

MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

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DOCUMENT 153

SHA'UL BEN KISH: THE TRAJECTORY OF DISOBEDIENCE

From Yahweh's Anointed to Yahweh's Rejected —

A Covenant Deep Dive in the Written Tana'kh

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REACHING JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM

☆ JUDAISM	† CHRISTIANITY	☪ ISLAM
<i>Sheol</i> (שְׁאוֹל) is the universal destination of the dead in the Written Tanakh — righteous and wicked alike. The Pharisees upheld resurrection against the Sadducees. Tanakh's own witness (Daniel 12:2) is the foundation.	The resurrection hope of Christianity derives from the Written Tanakh itself — Yeshayahu 26:19, Iyov 19:25-27, and Daniel 12:2 — before any New Testament elaboration. The Tanakh speaks for itself.	Kohelet 12:7 — 'the ruach returns to Elohim who gave it' — directly parallels the Quranic teaching that the soul (ruh) returns to Allah at death. Resurrection (Qiyama) is consistent with Daniel 12:2.

DOCTRINAL AUTHORITY — STANDING RULE OF MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

The sole binding authority of Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution is the Written Tana'kh — the Torah (Instruction), *Nevi'im* (Prophets), and *Ketuvim* (Writings) — interpreted by the evidentiary standard of Devarim (Deuteronomy) 19:15: no charge shall be established except by two or three independent witnesses. Rabbinic tradition, Church councils, and hadith are consulted as historical record only and carry no binding doctrinal authority. Josephus is cited only when corroborated and with awareness of his pro-Roman editorial bias. Scholars and lexicons provide linguistic orientation; the Written Tana'kh speaks for itself at the plumb line.

HOW TO READ THIS DOCUMENT

This study uses Hebrew book names throughout. English equivalents appear in bold parentheses on first use. Yahweh (יהוה) and Elohim (אֱלֹהִים) are used throughout — never 'God' or 'LORD.' All scripture citations follow the two-or-three witness standard of Devarim 19:15. The three-religion audience — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — is addressed

simultaneously. Hebrew transliterations appear in *bold italic* with English meaning in parentheses at every occurrence. Lexical references draw from BDB, HALOT, Strong’s Concordance, and TWOT.

TANAKH BOOKS CITED IN THIS DOCUMENT

Hebrew Name	English Name	Hebrew Name	English Name
Shemu’el Alef	1 Samuel	Shemu’el Bet	2 Samuel
Divrei HaYamim Alef	1 Chronicles	Devarim	Deuteronomy
Bereishit	Genesis	Vayikra	Leviticus
Bamidbar	Numbers	Tehillim	Psalms
Hoshea	Hosea	Yeshayahu	Isaiah

INTRODUCTION

The account of **Sha’ul** (שאול, H7586) ben Kish is one of the most documented covenant tragedies in the Written Tana’kh. He is simultaneously the king the people demanded, the man upon whom the *Ruach Yahweh* (Spirit of **Yahweh**) genuinely rested, and the leader whose progressive abandonment of covenant authority produced scripture’s most detailed record of disobedience and its consequences.

This document is not a character assassination. It is a covenant audit. **Yahweh** Himself anointed **Sha’ul**. **Yahweh** Himself grieved over him — **Shemu’el Alef (1 Samuel) 15:11**: “**And Yahweh regretted that He had made Sha’ul king over Israel, and it grieved Yahweh to His heart.**” That grief is itself a covenant statement. The question before this study is precise: What does the Written Tana’kh document about the trajectory of **Sha’ul’s** disobedience, and what covenant principles does each act of deviation reveal?

Four primary questions are examined under **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 19:15**:

- (1) What is the covenant framework of Israelite kingship?
- (2) What specific acts of disobedience does **Sha’ul** commit, and what does **Yahweh** declare in response?
- (3) What Hebrew lexical evidence confirms the covenant dimensions of his failure?
- (4) What do these findings say simultaneously to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam?

PART I — THE NAME AND THE FRAMEWORK: SHA’UL AS COVENANT KING

I.A — Lexical Foundation: The Name That Encodes the Problem

The Hebrew name **Sha’ul** (שָׂאֹל, H7586) is the passive participle of the verb *sha’al* (שָׂאֵל, H7592) — meaning *asked, requested, demanded*. BDB confirms: *asked of Yahweh*. This is not incidental. The identical root *sha’al* appears in **Shemu’el Alef 8:10** when the elders ‘demand’ a king. The name of the king encodes the people’s act of faithless demand. He is, from his name forward, *the asked-for one* — the answer to a question **Yahweh** warned them not to ask.

