insert it in v. 22 following LXX[B]
and a reconstructed 4QSam[a]. Given the doubts in vv.
22-23 about Hannah's intention to fulfill the vow,
however, the kaʔªser gᵉmālattû is an appropriate and
emphatic depiction of Hannah's faithfulness.[18]

Hannah takes a "three year old bull,"[19] an
ephah of flour, and a skin of wine. The final two
sentences of v. 24 with v. 25 are radically different
in MT and LXX[B] (cf. McCarter 1980:57). Before
attempting to determine the "original" or "correct"
reading, we must first determine if MT has meaning
as it stands. Recalling that the first sentence in
v. 24 corresponds to vv. 21/22, a similar response
can be seen in the last sentence of v. 24:

v. 22   waḥªbiʔōtîw wᵉnirʔâ ʔet-pᵉnê yhwh wᵉyāšab šām ʕad-ʕôlām

v. 24   wattᵉbiʔēhû bēt-yhwh šilô wᵉhannaʕar nāʕar

The narrative reemphasizes Hannah's faithfulness by describing the enactment of her promise, which she carries out quite literally.

The parallel may also afford an understanding of the obscure concluding sentence, w^{e}hanna^{c}ar nā^{c}ar. Tsevat has proposed that "Der Knabe trat seinen Dienst als Diener an" (quote from Stoebe 1973:99 n.24d). Samuel takes up his role as nā^{c}ar to the priests once he gets to Shiloh, just as his mother had said he would in v. 22.

Verse 25

The subjects of the verbs are unspecified. Perhaps it was this unspecificity that provoked the longer LXX reading in v. 25, though this cannot be proven. The ambiguity of the text allows the reader to entertain several possibilities:[20] 1. The subjects could be Elkanah, his household, and Hannah, since Elkanah has not returned home from his journey in v. 21; 2. The subjects could be Hophni and Phinehas, who are the priests at Shiloh; 3. The subjects could be Hophni, Phinehas and Hannah.

The ambiguity invites speculation from the reader but also forces him to hold all the possibilities in abeyance until he receives further information.

Whoever the subjects are, the most important point is
that the proper sacrifice is performed and that Samuel
is brought to Eli, fulfilling the vow.

Verse 26

Hannah, at least, must be included amongst
the subjects of v. 25. Here in v. 26 her address to
Eli is introduced by the narrator using the wāw
consecutive (wattōᵊmer), which implies temporal
sequence (cf. R.J. Williams 1976:33 #178).

Hannah identifies herself to Eli as the woman
who stood near him and prayed to Yahweh for Samuel.
Again Hannah is supremely humble before Eli, recalling
her previous bearing in vv. 15-16, 18. This time
Samuel is physically associated with his mother when
she exhibits such behaviour in Eli's presence. The
association is an important prelude to the stark
contrast to be made between Samuel and the Elides in
chs. 2-3.

Verse 27

The first three words in v. 27 pick up and
develop the last three words of v. 26. In v. 26,
Hannah describes her prayer to Yahweh. Immediately
following the words "to pray to Yahweh" (v. 26) she

says, "for this child" (v. 27). Taken together, the
six words exhibit a chiastic symmetry that reinforces
the semantic emphases of the words:

$$1^e\text{hitpallēl} \; {}^{\text{ɔ}}\text{el-yhwh}$$
$$\text{}^{\text{ɔ}}\text{el-hanna}^c\text{ar hazzeh hitpallālti̇̂}$$

The repetition of the verb hitpallēl, "to pray,"
unifies the two lines and accents the fact that the
only resort of a barren woman is prayer directly to
Yahweh.[21] The paralleling of the indirect object
"Yahweh," with the direct object, "this lad," both
modified by the preposition ${}^{\text{ɔ}}$el, suggests a connection
between Yahweh and the lad. The demonstrative adjec-
tive zeh modifying hanna^{c}ar calls attention to the
fact that the prayer was answered—"this (hazzeh)
lad" is the result. The small chiastic structure sets
up an important parallel that emphasizes one thing.
Hannah prayed to Yahweh and Samuel is the result. The
importance laid upon this state of affairs may be
gauged by its threefold repetition, once in v. 20 and
twice in v. 27.

Using different language, Hannah repeats again

her explanation of Samuel's miraculous birth to Eli.
Almost word for word, she repeats what Eli said to her
when she left the temple after her prayer in v. 17.
Yahweh has granted her her request in the form of
Samuel. Yahweh, we are told, is the answer to Hannah's
problems.

Verse 28.

Hannah attempts to show how her own response
to Yahweh's gift parallels the granting of her request:

v. 27 wayyittēn yhwh lî ᵓet-šᵉᵓēlātî

v. 28 wᵉgam ᵓānōkî hišᵓiltihû lyhwh

The correlative wᵉgam (R.J. Williams 1976: 64 #381),
and the long form of the first person pronoun in the
emphatic syntactic position before the verb highlight
Hanna's response. "And I, for my part, grant him to
Yahweh." The doubts raised in v. 22 about Hannah's
ability to overcome her maternal instincts and to
fulfill the vow by handing over her child are laid to
rest. She willingly repays the vow.

As she promised, "All the days for which he
shall be, he is granted to Yahweh" (Driver's transla-
tion, 1913:22). The special grant of Yahweh to

Hannah is specially dedicated to Yahweh. He will be
Yahweh's man.

Hannah's remarks about the background to
Samuel's birth and about his life-long career of
dedication to Yahweh supply the reader with a con-
clusive definition of Samuel's role. Hannah recalls
the almost miraculous birth and ties Samuel's career
to his special birth; his pre-natal dedication, his
birth, his name, and his public dedication all show
that he is inseparably linked to Yahweh. The only
thing that is not yet revealed about Samuel is the
part he will play in Yahweh's plans. That Yahweh
does have some purpose for this Samuel has been
evident ever since the narrator told us that Yahweh
sealed Hannah's womb (v. 5). Though we do not know
what Samuel is going to do, we do know that Samuel,
whose name means "the name of God," will act in the
interest of his namesake, "God."

Few scholars since Hylander have failed to
note the connection between the repeated emphasis on
the verb šā'al in connection with Samuel, and the name
of Israel's first king, Saul.[22] Most recently,
McCarter has also adopted Hylander's position.
McCarter suggests that an account of Saul's birth

and Nazirite dedication lie behind the narrative in ch. 1, which has been adapted for Samuel (1980:65-66).

McCarter provides two reasons for his suggestion: first, the word-play on šā'al, and secondly, the points of contact between ch. 1 and Judg 13. The wordplay fits Saul's name better than Samuel's, and the birth story in ch. 1 involves Nazirite elements that parallel the Samson birth story in Judg 13. Yet Samson and Samuel are not alike. Samson was a great military figure more comparable to Saul than Samuel.

To suggest that the Nazirite elements of ch. 1 must originally have described a military man assumes, on the basis of the Samson story, that all Nazirites were military men. Yet the case of Samson is more the exception than the rule for Nazirite status and function. W.R. Smith, citing Wellhausen, observes that the Arabic nadhara and the Hebrew nzr both mean primarily "to consecrate" (1969:482). The law of Nazirite dedication in Num 6 also focuses on sanctification rather than any explicit tasks or actions such as military duties. In fact, military function is not even mentioned in Num 6. Nor as Exum notes, is the Nazirite vow mentioned in Judg 14-15, which describe Samson's military endeavours.

"Samson's fidelity to the Nazirite vow is not central to the theological message of the saga as it now stands" (1981:25 n.1).

Without further proof the assumption that Samson was a typical Nazirite is unwarranted. The Nazirite elements of 1 Sam 1 are perfectly suited to the character of Samuel as outlined so far. The primary focus in the Nazirite life is that it is to be a life dedicated to Yahweh (Rylaarsdam 1962:526). Samuel, requested from Yahweh (v. 20), given by Yahweh (v. 27), and given to Yahweh (v. 28), is an eminent Nazirite candidate.

Without the support of the suggested Nazirite connection between Samson and Saul, who incidentally does not appear anywhere in the course of 1 Sam 9-11 as a Nazirite, the connection between the verb šā'al and Saul's name lends but weak support to speculation about the pre-history of ch. 1. The "whole narrative concerning the birth of Samuel cannot be declared a Saul birth story merely on account of this pun. Except for the verb šā'al, there is nothing in the present Samuel narratives that exhibits any connection with a possible Saul birth narrative (Van Zyl 1969:124).

The genetic explanations of the word-play on šā'al with reference to Samuel have been found unacceptable even to historical critics (e.g. Noth 1963:395; Stoebe 1973:97-98). The observation that the word-play, especially in v. 28, applies more naturally to Saul than Samuel is, however, valid and requires explanation. Hertzberg suggests that the application to Samuel may contain a criticism of Saul. "The real deliverer is not the first king, but the last judge" (1964:26; cf. Stoebe 1973:98). Alternatively the connection may not be so much a criticism of Saul as a conditioning of the reader. When one reads the events of ch. 9 and realizes that this Saul character is going to be Israel's king, one recalls a previous person—Samuel—described as šā'ul. Samuel was šā'ul, "granted" to Yahweh to serve him all the days of his life. Saul's very name in ch. 9 thereby cues the reader to the possibility that Saul, too, may be or become one dedicated to Yahweh.

Whether or not this is, in fact, the correct explanation of the narrative function of the connection between šā'al in ch. 1 and Saul in chs. 9-11, it is, I believe, a correct approach to an.

explanation. The reader of 1 Sam 1-12 encounters
ch. 1 before ch. 9 and so the reader reads and inter-
prets Saul's name in terms of the previous associa-
tions he has encountered in ch. 1. šā'ûl in 1:28 ·
foreshadows the name Saul in 9:2, which, in turn,
may contain a subtle hint about the type of monarchy
to be given to Israel.

If the connection between the verb šā'al in
ch. 1 and the name Saul in ch. 9 is exploited by the
narrative, it is the prior occurrence that will
determine the frame within which subsequent occur-
rences will be read (cf. Perry 1979:40; Sternberg
1978:35-55).

The traditio-historical explanation reverses
the conventional sequential order of reading, and
interprets the prior occurrence in terms of the
sequent. The basis for this reversal is the hypo-
thetical historical priority of the latter. The
dynamic structure built into the narrative for the
apprehension of meaning by the reader is thereby
disregarded. Instead, the meaning of the text is
sought in its compositional history.

The root š'l is, nevertheless, of great
importance for ch. 1 and the reader's view of Samuel.

If one attempts to say what ch. 1 is about, what
single thing or person frames the episode, one must
say that it is Samuel. Yahweh closes Hannah's womb
with the result that she promises to give her child
to Yahweh if he will only let her have one. Yahweh
opens her womb and she, for her part, gives him
Samuel, one requested from Yahweh and returned back
to him to serve him. Samuel is the miraculous gift
of Yahweh to a barren woman. He is a part of a
mysterious divine plan of which the reader is allowed
only glimpses at this point. The repetition of the
root $\check{s}^{\,3}l$ in vv. 27-28 recapitulates these various
emphases of the chapter.

Chapter 1 ends, therefore, with a reminder
of exactly who and what Samuel is; the various nuances
given to the root $\check{s}^{\,3}l$ are various nuances given to
the character of Samuel. Repeatedly the final verses
of ch. 1 emphasize Samuel's uniqueness and divine
origination. He is the answer to prayer, the granted
request. He has come into the world in response to
Hannah's human need. Subsequently, he is granted to
Yahweh, devoted to him all his days. In short,
Samuel is a God-given man of God.

The subject of the final sentence in v. 28 is

not defined. Most commentators have followed Well-
hausen, who himself followed LXX (1871:42). Instead
of "He worshipped there to Yahweh," LXX reads, "And
she left him there before Yahweh and returned to
Ramathah."[23] The LXX reading is unambiguous and
logical, and so an attractive alternative to the
obstacle posed by MT's ambiguity. And, as Wellhausen
notes with respect to Elkanah's absence in LXX 2:11,
"Wenn als statt dessen LXX in der That um den Abschied
der Hanna berichtet, so wird dies um so mehr das
Ursprüngliche sein, als sie kein Interesse hatte, dem
Elkana hier den Antheil an der Handlung zu verkummern,
den sie ihm v. 24 so weitläufig erworben hatte" (1871:
42).

It is possible, on the other hand, that the
ambiguity of this sentence is intentional rather than
an inadvertent textual corruption. Previously in v.
25 the subjects of the verbs were also left undeter-
mined and there too LXX made them specific. In MT,
Elkanah does not explicitly return from his journey
of v. 21 until 2:11. The text allows the reader to
include him in v. 25 and perhaps also as the subject
of the last sentence in v. 28. The reader recalls
that Elkanah went up to sacrifice and to worship in

v. 3. In v. 21, he goes up to sacrifice. Perhaps he
completes his religious observances in v. 28, and then
goes home as in 2:11.[24]

Another possible subject for wayyištaḥû in
v. 28 is Samuel (cf. Smith 1899:13). He is the sub-
ject in Hannah's preceding participial clause and
could be the subject of the final sentence, which is
a description from the narrator.

When Hannah finishes speaking about Samuel,
it is possible that the narrator might not identify
the subject of his descriptive conclusion. Since the
topic of Hannah's utterance is Samuel, the narrator
adds a subject-less sentence and assumes that the
reader will understand that the topic of discussion—
Samuel—has not changed. Viewed from the alternative
perspective, it would be strange and difficult to
follow if the narrator intended to change the topic
of discussion from Samuel in Hannah's utterance to
someone else in his own, but did not tell his audience
who he was talking about.

If Samuel is to be understood as the subject
of the last sentence—though it is far from certain
that he or anyone else can be conclusively chosen—
the sentence would show Samuel demonstrating his

willingness to take up the role prescribed for him by worshipping his new employer.

A third possibility suggested by de Boer is that the verb be read as "hitpal. 3rd pers. plur." with Hannah and Samuel as subject (1938:82; cf. Thenius 1864:9). Eli, while possible, is an unlikely candidate. Neither in the preceding context nor in the following is he or either of his sons cast in a clearly positive light. Contrast Elkanah, Hannah and Samuel. Worshipping Yahweh is not amongst the characteristics of the Elides. Eli even mistakes prayer for drunkenness (v. 14).

The positive function of the ambiguity of this sentence in v. 28 might be to cause the careful reader to do exactly what has been done above, namely to run through the possibilities noting who could and could not be subject. The process of recollection groups Elkanah, Hannah and Samuel as characters that could be expected to worship Yahweh and contrasts them with Eli. Such ambiguity, "plurisignation," is a valuable addition of richness and complexity to the structure of meaning in the narrative (Wimsatt and Brooks 1957:vol. 2, 639-40; Perry 1979:46-49). The unambiguous LXX reading does not contain the

opportunity for reader participation created by MT.
The attempt to understand the ambiguity forces the
reader to struggle with the text, thereby testing
and modifying or confirming his understanding of it.
Premature decisions to read MT here and LXX there
dodge the obstacles in the text instead of confronting
them and seeking to determine their significance.

Though summaries are doomed to misrepresent
literary texts (cf. Brooks 1947:192-214), it may be
useful to present such a "misrepresentation" at this
point in order to reorient my readers to the descrip-
tion at hand. Chapter 1 centres on Samuel, aiming
at a definition of his pre-determined role. Sub-
sidiary accomplishments include the veiled revelations
of divine purpose, and the introduction of a series
of contrasts drawn between the Elide priests and
ordinary Israelites such as Elkanah and Hannah.
These three aspects of ch. 1 are all on the level of
story, the subject matter of the narrative.

On the level of discourse, the level of
literary technique and narrative structure, the
narrator introduces himself to the reader in ch. 1.
The narrator shows that he reports to us from an
undetermined time subsequent to the events of the

narrative. He is an omniscient narrator with access to God's hidden actions (e.g. v. 5), though he does not commit himself to telling all to his reader. On the contrary, he is interested in narration, and the creation of narrative interest, as his many ambiguities and denials of necessary expositional material show. From ch. 1, we are given to understand that the voice describing everything belongs to a narrator telling a <u>story</u>, and not to a historian providing <u>information</u>.

Chapter 1, therefore, is best seen as an introduction to two persons, Samuel and the narrator.

2. 1 Samuel 2

Excursus: The "Song of Hannah"

The majority of critical studies on the song of Hannah have concluded that it is secondary in its present context (Thenius 1864:9; Wellhausen 1871:42; Smith 1899:14; Budde 1902:13-14; Nowack 1902:9; Dhorme 1910:29; Hertzberg 1964:29; Brockington 1962:319; Mauchline 1971:50; Stoebe 1973:106-07; McCarter 1980:75-76). Two positions have been taken on the question of the redactional logic for the insertion of the song.

Exemplifying the first position, Thenius suggests that a redactor who inserted the song saw a connection between vv. 1 and 5 of the song and the preceding situation of Hannah's infertility (1864:9; cf. Smith 1899:14). Because the connection is slim, almost spurious, the redaction critic is able to label the song redactional. He can then go on to suggest an original setting in which the song may be correctly understood (e.g., Budde 1902:13-14).

The presumption that an author of a work would not introduce a poem only minimally linked with its context has received neither demonstration nor analysis. Gutbrod, for example, simply asserts, "Es

bedarf keines sonderlichen Scharfblicks, um zu merken,
dass dieser Lobgesang wenig, ja, genau besehen, gar
keinem Zusammenhang mit der persönlichen Geschichte
von Hanna und ihrem Sohne hat" (1956:19). We are
to assume, therefore, that the psalm pre-existed its
present context and has been inserted. "We should
take this in the same way as the addition of a suita-
ble hymn to a Bible reading" (Hertzberg 1964:29).
But if it is "suitable," why call it redactional?
Lacking are objective criteria for determining
whether or not the song is redactional or integral to
its context.

Scholars of the second position build on the
redactional label attached to the song in the first
position. They differ, however, in their perception
of a broader thematic connection between the song and
its context. McCarter is able to say "the song is
not wholly unsuited to its secondary context....the
little hymn is fitting enough on Hannah's lips"
(1980:76; cf. Hertzberg 1964:31). As for the sub-
sequent context, "the song of Hannah sounds a clear
keynote" (McCarter 1980:76). Similarly, Gutbrod says
that although we cannot answer the question of whether
or not the song was sung by Hannah, it does introduce

the central concerns of the subsequent narratives.

> ...auf jeden Fall führt hier der Text in
> kurzen, energischen Schritten aus dem privaten
> Bereich einer Familie von Rama heraus zu dem
> leitenden Thema des Buches, das die Entfaltung
> des göttlichen Heilsplans zum Inhalt hat.
> Samuel, der kindlosen Israelitin geliehen
> und von ihr dem Gott Israels geliehen,
> gehört in den grössen Rahmen der Herrschaft
> Gottes auf Erden, die das Heil aller Welt
> zum Ziel hat; er steht speziell am Anfang
> eines bedeutungsvollen Abschnitts der
> Geschichte dieser Gottesherrschaft, in
> welchem Gott den König in erster Andeutung
> herausstellt. So notigt der Text zur
> Aufgeschlossenheit für dieses Thema (1956:
> 22).

The historical critic's recognition of such
important thematic continuity undermines his reason
for calling the song redactional. The redactional
label is left supported only by the fact that 2:1-10
is written as poetry while its context is written as
prose. By itself this difference allows no conclu-
sions about the text's compositional history, unless

one were to go as far as to suggest that poetry and
prose cannot coexist in the same literary unit.

The redactional label, originally applied
because 2:1-10 was regarded as contextually isolated,
becomes a vestigial appendage inherited from a
historical critical mode of reading when vv. 1-10 are
recognized as thematically appropriate. As Stoebe
suggests, if there is a lack of specific reference
in 2:1-10 to the details of Hannah's situation in
ch. 1 it is because even ch. 1 is not so much concerned
with the details as with the larger implications of
those developments. "Die Gestalt der Hanna findet
ebensowenig wie die Samuels Interesse um ihrer selbst,
sondern um der Bedeutung willen, die Samuel für die
Entstehung des Königtums behabt hat" (1973:106).

Both chs. 1 and 2:1-10 relate to Israelite
politics, the basic subject matter of the books of
Samuel. The song of Hannah according to Stoebe is
a thematic introduction, by which "die ganze darauf
abfolgende Geschichte als Ausfluss und Manifestierung
der Weisheit Gottes (V.2 u.3) herausgestellt [ist],
und das ist ein theologisch absolut richtige
Beurteilung des Handelns des geschichtsmächtigen
Gottes" (1973:106). Despite his correct observations,

Stoebe still feels compelled to doff his historical
critical hat to his predecessors. "Sollte diese
Folgerung zu weit zu gehen scheinen, so wäre jedenfalls
daran festzuhalten, dass dieses Lied unter dem Ge-
sichtspunkt der Gesamtgeschichte interpoliert wurde"
(1973:107).

Scholars of the "second position" have
rejected the view that the song of Hannah is con-
textually isolated, yet at the same time they have
been unable or unwilling to give up the now question-
able redactional label. Stoebe's statement that the
song was at least interpolated in view of the entire
narrative says nothing about the narrative and
everything about the historical critical predisposi-
tion to interpret the text in terms of literary
history.

McCarter suggests that since the lyrics
presuppose the monarchy (v. 10), the song cannot
have been contemporary with the events with which
it is related. He suggests, therefore, that it is
a redactional insertion made; perhaps, quite late
in the literary history of the book (1980:75). It
seems that McCarter assumes that the prose context
of 2:1-10 was composed at the same time as the

events it describes happened.. Yet such historical
information is neither explicit in the text nor does
McCarter supply a method for dating Hebrew prose.
It is just as difficult to date the narrative context
of Hannah's song as it is to date the song itself.[1]
Certainly the context offers no certain evidence
about itself or its relative dating with respect to
the song.

The only existing context for an interpreta-
tion of the song is to be found in its present
narrative context. If the song does offer "an inter-
pretive key" to the narrative (Childs 1979:273), then
one can only discover how it unlocks subsequent events
by a careful scrutiny of its contours as they now
'appear.

The hermeneutic options for reading the song
of Hannah are at least two. We can read the song in
a hypothetical historical context, interpreting it
as the literary record of a specific socio-historical
setting. Or, we can read it in its given narrative
context. The problem facing the historical critical
reading is the hypothetical nature of the undertaking.
"Si la critique n'a qu'une voix pour reconnaître dans
la cantique d'Anne un morceau introduit après coup,

l'accord est loin d'être fait sur l'interprétation de ce cantique et la date a laquelle on doit en rapporter la composition" (Dhorme 1910:32).

Even granting his correct determination of the socio-historical context, the historical critic is still faced with a problem analogous to that single problem facing a literary interpretation. Both approaches must show how the features of the poem engage the context, whether it be socio-historical or narrative. The most satisfying interpretation will be the one that is able to show the greatest degree of engagement between the poem and its context.

Polzin has even suggested that literary contextual analysis should have operational priority over socio-historical analysis. Citing K. Pomorska, he says, "if we move in the opposite direction, basing synchronic analysis on historical studies, 'we always run a risk of applying ready-made theories to something not suited to them'" (1980:6; cf. Ellis 1974:118-21, 133-54). Further socio-historical discussion of Hannah's song should at least consider the contextual engagement of the poem within the narrative before removing it to a separate

place and distant time (e.g. McCarter 1980:75-76).

Verse 1

Hannah expresses a prayer of thanksgiving
and praise, apparently in celebration of her fulfill-
ment of her vow (cf. 1:11). The repetition of the
verb <u>wattitpallēl</u>, forms an inclusio with the prior
occurrences in 1:26-27:

1:26-27	Hannah prayed to Yahweh, praying for Samuel (this lad).
1:27	Yahweh gives Samuel to Hannah.
1:28	Hannah dedicates Samuel to Yahweh.
2:1	Hannah prays (to Yahweh, thanking and praising him).

The inclusio, with the intervening chiastic summary
of the main events of ch. 1, specifically indicates
that the following prayer of thanksgiving is Hannah's
response to the result of the previous petitionary
prayer.[2] She is able to pray this prayer, which
celebrates divine strength because Yahweh answered
the first. Since this prayer in 2:1-10 is structural-
ly linked to the prayer for Samuel in 1:26-27, we are
also led to expect some correlation between Samuel
and the message of the poem. In fact, Samuel becomes

more and more the sole representative of the theolo-
gical and political point of view expressed in
Hannah's prayer.

Verse 1 exhibits a chiastic structure of the
AB:B'A' type. A and A' are semantically parallel.
Both describe Hannah's exultation in Yahweh and his
deliverance. The two verbs ᶜālaṣ and śāmaḥ also
appear elsewhere in parallel construction (Pss 5:12;
9:3; 68:4). In all cases, the verbs describe the
joyful response of humble worshippers of Yahweh, who
exult in the strength of their God. Also associated
with all occurrences are statements about the futili-
ty and wickedness of man's pride and efforts at self-
help, whether done in defiance or ignorance of the
deity.

B and B' are also connected semantically.
"My horn becomes high in/by Yahweh, my mouth stretches
wide over my enemies." They also share a connotation
of power possessed by Hannah; in B she exults in the
strength that Yahweh gives her and in B', in the
consequent power over her enemies (I owe this obser-
vation to a letter from J. Fokkelman). The
connection is reinforced by the alliterative paral-
lelism between the verbs. Both begin with r and

describe metaphorical physical enlargements resulting from Yahweh's sponsorship.[3]

In addition to the chiastic structure of the verse, which sets off the exultation (A, A') against the cause of exultation (B, B'), there is a logical progression in the verse indicated by the grammatical construction of each line:

> My heart exults in Yahweh
> My horn is exalted in Yahweh   ,
> My mouth extends over my enemies
> So I rejoice in your deliverance.

The °kî introducing A' should not be omitted to agree with LXX (against McCarter 1980:68). It highlights the uniqueness of A', which is the only line of the verse in which Hannah is subject. The switch from third person description in A, B, and B' to first person in A', an exclamation addressing Yahweh directly in the second person, structurally conveys the mounting pressure of Hannah's exuberance. She finally bursts out in direct address to Yahweh because her descriptive praise is not expressive enough. The single kî, the change in person of the verb, and the change from description to address to Yahweh in the 2nd person all combine to give

prominence to A'. As Muilenberg says, $k\hat{i}$ "is charac-
teristically associated with emphatic words or clauses,
...[it] frequently appears in a strategic position in
the poem or narrative,...[and] often confirms or
underlines what has been said, or, at times, undergirds
the whole of the utterance and gives point to it"
(1961:150). A third pattern, pointed out by Fokkelman
(in a letter) in v. 1 is related to the pattern of
logical progression. The first two lines are paral-
leled in A^1A^2 pattern, as are the second two lines,
B^1B^2. The first two lines are linked semantically
and by the perfect rhyme of yhwh. The B^1B^2 pair end
in contrasting terms "my enemies," and "your deliver-
ance."

There are, therefore, at least three struc-
tural patterns exhibited by v. 1. Rather than
attempting to decide which pattern is predominant,
it seems better to regard all three as equally
important. The reader of such beautifully constructed
and integrated plural structure is forced to meditate
on each verse with exceeding care if he is to discover
all of the riches contained therein. The time
necessarily spent on such a reading ensures that the
reader cannot leave the poem without having a

thorough understanding and appreciation of the message
presented by the poem.

In the particular case of Hannah's poem the
utility of such poetic technique is readily apparent,
since the message of the poem is one pole in the
subsequent examination, through the narrative, of
the question of human need in relation to divine aid.
The reader who has read Hannah's poem as it should
be read cannot fail to carry its message with him as
he reads on. The three structures in v. 1 are,
therefore, rhetorically complementary. .

McCarter notes that the idiom, "raise, exalt
the horn" denotes visible success and can refer
specifically to progeny acquired (e.g. 1 Chr 25:5;
1980:71). Hannah's praise refers directly back to
the birth of Samuel who is figuratively representative
of her raised horn. As a result of his birth her
mouth stretches (rāḥab) over her enemy.

Just as Moses and the people of Israel sang
a song of praise to Yahweh for his deliverance (Exod
15:2) from their enemies (vv. 6, 7, 9) so Hannah
rejoices. Both poems celebrate Yahweh's deliverance
(yešûʿâ) of his people, who praise him for it.
Again in both cases the immediate context provides a

contrast in the representation of the fate of those
whose strength is in their own hand (1 Sam 2:4-10a;
Exod 15:4-10; cf. Isa 10:12-15). Hannah regards
Yahweh's deliverance in the same terms as the
Israelites looked upon their deliverance from Egypt.
Hence the rhetorical emphasis on the final kî clause
is seen to agree with the semantic emphasis of the
poem, which celebrates Yahweh's deliverance of the
weak and helpless. As the kî clause is distinguished
as the climactic conclusion of v. 1, so it also intro-
duces the leitmotif of the poem—salvation is from
Yahweh. The only action to be taken by the one
delivered is to rejoice. This notion is especially
important in the light of Israel's subsequent deci-
sion to take matters into its own hands by ousting
Yahweh as their king and replacing him with a human
king (1 Sam 8). Though the reader does not read
Hannah's song in light of 1 Sam 8, he will relate
the two passages in the course of his reflections on
ch. 8.

It is important to note at this point that
the narrator does not himself espouse the notion of
total reliance on Yahweh. Instead, he allows Hannah
to do the talking. In her mouth, such an idea is

obviously motivated and supported by her personal
experience. Given the location of the motivation for
the expression of this notion <u>within the story itself</u>,
the reader is not at liberty to believe that the
narrator shares Hannah's point of view. The narrator
presents the notion through Hannah so that the reader
will consider it together with preceding and subse-
quent narrative situations and events. The reader
must, however, wait for further evidence of the
narrator's own point of view before making any firm
decisions on his relation to the ideas expressed in
<u>Hannah's</u> song. Given that the narrator has already
supplied the reader with the story of Samuel's
miraculous birth, a story that supports Hannah's posi-
tion in 2:1-10, it seems that he is at least not
against such views.

Verse 2

Practically all commentators regard this verse
as conflate. Usually the second line is taken to be
the intruder, although McCarter suggests that MT
contains three separate variants (1980:68-69; cf.
Talmon 1975:231ff.). It is, nevertheless, possible
to include all three variants in a reading of the
verse even though the first and third lines are

syntactically parallel, while the second deviates from the structure. It may be that the obtrusive appearance of the second line is designed to draw attention to it. If so, we would expect the foregrounded element to have a semantic role commensurate with its unusual form.

All three variants say more or less the same thing: Yahweh is unique and incomparable. The second line sums up the first and third, and includes all other comparisons that might be made. The unified voice of all three lines is that Yahweh is a certain source of refuge without rival. Parallel occurrences all stress the same idea (Deut 32:4, 15, 18, 37; Pss 18:3, 32, 47; 28:1; 31:3, etc.).[4]

Hannah's assertion of this widespread notion is important in light of the people's request for a human king to replace Yahweh in ch. 8. She presents the standard theological view, which is supported by the events of ch. 1.

By allowing Hannah to speak directly, the narrator begins to equip his reader for the exploration of the theological-political problem that is presented in his narrative. Hannah gives voice to the standard view of the proper relation between

Israelite need and divine response to need. It is important to note, however, that the standard view is supported here by the deliverance of a pious <u>individual</u>. The events of ch. 1 prove the truthfulness of the standard view but the application is limited to the individual's case.

Because the reader reads the exaltation of Yahweh as deliverer of those in need in light of a supportive example (ch. 1), he is compelled to admit to the validity of the idea, at least within the framework of this narrative. The order of presentation, example followed by theological statement, is designed to convince. Since it is the author/ omniscient narrator who has arranged this order of presentation, it would seem that he wants his reader to appreciate and accept the ideas presented by Hannah. Through an awareness of the rhetorical function of the narrative's order of presentation, we can watch how the narrator carefully guides the reader's reflections and perceptions of the events and their significance.

Again one must be careful to maintain a distinction between views the narrator wants his reader to accept and what he himself accepts. The narrator

may get his reader to accept something only to inten-
sify the effect of a subsequent questioning of it.
The reader, therefore, is prudent to avoid attributing
perspectives contained in the narrative to the
narrator until the whole narrative has been studied.
It is primarily in the structural whole, which includes
all aspects of his narrative, that a narrator presents
his peculiar perspective.

Verse 3

Verses 1-2 constitute a positive celebration
of both Yahweh's deliverance of Hannah from her
enemies and his preeminence as a haven for his people.
That is, the positive implications of Yahweh's power
and incomparability for humanity are presented.
Verse 3 presents the reverse side of the coin. It
advises against arrogant boasts because Yahweh is a
knowledgeable God who weighs such practises.

The two key words g^{e}bōhā and ^{c}ātāq converge on
the self-sufficient attitude of the person who makes
such utterances. According to Gowan, the basic
meaning of these words is haughtiness. They are the
biblical Hebrew equivalent to the Greek word hybris
(1975:20-21). Self-sufficiency is contrary to the
proper attitude of dependence on Yahweh. He is the

sole determinant of human fortunes. Arrogance and boastful speech are characterized as ^{ca}lilôt, "evil practises."[5] The evil deeds are, however, balanced by Yahweh.[6] As in Zeph 3:11ff., the evil deeds of the proud are punished, while the humble are given divine protection.

A series of seven contrasts follow v. 3 and illustrate the "balancing" or weighing of deeds by Yahweh (Brownlee 1977:43). The reversals of fortune exhibit the standard Israelite belief that Yahweh downgrades human self-sufficiency and rewards the helpless, who have no basis for pride or self-sufficiency.[7]

Verses 4-10

The warrior's broken bow is, as in Jer 51:56, symbolic of the insignificance of human strength. The reversal makes the strong weak and the weak strong. One cannot rely on appearances, which mean nothing when it comes to Yahweh (cf. 1 Sam 16:7). The obvious conclusion is that one should rely solely on Yahweh. He is the only "rock," the God who girds the weak with strength (Ps 18:32-33; cf. 2 Sam 22).[8]

The reverals of fortune receive further illustration, thereby driving the point home by

repetition.[9] Human fate is totally in Yahweh's hands
(v. 6; cf. Deut 32:39). Ehrlich describes the intent
of the references to the physical creation in v. 8:
"Weil JHVH der Schöpfer und Erhalter der Welt ist,
darum kann er in ihr schalten und walten nach Belieben"
(1910:170). Verse 9 openly states the basis of all
the unexpected reversals. A man does not become
mighty by his own strength, but must resort to Yahweh
for preservation (cf. Ps 33:16-17).

Verse 10

Yahweh shatters (yēḥattû) his opponents just
as he shattered the bows of the mighty (v. 4) By
implication one could say that his opponent is human
self-sufficiency as symbolized by the warrior's bow.[10]
The situation of Yahweh in heaven, thundering and
judging the inhabitants of earth, stresses man's
helplessness before this God (cf. Ps 33:13-15).[11]
Obviously any posture other than humble submission
is absurd.

Hannah's song also bears some implications for
the character of Samuel. He is born to the woman who
believes in the necessity of pious submission and
utter dependence on Yahweh. Samuel, the fruit of
such faith, will continue to bear that torch throughout

the following events. He is the living proof and will become the adamant exponent of the viewpoint expounded in Hannah's song.

The last two lines of v. 10 openly anticipate the coming conflict of political ideologies. In keeping with the entire poem we are told that it is Yahweh who gives strength to his king and raises the horn of his anointed. That is to say, if a king has any power at all, it is delegated to him by Yahweh. By attaching the third person masculine singular pronominal suffix to each noun describing the monarch the verse stresses the fact that the king is Yahweh's king (cf. 2:35, on which see below). He derives his power from him and owes obedience and allegiance to him.

The references to a king in v. 10 are usually taken as a clue that the song is from the later monarchic period. They are thought to be the clearest evidence that the poem is a' redactional insertion. Willis (1973:148 n.43) gives a list of early modern proponents to which add all recent commentators. This genetic explanation fails to perceive the unity of the poem, and its thematic linkage to its prose context.

As Willis has observed, the poem begins with
Hannah's description of her horn, raised by Yahweh,
and concludes with a note that Yahweh raises the horn
of his anointed (1973:148). An equivalence between
Hannah and the anointed is thereby established.
Hannah's horn-raising was accomplished through her
prayerful, but submissive request for divine activity
on her behalf. The structural inclusio suggests that
the anointed's horn, raised by Yahweh, requires a
similar stance of the king. If the reader has followed
the logic of the poem, he will agree with its impli-
cation, "For it is not by strength that a man becomes
might" (v. 9).

To reiterate, the song of Hannah begins to
equip the reader for the future controversy over who
shall rule in Israel—God or man. The poem directs
us to the simple fact that Yahweh is the great
leveller, the controller of human destiny. From this
perspective the notion that a human king could rule
and successfully guide Israel independent of Yahweh
is nonsense. The point is not, however, made polem-
ically, which is to say that redaction critics should
not jump to label the poem anti-monarchic. Rather
the poem sets forth this view upon the basis of

empirical observations, the case of Hannah, the examples of vv. 4-10, Yahweh's obvious superiority . (vv. 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10), and upon the common tradition about the fate of the proud.

The poem is a theological reflection on the principles underlying the events of ch. 1. At the same time, Hannah's song sounds a key note for the subsequent story of Israel's political evolution. The poem suggests that an Israelite monarchy can only exist in a subordinate role determined by Yahweh. Verse 10 anticipates the turn of events in chs. 9-12 but does not thereby make those chapters anti-climatic. On the contrary, the intervening chapters (2:11-ch. 8) support Israel's request for a secular king, just as ch. 1 supports Hannah's exultation in the standard view about the necessity of total dependence on Yahweh. Yahweh's apparent acceptance of Israel's request (8:7, 9, 22) lends it further plausibility.

The narrative in chs. 1-12 exhibits a dialectical structure. In ch. 1 and especially in 2:1-10 Yahweh's supreme sovereignty over humanity is affirmed.

In the concatenation of narrative events

following Hannah's poem the desirability of Yahweh's sovereignty over Israel is called into doubt and even rejected by Israel (8:5, 20).[12]

Finally, chs. 9-12 reaffirm both Yahweh's status as Israel's real king and the covenant between Israel and Yahweh. The reaffirmation is especially visible in the terms laid down by Samuel in ch. 12.

Hannah's song also serves as an appropriate introduction to the events of chs. 2-3, which set up a contrast between the Elides and Samuel. Samuel is of the same humble sort as his mother, with whom he is directly associated (2:18-21). Samuel is portrayed as a servant of God and his priests (2:11, 18; 3:1, 4-10). He calls himself "your servant" (^{c}abdekā, 3:9) when addressing Yahweh just as his mother called herself "your maidservant" (^{Da}mātekā, 2:11) in her prayer to Yahweh. Samuel is as humbly submissive to Eli's brusque cross-examination after Yahweh's visit (3:17-19) as Hannah was when Eli accused her of drunkenness when she was praying to Yahweh (1:15-16).

The Elides, on the other hand, are far from submissive types. Eli's sons put themselves before Yahweh in the sacrifices (2:15-17), thereby despising

(2:30) and blaspheming Yahweh (3:13). They sin against Yahweh (2:25). They are anti-types of Samuel and Hannah and can be grouped with those whose fate takes a turn for the worse in Hannah's song. It is Yahweh's will to slay them (2:25) just as he cuts off the wicked in Hannah's song (2:6, 9; cf. below on vv. 25-26).

Verse 11

The narrative thread is picked up from 1:28. Once again the text leaves the reader wondering about the place and action of a character, this time Hannah. Elkanah goes home and Samuel ministers to Yahweh, but where is Hannah and what is she doing?

R. Ingarden has called such narrative lacunae "places of indeterminacy." "Each object, person, event, etc., portrayed in the literary work of art contains a number of places of indeterminacy, especially the descriptions of what happens to people and things" (1973a:50; cf. Iser 1974:280; Chatman 1978:28-30). The reader's response to indeterminacies is to supply elements that agree with the context to concretize the indeterminacy. Ingarden focuses on the aesthetic effects of different concretizations. One way of filling-out may flatten

the work while another gives it greater depth, intro-
ducing new aesthetically valuable qualities (1973a:54).

The text-critical concretization of Hannah's
indeterminacy is to follow LXX in v. 11: "after
Hannah had returned to Ramah." This decision removes
the gap between 1:28 and 2:11, but in doing so it
also neglects the aesthetic possibilities of MT.
Furthermore there is no reason, other than the
indeterminacy itself, for rejecting MT. McCarter's
explanation for MT's supposed corruption rests on
two weak supports: supposed scribal incompetence and
redactional hypothesis. He suggests that the redac-
tional intrusion of 2:1-10 obscured the connection
between 1:28 and 2:11 (1980:78). But why would an
obscured connection be made even more obscure by
filling in Elkanah instead of leaving Hannah as
subject in v. 11? Would not the scribe who was con-
fused by the insertion of Hannah's prayer try to
eliminate his confusion by reading the same subject
in 1:28 and 2:11? As Ingarden suggested—and the
examples of LXX and numerous text critics who have
followed it support him on this—the usual response
to an indeterminacy or obscurity is to clarify and
not to obscure. There is in fact no basis for

suggesting that either MT or LXX is superior or inferior.

An alternative is to take MT seriously and to seek a concretization that is both aesthetically and contextually acceptable. We can recall that when Elkanah went up to offer the sacrifice of the days in 1:21 Hannah stayed behind so as to extend her time with Samuel (1:22). The poignancy of her situation was emphasized by the repetition of the phrase "until he is weaned" in 1:22-24, and the final sentence of v. 23, which pointedly emphasized the mother and child union.

Perhaps in 2:11 Elkanah finally goes home for the first time since 1:21, leaving Samuel at the temple. Hannah's absence at this point can be explained by the conflict she experiences between her vow to leave Samuel at the temple and her obviously strong maternal attachment. She does not go home with Elkanah because of her attachment to Samuel, and she does not stay with Samuel because of her promise to leave him "before Yahweh" when he is weaned. Hannah, as the text's indeterminacy suggests, is left nowhere, caught between her vow and her maternal instincts.

Of course there are virtually limitless alternative concretizations of Hannah's indeterminacy. Each reader fills in gaps in his own way (Iser 1974: 280). All that is claimed is that this concretization is contextually and aesthetically defensible.

Verse 11 immediately introduces Samuel in what will be his almost singular role in chs. 2-3. "And the lad was ministering to Yahweh before Eli the priest." Samuel is obviously a "flat" character according to E.M. Forster's division of characters into "flat" and "round." Forster's statement that the "really flat character can be expressed in one sentence" might have been written about Samuel in ch. 2 rather than Mrs. Micawber (1976:73).

Forster suggests that flat characters have two advantages; they are easily recognized and easily remembered. "They remain in his [the reader] mind as unalterable for the reason that they were not changed by circumstances" (1976:74). Samuel is the faithful servant in ch. 2, whose only development is to grow "in stature and favor with Yahweh and men" (v. 26). As a flat character, we easily recognize him as the unpretentious protagonist, continuing in his mother's footsteps. He represents the same

religious type as Hannah and will continue to express and exemplify the views she expresses in 2:1-10. His flatness makes him the unbending standard of right action by which other characters will be measured.

According to Driver, Samuel's action in v. 11 is simultaneous with the deeds about to be dealt with in v. 12 (1913:28). The synchronicity of Samuel's action with Eli's sons' misdeeds introduces the explicit contrast between them.[13] While Samuel is ministering ʾet-yhwh the sons of Eli do not know ʾet-yhwh (v. 12). As in other occurrences of the expression, "to know Yahweh" describes a conscious interaction of the knower with Yahweh in a covenantal relationship. To know Yahweh is to acknowledge his divinity (Exod 5:2 by implication) and claim on Israel (Judg 2:10), to enter into covenant with him (Isa 19:21), to obey the ethical requirements of relationship with Yahweh (Jer 9:2, 5, 15, 23), and to participate in a covenant with him (Jer 31:34; Hos 2:22; 5:4; 6:3; 8:2). While it is not stated here that Samuel knows Yahweh, the contrast between the lad who serves Yahweh and the priests who are supposed to maintain the covenant but do not even participate in "covenantal knowledge," is clear and

strongly in favour of Samuel.

Samuel has not yet been introduced to the knowledge of Yahweh, and will not attain such knowledge until Yahweh comes and personally introduces himself to Samuel (3:7-21). By implication, the existing priests, supposed mediators of the knowledge of-Yahweh, are incapable of introducing Samuel to it. Even though he lacks this important knowledge, however, Samuel remains a faithful servant of God, in contrast to the priests, who should have the knowledge, but do not.[14]

Verse 12

The focus shifts completely from Elkanah and Samuel to the sons of Eli. By means of paronomastic assonance and consonance the $b^e n\hat{e}$ $^c\bar{e}l\hat{i}$ are characteristically redefined as $b^e n\hat{e}$ $b^e l\hat{i}y\bar{a}^c al$. According to Otzen, who reviews the various attempts at etymological explanation, there is no convincing solution to the derivation of $b^e l\hat{i}y\bar{a}^c al$ (1977:133). Within the context of 1 Sam 1-12, however, the three occurrences of the term all describe characters offensive to Yahweh: the drunken woman in the temple (1:16), those who do not know Yahweh (2:12), and those who reject Yahweh's compromise kingship (10:27).

In each instance, the children of $b^e l\hat{i}y\bar{a}^c al$ trespass against the covenant, or a covenantal institution: the supposedly drunken woman violates the sanctity of the temple (1:16), the sinful priest neglects the covenantal knowledge of Yahweh (2:12), and the rebellious dissenters refuse to honour the king that Yahweh has granted (10:27).

The prior association of the term with the drunken woman in the temple corroborates the aspersion that the narrator casts on the Elides here. The narrator's interruption of the narrative sequence to give us his judgement of Eli's sons is a measure of the importance that he attaches to the reader's acceptance of the criticism of the Elides. He relies on his proven authority to ensure that the reader accepts the negative evaluation without question. Functionally like the omniscient narrator's assertion of the innocence of Job (Job 1:1), this characterization of the sons of Eli must be accepted as true if the reader is going to follow the logic of the following narrative. Since it is the sins of Eli's sons that catalyze the subsequent Israelite defeat (2:26, 31-34; ch. 4, esp. v. 11) the narrator takes pains, in the form of explicit exposition, to

assure that the reader follows the course of events.[15]

Verses 13-14

These verses describe the customary practise
of the priests when any person made a sacrifice
(Buber 1964:737).[16] The introduction to v. 13 indi-
cates that the verse should be read as a separate
syntactic unit from v. 12, which tells us about the
Elides' actions with respect to Yahweh. Verse 13,
on the other hand, describes their actions with
respect to the people:

v. 12 $lō^{\circ}$ $yād^{ec}\hat{u}$ $^{\circ}et$-$yhwh$

v. 13 $\hat{u}mi\check{s}pa\underline{t}$ $hakkōh^an\hat{i}m$ $^{\circ}et$-$hā^cām$[17]

Verses 13-14 are laid out in a symmetrical
chiasmus:

A   The priests' custom with respect to ($^{\circ}et$) the
    people when anyone sacrificed.

B   The priest's servant comes with his trident
    ($hammazlēg$ $\check{s}^el\bar{o}\check{s}$-$ha\check{s}\check{s}innayim$) when the flesh
    boiled.

B' (The priest's servant) thrusts his fork
    ($hammazlēg$) into the pots and the priest gets

whatever is on it.

A' So they (the priests) do to any Israelite coming

to Shiloh.

The chiastic structure, with its parallel
between ʾet-hā'ām in A and lᵉkol-yiśrāʾēl in A', also
shows that A in MT should be read separate from v. 12
with the verbal idea "virtually contained" in
ûmišpaṭ.[18]

The two verses themselves contain neither
explicit nor implicit condemnation of the priests
or the priests' servant's actions. Smith's view that
this method of obtaining the priestly portion "could
scarcely be more offensive" (1899:18) has little
basis in the text. Instead the two verses seem
designed to establish the regular practise in order
to highlight the irregularities of v. 15.[19]

Verse 15

The sin of the sons of Eli is foregrounded
by placing the words gam bᵉṭerem first in the verse.
Emphasis thereby falls on the fact that the priests
demand their portion **even** **before** the god gets his in·
the form of smoke from burnt fat. It is exactly
this prematurity that provokes Yahweh to anger;[20] in

2:29 he accuses Eli and his sons of fattening them-
selves on the first parts (mērē'šît) of every
Israelite offering (cf. McCarter 1980:90). Even the
common Israelite saw the priestly indiscretion in the
prematurity of their request for raw flesh. "Let
the fat be burnt first (kayyôm)" (v. 16; cf. Driver
1913:31). The words gam b\eterem might, therefore be
translated as "But even before...."

The reason for the priest's impatience is that
he wants roasted meat rather than boiled. The gastro-
nomical motivation for putting himself before Yahweh
makes the priest out to be nothing more than a
piggish lout (cf. Schulz 1919:37). As Yahweh points
out the motivation for Eli's sons' priestly crassness
is to get fat on the first parts of all Israel's
sacrifices (v. 29). The Elides are far from being
the promethians of Israel's sacrificial system.

Verse 16

As most commentators have recognized, v. 16
portrays an upside-down situation in Israel's cult.
The layman tells the official how the sacrifice
should be done (Hertzberg 1964:35). The offer to
take whatever he desired after the fat had been
burned is refused by the priest's servant. What is

at stake is not the question of raw or boiled meat;
that is a foregone conclusion ("take whatever you
want"). The point is that the priests will not wait
for Yahweh.

The reply of the priest's servant puts the
issue succinctly. "Give it now!" ($k\hat{i}$ $^c att\hat{a}$ $titt\bar{e}n$).
According to Driver the apodosis containing the "bare
perfect" is uncommon and emphatic. "And if not I
take it by force" (Driver 1913:32). Not only do the
priests disregard the regular sacrificial custom (vv.
13-14), but they threaten violence to any who would
obstruct them. Sacrifice in their eyes is only a
means to their own ends, which are pursued with total
disregard for sacrificer or Yahweh.

Verse 17

The verse assumes that the servants' actions
are sinful, and declares only that the magnitude of
their sin was very great in Yahweh's view ($^\circ et-p^e n\hat{e}$
yhwh). The gravity of the sin is explained by the
fact that "the men" contemned the offering of Yahweh.
"The men" who are subject of the verb do not appear
in LXX and are omitted by some commentators (e.g.
McCarter 1980:80). If retained, however, the shift
in the verse from hann$^{ec}\bar{a}r\hat{i}m$ to hā$^{\circ a}$nāš$\hat{i}m$ lays

emphasis on the hybris of the act. It is an act of contempt by man (or men) against God.[21] We expect, on the basis of Hannah's song, that such sinful hybris will not go unrequitted by Yahweh.

Again in v. 17 the narrator employs his omniscience to inform his reader about the relationship between the divine and human planes in the narrative. In ch. 1, he described a situation where a divine initiative changed the course of events on the human plane (1:5). Now, however, he shows a reverse causality, in which human actions have an effect on the divine character. Just as the reader was led to expect some future result of the divine intervention in ch. 1, he is now led to expect some future result, or reaction on the divine plane. A difference between the two situations is that while the human characters can only respond blindly, and so, from the reader's perspective, often ironically, to divine action, God responds directly and consciously to human actions that impinge on him. The expositional note in v. 17 assumes this difference and uses it to create narrative interest by leading the reader to anticipate a divine reaction.

Verse 18

As Willis observes (1979:208), v. 18 contrasts
Samuel, ministering before Yahweh ($^{\flat}$et-p^{e}nê yhwh),
with Hophni and Phinehas (or more correctly, the
servants of the latter) whose sin is exceedingly
great $^{\flat}$et p^{e}nê yhwh (v. 17; cf. Hertzberg 1964:35;
Péter-Contesse 1976:313).

Samuel is introduced by name for the first
time in an active role. It is possible that he is
mentioned by name to avoid any misunderstanding that
would identify him—the priest's servant (na^{c}ar, v.
11)—with the priest's servant of vv. 13-17.

The description of Samuel's garb also seems
geared to contrast him with the Elides. De Vaux
suggests that the linen ephod, worn here by Samuel,
was a loin-cloth worn by priests performing their
offices (1965:350). While the Elides are misbehaving
as priests, Samuel behaves as one both in appearance
and conduct.

Verses 19-21

These verses recall the series of events
leading to Samuel's birth, reminding the reader of
his special character.

The reminder, coming as it does just after an

explicit contrast between the Elides and Samuel, and just after the expositional comment in v. 17, is an example of the narrator's subtle use of structural associations to make veiled suggestions to the reader. Here he is reminded that Samuel was brought into the world for some divine purpose, just after the narrator has told the reader about the impingement of the Elide's actions on God. The association of these two transactions across the divine/human border seems to be aimed at arousing reader speculation about a possible relation between the two.

Hannah brings a little robe for Samuel every year when her husband brings her up to commemorate the birth of Samuel by sacrificing "the sacrifice of the days."[22] Eli joins in the commemorative cele-brations, blessing Elkanah and Hannah. She is again pointedly called Elkanah's wife (v. 20; cf. above on 1:19).

The scene parallels that in 1:17-18. The results are also similar. Eli blesses and Hannah/ Elkanah or Hannah leave. Subsequently, God "remembers" or visits Hannah and she conceives and bears a child/ children. The parallel indicates that Yahweh repays Hannah's faithfulness to her vow (v. 20) by giving

her five children for the one child, which came out of the previous visit and which she gave back to Yahweh.

The final sentence in v. 21 describes Samuel's physical maturation and his deepening relationship with Yahweh. Coming just after the notice of Hannah's continuing fecundity and her expanding family, this final sentence makes Yahweh the sole family for Samuel. Samuel's period of growth takes place with Yahweh, while Hannah is kept busy with his replacements.

We will hear no more from Hannah or Elkanah. They have fulfilled their task of introducing Samuel and now, both literally and literarily, they retire. Samuel and his relationship with Yahweh take up where Hannah leaves off. Verse 21 accomplishes this shift in focus by a fade-out scene of Hannah with her five new offspring followed by a fade-in on the lad Samuel, who is growing with Yahweh (v. 21). Hannah is bountifully repaid for her part in Yahweh's plan, and Yahweh has the person dedicated to his service.

It was in order to get Samuel that the whole process of events involving Hannah was initiated. The reader has been informed about Samuel's special identity by the special circumstances of his birth

and his subsequent temple career. The reader has also been made aware of a problem amongst the priests serving at the temple.

The associations of vv. 17-21 have intimated that there may be some causal relationship between the two instances of actions from one side of the divine/ human border with an influence or effect on the other side. The principal characters have been intro- duced and the stage is set. The plot will soon begin to thicken.

Verse 22

While Samuel is growing with Yahweh, Eli has become very old. The intended contrast is clear:

	subject	predicate	modifier
v. 21	the lad Samuel	grew	with Yahweh
v. 22	Eli	(was) old	very

The mention of Eli's old age here is important for subsequent events (Miller and Roberts 1977:62). Eli's age will play an important part in his death in 4:15-18. It is the "old man" (zāqēn) of the Elide household who is promised death in 2:31-32.

More important, however, is the paradigm

established by the conjunctive description of old Eli
and his wicked sons in v. 22. When the paradigm is
repeated later in the narrative, all of the meanings,
associations, and consequences that are connected to
the Elide instance are brought to bear on the recur-
rence. The paradigmatic Elide affair provides
commentary on all subsequent reappearances of a similar
state of affairs.

By providing the reader with this specific
description of the Elides, the only leaders visible
in the story, the narrator-directs attention to a
problem in the political structure of Israel, namely
the problem of bad representation.

The theocratic system is utterly dependent
on the proper functioning of the role of the mediator.
In the specific instance of the priesthood it is clear
that bad priests and abuses of the sacrificial system
destroy the utility of the institution as a mechanism
for maintaining normal covenantal relations between
Yahweh and his people.

Eli hears of his sons sacrificial misdeeds
and how they lay with (yiškᵉbûn) the women serving
at the entrance to the tent of meeting. Willis is
inclined to see a case of sacral prostitution here

(1972:56). Given that the narrator is listing the abuses of Eli's sons and the fact that the women are described neutrally as tent servants, it seems more likely that it is simply another example of the Elides' "heart's desire" taking precedence over cultic propriety. Just as they contemned the sacrifices of Yahweh so Eli's sons now abuse Yahweh's servants.

This reading is supported by an observation made by Fokkelman (in a letter to me). The women abused by Eli's sons are those "serving" (haṣṣōb$^{e\partial}$ôt) at the door of the tent of meeting. This description alludes to one of the divine titles, yhwh ṣ^{e}bā$^{\partial}$ôt, introduced to us by another woman, Hannah, when she prayed for a son (1:11) in the same locale, the cultic sanctuary. Eli's sons are violating the "hostesses" of "Yahweh, God of hosts"! The allusion repeats the suggestion that the sinful acts of Eli's sons transmit an effect across the divine/human border.

Verses 23-25

Eli's attempt to warn his sons away from their dangerously sinful ways distinguishes him from his sons. He is neither a party to their misdeeds nor

does he condone them. The fact that he rebukes his

sons because of the bad reports he has heard from the

people (v. 23) has been taken by Willis to suggest

an irresponsibility on Eli's part (1971:292). Pre-

sumably Willis thinks that Eli should have been aware

of the problem on his own. Why present Eli rebuking

his sons at all, though, if the goal is to criticize

Eli at this point in the narrative?

The fact that Eli hears the bad report from

the people is not so much a criticism of Eli as a

reflection of Eli's agedness. He is old and out of

touch with the affairs of the priesthood.

His knowledge of his sons' misdeeds is not

second-hand because he is willfully ignorant and out

of touch with reality. Rather, it is his agedness,

over which he has no control, that renders him out

of touch and unable to control his sons. Since the

narrator supplies this mitigating explanation of

Eli's ignorance about his sons' activities, it is a

mistake to suggest that the narrator is accusing Eli

of willful wrong-doing in vv. 22-23.

Willis' understanding of v. 23 is, in fact,

the result of reading it in light of Yahweh's sub-

sequent rebuke and condemnation of Eli (2:29; 3:13;

1971:292). In doing so he makes two mistakes. First,
by reading any element in a narrative in the light of
a subsequent element, the reader subverts the order of
presentation created by the narrator. Since the order
of presentation, or structure of a narrative is an
extremely important device for the narrator's creation
of meaning, we actually destroy the existing meaning
structure and create a new one by rearranging the
order of presentation (cf. Perry 1979; Sternberg 1978).
Secondly, Willis' reading of the narrator's comments
in vv. 22-23 together with Yahweh's condemnation of
Eli in 2:29 and 3:13 disregards the voice structure
of the narrative. An elementary convention in
narratives with omniscient narrators who write from
a time somewhere after the narrative events is that
the voices of all characters, even God, are authori--
tatively subordinate to the voice of their creator,
the omniscient narrator. One cannot simply combine
the voice of the narrator with the voice of a
character, even if it is God, and expect to have
gotten it right. If a reader suspects that the
narrator and a character share a common perspective,
the suspicion must be supported by proof from the
narrative before it is incorporated into an

interpretation.

Whatever the relationship between the nar-
rator's voice and Yahweh's voice may turn out to be,
Yahweh's comments should not be removed from their
subsequent position to modify the narrator's existing
evaluation of Eli in 2:22-23. Eli really does warn
his sons of the danger of their acts. The reader is
given no indication in these or any preceding verses
that Eli is culpably lax in his warning. The nar-
rator presents Eli as trying, within the limits
imposed by age, to turn his sons from their sin. If
a negative evaluation of Eli's efforts is later
voiced by Yahweh, the reader will have to understand
it in connection with the narrator's voice, and in
subordination to it.

Eli mentions twice that the people are
spreading the report of his sons' evil deeds. This
repetition is an indication of the importance attached
to absolving the people from any complicity in their
priestly officials' sin (vv. 23-24). The emphasis
lies on the peoples' universal judgement of their
priests; Eli hears the reports "from all this people"
(v. 23); the rumor is circulating amongst the people
of Yahweh (v. 24).

This emphasis on 'all the Israelites denouncing their priests (lō-ṭōbâ haššᵉmuᶜâ, v. 24) is another vital part of the theological-political problem that is being developed in these events. The people are innocent and are expressly called "Yahweh's people" (v. 24).

Though Eli's absolution does not itself have the authority of the narrator's explicit evaluations (e.g. the negative evaluation of Eli's sons in v. 12, which is complementary to Eli's absolution of the people here), it receives the necessary support from the narrator's descriptions of the people's propriety in vv. 13-16. In addition, there is no mention of any sin on the part of the people anywhere in the preceding (or subsequent) context.

Eli points out the extreme danger of his sons' actions. Their abuses of cultic procedures and personnel are sins against Yahweh to whom all cultic activities are directed. Eli's professional opinion about the effects of his sons' action supports the narrator's observation about its effect on the divine plane (v. 17). There is no one to offer intercessory prayer for one who sins against Yahweh. Intercession by God, available in the case of a man sinning against

another, is impossible when Yahweh is the injured
party (v. 25). Eli's words are ominous portents.

If he is correct, and the reader is given no
reason to doubt him, then we must expect disaster to
be approaching. Here, then, Eli himself is allowed to
create narrative interest by making suggestions about
impending doom.

Driver observes that the position of lyhwh
in the apodosis of v. 25 is emphatic (1913:35). This
emphasis supplements that of the nouns in the protas-
is. God ($^{\supset e}$lōhîm) can mediate when a man ($^{\supset}$iš) sins
against a man ($^{\supset}$iš).[23] But when it is against Yahweh,
Israel's sovereign, that a man sins mediation is out
of the question. Even the possibility of an effica-
cious prayer is doubtful; "Who will pray for him?"
(v. 25).

Eli's rhetorical question places grave doubts
on the future of his sons. They have sinned against
Yahweh (v. 17) and even Eli, their own father,
castigates them rather than praying for them.

The final sentence in v. 25 explicitly pre-
pares for the ensuing, but as yet unspecified, death
of Eli's sons. Yahweh is the one character in the
story whose ability to enact any wish or plan is

unquestionable. The death of Eli's sons is a foregone conclusion; it is only when and how that are unspecified, again creating narrative interest. When they do die the reader will be absolutely certain that their death and the conditions surrounding the event are the fruit of Yahweh's desire.

Few would debate the assertion that the repentance of the sinner is a predominant theme in the O.T., or that it is favoured by man and especially God.[24] In Ezek 33:11 (cf. 18:32) Yahweh says, "I have no pleasure (ḥpṣ) in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn back from his way and live."[4] Here in 1 Sam 2:25, however, the failure of Eli's sons to listen to him, that is, to repent, is directly attributed to Yahweh's pleasure (ḥpṣ) in killing them.[25] Eli's efforts to turn his sons from their path to destruction is a predetermined failure. Try as he might his words fall on ears closed by Yahweh himself.

As in ch. 1, the narrator affords his audience a clear view of the divine marionetteer working behind the scene. As he sealed Hannah's womb to get Samuel so now Yahweh prevents Eli's sons from listening to their father.

The fact that this revelation is preceded by
only one other such insight into the direct divine
intervention into human affairs provides an important
and obvious linkage of the two distinct actions. The
birth of Samuel and the ensuing deaths of Eli's sons
are henceforth inseparable. The rudimentary pattern
of birth (1:5) followed by death (2:25) suggests
that the birth was engineered in anticipation of the
death. The pattern at least makes room for such a
hypothesis, which can be confirmed or rejected as it
conforms or departs from the pattern of subsequent
events.

Just as the divine initiative served as the
efficient cause of events on the human plane leading
up to Samuel's birth and dedication, Yahweh's desire
to kill Eli's sons takes over in v. 25 as the effi-
cient cause of subsequent events. Had he not inter-
vened, Eli's sons might have repented and so changed
the shape of subsequent events. Whatever happens,
therefore can and must be understood as the result
of Yahweh's intention. The sins of Eli's sons are
hereafter causally subsidiary to Yahweh's desire.

It is worthwhile noting that v. 25 contains
another point to which the narrator has lent his own

omniscient authority. As with the characterization
of Eli's sons in 2:12, it is thereby mandatory for
the reader to accept the point. There can be no
doubt about Yahweh's responsibility for the deaths
of Eli's sons, as well as for any circumstances
directly attendant on their deaths. Yahweh's "desire"
is the fourth such key to be given to the reader for
a proper understanding of the subsequent course of
events.[26]

Verse 26

Samuel is contrasted with the wicked Elides,
as many have noted (Smith 1899:20; Bourke 1954:82,
89; Hertzberg 1964:37; Willis 1971:289, 291; Péter-
Contesse 1976:313-14; McCarter 1980:85). The impli-
cation of Eli's warning in v. 25 was that his sons
had sinned, perhaps against man, perhaps against
Yahweh. Samuel, on the other hand, "continued
growing greater and better" (Driver 1913:36), with
Yahweh and with men. The contrast is foregrounded
by a chiasmus of objects, and the syntactic fore-
grounding is supplemented by the similar sounding
prepositions that modify the objects:

	verb	objects
v. 25	_yeḥeṭā'_	_'im l^e'îs 'im lyhwh_
v. 26	_hōlēk_	_gam ʿim-yhwh w^egam ʿim-'ănāsîm_

The effect of the contrast is a striking
confirmation of the hypothesis that Yahweh has
brought Samuel into the world as a replacement for
Eli's sons, who are well on their way out. Eli's
sons are sinning against man and God, who plans to
kill them because of their sin. Samuel, on the
other hand, is prospering with respect to the very
persons—God and man—with whom the Elides are
failing.

Hannah offers this prophetic comment on the
fates of Eli's sons and her own son Samuel, "The
Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down
to the grave, and bringeth up" (1 Sam 2:6)!

Verse 26 also serves to confirm the predomi-
nant traits of each of the three main characters.
Explicitly it portrays Samuel, the good. By way
of contrast it confirms Eli's sons as the bad.
Finally, and also by way of the juxtaposition of
Samuel and the Elides, vv. 25-26 presents Yahweh,
manipulator. He has arranged for a Samuel to replace

the sons of Eli, whom he desires to kill.

Excursus on Verses 27-36

The man of God and his word of Yahweh have
often been regarded as late-coming intruders imported
by a deuteronomist (e.g. Smith 1899:21; Nowack 1902:
xxx-xxxi [citing Kittel, Wellhausen, Budde, Smith,
and Löhr in agreement]; Bourke 1954:73; Hertzberg
1964:37; deWard 1976:117; McCarter 1980:92-93).
Others have suggested that vv. 27-34 have only been
elaborated by deuteronomic additions, especially in
vv. 35-36 (Press 1938:187-89; Buber 1964:819-20;
Tsevat 1961:195; J. Mauchline 1971:54; Stoebe 1973:
118; Miller and Roberts 1977:21, 30-31).

As several scholars have pointed out, however,
there are several explicit literary connections be-
tween this episode and its preceding and subsequent
contexts (Willis 1971:292-93; 1972:38; 1979:208;
Stoebe 1973:86, 117; Miller and Roberts 1977:30).
More important is the fact that this section of the
narrative can be read, "deuteronomistic additions"
and all, as an important integral development in the
narrative. As in the case of textual criticism, when
the text itself presents us with a cohesive intelligi-
ble sequence there is no call, other than the siren

song of genetic explanation, for suggesting multiple
composers and compositional periods. Even if the
passage is "replete with the devices and cliches of
the Josianic historian" (McCarter 1980:92) and the
latter could be convincingly dated, there are no
comparable linguistic criteria by which the hypotheses
of earlier literary versions could be substantiated.
What we are faced with, instead, is an integral
narrative punctuated with dueteronomistic ideology.

Verse 27

That a man of God comes to Eli to make known
to him the word of God is an ironic comment on the
state of the Elide priesthood. The very first thing
mentioned in the message is that God revealed himself
to Eli's forebears while they were yet in Egypt and
belonged to Pharaoh.[27] Now, in Israel, to the
priests of his temple, Yahweh speaks only through a
man of God.

The interrogative particle prefixed to niglōh
expresses the belief that the subsequent information
is well known and unconditionally admitted by the
hearer (GKC #150e; cf. Gen 3:11; 27:36; 29:15; Deut
11:30; Judg 4:6, etc.). Yahweh states the grounds
for his displeasure at the Elide priesthood. Their

"house" became priests because Yahweh graciously
revealed himself to them and so they owe their
privileged position to him.

According to Zobel the niphal of gl̲h̲ is a
specific technical term for revelation (1977:484).
The revelation of Yahweh establishes a communicative
channel between God and man (cf. Gen 35:7). The
subsequent statement (v. 28) that Yahweh chose Eli's
forebear shows that the revelation of Yahweh is the
first step in the call to be a priestly intermediary
(Zobel 1977:484).

Verse 28

Yahweh privileged Eli's predecessors with a
divine revelation, and established a permanent
(v. 30, ^{c}ad-^{c}ôlām) office wherein they could act as
intermediaries between the God revealed to them, and
the men amongst whom they lived. The verse stresses
the unique status of the priesthood bestowed upon
the Elide predecessors. They are chosen mikkol-šibṭê
yiśrā^{ɔ}ēl. Seebass' observations on b̲h̲r neatly de-
scribe the situation of Eli's predecessors. "Every-
where that b̲h̲r occurs in relationship to persons, it
denotes choice out of a group (generally out of the
totality of the people), so that the chosen one

discharges a function in relationship to the group"
(1977:82-83).

The freedom bestowed by the revelation,
releasing Eli's father from "being to the house of
Pharoah" (bih^eyôtām l^ebêt par^cōh; v. 27) is not
unlimited. His new allegiance is to Yahweh; he is
now "to Yahweh" (ûbāḥōr ʾōtô lî, v. 28). In return
for his liberating revelation Eli's father was given
the duties of a priest. Remuneration for his services
is given in the form of all the ʾiššē of the
Israelites.[28]

An obvious parallel to the choice of the
priests is alluded to in the mention of Egypt and
Pharoah in v. 27. Israel too was freed from Egypt
(Exod 19:4; Deut 7:8). It was chosen (bḥr, Deut 7:6)
and given stipulated covenantal duties (Exod 19:5;
Deut 7:11-12). On the basis of these parallels it
seems that what Yahweh rehearses in vv. 27-28 is the
covenant he established with Eli's predecessors.
Although the "six common elements of the treaty form"
are not given, Yahweh does rehearse those points
vital to his case against the Elides.[29] They are
indebted to Yahweh because he revealed himself to
them in Egypt. They were commissioned to be his

priests and were given specific benefits in payment for their services.

Verse 29

The Elide abuse of their covenantal election to the priesthood is described as $b^c t$, "to kick." The only parallel is found in a similar context in Deut 32:15. Jeshurun waxes fat (wayyišman) and kicks (wayyib^{c}āt). He forsakes and scoffs at the God who saved him. The context reveals that Jeshurun has broken his covenant obligations to Yahweh. Similarly the Elides kick at Yahweh's sacrifices and offerings which he had commanded on account of sin.[30] As in Deut 32:15, this "kicking" is associated with the fact that the kickers have grown fat.

The "kicking" is particularly heinous in the Elides' case. Not only do they desecrate Yahweh's provision for expiation of sin, but they get fat by taking the first part (mērē$\overline{\hphantom{si}}$šit. cf. McCarter 1980: 86) of the sacrifice (cf. 2:15-16). Obviously Yahweh sees this as an example of adding insult to injury if there ever was one.

Yahweh's accusation that Eli has honoured his sons before Yahweh must be weighed against the narrator's description of Eli's rebuke of his sons

in vv. 23-25 and against the narrator's comment

that Yahweh desired the death of Eli's sons.

Neither option emerges as a decisive favourite.

Verse 30

The obligatory covenantal requirements are

laid out in vv. 27-28, the infraction in v. 29, and

now comes the punishment. The formal idiom of an

oracle of doom is used as an ominous introduction

(Hertzberg 1964:38; McCarter 1980:90). The use of

the infinitive absolute $\bar{a}m\hat{o}r$ before the verb $\bar{a}mart\hat{\imath}$

recalls the previous use of this emphatic construction

in v. 27. Yahweh reemphasizes his graciousness to

the Elide line and the prosperous future that had

awaited them.

The promise of a perpetual priesthood is

revoked.[32] Yahweh only honours (kbd) those who

honour him (kbd), not those who honour (kbd) their

sons more than God (v. 29). Those who contemn him

(ûbōzay), as Eli's sons have (2:17), are cursed.

The requital Yahweh offers to the Elides

reflects the language of covenantal retribution used

in passages such as Exod 34:7; Num 14:18; and Deut

7:9-10. According to J.A. Thompson these expressions

have the appearance of liturgical formulae or

confessional phrases (1974:131). Yahweh recites the
confessional view of covenantal retribution in v. 30,
and follows this recitation with the particulars to
be meted out to the Elides.[33] He obviously sees him-
self as within his rights, as such are defined by the
covenant.

Verse 31

In punishment Eli is to have his "arm" and
the "arm" of his father's house cut off. The Elide
dynasty is to be broken by cutting off its strength
($z^e r\bar{o}^c a$, Driver 1913:38). The statement that there
will not be an old man ($z\bar{a}q\bar{e}n$) in his house is
pointed directly at Eli, who we know is $z\bar{a}q\bar{e}n\ m^{e\partial}\bar{o}d$
(v. 22).

The reference to a future implementation of
the punishment ($y\bar{a}m\hat{i}m\ b\bar{a}\hat{i}m$) sets the reader in
expectation of a specific fulfillment of Yahweh's
words in the future. Any subsequent events that can
be taken as fulfillment of the oracle will be so
taken.[34]

Verse 32

As in v. 29, Seebass repoints $m\bar{a}^c\hat{o}n$, which is
incomprehensible, to $m\bar{e}^c\bar{a}w\bar{o}n$ (1966:80). The verse

would then read (ignoring Seebass' further emendations),
"And you will see affliction, on account of [your] sin,
in everything that should/will be good for Israel.
There will not be an old man in your house anymore."
The occurrence of the two words mēᶜāwōn in v. 29
describes the reason for the sacrificial system. The
priests and the system were chosen and commanded by
Yahweh to provide a means of atoning for sin: Iron-
ically in v. 32 it is because of sin, by implication
the priests', that affliction will be seen in what
should have been good for Israel. The repetition of
the words mēᶜāwōn draws attention to this reversal of
the priestly effect on the people.

Instead of averting the consequences of the
people's sin by obtaining sacrificial atonement for
it, the priests bring the evil consequences of their
own sin down on everything that should have been good
for Israel.

The ambiguity of the verb form yêṭîb does,
however, allow for two readings.[35] Either Yahweh
is hinting at the fact that the priests' sin will
bring affliction to all Israel instead of the "good"
that they expect to gain from the priestly offices,
or he is saying that future benefits to Israel will

appear as afflictions to Eli.

Two factors militate against the second alternative. First, Yahweh says that Eli, "the old man," will see this affliction. Since he dies in 4:18, the event referred to must occur prior to that verse. Secondly, the second sentence states that there will not be an old man in Eli's house in the future. That is, there will be no Eli (cf. v. 22) in the future to see all the good that is supposed to be done for Israel. In view of these two considerations the first possibility, that v. 32a refers to the affliction that Eli will see overtaking Israel because of the sin of its priests, is attractive.[36] In v. 32b, Eli is told that having seen the affliction, he, himself an old man, will cease to exist.

In this reading of what Smith appropriately called "so desperate a passage," v. 32 contributes to an anticipation of an impending disaster already developed in v. 31. A specific chronological pattern has been given, and it coincides with the events of ch. 4. First, Eli sees the expected Israelite victory (kōl ᵓašer-yêṭib ᵓet-yiśrāᵓēl) turned into a terrible defeat (4:1-11).[37] Then he himself is

killed (4:18). The exact nature of the affliction
and the potential good to Israel is left for the
reader to discover in ch. 4.

Verse 32 introduces a central issue in chs.
1-12. In the theocratic system the people are very
much affected by their leaders. Yahweh had established
the priests as covenant mediators in charge of the
cult. The latter, as Yahweh notes in vv. 28-29, is
an essential feature of the covenant, allowing as it
does for the expiation of sin. When the officials
of this vital institution are themselves sinful and
contemptuous of Yahweh their sin cannot be expiated
or palliated by prayer (2:25-26; 3:14). The priests
must die. The theocratic political system, that is
the covenant in which Yahweh is sovereign and Israel
subject, requires upright human leaders for its
smooth operation.

But this problem carries with it an even
worse consequence which is mentioned here in v. 32.
The sin of the priests, and they are the only ones
who have sinned so far, brings affliction to Israel.
That Yahweh is able to tell Eli, before the fact,
that Israel will be adversely affected by the sin
of its priests, indicates that the defeat and

slaughter of innocent Israelites is not spontaneous.
Hence what seems to be suggested is that Israel's
fate is closely tied to that of its priestly leaders
in the covenantally constituted theocracy.

On this point, Campbell has suggested that
the punishment of the Elides is incommensurable with
the national catastrophe of ch. 4 (1975:175). "The
loss of the ark, two defeats and the death of 34,000
men is a steep price to pay for the punishment of
two or three errant priests. Can this be justified
by the central role of these priests in the nation?"
(1979:35). Campbell concludes that the concerns of
ch. 4 are largely unrelated to those of ch. 2.

Campbell, however, has unknowingly put his
finger on the very issue that chs. 1-4, and indeed
chs. 1-12, focus on. The defeat at Aphek is the
fulfillment of the prophesied punishment and the
question posed by Campbell is the question posed by
the narrative. Is the theocracy with its covenant,
its intermediaries, and its stipulations and especially
its unpredictable God a desirable system? Are there
imbalances in the system that create political havoc
for all on the basis of the sacral misdeeds of a
few who happen to be leaders?

Verses 33-36

Verses 33, 35-36 have occasionally been
interpreted as the vaticinia ex eventu insertions of
the deuteronomist.[38] Press, for example, suggests
"so kundet v. 33 die Nobkatastrophe an" (1938:191).
The debate over the historical identification of the
events and characters referred to in vv. 33, 35-36
has a long history. (Keil and Delitzsch, 1880:44-48,
give early examples.)

Keil and Delitzsch offer the suggestion that
we should allow the possibility of multiple fulfill-
ments of the prophecy within a typological framework
(1880:46-47). Certainly that option is able to
accommodate all possible identifications, thereby
conforming interpretation to the ambiguity inherent
in the prophecy itself. Depending on the context in
which a reader has chosen to read the prophecy,
different possibilities arise.[39]

The typological approach to the identity
of the referents in the text comes close to certain
modern theories of reader-oriented and structuralist
critics. The following statement of Jonathan Culler
exhibits important similarities to the typological
approach. "To read a text as literature is not to

make one's mind a _tabula_ _rasa_ and approach it without preconceptions;....the semiological approach suggests, rather, that the poem be thought of as an utterance that has meaning only with respect to a system of conventions which the reader has assimilated. If other conventions were operative its range of potential meanings would be different (quote from .Tompkins 1980:xvii-xviii).[40] "The Rabbins" could never agree with Keil and Delitzsch or Gutbrod about the identity of the faithful priest in v. 35 because they operate from different coventional bases of interpretation.

Since the present reading is made from the context of 1 Sam 1-12, the present concern is to determine what, if any, subsequent characters and events are referred to by vv. 33, 35-36. The decision to read within this context is no more or less arbitrary than the decision to read in terms of the deuteronomistic history (McCarter), the Hebrew Bible ("the Rabbins"), or the Old and New Testaments (Gutbrod).

An indication of the validity of a reading of the prophecy made upon the basis of its immediate context is found in the favourable comments on this option by those who have chosen different contexts.

McCarter, for example, says, "Indeed we are bound to say that on the basis of our reading of the childhood narrative of Samuel up to this point and of the sequel to this passage in 3:1-4:1a, Samuel emerges incontestably as the successor to the prerogatives of the house of Eli" (1980:92). He then rejects this incontestable reading in favour of one made in the context of the deuteronomistic history. Tsevat too sees the possibility of a connection between 2:27-36 and chs. 3-4, but rejects it (1961:207).

Verse 33

The man left to Eli at Yahweh's alter after the death of Eli (v. 32) and his sons (vv. 31, 33, 34) could be either Ichabod (4:20, 21) or Samuel, who can be said to be "to Eli" ($l^e k\bar{a}$) as a servant and apprentice. Samuel and Eli are close enough, in fact, for Eli to call him "my son" (3:6, 16). Against Ichabod is the conclusion of v. 33, which says that all the increase of Eli's house will die as men. Ichabod is presumeably included here and so will be at Yahweh's altar ($^c im\ mizb^e\hat{h}\hat{i}$) neither as a cultic functionary nor even as a man. Furthermore it is difficult to see how the continued existence of Ichabod can be construed as a punishment that

would waste Eli's eyes and make his soul pine away.[41]

Samuel, on the other hand, would be a suitable
candidate for this role. The fact that a temple ser-
vant will outlast Eli and his house would be suffi-
cient cause for grief to Eli. The identification of
Samuel as the אֵשׁ of v. 33 also fits the immediate
context of complete doom for the Elides. Finally, it
should be noted that Samuel builds an altar to
Yahweh in 7:17 and survives through the remainder of
the narrative as the only active priest (7:9-10; 9:12-
14; 10:8; 12:23). He does, in fact, replace Eli at
Yahweh's altar.

Verse 34

The sign given to Eli is that his sons will
both die on the same day. Yahweh gives Eli a sign
because the latter will not be around to see the
installation of his successor. The sign is to be
taken by Eli as an indication that the various
events prophesied are about to take place (cf. Keil
and Delitzsch 1880:45; Smith 1899:23). The fulfill-
ment of this prophecy in 4:11 is an incontestable
link between chs. 1-3 and ch. 4.

Campbell, however, reasons that if ch. 4 was
intended as the accomplishment of the prophecies in

chs. 1-3 one would justifiably expect an indication, such as that in 1 Kgs. 2:26-37, that the prophetic word had come to pass (1975:175). The answer to Campbell's difficulty may be found in 2:34. Yahweh says that the death of Eli's sons is an ᵓôt, a sign. As Gunkel notes a sign "is an object, an occurrence, an event through which a person is to recognize, learn, remember, or perceive the credibility of something" (quote from Helfmeyer 1977:170). "The significant thing about a sign is not the sign itself, but its function....it calls attention to, confirms, or corroborates something beyond itself..."(p. 183).

The fact of the simultaneous death of Eli's sons in 4:11 is all that is needed, at that point, for both Eli and the reader to know that they are witnessing prophecy fulfilled in ch. 4. The functional nature of the sign along with the several other links between 2:27-36 and ch. 4 justify reading them as prophecy and fulfillment.

Verse 35

The substitute for the Elide priests is characterized. According to Buber, "der kohen neeman von 2:35 realisiert sich in dem neeman lᵉ-nabi von 3:20, d.h. der neue Kohen ist kein Kohen im alten

geschlechtsgebundenen und heiligtumsgebundenen Sinn
mehr, das Geschlecht soll seiner Häupter beraubt,
das Heiligtum soll zerstört werden, das Erbe soll der
Nabi antreten. Nicht ein Priester, der ein neues
Priestergeschlecht gründet und einem anderen Heilig-
tum vorsteht, sondern der Nabi" (1964:820). Buber
supplements this observation with the links between
2:27, 3:7; and 3:21. The repetition of the verb glh
in the Niphal signifies, according to Buber, that
the old priestly revelation, which has become
unworthy, is replaced by a new prophetic revelation.

Buber is correct in his observation that
Samuel is not simply a cultic priest. Instead he
combines several occupations into one career.[42]
Included among his activities is his priestly role,
prepared for in chs. 1-3 and implemented in chs. 7-12.
The case for Samuel grows stronger when Samuel's
origin and priestly apprenticeship are considered.
One recalls that his birth to a barren woman bears
the mark of divine intervention and purpose. He
is Yahweh's all the days of his life (1:11, 28) and
grows up as an apprentice to Eli (2:11, 18, 26; 3:1,
3). He wears the priestly clothing (2:18). Finally,
the juxtaposition of the "outgoing" priests and the

growing favour of Samuel in 2:25-26 foreshadows the
succession.

Consequently, when Yahweh says he will raise
a faithful priest for himself the reader is encouraged
by preceding events to conclude that Yahweh is simply
making explicit the developments he had planned ever
since he closed and then opened Hannah's womb. This
conclusion will be subsequently confirmed both in
the literary links noted by Buber and in the simple
facts of Samuel's subsequent actions as Israel's new
covenant mediator.

Hertzberg sees a problem arising for this
reading in the statement that Yahweh will build a
faithful house for Samuel. As we know from 8:3-5,
Samuel's sons also go astray. Samuel's house does
not, therefore, seem to continue from generation to
generation as the prophecy implies (1964:38). It
should be noted, however, that unlike Eli's sons,
who are killed for their sins, Samuel's sons are still
around in 12:2. From the context it appears that they
still operate in an official capacity. Subsequently
we hear no more of Samuel's sons due to the shifting
focus of the narrative. We cannot conclude, however,
that Samuel's house was not "faithful."

The final statement in v. 35 can be read as an
anticipation of the monarchy established in chs. 9-12.
The reader is prepared for subsequent events, albeit
more with perplexity than anticipation or foreknowledge.
Throughout the prophecy, Yahweh demonstrates his own
awareness of future events and reveals his plans for
those events. In fact, one of Yahweh's most constant
traits throughout the whole of chs. 1-12 is fore-
knowledge of future situations in his covenantal
relationship with Israel.

Yahweh's prediction also contains a subtle
indication of the type of monarchy to be introduced.
The fact that the king is referred to as m^{e}sihi
suggests that some future monarch will be established
by and be responsible to Yahweh. Anointment makes
the king a theocratic vassal of Yahweh (Szikszai
1962:139). Without a prior awareness of the issues
raised in ch. 8 the reader is unlikely, however, to
comprehend Yahweh's surreptitious anticipation of
chs. 9-12. It is a private irony between Yahweh and
the narrator.

Verse 36

As Mauchline observes, it is especially in
v. 35 that the identification of the faithful priest

encounters difficulty (1971:55-56). Nowhere can this
prediction be seen in Samuel's career. Scholars have,
therefore, turned to Zadok as the priest and suggest
that v. 36 refers to the Levites, who in consequence
of the Josianic reform (2 Kgs 23:9) were forced to
come begging at the Temple (Mauchline 1971:56; Tsevat
1961:192-93; McCarter 1980:93).

Noth agreed, at first, with this judgement
and labelled the prophecy a vaticinium ex eventu
product of the deuteronomist (1967:61). He later
repudiated this view of the prophecy, correctly
observing "Der Vers 2:36 ist ganz undeuteronomistisch
formuliert und lässt sich auch sachlich kaum mit den
Angaben in 2 Reg 23:8f. in Einklang bringen" (1963:
394). Noth's solution to the referential problem
posed by v. 36 is to suggest that we have no certain
grounds for dating it and even less certain grounds
to specify a situation in which it was fulfilled.
"Ein inspiriertes Wort eines 'Gottesmannes' gegen
die frühere silonische Priesterschaft und ihre durch-
aus mögliche Degeneration und für die königliche
Priesterschaft von Jerusalem ist an sich durchaus
denkbar" (1963:394).

In view of their radically different

presuppositions it is remarkable that Keil and Delitzsch arrive at a similar result. Just as they see the prophecy of the faithful priest fulfilled in both Samuel and Zadok so "the threat announces deep degradation and even destruction to all the priests of the house of Aaron who should walk in the foot- steps of the sons of Eli..." (1880:46).

The readings suggested by Noth and especially by Keil and Delitzsch are most compatible with the intentional vagueness of the prophecy. The only specific information given is the sign. The death of Hophni and Phinehas is supposed to show both Eli and the reader that the fulfillment of the prophecy is beginning. The reader is thereby provoked to identify the other events prophesied, and is given opportunity to do so for all except v. 36 in the course of reading chs. 3-12.

For v. 36, the reader is required to continue through the books of Samuel and Kings in search of a suitable referential candidate. The apparent lack of correspondence between the prophesied situation of v. 36 and that of the "Levites" in 2 Kgs 23:9 suggests that the majority of readers will come to identifications somewhere between Keil and

Delitzsch's multiple typology and the identification
of Levites as in 2 Kgs 23:9.

The prophecy of the man of God in vv. 27-36
exhibits the characteristics of the literary pheno-
menon that Iser calls "blanks":

the blank, however, designates a vacancy

in the overall system of the text, the

filling of which brings about an inter-

action of textual patterns.... It is

only when the schemata of the text are

related to one another that the imaginary

object can begin to be formed, and it is

the blanks that get this connecting

operation under way. They indicate that

the different segments of the text are to

be connected, even though the text itself

does not say so. They are the unseen

joints of the text, and as they mark off

schemata and textual perspectives from

one another they simultaneously trigger

acts of ideation on the reader's part.

Consequently, when the schemata and per-

spectives have been linked together, the

blanks 'disappear' (1978:182-83).

The prophetic sign says "begin here," but it is up to each reader to decide what fulfills what (Iser's "acts of ideation on the reader's part"). It is important to note, however, that 4:11 presents an explicit textual directive to the reader forcing him to scrutinize the immediately subsequent context. This explicit connection stacks the odds in favour of reading the subsequent events and characters, insofar as possible, as those referred to by the prophecy.

Perry's notion of a reader's frame construction is also relevant here. The reader who has read the prophecy will not fail to construct a "frame" that incorporates the events of chs. 3-7 as the fulfillment of the prophecy in 2:27-36. "The reader does not wait until the end before beginning to understand it, before embarking upon its semantic integration" (Perry 1979:46). If subsequent information is given that contradicts the constructed frame he will then modify or reject it.

Within chs. 1-12, however, such contradiction does not occur. If the final verse of the prophecy cannot be recognized as fulfilled before ch. 12 the reader will wait and watch for its subsequent fulfillment, whatever that may be.

3. 1 Samuel 3

**Excursus on the Contextual Situation
of Chapter 3**

In ch. 3, the narrator describes the conclud-
ing events in the transfer of human authority from the
priestly Elides to Samuel, who begins the chapter as a
priestly servant (v. 1) and ends as a prophet (vv. 20-
21). It is to this end that the miraculous birth
story (ch. 1), the contrasts between the families of
Samuel and Eli (chs. 1-2), and the prophetic rejection
of the Elide priests (2:27-36) have been moving.
Events in chs. 1-2:26 proceed in mysterious concatena-
tion towards the climactic message from Yahweh in
2:27-36. Though the narrator gives several hints at
the connections between the fates of the Elides and
Samuel, he never provides an explicit and detailed
prediction of the end towards which their intertwin-
ing paths are surely proceeding. The veiled struc-
tural hints about that end, as well as the revelations
that there is a divine purpose behind the events of
chs. 1-2, are only specific enough to allow the
reader to create hypotheses about the significance of
the events. The result is the creation of a great
deal of narrative interest, which prods the reader on
in hopes of discovering the connection or of having

it openly revealed to him.

In the prophetic message of 2:27-36, God reveals his reading of preceding events and lays out a rather ambiguous prophetic plan for the future. Though some of the possible contextual readings of the prophecy were explored in anticipatory fashion in the preceding discussion of 2:27-36, these were not intended to suggest that the reader would entertain all or any such hypotheses. Though the reader will try, of course, to interpret the prophecy as he reads it and may even arrive at hypotheses such as those suggested above, he remains absolutely dependent on the narrator to confirm or reject his suspicions. Chapter 3, following hard on the heels of the divine revelation, does exactly that, as the narrator describes the events in which the Elide priestly presence is obviated.

In accord with the general narrational principles described by Ruhl's algorithm,[1] the narrator has placed Samuel's call immediately after the prophecy, leading the reader to see events in ch. 3 as the fulfillment of ch. 2. The narrator takes obvious care to insure that his reader follows the logic of his plot. The reader must be aware that the prophecy

is being enacted and that Yahweh is guiding these events.

Chapter 3 describes the state of Israelite leadership in terms of the revelation of Yahweh, both aural and visual; it contains six references to visual revelation or sight, and sixteen to aural revelation. Good leadership allows for open communications from Yahweh (vv. 19-21), bad leadership restricts it (vv. 1-2).

A link with the prophecy in 2:27-36 is also forged with the vocabulary of revelation. The Elide line had been elected to the priesthood when Yahweh revealed himself (h^{a}niglōh niglêtî) to them in Egypt (2:27). The Elide corruption is cause for annulment of their election (2:30) and contact with Yahweh via vision or word thereafter becomes very rare (v. 1; cf. Willis 1971:292-93).

