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The Last Judge

First Samuel 7:2 to 12:25



The last chapters of the book of **Judges**, with their refrain: **there was no king in Isra'el (Judges 18:1, 19:1, and 21:25)**, prepare the way for new developments in **Isra'el's** leadership. The **judges** had been military as well as judicial leaders, effective in an emergency (though **Samson** did not fulfill his early promise), but limited by their geographical boundaries and by the nature of their office, for they did not appoint their successor. At a time of uncertainty due to external pressure from aggressors, **Isra'el** felt the need of a leader who would unite the tribes, have an effective standing army, and be a match for those who led **their** enemies to victory. It is hardly surprising that there were differences of opinion in **Isra'el** if it was proper to ask for **a king** when **ADONAI** was **their King**, and **Samuel** would bear the brunt of the conflict in **his** future capacity as **judge, priest, and prophet**, after the style of Moses.¹⁶⁵