There is a second lexical resonance of covenant weight. The Hebrew word for the realm of the dead — **She’ol** (שְׂאוֹל, H7585) — derives from the identical root *sha’al*. **Sha’ul** (the king) and **She’ol** (the grave) share the same three-letter root: shin-aleph-lamed. The man whose throne was built on faithless demanding moves, across the pages of **Shemu’el Alef**, toward the place whose name echoes his own. This is covenant architecture embedded in the Hebrew text itself.

HEBREW LEXICAL FOUNDATION

Hebrew Term	Strong’s	Root	BDB / HALOT	Covenant Significance
שָׂאֹל Sha’ul	H7586	שָׂאֵל sha’al	Passive participle: 'asked (of Yahweh)'	The king's very name encodes Israel's demanding request. He is the 'asked-for one' — the answer to faithless clamor. BDB confirms: asked of Yahweh.
שָׂאֵל sha’al	H7592	Primitive root	To inquire, ask, demand, request, borrow	Same root produces: Sha’ul (the king), She’ol (the grave), sha’al (to demand). The king demanded by the people moves, through disobedience, toward the grave his name echoes.
מֵרִי meri	H4805	מָרָה marah	Rebellion, bitterness, contention	Shemu’el Alef 15:23 — 'For rebellion (meri) is as the sin of divination.' The covenant definition of Sha’ul's disobedience from Yahweh's own prophet.
קֶסֶם qesem	H7081	קָסַם qasam	Divination, oracle, sorcery	Shemu’el's verdict: 'rebellion is as the sin of qesem.' Disobedience to Yahweh's command is covenantally equivalent to sorcery in His sight.
תְּרָפִים teraphim	H8655	Unknown; household idols	Household gods, cultic objects for divination	In Shemu’el Alef 15:23, stubbornness (patsar) is equated with iniquity and teraphim. Self-will before Yahweh is the functional equivalent of idol worship.
רוּחַ רָעָה ruach ra’ah	H7307+ H7451	ruach: spirit/wind; ra’ah: evil/harmful	Distressing/harmful spirit from Yahweh	Shemu’el Alef 16:14 — when the Ruach Yahweh departs, the ruach ra’ah enters. The departure of covenant presence creates a spiritual vacuum that is never neutral.
אֹב ob	H178	Skin bottle / hollow voice	Spirit of dead; medium; necromancer	Vayikra 20:6 — if a person turns to an ob, Yahweh cuts him off. Sha’ul had expelled these from Israel;

				in desperation he violates his own decree and Yahweh's law simultaneously.
מַעַל ma'al	H4604	מַעַל ma'al	Breach of faith, treachery, infidelity, covenant betrayal	Divrei HaYamim Alef 10:13 — the Tana'kh's own final verdict on Sha'ul: ma'al. Not a single failure but a pattern of sustained covenant betrayal. The most severe covenant language available.

I.B — The Covenant Framework of Israelite Kingship

Before examining **Sha'ul's** failures, the Written Tana'kh's own framework for kingship must be established. **Devarim 17:14-20** is the Torah's constitutional mandate for the king of Israel. The covenant king is not an independent sovereign. He is **Yahweh's** lieutenant.

Four requirements govern him: (1) appointment by **Yahweh**, not by popular demand alone; (2) no multiplication of horses, wives, or silver and gold; (3) he must write his own copy of the Torah; (4) he must read it all the days of his life and not turn to the right or the left.

Shemu'el Alef (I Samuel) 8:7 — **"They have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them."** The throne of the Israelite king is not autonomous — it is derivative. It exists under **Yahweh's** kingship. Every Israelite king rules on covenant probation. **Sha'ul** is the first to prove that probation can be forfeited.