As compensation for the loss of divine revelation through the medium of the priestly Elides, Yahweh grants Samuel a vision (v. 15), and speaks directly to him (vv. 4-14). As a result of the fulfillment of the message he then transmits, Samuel becomes established as the reliable prophet of Yahweh (3:20). Yahweh reappears at Shiloh because of

(kî) his self-revelation (niglâ yhwh) to Samuel (3:21).
Samuel replaces the Elides as the human receptor and
agent of the divine revelation. His installation in
this important mediating office allows for renewed
communication from Yahweh (cf. Newman 1962:89-90;
Buber 1964:819).

Verse 1

The introductory description of the lad Samuel
resumes the characterization of him begun in ch. 1
(Noth 1963:392). He is Yahweh's servant. The portrait
of Samuel has an ever closer link with 2:11, with
which it is almost identical. There are several
significant variants, however, which can be viewed
as the product of intervening events:

3:1 w^ehanna^{c}ar s^{e}mû^{5}el m^{e}sārēt ^{5}et-yhwh lipnê ^{c}ēlî

2:11 w^ehanna^{c}ar hāyâ m^{e}sārēt ^{5}et-yhwh ^{5}et-p^{e}nê ^{c}ēlî hakkōhēn

(Differences are underlined twice.)

As always when the name "Samuel" is used, the
narrator reminds the reader of the special meaning
of Samuel's existence and of the purpose which brought

him into being. Immediately after the prophecy of
the Elide rejection the reader is led to recall that
Samuel is Yahweh's missionary. The contrast between
Elides and Samuel is, again, obvious. We know from
the prophecy that Yahweh plans to replace Eli and his
sons. Samuel's appearance, serving Yahweh, immediate-
ly after the promise of a new priest is conspicious
and invites the reader to entertain the thought that
Samuel is that priest.

In 2:11, the lad serves Yahweh and "the face"
of Eli, both of which are modified by the accusative
particle ʾet. In 3:11, however, Samuel serves only
Yahweh, doing so "before" or "in the presence of"
(lipnê) Eli. The reason for this change is revealed
by the final variant: Eli is no longer called "the
priest" in 3:11; he is simply Eli. Samuel no longer
serves Eli "with" Yahweh because Eli has lost the
rank and title of priest. Already Eli takes a back
seat to Samuel in the priestly service (against
Mauchline 1971:57).

The second two sentences in v. 1 describe
the state of divine communications in the period
after the Elide rejection. It is the only descrip-
tion of the conditions of that time, and serves as an

important indicator of the effects of the upheaval in covenanted relations between Yahweh and his priests. The preciousness of Yahweh's word and the spareness of vision could indicate either that Yahweh has nothing to say to Israel, or that the official receptors of the vision, the Elides (cf. 2:27), were unfit to mediate any revelations. Given that Eli is no longer called "priest," it is most likely that there is no suitable recipient for the revelations of Yahweh. In fact, this is exactly the point, for when Samuel has come to know Yahweh through the revelation of his word, Yahweh reappears at Shiloh (v. 21).

The narrator momentarily shifts the reader's attention away from the characters to the state of affairs of covenantal communication with this brief note about the lack of such communication. He thereby exhibits his concern that the reader bear in mind the effect that the sin of the priests and the counter-measures of Yahweh are having in the larger arena of the theocracy as a whole. Obviously it is a dangerous situation for the union when the political leader refuses to communicate with the citizens.

Verse 2

Commentators have expressed doubts about how

to read the initial temporal clause in v. 2 and about
its bearing on the events at hand (e.g. Wellhausen
1871:51; Smith 1899:25). According to GKC (#126s),
the phrase simply means "one day." McCarter trans-
lates, "at that time" and states that the phrase
introduces a syntactical sequence of ordinary past
narration (1980:97). What follows the phrase would,
according to McCarter's translation, take place at
the same time as what immediately preceded.

More significant is the link that the phrase
provides with v. 1. In v. 1, we read that "In those
days (bayyāmîm hāhēm) the word of Yahweh was precious,
and the vision sparse." In v. 2, we read that "At
that time (bayyôm hahû) Eli was lying in his place,
his eyes were failing and he could not see." The
repeated temporal phrase reinforces the semantic
parallel between the two verses. The scarcity of
word or vision from Yahweh is a parallel, and perhaps
even the logical result, on the physical plane of the
blindness of Israel's priestly leader.

The attention drawn to this parallel by the
temporal phrases reinforces the point made in v. 1.
Together, vv. 1-2 suggest that a capable, functioning
priest is necessary for the regular communication of

messages from God, which are necessary for the main-
tenance of the theocracy. As in the Mosaic model,
the institutional mediator receives the message from
God and transmits it to the people (Exod 20:18-26).
When the mediator is non-functioning, the quantity
of divine communication is reduced.

The few communications that are sent when the
institutional mediator is out of commission, such as
that delivered by the man of God in 2:27-36, are
exceptional and few in number. The purpose of such
special revelations is not simply to continue the
regular communications through a different channel.
Rather, as the example of 2:27-36 shows, they often
are directed against the institutional means of
communication, and aim only at "tearing down" the
existing figures. The task of "building up" is left
to God's own subsequent action.

The description of Eli, lying in his place,
contrasts unfavourably with that of Samuel in both
vv. 1 and 3. While Samuel actively serves Yahweh in
v. 1, Eli lies dormant in v. 2. Whereas Eli lies in
his place, Samuel lies in Yahweh's temple (v. 3).[2]
Samuel attends to Yahweh's needs while Eli attends
to his own.

These contrasts support the succession of Samuel to Eli's position in the mediating office.

Though the narrator has not agreed with Yahweh's criticisms of Eli (cf. above on 2:22-25 and 29), he has suggested that Eli's great age is having a detrimental effect on his ability to carry out his important duties as the head priest. In the contrast between Eli and Samuel in 3:1-3 it is also Eli's feebleness in old age that serves as the basis for the narrator's contrast. The young Samuel remains in the temple, ready, able and willing to carry out any duty immediately. Eli, on the other hand, lies in his own place; the reader recognizes the familiar image of a tired, old man who relies on the comfort and security of his own place. In the narrator's contrast Eli is not sinful, he is only old. The contrast does show, however, that a transition from Eli to Samuel is desirable.

Verse 3

In contrast to the atmosphere of darkness and unknowing in vv. 1-2, symbolized by Eli's blindness and the scarcity of vision, v. 3 presents the hope of the future. The technique of foreshadowing a resolution to a present problem used in v. 3 has

already been seen in 1:18. Here in v. 3, the inser-
tion of the word ṭerem in the sentence "The lamp of
God had not yet (ṭerem) gone out," indicates that,
though the situation described in vv. 1-2 is gloomy,
there is still hope. The flame is not yet completely
extinguished.

The lamp of God, still burning, is a symbol
that God has not totally cut off relations with
Israel on account of the Elides. In Exod 27:2 (cf.
Lev 24:2), Yahweh commands that a lamp be kept ever
lit in the tabernacle. As with the other furnishings
and the tabernacle itself, the lamp represents the
presence of Yahweh, in accord with his covenanted
pledge to be with Israel (Lev 26:12-13; cf. Childs
1974:540). Ringgren suggests that the lamp provided
a vivid image of the divine presence (1966:91).[3]

Associated with the lamp of God, symbol of
God's presence and communication with Israel, is
Samuel who lies in the temple. Through this
associative parallelism the narrative identifies
Samuel as a glimmer of light in the general darkness
of that time (cf. Bourke 1954:85). The narrative
has drawn the comparison between Samuel and Eli in
terms of clear-cut opposites:

Samuel	Eli
lies in the temple the light still burns	lies in his place blindness, lack of vision or word from God

Commentators have generally missed the symbolic contrast between Samuel and Eli. The significance of God's burning lamp is seen to lie in its temporal definition (it was not yet dawn) (Thenius 1864:16; Keil and Delitzsch 1880:49; Smith 1899:26; McCarter 1980:98). Although the temporal dimension of the lamp does function as part of the general setting for the events of ch. 3 it has much greater significance as a symbol. As Stoebe noted with respect to ch. 1 the importance of details in this narrative lies in their significance for the theological-political issues raised by the narrative. Hence the reading that sees the mention of the still burning lamp as a temporal detail should be expanded to include the symbolism. As the still-burning lamp shows that dawn was near, so Samuel lying in the temple is a sign that a new dawn in Israelite leadership is also near.

Similarly, Buber observes that the mention of the ark, at first glance a mere scenic elaboration,

is in fact of special significance in view of subse-
quent events. The introduction of the ark here links
it with Yahweh's message of doom. Samuel receives
the message in the presence of the cultic object that
will play a major role in the subsequent destruction
of the Elides.

> Die Offenbarung an Samuel, die nun folgt,
> hat...die Katastrophe der Lade zum Gegenstand...
> der Herr der Lade sagt ihre Verschleppung und
> Entweihung an. Dass diese Ansage an Samuel
> geschieht, deutet darauf hin, worauf der
> Erzähler von Anbeginn nachdrücklich hindeuten
> will: Samuel ist von Jhwh, der sich zum
> Strafgericht rüstet, dazu ausersehen, in
> der ladenlosen, heiligtumsberaubten Zeit an
> Stelle der verurteilten Priesterschaft, ohne
> Ephod, als freier Nabi die göttliche Stimme
> zu tragen (Buber 1964:825; cf. Stoebe 1973:
> 124).[4]

In addition, it should be noted that like the
still-burning lamp, the ark appears in immediate
association with Samuel in the temple. The reader
finds Samuel sandwiched between these two symbols of
God's presence and covenantal relationship with

Israel. The narrator seems to be trying to rub some
of this symbolism onto the figure of Samuel by liter-
ally (literarily) surrounding him with it.

Verses 4-10

That Yahweh has to try three times before he
can talk to Samuel is an indication of both Samuel's
ignorance about Yahweh and Eli's lack of perceptive-
ness. Samuel's ignorance is innocent, for Yahweh
has not yet revealed his word to him (v. 7). Eli's
unperceptiveness, on the other hand, is probably
again a result of his failing powers in old age.
In addition, Yahweh's persistence indicates that he
has something important to say and that it is intended
specifically for Samuel's ears.

The reader, who is by now well aware of the
general direction that events are taking, remembers
Yahweh's last revelation through the man of God,
which contained a reference to a replacement for Eli.
Samuel's continual failure to receive his divine
visitor is a source of increasing tension to the
reader, who begins to doubt Samuel's intelligence.
Will Yahweh abandon the attempt to communicate with
the dutious but obtuse Samuel?

Samuel's speedy response to Yahweh's call is

to run to Eli, in the belief that Eli had called.
Three times Yahweh calls and three times Samuel
presents himself to Eli. Samuel appears as the young
man with great things in store for him, who still
runs to Eli in boyish respect when he thinks he is
being called (Stoebe 1973:125). The insight into
Samuel's character afforded by this incident,
nevertheless, evokes a positive response from the
reader. Though naive, Samuel is willing and respon-
sive. Even his ignorance makes Samuel shine in the
reader's eyes.

Press, discussing the rhetorical function of
the threefold call, suggests that the tension produced
by Samuel and Eli's continuing misunderstanding
causes "der Steigerung des Interesses und der Hervor-
hebung des zu erwartenden Orakels..." (1938:184).
Yet, as in the descriptions of Hannah's sterility in
1:5-6 and the lamp in 3:2, a future resolution to a
problem, in this case Samuel's ignorance of Yahweh,
is hinted at by a temporal modifier attached to
the description of the problem. Samuel does not yet
(terem) know Yahweh, the word of Yahweh is not yet
(terem) revealed to him (3:7). The reader is
given to understand, even before Yahweh successfully

communicates to Samuel, that Yahweh will eventually
get a message through. Samuel will know Yahweh, and
the latter's word will be revealed to him (cf. ṭerem,
as it functions in 3:3).

Verse 11

When Samuel finally responds correctly to
Yahweh's call, with the knowledge of who is calling,
Yahweh is able to speak.

It is important to note that it is Eli who
is finally responsible for the success of Yahweh's
third attempt to communicate with Samuel. Eli
finally discerns (wayyāben, v. 8) that Yahweh is
calling the boy, and so tells Samuel how to respond.
Again the narrator could have arranged his narrative
so that Eli had no part in the success, but he did
not. It is ironic that Eli should contribute to his
successor's rise, but it is not a condemnation. If
anything, Eli comes out of ch. 3 as a tragic figure.

Yahweh's mention of the location, "in Israel,"
of the thing he is going to do, and the statement that
it will make all its auditors' ears buzz, seem to
indicate an event of national significance.[5] Gutbrod
understands the national import of the punishment in
terms of the loss of the covenantal mediation of the

priesthood (1956:34). While he is correct, it is also possible that Yahweh is hinting at the even more horrifying repercussions of the priests' punishment seen in the Israelite defeat in ch. 4. Whether or not this allusion is contained in v. 11, the effects of Yahweh's action are such as to affect <u>all</u> Israel. The reader familiar with the conventional implication of an "ear-buzzing" event is at least certain that the impending disaster will not be limited to an effect on the Elide priesthood alone.

Verses 12-14

As commentators have noted, v. 12 refers directly back to 2:27-36 (e.g. McCarter 1980:98). Samuel is alerted to the fact that all is not right between Yahweh and Eli. Yahweh claims that Eli knew of his sons' sin yet did not "rebuke" them (v. 13).[6]

Again (cf. above on 2:29) the reader must evaluate Yahweh's claim in the light of the authoritative information provided by the narrator that Eli <u>did</u> warn his sons and that they did not listen because Yahweh desired to kill them (2:25). Yahweh is not telling the whole story to Samuel. As the reader watches the innocent young man being indoctrinated with an explanation of the ensuing disaster that is

only partially true, he is once again filled with
foreboding about the future of the people whose fate
lies in the hands of this God.·

Yahweh's half-truth also compromises Samuel's
innocence by indoctrinating him with an understanding
of what has happened and will happen that will make
him an unquestioning ally and representative of
Yahweh's position. Samuel was born to serve Yahweh,
but the reader did not know until now just what such
membership in the theocratic service might mean..

Yahweh's revelations to Samuel confirm the
reader in the view that was forced upon him by the
narrator's differences with Yahweh in ch. 2. Yahweh
has engineered the unnecessary destruction of the
·Elides and now he is grooming his own pawn to take
their place. If he had not desired to kill Eli's
sons, perhaps they would have listened to their
father, and if he told Samuel the truth about Eli's
efforts to reform his sons perhaps Samuel would not
be quite so dogmatically loyal to Yahweh.

As the reader stands looking over the nar-
rator's shoulder while Yahweh interprets past and
future for Samuel, he· has no doubts about who is
shaping the course of events. Whatever happens,

Yahweh is responsible.

Yahweh's presentation of his punishment for
the Elides aims at an appearance of just retribution.
As Stoebe observes, v. 14 seems an appropriate
denial of expiation to the Elides (1973:125). They
"kicked" at Yahweh's zebaḥ and minḥâ (2:29), which
were instituted for sin (mē$^{-ca}$wōn).[7] As their
punishment, therefore, they are denied the use of
zebaḥ or minḥâ to expiate their sin (^{ca}wōn bêt-^{c}ēlî).
What could be more just than such measure for
measure punishment?

Verses 15-16

Samuel lies down until morning and then opens
the doors of Yahweh's house.[8] Bourke, alone, seems
to have noticed the symbolic significance of this
gesture. Citing 2 Paraleipomenon 28-29, where good
King Ezechias opens the temple doors closed by his
wicked father, he suggests that Samuel's act symbo-
lizes the restoration of God's word to Israel (1954:
86). Samuel, associated with the still-burning lamp
in v. 2, floods the temple with the light of morning;
"good has prevailed over evil, and light over
darkness" (1954:86).

As his ignorance did before in vv. 4-9,

Samuel's fear introduces a tension into the narrative.
Will Samuel tell Eli what he knows? The narrative
highlights the similarity of the two situations by
using the same call and reply scheme used before:
Eli calls Samuel, "Samuel my son," and Samuel says,
"here I am." Samuel's simple reply shows his submis-
sion to Eli and perhaps his reluctance to say anything
at all.

Verses 17-18

Eli wants all the details and seems to assume
that it is bad news. The oath formula that he uses to
encourage Samuel to "tell all"—"May God do so to you
and more also, if you hide anything from me of all
that he told you"—is only coercive if the content of
the message is actually bad. Eli seems to have drawn
the conclusion that the divine message to Samuel is
about his termination as priest. Eli could reasonably
suspect this both because of the message he himself
had received in 2:27-36, and because Yahweh had
chosen to avoid him and had spoken instead to the
young temple servant.

Eli's response to the message to Samuel has
usually been understood as an expression of resig-
nation and even pious submission to the will of God

(e.g. Keil and Delitzsch 1880:51; Hertzberg 1964:42;
Willis 1971:291; Stoebe 1973:126). McCarter's trans-
lation (1980:95) exemplifies the pious reading, "He is
Yahweh. Let him do what seems best to him!"

On the other hand, it seems odd that Eli,
who of all people should know that Yahweh's claim
that he did not try to stop his sons was not true,
should capitulate so easily to a spurious condemna-
tion.[9] Admittedly he is dealing with Yahweh, and
so has no higher authority to turn to, but he could
at least try to save his reputation. I would suggest
that Eli does not simply lie down, but his only
sympathizers are those who share his knowledge and
so appreciate the ironic ambiguity of his answer to
the message delivered to Samuel. Since Eli does not
know that we readers are out here listening to his
remark, our impression of the tragic side to his
character is strengthened by his remark. "He is
Yahweh. He does as he pleases." Eli's reply is an
expression of despair. How can man resist God?
Since Eli does not know that we readers are out
here listening, our impression of the tragic isolation
of his situation is strengthened. Certainly the
innocent, but now indoctrinated Samuel could not

appreciate the despair contained in Eli's ambiguous
reply. For Samuel, like the majority of commentators,
Eli's remark would only seem to be a humble acceptance
of just punishment.

Eli's remark is in agreement with 2:25, in
which the omniscient narrator reveals the hidden
divine intention. Yahweh wants to slay Eli's sons
and he is going to do it. Eli's remark also casts
an ominous shadow over the unknown future. If
Yahweh is so concerned with the proper punishment of
the sons of Eli that he allows his anger to outstrip
his sense of justice—his ability to discriminate
between guilty persons and innocent bystanders—then
anyone who is associated with or even in the vicinity
of the Elides is in danger. Yahweh's treatment of
Eli is a harbinger of things to come.

The alternative reading of Eli's reply to
Samuel as pious submission can be seen as a reflec-
tion of Eli's realization that Yahweh is answerable
to no one. Fearing a fate worse than death, Eli
hides his cynicism about Yahweh beneath the guise of
piety and submission to the Almighty. It is, there-
fore, not a question of favouring either one or the
other reading, but of realizing the ambiguity and

including both as mutually interacting opposites.[10]

Verse 19

The placement of a note that Yahweh is with
Samuel at this particular point highlights the fact
that Yahweh has confirmed Samuel as the replacement
for Eli. As always, Yahweh's presence with Israel,
or an Israelite, is to be considered as a sign of
divine favour and blessing (cf. Exod 3:12; Josh 1:5;
Zimmerli 1978:70-81). The description of Samuel's
growth is paralleled by 2:21, but there is a dif-
ference that underlines the fact that Yahweh has now
chosen Samuel as Eli's replacement:

2:21 wayyigdal hanna^{c}ar $\check{s}^e$mû,ēl ^{c}im-yhwh
3:19 wayyigdal $\check{s}^e$mû,ēl wyhwh hāyâ ^{c}immô

Samuel was growing with/under the influence of Yahweh.
Now, he has grown and Yahweh is with him. Yahweh's
choice of Samuel is highlighted both by the contextual
contrast provided by 2:21, and by the fact that Yahweh
is the subject of hāyâ in 3:19, which implies volition
on his part.

Most commentators have observed that the
expression, "he did not allow his words to fall to

the ground," indicates that the information conveyed
by Yahweh to Samuel and by Samuel to Eli accurately
describes subsequent events (e.g. McCarter 1980:99).[11]

    This observation from the narrator takes
the reader once again behind the human scenes to the
place of hidden divine activity. Yahweh has indoctri-
nated his apprentice with an interpretation of what
will happen to the Elides, and now he ensures that
events are made to correspond to that interpretation.
When the narrator tells us that Yahweh "did not allow
his words to fall to the ground" we can only believe
that Yahweh shaped the course of events to agree
with the words. The narrator's "back-stage" observa-
tion assures the reader that disaster will overtake
the Elides at the same time that it reveals the
divine hand moulding Samuel into a believer by shaping
events.

Verse 20

    The description of Israel's recognition of
Samuel's status as a "reliable" prophet of Yahweh
presupposes a message that Samuel gives, and which
proves to be true.[12] Both here and in v. 19, the
narrator makes a point of anticipating the fulfill-
ment of the judgement on the Elides. The people of

Israel, recognizing its fulfillment, come to a knowledge of Samuel's prophetic capabilities.

That the people's recognition is narrated prior to the event and even prior to Samuel's publication of his message (4:1), is neither a sign of a dislocated text nor of a misreading of v. 20. Only when the reader requires that the text proceed step by step, with narrative event, comment, or description proceeding in exact chronological order, do such problems arise.

W.J. Martin has recognized and described several instances of what he calls "dischronologized" narrative, in which events, as related in narrative sequence, are not in chronological sequence (1968). He suggests that such "dischronology" can be understood by analyzing its literary effect (1968:186). As Chatman says:

> Its [Plot's] order of presentation need
> not be the same as that of the natural logic
> of the story. Its function is to emphasize
> or de-emphasize certain story-events, to
> interpret some and to leave others to
> inference, to show or to tell, to comment
> or to remain silent, to focus on this or

that aspect of an event or character
(1978:43; cf. Sternberg 1978).

In the case of v. 20, the focus of attention
is not on Israel's perception of the fulfillment or
even on their reception of Samuel's word. Rather,
what all Israel—from Dan to Beersheba—comes to
understand is that Samuel is "reliable" or "confirmed"
(ne'^{e}mān) as a prophet for Yahweh. Like v. 19, v.
20 is a description from the narrator. In v. 19, he
revealed that Yahweh shaped events to confirm Samuel's
words, thereby confirming Samuel as his apprentice.
Now, in v. 20, the narrator directs the reader's
attention to the public reaction to Samuel's prophecy.
He focuses on Israel's perception of Samuel, and not
the events since their course is a foregone conclusion.
All Israel understands the prophecy and fulfillment as
a visible manifestation of the close relationship
between Samuel and Yahweh. Samuel is ne'^{e}mān to pro-
phesy for Yahweh; whatever Samuel prophesys will come
true by virtue of Yahweh's backing. Samuel has proven
himself as the mouthpiece of God. As such he is to
be repeated and perhaps even feared. As Jepsen
suggests, the people's recognition that Samuel is
ne'^{e}mān to Yahweh emphasizes their perception of a

rare closeness between Samuel and God (1977:296).

As in vv. 19 and 21, the narrator's concern is
not with chronology in v. 20; rather, he traces Yah-
weh's steps to legitimate Samuel as a prominent theo-
cratic mediator. Samuel proves himself to be and is
recognized as a reliable replacement for the priests
in the office of mediator. Verses 19-20 trace the
enactment of the two aspects of legitimation necessary
to any official mediator in Israel. First, the
individual, Samuel, is chosen and supported by God,
and then he is recognized by the people as capable of
functioning in the mediatory office, in this case to
prophesy for Yahweh (cf. Soggin 1967:6). It is this
concept of sacral and secular legitimation that
explains the order of the text here.[13] Yahweh has
.chosen Samuel, equipped him, and obtained public
recognition for him. Samuel, mediator par excellence,
has arrived.

Verse 21

With Samuel's "arrival," the break in
communication between Yahweh and Israel caused by
the Elide defection is repaired. Buber, pointing to
the three connected occurrences of the verb glh in
2:27; 3:7, 21, suggests "die alten unwürdig gewordenen

priesterlichen Offenbarungsträger werden durch·den
neuen würdigen prophetischen ersetzt" (1964:820).
Buber's suggestion is supported by. the structure of
ch. 3.   In vv. 1-2, the scarcity of the word of
Yahweh and the vision is associated with Eli's failing
sight.   Now, in v. 21, contact is restored, and
Yahweh reappears in Shiloh.   The self-revelation of
Yahweh to Samuel restores the word of Yahweh to
Israel (Péter-Contesse 1976:314).   This reappearance
of Yahweh is a result (indicated by kî) of his self-
revelation to Samuel ·by his word (Noth 1963:399).[14]

The structure of v. 21 consists of two
parallel sentences with a final preposition tag added
to the second.   The repetition of "in Shiloh"
emphasizes that the renewal through Samuel reaches to
the very heart of the damages done by the Elides, for
it was in the cult at Shiloh that they carried on
their priestly malpractise.   The final prepositional
clause, bidbar yhwh, when not emended (e.g. Buber
1956:125 n.5), or deleted (e.g. Ehrlich 1910:181)
stands outside the parallelism of the previous
sentence and is thereby foregrounded.   As in v. 7, it
is through the word of Yahweh that Yahweh himself is
revealed to Samuel.

The inauguration of Samuel as Israel's new
mediator is begun; therefore, with the message of doom
to the Elides. The reappearance of Yahweh occurs once
Samuel has received this message. The new era is
based on the revelation of the old era's passage.
Verse 21, far from being "etwas Posthumes" (Well-
huasen 1871:54) or "tautological" (Smith 1899:30),
offers a compact summary of the major development
of chs. 1-3 (cf. Robertson 1944:189-90). It is
through the announcement of the passage of the Elide
era that the new mediator receives his authorization,
and with that authorization Yahweh reopens the lines
of communication. The goal towards which the divine
initiative (cf. 1:5) was moving has been reached. The
Elides are doomed and Samuel has been equipped and
accepted as a replacement. The imbalance caused by
priestly excess has apparently been righted—the lack
of divine communication is ended. All seems well in
Israel once more.

One small item of business remains to be con-
cluded before the transition in mediators is completed.
The destruction of the Elides remains undone. The
narrator moves on to describe Yahweh's operations
towards that end in ch. 4. The reader has been

prepared for ch. 4 in numerous statements and sugges-
tions throughout chs. 1-3.

What the reader is not totally prepared for
are the disastrous side-effects that the punishment
will bring with it. It is those side-effects and
their implications that will occupy the centre of
attention in chs. 4-6. The principle result of this
first section of the narrative (chs. 1-3), namely
Samuel's installation as prophetic mediator, will
remain unaffected by the events of chs. 4-6; in fact,
it is Samuel as mediator who will serve as the prin-
cipal agent for repairing the damages caused by
the side-effects of the Elide punishment.

4. 1 Samuel 4

Verse 1

The first sentence in v. 1 picks up the tem-
poral development of the narrative, which was briefly
set aside in 3:19-21. Those verses gave a short
summary of a large time-span, even including events·
from the narrative's future (the fulfilled prophecy).
The summary described what happened when Samuel
prophesied in order to show how Yahweh went about
legitimating Samuel; it was not concerned with the
temporal sequence of the events. With 4:1, the
narrator returns to a consecutive rehearsal of events.

The content of the word of Samuel, spoken
to "all Israel," is not specified by the narrator.
The reader has already been told, though, that "all
Israel" recognized that Samuel was a reliable prophet
on account of Yahweh fulfilling his words (3:19-20).
Since the only word that Yahweh has revealed to
Samuel is the message of doom against the Elides, it
is probable that this message is the implied content
of the word in 4:1. Chapter 3:19-20 summarized the
subsequent course of events as it concerned Samuel's
prophetic capacity. Those events are now presented
in detail in ch. 4.

Willis has made a study of similar summaries in 1 Sam calling them "comprehensive anticipatory redactional joints." He suggests that a redactor uses such summaries to introduce major themes that are revealed in the _following_ traditional complex or unit (1973:295). One might also add that, as in 3:19-21, the anticipatory summary incidentally provides the reader with a rudimentary map by which to follow the events subsequently narrated. Such literary maps are especially useful in cases where subsequent events are complex and do not appear to follow logically from their antecedents. Since this is the actual reading experience of some readers of ch. 4 (e.g. Campbell 1975:200), the placement of 3:19-21 can be taken as evidence of the good literary sense of the narrator. Hence in chs. 4ff. the reader expects a narrative description of what is summarized in 3:19-21. Chapter 4:1 rewards this expectation by describing how Israel came to know of the prophecy against the Elides—Samuel told them (against Ehrlich 1910:181).

Once he has shown Samuel _actually_ transmitting the unspecified message to Israel (did Samuel, in fact, tell them everything?), the narrator

moves directly to a description of events that led to
the destruction of the Elides. Many commentators have
regarded 4:1b as abrupt and lacking connection to 4:1a
(e.g. Schicklberger 1973:25).[1] Following LXX, they
suggest MT has undergone haplography through homoio-
teleuton (e.g. McCarter 1980:103).[2] As Campbell notes,
what is at stake in the differences between LXX and MT
is not only the question of literary style, but also
the question of who began the hostilities—the
Israelites or the Philistines (1975:58)?

      While text-critical debate continues over
this verse, there is no basis, from a literary point
of view, for preferring one version to the other.
Chapter 4:1b of MT is neither too abrupt nor does it
require the additional material of LXX for logical
consistency. Chapter 4 presents a new scene in the
narrative. The shift in characters and backgrounds
does not imply literary disjunction anymore than a
cut and shift to a new scene is a result of something
having "dropped out" in film production. As in any
narrative medium, perspectival presentation sometimes
shifts abruptly, focusing on certain aspects of
separate scenes so as to accent specific connections
without the intervention of long, and unnecessarily

tedious, logical or causal connections.[3]

The LXX reading is neither better connected
to the preceding context nor a better introduction
to the following battle with the Philistines by
making them the aggressors in this scene. Schickl-
berger suggests that MT's statement that Israel went
out to meet the Philistines presupposes mention of a
Philistine deployment (1973:26). From the perspec-
tive of literary response, however, the narrative
could assume the Philistine advance and leave it as
an "indeterminacy" to be filled by the reader (cf.
Iser 1978).

On the other hand, MT does not even require
us to assume an indeterminacy. The statement, "Israel
went out to meet the Philistines[4] for battle," only
requires that the reader understand that there is
going to be a fight. Neither Israel nor the Phili-
stines are specifically labelled as the aggressor
because it is irrelevant. The balanced initiatve is
indicated by the parallel statements of vv. 1 and 2:

1) Israel goes out to meet (liqra$^{\circ}$t) the
Philistines for battle.

2) The Philistines get ready to meet
(liqra$^{\circ}$t) Israel. Each group is equally active.

Verse 1 focuses, therefore, not on who started it, but just on it—the fact of warfare.

The description of the Israelite campground's location is of significance later in the narrative, when Israel defeats the Philistines in the very location where it is defeated here in ch. 4 (cf. 7:12).

Verses 2-3

The battle is "joined with a clash" and Israel is smitten before the Philistines.[5] The use of the passive Niph^{c}al, wayyinnāgep, to describe Israel's losses is important. Already the narrator is hinting that the Philistines are merely agents of destruction, which originates from a higher authority. Israel is smitten "before" (lipnê) the Philistines. When the narrator follows this description with the active Hiph^{c}il, wayyakkû, he does not modify his previous interpretation of the defeat. The Philistines are still agents; the narrative merely continues with a description of the details of the event.[6] About four thousand men from Israel's ranks are killed.

In v. 3, the interpretation of the battle suggested by the narrator in v. 2 is supported by the participating Israelites' interpretation of their defeat. The narrator's verbal description,

"they were smitten," (wayyinnāgep) now becomes active with Yahweh as subject: "Why has Yahweh smitten us (n^{e}gāpānû) today before the Philistines." There is no question of Philistine responsibility; the elders immediately assume that Yahweh has smitten them "before the Philistines."

The basis of this assumption lies, of course, in the Israelite view of war.[7] Yahweh had established his covenantal kingship over Israel by defeating Egypt in the great battle that occurred when Moses led Israel out of Egypt (Exod 15; cf. P.D. Miller 1973:83, 113-17, 174-75). Yahweh and Israel agreed that the basis of the covenantal relationship between them was divine protection in war on the part of Yahweh and obedience to Yahweh on Israel's part (Exod 19:3-8). Israel's obedience to Yahweh's commandments guaranteed his protection in war, and hence, victory in war (Exod 23:22-24). Only one thing could ever defeat Israel in battle, namely its own sin (e.g. Josh 7-8). Warfare for Israel was not a contest between opposing forces but strictly an indicator of the state of covenantal relations between Israel and Yahweh (cf. Campbell 1975:65). Judg 2:14-15 supplies the classic expression of the Israelite view of

defeat. Israel's enemies are only victorious on account of Yahweh's will to defeat Israel.

Only two interpretations of the defeat at the hands of the Philistines are possible for Israel: either Israel or an Israelite has sinned, or Yahweh has reneged. Miller and Rogerts agree that only two interpretations are possible, but see an ambiguity in the question: was it Yahweh who put the Israelites to rout or were they (and consequently Yahweh) simply defeated by a mightier nation (and god) (1977:64, 70-75)? According to Miller and Roberts, ch. 4 suggests that the Philistines and their god have defeated Israel and its god (1977:71). This reading of the chapter is, however, in direct contradiction of vv. 2 and 3. There is no question in Israel's mind over Yahweh's responsibility for the defeat (v. 3), and the narrator implies in v. 2 that the Philistines are not ultimately responsible for Israel's defeat. The question, rather, is what to make of Yahweh's action—"Why has Yahweh smitten us before the Philistines?" (cf. Smith 1899:32).

The response of the elders suggests that they place the blame for the defeat on Yahweh (cf. Schulz 1919:72; against Mauchline 1971:70). The

elders say, "Let us get from Shiloh, the ark of the covenant of Yahweh." Their proposal presupposes two things: 1. Yahweh has a covenantal duty to fight Israel's enemies. The ark of the covenant is called for as a reminder to Yahweh of those duties;[8] 2. The elders do not say "What have we done?", or "Who sinned?" (cf. Budde 1902:34). They can only think that Yahweh has momentarily forgotten his covenantal responsibility, because they are aware of no sin on their part.

The elders' neglect of the possibility that human sin has brought on the defeat is a reflection of the narrator's concern, which is not with the question of the relationship between the sins of the people and defeat. He does not, after all, contradict the elder's omission of such a possibility, and in fact, he does everything he can in preceding scenes to present the people as without sin. Since the narrator appears to accept and agree with the elders' attribution of the cause of the defeat, an attribution that is strikingly unique in narratives about Israelite defeats in battle (contrast e.g., Josh 7; Judg 2-16; 2 Kgs 21:12-14; 2 Chron 86:11-21), the reader must also accept it. Refusal to do so is simply a refusal

to accept the conventions of the narrative, whereupon the reader becomes a writer of another story.

The purpose for bringing the ark into Israel's midst, on the battlefield, is not simply to bring Yahweh into action as a result of the presence and imperilment of his palladium; nowhere does v. 3 imply that the summons of the ark will automatically bring Yahweh to deliver Israel (so, for example, Rössler 1966:119; Willis 1971:301-02; Campbell 1979: 36). Yahweh is already active in the battle before the elders decide to summon the ark. The point of bringing the ark of the covenant of Yahweh (the name of Israel's covenantal God) is to remind Yahweh that his actions do not agree with his covenant. He is supposed to smite Philistines, not Israelites.

Another aspect of the elders' suggestion is seen in the explicit mention that it is to be brought from Shiloh. This association of the non-performing Yahweh with Shiloh, where the non- or mal-performing Elides are, may suggest that the elders perceive some connection between the military defeat and the misdeeds of the Silonite priests. (One recalls that Samuel's word in 4:1 may have been the word about the punishment on the Elides.) In any case, the

mention of Shiloh does, as Willis notes, presuppose

the prior description of the ark at Shiloh (1971:302).

The literary link invites the reader to form his own

conclusions about the relationship between Yahweh's

anomalous military performance and the previously

described situation at Shiloh. The reader may recall

from 3:2ff. that Yahweh revealed his plan for punish-

ing the Elides in the temple, where the ark was. At

least, the link makes room for the reader's specula-

tive anticipations of what the presence of the ark

will do for Israel.

    The final sentence of v. 3—"He/it will come

into our midst and deliver us from the hand of our

enemies"—can be read with either the ark or Yahweh

as subject. Since the elders know that it is

Yahweh who has smitten them, it is probable that

Yahweh should be understood as the subject of this

sentence. Reminded of his covenant by the ark,

Yahweh will come into the Israelites' midst and from

there, deliver them from the Philistines.[9]

Verse 4

    Acting on the elders' decision, the people

send for the ark, which receives an even longer title

in this verse. Despite the many different attempts

to break this ark title down into separate components,
Jackson is right when he observes that MT needs no
correction (1962:116). This is the most ceremonious
title given to the ark and Yahweh, "God of hosts," is
characterized in his martial aspect (Hertzberg 1964:
48).[10] The divine symbol is brought on stage dressed
in all its glory. The elders decided to remind Yahweh
of his duties with the "ark of the covenant of Yahweh";
what they get instead—courtesy of the narrator—is
the "ark of the covenant of Yahweh of hosts who sits
on the cherubim."

Only the reader is privy to the narrator's
characterization of the ark that is brought from
Shiloh. So far as Israel is concerned, they are
bringing "the ark of the covenant of Yahweh" as
planned. The narrator's perspective on the ark sheds
a different light on its arrival in the Israelite
camp. Emphasizing as it does the tremendous power
and divinity of Yahweh, the narrator's description
of the ark reminds the reader of who it is that is
being reminded of his duties. This God is not to be
trifled with. If Eli could say of Yahweh, "He is
Yahweh and does as he pleases" (3:18), then so much
the more so for the God whose ark gets this regal

title.

Accompanying the ark of this awesome God, the narrator tells us, are Eli's two sons, whose presence with the ark is indicated by the words, "And there" (w^{e}šām) (cf. 1:3; Wellhausen 1871:55; McCarter 1980: 102-03). As Stoebe suggests, the association plays on the foreboding doom announced first in chs. 2-3 (1973: 132). In 1:3, the identical introduction (w^{e}šām) to Eli's sons tells us that they are priests to Yahweh. Chapter 2 describes their priestly abuses and the consequent punishment assured to them by Yahweh's desire (2:25). By reintroducing them in the same way as 1:3, the narrator points out that these corrupt priests are now not simply "there" at Shiloh but "there" with Yahweh of hosts, who desires to kill them.

The structure of v. 4 stresses the ominous conjunction of the sons of Eli and Yahweh by repeating it twice. The order of repetition is significant. It traps the two sons of Eli "there," between two references to Yahweh's/God's ark:

> ...the ark of the covenant of Yahweh of hosts...
> and there are the two sons of Eli
> with the ark of the covenant of God,
> Hophni and Phinehas.

The two outside references name the adversaries—Yahweh
of hosts versus Hophni and Phinehas; the two inside
descriptions contrast them as man and God—the sons of
Eli versus God (hā^{ᵓe}lōhîm). The reader, aware as he is
of Yahweh's desire and intention to slay the sons of
Eli (2:25), is alerted by this ominous companionship
to the likelihood of the Elides' forthcoming demise;
syntactically trapped between Yahweh of hosts and God,
there is no escape for them.

Verse 5

Neither Israel nor Eli's sons seem to be aware of
the threat hinted at by the narrator and thus seen by
the reader. The ark is again described simply as "the
ark of the covenant of Yahweh," to which the people
respond with a great shout.

The resumptive use of this title for the ark can
be viewed as the narrator's return to a non-revelatory
mode of description with which he indicates that he
is returning to a simple description of the chain of
events after the revealing insights of v. 4. The
reader, favoured with the privileged information of
v. 4, however, knows that it is not simply the ark
of the covenant of Yahweh that goes with Eli's sons.
The Israelite welcome for "the ark of the covenant of

Yahweh" is a product of their misunderstanding of the reason for the first defeat. Although they attempt no specific explanation for Yahweh's behaviour, the Israelites' summons for the ark and their great shout upon its arrival indicate that they see no reason for continuing failure. They give vent to the great shout (t^{e}rû^{c}â g^{e}dôlâ), suggesting that they expect Yahweh to turn the battle in their favour.

P. Humbert has suggested that the t^{e}rû^{c}â was "l'acclamation sauvage mais rituelle de Yahvé le roi et le guide...le chef de guerre, celui qui révéla sa puissance à l'exode..." (1946:34).[11] Whether the Israelites shout simply because they believe their troubles are over, or as a further attempt to goad Yahweh into action on their behalf, is not made explicit by the narrative. Given that the ark is called as a reminder to Yahweh, it is possible that the t^{e}rû^{c}â, while expressing a sense of relief and hope, was also employed as a further reminder to spur Yahweh on to combat and victory at the head of Israel's troops.

Verses 6-9

The Philistine reaction to the ark's arrival affords the narrator a further opportunity to point

out to the reader the important implications of the
impending Israelite defeat (cf. Stolz 1972:49;
Campbell 1975:67). The Philistines deduce that the
Israelite gods have come into the enemy camp.[12] They
fear this new turn of events not because of the pre-
sence of the ark, but because they have heard of the
power of the Israelite gods.[13]

The Philistines wrongly assume that their previous
battle with Israel was waged in the absence of
Israel's gods. "Woe to us; it wasn't like this before"
(v. 7). The Philistines' despair reveals to the reader
that they are the unwitting instruments employed by
Yahweh in his dealngs with Israel, and more particu-
larly Israel's priests. The narrator, the reader, and
even the Israelite elders know that it <u>was</u> like this
before (v. 3), only "Israel's gods" acted in a way
perplexing to Israel and totally misleading to the
Philistines.

The Philistines' recollection of the Israelite
gods' victory over Egypt in the wilderness is an
obvious example of the narrator's use of a character's
voice to draw the reader's attention to important
theological-political considerations unobtrusively
(Cf. Smith 1899:34; Hertzberg 1964:48, who sense

something odd about the Philistines' comment, but are
not quite clear on what it is.) It was Yahweh's
victory over Egypt that began the covenant relation-
ship formed between himself and Israel in the wilder-
ness.[14] As a result of Yahweh's military victories
over their enemies, the Israelites came to see him
as their king (Exod 15:1-18; Deut 33:5; P.D. Miller
1973:174-75).

The Philistine question, "Who will deliver us from
the hand of these terrifying gods?" (v. 8), the gods
of the exodus, is, from the Israelite perspective if
not the Philistine, rhetorical. Only if the exodus
gods themselves allow it can the Philistines be
delivered. Hence, both from the Israelites' under-
standing of the previous battle (v. 3) and the
Philistines' fear of Israel's gods, the reader is
given to understand that any subsequent Philistine
victory is willed by Yahweh, god of the exodus. As
Buber observes, the question that is raised by the
inclusion of these exodus recollections is, what has
become of the covenant formed on the basis of the
exodus (1964:823)?

The Philistines' exhortation to be strong and to
act manly (v. 9) is understood by Stoebe as an

attempt to preclude any misunderstanding that the
subsequent loss of the ark was due to Yahweh's
inferiority to the Philistine gods (1973:132). The
Philistines rely on their human capacities and not
their gods in their battle against Israel's god. As
the reader knows from 1 Sam 2:4, 9-10, however,
human strength cannot defeat Yahweh. As a prelude
to the battle report in vv. 10-11 then, the Philistine
exhortation in v. 9 again directs the reader to regard
any subsequent Israelite defeat as the intention of
Yahweh. Verses 8-9 set up a battle between the
mighty gods of the exodus and the Philistine men.
This contrast is highlighted by the descriptions of
the opponents:

v. 8	v. 9
1. hā^{ɔe}lōhîm hā^{ɔ}addîrîm	^{ɔ}a^{-}nāšîm p^{e}lištîm
2. hā^{ɔe}lōhîm hammakkîm ^{ɔ}et-	ta^{c}abdû lā^{c}ibrîm
-miṣrayim	

The Philistines are mere men, potential slaves, fight-
ing the awesome gods who destroyed might Egypt.[15]
Clearly the Philistines do not have a chance if they
really have to fight Yahweh (cf. Schicklberger 1973:
31).

Verse 10

The unexpected, which the reader expects by now, occurs: the Philistines fight; they are subject of the verb (wayyillāḥ^amù) indicating, perhaps, their dominance over the Israelites (cf. v. 2). Israel, on the other hand, is subject only of wayyinnāgep, "they were smitten," an indication of their poor showing in the battle. Obviously Yahweh has not been constrained by the reminders of his covenant. The people of the gods that devastated Egypt (hammakkîm ʾet-miṣrayim b^ekol--makkâ, v. 8) are themselves devastated (watt^ehî hammakkâ g^edôlâ) by the Philistines, mere men. The entry of the ark into the Israelite camp saw Israel united in giving expression to the t^erû^câ (wayyāri^cû kol-yiśrā ʾēl) (v. 5). The second Philistine victory destroys this regrouping, which was centered on the ark's presence, and the Israelites flee separately, each to his own tent (v. 10; cf. McCarter 1980:107).

Israel's expectations, or at least any hopes for a reversal in military fortunes, are clearly disappointed by the second defeat. This reversal of Israel's hopes, which were justifiable on the basis of Yahweh's covenanted commitment, fulfills the prophecy of 2:32. Yahweh had promised Eli that he

would see affliction because of sin in what should be good for Israel.[16] Now, in the course of events leading up to Eli's sons' punishment, Israel experiences a terrible defeat instead of the expected, and covenantally assured victory. The subsequent fulfillment of the predicted sign (2:34) confirms that it is indeed the sin of the priests that has brought defeat upon Israel.

Verse 11

The ark of God ($^{\jmath e}$lohîm) is, like the Israelites in v. 10, subject of the passive; it is taken (nilqāḥ) by the Philistine army.

The loss of the ark in battle (nilqāḥ) is the ironic counterpart to the elder's decision to bring (niqḥâ, v. 3) the ark into the camp as a reminder to Yahweh of his military duty (noted by J.P. Fokkelman in a letter to me). God ($^{\jmath e}$lohîm) appears to have been overpowered by man ($^{\jmath a}$nāšîm, v. 9).[17] The reader is well aware of the fact, however, that the Philistine victory is engineered by Yahweh, who has his own purposes, the accomplishment of which is now described.

Yahweh allows his ark to be captured and so allows Eli's sons to be killed. He has finally

executed his heart's desire to kill them (lah^amîtām,
2:25). The conjunctive description of the capture
of the ark and the death of Eli's sons, without any
mention of the Philistine agency, focuses attention
on the connection, known to be causal from the
previous context, of these two incidents.

An interesting structural parallel between
v. 11 and v. 4 supports the latter observation.
Ranged side by side, the correspondences highlight
one important difference. Both sentences are prefaced
with a mention of the ark; in v. 4 it is brought by
the Israelites into their camp on the advice of the
elders (niqḥâ) and in v. 11 it is taken (nilqāḥ) by
the Philistines. Then follows each of these sentences:

v. 4   v. 11

w^ešām š^enê b^enê-ʿēlî   ûš^enê b^enê-ʿēlî

ʿim-ʾarôn b^erît hāʾelōhîm   mētû

ḥopnî ûpînḥās   ḥopnî ûpînḥās

Verse 11, in place of a note about the presence of
Eli's sons with the ark, inserts a verbal description
of their death; their presence with the ark is

transformed into their death.

The description of the ark as the $^{ɔa}rôn$
$^{ɔe}lōhîm$ is important not only for the contrast it
provides with the Philistine victors, who are mere
"mem" and unlikely conquerors of gods; it also helps
the reader to avoid misinterpreting the second
defeat as the Israelites and Philistines do. Israel
had summoned the ark of the covenant of Yahweh. When
the ark is captured, they can only believe that the
covenant is broken and that Yahweh has abandoned them
(4:21-22). Yet the reader knows that it is not the
ark of the covenant of Yahweh that is taken. Rather
it is the ark of God, the tool of him who allows men
to "defeat" him and so to further the divine aims.

As Campbell notes, the simultaneous death of
Hophni and Phinehas is the sign, comprehensible to
Eli and the reader, that the prophecy of 2:27-36 has
been set into action (1979:35). In as much as the
description of the battle culminates with the sign,
the narrative presents the death of Eli's sons and
not the capture of the ark, which is only an important
contributing factor, as the final, and most important
consequence of the battle (cf. Miller and Roberts
1977:65). That the entire conflict between Israel

and the Philistines culminates in the fulfillment of
the prophetic sign is a further indication, available
to Eli and the reader, that Yahweh has had the guiding
hand in these events.

The death of Hophni and Phinehas resolves
the problem of wicked priests, at least from Yahweh's
point of view (Miller and Roberts 1977:66). Yet the
elimination of Eli's sons has brought with it dire
consequences. Innocent Israelites have also been
injured, even killed, and Israel's theological-
political covenant has, from Israel's vantage,
apparently been revoked. Against Miller and Roberts
it should be noted that the second defeat does not
call into question the power or claims of Yahweh
(1977:70-72). Israel is well aware that their defeat
is willed by Yahweh (v. 3) and the capture of the ark
does not change this one bit. Just as Yahweh operates
without the ark in the first battle, so he uses it in
the second battle as the instrument of Hophni's and
Phinehas' perdition. The reader, knowing that Yahweh
was responsible for the first defeat which resulted
in the call for the ark of the covenant (and Eli's
sons), and that Yahweh desired to kill Eli's sons
and promised to do so, can only regard their deaths

in the second defeat as Yahweh's doing. The issue
raised by the second defeat is the same as that raised
by the first; it is not Yahweh's power that is
questioned, but his covenantal faithfulness.

The reader, privileged with information
unavailable to Israel, knows that Yahweh has not
reneged on his covenantal duties, but only appears
to have done so. At the same time, the reader is
able to appreciate the problems posed to Israel by
the defeats. The narrative, therefore, poses
separate questions with regard to the covenantal
relationship—one to the reader and another, within
the story, to Israel.

For the reader the problem is not Yahweh's
abandonment of the covenant but the justice of Yahweh,
"who does as he pleases," and the weakness of the
theocratic political system as a practical government
for the Israelite nation. Yahweh may have cause and
even precedent (e.g. Josh 7) for his drastic means of
punishing Eli's sons, yet the injustice of his
actions and the political uncertainties inherent in
the theocracy are underlined in this narrative.
Campbell, who wants to say that the defeats are not
aimed at punishing the Elides, is a good example of

a reader impressed by the political dangers posed by
the theocracy.

> Yet the disproportion between the deserved
> disgrace of the Elides and concomitant
> disaster for Israel is glaring. The loss
> of the ark, two defeats and the death of
> 34,000 men is a steep price to pay for the
> punishment of two or three errant priests.
> Can this be justified by the central role
> of these priests in the nation?, (1979:35).

Is Yahweh's covenantal justice just? Is the covenant
along with its mediators of real value to Israel,
given that Israel in fact suffers because of it?

The question raised for Israel, on the other
hand, is the question of Yahweh's allegiance to his
covenant with his people. The call for the ark of
the covenant of Yahweh was a call for responsibility
on his part. The second defeat suggests, not that
Yahweh is weak, but that he has abandoned Israel.
As subsequent interpretations of the second defeat
suggest, Israel takes the defeat as a signal of the
end to the special relationship between Yahweh and
his people.

Verses 12-18

The fulfillment of prophecy continues. The literary links between vv. 12-18 and 3:2-18 confirm that the defeats are Yahweh's doing as he goes about punishing the Elides:

3:2 Eli lies in his place.	**4:13** Eli sits on his chair.
3:2 Eli cannot see.	**4:15** Eli cannot see.
3:4 God calls Samuel to tell him what he is about to do (the ear-tingling event) (cf. above on 3:11).	**4:10-11** Israel is defeated.
3:5 As a result, Samuel runs (<u>wayyorāṣ</u>) to Eli.	**4:12-13** A Benjaminite runs (<u>wayyorāṣ</u>) to tell what has happened.
3:11-14 Yahweh reveals his plans to Samuel. (Eli does not know what God says because he is "blind" and does not receive visions.)	**4:14-15** Eli does not know what has happened because he cannot see.
3:16-17 Eli, wanting to know (4:16) what God said,	**4:16** Eli asks for the news (<u>meh-hāyâ haddābār b^enî</u>).

calls Samuel ($\check{s}^e m\hat{u}^{\,\flat}\bar{e}l\ b^e n\hat{i}$)
and asks what God said
($m\hat{a}$ haddābār).

3:18	4:14
Samuel tells all (wayyagged-lô $\check{s}^e m\hat{u}^{\,\flat}\bar{e}l$ $^\flat$et-kol-hadd^{e}bārîm).	The messenger tells Eli what happened (wayyaggēd l$^{ec}\bar{e}l\hat{i}$).
3:18	4:17
Contents of Samuel's message: everything (including what Yahweh had previously said in 2:27-36 according to 3:12).	Content of message: Israel fled, great losses, Eli's sons dead, and the ark taken.

The appearance of the messenger alone is enough
for anyone seeing him to know that Israel was defeated
(v. 12; Campbell 1975:78). Eli is unable to see the
facts, however, and must ask. The description of Eli
in v. 13 is paralleled in 1:9, with the difference that
Eli is no longer called "the priest" and he no longer
sits at the doorpost of the temple. Instead, he sits
atop the gate, watching because he was fearful on
account of the ark.[18]

Eli's fear has been the subject of some debate.
Campbell, who sees the loss of the ark and the
interpretation of that loss as the primary concern of

ch. 4, suggests that the text's explicit statement
requires that we understand Eli to be fearing for the
ark, and presumably, its safety (1979:37). P.R. Davies,
on the other hand, notes that hrd does not mean to be
concerned or worried, but rather to be fearful and
trembling (1977:12; cf. BDB "terrify," p. 353).
According to Davies, Eli is afraid of the ark and for
his sons, because of their sins and, one might add,
because of the prophecy. The disagreement extends to
the understanding of the focus of ch. 4: for Campbell
it is the loss of the ark, for Davies it is Eli and
his family.

In fact, both Campbell and Davies are correct
insofar as it is possible to have a "correct" inter-
pretation. The chapter is concerned with the punish-
ment of the Elides, but as Miller and Roberts note,
that introduces a new problem, the loss of the ark
(1977:66). It is likely that Eli fears both the loss
of the ark and the potentially dangerous situation of
his sons, who are accompanying it. We may assume that
Eli shares the elders' assumption that Yahweh was
responsible for the first defeat, especially in view of
Yahweh's last message to Samuel. Knowing that Yahweh

had promised the death of his two sons and that Yahweh
was acting very weirdly towards Israel, Eli could be
expected to entertain fears for his sons' safety and
misgivings about the possibility that his sons had
brought this evil on Israel (cf. 2:32; 3:12, and the
interpretation above).

It is important to note that when the ark,
accompanied by his sons, goes out to the battlefield,
Eli does not worry about the danger of the situation
for the ark or his sons; his fear is explicitly focused
on the ark alone. Eli's attention, attuned by the
prophetic messages of chs. 2 and 3, is drawn to a single
aspect of the situation, the presence of the ark and
what that might portend. Further detailing of his
concern is left to subsequent verses.

The scene at the entrance of the ark to the
Israelite camp is tragically mirrored by the messenger's
entrance to the city. In v. 5, all Israel (kol-
-yiśrā'ēl) had voiced an earth-shaking $t^e r\hat{u}^c\hat{a}$ on the
ark's arrival in the camp. In v. 13, the whole city
(kol-hā$^c\hat{i}$r) cries out at the messenger's report.
The Philistines, hearing the sound of the $t^e r\hat{u}^c\hat{a}$ ask
"What is the meaning of this great $t^e r\hat{u}^c\hat{a}$" (v. 6).
The narrator tells us that they realized that the ark

had arrived. Eli, on the other hand, when he hears the sound of the outcry and asks, "What is the meaning of this outcry (hehāmôn)," (cf. v. 5, wattēhōm) has to be told. Instead of a narratorial comment telling us that he realizes what has happened (as in v. 6), the narrator tells us that he was an old man (lit. 98 years old) who could not see. As previously (3:2), Eli's blindness is more than physical and the narrator uses it to compare him unfavourably, first with Samuel and now with the Philistines.[19] As Dorn notes, v. 15 does provide general background to the narrative (Dorn 1978:318-19), but more importantly, it renders a subtle judgement on Eli, who is even less perceptive than the Philistines. As in ch. 3 where he has to ask what Yahweh said (v. 17), now Eli has to ask what Yahweh has done (v. 16).

The messenger's perception of the climax of the second defeat differs from the narrator's (cf. vv. 10-11). Instead of placing the death of Eli's sons last, the messenger regards the capture of the ark as the final blow. The difference is significant and indicative of the gradual change of focus that occurs in ch. 4. The narrator's order in v. 11 places the military defeat first, which leads to the capture

of the ark, which leads to the deaths of Hophni and Phinehas. The list follows the causal sequence that Yahweh uses to kill the Elides. The messenger's list, on the other hand, is an expression of an interest in the consequences of the defeat for Israel. The list gives these consequences in ascending order of importance: first the people are destroyed, then the priests are killed, and finally, the ark of God is taken.[20] What will become of Israel?

When Eli hears the last item in the messenger's list, he falls off his chair and breaks his neck (v. 18). The narrator's explanation of the cause of Eli's death, "for the man was old (zāqēn) and heavy (kābēd)," places Eli's death alongside his lack of control over his sons as a consequence of old age. Though Eli's death fulfills Yahweh's prediction that there would be no old man (zāqēn, 2:32) in his house, the narrator ensures that the reader will remember that Eli's punishment is for the "crime" of becoming old and feeble. By tying Eli's death explicitly to his age and decrepit condition (kābēd), the narrator emphasizes the correspondence of his death with his "crime" and plays down the actual cause of death, the broken neck. The expositional intrusion suggests that the narrator

is more concerned that the reader recall why Eli is
dying than he is with the actual circumstances of the
death. The death of the old man reminds the reader
of the injustice of the whole scene, which is directed
by the a-rational divinity, "Who does as he pleases"
(3:18).

Commentators have often taken Eli's reaction
in v. 18 as confirmation that Eli was fearful for the
ark's safety in v. 13 (e.g. Campbell 1979:37). Hertz-
berg, for example, says that "it is the news that the
ark has been captured and not that his sons have been
killed, that is the direct cause of the old man's
death" (1964:49; cf. Smith 1899:30; Campbell 1975:80,
1979:37; Miller and Roberts 1977:66; McCarter 1980:
116).

Careful attention to what the narrator tells
us in v. 18 suggest an interesting alternative. What
Eli hears, according to the narrator, is everything
up to and including "the ark of God." The narrator
explicitly states that when the messenger mentioned
"...the ark of God" Eli fell and died. Whether or
not Eli actually heard the word nilqāḥâ, "was taken,"
is debatable; the point made by the narrator is that
immediately upon hearing the words, "the ark of God,"

mentioned after the message about the defeat and the

death of his sons, Eli fell to his death. It may be

that Eli had already guessed what had happened to the

ark on the basis of his knowledge about the defeat and

his sons' death. After all, his sons were accompanying

the ark as a priestly guard. But the narrator's

obvious omission of the word nilqāḥâ from his descrip-

tion of what Eli heard before his death places primary

emphasis on the fact of the collocative mention of

Eli's sons' death with "the ark of God." Having heard

that his sons were dead, Eli recognized the fulfill-

ment of the sign (2:34). Upon hearing the words "the

ark of God" Eli surely recognizes God's hand in all

of this and is so overcome that he falls to his death.

Hence although Campbell is correct to observe that the

messenger's list presents the capture of the ark as

the most important consequence of defeat; he is wrong

to see Eli's death as confirmation of this (1975:80).

Eli and his sons are solely catalysts of the problem

they create for Israel and are not concerned with

the consequences of the lost ark. The ambiguity of

v. 13 will, at this point, be reinterpreted by the

reader in light of v. 18 which is clear (cf. Perry

1979:46-48). Eli fears on account of the ark of God

in v. 13, since he knows that the ark's God is going to kill his sons. In v. 18, he is not interested in the ark per se, but only with the mention of it in connection with his sons' deaths.

The note that Eli judged Israel for forty years is often passed over with the comment that it is of deuteronomistic provenance, designed to incorporate Eli's career into the framework of the book of Judges (e.g. Smith 1899:36; McCarter 1980:114). While this redactional hypothesis may be true, it does not apprehend the effect of the notice on the narrative. Hertzberg faces this question and decides that the notice shows the damage done to Israel's social and political institutions by the loss of the ark (1964: 50). This interpretation can be expanded.

First, it is not because the ark is lost that Israel experiences this blow to its leadership. Rather it is the corruption of the priestly leadership of Eli's sons that provokes Yahweh to arrange this defeat and to allow the loss of the ark. Viewed in the light of the role played by previous judges in Israelite history, the conclusion to "judge" Eli's career and its effect on Israel is ironic.[21] The reader's attention is directed to this ironic contrast by the

formulaic obituary notice, which follows the examples
of obituary notices about other judges in the book of
Judges. Such obituary notices were usually prefaced
with a description of how the judge delivered Israel
"from the hand of their enemies" (e.g. Judg 2:18; 3:31;
8:28). Eli's obituary notice, on the other hand, comes
immediately after a detailed description of total
chaos brought on Israel as a result of the sin of its
priestly leaders. The system of theocratic mediators
seems to have backfired.

Verses 19-22

The news of the ark's capture and the death of
her father-in-law and her husband causes Phinehas'
wife to go into premature labour, and the delivery
brings about her death ($k^{ec}\bar{e}t$ $m\hat{u}t\hat{a}h$, v. 20). She
takes neither interest nor satisfaction in her accom-
plishment in bearing a son. Her only action with
respect to her son is to name him and even this act
reveals that her thoughts are elsewhere (cf. McCarter
1980:115). The name she gives to her child, Ichabod,
means "Where is the glory?" or, "Alas, the glory!"
(McCarter 1980:115-16).

Like Eli, Phinehas' wife is mortified by the
news of the battle. She too hears a list of three

items, which are summarized by the narrator in the
following order: the capture of the ark of God, the
death of her father-in-law (Eli), and the death of her
husband (observed by Fokkelman in a letter to me). In
her case, the news brings on her labour pains (v. 19).
She gives birth to a son, but dies soon after.

Phinehas' wife presents an interpretation of
the crisis that reveals that she either has not, or
refuses to come to grips with the implications of
the connection between the defeats and the word of
Samuel given in 4:1a. To her the second defeat is
disastrous because "glory" has departed from Israel.
Her two separate but parallel statements on the
departed glory (vv. 21-22) seem contradictory and have
given rise to emendations and excisions to remove the
conflict (cf. Schicklberger 1973:38-42, Stoebe 1973:
135). The seeming contradiction can be resolved,
however, by paying close attention to the differences
between the two verses.

The first statement (v. 21) is a narratorial
description of how she knows that glory has departed
from Israel. "She said glory has departed from
Israel with respect to (ʾel) the captured ark, her
father-in-law, and her husband." Campbell (1979:37)

has suggested that "glory" refers to the loss of the ark, but this interpretation neglects v. 21, which emphasizes equally the ark and the priests. Davies makes the opposite mistake, suggesting that "glory" refers primarily to Eli and Phinehas (1977:12). de Robert comes closer to the mark when he suggests that "glory" refers both to the ark, Israel's esteemed divine symbol, and Eli and Phinehas, Israel's honoured, prestigious priests (1979:352-53). These prestigious symbols and honoured figures are supposed to be Israel's glory. The difficulty with de Robert's suggestion is that only the ark has left Israel; Eli and Phinehas are dead and in Israel.

Schulz takes an entirely different approach. Citing Jer 3:16ff; 14:21; and 17:12, he suggests that *kābôd* without the definite article may be a circumlocution for Yahweh (1919:83-84).[22] Elaborating on Schulz's suggestion, one might note that the ark was the physical symbol of Yahweh's presence with Israel (cf. vv. 3-7; Num 14:39-45). The priests were installed by God as operators of the sacrificial cult (1 Sam 2:28), the purpose of which was to remove the impurities caused by sin (2:29). These impurities were believed to attack both man and God, the latter

in his sanctuary (J. Milgrom 1976:766). The pollution
of the sanctuary by human sin drives God out from the
midst of his people (cf. Num 5:1-4; Deut 23:9-14).
The priests are, therefore, agents of the presence of
God in Israel. The narrator suggests, in v. 21, that
Phinehas' wife says that the divine presence has left
Israel,[23] and points to the capture of the ark and
the deaths of the priests as indications of the divine
absence (cf. Gutbrod 1956:41). Without these instru-
ments and tokens of the divine presence; Phinehas'
wife assumes that God cannot be present with Israel
anymore.

The second statement (v. 22) is a "tagged
quotation" of Phinehas' wife's view on when or why
the divine presence left Israel. If we translate kî
as "in that," then the verse seems to suggest that
the capture of the ark was the first visible mani-
festation that the presence had left. The deaths of
the priests are comprehensible because Yahweh is no
longer around to defend them. His absence is
inferred from the capture of his ark. Were he present,
he would not allow such a thing. If, on the other
hand, we read kî causally, the verse becomes a strong
expression of the view that Yahweh's presence is tied

to the ark.   The presence left Israel because the ark
was captured.

The picture of the distraught wife of Phinehas
offers a contrastive parallel to that of Hannah.   In
ch. 1, we see a barren woman who, thanks to the inter-
vention of God, gives birth to a son and celebrates
the divine action by naming her son in honour of God.
For Hannah, the birth of Samuel is a jubilant affair,
a time for praise of God and celebration of his aid
to the faithful (2:1-10).   For the reader, the birth
of Samuel was the first step in a series of events
that were being shaped in accordance with some obscure
divine plan.   The birth of Phinehas' wife's child
stands as the concluding event to that plan.   In
contrast to Hannah, Phinehas' wife's comment on divine
intervention is full of despair.   Ichabod, "Alas, the
glory," is a living reminder of the undesirable effect
that Yahweh's intervention (or lack of appropriate
intervention) can have, even on his own people.
Hannah was typically overjoyed at the birth of her
son, yet Phinehas' wife, who should also be happy,
pays no heed to the news of her accomplishment,
overpowered as she is by the news of the disaster (v.
20).

The contrast between these two child-bearers is clear and it reveals that events in Israel have taken a turn for the worse. Since in both cases it is divine intervention that provokes the mothers' reactions, the reader looks forward to a third intervention that will again restore the favourable reaction.

By allowing the wife to voice her own interpretation of the disaster, the narrator creates an opportunity for the reader to reflect on the course of events from yet another vantage, namely that of a human character with limited horizons. The reader has been privileged to know the true cause of defeat and shares few if any of the wife's thoughts about Yahweh's supposed absence from Israel. Neither she nor the elders (v. 3) seem to have linked the defeats with the word of Samuel. Instead, they think in terms of God's abandoment of (v. 3) or departure from (v. 22) Israel. What is a simple punishment of sin from Yahweh's perspective is experienced by Israel as a religious and existential crisis.

The reader is forced to consider the two perspectives on the defeat and to integrate them. He knows the real cause, yet he also sympathizes, as

a human being and, perhaps, as an Israelite, with the
wife's and elders' interpretations of defeat. His
omniscient perspective on the entire episode allows
him to see the injustices of the slaughter and brings
him to agree with the elders, who view the defeat as
a failure of Yahweh to do what he promised (vv. 3-4).
This sympathy for Israel is strengthened by the
impression, gained from the narratorial intimation
in 2:25, that the entire episode could have been
avoided had not Yahweh desired the death of Eli's sons.

What emerges for both the reader and Israel
is the unpredictability of Yahweh, and for the reader
alone, the apparent irrationality and even the
injustice of Yahweh's means of punishing the priests.
The narrative displays the potential danger of having
a god living amongst men and serving as their minister
of national defense. The controls and insurance
against disaster in this situation are the priests
and the cult. When these means of insulating the
community against the awful powers of the divinity
fail there is no back-up system (cf. 2:25). The
narrative exposes a weakness inherent in the theo-
cratic polity, namely the fallible human mediator(s)
between God and man, and the consequent danger to

the community of the unleased wrath of the punishing
God, "who does what he pleases."

As Levine points out, Yahweh's wrath knows no
distinctions and is uncontrollable when unleased
(1974:71). Yahweh is portrayed as a demonic power,
dwelling in the innermost sanctuary and requiring
that his worshippers defend themselves from his wrath.
Israel was willing to risk the dangers of divine
immanence in order to gain the blessings thereby
made possible (1974:71). The episode in 1 Sam 2-4
questions the viability of the political system
established to accommodate the divine presence.
Problems between the priests and Yahweh interfere
with the nation's defense, due to the constitutionally
based lack of distinction between the sacred and pro-
fane aspects of national existence. Similarly,
Israel experiences an existential and religious crisis
when it is defeated in war due to this same lack of
distinction.

The reader is left waiting for a resolution
of the difficulties created in the course of punish-
ing the Elides. Yahweh has estranged himself from
Israel. How will he repair the damage done to his
relationship with them? The process of reconciliation

is described in chs. 5-7.

5. 1 Samuel 5

Excursus: Perspective and Knowledge
in 1 Sam 5:1-6:11

The events of 5:1-6:11 are reserved for the
eyes of the narrator and his reader. The defeated
Israelites in the story are not allowed any insight
into the reasons for the return of the ark in 6:12,
nor do they know what Yahweh or the ark have been
doing during the time of the ark's stay amongst the
Philistines. By intentionally limiting access to
these events the narrator illuminates the meaning of
Israel's defeat for his reader, while leaving Israel
in the dark. The revelation of Yahweh's superiority
to Dagon and the Philistines is a clear testimony to
Yahweh's intentions in the Israelite defeats (Gutbrod
1956:44; Miller and Roberts 1977:71). The reader is
granted absolute certainty regarding the real causes
and results of the Israelite defeat in ch. 4.

At the same time, however, the reader is aware
that the Israelites share neither his omnipresent
perspective nor his certainty about the meaning of
their defeat. Even though the narrative states that
"the word of Samuel was (broadcast) to all Israel"
(4:1), the problem of correlating that prophecy with

specific events remained. While the reader is privi-
leged with corroborating details such as 5:1-6:11 by
the narrator, Israel sees only the bare facts and only
some of those. The reactions of the city-dwellers
(4:13) and of Phinehas' wife (4:20-22) illustrate the
initial confusion over the significance of Israel's
defeat.

The reader sees all and knows all, but is
forced to recognize the singularity of his vantage
by the presence, in the story, of an Israel that can-
not share his view. Since the reader is also aware
of the fact that he would normally share Israel's
limited perspective, his privileged access to nar-
rative events also become a privileged opportunity
for reflection on the encounter in history between
God and man, and on the implications of the normally
limited human access to an intelligible perspective
on the divine action. Though the narrator does not
himself explicitly engage in such reflection, he
does encourage his reader to do so by allowing him
the use of the omniscient point of view.

It is also important to be aware of the
reverse side of the omniscient perspective. Just as
the narrator can use his omniscience to create an

opportunity for reader reflection on the problems of human limitations in knowledge, he can also give his reader an experiential grasp of those problems by denying him a share in the omniscience that is always available to the narrator. So in 6:19, for example, the narrator resigns the reader to a view of divine action "from below," thereby allowing the reader a fuller appreciation of Israel's perspective on that particular action.[1]

As the majority of commentators have observed, 5:1-5 demonstrate Yahweh's complete superiority to Dagon, the Philistine god. Only on the basis of this demonstration is it usually inferred that Yahweh was responsible for the Israelite defeat (e.g. Campbell 1975:92; Miller and Roberts 1977:71; McCarter 1980:124-25). Miller and Roberts suggest that vv. 1-5 are a vindication of Yahweh's power in response to the doubt cast thereon by the Israelite defeat (1977:70-71). As Campbell intimates, however, Israel was never in doubt about Yahweh's role in the battle—the question they asked was why Yahweh had smitten them, not whether He had (1975:92). In addition, one might add that the reader has no doubts about Yahweh's responsibility, given his prior knowledge of Yahweh's

intent gained from chs. 1-4. For whom, then is this
demonstration? The only answer is that it is for the
Philistines. Israel is unaware of the events in the
temple at Ashdod and the reader is in no doubt about
Yahweh's abilities, but the Philistines appear to have
been in a position to misunderstand their success.
From 4:9 it should be recalled that the Philistines
plunged into battle as "men" against the powerful
and mighty gods of the exodus. Their apparent victory
might be taken by them as an indication that they had
conquered those mighty gods.

As in the case of King Nebuchadnezzar, who
was reduced to an animal existence for thinking that
he was responsible for his success rather than God
(Dan 4:20-37), the Philistines are made to remember
their proper station whether they have forgotten it or
not.[2] The god is smashed and they themselves are
stricken with a plague of tumors. Perhaps the best
comment on ch. 5 is contained in a line from Hannah's
song, "man cannot prevail by strength" (2:9). The
episode is, however, not so much a vindication of
Yahweh's powers as it is a glorification of them.
The keynote of Yahweh's Philistine venture is
glorification amongst the nations (6:5-6).

Verse 1

Verse 1 introduces a new scene in the chain of events consequent to the Israelite defeat (cf. Schicklberger 1973:100; against Campbell 1975:83-84). The positioning of p^elištîm first in the sentence emphasizes the Philistine initiative as subject (cf. Campbell 1975:83). At the same time the syntax of v. 1 also serves to distinguish this new scene from the preceding scene in ch. 4 (Miller and Roberts 1977:41; cf. Budde 1902:39; Schulz 1919:84). The emphasis on the Philistine initiative is also seen when v. 1 is compared with 4:22. In 4:22, the ark is subject of the passive "was taken" (nilqah), but in 5:1 the Philistines take over as subject of the same verb ($lāq^e$hû). Ehrlich notes that lāqah, in this incidence "heisst hier nicht nehmen, sondern, wie oben 4:11, 17, 21, 22, erbeuten" (1910:183). The point of such emphasis is, as in the following verses, to show that the Philistines deserve the punishment they get. They act presumptuously, as though they had won the victory and are bringing home their trophy (Miller and Roberts 1977:42-43).

Verse 2

The repetition of a large part of v. 1 in

v. 2 is reminiscent of certain aspects of poetic
parallelism and need not be taken as a redundancy to
be explained by the text's compositional history
(Wellhausen 1871:58; Miller and Roberts 1977:41;
against Dhorme 1910:55; Stoebe 1973:138; Campbell
1975:84-85; cf. Kugel 1981:59-95). Verse 2 specifies
exactly where in Ashdod they brought the ark. The
emphasis on the Philistine initiative continues in
v. 2; they are subject of all three active verbs,
while the ark is mentioned three times only as object
of the verbs. The Philistine manipulation of the
ark, so strongly highlighted in vv. 1-2, is soon to
end.[3]

Verses 3-4

The significance of Dagon's fall continues to
be debated by scholars. Does the verse depict a
battle of gods? Is it Yahweh or the ark that brings
down Dagon? Is Dagon worshipping Yahweh or is he
lying at his feet in defeat? In the two verses
themselves these sorts of consideration are not given
special prominence. No conflict is described. The
contest is really no contest. Yahweh does not act
and the ark is impassive. Only Dagon does anything,
and he simply falls to his face before the ark.[4]

The reader is allowed to see only the results
of the nightly activity. The activity itself is
intentionally disregarded. The scene of the morning
after is set forth in a simple, matter-of-fact
description that evokes neither surprise nor excite-
ment in the reader. There is no hint that either
Yahweh or the ark has lifted a finger in this "contest."
Dagon, the inferior, naturally falls with his face to
the ground before his superior (cf. Miller and Roberts
1977:44).[5]

The first fall of Dagon turns the tables on
the Philistines. In vv. 1-2 they took (wayyiqhû) the
ark and brought it to the house of Dagon, setting it
next to Dagon. When Dagon falls from his former
estate, it is him whom the Philistines have to take
(wayyiqhû) and return to his place. The reversal of
fortunes, indicated by the parallel and contrastive
verbs describing actions with the ark and Dagon as
objects, indicates that it is simply the presence of
the ark that brings about Dagon's downfall. When in
the presence of a superior, an inferior god quite
naturally shows deference.

As v. 2 is a development of v. 1, so v. 4
develops the implications of v. 3. The first half

of v. 4 virtually repeats the first half of v. 3, while the second half contains a new development. This time Dagon seems to be broken up by his fall. His head and the palms of his hands are severed on the threshold of the temple leaving "only Dagon on him."[6] Against Miller and Roberts, one must maintain that Dagon is not "slaughtered by Yahweh" (1977:45). The mythological parallels that they adduce as a possible context for understanding Dagon's dismemberment, while interesting, make Yahweh's involvement explicit when the text leaves it implicit. (Cf. Gutbrod 1956:43, "Bis zu diesem Punkte der Erzählung ist das Wirken des Herrn Israels nur zwischen den Zeilen zu lesen.")

Granted that the narrator leaves the determination of the agent of Dagon's demise to the reader, and Yahweh is the only logical choice, the narrator's formulation focuses on the simple fact that Dagon lies dismembered before the ark. Yahweh's absolute supremacy over Dagon is thereby demonstrated without any explicit struggle or effort on Yahweh's part, thus making the feat more remarkable.

Verse 5

In this etiological note, the narrator supplies the reader with empirical confirmation of

the truth of what is told in vv. 3-4, citing "factual evidence" from outside the narrative (cf. Miller and Roberts 1977:46). The reader is reminded that the events did occur and did bear consequences still felt "until this day." Viewed from a literary perspective, this etiology appears as a rhetorical technique supportive of the narrative.[7] Since the Philistines are supposed to have been the only viewers of Dagon's calamity, the narrator adds an etiology both as proof of his story and as a reminder to the reader of his privileged perspective.

Verse 6

Although Yahweh's activity and responsibility for Dagon's downfall is purposefully left implicit, the narrator does reveal the divine hand (yad-yhwh) when it moves against the Philistines themselves. When it is a god with whom Yahweh contends the narrative carefully avoids any appearance of activity on Yahweh's or Dagon's part.

The only things that reveals Dagon's inferiority is that each morning the statue of Dagon is found lying face down before the ark, cultic symbol of Yahweh. Yet even in that change of position, we are prevented from seeing any activity. Dagon's submission

to Yahweh is a state, without beginning, and not a process.

When it is merely the Philistines that are the objects of Yahweh's offensive actions, however, there can be no question of Yahweh's vast superiority. His total mastery of the situation is denoted in the playful, almost comic way that he defeats the Philistines (A. Bentzen 1948:46; Hertzberg 1964:53; Stoebe 1973: 144).

The specific ascription of the Philistines' sufferings to "the hand of Yahweh" is also significant in view of the fact that Dagon's hands (palms) are cut off (v. 4, Miller and Roberts 1977:48). The intended contrast is exhibited in the verb conjugations: Yahweh's hand is subject of the active verb _wattikbad_, while Dagon's palms are governed by the passive, k^erutôt; Yahweh acts, Dagon is acted upon.

Miller and Roberts suggest that the use of plague as a machine of war is part of Israel's divine warrior ideology. They see the divine warrior as a primary image that binds all parts of the narrative together—the defeats of Israel, Dagon, and the Philistines—demonstrating that the power of Yahweh, the divine warrior, is the key to what the narrative

is really about (1977:49). One can agree with this suggestion insofar as the narrative does illustrate Yahweh's complete control of the situation from beginning to end. The instance of the plagues and their association with the divine warrior ideology is a further example of the narrator's efforts to impress upon the reader the fact of Yahweh's supremacy.

The insuperability of Yahweh is, however, only a key to the meaning of the narrative. The point of illustrating at such great length (chs. 5-6) that Yahweh was in control is not simply to affirm Yahweh's superiority over the enemies of Israel and their gods (e.g. Miller and Roberts 1977:68). Rather Yahweh's obvious superiority is given centre stage to evoke a question in the mind of the reader.

If Yahweh is so obviously superior to the Philistines that one must assume his total control over the Israelite defeat, why did the defeat have to take place on such a grand scale? Could not the sinful priests have been exterminated more economically (cf. Campbell 1979:35)?

Verse 7

The Ashdodites' recognition that Yahweh is behind their misfortunates parallels that of the

Israelites in 4:3. The difference between the
Philistines and the Israelites is that the former
see the elimination of the ark's presence among them
as the way to relieve their suffering while Israel,
Yahweh's people, regards the presence of the ark as
the guarantee of their deliverance (4:3). In future,
however, Israel will come to share the Philistine
antipathy to the ark's presence (cf. 6:20).

Campbell has drawn attention to a recurring
pattern of interaction that begins here in vv. 6-7
(1975:96-99; cf. Schicklberger 1973:155-59). Yahweh
is shown plaguing the Philistines in the vicinity of
the ark, and they respond by passing the ark along
to someone else.[8] The pattern is partially unified
through a chiastic structure that shapes vv. 6-7.
The structure, in outline, is:

The hand of Yahweh is heavy on the Ashdodites	he smites them[9] (Ashdod and precincts) with tumours.
The men of Ashdod cognize their situation	they say that his (Yahweh's) hand is hard on them and their god.

The pattern is important. Its repetition firmly
impresses upon the reader the way that Yahweh treats
his enemies and the recourse that they have to his
attacks. When the ark is finally received by Israel
(6:19-7:1), Yahweh's similar treatment of Israelites
and their similar response are clear indications to
the reader that the disturbing effects of the Elide
affair have not been remedied.

Verse 8

Like the Israelites in ch. 4, the Philistines
are now faced with their first "defeat," and the
apparent inability of their god to do anything for
them. The Philistine princes convene to decide what
to do with the ark of Israel's god in view of their
situation, just as the Israelite elders met and
together decided to summon the ark in view of their
defeat (4:3). The operation of this technique of
scenic parallelism has often been observed operating
in other narratives (e.g. the wife-sister motif in
Gen 12, 20, and 26). Alter suggests that "narrative
analogy" (his term) is an important feature in much
biblical narrative, through which "one part of the
text provides oblique commentary on another" (1981:
21). The parallel between Israel in 4:3 and the

Philistines in 5:8 highlights the difference in the
response to known defeat by Yahweh. Israel calls for
the ark to remind Yahweh of his covenantal commitment,
while the Philistines, who have no contract with
Yahweh, pass it on. The narrator will use this
Israelite/Philistine parallel again in 6:19-21 with
a definite difference in Israel's response, which is
in obvious contrast to the parallel here in v. 8.

The Philistine decision to send the ark
around to Gath indicates their unrepentant will to
retain Israel's God's ark and affords further oppor-
tunities for exploiting the effect of Yahweh's show
of power on the reader's understanding of the narra-
tive. (Cf. Schicklberger 1973:155-58, who discusses
the repeated incident in terms of "Steigerung" and
"Dramatisierung" and their effect on the reader.)

Verse 9

The pattern established in Ashdod (vv. 6-8) is
repeated in vv. 9-10; of the Philistines' suffering
is intensified as a result of the ark's continuing
presence amongst them (Schicklberger 1973:155). The
hand of Yahweh results in a "great confusion" in the
city.[10] Yahweh makes use of his divine implements of
war to do what he would not do when called upon by

Israel in ch. 4.

The second sentence of v. 9 reinforces this
reading of the m^ehûmâ. The objects of the divine
warrior's attack are specifically the men of the city,
"from small to big." The detailed description of the
human object of the divine attack emphasizes the
insignificance of Yahweh's "opponents." Again Yahweh
is shown to have been in full control of Israel's
defeat; at the same time, however, the inappropriate
gradiosity of his methods is highlighted. As he
engineered a defeat of the entire Israelite nation
to kill the sons of Eli in ch. 4, Yahweh now brings
his divine armament to bear on the men of Gath in
order to show them who is really responsible for
victory and defeat. Both his sense of proportion and
his timing seem skewed.[11]

Verses 10-11

The men of Gath respond to Yahweh's attentions
with greater speed than the Ashdodites. Without a
convention of the Philistine leaders, the ark is
immediately dispatched to Ekron (Campbell 1975:98).
The Ekronites, however, have already heard of the
misfortunes of those to whom the ark is sent. They
object to the ark's presence in their town.[12] Fearing

for their lives in view of Yahweh's prior exhibitions,
the Ekronites reconvene the Philistine princes. Unlike
the Ashdodites (v. 8), they finally know exactly what
to do with the ark and demand that it be sent back to
Israel. As in the final plague in Egypt (Exod 12:29-
33), it is the mᵉhûmat māwet, which brought death to
the Ekronites, that convinces the Philistines to send
the ark back:

Exod 12	1 Sam 5
wattᵉhî ṣᵉʿāqâ gᵉdōlâ (v. 30)	wayyizʿaqû hāʿeqrōnîm (v. 10)
qûmû ṣᵉʾû mittôk ʿammî (v. 31)	šalᵉhû ʾet-ʾarôn... (v. 11)
ʾāmᵉrû kullānû mētîm (v. 33)	lahᵃmîtēnî wᵉʾet ʿammî (v. 10; cf. v. 11)[13]

Yahweh's affliction of the Philistines can get
no worse, since he has intensified his efforts from
plaguing them to killing them. The intensification is
highlighted by repeated vocabulary taken from vv. 6-9:

wattikbad yad-yhwh (v. 6)	kābᵉdâ mᵉʾōd yad hāʾᵉlōhîm (v.11)
mᵉhûmâ gᵉdōlâ mᵉʾōd (v. 9)	mᵉhûmat-māwet (v. 11)

Verse 12

D. Daube (1963:75) notes that the idea that those who escape one peril are smitten by another is also found in the exodus narrative (Exod 10:5, 12, 15). Driver also makes the exodus connection when he observes that $\check{saw}^c\hat{a}$ is paralleled in prose only by Exod 2:23 (1913:53). It would seem, then, that the vocabulary of v. 12 has been employed to remind the reader of the exodus event. Daube especially has drawn attention to numerous parallels between the events in 1 Sam 5-6 and the exodus (1963:73-88; cf. Bentzen 1948:45-47; Bourke 1954:96-99; Fretheim 1967: 120-21).

These scholars' observations suggest that chs. 5-6 should be read in the light of the exodus story and the latter's significance for Israelite thought.[14] In v. 12, however, the narrative has only begun to draw attention to the exodus motifs, so that the reader's consideration of such allusions is just developing.

In view of 4:9 the description of the cry of the city "mounting up to heaven" is especially interesting. In 4:9, the Philistines are exhorted to fight bravely so as not to become slaves to the

Hebrews as the Hebrews are slaves to the Philistines.
Now, in 5:12, however, the Philistine city utters the
same cry for help (šaw^{c}at hā^{c}îr) that the Israelites
cried to God when they were slaves in Egypt (Exod 2:23).
Though they may have won the battle, the Philistines'
existence under the heavy hand of Yahweh seems to have
become as oppressive as that of the Hebrew slaves.

The captivity of the ark, which is also to
say the Israelite defeat, has resulted in the Phili-
stine degradation in "slavery." Hence it is not only
Israel that experiences loss from the battle. The
Philistines too are subject to the experience of
defeat. Are there any winners? Yes, one; "By with-
holding his hand from the Philistines at Ebenezer,
Yahweh had created an opportunity not only to remove
his ark from Shiloh and its wicked priests but also
to demonstrate his power in the land of his enemies"
(McCarter 1980:126).

The whole series of events from the defeat
of Israel, to the deaths of the Elides, to the
Philistine devastation portrays men as pawns in the
hand of Israel's God. With them Yahweh plays a deadly
game in which he eliminates those who have sinned
against him, simultaneously affording himself the

opportunity to display his power to the Philistines.
The narrative follows the movement of the ark from
town to town to show Yahweh in action, revealing his
gradual intensification of the Philistines' devastation.
Yahweh's personal motivation is the same as his purpose
in devastating the Egyptians in Exodus. He sends
minor plagues at first, not wanting to crush "the
opposition" straightaway so that he can give an
extended demonstration of his power. God's ultimate
aim, of course, is to spread his reputation (cf. Exod
9:15-16; Lev 26:45; Num 14:13, 15; Josh 2:9-11;
Kaufmann 1972:297). While the narrator has not put
such an explicit avowal as that of Exod 9:14-16 in the
mouth of Yahweh here, he has made the divine intention
clear in the structural parallels between this scene
and the exodus narrative.

Yahweh's hand in the Israelite defeat was not
explicitly mentioned. The reader knows of it from
chs. 1-3, and Israel assumes it in 4:3, but Yahweh
accomplished his first purpose in secrecy. When it
comes to his self-vindication amongst the Philistines,
however, he plays his hand in full view (ch. 5).[15]

The divine character obviously wishes to
be associated only with the victory over Israel's

enemies. Since he later exhibits no qualms about pro-
claiming his own active role in'Israel's greatest defeat,
the exile, it may be that he realizes that his role in
the defeat of ch. 4 is indefensible. The divine justi-
fication for the exile was the extent of Israelite sin,
and so he could publish his role as a just act of
retribution. Without such justification, however, he
remains silent, working only behind the scene in ch. 4.

The reflective reader is hard-pressed to find
reassurance in the tale of Yahweh's vengeful rampage in
captivity (as according to McCarter 1980:126). If
Yahweh was always in control of the situation why could
he not have simply stricken the Elides with the deadly
plague that killed the Philistines. When David wanted
Uriah dead, he simply arranged for him to be deserted
in the frontlines of a battle (2 Sam 11:14-17).
Miller and Roberts are right that the might of Yahweh
is the red thread of ch. 5 (1977:49), but they are
wrong when they suggest that the narrative is an
"early theodicy" that vindicates Yahweh's actions by
giving the reader an insight into the larger purposes
of Yahweh (1977:73).

Far closer to the mark is Campbell who sees
the narrative as an expression of "an overwhelming

conviction of the absolute freedom of Yahweh" (1975:206).
As Eli said, "He is Yahweh and does as he pleases" (3:
18). Rather than providing reassurance, the narrative
exposes the frailty of the theocracy in the weak link
of its human priests, and the a-rationality of Israel's
God, whose purposes are not always compatible with
the well-being of his people.

Granting all these negative considerations
created in and by the narrative, there is an as yet
unexplored, positive possibility in ch. 5 (and 6). The
exodus associations in ch. 5 have been observed by
several readers, most of whom have suggested that chs.
4-6 describe a new or second exodus by which Yahweh
demonstrates his desire for renewed affiliation with
Israel (Bentzen 1948:46; Timm 1966:525-26; Fretheim
1967:120-22; Campbell 1975:200-07).

Campbell offers an example of a reader who is
guided by the exodus associations in chs. 5-6. He
perceives the end of ch. 4 as the end of an epoch in
Israel's history (1975:199-200). The covenantal
relationship established at Sinai on the basis of
Yahweh's saving deeds in the exodus, seems to have
been dissolved (Timm 1966:522, cited with approval by
Campbell 1975:199). When, in the course of chs. 5-6,

Yahweh is seen engaged in a second exodus, the reader
is led to entertain the possibility that Yahweh is
establishing a new basis for renewed relationship with
Israel. Campbell is careful to point out that this
second exodus does not lead <u>automatically</u> to Israel
(1975:205). His caution at this time is, however, a
product of his inclusion of the conclusion of the next
scene (6:19-21) in the reading of ch. 5. That is to
say, his reading of ch. 5 is made after the fact of
having read the entire narrative.

For a reader following the step by step
unfolding of the narrative, the exodus associations
are more seductive. The prospect of renewed relation-
ship between Yahweh and Israel on the basis of this
second exodus is brought to the reader's attention
by literary parallels that recall the exodus and its
theological-political significance (Fretheim lists 15
parallels, 1967:120.). The similarities between the
Philistine and Egyptian devastations lead the reader
to expect similar conclusions. The rhetoric of the
exodus parallels is, therefore, to lead the reader to
believe that though Yahweh may have mishandled the
Elide affair he is, in the new exodus, showing a
desire and intention for reconciliation with Israel.

The new relationship will be based on the second exodus which indicates Yahweh's will to act for Israel against its enemies (cf. Fretheim 1967:121).

