

Samuel #1

Are Politics the Word of God? Divine and Human Perspectives on Monarchy in Sefer Shemuel

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1. Judges 8:22-23

²²Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, “Rule over us—you, your son, and your grandson as well; for you have saved us from the Midianites.” ²³But Gideon replied, “I will not rule over you myself, nor shall my son rule over you; the LORD alone shall rule over you.”

שופטים ח:כב-כג

(כב) וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־גִּדְעוֹן מְשַׁלְבְּנוּ גַם־אֶתְּהָ גַם־בְּנֶךָ גַם־בְּרִבְכָּךָ כִּי הוֹשַׁעְתָּנוּ מִיַּד מִדְיָן :
 (כג) וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם גִּדְעוֹן לֹא־אֶמְשַׁל אֲנִי בְכֶם וְלֹא־יִמְשַׁל בְּנֵי בְכֶם הִ' יִמְשַׁל בְּכֶם :

2. Judges 21:25

In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did as he pleased.

שופטים כא:כה

בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם אֵין מֶלֶךְ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל אִישׁ הַיִּשָּׁר בְּעֵינָיו יַעֲשֶׂה :

3. Deuteronomy 17:14-15

¹⁴If, after you have entered the land that the LORD your God has assigned to you, and taken possession of it and settled in it, you decide, “I will set a king over me, as do all the nations about me,” ¹⁵you shall be free to set a king over yourself, one chosen by the LORD your God. Be sure to set as king over yourself one of your own people; you must not set a foreigner over you, one who is not your kinsman.

דברים יז:יד-טו

(יד) כִּי־תָבֹא אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לָךְ וּיְרַשְׁתָּהּ וַיִּשְׁבְּתָהּ בָּהּ וַאֲמַרְתָּ אֲשִׁימָה עָלַי מֶלֶךְ
 כְּכָל־הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר סְבִיבֹתַי : (טו) שׁוֹם תַּשִּׁים עָלֶיךָ מֶלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בּוֹ מִקְרֹב אַחֶיךָ
 תַּשִּׁים עָלֶיךָ מֶלֶךְ לֹא תוּכַל לָתֵת עָלֶיךָ אִישׁ נָכְרִי אֲשֶׁר לֹא־אַחֶיךָ הוּא :

4. Exodus 15:18

The LORD will reign for ever and ever!

שמות טו:יח

ה' יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעַד :

5. I Samuel 8:1-9

¹When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons judges over Israel. ²The name of his first-born son was Joel, and his second son's name was Abijah; they sat as judges in Beer-sheba. ³But his sons did not follow in his ways; they were bent on gain, they accepted bribes, and they subverted justice. ⁴All the elders of Israel assembled and came to Samuel at Ramah, ⁵and they said to him, "You have grown old, and your sons have not followed your ways. Therefore appoint a king for us, to govern us like all other nations."

⁶Samuel was displeased that they said "Give us a king to govern us." Samuel prayed to the LORD, ⁷and the LORD replied to Samuel, "Heed the demand of the people in everything they say to you. For it is not you that they have rejected; it is Me they have rejected as their king. ⁸Like everything else they have done ever since I brought them out of Egypt to this day—forsaking Me and worshiping other gods—so they are doing to you. ⁹Heed their demand; but warn them solemnly, and tell them about the practices of any king who will rule over them."

שמואל א' ח:א-ט

(א) וַיְהִי כִּאֲשֶׁר זָקַן שְׁמוּאֵל וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת בְּנָיו שֹׁפְטִים לְיִשְׂרָאֵל : (ב) וַיְהִי שֵׁם בְּנוֹ הַבְּכוֹר יוֹאֵל וְשֵׁם מִשְׁנֵהוּ אַבְיָה שֹׁפְטִים בְּבְאֵר שֶׁבַע : (ג) וְלֹא הִלְכוּ בְנָיו בְּדַרְכּוֹ בְּדַרְכּוֹ וַיִּטּוּ אַחֲרֵי הַבָּצַע וַיִּקְחוּ שֶׁחַד וַיִּטּוּ מִשְׁפָּט : (ד) וַיִּתְקַבְּצוּ כָל זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל שְׁמוּאֵל הַרְמָתָה : (ה) וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו הֲיֵנָה אַתָּה זֹקֵנָת וּבְנֶיךָ לֹא הִלְכוּ בְּדַרְכֶיךָ עִתָּה שִׁמָּה לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ לְשֹׁפְטֵנוּ כְּכָל הַגּוֹיִם : (ו) וַיִּרַע הַדָּבָר בְּעֵינֵי שְׁמוּאֵל כִּאֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ תִנָּה לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ לְשֹׁפְטֵנוּ וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל ה' : (ז) וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל שְׁמוּאֵל שְׁמַע בְּקוֹל הָעָם לְכָל אֲשֶׁר יֹאמְרוּ אֵלֶיךָ כִּי לֹא אֶתְּךָ מֵאֲסוּ כִּי אֲנִי מֵאֲסוּ מִמֶּלֶךְ עֲלֵיהֶם : (ח) כְּכָל הַמַּעֲשִׂים אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ מִיּוֹם הָעֲלִיתִי אֹתָם מִמִּצְרָיִם וְעַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וַיַּעֲזֹבְנִי וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים כִּן הָמָּה עֹשִׂים גַּם לָךְ : (ט) וְעַתָּה שְׁמַע בְּקוֹלָם אֲךָ כִּי הֵעֵד תַּעֲיֵד בְּהֶם וְהִגַּדְתָּ לָהֶם מִשְׁפַּט הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר יִמְלֹךְ עֲלֵיהֶם :