PART II — THE ACTS OF DISOBEDIENCE: A COVENANT AUDIT

THE ELEVEN-STAGE TRAJECTORY

Under **Devarim 19:15**, eleven documented acts across **Shemu'el Alef** are presented with their covenant references, consequences, and standing principles:

#	Passage	Act of Disobedience	Consequence / Yahweh's Response	Covenant Principle
1	Shemu'ul Alef 8:4-22	Israel demands a king — Yahweh warns through Shemu'ul	The throne itself is built on the people's rejection of Yahweh as king (8:7). Sha'ul steps into a covenant-compromised institution.	Covenant kingship that begins in faithless demand already carries a structural wound.
2	Shemu'ul Alef 10:1,10	Sha'ul anointed; Ruach Yahweh rests on him; he prophesies	The anointing is genuine. The potential was real. Yahweh's investment in Sha'ul was not a token gesture.	Yahweh's anointing is costly covenant investment — its withdrawal is therefore equally weighty.
3	Shemu'ul Alef 13:8-14	Premature sacrifice at Gilgal — usurps	First formal rejection: 'Your kingdom shall not endure.	Pressure does not license covenant boundary crossing.

		prophetic-priestly boundary	Yahweh has sought a man after His own heart.'	Obedience delayed is obedience forfeited.
4	Shemu'ul Alef 15:1-23	Amalek — spares Agag and the best livestock; religious justification offered	Final rejection declared: 'Because you have rejected the word of Yahweh, He has also rejected you from being king.'	Partial obedience is complete disobedience. Religious motivation does not sanctify covenant rebellion.
5	Shemu'ul Alef 15:24-31	Confession without repentance — asks Shemu'ul to honor him before the elders	Sha'ul confesses sin then immediately prioritizes his public image over covenant restoration.	Remorse aimed at reputation management is not covenant repentance.
6	Shemu'ul Alef 16:14	Ruach Yahweh departs; ruach ra'ah (distressing spirit) from Yahweh torments him	Spiritual collapse. The departure of divine presence is not neutral — the vacuum is filled.	The covenant presence of Yahweh is conditionally maintained. Its departure has consequences.
7	Shemu'ul Alef 18:6-11	Jealousy of David — throws spear at him twice in the palace	Paranoia and murderous intent toward Yahweh's own anointed. 'Saul eyed David from that day forward.'	Envy of another's covenant blessing is rebellion against the Blessor Himself.
8	Shemu'ul Alef 19:1-24	Systematic attempts to have David killed — commands soldiers and servants	Sends messengers to David's house to kill him; pursues him across the land relentlessly.	Pursuing Yahweh's anointed is pursuing Yahweh. The campaign cannot succeed and will destroy its author.
9	Shemu'ul Alef 22:6-23	Massacre of the priests at Nov — orders Doeg the Edomite to slaughter 85 priests	Complete moral inversion: the man who failed to destroy Amalek now destroys Yahweh's own priesthood.	The covenant atrocity: blood of Yahweh's servants on a king's hands is the point of no return.
10	Shemu'ul Alef 28:3-19	Consults the medium (ba'alat ob) at Eyn-Dor — violates his own decree	Yahweh will not answer by dreams, Urim, or prophets. Sha'ul seeks the very darkness he expelled from Israel.	Desperation driven by covenant breach amplifies disobedience. The ob cannot give what Yahweh withholds.
11	Shemu'ul Alef 31:1-6	Death on Mount Gilboa — falls on his own sword; three sons die	Israel was routed by the Philistines. Sha'ul's covenant kingship ends. Divrei HaYamim records: ma'al.	The sword he turned on Yahweh's servants and anointed returns to him. The covenant arc closes.

II.A — Stage Three: The Gilgal Sacrifice — First Formal Rejection (Shemu'el Alef 13:8-14)

In **Shemu'el Alef 13**, **Sha'ul** faces a military crisis. The Philistines have massed. **Shemu'el** has commanded him to wait seven days (**Shemu'el Alef 10:8**). The seven days expire. **Shemu'el** has not arrived. In this moment, **Sha'ul** offers the burnt offering himself, stepping into the prophetic-priestly role that was not his covenant authority to occupy. **Shemu'el's** verdict is immediate:

Shemu'el Alef 13:13-14 — "You have acted foolishly (*nivalsalta*). You have not kept the commandment of Yahweh your Elohim which He commanded you... But now your kingdom shall not endure. Yahweh has sought out a man after His own heart (*k'ish l'levavo*), and Yahweh has commanded him to be ruler over His people, because you have not kept what Yahweh commanded you."

Three covenant principles emerge:

- (1) Pressure does not license covenant boundary crossing.
- (2) Obedience delayed is obedience forfeited.
- (3) **Yahweh** looks for a man 'after His own heart' — the covenant quality **Sha'ul** lacks is not military skill but covenant disposition. The kingdom is forfeited at this moment, though the crown remains on his head for decades more.