As will be seen in the conclusion of the voyage of the ark, however, the new exodus does not result in a renewal of Yahweh's relationship to Israel. The opposite occurs. The narrator seems to use the exodus parallel to set up his reader for a great disappointment at the end of ch. 6. The reader's disappointment is focused squarely on Yahweh, who seemed to be engineering a new exodus leading to a renewed covenantal relationship. This elicitation of reader disappointment encourages the reader to sympathize even more with the suffering Israelites, who are ignorant of all the processes and events the reader has seen. The narrator seeks to establish the bond between the reader and suffering Israel just as his portrayal of Yahweh tends to alienate the reader from Yahweh. The narrative establishes these polarities in preparation for ch. 8, in which the story of Israel's rejection of Yahweh will be told. In order to preclude any automatic pious judgements on Israel's request in ch. 8, the narrator has set up the reader to understand the reasons for Israel's action; he is able to seriously consider

the validity of Israel's claim. The presentation of
chs. 4-6 neutralizes the theological-political pre-
judices of the reader (that God rightly and justly
rules Israel) so that the reader can approach the
request in ch. 8 with an appreciation of its legiti-
macy. Without the background provided by chs. 1-7,
the reader is almost inevitably dominated by theological
prejudice and the overpowering rhetoric of Samuel and
Yahweh in ch. 8. The reactions of commentators who
read chs. 8-12 separate from chs. 1-7 testify to this
predisposition.

6.   1 Samuel 6

Verse 1

Verse 1 follows naturally on the description
of the final plague that breaks the Philistine
determination to keep the ark. It is not "late"
(Stoebe 1973:151) nor does it displace an expected
conclusion of the account concerning Ekron (Smith
1899:42, followed by Budde 1902:42). The Ekronites'
resolve in 5:11 is firm—the ark must be sent back.
Chapter 6:1 is a summarizing chronological note, a
flashforward, or prolepsis, indicating the total
duration of the ark's stay in Philistine territory.[1]

The insertion of a chronological summary at
this point indicates, beforehand, that the ark will
definitely be sent out of Philistine territory and so
serves as a fitting conclusion to the description of
the plagues. What follows v. 1 is, therefore, pre-
sented as a detailed retrospect of the final moments
that led up to the ark's departure (against Campbell
1975:108).

The proleptic vision afforded by v. 1 guides
the reader's attention away from the simple chronolo-
gical sequence of the ark's departure, diverting it
onto the significance of the departure. This deictic

function of v. 1 supplements the emphasis placed on
words and meaning throughout vv. 1-16. Schicklberger
notes, "im Vordergrund stehen nicht mehr—wie in
Kapitel 5—irgenwelche Ereignisse oder Handlungen,
sondern das gesprochene Wort, eine Aussage. Das
lässt sich schon daran erkennen, dass, rein quantita-
tiv betrachtet, ein Gespräch das in eine predigtartige
Ansprache mündet, den grösseren Teil des Abschnittes
ausmacht" (1973:168). Especially in ch. 6, the
narrator directs the reader to the meaning of this
event rather than to the bare event itself, which is
summarized in the first verse.

Verse 2

The double question of the Philistines has
provoked much scholarly discussion about literary-
critical implications (see Campbell 1975:108-12). Any
difficulties can be obviated, however, by the simple
observation that the multiple questions of the
Philistines exhibit both their anxious desire to get
ride of the ark and their self-confessed ignorance of
how to go about that needful task. The point is not
how many questions are asked, but a realistic depiction
of the distraught Philistines, who are anxious to be
relieved of the ark.

The same impression is conveyed by the summons to the priests and diviners, specialists called in to deal with the technical problem at hand (Ehrlich 1902: 186; Hertzberg 1964:57). The narrative explicitly notes that the Philistines call priests and diviners to get answers to their questions. The situation is obviously beyond the means of ordinary people (cf. Gutbrod 1956:46).

Bourke notes the parallel to v. 2 in Exod 8:19 (1954:97; cf. Freitheim 1967:120). Once again the reader is reminded by the parallel that this narrative is proceeding along the lines laid down in the exodus narrative. Will Yahweh and Israel be reunited?

Verse 3

The advice of the priests and diviners makes it clear that the Philistine difficulties require a cultic resolution. A solution is proposed in terms of an $^{\supset} \bar{a}\check{s}\bar{a}m$ offering, indicating that the Philistines have committed an inadvertent trespass against Yahweh by their capture and retention of the ark.[2]

The significance of the cultic solution lies in the nature of the action, which is an appeal for divine forgiveness and a halt to punishment. The

Philistines are forced to recognize their actual posi-
tion with respect to Yahweh, and to assume a proper
posture of submission. There is no other option. God
will be glorified.

Daube notes that the priestly instruction in
v. 3 resembles the casuistic "if/then" legislation of
Deuteronomy (1963:80). The Philistines, according to
Daube, appear to have come under the rule of religious
legislation that obliges them to propitiate Yahweh
in recognition of the authority of Israel's God.
Yahweh's grip on the Philistines is tightening as it
did in Egypt. In the course of the plagues, Pharaoh
was also forced to submit to Yahweh, and requested
that Moses make supplication to Yahweh on his behalf
(Exod 8:4, 24; 9:27-28; 10:16-17; 12:32).

Similarly, the Philistine priests' advice that
the ark must not be sent away empty (rêqām) is paral-
leled by Israel's despoliation of Egypt, commanded by
God himself (Exod 3:21-22 (lō tēlᵉkû rêqām); 11:2-3).

The narrative uses this exodus parallel both
to demonstrate the complete success of Yahweh's
operations amongst the Philistines and, even more so,
to increase the reader's expectation of a future
reconciliation of Yahweh and his people. After all,

was it not the case in Egypt that when Pharaoh and
the Egyptians recognized Yahweh's authority (e.g.
Exod 9:27-28), Israel was soon allowed to leave Egypt
and join Yahweh on non-Egyptian territory? The only
difference is that in the present situation, it is
Yahweh who will soon be allowed to leave Philistine
territory to make the expected reunion with his
people Israel.

Verse 4

All Philistines are represented by the ʾāšām
to Yahweh, which takes the form of five golden tumors
and five golden mice. The introduction of the mice
at this point has proved troublesome to scholars, who
have offered various literary-critical explanations.
Hertzberg suggests that the mice are a natural cause
for the plague and hence their appearance is contrary
to the purpose of divine glorification in the
narrative (1964:58; cf. Stoebe 1973:151).

It should be recalled, however, that the
Philistines are uncertain about how to interpret the
entire incident. They do not know what they did to
deserve their plague, and they do not know how to
stop it (v. 2). The priests' religious explanation
of the plague depends on the success of the ʾāšām;

only if they are healed will they know why Yahweh
afflicted them ($^{\mathsf{c}}\bar{a}z$ $\underline{t\bar{e}r\bar{a}p^{e\mathsf{c}\hat{u}}}$ $\underline{w^e n\hat{o}da^{\mathsf{c}} l\bar{a}kem}$, v. 3). Even
the act of returning the ark, the material "admission"
that Yahweh was responsible, is a test to determine
whether it was Yahweh or chance that brought the
plague to the Philistines (v. 9).

Miller and Roberts point out that there are no
known, exact ancient parallels to the Philistine pro-
cedure of making golden tumors and mice, but suggest,
on the basis of a Hittite ritual, that a plague could
be attributed to an enemy god and that an end was
sought by placating the god with gifts (1977:55; cf.
Gaster 1969:453). Stoebe says the inclusion of five
golden mice, even though no mice have been previously
referred to, is based on the prior knowledge of
instances of plagues of mice (1973:151). Though all
scholars are agreed that we cannot be certain about
the exact significance of the golden mice, it seems
possible that these golden offerings were included as
a kind of insurance policy, in case the plague had some
connection with mice. Whether the Philistines thought
Yahweh had sent the mice, or whether they thought of
them as a separate, natural cause, is not specified.
The fact that the mice are included in the offering

sent along with the ark, however, suggests that the
mice were connected to the action of Israel's God.

It is not necessarily contrary to the narrator's
attribution of the plagues ·to Yahweh, then, for the
Philistines to be uncertain about the cause of the
plague. Instead, it is a further reflection of the
Philistine priests' human uncertainty about the causes
and meanings of the plague. They are simply playing
it safe and covering all possibilities, including the
chance that the plague is somehow connected with mice.
The mice need no explicit introduction in the previous
narrative; their introduction here, as the product of
Philistine uncertainty, is another instance in ·a
continuing series of situations where man is not
certain how to respond to Israel's God's interventions
in human affairs.

Verse 5

The exhibition of the Philistine uncertainty
continues ·in v. 5. The fabrication of the golden
tumors and mice is a separate act virtually unconnected
with Israel's God, to whom the priests only say
"honour" (kābôd) must be given. As commentators have
observed, the images seem capable of two functions
(Mauchline 1971:78). They are both an ᵓāšām presented

to Yahweh, and homeopathic objects designed to draw
off the ill-effects of the objects they represent
(cf. Hertzberg 1964:58; Num 21). The Philistine
vacillation is further illustrated in the participial
adjective, "the destroyers of the land" (hammašḥitim
ʾet-hāʾāreṣ), that modifies the images of tumors and
mice. Here the priests seem to view the destruction
in terms of its limited physical causes rather than
as a result of the divine hand. Of course they
suspect the hand of Yahweh (v. 3), but at the same
time, as might be expected of Philistines, they lean
towards other possibilities.

McCarter notes that the final sentence in v. 5
makes the priests and diviners seem even less confident
than in v. 3 (1980:134; cf. Campbell 1975:115).
According to BDB (p. 19), the preposition ʾûlay
expresses hope, fear, or doubt. In all cases an
element of uncertainty prevails. To the Philistine
religious experts Yahweh's divine acts in history are
an uncertain quantity, not easily reckoned with. They
are anxious and willing to respond, but they are uncer-
tain about how to respond because they are uncertain
about how to interpret what has happened to them.
One gives honour to Yahweh in hope (ʾûlay) that he

will lighten his hand on people, god, and land, while at
the same time, making apotropaic images as an insurance
policy. Although there is some relation between the two
acts, even the syntax of v. 5 separates them into dis-
tinct sentences, each with its own verb.

Within the compass of the entire Israel-Phili-
stine episode, the Philistine uncertainty over Yahweh's
part in their misfortune is yet another expression of
the sub-theme of human uncertainty about divine action
that runs throughout. Just as Israel did not know why
their own God would allow them to be defeated (4:3),
the Philistines are not certain what they have done to
displease Israel's God, nor are they even certain that
he is displeased. The narrator emphasizes this gap be-
tween human understanding and divine action, only tem-
porarily bridged for the reader by the narrator's omni-
scient point of view, because it is of central impor-
tance to the developments in Israel's political thought
in ch. 8. In that chapter, Yahweh's undependability in
conjunction with Israel's uncertainty over the divine
mind provide Israel with justification for a new
political structure.

Verse 6

Keil and Delitzsch observe that this warning

against hardening of the heart is not at variance with
the fact that the Philistine priests were in some doubt
about the exact cause of the plagues. Their doubts
were not denials, and the possibility that Yahweh was
responsible warranted an unhedged response (1880:64).

Both Thenius (1864:25) and Campbell (1975:114)
have noted that the Philistines have not actually voiced
any reluctance to which v. 6 may be seen as a priestly
response (cf. Rost 1926:13). The explicit recollection
of the exodus events seems, rather, to be somewhat akin
to an aside, delivered in the presence of the Phili-
stines (who have no need of it), yet audible only to
the reading audience. Bourke comments that "one cannot
avoid the impression that at this point the writer is
putting a central idea of his own into the mouths of
his characters" (1954:96).

This reference to the exodus reminds the reader
of "den heilsgeschichtlichen Urzustand Israels" (Timm
1966:525). What we see, we are told, is a new exodus,
a new basis for relationship between Israel and Yahweh.
In view of the fact that the relationship was disrupted in ch. 4
(cf. 3:30-32) the narrator indicates the significance of Yahweh's
actions during his stay among the Philistines. Like the Philistines'
question in 4:8, a reminder about the covenantal significance of the

upcoming battle for Israel, v. 6 directs attention away
from simple events to the theological and political.
significance of those events. Chapter 4:8 served as
the theological-political key for understanding the
crisis engendered by Israel's defeat (cf. Timm 1966:
521). Now 6:6 serves a similar purpose; in contrast
to 4:8, though, it points to a hope for covenantal
renewal by directing attention to the similarity of
the ark's departure from Philistine land to Israel's
departure from Egyptian territory.

Finally, it should be said that although v. 6
is not a response to any preceding obstinacy amongst
the Philistines, it is not altogether inappropriate in
the context of events. In v. 5, the priests recommend
that Israel give "honour" (kābôd) to Yahweh. It is
exactly this, giving honour, that the priests themselves
do in v. 6. As Hertzberg observes, there is a paron-
omastic link between vv. 5-6 based on the words kābôd
(v. 5) and t^ekabbedû, $kibb^e$dû (v. 6) (1964:59). Verse
6 gives glory to Yahweh by correctly evaluating his
power and advising the proper response of submission.
It was in order to elicit such recognition, both in
Egypt and world-wide, that Yahweh performed his mighty
deeds in Egypt (Exod 7:4-5; 9:14-16). By acquiescing

to Yahweh and pointing out the folly of the Egyptian
resistance, the Philistine priests give honour to
Yahweh in hopes of not becoming the object of Yahweh's
"sporting activities" (hit^{c}allēl).

Verses 7-9

The instructions for the return of the ark and
its booty are a continuing expression of the Phili-
stine uncertainty. The plans exhibit an effort to
show reverence and respect to Yahweh, but at the same
time they exhibit some disrespect by designing a test
to determine whether Yahweh is really responsible. The
two motives are especially visible as concatenated in
v. 7. The new cart and the unworked milch cows are
signs of respect for the ark's sanctity and a desire to
avoid further profanity towards it (Keil and Delitzsch
1880:65). Yet the fact that the cows are unbroken to
yoking and their calves are separated from them also
makes them tests to see if Yahweh can take this
unlikely carriage home (Hertzberg 1964:59). Like the
story of a doubting Thomas (John 20:24-29), this
trial of Yahweh's cart driving abilities offers the
narrator an opportunity to display the divine wonders
(cf. Keil and Delitzsch 1880:66).

In v. 8, the Philistines are given instructions

for the ark's removal from Philistine territory.
Several parallels between v. 8 and v. 2 reveal a
remarkable change in the Philistine attitude toward
the ark:

v. 2	v. 8
The Philistines took (wayyiqḥû) the ark of God.	Take (ûlᵉqaḥtem) the ark of Yahweh.
They brought (wayyābîʾû) it to the house of Dagon.	Put (ûnᵉtattem) it onto the cart.
They installed (wayyaṣîgû) it next to Dagon.	Set (tāśîmû) the golden objects, rendered as an ʾāšām, in the box³ beside it (the ark).

In the first parallel a change is seen in the motiva-
tion for the same verb; lqḥ in 5:2 describes the
Philistines taking the ark home as booty, while in
6:8 it is an order from the Philistine priests telling
how to get rid of the ark. The same contrast is seen
in the verbs of the second parallel, albeit using
different verbs. Also in 5:2 they bring the ark to

the sanctuary of their own god, Dagon, but in 6:8
they put the ark into the cart, a new "sanctuary"
constructed to house the ark alone. Finally in the
third parallel we see a clear contrast between the
ark, set beside Dagon as a trophy in 5:2, and the
golden 'āšām set beside the ark as a propitiatory
going-away present in 6:8. The distinct change of
heart evidenced by the comparison of these two verses
supplements statements such as v. 6, which demonstrates
the effect of Yahweh's mighty deeds on his and Israel's
enemies.

As Fretheim notes, v. 8 also offers a parallel
to the exodus story in the mention of the golden
objects (k^{e}lê hazzāhāb) that are given to the depart-
ing captives by their repentant captors (1967:120; cf.
Exod 12:35). The common despoliation motif is yet
another encouragement to the reader to identify
Yahweh's exit as a new exodus, and so to expect a
renewal of the covenantal relationship inseparably
associated with the exodus.

Miller and Roberts correctly surmise that
v. 9 reveals some uncertainty on the Philistines'
part, but wrongly conclude that their concern in the
test "is obviously due to the consideration that if

Yahweh was not responsible, then some other power was,
and they would have to keep searching for the correct
deity to appease before the plague would abate" (1977:
56). The priests explicitly state that if it was not
Yahweh that had perpetrated the calamity, it was
simply "chance" (miqreh). The narrator's concern is
not to explore the various theological explanations
for war or plague in the ancient near east. His aim
is, rather, to demonstrate Yahweh's control over the
Philistine situation and to follow that demonstration
with an examination of its implications for Israel
(6:13ff.).

Verses 10-12

The plan is put into effect with the result,
predictable from the reader's perspective, that the
cows and cart head straight for Beth-Shemesh without
deviating. As Driver notes, the emphasis in v. 12
falls on the straightness of the cows' route (1913:56).
The narrator has the Philistine princes follow the
ark on its homeward journey so that there is no doubt,
even amongst the Philistines, about the significance
of the journey.

Verses 13-14

The reader's attention is now directed to the Israelite reaction to the ark's return. The Philistines and their doubt have served their purpose and so are retired, temporarily, with the note in v. 16.

This view of Israel is the first offered since ch. 4, where the reader was left with the picture of an Israel lamenting the departure of Yahweh. Any uncertainty over what Israel's response to Yahweh's return would be is quickly removed by the narrator. After presenting the reader with a view of Israel going about its regularly yearly agricultural activities (v. 13), and hence in no dire strait requiring Yahweh's aid, the narrator describes Israel's reaction to the return of their God. Recalling that Israel had questioned Yahweh's behaviour in 4:3 and that it was possible for an Israelite to think that Yahweh had abandoned Israel (4:22), Israel's response is amazing. One would expect at least a hint of reproach, yet there is none. In three short, uncluttered, verbal descriptions their undivided joy over the return is depicted—"they looked up, saw the ark, and rejoiced at the sight."[4] The description focuses exclusively on Israel's visual reception

of the ark, indicating thereby, that "just the sight (of
it)" made them happy. They have gained nothing from the
ark's return. They do not know of the conditions of its
return. The fact that they are harvesting the wheat
crop indicates that they are getting along very well
without the ark. Yet their reaction to the mere sight
of it is spontaneous and positive. Again, Israel comes
out spotless in the narrator's presentation. The
people seem to have forgiven and forgotten.

The actual dinner reception ($^{c}\bar{o}l\hat{a}$) for Yahweh
is described in v. 14. The cart goes into the field
of a certain Joshua and stands there. The cart itself
is the subject of the verbs in v. 14. Since the
reader will be well aware that carts are without
volition, he will no doubt see the hand of Yahweh at
the reigns of the cart. The description leaves Yahweh
behind the scenes once more and lends an aura of
weirdness to the cart's movements, as was the case
in v. 12. The divine cart-driver has stopped at a
specific spot ($\check{s}\bar{a}m$) where ($\check{s}\bar{a}m$), it so happens, there
is a large stone.[5]

The name of Joshua, the man in whose field
the cart stops, recalls another more famous character
who was chosen to lead Israel into the promised land

when Moses was barred entry (cf. Num 20:12; Josh 1).
Once again an allusion to the exodus story is used to
indicate the significance of these events. In this
particular example, the ark's passage onto Israelite
soil in the field of one Joshua recalls Israel's own
entry into the land under the leadership of a Joshua.
From the perspective of Israel's history, the return
of the ark into Joshua's field after the destruction
of Israel's polity in ch. 4 would seem a perfect
portent for the renewal of that selfsame polity.

The second Israelite response, after seeing
the ark and rejoicing, is to offer a holocaust to
Yahweh, using as material the spoils of his Philistine
travels (Hertzberg 1964:59-60). The response is
immediate, following right after the description of
the cart's stop by the big rock. The offering of an
$^c\bar{o}l\hat{a}$ by Israel with materials provided by the Phili-
stines is appropriate. The $^c\bar{o}l\hat{a}$ was, among other
capacities, both an expression of thanksgiving (Lev
22:17-19; Num 15:1-16) and an expiatory sacrifice
(Lev 1:4; Milgrom 1976:769). Here the Israelites
express their thanks, and at the same time unwittingly
perform an expiatory sacrifice on behalf of the
Philistines, who had supplied the sacrificial materials.

Verse 15

Most commentators have viewed v. 15 as a late
insertion designed to correct any misimpressions about
the manner in which the sacrifice of v. 14 was carried
out (Stoebe 1973:148; McCarter 1980:136). The Levites
are described taking the ark and the box of gold
articles down (hôrîdû) and setting them on the great
stone. As Stoebe observes, however, the cart has
already been burnt so that the description is out of
chronological sequence (1973:148). The difficulty can
be resolved by attention to the rhetorical emphasis and
structure of vv. 14-15.

In v. 14, the description of Israel's reaction
is presented as immediate and spontaneous. An $^c\bar{o}l\hat{a}$
is offered the moment the cart stops. The description
of the Levites' activities in v. 15 can be understood
as a narratorial aside, not intended as a chronologi-
cally subsequent event to v. 14. The concern of v.
15a is to show that the ark was not mishandled.[6]
Rather, it was dismounted and set on the great stone
by the Levites, the only Israelites consecrated to
handle the ark (Num 4:4-15; Deut 10:8). The people of
Bethshemesh do not make Uzzah's mistake (cf. 2 Sam 6:
6-7).

That v. 15a is not intended as a continuation
of the chronological sequence is indicated by two
factors: 1. The breaking up of the cart on which the
ark sat is narrated already in v. 14. Verse 15 cannot
logically follow v. 14 in chronological order. 2. In
the second half of v. 15 the narrator makes use of
"resumptive repetition," a rhetorical technique used
to resume the chronological sequence of a narrative
by an aside.

> By cutting the thread of a story at a convenient,
> or even not quite so convenient, juncture, then
> interweaving other matter of a different narra-
> tive character, and again resuming the first
> account by means of repeating the verse, phrase,
> or even the word, at which the cut-off occurred,
> the author safeguards the linear continuity of
> the narration, and at the same time permits the
> listener or the reader to become aware of the
> synchroneity of the events related (Talmon 1978:
> 17).

Verse 15b resumes v. 14 by repeating the words
he^{ce}lû ^{c}ōlôt...lyhwh, "they offered holocausts to
Yahweh." The rhetorical need for the device of
resumptive repetition is created in v. 14, in which

the narrator underlines the swift and <u>immediate</u> sacrificial response of Israelites, the unspecified subjects of the verbs, to Yahweh. Immediately thereafter (v. 15a), in narrative, syntactic—not chronological—sequence the narrator takes pains to show that no trespass was committed by the unsanctified against the ark. Finally, in v. 15b, the narrator returns to describe the unreserved sacrificial response.

In the resumptive repetition in v. 15b the subjects of the sacrificial verbs are specified—the Bethshemeshites—an important development in view of the subsequent incident. In addition, the narrator adds that they also made sacrifices ($z^e b\bar{a}h\hat{i}m$) to Yahweh as a further indication of their unstinting welcome for Yahweh. The temporal determinant—"on that day"—serves to link the action of v. 15b with that of v. 14, a further support for the device of resumptive repetition.

Verse 16

At the same time that Israel is celebrating Yahweh's apparent return, the Philistine chiefs are observing the proceedings. The temporal simultaneity of their observation is indicated by the repeated temporal determinant, "on that day," in both vv. 14

and 15. In contrast to the Bethshemeshites, who
rejoiced after they saw (wayyir$^{\jmath}$û, v. 13) the ark, the
Philistines leave when they see (rā$^{\jmath}$û) the proceedings.
The repeated verb rā$^{\jmath}$â functions as a Leitwort, direct-
ing the reader to connect the two occurrences and
compare them (cf. Buber 1964:1131; Alter 1981:92-96).
In this instance both Philistines and Israelites are
"seeing" the return of Yahweh to Israel. The return
sparks a joyful celebration in Israel; the Philistines,
on the other hand, simply return home to the now
devastated city of Ekron. The parallel is important
because it shows that Israel responds to Yahweh's
return far differently than the Philistines. Israel
greets him as their God. The Philistines just walk
away. Obviously Israel holds no grudge against Yahweh
for his part in their defeat in ch. 4. Yahweh's
response to their welcome will soon change this
attitude, however, and Israel will come to view Yahweh
and the presence of his ark just like the Philistines.

Verses 17-18

The verses, as Campbell observes, add an
element of verisimilitude to the narrative "by
associating it with concrete and verifiable objects"
(1975:120; cf. McCarter 1980:137; above on 5:5).[7] The

narrator opens his address, which is directed to his
reader, with the words "and these" ($w^e\ni\bar{e}leh$) as though
he had the very things he lists sitting in front of
him. He uses this rhetorical device to create the
impression in his readers that he does have the items
and, in turn, that the events described did happen.
Supplementary to his reference to the golden tumors
and mice, he points to the great stone which sits "to
this very day in the field of Joshua, the Bethshemesh-
ite" (v. 18) as a "witness" ($^c\bar{e}d$) to the truth of what
he has depicted.[8]

Perhaps the emphasis on the reality of the
events under description is made with a view to the
subsequent events. All through chs. 5-6 the narrator
has encouraged the reader to see the ark's sojourn and
return in terms of the paradigmatic exodus story. With
the return and joyous celebrations of ch. 6 the reader
is led to believe that the problem of the captured
ark and the foreboding covenantal implications of that
occurrence have been not only ended, but even have a
certain value. Once more Yahweh has had an opportunity
to display his awesome abilities to the nations and to
reaffirm his choice of Israel as he had in the first
exodus. Now, with Yahweh back with Israel, surely

the bad times are over. Could any further misfortune really come to Israel?

Verse 19

Nothing could be more unexpected, either by the Israel in the narrative, or the reader reading the narrative, than the response of Yahweh to the attentions of the Bethshemeshites. The majority of scholars confronted with the startling presentation of MT in v..19, of which Stoebe says that it stands "in einer so deutlichen Spannung zum Vorhergehended, dass sie keine organische Fortsetzung dazu bilden können, sondern eine eigene, unabhängige Überlieferung sein müssen" (1973:153), following LXX or some reconstruction based thereon. Unfortunately the LXX reading also has contextual difficulties.[9]

N.H. Tur-Sinai lists the main difficulties of MT as follows: 1. The predicate verb wayyak appears twice, the first time without an explicit subject. 2. The description of the numbers of the smitten also occurs twice - 70 men and 50,000 men - in asyndetic combination. 3. The larger number - 50,000 - is difficult to accept for a small town like Bethshemesh. 4. The smaller number - 70 - is unexpectedly small in a legend about "a great slaughter" (1951:277).

Tur-Sinai fails to mention the further difficulty seen
by most readers in the "justification" supplied for
Yahweh's action, "because they looked in/on (b)
Yahweh's ark."

The general approach of a literary study of
the Bible is to seek a solution to such problems, in-
sofar as possible, in the literary dynamic of the
narrative rather than in the text's prehistory or
compositional mechanics. If the text under study, MT,
is not nonsense then an effort must be made to deter-
mine what implications these difficulties may bear for
the whole story being told.

The opening sentence of v. 19 describes
Yahweh's response to the inhabitants of Bethshemesh,
who were last seen in v. 15 offering both ᶜōlâ and
zebaḥ sacrifices to Yahweh. "And he struck down (way-
yak) some of the men of Bethshemesh because they
looked at the ark." What kind of way is this to
treat the people who rejoice at the mere sight of his
ark? Yahweh's treatment of the Bethshemeshites is
similar to his treatment of the Philistines (5:6, 9,
12)—both are stricken by God (Willis 1971:296). The
connection between the two incidents of divine assault
on human objects if foregrounded by the repetition of

the verb <u>nkh</u> in the same form, <u>wayyak</u> .(v. 19; cf. 5:6,
9). The omission of "Yahweh" as the explicit subject
of the first occurrence of <u>wayyak</u> in v. 19 contributes
to this linkage with the previous incidents, where the
verb also appears without the addition of an explicit
subject.

When the reader recalls that Yahweh's previous
assaults on the Philistines were cast in the mould of
the exodus pattern, designed to exalt Yahweh in the
course of his saving deeds performed on Israel's behalf,
the repetition of the same divine behaviour amongst
his own chosen people changes the meaning of the ark's
"new exodus" entirely. Instead of a dual purpose event,
with both divine and human dividends, it becomes
solely an opportunity for an overbearing display of
divine power. If, instead of leading up to Israel's
renewal of relationship with Yahweh, the "new exodus"
leads up to a situation in which Israel is also sub-
jected to the divine assault and self-glorification,
the entire spectacle becomes an occasion for realign-
ment. Instead of Israel and Yahweh against the nations,
we have Israel and Philistia (representing "the
nations") against Yahweh.

This realignment of Israel is particularly

evident when we recall that 6:19-21 is the third
incidence of a "narrative analogy" (cf. Alter 1981:
21), in which Israel or the Philistines respond to a
divine action in connection with the presence or
absence of the ark. In the first instance Israel,
seeing itself submitted to defeat by Yahweh (4:3),
calls for the ark's presence to remind Yahweh of his
covenantal commitment to Israel (4:3-4). In the
second case, the Philistines convene after their
evident "defeat" at Yahweh's hands, and decide that
the ark must be sent on to someone else (5:8).

Now in the third incidence Israel's attitude
is seen to have undergone a remarkable shift. Their
response to Yahweh's action and the presence of the
ark is like that of the Philistines who have no
covenant with Yahweh, and unlike that of the Israelites
in 4:3-4. The latter still operated within the cove-
nantal guidelines and attempted to call Yahweh to
order. Israel in 6:20-21, seeing no rationale for
Yahweh's behaviour, makes no claims based on the
covenant and simply tries to relieve itself of the
burden of the ark's presence. Without mutual under-
standing, there are no grounds for relationship. The
parallel to the Philistine response in 5:8 offers

convincing evidence that Israel has become "like the
nations" (cf. 8:20) as a result of Yahweh's disregard
for his people.

The narrator seems, nevertheless, to supply
some mitigation for Yahweh's attack on the Bethshemesh-
ites in the explanation that he did it because they
looked "at the ark of Yahweh" (ba$^{\supset a}$rôn yhwh).[10] But
what kind of mitigation is this? The narrative has
already given the reader a direct description of the
Bethshemeshites looking at the ark (wayyir$^{\supset}$û $^{\supset}$et-hā$^{\supset}$arôn,
v. 13) including an <u>unambiguous</u> description of their
mental state at that time—they were overjoyed at the
sight (wayyiśm^{e}ḥû lir$^{\supset}$ôt, v. 13).[11]

The simplest solution to the seeming contra-
diction between the joyful seeing in v. 13 and the
seeing in v. 19, for which Yahweh assaults the Beth-
shemeshites, is to regard the mitigation as ironic.
Yahweh's response is made to appear totally incompre-
hensible by the narrator. It is as though he assaults
the Bethshemeshites for simply looking at the ark. The
mitigation is, in ironic fact, a concealed criticism
of Yahweh's conduct towards his people. Both before
(ch. 4) and after the new exodus of the ark they
suffer at his hands for no just cause. The rationale

for Yahweh's actions is now hidden not only from the
people in the narrative, as seemed to be the case for
some in ch. 4 (e.g. 4:3). The irony of the mitigation
is shared by the omniscient narrator with his reader,
who is now numbered among those who do not see the
purpose of Yahweh.

Abrams suggests that "recourse to irony by
an author carries an implicit compliment to the intel-
ligence of the reader, who is invited to associate
himself with the author and the knowing minority who
are not taken in by the ostensible meaning" (1981:90).
In this case, the narrator invites the reader to share
an ironic jab at Yahweh that underlines the Bethshe-
meshites' perplexity over Yahweh's ungrateful response
to the joyous visual reception. The ironic explana-
tion also promotes the reader's sympathetic identifi-
cation with the Israelites in the story. At this
juncture, he actually does share in their ignorance
of the divine motivation. His knowledge of the
ironic mitigation causes the reader to reflect on the
distance between the purposes of God and the cognitive
possibilities of man.

The question still remains why the narrator
chooses to say that the Bethshemeshites looked

baᵓaˆrôn in v. 19 instead of ᵓet-hāᵓārôn as in v. 13 if
he was intending only ironic justification of Yahweh's
assault. A rhetorical justification may be seen in
the fact that the preposition b occurs four times in v.
19. The use of the preposition b after the verb "to
see" (rāᵓâ) parallels the latter with the smiting
(nākâ) performed by Yahweh. The parallel usage of b
to introduce the objects of both verbs draws attention
to the contrast in the type of action done by each
subject:

wayyak beᵓanšê bêt-šemeš

kî

rāᵓu   baᵓarôn yhwh
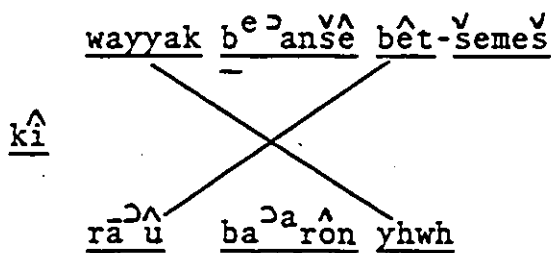
The chiastic structure highlights the incongruity of
Yahweh's response by drawing attention to the parallel
and reciprocal action of the Bethshemeshites; their
looking was joyful; his response seems wrathful.

The second problem that Tur-Sinai saw in MT
was that the repetition of the words "and he smote the
people" (wayyak bācām) seemed to indicate a disturbed,
unnatural text. In conjunction with the emphasis on

the reprehensibility of Yahweh's action, however, the
repeated emphasis on the smiting is suitable. The
narrator repeats the word nākâ four times in the
verse, forcibly recalling the parallel with the
Philistine devastation (cf. 5:6, 9, 12) and focusing
attention on Yahweh's unfriendliness.

The first occurrence of nākâ has "the men of
Bethshemesh" as object; the second has "the people."
The change in object recalls the fact that the Beth-
shemeshites are a people, or more specifically, "the
people" of Yahweh. He smites some of "the people"
(cf. Exod 6:7) just as he smote the Philistines. The
repetition, therefore, emphasizes the overwhelming
nature of Yahweh's smiting and at the same time
introduces the anti-covenantal aspect of the deed by
the subtle change of objects in the second occurrence.[12]

In Tur-Sinai's list of four difficulties in
v. 19, the asyndetic numbers, 70 and 50,000 men,
comprise three of the four. The asyndetic syntax is
thought to show that 50,000 is a gloss (cf. Schulz
1919:109). The first number, 70, is unexpectedly
small, while 50,000 is too many for a small town such
as Bethshemesh (Tur-Sinai 1951:277). The two numbers
can be understood as examples of what Talmon has

called "double readings" (1975:231). Such double
readings may result from the insertion of marginal
glosses into the text together with the readings they
were intended to supersede, or they may be the attempt
of a scribe to preserve two variant readings of equal
value and worth (p. 231). From this perspective,
each reading may be examined to determine its effect
on the narrative without the influence of the pre-
judicial label "gloss" being attached to either.

When such separate readings are made, the
difference between the two variants is small in terms
of the effect on the narrative. Seventy men would
represent the elimination of a complete complement
of men. As U. Cassuto observes, "This number—seven-
ty—commonly indicates the perfection of a family
blessed with offspring, both in the prè-Israelitic and
in the Israelitic traditions" (1967:8; cf. Cassuto
1961:12-13). The number seventy in v. 19 points to
the severity of the divine assault in that the
"perfect number" of men are destroyed.[13] The second
number, 50,000, is not that different, rhetorically
speaking; it too emphasizes the severity of the
damages done to Israel in the divine attack. Since
the two readings are almost rhetorically synonymous,

it is understandable why they were both preserved.
In the present form of the text, the repetition of
the numbers slain is in accord with the repeated
verbs of Yahweh's smiting; the enormity of the devas-
tation is foregrounded and impressed on the reader.

Yahweh's return to his people, signaled by
the reappearance of the ark, made them happy (v. 13).
His response to their reception has now changed their
joy to sorrow and they mourn their dead (wayyit$^{\circ}$abb^{e}lû,
cf. Baumann 1977:46). Once more the narrator focuses
on the ill-effects of Yahweh's return to his people.
When Yahweh deserted Israel in ch. 4 he left them to
be defeated before the Philistines (4:3). The result
of that desertion is given in 4:10—"there was a
great slaughter" (watt^{e}hî hammakkâ g^{e}dôlâ). Having
achieved his purpose (the death of the Elides) in
that escapade and having shown the Philistines who
really controlled that battle, one would expect Yahweh
to return home and make amends for the incidental
injustices to his people. Instead, Yahweh personally
makes yet another great slaughter amongst "the people"
(hikkâ yhwh bā^{c}ām makkâ g^{e}dôlâ).

The narrator seems to be doing his best to
point out certain imbalances in the relationship

between Yahweh and Israel. Thus far the pattern of interaction has been: 1. Israel offers sacrifices to Yahweh (2:13-17; 6:14-15); 2. Yahweh "responds" with great slaughters (4:10; 6:19).

Though Yahweh may have been justified (cf. 2:25) in what he did to the Elides, he was not justified to include so many of the people in the punishment; though Yahweh is justified to punish sanctum trespass, there is no clear, unambiguous trespass in 6:19. The question mark that the narrator's portrait of Yahweh's behaviour places over the viability of the covenant relationship is openly stated in v. 20.

Verse 20

The questions posed by the Bethshemeshites are paralleled by two questions put by the Philistines during the course of their dealings with Yahweh. The first question, "Who can stand before Yahweh, this holy God?", is similar to the Philistines', "Who can deliver us from the power of these mighty gods?" (4:8, Willis 1971:296). The second, "To whom might he go up from upon us?", is preceded by the Philistines', "What should we do with the ark of Yahweh? What shall we send back with him?" (6:2). The simple fact of the parallel itself reveals a remarkable affinity between

Israelites and Philistines in their attitudes to
Yahweh. Both attitudes are brought about by the
warring actions of Yahweh, the divine warrior, against
his enemies and against his people.

"Wenn die Leute von Beth-Schemesch vor diesem
heiligen Gott nicht bestehen können, so weist auch
das in das Gebiet ursprünglicher Kriegsfrömmigkeit,
wonach ein Feind vor Jahwe nicht standhalten kann"
(Stoebe 1973:153; cf. Judg 2:14). Stoebe has
correctly noted one implication of the Bethshemeshites'
question: it is an expression of the conviction that
no one, not even his own people, is safe from the
warlike attacks of Yahweh. Israel, in coming close
to the Philistines in the expression of this attitude,
has become distant from Yahweh,

A second implication of the question, "Who can
stand before Yahweh, this holy God?", is noted by
Ehrlich, who suggests that the Bethshemeshites are
expressing their inability as unsanctified people, to
render properly sanctified treatment to the ark (1910:
191; cf. Schulz 1919:111). More recently McCarter has
adopted this view in conjunction with his emendation
of the mitigation in v. 19 ("no members of the
priesthood joined in") and the belief that the mention

of levitical activity in v. 15 is a late insertion
(1980:136-37). Citing examples, McCarter notes that
the expression "to stand before" connotes "attend
upon" and is often used of priests attendant on Yah-
weh or his cult. The Bethshemeshites, according
to McCarter, are simply admitting their guilt in
profaning the ark and suggesting that they find a
suitable attendant.

While he has touched upon an important sense
of the phrase "to stand before," McCarter's suggestion
must be rejected for two reasons: 1. It depends upon
an unconfirmed emendation of LXX in v. 19, and upon a
hypothesis about the literary history of v. 15 that,
in turn, depends on debatable literary-critical
observations. 2. If the Bethshemeshites had admitted
culpability for their misfortune and were simply
seeking a proper priest to attend to the ark, why
would they want to get rid of it? Why would the ark
be left in "cold storage," in the care of a person
who was not a member of a priestly family (cf. 6:21;
7:1)? Why would all Israel mourn Yahweh as though
he were dead (7:1; cf. Buber 1956:118)? Surely
there was at least one proper priest in Israel.

The value of McCarter's observation about the

phrase "to stand before" is that it reveals yet
another side to the Bethshemeshites' exasperation.
Reading the chapter as it stands, v. 15 indicates that
the ark was handled by licensed personnel, the
Levites. The question of v. 20 may, therefore, be
rhetorical. If those sanctified to handle the ark
are not able to stand before Yahweh, who can? Only
from this perspective on the cultic side of the Beth-
shemeshites' question do the subsequent question and
events make sense (against Schicklberger 1973:128).
If the Levites can not deal with Yahweh and his
ark, no one can. The ark goes into "cold storage"
and Israel mourns Yahweh.

Finally, there is a third side to the first
question of v. 20. Not only is the phrase "to stand
before" used with reference to priestly service of
Yahweh, itself a prominent aspect of covenantal inter-
course between Yahweh and Israel; the phrase is also
used both of covenantal intermediaries and of Israel
standing before God in covenantal ceremonies.[14] In
view of its context, then, the question of v. 20 is
also rhetorical in a covenantal sense. No one can
covenantally stand before this holy God who makes
great slaughters (4:10; 6:19) amongst his people

for no apparent reason.

The addition of the phrase "this holy God" is
a sarcastic comment on Yahweh's unapproachability and
incomprehensibility. Hertzberg, who does not see any
sarcasm in the phrase, still gets the same impression
and cites Eccl 5:2, "God is in heaven and you upon
earth," as a parallel (1964:61). A covenant with such
a totally "other," whose behaviour admits of no
rationale from an Israelite perspective, is impossible.
The question, then, is an expression of Israel's
alienation from a God who will not be approached.

That the answer to the question, "Who can
stand before Yahweh, this 'holy' God?" is "no one,"
is confirmed by the second question, which contains an
implicit answer to the first. The only way to deal
with this God, as the Philistines well knew (cf. chs.
5-6), is to unload him on someone else. The use of
the prepositional phrase "from upon us" (mē^cālênû)
characterizes the renewed presence of Yahweh with
Israelites as a burden, wearisome to its bearer.

Verse 21

Like the Philistines, the first step the
Israelites take when they decide to get rid of the ark
is to send (wayyišl^eḥû, cf. 6:8, 11) for outside help.

The narrator continues to point out that Israel has
been forced into the ignominious role of behaving as
if they were Philistines on account of Yahweh; he has,
in fact, modelled the entire Israelite encounter with
Yahweh on the previous Philistine encounter. In out-
line form, the parallels are:

Philistines	Israelites
1. Take possession of the ark (5:1).	"Repossess" the ark (6:14).
2. Install the ark in the cultic sanctuary (5:2).	Perform cultic acts cele-brating the repossession (6:14-15).
3. Yahweh strikes the Philistines and creates a "great confusion" (m^{e}hûmâ g^{e}dôlâ) in the city (5:9).	Yahweh strikes the people with a "great smiting" (makkâ g^{e}dôlâ) (6:19).
4. The people cry out (5:10, 12).	The people mourn (6:19).
5. The people demand that the ark be sent away (5:11).	The people ask to whom they may send the ark (6:20).

6.	The ark is sent to Israel in a specially dedicated vehicle along with propitiatory offerings (6:7-12).	The ark is taken up to Qiryath-ye^{c}arim, and a guard is sanctified to keep it (7:1).

Hertzberg asks the important question why the ark was·not sent to one of the more ·important, well-known sanctuaries, instead of putting it into "cold storage" in a back-water like Qiryath-ye^{c}arim (1964:61-62).. He suggests a plausible historical reason, but misses the reason implied in the narrative. The ark is now seen as a dangerous burden, one not to be kept where many people would be exposed to it. The choice of an out-of-the-way hamlet is, therefore, completely natural.

The Bethshemeshites, aware that no one would take the ark if they knew the true story of its return, conceal the facts and make the description of the ark's return as matter of fact as possible. They say "the Philistines have returned Yahweh's ark," failing to mention the peculiar manner of the ark's return. They are also somewhat deceptive in their instructions to the inhabitants of Qiryath-ye^{c}arim. "Come down and take up the ark to you." As Driver

observes, Bethshemesh was at a lower altitude, hence
"come down" and "take up" are geographically appro-
priate (1913:59-60). But the instructions also contain
a hidden significance that appears only when they are
compared with the second question of v. 20:

v. 20 $w^{e\jmath}el$-$m\hat{i}$ $ya^{ca}leh$ $m\bar{e}^c\bar{a}l\hat{e}n\hat{u}$

v. 21 $ha^{ca}l\hat{u}$ $\jmath\hat{o}t\hat{o}$ $\jmath a_l\hat{e}kem$

The Bethshemeshites conceal their real concern, that
Qiryath-ye^{c}arim take on the burden, in a geographical
subterfuge.
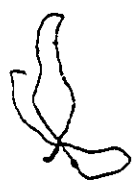
7. 1 Samuel 7

Verse 1

The men of Qiryath-ye'arim seem either to have seen through the Bethshemeshites' deception or to have been given some clues as to the dangers posed by the ark and its God. They do come and take the ark, but do not install it in a sanctuary as would be expected (cf. Hertzberg 1964:61). Instead the ark is brought to the home of a private citizen, Abinadab, whose son Eleazar is consecrated to guard it. . The means by which the men of Qiryath-ye'arim came to know the truth about the ark is left as a "gap" or "indeterminacy" to be filled in by each reader in his own way (cf. Ingarden 1973a under "concretization"; 1973b under "indeterminacy; Iser 1978:172-82). That they do know that Yahweh has apparently rejected the services of the Levites is apparent from their consecration of a secular person to a sacral task.

Chapter 7:1 describes how the ark was put into cold storage, out of harm's way. The people, as Ehrlich notes (1910:192), cannot make priests or levitical attendants for the ark (cf. Schulz 1919:111). The latter are chosen and sanctified directly by Yahweh (Num 4:4-15; Deut 10:8; 1 Sam 2:27-28).[1] Keil

and Delitzsch, faced with this difficulty, suggest
that it is very probable that Abinadab was a Levite
"because otherwise they would hardly have consecrated
his son to be the keeper of the ark, but would have
chosen a Levite for the office" (1880:70). This
suggestion, wrong as it is, clearly reveals the empha-
sis of 7:1. Eleazar is a commoner elected to watch
over the ark, which along with its absentee levitical
attendants, no longer plays a role in the active
religious life of Israel. As Smith observes, nothing
at all is said of Eleazar's belonging to a priestly
family or tribe (1899:50).

Verse 2

Verse 1 cannot, therefore, be regarded as any
kind of resolution of Israel's difficulties with
Yahweh. It is only a temporary measure designed to
bring symptomatic relief of the troubles associated
with the ark's presence. That the care of Eleazar
is not a cure for the ills in Israel's relationship
with Yahweh is shown, in part, by the chiastic struc-
ture that governs 6:19-7:2:

6:19   The people mourned because Yahweh had made a great slaughter.

7:1   The men of Qiryath-ye'arim bring the ark home.

7:2   The ark stays twenty years at Qiryath--ye'arim.

7:2   Israel mourns Yahweh.

The removal to Qiryath-ye'arim has brought no perceptible change in Israel's behaviour or relationship with Yahweh. The only difference that twenty years of cold storage has made is that Israel mourns Yahweh rather than its own dead, killed by him.

Gutbrod has noted the presence of much summary in ch. 7, in contrast with the preceding six chapters (1956:51). Verse 2 offers a good example in which a period of twenty years is passed over with a simple temporal description. The only descriptive content that the narrator attaches to that whole period is that of Israel mourning Yahweh as though he were dead (cf. Ezek 32:18; Mic 2:4; Jer 9:9, 17-19; Amos 5:16; Buber 1956:118; against Seebass 1967:166 n.3). The reader is thereby directed to think in terms of a long period of mourning and hence of a state of serious disrepair in covenantal relations between Yahweh and Israel (cf. Willis 1971:304; 1979:209; against Miller

and Roberts 1977: 20, 59, 66, 69). The ark, and by
implication Yahweh, is interred in Qiryath-ye'arim,
and Israel obviously sees no hope for renewal.

That v. 2 provides the last view of the ark,
sitting in storage (šebet), has troubled some scholars
who seem to require that all characters and important
objects such as the ark continue to occupy a place in
every scene if a narrative is to be judged and inter-
preted as a unity. Press, for example, says "7:2
versucht zwar eine Überleitung von der Ladegeschichte
her zu geben, lässt aber dunkel, warum in den folgenden
Kapiteln die Existenz der Lade überhaupt nicht mehr
erwähnt wird und ist durch Inhalt und Stil als Über-
leitung denkbar ungeeignet" (1938:192). Apparently
the possibility that the role of the ark is taken over
by someone else (cf. Stoebe 1973:172), such as Samuel,
and that the narrative has been purposefully moving
toward that transition, is overruled by the considera-
tions of "Inhalt und Stil," which remain unspecified
by Press.

The note that a period of twenty years passed
during the ark's stay in Qiryath-ye'arim is usually
taken to be a late deuteronomistic insertion (e.g.
Blenkinsopp 1969:143 n.1; Veijola 1977:31; McCarter

1980:142). Even if the attribution were acceptable—
it is debatable on the grounds that someone other than
the deuteronomist may have had use for temporal descrip-
tions—[2]the contribution of such redaction labels to an
understanding of the narrative is questionable. Do we
learn what the deuteronomist was trying to say in his
literary montage by examining what we think are his
fingerprints on the tape that holds the separate pieces
together, or by making a careful study of the literary
effect of the montage (cf. Alter 1981:140)? Even when
there are clear indications of a vocabulary and theology
that permeate all the books of the deuteronomistic
history, it is only through detailed examination of the
contextual literary impact of each "deuteronomisticism"
that the reader will ever come close to an understanding
of deuteronomistic literature.

This is not to say that it may not be helpful to
correlate the usages of specific "deuteronomisticisms"
so as to form a general understanding of deuteronomis-
tic usage which may then be applied to the individual
occurrence. Although there is a good amount of
circularity in such an approach, it is the circularity
attendant upon the study of the relationship between
any single phenomenon and its wider context, and cannot

be avoided. What can and should be avoided is the act of simply labelling any phrase or unit as deuterono- mistic and thinking that such is explanation enough for a "late redactional element."

Verse 3

The sudden reappearance of Samuel along with the implication that Israel's subjection to the Phili- stines is a result of its idolatry and defection has prompted scholars to think in terms of source or redactional conflicts in the text (e.g. Budde 1902: 48-49; Blenkinsopp 1969: 148 n.19). In chs. 4-6, the Israelite defeats are caused by Yahweh's desire to kill the Elides, and the ark plays a central role. Samuel does not appear in those chapters. Now Samuel reappears, the ark disappears, and a causal connection seems to be implied between the Philistine domination and Israelite idolatry. Is there any other explanation for such contradiction and shifting focus than a source- critical or redaction-critical analysis?

Taking the matter of Samuel's sudden reappear- ance first, it should be noted that Samuel makes his second debut with a plan for renewal and victory exactly at a point when all hope seems to have vanished. Israel's attempts to converse with Yahweh,

whether by using the ark as a reminder to him (4:3-5), or simply in sacrificial response to the ark's reappearance, have failed miserably. Thereafter the ark is interred in a hamlet with a common person ordained as its keeper. Samuel's sudden reappearance could not be more perfectly timed.[3]

Furthermore, as Schulz has observed, the words used to reintroduce Samuel provide a link back to 4:1, the place at which Samuel was last seen (1919:114). In 4:1, Samuel gave out the prophetic word to Israel, presumably a word related in some way to the visit he received from Yahweh. Now in 7:3 he returns after the disaster with a plan for repairing the resultant damages. Both his exit and his entrance show Samuel speaking to Israel, attempting to guide it through and out of the crisis precipitated by the Elides. Samuel takes over exactly where the "failed" ark leaves off, and he has a plan that should bring about what Israel thought the ark could be used to effect, namely responsible divine action. Could Samuel have timed his reappearance for this important point so that if all goes according to plan, he will be established as the new centre of mediation between Yahweh and Israel? If his mediation is successful in ch. 7,

he will have accomplished what could not be accomplished
through priest and ark in chs. 4-6. Buber, especially,
has seen this side of Samuel's succession to the place
held by the ark in 4:3-4:

> Gottesführung ohne Lade, das ist in der Stunde
> der von ihm angekündigten Katastrophe Samuels
> 'Idee'. Es ist die n^{e}biische. Die Priester-
> schaft, die das Unheil verschuldet hat, muss
> ausgeschaltet werden. Die Lade hatte ihren
> Sitz in einem von Priestern verwalteten Heilig-
> tum; als ihr Diener hat der junge Samuel einst
> in ihrem Hekhal geschlafen, aber ebenda ist
> ihm der Zusammenbruch angesagt worden. Keine
> Lade—keine starre Kultbindung mehr, gelockert,
> freizügig der Opferdienst. Keine Lade—kein
> Pilgern zum dinggebundenen Orakel mehr, selber
> von Ort zu Ort wandernd ist der Gottesmensch
> da, zu dem JHWH redet, und der zu sagen vermag,
> was dessen führender Wille ist (1964:836).

Samuel does not appear in chs. 4-6 because
the narrator does not want to associate him with the
failure of preceding mediatory institutions. Samuel
appears only after those institutions have failed.
He steps in after a lengthy period of depression about

the disasterous meeting at Bethshemesh and offers a
plan for rehabilitating the relationship. No poli-
tician could have timed his campaign better than
Samuel. Israel is obviously ripe for anything that can
give them hope for renewed ties with Yahweh whom they
have been mourning for twenty years. In such a state
of mind they could be expected to do almost anything
that Samuel would suggest.

The second problem in v. 3 is the apparent
connection between Israelite apostasy and the Phili-
stine victory. "Dass das Volk anderen Göttern gedient
hat, dass es darum von der Philisternot betroffen ist,
wird stillschweigend vorausgesetzt, und doch haben
wir bisher nichts davon erfahren; auch cap. 1-3,
machen nur das Haus Elis dafür verantwortlich" (Budde
1902:49).

The problem resolves itself when close atten-
tion is paid to what the text says. It does not say
that the Philistine victories were caused by Israelite
apostasy, but only that a future victory over the
Philistines may be had if the people will repent and
return to the sole worship of Yahweh (Willis 1971:303).
The narrative, as Budde observes, is very definite
that the Elides, and no one else, were responsible for

Israel's defeats.

If one asks when, following the defeat, Israel might have turned to other gods in the face of Yahweh's apparent defection, only one answer is possible. Prior to Yahweh's action in 6:19 the Israelites appear still faithful to Yahweh (e.g. 6:13-15). Following 6:19, however, they voice a Philistine-like objection to the presence of Yahweh and the ark (6:20); they put it (and him) in cold storage (6:21-7:1), and they mourn Yahweh's passing. With Yahweh dead and gone, Israel might have turned to the reluctant worship of other deities.

Though the narrator does not himself tell us when Israel turned to these substitute deities, he does confirm (v. 4) the fact that Israel did turn to other gods. Given their unstinting devotion to Yahweh, even after the disaster in ch. 4,[4] it is most likely that they turned to these other gods only out of desperation.

Samuel attaches no blame to his exhortation in v. 3. He simply states that if Israel will return to Yahweh, the latter may give them victory over the Philistines.[5] Scholars who suggest that v. 3 is based partly on a pattern found in Judg 10:6-16 have usually

not seen the essential difference between the two
passages (e.g. McCarter 1980:143, 150). In Judges,
the peoples' apostasy provokes Yahweh to abandon them.
In 6:19-7:3, on the other hand, Yahweh's apparent aban-
donment of the people provokes them to apostasy. The
deuteronomistic idea of "return" may be present, but
this does not automatically incorporate the incident
into the deuteronomistic theology of history with its
pattern of apostasy, punishment, repentance, and
deliverance (against McCarter 1980:143). Rather, the
sequence in which v. 3 is incorporated is: unwarranted
punishment, apostasy, guided repentance, and deliver-
ance.

A question may arise in the reader's mind at
this point about why Israel should be desirous of a
victory over the Philistines. The answer is to be
found in Israel's continued mourning for Yahweh (v. 2),
which is a result of catastrophic disturbances in the
relationship with Yahweh. It will be recalled, and
Israel needed no reminder of this fact, that the
disorder of the relationship first appeared in the
battle against the Philistines. Seeing that Yahweh
was against them Israel had called out the ark of the
covenant, a reminder to Yahweh to deliver Israel

from the hand of its enemies (w^{e}yōsi^{c}ēnû mikkap
$^{\backslash}$ōy^{e}bēnû, 4:3). Yahweh ignored the reminder and
since then things had gone from bad to worse. Now
Samuel proposes a plan to reverse the bad turn taken
in ch. 4. If Israel will take the first step by
eliminating their newly adopted religious practises,
Yahweh will deliver them from the hand of the Phili-
stines (w^{e}yaṣṣēl $^{\backslash}$etkem miyyad p^{e}lištîm, 7:3).
Obviously, to an Israel that mourns Yahweh for twenty
years, nothing could be more desirable than an oppor-
tunity to get back to a normal relationship with Yah-
weh.

Samuel has promised a reversal of the effects
and the covenantal implications of the defeat in ch.
4. The question that arises, for both Israel and the
reader, is whether Yahweh, whose behaviour has been
anything but normal or comprehensible, will do as
Samuel suggests. The narrator makes use of this
question in the mind of his reader to increase tension
and narrative interest as he traces events up to the
crucial moment when the promised action is required
of Yahweh.

Samuel has asked Israel to give Yahweh one
more chance. They are required to take a gamble since

they must first return to Yahweh before he will act
again on their behalf. The significance of Israel's
initiation of the rapprochement will appear in ch. 9,
where Yahweh launches a second reconciliation. In
both cases it is the injured party that must make the
first move towards covenant renewal. If the injured
party is not desirous of reconciliation, nothing can
be done to repair the relationship.

Verse 4

Israel's response is immediate and unequivocal.
They turn out their adopted religions and worship
Yahweh alone. There is no question about Israel's
continued· desire for normal relations with Yahweh.
Obviously they turned to other gods only because Yah-
weh was acting so strangely towards them. As soon as
an opportunity arises, Israel turns back to its cove-
nantal God without hesitation.. Israel's forced aposta-
sy is, therefore, mitigated from the reader's perspec-
tive.

Verses 5-6

Samuel enjoins all Israel to congregate at
Mizpah where, he says, he will intercede on their
behalf in prayer. Israel, as ever in this narrative,

responds immediately to Samuel's direction (v. 6).
It has been suggested that the actions of v. 6 indicate
a ceremony for community purification-necessitated by
Israel's defection to other gods (McCarter 1980:144).
The confession of sin also points to a parallel in 12:
19 (cf. 12:10, Buber 1956:158), where a similar con-
fession is part of a process of covenant renewal (See-
bass 1965:294-95; McCarthy 1978:217).

Given the immediate context of v. 6 it is also
possible that these rites should also be viewed as
rites of covenant renewal (cf. Weiser 1962: 15 n.1).
First Israel engages in acts of symbolic contrition
and confession, and then Samuel, the new intermediary,
judges Israel.

Weiser also suggests a covenantal function for
Samuel's judging. "Im Sinne des Verfassers ist der
die Szene abrundende Satz 'und Samuel richtete die
Israeliten in Mizpa' 7, 6 in die vorausgehende Dar-
stellung mit einzubeziehen, nach der Samuel die in
Frage gestellte Beziehung Israels zu Jahwe wieder in
Ordnung zu bringen suchte" (1962:15; cf. Budde 1902:
49). Although Samuel's judgeship is not specifically
described, the context makes Weiser's suggestion
plausible.[6]

Verse 7

The Philistines, last seen heading back to
Ekron (6:16), hear of the Israelite assembly in Mizpah
and come back up to Israel. The Philistines' speedy
response to the news is the narrator's gift to Samuel,
affording him and Yahweh the opportunity to set things
right at the opportune moment when Israel has just
confessed its sin.

The attitudes of the Philistines and Israelites
are linked and contrasted by the repetition of the verb,
"they heard," for both. When the Philistines hear
(wayyišm^{e}c^{û}) they aggressively advance against Israel.
Apparently they have not connected their devastation
by Yahweh with their prior defeat of Israel. On the
other hand, when the Israelites hear (wayyišm^{e}c^{û}) of
the Philistine advance, they fear the Philistines.
Samuel's promise of divine aid is, by itself, not
enough to allay their fear. Israel has no more con-
fidence in Yahweh's intentions towards it.

This description of aural response is also
contrasted with an earlier scene paralleling the
present one (cf. Willis 1979:211). In schematic form
the parallels appear as follows:

4:6-7	7:7
1. wayyišmᵉʿû pᵉlištîm	wayyišmᵉʿû pᵉlištîm
2. a great noise in Israel's camp	that Israel had reassembled
3. They knew that the ark of Yahweh had arrived in Israel's camp.	The Philistine heads go up to Israel.
4.	Israel hears (wayyišmᵉʿû bᵉnê-yiśrāʾēl) that the Philistines are coming.
5. The Philistines fear (wayyirʾû) Israel's gods.	Israel fears (wayyirʾû) on account of the Philistines.

Verse 8

Israel's acceptance of Samuel's role as the new
mediator is evidenced by the parallel between 7:8 and
4:3. In the latter instance, Israel calls for the ark,
symbol of the covenant, when faced with the continued
threat of the Philistines following the first defeat.
With the ark in their midst, they believe that "he will
deliver us from the hand of our enemy" (wᵉyōšiʿēnû
mikkap ʾōyᵉbênû).[7] In 7:8, on the other hand, Israel
expresses its faith in Samuel's unceasing intercession

to stir Yahweh into action, $w^e y \bar{o} \check{s} i^c \bar{e} n \hat{u}$ $\underline{miyyad}$ $p^e li \check{s} t \hat{i}m$.

As Hertzberg points out, the expression "to cry" $\underline{mizz^{ec} \bar{o}q}$ indicates the urgency, and one might add the helplessness, of Israel's situation (1964:68). It is the same word used to describe Israel's oppressed cries to Yahweh in Egypt (cf. Exod 2:23; 3:7), and is also followed in Exod 3:7 with the expression "to deliver them from the hand of the Egyptians." It would appear that once again the narrator encourages the reader to view the ensuing battle in terms of the exodus and so to interpret a victory on Israel's part as a new divine saving deed upon which a renewed covenant may be based. Thus far, though, the narrative has given no indication as to what Yahweh's response, if any, will be. The Philistines are approaching; Israel is getting nervous. The narrator prolongs the increasing tension by describing, in detail, Samuel's sacrificial ministrations at this crucial hour.

Verse 9

The animal offered is not simply a lamb, but a "single milk lamb." Samuel not only offers a "whole burnt offering"; it is a "complete whole burnt offering to Yahweh."[8]

The narrator's descriptions of sacrificial

procedures slows the narrative's progress towards reso-
lution of the increasing tension. Momentarily diverting
the reader's attention away from the pressing circum-
stances of the Israelites, the narrator's attention to
the details of the sacrifice recalls the initiation of
this entire series of events through the performance
of sacrifice. Eli's sons' abuse of the sacrificial
system provoked Yahweh and he arranged for them to be
killed in battle. Now, some twenty years later,
Samuel takes care to offer a proper burnt offering to
Yahweh. Again the outcome of a battle is linked to a
sacrifice. Will a proper sacrifice have a better
effect on Yahweh? The inclusion of the retardatory
details on Samuel's sacrifice is doubly designed to
increase tension and suspense about Yahweh's role in
the upcoming battle. It slows the reader's progress
towards the crucial details while at the same time
increasing the suspense about how Yahweh will respond
to sacrifice.

Finally, the narrator turns to the matter of
immediate interest to both Israel and the reader.
Samuel's intermediary role is foregrounded in the
description of his cry; it is to Yahweh on behalf of
Israel. Having arrived at the peak of expectation,

the narrator wastes no more superfluous words (cf.
Buber 1956:119, "zurückhaltende Stil"), but simply
states "And Yahweh answered him." This is Yahweh's
first positive action towards Israel or an Israelite
since he answered Hannah's petition in 1:19. In
both cases, Samuel is inextricably involved—once as
the positive answer and once as the intercessor
requesting and receiving the positive answer. In
between, Yahweh's treatment of Israel is totally
conditioned by the presence of the wicked Elides as
Israel's priestly intercessors, and his desire to
eliminate them.

Verse 10

Characterization by way of contrasts revealed
in dialogue is a technique of biblical narrative noted
by Alter (1981:84-85, 123). Verse 10 offers an example
of contrastive characterization created by indicating
the simultaneity of the different characters' acts.
The reader sees the pious Samuel offering up a
sacrifice. At that very moment the sneaking Phili-
stines are moving in for the kill. The simultaneity
of the two actions is expressed syntactically by a
yqtl-qtl structure; $way^e h\hat{\imath} \check{s}^e m\hat{u}^{\supset}\bar{e}l ma^{ca}leh...\hat{u}p^e li\check{s}t\hat{\imath}m$
$nigg^e \check{s}\hat{u}$ (cf. Talmon 1978:11-12; Driver 1913:65).

The whole of v. 10a is recognized by McCarter as a parenthetic discursion supplying the reader with incidental information (1980:145; cf. Nowack 1902:35). He wrongly suggests, however, that it obscures the connection between Yahweh's "answer" in v. 9 and "thunder" in 10b (p. 145). The reader of biblical narrative familiar with the covention of parenthetic discursions would recognize its function and appreciate its apt placement. Just before Yahweh lets loose with his thunder the reader is treated to a picture of the stealthy Philistines whose sacrilegious designs on the pious Israelites are so richly deserving of punishment. Far from obscuring the connection between v. 9 and v. 10b, v. 10a makes it so much more appropriate.

What failed to materialize when Israel gave vent to its great earth-shaking shout is now accomplished with ease by Yahweh's loud thunder against the Philistines:

4:5 wayyāriᶜû kol-yiśrāʾēl tᵉrûᶜâ gᵉdôlâ wattēhōm hāʾāreṣ
7:10 wayyarᶜēm yhwh   bᵉqôl-gādôl...wayᵉhummēm

Israel's shout gets an echo; Yahweh's thunder gets
action. As before (5:9) Yahweh's attack on the Phili-
stines throws them into a confusion (way^{e}hummēm).
Most commentators have noted that Israel steps into
the battle only after it is already decided by Yahweh
(e.g. Smith 1899:53; Stoebe 1973:174). Yahweh's·
overthrow of the Philistines thereby becomes a solid
basis for renewed relationship between himself and
Israel.[9] It is an unambiguous indication of the
divine will to be with and for Israel against its
enemies (cf. Hertzberg 1964:68). It is also a rever-
sal of Yahweh's previous contraventions of his pro-
mise to make Israel's enemies his enemies (cf. Exod
23:22; 1 Sam 4:2-3).

The final sentence of v. 10 describes an
obvious reversal in Israel's fortune at war. In 4:2,
Israel is smitten (wayyinnāgep) before the Philistines
(cf. 4:10; Veijola 1977:37-38; Willis 1979:211). Now,
however, Yahweh honours his agreements and it is the
Philistines who are properly smitten (wayyinnāgep)
before Israel. In both cases, it should be noted that
the action is described with the defeated as subject
of a passive verb, "x was smitten before y," indicating
Yahweh's responsibility for the outcome of both battles.

Whether it is Israelites or Philistines that win, Yah-
weh alone determines who will be smitten before whom.
The reversal is another assurance of Yahweh's renewed
good will towards Israel. Samuel's promise (v. 3). is
thus made good by Yahweh. A new effective and bene-
ficial team of God and mediator has been tried and
proven true.

Verse 11

Continuing his description of the symmetrical
reversal of Israel's previous defeat, the narrator
now shows the Israelites going out from Mizpah in
pursuit of the Philistines. The contrast with 4:10 is
striking:

4:10 wayyānusû ʾîš leʾōhālāyw

7:11 wayyēṣeʾû ʾanšê yiśrāʾēl min-hammiṣpâ
      wayyirdepû...

The first noticeable difference is in the verbs. In
defeat each man flees whereas in victory they pursue
their enemy. In defeat, it was every man for himself
and each was not even described as an Israelite,
perhaps an indication of the devastating political
consequences of military defeat for Israel. In

victory, however, it is the men of <u>Israel</u>, now united
by their God-given victory, who pursue their enemy
(against Ehrlich 1910:193). Finally, one might note
that in defeat each man returns to his own tent, a
measure of the disunification caused by defeat. In
contrast, the men of Israel go out from Mizpah, their
base, indicating the security brought by victory,
which allows them to venture out of their own terri-
tory.

Verse 12

The stone set up by Samuel is a tribute to the
renewed aid given by Yahweh to his people.[10] Given the
memorial name <u>ʾeben hāᶜāzer</u>, "stone of help," the stone
also serves as another indication that Israel's victory
constitutes a complete reversal of its previous
defeat, for it was exactly at Ebenezer (4:1) that
Israel had been defeated (cf. Willis 1979:210-11;
McCarter 1980:146).

Contrary to Buber, Samuel's expression "as
far as here" (ᶜad-hēnnâ) does not imply "und vorläufig
nicht weiter will die Hilfe des Himmels reichen"
(1964:731). Verse 13, which Buber disallows as
integral to the original narrative, states quite
clearly that Yahweh's hand was on the Philistines

throughout Samuel's life. Instead, one must seek a
meaning for ^{c}ad-hēnnâ that agrees with its present
context.

Both Samuel's actions and words in the preceding
sentences of v. 12 are centered on the commemoration of
the particular place to which Israel pursued its vic-
tory (cf. Gutbrod 1956:55). The name that Samuel gives
to that place just happens to be identical to the name
of the place where Israel was first defeated, that is,
Ebenezer. In view of the strong emphasis on symmetrical
reversal of Israel's previous misfortune in vv. 10-12,
it is likely that the final sentence of v. 12 also
contributes something to that aim. When Samuel says,
therefore, that Yahweh has helped them "as far as
here" or "up to here," and "here" (hēnnâ) refers to
Ebenezer, it would seem that he is making two points,
one geographical and one theological. Yahweh has
helped them back to Ebenezer and has there reversed
the ill-effects of the previous disaster; he has
helped the Israelites back ^{c}ad-hēnnâ, to the place
where they were undone and their relationship with
Yahweh seemed at an end.

Samuel's ^{c}ad-hēnnâ is a fitting summary and
conclusion to the entire battle report. The battle

brings Israel back to Ebenezer in victory and, thereby, Yahweh back to Israel. The point by point reversal of Israel's defeat is the means that Yahweh chooses to right his wrongs and to show Israel that he desires reconciliation with them. It should be noted that it is only after the Elides are dead and Samuel has taken over as leader and covenant mediator that Yahweh moves to renew relations. Before Samuel's appearance and intervention there were no indications of any such desire. Hence the victory not only expresses Yahweh's renewed concern for Israel; it also legitimates Samuel, firmly establishing him as the new mediator chosen (cf. chs. 1-3) and designated by Yahweh.

Verses 13-14

The legitimation of Samuel as mediator continues in vv. 13-14 (cf. Good 1965:60-61). In contrast to chs. 5-6, where the heavy hand of Yahweh on the Philistines was of no benefit to Israel, the hand of the Lord on the Philistines during the period of Samuel's judgeship brings peace to Israel. Again the difference is due to Samuel's assumption of the role of renewer (v. 6) and maintainer (v. 15) of the relationship between Israel and Yahweh. The connection between the lack of a Philistine presence in Israelite

territory and the influential presence of Samuel is
explicit in v. 13. The state of affairs therein
described exists "all the days of Samuel."

All territories lost to the Philistines are
regained by Israel and there is even peace with the
Amorites on the eastern front (v. 14).[11] Once again
the narrator shows how the accession of Samuel to the
mediating office results in a return to normal
patterns in Israel with divine protection from external
forces. The description of recaptured cities on the
western front (Philistine) and peace on the eastern
front (Amorite) expresses the completeness of the
peace on all fronts achieved under Samuel (cf. Keil
and Delitzsch 1880:75; McCarter 1980:147; against
Hertzberg 1964:69).

Verses 13-14 summarizes Samuel's "military"
career in a formulaic pattern known from the book
of Judges (McCarthy 1973:402; McCarter 1980:147).
The summary is designed to convey the impression of
a lengthy period of peaceful existence in Israel
under the judgeship of Samuel. "Die Folge des Sieges
war eben šālôm in ganzem Umfang" (Stoebe 1973:175).
During this period, the narrator tells the reader
nothing about the people or their reactions to the

renewed protection of Yahweh under the auspices of
Samuel's judgeship. It is as though having been
brought back to a normal state of covenantal existence,
they have no further interest in the matters being
described, that is, matters of state. So long as
there is peace in Israel, with no threat of recurring
political disaster such as the Elide affair, this is
how the people continue to behave.

Verse 15

As Weiser observes, vv. 15-17 lay great
emphasis (three occurrences of $\check{s}p\underline{t}$) on Samuel's role
as judge over all Israel (1962:10). Against Noth's
assertion that Samuel the judge is a deuteronomistic
fiction, Weiser suggests that the emphasis on Samuel's
judgeship is more elegantly explained as a true
historical reminiscence born by the old tradition upon
which vv. 15-17 are based (p. 10; cf. Wildberger 1957:
464; Seebass 1965:292; V. Fritz 1976:351; and Noth
1967:55).

The emphasis on Samuel's judgeship, whatever
its historical basis, fulfills certain important
literary functions in its immediate literary context.
Verse 15 says that Samuel judged Israel "all the days
of his life." The description of the duration of his

period in office parallels the description in v. 13,
a description of the period when Yahweh's hand was
against the Philistines, "all the days of Samuel."
By means of this repeated temporal definition, the
narrator draws attention to the contemporaneity of
Samuel's judgeship and the absence of a Philistine
threat to Israel.[12]

The obvious implication of this link between
vv. 13 and 15 is that when Samuel is judge in Israel,
Yahweh effectively wards off external dangers. Samuel
and Yahweh make a successful administrative team.
Samuel judges Israel, maintaining internal affairs,
while Yahweh keeps his part of the bargain in his
defensive activities against the Philistines.[13] M.A.
Cohen agrees that Samuel's judgeship should be under-
stood in terms of political leadership:

> Samuel's importance derived not from his role as
> a shofet or military leader or from his role as
> a prophet, but from his actual position as the
> Shilonite seer-priest. As such he was the
> legitimate spokesman for Yahweh and the embodi-
> ment of the ideology that united the tribes in
> what might be called today a religious federa-
> tion (1965:66-67; cf. Press 1938:193).

Willis has observed that v. 15 makes Samuel
the immediate successor to Eli's office as judge
(1971:304; 1979:211; cf. 4:18). With a good judge in
this office Israel experiences the positive side of
covenantal existence under Yahweh. The contrast
between Israel's experiences under bad judges and good
is highlighted by the link between these descriptions
of Eli and Samuel, both of which are written as formu-
laic summaries. Eli's summary is placed at 4:18,
immediately following the catastrophic defeat
brought on by his sons' misdeeds. Samuel's
summary, on the other hand, follows immediate-
ly after the reversal of Israel's defeat, a reversal
produced and engineered by Samuel in his role as judge.

By means of these structural parallels linked
by the formulaic summaries, the narrator draws atten-
tion to the effect that good and bad judges have on
the theological-political fortunes of Israel. A bad
judge brings about political destitution and an
apparent end to the relationship with Yahweh (4:22).
A good judge, on the other hand, is capable of quickly
reversing the ill-effects of any predecessor's
mismanagement. The lesson taught by these parallels
is that Israel's fortunes are determined, to a great

extent, by the degree of its judges' rectitude. With-
out a good mediator in place Yahweh is too unpredicta-
ble (cf. 3:18), too holy (cf. 6:20) for a regular,
normal relationship with Israel.

Verses 16-17

The portrait of Samuel on his regular yearly
rounds as Israel circuit-judge serves to give an
impression of restored regularity to Israel's
existence.[14] Samuel's conscientious application to his
duties is emphasized by the threefold repetition of
the words "he judged Israel" in v. 17. Thereby the
impression of regularity and a lengthy period of peace
in Israel is directly tied to Samuel's performance in
office.

The summary format of vv. 15-17 also contri-
butes to the impression created by vv. 15-17. By
compresssing a large span of story time into a short
narrative description, the narrator is able to
characterize the whole period uniformly (cf. 7:2).
In this particular case the result is an unblemished
and lengthy period of peace under the all-encompassing
judgeship of Samuel.

The final portrait of Samuel's leadership in
Israel seeks to combine all aspects of his career and

to use this combination as a culminating characteriza-
tion of his function in Israel and of the results
thereby accruing to Israel's profit. Samuel returns
home following his rounds, suggesting a time of peace
when Israel's judge can retire to his own home. The
peaceful scene is explained, as previously, by the
covenantal maintenance performed by the judge. Samuel
judges Israel in Ramah, thereby preserving the social
and political order required by covenantal law. He
also builds an altar to Yahweh so as to maintain proper
relationship with Yahweh by means of expiatory sacri-
fice, "given for sin" (see above on 2:29). Samuel,
as apparently Eli before him (cf. 1:9; 2:28; 4:18),
unites the sacral and secular aspects of mediation in
one person.

In all this time the reader does not hear of
Israel, save as the object of Samuel's judging. No
complaint is voiced during the entire period of
Samuel's office. Trivial as this observation may
seem, it is very important in view of suggestions
that have been made as to the purpose of ch. 7.
McCarter, for example, suggests the following reading
of ch. 7:

All is well in Israel. Yahweh rules by his

prophet. The land is secure. We have

seen a major crisis met and surmounted

under Samuel's leadership. Our narrator

would have us believe that at this point

in history the people of Israel could

perpetrate no greater breach of trust,

no more arbitrary exercise of self-will,

no more senseless deed of vanity than

to demand for themselves a human king

(1980:151).

These are strong words, but do they accurately describe

the effect of ch. 7 when seen in conjunction with ch.

8? The reasons that the elders supply for their request

in 8:5 are, in fact, based on developments that arise

subsequent to the situation in ch. 7. Hence ch. 7 can

no more be used to defame Israel's request than the

Elides' predecessors' good behaviour could be used to

criticize Yahweh's decision to eliminate the Elides.

Things change and from ch. 7 to the time of the elders'

request in 8:5 great and portentous changes have

occurred.

Chapter 7 cannot, then, be viewed as an attempt

to predispose the reader to a negative valuation of

the request for a king in 8:5 (against Schulz 1919:121;

Boecker 1969:97; Stoebe 1973:175). It may in fact do
the opposite in that the people voice no complaint at
all until situation demands it. McCarter is right to
see all well in Israel in ch. 7. Apparently the
people of Israel agree. It should be recalled that
even though they were wrongfully spleened by Yahweh
in 6:19, not to mention ch. 4, they are the first to
make a move towards reconciliation. Having achieved
the state they so anxiously desired, it is not sur-
prising that they do not complain. All is indeed
right in Israel at the end of ch. 7. From 7:17 the
reader knows that Samuel is at home judging Israel;
Israel is doing no other thing than being properly
judged by Samuel; and Yahweh is presumably in heaven,
ready and willing to accept the sacrifices offered
by his chosen servant, Samuel.

8. 1 Samuel 8

Verse 1

The narrator begins a new scene with a circum-
stantial clause (cf. Andersen 1974:79 #5.1.1). At
the same time, the new scene contains recurring ele-
ments from preceding scenes. The narrator describes
a state of affairs that will trigger a sequence of
events ending only in ch. 12. It is important to note
that the descriptions of the state of affairs in vv.
1-3 does stem from the omniscient narrator himself and
is, therefore, not controvertible by anything a char-
acter might say or a reader might think.

Attention is drawn to Samuel's age by placing
the predicate adjective, zāqēn, before the noun,
"Samuel." The prominence that the narrator gives to
Samuel's age supports the importance it will subse-
quently be given by the elders in their request (v. 5).

More importantly, however, the foregrounding
of Samuel's age focuses the reader's awareness on the
picture of an aged judge with two sons. The reader
struck by the emphatic position of zāqēn cannot
fail to recall the importance attached to Eli's age
in preceding scenes (cf. 2:22, 32; 3:1-2; 4:15, 18).
Moreover, this associative recollection of the Elide

affair is supported by the second sentence, which
describes Samuel installing his sons as judges for
Israel. The reader recalls, of course, that the aged
Eli also had his sons working under him as priests
(1:3; 2:11-13, 22-25; cf. Robertson 1944:193).

The reader of v. 1 will recognize, therefore,
that the narrative has moved on to a new scene on
account of the introductory circumstancial clause.
The reader's initial reaction to the new scene is one
of foreboding because of the associations with the
Elide affair. Perhaps under Samuel's firm leader-
ship, however, events will not take the bad turn
that they did under the aged Eli.

Verse 2

Scholars reading v. 2 have suggested that it,
along with v. 1, stems from an old, genuine tradition
(Wildberger 1957:457; Weiser 1962:30; Noth 1967 56 n.7;
Birch 1976:26). The straight-forward presentation of
the names of Samuel's sons, along with their place of
occupation seems to impress these readers, at least,
with the verisimilitude of the narrative in these two
verses. Perhaps the narrator has supplied these
details to lend realism to his introductory background
information to the new scene; but there is an even

more important function for the names. As Dhorme
notes the manner of presentation of Samuel's sons is
reminiscent of that of Eli's sons (1910:70; cf. 1:3).
Even the simplest introduction is used to reinforce
the association of the sons of Eli and Samuel.[1]

The statement that the sons occupy themselves
in Beersheba, while possibly an authentic, southern
Samuel tradition (Weiser 1962:30), or an effort to
extend the narrative's geographical focus to all of
Israel (cf. McCarter 1980:156), serves to establish
an important difference between the situation of the
corrupt sons of Eli and that of the equally corrupt
sons of Samuel. Eli's sons engage in their wrong-
doing in the very same temple that Eli presided over
so that Eli was implicated, and even charged by God
as complicit in his sons' sin (2:29). By placing
Samuel's sons in Beersheba, approximately 80 km.
south of Ramah, Samuel's home (7:17), the narrative
physically removes Samuel from any reproach that
might fall on his sons.[2]

Verse 3

The narrator reinforces the geographical
separation of Samuel and his sons by inserting his
own comment to distinguish them. The first sentence

of v. 3 characterizes the misdeeds of the sons as the opposite of their father's behaviour. Samuel serves as the standard of uprightness against which his sons are measured and found wanting. Samuel is placed above the wrong-doing of his sons; the narrator puts him beyond reproach.

The misdeeds committed by Samuel's sons are similar to those of Eli's sons, excepting specific differences attendant on variations between the offices of priest and judge. Samuel's sons turn aside after personal gain and they take bribes. Such actions are abuses of the mediatory office (cf. McCarter 1980:156). The wrong actions evidence an attitude that places self before others in an office where self-denial is part of the occupation. Eli's sons are no different (cf. Kellermann 1977:208). They pursue their own ends in sacrifice, callously neglecting the needs of man and transgressing the rights of God (2:12-17).

By repeating the verb $n\bar{a}t\hat{a}$ twice in v. 3, an equation is made between "turning aside ($wayyitt\hat{u}$) after gain," and "perverting ($wayyatt\hat{u}$) justice." The equation indicates that the pursuit of selfish gain is an abuse of the office that creates the

opportunity. The maintainers of justice (šōp^{e}ṭîm)
have become perverters of justice (mišpāṭ) (cf. Weinfeld
1977:87).

This description of the sons' misbehaviour is
the first sign of any problem since the great reconcil-
iation of ch. 7. Significantly the fault lies on the
side of the theocratic administrators as opposed to
the common people. The situation duplicates the
previous priestly sin which was contrasted with the
innocence of the common people (as in 2:12-17). And
as the people complained of their priestly mediators'
misbehaviour there (2:22-24), they will now complain
to Samuel about his sinful sons.

Verse 4

The last assembly was described in 7:6, where
all Israel assembled (wayyiqqāb^{e}ṣû) to make confession
for sin as the first step towards reparation of the
rift in their relationship with Yahweh. Though they
were the injured party, the Israelites made the first
move towards reconciliation. Now in v. 4 we see a
reassembly (wayyitqabb^{e}ṣû).

A difference between the assemblies of v. 4
and 7:6 is immediately apparent in the assembling
group; in v. 4 it is "all the elders of Israel" and

in 7:6, "all Israel" (7:5). The last time the elders
conferred they voiced a concern over the outcome of
a battle and decided to call out the ark as a reminder
to Yahweh of the covenant (4:3). Now in v. 4 the
elders are reassembling for a related, but different
purpose. As Gutbrod suggests, the elders "treten in
Tätigkeit, wo es um den Bestand und das Geschick
Israels als des Volkes im Bunde Gottes geht" (1956:58).
The description of their assembly before they go to
Samuel at Ramah already indicates that they are
united as a group with a singular purpose even before
they go to see him. Israel, as a body, is going to
confer with Samuel, Yahweh's mediator.

Verse 5

The reasons given for their request for a king
by the elders are supported by the narrator's descrip-
tion of vv. 1-3. Samuel's age and the sins of his sons
constitute the sole basis for their request. Some
scholars have seen this narrow support as an attempt
by the narrator to cast aspersions on the request
(e.g. Buber 1964:728; Good 1965:60, "The fact of
incompetent incumbents is no reason to throw-over
the whole institution of judgeship."). Others have
seen it as an indication that Israel was beginning

to awaken to political realities and the insufficiency
of the judge system (e.g. Ishida 1977:35). Yet another
view is expressed by Weiser, who regards the reasons
as plausible and an indication that the narrative, at
this point, is not anti-monarchic (1962:30; cf.
Veijola 1977:68-69).

On account of the narrator's support for the
elders' observations the reader knows that their
evaluation is accurate. He also knows that it was
the identical state of affairs that brought Israel to
grief before, on account of the Elides and Yahweh's
desire to punish them. The elders are aware of this
recurrence of a potentially disastrous state of
affairs in the offices of their mediators. Knowing
what this state of affairs led to previously, the
elders have determined to avoid a repetition at all
costs.[3]

The fact that the elders come to Samuel, the
designated mediator, and ask him to establish a king
to take over the office of judge indicates that they
regard their complaint and request as legitimate and
justifiable in terms of the existing covenantal
constitution (cf. Willis 1972:52). The request is a
product of a defect in the theocratic system, a

defect lying wholly on the side of Yahweh and his
chosen mediators. What the request amounts to is a
formal petition, calling for an end to the theocratic
system with its fallible mediators and its holy God.

The request for "a king to judge us" has
posed a problem in determining the meaning of the
word "to judge." For Press the meaning is determined
by v. 20: "Recht schaffen soll der Konig seinem Volke
als der siegreiche Fuhrer seiner Kriege" (1938:197;
cf. Boecker 1969: 24 n.2). Speiser, on the other hand,
states that the obvious meaning is not "to judge" but
"to govern" as the preceding context would lead one
to expect (1971:282).

It is probable that both these aspects are
contained in the verb "to judge." As Hertzberg
intimates the verb "to judge" is used of the requested
king to show that the office of judge is replaced by
that of king (1964:72; cf. Stoebe 1973:183-84 citing
W.H. Schmidt 1966:39-40 in support). Buber notes that
such a reading of "to judge" in v. 5·is exactly what
the repeated use of spt in chs. 7-8 would lead one to
expect.

Der in Zusammenhang des Buches vorangehende
Text 7, 15-18 [sic], 3 tut, indem er das

Wurzelwort sechsmal im Sinn von richten,

Richter, Recht (in gesetzhafter Bedeutung)

wiederholt, das Mögliche—und in alttesta-

mentlicher Komposition Übliche—, um uns

diesen Sinn so einzuhämmern, dass, wo uns

das Wort nun ein siebentes und achtes Mal

begegnet, wir sogleich bereit sind, es.

ebenso zu verstehen (1964:728).

But Buber disallows that the king takes over the

functions of the judge on the grounds of 7:15-17,

which states three times that Samuel judged Israel.

Since in ch. 8 the mediatory office of judge con-

tinues, it cannot be that activity which the people

desire of the requested king.

Buber's rejection of the reading demanded by

the repetitions of špṭ is, however, more a product

of his own reconstructed narrative, than of the

narrative found in MT. The elders' request for a

king "to judge" is a pointed rejection of the existing

judgeship. The unusual role requested of the future

king is intended to show that a king will obviate all

the functions that the judge has performed in chs. 7-8.

As Buber says, the word špṭ and its significance as a

description for Samuel's mediatory activities has been

so pounded into the reader that its recurrence in a
request for a king cannot be understood as anything
else than a replacement of the office of judge by that
of king. When it is recalled that the primary function
of all of Samuel's judging activities in ch. 7 was to
act out the role of covenant mediator, renewing and
maintaining the relationship, the seriousness of the
elders' request for a replacement begins to be
appreciated. But what is the point of the switch?
Why is it necessary and what does it accomplish?

It is only with the inclusion of the last three
words of the request that its full implication becomes
clear. The elders request a new government that will
make Israel a state like any other pagan nation. The
key to the meaning of the request lies not in Deut 17:
14, to which it is certainly related, but in the impli-
cations of an expressed desire to be "like the nations."[4]
Hertzberg notes that the word for nations, haggôyim,
stresses the "non-Israelite, heathen element," and
correctly concludes that the elders express a desire
to depart from the special political status of a nation
chosen and ruled by God in order to become simply one
among many ordinary nations (1964:72).

Israel had been created as a people with a

theocratic political system as a result of Yahweh's special action. Israel was Yahweh's people (^{c}am yhwh) chosen from out of all the peoples of the earth to be Yahweh's special possession (Exod 19:5-6; Lev 20:26; Deut 7:6; 14:2; 26:18-19; 32:8-9; 1 Sam 12:22). "Israel's social existence was founded on the premise of being distinct from all peoples by virtue of divine election" (Talmon 1979:6). The covenant between Israel and Yahweh distinguished Israel, elevating it above all the nations of the earth (Deut 4:6-8). The request of Yahweh's people (^{c}am yhwh) to become like the nations (k^ekol-haggôyim) in political structure is, therefore, not only a rejection of the theocracy and its judges, but even more it is a rejection of the covenant.[5] "The fundamental thing threatened by Israel's action was the covenant relationship" (McCarthy 1973:412).

Scholars have regarded the request, which is subsequently correctly interpreted by Yahweh as apostasy (v. 8) and rejection of his rule (v. 7), as either an overreaction (Good 1965:60), or as out of sorts with its subsequent context (Press 1938:196-97). When it is recalled that the elders' request is a response, not simply to one instance of corrupt

leadership but to a recurrence of corrupt leadership,
a state of affairs that had previously led Israel to
disaster and an apparent end to the covenant (cf. 4:22;
7:12), their drastic request seems entirely appropriate.
Rather than requesting new judges and leaving them-
selves open to further recurrences, the elders attack
the roots of the problem—the theocratic system.
Before Yahweh can respond to the corruption of Samuel's
sons as he did to that of Eli's sons, the elders
request that the whole problematic system, with its
judges, its covenant, and its "holy God" (6:20) be
done away with. Hence the elders' request is actually
a timely nipping of another theocratic disaster yet in
bud. The lack of continuity that Press sees between a
request for a king on account of sinful judges, and
Yahweh's interpretation of the request in vv. 7-8 as
a rejection of divine kingship and covenantal rebel-
lion, is only apparent and disappears when the sins of
Samuel's sons are viewed in the context of chs. 2-7.
Rather than allowing Yahweh to create another national
disaster that would again seem to be an end to the
covenant (cf. 4:22; 6:20), Israel will end the
relationship less painfully by simply installing a
king in a secular government. Yahweh will then have

neither cause nor justification to foist another
national disaster on Israel on account of <u>his</u> officials'
misdeeds.

On a structural note, one observes that v. 5
constitutes the beginning of a balanced dialogue be-
tween Yahweh and Israel, with Samuel, true to his pro-
fession, acting as go-between. The structure consti-
tutes a remarkable network of correspondences and
reversals in the roles of speaker and addressee; the
complexity of the pattern cannot be explained as a
redactional pastiche of sources, traditions, and
redactional insertion.

v. 5	People to Samuel; "give king."
v. 6	Samuel to Yahweh; "prayer."
vv. 7-9	Yahweh to Samuel; "listen; declare the manner of the king."
vv. 10-11	Samuel to people; "description of the manner of the king."
v. 19	People to Samuel; "No—give king."
v. 21	Samuel to Yahweh; "reports people's refusal."
v. 22	Yahweh to Samuel; "listen; make a king."
v. 22	Samuel to people; "Go home."

