

1 Samuel 8:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king.

Analysis

And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king.

Samuel's faithfulness as a prophet shines through this pivotal moment. The Hebrew phrase "kol divrei" (all the words) emphasizes his complete transmission of God's message without omission or softening. As God's spokesman, Samuel does not filter the divine warning to make it more palatable, nor does he add his own grievances to manipulate the outcome. This exemplifies the prophetic office at its purest: the faithful declaration of God's word regardless of audience reception. Samuel's integrity contrasts sharply with false prophets who tell people what they want to hear (Jeremiah 23:16-17). The phrase "that asked of him a king" subtly reminds the reader that this demand originated with the people, not with God's design. Their persistent asking (Hebrew "sha'al," the root of Saul's name) sets up an ironic wordplay that will echo throughout Saul's narrative. True spiritual leadership requires speaking truth even when it confronts popular desire.

Historical Context

The prophetic role of covenant mediator required complete faithfulness in transmitting divine messages. Ancient Near Eastern treaties similarly required messengers to deliver the suzerain's words exactly as given. Samuel's role here parallels Moses announcing covenant stipulations, establishing a pattern for later prophetic ministry.