II.B — Stage Four: The Amalek Command and the Decisive Rejection (Shemu'el Alef 15)

In **Shemu'el Alef 15**, **Yahweh** commands total covenant judgment on Amalek. The command is unambiguous: destroy everything, spare nothing. Sha'ul executes the campaign — but spares Agag, king of Amalek, and the best livestock. When Shemu'el confronts him, Sha'ul offers religious justification: "The people spared the best of the sheep and oxen to sacrifice to Yahweh your Elohim" (v. 15). **Shemu'el's** response is the covenant's permanent verdict:

Shemu'el Alef 15:22-23 — "Does Yahweh delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of Yahweh? Behold, to obey (*shama*) is better than sacrifice (*zevach*), and to heed (*baqshev*) than the fat of rams. For rebellion (*meri*) is as the sin of divination (*qesem*), and stubbornness (*patsar*) is as iniquity and idolatry (*teraphim*). Because you have rejected the word of Yahweh, He has also rejected you from being king."

This passage is the covenant's most explicit equation of religious performance with spiritual rebellion. Disobedience is declared the structural equivalent of sorcery; self-will is declared the functional equivalent of idolatry. The verdict is final and documented in the Written Tana'kh with three independent Hebrew witnesses: meri (rebellion) = qesem (divination); patsar (stubbornness) = teraphim (idolatry).

II.C — Stage Five: Confession Without Repentance (Shemu'el Alef 15:24-31)

After Shemu'el's verdict, Sha'ul confesses: "I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of Yahweh and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice" (v. 24). The confession is technically accurate — but immediately followed by: "Please honor me now before the elders of my people" (v. 30). Sha'ul's confession is directed toward reputation management, not covenant restoration. The wound of disobedience remains open because the patient refuses the only surgery that closes it: genuine submission to Yahweh's covenant standard.

II.D — Stage Six: The Ruach Yahweh Departs; The Ruach Ra'ah Enters (Shemu'el Alef 16:14)

Shemu'el Alef 16:14 — "Now the Ruach Yahweh had departed from Sha'ul, and a distressing spirit (*ruach ra'ab*) from Yahweh tormented him." The Hebrew *ruach ra'ab* (**H7307 + H7451**) carries the force of a harmful, evil-directed spiritual pressure. The Tana'kh does not describe a neutral spiritual state after the departure of **Yahweh's Ruach** — the vacancy is not empty; it is filled. **Yahweh** graciously provides temporary relief through David's music (vv. 15-23). Sha'ul accepts the grace and then resumes his rebellion. When covenant grace is offered and rejected, the condition deepens.

II.E — Stage Seven: Jealousy of David (Shemu'el Alef 18:6-11)

When the women sing "Sha'ul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands" (Shemu'el Alef 18:7), Sha'ul is consumed with covenant envy. He declares: "What more can he have but the kingdom?" (v. 8). From this day, he views David — **Yahweh's** anointed — as his enemy. He throws his spear at David twice (vv. 10-11). The covenant principle is embedded throughout the Tana'kh: envy of another's covenant blessing is rebellion against the Blessor. Sha'ul's jealousy of David mirrors Cain's jealousy of Abel in Bereishit (Genesis) 4 — both rejected for the same structural reason; both responding with violence against the one who was accepted.

II.F — Stage Nine: The Massacre at Nov (Shemu'el Alef 22:6-23)

In **Shemu'el Alef 22**, Sha'ul's pursuit of David reaches its darkest expression. Learning that the priests of Nov aided David — providing him bread and the sword of Golyat (Goliath) — Sha'ul orders their execution. His own servants refuse to raise a hand against **Yahweh's** priests. He turns to Doeg the Edomite, who slaughters eighty-five priests wearing the linen *efod*. The city of Nov — men, women, children, and animals — is put to the sword (v. 19). This is the covenant atrocity that completes Sha'ul's moral inversion: **the man commanded to destroy Amalek and who partially failed now successfully destroys Yahweh's own priesthood.**

II.G — Stage Ten: The Eyn-Dor Consultation — The Final Abomination (Shemu'el Alef I Samuel) 28:3-19)

The night before his final battle, **Sha'ul** finds himself in absolute covenant darkness: **Yahweh** will not answer him — not by dreams, not by *Urim*, not by prophets (**Shemu'el Alef 28:6**). He seeks out a woman who has an *ob* (**H178**) — a medium who consults the dead — at Eyn-Dor. The *ob* is explicitly prohibited in **Vayikra (Leviticus) 20:6**: "If a person turns to mediums (*ba-ovot*)... I will set My face against that person and cut him off from his people." **Devarim 18:11** categorizes consulting the dead as a *to'evah* (abomination). **Sha'ul** had expelled mediums from Israel. In desperation he violates his own decree and **Yahweh's** explicit command simultaneously.