At the centre of this balanced inversion we

see that the opposition between two groups is really between Samuel and the people—not between the people and Yahweh as would be expected. The structural opposition supports and confirms a fact that appears during the course of the unfolding dialogue; Yahweh, though he does not like the request, does not deny it; instead, he simply subverts it (cf. Buber 1964:134-35).

Verse 6

Scholars have often spoken of a perspectival division between vv. 1-5 and vv. 6ff. (e.g. Wildberger 1957:467). Verses 1-5 are regarded as positive, or at least neutral with respect to the suggested monarchy. Veijola calls the request "ein durchaus verstandlicher Plan nach den eingerissenen Misstanden" (1977:55; cf. Weiser 1962:30; Stoebe 1973:182). Nevertheless, according to Veijola, vv. 6-22a, the product of one (DtrN) of two deuteronomistic redactors (DtrN and DtrG), voice an absolutely negative judgement on the proposition (1977:55). While in vv. 1-5 the reason for the request is stated to be the abuses of Samuel's sons, vv. 6ff. attribute the request to Israel's stubbornness (Wildberger 1957:457). Furthermore, from v. 7 on, the confrontation over the issue of the monarchy takes place between all the people

and Samuel, whereas in vv. 4-5 the elders alone bring
forward the request (Veijola 1977:55).

Impressive as this argument for redactional
divisions in the text may be, there is a case to be
made for a unified reading, which, at the same time,
calls into question the validity of the anti-monarchic
label attached to 8:6-22 if not all of ch. 8. Both
redactional analysis of the chapter and the more
generally accepted opinion that ch. 8, and hence the
compiler/narrator of ch. 8, is expressing an anti-
-monarchic point of view depend on a total disregard of
the "voice structure" of ch. 8.

In the analysis of a speech or literary.
composition, nothing is more important than
to determine precisely the voice or voices
presented as speaking and the precise nature
of the address (i.e., specific direction to
a hearer, an addressee); for in every speech
reference to a voice or voices and implication
of address (i.e., reference to a process of
speech, actual or imagined) is a part of the
meaning and a frame for the rest of the
meaning, for the interpretation of which it
supplies an indispensible control (La Drière

1953:441-42).

The simple act of attention to the question of "who says what," soon reveals who the real anti-monarchist is in ch. 8, and he is definitely not the narrator.

The description of Samuel's reaction to the request is the first indication that the narrator holds a different view than Samuel. The proposed monarchy (haddābār) displeases Samuel, not the narrator and not Yahweh. That Samuel, groomed from before birth to be Yahweh's agent, should be displeased with the request is neither surprising nor expressive of narratorial anti-monarchism.

Samuel's personal dislike for the request receives additional emphasis in the narrator's description of what specifically bothered Samuel about it. "The matter displeased Samuel because (ka$^{\supset a}$ser) they said, 'Give us a king to judge us'." The narrator pointedly leaves out the crucial information about the covenantal implication of the request (k^{e}kol-haggôyim) in order to show that Samuel's interest is, at this point, focused on the personal import of the request (against Talmon 1979:10). Samuel is concerned, at this point, only with the administrative switch from judge to king.[6] As Schulz says, Samuel's resentment

is "echt menschlich geschildert" (1919:123; cf. Gutbrod
1956:59; Weiser 1962:33; C.P.W. Gramberg 1830:74, cited
by Boecker 1969:25 n.1).[7]

Samuel's personal involvement has initially
prevented him from seeing the large implications of the
request (cf. Stoebe 1973:184). Even though he was
intimately involved in the Elide affair, knowing both
its causes and consequences, he is unable to see the
justice and necessity of the elders' request as an
attempt to prevent a repetition of the previous disaster.
Neither does he yet appear to have fully perceived the
covenantal implications of the request, which aims at
terminating not simply the judgeship, but the whole
theocratic enterprise. Poor old Samuel, he is human
after all.

Returning to the supposed split between vv. 5
and 6, it is difficult to see how Samuel's resentment
of the request can be read as "ein absolut negatives
Urteil über das Vorhaben des Volkes" (Veijola 1977:55;
cf. Hylander 1932:118; Soggin 1967:32). Smith pro-
vides an example of how scholars can misunderstand a
narrator's purpose by taking a protagonist such as
Samuel as the unquestionable mouthpiece of the
narrator. Commenting on vv. 6-9 he says:

The view of the author is evidently that
the theocracy is the divinely appointed consti-
tution for Israel, and that the substitution
of another form is treason to God. He does
not seem to recognize that Samuel was charge-
able with fault in not correcting the abuses
of his sons' government, nor does he tell us
how Yahweh would give them relief (1899:56).

What Smith fails to recognize is that it is
the narrator himself who presents the misdeeds of
Samuel's sons as legitimate cause for the Israelites'
request. It is the narrator who has constructed chs.
1-7, in which the basis for the request is established.
It is Samuel and not the narrator who fails·to recog-
nize his sons' shortcomings.

Naturally if the reader assumes that the
narrator is publishing his own views through each
character's thoughts and speech, then he must also
assume a multiplicity of narrators to account for the
varying viewpoints expressed by the different charac-
ters. Once it is allowed that a narrator can and will
allow his characters to voice contradictory opinions
over which the narrator and reader stand as observers,
shifts in opinion such as that between the elders in

v. 5 and Samuel in v. 6 can be seen in their proper

literary perspective. They are the integral parts of

the narrative's dialectic. Verse 6 explicitly limits

dissatisfaction to Samuel and only with respect to

the king as a replacement for a judge.

Verse 7

Samuel takes his problem to the Lord in prayer,

and Yahweh replies with an astute observation about

Samuel's personal involvement: "Listen to the peoples'

voice, to everything that they said (l^{e}kōl $^{\ni}$a$^{\vee}$ser-

-yō$^{\ni}$m^{e}rū $^{\ni}$ēleykā); (kī) they haven't rejected you but

me from reigning as king over them." Yahweh has a much

more accurate understanding of both the nature of the

people's request and the nature of Samuel's displeasure,

in contrast to Samuel's clouded vision.[8] The narrator

has nicely used the deity's omniscience, which is also

unquestionable, to reveal the true import of the request

in an unerring, omniscient evaluation.

Yahweh tells Samuel that he is getting side-

tracked by a relatively minor implication of the request,

because he has not really listened to all of it (cf.

Weiser 1962:35). At issue is not simply the fate of

particular judges, but the entire theocratic enter-

prise. As Driver observes, Yahweh emphasizes the

difference between Samuel's misinterpretation and the
realities of the request with the emphatic syntactic
positioning of the contrasting phrases introduced by
kî; kî lō° °ōt^{e}kā...kî-°ōtî (1913:67).

Yahweh's statement that the people reject his
kingship, in conjunction with the case of the rejec-
tion in the recurrence of sinful mediators, indicates
that Yahweh's actions in chs. 1-7 are to be understood
as actions of the divine king. The people now reject
him as king because they do not want a repetition of
such actions on the part of the divine monarch. They
reject him and his government because of the inherent
dangers and weaknesses of the theocratic constitution.

According to Crüsemann, the function of the
opposition between the kingship of Yahweh and man in
v. 7 is to label the request as reprehensible (1978:
74). Speaking of v. 7, which he regards as a pre-
deuteronomistic element, Crüsemann says, "Das ist als
äusserste, im Jahweglauben denkbare Kritik am
Königtum in der vor-dtr Vorlage von 1 Sam 8 und 12
geschehen; ihr Vorwurf lautet im Kern: Die Errichtung
eines Königtums und damit die Gründung eines Staates
bedeutet praktizierten Atheismus" (1978:84).
Similarly Boecker, who places emphasis on the

interpretation of v. 7b, the "Alternativformel," in the context of its prehistory rather than its existing literary context, suggests that the pre-monarchic history of Israel was decidedly anti-monarchic (1969: 26). The deuteronomist uses an "Alternativformel" from the pre-monarchic period and so purposefully incorporates the early anti-monarchic political thought into his history (1969:25-26).

Is v. 7 any more an anti-monarchic expression of the narrator than the request in v. 5? Already in v. 5 the reader was made aware of the covenantal implications of the request, which signals and end to the relationship by requesting a profane, non-covenantal status for Israel as one among many nations. The reader is also well aware that the request is justified by the recurrence of sinful mediators. When Yahweh corrects Samuel's misimpressions in v. 7, therefore, he is doing nothing more than making an accurate explication of the implications of v. 5 with respect to his own sovereignty over Israel. His correct apprehension of the aim of the request should not be taken as the narrator's attempt to cast aspersions on it. The fact that Yahweh uses the verb mā'as to describe the rejection does not characterize the

narrator's evaluation of the request, but Yahweh's
(against Veijola 1977:55-56). That Yahweh is disturbed
by the request is well within the bounds of expecta-
tion. The narrator, it should be observed, refrains
from commenting on Yahweh's assessment, a strange
silence if he agreed with Yahweh and was trying to
show that the requested monarchy was a bad thing for
Israel.

Verse 8

Verse 8 presents great interpretational
difficulty because it contradicts v. 7; in v. 7,
Yahweh tells Samuel it is not Samuel but Yahweh that
the people reject, but in v. 8, Yahweh tells Samuel
that they are forsaking (^cazab) Samuel and serving
other gods as they have been doing to Yahweh since
the exodus. As Buber especially has noted, the
conflict is irreducible. "Hier redet JHWH so, als
gelte der Verrat des Volkes wirklich Samuel, und
vergleicht ihn nur mit dem von Israel oft an ihm
selber, seinem Gott, durch den Dienst andrer Götter
geübten" (1964:733). Buber's remark touches on the
other major difficulty, namely the incongruity of
equating the rejection of Samuel, only a man after
all, with Israel's previous religious defections

from the worship of Yahweh.

Taking the second difficulty first, one should
note that the described sin of Israel is not simply
religious, but covenantal, as the parallels in Deut
29:25-26 clearly indicate (cf. 1 Kgs 9:9):

1 Sam 8:8	Deut 29:24-25
1. Mentions the exodus, the divine act of deliverance that serves as the basis of the covenant.	Cf. 29:1-2, 15.
2. Recalls the period between the exodus and the present.	Cf. 29:3-5, 15-17.
3. Israel forsook Yahweh (wayyaᶜazbunî) and served other gods (wayyᶜabdû ᵓeₗōhîm ᵓaḥērîm).	Israel is punished because they forsook (ᶜazᵉbû) the covenant of Yahweh...and went and served other gods (wayyaᶜabdû ᵓeₗōhîm aḥērîm).

In v. 8, the deeds that Yahweh compares as the same as
those which Israel is now doing "even to Samuel" are of
a covenantal nature and constitute a rebellion of
Israel against its sovereign Yahweh.[9] Samuel is,

however, a most unlikely candidate for sovereignty.
Are we really expected to believe that Yahweh, having
just told Samuel that Israel is not merely rejecting
a judge, but its divine sovereign, now tells Samuel
that he is experiencing the rejection that Israel
customarily gives to its sovereign?

A solution by way of a small, justifiable
emendation has been proposed by S.L. Harris. Not
only does Harris' solution clear up v. 8, but it
also reveals clear parallels (and gains support
therefrom) between v. 8 and 10:18-19 and 12:6-12,
both of which also give a past history of Israel's
covenantal transgressions, and both of which, like
v. 8, conclude with a divine "affirmation" of the
monarchy. Harris suggests that the last clause in
v. 8 has undergone the haplography of a _mem_ after
gam, so that it should read "so they are also making
a king" (<u>kēn</u> <u>hēmmâ</u> <u>cōśîm</u> <u>gam-melek</u>[!]) (1981:79). The
emended text is then eminently agreeable to its
context, and simply constitutes an expansion of the
theme stated in v. 7. The final clause is now com-
patible with the previously mentioned deeds of v. 8;
the act of making a king is, like all previous
defections (<u>k^ekol-hamma^{ca}śîm</u>), a rejection of Yahweh

($wayya^{c}azbun\hat{i}$).

Harris' emendation neatly removes the contra-
diction between vv. 7 and 8. Yahweh does not change
his mind over who is rejected in v. 8. Both vv. 7 and
8 interpret the request as a rejection of the divine
king.

The parallels cited by Harris support his
emendation. In 10:18-19, a history of Yahweh's saving
deeds is given, followed by a description of the
request for a king as the rejection of God. The verses
conclude with the adverb $w^{ec}att\hat{a}$, and a description of
making a king follows (10:19-24). Chapter 12:6-12
follows the same pattern; the past history (vv. 6-11),
the rejection of Yahweh as king (v. 12), and the con-
clusion, introduced by $w^{ec}att\hat{a}$, describing the new
human king. In 8:8-9, we see the past history, the
making of a king characterized as a rejection of
Yahweh, and the acquiescence to the wish, again intro-
duced by $w^{ec}att\hat{a}$, (Harris 1981:80).

In all these examples, the prefacing of a
recollection of Yahweh's mighty acts of deliverance
before the description of the rejected divine king
(and his human replacement) indicates that it is the
saving deeds that constitute the basis of Yahweh's

kingship (cf. Exod 15:18). The covenant at Sinai was
established on the basis of those deeds and hence, as
Buber notes, they should be seen as basis for relation-
ship with Yahweh as king and Israel as his people (1967:
39; cf. P.D. Miller 1973:174). Like v. 5, then, v. 8
draws attention to the covenantal significance of
Israel's request, which repudiates any claim based on
the exodus events.

The links between vv. 7-8 are strengthened by
alliterative connections between the verb for rejecting
Yahweh in v. 7 and those for rebellious deeds and
king-making in v. 8:

v. 7 $\underline{m\bar{a}^{\jmath}\bar{a}s\hat{u}}...\underline{m\bar{a}^{\jmath}a_s\hat{u}}$
v. 8 $\underline{hamma^{ca}s\hat{\imath}m}...\underline{{}^c\bar{a}s\hat{u}}...\underline{{}^c\bar{o}s\hat{\imath}m}$[10]

It has been observed that v. 8, widely agreed
to contain deuteronomistic vocabulary, incorporates
the present incident into the deuteronomist's historio-
graphic pattern of cyclic apostasy (e.g. Weiser 1962:
33-34; Veijola 1977:56-58; McCarter 1980:157). The
recapitulation of Israel's past failings does little,
however, to support the anti-monarchic label attached
to ch. 8. It should be noted that it is Yahweh, the

divine king whose abdication is demanded, who compares the request to past apostasy. It is Yahweh's view, not the narrator's that the request is an apostasy. The narrator refrains from inserting his own views.

Yahweh's interpretation of the request, while an accurate assessment of the covenantal implications, may also contain an ironic revelation about Israel's past defections, which Yahweh refers to here. The reader knows that Israel's request for a king, its present apostasy, is justified. If such is true for present defection, might there also have been mitigations for past instances, which Yahweh finds comparable to the present?

This question about Yahweh's reading of Israel's past defections is a result of the direct conflict between the narrator's voice and Yahweh's voice over the justification of Israel's request for a king. The narrator supports the justice of the request by his narrative in chs. 1-7 and by his description in 8:1-3. Yahweh, in contrast, impugns the justice of the request by associating it with previous defections from the theocracy. Since the omniscient narrator's voice is the ultimate authority

in the narrative world that he creates, and since the
narrator's voice contradicts and overrules Yahweh's in
the evaluation of the request for a king, doubts are
also cast on Yahweh's interpretation of past defections,
which he himself has chosen to compare to the request.[11]
Within the context of the voice structure of the whole
narrative, therefore, Yahweh may voice anti-monarchic
sentiments in v. 8, but his views, because they are
subordinate to the narrator's, are to be viewed as
expressions of personal opinion, not statements of
fact. Viewed from the narrator's perspective, Yahweh's
comparison of the request with past defections sug-
gests that maybe past defections were somewhat more
complex too. Could Israel actually have had valid
reasons for rebelling in the wilderness? Such an
implication is not beyond the possible for the
narrator who created an incident such as that of 6:19-
20.

Verse 9

In all three parallel occurrences of the
adverb w^{ec}attâ (cf. 10:19; 12:13) the word introduces
a new possibility, "now," as opposed to the immediately
preceding past, the exodus events. The adverb sig-
nals the dawning of a new political age in Israel.

In contrast to v. 7, where Yahweh placed emphasis on Samuel's audition of all that the people said, he now tells Samuel simply to listen to their request:

v. 7 šᵉmaᶜ bᵉqôl hāᶜām lᵉkōl ᵓᵃᵛšer-yōᵓmᵉrû...

v. 8 šᵉmaᶜ bᵉqôlām...

Yahweh's capitulation to the request, immediately after he has voiced his opinion that it is a breach of covenant, seems odd (so Birch 1976:23). One would expect him to put up some resistance to the request. In fact, that is exactly what he does—the immediate compliance is only apparent, limited as it is by the expression ᵓak kî, "howbeit." As Buber observes, the ᵓak kî presupposes that the request will be honoured, that is, a king will be made (1964:736). The ᵓak kî, however, places a restriction on the act of making a king by laying down guidelines for Samuel to follow as he proceeds to fulfill the request. "Das akh ki besagt somit: nur dass es eben doch kein Königtum wie aller Völker sein soll, das sich etwa als Vikariat eines Gottes bezeichnen mag, aber nicht in Wahrheit dem Himmel Rechenschaft schuldet und erstattet, sondern wirkliches nach oben verantwort-

verantwortliches, also von oben absetzbares, von oben
'verwerfbares' (15, 23) Statthaltertum" (Buber 1964:738;
cf. Weiser 1962:38). Yahweh's first condition is that
Samuel must "stipulate the stipulation against them"
(Israel).[12] Although the reader is not given to know
whether this stipulation is drawn from the old theocra-
tic covenant or a new one created explicitly for the
monarchy, it is obvious that Yahweh has not renounced
his role as creator and legislator of Israel's politi-
cal system. He commands Samuel to lay down the legal
framework for the establishment of a monarchy. This
action alone should indicate to the reader that the
king to be installed will not be a king like those
of other nations, but a king that stands under "the
stipulation" ($h\bar{a}^c\bar{e}d$) of Yahweh.

Buber calls attention to the fact that Samuel
is to stipulate the stipulation against Israel
($b\bar{a}hem$). "'Gegen sie': denn wenn je und je sie
oder ihr König oder sie und ihr König mitsammen auf
ihre Autonomie pochen und sich darauf berufen, dass
sie einen Staat haben 'wie alle Völker', dann wird
dieses Urkunde der göttlichen Verfassung gegen sie
zeugen" (1964:737-38). Yahweh understands that the
stipulation is contrary to the wishes of the people.

Hence it must be stipulated "against them."

Samuel's second task is to declare the "manner"
(mišpaṭ) of the king that will be established.[13] Both
the "stipulation" and the "manner of the king" in v. 9
are to be proclaimed by on behalf of Yahweh. The
active force of both verbs is emphasized by the fact
that both are given in the Hiph^{c}il form. As Buber
points out, the "manner of the king" is "nicht eine
Verfassung 'von unten', sondern 'von oben', eine von
Jhwh erlassene, fur deren Einhaltung der bewilligte
König also ihm, seinem unabsetzbaren 'Vorgänger',
verantwortlich sein wird, ja die gar keine Einzel-
pflichten, nur eben die fundamentale Festlegung dieser
Verantwortlichkeit zu enthalten brauchte" (1964:737).

At this point Yahweh does not specify the
content of the stipulation or the manner of the king.
His vagueness leaves room for misinterpretation on both
Samuel's and the reader's parts. Yahweh has stated
his intention to remain in control, but he has not
explained how the stipulation or the "manner" will do
so.

Yahweh's conditional acquiescence to the
request is in accord with his perception of the request
as characteristic of Israel's covenantal behaviour. As

many times as Israel had expressed its dissatisfaction
and thrown off the yoke of the covenant, Yahweh had
responded with a solution to repair the damage and
pacify Israel (e.g. Exod 15-19; Num 11; 14). So now
when Israel tries to escape the covenantal relation-
ship, Yahweh tries to appease them by giving them a
king, but not such as they desired.

Verse 10

The narrator informs the reader that Samuel
repeats "everything" (kol-dibrê yhwh) that Yahweh
said to the people. The people are thus potentially
made aware of Yahweh's grasp of the implications of
their request and of his intention to maintain a
hold on Israel and its king. Due to the vagueness
of Yahweh's response, and Samuel's own misinterpreta-
tion of Yahweh's directives (a fact revealed in v. 11),
however, it seems that the people do not perceive Yah-
weh's intention until it is unveiled in 10:24-25.
When they finally understand the implication of Yahweh's
response, there are mixed reactions, with some vocal
opposition (10:26-27). It seems that Samuel's simple
retelling (wayyō'mer) of what Yahweh said is not
powerful enough to carry the imperative directive
force of Yahweh's ."stipulate" (tā'îd) and "declare"

(w^ehiggadtā).

The people to whom Samuel tells all are explicitly described as "those asking a king from him (Samuel)."[14] With this description the narrator highlights the fact that the request is not a simple rebellion or apostasy, contrary to what Yahweh might say. The people pursue their case legitimately through the institutions open to them in the theocratic political structure. Unfortunately for them, the theocratic structure places all power and authority in the hands of Yahweh and his mediator; the people must make their case to the very individuals whom they wish to oust. We see the same political principle at work today, when the Canadian people must take their request for constitutional reform to the Queen of England for her approval, even though she is the very person whose authority over Canadian political affairs is finished with her assent to the new constitution.

The narrator's emphasis on the people as "those asking a king from him" placed immediately after Yahweh's conditional affirmation of the kingship, also brings the unlikelihood of success for their request to the surface.

Verse 11

Conspicuous in their absence from Samuel's conversation with the people in v. 10 are the stipulation that he was to stipulate and the manner of the king that he was to declare. Instead of stipulating (tā‘îd) and declaring (wᵉhiggadtā), Samuel simply told (wayyōᵓmer) the people what Yahweh said. Although one might infer that such activities are subsumed by the verb ᵓmr in v. 10, it would seem that the peculiar usage of ᵓmr with a definite objection is specifically intended to highlight the difference between what Yahweh commanded and what Samuel did.[15] Neither does Samuel make the appropriate declarations in v. 11. Instead of "declaring (wᵉhiggadtā, v. 9) the manner of the king that will rule over them," Samuel again simply says (wayyōᵓmer) "this will be the manner of the king that will rule over you." Yahweh tells Samuel to prescribe "the manner," and instead Samuel describes it.[16] As a result of his misunderstanding of Yahweh's directive, Samuel proceeds with a lengthy description of what he perceives as the prospective disadvantages of the monarchy.[17]

The request for a king that would unseat him as judge seems to have unsettled Samuel. First he

missed the more important and larger implications of
the request (vv. 6-7), and now he misses the regulative
intention of Yahweh's reply in v. 9. Thinking that
Yahweh has simply acceded to the demand, Samuel seems
to interpret Yahweh's instructions as warnings to
Israel. He regards the "manner of the king" not as a
divine directive, but an analysis of possible monarchic
abuses.[18]   Buber, who regards vv. 11-18 as a redactional
insertion comes, nevertheless, to a similar reading of
the difference between "the manner of the king" in vv.
9 and 11. For Buber, though, it is the redactor who
inserted the tendentious exegetical pamphlet now seen
in vv. 11-18 that misunderstands Yahweh, and not Samuel
(1964:738).

The misunderstanding is, nevertheless, appro-
priate to Samuel and serves to illustrate further his
personal anxieties over the request. He has heard
nothing Yahweh has said and seeks only to dissuade
the people from their purpose. His arguments, as we
shall see, seek to persuade the people of the favour-
ability of the theocratic regime, under Samuel and
Yahweh, over the monarchy. Samuel assumes the role
of rhetorician, speaking his own thoughts, rather
than the role of Yahweh's authoritative mediator

commanded to make specific declarations on the "manner of

of the king." Ironically it is the very fear of losing

his role as mediator that prevents Samuel from fulfil-

ling that role.

Samuel begins his skillful speech with a hard-

hitting description of how a monarchy will encroach on

the individual Israelite families. As Weiser notes, the

fourfold repetition of the verb "he will take" (yiqqāh)

stresses the burdensome aspect of the monarchy (1962:

40; cf. Veijola 1977:60). Samuel attempts to emphasize

the negative in everything that the monarchy will do.

The list of things that the king will take begins with

the most important of possessions, the sons (v. 11),

and proceeds in descending order through daughters

(v. 13), real estate (v. 14), and income tax (vv. 15-

17a). Each description is introduced by placing the

affected object first in its sentence. The emphatic

position of each object (Driver 1913:67) is intended

to impress the audience with all of the areas that

will be affected by the monarchy—family, land, and

wealth. Nothing will be left untouched. The cost of

kingship is very great, says Samuel. Will Israel be

willing to pay, asks the reader?

At the same time that he lists the evils of

the monarchy, Samuel unwittingly reveals positive
aspects. It is these positive aspects of the monarchy,
hidden behind Samuel's rhetoric, that have provoked
some scholars to suggest a pro-monarchic tradition
lying behind vv. 11-12 (e.g. Press 1938:197; Stoebe
1973:186-87). As Talmon notes, the two positive
aspects of fundamental importance to any stable
ancient near eastern monarchy are the creation and
organization of an army and the internal administration
of the kingdom (1979:13). The inclusion of these
aspects in Samuel's criticisms is not so much the
result of a combination of sources as it is a neces-
sity of the speech. If Samuel wants to criticize the
monarchy for pressing Israelites into military service,
he is forced to mention the good of a monarchic army, a
necessity for national defence. Similarly to criticize
the monarchy for taxation necessitates mentioning the
good of a centralized administration.

In order to appreciate the rhetoric of Samuel's
speech, we must follow it through in its given sequence.
The royal expropriation begins with "your sons." The
first blast strikes uncomfortably close to the persons
of the audience, and emphasizes the high personal
cost of establishing a royal army. The descriptions

of the sons' duties are intended to emphasize the service that the people will render to the king. The king appoints them to his chariot, to his cavalry, and they will run before his chariot. "Das ganze Stück basiert auf einer bewusst angestrebten Distanzierung: Ihr, das Volk—er, der König" (Crüsemann 1978:69). From Samuel's description one would hardly think that a national army could benefit anyone other than the king. Yet the most important aspect of any army is defence and enforcement of external policy.

Verse 12

Even high-ranking officials are made to do the menial tasks of farming the king's estate by Samuel (cf. Smith 1899:57; de Vaux 1965:124).[19] Not even those in positions of authority have anything to gain from Samuel's king.

Verse 13.

The second assault on the audience's purposes exhibits a slight weakening in that it is only daughters who are taken. Samuel begins to prepare his audience for a devastating grand finale by gradually lessening the importance of the affected item; he leads his audience to believe that the worst is over with the

sons. The same tactic can be discerned in the descriptions of the tasks to which the daughters are put—they are now simply perfumers, cooks, and bakers rather than his perfumers, his cooks, and his bakers.

Verse 14

The lulling effect continues with the transition from the effect on families to that on possessions. Samuel makes his criticism elegantly, using contrasting verbs and pronominal suffices: "He will take your best fields, your best vineyards, your best olive groves and give (them) to his servants."[20]

Verse 15

The neat structure that Samuel uses in each of the three preceding cases breaks down in vv. 15-17. Crüsemann notes the inconsistency, especially in v. 15, and suggests that v. 15 and the asses in v. 16 be omitted as obvious additions that disturb the clear structure of vv. 11-17 (1978:67-68). It is possible, however, that the narrator has abandoned the neat structure repeated in vv. 11-14 in order to convey a portrait of the growing emotion and forcefulness of Samuel's presentation, which comes, as often in speeches, at the expense of order and precision. The same

impression is conveyed by the principle of linking
words (Leitwörter) that does organize vv. 15-17.
Samuel's growing animation brings him to present his
arguments in an associative concatenation rather than
a logical, structured order.

Verse 15 is connected to the preceding verse
by the repetition of the words "your vineyards."
"Both your grain crops and your vineyards he will tithe
and give them to his officers and his servants." The
use of contrasting verbs and pronominal suffixes
continues to emphasize the negative side of the monar-
chy. Also continued is the diminishing severity of
each item. In contrast to the expropriation of the
best vineyards (v. 14), only the tenth part of the
produce is taken in v. 15.

Verse 16

Verses 15 and 16 are linked by the word "ser-
vants." In this case, the connection itself serves
to make a point about the cost of kingship. "He will
give (the tithes) to his servants (v. 16), but your
servants...he will take and put to his (own) work."
The king pays his own servants with the taxes and on
top of that, conscripts Israel's servants to do his own
work. The conscription of servants is a further

development in taxation (cf. Talmon 1979:14-15).

The list of expropriations in v. 16 reflects
the rhetorical pattern of the entire speech; it pro-
ceeds from the most important to the least of the
losses to the king: slaves, maidservants, cattle,[21]
ending with asses. The mention of the asses following
the adjective haṭṭôbîm does seem incongruous (Dhorme
1910:72); its position can, however, be understood as
an indication of Samuel's growing excitement as he
nears his punch-line.

The mention of the tithe on the flocks is
linked to v. 15 by the verb ya'sōr and to v. 16 by the
parallel categories of possessions (cattle, asses,
flocks). The associative logic and appearance as an
afterthought contributes to the impression of Samuel's
growing fervor.

Verse 17

As commentators have noted, the mention of
the tithe on the flocks appears as an anti-climatic
afterthought; "sie legt den Gedanken an eine spätere
Auffüllung nahe" (Stoebe 1973:186). It is, however,
precisely on account of its anti-climactic aftertone
that it should not be seen as a late redactional
expansion. As with the whole of vv. 11-16, Samuel uses

this final afterthought to accommodate his audience to the costs of kingship. Certainly Samuel's audience would also have been impressed with the incongruity of his concluding remark, which is remarkably similar to Yahweh's final words to Jonah, "and also much cattle?" (Jonah 4:11).

Samuel's assumption of the appearance of a scatter-brain is only a ruse designed to lower the defences of his audience. Having given them a growing sense of ease with the descriptions of what would happen to their families and possessions, Samuel fires a parting shot aimed squarely at the persons of his audience. Such is the emphasis supplied by the opening w^e attem, "And you," of v. 17b, following, as it does, after all the "your" openings: your sons, your daughters, your fields, your vineyards, your olive groves, your seed crops, your vine crops, your slaves, your maidservants, your cattle, your asses, your flocks, you (cf. Driver 1913:68). Having gradually accustomed his audience to the adjustments in lifestyle under a monarchy by the rhetorical pattern that governs his speech, Samuel blasts his unsuspecting audience with the most devastating description of all.[22]

"And you will be slaves to him." The line has

a familiar ring to it that Israel would easily recog-
nize from its past, and which the reader also recalls
from the latter part of 2:27, "when they (your fathers)
were in Egypt 'to the house of Pharoah'." Samuel is
using the same methods as the book of Deuteronomy to
dissuade his audience from what he sees as their wrong
purpose; "Remember that you were a slave in Egypt"
(Deut 5:15; 15:15; 16:12; 24:18, 22). The election of
a king will return Israel to the slave status from
which Yahweh originally freed them. Samuel's purpose
is clear, especially when v. 17 is set beside Deut 6:21,
an explanation of the significance of Israel's covenan-
tal laws:

v. 17   wᵉʾattem tihyû-lô laᶜăbādîm

Deut 6:21 ᶜăbādîm hāyînû lᵉparᶜōh bᵉmiṣrāyim
           wayyôṣîʾēnû yhwh mimmiṣrayim bᵉyād
           ḥăzāqâ

Israel's anti-theocratic request will lead them
back to the state from which Yahweh rescued them.
"Thus 'the manner of the king' as it is stigmatized in
1 Sam 8:11-18, could just as aptly have been labelled
in that context 'the Egyptian manner'" (Speiser 1971:

283). Since they cannot cope with the freedom (and uncertainty) of political life under the theocracy, they will have to live as slaves under the overbearing, monocratic rule of a human king. The change cannot be from the freedom under theocracy to a freedom under a monarchy, but only from freedom to bondage.

Samuel's characterization of the wish for a king as, in fact, a desire for renewed slavery parallels certain facets of the murmuring traditions in the Pentateuch. In both the request, as interpreted by Samuel, and the murmurings in the wilderness, Israel rejects the freedom of life under Yahweh and his mediator in favour of the life of slavery in Egypt, under a king (cf. Exod 16:2-3; 17:3; Num 11:4-6; 20:3-5; 21:5; Ps 78:18-22). The rationale for the choice is that life "in Egypt" is free from the uncertainties and insecurity of the free life under Yahweh; "a live dog is better than a dead lion" (Eccl 9:4).

Verse 18

Samuel, having been corrected by Yahweh in vv. 7-8, gives a correct interpretation of the anti-covenantal intent of the people. Yet his interpretation is not neutral, but polemical; he tries to emphasize the ills of the people's request for an

"Egyptian" lifestyle. Verse 18 combines the memories
of Egyptian slavery with the more immediate memory of
deliverance under Samuel in order to call the wisdom of
the request into doubt.

Samuel notes that the life of slavery under a
king will undoubtedly lead to cries ($\hat{u}z^{e c}aqtem$) for
help, just as in Egypt (cf. Exod 3:7). Yahweh, however,
will not answer because it was Israel's choice to reject
the divine king and their covenant with him. They
chose, instead, to elect a human king ($b^{e}hartem$ $lakem$).

Verse 18 also contains specific recollections
of the crucial moment in 7:8-9, when Samuel cried
($wayyiz^{c}aq$) to Yahweh on Israel's behalf, and Yahweh
answered him ($wayya^{ca}n\bar{e}h\hat{u}$). The rejection of the
existing covenant will mean that Israel will no
longer have a mediator to convey its cries to Yahweh;
without a mediator, there can be no answer such as
there was in 7:9. The options are clear: slavery
under a human king, or deliverance under Yahweh and
Samuel.

Verse 19

The people unhesitating reject Samuel's
argument. The narrator's description of their refusal
"to listen to Samuel" ($li\check{s}moa^{c}$ $b^{e}q\hat{o}l$ $\check{s}^{e}m\hat{u}^{\supset}\bar{e}l$) reminds

the reader of Yahweh's previous instructions to Samuel to listen to the people ($\check{s}^e$ma^c b^{e}q$\hat{o}$l$\bar{a}$m, v. 9). Samuel has not listened to Yahweh, so the people do not listen to him. His words from v. 11 on lack the authority of the words given to him by Yahweh in v. 9. Instead of declaring the manner of the king and stipulating the stipulation, Samuel presented the people with his own estimation of their alternatives. Accurate as it may be, Samuel's evaluation of the monarchy is an ineffectual restatement of facts already contained in the request and in Yahweh's own evaluation (vv. 7-8). Contrary to Samuel, however, Yahweh did more than evaluate; he moved swiftly with a declaration, as reigning king, to cut off his people's insurrection.

The people brush off Samuel's alternatives as the irrelevant redundancies they are.[23] They remain firm in their decision to opt out of the theocracy; "their insistence even in the face of Samuel's objections indicate[s] that the negotiations were conducted on the basis of clear knowledge of the obligations and privileges that went with the monarchy" (Talmon 1979:15).

The fact that the people prefer even the despotic monarchy described by Samuel is also a clear

indication of the degree of their fear of another
disaster such as that brought on Israel by the Elides.
Samuel's description of the change their choice in-
volves is greeted and welcomed; from Israel's point of
view it is a welcome change from the uncertainties of
theocracy to the certainties of monarchy. The price
that Samuel names is apparently counted as small for
the benefits received.

Verse 20

The people reaffirm their wish to be like the
nations with a non-covenantal political structure. The
people's emphatic declaration, "(Yes) even we shall
become like all the nations" is an unambiguous repudia-
tion of their special status as Yahweh's own possession,
a priestly kingdom and a holy nation (cf. Exod 19:5-6).
As in Ezek 20:32, Israel's desire to become "like the
nations" is a proclamation of independence, a vocal
manifesto ending allegiance to the divine king. "The
author of I Sam. 8 tries to capture in a single phrase
how Israel repudiates the special position ordained
for her by God, and wishes to assimilate her own special
constitution to the profane constitution of the states
in the heathen world around her" (Eichrodt 1970:277).
Yahweh said, "You shall be to me a priestly kingdom,

a holy nation" (Exod 19:6), but Israel says "But we, yes we (gam) will be like the nations." As their subsequent reasons show, the people view monarchy and theocracy from a much different perspective than Samuel; they also have memories, recalled in v. 20, which extend back to the exodus, and more recently, to the events of ch. 4.

The king will take the place of both Yahweh, the present king, and Samuel, the present judge—"our king (malkēnû) will be our judge (ûsᵉpāṭānû)" (cf. North 1932:9; Whybray 1962:138). The king will go out before Israel (wᵉyāṣāʾ lᵉpānēnû) in battle as Yahweh had once gone out before Israel (cf. Judg 4:14; Boecker 1969:32-33). The king is supposed to fight Israel's battles, which are specifically described as "our battles" rather than "Yahweh's battles," the usual, and covenantally grounded description of Israelite warfare (cf. Hertzberg 1964:74; Boecker 1969:34; Stoebe 1973:189). The king is expected to take on the role that Yahweh promised to play—but did not (cf. ch. 4).

As Buber notes, v. 20 is a development of v. 5, a response to the recurrence of an "Elide" situation amongst the judges. Of v. 20, Buber says:

was daraus spricht, ist die unverwindbare
Erinnerung an die Katastrophe der Lade und
des von ihr geführten israelitischen Heers
und das Bewusstsein der Vergeblichkeit der
seitherigen Befreiungsversuch; dahinter
steht die Erfahrung die man in kriegerischen
Unternehmungen gegen die Philister mit
Heiligtümern und Gottesmännern gemacht hat
(1964:739).

In the people's view, Yahweh had unquestionably reneged
on his covenantal obligations in the battles of ch. 4.
Now, with the recurrence of an "Elide" situation amongst
the judges, Israel chooses to have a human king whose
military activities will not be affected by these, or
any other theocratic concerns. The people prefer the
stability and reliability of a human king and their own
devices to fight their wars, rather than helpless
dependence on Yahweh to fight a "Yahweh war." As a pro-
fane political unit there will be no sacral complica-
tions to interfere in either the internal or external
affairs of state.

   Over and against Samuel's alternatives, the
people set their own alternatives: stay within the
theocracy and risk a repetition of ch. 4, or get out

and make one's own way, fighting one's own battles.
At least the latter option insures that military
defeats will be produced only by one's own military
deficiencies. Israel's request for a king, then, is a
decision on a national level to take its fate into its
own hands with one of its own people at its head where
Yahweh used to be.

Verse 21

The narrator informs the reader that finally
Samuel does hear "all the words" ($^{\circ}$ēt kol-dibrê hā^{c}ām,
cf. v. 7), the implication being that he finally
realizes the full implications of Israel's request for
covenantal reform. Israel's polemical rebuttal of his
remarks about the monarchy is what finally brings
Samuel to a sense of everything they are saying, and
not just the personal implications of their request.
As before (v. 6) he brings what he considers as news
to Yahweh.

There is a difference between Samuel's two con-
versations with Yahweh (cf. Press 1938:198). The first
time Samuel speaks of the request it is in a prayer
concerning his own replacement as judge (v. 6). In
v. 20, however, Samuel has finally realized the full
import of the request and so relates this "new"

development to "Yahweh's ears," an expression chosen,
perhaps, to indicate that Samuel relates a discovered
secret to Yahweh.

Verse 22

Yahweh's response to Samuel's news is simply
to reiterate his previous command to Samuel to listen
to the people ($\check{s}^e$ma^c b^{e}qôlām, cf. v. 9; Stoebe 1973:
189). Samuel's discovery has changed nothing and Yah-
weh tells him to get on with his job. As in v. 9,
Yahweh's instructions indicate that he is not abdicat-
ing. Samuel was to "stipulate the stipulation"
(hā^{c}ēd tā^{c}îd), "declare the manner of the king"
(w^{e}higgadtā lahem mišpaṭ hemmelek), and to "make the
king" (w^{e}himlaktā lāhem melek), all Hiph'il verbs
indicating that Yahweh still controls Israel's politics
even in the matter of kings (cf. Cohen 1965:69; Payne
1972:323).

Once again, however, Samuel balks at the com-
mand and does not proceed with the necessary action
straight away. Instead of making a king he sends
every man to his city. Samuel was unable to follow
Yahweh's instruction, even when he was only aware of
the instability of his own position. Now, aware of
the covenantal implications of the request, Samuel

cannot bring himself to do as he is bidden.[24]   His act
marks a failure to obey out of a sense of loyalty to
Yahweh and the covenant concept.   It will take some
further explaining on Yahweh's part before Samuel under-
stands the divine plan and takes an active part in its
enactment.   Samuel's failure to obey Yahweh reveals the
human side of Samuel; he is faithful to his own percep-
tion of what should be done (the maintenance of the
covenant) and will not obey even Yahweh when the command
seems to contradict his allegiances.   Samuel's loyalty
to the theocratic covenant is immaculate.

Verse 22 does, as most commentators have noted,
prepare for the description of Saul's anointment (e.g.
Smith 1899:59); but it is not the simply redactional
link that it is often said to be.   McCarter for example,
comments "Exuent omnes. The prophetic narrator dismis-
ses the people" (1980:159).   It is not the narrator
who dismisses the people, but Samuel, who thereby
reveals something of his character and understanding
of the situation to the reader.   Samuel does not
immediately make the king because he does not know
what kind of king Yahweh has in mind, and he refuses
to make the kind of king that the people have in mind.
The dismissal of the people does, then, "make room"

for Yahweh's leading of Saul to Samuel in ch. 9, but

not simply as an artificial redactional link. Since

Samuel has not caught on, Yahweh himself has to choose

a man, Saul, bring him to Samuel, and tell Samuel

exactly what he has in mind. The room made for ch. 9

is not redactional and artificial, but vital and inte-

gral to the narrative. Samuel's inability to follow.

orders and make a king creates an opportunity for

Yahweh himself to move to centre stage. As will be

seen in ch. 9, his orchestration of Saul's journey to

the throne leaves no doubt about Yahweh's conception

of an Israelite monarchy.

9. 1 Samuel 9

Excursus on the Contextuality of 9:1-10:16

Past literary analysis of ch. 9 is emblematic of the analysis of chs. 8-12 as a whole—no single dissection of the text has proven to be generally acceptable.[1] The predominant approach to these scenes (9:1-10:16), in which Saul is selected to be nāgîd by Yahweh, is evident in a comment by W. Richter. He observes that the most reliable criterion by which a narrative may be divided —doublets—is lacking in 9:1-10:16. "Das garantiert noch nicht die Einheitlichkeit, vielmehr ist nach weiteren Kriterien Ausschau zu halten" (1970:13). Contained in Richter's advice is one of the most widespread and fundamental of historical-critical assumptions: biblical narrative is composite and can be shown to be so, appearances to the contrary. It is held to be methodologically unsound to draw exegetical conclusions, either historical or literary, prior to the isolation of "die Kleine Einheit" (Richter 1970:13 n.3).

It is exactly this order in historical-critical analysis that has prevented scholars from reaching any kind of agreement concerning the historical content of 9:1-10:16. "Die verschiedenen Auffassungen über

den historischen Gehalt des Abschnittes spiegeln nur
die Tatsache, dass bis heute keine Übereinstimmung über
seinen literarischen Aufbau erreicht worden ist" (L.
Schmidt 1970:59). In view of the fact that it is the
principal aim of historical criticism to achieve a
historically accurate understanding of this and other
narratives, the methodological sequence described by
Richter can only be regarded as self-stultifying.
L. Schmidt's own attempt to resolve the inconclusive
debate is to provide yet another reanalysis, and that
has subsequently been added to Kegler's list (1977:67-
68) of previous analyses. Kegler continues the tradi-
tion with his own unique analysis and resulting
historical conclusions (1977:70-77).

A relatively untravelled path around the morass
created by historical-critical division and redivision
of 9:1-10:16 is the narrative itself, when read in its
existing consecution.[2] One would be very short-sighted
not to anticipate the objection that this holistic
reading is just another analysis to be added to the
existing pile of disagreements. While it is true that
there are no compelling arguments in favour of final-
form readings, other than the possibility of achieving
more interesting readings of the narrative itself

(rather than the history behind it), the approach does have one important advantage: at least when readings are all based upon the same text, rather than various segmentations of the text, a major variable and hence, source of disagreement is eliminated. Seen from a contextual perspective, most of the literary phenomena that historical criticism has used to divide the narrative appear as integral components in an episode which is itself an integral component in a larger pattern. One recalls that certain aspects of ch. 8, notably the recurrence of a particular state of affairs in the offices of Yahweh's mediators (8:1-5) and the consequent request for a king to fight Israel's battles (8:20), appeared to parallel or react to the precedent-setting events of chs. 1-7. It comes as no surprise, given the narrator's prior use of the literary technique of parallel episodes, that 9:1-10:16 also corresponds to certain aspects of the events of chs. 1-7 and react to others. Chapters 9:1-10:16 present the divine response to Israel's request for a king (ch. 8) but it is also a reaction and response to chs. 5-7. In summary form the points of contact are:

1. Yahweh displays his powers in a manner reminiscent of the exodus display (chs. 5-6). The divine warrior vindicates himself before his enemies, but leaves his own people in the dark.[3]	As he did prior to the exodus, Yahweh hears the cry of his people (cf. Exod 3:7, 9) and brings them a deliverer. Saul (a new Moses) is to be annointed nāgîd over Yahweh's people (ᶜammî 9:16), his inheritance (10:1). Yahweh reasserts his sovereign responsibility to Israel and his covenantal claim on their allegiance.
2. Yahweh treats Israel in a manner similar to his previous conduct towards the Philistines. Israel responds like the Philistines (6:19-20; cf. chs. 5-6).	

The narrative in 9:1-10:16 portrays a divine response; it is a response to the request for a king but also constitutes an attempt to make amends for any divine failures in the events that brought defeat to Israel at the hands of the Philistines. If Israel was excluded from any participation in the exodus-like reenactments of chs. 5-6, Yahweh now makes certain that they will be included in the new monarchy, a monarchy not "like the nations" but under the nāgîd of Yahweh.

The divine actions in terms of the exodus paradigm reveal wild oscillations in Yahweh's covenantal

behaviour. In the first instance his exodus-like actions seem to omit Israel (chs. 5-6), and go so far as even to appear anti-Israelite (6:19-20). When Israel calls a justifiable halt to relations upon being faced with a renewed threat of recurring misbehaviour (8:5, 20), however, Yahweh counters with a national theological-political slogan (9:15-16)[4] taken from Exodus 3:7, 9, as he plays the role of Israel's divine protector. Yahweh's creation of a new deliverer, a new Moses (9:16), for Israel is a response intended to make amends for his prior refusal to allow Israel to participate in his exodus from Philistine territory.

Verse 1

As scholars have observed, Samuel's refusal to listen either to the voice of the people or the command of God opens the door to the events described in chs. 9-10 (e.g. Veijola 1977:73).[5] When Samuel refuses to carry out Yahweh's commands, the counter-measures to Israel's request, the reader expects Yahweh to respond, perhaps by taking matters into his own hands. Hence any subsequent events that exhibit the slightest hint of divine intervention on the human plane will be scrutinized by the reader, who is on the lookout for Yahweh's response to Samuel's

refusal.

The reader is immediately provided with some
hint of what is to follow by the introduction to Saul,
which, as most commentators have noted, is similar to
that of Samuel (Budde 1902:58; Nowack 1902:39; Schulz
1919:128; Hertzberg 1964:80; Stoebe 1973:193; McCarter
1980:172). As in 1:1, the opening in 9:1 (way^{e}hî $^{\circ}$îš)
marks a new scene following the pattern of previous
introductions (e.g. Judg 13:2; 17:1; 19:1; cf. Richter
1970:30). The parallel encourages a recollection of
Samuel's birth story and alerts the reader to watch
for any further similarities.

The genealogical information about Saul consists
of a list of unimportant ancestors known otherwise only
from the books of Chronicles (1 Chr 8:33; 9:39).[6]
Saul's genealogical connections, like Samuel's, are
incapable of providing any legitimate claim to superior
office or status in Israel (cf. above on 1:1). Con-
sidering that it is the normal function of a linear
genealogy such as v. 1 to provide social, religious,
or political legitimation (Wilson 1977:40-45, 155, 164),
the lack of any such potential in Saul's genealogy
should be regarded as an intentional manipulation of
genealogical conventions. The genealogy without

legitimation, used as a prelude to the story of Saul's
anointment, indicates that any successful elevation of
Saul is not a product of familial connections.

Like Samuel, Saul begins as a nobody who
becomes a somebody as a result of Yahweh's decision to
make use of him. The unusual function of both Samuel's
and Saul's genealogies creates a conspicuous parallel
between the two. On the basis of his previous exper-
ience with a character introduced by such a genealogy
the reader may begin to formulate some hypothetical
frames about the connection between the new character,
Saul, and Yahweh's plans for the Israelite monarchy.

The description of Kish as a _gibbôr ḥāyil_, a
"man of means" (Eising 1980:351; McCarter 1980:173),
might seem to contradict the suggested function of the
genealogy. The reader is, however, not certain about
Kish's role in the story and so cannot make any firm
conclusions. All he knows is that a new scene has
begun and that a relatively unimportant man of means
has been introduced.

Verse 2

The explicit introduction of Saul into the
story bypasses his birth, a circumstance that has
fueled speculation that the birth story of Samuel may

originally have been a birth story about Saul (e.g.
Hylander 1932:11-39). The connection between the two
stories is, in fact, literarily reinforced by v. 2 as
well as by the links already seen in v. 1. Placed
side by side, the correspondences and differences are
evident:

1:1-2   9:1-2

	1:1-2	9:1-2
1.	Introductory formula ($way^e h\hat{\imath}$ $\hat{\imath}\check{s}$ $eḥ\bar{a}d$)	Introductory formula ($way^e h\hat{\imath}$ $\hat{\imath}\check{s}$)[7]
2.	Geographical note	Geographical note
3.	Name: Elqanah	Name: Kish
4.	Genealogy	Genealogy
5.	Introduction of wives ($w^e l\hat{o}$ $\check{s}^e t\hat{e}$ $n\bar{a}\check{s}\hat{\imath}m$)	Introduction of Saul ($w^e l\hat{o}$ $h\bar{a}y\hat{a}$ $b\bar{e}n$)
6.	(Miraculous birth)	(Miraculous anointment)
7.	Introduction of Samuel	

The introduction of Saul contrasts with that of
Samuel in passing over the birth story. Saul's career
as an instrument of Yahweh, if he is indeed to have one,
is not one pre-ordained before birth, but one to which

he is adapted. Samuel and Saul are miraculously
enlisted in the divine service, but Saul's career
begins only later in life, entailed as it is by the
unforseen demands of the people for a king. The lack
of a birth story in the episode describing Saul's rise
to kingship is congruent with the immediacy of the
demand and the fact that Saul's career as a servant
of Yahweh is not one that Yahweh had intended from
before his birth. As will become apparent in Saul's
subsequent career, the unplanned choice of Saul
develops into complications that reveal the danger of
forcing Yahweh to make spur of the moment choices (1
Sam 15:11).

An even stronger association between Samuel
and Saul comes in the form of Saul's name, which
appeared several times in verbal form ($\check{s}$ˀl) in ch. 1.
Though I have argued against the position that Samuel's
birth story originally belonged to Saul, the use of
the verb $\check{s}$ˀl in ch. 1 does link Saul with Samuel by
association. After reading the miraculous birth story
of Samuel and being told several times that Samuel is
"asked" ($\check{s}$ˀl) from God (1:17, 20, 27) or granted to
God (1:28), the reader cannot fail to associate "Saul"
with the story of Samuel's birth. The question that

remains unanswered at this point is the meaning of the association. Is "Saul" perhaps an answer to Israel's request? Is he another of Yahweh's dedicated servants (cf. 1:28)? The narrator is not telling yet, so the reader can only hypothesize and wait for subsequent expositional clarification from the narrator.

Saul's description as a handsome, tall young man, taller and better looking than any other in Israel, is a further suggestion that Yahweh may have decided to go even further to please the people with his choice for a king.[8] Far from being an inconspicuous, unlikely choice, Saul stands head and shoulders above any other Israelite. Though the reader is far from certain that Saul is indeed the man that Yahweh has chosen to make king, the parallels with the Samuel birth story encourage that hypothesis.[9]

Again the reader is led, by the narrator's description, to wonder whether Yahweh is choosing more according to how Israel would choose—by appearance— rather than according to how the divine should choose, by character (cf. 1 Sam 16:7; Stoebe 1973:193, 201).[10] Whatever the answer to this complication, the questions posed to the reader remain to influence the reading of the narrative. Why might Yahweh choose the

greatest instead of the least? Would such a choice
prove felicitous? The reader must wait until he has
read 9:16 and then 10:23-24 before he will understand
the divine logic in the choice of Saul (cf. Buber 1956:
115). And due to the complete lack of narrative
exposition at the beginning of ch. 9, telling him that
Saul is Yahweh's future king, the reader must certainly
wait until vv. 15-16 before he can confirm or reject
any hypotheses (frames) about the connection between
chs. 8 and 9.

The introduction to Kish/Saul, and the subse-
quent tale of the asses is, at first glance, a simple
case of retardation for increased suspense. The nar-
rator leaves off the matter of monarchy at a crucial
moment and switches to this pastoral scene. "One of
the prime means of creating, intensifying, or prolong-
ing suspense consists in the author's temporarily
impending ('suspending') the natural progression of
the action, especially its onward rush towards some
expected climax, by the interposition of more or less
extraneous matter" (Sternberg 1978:159). Sternberg's
description might have been written to describe the
transition from ch. 8 to ch. 9.

On account of the parallel between the

introductions to Samuel and Saul, however, the reader is
led to think that there may be some connection, however
slim, between past and present descriptions and hence
between the matter of the monarchy and the story about
Saul. Similar hints as to a connection, which remains
implicit, between past and present are dropped to the
reader throughout vv. 1-14 of ch. 9. It is these
subtle hints that keep the reader's interest alive in
the first 14 verses and which also make these verses
more than a simple retardation; they indicate that the
tale of the lost asses may be an integral part of the
ongoing events, as, in fact, turns out to be the case.

Verses 3-4

The accidental loss of some asses that go astray
becomes the occasion for a journey by Saul to find
them.[11] Familial relations are foregrounded by the
redundant descriptions of Kish as "the father of Saul"
and Saul as "his son"; these relations were previously
established in v. 2. Explanation of this foregrounding
is to be found in the contrast between Kish and Saul
and previous fathers and sons, Eli, Hophni, and Phine-
has; Samuel, Joel, and Abijah. In previous cases, the
sons either disregard their father's instructions or
fail to follow his exemplary actions in office.

Relations between Saul and his father are different.
Kish issues a simple command, "take a servant, and go
search for the asses." The command is even softened,
according to Smith, by the placement of the word nā$^{\supset}$
after the imperative (1899:60). Saul's response is
lightning quick; Kish has only just finished speaking
when we see Saul crossing over to the Ephraimite hill
country (v. 4). Recalling that Israel's previous mis-
fortunes in ch. 4, and the standing request for a king
in ch. 8 were predicate to the situation of disobedient
or wayward sons, Saul's unquestioning, immediate obed-
ience becomes an important characterization. Disobed-
ient sons have been rejected by God and man; might Saul
be an obedient replacement?

The search is described first generally—"he
crossed the Ephraimite hill country"—and then in detail
in three specific locales (McCarter 1980:174). Although
scholars have generally preferred to follow LXX and Vulg.
in reading all verbs in the plural, MT does exhibit an
ordered pattern of singulars and plurals:

1. General overview: singular, wayya^{ca}bōr

2. Specific descriptions:

singular, wayya^ca_bōr; plural, māṣā^ʾû.

plural, wayya^cabrû; elliptic omission, wāʾayin.[12]

singular, wayya^ca_bōr; plural, māṣā^ʾû.

Though it is difficult to derive semantic import from the patterning, it does indicate that MT is not entirely random, and hence, that it need not be regularized.

Regarding the topography and significance of the places visited, Mauchline's conclusion is safe, and apprehends the rhetorical effect of the description. "We can conclude without hesitation that a wide search was made of the hill country between the range of Shechem in the north and well nigh Jerusalem in the south" (1971:94).[13] Despite a thorough search, the asses remain unfound. Could someone have hidden them? The text does not say, but the extent of the search leads the reader to entertain such thoughts.

Verse 5

Saul receives further characterization as a devoted son who is concerned for his father's well-being (cf. Gunn 1980:61). As most commentators have noted, the search has brought Saul to the land of Zuph,

which the reader associates with Samuel on the basis of
1:1. McCarter, for example, says "Providentially (v 16)
Saul's wanderings have brought him to Samuel" (1980:175;
cf. Buber 1957:124). Saul's presence in the territory
associated with Samuel leads the reader to wonder whether
there will be a chance meeting between the two, or
whether the loss of the asses and the search for them
have perhaps been engineered to bring Saul to this
locale. Though the narrator refrains from any explicit
exposition about these possibilities, he has provided
the associations that allow the reader to speculate.

Saul's choice of a location to express his
doubts about continuing the search is the second in a
concatenation of "chance" occurrences that guide his
steps towards anointment. "The way in which the hither-
to negative results are transformed into something
positive will seem to every reader to be a conclusive
proof of the mysterious workings of fate" (Hertzberg
1964:81). As such coincidences continue to mount, the
reader's initial inkling that the story of Saul might
be another story of divine choice and election, such
as Samuel's, is nurtured.

Having read chs. 1-7, in which Yahweh is often
at work behind the scenes, the reader has already been

acquainted with the divine <u>modus</u> <u>operandi</u>. The narrator's notable restraint in withholding the explicit identifi- cation of Yahweh's hand in all of this earns the dividend of increased reader interest and active participation in the unfolding events at the negligible price of some pos- sible initial uncertainty over the connection between chs. 8 and 9.[14]

Verse 6

The servant's speech is another invitation to reader speculation. "He said to him, 'But there is a man of God in this city. He is an honoured man, and everything he says comes true...'." This servant certainly seems to know a lot about the man of God, whose identity he, nevertheless, does not reveal. The narrator employs the servant temporarily to divulge this important information at a point when Saul was about to turn back, thus ending the journey and frus- trating the reader's own search for the significance of the journey. Though the servant drops some impor- tant clues about the identity of the man of God, he is careful to preserve the veil of mystery that the narrator has thrown over the journey so far. The servant's advice to Saul is itself an example of the

narrator's secretiveness; he uses the servant to provide
Saul with information that allows for the continuation of
the journey, and at the same time, provides the reader
with hints about the identity of the unknown man of God.

The servant speaks of an honoured man of God
whose predictions always come to pass. The reader will
recall that Samuel is the only prior example of someone
whose words always come true (3:19-20; cf. Schulz 1919:
131). Although Samuel is called a prophet in ch. 3,
unlike v. 6, the reader's suspiciouns are aroused by
the claim of accurate prediction for both individuals.

The problem that historical criticism has
found in the contradiction between vv. 6-10, which
speak of a "man of God," vv. 11, 18-19, which speak of
a "seer," and vv. 14-17, 19, which identify both "man
of God" and "seer" as Samuel can be resolved, as Buber
noted, by paying close attention to the rhetorical
impact of the variations (1956:124-26).[15] Weiss
describes the rhetorical effect of the initial anonym-
ity of the unknown man of God/seer as follows:

> Dass sich die Exposition erst im Laufe der
> Erzählung entfaltet, erhöht den Reiz ihrer
> dramatischen Spannung. Demselben Zweck dient
> auch der Zug, dass der "Gottesmann," an

dessen Identität mit Samuel nicht zu
zweifeln ist, in den Augen Sauls und seines
Begleiters als Wahrsager erschient., dem
man für seine Auskunft eine Vergütung
schuldet; dies entspricht einer volkstüm-
lichen Auffassung, die nur das zum Ausdruck
bringt, worauf es in diesem Stadium der
Erzählung gerade ankommt, die aber die
sonst bekannte weit umfassendere Bedeutung
Samuels keineswegs ausschliesst (1962:50).

The narrator is able to disguise his deliberate
suppression of the identity of the "man of God" by
introducing the latter through the mouth of Saul's
servant, who need not know Samuel's name. To Saul's
servant, the adviser is important for their predicament
only as a man of God who can make their way known to
them. His lack of concern for the name of the man of
God is thus realistically motivated by his focus on
the problem at hand. Whether or not the servant knew
of Samuel, or should have known of him on account of
the latter's prominence is debatable (against e.g.
L. Schmidt 1970:71). The servant's only concern is
that they seek advice from a human representative of
God. The generic appellation of the adviser may,

therefore, be regarded as a usage consistent with the situation in the story.[16]

The generic "man of God" also serves the narrator's purpose by maintaining the suspense and mystery surrounding the journey and its relationship to the matter of the monarchy, which in spite of its absence so far in ch. 9, is prominent in the reader's mind on account of the abrupt end of ch. 8.

The narrator plays on the indefiniteness of the "man of God" to contribute to the sense of marvellous coincidence in the journey; his characters go in search of a man of God and find, instead, a Samuel (Hylander 1932:243, citing G. Holscher). That the servant should expect simply a man of God in the city, yet encounter a Samuel there, can be explained as a further attempt to illustrate the divine engineering agreed by all to play a dominant role in 9:1-10:16 (e.g. Gressmann 1921:34; McCarter 1980:184-85).

As first noted by Buber, the young man's speech also introduces an element of irony to the quest (1956: 126, 142; cf. McCarter 1980:176). The young man says "Let us go! Perhaps he will advise (yaggîd) us about the journey we have undertaken" (McCarter's translation).

The suggestion that the man of God will "declare" (yaggîd) introduces a number of repetitions of words based on the same root as nāgîd (vv. 6, 8, 16, 18, 19; 10:1), an office to which Saul is being divinely directed. To the reflective reader of ch. 9, the young man's innocent description of the forthcoming "advice" is a remarkble verbal irony based upon a repeated Leitwort (cf. Buber 1956:126). The young man says that the man of God will "declare" (yaggîd) their way and the result is that Samuel anoints Saul as nāgîd.[17]

The narrator supplements the irony based on the Leitwort with the young man's description of what it is that the man of God will do for them. In view of the fact that they are out searching for the lost asses, it is rather surprising that the man of God is expected to tell them of "the path that we have taken" instead of the whereabouts of the asses.[18] Surely they knew the path they had taken as well as anyone else. Viewed in the context of what the man of God actually does, however, the significance of the strange suggestion is clear, and another instance of irony in the naive young man's utterance. Samuel does, in fact, tell Saul about the immediate cause of their journey (v. 20), and also, by way of his subsequent actions, about the

ultimate reason for their taking a path that led them
to him and Saul to the office of nāgîd (9:19-10:1).
The reflective reader will see the narrator's irony
behind the young man's words; the latter expects some
sort of solution to his immediate difficulties, while
the narrator hints at a somewhat different significance
for the path that the servant and Saul have taken.[19]

Verses 7-8

Saul points out a complication for the servant's
proposal—they do not have the means to pay the man of
God for his advice. The mysterious appearance of the
quarter shekel in the young man's hand seems to be
another of the narrator's subtle hints that events
are being guided from behind the scenes. The unusual
expression nimṣāʾ beyādî, "there is found in my hand,"
rather than the more common yēš lî, "I have," is con-
spicuous, and emphasizes that the money comes from a
source other than Saul or the servant (McCarter 1980:
176). The sudden materialization of the shekel in the
young man's hand creates a gap in the narrative by
leaving the natural question, "Where did it come from?"
unanswered. The reader will, of course, formulate
some of his own answers, but he will also hope to

find some authoritative answer later in the narrative.

Verse 7 offers the reader a further hint about the identity of the man of God by juxtaposing the words nābî² and ²îš and then underlining the juxtaposition by repeating it in a modified form, l²ḥābî² l²²îš ha²²lōhîm (Buber 1956:126). The verb nābî², "we bring," is a homonym of the noun nābî², "prophet." Though the syntax prevents any ambiguity about the meaning of nābî², the similarity of the roles of "man of God" and prophet is enough to bring the juxtaposition to the attention of a careful reader such as Buber. Though no explicit equation is made in Saul's unconscious juxtaposition, the man of God is related to prophecy, as he was in v. 6.

These subtle intimations about the identity of the anonymous man of God function as goads, prodding the reader on in hope of an authoritative identification of the man of God that will fill in the gap (indeterminacy) created by his anonymity (cf. Sternberg 1978:311 n.31). It should be recalled that this gap is created first to show that neither Saul nor the servant knows who the man is, and second to add to the aura of mysterious purpose that envelopes the entire search for the asses.

The curiosity excited by this gap, which, along
with the glimmerings of a mysterious purpose shaping the
search, capture the reader's attention. Were it not for
such literary techniques, the seeming lack of connection
between the issue of monarchy, unresolved in ch. 8, and
the matter of lost livestock might serve as a distrac-
tion to the reader, and perhaps lead him to believe
that he was reading two separate and unrelated stories.[20]
The disjunctive effect of the "in medias res" beginning
of ch. 9 is ameliorated by the mystery of the search
and the smaller gaps of the identity of the man of
God and the question of where the coin came from in
v. 8.[21]

> In fact, however, the reader's attention is
> not drawn immediately to this single large
> gap as a whole but rather to a series or
> system of smaller, successively opened gaps
> subsumed by it....For as soon as the
> initially propelled situation and the
> characters figuring in it have caught his
> attention, the reader becomes aware—and this
> awareness can easily be heightened by a
> suitable manipulation of gaps—that he will
> not understand them fully or at all as long

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as he lacks certain information about the
period preceding the beginning of the sujet.
...the very sketchiness of the information
thus unfolded renders these gaps even more
prominent and proportionately stimulates his
curiosity even further (Sternberg 1978:53-54).

Verse 9

As scholars have noted, v. 9 is a gloss, a
narratorial intrusion into the ongoing tale.[22] It is
addressed directly to the reader, and though often
transposed to a position between vv. 10 and 11 (e.g.
McCarter 1980:165), or between vv. 11 and 12 (e.g.
Smith 1899:61), it is also appropriate in its present
location (cf. Hylander 1932:139-40; Seebass 1967:158
n.16).

Before he explains the history of the words
"seer," and "prophet," the narrator characterizes the
proposed visit to the man of God as an "enquiry of
God" (drš) (Stoebe 1973:195, 203). The narrator thus
indicates that the conversation about going to the
man of God for information has shiften the focus of
the journey; it began with Saul seeking (baqqēš) the
asses, but now it has come to seeking (lidrōš) God.

The synonymous verbs, bqš and drš, are narratorial con-
firmations to the reader that he is on the right track
when he perceives more than a simple search for live-
stock in the trek.

Yet the narrator does not offer this authorita-
tive description to his reader without camouflaging it
with another meaning, and so preserving the ambiguity
of the search. He does this with the explanation in
v. 9b. As Stoebe notes, v. 9b shifts the reader's
attention away from the nature of Saul's quest (1973:
203). He suggests that it is a further (and presumably
later) expansion of the gloss in v. 9a. Recalling,
however, that there have been prior allusions to the
relationship between prophets and men of God (vv. 6-7),
a further similar allusion, albeit between seers and
prophets, might not be totally out of context.

One should note that 9b opens with the words
l^{e}kû w^{e}nēl^{e}kâ, which hark back to the servant's words,
yābô^{3}...nēl^{e}kâ (v. 6), and Saul's nēlēk (v. 7), and
look forward to Saul's l^{e}kâ nēlēkâ (v. 10). Each
occurrence have as its end an audience with the man of
God. The narrator thus equates the actual visit to
the man of God with a hypothetical visit to the seer,
as do Saul and the servant in v. 11. Seer and man of

God are synonymous in this narrative.

The narrator goes on to tell his reader that the seer is the same as a prophet, that is, the two words describe the same office. Again the narrator is offering the reader hints about this man of God. The difference expected in an explicit authorial comment such as v. 9, is that the equation is clear and specific; man of God = seer = prophet (cf. Buber 1956:125-26). As in v. 9a, the narrator partially conceals his explicit clues in the guise of an antiquarian linguistic comment. The hidden message of v. 9, which is meant to be discovered, is that Saul is really seeking God and really going to a prophet.

The insertion of a comment of this nature offers some positive reinforcement to the assiduous reader who has struggled through the abrupt beginning in medias res of ch. 9, and the gaps along the way. The comment encourages the reader to continue to wonder about the ultimate meaning and goal of the journey by confirming that there is a hidden significance to the journey. Having momentarily drawn back the veil, however, the narrator quickly replaces it and covers the partial revelation with the antiquarian tone of v. 9. The brief respite over, the reader is plunged

back into the ongoing flow of events.

Verse 10

Saul voices his agreement to the servant's plan.
The narrator then tells his reader that Saul and the
young man went off to the city where the man of God was.
The narrator's use of the descriptive term "man of God"
(previously used only by Saul and the young man)
immediately following his equation of Saul's visit with
a visit to a seer/prophet reveals that he uses the terms
as synonyms, interchanging them as he sees fit.

Verse 11

The situation of a young man meeting a young
woman, or a group of women at a well is a "type-scene"
frequent in the Genesis narratives (cf. Exod 2:15ff.;
John 4; Culley 1976:41-43; Alter 1981:51-62). Alter
characterizes a "type-scene" as "The recurrence of
the same event—the sameness being definable as a
fixed sequence of narrative motifs which, however,
may be presented in a variety of ways and sometime
with ingenious variations—" (1981:181). Verse 11
alludes to that type-scene and the complex of
associations and expectations included with it in
order to add further information about the nature of

Saul's approaching encounter with the seer. Press
reaches a similar conclusion from a historical perspec-
tive: "Fragen wir nach dem historischen Tatbestande,
den 9 1ff. voraussetzt, so wird es nicht zufällig sein,
dass die beiden Märchenmotive der Eselinnensuche und
der Mädchen am Brunnen vor dem Tore im Gesamtaufbau
der Erzählung nur dazu dienen, die Begegnung Samuels
und Sauls in Rama hervorzuheben" (1938:201).

The betrothal type-scene, as summarized by
Alter (1981:52) is as follows:

1. The future bridegroom (or surrogate)
   journeys to a foreign land.

2. He encounters a girl, usually described
   as a na^{ca}rå, at a well.

3. Someone, either the man or the girl,
   draws water from the well.

4. The girl or girls rush home to bring
   the news of the stranger's arrival
   (the verbs "hurry" and "run" are
   emphasized here).

5. A betrothal is concluded between
   the stranger and the girl, usually
   after he has been invited to a meal.

When Saul's encounter with the ladies is com-
pared, noticeable differences appear:

1. Saul journeys to a foreign land in
   search of the lost asses.

2. He encounters the $n^{ec}\bar{a}r\hat{o}t$ coming out
   to draw water.

3. No one draws water.

4. The girls tell Saul to hurry (mahēr)
   to the city if he wants to find the
   seer.

5. Saul meets Samuel, he is invited to
   dine at the head of the table, and
   he is anointed nāgîd over Israel.

The reader who is familiar with the convention
forms certain expectations about what will happen as
soon as he is cued to it by the first two items of
the list contained in vv. 1-11. The modification of
the typical consummation by replacing the union of
male and female with the events leading to Saul's
anointment, his entrance into theocratic service, is
another means the narrator uses to show that Saul's
journey is no ordinary journey. Though the reader
does not yet know that Saul will be anointed in v. 12,
the deviations from the conventional type-scene are

sufficient notice that something unusual is happening.
The importance of Saul's appointment with the seer does
not allow him to dally with the maidens, who speedily
send him off to meet his destiny.

The question put by Saul and his servant to
these woman, while plausible in itself, affords the
narrator the opportunity to place some well-chosen
words in the mouths of the young ladies. As Richter
notes, "Als Antwort [auf die Frage von v. 11b] genügte
eine Erläuterung, wo und wie er zu finden ist" (1970:
23). The rather lengthy response is more in the way
of a narratorial comment to the reader than a perti-
nent response of the maidens to Saul and servant.[23]
The narrator preserves his unintrusive mode of nar-
rating the journey by getting characters to supply
the reader with important information.

Verse 12

Saul's arrival could not have been better
timed by the narrator; as the maidens tell Saul, the
seer has arrived "just ahead" (l^{e}pāneykā)[24] of him,
another in the chain of fortunate coincidences. The
repeated temporal explanation of the seer's presence
(kî hayyôm...kî zebaḥ hayyôm) emphasizes the unique-
ness of the occasion.[25] The article with yôm is

demonstrative—"Today" (cf. R.J. Williams 1976:19 #87;
GKC #126ab). Like Saul and his servant, the seer has
only come to the city for a special reason: they, to
receive his explanation of their journey, and he,
because there is a sacrifice for the people on the
high place.

The sacrifice is specifically described as
"to" or "for the people" (lāᶜām).[26] The last time the
people were seen they had been sent home after request-
ing a king. Now they reappear as the beneficiaries of
a sacrifice. Is there any connection? Have the people
forgotten their demand? Has the demand been filled
in the meantime? Do these people even know about the
request? These and other questions are created by
the reappearance of "the people," who so far are the
only characters explicitly common to both chs. 8 and 9.
The fact that the sacrifice is "for the people" also
introduces a commonality between the two chapters in
which the people are benefited or potentially benefited
by the actions of a prophet or seer.

Verse 13

The seeming superfluity of the continued
response is not simple revelry in detail (so Stoebe

1973:203). Rather it supplies the reader with additional important information about this sacrifice for the people. The seer plays a central role in the sacrifice and the people will not eat of it until this seer comes and blesses it. As Wildberger notes, however, sacrificial duties are not the usual province of a seer, or even a prophet (1957:462). This seer seems to have a wider range of duties and authority than that of any ordinary seer. Again the reader is given additional information about the seer, yet the information, as before, serves only to increase the awareness of the anonymity of the seer and of the gap created by his anonymity.

After the seer blesses the sacrifice, it is "the invited" (haqq^{e}ru$^{\ni}$m) and not simply the people that eat.[27] This description of the eaters seems to imply that they have been summoned especially for this occasion (Buber 1964:740). Like all of the other hints dropped by the narrator, however, the q^{e}ru$^{\ni}$m contribute more to the reader's sense of mystery and the mounting tension of the narrative than to any new illumination.[28] The reader sees the mysterious confluence of Saul and servant, the seer, and the invited eaters all converging on the city and then

the sacrifice; yet he has no certainty about the occasion or meaning of the meeting.

We recall Sternberg's observation that such expositional information is usually intentionally sketchy, serving to spark the reader's curiosity and force him onward (1978:53-54, quoted above on vv. 7-8). The fact that there is a noticeable increase in such hints (exposition) towards the latter part of the tale is an indication that the narrator is aware of the danger of losing his reader's interest, and so includes proportionately more of these goads to curiosity.

The final sentence of v. 13 places emphasis on two things: first, on the necessity for Saul and the young man to get going right away, and second on the fact that they will find him, (the seer). The emphasis on timely departure and meeting is conveyed by the words $w^{ec}att\hat{a}$ and $k^ehayy\hat{o}m$, and on the anonymous person they are to meet by the repeated $\ni\hat{o}t\hat{o}$.[29] The impression is one of a unique opportunity that can be lost if Saul and the young man are late.

Verse 14

The most important contribution of v. 14 is, of course, the narrator's identification of Samuel as the mysterious man of God/seer. To the historical

critic, Samuel's presence in v. 14 represents an indisputable key to the separation and analysis of the components and prehistory of 9:1-10:16. For the close reading of the story it is an important break in the shroud that covers almost every aspect of the search for the lost asses. The reader who had correct suspicions as to the identity of the anonymous holy man is rewarded and encouraged to continue thinking and hypothesizing about the narrative. Attention is now shifted completely to the significance of the journey and the encounter between Saul and Samuel, both of which remain as gaps in the reader's understanding. The meeting with Samuel momentarily becomes another of those expositional elements that gives a little information while demanding larger and larger amounts of attention and curiosity as payment from the reader (cf. Sternberg 1978:86-89).

Samuel last appeared in 8:22, where he sent the people home instead of installing a king over them as Yahweh had commanded. The problem of the monarchy was left in suspension at that point, in order to tell the story of Saul's search for the lost asses. The revelation that it is Samuel to whom Saul has come for enlightenment about his journey is certainly intriguing

to the reader, especially in view of the previous secrecy about the seer's identity. Without further information, however, the reader is reduced to speculation about the meaning of journey and meeting, and must wait upon the narrator for any real understanding.

Verses 15-16

Finally the narrator reveals the information that will make sense of the journey and of the meeting. Allowing his reader to listen in on Yahweh's private revelation to Samuel, the omniscient narrator finally confirms any suspicion the reader might have entertained that events on the human plane were somehow being moulded by divine intervention and guidance. All the coincidences, and intimations of the narrative about the journey are confirmed by Yahweh's explication to Samuel.

The sense of mystery and the many uncertainties that prodded the reader on to this moment of revelation were not, however, purely means of stimulating the reader's interest and attention. Such responses were aroused by narrating the journey from the viewpoint of a detached human observer who has no knowledge of any larger purpose of meaning in these events (cf. N. Friedman 1955:1174-75 on "witnessing" and point of

view). The aura of mystery functions both outside the
story as a literary technique to spark attention and
interest, and inside the story as a pervasive descrip-
tion of the atmosphere surrounding the journey. None
of the characters is allowed to see any hidden purpose
or significance in the journey and meeting. There is
no intentional human complicity in the engineering of
this concatenation of events. God, alone, has brought
these events about.[30]

The great revelation to the reader opens signi-
ficantly with the words "Yahweh revealed." The keynote
for both reader and Samuel, the story's recipient, is
revelation. Yahweh returns to the stage giving his
first communication to Samuel since he told the latter
to make a king. Samuel had refused that task and the
reader was led to expect a divine response. Yahweh
proceeds to explain what he has been doing, how he has
begun his response, and what that response actually
entails.

The strayed asses were simply the means that
Yahweh had chosen to send ($^{\supset e}$šlaḥ, v. 16) Saul to
Samuel. The predictive aspect of the revelation in v.
15 is an important characterization of the entire
journey as divinely engineered. Yahweh is able to

predict the future course of Saul's journey because
he has directed it all along.

Yahweh's revelation is indeed a response to
Samuel's failure to make a king in 8:22. As noted
above on 8:9, 22, Samuel misunderstood Yahweh's command
to make a king. Though Yahweh had implied that he
would maintain theocratic control of Israel and its
monarchy (8:9, 22), Samuel had not apprehended that
implication of Yahweh's command, and so had not made
a king. Instead of choosing a man and installing him
as king, Samuel had sent all the people home. In
immediate response, as we now see, Yahweh took Saul
from his home and brought him directly to Samuel.
Saul's journey from home to Samuel is the divine
summons that reverses the effect of Samuel's dismissal
of the people. Having directed Saul's steps to
Samuel's doorstep, as it were, Yahweh now gives a
detailed explanation of the role that this future
monarch will play.

Yahweh tells Samuel that he is to anoint
Saul as nāgîd. The act of anointment itself indicates
that Samuel is in a position of authority. The fact
that Samuel is commissioned by Yahweh to invest Saul
with the commission of nāgîd reveals the lines of

authority.[31] The theocratic structure remains, as ever,
God over mediator over Israel, or in this case, over
Saul the nāgîd. Yahweh's command for Samuel to anoint
Saul is a specification of the manner in which Samuel was
to "make a king" (cf. 8:21). Yahweh's explanation re-
veals, or should reveal, to Samuel that the theocratic
structure will remain in place. If Samuel proceeds to
carry out Yahweh's commands it will indicate that he
refused to do so previously on account of his misunder-
standing Yahweh's original intention.

The subjugation of the "king" to the theocracy
is also indicated by the name of the office for which
Saul is anointed.[32] The etymological derivation of
nāgîd is uncertain (Fritz 1976:351-52; Mettinger 1976:
158-59; Ishida "nāgîd...," 1977:35 n.8). Ishida sug-
gests in his article that the term was originally the
title of a person designated, either by Yahweh or a
reigning monarch, to be ruler (1977:45). Mettinger
narrows the meaning of nāgîd as it occurs in 1 Sam 9
even more. He sees the latter occurrence as the
product of prophetic circles in Israel (the northern
kingdom) (cf. Mayes 1978:14).

[They] introduced the idea that YHWH, the
Supreme King, could take one of His own

people and designate him nāgîd. It is
tempting to see in the choice of this
terminology for divine designation a
tacit criticism of the secular institution
of a human king designating his successor:
God Himself and no one else was to decide
who was to sit on the throne (1976:168;
cf. Richter 1965:77-78; Fritz 1976:352).

Both Mettinger and Ishida agree that the term
describes a person who is designated to perform a
task, usually of leadership (Mettinger 1976:182;
Ishida "nāgîd...," 1977:48; cf. McCarter 1980:178-79).

When Yahweh prescribes an anointing as nāgîd
for Saul, the combined meaning of the words ûmᵉšaḫtô
lᵉnāgîd is clearly and uncompromisingly theocratic.
The man is chosen as the official "designate" of
Yahweh, to be invested in office by Samuel, the theo-
cratic mediator (cf. Kegler 1977:74). Yahweh has now
clearly delineated what he left implicit in his previous
instructions for inaugurating the monarchy.[33] Samuel's
refusal to make a king provides the occasion for Yah-
weh's entrance and an unambiguous statement on what
kind of king (mišpaṭ hammelek, 8:9) he will stipulate
(wᵉhiggadtā, 8:9). Samuel's misinterpretation of

Yahweh's words in 8-9, detailed in 8:11-18, is now
corrected by Yahweh. Yahweh had said "Designate
(w^{e}higgadtā) the kind of king" (8:9), and now he has
brought the man to be anointed as designate (nāgîd).
Saul's rise to the office of "king" is, therefore,
Yahweh's doing from beginning to end.

The people had demanded that a king be esta-
blished over them (^{c}ālênû, 8:19) so that they, the
people of Yahweh, could be "like all the nations."
The phrase "like all the nations" was Israel's declara-
tion of independence. In response, Yahweh now issues
his theocratic declaration: "Anoint a designate over
(^{c}al) my people Israel (^{c}al-ammî yiśrā$^{\,)}$ēl)." A clear
denial of the people's declaration resounds in Yahweh's
command. The one who will be over (^{c}al) Israel is
Yahweh's designate; the reason—Israel is Yahweh's
people. Buber's description of Yahweh's counter-decla-
ration is accurate:

> In dem Befehl an Samuel spricht sich also
>
> JHWHs eigentliche Antwort auf das Volks-
>
> begehren, die Verwandlung des Gewährten
>
> entscheidend aus. Für den Erzähler
>
> bedeutet dieser Vorgang die von Gott
>
> befohlene Ablösung der unmittelbaren.

<u>primitiven Theokratie durch die mittelbare</u>
(1956:128, Buber's emphasis).

Yahweh's description of the task for which Saul
is anointed places the new designate well within pre-
viously established theocratic bounds. "He will deliver
<u>my people</u> from the hand of the Philistines." Albright,
among others, sees the description as a statement that
Saul was anointed only as a military leader of the tri-
bal confederation (1969:163; cf. Robertson 1944:183;
Langlamet 1970:191-92). Yahweh's statement is in
pointed opposition to the people's idea that their new
monarch would make them "like the nations." The "king"
as designate, will instead widen and maintain the gap
between Yahweh's people and the nations such as the
Philistines.

The reader familiar with the exodus narrative
in the book of Exodus easily recognizes that Yahweh is
quoting himself in v. 16. The fact that he spoke
almost identical words to Moses when he was preparing
to bring Israel out of Egypt (cf. Exod 3:7-9) indicates
that Yahweh views the present situation as similar to
that of the exodus.[34] Not only does Yahweh see the
situations as parallel, but he makes their outcomes
parallel. Saul is to be a new Moses, delivering Israel

from the Philistines as Moses delivered them from the Egyptians (cf. Exod 3:10).[35]

Smith correctly observes that Yahweh's suggestion that there is a Philistine threat stands in direct contradiction to 7:11-14 (1899:62). Buber uses the contradiction as a basis for labelling the end of 7:9 as a gloss along with the description of victory in 7:11-14 (1956:114-20). He suggests that only with the revelation of 9:15-16 does Yahweh answer Samuel's cries of 7:9 (Buber 1956:128).

An alternative, which obviates recourse to textual excision or division into separate sources, arises when one notes that it is Yahweh who seems to contradict the events of 7:10-14. Either he has forgotten—unlikely—or his statement is more complex than it first seems. Pursuing the latter possibility, one recalls that v. 16 is a response to the request for a king by way of defining what that king will be. The request in turn was provoked by the reappearance of a situation (cf. 8:1-4) that threatened to provoke another catastrophe such as ch. 4. The people feared bad judges (theocratic mediators) because Yahweh had previously allowed the Philistines to defeat Israel in order to punish errant priests (also theocratic

mediators). Thus their request for a king could be
"interpreted" by Yahweh, whose judgement is obviously
prejudiced by personal involvement, as an expression
of their fear of a recurring Philistine disaster.
Yahweh leaves out any mention of his own part in the
disaster both because he has no one to answer to and
because he is concerned to place the request in a new
light. He ignores the request's implication that he
has misgoverned as he "forgets" his own role in the
disaster. Yahweh reshapes the request into a plea for
divine aid within the theocratic structure. All anti-
covenantal emphasis simply disappears beneath Yahweh's
forceful reassertion of national covenantal ideology.

Yahweh's response to the request characterizes
him as a powerful and somewhat unsympathetic God. The
nearest he comes to an admission of guilt is his instal-
lation of Saul as nāgîd. The fact that he gives in
even half-way to the request indicates that its justice
requires Yahweh to recognize it. Far from expressing
the noble sentiment that it did in Exodus, however,
Yahweh's self-quotation becomes the sarcastic response
of an unmoving, all-powerful God who will not admit
his mistakes.[36] As Eli said, "he is Yahweh and does
as he pleases" (3:18).

Israel requested a <u>melek</u> and political indepen-
dence; Yahweh responds with a <u>nāgîd</u> and an emphatic
"my people" (3 times in v. 16). Yahweh's reliance on
the exodus and its significance to respond to Israel's
request for a king reminds the reader of his prior
reenactment of the exodus in chs. 5-6. In both in-
stances, Yahweh resorts to the exodus typology because
his status as a mighty divine warrior and Israel's
king has been called in question. Israel's defeat in
ch. 4 seemed to suggest to the Philistines that they
and perhaps their god Dagon had defeated Yahweh the
fearsome god of the exodus (cf. 4:8; 5:1-2). Similarly,
Israel's request for a king was justified with the
statement that a king would go out before Israel to
fight Israel's battles (8:20). Since the request was
made in view of Israel's past defeat in ch. 4, the
clear implication of 8:20 was that Yahweh, who was
covenantally committed to Israel's defence, had failed
to live up to his commitment and so forfeited his king-
ship over Israel.

Both times Yahweh responds by "replaying"
some aspect of his actions in the exodus. Apparently
Yahweh regards the exodus events as fundamentally
establishing his sovereignty over Israel and as clear

signals to the nations that he is the mightiest divine
warrior.. In response to the Philistines' apparent vic-
tory, he reenacts the exodus using the ark as his new
Israel. The result is that his reputation is cleared.
Similarly, when Israel itself questions his right to
rule them, Yahweh calls out a new Moses to lead them to
safety. He uses the exodus events to overrule any ob-
jection that Israel might have to his rule, and simply
reasserts the covenantal dogma: they are his people
and he is their divine king.

The parallels that the narrator has drawn
between these exodus allusions are part of the broad
parallelism that he has constructed between chs. 1-7
and chs. 8-12. If the reader remembers what Yahweh's
prior exodus recollection did for Israel—nothing—
the implications for Israel's requested monarchy are
not good. The only one likely to benefit from Yahweh's
new Moses is Yahweh himself.

Samuel, alone amongst the human characters, is
given to know the specifics of Yahweh's response. No
one else is allowed to know the true nature of the
monarchy and the divine response until after the new
arrangement is ratified and made law (10:25). By
giving the reader access to the details of Yahweh's

plans for the monarchy the narrative offers another
explanation for the sense of mystery surrounding Saul's
journey, and for the secrecy attendant on his subsequent
anointing. If anyone else were to know the true nature
of the new monarchy, it would be immediately rejected.
The entire affair is, therefore, concealed from start
to finish. Even Saul and his servant have no idea about
the true nature of their quest. The air of conspiracy
that Wildberger detected in ch. 9 is there, but it is
a conspiracy perpetrated by Yahweh and Samuel, rather
than Samuel and the elders (Wildberger 1957:454). The
reader's access to the revelation functions, therefore,
as an important interpretive guideline for the remain-
der of the narrative. With it the reader will be able
to penetrate the appearances staged by Yahweh and
Samuel, and so understand the realities of their
inauguration of the Israelite monarchy. Having attuned
the reader to the realities of the divine plan, the
narrator will proceed to present an ironic picture of
Israel as it welcomes Saul, the people's "king" who is
really Yahweh's designate.

Verse 17

The narrator now resumes his description of

the flow of events that is carrying Saul towards king-
ship. He left off his narration with a view of Samuel
from Saul's perspective. The revelation to Samuel is
bracketed with the temporal description that it came
the day before (v. 15). The return to the time frame
of Saul's arrival is indicated in v. 17 by a descrip-
tion of Samuel seeing Saul.

The sequence of perfect verbs suggests the
simultaneity of the actions in v. 17. As soon as
Samuel saw Saul, Yahweh answered, "Behold the man..."
(McCarter 1980:179; GKC #164b.)[37]

The verb ya^{ce}ṣōr in the last sentence of v.
17 has not yet been successfully shown to mean "will
rule," despite many citations of cognates in other
languages and post-biblical Hebrew (cf. Smith 1899:64,
and examples in Stoebe 1973:196).

McCarter, noting that ^{c}āṣar usually means
"restrain, hinder, retain, shut in" suggests that Yah-
weh is referring to Saul's activities in mustering
Israel's forces, hence "to retain" (1980:179). "This
one shall muster my people!" (McCarter 1980:165).
There is, however, quite a difference in meaning
between "restrain" and "muster".

An alternative reading for which the normal

sense of $^c\bar{a}\d{s}ar$ is emminently suited, appears when Yahweh's sarcasm is appreciated. Yahweh does not himself see any need for a king to defend Israel. Instead, he is installing a nāgîd precisely because he wants to restrain Israel from its admitted goal of becoming "like all the nations." In v. 16, Yahweh tells Samuel that he intends to maintain the theocracy and the covenant by installing a nāgîd, which in this context might be translated "puppet king." In v. 17, then, one should translate $^c\bar{a}\d{s}ar$ as usual: "Behold the man of whom I spoke to you. This one ought to stop my people."[38] Yahweh's explicit statement about the purpose of the new nāgîd continues his sarcastic comments about his "capitulation" to the people's request for a king, but only when $^c\bar{a}\d{s}ar$ is kept to its normal meaning. Certainly Samuel, who was not willing to give in to the people, would appreciate Yahweh's vitriolic comments about the designate's function.

Verse 18

When Saul comes asking Samuel where the nameless seer is, he reveals his innocence of any complicity in the plan revealed by Yahweh. He does not even know who Samuel is.

As Buber observes, Saul's question, "Can you tell me...?" (haggîdâ) is another instance of the narrator's subtle structural ironies by way of word-play (1956:126, 141-42). Saul still seeks the seer whom he hopes will explain (yaggîd, cf. vv. 6, 8) their course. It is his quest for explanation that brings him to ask (haggîdâ) Samuel the seer's whereabouts. The irony is that his quest is really a summons to become nāgîd (cf. McCarter 1980:179).

Verse 19

If there was any doubt left in the reader's mind that Samuel was the seer, it is now dispelled by Samuel's answer, "I am the seer." Saul seems neither to recognize Samuel nor to know of his role in Israelite politics. As a result, Saul appears as the simple, naive country boy from Benjamin, out of touch with the national concerns. In view of Yahweh's subterfuge, he could not have chosen a better subject for his designate. Under Yahweh's and Samuel's guidance, Saul will be transformed from a tabula rasa to Yahweh's anointed designate.

