

# Samuel Administers Justice

**Key Verse:** “*Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the LORD with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only; and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.*”  
—I Samuel 7:3

**Selected Scripture:**  
*I Samuel 7:3-11,15-17*

after the LORD.” (I Sam. 7:2) Samuel, seeing this, spoke the words contained in our Key Verse. In his words we note three specific requirements are set forth in order for Israel to be delivered out of the hands of the

## **DURING THIS PERIOD OF**

Israel’s history, Samuel was their Judge, chosen by the Heavenly Father. In this position, he was called upon to administer justice among the people, and to also encourage them to serve God with their whole heart. This was not an easy task for Samuel, due to the people’s tendency to fall into the sins and ungodly practices of their heathen neighbors. At this time, in particular, Israel was guilty of worshiping the gods of the Philistines. Because of this, God allowed them to be subservient to that nation.

As time passed, Israel began to realize that because of their lack of faithfulness to God, they were not receiving his blessings and protection, and “lamented

Philistines and return to the full favor of God. The principles contained in these words are also fully applicable to Christians today who may find themselves temporarily drawn away from their covenant with God.

Samuel stated that Israel must first put away the false, heathen gods they were worshipping. The first commandment originally given to Israel was: “Thou shalt not have other gods besides me.” (Exod. 20:3, *Rotherham Translation*) God could not be expected to bless them if they were not even worshipping him, but looking to powerless and false gods. For the Christian, we would not think of literally worshipping a false god. However, there are many things in the world which could become “gods” to us—things which we might idolize and worship to a greater or lesser extent. These might include such things as earthly riches, worldly position, influence, abilities, and other such “gods” of this present evil world. Such must be put away from us if we desire to be in God’s favor.

The second requirement set forth by Samuel was that the Israelites must prepare their hearts to serve the LORD. The meaning of the word “prepare” is to “establish” or “fix.” In this is the thought that, as we put away the false “gods” from our life, the focus of our heart should become established—fixed—only upon our Heavenly Father and his will for us. This is the essence of the Christian’s consecration—doing God’s will in every experience of life to the best of our ability. To do this requires that our heart be continually fixed on him and his benevolent designs for our ultimate blessing.

The final step Samuel gave in his instructions to the Israelites was that they must serve God, and him only. This implied works on their part—keeping the various features of the Law arrangement, and serving God actively. For the Christian, it is equally true that service to God and his cause are a requirement to receive his full blessing. The Apostle James says, “Faith without works is dead.”—James 2:20 ■