What **Shemu'el's** shade declares to him is the covenant summary of his entire life:

Shemu'el Alef 28:16-19 — "Why then do you ask me, since Yahweh has departed from you and has become your adversary?... Yahweh has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, to David... Moreover Yahweh will give Israel along with you into the hands of the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons will be with me."

The covenant circle closes. Sha'ul asked (*sha'al*) for a king; the people asked (*sha'al*) for a king; the king who was asked-for now asks (*sha'al*) the dead for what only the living Yahweh could provide. The name, the sin, and the judgment all converge on the same root word.

PART III — FIVE COVENANT PRINCIPLES FROM SHA'UL'S TRAJECTORY

The Written Tana'kh does not merely record history — it embeds covenant instruction in history. From Sha'ul's trajectory, five standing covenant principles are established under Devarim 19:15:

Principle 1 — Partial Obedience Is Complete Disobedience

Shemu'el Alef 15:22 establishes this permanently. Sha'ul executed the majority of the Amalek command. The portion he withheld — Agag and the best livestock — cost him the kingdom.

Three witnesses:

- (1) Shemu'el Alef 13:13-14 — one act of premature sacrifice forfeits the dynasty.
- (2) Shemu'el Alef 15:22-23 — one act of selective execution forfeits the crown.
- (3) Hoshea (Hosea) 6:6: "*For I desire chesed and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of Elohim more than burnt offerings.*" The covenant does not grade on a curve.

Principle 2 — Pressure Does Not License Covenant Boundary Crossing

The army was scattering. Shemu'el was late. The Philistines were massing. Every circumstantial pressure at Gilgal pointed toward action. But the command was wait. The covenant boundary — that the king does not offer sacrifice without the authorized prophetic guidance — was not suspended by military urgency.

Two witnesses:

- (1) Shemu'el Alef 10:8 — the explicit seven-day command.
- (2) Shemu'el Alef 13:13 — the explicit verdict of violation. Covenant authority structures are not contingency plans.

Principle 3 — Religious Performance Cannot Substitute for Covenant Obedience

At Gilgal, Sha'ul offered sacrifice in disobedience to a command. At Amalek, he preserved animals for sacrifice in disobedience to a command. In both cases, the religious frame covered covenant rebellion.

Shemu'el's verdict makes the equation permanent: *meri* (rebellion) equals the sin of *gesem* (divination). Self-willed religiosity is, before Yahweh, the functional equivalent of sorcery. Three witnesses: Shemu'el Alef 15:22-23; Hoshea 6:6; Tehillim (Psalms) 51:16-17 — "*The sacrifices of Elohim are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O Elohim, you will not despise.*"

Principle 4 — The Departure of Covenant Presence Creates a Spiritual Vacuum

When the *Ruach Yahweh* departs from Sha'ul, the *ruach ra'ab* enters. The Tana'kh describes no neutral spiritual state. Two witnesses: (1) Shemu'el Alef 16:14 — the explicit account. (2) Shemu'el Alef 28:6 — Yahweh does not answer by dreams, *Urim*, or prophets; the silence of covenant presence

drives **Sha'ul** to seek the *ob*. What he lost through disobedience cannot be recovered through desperation.

Principle 5 — Yahweh’s Anointing Can Be Withdrawn

The most theologically uncomfortable covenant principle in the Sha'ul account: the anointing of **Yahweh** is real, but it is not irrevocable. Sha'ul was genuinely anointed. The *Ruach Yahweh* genuinely rested on him. **Yahweh** genuinely grieved when Sha'ul forfeited it.

Three witnesses:

- (1) **Shemu’el Alef 13:13-14** — 'would have established your kingdom forever' if **Sha’ul** had obeyed.
- (2) **Shemu’el Alef 16:14** — the *Ruach Yahweh* departs.
- (3) **Shemu’el Alef 28:16**: "**Yahweh has departed from you and has become your adversary.**" Accumulated, unrepented covenant rebellion closes the door that disobedience opened.