Samuel can also engage in the verbal irony of which the narrator is so fond; "I'll send you off in the morning and explain (ʾaggîd) everything on your

mind." One can almost visualize Yahweh and Samuel wink-
ing at one another.[39]

Verse 20

Samuel proves himself as seer by telling Saul
that the lost asses have been found even before Saul
makes any mention of them. That Samuel should tell
Saul about the asses and then still have him up to
eat and to stay overnight, indicates that more impor-
tant issues than lost asses are at hand (cf. Hertzberg
1964:83).

Samuel's veiled explanation of why Saul should
not worry about the asses "is obscure to Saul as it is
clear to the audience" (McCarter 1980:179). The word
ḥemdat, usually translated as "desirable" (objects) or
"riches," also contains an ambiguity that reveals
Samuel's continuing disgust at Israel's request for
a king. According to Wallis ḥmd can be negative,
neutral, or positive (1980:455-56). On the face of it
Samuel appears to say that Saul need no longer worry
about such silly things as asses when all the riches
of Israel are at his disposal. But this windfall is
only available because Israel requested a king, a
request that Samuel regarded with open disfavour (ch.
8). Wallis notes that ḥmd can be negative when the

desire is viewed in conjunction with a disreputable
act (1980:455). Samuel's comment may play on the
ambiguity of ḥmd to voice another criticism of Israel's
"base desire" for a king. Good also observes this
ambiguity in Samuel's rhetorical question and suggests
that, on the basis of ch. 8, "Israel's desire (chemdāh)
amounts to a rejection of Yahweh" (1965:62). Samuel
leaves no doubt in the reader's mind about his stance
on the monarchy. Even though he knows that Saul will
only be another theocratic official, Samuel still
resents the request.

Verse 21

The narrator continues to develop his charac-
terization of Saul as a simple, modest, country boy.
Saul protests that his background does not warrant
such lofty promises as Samuel has given. The reader
knows why Samuel has spoken as he has and, by Saul's
reaction, he is assured that Saul has not the slightest
inkling about contemporary political issues.[40]
Anyone who knew about the request and the transactions
of ch. 8, in which Samuel played an important part,
would easily understand Samuel's meaning. He should
also, as scholars have frequently noted, recognize

Samuel, an important figure in the political transactions.
Since Saul gives no evidence of any such knowledge, the
reader sees him entering into his anointed office with
complete and unsuspecting innocence.

The point is stressed because Saul's simplicity
plays an important role in the scheme that Yahweh and
Samuel use to gain legal acceptance of their puppet
king.[41]   Saul is Yahweh and Samuel's dupe; the success
of their operation depends on their total control of
him.   As soon as Saul shows signs of going his own way
(ch. 15) he is rejected as unfit for office:

> For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft,
>
> and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.
>
> Because thou hast rejected the word of the
>
> Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being
>
> king (1 Sam 15:23 KJV).

Verse 22

Observing Saul's puzzlement and consequent
hesitation, Samuel personally leads Saul and his
servant to the banquet hall.[42]   Saul is a good catch
that must not be allowed to escape.   Samuel continues
to honour Saul in a way that is mysterious to the
characters but transparent to the reader.

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The narrator's bestowal of this privileged perspective on the reader gives him a clear view of the theocratic conspiracy. Samuel and Yahweh are revealed in all their manipulative nakedness. The reader's appreciation of his privileged access is heightened by the fact that the narrator denied it to him in the first suspenseful half of ch. 9. Nor does the sudden lifting of the previously annoying veil leave the reader with an unbiased appreciation of Yahweh and Samuel's machinations. Having himself been subject to the mystifications thrown round Saul's journey to kingship, the reader's sympathies have been educated so as to lie with the unsuspecting Israelites (cf. above on 6:19-20).

As will be seen, however, the narrator's goals are far more complex than the simple alliance of the reader with Israel. Only in ch. 12, where Yahweh and Samuel face Israel openly with their subterfuge, does the narrator present his reader with a conclusive position in which the whole issue of theocracy and monarchy is resolved. Whether it is a satisfactory resolution remains to be seen.

The fact that Samuel honours Saul at a public banquet indicates that Yahweh's scheme is now put into

action. The people at the banquet are themselves being
prepared for a reception of what they think is their
new king. Nothing is mentioned about any nāgîd or
king, however, indicating that the banquet is used as a
preparatory step: Saul is made to feel that Samuel
and the invited guests are united in purpose, and the
guests are given the impression that Samuel has honoured
Saul in accordance with a preconceived plan. What the
plan and purpose are is, however, left in ambiguity for
the guests and Saul. Samuel, like a good narrator,
leaves his audience to fill in the indeterminacy with
their own speculations.[43] His purpose at this time is
best achieved by allowing all participants to close the
ambiguous gaps with their own expectations.

Verses 23-24

Samuel's instructions to the "butcher"
(laṭṭabbāḥ) make it seem as though he had prepared for
Saul's presence. Richter observers that any prepara-
tion for this moment is in direct contradiction to
v. 12 (1970:24). The contradiction may be resolved
by v. 15, however, which takes place before v. 12
in narrative time (the day before). Samuel was
prepared for Saul's coming and apparently pre-arranged
with the butcher to have a special portion set aside

for the man that Yahweh was sending.

The text of v. 24 is corrupt and, as the most recent textual treatment has suggested, has not yet been explained (McCarter 1980:170-71; cf. Driver 1913: 75-77). It is comprehensible, excluding the obscure word he^{c}āleyhā, up until the word lē^{ɔ}mōr, however, and describes the butcher bringing out the thigh which had been set aside for Saul's consumption.[44]

In the butcher's address to Saul the latter is again given to understand that his arrival and presence have been anticipated. Saul is made to feel that his destiny has been guided and prearranged, leading him to this meeting. Obviously such psychological manipulation is of great utility to Samuel who uses the meal especially to convince Saul of his destiny (against Hertzberg 1964:84). The butcher, whose own understanding of the situation is left undetermined, is a tool in Samuel's hands. With the butcher, Samuel shapes Saul's perception of his path to this meeting.

The shock of experiencing such prearrangement of one's life takes obvious effect on Saul. No longer questioning the incredible behaviour of others towards him, Saul's response to the butcher's speech is simple and passive—he eats what is set before him. The

narrator's description of Saul's response reveals that
Samuel's staged sacrifice has achieved its goal. "And
Saul ate <u>with Samuel</u> on that day." Saul has become
Samuel's accomplice; he simply complies with the situa-
tion and its requirements. The conspiratorial sacri-
fice has transformed Saul into Samuel's compliant eater,
who, for a time, swallows everything that Samuel feeds
him.

Verses 25-26

Most scholars since Thenius have preferred the
reading of LXX in vv. 25-26. Driver notes that the
sequence of verbs in MT is so badly incongruous compared
to LXX's natural and suitable sequence that there can
be little doubt that LXX is the "true reading" (1913:77;
cf. Thenius 1864:38, who comments on LXX, "So Alles in
schönster Ordnung"). Stoebe (1973), nevertheless,
follows MT, which is comprehensible even if incongruous.
Since both the readings of LXX and MT accomplish more
or less the same function—to get Samuel and Saul to
bed and back up again in the morning—I shall "harden
my heart" with Keil (so Smith 1899:66) and follow MT
in accordance with my interpretational principle of
reading with the primary text whenever possible.

The topic of Samuel's discourse on the

roof-top is not disclosed by the narrator.[45]   Instead, he

focuses on the simple fact that Samuel and Saul converse,

indicating thereby that they become more closely

acquainted.   Since it is Samuel's goal to make an obed-

ient theocratic servant out of Saul, the detail is not

without significance.

According to Keil and Delitzsch, the temporal

description "it was sunrise" following the verb "they

rose" (wayyaškimû) is simply a more precise definition

of the verb (1880:94 n.1). The night's activity—

sleeping—and the preparations for it, all described by

LXX, are passed over and left indeterminate by MT.

In defence of MT, Keil and Delitzsch offer the perti-

nent comment that both bed making and sleeping were

"matters of course, and there was consequently no neces-

sity to mention them; whereas Samuel's talking with

Saul upon the roof was a matter of importance in rela-

tion to the whole affair, and one which would not be

passed over in silence" (1880:94 n.1).

The final three sentences of v. 26 are impor-

tant for the light they cast on the relationship be-

tween Samuel and Saul. First the reader sees Samuel

issuing a command: "Get up and I'll send you off."

The immediacy of Saul's response is visually conveyed

by making the very next word a description of Saul's response—"'Get up (qûmâ) and I'll send you off,' and he (Saul) got up" (wayyāqom). One recalls that Saul demonstrated such obedience previously in response to his father's command to go and find the asses (vv. 3-4). Yahweh's choice of an obedient young man is already paying dividends. The order of dominance has been unquestionably established. Samuel commands and Saul obeys.

The relationship is not entirely stratified, however, as we see from the final sentence of v. 26. "And the two, he and Samuel, went out." The impression conveyed by this description is one of solidarity between the two, an impression based on the grammatically redundant double subject (šᵉnêhem hûʾ ûšᵉmûʾēl) which serves to emphasize the unity of the pair.[46] This description is the final member in a chain showing the convergence of Samuel and Saul: first we saw Saul eating with (ᶜim) Samuel (v. 24), then the latter speaking with (ᶜim) Saul, and finally the two of them going out together. They may have arrived by separate paths and for individual reasons, but, following the revelation to Samuel and the banquet for Saul, Samuel and Saul leave town as a pair. They are united by the

single purpose of which the reader and Samuel are aware,
and by which Saul is obediently governed.

Saul has shown himself fit to become nāgîd by
his obedience; the morning on which Samuel told Saul he
would tell (ʾaggîd, v. 19) everything has arrived (v.
26; cf. L. Schmidt 1970:71). The reader awaits the
description of the anointment that he knows must come.

Verse 27

The moment for Saul's enlightenment arrives,
but the word of God is for his ears only and so the
servant is directed by Saul to travel on ahead. Once
again the chain of command is presented; Samuel com-
mands Saul to tell the servant to go ahead, and the
servant goes ahead, the implication being that Saul
followed Samuel's directive. No one but Saul himself
is allowed to see or hear what Samuel is now going to
make known to Saul, nor is Saul allowed to tell anyone
(see below on 10:16). Contrary to Weiser, the reason
for the secrecy is not the simple result of "der
Eigenart der Sagenbild, ihren Entstehungsverhältnissen
und ihrem Anliegen" (1962:51). Rather the secrecy has
a function within the story. The true nature of Israel's
new monarch and his subordination to Samuel are hidden
from all; only after the people have accepted Saul does

Samuel reveal the secret of the anointing.

10.   1 Samuel 10

Verse 1

Verse 1 continues the description of Saul's anointment. In 9:27, Samuel tells Saul to send the servant ahead and that he will proclaim the word of God ($w^e{}^{\jmath}a\check{s}m\hat{\imath}^{ca}k\bar{a}$ ${}^{\jmath}et-d^ebar$ ${}^{\jmath}e{}l\bar{o}h\hat{\imath}m$) to Saul. Samuel thus prepares the innocent young Saul to hear and accept the political ideology that Samuel will reveal. The official sounding announcement (cf. Birch 1976:37-38) is designed to make the deepest impression on the young country-boy. Whatever Samuel is going to say or do, Saul is supposed to take it as official and irrevocable.

Samuel breaks the vial of oil on Saul's head, kisses him, and then explains why ($h^a l\hat{o}^{\jmath} k\hat{\imath}$) he has performed the ritual. Like the announcement about the word of God (9:27), the ceremonial anointing and kiss (Blank 1962:39) are calculated to impress the importance of the occasion on the naive young man. After such treatment, Saul should be all ears to anything Samuel should say. The anointing should have much the same effect on Saul as the prior banquet did (cf. above on 9:24).

As it stands in MT, Samuel's explanation of the
anointment is a terse reformulation of the revelation
that he received in 9:16.[1] As always when a piece of
information is repeated by any character, additions and
deletions are important (cf. Alter 1981:97).

Samuel repeats only the command portion of
Yahweh's revelation to Saul:

9:16 ûmᵉšaḥtô lᵉnāgîd ᶜal-ᶜammî yiśrāʾēl
10:1 kî-mᵉšāḥᵃkā yhwh ᶜal-naḥᵃlātô lᵉnāgîd

One notes, first of all differences in syntax. Yahweh's
order of emphasis was first Samuel's role as anointer,
then Saul's position as designate, and finally Yahweh's
own intention to keep a hold on Israel, "his people."
Samuel, on the other hand, directs Saul's attention
first to the fact that the anointer is Yahweh, then
to the condition of anointment—it is over his (Yahweh's)
"property"—, and lastly to Saul's status as designate.
Yahweh sought to show Samuel that he still had a
theocratic role to play and to explain the constraints
that would be placed on the monarchy.[2] Samuel seeks
to awe and overpower Saul with the information that
Yahweh anoints him,[3] while at the same time down-playing

Saul's subordinate status as designate. Both Yahweh and Samuel take advantage of the primacy effect (better known as first impressions) in their speeches.[4]

Samuel also changes Yahweh's description of the group over which Saul will be designate. Yahweh called it "my people, Israel," but Samuel calls it "his possession."[5] Yahweh affirmed the covenantal aspect of his relationship, as does Samuel, but Samuel's choice of the word "possession" emphasizes the fact that Saul is being set over a group that belongs to Yahweh (cf. Buber 1956:132). Through syntactic construction and vocabulary Samuel seeks to combine an overpowering sense of subordination with the fact of political elevation.

Omitted altogether are Yahweh's ironic comments about the intended function of the designate. As suggested above, Saul is to be a puppet king and so is not taken completely into Samuel's confidence. Anything that might cue Saul to the real purpose of his new position is discreetly left unmentioned (against Seebass 1967:159 n.21). Their goal is to make of Saul a loyal theocratic designate; all efforts are directed exclusively to that end.[6]

Verse 2

If the sacrificial meal was orchestrated to con-
vince Saul that his destiny lay in the guiding hand of
God, Samuel's prediction of the course of Saul's return
journey is doubly so. Each of the three predicted in-
cidents corresponds to a specific event on the journey
that led Saul to Samuel (Buber 1956:133-34). The most
important persuasive element in Samuel's description is
the fact that he knows what will happen before it
happens. The predictive aspect of Samuel's descrip-
tion, in combination with the uncanny correspondence
of each incident to a prior occurrence, constitutes an
overpowering mechanism by which Saul is to be thorough-
ly convinced of his destiny. The miraculous corre-
spondences show Saul the power and authority of Yahweh
who guides his every step, and Samuel's predictions of
these events bear witness to his own intimate relation-
ship with Yahweh.

The first incident involves a meeting with two
men who repeat Samuel's disclosure that the asses are
found (cf. 9:20), and confirm Saul's own fear that his
father would forget about the asses and begin to worry
about him (cf. 9:5; Smith 1899:67). As Saul heard
Samuel describing the future, he would no doubt recall

the past and his own worries about his father. This
first description would not, however, lead him much
beyond the recollection of the past and a marvelling
at Samuel's predictive abilities. He might recall that
it was his worrying that had sparked the decision to
seek the seer's advice and hence had helped to bring
him to become designate and to stand there listening
to Samuel's prediction. For the moment, however, the
narrator leaves Saul's reactions as an undetermined gap.

Verses 3-4

The second incident involves an encounter with
three men who just happen to be going up to God at
Bethel. Their gift of bread to Saul as they go up to
God recalls Saul's own lack of bread when he wanted to
go to a city to inquire of a man of God (Hertzberg
1964:85). But now a pattern begins to appear. As in
the first prediction, Saul has changed places in these
parallels to his previous journey. Before, he was the
one who suggested that his father might worry about
him; now, it is Saul who listens while someone else
tells him the same. Before, Saul was the one who had
no bread to give to the man of God; now, having visited
Samuel, bread is given to him. The correspondences

appear to point to a significant change; could it have
something to do with the fact that Saul has been
anointed by Yahweh as designate?[7]

Verses 5-6

The final incident and recapitulation of Saul's
journey to Samuel and the office of nāgîd takes the
form of a meeting between Saul and a band of prophets
coming down from the high place.[8] As Buber notes, the
encounter with this group of prophets matches Saul's
previous encounter with Samuel, who was just going up
to the high place when Saul met him. "Samuel verwaltet
das Sakrament, den es realisierenden Geistempfang
vermittelt seine Gilde, die Begegnung mit ihr (10:10a)
wird mit den gleichen Worten wie die mit ihm (9:14b)
verichtet, und was auf einer bama begonnen hat,
vollendet sich auf einer" (Buber 1956:135; cf. 9:14).

The parallel to which Buber draws attention
also serves to highlight a major difference. In the
second encounter with prophets at a high place, Saul
is overcome by the spirit of Yahweh and actually
joins in the prophetic activity. Samuel's prediction
that Saul will "become another man" is a perfect
description of the desired effect of all these

incidents—Saul will become a convert—presented in the
guise of a portrayal of Saul's prophetic condition.
Unlike his first encounter when he went to the prophet
Samuel seeking information, Saul now joins the company
of prophets and prophesies with them. Between the two
incidents lies the event that explains the change,
namely Saul's induction into the theocratic service as
nāgîd.

Verse 7

The purpose of Samuel's predictions and the
astonishing correspondences with Saul's first journey
is suggested by Samuel's description of the future ˏ
incidents as "signs" (ʾōtôt).

> ʾoth, 'sign,' is an object, an occurrence,
> an event through which a person is to recognize,
> learn, remember, or perceive the credibility
> of something.' In my opinion, this definition
> suggested by Gunkel correctly emphasizes the
> functional character of a sign, for that
> which is crucial in a sign is not the sign
> itself or its execution, but its function
> and its meaning...
>
> The function of a sign [is]...to mediate

an understanding or to motivate a kind of behaviour (Helfmeyer 1977:170-71).

It should first be noted that Samuel suggests that Saul is to respond to the signs with action "do whatever your hand finds" on account of the knowledge conveyed by the signs that, "God is with you." Samuel thus supplies Saul with the correct interpretation of the signs. The purpose of the signs is to convince Saul that God is with him by showing him his new position within the theocratic regime in contrast to his former position outside of it.[9] .The means of convincing Saul of his new position are the contrasting parallels. When Saul sees the actual change that the anointing has brought about, he will be certain that God is now with him, the new designate, and that his steps and actions are all directed by God.

As Irwin suggests, Samuel's advice that Saul do whatever comes to hand is closely bound to the fulfillment of the signs (1941:124; cf. Buber 1956: 137). When it is recalled that the final event in these three incidents is Saul's conversion to another man, it is clear that Samuel's instructions to do what comes to hand are directed to the changed Saul and not to Saul as an ordinary person. Hence it would appear

that the freedom granted to Saul in v. 7 is not complete-
ly unconditioned. Furthermore, L. Schmidt concludes
that a study of the expression to do "what comes to
hand" reveals that the expression does not mean unlimi-
ted personal freedom:

> An allen Stellen, die untersucht wurden,
> bezieht sich "die Hand findet" nicht auf das
> Unbestimmte einer Situation, auf irgendwelche
> Möglichkeiten, die die Lage bietet, sondern
> auf die handelnde Person. Die Wendung
> drückt die Fähigkeit einer Person aus,
> etwas zu tun, oder sie bezeichnet die
> Macht, die eine Person über andere Menschen
> auszuüben vermag (1970:77).

As the divine guidance had led Saul in the past,
without his ever intending to aid the divine direction,
so it will continue to lead him. The signs do not
give Saul himself the knowledge of the entire future
course of his divinely led destiny. On the contrary,
they give him only the assurance that his steps are
guided by God and that whatever actions are required
of him by circumstances are in fact ordained by God.
Samuel alone knows how God will direct Saul's path as
designate; Samuel demonstrates this knowledge in his

predictions of vv. 2-7. The sign themselves are also examples of how Saul's divinely led career will go; in all three examples, Saul is a passive respondent to the circumstances into which he is led.

Verse 8

Samuel's instructions to Saul in v. 8 are primarily preparatory to the events of ch. 13, but need not therefore be regarded as contradictory to v. 7 (against e.g. Buber 1956:137-39; Richter 1970:19). Samuel has just finished predicting a series of events in which Saul would participate upon leaving Samuel. The passing of these incidents as predicted was to be a sign to Saul that his steps were guided and that he was to continue to participate in further events because God, as the signs clearly showed, was with him. The content and sequence of incidents subsequent to the prophesying is left undetermined by Samuel, who describes them only as "whatever comes to hand." Following this predicted blank, however, Samuel continues his predictive description of future events.

The resumption of the prediction is indicated by the waw-consecutive perfect verb, "You will go down" (w^{e}yāradtā), which continues the series of such

verbs in vv. 2-6.[10] What Samuel says in v. 8 is no less
predictive or prescriptive than what he said in vv. 2-6.
The difference between v. 8 and v. 7 is that the latter
leaves the future course of events undetermined.

To say that the latter event or events are not
determined is not the same thing as saying that they are
left to be determined by Saul. Instead what is implied
is that Samuel does not know what exactly will happen
in that space of events. He leaves it open and tells
Saul to improvise. Why Samuel should do such a thing
at the very time when he and Yahweh are seeking to
establish strict control over Saul's loyalty and
action is left undetermined by the narrative. The
reader, at this point, can only speculate about Samuel's
reasons. Perhaps there are some conditions that cannot
be predicted for that particular period. Could it be
that Samuel and Yahweh are not yet certain of how the
people will respond to their choice for a king? The
answer to this question lies in subsequent scenes.

This reading of the banquet (9:22-24), the
anointing (9:27-10:1), the signs of vv. 2-6, and the
subsequent prediction of v. 8 as the scheming efforts
of Yahweh and Samuel to form Saul into an obedient
and loyal designate is supported by the events of ch.

13 which are dependent on v. 8.[11] At the first sign of independence from Saul, when he deviates from the passive role assigned to him by Samuel (v. 8; cf. 13:8-9), Samuel predicts a premature end to Saul's monarchy (13:14).

Verse 8 need not, therefore, be regarded as "diametrically opposed" to its context (so Crüsemann 1978:58-59).[12] Samuel first predicts a series of situations and prescribes Saul's responses (vv. 2-6). The fulfillment of those events will constitute a sign to Saul that God is indeed with him, and that knowledge will allow him to continue to do "whatever his hand finds to do" in the assurance that his steps are still divinely guided (v. 7).[13] Finally, sometime in the future, Saul is to go to Gilgal and wait seven days for Samuel whereupon the latter will come and make known Saul's future undertakings.[14]

Verse 9

Samuel has done as much as he can to indoctrinate Saul, and now God takes over. No sooner does Saul turn to leave Samuel than God gives Saul another heart. The narrator's description emphasizes the immediacy of this divine intervention (cf. Nowack 1902:

47). Listening to Samuel in v. 6, the reader has been led to expect that Saul will not be a changed man until he joins in the prophesying with the band of prophets.[15] Why does the narrator now contradict Samuel?

Various solutions have been sought to explain the apparent prematureness of the change. Keil and Delitzsch rationalize, suggesting that the change did not come early but on the same day as the signs were fulfilled. "As he left Samuel early in the morning, Saul could easily reach Gibeah in one day..." (1880: 104). Smith demythologizes, suggesting, "it is psychologically quite comprehensible that the impulse should anticipate the predicted order of events" (1899:70; cf. Dhorme 1910:86).

More recently Helfmeyer has suggested that the changed heart was given to Saul so that he might gain a clear and proper understanding of the subsequent signs (1977:185). Citing parallels, Helfmeyer suggests that only when Yahweh gives an "understanding heart" is it guaranteed that a sign will be properly understood (p. 185). Helfmeyer fails to observe, however, that unlike Deut 29:3, which speaks of the need for Yahweh to give an "understanding heart" (lēb lāda^{c}at), v. 9 speaks only of a "changed heart" (lēb ꜣaḥēr).

A solution to the difficulty presents itself when attention is directed to the question of who says what to whom. In v. 6, it is Samuel who tells Saul that he will be a changed man when the spirit takes him and he prophesies. In v. 9, on the other hand, the omniscient narrator reveals to his reader that God intervenes and changes Saul's heart at the very moment that Saul turns to leave Samuel. Certainly Samuel did tell Saul that he would be changed after or during the prophesying. But God, as the narrator so kindly shows us, has no qualms about speeding up the change in Saul as an insurance against any slip-up; he makes the change immediately.

"When he turned to leave Samuel, God transformed his heart." No entrance is left for accidental influences to distract or deflect Saul from the course on which Samuel and God have set him. From what Samuel told Saul, it would be the signs given by the three incidents that would objectively show him that God was with him. The reader now knows, however, that God has exercised his divine prerogative, intervening to ensure that Saul is properly affected. Welcome Saul, automaton.

The third sentence in v. 9 is the narrator's

matter-of-fact summary description that all of the signs
came·to pass on that same day. When he now recounts in
one sentence what it took Samuel roughly sixteen de-
tailed sentences to describe, the narrator brings the
reader back to the reality of the situation. Given that
God has just intervened directly to change Saul's heart,
the narrator indicates that it is a matter of course,
requiring little attention, that the signs are ful-
filled. The narrator diverts his reader's attention
away from the astonishing correspondences and meanings
of the signs, and directs him to observe God and
Samuel in action. Save the rhetoric and fulfilled
signs for Saul—both the narrator and the reader
already know that God is "with Saul."[16]

Excursus - Structure in 9:1-10:16

Buber has noted a significant pattern exhibited
by the events of 9:1-10:16 (1956:142). First Saul is
the centre of action as he makes his unknowing way
towards Samuel (9:1-14). Then Samuel takes over in
the actions leading to Saul's anointment and induction
into the theocratic·service (9:15-10:9). Finally,
Saul returns to centre stage on his return journey
(10:10-16). From the reader's perspective, three parts

to the story of Saul's designation may also be labelled according to the narrative's point of view.

First we travel with Saul, experiencing and understanding the journey solely from the limited per-, spective of the human character. Although the narrator sprinkles hints about some larger significance through- out vv. 1-14, they are not enough to afford the reader the opportunity to climb out of his limited access.

In the second stage, where Samuel takes over as the principal actor (though Yahweh's part should not be ignored), the narrator reveals the hidden signifi- cance of Saul's journey and the true nature of the office that Yahweh bestows on Saul. The narrator accomplishes this revelation by means of his omniscience, which allows him and his reader to listen in on the revelation to Samuel, and to peek behind the scenes as God gives Saul a new heart.

Finally, Saul sets out on his return journey. The return segment of the journey differs from the out- bound segment in two ways: Saul is now nāgîd, and the reader now knows what that designation really means. The narrator focuses on two events in Saul's homeward journey, both of which illustrate the reception that the new designate receives from his fellow countrymen

and from his immediate family. The reader watches with
interest, as we may assume Yahweh does, to see if Saul
will be detected or give away his secret. Once again,
the narrative presents events primarily as they are
seen on the human plane, that is, from a limited point
of view. Saul is presented as he appears to other
characters and their reactions to him are recorded.
The reader, noting that he was formerly in the same
state of ignorance as Saul's onlookers and interlocuters
are in vv. 10-16, is able to appreciate both the ig-
norance of the human characters and the advantages
that Yahweh holds over the people who demand a king.

Verse 10

Most scholarly readers of v. 10 have been
troubled by the omission of the first two signs from
description, or conversely, with the description of
the third sign when v. 9 has already told of the ful-
fillment of all the signs. Smith suggests that two
signs may have "dropped out" (1899:70-71; cf. Budde
1902:69; Driver 1913:82). McCarter, accepting the
integrity of the narrative, regards v. 9b as a summary
that replaces the first two signs (1980:183). But
why does it not replace all the signs? Stoebe answers

that question with the suggestion that the third sign
receives special mention because of its greater impor-
tance (1973:208; cf. Hertzberg 1964:86 who regards the
emphasis as an accident of transmission rather than a
reflection of intention).

An examination of v. 10 soon reveals, however,
that the narrator is not simply relating the fulfill-
ment of the third sign. "Die Schilderung des Propheten-
zuges ist hier nicht so vollständig wie in V.5"
(Schulz 1919:151). The fulfillment of the third sign
is repeated only in summary, with only those elements
mentioned that are essential to the reader's under-
standing of the people's reaction. Were it the narra-
tor's intention to describe the fulfillment of the
third sign, the failure to mention Saul's change to
another man—the climax of the third sign according to
v. 6—would be especially peculiar.

When we accept the narrator's statement that
the matter of the signs and their fulfillment was
finished in v. 9, however, v. 10 poses no problems of
redundancy or omission of signs. Instead, v. 10 is
presented as an example of Saul's reception by the
people who are allowed to glimpse the first manifesta-
tions of Saul's new position within the theocracy.

Keil and Delitzsch are on the right track with their expla-
nation of the reason for repeating the third sign: "The
third sign is the only one which is minutely described,
because this caused a great sensation at Gibbeah, Saul's
home" (1880:104). If vv. 10-13a may be taken as a com-
plete scene, without change in place or break in tem-
poral continuity (Abrams' definition of scene, 1981:2),
it is obvious that the topic is the people's reaction
to Saul's new position amongst the prophets.

This reading of the function of v. 10 as a
prelude to vv. 11-12 rather than a fulfillment of vv.
5-6 is also congruent with the subsequent encounter
between Saul and his uncle. In both meetings Saul,
the new theocratic designate, is exposed to contact
with ordinary people who question his behaviour—known
by the reader to be an exhibition of Saul's new status
—ask him about his journey—of which the reader
knows the real significance—and ask about his conver-
sation with Samuel—in which the reader knows more
than asses were discussed. Both meetings are tests:
the first tests the people's ability to discover Saul's
secret; the second, Saul's desire to keep it, and
hence, his loyalty.

Verse 11

The reader knows that Saul's prophesying is a manifestation of the presence of God with Saul, of his new position within the theocracy as $n\bar{a}g\hat{i}d$. The narrator now presents the view from outside, that is from a human, non-omniscient perspective. He draws attention to the people's perception that Saul's behaviour differs from what it had formerly been (cf. Keil and Delitzsch 1880:104). The people who comment on Saul's radically new mannerisms are "everyone who knew him previously." Emphasis is also placed on the fact that the people now see him in a new group; two times Saul is described as "among the prophets" (^{c}im-n^{e}bi$^{\,}$îm, bann^{e}bi$^{\,}$îm). The people's double question, "What has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?", reflects their awareness of a change in Saul's behaviour and raises the possibility that something has happened to change his manner; "the implication is that his former life had been of a very different kind from theirs [the prophets]" (Smith 1899:70).

Nowhere in v. 11 is there any indication that the people regard Saul's prophetic activity either negatively or positively. Neither does the immediate context afford any entrance to the reader who wishes

to know whether the people approve or disapprove of
Saul's new talent, or his new-found companions.

One recent study suggests that the proverb that
is central to the incident antedates the aetiological
narrative context in which it has been placed (Sturdy
1970:208-09). According to Sturdy, the narrative con-
text or aetiology has probably not understood the pro-
verb, however, and so the meaning of the proverb "must
then be other than that in the stories" (p. 209). He
then ventures to read the proverb in isolation, and it
turns out to be critical of Saul. An equally conjectural
"setting in life" is created as a new context for the
proverb and the ultimate result is that it is seen as
Davidic propaganda against Saul (p. 213). Sturdy's
study provides a modern parallel to midrashic exegesis
in which a word or a phrase is taken out of context and
made to serve as the basis from which new, interesting
stories and anecdotes are created. With respect to the
interpretation of 1 Sam 10:11, however, it is almost
totally irrelevant.

The meaning of v. 11 is quite simple in context.
Saul has been inducted into the theocratic service,
and his prophetic activity is a visible manifestation—
a sign—of his new role. His former acquaintances

witness his prophetic display and ask themselves if
Saul is also now a prophet. They have come rather close
to the true meaning of Saul's activity, but only
accidentally, because the prophets were also considered
to be servants and mouthpieces of God. Saul's partici-
pation in this group's activities is only an ambiguous
evidence of his new status.

In fact, however, the people's guess is no more
than an expression of surprise, an exclamation, in
which they simply restate what they see in the form of
a rhetorical question. They have no answer to their
own question. Though they are presented with a visible,
indubitable manifestation of Saul's new association,
they do not understand its significance. The point is
not that they should understand, but rather, that it is
impossible for them to know what Yahweh has done to Saul,
their future king, even when he publicly displays his
theocratic association. The verbal reaction to Saul's
behaviour is, therefore, neither a negative (e.g. Wild-
berger 1957:454) nor a positive (e.g. Ishida 1977:44)
evaluation, but a simple rhetorical question.

The question asked by Saul's acquaintances,
unanswerable by them yet easily answered by the reader,
can be viewed as another example of the narrator's

frequent irony, this time dramatic.[17] The people

express the proposition that Saul is among or with

the prophets, but their use of the question format in-

dicates their uncertainty and incredulity over this

state of affairs. The reader shares the narrator's

knowledge that they have correctly stated Saul's new

association, however, making their question dramatically

ironic. Saul, as they shall soon find out—to the dis-

may of some—stands with the prophet Samuel; he is a

living rebuttal to the demand for a king.

Verse 12

Supplementary (wayyaᶜan) to the general expres-

sion of surprise at the incongruous sight of Saul pro-

phesying amongst the prophets, a local man (ʾîš miššām)

adds another question of similar import. The second

question, also conspicuously unanswered, asks who the

"father" of the group is. The word "father," in

contexts where it describes a person who heads or is

honoured by a group, is usually regarded as a title

given to the leader or master (Ringgren 1977:8; cf.

Lindblom 1962:69 n.39; Wilson 1980:141).

The second question like the first comes close

to comprehending the significance of Saul's act. If

they knew who the leader of the band of prophets was,
the people might have a better idea of what Saul was
doing in the band. That the man phrases this insight
as a question, however, is also an admission that he
does not know who the leader is.

The reader, on the other hand, at least knows
that Samuel was able to predict the movement of these
prophets and that it is likely that Yahweh has, as
previously, orchestrated the entire meeting. Subsequent
events and the recurrence of the proverb about Saul will
confirm the reader's suspicion that Samuel is indeed
the head of the band of prophets (1 Sam 19:20-24). Thus
the second question, like the first, strikes very near
to the heart of Saul's appearance among the prophets.
The second question may also be regarded as an example
of dramatic irony, with the reader knowing both the
answer to the question and the significance of both
question and answer.

The last sentence of v. 12 is a narratorial
comment addressed directly to the reader. It suggests
that "for this reason (ᶜal-kēn) it became a proverb,
'Is Saul also among the prophets?'." The bare facts
of what has just been narrated do not, however,
explain why the question became a proverb, and so

scholars have attempted to supply historical contexts
that might explain the proverbial status of the ques-
tion (e.g. Sturdy 1970; L. Schmidt 1970:118).

An alternative is available, however, arising
from the observation that both questions are examples
of dramatic irony. Both the narrator and his reader
know the significance of Saul's action, and the answer
to the questions. As they watch Saul's fellow
Israelites struggling to come to grips with Saul's
unusual behaviour, the narrator knows and the reader
suspects that Israel will soon know what Saul's acti-
vity signified when Saul is publicly installed in the
office of designate. At that point, those Israelites
who asked these ironic questions will share in the
irony. For this reason—the irony of the situation—
(ᶜal-kēn) it became a proverb, "Is Saul also among
the prophets?".

It is perhaps unnecessary to point out that
the suggestion about the ironic origin of the proverb
is purely literary and only intended as a description
of the contextual significance of the proverb and of
the narrator's statement about the proverb. Whether,
in fact, there ever was such a proverb, and if there
was, the questions of how it came to be and what it

meant are beyond the concerns of this reading. One might
add that such questions are also beyond the _known_ con-
cerns of the narrator, whose only _known_ interest in the
proverb comes to expression in his narrative. As a
proverb, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" is not a
matter of fact, but a matter of biblical literature.

Verse 13

The secret of Saul's anointing has passed the
first test; no one was able to penetrate through to
the truth even when the sign of God's presence with
Saul was manifest. Without pause the narrator stops
Saul in his prophetic tracks and moves him quickly on
to the next scene, the encounter with the uncle.
Obviously the narrator does not regard causal continuity
as a necessary feature of narrative representation. .

Saul comes to _the_ high place, the definite
article suggesting that it is the high place that Samuel
mentioned in v. 5 (cf. Buber 1956:140).[18] Saul moves
into that period in which Samuel told him to do what
came to hand, Samuel's predictions and directions having
ended with the prophesying (against Ap-Thomas 1961:242).
The point is important to the following scene in which
Saul's loyalty to his new affiliation is tested. Since

he is now more or less on his own his actions should reflect his own position on what has happened to him (cf. L. Schmidt 1970:115-16).

Verses 14-16

How did Saul's uncle happen to be at the high place? How did he meet Saul? Why is it Saul's uncle that questions Saul, and not his father? These and similar questions have provoked some scholars to regard vv. 14-16 as a disconnected traditional fragment (e.g. Birch 1976:41). Ap-Thomas attempts to integrate the scene by giving a new meaning to the word dôd, usually translated as "uncle." He suggests that dôd means (Philistine) governor (cf. 10:5), and that Saul conceals his anointing from the enemy (1961). Were this the intention of v. 14, one might wonder why the text would call this governor "Saul's governor" (v. 14) instead of "the Philistine governor." Moreover, why would the same words not be used as in 10:5 (neṣîbê-peliŝtîm) to describe this governor?

A simpler solution to the problem of why the uncle poses the questions to Saul may be had by observing what literary gains are made by this move. First, if Saul's father had asked the questions, he could not

have asked Saul "where were you?" and receive the evasion, "looking for the asses."[19] Saul's father knew where Saul had gone (9:3). Since it is the narrator's apparent wish to show how Saul evades any questions that would disclose his secret anointing, the uncle is a good choice to ask the first general question.

An even more simple explanation (which I owe to Alan Cooper) of why Saul's father does not question Saul is that he simply was not around (in the narrator's story) when Saul came back.

Saul's answer to his uncle's first question is truthful, even if it does omit the most important events of Saul's journey. When he says "when we saw that they were nowhere to be found, we went to Samuel," the reader is led to entertain the thought that Saul might disclose the contents of his conversations with Samuel. Tension mounts. Will Saul give it away?

The uncle's second question especially opens the door for Saul to disclose his secret anointing and so to ruin the entire operation planned by Yahweh. The question that the narrator places on the uncle's lips seems especially chosen to heighten the tension of the moment for the reader. Saul, we know, was secretly anointed as nāgîd. When the uncle says, "Tell me

(haggîdâ) what Samuel said to you" (v. 14), it seems to
the reader (and so, the reader must think, to Saul) as
if he somehow knew about this great secret, and is only
asking Saul to confess it. The apt choice of words
increases the reader's sense of tension and tests Saul's
loyalties to the limit. This is the moment of truth
for Yahweh's entire scheme; one word from Saul about
being the new nāgîd over Yahweh's property, and Yahweh's
"messianic secret" will be ruined.

The narrator increases the suspense even more
in v. 16 by having Saul use the verb ngd two more times
in his recapitulation of what Samuel said. "Saul said
to his uncle, 'He told (haggēd higgîd) us that the
asses were found.'" With all of this paronomastic
playing around the word nāgîd it seems almost certain
that Saul is going to say something about it. Yet,
he does not; "but he did not say (higgîd) a word to
him about the kingdom."

Why Saul would not say anything about the
kingdom is answered for us by the narrator himself in
a narratorial comment on Saul's answer. The final
three words of v. 16 are usually read as a relative
clause modifying "kingdom," that is, "the kingdom of
which (ʾaʾšer) Samuel had spoken." Were this the case,

one would expect the relative clause to follow immediate-
ly after the noun that it modifies.[20] BDB (p. 83 8e),
however, suggests that ᵓaᵛšer can be equivalent to
kaᵓaᵛšer, "as," citing Jer 33:22; Isa. 54:9; and perhaps
Jer 48:8; Ps 106:34 as examples. In its present posi-
tion, separated from the noun ham^elûkâ by the verb,
ᵓaᵛšer is easily associated with the verb, but only
with difficulty with the noun.

Saul does not mention a word about the kingdom
because Samuel told him to keep quiet about it. "But
he did not tell him anything about the kingdom, as
Samuel had said." As past readers have observed, Saul's
reasons for silence are not found in the text when
ᵓaᵛšer is connected to "the kingdom" (McCarter 1980:184).
When ᵓaᵛšer is connected to the verb, however, Saul's
reasons are clear, and Samuel's instructions are in
accord with his previous efforts to keep the subject
under wraps (9:27).

The introduction of the word "kingdom"
(hamm^elûkâ) here by the narrator is conspicuous. He
uses the word to describe the secret arrangements sur-
rounding Saul's anointment as nāgîd. The narrator
thus introduces the reader to "the kingdom" as a
description of the theocratically subordinate

institution that Yahweh has planned in response to the
people's request for a king "like all the nations."
Since it is the narrator himself who so characterizes
"the kingdom (hamm^{e}lûkâ) the reader is obliged to under-
stand that that is what the word means in this narrative.

The narrator's comment that Saul did not let
out the secret of "the kingdom," while an important
summary description of Saul's silence on this topic,
is even more important as a preparation for the descrip-
tion of Samuel's subsequent public unveiling of "the
kingdom" (10:25). When the reader hears what Samuel
proclaims in that verse, his prior acquaintance with
the word m^{e}lûkâ and its significance help him to under-
stand Samuel's audience's reaction.

Saul's return to public view bearing the
visible signs of his new status (10:10) and even speak-
ing about his journey and visit with Samuel (10:14-16)
is successful. No one suspects what has happened to
him and Saul has demonstrated his own fidelity to the
theocratic cause. The stage is now set for Saul's
public acclamation as king. Too late Israel will dis-
cover that they acclaim Yahweh's nāgîd as their king.

Verse 17

The beginning of a new scene in v. 17 is

indicated by the temporal and geographical disjunction
between v. 16 and v. 17. According to Weiser, the dis-
junction "rührt wohl daher, das ihm [Sammler] für die
Zwischenzeit keine weitere Tradition zu Gebote stand"
(1962:62). While it is possible for the reader to
suggest many events or "traditions" that might fill this
temporal gap in the narrative, he should not thereby
conclude that something has been left out and that the
narrative is defective. All literary creations are
based upon a selection of events from the sum total
of available real or conceivable events. "We can say
that, with regard to the determination [exhaustive
representation] of the objectivities represented within
it, every literary work is _in principle_ incomplete and
always in need of further supplementation; in terms of
the text, however, this supplementation can never be
complete" (Ingarden 1973b:251, my emphasis). With
respect to the disjunction of v. 17, then, the reader
should respect the narrator's decision as to what he
wishes to represent and accept the disjunction as an
indication of a new scene.

A _nāgîd_ has been made (9:1-10:10) and his
loyalty proven (10:11-16). Samuel will now set in
motion processes to obtain public support and

acclamation for Saul. The secrecy that has enveloped
Saul's designation continues to play a fundamental role
in this new scene, which stretches from v. 17 to v. 27.
Buber describes this continuing role of the secret
with particular respect to the interchange between Saul
and his uncle:

> Die Frage des Oheims und diese Antwort sollen
> vollends deutlich machen, dass alles Bisherige
> nur eine Sache zwischen Gott und Saul war.
> Dies ist die Voraussetzung für das Folgende,
> aber nicht seine Vorwegnahme. Symbolisch
> haben die Ältesten die vollzogene Wahl
> erfahren, das aber heisst: als vorerst
> schweigen Sollende, das Volk darf noch
> nichts von der Kürung wissen (1956:141,
> Buber's emphasis).

The secret of Saul's theocratic affiliation will not be
revealed until after Israel has irrevocably accepted
him as king.

Chapter 10:17-27 is also linked to chs. 8-10:16
in another respect, namely Samuel's change of heart
regarding the installation of a king over Israel.
Samuel, who had refused to make a king in ch. 8 and
had, instead, sent the people home (8:22), finally

recalls them. He is able to carry forward his task of making a king only because of the intervening developments of 9:1-10:16, and because he now knows exactly what Yahweh means when he says "Make a king for them," (8:22; cf. 8:9; 9:15-16). Hence the scenes of 9:1-10:16, far from being unrelated or even contradictory to 10:17-27, are absolutely essential to the reader's understanding of Samuel's change of heart, not to mention the reality behind Saul's public installation (against e.g. Press 1938:198-99; Weiser 1962:62; Hertzberg 1964:87; McCarter 1980:191, 194).

Verse 17 draws attention to parallels between the new scene and the assembly in ch. 7, both located at Mizpah,[21] by repeating words used in the narration of the previous meeting:

10:17	ch. 7
wayyaṣ^{c}ēq š^{e}mû$^{\wedge \supset}$ēl	wayyiṣ^{c}aq š^{e}mû$^{\wedge \supset}$ēl (v. 9)
($^{\supset}$et-hā^{c}ām)	(b^{ec}ad yiśrā$^{\supset}$ēl, v. 9)
$^{\supset}$el-yhwh	$^{\supset}$el-yhwh
hammiṣpâ	(hammiṣpātâ, v. 5)[22]

The Mizpah meetings are also parallel in purpose: both convocations are called to deal with covenantal

matters, the first to renew the relationship, and the second for its apparent annulment.

Mizpah is, therefore, an appropriate place at which to hold the second convocation, for it was there that the people and Yahweh had been reunited after Yahweh's apparent abandonment of Israel in the events caused by the Elide affair. Israel and Yahweh will now meet again at Mizpah for the apparent purpose of undoing the work done in the prior Mizpah meeting. he second meeting, like the first, looks back to the Elide affair and the disaster it caused for Israel; in order to avoid another such disaster, the second meeting at Mizpah is convened for the apparent replacement of the old theocracy and its fallible mediators with a new, profane kingship.

Included in the parallels between the two Mizpah meetings is a shift in the way words from the first meeting are used in the second. The fact of the people's intervening request for a king, which constitutes a rejection of Yahweh's kingship, explains the shift. In ch. 7, Samuel had cried to Yahweh on the people's behalf, because Yahweh had apparently left them. Now, Samuel cries to the people and calls them to Yahweh, the implication being that they have

departed from him. In ch. 7, Samuel called out to
Yahweh on behalf of the people, who had made amends
and wished to renew relations. In 10:17, on the other
hand, Samuel cries to the people on behalf of Yahweh,
who has made a nāgîd and wishes to maintain his grip
on Israel.[23]

Both Mizpah meetings are initiated by Samuel
on behalf of the covenantal partner who has been
spurned or openly rejected. The major difference in
the second meeting is that the meeting appears, at
first, not as a covenant renewal but as an annulment.[24]
The people are led to believe that their rejection of
Yahweh has been acknowledged (v. 19) and that their
request has been granted (vv. 19-24). Only when the
pact is concluded does Samuel reveal the true meaning
of the meeting (v. 25).

Verse 18

Samuel initiates the proceedings with a formal
recitation of Yahweh's past saving deeds, deeds that
had inaugurated and served as the constitutional
foundation for Israel's theocratic policy (cf. Boecker
1969:38-39). Samuel prefaces his remarks to the
assembled people with the official-sounding statement,

"thus says Yahweh, God of Israel." Samuel thereby indi-
cates to his audience that what he is about to say
comes from Yahweh, and not himself. The possible aim
of the official introduction is to convince the people
of the formality and seriousness of the procedures that
will follow.

Samuel's introductory words may be contrasted
with his previous address to Israel on the matter of
the requested king. In 8:10-11, where Samuel disobeyed
Yahweh's instructions because he misunderstood them,
Samuel did not say "thus says Yahweh." Instead, he
simply related what Yahweh said and went on to give his
personal reflections on the disadvantages of monarchic
government. In 10:18, on the other hand, Samuel has
finally come to understand Yahweh's intention and so he
is able to   Yahweh's position.

As the sympathetic mouthpiece of Yahweh,
Samuel returns to what Yahweh really told him (8:7-8),
and delivers that word to the people. Samuel emphasizes
the covenantal role of Yahweh as Israel's God in the
first sentence of the historical recitation. Speaking
now for Yahweh in the first person, Samuel says "I
brought Israel up from Egypt." Only in the next
sentence does Samuel address his audience in the second

person plural. The reason for his initial impersonality is, of course, to emphasize the covenantal significance of the exodus. The nation Israel was formed on the basis of this act; connection of the names "Israel from Egypt" is an important recollection of the national political significance of the exodus.

Samuel's second sentence recalls the continuing covenantal fidelity of Yahweh from the exodus on. Israel's God delivered it from Egypt and all other oppressive kings.[25] Boecker, commenting on the significance of the verb he^{ce}lêtî, also notes the emphasis on Yahweh's continuing acts of protection on Israel's behalf (1969:42). The emphasis in v. 18 is placed on the magnanimity of Yahweh towards Israel. He did all these things for Israel without compulsion.

Verse 19

The new sentence, begun with the pronoun "But you" (w^e attem) in the emphatic position, contrasts Israel's response to Yahweh with what Yahweh has done for Israel (Driver 1913:83). In gratitude for Yahweh's benevolence, Israel reject its God. Samuel, speaking for Yahweh, correctly characterizes the request for a king as a rejection of God.

Boecker describes the rhetoric of v. 19:

> Dass der König der als Kriegshelfer erbeten
> wird, wirklich die Stelle Jahwes einnimmt,
> ist in V.19 besonders anschaulich gemacht.
> Nachdem in V.18.19a die darauf erfolgte
> Antwort des Volkes mit: "Nein,[26] sondern
> einen König sollst du über uns einsetzen."
> Deutlicher kann es mit den Mitteln einer
> Geschichtserzählung nicht ausgedrückt werden,
> dass der König als Kriegshelfer gefordert
> wird, und als solcher das tun soll, was
> bisher Jahwe getan hat (1969:43).

In place of the expected response of fealty and obedience to Yahweh's acts of deliverance Samuel places the request for a king, a direct contradiction to the expected expression of gratitude. Rather than honouring and respecting the divine king Israel rejects him by requesting his replacement. Israel's request is made to appear as a repudiation of its national God and its foundational myth, the exodus.

Samuel obviously recognizes that the basis of Israel's request lies in its previous defeat at the hands of the Philistines, but refuses, along with Yahweh, to admit the validity of the request. Like

Yahweh (8:7-8), Samuel totally ignores the disaster at Aphek, refusing even to mention it. Samuel presents the final theocratic position on the requested monarchy; Yahweh has been completely faithful to his obligation, and the request is legally (covenantally) groundless (cf. Weiser 1962:64).

Were the reader only aware of the request as presented by Samuel and Yahweh, he might believe that it was totally arbitrary. Thanks to the narrator, though, the reader sees Samuel's speech in a wider perspective. From that larger perspective the usual description of 10:17-19 as an anti-monarchic tradition is highly questionable. There are, in fact, good reasons for the people's request and the narrative has clearly presented these in previous scenes. The only anti-monarchists in vv. 18-19 are Samuel and Yahweh. The narrator, on the other hand, stands against Samuel's biased review of the request insofar as he has already presented the reader with the real background and reasons for it. Samuel's anti-monarchic tendencies reflect only the personal tendencies of a character in a story, not of the narrator outside the story. In fact, in view of the obviousness of the bias in the anti-monarchism of vv. 18-19 it may be that the

narrator is even anti-theocratic. By allowing both Yahweh (8:7-8) and Samuel (10:18-19) to present bigoted descriptions of the request, the narrator lets them convict themselves, for the reader knows that the people have not rejected Yahweh on account of any saving actions such as Samuel has just rehearsed.

Rather than reading vv. 18-19 as the anti-monarchic vilifications of an isolated tradition (Weiser 1962:63) or redaction (Veijola 1977:41, citing support in n.18) that is inconsistent with the subsequent election of Saul, these verses must be read and understood from the perspective of Samuel's rhetorical purpose. Samuel seeks to convince his audience that they are getting what they asked for—a king that replaces Yahweh and the theocracy—while at the same time denying the validity of the request. He must deny the validity of Israel's request because Yahweh does not intend to dissolve the theocracy and so cannot admit any failing on his own part. To admit to past covenantal failing would be political suicide for Yahweh and, therefore, for Samuel too.

Though he wants to deny the validity of the request, Samuel must convince the people that their request has been granted so that they will formally

accept Saul as their new king. He therefore correctly summarizes the request as a rejection of the theocratic covenant and acts, subsequently, as though Saul were the king that fits the bill of a new, non-theocratic state.

Samuel's brief restatement of the anti-covenantal implications of the request for a king seems to be agreeable to Israel. Nobody protests that Samuel has misunderstood the implications of the request, as one   expect. Since this is the first occasion for the theocrats to convey their understanding of the request back to Israel, it is also the appropriate point for Israel to correct any misimpressions that Samuel or Yahweh might hold about the request. Israel's silence indicates that Yahweh and Samuel do correctly understand and represent the request as anti-covenantal.

Several scholars have suggested that vv. 17-19 take the form of a judgement oracle, with the ceremonial lottery to find a king taking the place of a specific judgement or punishment (Birch 1976:48-54, citing also Richter; Kegler 1977:77-78; McCarter 1980: 191-92, 195). Even granting this categorization, the resulting negative presentation of the transition to

a monarchy expresses Samuel's attitude and not the author's. It is part and parcel of Samuel's rhetorical endeavour to convince his audience that they have no right to ask for a king and that from the theocratic perspective, the installation of a monarchy is a judgement on Israel.

As readers we sit in the privileged position granted us by the narrator and look over Samuel's shoulder as he puts his audience through its paces. His apparent anger and indignation (expressed in the form of a prophetic judgement) at the request and at the task of making a king are designed to lead his audience to believe that they are getting what Samuel seems not to want (cf. 8:6, 11-18), namely a profane king.

The employment of the prophetic judgement oracle has two sides: 1. To Samuel's audience it is a sign that their request is grudgingly being fulfilled; 2. To the reader it is an ironic intimation of the true nature of the monarchy to be installed. The installation of a theocratic designate in response to the request for a secular monarch is, indeed, a judgement and punishment of the people who only want freedom from the uncertainties of the theocratic

polity.

The discord between Israel and Yahweh has been
ceremoniously recapitulated by Samuel; the resolution of
the problem is now dramatically introduced by the
particle w^{ec}attâ, "And now..." (Birch 1976:50). This
introduction is more than dramatic, and serves as in
other covenantal contexts, to introduce the stage in
the proceedings where Israel is called upon to parti-
cipate in something that will affect the covenantal
relationship thereafter (cf. Exod 19:5; Deut 4:1; 10:12;
Josh 24:14, 23; 1 Sam 12:7; Muilenburg 1959:355, 363;
Weiser 1962:65; Stoebe 1973:216).[27] In conjunction
with the solemn call to assemble before Yahweh in their
tribal groupings, Samuel uses the transitional particle
w^{ec}attâ to impress his audience with the seriousness
of what they have done and are about to do. Playing
upon Israel's manifest belief that the demand for a
king was just and lawful, and hence to be pursued
through the existing judicial system of the theocracy
(8:4-6), Samuel accents the formality of what will
take place. The people will be bound by what they
say and do.

Verses 20-21

The sham continues with Yahweh now joining indirectly in the operations of the lottery. To the participating Israelites all appears normal, which is to say the lottery is completely unpredictable. To the reader, however, it is no surprise to watch the successive lotteries closing around Saul until he is finally taken. Yahweh is obviously working behind the scene.

Stoebe misses the point when he suggests that this scene presupposes neither Saul's meeting with Samuel, nor his anointment "nach der eine Loswahl nicht nur überflüssig, sondern geradezu Sakrileg wäre" (1973:214). The lottery is staged by Samuel and Yahweh solely for the benefit of the unsuspecting Israelites, who are led to believe that the divine will is being formulated and made manifest before their very eyes, and in response to their request for a replacement for Yahweh.[28] Weiser observes that the use of a lottery to find the new king was also intended to show "dass alle Stämme unter gleichen Bedingungen ordnungsmässig zur Wahl gestanden haben" (1962:65). Though the Israelites in attendance may have been expected to believe in the equity of the lottery, we readers of

9:1-10:16 are certainly not.

Hertzberg comes closer to the contextual signi-
ficance of the lottery when he says it is a "miraculous
confirmation" of the events of 9:1-10:16 (1964:88). In
view of Yahweh's ultimate purpose (stated in 9:15-16),
however, the choice of Saul by lot is neither surpris-
ing, nor miraculous to either the reader or, apparently,
Saul.

. . Saul seems to anticipate the results of the
final throw; when he is taken, he is nowhere to be
found. Scholars have found Saul's absence troublesome.
Lindblom points out that in lot-casting, the only
answers that could be given were yes, no, or silence
(cited by Birch 1976:44). Saul must have been present
when taken and so it is nonsensical to say that he
could not be found. In addition, Eissfeldt has sug-
gested that beginning with the words "They sought him"
(v. 21), we are faced with a new tradition contained
in another literary strand (1931:7). In this second
tradition, the means of election is determined by the
physical superiority of the candidate rather than by
lottery (Eissfeldt 1931:7; a list of subscribers to
this view is given in Mettinger 1976:180 n.73).

It is possible, however, that our narrator

did not know exactly how the lottery worked in prac-
tise, and even that he was not so concerned with a
historical representation of Israelite lottery prac-
tises as he was with constructing an interesting
story (cf. Weiser 1962:65-66). Pursuing this possibili-
ty, one must ask what is gained by Saul's absence when
he is chosen by the lottery. The answer to this ques-
tion lies in v. 22, in which the significance of
Saul's absence is probed.

Verse 22

From the point of view of the Israelites, the
fact that the lot has fallen to someone that is absent
and cannot be found suggests that there may yet be
another, as yet unidentified person to come forward.
Since the mechanism of the lottery seems to have mal-
functioned, the Israelites inquire directly of Yahweh,
"Is there still (i.e. besides ourselves) any one come
hither?" (Driver's translation, 1913:84).[29] In the
absence of the one designated by the lottery, the
people look for "anyone" (אישׁ without article) to fill
the gap; they are completely at a loss and depend
entirely on Yahweh for the choice of their king.

The reader, at this point in the narrative, is

no more certain about Saul's whereabouts or the reason for his absence than the people in the story. The text leaves these things completely undetermined. The reader knows that Saul was predestined by Yahweh to be Israel's leader, so Saul's absence and the people's apparent confusion pose no immediate jeopardy to the theocratic scheme. What emerges most clearly from the people's question is their total passivity in the choice of a monarch. When the lottery "before Yahweh" seems to fail, they do not even think to make their own choice, but go straight to Yahweh for a resolution. The people, as always in the entire narrative, remain under the authority of their existing king—Yahweh— and make no insurrectional moves, even when opportunities, such as the apparent failure of the lottery, arise.

Aside from reinforcing the passive, law-abiding characterization of the people, their question and Saul's absence afford Yahweh another opportunity to demonstrate his control over the whole situation, and, to the reader, his determination to install his designate Saul as Israel's new king (cf. Weiser 1962:66; Stoebe 1973:218). To the Israelites in attendance, Yahweh's directions for finding the hidden Saul in response to their indefinite question show that Saul

is "mehrfach beglaubigt und ohne allen Zweifel der erkorene Liebling Jahves" (Gressmann 1921:42). They had asked simply for an ꭓꞮš, any man, and Yahweh had responded in accordance with the choice of Saul by lot; "He (hûꞌ) has hidden...."

The obvious question, asked by almost every published reading of v. 22, is why did Saul hide? His action presupposes, as Keil and Delitzsch point out, that he knew the lot would fall to him, and hence that he had made the connection between his anointing and the matter of the monarchy (1880:108). The text, however, supplies no indication as to his motives for hiding so that readers have had to fill that gap, usually with some suggestion about Saul's modesty and self-effacement (e.g. Smith 1899:73; Ishida 1977:46).

However this gap is filled, McCarter is probably right when he says that to seek Saul's motive is to miss the point (1980:196).[30] The gap in the text—Saul's motivation—cannot be filled conclusively on the basis of the prior context, nor will it be filled immediately in the subsequent context; it is what Sternberg calls a permanent gap:

No reader can afford to disregard them, but he will look in vain for pat explicit answers. Only

through a close analysis of the text can he evolve an hypothesis or a set of hypotheses by which these gaps can be filled in with some degree of probability (Sternberg 1980: 51).

An entrance to such a hypothesis is provided by the fact that Saul's action was manifestly made in the knowledge that he would be chosen; why else would he hide? His action reveals, in a small way, a certain amount of will for self-determination, and hence the potentiality for this meek and mild designate to frustrate Yahweh's designs. To hide when Yahweh has chosen him may be a futile act on Saul's part; but it does reveal a side to his character that becomes increasingly important later in his career (e.g. ch. 13).

In summary, v. 22 is primarily a verse of characterization: of Israel in the question, Yahweh in the answer, and Saul in the baggage.

Verses 23-24

Upon hearing the whereabouts of Yahweh's chosen one, the people run and get him. Once more, Israel's forthrightness—they _ran_ and got him—shows

that they willingly accept the condition that Yahweh alone decides who his replacement will be.

The description of Saul standing head and shoulders above all the people around him harks back to the prior occurrence of this description in 9:2, where it prefaced the description of Saul's secret designation. In v. 23, on the other hand, it plays an important part in his public acclamation. While it has often been suggested that 9:2 is a redactional connector based on 10:23, and aimed at linking a disjointed narrative, closer examination demands a reconsideration.[31]

As noted above in the discussion of 9:2, the reader is given to wonder about the significance of Saul's size, especially as it might relate to his possible involvement in the proposed monarchy. The description in 9:2, as it stands in context, opens a gap in the reader's understanding of the information about Saul's stature as it relates to previous events and the ongoing story. What, if any, is the connection between this Saul and the request for a king? What about his great size? The expositional gap is only temporary, however, and is now closed by the description of the use to which Samuel puts Saul's size.

The narrator directs the reader's attention to this closure of the gap, the answer to those previously unanswerable questions, by means of repeating words from the verse that created the gap. Buber is an example of a reader sensitive to this use of Leitwörter: "Jetzt erst spricht Samuel das entscheidende Wort aus, dem das bachur ix2 präludierte, das aber seither, von dem disponierenden Stil des Erzählers aufgespart, auf sich hat warten lassen: bachar, erwählt hat JHWH den" (Buber 1956:145). The repetition is not limited to bḥr, however; also repeated are miššikmô wāmaʿelâ gabōahh mikkol-hāʿām, and with some variation, weʾên ʾîš mibbenê yiśrāʾēl ṭôb mimmennû. The reader is thus invited to renew his attempt to understand the significance of these descriptions using their second occurrence as a context.

Samuel commends Yahweh's choice to the people by pointing to his size.[32] Keil and Delitzsch unknowingly put their finger on the very important strategic reason for the choice of the giant Saul: "Such a figure as this was well adapted to commend him to the people as their king (cf. ch. x.24), since size and beauty were highly valued in rulers, as signs of manly strength" (1880:87; cf. Gressmann 1921:42).

Knowing Samuel's (and hence Yahweh's) deceptive inten-
tions, one of the reasons for the choice of Saul is
clearly that he would be an attractive choice from the
people's perspective. The people had requested a king
who could fight their battles, going out before them
to war (8:20). Who would seem better suited to this
task than the biggest man in the land? Samuel even
implies that Yahweh's choice was made in view of Saul's
incomparable size (kî ᵓên kāmōhû).[33]

That Yahweh had Saul's attractive size in mind
from the very start of his operation to subvert the
proposed monarchy is evident from 9:2, which now can
be seen to fit into the total maneuver. Reading
Samuel's speech in v. 24, the reader understands why
the narrator focused on Saul's size in 9:2; the size
of the giant is the bait that, when taken by the
people, will spring the trap of the nāgîd on the
unsuspecting victims.

The literary dynamics of this particular
example of a temporary gap may be summarized as fol-
lows: 1. A gap is created in the reader's under-
standing of the narrative by supplying him with a
detail, Saul's size, that seems important, but has
no immediate contextual significance; 2. Following

a lengthy plot development, the gap is closed by placing
the detail in a new context in which the importance of
its previous occurrence is explained by its second
contextual connection.

The author did not explain the significance of
Saul's size immediately on the first occurrence for
two important reasons: 1. The withholding of exposi-
tion creates reader interest and curiosity, thereby
making a more compelling tale; 2. On account of the
sense of mystery and unseen purposes which he seeks to
create in 9:1-14, the author could not afford to
explain that, in consideration of Saul's size, Yahweh
would choose him for a king. Such preliminary exposi-
tion would totally destroy the literary artistry of
both 9:1-4 and that now created by the delayed exposi-
tion in 10:24. As it is, when the reader watches as
Samuel presents the bait to Israel and recalls the
prior mention of Saul's size in the story of his path
to designation, he says "Of course, how clever!" By
allowing his reader to "discover" the explanation for
9:2, the author creates a more interesting, satisfying
reading experience.

I have suggested that the proceedings of vv.
17-27 are a trap set up to trick Israel into accepting

Saul, the nāgîd. In order to be successful, however,
the trap must have also teeth, that is, some means of
compelling Israel to abide by their acceptance, if
they should give it.

Throughout the narrative, the people have
been the model of covenantal fidelity. Even when they
have justifiable cause to reject Yahweh, they do so
only through existing covenantal channels, which is to
say, through Samuel and Yahweh. Playing on this char-
acteristic uprightness, Samuel engineers the proceed-
ings so that Israel commits itself to Saul before he
reveals the constitutional basis of the monarchy
(mišpaṭ hammᵉlukâ, v. 25). As noted above, Samuel
sets a serious, ceremonious tone for the proceedings
from the beginning (cf. above on v. 19). Using the
form of a prophetic judgement, he leads the people
to believe that their request is being acceded to.
Now, in v. 24, Samuel asks the people if they will
"appoint" (harᵉʾîtem) Yahweh's choice.[34] What Samuel
is hoping for is an official, binding agreement from
the people that they accept Saul.

The response is immediate. All the people
(kol-hāᶜām) send up a great shout (wayyārîᶜû). It is
important to note that at this point, before Samuel

lays down the new monarchic constitution, the acclama-
tion is unanimous and therefore binding on all Israel.

The acclamation of Saul has two separate vocal
parts, the "great shout," and the exclamation "Long
live the king!" (Mettinger's translation of $y^e\hat{hi}$
hammelek, 1976:132). According to Humbert, the
"great shout"

> était l'acclamation sauvage mais rituelle de
>
> Yahvé le roi et le guide (arche et taureau),
>
> le chef de guerre, celui qui révéla sa
>
> puissance à l'exode (1946:34).

The people's use of this means to voice their approval
of Saul as Israel's new leader is particularly appro-
priate, and reveals their conception of what is taking
place. Yahweh, their past king, their military
leader, the one who led them in the exodus, is replaced
by Saul as the one acclaimed by the great shout.
Everything symbolized by the expression in the past is
now transferred to the new, profane monarchy. Yahweh
had failed them before, even though they had greeted
the arrival of his ark with a "great shout" (4:5). The
acclamation of his replacement with the same sound
can, therefore, be taken as a communal recollection
of the reason for their installation of this new king.

Signficantly this is the first and last time that
Israel acclaims a new king with this shout, normally
reserved to recognize Yahweh as king.

The second part of the acclamation, $y^e h\hat{i}$
hammelek, occurs six times in connection with the
investiture of a king (De Boer 1955:225; Mettinger
1976:132-33; Ringgren 1980:335-36). Though the exact
translation of this acclamation is disputed, it is
agreed that it is a recognition of the authority of
the new king and that those expressing it consent to
submit to the king's authority (De Boer 1955:231;
Mettinger 1976:135-36; Ringgren 1980:336).

The alert reader will see in Israel's first
response (the great shout) to Saul an example of
dramatic irony based both on the verb wayyāri^{c}û,
previously occurring in 4:5, and on the parallelism
of scene, character, and character expectations be-
tween the two occurrences.[35] In 4:5, the people send
up a great shout when they see the ark, expecting its
arrival to turn the battle in their favour. In fact,
the exact opposite takes place. Now in 10:24 the
people send up a similar shout expressing their
approval of the new king, who they think will lead
them as a profane nation into new conquests,

uncomplicated by the problems of theocratic political existence (8:19-20). As the reader knows, however, they are actually expressing their approval, not of a king to make them like all the nations, but of a nāgîd whose only real commission is over Yahweh's "inheritance" (10:1).[36]

Verse 25

The bait taken, the trap sprung, Samuel lays down the law concerning the new monarchy. Ben-Barak (1979) has presented a detailed comparison of v. 25 with two well-known tribal covenants: the covenant at Sinai (Exod 19-24), and the covenant at Shechem (Josh 24). On the basis of that comparison which need not be recited here, Ben-Barak concludes that v. 25 is also a description of the ceremonial formalization of a covenant (1979:32-33; cf. Stoebe 1973: 218, who cites Baltzer's work on Josh 24 and Exod 19ff.; Mettinger 1976:136). In view of the emphasis on acclamation and commitment in v. 24, Ben-Barak's judgement also appears sound from a contextual perspective. Samuel's actions in v. 25, therefore, bind the people to the king in a "covenant document" that is legally inescapable.[37] If the people continue in their law abiding ways, they will do so with Saul as

their king.

Besides the legal aspect of v. 25, there is
yet another revelatory side to Samuel's management of
the covenantal installation. Samuel describes the
"manner," "type," or "law" (constitution) of the
monarchy (mišpaṭ hamm^{e}lukâ) to the people. Various
suggestions have been made about the content of this
constitution: it is identical or related to the
mišpaṭ hammelek described in 8:11-18 (e.g. Smith 1899:
74; Budde 1902:72; Dhorme 1910:90); it is unrelated
to 8:11-18 which is not a constitution, but a critical
evaluation of the weaknesses of monarchy (e.g. Keil
and Delitzsch 1880:108; Birch 1976:51-52; Mettinger
1976:87-88; McCarter 1980:193-94); it is related to
the description in 8:11-18, but may (Stoebe 1973:218-
19) or does involve further considerations than the
purely negative valuations of 8:11-18 (Hertzberg 1964:
88; Langlamet 1970:187); it presupposes, or relates
to the law of the king in Deut 17:14-20 (Nowack 1902:
49; Talmon 1979:13).

There are four definite textual features that
can help to resolve this problem of identification.
Against the identification with 8:11-18 is the
people's differing reactions to each mišpāṭ. The

people find nothing objectionable in 8:11-18, insisting that they will have a king, no matter what he may do. In response to the mišpāṭ in v. 25, on the other hand, there are mixed feelings. Those "whose hearts God had touched" accept Saul, and so the conditions described in the mišpāṭ (v. 26). Other untouched persons—bᵉnê bᵉlîyaᶜal—, however, rejected Saul as a king that cannot benefit them (v. 27). In view of the fact that all the people (kol-hāᶜām, v. 24) accepted Saul before Samuel made known the mišpāṭ, one must conclude that it is the monarchic constitution and not Saul per se, that has upset these people. Thus the two mišpāṭim of 8:11-18 and 10:25 cannot be the same.

The second point to be taken into consideration is the treatment accorded to this new mišpāṭ, which is written in a covenant document and installed before Yahweh. As in the example of the great stone in Josh 24:26, the covenant document is placed in Yahweh's presence with the implication that he will watch over and guarantee the fulfillment of its stipulations and, if necessary, punishment for any infractions. "On déposerait ce document en présence de Yhwh, signe évident de la dépendance de la

monarchie nouvelle à l'égard du Dieu national" (Langla-
met 1970:198; cf. Weiser 1962:67; Thornton 1967:420;
Boecker 1969:56). In view of the people's intention
to sever the ties between "church and state" it is
altogether understandable that there should be a neg-
ative reaction to Samuel's news. The installation
before Yahweh also stands, therefore, against the
linkage of the mišpāṭîm of 10:25 and 8:11-18.

Regarding the third point, we can recall that
there was an important difference in ch. 8 between
what Yahweh said, "Declare the manner of the king
to them" (v. 9), and what Samuel did (8:11-18).
Instead of declaring the "manner of the king," Samuel
had tried to dissuade the people by describing, in
the worst light, "the custom of a king." Could
Samuel now be fulfilling Yahweh's command by unilat-
erally laying down this new constitution on the basis
of what he has learned in ch. 9? Certainly the two
passages would seem to agree with regard to the
question of whether or not Israel could have a monar-
chy not under the direct governance of the theocracy
and its agents. In 8:9, Yahweh commands Samuel to
take immediate regulative control over the implemen-
tation of the request, and in 10:25, Samuel places

the new monarchic constitution squarely before Yahweh, a clear indication of its theocratic subservience.

One seeming difficulty posed by the suggested connection is the difference in terminology. Yahweh had said "Declare to them the manner of the king" (wᵉhiggadtā lāhem mišpaṭ hammelek, 8:9), but here Samuel simply "tells" the people what the constitution is (wayᵉdabbēr ʾel-hāᶜām ʾēt mišpaṭ hammᵉlûkâ). As Boecker has noted from a somewhat different perspective, the solution to this problem is to pay close attention to the contextual frame of each occurrence (1969:52). In 8:9, Yahweh seeks both to still Samuel's fears about losing his position to the new king, and to tell him what action to take in response to the request. The words Yahweh uses are directly suited to that particular situation of immediate need. In 10:25, on the other hand, Samuel, no longer fearful for his position, is engaged in the public proclamation and installation of a monarchic constitution to go with the already accepted king. Though what he does is in essential accord with Yahweh's command, Samuel's public proclamation has a different rhetorical emphasis (cf. Boecker 1969:56).[38]

The fourth and conclusive indication of the
identity of this "monarchic constitution" is the
word m^{e}lûkâ. The reader will recall that this word
has occurred only once previously in 10:16. There
the narrator himself introduced the reader to this
word, which in context, could only be taken to refer
to the secret arrangements that Yahweh and Samuel had
made to install a theocratically subordinate designate
over Israel as king. That introduction to the mean-
ing and significance of the word provides the reader
with a ready understanding of the mišpaṭ hamm^{e}lûkâ
in v. 25, and of the mixed reactions resulting from
Samuel's announcement. The meaning of the word
established by 10:16 is also in accord with the instal-
lation of the constitution before Yahweh; it is,
after all, his creation.

The combined weight of these four considera-
tions is, in my opinion, sufficient to establish the
meaning of the mišpaṭ hamm^{e}lûkâ. It is "the monar-
chic constitution" that subordinates the monarchy to
the theocracy. It is installed before Yahweh as a
sign of his continuing political supremacy and as
a warning that he is the warden who will ensure that
Israel, the committed "signatory," lives up to this

new monarchic constitution.

According to McCarthy the final sentence of
v. 25 is comparable to Josh 24:28, a formal phrase of
dismissal counterpart to the call to assembly in Josh
24:1 (cf. 1 Sam 10:19) (1978:224). Samuel leaves no
room for protest at his deception. The people are
dismissed and explicitly told to go their separate
ways (ʾîš lᵉbêtô), perhaps to prevent insurgent assem-
blies from forming.

Verse 26

The first thing the reader is told after
Samuel dismisses the people is that "even" (gam) Saul
went to his home. The emphasis of gam is placed on
Saul's response because his action is the first action
of the inaugurated monarch—an obedient response to
the command of Samuel, the theocratic mediator. Saul
leads the way for his subjects with his exemplary
response to Samuel's command. His obedience is, of
course, a result of his conditioning and heart-chang-
ing (10:9) experiences in ch. 10.

Not surprisingly, as our narrator points out,
those who go along with Saul, thus expressing their
acceptance of him as king under the new constitution,[39]
are also persons whose hearts are touched by God. As

God changed Saul's heart in 10:9 to ensure Saul's
compliance so now he touches the heart of the army,
making them Saul's supporters.[40] Again God appears as
the divine enforcer of what Samuel has begun; Samuel
sends the people home separately to avoid rebellious
mobs, and God, who must have read Thomas Hobbes,[41]
provides the physical means of force to keep the monar-
chy in place. The future of the new monarchy is now
guaranteed by a constitution and the means to enforce
it.

Verse 27

Not all of the people are touched by God,
however, and those who are not openly question the
utility of Saul's monarchy. The request for a king
was motivated by the desire to avoid future military
disasters like that of ch. 4. Freed of theocratic
entanglements, the people could at least fight in
the confidence that they could depend on their king
(8:19-20). The new monarchy still situated within
the theocratic structure is, therefore, useless from
the perspective of the request. Truly King Saul can-
not deliver them from the theocracy.

It may seem odd that the narrator who has
been sympathetic to Israel's plight should now

characterize these dissenters as $b^e n\hat{e}$ $b^e l\hat{i}ya^c al$. This descriptive term has been used twice before in the narrative; once in Hannah's protest to Eli, who thinks she is drunk in the temple, not to take her for a bat-$b^e l\hat{i}y\bar{a}^c al$ (1:16), and once in a description of Eli's sons as $b^e n\hat{e}$ $b^e l\hat{i}ya^c al$ who do not know (yd^c) Yahweh (2:12). These two examples both relate to possible or actual cultic abuse (Otzen 1977:135-36). The usage in 10:27 seems, on the other hand, to be related to juridical abuses since these persons refuse to honour their expressed commitment to Saul as king (cf. Otzen 1977:134). In all three cases, the translation "renegade" captures the essential significance.

The narrator's critical evaluation of these renegades, however, should not be taken as an indication of a complete turnabout in his attitude towards the people and their case for a profane monarchy. Rather, the term $b^e n\hat{e}$ $b^e l\hat{i}ya^c al$ should be understood: 1. as an accurate, and therefore not completely condemnatory, description of someone transgressing against an existing statute;[42] 2. as an indication that the narrator places a high value on the virtue of honouring one's commitments, a trait that he has already revealed in his negative presentation of

Yahweh and positive presentation of the people; 3. as
an indication that the narrator believes that Yahweh's
concession of Saul is a necessary compromise in view
of the ultimate meaning and value of Israelite exis-
tence as the people of Yahweh. This last consideration,
which will predominate in ch. 12, is obviously at the
forefront of the narrator's evaluations of either
covenantal partner's action. When Yahweh disregarded
his commitment, the narrator sympathized with the
people. And now that Yahweh has made the conciliatory
gesture of a monarchy under the theocracy, which the
people have legally accepted, he tenders a criticism
of those individuals who cry foul play. Though they
have been duped, everyone acclaimed Saul (v. 24) so
that any subsequent rejection of him automatically
brands the protestors as "renegades."

A similar emphasis is also seen in the second
sentence of v. 27, "And they spurned him." Görg notes
that the verb $\underline{bzh}$ is sometime used when a "sacral
legal relationship" is contravened (1977:62-63). Saul,
it will be recalled, is Yahweh's anointed and so any
slight against him is also a slight against Yahweh.
The choice of the verb $\underline{bzh}$ also harks back to those
previous $\underline{b^e n\hat{e}}$ $\underline{b^e l\hat{i}ya^c al}$ who, Yahweh implies, are

despisers of Yahweh (b̄ozay, 2:30). In both cases, the offenders have broken a covenant with Yahweh; both their title and the verb describing their action point to this aspect of their behaviour.

The verse and the chapter are concluded with a description of Saul's personal reaction to these rebellious dissenters. The narrator introduces the change of focus by switching from the general covenantal implication of the dissent to the particular, individual event. The b^e^nê b^e^lîya^c^al express their disrespect by not bringing any "tribute" (minhâ) to the new king.[43] Saul's response is described as silence, "as being deaf."[44] This reaction, while not qualified by the narrator, can be judged by the reader as astonishment, or inexperienced inability to respond, or forbearance, or perhaps all of these. The reader must, however, wait for further events and narratorial comment before he can accurately gauge the performance and behaviour of the new king towards his subjects. From the perspective of narrative technique, then, Saul's silence opens a gap in characterization that may or may not be filled in the subsequent narrative.

11. 1 Samuel 11

Many readers of ch. 10 have noted that the final scene closes on a note of inconclusive uncertainty (e.g. Mettinger 1976:84-85; Veijola 1977:40). The doubts expressed by some of the people go unanswered by Saul himself with the result that the reader looks toward future scenes for a resolution of the question about Saul's monarchy (cf. Noth 1967:59;McCarthy 1973: 411; Crüsemann 1978:55-56).

Saul's public inauguration has been performed. The new constitution has been publicized and installed before Yahweh. And yet, as Wellhausen says, "Dann geht man nach Hause und alles bleibt beim Alten" (1899:241). The conditional monarchy may have been installed, but there is, as yet, no indication of any accord between Yahweh and his people. The imbalance created in the relationship between Yahweh and Israel by the latter's request for a king to make them like the other nations has obviously not been corrected by the installation of a monarchy whose constitution is dictated by the theocratic representative.

The reader will recall that in the previous Mizpah meeting (ch. 7), which consisted of a ceremony in which Israel tried to bridge the gap between itself

and Yahweh, the reunification of the two partners was
sealed in a battle against a common enemy, the Phili-
stines. When Israel saw Yahweh once again fighting on
its behalf, it became clear that Yahweh had accepted
the contrite plea for renewed relationship. As the
reader will soon discover, the new scene, about to
unfold in ch. 11, runs parallel to the battle scene
that followed the first Mizpah rapprochement. When
the Israelites see just how well their new king is
able to save them from an outside enemy, they will
unite in their acceptance of him, and hence in their
agreement to a renewed relationship with Yahweh. As
Israel remained unsure of Yahweh's acceptance of their
coniliatory offer (7:8) until Yahweh joined in the
battle on their side (7:10-14), so Yahweh (and the
reader) will not be sure of Israel's allegiance to
the new monarchy (Yahweh's conciliatory offer) until
Israel responds to the victory wrought by Yahweh (11:11;
cf. v. 13). It is a significant comment on the rela-
tionship between Israel and Yahweh that it should
depend so completely on the performance of Yahweh
(or his designate Saul) on the battlefield. Without
assured military victory, it seems, there could be no
ties between Israel and Yahweh.

Verse 1

The reader is made aware that he faces a new
scene by the introduction of a new character, Nahash,
and a new setting, the location at Jabesh-gilead.   The
new scene, as scholars have noted, opens without
explicit connection to prior events.   Even following
LXX one only gets a limited temporal connection that
can even be read as a connector to 9:1-10:16 (e.g.
Gressmann 1921:43; Hylander 1932:159).   The narrator
jumps from Saul's silence at Mizpah into the middle
of ongoing actions at Jabesh-gilead.   The sudden switch
reinforces the reader's sense of unfinished business·
in ch. 10.

Buber has correctly described the literary
dynamic of this abrupt opening:

Wie für den Anfang des 9., so möchte ich
auch für den Anfang des 11. Kapitels ein
erzählerisches, insbesondre dem Märchen
geläufiges und wohl aus ihm in die epische
Dichtung eingegangenes Stilmittel annehmen,
das man als Zeitverfügung bezeichnen kann:
bei Änderung der Szenerie greift der
Erzähler auf einen etwas früheren Zeitpunkt
zurück und führt von diesem her einen Vorgang

so durch, dass er die verlängerte Zeitlinie

des vorhergehenden Abschnitts im Moment

einer entscheidenden Begegnung kreuzt....

Hier kommt es vom Anliegen der Sage aus

darauf an, zu zeigen, wie der verhaltene

und verkannte Held im Augenblick, da die

situation ihn gewaltig anfordert, ausbricht

und sein Heldentum bewährt; (1956:150).

With respect to Saul's kingship, the reader is struck by the complete disregard paid to Saul in the description of the initial exchange between Israelites and Ammonites at Jabesh-gilead. Since all the people had acclaimed Saul (wayyāri^{c}û kol-hā^{c}ām, 10:24), the reader must take the Jabesh-gileadites' suggestion that they would like to become Ammonite vassals under an Ammonite covenant (cf. McCarter 1980:203) to imply that they have no trust in the new king, and no longer feel any allegiance towards Yahweh and their covenant with him (cf. Gutbrod 1956:79-80). A king had been requested that would make Israel "like all the nations" (8:5, 20). When a king was set over Yahweh's "inheritance" (10:1) to maintain Israel's identity as Yahweh's "people" (9:16) and the Jabesh-gileadites were faced with the Ammonite threat, they decided that it .

was better to subjugate themselves to "the nations" in a covenant, than to risk a reliance on the bruised reed of a theocratically subordinate monarchy.

It seems that the Jabesh-gileadites have forgotten neither the request for a profane king, nor the reason for it, namely the great defeat at the hands of the Philistines (ch. 4). That previous defeat is recalled here by the repetition of the verb ḥnh in v. 1, last used in 4:1 to describe the Philistine encampment. Should this Leitwort connection seem rather slim, one might note that this is also the first time that Israel or a group of Israelites has faced an enemy encampment since ch. 4. The first sight of an enemy encampment and Israel would rather surrender than fight. The Jabesh-gileadites, at least, do not seem to regard Saul's monarchy as a suitable solution to the problem of enemy encampments.

Verse 2

Nahash's reply to the plea for a peaceful surrender is also used to indicate the weakness of Israel without an accepted leader. His terms—all the right eyes of the Jabesh-gileadites—are intended to show Nahash's contempt for the weak enemy who give up

without a fight. Nahash's suggestion that this dis-
figurement of the Jabesh-gileadites would be a reproach
to all Israel is based upon the obvious lack of a
national defence program in Israel. When a city within
a nation is willing to gouge out its eyes in surrender
rather than to fight in expectation of support from its
country, the disfigurement would indeed be a reproach
on the whole country.[1] It would also seem to indicate
a complete lack of political authority and allegiance
in the country where such a thing would even be con-
ceivable.

Verse 3

The portrait of Israel's complete disarray as
a political entity is completed in v. 3. The elders
beg (<u>herep lānû</u>) for a seven-day period of grace in
which they will send messengers to every corner of
Israel in search of a deliverer (<u>môsîᶜa</u>).[2] It seems
that the Jabesh-gileadites would disagree with Samuel's
statement that Yahweh is their deliverer (<u>môsîᶜa</u>, 10:19)
and by not turning directly to their new king would
implicitly agree with those "renegades" (<u>bᵉnê bᵉlîyaᶜal</u>)
who questioned Saul's ability to deliver them (<u>mah-</u>
<u>-yōšîᶜēnû</u>, 10:27; cf. Buber 1956:149). At least for
these Israelites neither the theocracy nor its agents

is worth considering as a source of deliverance.

Instead, they look for help from their fellow Israelites, "in every corner of Israel." This attitude is underlined by the Jabesh-gileadites' complete willingness to surrender should they not find a deliverer within Israel. Divine help is neither expected, nor solicited. In view of Israel's covenant with Yahweh, in which divine protection (as Samuel has just recalled, 10:17-19) was the underlying presupposition of the relationship, the behaviour of these Israelites is remarkable to say the least. If anything, Yahweh's concession of a limited monarchy has worsened the state of affairs. Only once before had Israel looked for a human leader to deliver them from an enemy instead of looking to Yahweh (Judg 10:17-18) and that was because Yahweh himself had told them that he would not deliver them anymore (Judg 10:11-14).[3] Even after the terrible defeat of ch. 4, Israel was still willing to rely on Yahweh's saving action to deliver them from a renewed Philistine threat (7:8), though it is only fair to point out that the exigency of that situation was a great stimulus to their renewed faith. In 1 Sam 11, on the other hand, Israel disregards Yahweh's help totally on its own initiative. The people act as if

their covenant with Yahweh no longer existed.

Verse 4

Immediately following the plea to the Ammonites the narrator describes the travels of the messengers, leading the reader to assume that Nahash did grant the seven-day reprieve (cf. Gressmann 1921:44). Nahash's agreement is a further indication of what dire straits Israelite defence was in. "Er will nur mit ihnen spielen wie die Katze mit der Maus" (Schulz 1919:160; cf. Budde 1902:74).

The description of the messengers' journey is limited to the one stopping place which is of any importance in the narrator's eyes, namely Gibeah of Saul.[4] The town in this visit, Gibeah, is called gib^c at šā^ʾûl, not because the narrator wishes his reader to think that Saul now owns the town, but in order to jog the reader's memory that Saul had gone home to Gibeah after the inauguration (cf. 10:26). The messengers are thus shown to have pursued their search for a môšî^c a and to have arrived in Gibeah of Saul, a man whom Yahweh had said would deliver (w^e hôšî^c a, 9:16) Israel, but a king whose ability to deliver was doubted by some Israelites.

As Budde notes, the single destination of the

search suggests that the messengers have come to Gibeah
to get Saul, who is known to Israel and reader alike as
king (1902:74). Perhaps, the reader is led to conjec-
ture, the messengers, unable to find a deliverer, have
finally decided to give Saul a try. Is Saul finally
going to be giving a chance to prove himself to the
people? The narrator excites these and other specula-
tions in his reader with the description that the
messengers went to Gibeah of Saul, but he does so only
to build up the reader's expectations and then demolish
them with the realities of the situation.

The messengers relate their mission to the
people. Instead of running to tell the news to Saul,
who has purposefully been left-off stage so that the
people can call for him if they want him, the towns-
people begin helplessly weeping and wailing. Even the
inhabitants of Saul's own home town do not seem to
consider Saul, their elected king, as a possible
deliverer. Neither do they make the obvious move and
turn to Yahweh for help for their countrymen. Saul's
neighbours thus share the Jabesh-gileadites' mistrust
of Yahweh, and, along with the Jabesh-gileadites, they
seem to agree with the doubts of the "renegades"
(b^{e}nê b^{e}lîya^{c}al) about the ability of Saul's monarchy

to serve as Israel's delivering agency.

Verse 5

While his subjects are lamenting the fate of
the Jabesh-gileadites Saul appears, coming up from the
field behind the oxen. The reader may recall a pre-
vious incident where Saul was following some animals
(9:3-14) and ended up being anointed as Yahweh's desig-
nate. Could the narrator be hinting at something
that lies in Saul's future by putting him in a similar
position here?

As Miller points out (1974:165-67), scholars
have often used the description of Saul engaged in
agricultural pursuits to separate this scene from
10:17-27, where Saul is the acclaimed king with the
army at his side (e.g. Beyerlin 1961:188-89; Soggin
1967:41-42). Two explanations of Saul's agricultural
activity are possible, both of them allowing the
reader to understand ch. 11 as an important and logical
sequel to 10:17-27. First, it is not entirely implaus-
ible that a king should also go out and plough his own
fields in a small, disjointed kingdom like Israel.
(Smith cites Poole who gives classical parallels, 1899:
78.) Secondly, and more important, the reader has
already been presented with two examples of groups of

people who seem to have rejected any notion that either Yahweh or Saul can deliver Israel from the enemy. Perhaps Saul does not act like a king because he is not recognized as one, even when his help is desperately needed. In a situation where a new king—the first ever in the nation's history—is not recognized by his subjects, what else can he do but tend to his regular daily affairs? If the lack of recognition for the king is openly displayed even in his home town, how much more so would it be in the distant areas of the country. Without even the recognition of being used as a king when his help is needed, Saul is, for the moment, a king without a kingdom.

The description of Saul's agricultural activity after his inauguration completes the picture of the stalemate in Israel's struggle for constitutional reform. Yahweh may have foisted his own designate upon Israel as their king, but they seem to have countered by refusing to recognize Saul. No one even takes the time to tell Saul about the Ammonite threat so that he, like the worn out, old priest Eli (cf. 4:14), must ask to find out why the people are crying (Smith 1899: 78). The political negotiations are at an impasse. Yahweh has made his offer but Israel refuses to

recognize Saul, even though he was accepted by all.
Their refusal is apparently regarded as at least par-
tially justified by God and king, neither of whom
tries to force the people to recognize the new monar-
chy. The reader may surmise that the refusal of
recognition is justified by the devious methods used
to install the theocratically subordinate monarchy.

Verse 6

Into the stalemate rushes the spirit of God,
overpowering Saul, who immediately becomes enraged
over what he has just heard (cf. Smith 1899:78, the
spirit is "the efficient cause of wrath"). "It is
clear that in 11:6 the possession of the spirit
becomes the motivation for all that follows: hence,
the impetus is God's (Birch 1976:57). Saul's own
anger at the situation, which commentators have ob-
served to be separate from the onrush of the spirit
(e.g. Hertzberg 1964:93; Stoebe 1973:227), is now
stirred because the spirit has overpowered him; hence
he is no longer subject to normal human limitations
and is able to disregard and overcome the lack of
recognition from his subjects. He is angered by the
situation because he has just been given the means to
surmount it.

