

We Want to Be like Other People

1 Samuel 8:1-22

I. The Hebrew Republic Had Problems

A. When he became old, Samuel turned over his work to his sons. And it came to pass, *when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges* over Israel. Now the name of his firstborn was **Joel**; and the name of his second, **Abiah**: *they were judges in Beersheba.* (1 SAMUEL 8:1,2)

B. The men had not learned the central lessons of Samuel's life. And *his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside* after *lucre*, and took *bribes*, and *perverted judgment.* (1 SAMUEL 8:3)

C. God has a standard for governing. The God of Israel said, the **Rock of Israel spake** to me, **He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.** (2 SAMUEL 23:3)

D. Isaiah reviewed executive justice. He that *walketh righteously*, and speaketh *uprightly*; he that *despiseth the gain of oppressions*, that *shaketh his hands from holding of bribes*, that *stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood*, and *shutteth his eyes from seeing evil*; (ISAIAH 33:15)

E. Fundamental motivations are universal. For *the love of money is the root of all evil*: which while some coveted after, *they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.* (1 TIMOTHY 6:10)

II. Israel Thought Out its Own Solution

A. Thinking for yourself isn't always the best solution. **Trust in the LORD** with all thine heart; and *lean not unto thine own understanding.* (PROVERBS 3:5)

B. The representatives gathered to complain and solve Israel's problems the way other nations solved civil problems. **Then all the elders of Israel gathered** themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, And said unto him, Behold, **thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king** to judge us **like all the nations.** (1 SAMUEL 8:4-5)

C. Samuel appealed to God. But the thing *displeased Samuel*, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And **Samuel prayed unto the LORD.** (1 SAMUEL 8:6)

D. God put the real problem in focus – Israel was in rebellion against God. And the LORD said unto Samuel, Harken unto the voice of the people in all that they

say unto thee: for ***they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.*** (1 SAMUEL 8:7)

E. God ordered one last warning. Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit ***yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.*** (1 SAMUEL 8:9)

III. Governments by Men Rather than God Display Common Features

A. Kings demand standing armies and control economies. And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king. And he said, ***This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you.*** He will take your sons, and appoint *them* for himself, for his chariots, and *to be* his horsemen; and *some* shall run before his chariots. And ***he will appoint him captains*** over thousands, and captains over fifties; ***and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war,*** and instruments of his chariots. (1 SAMUEL 8:10-12)

B. Family life must give way to the central economy. And ***he will take your daughters*** *to be* confectionaries, and *to be* cooks, and *to be* bakers. (1 SAMUEL 8:13)

C. The best of everything will go to the government. And ***he will take your fields,*** and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, ***even the best of them, and give them to his servants.*** (1 SAMUEL 8:14)

D. The government will demand as much as God. And ***he will take the tenth*** of your seed, and of your vineyards, ***and give to his officers,*** and to his servants. (1 SAMUEL 8:15)

E. The governments of the nations do not stop until they make slaves of their people. And ***he will take*** your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put *them* to his work. He will take the tenth of your sheep: ***and ye shall be his servants.*** (1 SAMUEL 8:16-17)

F. Ultimately, those who refuse God must live with the consequences of their preferences. And ***ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you;*** and ***the LORD will not hear you*** in that day. (1 SAMUEL 8:18)

G. Even with fair warning, Israel chose its own way. Nevertheless ***the people refused to obey*** the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but ***we will have a king over us;*** (1 SAMUEL 8:19)

IV. Israel Got its Way

A. In disobedience, Israel demanded its own way. Nevertheless *the people refused to obey* the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but *we will have a king* over us; (1 SAMUEL 8:19)

B. Israel demanded to give up its unique relationship to God and become like ordinary nations. That *we also may be like all the nations*; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles. (1 SAMUEL 8:20)

1. Having God as king had been the evidence of God's favor and the people didn't want it. For *wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight?* is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth. (EXODUS 33:16)

2. Israel rejected what had blessed it – DIFFERENCE FROM THE OTHER NATIONS. And *ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.* (LEVITICUS 20:26)

3. The people mistook superiority for inferiority. For thou art *an holy people unto the LORD* thy God: the LORD thy *God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people* that are upon the face of the earth. (DEUTERONOMY 7:6)

4. The church continually faces the same challenge. But *ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation*, a peculiar people; *that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.* (1 PETER 2:9)

C. God gave the people what they requested. And *Samuel heard* all the words of the people, and *he rehearsed them in the ears of the LORD.* And the LORD said to Samuel, *Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king.* And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, *Go ye every man unto his city.* (1 SAMUEL 8:21-22)