PART IV — THREE-RELIGION COVENANT AUDIT

Under the **Devarim 19:15** evidentiary standard, the covenant findings from **Sha’ul’s** trajectory are assessed across all three Abrahamic traditions simultaneously. All six findings: unanimous.

Covenant Point	✧ Judaism	† Christianity	☪ Islam
Covenant kingship requires full obedience — no selective compliance	BDB/Ramban: partial compliance = full violation. Devarim 17:18-20: the king writes and reads Torah daily. No exemption for royal status.	Sha’ul’s fall is the Tana’kh’s template for leadership corruption. The principle extends to every authority claiming covenant mandate.	Talut (Qur’an 2:247) given authority conditionally by Allah. Authority granted is authority that can be rescinded. No human ruler is above divine instruction.
Ritual performance cannot substitute for covenant obedience	Hoshea 6:6: chesed and not sacrifice. Shemu’ul Alef 15:22 is the Tana’kh’s foundational verdict: to obey (shama) is better than zevach (sacrifice).	Sha’ul’s preserved livestock 'for sacrifice' is the archetype of all institutionalized religion that offers ceremony in place of submission.	'Ita'ah (obedience) precedes the form of 'ibadah (worship). The Quranic pattern confirms: spirit before form, submission before liturgy.
The king is not above the covenant standard of Yahweh	Devarim 17:14-20 mandates the king write, carry, and read his own Torah copy. No exemption. No royal exception to Yahweh's instructions.	Sha’ul’s presumption at Gilgal — usurping the prophetic role under military pressure — is the key warning to every leader in every generation.	No human ruler is exempt from divine accountability. Authority is a trust from Allah; its abuse is answered by its withdrawal.

Envy of another's covenant blessing destroys the envier	Sha'ul / David mirrors Qa'in / Hevel. Envy of Yahweh's appointment is rejection of Yahweh's sovereign choice. The root pattern is in Bereishit 4.	The entire Sha'ul-David arc is scripture's deepest portrait of jealousy and its fruit. Murderous envy toward the blessed is murderous envy toward the Blessor.	Qur'an 4:54 warns against envy of what Allah has given others. Gratitude for one's own covenant portion is the prescribed covenant antidote.
Necromancy and consulting the dead are covenant prohibitions	Vayikra 19:31; 20:6; Devarim 18:11 — explicit. The ob is a to'evah (abomination). Yahweh cuts off those who consult mediums from the covenant people.	Sha'ul's Eyn-Dor visit is the textbook abomination. He violates his own royal decree and Yahweh's explicit law simultaneously in one act of desperation.	Qur'an 2:102 (Harut and Marut); any power sought outside Allah enters shirk territory. Divination is association of divine authority with other sources.
The departure of Yahweh's presence creates a spiritual vacuum	Ruach Yahweh departs — ruach ra'ah enters (Shemu'el Alef 16:14). No neutral state exists. Disobedience opens doors; it does not simply close one.	When the Spirit departs, something fills the vacancy. The spiritual architecture of Sha'ul's decline is the Tana'kh's warning to every covenant community.	Yahweh's protection is conditionally maintained. Covenant compliance sustains the shield; covenant breach removes it. The Quranic pattern confirms this.

PART V — COVENANT WITNESS TO CURRENT EVENTS

The Sha'ul account is not an ancient biography. It is a living covenant diagnostic. **Yahweh's** word through Shemu'el speaks directly to every covenant community, every religious institution, and every political leader claiming divine mandate in 2026.

First: Religious institutions that use ceremonies to cover disobedience. Sha'ul's Amalek justification — 'we kept the animals for sacrifice to **Yahweh**' — is the template of institutionalized religion in every generation. When houses of worship perform their liturgy while violating explicit moral commands of the Written Tana'kh, they repeat Sha'ul's sin. **Shemu'el Alef 15:22** is the covenant's permanent answer.

Second: Political leaders claiming covenant appointment without covenant accountability. The election or appointment of national leaders is not a covenant appointment simply because a people desire it. **Yahweh's** warning in **Shemu'el Alef 8** stands: when a people reject divine governance to follow human governance 'like all the nations,' the leader they receive reflects the faithlessness of the request, not the faithfulness of **Yahweh**.