Much scholarly effort has been spent on the questions of the historicity and nature of Saul's inspiration by the spirit of God (see Beyerlin 1961; Mettinger 1976:234-38 for discussion and review). In the context of our narrative, however, the implications are fairly straightforward. Saul had experienced the onslaught of the spirit once before (10:10), and had been supplied with the explanation that it, amongst other things, indicated God's presence with him (10:7), empowering him to do whatever circumstance demanded. The reader may, therefore, regard this second rush of the spirit of God onto Saul as a necessary booster shot to stir him into action. By himself, Saul seems incapable of overcoming the people's resistance to his leadership (cf. Fritz 1976:357).

Verse 7

The timing is perfect. The spirit of God comes upon Saul exactly when he hears about the Jabesh-gileadites' need for a deliverer. Thus reminded of Samuel's instruction to do what comes to hand, Saul throws off his role as farmer and takes on the task of deliverer.[5] His first action, with which he signals the end of his farming activities, is to take the pair of oxen and cut them up. What a difference a bit

of spirit makes—instead of following the oxen around,
Saul now destroys them.

Saul commandeers the messengers who were to have
gone to every corner of Israel in search of a deliverer
and sends them on the same course (b^ekol-$g^eb\hat{u}l$ $yiśrā^{\prime}\bar{e}l$)
with pieces of the cut-up oxen. Saul's act is a direct
challenge to the people's refusal to recognize him.
The search for a deliverer is transformed by that
deliverer into a call to all Israel to follow Saul and
Samuel in the fight against the Ammonites. Saul's bold
transformation of the messengers' task carries its own
clear message with it. A deliverer, says Saul, has
been found.

As a not so subtle reinforcement of his call
to arms, Saul issues a threat, promising also to destroy
the oxen of anyone that did not come out in support of
himself and Samuel.[6] The threat that he would destroy
the oxen of anyone refusing to come out in support of
Saul and Samuel indicates that Saul will no longer
tolerate the passive resistance to his leadership. If
Israel will not willingly support him, he is now willing
to coerce their support for the sake of the threatened
Jabesh-gileadites.

As is often observed, there are similarities

between Saul's use of the pieces of oxen and the Levite's use of pieces of his concubine in Judg 19:29 (e.g. Smith 1899:78; Wallis 1952:57-61; McCarter 1980: 203). But the differences between the two incidents are even greater than the similarities (cf. Buber 1956:151; Stoebe 1973:227; Miller 1974:167-68). Saul sends his pieces of oxen out as a threat against anyone who would not come to fight under him; the Levite sends his pieces of concubine out without any accompanying explanation, request, or command. In response to Saul's action, the fear of Yahweh falls on the people and they come out "as one man," but in response to the Levite's action the people independently suggest a conference and independently assemble "as one man" at Mizpah (Judg 20:1). The essential difference is that Saul seems to have the authority to command an action on the part of the people, whereas the Levite only tries to stir up a public reaction, which is initially a reaction to his own abuse of the concubine's corpse (Judg 19:30).

Why do the people, who have so far ignored Saul's kingship, now choose to obey him? Before seeking a specific answer one should note that this is, the first explicit command that the new king has issued; so, in fact, this is the first actual trial of Israel's

recognition of Saul's authority. Against those who
assert that 11:1-11 does not presuppose either Saul's
designation (9:1-10:16) or acclamation (10:17-27),
Miller suggests that Saul's threat "is not the sort of
threat that an unknown farm boy is likely to have made,
or that the people would likely have taken seriously—
unless they were aware that he had some authority or
ability to back it up" (1974:167-68). Miller pinpoints
the source of Saul's authority in the army, which, as
the reader knows from 10:26, was God's inauguration
present to Saul (1974:168).

The reader of v. 7, though he may share Miller's
surmise, is given a more explicit reason for the
people's obedience. Saul makes the threat, yet inter-
vening between the threat and the positive response is
the narrator's own explanation—"And the fear of Yahweh
fell upon the people" (cf. Zimmerli 1978:87). Saul's
prime source of authority, then, is Yahweh himself (cf.
Birch 1976:57). As Yahweh's chosen king, Saul must be
obeyed. Disobedience of Saul is disobedience of Yahweh
and the people are well aware that he is able to enact
punishments far more serious than Saul's threat of
chopped-up oxen.[7]

With the events of v. 7, then, the stalemate

between the theocrats and the people is over, even if

the recognition accorded to Saul's leadership is forced.

For the moment that is all that is required since it

will give Saul, Samuel and Yahweh the chance to prove

the advantages of acceptance of and cooperation with

the new monarchy.

Verse 8

The narrator apprises his reader of the response

in numerical terms.[8] However the reader understands

the meaning of ᵓelep, "thousand," he is predisposed by

v. 7 to understand the numbers as a favourable response

to Saul's call. If the response to the call was as

unified as v. 7 suggests—"they came out like one man"—

then the numbers that are given should be taken to

support that description (cf. Shulz 1919:162).

The separate assessment of participants from

Israel and from Judah foreshadows the eventual split

between the two regions (Keil and Delitzsch 1880:112).

By describing the rally in these terms the narrator

includes a veiled irony in his story of Israel's first

king, for though the king is able to unit all

Israelites "as one man," the reader is reminded by the

names Israel and Judah that a subsequent king will

also be a cause of division amongst the people.

Verse 9

The messengers that came (habbā'îm) from Jabesh-
gilead (cf. v. 4, wayyābō'û hammal'ākîm) are told to
tell the men of Jabesh-gilead that they will be rescued
the next day. In MT the verb 'mr is plural, indicating
that it is the assembled people (or a part thereof)
that, with or without Saul, predicts a rescue for the
Jabesh-gileadites. Though the majority of scholars
follow LXX in which the first verb is singular and
understood to have Saul as subject, there is no basis
other than interpretational preference for rejecting
MT. The reader of the Hebrew text must ask not
whether the verb is singular or plural, but why the
unidentified subjects of v. 9a predict a rescue.

At least three answers are possible. The
persons who make this promise may be army personnel,
the hearts of whom God had touched in 10:26. The
reader might understand them to express their faith
in their leader. Alternately, the anonymous authors
of the promise may be people who have changed their
minds about the efficacy of Saul since he now seems
to have a new appearance of authority and is obviously
taken seriously by all in attendance. In this case,
the reader is given to understand that Saul's

authoritative command to come out, in combination with the fear of God, is enough to gain the sympathy and support of a previously balky populace. Finally, the reader might also consider the possibility that the assembled people feel confident of their success on account of their perception of their own strength, Saul, Samuel and Yahweh aside. The anonymous subjects thus promise deliverance without any consideration or desire for divine aid in combat.[9] The simple inclusion of Saul in each of the aforementioned possibilities alters the reader's understanding of each, and multiplies the number of readings to a total of six. The reader is, therefore, forced to wait for subsequent events and perhaps narratorial exposition to know who made this statement and why they made it.

Though the narrator will not fill in the expositional gap created by the anonymity of the subjects in v. 9a, the gap causes the reader to consider and reflect upon the meaning of the assembly and the battle with respect to the people's perception and acceptance of Saul's designated monarchy. Whether the reader ever arrives at any certainty about who made this promise is relatively unimportant. As it turns out, however, the narrative will allow Saul a chance to

declare unambiguously who really assures deliverance ($t^e\check{s}u\hat{a}$) in Israel (11:13) and by that time the question of the people's allegiances will no longer be in doubt.

The ambiguity of v. 9 continues in the description of the Jabesh-gileadites' reaction to the promised deliverance. Do they rejoice because their fellow Israelites feel they have strength enough to save them or because King Saul now seems capable of acting as a deliverer in Israel? Only time will tell, and even then the reader will not be sure whether Saul was accepted before or only after the victory. By that time, however, the issue will have palled in the light of the reconciliation and resolutions of the victorious Israelites and their king. The ambiguity is important only as a technique to prod the reader into a consideration of the manifold possibilities and prospects of the narrated events with respect to the disputed kingship.

Verse 10

The Jabesh-gileadites inform the Ammonites that they will surrender the next day, implying that their messengers have not been successful in their quest for a deliverer. They "give the Ammonites tidings

intended to make them confident. The hidden double mean-
ing of the phrase 'tomorrow we will come out to you' is
thus an especially subtle touch, which the ancient
audience would have applauded loudly" (Hertzberg 1964:
93; cf. Keil and Delitzsch 1880:112).

Verse 11

The attentive reader will recall that just as
the preceding ceremonies at Mizpah (10:17-27) were
parallel to the prior Mizpah meeting (7:5-10), so this
battle account also has its counterpart in 7:10-12.
In the prior instance Yahweh had thrown the Philistines
into confusion so that they were defeated by Israel.
That victory was a sign to a conciliatory Israel that
Yahweh was once again with them.

When the reader compares this second battle
with the first, however, he notes a significant dif-
ference. Here Yahweh does not himself exert any overt
influence over the course of the battle. Nor does
Samuel, whose intervention by sacrifice and supplication
played a major role in the previous battle, take any
part in the battle itself. Instead, Saul stands alone
as commander of the Israelite forces. The campaign,
like that of ch. 7 (vv. 10-11), turns into a rout with
the Ammonites fleeing in total confusion, "disbanded

($w^e l\bar{o}{}^{\circ}$ niš$^{\circ a}$rû-b$\bar{a}$m š^{e}nayim y$\bar{a}$had) and dispersed (way^{e}hî hanniš$^{\circ}\bar{a}$rîm wayy$\bar{a}$puṣû)." This similarity in result only serves to emphasize even more, however, that the second post-Mizpah victory is achieved under Saul without any apparent interference from Yahweh. Saul has proved that he is indeed capable of delivering Israel (cf. Knierim 1968:32). Only Saul, the narrator, and the reader know that it was the spirit of God that stirred Saul into action in the first place. From the people's point of view, victory is aided only by their support.

Verse 12

Verses 12-14 are one of those places in the Bible where scholarship has blazed so many different pathways through the material that no "tree" or, in this case, word is left standing as a solid point to guide the biblical reader through the textual wilderness. A short list of difficulties that have been encountered by historical-critical readers is as follows:

1. The people in v. 12 want to kill those who have questioned that Saul should be king. Yet nowhere in ch. 11 has Saul acted as king

and even in 10:27, presuming momentarily
that I0:27 might be read before ch. 11,
nobody questions Saul's kingship, but
only his ability to "deliver" (e.g. See-
bass 1967:165 n.24, Bardtke 1968:298;
Stoebe 1973:222, 228; Ishida 1977:46-47).

2. Samuel appears out of nowhere in 11:12-14.
   He does not belong at all in ch. 11,
   presupposing the "obvious" excision of
   the gloss in 11:7 (Wildberger 1957:449;
   Fritz 1976:357).

3. A question is put to Samuel in v. 12, yet
   in v. 13 it is Saul who responds. The
   logic of the text requires that we
   follow LXX and read Samuel in place of
   Saul as the subject of v. 13 (e.g. Weiser
   1962:74 n.60; McCarter 1980:201). The
   shifting of subjects of vv. 12-14 may
   be the result of redactional disturbances
   in the narrative (Stoebe 1973:222, 228).

4. The request to kill some people who reject
   Saul's kingship in v. 12 makes sense
   only when 10:27 is presupposed (Weiser
   1962:73-77; Kegler 1977:82; Crüsemann

1978:56-57). Yet 11:12 seems to reflect
a personal rejection of Saul, while
10:27 questions the type of monarchy
established (Bardtke:1968:298; Crüsemann
1978:59).

Though the list could be extended considerably,
the relevance of these considerations for a synchronic
reading is limited, since in all cases the literary-
critical discussion of vv. 12-14 presupposes various
dissections and rearrangements of the material in chs.
8-10. Because it has proven possible to find coherence
in the preceding scenes, it seems plausible that vv.
12-14 may also be understood as integral elements of
a unitary literary context (cf. Buber 1957:153;
Miller 1974:166).

The first thing that the reader notices in
v. 12 is a definite shift in the attitude of the people
towards King Saul. In 10:27, some had expressed
serious misgivings about the chances of such a monarch
ever proving a capable deliverer. Subsequently in
11:1-5 the reader was presented a picture of widespread
lack of recognition for Saul's kingship. Even in the
face of danger, when a search was being made for a
deliverer (a role that we know from 10:27 to be a king's

recognized task), Saul was not even considered as a
possible choice, let alone as the obvious one. Follow-
ing the victory, however, it seems that the majority
of people (hā‛ām) have changed their views and wish
to publicly proclaim their allegiance to the crown.
These people therefore jump in at the first opportunity
—just after the last single Ammonite disappears over
the horizon in v. 11—to profess their new-found
allegiance; they do so by a clever rhetorical contrast
drawn between themselves, loyal defenders of the crown,
and those base individuals who had dared to question
Saul's kingship over them.[10] The new converts attempt
to hide their past disregard for King Saul behind
their accusing fingers, which are pointed at those who
dared to voice (hā᾿ōmēr) their misgivings about the
new monarchic constitution.

The rhetorical intent of the people's question
and request also explains the much questioned change
in the nature of the questions in 10:27 and 11:12.
In 10:27, the "renegades" (bᵉnê bᵉlîya‛al) had
questioned the efficacy of Saul's kingship when they
heard Samuel's constitutional declaration (10:25).
Now, however, the people rephrase the expression of
doubt so that it becomes more serious in its implied

rejection of King Saul. Rather than a question about efficacy, the question becomes a rejection of Saul's kingship, kingship already acclaimed and constitutionally supported (10:24-25).

In their desire to appear as loyal supporters the people have turned an expression of misgiving into an offense of treason, the outright rejection of the monarchy. The renegades (b^{e}nê b^{e}lîya^{c}al) had not, in fact, questioned the legitimacy of Saul's kingship, even though they had been duped. They questioned only the ability of a theocratically designated monarch to "deliver" what they had in mind. The psychology behind the people's reformulation of the question is at least as old as this example and still prevalent in similar situations today. The paradigmatic biblical example of this blame-shifting technique is, of course, found in Gen 3:11-13.

To make matters worse, at least from the reader's perspective, the people express their intention to slay these villains for their calumny against King Saul. The hypocrites will have scapegoats to absorb the punishment due to all for failing to treat Saul as the king acclaimed by all. The reprehensibility of the people's call for scapegoats is not alleviated by Knierim's observation that they base their call for the

death of the vocal opposition on the dictates of sacral
justice:

> After Saul had been chosen by the Yahweh lot
> out of the tribes, Samuel said: "Do you see
> him whom Yahweh has chosen?" and Saul received
> the acclamation, except for a few who despised
> him. After Saul's victory, however, it was
> proved by divine judgement that the despisers
> had not merely slandered Saul but also
> Yahweh's messiah, and with that Yahweh himself.
> This meant that the judgement of death had
> been revealed over them according to the
> understanding of sacral justice. Then the
> people, in asking Samuel for the execution
> of the judgement, do not turn to the avenger
> but to the representative of Yahweh and to the
> judge of Israel. The desire of the people
> has, therefore, nothing to do with vengeance
> and it is not 'petty.' It is a legitimate
> and necessary demand to executive judgement
> against the convicted slanderers of Yahweh
> (1968:33; cf. Birch 1976:61-62).

While Knierim's suggestion is probably correct,
especially since it is supported by the narrator's own

sacro-legal characterization of the dissenters as $b^e n\hat{e}$
$b^e l\hat{i}ya^c al$ (10:27),[11] the people's call for justice is

thereby no less hypocritical. The $b^e n\hat{e}$ $b^e l\hat{i}ya^c al$ may

even legally deserve the death penalty for what they _did_

say against Saul's kingship, but the fact remains that

the quotation of v. 12 is a fabrication that reveals

more about the people who utter it than it does about

the reaction of the dissenters to Samuel's constitution-

al proclamation.

Knierim's observation that the people bring

their sacral legal grievance to Samuel because he is

Yahweh's representative and Israel's judge is argument

enough against the frequent attempts to oust him from

v. 12. The reader will recall that Samuel had offi-

ciated over Saul's public installation. It is natural

that the newly confirmed adherents should address their

self-justifying incriminations to the human represen-

tative of the divine architect who designed Saul's

monarchy (cf. Weiser 1962:75).

Verse 13

It seems odd that in v. 13 Saul should answer

the question posed to Samuel in v. 12. Some commenta-

tors have followed LXX in v. 13, which reads "Samuel"

instead of Saul as subject of the first sentence, thus

resolving the incongruity (e.g. Weiser 1962:74 n.60;
McCarter 1980:201). Others have regarded LXX as a
harmonistic alteration to circumvent the incongruity
(e.g. Dhorme 1910:94; Stoebe 1973:222), all to the
greater glory of Samuel (Budde 1902:76).

If the people's utterance in v. 12 served to
characterize them is it possible that Saul's inter-
ruption is also used to characterize him? Birch has
observed one aspect of characterization in Saul's
interruptive response to the question posed to Samuel.
According to Birch, Saul's response is apodictic in
form, a legal pronouncement based upon Yahweh's deliv-
erance and not on Saul's personal magnanimity (1976:61).
Saul thus encroaches upon Samuel's territory in
sacral/legal judgements; "this small fragment of tradi-
tion serves to set up the later situation of Saul's
rejection precisely because of his lack of concern for
matters of sacral law" (Birch 1976:62). It would,
however, be a mistake to regard this brief passage as
a criticism of Saul. On the contrary, Saul's impetuos-
ity in v. 13 offers, if anything, a mitigation for
this and subsequent trespasses on Samuel's theocratic
province. The mitigation is supplied within the
answer that Saul gives to the request for summary

justice to be meted out to his own erstwhile detractors.

Saul orders the stay of execution but immediately justifies his command with a profession of his own.[12] Though Yahweh played no obvious part in the battle, Saul gives him all the credit for the victory. Saul implies that his own command over the Israelite forces is, in fact, the command of Yahweh. Saul witnesses to the fact that he is Yahweh's designate, that he had acted on the impulse of his inspiration, and so he testifies to his own belief that Yahweh was with him as he directed the Israelite army to a sound defeat of the Ammonites. Saul's impetuous interruption is, therefore, the result of his honesty and self-effacement. He wants everyone to know who really brought victory to Israel.[13] Saul's intrusion into Samuel's sphere of activity is excused by his enthusiasm and his open show of allegiance to his theocratic lord exactly at a time when it would have been easy for him to take personal credit for the victory. Saul passes his first test of power with flying colours. He recognizes and affirms his subordination to Yahweh and at the same time deals justly and sympathetically with his subjects, especially those who had previously criticized his kingship.

Still we would like to know why the fact that
Yahweh has given Israel a victory ($^c\bar{a}\acute{s}\hat{a}$-yhwh $t^e\check{s}\hat{u}^c\hat{a}$)
should be cause for amnesty for those who had maligned
Yahweh's chosen king. The answer lies in the sequence
of actions in narrative time. Yahweh chooses a king
who is accepted but then doubted by these vocal dis-
senters. Nevertheless, Yahweh delivers Israel, indicat-
ing that he has disregarded the slight against his
chosen king. And if Yahweh shows by Israel's deliver-
ance that he has not been offended by the criticisms
of the dissidents, then so much the more should Israel
and Saul let them pass. Saul emphasizes the fact that
Yahweh's positive action supercedes the criticism by
stressing the word "today" first in his justification.
"No one will die on this day (bayyôm hazzeh) [for former
offences] because today (hayyôm) Yahweh has given
deliverance in Israel." The fact of "deliverance" after
the offence is enough to suspend any call for punish-
ment.

Saul directs the attention of both his audience
and the reader to an important implication of their
victory. That Yahweh should disregard the detractors
of his chosen king and still press on to his goal of
getting his people to accept his designate is an

accurate measure of his priorities. While he could
have anticipated the people's call for the death
penalty, perhaps by arranging it so that the "renegades"
would be killed in the battle, a maneuver at which
Yahweh is accomplished (ch. 4), he does not. Instead
Yahweh continued his efforts to have Saul accepted,
installed and recognized as Israel's king. The matter
of the detractors is obviously of small importance
from Yahweh's perspective, in comparison to the great
gain of reconciliation if Saul would be welcomed by
the people. For this reason, says Saul, no one shall
die, for that would be contrary to Yahweh's wishes
as known from the deliverance that he has granted.[14]

Verse 14

Vannoy notes that there is near consensus that
v. 14 is the creation of a redactor who tried to har-
monize the crowning of Saul at Gilgal (11:15) with the
account of his inauguration at Mizpah (10:17-27) (1978:
114).[15] In all cases, the key to understanding the
harmonistic redactional intent of v. 14 is seen in
the verb "let us renew ($n^e h a d d \bar{e} \check{s}$) the monarchy." (To
Vannoy's survey of redactional analyses of v. 14 add
McKenzie 1962:8; Langlamet 1970:197 n.195; Miller
1974:172; Fritz 1976:356; Mettinger 1976:84; Veijola

1977:40; Mayes 1978:16.) Speaking of the relationship between 10:17-27 and 11:14-15, Hertzberg suggests that originally the action of 11:15 was no renewal, but a separate description of the first establishment of Saul's monarchy. "We are also able to see in the sequel that here an editorial hand has tried to represent things as a succession rather than a juxtaposition of accounts" (Hertzberg 1964:94).

Before surrendering v. 14 to the redactional scrap-heap, however, we should examine it carefully to see if it really is so out-of-sorts with its context. Is it possible that the monarchy <u>was</u> in need of renewal? The reader will recall that though all the people did acclaim Yahweh's choice in 10:24, there was vocal dissension after the publication of the monarchic constitution (10:27). In fact, only the army, whose hearts were manipulated by God, "went with Saul."[16] Subsequently it became apparent that the lack of recognition for Saul's kingship was widespread in Israel (11:1-5; cf. Buber 1956:155). Though Saul had been publicly acclaimed and a monarchic constitution had been proclaimed and installed before Yahweh, the monarchy had been dormant because it was not recognized by the people.

Following the victory over the Ammonites, however, the people act speedily to profess their uncompromising support of Saul as their king. "Das gespaltene, unentschlossene Volk realisiert aber die m^elukha zunächst nicht,—nicht durch das, wodurch allein sie vom ihm realisiert werden kann, durch Einheit des botmässigen Handelns, der Gefolgschaft" (Buber 1956: 155). Saul matches their zealous defence of his kingship with a proclamation that Yahweh has granted deliverance to Israel and so all former detractors are pardoned. Both sides of the monarchic dispute thus show themselves reconciled, forgiving, and ready to act together under the auspices of the new monarchic constitution.

Could anything be more appropriate than for Samuel, theocratic mediary and official installer of the conditional monarchy, to suggest that everyone now go together ($l^e k\hat{u}$ $w^e n\bar{e}l^e k\hat{a}$, $\hat{u}n^e hadd\bar{e}\check{s}$) and renew the monarchy (cf. Levine 1974:28-29)? As Buber observes, Samuel's name has now appeared three times in connection with the word $m^e l\hat{u}k\hat{a}$ (10:16, 25; 11:14). Samuel "erscheint zuerst als der Mittler des Sakraments, das die m^elukha begründet, sodann als der Überbringer der Verfassung, durch die sie normiert wird, nun

erscheint er als der Initiator des noch ausstehenden reinen und feierlichen Vollzugs" (Buber 1956:156). The "kingdom" ($m^e l\hat{u}k\hat{a}$) that Yahweh establishes for Israel was secretly planned (10:16), perpetrated (10:25) but unaccepted (10:27-11:5), and finally accepted and supported by all (11:14-15).

Not only is a renewal of the monarchy possible in the context of chs. 10-11, but it is absolutely necessary as an opportunity for the people to affirm their acceptance of and allegiance to the monarchy offered to them by Yahweh (cf. Vannoy 1978:66). The renewal will mark the beginning of a new period in Israelite political history in which the people are willingly governed by a king given to them by Yahweh on the express condition that the theocracy remains, with the king ruling only as Yahweh's designate. The renewal gives the people the chance to say yes to this condition with an unambiguous and unanimous affirmation, not previously given.

The choice of Gilgal as the place to renew the monarchy is apt, since the renewal of the monarchy is also a renewal of allegiance to Yahweh, the divine architect and master of this monarchy. Forever linked with Gilgal was the memory of Yahweh's foundational

acts of deliverance on Israel's behalf (Josh 4:19-24).
Gilgal was the place of the twelve stones, set up as
a permanent reminder of the exodus and the crossing
of the Red Sea, "so that all the people of the earth
may know that the hand of the Lord is mighty; that you
may fear the Lord your God forever" (Josh 4:24, RSV).
A renewed allegiance to the monarchy at Gilgal is a
fitting conclusion to the introduction of a monarchy
into the theocracy. The combination of a memorial
location and renewed allegiance to the conditional
monarchy signals the end to any aspirations of
becoming "like all the nations" with a leader other
than Yahweh.[17]

Verse 15

In response to Samuel's suggestion all the
people, together again (cf. 10:24, the last explicit
description of their unity), go to Gilgal (cf. Buber
1956:154, "die elementar als Einheit ergriffene und
als einheit handelnde Schar"). The victory, their
perception of the possibilities in Saul's kingship,
and Samuel's suggestion to renew the monarchy have
together brought about a reunification of the people.

As many readers have observed, there is a
pronounced emphasis on the fact that the people alone

make Saul king (wayyamlikû šām et-šā ûl) (Wildberger
1957:449; Alt 1967:254; Speiser 1971:284; Birch 1976:
60; Fritz 1976:357). This emphasis is cited to support
the argument that v. 15 and indeed all of ch. 11 repre-
sents a separate account in which Saul is made king
solely on the initiative of the people (e.g. Birch
1976:60). As Birch is well aware, however, under the
influence of 11:14, which suggests renewal, the people's
action serves only to express their support of the king
already designated and chosen by Yahweh. In v. 15,
also, there is an emphasis on the act as confirmation.
Five times Gilgal is mentioned (thrice as šām) to stress
the importance of the site where the new monarch was
finallly accepted by the people. The act of making
Saul king takes place "before Yahweh," indicating that
it is under Yahweh's sanction and in agreement with the
monarchic constitution previously installed "before
Yahweh" (10:25).[18]

The emphasis on renewal and reconciliation in
response to the previous dissatisfaction with Saul's
monarchy (10:27-11:5) is also seen in the description
of sacrificial activity. In contrast to the "renegades"
who refused to bring the new king a minḥâ, "tribute"
(10:27), the people now sacrifice šᵉlāmîm, "offerings

of well being," before Yahweh.[19]   In the contrast with
the situation in 10:27, in the type of sacrifice, and
in the locations "there," (Gilgal) and "before Yahweh,"
there is strong emphasis on the complete resolution of
political conflict between Yahweh and Israel, recon-
ciled as they are by the new monarchy.

In view of the atmosphere of reconciliation
created by vv. 12-15, it seems probable that the empha-
sis on the people alone making Saul king or, with
Mettinger (1976:86), "calling him king" in v. 15 should
be understood not as an indication of an alternate con-
ception of the inauguration of Israel's monarchy, but
as the proper and necessary response to Yahweh's con-
ciliator gesture of giving Israel victory through Saul.
It is important for the future state of relations
between God, king and people that the people do act alone
in this renewal. They thereby give their uncompromised
seal of approval to the monarchy of Saul, and so they
eliminate the shadow of doubt which hung over the prior
inauguration on account of the deceptive procedure em-
ployed by Samuel.

The final sentence of v. 15 is the narrator's
depiction of the peaceful conclusion to this stormy
period in Israel's political history. We see Saul and

<u>all</u> the men of Israel together and exceedingly happy about the conclusion that has been reached. The men of Israel are happy to have such a king, Saul is happy to be such a king, and Yahweh has installed the type of king that maintains the relative positions of himself and Israel: he as their God and they as his people.

The sequence of events initiated by the mis- behaviour of Samuel's sons has finally come to a conclusion. Not surprisingly, in view of the many instances of scenic parallelism already observed between chs. 2-7 and 8-11, the concluding resolution of conflicts in ch. 11 parallels the resolution of ch. 7. In both cases the series of events were initiated by the misdeeds of Israel's theocratic leaders, and in both cases the series concludes with a victory given to Israel by Yahweh through a theocratic agent. The only significant difference in the final analysis is that in the second resolution a division of labour has been instituted in the offices of mediator. Saul takes over the role of military leader and provides some insulation of national defence from the cultic sphere. Perhaps this division of labour explains why Israel is now satisfied with the arrangement, even though they obviously knew (10:27-11:5) that they have not gotten

what they asked for (8:5, 20). At least they will
never again be confronted by a disaster like that
brought upon them by the sins of the Elides.

12. <u>1 Samuel 12</u>

Verse 1

There is general acceptance of Noth's suggestion
(1967:5, 10, 47) that 1 Sam 12 is a programmatic outline
of prospects for the new monarchy seen against the
historical background of Israel's relationship with Yah-
weh (e.g. Boecker 1969:63-64; Miller 1974:161; Wolff
1975:88-89; Fritz 1976:360; Mettinger 1976:82; Veijola
1977:83; Mayes 1978:10 n.40). There is less unity con-
cerning the question of the relationship of ch. 12 to
1 Sam 1-11 or to chs. 8-11, or even to ch. 11. Veijola,
for example, argues, against Muilenburg (1959:364) and
Weiser (1962:82), that Gilgal (11:15) is not the locale
of ch. 12. The fact that a collector put the disparate
traditions and redactions of chs. 11-12 in their present
order with the understanding that oration of ch. 12
took place at Gilgal "beweist noch keineswegs Gilgal
als Haftpunkt von 1 Sam 12" (Veijola 1977:84 n.5). For
Veijola it is important that ch. 12 be viewed alone,
separate from its collected context, because he regards
the chapter as the redactional product of "DtrN," a
redaction in which geographic locales are characteristi-
cally absent (1977:84).

Considered from a literary perspective, 12:1 does

not seem to introduce a new scene; in fact, continuity predominates. Three of the four important scenic determinants link 12:1 with 11:15:

1. Topic - the inaugurated monarchy (Keil and Delitzsch 1880:115);

2. Characters - Samuel (11:14), all Israel, and Saul (the _melek_ of 12:1);

3. Time - no indication of any lapse between 11:15 and 12:1;

4. Place - no indication of any change of place (cf. Vannoy 1978:9).

A separate factor that argues for the inseparability of chs. 11 and 12 is the causal connection: Samuel's introductory words in 12:1 are a response to the proceedings described in 11:15.[1]

The contextual connection of v. 1 extends much further than 11:15; Samuel explicitly recalls the words of Yahweh in 8:7 (Budde 1902:77): $\check{s}^e ma^c\ b^e q\hat{o}l\ h\bar{a}^c\bar{a}m$ $l^e k\bar{o}l\ {}^{\ni}a\check{s}er\text{-}y\bar{o}{}^{\ni}m^e r\hat{u}\ {}^{\ni}eleyk\bar{a}$ (against Smith 1899:84). For Samuel at least the actions of 11:15 are the fulfillment of the request made in ch. 8. He has made them a king ($w\bar{a}{}^{\ni}aml\hat{i}k\ {}^{ca}l\hat{e}kem\ melek$) in accordance with Yahweh's final command ($w^e himlakt\bar{a}\ l\bar{a}hem\ melek$, 8:22) (Boecker 1969:65; Birch 1976:67; McCarter 1980:212).

Samuel's opening remarks imply that the conditional monarchy of Saul is "everything they asked for" ($l^e k\bar{o}l$ $^{\supset}a\check{s}er$-$^{\supset}a_{martem}$). They also remind the reader of Samuel's initial worries that the people were rejecting him (8:6), fears that were only allayed when Yahweh told him to "listen to the people, to everything they say" (8:7). Samuel's quotation of Yahweh's words at this point can be understood partly as an effort at self-assurance in the face of the now firmly established monarchy, which Samuel had previously regarded as a threat to his own office (cf. above on 8:6-7). Samuel quotes Yahweh as a reminder to himself that the request for a king was a direct threat against Yahweh's position, and not his own. Further on the reader will see that Samuel's own position with respect to the monarchy is of major concern to him. He takes care to ensure that his position is understood and accepted by the people (vv. 16-25).

Samuel's efforts at self-assurance are supplemented by his obvious effort to assert his continuing authority over Israel after the acceptance of King Saul. The first thing Samuel does after the renewal is to claim credit for the creation of the monarchy—"I made a king over you." As Dhorme observes, Samuel seems to

quote Yahweh (8:22) here, but makes one small alteration (1910:100). Yahweh said, "Make a king <u>for</u> them ($l\bar{a}hem$)," but Samuel says "I made a king <u>over</u> you ($^{ca}l\hat{e}kem$)." Emphasis falls on Israel's subordination to the king and on the authority of Samuel who places the king over them. Through this statement Samuel is characterized both by what he says and by what he changes when he quotes Yahweh (cf. Alter 1981:70, 97). Both quotations reveal that Samuel is a bit apprehensive about his own position as theocratic mediator, probably because the people now have their king.

Verse 2

A switch to a new concern, separate from the details of installing a king, is marked by the introductory particle $w^{ec}att\hat{a}$ (cf. Veijola 1977:92-93; Vannoy 1978:11 n.5).[2] Samuel points out that the path to monarchy has been followed to its conclusion, using the demonstrative particle <u>hinnēh</u> (cf. Labuschagne 1973:74): "And now, <u>take note</u>. The king walks before you. As for me, I am old and grey. My sons are with you and I have walked before you from my youth up to this very day."[3] Samuel states the result of the request for a king, touching noncommittally on the

immediate catalyst for the request in the state of affairs in his own family.

The presentational order of his recollections is a reversal of the actual order in which things happened. Reversing Samuel's order, we see that he retraces the steps by which the king seems to have preempted Samuel's place, walking before the people. Intervening between the king who now _walks_ before the people and Samuel who _has walked_ before them is Samuel's painful recollection of the request for a king. That Samuel appears to think that the king has replaced him, or at least encroached on his monopoly of walking before the people, is indicated by the emphatic juxtaposition of himself and the king as the past and present "walkers" (Langlamet 1978:289 n.12; Vannoy 1978:11; McCarter 1980:212-13).

As scholars have observed, v. 2 is not a simple recapitulation of the transition, especially as it pertains to Samuel's sons. Weiser goes so far as to suggest that the author of 12:2 seems neither to presuppose nor even to be aware of the sins of the sons as they are described in 8:3, (1962:80; cf. Veijola 1977: 95; Crüsemann 1978:61-62). In view of Samuel's concern over his own post-monarchic status (cf. vv. 1, 3-5), it

´is likely that the critically unaffiliated reader will see the neutral presentation of the sons in v. 2 as the biased opinion of a father trying to maintain family honour in the community.

Closer examination from this angle uncovers Samuel's defensive tactics. The reference to his sons is surrounded by two self-references, both begun with the words "as for me" (wa$^{\circ}$a$_{n\hat{1}}$) to contrast Samuel with the new king. Samuel tries to hide and protect his sons between the two predominant self-references; he points to his own behaviour as the explanation for the request.

What were Samuel's failings?—he is old and grey from a lifetime spent walking before the people. The way Samuel puts it the reasons for the request for a king are grudging and thankless. He sees everything in the light of his long career, which he knows is uncompromised (cf. vv. 3-5).

The sons, moreover, are "with the people," a phrase with which Samuel proposes a camaraderie between sons and people. The sons are even paired with the king by the parallel introductions of both by the particle hinnēh and the suggested associations of both with the people. Samuel includes his sons with the king

as joint heirs to his heritage. Obviously Samuel's
sons are the chink in his armor, so he is careful to
hide their failing behind his own merits. More than
the neutral mention of them in v. 2 he dares not make.

Verse 3

Samuel redirects his audiences' attention to
himself, again, with the third repetition of the
demonstrative particle, hin^{e}nî. He has recalled the
inauguration of the monarchy and touched lightly upon
the reasons advanced by the people for their request.
Samuel continues to present a revised recollection of
the causal conditions for a monarchy which has little
in common with the people's perspective as revealed
in ch. 8. In v. 3, he lays the groundwork for an under-
standing of the request for a king from his own per-
spective as Israel's incumbent theocratic mediator.
The people have had their say about Samuel and his
sons, and their request has been partially granted.
Now Samuel sets about the task of reframing the entire
sequence in what he regards as a proper perspective.

The people are called to testify before Yahweh
and his anointed against Samuel if he has committed any
of the crimes that he lists. Samuel's specification

that testimony be made also before Yahweh's anointed has
sometimes been considered a secondary expansion, large-
ly on the basis of grammatical considerations in v. 5
(e.g. Veijola 1977:94; Crüsemann 1978:63).[4] Samuel's
inclusion of the anointed accomplishes two things,
however, both important for his immediate purposes.

First, by suggesting that any legal testimony
be made before Yahweh and "his anointed" Samuel implies
that the law and legal practises of Israel still remain
a theocratic province, even when it is the theocratic
mediator that is being tried. Though they now have a
king; requested, we are reminded by v. 2, on account
of corrupt judges (cf. 8:3-5), he is by definition
"Yahweh's anointed" and not an alternative or separate
authority in Israel's law and legal practise (cf.
Gutbrod 1956:87). The new king has not altered the
judicial hierarchy in Israel, even though it had been
expected that a king would do so by judging Israel
"like all the nations" (8:5). The "anointed" stands
with Yahweh.

Secondly, Samuel confidently puts himself on
trial by the people before Yahweh and his anointed with
the expectation of being cleared of any charges he
makes against himself. Samuel recruits the new king

as a witness to his own innocence. The king, requested
to replace Samuel, becomes a witness to the fact that
Samuel's replacement was uncalled for, and thus to
his own redundancy in Israel's legal system.

The injustices that Samuel denies having com-
mitted have sometimes been regarded as intentional
contrasts to both the manner of the king in 8:11-18
(Budde 1902:78; Schulz 1919:168; Boecker 1969:70;
Veijola 1977:95; Crüsemann 1978:64-65; Vannoy 1978:16)
and the provocative misdeeds of Samuel's sons (Boecker
1969:70; Crüsemann 1978:64-65; Vannoy 1978:12 n.12a).
Unlike his hypothetical king in 8:11-18, Samuel claims
that he has taken (lqh) no livestock and has not wronged
or abused anyone. Unlike his sons, Samuel has not
taken any bribes.[5] Samuel sets up the questions, all
relating to the abuse of power by a mediator, so that
his audience, if they grant that he has not done any
of these things, will be trapped in the implication
that nothing was wrong in the pre-monarchic offices of
theocratic mediation. The reader will note that
Samuel is very careful to avoid mentioning any of the
specific misdeeds of his sons, and that he does not
ask their opinion of his son's performance in office.

Verse 4

The people answer with a complete acquittal·
for Samuel·on all charges.·

Verse 5

Samuel capitalizes on his exoneration by
reversing the roles of Yahweh and his anointed; instead
of witnessing claims of injustice against Samuel, they
now stand as witnesses <u>against</u> the people (bākem) that
Samuel's hands are clean (lō² m^eṣā²tem b^eyādî m^e²ûmâ).
The ultimate aim of this public exoneration is not
immediately apparent, though the very fact that Samuel
enlists the support· of Yahweh and his anointed as
witnesses is reason enough for the reader to believe
that Samuel plans to develop some further action·or
claim (cf. Weiser 1962:84). Since it is Samuel's
activities as theocratic mediator that are cleared of
suspicion, it is a good bet that any further claims
will have direct bearing on the question of his partial
or complete replacement by the new king (cf. Keil and
Delitzsch 1880:116).·

The final sentence in v. 5 is problematic on·
account of the unidentified subject of the verb
<u>wayyō²mer</u>. Who says "Witness"? A common solution to
the problem is to follow versional readings in which the

verb is plural (e.g. Smith 1899:84-85; Stoebe 1973:232).
The subject is then understood as the people, who
express their assent to Samuel's legal claim with the
single word "Witness."

Whether one follows the plural of the versions,
or simply understands Israel as a unit to be subject
of the singular (so Keil and Delitzsch 1880:116; cf.
Vannoy 1978:18 n.23), the context seems to demand that
the subject be understood as the people, who agree to
Samuel's claim. In v. 3, Samuel calls for testimony
against himself; in v. 4, the people reply (third
person plural of ^{ɔ}mr without specified subject), clear-
ing Samuel; in v. 5a, Samuel replies (third person
singular of ^{ɔ}mr without specified subject) with a cita-
tion of witnesses; in v. 5b, the people reply (third
person singular of ^{ɔ}mr without specified subject) in
agreement; in v. 6, Samuel replies (third person singu-
lar of ^{ɔ}mr with specified subject, necessary for clari-
ty on account of the singular in v. 5b) with a comment
on the people's agreement. Both the alternating dia-
logue and the explicit subject of v. 6 suggest that the
unidentified subject of v. 5b is the people. The fact
that Samuel is specified as the new subject of ^{ɔ}mr in
v. 6 also suggests that the verb in v. 5b should be

left in the singular; if it were plural, there would be
no need to reidentify Samuel as the respondent, since
he is the subject of all third person singular utterances
in ch. 12 up to v. 5b.[6]

Verse 6

Inextricably linked to the difficulties in
v. 5 is Samuel's description of Yahweh in v. 6 (cf.
Buber 1956:157-58, who eliminates both vv. 5 and 6 as,
respectively, insertion and gloss on insertion).
Attempts to regularize the syntax of the verb have
either followed LXX and inserted $^c\bar{e}d$ before yhwh (e.g.
Thenius 1864:47), or inserted the pronounc $h\hat{u}^{\jmath}$ between
the words yhwh and $^{\jmath a}\check{s}er$ (e.g. Ehrlich 1910:207). The
syntactic difficulty of v. 6 can also be alleviated,
as Keil and Delitzsch suggest (1880:116), without
alteration on the basis of versions by careful atten-
tion to context.

Samuel's reidentification as the speaker in v.
6 avoids confusion on account of the last sentence in
v. 5. Samuel answers the people's response (wayyō$^{\jmath}$mer
$^c\bar{e}d$, v. 5) immediately, perhaps even intrusively so
that his first word, yhwh, follows immediately after
the word $^c\bar{e}d$, voiced by the people in v. 5. The
unidentified person or persons who say $^c\bar{e}d$ in response

to Samuel's call for witnesses are given an impromptu
definition of who it is that is called and accepted as
witness to Samuel's integrity.[7] As Ehrlich noted
against a correction on the basis of LXX, nothing has
dropped out of MT before the word yhwh (1910:207). "He
(they) said, 'Witness,'" and Samuel said to the people,
'(is) Yahweh...'."

Verse 6, then, does function, in part, as a
concluding answer to vv. 1-5.[8] Samuel reminds the
people that the witness to his integrity as mediator is
Yahweh. More specifically, he points out that his
divine witness is Yahweh, who "made" Moses and Aaron
and brought the fathers from the land of Egypt.

Samuel regards this biographical information
about Yahweh as important to Yahweh's status as witness
to his own integrity. (Scholars, on the other hand,
have regarded this information, especially the peculiar
note that Yahweh "established" ($^{c}\bar{a}\acute{s}\hat{a}$) Moses and Aaron,
as justifiable grounds for excising at least v. 6b as a
secondary intrusion; e.g. Buber 1956:157-58; Noth
1967:59 n.3; Boecker 1969:71; Stoebe 1973:237; Veijola
1977:94; McCarthy 1978:207, "a gloss as in v. 8?".)

Keil and Delitzsch suggest that the expression
"he made Moses and Aaron," means "to make a person what

he is to be" (1880:116; cf. Driver 1913:92). What
were Moses and Aaron? The answer, provided by the
allusion in the second biographical detail, is that
they were Israel's theocratic mediators throughout the
fundamental event of the exodus. The syntax of v. 6
parallels the making of Moses and Aaron with the
bringing of the fathers up from the land of Egypt:

$$\text{yhwh } {}^{\jmath a}\check{s}er \, {}^c\bar{a}\acute{s}\hat{a} \, {}^{\jmath}et\text{-}m\bar{o}\check{s}eh \, w^{e\jmath}et\text{-}{}^{\jmath}ah^ar\bar{o}n$$
$$wa^{\jmath a}\check{s}er \, he^{c e}l\hat{a} \, {}^{\jmath}et\text{-}{}^{\jmath a}b\bar{o}t\hat{e}kem...$$

The witness to Samuel's integrity is Yahweh, creator
of the offices of theocratic representatives in the
exodus and "maker" of Moses and Aaron, the archetypal
mediators. Samuel's credentials as an upright mediator
must, therefore, be immaculate, testified to by the
people, and witnessed by Yahweh.

Vannoy notes that the verb $^c\acute{s}h$ in the phrase,
"who made ($^c\acute{s}h$)...," must have been employed to bring
out a particular emphasis (1978:23 nn.39-40). He
observes that the same verb is used in v. 7 with
reference to the $ṣidq\hat{o}t$ yhwh, "Yahweh's acts of
justification."[9] $^c\acute{s}h$ also occurs in 11:13 with Yahweh
as subject: "Yahweh has made deliverance" ($^c\bar{a}\acute{s}\hat{a}$-yhwh

$t^e \check{s}u^c \bar{a}$). Placing all three occurrences together, it
seems that Samuel, following Saul's use of $^c \check{s}h$ in 11:13,
places Moses and Aaron in the same category as "deliver-
ance" and "acts of justification." All are things
"made" ($^c \check{s}h$) by Yahweh for Israel's benefit in a situa-
tion of need. The witness to Samuel's integrity as
mediator is the person who created that position for
Israel's benefit.

The political evolution traced by Samuel reveals
a surprising aspect of the succession of a king to a
position previously occupied by the theocratic mediator
alone. The people have moved to replace an officer,
whose office is ranked alongside Yahweh's deliverance
and saving deeds, with a king. Moreover, they have done
so while openly admitting the rectitude of Samuel. As
regards the specific situation in the mediatory office,
this grave development, which in Samuel's presentation
amounts to a rejection of Yahweh's unwarranted gracious-
ness, is made to appear unnecessary and inexplicable.
If the reader or Samuel's audience accepts Samuel's
claim, and his audience seems bound to do so by their
own testimony to his integrity,[10] the request for the
monarchy begins to appear less justifiable. The
obvious question of why Samuel should trouble himself to

persuade Israel that the request was not legitimate after the monarchy is already in place is answered later in ch. 12.

Just because v. 6 has been shown to function conclusively with respect to vv. 1-5 does not mean that it does not also serve as an introduction to vv. 7ff. Verse 6 introduces the topics of the arche-typal mediators Moses and Aaron and the exodus event with which these figures are associated. Boecker argues that the references to Moses and Aaron in v. 6 (and v. 8) are conspicuous and without contextual mooring (1969:71; cf. Veijola 1977:85). Standing against this view are Samuel's concern with the office of mediator in vv. 1-5 and the important bearing of v. 6 on that subject. In addition Samuel will continue to trace both the benefits and the lineage of mediators from the paradigmatic Moses and Aaron down to himself (vv. 6-11). To deny the connection of Moses and Aaron to Samuel's remarks on Yahweh and his beneficial media-tors one must ignore the syntactic parallels between the descriptions of Moses and Aaron (v. 8) and the other judges (vv. 10-12). Both form and content speak against the elimination of Moses and Aaron from Samuel's speech.

Samuel's brief recollection of the origins of
his office in v. 6 is a turning point where he shifts
from the vindication of his own performance in office
to a historical retrospect covering the entire line of
theocratic mediators. Having obtained a public
acknowledgement of his person integrity in office, he
moves on to defend the office itself.

He begins already in v. 6 with his recollection
of the exodus, Israel's birth story as a nation, and
the provision of mediators whose important role was
known by all Israelites (cf. Vannoy 1978:21). These
memories remind Samuel's audience of a time and place
when the mediator was of irreplaceable benefit to
Israel, as Yahweh worked through Moses and Aaron to
bring Israel up out of Egypt.

Verse 7

Samuel marks a complete shift to a new topic in
Israel's political affairs by repeating the introduc-
tory expression w$^{e c}$attâ, so employed at three places in
Samuel's presentation (vv. 2, 7, 16; cf. Muilenburg 1959:
361-63; 1968:171 n.2; Veijola 1977:92-93; Vannoy 1977:
11 n.5, 24-25). He proposes to review Yahweh's past
performance. Like the previous section introduced by

w^{ec}attấ (vv. 2-5 (6)), vv. 7-12 stand in relationship
to v. 1, which gives the basic datum to which all of
Samuel's reviews are related. In summary form the
relationship is:

    v. 1 Samuel said, "I have listened to every-
          thing you said and set a king over you:
    vv. 2-5 (6) "And now," as for Samuel's
          conduct.
    vv. (6) 7-12 "And now," as for Yahweh's
          conduct.

     In contrast to his own case, where Samuel called
on the people to testify against him before Yahweh and
his anointed (v. 3), Samuel expresses his desire to
dispute with Israel before Yahweh, all the acts of
justification that Yahweh has done for them and their
fathers.[11] Samuel is open about his bias concerning
Yahweh's irreproachability; he will not even entertain
the notion that Yahweh's past behaviour was ever detri-
mental to Israel's well-being.

     Once again the reader sees Samuel circumventing
the real reasons for Israel's request for a king. It
was not for his performance of any such acts of

deliverance that Israel requested a king to replace Yah-
weh; rather, it was on account of Yahweh's failure to
perform these covenantally ensured acts (cf. ch. 4).
Like his noncommittal reference to his sons in v. 2,
Samuel's rehearsal of Yahweh's saving deeds touches on
the matter of concern, but skirts the crucial issues.
Samuel's concern is formal vindication for himself and
for Yahweh, and not an impartial review of faults.

Verse 7 begins a section in ch. 12 generally
regarded to exhibit the influence of literary covenant
forms (e.g. Muilenburg 1959:360-65; Baltzer 1964:73-76;
Stoebe 1973:237; Birch 1976:68-70; McCarthy 1978:213-
21; Vannoy 1978; McCarter 1980:220-21). Scholars are
careful to point out, however, that the covenant form
is subordinate to Samuel's particular rhetorical pur-
poses. "...we do not have a covenant or a treaty docu-
ment but a speech by Samuel that shows the influence
of the covenant form" (Birch 1976:68). It will pay,
therefore, to devote attention to resemblances to
covenant formulas found in Samuel's presentation
without expecting to find a covenant or covenant renewal
as a result. The reader informed by a knowledge of a
fixed literary form for covenant renewal in the Bible
should be prepared to let Samuel's direction of the

proceedings override his own understanding of how such a ceremony should go.[12]

The covenantal nature of the business at hand is introduced by Samuel's call to assembly (w^{ec}attā̂ hityaṣṣ^{e}bû), an expression regarded by Muilenburg as a common feature of covenantal formulations (1959:361, 363, cf. Baltzer 1964:74 n.1; McCarthy 1978:207; Vannoy 1978:24-25). Samuel had last called such a formal assembly in 10:19 (w^{ec}attā̂ hityaṣṣ^{e}bû) when he installed Saul, initially under the guise of a replacement for Yahweh. The reassembly in 12:7 recalls the assembly of 10:19; at both gatherings Yahweh's history of beneficent acts on Israel's behalf is invoked as a demonstration of the senselessness of the request for a human king (cf. Boecker 1969:74).

Verse 8

Samuel commences his recitation of Yahweh's acts of justification with the exodus. In Samuel's presentation it is Israel, represented here by Jacob, that gets itself into trouble in Egypt. Yahweh is excluded from any involvement in the migration to Egypt. Samuel's interest lies in the series of interactions between Yahweh and Israel; he therefore

skips over any mention of the Egyptian oppression and moves directly from Israel's entrance into Egypt to Israel's cry to Yahweh for help. Samuel presents his audience with a singular focus on Israel's sole responsibility for its troubles in Egypt. The lack of reference to Egyptian oppression is more elegantly explained as a rhetorical feature than as a textual error (against Driver 1913:93), or an alternate tradition about the exodus.

Yahweh's immediate response to the fathers' cries for help is to send Moses and Aaron, his mediators, to their aid. It is Moses and Aaron—not Yahweh—who bring (wayyōṣiʾu) the fathers out of Egypt and settle them (wayyōsibum) in the land of Israel (literally "this place").. In this paradigmatic instance Yahweh accomplishes his justifying acts through the agency of his mediators; the only verb of which Yahweh is subject is wayyišlaḥ, "he sent Moses and Aaron."[13]

In the first instance Yahweh's justifying act is complex because it depends on the actions of the mediators Moses and Aaron for its success. The mediator is indispensible in the exodus; he is the specific means Yahweh chooses to accomplish the paradigmatic act of jusification.

Samuel brings the implications of Moses' and
Aaron's actions up-to-date with his description of the
place where the fathers of his audience were settled:
it is "this place" (bammāqôm hazzeh), the very place
where Samuel and the people stand and ponder the
apparent replacement of the last mediator by a king.[14]
Recalling that Samuel had claimed Yahweh, maker of
Moses and Aaron, as witness to his integrity as
mediator, and that it was Yahweh who sent Moses and
Aaron as mediators of the primary act of justification,
Samuel seems to suggest that the people are disrupting
the mechanism of Yahweh's justifying acts by replacing
Samuel. If the divinely appointed mediators, Moses
and Aaron, brought "your fathers" to "this place," why
replace their successor to whose untarnished record
you have just testified before Yahweh?

Verse 9

Samuel goes on to describe Israel's response to
Yahweh's first act of justification. Yahweh arranges
for his people to be brought out of Egypt and they
express their gratitude by forgetting him. In Samuel's
historical concatenation Israel is allowed only an
unequivocal thanklessness in response to Yahweh's

beneficence. According to McCarthy, "forgetting"
Yahweh is destructive of the relationship between
Israel and Yahweh (1978:219-20). Indeed, this side of
Israel's forgetfulness is highlighted by Samuel him-
self, who says, "They forgot Yahweh, their God...."
Samuel draws the contrast between Yahweh and Israel
with bold strokes that pay for unambiguous expression
with a lack of accuracy in representation. Yahweh
seeks to build a relationship between himself and
Israel and is, therefore, good; Israel's forgetfulness
is destructive of Yahweh's efforts and Israel is,
therefore, bad.

Yahweh's response to Israel's forgetfulness is
to "sell out" (wayyimkōr...b^{e}yad) Israel to its enemies
in warfare. Yahweh's action is a direct reflection of
their forgetfulness. They forget him so he abandons
them on the battlefield. Like Israel's first misfor-
tunes in Egypt, these difficulties are presented as
brought on by the people themselves. Though Yahweh is
now inextricably linked to all of Israel's experiences,
Samuel shows that adversity within the period of cove-
nantal relationship was the just and necessary result of
Israel's own failings. The point is important to
Samuel's presentation because it establishes a

historical precedent for an alternate interpretation of
Israel's disastrous defeat at the hands of the Phili-
stines. If Israel's military failings were previously
caused by Israel's own misbehaviour, why should the
recent case be understood any differently?

The brief list of enemies to whom Israel is
sold out does not correspond to the fuller enumeration
given in the book of Judges. Though McCarthy sees the
sequence of names as an example of the conservation of
a tradition by the deuteronomist(s) that did not agree
with his (their) own portrayal in Judges (1978:208-09;
cf. Stoebe 1973:237-38), it is possible to forego the
conjecture, following Smith; "The list of oppressors
here, 'Sisera, the Philistines, the king of Moab,' does
not pretend to follow the order of the Book of Judges"
(1899:86; cf. Vannoy 1978:36-37; McCarter 1980:215).
As in v. 8, Samuel takes obvious liberties with the
traditional stories both to make new points and to
direct his audience's attention to those new points.
Here he only alludes to the tales from the period of
judges because his concern is not to recite history or
tradition. Rather than diverting his audience's
attention onto irrelevant reveries or sad memories,
Samuel mentions only three representative examples. The

three examples serve as paradigmatic characterizations
of the whole period of the judges as a continual cycle
of Israelite forgetfulness met by Yahweh's remedial
response. Samuel's inclusion of the Philistines might
imply that even the defeat of ch. 4 should be inter-
preted as an example of this paradigmatic cycle.

Verse 10

Not surprisingly, given that we know that
Yahweh has delivered Israel to its enemies, Israel is
seen immediately after the battle description in a
position of complete helplessness (wayyillāḥ^{a}mû bām
wayyiz^{ca}qû ʾel-yhwh, vv. 9-10). The people are in
the same straits that their fathers found themselves
in in Egypt, and like their fathers, their only
recourse is to "cry to Yahweh" (vv. 8, 10). Suffering
alone turns Israel towards Yahweh. With admissions of
sin and apostasy the people promise renewed service to
Yahweh if he will deliver them from their enemies.

Samuel borrows both the language and the cycle
of forgetfulness and promise of renewed devotion from
the books of Deuteronomy and Judges (Birch 1976:70-71;
McCarthy 1978:208-09; Vannoy 1978:33-37; McCarter 1980:
214). The cycle in v. 10 is predicate to the allusion
to previous cycles in v. 9 and is, therefore, presented

as a summary of the pre-monarchic history of covenantal relations between Israel and Yahweh. That this cycle depicts the customary shape of relations is confirmed by v. 11, which describes a succession of emissaries sent by Yahweh to rescue Israel again and again from the destitution paradigmatically described in v. 10. Samuel emphasizes the respective roles of Yahweh and Israel in the pre-monarchic period: Israel was ever the back-slider, and Yahweh ever the forgiving and faithful benefactor (cf. Vannoy 1978:36-37).

Verse 11

As in the exodus (v. 8), Yahweh sent various individuals throughout Israel's premonarchic period to rescue Israel. The names of these emissaries, like the names of the adversaries in v. 9, are allusive. The names Jerubbaal and Samuel establish the chronological limits for the period in which these emissaries functioned. The middle names, Bedan and Jepthah, represent those mediators sent during this period to deliver Israel from its enemies; "...jedenfalls wollte Dtr hier auf alle 'Retter' - Gestalten der 'Richter' - Zeit hinweisen" (Noth 1967:59).[15]

Samuel's inclusion of his own name amongst

these agents of Yahweh's acts of justification, though
not in accord with the book of Judges, is in keeping
with the tendencies of his speech. He exculpates Yah-
weh of any failings that could justify the request for
a king and extols the human emissaries who are Yahweh's
agents. Samuel includes himself amongst those emis-
saries to indicate that "Yahweh had continued to pro-
vide for the national defense and leadership even
during his own lifetime—, in order to make his case
relevant to the current situation, and the request for
a king" (Vannoy 1978:37; cf. Hertzberg 1964:99). The
second thing Samuel's self-inclusion achieves is to
number his own actions on Israel's behalf among Yahweh's
acts of justification. As Keil and Delitzsch observe,
Samuel is justified to do so by his role in the events
of ch. 7 (1880:118). And, as Smith perceives, by
tracing the continuing acts of justification through
emissaries up to the contemporary moment, Samuel places
any defection from this divinely implemented system in
the same class with all other such defections (1899:86).

Verse 11 is the capstone of Samuel's historical
argument against the validity of the request for a
king. He has established a set of causal principles
underlying Israel's history and has traced their

operation into the contemporary scene. Since the people
have already exonerated his performance as mediator,
they are now set up for the great fall that Samuel has
prepared for them. By seeking to replace Yahweh or
Samuel, the people have in fact rejected the justifying
acts of Yahweh, a sin even worse than their predeces-
sors' continual forgetfulness.

The last two sentences of v. 11 stand together
in a relationship of cause and effect. Together they
offer a picture of Israel's security under Yahweh's
protection. Samuel signifies this security with the
word beṭaḥ, which evokes a sense of the complete peace
of mind Israel gained by Yahweh's victories over their
enemies. Because bṭḥ is only positively toned as a
description of human behaviour when Yahweh is its
object of inspiration, Samuel must say that Yahweh (the
implicit subject), rather than the emissaries, "deli-
vered" the people (wayyaṣṣēl ʾetkem).[16] Since he has
already established his claim for the importance of
the emissaries in the larger framework of the contin-
uing acts of justification, Samuel's shifting of
responsibility for the saving acts from the mediators
to Yahweh himself should be seen as a shift in focus,
from the beneficial acts and actors to the resulting

peace of mind given to Israel. Samuel ensures that no one will misunderstand the ambivalent word bṭḥ by making it clear that the secure feeling is a response to an act of God.

As Smith notes, the picture of peaceful external relations in v. 11 is similar to the situation with which ch. 7 concludes (1899:86; cf. Schulz 1919:170). Samuel paints this pastoral backdrop in anticipation of his next point, the senseless, unwarranted nature of the request for a king. That much of the final description of Israel's security is dependent on the thought and language of such passages as Deut 12:10; 25:19; and Josh 23:1 supports this reading of its rhetorical purpose as a contrastive backdrop. The attainment of such a state of peaceful security, courtesy of Yahweh, is the goal of Israelite existence; there is nothing more to be achieved.[17] Subsequently, Israel is expected to act in accordance with the wishes of Yahweh, who has fulfilled his covenantal commitment by giving them this secure refuge. Whether there is any truth in Samuel's recollections or not, if he has succeeded in convincing his audience, the last thing that could be expected is a response of insurrection or rebellion from Israel (cf. Gutbrod 1956:

89).

If Samuel's audience or the reader simply
accepts his presentation of the course of Israel's his-
tory up to the time of the request—and it is difficult
to do otherwise since the unintrusive narrator allows
Samuel to hold the floor—Samuel's evaluation of the
request for a king (v. 12) will seem indisputable.
Both Samuel's audience and the reader know, however,
that his memory is defective because he avoids any
mention of the disastrous events of chs. 2-6.

The narrator does not allow anyone in Samuel's
audience to object to Samuel's obvious bias. This
enforced silence within the narrative is a goad that
prods the reader to express his own objections to
Samuel's biased recollections. The reader has been
supplied with authoritative information that contra-
dicts Samuel's presentation (chs. 2-6). The silence
of the narrator and Samuel's audience only adds to
the reader's sense of a need for protest and his frus-
tration at the absence of it. Though he cannot actually
come to Israel's defence, the critical balance given
to the reader allows him to evaluate all of Samuel's
subsequent rules and regulations for the new political
structure from a more sheltered vantage than those in

Samuel's audience.

Verse 12

Nowhere is the discrepancy between Samuel's presentation and what actually happened (according to the narrator) more apparent than in v. 12. Though various suggestions about the compositional history of chs. 8-12 have been tendered to explain the differing reasons that are suggested for the request for a king, the most elegant is supplied within the narrative.[18]

The reader knows that the request for a king was made in view of the particular state of affairs in Samuel's family seen from the perspective of an Israel educated by the Elide affair. He has this information on the authority of the narrator (8:1-3) who has proven to be reliable throughout the narrative.[19] When Samuel contradicts the authoritative version of what brought on the request, the reader can only understand the discrepancy as a product of the character's personal opinions and involvement—as an attempt by the character to reinterpret the past, attributing the desire for a monarchy solely to Israel's inexplicable willfulness. Vannoy is a reader who comes to this very conclusion: "Samuel's statement in

1 Samuel 12:12 is thus compatible with chapters 8, 10, and 11, [see note 18 above] but more important is that it reveals his own analysis of the motivation behind the initial request of the elders for a king" (1978:39).

As Samuel presents the request, and in this he shares Yahweh's perspective (8:7-8), it seems to arise as one in the succession of Israelite defections from loyalty to Yahweh. According to Samuel, when the people saw Nahash advancing against them they said, "No, but a king shall be king over us," yet Yahweh was their king. Having just rehearsed the usual course of action when faced with an external threat—to cry to Yahweh— Samuel obviously regards Israel's "No" as a rejection of the theocratic framework for national defense, a framework that he has just shown to be historically proven.

In place of the cry to Yahweh for help, we find "No—but a king shall be king over us" (Boecker 1969: 76; Veijola 1977:96-97). As Samuel stages it, the request is a senseless act. Israel already had a king in Yahweh their God, who, as Samuel has just demonstrated, was not only capable of delivering Israel from any external army, but even of giving Israel a secure existence available from no other source (betah; cf.

above on v. 11). Samuel sees the request for a king, which he quotes from 8:19, as a rejection of Yahweh that is comprehensible only as the fruit of ingrained stubbornness and stupidity, the heritage of their fathers' sins (vv. 9-10).[20]

From the reader's perspective Samuel's recollection of the request reveals a loyal Yahwist who refuses to admit the validity of Israel's reasons for that request. Whether or not a reader entertains the possibility that the Ammonite threat also lies behind the request in ch. 8 (Vannoy 1978:38-39), Samuel has omitted its real justification, which lay in Yahweh's past behaviour (chs. 4-6) and the immediate danger threatened by the behaviour of Samuel's wayward sons. By avoiding the real reasons and occasion for the request, Samuel exposes his own sensitivity to it (cf. 8:6-7). The discrepancy between the request as described in ch. 8 and ch. 12 is a relatively simple matter of a disparity between the way it was, and the way a deeply involved character would like everyone to believe it was.

In spite of the reader's awareness that Samuel is hopelessly biased here (and elsewhere, e.g. 10:17-24), the failing is partially mitigated. Samuel's

evasive defense is the utterance of an old man who has spent all his life as a servant of God and people. Both his pride in a lifetime of flawless service and even his continued existence in the office of mediator were jeopardized by the request. Yet he himself had not done anything to deserve dismissal.

Samuel turns to the present result of the request, Israel's new king. Samuel introduces him first as "the king whom you have chosen," an expression he last used in 8:18 in his attempt to dissuade the people. There is no indication here that Samuel is suggesting that the king they have gotten is a despot. Rather, his emphasis lies solely on the fulfillment of the people's desire; they have gotten what they wanted. At least, that is what Samuel would like them to believe. Next he refers to the king as the one "whom you requested," implying, with this play on the name šā'ul and the verb šᵉ'eltem, that King Saul is in fact a king such as they had asked for. Samuel, a master at diplomatic rhetoric, opens his remarks on the behavioural requirements of monarchic Israel with two notes that emphasize that the people have gotten what they wanted.[21]

Finally, however, Samuel must turn to the task

of characterizing the new monarchy from the prescriptive
theocratic perspective. He signals the important shift
in perspective by introducing it with the particle
hinnēh (cf. Boecker 1969:77). "So now, Yahweh has
installed a king over you."

The combination of the verb ntn with the prepo-
sition ^{c}l stresses the hierarchy of the new arrange-
ment: Yahweh is over the king, by virtue of being the
one to install him, and the king is over "you," by
virtue of the manner of installation (^{c}l) (cf. McCarthy
1978:214). "...der zweite Satz dieser Königsproklama-
tion hat programmatisches Gewicht; er leitet sich ab
aus der unmittelbar vorausgehenden grunsätzlichen
Feststellung, dass Jahwe der König des Volkes ist (V.
12b), und umschliesst sowohl die von Gott verliehene
Autorität des Königs dem Volk gegenüber als auch seine
Verantwortung Gott gegenüber" (Weiser 1962:86).

With this description, the emphasis shifts
from the people's will regarding the king, to Yahweh's
Placing both aspects together, in balance, Samuel
presents a summary description of the forces that have
gone into the creation of an Israelite monarchy; it is
a manifestation of the people's will, which is then
actualized, with some reinterpretation, by Yahweh (cf.

Vannoy 1978:41 n.95).

Samuel's presentation begins to take on a
positive, exhortatory tone with the statement that
Yahweh installed the king. Yahweh's action appears to
have converted the people's idea of monarchy into
something that can be incorporated in the theocratic
structure. "...v. 13 marks the climax of the formula-
tion and it reverses the history of sin. The king is
no longer the sign of a great infidelity; he is
Yahweh's gift" (McCarthy 1974:102; cf. Muilenburg 1959:
363; Boecker 1969:77; Wolff 1975:88-89; Birch 1976:69).
As the request for a king was linked to the long
history of Israelite defections, so Yahweh's response
is to be understood as the most recent in a series of
gracious responses. Israel's defection is forgiven
and arrangements are made for the continuation of
relations between Yahweh and Israel.

Verse 14

Samuel proceeds to lay down the conditions
under which the new political organization will function.
McCarthy notes that the conditional protases of both
vv. 14 and 15 are typically deuteronomistic in concern
and formulation, excepting the use of "rebel" for a

future possibility (1978:209-10). All of the condi-
tions show that Israel remains firmly bound by the
same covenantal stipulations as before. The monarchy
has changed little if anything. In spite of the fact
that they now have a king, Yahweh continues to be the
only one to whom Israel owes its loyalty:

> With the institution of kingship the potential
> for divided loyalties of the people and conflict
> of interest between Yahweh and the human king
> is created. In this new situation Samuel
> challenges the people to renew their determina-
> tion to obey Yahweh, and not to rebel against
> his commandments, and thereby to demonstrate
> that they continue to recognize Yahweh as
> their sovereign (Vannoy 1978:44).

Though v. 14 in MT has often been regarded as
needing a conclusion in the form of some reward for
accepting the conditions (e.g. Smith 1899:87-88;
Ehrlich 1910:208; Driver 1913:94; Stoebe 1973:238;
McCarter 1980:211-12), the necessary apodosis is,
indeed, found in MT. Beginning with the words wih^{e}yitem,
a grammatically correct introduction to an apodosis
(Smith 1899:88), Samuel's audience is promised that
they and their king will follow Yahweh. Boecker has

shown that the expression hāyâ...ʾaḥar is a suitable
apodosis in v. 14 (1969:77-82). By fulfilling all the
conditions mentioned by Samuel, the people and their
king will be true followers of Yahweh. As the phrase
reveals in other contexts (2 Sam 2:10; 15:13; 1 Kgs 12:
20;16:21), to be a true follower of Yahweh means to
recognize him as king. "hāyâ ʾaḥar, to be after or
behind a person, is good Hebrew, and is frequently met
with, particularly in the sense of attaching one's
self to the king, or holding to him" (Keil and Delitzsch
1880:119; cf. Boecker 1969:80; McCarthy 1978:215-16;
Vannoy 1978:42-43).

Still, one might ask how Israel's and its king's
recognition of Yahweh as their supreme political head
would be a blessing to them. By recognizing Yahweh
as ultimate authority, Israel should be able to count
on Yahweh's help as promised in the covenant (Weiser
1962:86; Boecker 1969:81). "The implication...in terms
of the covenant conditional is that Israel and her king
can then continue to expect Yahweh's help in war and
enjoy the benefits of Yahweh's rule as described in
the blessings of the covenant (Deut 28:1ff.) which are
received as the concomitant of covenant loyalty to
Yahweh" (Vannoy 1978:44-45).[22]

Verse 15

Samuel's description of the alternative to
accepting his terms is obviously aimed at strengthen-
ing the theocratic hold on the people and their king.
Samuel characterizes the alternative as disobedience
to Yahweh, and rebellion against his commands. The
consequence of such lawlessness is that, "The hand of
Yahweh will be against you and against your 'fathers'
to destroy you."[23] If Israel and its king are not
willing to be subject to Yahweh, thereby reaping the
benefits of being his followers, then they will be
treated as an enemy. The same "hand of Yahweh" that
the reader has seen in devastating action against the
Philistine enemy will turn against monarchic Israel.

Many scholars have argued that vv. 14-15
constitute a re-presentation of the covenant blessing
and curse, indicating that Israel is being offered a
fresh beginning in its relationship with Yahweh (Muilen-
burg 1959:363; Weiser 1962:86-87; Boecker 1969:81-82;
Veijola 1977:87-88; Vannoy 1978:46-47). The choice
Samuel offers is clear-cut: Israel and their king can
either be for Yahweh or against him. The results of
each option are two sides of the same coin: obedience
allows unification with Yahweh and disobedience turns

him into their enemy (Boecker 1969:82; McCarthy 1978: 210).

Considered from the larger perspective of Israel's past relationship with Yahweh, the new conditions, paralleling as they do the blessing and curse portions of the covenant, indicate that the monarchy has changed nothing essential in Israel's political structure. Everything still depends on Yahweh's expressed desires for Israelite behaviour and on Israel's conformity with those stipulations. The king, originally requested as an instrument of political change, is publicly subsumed within the old order.[24]

Verse 16

A new stage in the proceedings is marked by Samuel's opening words in v. 16, gam-^{c}attâ, which link up with the previous usage of ^{c}attâ in v. 7. The emphatic particle gam also expresses Samuel's recognition that the formal call to assembly (hityaṣṣ^{e}bû) is made again here, even though it has already been made in v. 7 (cf. Ehrlich 1910:208; against Buber 1956:158, "das gam ^{c}atha von v. 16 ist vollends nichtssagend"). Both Muilenburg (1959:355, 363) and Harrelson (cited by Vannoy 1978:47 n.106) suggests that the verb ḥtyṣb

is used in such contexts as a formal expression. The emphasis lies not so much on the physical detail as on the psychological attitudes and religious meaning of the act of assembly.

The people are called to assemble and witness "this tremendous deed" which Yahweh is about to do before their very eyes. Vannoy has observed that there is a close phraseological resemblance between Samuel's introduction of this phenomenon and Moses' introduction to Yahweh's deliverance at the Reed Sea (1978:47-48). Samuel sets himself up as a Moses figure, leading Israel to a new or renewed experience of relationship with Yahweh. The formation of the relationship in Exodus and the reformation in vv. 16-25 are catalyzed by the experience of Yahweh's miraculous deeds. In Exodus the miracle of the Reed Sea is enough to make the Israelites fear Yahweh and believe in Yahweh and in Moses (wayyîrᵊʾû hāʿām ʾet-yhwh wayyaʾᵃmînû byhwh ûbᵉmōšeh ʿabdô (Exod 14:31). Likewise, the thunderstorm convinces Samuel's audience, whose quest for a king has already been compared to Israel's apostasy during and since the exodus (I Sam 8:8; 12:8-12; cf. 10:18-19),[25] that their request for a king was sinful, and they fear Yahweh and Samuel (wayyîrāʾ kol-hāʿām

$m^e\bar{o}d\ ^\partial et$-yhwh $w^e\partial et$-$\check{s}^e m\hat{u}^\partial \bar{e}l$ (v. 18).[26]

The opening phrases show Samuel operating in the role of mediator; once more in a position of dominance, he exhibits an attitude of assurance. Though he had begun his remarks with intimations that he would step down from his post in deference to the new king and perhaps to the younger generation (v. 2), Samuel's demonstration of power, both Yahweh's and his, if anything puts him back in the position of authority he last occupied by himself in ch. 7.

Structural Excursus

Both Buber (1956:158) and Seebass (1965:294-95) have perceived a connection between 12:16-25 and ch. 7 (cf. Press 1938:211-12; Hertzberg 1964:100). Seebass even argues that this section in ch. 12 is modeled on ch. 7 (1965:294-95; cf. Birch 1976:70, criticizing Seebass' proposal). Though the reader, and perhaps Samuel's audience, will not realize the full extent of the patterns of contact between the two scenes until Samuel completes his presentation, I shall anticipate that realization by summarizing the parallels beforehand in deference to conciseness of presentation.[27]

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ch. 7	ch. 12
Israel is exhorted to put away foreign gods and Ashtaroth, to direct its heart to Yahweh, and to serve him only; then he will deliver it from the Philistines (v. 3).	Israel is promised that if they will fear Yahweh and serve him, heed his voice and not rebel against his command, then Israel and its king will be behind Yahweh, and by implication, Yahweh will be before them (v. 14).
Samuel directs Israel to assemble (qbṣ) at Mizpah, where he will pray to Yahweh for them (v. 5).	Samuel says to assemble (htyṣb) to see the tremendous deed that Yahweh is about to perform for them. Though it is now harvest time, Samuel will call to Yahweh and he will send thunder and rain so that Israel will recognize and see the great evil that they have done in Yahweh's eyes, by asking for a king (vv. 16-17).
Israel gathers at Mizpah. They draw and pour out water before Yahweh, they fast on that day (bayyôm hahû') and confess their sin against Yahweh (v. 6).	Samuel calls to Yahweh and he sends thunder and rain on that day (bayyôm hahû') (v. 18).

Hearing that the Israelites have assembled at Mizpah, the Philistine leaders go up to Israel. Israel hears about it and fears (wayyir᾽û) the Philistines (v. 7).

The Israelites tell Samuel (wayyō᾽merû ᾽el-šemû᾽ēl), "Do not refuse to cry for us to Yahweh, our God (᾽elōhēnû), that he may deliver us from the Philistines" (v. 8).

Samuel takes a suckling lamb and offers it as an offering to Yahweh. Samuel cries to Yahweh on Israel's behalf, and Yahweh answers him. When the Philistines close for the attack, Yahweh thunders against them with a great voice. The Philistines are duly confused and then

As a result of Samuel's call and Yahweh's response, the people greatly fear (wayyîrā᾽) Yahweh and Samuel (v. 18).

The people tell Samuel (wayyō᾽merû ᾽el-šemû᾽ēl), "Pray on your servants behalf to Yahweh, your God (᾽elōheykā), that we might not be killed because we have added to all our sins the evil of asking for a king" (v. 19).

Samuel tells the people not to be afraid. Though they have done this evil, they should not turn away from Yahweh; they should serve him with all their heart. They should not turn aside after vain things, which are profitless and unable to rescue because they are vain. Yahweh will not abandon his people on account of his reputation

routed before Israel (vv. 9-10).

Yahweh has shown his willingness to be reunited with Israel, and continues to demonstrate it by giving Israel victory over some neighbours and peace with others. Samuel is established as judge over Israel for the rest of his days (vv. 12-17).

("great name") for it was Yahweh's pleasure to make them into a people for himself (vv. 20-22).

Yahweh will not abandon his people (v. 22) and Samuel promises that he shall not sin against Yahweh by ceasing to offer intercessory prayer on Israel's behalf (cf. 7:8); he will teach Israel to walk the straight and narrow (v. 23) and in vv. 24-25 he sets to that task.

In both cases the upshot of the proceedings is that Yahweh sits in firm possession and leadership over a penitent Israel guided by his watchful servant (Israel's intercessor) Samuel. The parallel proceedings support the view that the theocratic superstructure ultimately remains intact and is recognized as legitimate by Israel; the monarchy has not changed the basic political order at all.

The reader must, however, be careful to distinguish between Samuel's meanings and the narrator's

meanings. The narrator, who presents us with a third
person narration of Samuel's (and Yahweh's) grand
finale may shed a different light on Samuel's demon-
stration through the differences between his third per-
son perspective, and the infra-narrative perspectives
expressed by Samuel and the people.

As this narrator's readers we see Samuel's
demonstration of Yahweh's power (at his beck and call)
neither from the position of the Israelites, who are
frightened into confessions of sin, nor from Samuel's
(and probably Yahweh's) point of view, from which the
demonstration serves to evoke a proper and needful
response from Israel. Instead the reader is the aloof
onlooker, viewing things from the distance created by
the narrator's third person perspective. The reader's
viewpoint is undisturbed by the immediate turbulence
created by the thunderstorm. He easily recalls all
sides of the kingship issue, including the historical
causes as presented in the narrative. These powers
of recollection are afforded by the narrator's gift
of distance. The meaning of Samuel's demonstration is
different for the reader than it was for Samuel and
Israel.

Verse 17

Samuel sets up a demonstration that will prove two things. The demonstration will take the form of a miraculous phenomenon, a thunderstorm in the dry season when such a thing never occurred. According to G.A. Smith, in a chapter appropriately titled "The climate and fertility of the land, with their effects on its religion," "In May showers are very rare, and from then till October, not only is there no rain, but a cloud seldom passes over the sky, and a thunderstorm is a miracle" (1900:65).[28] Samuel tells his audience that this weird event, to be enacted at his signal, is intended to convince them that Yahweh viewed their <u>request</u> as very evil.[29]

The second purpose of the demonstration, unmentioned by Samuel but obvious to both his audience and the reader is that it proves the strength of Samuel's ties with Yahweh and the agreement between them concerning the monarchy (cf. McCarter 1980:216). If Samuel's relationship with Yahweh were weak, or if Yahweh did not regard the request as evil, he would not answer Samuel. Samuel shows a great deal of confidence in v. 17. He is so sure of himself and of Yahweh's opinions that he willingly stakes his

reputation on the success of the demonstration.

With respect to the parallel between v. 17 and 7:5, several consideration arise. Back in 7:5, Samuel had gathered a scattered Israel, which had experienced a loss of faith in Yahweh on account of his strangeness towards them. Samuel promised to pray for them with the unstated goal of bringing them back together with Yahweh. Now in v. 17, Samuel has called another assembly in which he will effect a communication between Yahweh and Israel, only this time it is a message from Yahweh to the people who had cast a vote of non-confidence against him and Samuel with their request for a king. Besides the difference in the direction of the communication, there is also a difference in tone: when Israel feels rejected by Yahweh it seeks reunification through intercessory prayer (at Samuel's suggestion), but when Yahweh feels (is) rejected by Israel he uses the heavy-handed, direct route of miraculous thunder and rain, which communicates displeasure and smells of coercion, especially against the backdrop of Israel's passive submission through Samuel's intercession.

This contrast is partly explained by the fact that reconciliation over the matter of kingship has already taken place (ch. 11). Yahweh has already given

in to a certain extent by allowing a conditional monarchy. What is intended by the demonstration of v. 17
is not so much reconciliation as it is a restoration of
a respectful distance in the existing relationship.
Israel has questioned Yahweh and experienced some success in its petition. The demonstration will put
Israel back in its proper place through a show of
divine force.

Verse 17 and 7:5 are alike, then, in describing
assemblies for the purpose of a divine-human interchange through the agency of Samuel. Verse 17 differs
in that it describes an effort at restoring proper
relationship, while 7:5 describes only a request for
renewed relationship. The difference is caused by
the intervention of the request for a king which,
though granted, is regarded as impudent, improper and
in need of redress.

Verse 18

Having presented Samuel's description of what
he was about, the narrator describes the actual undertaking. Samuel's actions correspond word for word
with what he said he would do, and in support of
Samuel, so do Yahweh's actions. Scholars have often
debated the significance of Yahweh's response.

According to one view, the dispensation of thunder (and rain) is to be understood as an echo of theophany, especially the Sinai theophany (Weiser 1962:87). Against this position others have argued that the out-of-season thunder and rain are a visible manifestation of Yahweh's power, a sign given in response to Samuel's call and so an authentification of Samuel as mediator (Boecker 1969:85; Stoebe 1973:238-39; Veijola 1977:98).

As the results of the demonstration show, however, it is likely that aspects of both theophany and sign are contained in the demonstration (cf. Vannoy 1978:50-51; McCarter 1980:216). The people fear Yahweh and Samuel, a twofold result that corresponds to the two sides of the demonstration. On the theophanic side, Birch observes that thunder ($q\hat{o}l$) is common to such manifestations (1976:70). Both the people's fear of Yahweh (v. 18) and their fear that they might die if Samuel did not pray for them seem more in tune with the concept of theophany than that of pure sign (cf. Birch 1976:70). The terrifying thunder and rain do indeed convince Israel that Yahweh was displeased with the request: "Gott, der von Israel mit dessen Drängen nach dem König als wesenlose Unwirklichkeit beiseite geschoben ist, bezeugt sich handgreiflich als der

Lebendige, der mächtig ist, seine Kreatur völlig zu
vernichten (Gutbrod 1956:90-91). The people certainly
see this side of the miraculous thunderstorm; the man-
ifestation of divine power as a displeased reaction to
their request seems to them to threaten their very
existence (v. 19; cf. McCarthy 1978:217; Vannoy 1978:
50-51).[30] While there is, strictly speaking, no
theophany, Weiser is justified in saying that there is
an echo of it here (1962:87).

On the other hand, the demonstration does serve
to legitimate Samuel by showing the people that they
need his services as mediator to pray on their behalf.[31]
Yahweh's real power and real domination over Israel
continues, as the storm demonstrates (cf. Boecker 1969:
85). On account of Samuel's intimacy with this power-
ful God, with whom the people know he shares bad feel-
ings about the request for a king, Samuel is a man to
be feared alongside God. Think what he could call down
upon them if they angered him by not heeding Yahweh's
"voice" (qôl v. 14 = qōlōt v. 18 "thunder") or rebelling
against Yahweh's "mouth" (v. 14, Samuel?). In Israel's
position there is every reason to fear Samuel along
with Yahweh.

Turning now to the parallel with ch. 7, it will

be recalled that following the ceremonial downpour of
water in v. 6 the Philistines advance against Israel.
Israel fears the advance on account of their previous
experiences with the Philistines, in which Yahweh has
proven unreliable. Despite a victory in that instance,
Israel soon finds itself threatened with a repeat of
the Elide disaster (8:1-3) and decides to avoid further
fiascos by opting out of the theocracy. As a direct
result of that request, Israel is now in greater
danger, for they face a greater threat than the Phili-
stines. Instead of fearing the Philistines because
they were not sure that Yahweh would come to their aid,
they fear Yahweh and Samuel with the knowledge that no
human power could ever deliver them from this potential
enemy.

Verse 19

There is only one way to soothe Yahweh's bad
feelings over the request: Israel hastens to adopt an
attitude of humble, repentant submission. In the
first words allowed to them since Samuel began his
presentation all the people tell Samuel, "Pray on behalf
of your servants to Yahweh your God." The request
acknowledges a need for Samuel's legitimate service as
intercessor. The people characterize themselves as

Samuel's servants, thereby acknowledging their subordination to the theocratic mediator whose prayers are requested. They speak of Yahweh as Samuel's God ($^{\jmath e}$lōheykā), in recognition of the fact that their request has alienated God from themselves (cf. Vannoy 1978:52). They express the hope that Samuel's prayers will prevent their death, a punishment that they seem to see lurking in the thunderstorm. Finally they confess that over and above all their sins, they have gone and added to the evil of asking for a king for themselves.

The demonstration is a complete success, having achieved both of its goals (Veijola 1977:98-99). The people have been frightened into a recognition of their need of Samuel and a confession of their sin in asking for a king (cf. Vannoy 1978:52). The relative positions of Israel, Samuel, and Yahweh are restored to the same order that obtained before the request for a king. In a time of fear and need, Israel confesses to its own sin, suggesting that it has brought this trouble upon itself (cf. 7:6). Fearful for their lives, (cf. 7:7) Israel calls on Samuel to cry or pray to Yahweh for them (cf. 7:8; Hertzberg 1964:100; McCarter 1980: 216). The omission of any reference to their king as

a possible source of relief indicates their complete
return to the theocratic form of dependence.

The parallel with ch. 7 in this instance also
reveals a change in Israel's perception of its relation-
ship with Yahweh. In 7:8, the people ask Samuel to cry
to Yahweh "our God" whereas in v. 19 they ask Samuel
to pray to Yahweh "your God." The change is a result
of Israel's perception of the threat contained in the
thunderstorm. Having spurned Yahweh by asking for a
king, the people no longer think they have the unques-
tioned right to call Yahweh "our God" (Vannoy 1978:52).
Israel has come full circle back to the position of
dependence in which it stood as recently as ch. 7 and
from which it had tried to escape by the request. Con-
trite and repentant, the people plead for a renewal of
regular theocratic operations.

. The reader's perception of the thunderstorm is
influenced by what he knows of the narrative past, and
by his understanding of the psychological side of the
demonstration, which he has been fortunate enough to
view from a distance. Israel's humble confession is not
seen as the utterance of deep reflection and consequent
repentance. Rather it is a forced confession, extorted
under duress, in fear for life itself. Only a short

time (10:27-11:5) before (10:27-11:5) all Israel had
refused to treat Saul as king because he was not a king
such as they had wanted. The people were bold then in
their demand for a king who would make them a nation
like any other nation. When the reader now sees the
people humiliated into a condemnation of their seemingly
just demand, he is forced to explain their about-face.
The obvious answer, supplied by the narrator in v. 19,
is that the confession is extracted by the strong-arm
tactics used by Samuel and Yahweh. The people beg for
Samuel's intercession and confess in order to avoid
sudden death (w^e$^{\,\circ}$al-nāmût).

Yahweh and Samuel may be pleased with their
results and Israel may be forced to accept them, but
for the reader a question mark hangs over the whole
enterprise. If the subsequent history of the relation-
ship between Israel and Yahweh is based on such a
foundation, and it is presented as a foundation for
what follows, what will come of it? Can there be a
satisfactory sequel to this scene? The reader will
have to continue his passage through the books of
Samuel and Kings to get an answer.[32]

Verse 20

Having extorted the confession with a little
help from his God, Samuel proceeds to remold the
penitents' perception of their request and the meaning
of their new political existence as a monarchy under
theocracy. As Weiser observes, Samuel again holds
a position of recognized authority as mediator between
Israel and Yahweh (1962:87). "Samuel springt in die
Bresche vor das verlorene Volk samt seinem König"
(Gutbrod 1956:91).

Vannoy notices that Samuel does not immediately
pray on the people's behalf, as they request, but sug-
gests that it may be assumed that he did pray for them
on the basis of v. 23 (1978:52). Plausible as this
assumption may be, the adoption at this point in the
narrative (v. 20) of an assumption based on later
material (v. 23) is a defection from the narrated order
of description. As Sternberg emphasizes, the reader of
narrative must constantly be aware of the effect of
sequence on the reading process:

> Why has this complex of events been presented
> first and that delayed? Why has this facet
> of a character been portrayed before that?
> Why has this piece of (verbal, actional,

structural, or even generic) information been
conveyed—or on the contrary, suppressed and
ambiguated—at precisely this point? And it
is especially imperative to investigate these
questions whenever the distribution and order-
ing of information involve a deviation from a
coventional or previously postulatèd pattern
of organization, such as chronological sequence
(1978:97).

The people have asked for Samuel's prayers and,
if he is favourably disposed towards them, we expect
him to pray for them. The people in v. 19 believe
that they are in a life or death situation and beg
Samuel to intercede that they might live. Instead,
Samuel takes advantage of their situation of absolute
dependency on him in order to give another repetitious
(cf. vv. 14-15) lecture on the behaviour required of
them.

The fact that Samuel pursues this didactic
course reveals that he knows of another side to the
demonstration; he views the thunderstorm as an audio-
visual teaching aid rather than a threat to life.
Samuel does not hasten to pray for Israel because he
actually set up the demonstration for educative rather

than punitive purposes (v. 17). His post-thunderstorm
lecture is, therefore, the natural consequence of his
intention to convict Israel of the great evil it has
done in asking for a king.

Samuel's first words to the fearful Israelites
are a clear exhibition of his own interests and con-
cerns; "Fear not! You[33] have done all this evil, but
do not turn aside from after Yahweh and serve Yahweh
with all your hearts." They ask him to pray to God
because they are scared to death and instead he gives
them a lecture on Yahweh's behalf. Passing off their
terror with a simple "Fear not," he reiterates a por-
tion of their confession—"you have done all this
evil"—and offers advice for better future performance,
again partially repeating himself (cf. vv. 14-15).
Samuel's response reveals that what is of paramount
importance to him, and hence to Yahweh who supports
him here, is that Israel return to a course of strict
obedience and total devotion to Yahweh.

By paralleling the mention of the evil done,
that is, the request for a king, with the demand for
future obedience, Samuel hints at an evaluation of the
request as an act of disobedience. He plays on his
audience's moment of terror to redefine the legitimate

request from the covenantal perspective as though it were a simple act of unprovoked disobedience and faithlessness.

Verse 21

Though v. 21 is frequently discarded as a late gloss ("einem Einschub im Einschub," Buber 1956:159) on account of the supposedly anachronistic word $t\bar{o}h\hat{u}$ (e.g. Budde 1902:81; Buber 1956:159; Stoebe 1973:239; cf., however, Deut 32:10) and the ease with which the verse may be omitted without disturbing the sense of the context (Budde 1902:81; Boecker 1969:86), it is not entirely without contextual value. As Boecker observes, v. 21 is connected to v. 20 by the repetition of the verb $t\bar{a}s\hat{u}r\hat{u}$, which is given an expanded interpretation in v. 21 (1969:68; cf. Seebass 1965:295 n.21). It is the expansionistic rhetoric of Samuel's restatement that also explains the particle $k\hat{\imath}$, which follows after the verb $t\bar{a}s\hat{u}r\hat{u}$ and has generally been omitted as "senseless" with the support of LXX (e.g. Wellhausen 1871:79; McCarter 1980:212; cf. Vannoy 1978:54 n.128 for a review of other suggestions). The repeated exhortation taken from v. 20 is "Do not turn aside." Following the exhortation is a $k\hat{\imath}$ clause explaining why one should not turn (cf. Muilenburg 1961:157). "Do

not turn aside, for ($k\hat{\imath}$) [it is] after vanities which can neither benefit nor deliver because they are vain."

