

The legend is a popular account of a proverbial figure embellished with numerous accretions of ideal, etc. It is not a mere "hero-story" but one to which a lot of tradition has been added giving it national or ethnic proportions. A legend will admit some truth, however, when all of the peripheral data has been cut away. The term is used more broadly than the technical definition, however, and it is one of those things that the user must define clearly for the benefit of the listener. As a general rule we admit of no legend in the Bible from a strict point of view. Samson is the party regarded as most legendary by many critically minded teachers.

The concept of the Bible that we use is one of a book divinely inspired by God for instruction in the concept of redemption, etc. The Lord may use any literary genre he desires, of course, but will surely make it plain to us what the character and meaning of it is.

2. Reasons for the Nationalization of Israel 1 Samuel 8

We cite essentially four causes for the nationalization..

The internal cause: Failure of the Old Order

- The judgeship period had not worked...we think the unwillingness of the people to be ruled by God to have been the deciding point... but there was a lot of dissatisfaction to it and the unity that should have marked the nation had been lost.
- The continuation of a "judgeship" economy under the sons of Eli (1 Sam 2:22 ff) had been impossible and had been ended by God but the sons of Samuel (1 Sam 8:33 ff), although not so gross in their sin, did not suggest a much better arrangement for the future.
- The dependence on charismatic rule, in general, is one that is not easy to be patient concerning.

The external cause: The Philistines

- Apparently a Hamitic people (Gen. 10:14) of an Aryan cast, they had migrated into Palestine in huge numbers in the 13th century... were defeated by Ramses of Egypt and forced to settle the coastal towns and territories of the southern Palestinian territory. They formed a community built around the five city-states (Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, and Gath) in which a local "tyrant" was the "king" or leader. They were worshippers of Baal, Dagan, Ashtoroth, etc., and so were devoted to the Sea, the fertility rites, and the "angry God" concept. They possessed the ability to work with iron and apparently monopolized that trade in the Palestinian territories. They used the horse in commerce and warfare. Like the Israelites, they were migrants to the land but quickly took possession of the lower coastal portion and built a powerful kingdom-culture territory for themselves.

The Emotional cause: The envy of success

- All the other peoples had kings: the Ammonites, the Moabites, all being kin to Israel. The people saw this and thought that a king would bring to them leadership and strength as to these cousin countries. See 1 Sam. 8:19-20 for their ideas of a king power.