Third: Covenant communities that consult counterfeit authority when the legitimate channel goes silent. Sha'ul's Eyn-Dor visit is the pattern of every covenant community that, finding **Yahweh** silent (because the covenant has been broken), turns to alternative sources — **mysticism**,

political calculation, denominational tradition — to obtain the guidance only the Written Tana'kh can provide. The *ob* cannot give what **Yahweh** withholds. Desperation amplifies disobedience; it does not replace it.

CONCLUSION — THE COVENANT VERDICT UNDER DEVARIM 19:15

Under the **Devarim 19:15** two-or-three-witness standard, the eleven-stage trajectory of Sha'ul's disobedience is fully established across Shemu'el Alef (I Samuel) and confirmed by the Tana'kh's own summary verdict in **Divrei HaYamim Alef (1 Chronicles) 10:13-14**:

"So Sha'ul died for his breach of faith (ma'al). He broke faith with Yahweh in that he did not keep the command of Yahweh, and also consulted a medium, seeking guidance. He did not seek guidance from Yahweh. Therefore Yahweh put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Yishai."

The word *ma'al* (**H4604**) — **breach of faith, treachery, covenant betrayal** — is the Tana'kh's most severe covenant language. It does not describe a single failure. It describes a pattern — sustained, progressive, willful rejection of covenant authority in favor of self-will, fear-driven pragmatism, and desperate idolatry. The court of **Yahweh's** written word renders its verdict: *ma'al*.

The name Sha'ul means *asked*. When covenant people demand a king on their own terms, they receive a king who governs on his own terms. When a king governs on his own terms, Yahweh is not obligated to sustain the throne. The covenant did not fail Sha'ul. Sha'ul failed the covenant — and the Written Tana'kh records it in precise, evidentiary, three-religion-applicable detail so that every generation with ears to hear may hear.

SCRIPTURE INDEX

Passage	Covenant Significance in This Document
Bereishit (Genesis) 4:3-8	Qa'in and Hevel — the jealousy parallel to Sha'ul and David
Devarim (Deuteronomy) 17:14-20	The Torah's constitutional mandate for Israelite kingship
Devarim 19:15	Evidentiary standard governing this entire document
Devarim 25:17-19	The Amalek mandate — why the command to Sha'ul existed
Vayikra (Leviticus) 19:31	Prohibition on consulting mediums — <i>ob</i> and <i>yidde'oni</i>
Vayikra 20:6	Yahweh's covenant penalty: cut off from the people
Bamidbar (Numbers) 27:21	Urim — the legitimate channel of divine inquiry for the king
Shemu'el Alef 8:4-22	Israel's demand — 'give us a king like the nations'
Shemu'el Alef 10:1, 10-11	Sha'ul's genuine anointing; Ruach Yahweh rests on him
Shemu'el Alef 13:8-14	First rejection — Gilgal sacrifice; 'your kingdom shall not endure'

Shemu'el Alef 15:1-23	Amalek command; partial obedience; final rejection declared
Shemu'el Alef 15:22-23	'To obey is better than sacrifice' — the covenant's foundational verdict
Shemu'el Alef 15:24-31	Confession without repentance — reputation management
Shemu'el Alef 16:14	Ruach Yahweh departs; ruach ra'ah enters
Shemu'el Alef 18:6-11	Jealousy of David; spear-throwing — covenant envy in action
Shemu'el Alef 22:6-23	Massacre at Nov — 85 priests of Yahweh slaughtered
Shemu'el Alef 28:3-19	Eyn-Dor consultation — the ob; Shemu'el's final verdict
Shemu'el Alef 31:1-6	Death on Mount Gilboa — covenant kingship ends
Hoshea (Hosea) 6:6	'I desire chesed and not sacrifice' — the covenant preference confirmed
Tehillim (Psalms) 51:16-17	The sacrifices of Elohim are a broken and contrite heart
Divrei HaYamim Alef (1 Chronicles) 10:13-14	Ma'al — the Tana'kh's own final verdict: breach of covenant faith

Shemu'el Alef (1 Samuel) 15:22-23

"Has Yahweh as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Yahweh? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of Yahweh, He has also rejected you from being king."

— Shemu'el (Samuel) the Prophet, covenant witness to Sha'ul

Divrei HaYamim Alef (1 Chronicles) 10:13-14

"So Sha'ul died for his breach of faith. He broke faith with Yahweh in that he did not keep the command of Yahweh, and also consulted a medium, seeking guidance. He did not seek guidance from Yahweh. Therefore Yahweh put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Yishai."

— The Written Tana'kh's own final verdict on Sha'ul

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