The word $t\bar{o}h\hat{u}$, though usually understood as a reference to false gods on the basis of Deutero-Isaiah (e.g. Keil and Delitzsch 1880:121; Hertzberg 1964:100), has a more specific reference in this context. In v. 20, Samuel balances the evil that has been done—the request for a king—against the exhortation not to turn aside anymore from after Yahweh. By a series of associations, then, Samuel equates the anti-covenantal request for a king like the nations with defection (swr) from Yahweh: 1. the request for a king is evil (v. 17); 2. the evil (the request) done is not a cause for fear so long as Israel no longer turns aside from after Yahweh (v. 20); 3. one should not turn aside because the things that are so pursued are worthless (v. 21).

In v. 21, Samuel provides a more detailed definition of the defection. He tells Israel why it should not engage in such defections: the reason, because all such things are worthless. They are profitless ($lo^{\ni}$ $y\hat{o}^{c\hat{a}}\hat{\imath}\hat{u}$) and unable to deliver ($l\bar{o}^{\ni}$ $ya\d{s}\d{s}\hat{\imath}l\hat{u}$). Samuel's negative evaluations of the worthless things, such as the kingship they requested, may be contrasted with

Yahweh's actions. He brought Israel up (he^{ce}lêtî, 10: 18) from Egypt, and he delivered (wā$^{\jmath}$aṣṣîl, 10:18; cf. 12:11) Israel from all its enemies. No one but Yahweh, according to Samuel, is of any use to Israel as a source of security; in comparison, everything else is hattōhû, "worthlessness."

Verse 22

The introduction of this verse by kî indicates that the subsequent information is attached to the preceding as an explanation or motivation for what has been said (Keil and Delitzsch 1880:121; cf. Vannoy 1978:55-56). Israel is not to turn aside because Yahweh will not forsake his people. He has a reputation to maintain. Yahweh's reputation is staked on Israel's fortunes because he made them into a people, and so they need never fear for their political existence. So long as Yahweh's "great name" means anything to him, Israel's continued survival as his people is guaranteed. It is this certainty of Yahweh's benefaction that makes Israel's request for a king a vain thing. Israel sought security from a king when it was already guaranteed by Yahweh's great name (v. 11).

From the reader's perspective Samuel's assurances are less than reassuring. Only a few chapters

previously (chs. 5-6), Yahweh took action to protect his
reputation, but that action was of no benefit to Israel.
Both before and after the Philistines were forced to
confess to the greatness of the mighty exodus God,
Israel was subjected to unwarranted abuse at the hands
of Yahweh. So the reader, at least, perceives a hollow
ring to Samuel's assurances in v. 22. The response of
Samuel's audience is left undetermined by the narra-
tive. Perhaps since they were not privy to Yahweh's
name-saving actions in chs. 5-6 the assurance provided
by the divine reputation might seem more credible to
them.

At any rate, the narrative is focused on
Samuel and on the conditions, promises, and requirements
that are laid down as the basis for Israel's condition-
al monarchy. But Samuel's tendentious interpretation
of the past and his dubious reassurances about the
future do not seem a firm foundation for the political
organization that is being reaffirmed. The inadequate
half-measure of a theocratically designated king only
smooths over the problem raised by the request; Samuel's
reassessment of the request only buries the seeds of
legitimate discontent under the facade of covenant
renewal, and Israel is obliged to do all of the

recanting.

It is frequently observed that the language and ideas of v. 22 draw upon Israel's covenant ideology (Weiser 1962:87; McCarthy 1974:102; Veijola 1977:90). In view of the context some scholars have suggested that v. 22 renews the covenant between Israel and Yahweh (Boecker 1969:87; McCarthy 1973:412; 1978:217). Certainly it must be admitted that Samuel holds out the possibility for a fresh beginning to monarchic Israel in ch. 12. But is it accurate to say that v. 22 reestablishes the covenant?

What v. 22 does, in fact, is to point back to the conditions that have always supported Israel's covenantal existence, namely the priority of election and Yahweh, who has a great name to maintain (cf. Muilenburg 1959:364; Payne 1972:324). These presuppositions of Israel's covenant do not signal a renewal of covenant, because the covenant has not been broken since ch. 7, when it was last renewed. As ch. 11 concludes Israel has come to terms with Saul's theocratic subordination and signaled its acceptance of Yahweh's terms by renewing the kingdom (11:14-15). At that point any rift in the relationship has been mended. Verse 22 explains that Israel should not turn aside

from after Yahweh because it is unnecessary; it empha-
sizes continuity between past, present and future
rather than a re-establishment of past conditions.
Yahweh <u>will</u> not forsake (so Israel should not turn)
because.he <u>has</u> gladly made Israel his people.

Verse 23

Samuel contrasts his own steadfast behaviour as
mediator with that of his audience through the use of
the emphatic introductory pronouns in vv. 20 and 23:
"You have done all this evil...but as for myself..."
(Ehrlich 1910:209; McCarter 1980:216).

Having criticized Israel's request to the
fullest, Samuel finally responds to the people's appeal
for his prayers: his response, "Far be it from me to
sin against Yahweh by ceasing to pray on your behalf,"
implies that he has never stopped praying on Israel's
behalf.because it is part of his God-given task as
Yahweh's mediator. Though the people have only just
recognized their continuing need of Samuel's services,
Samuel, like. Yahweh, has continued and will continue
to fulfill his task within the covenantal framework.

Samuel's reassurance about his continuing
prayers for Israel is paralleled in ch. 7 by Israel's
request that Samuel not cease crying to Yahweh for

deliverance (7:8). His statement here may be taken as a
conscious allusion to that request and as such consti-
tutes a celebration of his personal victory. Threatened
with retirement, Samuel has emerged from the crisis
with a public vindication of his integrity (v. 4) as
well as the public recognition of his indispensability
as mediator. Samuel remains in authority (cf. Robert-
son 1944:194; Willis 1972:52-53).

Samuel crowns his successful demonstration of
the necessity of his office by electing himself to the
task of directing Israel in the good and upright path.
On the one hand, his audience might well understand
this as an act of kindness on Samuel's part:

> Samuel's pledge in v. 23, therefore, is unde-
> served by its beneficiaries, the Israelites.
> It amounts to a special provision for the
> succor and preservation of the people, which
> comes on the very brink of disaster...
> (McCarter 1980:219).

With Samuel as teacher, the people need not worry that they
will foolishly turn away from Yahweh in pursuit of
some chimerical end. Samuel selflessly undertakes to
keep Israel on the straight and narrow, which, in view
of the ominous threat of divine punishment, must be

accepted as a valuable and necessary service to Israel.

The reader cannot help but notice that the installation of the theocratic mediator as the official censor, dictator of the "good and upright path," is the final blow to Israel's idea of a political system unfettered by the minutiae of theocracy. The result of Israel's quest for independence is a strengthening of the theocratic hand on this people whom it has pleased Yahweh to make. Whether the people will always accept this imposition, and whether the king will be satisfied with his subordination remain as questions that the reader must carry into the subsequent scenes of the monarchic history.

One thing is certain about v. 23: it marks the end of the movement for a king like all the nations. Just as the request for a king was sparked by a recurrence of a previous circumstance, the dangerous state of affairs in the mediator's family, so the conclusion to the chain of events resulting from the request is marked by the recurrence of the scene at the end of ch. 7. In both instances Samuel has brought Israel through a crisis and stands thereafter ensconced as mediator, shepherding the people of Yahweh. Both the request for a king and the conclusion of the issue

illustrate the narrator's technique of scenic parallel
and allusion to add commentary to scenes that otherwise
appear to lack narrative exposition (cf. Alter 1981:7).
With Samuel's remarks in v. 23 and the parallel situa-
tion in ch. 7, it is almost as though the request had
never been made. Under Samuel's direction, with
special effects by Yahweh, the pursuit of a king like
the nations has now come to seem the pursuit of an
illusion (hattōhû?)

Verses 24-25

Samuel concludes his presentation with a reca-
pitulation of what is required of Israel, balancing his
descriptions of Yahweh's and his own future activity
(vv. 22-23) with another prescription for Israel's
behaviour. Of the exhortations only the addition of
the adverb be$^{\circ e}$met "sincerely" is not a repetition of
things he has already said in vv. 14-15, 20. As Buber
has noted, the explanatory clause is linked with the
first part of the exhortation by a wordplay. "Only
fear (y^{e}r$^{\circ}$û) Yahweh...for consider (r$^{e \circ}$û) how gravely
he has dealt with you" (1956:161). The fear of Yahweh
and sincere service are motivated by the tremendous
deed (hāddābār haggādôl, v. 16) that Yahweh showed

to demonstrate his evaluation of the request for a king (Smith 1899:89; Budde 1902:81; Ehrlich 1912:209; cf., however, Keil and Delitzsch 1880:121; Gressmann 1921:46; Stoebe 1973:234). Correct behaviour is motivated by the threat implicit in the thunderstorm.

The alternative to a proper fear of Yahweh and faithful service to him is described by Samuel with the comprehensive words "If you do evil." Anything other than obedient subservience to Yahweh is included in this description. The penalty for continued disobedience on the people's part is that both they and their king will be swept away. The people had said about their proposed king "Even we (gam-$^{\jmath a}$naḥnû) will be like all the nations" (8:20), to which Samuel responds here "Even you and even your king (gam-$^{\jmath}$attem gam-malk^{e}kem) will be swept away."

Thornton understands v. 25 to be a threat of destruction aimed particularly at Saul himself, if he should behave wickedly (1967:421). Yet, as Boecker observes, Saul is not even mentioned in ch. 12 (1969: 87 n.3). Moreover, the kingship of Saul is neither questioned nor criticized in ch. 12; only the request for a king like all the nations is reproved. If anything, v. 25 ties the fate of the Israelite monarchy

to the behaviour of the Israelite people. If Samuel's
audience continues to do evil, the king will be sub-
jected to the same fate as themselves, without any
consideration of his complicity or the lack of it.
The installation of a king has changed nothing with
regard to Israel's theocratic obligations. They are
still governed by the same theocratic duties in their
binding covenant with Yahweh. Regarding the Israelite
monarchy, Samuel is right: it is <u>hattōhû</u>.

V.   CONCLUSION

Needless to say, it has, in my view, proven possible to read 1 Sam 1-12 as a unitary narrative with a clear, logically progressive plot. The major hypothesis of this study has, therefore, been confirmed. Individual points of interpretation may be debated, modified, or rejected, but the fact that these chapters can be read as a unity is indisputable.

During the course of reading this episode in Israel's theological-political adventures, it became apparent that the greatest failing of historical-critical readings of the narrative was a neglect of the narrative's voice structure. The majority of supposedly irresolvable ideological conflicts in the opinions that find expression in these chapters disappear when careful attention is paid to the simple questions, "Who says what to whom?" and "Where and when was it said?".

Along the way, several implications arose out of the reading, by virtue of the fact that 1 Sam 1-12 is relied upon as a source of data in so many important areas of contemporary biblical scholarship. Obviously a unitary reading of all of the twelve chapters calls into question any readings that suggest a chapter or

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group of chapters must be read in isolation. Until the suggested unity of the narrative and the supporting evidence thereto is refuted, any further suggestions about the socio-historical settings of the "pro- and anti-monarchic factions" in chs. 8-12, or about the "Ark narrative" in chs. 4-6 must be regarded as unnecessarily complex, both as hypotheses and as explanations of the data. Literary explanations of the narrative are inherently stronger because they are descriptive and verifiable; a holistic literary approach eliminates the undesirable multiplication of historical assumptions, and its conclusions can be accepted or rejected as they agree or disagree with the text (cf. Polzin 1980:5-7). The literary approach that I have used provides a way out of the proliferation of studies whose conclusions cannot be compared because each study depends on varying, non-verifiable hypotheses and assumptions. A descriptive reading of 1 Sam 1-12 can be compared with other such readings and the comparative strengths and weaknesses of each reading should appear. Individual readings may suffer refutation, but scholarly dialogue about the text will increase.

Read as a unit, 1 Sam 1-12 also posed problems

for existing readings of the deuteronomistic history.
If the narrator of these chapters does not condemn
kingship, and if the narrator is the deuteronomist,
then it would seem that the generally accepted
opinions about the deuteronomist's negative attitude
towards the institution of monarchy need reconsidera-
tion. Again such reconsideration is made necessary
by a reading that pays careful attention to the narra-
tive's hierarchical voice structure, such as was not
done by previous studies of the "deuteronomist" in 1
Sam 1-12.

The theological implications of my reading of
these chapters, especially as regards the characteriza-
tion of God, suggest that 1 Sam 1-12 is more comparable
to a book like Job than has previously been accepted.
It would, of course, be question-begging to suggest
that these theological implications reveal the perver-
sity of my reading when viewed in the wider context of
the known theology of the deuteronomistic history. A
close reading of the remainder of the deuteronomistic
history is necessary to evaluate a close reading of 1
Sam 1-12.

Finally, a subsidiary result of my reading is
to add some observations and descriptions to the

existing catalogue of Hebrew narrative technique.
Eventually, after all biblical narrative has been
studied from a methodological perspective similar to
the one that I have found fruitful, it should be possi-
ble to write a narratology of biblical narrative.

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[1]Stoebe (1973:32-44) reviews this period in scholarship.

[2]Wellhausen was himself aware of this neglect of the existing narrative but saw no deficiency in his approach. It is the history of Israel and its literature that enables one to understand the Bible and the relationship between its parts. (See Wellhausen's description of his own experiences, 1973:5.) What is important is not the narrative description itself, but the more remote social and historical contexts that have given expression to the biblical text (1973:366, 368).

[3]K. Koch explains the reasons for this apparent apriorism:

> Literary [source] criticism begins with the recognition that the period of origin of a biblical writing presents enormous diffi-culties, and that the situations of the writers have also become greatly obscured through a many levelled process of redaction. Formerly independent sources were linked together, even merged, or torn apart and made up into different and separate units.

Notes to Chapter I

The literary [source] critic therefore attempts
to discover the original writings, to deter-
mine exactly their date of origin, and to
grasp the personality of the writer as much
as is possible. This means that he approaches
the text with, so to say, a dissecting knife
in his hand, looks out particularly for
breaks in continuity, or missing links in
the train of thought, and also for disturb-
ing duplications and factual inconsistencies,
and for variations in the use of language
which will have originated in another set
of circumstances or at a period of different
religious concepts. The literary critical
[sic, source] method leads to a determination
of sources....Literary criticism is the
analysis of biblical books from the stand-
point of lack of continuity, duplications,
inconsistencies and different linguistic
usage, with the object of discovering what
the individual writers and redactors
contributed to a text, and also its time
and place of origin (Koch's underlining)

Notes to Chapter I

(1969:69, 70).

[4]For criticism of the extrinsic approach see R. Wellek, A. Warren 1975:73-74, 139-41; J.M. Ellis 1974:104-54.

[5]Further proliferation of reviews of scholarship on the narrative is unnecessary. For existing treatments see Birch 1976:1-10; Boecker 1969:1-10; Childs 1979:263-77; Eissfeldt 1965:269-71; Fritz 1976:346-49; Ishida 1977:26-29; Jenni 1961:136-41; Kegler 1977:56-70; Langlamet 1970:161-200; 1978: 277-300; Mayes 1977:322-31; 1978:1-10; McCarter 1980:12-14; Radjawane 1973: 177-216, esp. 190-200; Ritterspach 1967:16-53; Schmidt 1970:58-63; Stoebe 1973:32-52; Veijola 1977:5-14; Wildberger 1957:442-46.

[6]Gunkel discusses the proposed literary history in detail in "Die Israelitische Literatur," 1906:51-102. See also W. Klatt 1969:166-91.

[7]Gressman anticipates here, S. Talmon's observations on synonymous readings in the Bible. See Talmon 1975:226-63, 321-400.

[8]See Gunkel 1906:51-102; and Gressmann 1921:xii-xvi for the latter's own summary of the

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generic history of Israelite literature.

[9]Gressmann gives a summary of the histories of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Palestine, showing how events led to the possibility and actual formation of Israel's monarchy. Since only ch. 11 comes close to agreement with Gressmann's analysis of the historical situation it is probably the only historical tradition (1921:27).

[10]The historical period in which a pro-monarchic view is possible is further defined for Noth by the historical fact of the long delay before the institution of a monarchy in Israel. Noth explains the delay, remarkable in view of the external threat from neighbouring kingdoms, as a product of a pre-monarchic theocratic ideology in Israel (1960: 164-65). Pro-monarchic views, therefore, were not likely to have been common before the crushing defeat of the amphictyonic armies at Aphek (1 Sam 4). The losses in this battle forced the weakened Israelites to resort to a monarchy if they were to continue as a politically independent society.

[11]Weiser includes Noth (1967) among those whom he calls literary critics because Noth follows

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Wellhausen's source divisions of the narrative.

[12]For example, Birch divides ch. 9 into 1-14,
18-19, 22-24, and ch. 10 into 2-4, 9, 14-16a. These
verses represent a separate folk tale of Saul's search
for his asses (1976:132).

[13]On the role of analogy in historical
criticism see J.M. Miller 1976:18.

[14]See Buber 1956, 1964. Buber's arguments
for the unity of 1 Sam 7-12 are vitiated by his
excisions of material that does not conform to what
he sees as the unitary narrative.

[15]A comprehensive, systematic description of
narrative in the Hebrew Bible remains far in the
future. L. Alonso-Schökel's evaluation of Hebrew
narratology still holds true twenty years after he
made it: "Doch eine grundsätzliche, systematische
und abgerundete Darstellung der atlichen Erzählkunst
besitzen wir nicht. Mehr noch: sie wird kaum als
Desiderat empfunden" (1961:147). Preliminary work
is, however, now underway towards this goal, e.g.
Alonso-Schökel 1960:154-64; 1961:143-72; 1975:1-15;
R. Alter 1981; S. Bar-Efrat 1978:19-31; 1980:154-73;
M. Buber 1956:113-73; 1964:727-845, 1131-58;

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C. Conroy 1980; R.C. Culley 1976; J.P. Fokkelman 1975,
1981; D.M. Gunn 1978, 1980; I.M. Kikawada 1977:67-91;
M. Perry and M. Sternberg 1968/69:263-92 (452-99);
R. Polzin 1980, 1981; A. Schulz 1923; I.L. Seeligmann
1962:305-25; Semeia 1975, 1977, 1979; S. Talmon 1978:
9-26; M. Weiss 1963:456-75; 1965:181-206; 1971:88-112.

[16]E.g. Childs 1979:278; McCarthy 1973; Tsevat
1980.

[17]The principle is best known as formulated
by William of Ockham who said, appropriately enough,
"Plurality is not to be assumed without necessity,"
and "What can be done with fewer [assumptions] is done
in vain with more" (cited from P. Edwards 1967: Vol.
7/8, 307).

[18]R. Polzin comes to similar conclusions,
"If, on the other hand, we assume that many gaps,
dislocations, and reversals in the biblical text may
profitably be viewed as the result of the use
(authorial or editorial) of several different view-
points within the narrative, then, whether the
present text is the product either of a single mind
or of a long and complicated editorial process, we
are still responsible for making sense of the present

Notes to Chapter I

text by assuming that the present text, in more cases
than previously realized, does make sense" (1980:17).

[19]Cleanth Brooks suggests that "it is easy to
see why the relation of each item to the whole con-
text is crucial, and why the effective and essential
structure of the poem has to do with the complex of
attitudes achieved. A scientific preposition [sic]
can stand alone. If it is true, it is true. But the
expression of an attitude, apart from the occasion
which generates it and the situation which encom-
passes, is meaningless" (1947:207). Cf. Ellis 1974:
118-20.

[20]The macro-contextual pattern is the
narrative structure that governs the narrative as a
whole (Conroy 1978:89-90).

[21]The objective of narrative theory "...is a
grid of possibilities, through the establishment of
the minimal narrative constitutive features.....What
can we say about the way structures like narrative
organize themselves?...What are the necessary compo-
nents—and only those—of a narrative?" (Chatman
1978:19).

[22]E.g. phonology, vocabulary, grammar,

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syntax, and rhetorical structures.

[23]E.g. plot, theme, sequence, suspense and tensions, time relations, character, and narration and point of view.

[24]For the methodological principles guiding the literary approach to 1 Sam 8-12 see P.M. Wetherill (1974). His book provides summaries and examinations of the major theories and methods in recent literary studies. Rather than supplying a summary of Wetherill's methodological summary it seems better, at this point, to avoid further theoretical discussion. As Wetherill suggests, the individual text must determine the methodology that will be useful in the comprehension of its meaning and in the description of how it achieves that meaning (1974: 248). Since the object of this study is the interpretation of a specific narrative rather than a general theory of narrative, a detailed discussion of methodology would be aprioristic with respect to 1 Sam 8-12, and redundant and superficial in view of Wetherill's and others' metacritical studies.

Notes to Chapter II

[1] For example, although modern scholars agree that the "Court History of David" (2 Sam 9-20, 1 Kgs 1-2) is a unit (e.g. G. Fohrer 1968:222), it is divided in the Bible between the books of Samuel and Kings.

[2] E.g., the collocation of three literary units—the three Isaiahs—in the single book of Isaiah.

[3] This delimitation was classically formulated by Wellhausen (1899:240-41, 1973:24). Although there have been differences amongst scholars on the boundaries of the narrative, some beginning with ch. 7 (e.g., citing only periodical literature, Z. Ben-Barak 1979, R.E. Clements 1974, F. Langlamet 1970, A.D.H. Mayes 1978, E. Robertson 1944, H. Seebass 1965) and others with ch. 8 (V. Fritz 1976, D.J. McCarthy 1973, R. Press 1938, T.C.G. Thornton 1967, M. Tsevat 1980, H. Wildberger 1957), there is agreement, however, that 1 Sam.1-6 (7) are not to be included in the narrative.

[4] When chs. 13-15 are included, the theme becomes more specifically the inauguration of Saul's kingship and his subsequent rejection.

Notes to Chapter II

[5]L. Rost's study (1926) offers detailed exemplification of stylistic analysis used to support this thematic division. For 1 Sam 4:1b-7:1, see especially p. 11ff.

[6]P.D. Miller and J.J.M. Roberts rejected Willis's literary pattern (1977:20). Willis replied in a lively polemical rebuttal albeit with reduced claims of pervasiveness for the convention in biblical narrative (1979:212). In my opinion, Willis's reading remains the more valid even with the smaller comparative basis for the pattern. The reading of Miller and Roberts suffers from excessive trimming of textual data to get a "text" (1 Sam 2:12-17; 22-25, 27-36; 4:1b-7:1 (Miller and Roberts 1977:60-61)) that fits their explanatory frame. (See Willis 1979 for extensive criticism of Miller and Roberts on this issue, esp. 204-07.) Even if Willis's literary pattern were evident only in 1 Sam 1-7, it would still be valid as a logical frame for the interpretation of the narrative because he meets the first two of Perry's considerations on frame construction.

[7]The question of the historicity of the events is not at issue here. My concern is only to analyse

Notes to Chapter II

and describe the text and what it says about those events.

[8]Samuel himself describes the move towards monarchy as a "turning aside" out of the path of ordained theocratic politics (1 Sam 12:21. See the exegetical comments on ch. 12 for my reading of this verse.).

[9]R. Polzin (1980) proposes to do a literary study of the deuteronomistic history in two volumes. Obviously he neither intends, nor is it possible for anyone, to deal with all the individual exegetical problems posed by the history. Such detailed analysis, however, is my aim for this study of 1 Sam 1-12.

[10]McCarter notes that the use of the word t^{e}šu^a in 11:13 links the victory over the Ammonites with the pre-monarchic acts of deliverance via the judges (1980:203-04). This link stresses that regardless of the human agent, deliverance always comes from Yahweh.

Notes to Chapter III

[1]The phrase la^{c}a̱mod lipnê is also used in covenants of grant to describe the loyal service of a servant which is rewarded by a grant (M. Weinfeld 1970:185-86).

In the Bible the phrase occurs several times in the context of covenantal obedience or priestly service to Yahweh. In Ezra 9, the Israelite returnees have broken the commandment "by the prophets" (cf. Lev 18:24-30; Deut 7:3) not to intermarry with non-Israelites. Ezra says, "Behold we are before thee in our guilt, for none can stand before thee because of this" (9:15). In Deut 4:10, the people stand before Yahweh to hear his words and to learn to fear him. The words that Yahweh speaks are his covenant—the ten words (v. 13). The priestly service, described as standing before Yahweh, is another aspect of Israel's total covenantal obligation to Yahweh as 2 Chr 29:10-11 shows. Hezekiah, wishing to renew the covenant with Yahweh, asks the Levites who have been chosen to stand before Yahweh as servants (cf. Deut 10:8; 18:5, 7) to be diligent.

[2]The question, "To whom will he/it go from upon us," (i.e. "get off our back") (6:20) is

Notes to Chapter III

pointedly ambiguous and includes both Yahweh and his infernal ark.

[3]The problematic individuals in both families are the sons and not the aged fathers, who, it is implied, are two old to keep a tight rein on their sons' activities. Eli is never accused of active wrong-doing but is implicated in his sons' sinfulness because he has not put a stop to their activities (2:29; 3:13).

[4]It was essential for both priest and judge, the mediators of the covenant relationship, to be absolutely sinless. The priest represents Yahweh to man (oracle, ordeal, instruction, blessing and cursing) and man to Yahweh (sacrifice), (G. Fohrer 1972:212; cf. H. Ringgren 1966:204-10; R. de Vaux 1965:357). The judge was the official agent to whom the Israelites brought their cases (Exod 18:13-22, cf. de Vaux 1965:151-53). Judges were supposed to be God-fearing, trustworthy, and haters of bribes (Exod 18:21). They not only arbitrated legal disputes, but also represented the people before God, taught them the statutes and decisions, and how they were to behave (Exod 18:19-20; cf. Samuel's role as judge

Notes to Chapter III

described in 1 Sam 7:3, 6, 15-17; 8:10; 10:25; 12:3 (possible abuses of the judgeship), 7, 20-25).

[5]The fourfold repetition of ʿammî in 9:16-17 emphasizes that Yahweh still regards Israel as his covenantal people; cf. Buber 1956:128.

[6]Cf. Buber, "dahinter steht die Erfahrung, die man in kriegerischen Unternehmungen gegen die Philister mit Heiligtümern und Gottesmännern gemacht hat. Das Volk ruft nach dem charismatischen Feldherrn; den verlangt es vom Gott anstatt dessen erfolgloser Unmittelbarkeit" (1964:739).

[7]The apostasy described by Samuel in 7:3 can only be seen as the Israelite's reaction to their apparent rejection by Yahweh. They mourn Yahweh's removal from themselves (7:2) and turn to other gods for consolation in the face of Yahweh's silence. The narrative makes no previous mention of Israelite apostasy. The only prior descriptions of the Israelites display them adhering to the ordained sacrificial regulations, objecting to the Elide abuses (2:13-16), and going out to war on the Philistines (4:1-10).

[8]Saul's silence on the matter of the monarchy

Notes to Chapter III

(hamm^elûka) at the request of Samuel (^{ɔa}šer ɔāmar

v^emû^ɔel, 10:16) also appears to aim at avoiding pre-

mature disclosure of the manner of monarchy Yahweh

has granted.

[9]The point of this description is not, as

Buber notes against Budde, to describe the establish-

ment of a royal court or bodyguard (1956:148). The

expression "they went with him" (wayyel^ekû ^cimmô)

connotes more than mere physical accompaniment. In

several occurrences, the idiom is used for Yahweh's

covenantal presence with his elect (Exod 33:16; Lev

26:21ff; Deut 20:4; 31:6; 2 Sam 7:9; Mic 6:8; 1 Chr

17:8; cf. Helfmeyer 1978:395). Several other occur-

rences describe a league between individuals (Num

10:32; Judg 4:8; 11:8; 1 Sam 30:23; Job 31:5; 34:8).

Amos, though he does not use the expression, states

the principle: "Do two walk together, unless they

have made an appointment?", (3:3).

[10]On the appropriateness of fearing Samuel

too, see Stoebe 1973:239 and Buber 1956:159.

[11]The key words are sûr "turn aside," b^ekôl-

l^ebabkem "with all your heart," ^cābad "serve," nāsal

"rescue."

Notes to Chapter III

[12]Of ten occurrences of the word ra/ra‘â,
variously translated as evil, harmful, distress, or
wickedness (1:8; 2:23; 6:9; 8:6; 10:19; 12:17, 19,
20, 25), five occurrences appear in ch. 12 and all
of these describe the request for a secular monarchy.
(This is also true of the usage in 8:6.) Given the
emphasis on whole-hearted service of Yahweh alone
(cf. Weinfeld 1972:77; McCarthy 1978:43 on the
covenantal significance of this emphasis), it is
likely that the continued wickedness of 12:25 refers
to further efforts at political secularism.

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 1

[1]McCarter notes that the LXX reading is dis-
junctive, marking the beginning of an entirely new
narrative. He cites Job 1:1 as a parallel example.
One might just as easily say that the LXX reading is
an accommodation to the beginning of other biblical
books. Neither genetic explanation would understand
either MT or LXX. Interestingly enough, McCarter
observes that the LXX reading supports his traditio-
historical hypotheses about the pre-history of the
text. He makes this observation in a section of his
commentary supposedly devoted solely to textual
criticism. Whether it is MT or LXX that is the
"correct reading," a thing that will never be certain,
it is certain that the decisions of text criticism
are better made without the influence of traditio-
historical hypotheses.

[2]Driver's long excursus on the secondary
status of the dual ending and the topographical
features of Samuel's village (1913:2), though of
interest from the theoretical perspective of histori-
cal geography, is unnecessarily complex from a
literary perspective. An awareness of the poetic
parallelism in the genealogy provides a pleasantly

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 1

parsimonious literary explanation of the dual ending.
Needless to say, the literary explanation neither
rules out alternatives from other perspectives, nor
does it need their agreement. It is a self-sufficient
way of looking at biblical narrative.

In addition, both Robertson (1944:180-81) and
Aharoni (1979:210) supply geographical arguments that
support the dual ending.

[3]The names appear elsewhere primarily in
Chronicles in various genealogical lists from different
periods. Even in these lists they are names of unim-
portant persons. The occurrences are: 1. $y^e r\bar{o}h\bar{a}m$ -
Neh 11:12; 1 Chr 6:12, 19; 8:27; 9:8, 12; 12:27; 27:22;
2 Chr 23:1. 2. $\partial e_l\hat{\imath}h\hat{u}^{\,\partial}$ - 1 Chr 12:20; 26:7; 27:18; and
the book of Job. 3. $\hat{sup}$ - 1 Chr 6:20.

[4]The genealogy of Jesus in the gospel of Luke
(3:23-38) provides another example of this reversal
of the usual function of linear genealogies (Wilson
1979:21).

[5]The motif of two wives, one barren and one
fertile, usually with the barren wife being favoured
over the fertile, is prominent in the patriarchal
narratives; see Hauge 1975; J.G. Williams 1980.

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 1

[6]The textual difficulty produced by the word
ʾappāyim in v. 5 can be relieved by a philologically
and contextually defensible reading suggested by
Wellhausen (1871:36) and developed by Driver (1913:7-
8). Based on LXX[B] plēn hoti, the problematic ʾappāyim
is read ʾepes and, with the following kî, translated
"howbeit." The sense of the verse with the emendation
is that although Elkanah loved Hannah, he could only
give her one portion because Yahweh had sealed her
womb (cf., however, D. Aberbach 1974:350-53; F. Deist
1977:205-09).

[7]McCarter's suggestion that MT is expansive by
including her daughters is arbitrary (1980:51). The
point of saying "and all her sons and daughters" is to
emphasize the vexation to Hannah. The sons and
daughters are multiple and they are specifically
Peninnah's (3rd fem. sing. suffixes).

[8]Dhorme labels the repetition in v. 6 as a
gloss, simply because it repeats the end of v. 5 (1910:
19). Repetition has since been recognized as an
important stylistic device in biblical literature
e.g. Muilenberg 1953:97-111.

[9]McCarter's objection to the Wellhausen/Driver

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 1

solution to ˀappāyim in v. 5 is that it is contextual-
ly unsuitable. It assumes that Elkṇah gives Hannah
only one portion thereby leaving Peninnah's rancor in
v. 6 unexplained (1980:52). He suggests that
Peninnah's rancor can be explained by reading ˀappāyim
as kĕpîm, "proportionate to them, equal to them," and
understanding that Peninnah is retaliating on account
of Hannah's preferential treatment. The Wellhausen/
Driver reading is, however, perfectly suited to the
context and provides a better understanding of
Hannah's vociferation in v. 6. She not only gets a
smaller share of the sacrifice because of her steril-
ity, but is also subject to Peninnah's scorn.
Peninnah, characterized as both the second wife and
Hannah's rival, needs no excuse to vex Hannah; rather
Hannah's barrenness and consequent single portion of
the sacrifice provide a prime opportunity for
Peninnah to rub it in.

[10]The additional note about Hannah's drinking,
"and after drinking" (wᵉ aháᵃrê šātōh) is grammatically
anomalous (GKC #113e n.3) and usually seen as a gloss
(Stoebe 1973:91; McCarter 1980:53). Even if it is
retained in one's reading it changes nothing. It is

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difficult to understand why a glossator would add

such an anomalous and irrelevant detail, though.

Perhaps it was intended as a small piece of scenic

background by whoever included it.

[11]The possibility that the gaps in 4QSam[a]

may support LXX[B] is insufficient reason to follow

the variant, even if the combined versional voice

does represent an independent witness and not simply

an amplification of MT (cf. Driver 1913:13; B.

Johnson 1976/77:134). MT makes sense as it stands

and so from a literary point of view, there is no

reason to add or subtract anything. Neither is

there any compulsion to compare variants in order to

see what difference the variant would make to the

meaning of the text in such a case. M. Greenberg

suggests that although there is no logical basis for

choosing one version over another when they both

make sense, a comparison of the divergencies, each

read in its own context, provides a powerful

heuristic resource that can alert us to the particular

focus of each version (1977:140).

Greenberg does unquestionably demonstrate the

heuristic value of the comparative exercise. But

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there is a danger here that each version may be
understood and explained according to its distinction
from the other. This method of elucidating a text
concentrates on a distinctive feature, which is only
especially distinctive in view of the other version.
Thereby that specific textual feature is given more
prominence than it would have had viewed only within
its own context (cf. J.M. Ellis 1974:116-18). To
avoid this danger, and Greenberg is aware of it, it
seems better to leave such comparisons aside until a
complete interpretation of the narrative has been
made. Or if comparison must be made no special
importance should be attributed to LXX or any other
version, if our purpose is simply to highlight the
text under study. As Wellek and Warren suggest, "the
same end may well be achieved by devising for our-
selves alternatives, whether or not they have actually
passed through the author's mind" (cit. in D.G. Mowatt
1958/59:217-18).

[12]Although, as S.B. Parker states, it is clear
from the context that Hannah desires a boy ($\hat{u}n^e$tatt$\underline{\hat{i}w}$,
^{c}al-r$\bar{o}$ s$\underline{\hat{o}}$) (1979:694; cf. Hertzberg 1964:25), McCarter
is correct to reject the translation of zera^c $\underline{{}^{\ni}a}$ $\underline{n\bar{a}s\hat{i}m}$

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as male child/offspring (1980:61). The expression
occurs only here, where it stands in explicit
opposition to the Nazirite whom Hannah gives back
to God.

[13]Nowack denies that the uncut hair alludes
to an association of the future child with the
Nazirite life. Instead, he says it was the custom of
the priests to leave their hair uncut, citing Ezek
44:20 as an example (1902:5). As Cooke notes, how-
ever, the context implies that the reference in Ezek
44 is to the custom of cutting the hair as a sign
of mourning. This practise was associated with non-
Israelite religious practises and so was prohibited
(1936:485; cf. Lev 21:5-6; Deut 14:1). The fact that
Hannah is making a vow also supports the connection
with the Nazirites, who according to Num 6:2 become
Nazirites by making a vow, lindōr neder.

[14]Note Hertzberg's response to Hannah. "Han-
nah's modest reply so obviously bears the stamp of
truth that Eli believes her completely..." (1964:25).

[15]The fact the narrative notes Hannah's
pregnancy only after the passage of due time may
indicate that pregnancy is judged by external

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appearances rather than the cessation of menstruation.

[16]Ellis argues that to go back to prior con-
texts or usages of a literary document is a contra-
dictory reversal of the process that resulted in the
literary work. "...to put back all that the poet
thought was irrelevant and therefore left out is to
destroy the structure of the finished work by virtue
of which it has its artistic impact and meaning; that
meaning was created precisely by the selective opera-
tion that so many critics seem to be at pains to
reverse and remove" (1974:114). Applying these
remarks to the case of Samuel's name and its explana-
tion one could agree with the hypothesis that the
explanation is well-suited to the name Saul and yet
maintain that the interpretation of the <u>actual</u>
connection between the explanation and the name
Samuel must take precedence as the first concern of
readers. Similar observations are made by Childs
1979:75-77.

[17]According to Haran, there is no difference
between the two times and sacrifices of vv. 3 and 21;
both mean "the yearly sacrifice" (1978:304-07; cf.
Newman 1962:88). Haran cites Exod 13:10; Judg 11:40;

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21:19 as support for translating *miyyāmîm yāmîmâ*

"from year to year." As employed in 1 Sam 1:3 he

says it is an event that occurs once a year. But

both Exod 13:10 and Judg 11:40 include additional

temporal determinants, without which it is not clear

that *miyyāmîm yāmîmâ* designates any specific or

limited occurrence. Neither is it clear that the

ḥag in Judg 21:19 is a once-a-year affair. The

evidence, however, is ambiguous, as Boling's inter-

pretation shows. He reverses Haran's hypothesis,

and uses 1 Sam 1:3 to identify the *ḥag* in Judg 21:19

as the "important yearly celebration at Shiloh"

(1975:293)!

Haran deduces the existence of a yearly

sacrifice from 1 Sam 1 (esp. v. 21), held once annual-

ly. For *yāmîm* meaning "year" he cites Lev 25:29-30;

Judg 17:10; 19:2.

The occurrence in Lev 25 should not be trans-

lated "year"; the word *yāmîm* is set in an appositional

explanatory clause that emphasizes the multiplicity

of opportunities for redemption of a residence in a

walled city. *yāmîm* is balanced against *ʿad tōm šᵉnat*.

The use of *yāmîm* (pl.) has rhetorical value that is

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lost when understood simply as synonymic with $\check{s}^e$nat,
"year."

Judges 17:10 is ambiguous and in 19:2 Haran
arbitrarily inserts a wāw copulative before yāmîm,
without which there is no reason to translate "year".
(Haran 1978:306 n.28) (BDB, p. 399, suggests no
occurrence of yāmîm that should be translated a
"year." Most occurrences actually capitalize on the
plurality of the word.)

[18]ka'a$\check{s}$er is used similarly to note the ful-
fillment of promises many times throughout Deuterono-
my, e.g. 1:3, 11, 19, 41; 2:1, 14; 4:5; 5:12, 16, 32;
6:3, 19, 25, etc.

[19]The reading "a three year old bull" instead
of "three bulls" is accepted by most commentators,
e.g. Driver 1913:20-21; Stoebe 1973:99; McCarter 1980:
56-57. It is required by the context in v. 25 where
a single bull is slaughtered ('et-happār; cf. Thenius
1864:8). "MT bprym $\check{s}$l$\check{s}$h shows a simple corruption,
the m grouped with the wrong word" (McCarter 1980:56-
57).

[20]Ehrlich offers the entertaining suggestion -
that "die Verba sind im Pl. und ihr Subjekt

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unbestimmt wegen des Stieres, den Hanna nicht führen konnte" (1910:168).

[21]The rhetoric of repetition is discussed by Brown 1957; Chatman 1978:78-79; Fogle 1974:699-701; Forster 1976:146-50; Genette 1980:113-60; Hartmann 1979 (esp. pp. 4-30); Leech and Short 1981:257-59.

[22]Hylander provides a summary of the discussion of the topic prior to his study, 1932:13 n.1.

[23]LXX omits this sentence in 1:28, placing it in 2:11 where MT has Elkanah, rather than Hannah, going home to Ramathah.

[24]Keil and Delitzsch hold this view, but for different reasons (1880:28).

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[1]Archaic features in the song of Hannah allow only the conclusion that the poem contains certain features of early poetry. Archaizing cannot be ruled out (cf. Robertson 1972:147-48). Even if an acceptable date could be suggested for the song on the basis of the proposals of Albright and his followers (cf. Robertson 1972:6; Willis 1973:140 n.10; Cross and Freedman 1975; McCarter 1980:75-76), it would say nothing about the putative redactional status of the song. Whether it be early or late, dating cannot answer the questions of who put the song in ch. 2, and when he did it. If a certain dating of the narrative context could be determined, then it might be possible to say that the song is redactional—but only if its date were later than that of the prose context.

[2]The syntactic patterning should also indicate to the redaction critic that the song has not simply been inserted. At the very least, it is skilfully grafted.

[3]The connection between B and B' could be further strengthened assonantally, if the reading of LXX and OL was adopted, as most scholars do (e.g.

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Wellhausen, Smith, Driver, Hertzberg, Stoebe,
McCarter).

rāmâ qarnî bēʾlōhāy (!)
rāḥab pî ʿal-ʾōyᵉbay

As Willis notes, however, MT is representative of
the repetitive style often seen in early Hebrew and
Ugaritic poetry (1973:143-44), and so can be read as
is.

[4]Ps 18:3 is a particularly interesting
parallel since it also shares both the vocabulary and
the conceptual framework of 1 Sam 2:1-2.

[5]Cf. Zeph 3:11 where ʿᵃlilôt are the rebel-
lious acts of the proud against Yahweh.

[6]Reading wᵉlô with the qere.

[7]An alternative explanation in terms of class
conflicts and revolution is offered by Gottwald 1979:
534-40.

[8]Again, the parallel in vocabulary between
1 Sam 2:4 and Ps 18:33 illustrates that Hannah's
song expresses a common belief:

1 Sam 2:4   wᵉnikšālîm ʾazrû ḥāyil

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Ps 18:33   hā'ēl ham'azz^{e}rēnî ḥāyil

Both passages show the beneficial side of Yahweh's power and incomparability.

[9]On the meaning of v. 5b see McCarter 1980:72.

[10]Gottwald errs in restricting the poem's critique of human self-sufficiency to the social elite of Canaan (1979:537-38). Nor is it correct to say, as Gottwald does, that the poem "hails the elevation of the poor and destitute to the status of communal leaders and to the full exercise of sovereign self-rule" (1979:535). The poem is directed against all expressions of self-sufficiency pointing instead to Yahweh's graciousness to the helpless and submissive. It is difficult to read a poem that downgrades human ability "the warrior's bows are shattered" (v. 4), and "a man does not become mighty by strength" (v. 9) as revolutionary ideology. The poem exalts only Yahweh's ability and willingness to rescue the defenseless. The contrasts are not between people of different nations, or social classes, but between the humble dependant of Yahweh and the proud self-sufficient human.

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[11]Other occurrences of this metonymic usage of ꜣapsê-ꜣareṣ are Isa 45:22 and Ps 22:28. See Hamp's discussion, 1977:362. On reading ʿālāw as a divine name in v. 10b see Barr 1968:283.

[12]The demand for a human king in 8:5, 20 is not a response resulting from a perception of God's feebleness or incompetence. Rather it is made in the knowledge of Yahweh's apparently unpredictable and, therefore, unreliable behaviour when the covenant mediators are sinful (cf. 2:22-25, the resulting disaster in ch. 4, and the note preceding the request (8:1-3), which shows a relapse to the dangerous situation of sinful mediators).

[13]This contrast has been discussed by several scholars, e.g. Bourke 1954:82ff.; Hertzberg 1964:84; Willis 1971:289-94; 1972:38; 1979:208 n.29; Péter-Contesse 1976:313.

[14]Samuel acts as though he were a Levite, ministering to Yahweh before Eli the priest (cf. Num 3:5-13; 8:19, 26; 11:28; Deut 18:7). The Elides, on the other hand, do not act as the priests they are supposed to be.

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[15]The rhetorical effect of narrative exposi-
tion is discussed by Booth 1961; Chatman 1978:228-48;
and Sternberg 1978.

[16]Two other possible alternatives have been
suggested for interpreting vv. 13-14. Smith reads
the mišpat hakkōhᵃnîm as object of the verb in v. 12
(as in LXX), suggesting that vv. 13-14 describe cultic
abuse (1899:18). Driver, following Wellhausen, also
sees vv. 13-14 as examples of cultic abuse, but reads
v. 13 disjunctively from v. 12, as in MT (1913:29).
The interpretation proposed here is not claimed to
be superior to Driver's, but simply accounts for
the verse from a different perspective. Smith's
proposal, as well as any other that follows LXX
instead of MT, deals with a different narrative.

[17]The accusative particle here "depends on
a verbal idea, virtually contained in what has gone
before, and consequently present to the speaker's
mind as governing the accusative" (GKC #117). It
also serves to call attention to the parallel between
vv. 12 and 13.

[18]In conjunction with the decision to read
v. 13 with v. 12 (e.g. Hertzberg 1964:32, 34) it has

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been suggested, following LXX, that the final m of hakkōh^anîm should be read with the following ᵓet as mēᵓēt. "They knew not Yahweh, or the right (i.e. the rightful due) of the priest from the people" (cit. in Driver 1913:29). Cf. Stoebe (1973:108) who suggests simply a haplography of m. The chiasmus in MT argues against these emendations.

[19]According to Wellhausen the gam at the beginning of v. 15 requires that vv. 13-14 be seen as cultic abuses. "Denn, da dieses Gleichartiges steigert, so kann v. 13f. nicht dem v. 15f. wie Recht dem Unrecht entgegengesetzt sein, sondern beides gilt als Ueberschreitung der Befugnis, nur das eine in höherem Masse als der andere..." (1871:44). It is quite possible, however, to read the gam of v. 15 asseveratively in connection with the priestly lack of patience to wait for Yahweh to get his share (cf. R.J. Williams 1976:63 #379; GKC #153). When v. 15 is not seen as a further abuse, then, as Wellhausen says, vv. 13-14 appear as the customary practice of the priests at that time.

[20]Willis (1972:55) suggests that the priests desecrated the sacrifice in three ways: taking from

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the cooking pots what was not voluntarily given (vv. 13-14), claiming choice portions of raw flesh (v. 15), and intervening before Yahweh got his share (v. 15). The fact that the priest refuses boiled meat seems to suggest that that is what was offered to the priest. At best, the receipt of uncooked as opposed to boiled meat is only a subsidiary issue. In fact, the priest's desire for raw meat seems more a means of revealing his character and the reason for his impatience to get his due. Nowhere is the prohibition against eating on the blood (cf. Gen 9:4; Lev 19:26; Deut 12:16) brought to bear, as one would expect if that were at issue.

[21]In Ps 10:3-4, it is also the hybris-filled man who rejects (ni$^{\jmath}$ē$\d{s}$) Yahweh. He glories in the desires of his soul (ta$^{\jmath a}$wat napšô). Similarly the priest's servants take whatever they desire (1 Sam 2:16, ka$^{\jmath a}$šer t$^{e\jmath}$awweh napšekā), and the narrator tells us that they contemned (ni$^{\jmath a}$$\d{s}$û) Yahweh's offering. In both cases, the attitude of self-help is exactly that criticized in Hannah's song.

[22]See above on 1:21 for my reading of zeba$\d{h}$ hayyāmîm in this narrative.

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[23]The exact meaning of the verb pll is as yet undetermined. For surveys of opinions see de Ward 1976, 1977; Houtman 1977. For present purposes, however, the context suggests an act of judging and mediation that lessens the severity of punishment inflicted on the sinner.

[24]Tsevat can list only four instances, including 1 Sam 2:25, in which failure to repent of sin is traced to divine agency (1964:357 nn.5-9). He suggests that the explanation of human folly by divine coercion is one extreme in the spectrum of biblical responses to the problem of unrepentant sinners (pp. 355-58).

[25]According to Willis, v. 25 suggests that Eli's sons "refused to listen to him because he had not behaved so as to command their respect" (1971:292). Again, he bases this reading, which contradicts the plain sense of the text, on 3:13, which states that Eli failed to rebuke/restrain them (w^{e}lō$^?$ kihâ bām), and on 2:29, which states that Eli honours his sons more than Yahweh. Clearly these last two verses contradict 2:25, according to which Eli had no chance of persuading his sons because Yahweh had already

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predetermined their response (cf. Smith 1899:20; Press
1938:178-79).

The historical-critical solution to such con-
tradictions is commendable in that it admits them,
instead of harmonizing them by favouring one at the
expense of the other. Press sees 2:22ff., 2:29, and
3:13 as all contradictory and concludes that, "das
führt zu der Annahme, dass an I Sam 1-3 drei ver-
schiedene Hände gearbeitet haben" (1938:179).

It is, nevertheless, possible and even
necessary to relate the two supposedly contradictory
views, or better voices, by paying careful attention
to two important facets of all narrative, namely the
temporal ordering or structure, and the voice struc-
ture, as suggested above on v. 23. Attention to
these parameters of the narrative put the conflict
into proper perspective as a difference of opinion
between the narrator and God.

[26]The three aforementioned keys are: 1. the
divine initiative in Samuel's birth; 2. the
unquestionable sin of Eli's sons; and 3. the undis-
puted innocence of the Israelite people.

[27]Most commentators follow LXX and now 4 QSam[a],

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and insert $^{c}{}^{a}$bādîm after b^{e}miṣrayim. Haplography
caused by homoioteleuton is suggested as the cause for
corruption (e.g. Wellhausen 1871:48; McCarter 1980:87).
As it stands, though, MT stresses the fact of belong-
ing; the house of Eli's father belonged to Pharoah in
Egypt. The revelation came to them in that state and
by implication freed them to become priests to
Yahweh.

[28]The exact meaning of ʾiššê is disputed. From
LXX on, the term has been translated as "offering made
by fire," but modern exegetes have suggested that it
could mean "oblation" (Hamp 1977:424; McCarter 1980:90,
citing Hoftijzer 1967:114-34). Whatever the exact
meaning of the word, the point is that the priests
are granted one specific type of sacrifice or offering
as payment for their services.

[29] The standard treaty form is discussed by
K. Baltzer 1964; McCarthy 1978.

[30]As Driver, among others, notes mā^{c}ôn is
"untranslateable" (1913:37). Seebass suggests that we
repoint to mē^{c}āwōn reading "um der Schuld willen"
(1966:77). On the causative use of min see GKC #119z.
On āwōn as the object of expiation by sacrifice and

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offering see 3:14.

[31]Eli's participation is implied by the 2nd pers. pl. suffix in l^{e}habrî$^{\hat{}Ja}$kem, "to fatten your-elves." selves."

[32]On the meaning of yithall^{e}kû see Keil and Delitzsch 1880:42; McCarter 1980:90.

[33]Cf. McCarter, "the author is quoting or paraphrasing a traditional maxim" (1980:90).

[34]C. Ruhl has constructed the following algorithm to describe the reading procedures commonly used (by all except historical-critics) to make sense of discourse, including narrative.

> If a structure A-and-B can be analyzed as a
> temporal sequence, it will be. If it can be
> further analyzed that A is a precondition for
> B, it will be. And if A can be analyzed as
> a decisive condition—that is, a cause—for
> B, it will be. Only if the first stage—the
> temporal sequence—is not reached, will the
> co-ordinate structure be analyzed as symmetric
> (cit. in M.L. Pratt 1977:156).

The almost total annihilation of the Elide house in ch. 4 should, according to Ruhl's algorithm, be

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identified by most readers as the temporal and causal
result of the word of God presented in v. 31.

[35]Cf. Deut 8:16; 28:63; and 30:5 for further
examples of ytb construed with the accusative of
person (Keil and Delitzsch 1880:43).

[36]Tsevat comes close to suggesting a similar
reading of 2:27-36:

> It would not be unreasonable to assume that
> it is the intention of the story of the house
> of Eli as part of the book of Samuel to lead
> up to the destruction of Shiloh and the
> capture of the ark, to indicate that, far
> beyond bringing kareth upon their family and
> damaging the institution of the priesthood,
> the sons of Eli brought about national
> disaster. This assumption, however, is not
> substantiated in the text. Nowhere are the
> catastrophe of Aphek and Shiloh and the
> long years of Philistine rule over Israel
> traced in any way, however, devious, to the
> conduct of the Elides (1961:207).

His rejection of the type of reading suggested here
for v. 32 cannot be regarded as well founded in view

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of the foreshadowing and explicit prophecies of the deaths of Eli's sons (2:25, 34; 4:11). The Israelite defeat is Yahweh's means of killing Eli's sons. We know from 2:25 that Yahweh was going to kill Eli's sons, and from chs. 5-6 we know that he, in fact, was responsible for the Israelite defeat in which they were killed. Tsevat's original intuition is, in fact, quite reasonable and need not be called an assumption in view of evidence such as v. 32.

[37] The verb _yāṭab_ in the Hiphil is also associated with Israelite military success in Deut 6:18-19.

[38] Modern commentators in favour of reading vv. 33, 35-36 in this way include Budde 1902:21-22; Nowack 1902:17; Dhorme 1910:41; Driver 1913:39-40; Schulz 1919:52-53; Stoebe 1973:117-20; McCarter 1980: 87-93. Others see the supposed references to Abiathar in v. 33 and to Zadok in v. 35 only as uncertain possibilities (Smith 1899:23; Hertzberg 1964:38; Mauchline 1971:55; Miller and Roberts 1977: 30).

[39] From a typological perspective the identifications of the faithful priest of v. 35 as Samuel

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 2

(Thenius 1864:15), Zadok (McCarter 1980:92, "Theodoret
and the Rabbins," [Keil and Delitzsch 1880:45]), or
Christ (Keil and Delitzsch 1880:47; Gutbrod 1956:30-31)
are all valid possibilities.

[40]Cf. Michaels who makes the same point using
examples from both legal and literary interpretations.
"...plain meanings are functions not of texts but of
the situations in which we read them" (1979:33).

[41]For la$^{\jmath a}$dib we must read l^{e}ha$^{\jmath a}$dib for a
grammatically correct text (Driver 1913:39). There
is no need to change the suffixes on the two infini-
tive constructs to the 3rd masc. sing. The idea of
a man who will continue in the Elides' place at the
altar is supposed to cause Eli severe mental anguish.

[42]On the subject of Samuel's multiple roles
see McKenzie 1962:3-18. McKenzie attempts to find
the "real," historical Samuel lying behind the
traditions. He tentatively suggests that the real
Samuel is the leader of the sons of the prophets, as
seen in 1 Sam 10 (p. 16).

As in the case of Moses, however, it seems
possible that Samuel's multiple roles should not
be regarded as contradictory. Whether the

contradiction is seen in historical terms, or in
terms of tradition history is irrelevant. Buber's
comments on Moses are equally applicable to Samuel:

> It is true that the way in which he receives
> the revelation is largely prophetical,...;
> but his activity in history, as leader of
> the people, as legislator, is what separates
> him in character from all the bearers of
> prophecy known to us. For this reason
> Moses likewise cannot be comprehended
> merely as a combination of priest and pro-
> phet; moreover, he is not to be comprehended
> at all within any exclusively "religious"
> categories. What constitutes his idea
> and his task: the realization of the unity
> of religious and social life in the
> community of Israel, the substantiation
> of a ruling by God that shall not be
> culturally restricted but shall comprehend
> the entire existence of the nation, the
> theo-political principle; all this has
> penetrated to the deeps of his personality,
> it has raised his person above the

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compartmental system of typology, it has
mingled the elements of his soul into a
most rare unity (1958:186).

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 3

[1]Cf. above on 1 Sam 2, n. 34, and Pratt 1977: 156 on Ruhl's algorithm.

[2]Stoebe argues that bimqômô is a general expression and does not intend to indicate a deviation from correct priestly practise on Eli's part (1973: 123). He suggests that if Eli's resting place was supposed to be emphasized, it would have been put more clearly. The contrast is clear, though, between Eli in his place and Samuel in Yahweh's temple, and it is supported by its agreement with the other contrasts noted in vv. 1-2. Eli may not be breaking any rules, but neither does he shine when compared with Samuel, as he is in these verses.

[3]On the symbolism of the lamp see Funk and Ben-Dor 1962:64; Keel 1978:188-90.

[4]The first time reader would not be able to appreciate the significance of this mention of the ark. Its appreciation is reserved as a private irony between the narrator and the retrospective reader, who, like Buber and Stoebe, see it as a harbinger of the disaster about to be revealed to and through Samuel. The inability of a first reading to see this meaning is not a point against it, but rather, should

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be taken to show that scripture is amenable to retro-
spective reading.

[5]Cf. 2 Kgs 21:12; Jer 19:3, where ear-buzzing
events are also catastrophes of a national proportion.
"Ein grosses Unglück wird also über das Volk Israel
hereinbrechen..."(Schulz 1919:62).

[6]The verb kihâ, translated here as "rebuke,"
poses a problem. McCarter says this translation
cannot be right in view of 2:22-25. He suggests,
with D.N. Freedman, a relationship to kāhâ "be weak"
(v. 2)—thus kihâ, "weaken, repress, restrain" (1980:
98). This reading, however, does little to alleviate
the dilemma. Eli's rebuke in 2:22-25 can also be
seen as an attempt to restrain his sons. The reader
knows from 2:25 that nothing short of death can
restrain Eli's sons. Is Yahweh judging Eli because he
did not kill his sons himself? The uncertainty about
the meaning of kihâ prevents a certain answer.

One might posit a textual corruption in kihâ,
as a result of metathesis (cf. Ehrlich 1910:180).
Originally, the verb might have been hikkâ, resulting
in a known idiom, "He did not slay them." (For other
occurrences of nkh with a direct object modified by

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 3

b see 1 Sam 18:7; 21:12; 29:5; 1 Kgs 20:35; cf. Jer 5:6.) This reading would solve the dilemma. Yahweh would be justified, as Eli did not try to kill his sons. Since MT is conceivable, however, this emendation is only an entertaining speculation.

[7]Cf. above on 2:29 and Seebass 1966:77 for discussion of this pointing of m^{c}wn.

[8]Most recent scholars agree with Wellhausen (1871:53) that wayyaškēm babbōqer, "he rose in the morning," should be added, with LXX, after "he lay down until morning." This concretization of an indeterminacy (cf. Iser 1978:170-80) is possible but unnecessary, since MT already has ^{c}ad-habbōqer. The preposition implies that the action of the verb ends at morning. The reader does not require the explicitness of LXX to understand that Samuel got up.

[9]Cf. Gutbrod (1956:34-35) who expresses doubts about the contextual suitability of a pious reply on Eli's lips.

[10]The rhetoric of ambiguity is discussed by Rimmon-Kenan 1980/81:185-88 and J.H. Miller 1980/81: 189-91. Rimmon-Kenan describes ambiguity as the co-existence of mutually exclusive readings that

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 3

frustrate the reader's expectation of a univocal,
definitive meaning (p. 186).

[11]Both Budde (1902:29), and Stoebe (1973:126)
suggest that "his words" ($d^e b\bar{a}rayw$) are God's, not
Samuel's. In view of the fact that Samuel does pass
them on both to Eli and later to Israel (4:1), it is
more likely that the words are Samuel's and Yahweh's,
since they originate from Yahweh. Also v. 20, con-
taining Israel's recognition of Samuel's prophetic
accuracy, requires a reason for this recognition.
What could be more suitable than the immediately
preceding reference.to the veracity of Samuel's
words? Cf. Hertzberg 1964:42.

[12]Jepsen discusses the problem of translating
$ne^{?e}m\bar{a}n$ in his article in TDOT (1977:296).

[13]Seebass regards the portrait of Samuel as
a prophet as an "aufgesetztes Licht" that contradicts
the preceding tradition (1967:164 n. 40). In that
tradition (3:1-18), Samuel's familiarity with
Yahweh's word is associated with his cultic duties
under Eli (cf. Schunck 1963:103). The two conceptions
of Samuel, as priest and prophet, are products of
different socio-historical circumstances according

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 3

to Seebass.

In fact, Samuel has difficulty receiving the
word of God in his priestly capacity. His master, Eli,
only comes to realize that God is trying to speak to
Samuel after three attempts. The notice in v. 7 that
Samuel did not yet know Yahweh is as much a negative
reflection on Eli's tutelage as vv. 1-2 are on his
effect on relations with Yahweh. Hence, Samuel's
intimacy with the divine word is not so much connected
with his situation amongst the priests in Shiloh as it
is in spite of that association. Neither is Samuel's
prophetic role necessarily in conflict with his
priestly role.

As suggested previously, Samuel performs
several roles in chs. 1-12. Like Moses, Samuel is one
of the great figures of mediation in Israelite liter-
ature. It would be surprising if he were not portrayed
as a great priest, prophet, judge and seer. Verse 20
says only that Samuel was recognized as a reliable
prophet, not that he was no longer a priest (cf.
Péter-Contesse 1976:314).

[14]Textual emendations and reconstructions
abound for v. 21 (see Stoebe 1973:123 for a selection).

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 3

Noth correctly observes, however, that "Ein zureich-
ender Grund zu einer Text-'Verbesserung' besteht
jedoch nicht; und daher ist es methodisch geboten,
am gegebenen Wortlaut festzuhalten" (1963:399).

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 4

[1]Mauchline suggests that 4:1b introduces a
sudden change of subject. Chs. 1-3 are concerned with
the Elides, Shiloh, and Samuel; chs. 4-6 are concerned
with politics, the Philistine war, and the national
emergency (1971:69). Mauchline has missed the connec-
tion between the two episodes, which are only super-
ficially separate. (Cf. Gutbrod, who seems to be
unable to decide how to view the connection between
chs. 1-3 and 4-6 (1956:38).) They are linked not only
by the theme of priestly sin and its consequent
punishment, but also, and to a much greater extent,
by the probing of Israel's theological-political
order. In chs. 2-3, Israel is troubled by the priests,
who irresponsibly abuse the sacrificial system, there-
by interfering in the regular process of atonement
necessary for normal covenantal relations in the
theocracy. In chs. 4-6, Israel is made to experience
the retributional fruits of its priests' misdeeds in
the form of a national military disaster that is
interpreted as an end to the theocratic system (4:
20-21).

[2]LXX adds "Eli grew very old, and his sons
continued to act more and more wickedly in the

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 4

presence of Yahweh. In those days the Philistines gathered to make war against Israel" (McCarter 1980: 102). Though the LXX reading has captured the crucial features of the Elide family situation, and though it does make a nice associative implication about the connection between the impending war with the Philistines and Yahweh's wrath at the Elide sin, it cannot be said that it is a necessary correction to any obvious deficiency in MT. LXX offers a slightly different narrative, but not a "better" one.

[3]Cf. Booth 1961:154, and Dostoevsky cited by Booth (p. 168), who explained lapses in his story "most of all because, as I have said before, I have literally no time or space to mention everything that was said and done."

[4]Cf. GKC #125e.

[5]The associations of the verb wattiṭṭōš are discussed by Driver (quoted in J.J. Jackson 1962:115) and Campbell 1975:59.

[6]The placement of the interpretation before the description makes use of what psychologists call the "primacy effect" (cf. Perry 1979:53). Once a semantic organization of a set of facts is established

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 4

it will not be altered if subsequent input can be sub-
sumed within it. Hence the first description of the
Israelite defeat has a greater input into the reader's
understanding of the event, and the second can be sub-
sumed.

[7]For detailed examination see von Rad 1951;
Stolz 1972; P.D. Miller 1973; Craigie 1978.

[8]Maier's simple assertion that "MT [$^{\circ a}r\hat{o}n$
$b^e r\hat{i}t$ yhwh] ist allerdings z.t. sekundär entstellt,"
and consequent acceptance of LXX's $^{\circ a}r\hat{o}n$ $^{\circ e}l\bar{o}h\bar{e}n\hat{u}$
is an example of unsupported textual "criticism" at
its worst (1965:47-48; cf. Buber 1964: 823 n.30, whose
reason for deleting the word "covenant" is that it
"in den Mund der Ältesten nicht recht passt"!).
Rather than impressionistic selection of one variant
or another, the exegete should endeavour to determine
the sense of each variant. In the case of "the ark
of the covenant of Yahweh," the description mentions
covenant precisely because it is the covenantal issue
of Yahweh's military duties that is at issue.

[9]Taking the ark as subject of the final
sentence, the elders' reasoning seems less reasonable.
Yahweh has already smitten them. How can the presence

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 4

of the ark save them when Yahweh has indicated his will
to defeat them? It is Yahweh who must be with the
Israelites; the ark of the covenant is only a token
of his covenanted presence.

[10]Discussion of the various names for the ark
and bibliographical information may be found in
Schicklberger 1973:27-28.

[11]Although F. Stolz disagrees with Humbert's
analysis of $t^e r\hat{u}^c\hat{a}$ in other respects, he agrees that
it played a part in the enthronement festival and
that is was a sign of Israel's positive expectations
in 1 Sam 4:5 (1972:48-49).

[12]The statement in v. 6 that the Philistines
knew that the ark of Yahweh had arrived in the
Israelite camp is a narratorial description, not of
the content of the Philistines' knowledge, but rather
of the Philistines' awareness that ($k\hat{i}$) the ark of
Yahweh had come into camp. This knowledge is deduced
solely from the sound of the $t^e r\hat{u}^c\hat{a}$. Hence the
point of v. 6 is not that the Philistines know that
the ark has come amongst the Israelites, but that
they are aware of the significance of the $t^e r\hat{u}^c\hat{a}$.
As the narrator has them say in v. 7, the Philistines

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 4

know only that "gods have entered the Israelite camp."

[13]The description of the ark in v. 6 (simply
ᵃarôn yhwh) cannot serve as an independent witness to
multiple redactions in ch. 4 (as, for example,
according to Budde 1902:34). The narrator who supplies
the title as part of his own narrative commentary is
concerned only to describe the Philistines' reaction
to the entrance of the ark. He uses a title which
appropriately describes the ark with respect to the
Philistines—it is the ark of Yahweh, Israel's
national god.

McCarter's view that the Philistines are some-
how aware of the claim that Yahweh rides upon the ark
is unsubstantiated by the text (1980:106). The
Philistines speak of these gods only generally, and,
never as Yahweh. Besides, it is the narrator who calls
the ark "the ark of Yahweh" in v. 6.

[14]The Philistine view that God smote Egypt in
the wilderness is neither to be emended as incompre-
hensible (e.g. Wellhausen 1871:55) nor viewed solely
as a Philistine peculiarity (e.g. Keil and Delitzsch
1880:55). The mention of the wilderness, as more
explictly that of the exodus, alludes to the saving

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 4

deeds of Yahweh and the initial covenantal experiences.
The period in the wilderness (bammidbār, cf. the
Hebrew title of the book of Numbers) is recalled by
the Philistines' geographical "error" and the associa-
tions thereby recalled to the reader are used to
indicate the seriousness of Israel's predicament (cf.
Jackson 1962:119). "Das Volk setzt den Gott des
Auszuges aus Ägypten und mit ihm das Fundament seiner
geschichtlichen Existenz aufs Spiel" (H. Timm 1966:
521). While it might be more accurate to say that
Yahweh is the one who jeopardizes the fundamentals of
Israelite existence, Timm has correctly apprehended
the impact of the Philistines' reflections.

[15]Ahlstrom observes that ʾaddîr usually appears
in contexts of Yahweh's cosmological or other super-
human acts (1977:74).

[16]On this reading of 2:32 see the discussion
above.

[17]For a discussion of other passages that
utilize such a man-God contrast see Ringgren 1977:
273-75.

[18]Rost observes that watching (m^{e}ṣappeh) is
to be taken in a general sense as "waiting" or

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 4

"expecting" (1926:11-12; cf. Hertzberg 1964:49). On reading the words yak derek as "atop the gate," see McCarter 1980:114.

[19]Contrary to those who would excise v. 15 as a suspicious doublet of v. 2 that contradicts v. 13 (e.g. McCarter 1980:111), or those who, like Budde, would regard it as indicating another source or redaction than that of v. 13 (1902:36), the verse is an integral, functional, and characteristic example of this narrative's literary technique. We have already seen several important examples of this mirroring technique whereby the narrative offers comment upon an item or event by providing a structural parallel to it elsewhere in the narrative. The narrator refrains, mostly, from explicit commentary and allows these parallels and literary links to stand as sole comment. The largest and most important of these parallels is, of course, that which comprises the overarching structure of chs. 1-12. Alter discusses other examples of this important literary technique, 1981.

[20]The messenger's name for the ark is difficult to incorporate into the framework of

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 4

previous observations on the significance of names for
the ark in ch. 4. One would expect him to voice con-
cern for the ark of the covenant of God/Yahweh, given
his interest in the implications of defeat for Israel.
It is possible, however, that as in v. 11 "the ark of
God" is used to express surprise that the symbol of
God is taken by man.

[21]Rozenberg, in a study of the title šōfēt,
suggests that it often refers generally to "leadership"
without intending further specificity (1975:78).
Hence to call Eli a judge after the narrative has
made him a priest is not a contradiction between the
roles of the priest and "vindicator" or "deliverer."
Instead it suggests that both religious and political
authority were exercised by Eli as mediator/judge.

[22]Cf. Brockington 1962:320 who suggests that
"glory" in vv. 21-22 may anticipate its use in later
writers (e.g., Ezekiel) for the concept of God's
presence on earth. Cf. Ps 24:7-10.

[23]Levine, citing H.L. Ginsberg's study of
the usage of kābōd as "body, person," suggests that
although kābōd can mean "glory, honour," "in more
cases than not, we should eliminate the elements of

Notes to Chapter IV -- 1 Samuel 4

greater abstraction, so understandably evoked by
divine associations, and emphasize rather the element
of real presence" (1968:72 n.1). Cf. Rendtorff .
1968:36-37.

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 5

[1]Cf. Alter, "The biblical tale might usefully
be regarded as a narrative experiment in the possibili-
ties of moral, spiritual, and historical knowledge,
undertaken through a process of studied contrasts
between the variously limited knowledge of the human
characters and the divine omniscience quietly but
firmly represented by the narrator (1981:157).

[2]Further discussion of the instrumentality of
foreign nations in Yahweh's dealings with Israel may
be found in Zimmerli 1978:63-64, 218-19.

[3]Detailed treatment of ancient near eastern
comparative parallels to the capture of the ark may be
found in Miller and Roberts 1977, whose special concern
is the theological problem raised for a nation by the
capture of its gods. Rather than reciting their study,
I will presuppose their work and make reference to it
when necessary.

[4]Discussion of the preposition $l^e p\bar{a}n\bar{a}yw$ may be
found in Delcor 1964:148; Stoebe 1973:138-39; Miller
and Roberts 1977:44.

[5]Other biblical examples of prostration as a
sign of deference are found in Gen 44:14; 50:18; Josh
5:14; 7:6; 2 Sam 9:6; 14:13, 22; 17:49; 19:19, etc.

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 5

[6]Several emendations and text-critical explanations for the difficult statement that "only Dagon was left upon him [Dagon]" have been suggested (e.g. Smith 1899:39; Stoebe 1973:139). It is possible, however, that MT is not "meaningless" (McCarter 1980:119), and that the significance of the statement will only be understood when a better knowledge of the god Dagon is possessed. The verse states that Dagon's head and the palms of his hands were cut off, and then goes on to say that only Dagon was left on him (^{c}alayw). Perhaps Dagon, a grain god associated with the concept of fertility (Ringgren 1978:142), possessed some distinctive appendage, or anatomical feature that characterized him as the grain god. The point of telling that his hands and head were cut off, but his dāgôn was left would be to show that he was powerless (i.e. "palmless") even when still in possession of his distinctive feature, his dāgôn. Tenuous as this suggestion may be, it does offer a verifiable alternative to the unprovable suggestions of emendation.

[7]The literary reading of this etiology is the opposite of what Long calls the "inferential model" prevalent in historical criticism. The inferential

model regards the story as an answer contrived to
answer a previous question (Long 1968:88-89). In 1
Sam 5:5, for example., the question would be, "Why do
the Philistines skip over the threshold?" The literary
reading of etiology, on the other hand, seeks to
understand the literary function of etiology in its
existing narrative context.

[8]Campbell discerns a three part pattern that
is repeated three times. In order to get a three part
pattern, however, he shifts 5:1 to a position
immediately preceding vv. 6-8. Since 5:1 is satis-
factory where it is, however, its removal and rein-
sertion seems dubious.

[9]The participation of the so-called gloss,
ʾet-ʾašdôd weʾet-gebûleyhâ, in the chiastic structure
lends some support to the rejection of this text-criti-
cal label on the grounds of the inherent unverifiabil-
ity of such pronouncements (against e.g. Smith 1899:
40; Driver 1913:52).

[10]The great "confusion" (mehûmâ) was the
divine weapon used to defeat Israel's enemies (Deut
7:23; 1 Sam 14:15, 20, 22; McCarter 1980:106).

[11]Cf. Campbell (1975:101), "Any triumphalism

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 5

in the plague stories must needs be tempered by the presence of an unspoken but menacing implication for Israel."

[12]The description of the ark as "the ark of God" in v. 10a rather than as "the ark of Israel's God" (vv. 7-9, 10b, 11) has been taken to indicate a separate source or tradition (e.g. Maier 1965:48). It should be noted that the "ark of God" in v. 10a occurs in a narrative description immediately subsequent to v. 9 in which there is an emphasis on the divine/ human contrast. It may be significant, therefore, that the narrator should say that they sent the "ark of God" away, rather than the "ark of Israel's God." Within ch. 5 one notes that, with the exception of a narrational element in v. 8, the "ark of Israel's God" is used by the Philistines, for whom it is natural to speak of the ark in political terms.

[13]D. Daube (1963:75) discusses this parallel in greater detail on account of the puzzling first person singular expression attributed to the Ekronites in v. 10.

[14]Cf. Bourke (1954:99), "He [the narrator] presupposes the sort of audience that would be steeped

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 5

in Hebrew tradition, and that would know the story of the exodus off by heart. For such an audience the significance of this story would emerge spontaneously (and therefore quite compellingly) from the facts themselves."

[15]It should be recalled that Yahweh's non-appearance and passivity in vv. 1-5 meet the specific rhetorical requirements of that particular "conflict." He effortlessly dominates Dagon, without lifting so much as a finger. See above on vv. 1-5.

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 6

[1]Genette (1980) provides detailed analysis of narrative time relations; cf.Chatman 1978:63-84. For analysis of similar narrative prolepses in the books of Samuel see Willis 1973:294-314.

[2]Cf. Milgrom's discussion of the ʾāšām case in Lev 5:17-19:

> He who suffers in body or conscience without knowing the cause suspects that he is being punished by God for trespassing on his sanctums. In this respect, ancient Israel is no different from its environment, where unconscious sanctum trespass was identified as a prime cause for divine retribution (e.g., ANET pp. 34-36, 391-92) (1976:768).

Levine, in a discussion of 1 Sam 6:3 notes the appropriateness of the ʾāšām in the Philistine case. The Philistines had inadvertently trespassed on the sanctity of Yahweh's ark in the course of handling it. Although they did intend to capture and keep it, they were ignorant of its sanctity, of the proper procedure for handling it, and of the penalties for trespass. "The ʾāšām thus emerges as a response to misfortune; when the causes of misfortune

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 6

are not fully identified, and an element of uncertainty exists" (Levine 1974:94).

The numerous emendations, literary-critical operations, and unusual readings for the second half of v. 3 are obviated by Levine's observations. (See Stoebe 1973:146; Miller and Roberts 1977:52-54; McCarter 1980:129, 133 for examples.) The priests prescribe an ʾāšām because the people know that something has to be done, but do not know what. The healing of the people after they have sent the ʾāšām will explain the plague to them because the ʾāšām is successful. The final sentence of v. 3 thus predicates the knowledge of why Yahweh's hand is against the Philistines to the successful result of the ʾāšām. The people will know how they have been healed, that is, by an ʾāšām, a sacrifice for inadvertent trespass.

[3]See McCarter 1980:133 for a discussion of the correct translation of ʾargaz. Ehrlich (1902:189) offers the plausible suggestion that ʾargaz is simply a textual corruption of ʾarôn.

[4]Most scholars have chosen to follow the LXX here, reading "they rejoiced to meet it" (e.g. McCarter 1980:130, who also adds an unattested verb "they ran

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 6

rejoicing to meet it"). Given the flexibility of text-criticism, however, one may choose to view the LXX reading as either "pregnant...[and] so much more forcible and idiomatic" (Driver 1913:57), or as "a free translation"(De Boer 1938:63). MT is acceptable as is, and makes good sense when lir'ōt is translated as a verbal noun, object of the verb śmḥ (cf. R.J. Williams 1976:35 #193, GKC #114m).

[5]Contrary to Schulz, the double śām is not to be reduced to one and explained as dittography (1919: 105). The narrator attracted the reader's attention to the divine-cart driver's straight path in v. 12 by multiple descriptions. Now he does the same for the choice of a final stopping place, noting by the double śām that the cart stops exactly where a large stone is located. As Wellhausen notes, the stopping place is important (1871:65). It indicates the cart-driver's intentions, which are correctly perceived by those Israelites in attendance in v. 14, who use the cart and cattle to offer a holocaust to Yahweh (Budde 1902:45). It is important to note at this point, however, that the text does not say that the ʿōlâ was offered on the stone. Though that action

Notes to Chapter IV.- 1 Samuel 6

is implied by the text, and inferred by most readers, it is never made an explicit part of the narrative (against Schicklberger 1973:120).

[6]Contrary to Mauchline's belief, the notice about the Levites does not "make it plain that the sacrifice was made by properly authorized persons" (1971:80; cf. Hertzberg 1964:60). The Levites are only subjects of two verbs, both of which describe actions done to the ark and box. As a matter of fact, the only persons who sacrifice at all in v. 15 are the Bethshemeshites.

[7]Discussion of the textual problems in v. 18 may be found in Driver 1913:57-58; Stoebe 1973:148-49; and McCarter 1980:130-31.

[8]On the pointing of $^{c}\underline{d}$ see Stoebe 1973:148.

[9]Resort to LXX is initially made because Yahweh's devastation of the Bethshemeshites on account of their looking "on" or "in the ark" is said to be out of tune with the preceding context (e.g. Mauchline 1971: 81). LXX justifies Yahweh's slaughter on account of the sons of Jeconiah, who did not participate in the joyful reception of the ark (<u>kai ouk ēsmenisan hoi huioi iexoniou en tois andrasin baithsamys</u>).

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 6

As Stoebe has observed, however, if Yahweh has just
cause for punishing because of some wrong actions
amongst those present, there is no call for the people
as a whole to take exception to the punishment (1973:
153; cf. Campbell 1979:38). LXX has, therefore, as
much or more difficulty with the subsequent context
(v. 20), as is suggested for MT and the preceding
context. McCarter's ingenious adaptation of LXX is
weakened in its dependence on literary-critical hypo-
theses about the text's pre-history in v. 15, hypo-
theses that are not supported by versional evidence
(1980:131). In any case, the reading with LXX or an
adaptation thereof is not warranted when MT is compre-
hensible as it is here. What is incomprehensible, as
the people of Bethshemesh observe in v. 20, is Yahweh,
not the text. See Driver 1913:58-59, Schicklberger
1973:123-26; Stoebe 1973:149; and McCarter 1980:131
for elaboration on the possibilities of LXX.

[10]Both from the preceding context (v. 13) and
the usual meaning of the verb rā²â with the preposition
b, it is possible that nothing more is intended by the
expression in v. 19 than that the Bethshemeshites looked
at the ark. We know from v. 13 that they did look at

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 6

the ark from a distance, since it had not yet stopped
in the field (v. 14). We also know from v. 15 that
the ark was handled only by Levites, in accordance
with the prohibition against profaning the ark.
Since both of these verses are pieces of narration
supplied by the same narrator who gives us v. 19, it
is a fairly safe contextually based assumption that v.
19 intends to say "because they looked at the ark."
From the numerous other occurrences of $r\bar{a}'\hat{a}$ with $\underline{b}$ it
is also safe to say that the preposition functions
deictically, indicating the object of perception (BDB
907 #8a-908; cf. 90 IVd; GKC #119k).

       The inference made by some commentators that
the expression is used in a bad sense in v. 19,
signifying "to gaze at, viz. with an unbecoming
interest" (Driver 1913:58; cf. Wellhausen 1871:65-66)
is unsupported by any consistent occurrence of such
usage elsewhere. Neither does the immediate context
support such an inference.

> There is, however, no other indication that
> this author thought it sinful to look upon
> the Ark. Had he thought so, he would have
> shown what precautions were taken by the

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 6

Israelites before the battle to prevent this
profanation, and would for this cause have
aggravated the plague sent upon the Philistines
(Smith 1899:48).

[11]In contrast to commentators' attempts to
supply the seeing in v. 19 with an adverb that would
demonstrate the Bethshemeshites culpability, the
narrator supplies us with an adverb in v. 13 (in
verbal form) that demonstrates their good intentions.

[12]Cf. Alter, "Broadly when repetitions with
significant variations occur in biblical narrative,
the changes introduced can point to an intensification,
climactic development, acceleration..." (1981:97).

[13]Cf. M.H. Pope, "seven denotes completeness,
perfection, consummation" (1962:295).

[14]Examples of the phrase used to describe
priestly service are Deut 10:8; 18:5, 7; Num 16:9. The
connection between the priestly service "standing before
Yahweh," and the proper maintenance of covenant is
explicit in 2 Chr 29:10-11. The covenant mediator is
also found standing before God in Jer 18:20. In
Deuteronomy the covenant is established with Israel
standing before Yahweh (4:9-14; 29:14). And in

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 6

Ezra 9:15, Ezra confesses the inability of Israel to stand before God because it has forsaken the covenantal laws. Cf. Weinfeld 1970:185-86; 1972:77.

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 7

[1]The examples offered by Miller and Roberts
(1977:25) to support their claim that Eleazar is desig-
nated as a proper priest in 7:1 do not support it.   In
all cases (Exod 28:3, 41; 29:1, 44; 30:30; 40:13; Lev
8:30; 21:8) qdš...l is used of the sanctification of
priests only at the direct command of Yahweh himself.
Similarly, šmr as a description of priestly duties
is, in the examples provided by Miller and Roberts, a
description of a service commanded directly by Yahweh
(Num 1:53; 3:10, 31; 18:3; 31:30, 47).   Ehrlich's obser-
vation that there is a great difference between the
people sanctifying someone and Yahweh doing so, stands
against the argument of Miller and Roberts.

McCarter also wishes to see Eleazar made a
priest in 7:1.   He offers only the weak defense that the
names Abinadab and Eleazar are common in the levitical
pedigress (1980:137).   Both Miller and Roberts and
McCarter see Eleazar's putative priesthood as a satis-
factory conclusion to the "ark narrative."   McCarter
understands that the problem in Bethshemesh was caused
by a lack of proper priestly attendance on the ark.
"But this final difficulty is resolved when Eleazar,
a proper custodian for the ark at last, steps on stage"

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 7

(1980:139). This may be true for McCarter, but not for Israel, which continues to mourn even after Eleazar takes over as custodian (7:2). For a different perspective on the difficulties involved in regarding 7:1 as a satisfactory conclusion to the "ark narrative" see Willis 1979:209-10; Campbell 1979:38-39.

[2]There is no vocabulary in the temporal note that has, so far, been judged the exclusive province of deuteronomistic literary expression.

[3]Cf. 1 Sam 13:10 where Samuel's timing also plays an important part in the narrator's story.

[4]Only ardent devotees could react like the Bethshemeshites do when they seek the ark: "They looked up, saw the ark, and were overjoyed at the sight" (6:13). To appreciate this reception, one must recall that the ark was last seen being taken in a battle that Israel knew was directed by Yahweh against Israel.

[5]I read the participle šābîm, "returning," as expressive of imminent action as in e.g. Gen 6:17; 20:3; 1 Kgs 20:13; cf. R.J. Williams 1976:39 #214; GKC #116p. Samuel is not describing what Israel is doing. (One does not normally "return" to someone

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that one has mourned as dead.) He is making a sugges-
tion about what Israel might do.

[6]On the problem of determining what "judging"
means for Samuel and throughout the Bible see Rozen-
berg 1975:77-86. Keil and Delitzsch arrive at a
result remarkably similar to that of Weiser and Budde.

> Judging the people neither consisted in a
>
> censure pronounced by Samuel afterwards,
>
> nor in absolution granted to the penitent
>
> after they had made a confession of their
>
> sin, but in the fact that Samuel summoned
>
> the nation to Mizpah to humble itself before
>
> Jehovah, and there secured for it, through
>
> his intercession, the forgiveness of its
>
> sin, and a renewal of the favour of its
>
> God, and thus restored the proper relation
>
> between Israel and its God, so that the
>
> Lord could proceed to vindicate His people's
>
> rights against their foes (1880:73; cf.
>
> Gutbrod 1956:54).

[7]Against Veijola it must be maintained that the
Israelites do not have a mechanical trust in the ark
in 4:3, nor is the ark to be taken as subject of the

verb $w^e y\bar{o}\check{s}i^c\bar{e}n\hat{u}$ in 4:3 (1977:37). They know full well

that Yahweh is responsible for their plight and hence

are well-aware that only he himself can deliver them,

if he will.

[8] Ehrlich offers an entertaining reason for

Samuel's choice of sacrificial animal. He suggests

that Samuel chose a tender lamb in view of the

immanent threat posed by the Philistines. The small

and tender lamb would burn more quickly (than an old

goat), thereby allowing Israel and Yahweh to get to

the business of fighting more quickly (1910:193)!

[9] Buber attempts to use Yahweh's singular

action as a solid basis for source analysis in ch.

7. He regards Yahweh's miraculous defeat of the

Philistines in response to Samuel's prayer as a late,

unhistorical conception (1956:117). Buber suggests

that the original narrative ended on the note that

Yahweh answered Samuel without supplying a specific

content to the answer (p. 118). The answer does not

come until 9:16 where Yahweh supplies the true

answer to the Philistines threat in the form of Saul's

monarchy (pp. 127-28).

Buber's excision of vv. 10-12 from the

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 7

"original" narrative falters in the face of the
literary connections between this battle report and
those in ch. 4 (cf. Willis 1979:211), and on the
implications thereby created for the meaning of
Yahweh's renewed action on Israel's behalf. When
such literary links are evident, the case for com-
positional layering is weakened and certainly requires
more proof than a simple assertion that the theology
or ideology of a verse does not agree with one's
perception of its context.

[10] For discussions of geographical questions
entailed by v. 12 see Driver 1913:65; Seebass 1965:
293 n.18; McCarter 1980:146-47.

[11] On the deuteronomisms in v. 14 see Birch
1976:20; McCarter 1980:147. Although the name
"Amorite" is used as a general description of people
in Palestine prior to Israel's entry (e.g. Gen 15:16;
Deut 1:7; Josh 10:5), it is a name more specifically
associated with residents of Trans-jordan (e.g. Deut
3:8; Josh 2:10) (H.B. Huffmon 1976:21).

[12] Uncharacteristically, Buber misses this
repetition and suggests that the expression in v. 15,
"all the days of his life," be deleted as a probable

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replacement for an original numerical description
(1964:837). He supplies, however, no grounds for his
suggestion.

[13]The well-worn paths around the questions of
the actual function of the judges and the meaning or
meanings of the word "judge" need not detain us at this
time. Within the immediate context of chs. 7-8, it is
clear enough that Samuel's judgeship consists more
importantly in his role as mediator, allowing for
renewed covenantal relations between Israel and
Yahweh (vv. 6-15). As the temporal paralleling of
vv. 13 and 15 shows, Samuel's judging Israel is
matched by Yahweh's defensive actions against the
Philistines. With regard to covenantal implications,
Samuel's judging should be regarded as a maintenance
of Israel's commitment by ensuring that stipulations
are adhered to. Yahweh's defense of Israel may be
seen as the protection promised for Israel's obedience.

For a recent survey of research on "judging"
and judges, with an attempt at a new historically
oriented solution see de Vaux 1978:751-73. Additional
bibliography may be found in Wallis 1968:76 n.37.

[14]Cf. Driver, "Observe the series of perfects

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 7

with <u>w</u> conv., descriptive of Samuel's <u>custom</u>" (1913: 65).

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 8

[1]Soggin also notes this connection between the
sons but draws an unusual and unsupported conclusion:

> Diese für die jüngste gehaltene Tradition ist an
> sich auch nicht mehr einheitlich, da sie mit der
> Beschreibung der Söhne Samuels einsetzt und sie
> also Anknüpfungspunkt für die Forderung nach
> einem König nimmt. Beide Geschichten sind allerd-
> ings zu trennen: in der Episode der Söhne Samuels
> haben wir eine Parallele zu der der Söhne Elis
> 2:11ff., und beide haben natürlich mit dem
> Königtum ursprünglich nichts zu tun (1967:31).

Whether or not the sons of Samuel or Eli actually had
anything to do with the monarchy is a matter beyond the
grasp of anyone. According to the narrative, however,
both the sons of Eli and Samuel are intimately and
inextricably involved in the initiation of Israel's
monarchy, as a first reading of even 8:1-5 alone makes
plain.

[2]The modern reader must remember that a distance
of 80 km. was a much greater isolating factor than it is
today. Samuel's control over his sons and even his
knowledge of their actions would always be two days
after the fact.

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 8

[3]Israel's knowledge of the cause of their mis-
fortunes in war comes by way of Samuel's prophecy (4:1)
in connection with reflections on the disaster after
the fact. That Israel does know of the potential danger
of an old mediator with wayward sons is clear enough
from 8:5 alone, however.

[4]On the relation of 8:5 to Deut 17:14 see Birch
1976:24, 137-38; Veijola 1977:68-69; McCarter 1980:161-
62.

[5]Clements observes that the term "nation" (gôy)
has strong political colouring. It is never used in
construct with the name of a deity. Israel is called
the ʿam yhwh but never the gôy yhwh (1977:427). The
case of Exod 19:6, where God says Israel will be a gôy
to himself is no exception; Israel is "a priestly king-
dom, a holy nation" (wᵉgôy qādôš) indicating that
Israel, as a nation, is to be separate from all other
nations, sanctified and holy to Yahweh.

Cazelles' reading of Exod 19:6 supports the
reading of 1 Sam 8:5 being made here. "Israel is a
holy nation that is supposed to draw near to God in
the sanctuary, 'because her national life is dependent
upon priests..., while the other nations have kings'"

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(cit. by Botterweck 1977:430). The request in 1 Sam 8:5
is for a king so as to become a profane nation.

[6]The literary technique of omitting or adding
details to differentiate between actual narrative
circumstances and the characters' perceptions of the
same has already been seen in the case of Eli's death,
where the latter dies before he hears that the ark was
taken (4:17-18). Cf. Alter:

But there is a different kind of biblical
repetition, which is phrasal rather than
verbal or a matter of motif, theme, and
action. Here entire statements are repeated,
either by different characters, by the
narrator, or by the narrator and one or more
of the characters in concert, with small but
important changes introduced in what usually
looks at first glance like verbatim repeti-
tion. Many of the psychological, moral, and
dramatic complications of biblical narrative
are produced through this technique (1981:97).

[7]Buber misses the point when he objects; "Aber
so privatpsychologisch als hätten die Alten nicht eine
unerhörte Neuerung, sondern die Demission eines

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Ministers gefordert, ist nicht zu erfassen, was das
Erzähler als den Widerwillen in Samuels Seele uns dar-
stellt" (1964:731). The narrator does not say that the
elders requested only new judges—far from it—but that
"in the eyes of Samuel"—a significant way of putting
it—the request initially boiled down to the simple
fact of a king "to judge" Israel instead of a judge.

Boecker seeks to buttress Buber's objection
against seeing a technique of characterization in v. 6
by suggesting that one must take v. 7b, which seemingly
"auf die persönlichen Gefühle Samuels gemünzt ist,"
out of its literary context and read it in the context
of its prehistory (1969:25). While Boecker may or may
not be right in his conjectures about the prehistory of
the "Alternativformel" in v. 7, it must be maintained
that the existing narrative context must serve as the
principal standard of any reading. There can be little
surprise that scholars discover numerous sources and
redactions, contradictions and inconsistencies, and
ideological multiplicities in ch. 8 when they read
with strategies such as Boecker's. ("Bei der Interpre-
tation des V. 7b sollte man den unmittelbaren Kontext
nicht überbewerten" 1969:25.)