6. I Samuel 9:16

"At this time tomorrow, I will send a man to you from the territory of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him ruler of My people Israel. He will deliver My people from the hands of the Philistines; for I have taken note of My people, their outcry has come to Me."

שמואל א' ט:טז

כַּעֲת מָחָר אֲשַׁלַּח אֵלֶיךָ אִישׁ מֵאֶרֶץ בְּנֵימִן וַיִּמְשַׁחְתּוּ לְנָגִיד עַל עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהוֹשִׁיעַ אֶת עַמִּי מִיַּד פְּלִשְׁתִּים כִּי רָאִיתִי אֶת עַמִּי כִּי בָאָה צַעֲקוֹתוֹ אֵלַי :

7. I Samuel 12:1-3, 12, 16-19

¹Then Samuel said to all Israel, "I have yielded to you in all you have asked of me and have set a king over you. ²Henceforth the king will be your leader. "As for me, I have grown old and gray—but my sons are still with you—and I have been your leader from my youth to this day. ³Here I am! Testify against me, in the presence of the LORD and in the presence of His anointed one: Whose ox have I taken, or whose ass have I taken? Whom

have I defrauded or whom have I robbed? From whom have I taken a bribe to look the other way? I will return it to you”...

¹²But when you saw that Nahash king of the Ammonites was advancing against you, you said to me, ‘No, we must have a king reigning over us’—though the LORD your God is your King...¹⁶“Now stand by and see the marvelous thing that the LORD will do before your eyes. ¹⁷It is the season of the wheat harvest. I will pray to the LORD and He will send thunder and rain; then you will take thought and realize what a wicked thing you did in the sight of the LORD when you asked for a king.”

¹⁸Samuel prayed to the LORD, and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day, and the people stood in awe of the LORD and of Samuel. ¹⁹The people all said to Samuel, “Intercede for your servants with the LORD your God that we may not die, for we have added to all our sins the wickedness of asking for a king.”

שמואל א' יב: א-ג; טז-יט

(א) וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל הִנֵּה שְׁמַעְתִּי בְּקִלְכֶם לְכָל אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְתֶּם לִי וְאִמְלִיךְ עֲלֵיכֶם מֶלֶךְ: (ב) וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה הַמֶּלֶךְ מִתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵיכֶם וְאֲנִי זִקְנָתִי וְשִׁבְתִּי וּבְנֵי הַנֶּזֶם אֲתִכֶם וְאֲנִי הִתְהַלַּכְתִּי לִפְנֵיכֶם מִנְעָרֵי עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: (ג) הֲנִנִּי עֲנוּ בִי נֶגֶד ה' וְנֶגֶד מְשִׁיחוֹ אֵת שׁוֹר מִי לְקַחְתִּי וְחַמּוֹר מִי לְקַחְתִּי וְאֵת מִי עָשָׂקְתִי אֵת מִי רִצּוֹתִי וּמִיִּד מִי לְקַחְתִּי כֶּכֶר וְאַעֲלִים עֵינַי בּוֹ וְאָשִׁיב לָכֶם: ...

