

1 Samuel 7:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.

Analysis

And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.

This narrative marks the transition from priestly to prophetic leadership in Israel. Samuel's calling demonstrates that God raises up servants according to His sovereign purposes, often choosing unexpected persons during dark spiritual times. The rarity of prophetic revelation ('the word of the LORD was precious in those days') underscores the spiritual bankruptcy of the era. God's threefold call emphasizes both divine initiative and human response—Samuel must learn to recognize God's voice and respond in faithful obedience.

Historical Context

The Philistines, part of the 'Sea Peoples' who settled the coastal plain around 1200 BCE, possessed superior iron technology and organized military forces. Their pentapolis (five major cities: Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, Gath) controlled coastal trade routes and threatened Israelite settlements in the hill country. The Philistine threat created the political pressure that would eventually lead to Israel's demand for centralized monarchy.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What does divine judgment in this passage reveal about God's holiness, justice, and intolerance of persistent rebellion?
2. What specific heart attitudes, thought patterns, or life practices does this passage call you to examine or change?
3. How does divine judgment in this passage drive us to appreciate Christ's substitutionary atonement on our behalf?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּשְׁפֹּט ט	שָׁמוּאֵל	אֶת	יִשְׂרָאֵל ל	כָּל	יְמֵי	חַיָּו:
judged	And Samuel	H853	Israel	H3605	all the days	of his life
H8199	H8050		H3478		H3117	H2416

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 7:6 (Judgment): And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and drew water, and poured it out before the LORD, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the LORD. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh.

Judges 2:16 (Judgment): Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.