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[8]Veijola takes the mention of "the people (hā^{c}ām)
as the voicers of the request in v. 7 as strong support
for separating vv. 6ff. from vv. 1-5 in which it is the
elders alone (vv. 4-5) who make the request (1977:55).
Against this one might counter that the issue is cove-
nantal, the rejection of Yahweh's rule by his people.
Hence it is perfectly appropiate for Yahweh to note
that the request for a new sovereign comes from the
people, since the covenant is between the god and his
people. In addition, it should be noted that Yahweh
does not simply say "listen to the people," but "listen
to the voice of the people." One may understand "the
voice of the people" as a reference to the elders, or
simply as implying, with divine insight, that the
elders speak for the people.

[9]Against Buber, who suggests that the past mis-
deeds of v. 8 are inappropriate to their context be-
cause they describe religious failures and cannot be
compared with the theological-political treason of
the request for a king (1964:733-34).

[10]This use of connective alliteration to link
the rebellion of v. 7, the previous rejection of Yahweh
(v. 8), and the making of a king (v. 8) may explain

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why the verb $^c\acute{s}h$ is used only here in the Bible to
describe the establishment of a monarchy. Cf. Harris
1981:79.

[11]This reading of v. 8 goes against the usual
reading of similar "deuteronomistic interpolations"
in the deuteronomistic history, all of which are
supposed to trace the cause of Israel's downfall to
its continual sin and apostasy (see Cross 1973:274-86),
and hence might seem contrary to the supposed known
intention of its larger literary context. Closer
examination of other "deuteronomisticisms" in their
immediate narrative context might reveal a more
variegated deuteronomistic ideology, however. Hence
before a close reading of a "deuteronomistic interpo-
lation" such as v. 8 may be rejected as contradicting
the known purposes of the deuteronomist(s), a close
rereading of interpolations should be made, in which
they are read in relation to their immediate literary
context.

It is probable that the single-minded deuteron-
omist, a hypostasization built from the isolation of
all his words from their immediate context (or even
worse, from forcing contexts to agree with isolated

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deuteronomistic interpolations), will appear as a much more complex fellow once he is read in context. The more recent redactional analyses of deuteronomistic literature reveal an increasing awareness of its complexity (e.g. Smend 1971, who saw two differing deuteronomists (DtrG, DtrN), but now (1978:123) sees three (DtrH, DtrP, DtrN). Cf. Dietrich 1972; Veijola 1975; 1977; Bickert 1979; Friedman 1981). As was once the case in Pentateuchal studies, the initial isolation of a unitary literary strand, or in this case, redaction, gives way to a more nuanced reading in which one speaks of J1, J2, J3..., or Dtrs H, P, and N. The literary alternative to this process of redactional reductio ad absurdum, which ultimately results in a new deuteronomist with each change in context, is to avoid premature attributions of authorship or redaction, waiting until a detailed contextual reading of all the literature has been made.

[12]Veijola has shown that the phrase $h\bar{a}^c\bar{e}d$ $t\bar{a}^c\hat{i}d$ $b\bar{a}hem$ must be understood as covenantal in character. Citing 2 Kgs 17:15, he suggests the expression $^c\bar{e}d\hat{o}t\bar{a}yw$ $^{\jmath}a\check{s}er$ $h\bar{e}^c\hat{i}d$ $b\bar{a}m$ should be translated "seine Bundesbestimmungen (bzw. Vertragsverpflichtungen), die

er ihnen auferlegt hatte" (1977:64).

[13]Many different translations have been suggested for mišpaṭ in v. 9 (cf. Langlamet 1970:186 n.46). No matter which translation is preferred, the point I wish to make is that the determination of the king's behaviour is made by Yahweh through Samuel.

[14]On the shift from elders in v. 5 to people in v. 10, noted by Wildberger (1957:459), see above on v. 7, and Dhorme (1910:71).

[15]Cf. Budde (1902:55); Dhorme, "Le verbe ᵓmr ne s'emploie pas généralement avec un complément direct" (1910:71).

[16]See Langlamet (1970:186 n.146) for a list of scholars who read vv. 11-18 as a description "de la 'maniere d'agir' habituelle des rois." Cf. Speiser, "As regards mishpāṭ—which has not turned up at Mari— we should now expect it, theoretically, to mean something like 'standard, regulation,' and hence conduct, custom, manner, or characteristic behaviour in general" (1971:282).

[17]Again a great deal of discussion on the "manner of the king" in vv. 11-18 has focused on the question of the anti-monarchic tendency that the

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narrator is thought to be expressing here, while neglect-
ing the simple fact that it is Samuel—not the narrator
—who expresses these reservations about monarchic
administration. Whether these verses are completely
critical of the monarchy (e.g. Boecker 1969:17; Crüse-
mann 1978:72-73), or contain positive elements (e.g.
Press 1938:197; Wildberger 1957:458, 467; Seebass
1965:295 n.22; Stoebe 1973:186-87; Ishida 1977:41;
Talmon 1979:15); whether the monarchic model for the
practises is early Canaanite (e.g. Mendelsohn 1956;
cf. Rainey 1975; Weiser 1962:39; Thornton 1967:418;
Soggin 1972:16) or the later kings of Israel (e.g.
North 1931:8 [Solomon]; Wildberger 1957:458; Cohen
1965:68 [Solomon]; Clements 1974:409 [Solomon]; Fritz
1976:354-55; Mayes 1978:9 [Solomon]), the reader can
only misconstrue the narrator's position if he does
not distinguish between statements made by the
narrator and the characters in the narrator's narra-
tive.

One cannot deny that a narrator may occasion-
ally, or even consistently agree with a specific
character, but such agreement must be studied and then
demonstrated, rather than assumed. E.M. Forster's

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advice stands even biblical readers in good stead:

> So next time you read a novel do look
> out for the 'point of view'—that is to say,
> the relation of the narrator to the story.
> Is he telling the story and describing the
> characters from the outside, or does he
> identify himself with one of the characters?
> Does he pretend that he knows and forsees
> everything? Or does he go in for being
> surprised? Does he shift his point of view...
> (1976:187)?

[18]Budde also notes that what Samuel says about the manner of the king is not given to him by Yahweh (1902: 55).

[19]On the syntax of v. 12 see McCarter 1980:158, who follows Driver's explanation, cf. Driver 1913:67; GKC #114p. Ehrlich regards the entire verse as "ganz und gar ein geschmackloser späterer Einschub" (1910: 194-95). His reasoning is that the commissions of officers are honours, the mention of which goes against the negative evaluation of the monarchy's impact.

[20]On the nature of the king's "servants" see Mendelsohn 1956:20-21; Rainey 1975:95-97; and McCarter

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1980:158.

[21]The emendation, supported by LXX, of bahûrêkem to
b^{e}qarkem, first suggested by Capellus (Stoebe 1973:186),
is almost universally accepted (cf. however Stoebe
1973:186, 188). Not only have the "young men" been
implicitly dealt with in v. 11 (Driver 1913:68), but
they are incongruous in a list of possessions such as
v. 16. Furthermore, their mention here, which Stoebe
notes "stellt nun freilich den starksten Eingriff in
die Freiheit der Familie dar" (1973:188), is at odds
with the ranking of vv. 11-17 from most important to
least important items, a rhetorical technique with
which Samuel tranquilizes his audience. The same holds
true for the order of v. 16 itself, where one would
expect the bahûrêkem to come before the male and female
slaves (cf. McCarter 1980:155 and Deut 5:21).

[22]For a parallel rhetorical pattern see Amos 1:3-
2:16, and Wolff's comments (1977:149). A similar pattern
appears in the prologue to the book of Job (ch. 1),
although there the devastations progress from mild to
severe with a culmination in Job's personal affliction
(2:1-7).

[23]Seebass also notes the disjunction between the

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people's reply and Samuel's warning, but uses it to

draw conclusions about the literary history of ch. 8

(1965:287).

[24]Against Talmon's view that Samuel "took

absolutely no exception to the people's wish to be

like the other nations in the matter of the monarchy"

(1979:10), it must be asserted that Samuel's disobed-

ience of a direct command from Yahweh constitutes the

strongest possible expression of Samuel's revulsion

at the thought.

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 9

[1]For surveys of scholarship on 9:1-10:16, an
episode delimited mainly by content, see W. Richter's
copious footnotes 1970:13-56 (esp. 13-29), L. Schmidt
1970:58-63 and J. Kegler 1977:56-70.

[2]A brief summary of this approach as advanced
by Gressmann, Budde, Buber, and Weiser, may be found
in L. Schmidt 1970:59-60.

[3]See above on chs. 5-6.

[4]Cf. Weinfeld who regards Exod 3:7, 9 as
"ancient formulae" (1972:33 n.5).

[5]Weiser comes to much the same conclusion from
a historical perspective.

Insofern bietet Kapitel 8 doch noch mehr als
nur eine Vorgeschichte der Entstehung des
Königtums, die im historischen Sinn lediglich
als Auftakt zu den in den folgenden Erzählungen
berichteten Geschehen zu verstehen ware. Im
Gesamtaufriss der Darstellung hat es zugleich
die Aufgabe eines Vorzeichens, das die Rich-
tung andeutet, in der die folgenden Erzählungen
verstanden sind (1962:47).

[6]Wellhausen suggests that the information about
Kish's place of residence, mibbin-yāmîn in MT, is

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 9

superfluous in view of the subsequent note that Kish's

great-great-great grandfather was an *ʾîš* *yᵉmînî*. Conse-

quently he inserts, without versional support, *mgbᶜt*

before *bin-yāmîn*, a suggestion that has been almost

universally adopted (1871:70). MT's description is,

however, acceptable as is. Benjamin, by itself, is

perfectly acceptable as a geographical name (cf. Aharoni

1979:210; G.A. Smith 1900:290). Neither is this geo-

graphical information superfluous in view of the subse-

quent note that Kish had an ancestor who is described

as an *ʾîš* *yᵉmînî*. The first occurrence of *yāmîn*

gives Kish's geographical background, the second, his

genealogy (cf. Richter 1970:14).

[7]The lack of the adjective *ʾeḥad* after *ʾîš* in

9:1 marks a deviation from the pattern seen in Judges

and in 1 Sam 1:1, the significance of which is uncer-

tain. One might conjecture that it differentiates

Saul and Samuel, hinting at the differences in the

courses of their divinely initiated careers.

[8]Richter's syntactical objection to 9:2b as

an original element of ch. 9 is not compelling (1970:

25-26). 9:2b can be read as a separate sentence,

unrelated, syntactically, to the prior comparative.

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 9

[9]Buber suggests additional reasons for seeing Saul, at this point, as the chosen one (1956:123, 145).

[10]Yahweh's remark in 1 Sam 16:7 reflects his own experience with choices made on the basis of appearance and stature. Saul's failings have taught Yahweh the folly of choosing a king that will meet with immediate human approval on account of superficial appearance.

[11]See McCarter 1980:173 for a convincing explanation of the definite article attached to the first occurrence of "the asses."

[12]Cf. R.J. Williams 1976:67 #409, 100 #593.

[13]Symbolic interpretations of the journey have been suggested by Bič 1957:92-97, and Stoebe 1957:362-70; cf. 1973:201-02. The most recent attempt to rationalize the itinerary is that of McCarter 1980:174-75. Since there is no obvious significance in the itinerary, the problem can be left for topographical and geographical studies; in a specifically literary study such as this, it would digress too far.

[14]The historical-critical division of chs. 8 and 9 is made possible by the narrator's use of uncertainty in the opening of ch. 9. Since historical

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criticism is predisposed to dissect at the first sign of
disjunction, it is unable and unwilling to struggle
through the uncertainty and so to achieve the participa-
tory understanding that the narrative affords to a
sequential reader. The historical critic is excluded a
priori from an appreciation and understanding of any
narrative that includes the common literary techniques
of suspension and retardation. In anticipation of the
objection that the sequential unity is a total creation
of the sequential reader, one need point only to the
lack of resolution in 8:22. Yahweh had said "Make a
king," and Samuel said only "Go home." The expected
resolution of their differences comes, not surprising
immediately thereafter, in ch. 9.

[15] For the historical-critical position on this
situation see the commentaries and Hylander 1932:139-43;
Richter 1970:17, 18, 23-24, 28, 29, 32-34; L. Schmidt
1970:69-71; Birch 1976:30; and Mettinger 1976:64.
Wilson (1980:175-78) provides a sociological perspective
on the various terms in 9:1-10:16.

[16] Stoebe points to parallel instances in the
Elijah narratives where Elijah is called both by name
and by the descriptive appellation, "man of God" (1973:

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202).

[17]Of course the reader will only appreciate the full effect of this irony after he has been told that Saul will be anointed nāgîd, but this is also true of his appreciation of the entire journey in search of the asses. Once he is told the real meaning of the journey, the reader can make a quick review of the preceding events confirming his suspicions and gaining a full appreciation of the ironies incorporated by the narrator (cf. Sternberg 1978:31).

[18]As Dhorme observes (1910:76), the perfect tense of the verbal adjective ʾăšer-hālaknû militates against Driver's suggestion that derek includes the goal here (1913:71).

[19]An example of a reflective reader is Calmet who, following the Vulgate, makes the irony explicit in his translation of v. 6. "Peut-être qu'il nous donnera quelque lumière sur le sujet qui nous a fait venir ici" (cited by Dhorme 1910:76). Cf., however, GKC #106g.

[20]Smith, for example, says that 9:1-10:16 "begins like a separate book, introducing persons hitherto unknown" (1899:xviii).

[21]In media res is a simple description of the

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literary technique of beginning a story "in the middle."
If we make a distinction between the real, "historical"
order of events (the Russian formalists' <u>fabula</u>) and the
order in which these events are actually told (<u>sjužet</u>,
plot), an <u>in medias res</u> beginning is the opening of a
plot that does not begin where the real, historical
events began (cf. Chatman 1978:19-21, 63-67; Sternberg
1978:8-14, 35-41). In proper "historical" order, the
events of ch. 9 would follow a sequence of: 1. divine
intervention, leading the asses astray; 2. human
response, Saul's search; 3. divine revelation to Samuel;
4. divine guidance and sustenance, Yahweh leads Saul to
Samuel and gives him a quarter shekel, etc.

[22]See Richter 1970:19 n.20 for a list of adher-
ents to this view.

[23]Richter's response to the wordiness of the
reply, in contrast, is to suggest possible expansions
(1970:23-24).

[24]I follow Stoebe's defence of the 2nd person
singular suffix in MT (1973:195).

[25]"Eine gewöhnliche Opfermahlzeit war es gewiss
nicht" (Wildberger 1957:453); cf. Stoebe 1973:195.

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 9

[26]Most translations have not successfully con-
veyed this idea, e.g. RSV, "the people have a sacrifice";
Stoebe (1973:190), "die Bevolkerung ein Opferfest
feiert"; McCarter (1980:165), "the people have a sacri-
fice."

[27]As Richter notes, the supposed discrepancies
between vv. 12b, 13a, 13b, and 22 on who participated in
the sacrifice—people, invited guests, or 30 guests—are
insufficient for purposes of literary-critical division
(1970:20).

[28]Wildberger provides an interesting example of
a reader who contructs a provisional frame within which
to incorporate and understand all of the exposition
hints dropped by the narrator.

> Zwischen den Zeilen kann man sehr wohl lesen,
> dass hier ein geheimer Rat von Vertretern ganz
> Israels unter der Führung Samuels versammelt
> ist, der über das Königtum verhandelt hat und
> dem Samuel nun den vorstelit, den er für den
> gegebenen Anwärter der hohen Wurde betrachtet
> (1957:454).

Wildberger is well aware that this explanation is his
own construction (zwischen den Zeilen) and even offers

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a rhetorical explanation for the narrative's pronounced reticence. "Dass hier nicht viel gesprochen wird, ist nur natürlich: über der Versammlung liegt die Atmosphäre der Konspiration." (1957:454).

Unfortunately, as Weiser notes, Wildberger fails to renounce this provisional frame even when it is contradicted by subsequent information in the narrative (Weiser 1962:51 n.8). Wildberger does, nevertheless offer an example of a reader responding to the literary dynamics of ch. 9, and so his hypothesis provides tangential confirmation of the analysis presented here.

[29]On the arguments for and against emendation of this last sentence in v. 13 see Wellhausen 1871:72; Driver 1913:72-73 (both against); and McCarter 1980: 169 (for).

[30]Cf. Weiser 1962:50:

Nicht zu übersehen ist der eigenartig geheimnisvolle Ton, der die gesamte Erzählung durchzieht. Er ist nicht zu verwechseln mit dem erzählerischen Stilmittel, das die Spannung dadurch erholt, dass es das

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anfängliche Dunkel, das über den Personen und
dem eigentlichen Ziel des Geschehens schwebt,
erst allmählich Zug um Zug erhellt; er erklärt
sich auch nicht nur von dem verborgenen
Hintergrund des göttlichen Plans und Auftrags
her,....

Weiser wrongly suggests that the "geheimnisvolle
Ton" cannot have more than one function. He does, how-
ever agree that an important function is "Dadurch ist
Saul als König in einer Weise legitimiert, die jede
menschliche Einmischung von vorneherein ausschliesst"
(1962:53).

[31]Mettinger gives a judicious survey of the
various positions on the significance of anointment in
his history of scholarship (1976:185-88, see p. 185 n.1
for bibliography). Mettinger divides biblical anoint-
ing into two groups:

> 1. Instances of anointing performed
>   by the people or their represen-
>   tatives.
>
> 2. Instances performed by a human

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mediator on behalf of God
(1976:192).

For Saul's anointing, we are concerned only with the
latter group. Although Mettinger denies the histori-
cal accuracy of Saul's anointment—"we can feel entitled
to infer that Saul was never anointed" (1976:197)—the
fact remains that in the narrative his anointment is
performed by Samuel.

Mettinger concentrates on the political legiti-
mation accomplished by divine anointment. The king is
consecrated to Yahweh and the anointing becomes a visi-
ble sign of divine election (1976:207). The anointing
of a king by Yahweh signals a covenantal relationship
between Yahweh and the king, who becomes a vassal to
Yahweh. In return, Yahweh is obligated to the king as
protector (1976:230, cf. 222). In Mettinger's view,
the leitmotif of the historical cases of anointing was
to express the idea that God had chosen and was obli-
gated to the anointed (1976:230). For present purposes
and in the context of 1 Sam 1-12, where the issue is
the relationship between theocracy and monarchy, equal
weight must also be given to the other side of the coin,

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namely that the act of anointing makes the anointed the
vassal of Yahweh. De Vaux's study exhibits the neces-
sary balance:

> So far then we have shown: that the
> king of Israel was designated by Yahweh; that
> he was the nāgîd, the administrator appointed
> by Yahweh over his people Israel; that he was
> the servant of Yahweh; that these facts of
> choice and dependence were expressed in a
> "covenant" which guaranteed divine protection
> for the king in return for his fidelity; that
> the terms of this covenant were contained in
> a pact which the king had no choice but to
> accept and which had similarities, both in
> form and in content, with ancient Oriental
> treaties of vassalage. All of these charac-
> teristics make the king of Israel Yahweh's
> vassal (1972:162).

Knutsch (1963), who regards all instances of
divine anointing as unhistorical, theological attempts
at monarchic legitimation (p. 58), also recognizes
that divine anointing submits the anointed to divine

authority. "In der israelitischen Vorstellung von
dieser Salbung steht an der Stelle des Pharao Jahwe als
Oberherr. Der Gesalbte ist hier wie dort an die
Weisung des Overherrn, der ihn 'ermächtigt' hat,
gebunden, geniesst andererseits aber auch dessen beson-
dern Schutz" (p. 57). Weisman has subsequently attempted
to harmonize the two kinds of anointing as complementary
steps in king-making (1976:378-98).

[32]Langlamet (1970:188-92) gives an extensive
summary of scholarship on the term $n\bar{a}g\hat{i}d$, including
biographical notes.

[33]Cf. L. Schmidt, who reaches a similar conclu-
sion from a redactional perspective:

Er verknüpft einen Akt, der in der Einsetzung
eines Königs wurzelt, mit der Bezeichnung nagid.
Freilich spricht der Bearbeiter an keiner
Stelle von Saul als $m\bar{a}l\bar{a}k$, obwohl er eindeutig
Saul als König ansieht. Er will offenbar nicht
nur die Grunderzählung so deuten, dass sie von
der Einsetzung Sauls zum König handelt, sondern
er will zugleich dieses Königtum interpre-
tieren. Deshalb verzichtet er auf das Wort

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"mälāk" und verwendet stattdessen "nagid"
(1970:88).

[34]On the role of v. 16 as part of a call narra-
tive see Richter 1970:13&56, 136-81; Birch 1976:35-42,
and the objections to the latter's analysis by Walters
1978:69-70 (cf. Seebass 1967:163 n.36). Further biblio-
graphy is provided by Mettinger 1976:66 n.5.

[35]The slight difference in emphasis—Yahweh
says that he will deliver Israel in Exod 3:8, whereas
Saul delivers them in 1 Sam 9:16—may be accounted for
by the purpose of v. 16, which is to define the role
of the new "king." The difference is also not as
great as it might seem, since emphasis has already
been placed on Saul's role as Yahweh's anointed
designate.

[36]From this perspective one may also understand
the omission of the word $^c\bar{a}n\hat{i}$ from the quotation. Most
scholars insert it in the phrase "I have seen (the
affliction of) my people" on the basis of LXX and Exod
3:7 (e.g. Thenius 1864:36-37). Without "affliction,"
Yahweh appears to say that he has "seen" (had an
insight into) his people on account of their request,
which he regards as fear of the Philistines. For this

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usage of the verb rāʾâ one may compare Gen 37:14; Exod
2:25; Num 24:20-21. Alternatively, reading with LXX,
Yahweh would be saying that he now understands the
suffering that his people underwent in chs. 4-6 on
account of their recent cry to him for a new king.
Either reading is possible, but since MT is coherent,
there is no pressing reason to follow the text of LXX,
which may or may not be an accommodation to the Exodus
passage.

[37] The verb ʿānāhû (Yahweh "answered him")
implies that Samuel was watching out for the man and
that when he spied Saul Yahweh "answered" his vigilance
(cf. Driver 1913:73-74).

[38] ʿāṣar is also used with b governing the direct
object in Job 4:2; 12:15; and 29:9.

[39] L. Schmidt attempts to use Samuel's suggestion
that Saul stay overnight as a means for textual dissec-
tion. He suggests that Samuel originally did not know
what he would say to Saul, and required an evening in
which to receive the word from God (1970:68). The
revelation of vv. 15-16 is, therefore, a separate tra-
dition. Schmidt's suggestion fails, however, to account

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for the wordplay on nāgîd throughout vv. 1-19, and
more specifically for Samuel's verbal irony in v. 19.
Is it reasonable to regard such a developed and wide-
-spread verbal irony as the happy accident of amalga-
mated traditions?

[40]McCarter's suggestion that Saul's protest of
unworthiness is the customary response of individuals
called to divine service fails to recognize that Saul
does not know at this point that he is being inducted
(1980:179). Similarly Birch, who observes that Saul
has not yet been told what he is supposed to do,
suggests that Saul's self-effacement is an integral
element in a call narrative (1976:37). Birch suggests
that Saul's objection should be taken to mean that he
feels unworthy of being chosen for divine service
(1976:37). But neither Samuel nor Saul make any
mention of induction into divine service (cf. Seebass
1967:163 n.36). Saul, in fact, objects to nothing;
he simply remarks on the incongruity of Samuel's
rhetorical question and then asks what the meaning of
it is (wᵉlāmmâ dibbartā ʾēlay kaddābār hazzeh) (cf.
Walters 1978:69). How can Saul be said to protest or

object to a remark, the significance of which he does
not even understand (cf. Schulz 1919:137; Gutbrod 1956:
71)?

L. Schmidt's reading of v. 21, also influenced
by the hypothesis of a Berufungsschema in ch. 9, is more
congruent with the details of the text.

Der Einwand in 9:21 macht deutlich, dass
Saul aus einem Stamm und einer Familie kommt,
die für diese hohe Stellung in keiner Weise
prädestiniert zu sein scheinen. Damit wahrt
der Einwand ebenfalls die ausschliessliche
Initiative Jahwes (1970:91).

[41]Cohen also notes that the choice of Saul was
a planned and careful move, but completely ignores
the characterization of Saul supplied by the text. In
his historical reconstruction, Saul is a military hero
before he is chosen. (Cohen places ch. 11 before ch.
9.) "Saul descended from a family of wealth, to judge
from his servants and possessions, and of prestige, to
judge from the length and impressiveness of his
genealogy" (1965:70; cf. Ishida 1977:44). According
to the text, however, Saul's father possessed an

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unspecified number of servants and asses. Whether many
or few is left to the imagination of readers. His
genealogy is not very long and it makes him a man with
no impressive familial ties (see above on 9:1). If as
Cohen suggests, the "old guard" chose a king that they
could easily manipulate (1965:70), it would make more
sense for them to choose the Saul of ch. 9 rather than
the military hero and landed gentryman that Cohen
reconstructs.

[42]Seebass fails to take into account Saul's
obvious confusion in v. 21 when he suggests a contra-
diction between separate narratives seen in vv. 19 and
22 (1967:158). According to v. 19, Saul is to go up
to the high place ahead of the seer, while in v. 22
Samuel personally escorts him. The change is most
economically explained, however, by Saul's hesitation
in the intervening v. 21, rather than by the supposi-
tion of two narratives.

[43]Buber plausibly suggests that the guests, in
view of the events of ch. 8, would see Saul as the
requested king (1956:129-30). Similarly, L. Schmidt,
citing biblical parallels, suggests that the

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combination of an assembly and an offering with a meal
was customary in the election of a new king (1970:84-85).
The narrator, aware of this custom, incorporated such a
scene into ch. 9 by including these aspects in the
existing meal of the "Grunderzählung" (vv. 22a, 24b).

Schmidt seems to suggest that the anachronistic
incorporation of this custom, which became familiar only
after the succession of monarchies, indicates that the
meal was intended to honour the new king. But would
the guests, who had never had a king before, know this?
My point is not historical but literary, and as such
it is not an objection to Schmidt's suggestion but
merely a question of mimetic plausibility. In any case,
the narrative itself leaves the guests' impressions
unstated.

[44]The corrupt portion of v. 24 cannot be
interpreted as is, nor do I have any alternative to add
to the existing list of unsatisfactory emendations.

[45]For an example of gap-filling (concretization)
see the suggestion of O.V. Gerlach regarding the topic
of the roof-top discourse (cited by Keil and Delitzsch
1880:93-94).

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[46]The servant's accompaniment is omitted from description, not because he was not along—he was (v. 27)—, but because the narrator wishes to foreground the bond between Samuel and Saul and the mention of the servant would obscure the otherwise clear description.

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[1]The majority of scholars follow LXX in 10:1,
which contains a substantial addition (e.g. Wellhausen
1871:72-73; McCarter 1980:171; see also Langlamet's
review of text criticism on 10:1, 1978:291-94). MT
gives, however, no appearance of corruption. Conse-
quently there are some scholars who defend MT and
explain LXX as a deviation (e.g. Keil and Delitzsch
1880:96 n.1; Stoebe 1973:197, 205).

Given the lack of accepted principles for
reaching agreement on what our text should be in cases
such as 1 Sam 10:1, the reader of the biblical text
is left with a practical course. Whether one reads
the LXX version of the narrative or MT, one should
stick with that version unless corruption dictates
otherwise. Even faced with an obvious corruption
versional support for emendation, however convincing,
can never be more than incidental since one can never
be sure whether the intelligible reading was formed
before (variant) or after (correction) the corrupt
reading. When scholars think that they must make a
decision between two intelligible variants, the
resulting decision will always be beyond proof or
refutation and is best described as impressionism.

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Examples of text-critical judgements on 10:1 support this judgement:

> The text of the Septuagint is nothing more
> than a gloss formed from ch. ix 16, 17, which
> the translator thought necessary, partly be-
> cause he could not clearly see the force of
> h^{a}lô^5 kî, but more especially because he
> could not explain the fact that Samuel
> speaks to Saul of signs, without having
> announced them to him as such. But the
> author of the gloss has overlooked the
> fact that Samuel does not give Saul a
> sēmeion but three sēmeia...(Keil and
> Delitzsch 1880:96 n.1).
> Da Samuel sich hier seinem Gaste zum ersten
> Male offen und rund erklärt, so ist es in
> der Ordnung, dass er es ausführlich thut;
> die Bedeutung ferner jener Ereignisse v.2ff.
> als Zeichen für das Eintreffen des grösseren
> stand nicht nur nachträglich (v.7.9) als
> bekannt vorauszusetzen, und endlich verräth
> noch das ky nach hl^5 im MT. die Lücke zwischen
> diesen beiden Worten, die enstanden ist durch

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Abirren eines Schreibers von ersten mšhk

aufs zweite (Wellhausen 1871:73).

Both Keil and Delitzsch and Wellhausen use interpreta-
tional arguments based on their understanding of con-
text and literary necessities to support their deci-
sions. The impressionistic element in text-criticism
seems unavoidable.

Before we can see what it is that has

occurred when a text has been changed from

one version to another, we must look at the

effects of the parts of the text concerned

on the whole text; that is, we must inter-

pret their function within both complete

texts. And only after that can we form

any judgement about the nature of the

changes, which must be viewed not merely

as the change of a few words that can be

compared directly to each other, but as a

change from a whole text meaning one thing

to a whole text meaning another (Ellis

1974:118; cf. Greenberg 1977).

Both the examples of Keil and Delitzsch and Wellhausen
exhibit the rudiments of the approach suggested by

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Ellis.

The point I wish to make, however, is that text-criticism is partially dependent on literary interpretation. As such, a preference for one version over another is partially a product of the preference of one interpretation over another. The science of text-criticism is still handmaid to another queen, the art of interpretation. Hence those readers who select a little LXX here, or a mite of MT there, actually compose new texts (variations) on the basis of interpretation and become interpretive composers in their search for the Urtext (theme). As Mowatt points out, such textual criticism is self-defeating when it is seen as an interpretational necessity:

> The author's version of his own work is a
> desirable starting point for the literary
> historian and critic. Where this is not
> available, however, it is doubtful whether
> we are justified in trying to reconstruct
> it. If we do try, we are obscuring our
> own function, which is the interpretation
> of the facts as found (1971:26).

[2]Mayes also notes that the anointing episode

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"was as much to emphasize the role of the prophet in the call and anointing of Saul as it was to indicate that Saul was in fact called and anointed..." (1978:14).

[3]Knierim also perceives the emphasis on Yahweh's role in the anointing—"the king is not the anointed of the people, but of Yahweh" (1968:30; cf. Buber 1956:132)—but fails to observe that Saul is the only Israelite given to know this. At this point in the narrative, the characterization of the anointing as a Yahweh anointing is not so much a polemic as it is a definition with which the naive Saul is indoctrinated.

[4]Perry discusses the literary uses of the primacy effect in his article on literary dynamics (1979:52-58), as does Sternberg (1978:index under "Primacy effect"). It is also an accepted view that Hebrew syntax can lend special emphasis to a word by placing it first in a sentence and so contrasting it with the usual word order, a technique that seems to depend on the primacy effect (cf. R.J. Williams 1976: 96-98).

[5]Richter explains the difference chronologically; "'über meine Erbe' dürfte die ältere Form sein,

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9, 16 enthält die Erweiterung auf Israel" (1970:47).

Aside from this assertion, however, he supplies no

proof of the relative dating, and his explanation

merely serves to show the tendencies of historical

criticism. Such commentary, instead of enhancing the

reader's understanding of the story, diverts it onto

the hypothetical history of the story.

[6]It is for this reason that, as Fritz observes

(1976:351), the term _melek_ is never mentioned in any

communications to Saul, who only comes to know that

he will be _melek_ as well as _nāgîd_ in 10:21.

[7]Tsevat suggests a symbolic meaning for the

second sign. "Whereas the third sign symbolizes Saul's

appointment by God, the second points to his recogni-

tion by the people....Saul is given consecrated food"

(1962:117). Although MT does not say that the bread

was consecrated, Tsevat's suggestion, based on LXX

(and supported by 4QSam[a]., McCarter 1980:172), is in

accord with the general sense of the text. Saul has

crossed over from a secular to a sacral position;

instead of giving bread, he gets it (cf. Wildberger

1957:455).

[8]The incidental note that there was a

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Philistine·prefect at Gibeath-elohim prepares for ch.
15, but cannot be labelled secondary on that account
alone if one admits that a narrator can include anti-
cipations in his narrative (against e.g. McCarter 1980:
182).

[9]Cf. Gressmann (1921:33), who unfortunately
suggests that Samuel presents the predictions in order
to allay Saul's astonishment and doubts. Weiser cri-
ticizes Gressmann's reading as over-interpretation
without textual basis (1962:58). He suggests that
for the narrator and reader, the anointing done by a
man with the authority of a Samuel, accompanied by a
word of God was sufficient proof and required no
additional signs. The signs are, therefore, secondary
accretions (1962:57-58).

Weiser, however, goes too far in his reaction
to Gressmann. The signs are in the text, and though
Saul is never explicitly shown to doubt Samuel, the
purpose of the signs, like the prearranged sacrificial
banquet, is to convince Saul beyond the slightest
doubt, that he is predestined to be the designate of
Yahweh. The signs, therefore, are part of the plan
and not an impromptu response to some doubt that Saul

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may or may not have had.

[10]The series is ûmāṣā'tā, wᵉ'āmᵉrû (v. 2);

wᵉhālaptā, wāhāl e'â, ûbā'tā, ûmᵉṣā'ûkā (v. 3);

wᵉṣā'ᵃlû, wᵉnātᵉnû, wᵉlāqaḥtā (v. 4); (tābô'),

ûpāgaᶜtā (v. 5); wᵉṣālᵉḥâ, wᵉhitnabbîtā, wᵉnehpaktā (v. 6).

[11]Veijola, who follows Press' line of reasoning
(1938:199), suggests that the connection between 10:8
and ch. 13 was logical only before ch. 11 was inserted
between chs. 10 and 13. According to 11:14, Samuel,
Saul and the people all go to Gilgal to renew the
kingdom. "Ein sieben Tage langes Warten auf Samuel
in Gilgal wäre danach sinnlos" (Veijola 1977:49)! In
view of the fact that 10:8 is a prediction that Saul
will go down to Gilgal <u>ahead</u> of Samuel and wait there
seven days, however, there is no contact or conflict
between 11:14 and ch. 13. The only thing they share,
in fact, is a situation in which Samuel and Saul are
both in Gilgal together, but the circumstances are
unrelated.

[12]Alternate defences of 10:8 are presented by
Eissfeldt 1931:8; Irwin 1941:122-24; and J.M. Miller
1974:160-61. The reading presented here was partially

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anticipated by Schulz 1919:150.

[13]Had Samuel wanted to give Saul the freedom to do as he saw fit, he could have said, as Jonathan's armorbearer did, "do all that your mind inclines you to" (^{ca}śēh kol-^{ɔa}šer bil^{e}bābekā n^{e}ṭēh lāk, 1 Sam 14:7), which better conveys a sense of individual freedom. The expression "do what your hand finds," on the other hand, carries a sense of action in accord with external circumstance.

[14]Richter raises a further objection against 10:8, saying that it is in contradiction to 9:13b; in 9:13b Samuel simply blesses a prepared offering but in 10:8 he promises to perform the very specific sacrifices of ^{c}ōlōt and š^{e}lāmîm (Richter 1970:19). Were one to admit a connection between Samuel's appearances throughout chs. 1-12, as Richter, I think, would not, one might note that Samuel has already been trained as a priest (chs. 1-3), has already offered an ^{c}ōlâ (7:10), and has built a sacrificial altar (7:17). Wildberger's objection to using these passages as proof of Samuel's priesthood depends on rather arbitrary assessments of historicity (Samuel as prophet is historical, but as priest is fictitious)

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and, in any case, holds only against those who would argue the historicity of Samuel's priestly activity (1957:462-63). The lesser claim of the literary approach is simple and incontestable—in the narrative, Samuel sometimes acts as a priest. Furthermore, 9:13 does not say that the seer cannot sacrifice, but only that he blesses the sacrifice before the people eat.

On the topic of Samuel's priestly activity see McKenzie 1962:4-6 (Samuel's priestly character is late and unhistorical), and Willis 1972:44-45 ("it was natural for traditionist circles to think of Samuel in priestly terminology").

[15]Budde believes so strongly that the expectation created by v. 6 should not be anticipated that he rejects the early divine intervention as a "falsch eingeruckte Randglosse" (1902:69). Hertzberg shows a similar preference for order and transposes the description of the changing of the heart to the end of v. 10 (1964:77-78).

[16]Cf. Weiser, "Denn die abschliessende Bemerkung (10:9) 'Da trafen alle diese Zeichen ein an jenem Tage' macht eine derartige Erzählung eigentlich überflussig, zumal der Erzähler verständlicherweise es

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nicht für nötig gehalten hat, über den zusammenfassenden
Hinweis von V.9 hinaus von der Erfüllung der beiden
ersten Weissagungen zu berichten" (1962:59).

[17]Abrams defines dramatic irony as "a situation
in a play or a narrative in which the audience shares
with the author knowledge of which a character is
ignorant: the character...says something that anti-
cipates the actual outcome, but not at all in the way
that he means it" (1981:91).

[18]Seebass' suggestion that Saul returned to the
high place where he attended the banquet (9:19) strains
the meaning of the verb wayyābō' in v. 13 and conflicts
with v. 14 (1967:161 n.28). According to Seebass,
Saul's uncle was one of the invited guests at that
banquet. In v. 14, however, the uncle asks Saul where
he has been and Saul replies that he has been out
looking for the lost asses. The implication is that
Saul and the uncle have not met since Saul first left
home in 9:4.

[19]It should also be noted that only a member
of Saul's immediate family or a close acquaintance
would miss Saul and ask him about his absence. An
uncle is neither better nor worse a choice than any

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other within that circle to perform this task for the narrator.

[20]Driver notes the "awkward and unnatural position of the words," but suggests only that v. 16b is a misplaced gloss (1913:83).

[21]Various socio-historical reasons have been advanced to explain why Mizpah was chosen as the site of the two important meetings in chs. 7 and 10 (e.g. Press 1938:199; Noth 1967:58 n.3; Boecker 1969:36-37; Stoebe 1973:215; McCarter 1980:143 n.6, 191). Whatever the historical importance of Mizpah may have been, the reader should first seek to determine the contextual significance of Samuel's choice to reconvene Israel at Mizpah.

Although there is no narrative context that helps us to understand why Samuel held the first convention (ch. 7) at Mizpah, we do gain insight into the second (10:17-27) by comparing it with the first. "Samuel selected Mizpeh for this purpose, because it was there that he had once before obtained for the people, by prayer, a great victory over the Philistines" (Keil and Delitzsch 1880:106). As Keil suggests, Samuel convenes the second meeting at the

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same place—Mizpah—because the item on the agenda is directly related to the agenda of the prior meeting.

Samuel's prior administration of Israel's victory had led to a restoration of theocratic covenant relations. The installation of a king is held at Mizpah to show that the accomplishment of the prior meeting is now being reversed, or at least apparently so, for one must always bear in mind that the ceremony of 10:17-27 is a show staged to·trick Israel into public acceptance of a "king like all the nations" who is really Yahweh's designate. Israel is led to believe that it is rejecting Yahweh in favour of a king (10:19), and hence annulling the reconciliation previously made at Mizpah (ch. 7).

The choice of Mizpah may, therefore, be viewed as a brilliant ploy on Samuel's part. As director of this sham covenant dissolution, Samuel carefully ensures that the stage setting is eminently suited to the ensuing action.

[22]Smith (1899:72) also observes the connection on the basis of Mizpah, but does not draw any significant conclusions therefrom.

[23]That Samuel is said to call the people "to

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Yahweh" ($^{\circ}$el-yhwh) may be a subtle intimation about
the true purpose of the meeting—to call the people
back from their insurrection to Yahweh.

[24]No generic, which is to say form-critical,
assertions are intended by the terms covenant renewal
or annulment, which are simply aimed at describing
what happens in each meeting.

[25]Samuel misses no opportunity to criticize
the people's desire for a king. He describes Yahweh's
saving acts toward Israel as rescues from the hands
of kings, who oppress Israel. Yahweh saves, kings
oppress.

[26]Boecker follows "praktisch alle Kommentare,"
LXX, Vulg., Syr., and Targ. reading "No!" ($l\bar{o}^{\circ}$) rather
than MT's "to him" ($l\hat{o}$) (1969:43 n.2). Since Samuel
has just finished saying that Israel spurned ($m^{e\circ}$astem)
its God, however, MT's reading seems most suited to
that description. A pattern in vv. 18-19 also supports
MT:

v. 18 Yahweh (subject) - brings Israel (direct
object) up from Egypt and
delivers Israel from the

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                                hand of all the kings

                                oppressing it.

v. 19   Israel (subject) - spurns its God (<u>direct</u>

                       <u>object</u>).

       Yahweh (subject) - is Israel's deliverer

                       (mōsî^{c}a <u>lākem</u>) from all

                       its ills and hardships.

       Israel (subject) - says to him (<u>lô</u>), "Give

                       us a king."

Reading <u>lô</u> rather than <u>lō'</u> in v. 19, there is a degree of correspondence (underlined above) between Yahweh's saving acts on Israel's behalf and Israel's spurnful replies. See also below, n.27.

    [27]Veijola denies that <u>w^e^{c}attâ</u> is an element of a covenant form, suggesting that it is simply a redactional connector (1977:41 n.19). In support he suggests "dass die Aufforderung zum Hintreten vor Jahwe in einer direkten Jahwe-Rede—deren Form allerdings schon in V.19a verlassen wird—höchst unsachgemäss klingt" (1977:41 n.20). There is, however, nothing in the narrative to suggest that v. 19b should be regarded as part and parcel of the "word of Yahweh," and in fact the particle (<u>w^e^{c}attâ</u>) itself seems to suggest a new

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beginning, which in context is clearly attributable to
Samuel alone. As to any "Verlassenheit" of the Jahwe-
-Rede" in v. 19a, by which one must assume that Veijola
refers to the third person references to "your God" and
"he," these references are part of a rhetorical pattern
in the oracle:

v. 18   I brought up Israel
        I delivered you

v. 19   But you spurned your God
        and you said to him

[28]Noth approximates this perspective on the
lottery, though he fails to observe the dramatic, which
is to say the staged, aspects of the lottery. "...es
sei denn, dass Dtr diese Entscheidung auch noch vor
der Öffentlichkeit des Volkes ausdrücklich bekannt
gemacht wissen wollte, um der in 11, 14.15 berichteten
Szene den Anschein einer eigenmächtigen Handlung von
seiten des Volkes zu nehmen" (1967:58).

[29]It has been suggested that the question of
v. 22 should be regarded as evidence of two traditions
in vv. 21-22. In v. 21, Yahweh's will is manifest by

lottery, in which answers to questions could only be
yes, no, or silence. In v. 22, on the other hand, the
explicit location of Saul could only be given by some
type of oracular designation (Birch 1976:44). It is
therefore inferred, in conjunction with other considera-
tions, that the two incompatible types of inquiry
belong to separate traditions.

In view of the fact that the lottery process
was stalemated by Saul's absence, however, there is no
reason why the people would not have reverted to the
other, more explicit means of divine inquiry. If we
can understand that the words šā'al byhwh describe
oracular consultation ("by means of the Urim and Thum-
mim," Keil and Delitzsch 1880:107; cf. Albrektson
1977/78:4), we should also be able to understand that
Israel could know which one to use in order to obtain
an answer to a question such as that posed in v. 22.

[30]Regarding the significance of Saul's choice
of a hiding place, 'el hakkēlîm, McCarter also offers
the most balanced view. hakkēlîm "can refer to almost
any kind of equipment or paraphernalia, so that
exactly where Saul was hiding is something we cannot
know with certainty" (1980:193).

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[31]See Richter 1970:25 for the redactional argument. He also lists other proponents of the redactional view on p. 25 n.48. Richter is willing to admit, however, that 9:2 may function as one of Buber's _Leitwörter_, but only on the level of the final revision.

[32]Scholars have been puzzled by the fact that Samuel, who was vehemently anti-monarchic as recently as vv. 17-19, should now so heartily endorse the monarchy of Saul (e.g. Schulz 1919:156). Once it is recognized that the endorsement is a trap, however, Samuel's mixed attitudes are clearly seen as a part of his rhetoric. There is no need to posit separate Samuels in separate sources or traditions.

[33]Birch objects to this reading of v. 24. "Vs. 24 emphasizes that it is Yahweh who has chosen Saul, and his stature in vs. 23 acts as a prior sign attesting to this divine choice. In no way is it suggested that it is because of Saul's stature that he becomes king" (1976:46). But nowhere in v. 23 is there any mention of a sign. In fact, Saul's physical preeminence is made manifest to the people only because Yahweh has already chosen him (as far back as ch. 9), revealed his choice in the lottery, and thwarted Saul's efforts

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to evade public notice as the chosen one.

Birch suggests that "Yahweh has chosen a king completely apart from the normal means of cultic designation which have apparently failed" (1976:46). The failure of the lottery was, however, only apparent and due to Saul's uncooperative behaviour. Yahweh revealed his hiding place and hence reinforced the results of the lottery. Samuel's speech in v. 24 only suggests a plausible reason why Yahweh chose Samuel, a choice first made manifest in the lottery.

[34]I follow Mettinger's recent development of a suggestion by Clark (1971:275 n.3) that the verb $r'h$ is used here (and elsewhere) as a term for election or choice (1976:112-13). Numerous parallels are presented and discussed by both Clark and Mettinger. According to Clark, "bhr and $r'h$ also came to function as technical terms of royal election" (1971:275).

As Mettinger points out, it is the contextual suitability of this translation of $r'h$ in v. 24 that is most compelling. The divine choice has been established in the lottery, and the people are asked if they agree.

This solemn question was not merely rhetorical

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that is whether the people were able to see
(discern) whom the Lord had chosen. What
Samuel's question implied was, whether or
not the people were prepared to recognize
the divine designation of Saul and appoint
him king. The formal consent of the
people was expressed by means of the accla-
mation [y^{e}hî hammelek] (1976:113).

   [35]Dramatic irony involves a situation
in a play or a narrative in which the
audience shares with the author knowledge
of which a character is ignorant: the
character acts in a way grossly inappro-
priate to the actual circumstances, or
expects the opposite of what fate holds in
store, or says something that anticipates
the actual outcome, but not at all in the
way that he means it (Abrams 1981:91).

   [36]Budde provides an example of a reader who is
aware of what Samuel has done—given Israel as king, a
man who is only authorized with the anointing of nāgîd
—, but instead of accepting this, he proposes a con-
jectural emendation to bring the installation into

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accord with 12:1-3. In 12:1-3, says Budde, Samuel re-
calls that he installed Saul as Israel's king, and then
refers to the latter as Yahweh's anointed (1902:72).
Accordingly there might once have been a simple note at
the end of v. 24 that said, "And Samuel anointed him
king" (1902:72).

Budde's conjectural emendation is the result of
a careful reading of the text, but he errs in attempt-
ing to read 10:24 in the light of the subsequent 12:1-3.
Read in the natural order, the reader encounters 12:1-3
after Samuel has revealed that King Saul is actually
Yahweh's designate. From this perspective for Samuel
to identify the king as Yahweh's anointed in 12:1-3 is
not surprising at all.

[37]Commenting on Josh 24:26, McCarthy suggests
that the word sēper should be translated "covenant
document" on the basis of parallels in a Sefire treaty
(1978:223). Given the covenantal context of 1 Sam 10:
25, and the parallels between it and the Joshua
example, it seems safe to assume that such is also the
meaning of sēper in v. 25.

[38]Seebass also perceives the rhetorical dif-
ferences between the mišpāṭîm of chs. 8 and 10, and on

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that basis suggests they are "Parallelüberlieferungen"
(1965:286-87). Unless one presumes compositional
multiplicity, however, a contextual explanation of
such rhetorical differences should preclude genetic
explanations.

[39]The expression "to go with" (hlk ᶜm) someone
is regularly used to show unity and even compact be-
tween individuals and groups (Exod 33:16; Lev 26:23-24,
28, 40-41; Num 10:32; Deut 20:4; 31:6; Judg 4:8; 11:8;
1 Sam 30:22; 2 Sam 7:9; Mic 6:8; Job 31:5; 34:8; 1 Chr
17:8).

[40]Stoebe (1973:214) and DeBoer (1938:56) defend
MT's "army" (haḥayil) against the addition of bᵉnê be-
fore haḥayil. On translating ḥayil as "army" see
Crüsemann 1978:55 n.9 and Eising 1980:351-52.

[41]The opinion that any Monarch receiveth his
Power by Covenant, that is to say on Condition,
proceedeth from want of understanding of this
easie truth, that Covenants being but words,
and breath, have no force to oblige, contain,
constrain, or protect any man, but what it has
from the publique Sword; (1968:231).

[42]Caspari's attempt to convey the covenantal

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implications of the description of transgressors as b^enê b^elîyā^cal with the translation "Verfehmte" has not been well received (cit. by Buber 1956:147 n.3). Even so, Stoebe, though he rejects Caspari's translation, agrees with his general conception. "Ein b^elîyā^cal ist ein Verletzter des Gottesrechtes" (1973:214).

[43]See Levine 1974:16-17 on this translation of minḥâ.

[44]The majority of scholars have chosen to follow LXX in v. 27b, correcting the Hebrew from wyhy kmḥryš to wyhy kmḥdš (cf. McCarter 1980:191, 199-200). Recently the evidence of 4QSam[a] has also been cited as reason to read wyhy kmw hdš, a reading close to that of LXX (McCarter 1980:199-200). From a strictly grammatical, syntactical perspective, both MT and LXX are possible and neither preeminent (cf. Keil and Delitzsch 1880:109; Driver 1913:85).

The reader gains two things from the cross--fertilization of MT by LXX and 4QSam[a]. First, with the temporal information of the new reading, "About a month later" (McCarter's translation), he gets a transitional note telling him how much time has elapsed between the last narrated event and the forthcoming one.

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(The effect is the same whether the transition bridges
10:27 and 11:1 as in MT and LXX, or the additional infor-
mation of 4QSam[a] and 11:1.) Secondly, the reader is
thereby relieved of the task set by the expositional
gap if he follows MT. And while I would not suggest
that scholars have followed LXX or 4QSam[a] in conscious
evasion of the expositional gap in MT's v. 27, it is
quite possible that this <u>interpretational</u> complexity
could influence a text-critical decision. As to the
first gain to be had, one notes that temporal transi-
tions in Hebrew narrative may be explicitly noted
(e.g. 1 Sam 3:2; 6:1; 8:1) and they may not (e.g. 1 Sam
2:27; 4:1b; 9:1; 10:17). Without a supporting argument
from narrative technique, it is difficult to see any
advantage in the versional reading, though there is
certainly a difference. Greenberg's comments on LXX
and MT divergence in Ezek 2 also apply here:

> The two versions thus convey different
> messages in this paragraph, for which their
> distinctive formulations are the necessary
> vehicles. Can one message be made a
> criterion for the other? Which one is
> more original? On what ground will the

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 10

decision be made? (1977:136).

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 11

[1]Cf. Gutbrod, "Dahinter [the intended reproach] steht der auch dem Feind bekannte Anspruch der israelitischen Verbände, als Gottes berufenes Volke eine Einheit und etwas Besonderes unter den Nachbarvölkern zu sein" (1956:80).

[2]The seven day period has troubled some scholars as being too short a time for messengers to cover all of Israel (Wallis 1968:55-56; cf. Gressman 1921:44; Soggin 1967:42-43). Be that as it may, one might also consider the influence of the symbolic significance of the number seven on this suggested time period. Cassuto claims that Akkadian, Hebrew, and Ugaritic examples all prove "that a series of seven consecutive days was considered a perfect period [unit of time] in which to develop an important work..." (1961:13). Perhaps the seven day time period is intended to suggest a "perfect period." If they could not find a deliverer in this period, they would never find one. The text is, therefore, readable so long as one does not presuppose that it is intended to be historically accurate.

[3]The characteristic Israelite response to threatening adversaries, on the other hand, is straight away to "cry to Yahweh" (e.g. Judg 3:8-9, 13-15; 4:2-3;

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6:1-6; 10:9-10, 14-15).

[4]Alternatively, Budde suggests that in the redactional process a description of the wide-ranging travels of the messengers was dropped out to make it look like the messengers went straight to Saul (1902:74). Budde, therefore, also arrives at a conclusion about the redactor's interest, but includes two assumptions in his comment—that there was a separate redaction, and that something has been omitted from the original narrative. Occam's razor may be put to good use when the reader faces such alternatives.

[5]Beyerlin suggests that Saul's two experiences of the onrush of the spirit must be separated, one being a temporary prophetic charisma and the other an empowerment similar to that given to the judges in their battles against Israel's enemies (1961:187-89; cf. Langlamet 1970:193-95). When looking at the differences between the two one should also note that the prophetic instance was uncontrolled by Saul, and so functioned for him as a sign that God was with him. The instance in 11:6, on the other hand, leaves Saul in complete control. In fact, just after the spirit comes on him, Saul gets very angry at what he has heard. The spirit,

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in this case, catalyses Saul into action (cf. Hylander
1932:158-59; Weiser 1962:71).

Turning to the similarities between the two
instances, one observes that they are both examples
of God's direct intervention in Saul's life for the
ultimate purpose of making him Yahweh's designate and,
as such, Israel's king. The first instance aims at
convincing Saul that God is with him, the second, at
stirring Saul into effective action and so, convincing
a reluctant people that their new king is an effective
leader in times of military trouble. The different
manifestations of Saul's charismatic experiences may,
therefore, be seen as the product of the different
contexts within which they appear. They are linked by
the overriding unity of purpose of installing a
theocratically designated king in Israel over a people
that accept him and thereby give up their intention to
sever their political ties to Yahweh. (Mettinger has
also questioned the absolute separation of 10:10 and
11:6, and presents other arguments in favour of their
compatibility, 1976:236-37.)

[6]The common assumption that the words "and
after Samuel" are secondary redactional insertions is

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 11

not favoured by a careful consideration of their context
(cf. Willis 1972:53 n.75; Ishida 1977:47-48, against
e.g. Smith 1899:78; Fritz 1976:356-57; McCarter 1980:
203). Saul's inclusion of Samuel with himself is a
statement by Saul to the people that he intends to up-
hold his ties with the theocracy. The people are
clearly reminded by Saul that they will be fighting
under Saul, Yahweh's willing designate, and Samuel,
the theocratic mediator. Samuel's inclusion in the
call to arms is thus an important preliminary charac-
terization of the meaning of the battle. Though Saul
may have been slow to fulfill the role assigned to him
by Samuel, he leaves no doubt in anyone's mind that he
is mindful of it and of the man who stands over him.

[7]The fact that Saul's threat should evoke the
fear of Yahweh in the people is a good argument against
the suggestion that 11:1-11 does not presuppose even
10:17-27. If the people were not aware that Saul was
Yahweh's chosen king whom they had acclaimed, why should
they fear Yahweh when Saul, the supposedly unknown
farmer, had made the threat? Only the reader is aware
that Saul's behaviour is conditioned by an onslaught
of God's spirit (v. 7), since that fact is only manifest

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in a narratorial description. That the onslaught of
the divine spirit was not readily ascertainable by the
people is evidenced already in 10:10-11, a manifesta-
tion even more obvious than 11:7.

[8]Some commentators have regarded the large
numbers of v. 8 as fantastic and hence, spurious
(Smith 1899:78-79; Budde 1902:75; Nowack 1902:51;
Hertzberg 1964:93). Others have explained that the
turnout was so large because Saul had issued a call for
a general levy of all Israelites (Keil and Delitzsch
1880:112; Stoebe 1973:22). A third possibility is that
the word ꜣelep, usually translated as "thousand,"
refers to a military unit comprised of a variable num-
ber of men (E. Meyer 1906:498; Mendenhall 1968:52-66;
Gottwald 1979:270-76; McCarter 1980:204). This last
possibility would reduce the response to a more credible
level. Finally, it is possible that the large numbers
are intended to emphasize the great extent of the
response to Saul's call, an emphasis already seen in
the expression "as one man" in v. 7.

[9]Ishida also recognizes that the plural
wayyōꜣmᵉrû in v. 9a focuses the reader's attention on
the question of the people's response to the call.

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(1977:47). With reference to the question posed in 10:
27, "How will this (Saul's kingship) save us (yōšiᶜēnû)?"
the possibilities with respect to 11:9 and the tᵉšuᶜâ
promised therein remain the same. Either the anonymous
subjects have decided that Saul is capable, or they
have concluded that their own assembled strength is
sufficient to the task.

[10]Defense of the question as it appears in MT
is made by Driver 1913:87; cf. GKC #150a. The inser-
tion of a negative particle, following LXX (saoul ou
basileusei) is unnecessary.

[11]Knierim also notes the legal implications
of the term bᵉnê bᵉlîyaᶜal. "In all Old Testament
references ᵓîs bᵉlîyaᶜal is a slanderer of God or a
breaker of the sacral laws, a destroyer of justice, a
rebel against the king, or one who destroys life"
(1968:33; cf. above on 10:27).

[12]The fact that Saul thinks it necessary to
justify his prohibition against executing the vocal
dissenters argues against Birch's assertion that the
right to make judgements in the sacral/legal realm has
been transferred to Saul (1976:61). If he did have
that right, he would not have to justify his

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pronouncements.

Saul's insecurity in this area is manifest when contrasted with David's issue of a similar amnesty. In 2 Sam 19:22, Abishai suggests that Shimei should die for cursing David, Yahweh's anointed. David, whose situation parallels Saul's in that he has just regained his hold on the throne, asks "Shall any one be put to death in Israel this day? <u>For do I not know that I am this day king over Israel?</u>', (2 Sam 19:23). David bases his amnesty proclamation on the fact that he has, once again, a firm hold on the crown. Though the death penalty was suggested because Shimei cursed "Yahweh's anointed," David issues the amnesty on his own authority, a far cry from Saul's humble justification.

[13]Cf. Vannoy (1978:68 n.22):

This [Yahweh's deliverance] demonstrated Yahweh's sanction of the choice of Saul to be king, but at the same time it also demonstrated Saul's realization that he was merely an instrument in the accomplishment of Israel's deliverance, which, rightly understood, was to be regarded as a work of Yahweh.

[14]Those commentators who have suggested that

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Saul's amnesty is intended to publicize his magnanimity
as king (e.g. Keil and Delitzsch 1880:113; Smith 1899:
80; Hertzberg 1964:94) are not as far off the mark as
Knierim suggests (1968:33): They have simply shifted
the magnanimity that is Yahweh's onto the shoulders of
Saul. Goodenough's statement that the object of the
amnesty was "to make Saul's claim to kingship include
judicial justice and mercy, as well as prowess in war"
(1928:187) needs only minor modification. What the
amnesty pays tribute to is Yahweh's merciful granting
of deliverance through his designated king, even after
the people have voiced their opposition (10:27) and
withheld the recognition due to a king (11:1-5).

[15]Vannoy also gives a representative survey of
the variations that individual scholars have composed
on the redactional theme of v. 14 (1978:114-127).

[16]See above on 10:26 for the significance of
the expression hlk ^{c}m. Against the argument that only
a minority questioned the monarchy after its constitu-
tion was described and installed, Buber replies:

Einer solchen Auffassung der Sachlage hat
der Erzähler durch sein einprägsames 'die
Tapfern, denen Gott das Hertz angerührt hatte',

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 11

> vorbeugen wollen. So wird eine Majorität
>
> nicht bezeichnet, so wird eine Elite
>
> bezeichnet, did gegen den Strom schwimmt"
>
> (1956:155).

In addition, one might note that the impression created
by 11:1-5 is one of general disregard for the monarchy,
which would seem to confirm Buber's reading of "those
whose hearts were touched" as a minority.

[17]Vannoy also notes the significance of choosing
Gilgal as the location for the renewal, but suggests
that the monarchy ($m^e l\hat{u}k\hat{a}$) that is renewed is Yahweh's
over Israel (1978:82-84).

> Precisely because the kingdom of Saul was
>
> being formally established, the kingdom of
>
> Yahweh must not be forgotten. The intro-
>
> duction of the monarchy in Israel required
>
> that it be understood within the framework
>
> of the provisions of the Sinaitic covenant
>
> so that the continued rule of Yahweh in the
>
> new political order would be recognized
>
> (1978:81).

Vannoy's suggestion, while plausible within the textual
limits he sets to his study (1 Sam 11:14-12:25),

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 11

illustrates the hazard of interpretation on the basis of a limited context. The reader knows from 9:1-10:16 that Saul's monarchy presupposes the continuing higher authority of the theocracy, a condition that initially caused the people to question and ignore Saul's kingship (10:27-11:5). When the people are finally persuaded to accept the proferred monarchy, their renewal of Saul's kingdom constitutes and is recognized to constitute a simultaneous renewal of allegiance to the theocracy to which Saul publicly professes his own allegiance (11:13).

It is, therefore, unnecessary to isolate the usage of $m^e l\hat{u}k\hat{a}$ in 11:14 either to have Israel renew its commitment to Yahweh, or, against historical criticism, to show that the Gilgal renewal is not simply a repetition of the Mizpah inauguration (10:19-25) (cf. Vannoy 1978:61-84). $m^e l\hat{u}k\hat{a}$, in all three of its appearances (10:16, 25; 11:14), refers to Saul's monarchy; when the people finally reaffirm their acceptance of Saul as king, they also accept the fact that Saul stands under the theocratic authority.

[18]Mettinger's suggestion that the verb $\underline{himl\hat{i}k}$ is a "delocutive" verb, "to call someone king," also

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 11

,supports an understanding of the people's act as a con-
firmation rather than an initiatory act (1976:86).

[19]Vannoy, following R. Schmid (1964), suggests
that the $\check{s}^e l\bar{a}m\hat{i}m$ are covenant offerings sacrificed to
ratify the renewed relationship between Israel and
Yahweh (1978:88-91). Objections to the exclusive
association of $\check{s}^e l\bar{a}m\hat{i}m$ with covenantal contexts have,
however, been raised by McCarthy (cit. Vannoy 1978:89
n.84) and especially Levine (1974:35-41). Though the
context of v. 15 seems to invite an understanding of
the sacrifice in covenantal terms, it is equally open
to Levine's suggestion that the $\check{s}^e l\bar{a}m\hat{i}m$ are "gifts"
given to the king and by him to God in celebration of
his new kingship (1974:28-32).

Milgrom summarizes the suggested etymologies
for $\check{s}^e l\bar{a}m\hat{i}m$, all of which, he notes, are conjectural,
as peace, covenant, gift, whole or sound, and repay.
He offers the tentative suggestion, which more or less
encapsulates the general similarity of all the sugges-
tions, "offering of well-being" (1976:769). In 1 Sam
11:15, where the emphasis lies on the fact of reconcil-
iation, it seems unwise to be too specific in one's
understanding of the $\check{s}^e l\bar{a}m\hat{i}m$, given the disputed state

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 11

of the question. Understanding the $\check{s}^e l\bar{a}m\hat{i}m$ as offerings expressing the people's sentiments of acceptance of Saul and so reconciliation with Yahweh also agrees with the generally applicable translation "peace offerings" (cf. Keil and Delitzsch 1880:114; Smith 1899:81; Rowley 1967:122-23).

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 12

[1]Both Thenius (1864:46) and Keil and Delitzsch
(1880:115) also point to the waw consecutive imperfect
(wayyō°mer) in 12:1 as a syntactic support for the
connection.

[2]Die Wendung w^{ec}attā "und nun" begegnet in
über 220 Fällen regelmässig nach einer Art Expo-
sition, der Darstellung eines Sachverhaltes,
die zunächst von der Sprech-Situation wegführt,
worauf dann mit "und nun" zur aktuellen
Situation des Redenden (und des Angeredeten)
zurückgerufen wird, um eine auf die vorangehende
Exposition folgende Reaktion einzuleiten (Jenni
1972:8).

[3]In spite of McCarter's objections (1980:90, 212-
213), Driver's explanation of the phrase "to walk before"
is adequate. "To walk before any one is to live and
move openly before him" (1913:38; cf. Helfmeyer 1978:
393).

[4]Birch (1967:67) and McCarter (1980:213) also
regard the positive sounding reference to the king as
Yahweh's anointed as incongruent with the remainder of
the chapter, which does not use the title "anointed"

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 12

(Birch; McCarter) and is uniformly critical of the monarchy (McCarter; cf. Veijola 1977:94). The usage of the title "anointed" can, however, be understood when viewed from the perspective of Samuel's rhetorical intent. As for the supposed anti-monarchic stance of ch. 12, I will suggest that <u>Samuel</u> is not so much critical of the new monarchy, which is recognized as God-given (v. 13), as he is of the reasons and attitudes displayed by Israel in its bid for political change (cf. McCarthy 1974:102).

[5]The contrasts between Samuel and his sons do not consist of the verbal linkages so often used when contrasts and comparisons are made in biblical narrative (cf. Crüsemann 1978:64-65). This vagueness, however, is exactly what one would expect. Samuel is trying to prove that the request for a king was not warranted by pointing to his own innocence of the crime of abusing the office of judge while avoiding any mention of the wrongdoing of his sons. In support of this reading of the vague contrasts one might also note that Samuel is more specific in his comparison with 8:11-18; he does not take (<u>lqh</u>) livestock, but the king does (8:16-17; cf. Boecker 1969:70; Vannoy 1978:16).

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 12

[6]McCarter offers the interesting suggestion
that the last sentence in v. 5 and the first in v. 6
are conflate variants, "And he said 'Witness,'" "And
Samuel said to the people, 'Witness....'" (restoring a
second c_d after h^c_m with LXX) (1980:210). He opts for
a conglomerate reading using elements from both
variants—"Yahweh is witness," he said,...(1980:208,
210), a solution which removes the difficulty by creat-
ing a new version. The new version also creates a new
problem for the reader, who must now supply a connec-
tion between Samuel's discourse on Yahweh's past his-
tory and the preceding dialogue. If the reader follows
MT, the connection is supplied by the logic of the
alternating dialogue between Samuel and the people.

[7]In contrast to Keil and Delitzsch, who suggest
only that "the context itself is sufficient to show
that the expression 'is witness' is understood" (1880:
116), I maintain that Samuel's interruption incorporates
the last word of v. 5, c_{ed}, into his own sentence, and
hence that nothing needs to be presumed. In other
words, Samuel finishes the last sentence of v. 5 with
his own conclusion, thus shaping the admission of
"Witness" to suit his own purposes.

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[8]Against Smith 1899:85; Ehrlich 1910:207; Birch 1976:65; Veijola 1977:94-95; Vannoy 1978:21-23; McCarter 1980:214, who read v. 6 exclusively as an introduction to vv. 7-12.

[9]Eichrodt says that the sidqôt yhwh are Yahweh's military victories on Israel's behalf, which, as proofs of Yahweh's righteousness, suggests why they are labelled ṣdq (1961 vol. 1:242). As Zimmerli notes, however, "righteousness" is not always an accurate translation of ṣdq (1978:142). Zimmerli touches on a more appropriate understanding of Yahweh's ṣdq with respect to Yahweh's relationship with Israel. "When the Old Testament speaks of 'Yahweh's righteousness' it means rather the social bond existing between him and his people and Yahweh's actions based on this bond" (1978:142). With respect to Yahweh's sidqôt in Judg 5:11 and 1 Sam 12:7, both contexts of recitation of Yahweh's military acts on Israel's behalf, it would appear that these acts are called sidqôt because they justify Yahweh's covenantal claim on Israel. That is to say, Yahweh's sidqôt are those actions that justify (or make right, and hence "righteous") Yahweh's status as Israel's political leader, the divine king. "Yahweh

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is acclaimed as king in the light of the victories
[ṣidqôt yhwh] which he and his armies have wrought..."
(P.D. Miller 1973:84).

[10]Again the reader must be careful not to con-
fuse Samuel's presentation and views with those of the
narrator. The people are only compelled to admit
Samuel's argument if they allow Samuel's suggestion
that the request for a king was partly or wholly
entailed by his own performance as mediator. That the
narrator does not share Samuel's perspective is evident
from his authoritative presentation of the problem in
8:1-3. If Samuel's audience accept Samuel's suggestion,
the reader can only attribute their acquiescence to the
combination of Samuel's persuasive rhetoric and their
characteristic docility, for their admission of his
innocence can in no way be extended to cover the sins
of his sons.

[11]Presentations of the two sides to the insolu-
ble grammatical dispute over v. 7 may be found in
Driver 1913:92-93 (favouring LXX) and Vannoy 1978:24-26
(favouring MT). Cf. König 1897:267 #288k.

[12]Caution in the matter of perceiving formal
literary patterns need not be taken to the extreme of

denying such affiliations unless exact replication of all elements is present. Veijola, for example, denies the validity of reading ch. 12 in the light of covenantal forms, "denn es handelt sich hier weder um einen 'Bund' noch um eine Ordnung des Königtums" (1977:95 n.79). McCarthy rightly maintains the covenantal aspects of Samuel's presentation, even though there is no strict adherence to any idealized covenant form (1978:218).

One might add that the story as developed up to this point requires neither a new covenant nor a covenant renewal. The fact that the people have accepted Saul and renewed the kingdom by making Saul king before Yahweh (11:14-15) is a sufficient expression of their willingness to remain under and within the theocracy. Covenantal relationship at the end of ch. 11—Yahweh having given a conditional monarchy and the people having accepted it—is restored and in no need of repair. If Samuel presents his argument in ch. 12 in covenantal terms, it may be that he is seeking to define the relationship that already exists and, more importantly, to give the people the theocratic perspective on the recent calamities in the relationship.

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[13]Several scholars have objected to the plural verbs in v. 8 and have accordingly followed LXX in which the verbs "brought out" (LXX[A], Targum, Vulgate) and "settled" (LXX[BL], Syriac, Vulgate) are singular, with Yahweh understood as subject (e.g. Stoebe 1973: 233 and scholars cited by him; McCarter 1980:210). As Driver puts it, the plural verb "they settled" "expresses just what Moses and Aaron did not do" (1913:93).

Underlying the text-critical judgement is an exegetical presupposition that Samuel's presentation of the exodus and settlement stories should agree, or be made to agree with the presentations in the Pentateuch and Joshua. It is equally possible, however, that the plurals of LXX are the product of the same harmonistic presuppositions that lead modern scholars to prefer the versional readings. The alternative path, taken here, is to consider the singular verbs as meaningful, important and integral to the context of Samuel's rehearsal, of Yahweh's "acts of justification."

Ehrlich recognizes the validity of the plurals in MT, but short-circuits the interpretation of the verb numbers by shifting to tradition history. "Die Recepta wird heir wohl richtig sein, nur setzt sie eine

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ältere Tradition voraus, die Josua als Nachfolger Moses nicht kennt" (1910:207).

[14]Veijola's use of the words bammāqôm hazzeh to draw redactional conclusions about ch. 12 suffers from inattention to the contextual utility of the words. Before labelling the expression as "einer der unauffälligen dtr Termini, die durch ihren wenig konkreten Inhalt der dtr Sprache ihren Gegenwartsbezug und ihre breite Interpretations fähigkeit verleihen" (Veijola 1977:86), it is desirable, methodologically speaking, to eliminate the possibility that the expression might be contextually requisite rather than stylistically characteristic.

[15]The widely accepted emendation that reads Barak (following LXX) rather than the obscure Bedan (e.g. Driver 1913:93) receives support from the widespread use of allusion in the immediate context. If Samuel is trying to convey a general understanding of the whole period, it is difficult to regard the introduction of an almost unknown character amongst the allusions as compatible with this purpose.

The suggestion of Zakovitch would alleviate this difficulty. He suggests Bedan, identified as a

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Gildeadite in 1 Chron 7:17 is actually another name for Jepthah, also a Gileadite (Judg 11:1, 1972:124-25). The existence of two names for the same man is paralleled by the case of Gideon-Jerubbaal. Originally the list in 1 Sam 12:11 contained only the names Jerubbaal, Bedan and Samuel. A copyist or redactor who knew that Jepthah = Bedan inserted the name Jepthah after Bedan to explain the relatively obscure Bedan. Finally a later copyist, not knowing that Jepthah was intended as a gloss on Bedan, added the words $w^e{}^{\backguillemet}et$ before Jepthah (1972:125).

Whether the reader follows LXX (Barak) or Zakovitch, the result is much the same: Samuel alludes to the period of the judges. If, on the other hand, one follows MT, one must assume that Bedan was a judge of whom Samuel could assume his audience's knowledge, whose memory has been lost. In any case, Bedan is insignificant enough that no single alternative changes the reading of v. 11.

[16]In passages where derivates of the root bth are used to describe relationships between human beings, frequently they describe security that is taken for granted, but which also turns

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out to be disappointed, i.e. a credulous,
frivolous, or even arrogant unconcern and
security. ...frequently bth is used to
describe a person who thinks he is secure,
but is deceived because the object on which
his feeling of security is based is unrelia-
ble. When we take all the passages in which
bth is used in this sense, we get a
picture of everything to which the heart
of man clings and on which he believes he
can build his life, but which will end in
failure (Jepsen 1977:90).

In contrast to this clear linguistic
usage of bth there is another that is even
clearer. The community of Yahweh can know
for sure that it can rely on him (Jepsen
1977:92).

Thus the feeling of being secure in God
is the only certain support for human life.
When Israel lives securely; it is a result
of divine guidance: 1 S. 12:11; 1 K. 5:5
(4:25); Ps. 78:53 (Jepsen 1977:93).

[17]In Deut 12:9 it is implied that this security

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is part of the "rest and inheritance" given by Yahweh
to Israel. Only when these are actualized is Israel to
establish the place of sacrificial worship that Yahweh
shall choose (vv. 8-11). In Josh 23, the achievement
of this security signals a moment for recollection and
recommitment to maintain the achievement.

[18]Among the proposals one sees three variations:
1. Verse 12 is a late insertion (Budde 1902:80), serv-
ing to unite chs. 11 and 12 (Schulz 1919:171).
Apparently late redactors do not see contradictions or
are not bothered by them. 2. Verse 12 is the creation
of the deuteronomist, being an interpretive collage of
traditions in chs. 8 and 11 (Hertzberg 1964:99; Noth
1967:60; Boecker 1969:75-76; Birch 1976:71-72; McCarter
1980:215). Boecker explains the discrepancies between
v. 12 and chs. 8 and 11 on the reasons for and time of
the request with the suggestion that the deuteronomis-
tic redactors were obviously not so concerned with such
disparities as the modern reader (1969:76). Veijola,
who also suggests that v. 12 is the composition of a
deuteronomist (DtrN), recognizes the problem of the
contradiction, which Boecker explains away, and suggests
that 8:1-5 is the view of DtrG while 12:12 is that of

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DtrN (1977:97). His solution is the logical conclusion of the diachronic redactional approach and is, therefore, methodologically preferable to Boecker's apologetic for deuteronomistic literary taste. 3. Verse 12 represents a third unique tradition about the request and occasion for the development of a monarchy (Weiser 1962:72-74, 86; Hertzberg 1964:99; Stoebe 1973: 237-38; cf. Mayes 1978:15).

A fourth position, presented by Vannoy, is that though the request in ch. 8 is not explicitly made with an eye on the Ammonite threat, there is also nothing in the text that would contradict this hypothesis (1978:38-39). This suggestion is a good example of the construction of a retrojective frame with which a reader provides a logical explanation for apparent discrepancies in a text. Such hypotheses may stand or fall depending on whether there is any explicit confirmation or disaffirmation in the text itself. If the text leaves the issue unresolved, the reader is forced to hold such possibilities as the presence of the Ammonite threat behind the request for a king (ch. 8) forever in mind but never incorporated in an unequivocal reading.

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[19]The complex subject of narrator reliability
is discussed by (among others) Booth 1961, parts 2 and
3; Chatman 1978:228-37; Sternberg 1978:see index, s.v.
"Reliability"; Stanzel 1979:199-202; Yacobi 1981).

[20]Against the counter-proposals of Stoebe
(1973:238) and McCarthy (1978:214), who suggest that
the request is not viewed negatively in v. 12, one
must affirm with Veijola (1977:97 n.85) that the con-
text speaks against such a view. The request replaces
the cry to Yahweh in a situation of need, and the
people are subsequently forced to admit that their
request was sinful (v. 19). The thunderstorm is staged
by Samuel so that Yahweh has a chance to show his dis-
pleasure at the request ($rā^c atkem\ rabbâ...b^{ec}ênê\ yhwh$
$liš^{eɔ}ôl\ lākem\ melek$, v. 17). The monarchy in the form
created by Yahweh, where Saul is Yahweh's anointed
designate, is not regarded as sinful by Yahweh and
Samuel, but the request for a king in place of Yahweh
certainly is.

[21]Though text critics have argued for the omis-
sion of either of the verbs ($š^ɔl$, e.g. Wellhausen 1871:
78-79; bhr, e.g. Stoebe 1973:233-34), the redundancy of
Samuel's usage is rhetorically comprehensible and

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therefore suitable (cf. Vannoy 1978:40 n.94).

[22]In support of the semantic arguments for the
apodosis in v. 14, Vannoy has marshalled a convincing
structural argument based on the parallel structures
of vv. 14 and 15 (1978:42; cf. Baltzer 1964:74 n.6).
The parallel, in translation, can be briefly illustrated
here:

	v. 14	v. 15
protasis	If you fear Yahweh and serve him,	
	and heed his voice	But if you do not heed Yahweh's voice
	and do not rebel against his commands	and you rebel against his commands
apodosis	then (wih^{e}yitem) you and your king will be after Yahweh, your God.	then (w^{e}hāy^{e}tâ) the hand of Yahweh will be against you and your fathers.

[23]The final word of v. 15 is an example of a
situation in which we are forced either to stretch the

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usual meaning of a word in the text, to follow another
textual tradition, or to resort to judicious emenda-
tion. Examples of all three solutions to MT, which
Smith in his forthright manner calls "absurd" (1899:87),
are:

1. The conjunction û attached to the
   last word (ûba⁻ᵃbōtêkem) is used in
   a comparative sense, "as it was upon
   your fathers" (Keil and Delitzsch
   1880:119; Stoebe 1973:234; McCarthy
   1978:210; Vannoy 1978:46 n.104).
   Against this option one notes that
   w - comparative is confined to
   poetry (R.J. Williams 1976:71 #437),
   and that when it is used in poetry
   the verb from the first item of
   comparison applies identically
   (including tense) to the second item.
   The tense of the verb that governs
   the first object ("against you") is
   "will be," but for the comparison
   to make any sense one must substitute

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"it was" for the second clause: "The
hand of the Lord will be against you
as it was against your fathers"; "the
substitution of 'it was' in the second
clause destroys entirely the 'paral-
lelism of idea' upon which the idiom
itself essentially depends" (Driver
1913:94 n.1; cf. Thenius 1864:48).

2. Another example of interpretation
that depends on expansion of the
usual semantic range of a word is
David Kimhi's suggestion that the
word "fathers" refers to Israel's
kings: "like wbmlkkm, for a ruler
is to the people like a father to a
son" (the translation is Alan Cooper's,
who brought Kimhi's suggestion and
several parallels to my attention).
Kimhi cites Gen 45:8 as a parallel
(cf. Isa 22:21, and the Phoenician
parallels in KAI 22, 24). Ringgren
discusses parallels in Egyptian,

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Akkadian and Ugaritic (1977:2-6). He
also notes the use of ʾb as a royal
epithet in Isa 9:5 (p. 19). Kimḥi's suggestion
is attractive because it requires no adjust-
ments in the text and because of it contextual
suitability. Understanding "your fathers" as
a reference to Israel's kings, the parallelism
of vv. 14-15 is clear and forceful.

3. The majority of scholars have fol-
lowed the readings of LXX, "and
against your king" (Wellhausen
1871:79; Nowack 1902:54; Driver
1913:94-95) or LXX^L, "and against
your king to destroy you" (Kloster-
mann 1887:59; Smith 1899:88; Budde
1902:80; Dhorme 1910:104; McCarter
1980:212). The reading "and against
your king" completes the parallelism
of the apodoses in vv. 14 and 15,
in which the fate of king and
people are linked, but does not
explain how MT's "and against your

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fathers" might have come about. The reading of LXX^L, which in McCarter's retrojection is <u>wbmlkkm l^{3}bydkm</u>, is proposed as the possible basis of MT's reading. Whether we accept this explanation of MT or not, the reading "and against your king (to destroy you)" is superior to MT in contextual suitability, if Kimhi's suggestion about the meaning of <u>*^{3}b</u> is not accepted.

4. At least three different emendations of the problematic conclusion to v. 15 have been suggested. Schulz, who rejects the reading of LXX^L because he regards the idea of annihilating the people as an anachronism from the time of the prophets, expressed his wish to solve the problem by simply ending the sentence with the words "against you" (1919:172). Goslinga (cited by Vannoy 1978:46

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n.104) suggests that the conjunction
w attached to "against your fathers"
is a scribal error for k, so that
the conclusion is "against you even
as against your fathers." The major
problem with Goslinga's suggestion
is the same as that facing MT (with-
out Kimḥi's suggestion), namely that
it disturbs the parallelism of vv.
14 and 15. R. Weiss turns the
tables on those who follow either
LXX reading, suggesting that LXX^B
("against your king") is a harmon-
istic exegetical attempt to correct
MT, and that LXX^L ("against your king
to destroy you") is obviously an
attempt to bridge the gap between
LXX^B and MT (1976:53). He hypothe-
sizes, instead a minor corruption
in which an aleph was mistakenly
inserted into the final word
wbbtykm, "and against your houses"

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(1976:54). The copyist was influenced
to err by the common expression ^{ɔ}tm
w^{ɔ}btykm and by the three prior occur-
rences of the word ^{ɔ}btykm (once in
conjunction with ^{ɔ}tkm (v. 7)) in ch.
12. Incisive as Weiss arguments
against the LXX readings are in
revealing the ambiguity of the rela-
tionships between the textual tradi-
tions, his suggestion does not, in
my view, succeed against the strong
contextual linkage of vv. 14-15,
which supports LXX.

Additional support for the LXX in v. 15 is
also found in vv. 24-25, which reiterate the structural
and semantic patterns of vv. 14-15. Paraphrased, the
pattern is:

A. Fear Yahweh and serve him because he has benefited
   or will benefit you.

B. If you will not acquiesce, you and your king (!)
   will become Yahweh's enemies and be destroyed.

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This parallel, along with the structural argument from the parallelism of vv. 14 and 15, makes the reading of the LXX an attractive alternative.

Only Kimḥi's reading of MT allows a retention of the Hebrew text in view of the structural necessities of the parallelism between vv. 14-15 and the parallel in vv. 24-25. And since Kimḥi's reading of *ᵓb allows for the same sense as the reading of LXX, which may be a correct explication of an obscured sense of the word *ᵓb, I prefer to follow Kimḥi, in keeping with the principle of retaining MT when it is comprehensible.

[24]It is important to note that at this crucial juncture, when the conditions for Israel's survival under the monarchy are being laid down, no special emphasis is placed on the behaviour of the king as opposed to the people. Rather they stand together under the demand for obedience. When one holds this fact together with the observation that what Samuel criticizes in ch. 12 is not the monarchy, but the request for a king in place of Yahweh, it becomes questionable whether ch. 12 supports the claim that the deuteronomist, supposedly responsible for the construction of ch. 12 (Noth 1967:54-55), saw

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the monarchy as Israel's downfall. According to Noth,
the deuteronomist used Josiah as his model for king-
ship:

> Dtr stand unter dem unmittelbaren Eindruck
> dieser Tatsache, wenn er das unter Josia
> Geschehene nun sogar zu einer allgemeinen
> Norm erhob und dem Königtum als solchem die
> Hauptaufgabe zuweis, für das Einhalten der
> kultischen Bestimmungen von Dt einzustehen,
> und wenn er—durchaus abweichend von der
> Intention dieses Gesetzes selbst—mit dem
> geschichtlichen Aufkommen des Königtums
> geradezu die Verantwortung für die vom
> Gesetze in das Auge gefasste Ordnung des
> Verhältnisses zwischen Gott und Volk vom
> Volke auf das Königtum übertrug. Denn
> dies war in der Tat der Leitgedanke für
> seine gesamte Darstellung der Königszeit.
> Damit hat Dtr diesen Teil seines Werkes
> nicht nur von der Voraussetzung aus, dass
> das auf Mose zurückgeführte Dt seit ältester
> Zeit bekannt gewesen und nun vorübergehend
> in Vergessenheit geraten sei, unter einen

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ungeschichtlichen, sondern auch durch die

Behauptung, dass das Königtum während der

Zeit seines Bestehens für die Beachtung des

'Gesetzes' und damit für die Aufrechterhaltung

des Verhältnisses zwischen Gott und Volk

verantwortlich gewesen sei, unter einen

unsachgemässen Gesichtspunkt gestellt

(1967:94).

The deuteronomist, says Noth, remodels the traditions

about the rise/of the monarchy, incorporating within

them his own interpretation of Israel's downfall as

caused by the failure of monarchy:

> Var [sic] schon in der 'Richter' - Zeit das
>
> israelitische Volk durch seinen fort gesetzten
>
> Abfall fast bis an den Rand des Abgrundes
>
> gelangt (vgl. Ri. 10, 6-16), so übernahm
>
> nunmehr nach seiner Auffassung der Dinge das
>
> Königtum die Verantwortung, und zwar mit dem
>
> Enderfolg, dass—allerdings erst nach längerer
>
> Zeit—dass israelitische Volk durch seine
>
> Könige schliesslich in den Abgrund gestürtzt
>
> wurde (1967;54).

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In view of the obvious contradiction between
Noth's understanding of the deuteronomist's views about
monarchy and obedience to the law, and the deuterono-
mist's own statements on the subject in ch. 12 (assum-
ing that ch. 12 is deuteronomistic), it seems that
there is reason to reexamine the whole question. If
the deuteronomist does not seem to place responsibility
for obedience to Yahweh at the king's doorstep in ch.
12, which is generally regarded as a covenant renewal
that governs the whole of the monarchic period up to
Josiah, then we must either say that vv. 14-15
(McCarthy 1978:210) and 24-25 are not deuteronomistic
or we must reevaluate our understanding of the deuter-
onomistic history.

[25]Speiser has also observed that Yahweh and
Samuel see the request for a king as comparable to
Israel's previous expressions of a desire to return to
a lifestyle such as they had when they were slaves in
Egypt. "Thus 'the manner of the king' as it is stig-
matized in I Sam. 8:11-18, could just as aptly have been
labeled in that context 'the Egyptian manner'" (1971:
283).

[26]Though Buber finds that "die Zusammenstellung

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von JHWH und Samuel in v. 18b wirkt neben Ex. xiv 31
fast wie eine Travestie" (1956:159), the fact of the
matter is that the parallel is there as an integral
part of the scene in which Samuel secures the position
of mediator, first held by Moses, for all subsequent
Israelite history. The parallel with Moses in Exodus
is, therefore, an important recollection of the
fundamental role that Samuel is playing. The only
travesty here lies in Buber's arbitrary division of
ch. 12 into, among other things, original narrative
and inserted miracle story "die mit der Handlung nichts
zu schaffen hat, also einen Erweis nicht im guten Sinn
der Sage, sondern im Willkürsinn der späten Legende
darstellt" (1956:158). Such occasional exhibitions of
homage to historical criticism in Buber's studies are
travesties of his otherwise thorough readings of
biblical texts.

[27]Although this reordering of the reading
experience of vv. 16-25 is destructive of the gradual
realization created by the temporal sequence of the
narrative, it avoids the tedious repetition involved
in first describing the gradual realization, then the
full structural parallel, and finally, the significance

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of each point of contact. In addition, the gradual

realization of the parallel does not seem to play the

important role in 12:16-25 that it did, for example,

in Saul's journey in search of his asses (ch. 9).

[28]Ehrlich suggests a third possible implication

of the out-of-season shower, namely that Yahweh thereby

shows, "dass er den Wunsch seines Volkes nach einem

König nicht an der Zeit findet" (1910:209).

[29]In view of the widespread acceptance of the

opinion that ch. 12 is critical of the monarchy, it is

worth emphasizing that Samuel only says that the show

of force is supposed to convince the people of the

evil of their request (lis^{e}'ōl lākem melek). The

thunderstorm expresses no negative views of the monarchy

of Saul, which is an institution created and implemented

by Yahweh himself.

[30]Boecker suggests that the demonstration of

the divine power at Samuel's disposal was intended

simply to show the error of the request. The request

was an expression of doubt about the power of Yahweh:

Israel hat sich nicht mehr darauf verlassen

wollen, dass sein Schreien von Jahwe erhört

wird, so wie es früher immer gewesen war.

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Die prompte Erhörung des Gebets in einer so
ungeheuerlichen Sache wie der vorliegenden
muss deshalb Israel blitzartig zu der
Erkenntnis führen, mit seinem Verlangen nach
einem König vollig ungerechtfertigt Jahwe
das Vertrauen aufgekundigt zu haben—und
das heisst, vor ihm schuldig geworden zu
sein (1969:85).

This suggestion must be rejected on the grounds
of two considerations in the narrative and one consid-
eration in Boecker's own argument. First, it is
explicitly stated that the thunder and rain are to
convince Israel of Yahweh's <u>displeasure</u> with the request
(v. 17), and that is exactly how Israel takes it (vv.
18-19). When creator is displeased with creature's
behaviour, there is good reason for creature to exper-
ience some insecurity about his position in the world.
Secondly, if Yahweh and Samuel were only trying to
demonstrate the continuing viability of the old arrange-
ment for defence, and were not using strong-arm tactics,
why would not the show of power be more convincingly
vented on one or another of Israel's potential oppo-
nents?

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As the later examples of Martin Luther and
other converts\shows, the thunderstorm is a particular-
ly effective means of convincing human beings that
they are in need of some protection against the fearful
power that is revealed in such storms. The psycholo-
gically coercive power of the thunderstorm could only
be multiplied many times by the weird occurrence in
the dry season, at Samuel's call, and after the expla-
nation that it shows the creator's displeasure!

[31]McCarter confuses the issue:

> The point of the narrator is clear: a prophet
> is the proper and divinely sanctioned channel
> between man and God, and in this respect the
> request for a king is a great evil (1980:216).

Nobody has suggested that the king might replace the
prophet as channel. The king was intended to replace
both prophet and God as Israel's political leader. He
obviates this sort of communication with God in times
of need. What the demonstration does show with reference
to McCarter's perspective, is that even though Israel
now has a king it is still in need of Samuel's inter-
cession precisely because it has made the request and
so has displeased Yahweh. King or no king, the people

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cannot escape Yahweh. They need a Samuel to pray for
them.

[32]A widely accepted reading of the deuterono-
mistic history is that of Noth. He suggests that the
deuteronomistic recognized "dass Gott in dieser
Geschichte erkennbar gehandelt hat, indem er auf den
ständig wachsenden Abfall mit Warnungen und Strafen und
schliesslich, als diese sich als fruchtlos erwiesen
hatten, mit der völligen Vernichtung geantwortet hat"
(1967:100). Given the importance of 1 Sam 12 for the
history of monarchic Israel, and the suggestion in
the narrative that the arrangement is not fair and not
freely accepted by Israel, it seems fair to say that a
reconsideration of the meaning and purpose of the
history is in order. It would be a simple case of
question-begging to suggest that our understanding of
the wider context of the deuteronomistic history allows
us to reject this reading of 1 Sam 12:16-25. The
reading may be discarded, but not until a detailed
reading of the entire history, unconditioned by pre-
suppositions borrowed from previous readings, is made.

[33]"You" (᾽attem) is positioned emphatically

Notes to Chapter IV - 1 Samuel 12

(Driver 1913:95) as a further means of drawing the
audience's attention to its own culpability.

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