(יב) וַתֵּרְאוּ כִּי־נָחַשׁ מֶלֶךְ בְּנִי־עַמּוֹן בָּא עֲלֵיכֶם וַתֹּאמְרוּ לִי לֹא כִי־מֶלֶךְ יִמְלֶךְ עָלֵינוּ וְהִ' אֶ־לְקִיכֶם מֶלְכְּכֶם: ... (טז) גַּם עַתָּה הִתְיַצְּבוּ וּרְאוּ אֵת הַדָּבָר הַגָּדוֹל הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר הִ' עֹשֶׂה לְעֵינֵיכֶם: (יז) הֲלוֹא קָצִיר חֲטִים הַיּוֹם אֶקְרָא אֶל הִ' וַיִּתֶּן קִלּוֹת וּמָטָר וַדְּעוּ וּרְאוּ כִי רָעַתְכֶם רַבָּה אֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂיתֶם בְּעֵינַי הִ' לְשֹׂאֵל לָכֶם מֶלֶךְ: (יח) וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל הִ' וַיִּתֶּן הִ' קִלְת וּמָטָר בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וַיִּירָא כָּל הָעָם מְאֹד אֵת הִ' וְאֵת שְׁמוּאֵל: (יט) וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָּל הָעָם אֶל שְׁמוּאֵל הַתְּפִלָּל בְּעַד עֲבָדֶיךָ אֶל הִ' אֶ־לְקִיךָ וְאַל נָמוֹת כִּי יִסְפְּנוּ עַל כָּל חַטֹּאתֵינוּ רָעָה לְשֹׂאֵל לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ:

8. Numbers 16:15

Moses was much aggrieved and he said to the LORD, “Pay no regard to their oblation. I have not taken the ass of any one of them, nor have I wronged any one of them.”

במדבר טז: טו

(טו) וַיַּחַר לְמֹשֶׁה מְאֹד וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִי אֲלֵתֶפֶן אֶל־מִנְחֹתָם לֹא חֲמוֹר אֶחָד מֵהֶם נִשְׂאתִי וְלֹא הִרְעַתִּי אֶת־אֶחָד מֵהֶם:

9. I Samuel 15:11

“I regret that I made Saul king, for he has turned away from Me and has not carried out My commands.” Samuel was distressed and he entreated the LORD all night long.

שמואל א' טו: טו

נִחַמְתִּי כִּי הַמֶּלֶכְתִּי אֵת שְׂאוֹל לְמֶלֶךְ כִּי שָׁב מֵאַחֲרַי וְאֵת דְּבָרֵי לֹא הִקִּים וַיַּחַר לְשְׁמוּאֵל וַיִּזְעַק אֶל הִ' כָּל הַלַּיְלָה:

10. I Samuel 16:1-7

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

²Samuel replied, “How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me.” The LORD answered, “Take a heifer with you, and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the LORD’ ...⁶When they arrived and he saw Eliab, he thought: “Surely the LORD’s anointed stands before Him.” ⁷But the LORD said to Samuel, “Pay no attention to his appearance or his stature, for I have rejected him. For not as man sees [does the LORD see]; man sees only what is visible, but the LORD sees into the heart.”

שמואל א' טז: א-ז

(א) וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל שְׁמוּאֵל עַד מָתִי אֶתָּה מִתְאַבֵּל אֶל שְׂאוּל וְאַנִּי מְאַסְתִּיו מִמֶּלֶךְ עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל מִלֵּא קֶרֶןֶךָ שֶׁמֶן וְלֶךָ אֲשַׁלְחֶךָ אֶל יֹשֵׁי בֵּית הַלְּחָמִי כִּי רָאִיתִי בְּבָנָיו לִי מֶלֶךְ: (ב) וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל אֵיךְ אֵלֶיךָ וְשָׁמַע שְׂאוּל וְהִרְגִנִּי וַיֹּאמֶר ה' עֲגַלְת בְּקָר תִּקַּח בְּיָדְךָ וְאָמַרְתָּ לְזַבַּח לַה' בְּאֵתִי: ... (ו) וַיְהִי בְּבוֹאָם וַיִּרְא אֶת אֱלִיאָב וַיֹּאמֶר אֵךְ נֶגְדַּה ה' מִשִּׁיחוֹ: (ז) וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל שְׁמוּאֵל אַל תִּבְט אֶל מְרֹאָהוֹ וְאֶל גְּבַהַ קוֹמָתוֹ כִּי מְאַסְתִּיהוּ כִּי לֹא אֲשֶׁר יִרְאָה הָאָדָם כִּי הָאָדָם יִרְאָה לְעֵינָיִם וְה' יִרְאָה לְלֵבָב:

11. *Tanhuma Buber Mikketz* 6

And even Samuel—who was likened to Moses and Aaron—because he said “I am the seer” (9:19). God said to him: “You said ‘I am the seer’; by your life tomorrow I will show you if you are indeed a seer. As it is written, ‘Fill your horn with oil and set out; I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have decided on one of his sons to be king.’” (16:1). When he arrived it is written, “When they arrived and he saw Eliab,” he thought: “Surely the Lord’s anointed stands before Him” (16:6). God replied, “You are the one who said ‘I am the seer’! ‘Pay no attention to his appearance’” (16:7).

תנחומא (בובר) מקצו

ואף שמואל שהיה שקול כנגד משה ואהרן, על שאמר לשאול אנכי הרואה (שמואל א' ט יט), א"ל הקב"ה אתה אמרת אנכי הרואה, חייך למחר אני מראה לך אם רואה אתה, שנאמר מלא קרנדך שמן ולך (בא) [ואשלחך] אל ישי בית הלחמי כי ראיתי בבניו לי מלך (שמואל א' טז א), כיון שהלך מה כתיב, ויהי בבואם וירא את אליאב ויאמר אך נגד ה' משיחו (שמואל א' ט"ז ו), א"ל הקב"ה אתה הוא שאמרת אנכי הרואה, אל תבט אל מראהו וגוי (שמואל א' ט"ז ז).

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF SAMUEL

SAMUEL (I Samuel Chapters 1-7)

Chapter 1:	Hannah prays for son, Samuel born
Chapter 2:	Contrasts between Eli's sons and Samuel
Chapter 3:	Samuel's prophetic initiation—downfall of Eli
Chapters 4-6:	Ark captured by Philistines, Eli's sons killed, Eli dies. Ark wreaks havoc with Philistines, return it
Chapter 7:	Battle vs. Philistines, Samuel prays and Israel wins

SAMUEL AND SAUL (I Samuel Chapters 8-15)

Chapter 8:	People request king; Samuel angry, God approves
Chapters 9-10:	Saul divinely chosen as king, anointed, coronation
Chapter 11:	Saul defeats Ammonites, gains new respect
Chapter 12:	Second coronation, Samuel condemns people for king
Chapters 13-14:	Battle at Michmash: Jonathan hero, Saul sins
Chapter 15:	Battle against Amalek, Saul rejected as king

SAUL AND DAVID (I Samuel Chapters 16-31; II Samuel chapter 1)

Chapter 16:	David anointed; becomes musician for Saul
Chapter 17:	David kills Goliath, becomes national hero
Chapter 18:	Jonathan and Michal love David; Saul jealous
Chapter 19:	Saul tries to kill David, Michal saves him
Chapter 20:	Jonathan speaks up for David, Saul furious
Chapters 21-22:	Priests of Nob feed David, Saul massacres them
Chapter 23:	Saul pursues David
Chapter 24:	David has opportunity to kill Saul but cuts corner of his robe instead; Saul admits David will be next king
Chapter 25:	David and Nabal-Abigail
Chapter 26:	David has opportunity to kill Saul but spares him
Chapter 27:	David flees to Philistines
Chapter 28:	Saul goes to witch; Samuel's spirit tells him that will soon die
Chapter 29:	Philistines do not allow David to join them
Chapter 30:	David defeats Amalekites
Chapter 31:	Saul and sons killed at Mount Gilboa
Chapter 1:	David learns of defeat, eulogizes Saul and Jonathan

DAVID CONSOLIDATES MONARCHY (II Samuel chapters 2-10)

Chapter 2:	David's capital in Hebron; Ish-bosheth king of north
Chapter 3:	Abner agrees to turn kingdom to David; Joab kills him
Chapter 4:	Ish-bosheth assassinated; David kills assassins
Chapter 5:	David captures Jerusalem; defeats Philistines
Chapter 6:	David moves Ark to Jerusalem
Chapter 7:	David wants to build Temple; God says no but promises eternal dynasty to David
Chapter 8:	David's military successes
Chapter 9:	David kind to Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son
Chapter 10:	Ammon makes trouble, David defeats Aramean allies

BATHSHEBA AND AFTERMATH (II Samuel chapters 11-20)

Chapter 11:	During battle with Ammon, affair with Bathsheba
Chapter 12:	Nathan's prophetic condemnation of David
Chapter 13:	Amnon rapes Tamar, Absalom kills him, flees
Chapter 14:	David and Absalom appear to reconcile
Chapters 15-19:	Absalom revolts against David, killed
Chapter 20:	David snubs northern tribes, Sheba son of Bichri revolts; killed, battle over

APPENDIX (II Samuel chapters 21-24)

Chapter 21:	David kills seven members of Saul's family because of Gibeonite fiasco; some stories of military heroics
Chapter 22:	David's psalm after Saul was killed
Chapter 23:	More military heroics
Chapter 24:	David purchases place of Temple