

**Slide 1**

# **We Want To Be Like Everyone Else**

## **1 Samuel 8:1-22**

### **Introduction**

1. Our study in 1 Samuel ended last week with Israel's revival at Mizpah and their victory over the Philistines who had seen this as a opportunity to thoroughly defeat the Israelites.
2. However, the Lord acted on Israel's behalf and it was the Philistines who were overcome.
3. Samuel erected a stone, named it Ebenezer, "the stone of help" and reminded the Israelites that it was the Lord who had helped them all along.
4. This single event could be called the highlight of Samuel's judgeship which lasted some 42 years.
5. These events took place around 1085 B.C.
6. The anointing of Saul would not take place for another fifty-eight years (1043 B.C.).
7. Between chapters 7 & 8 there are approximately forty years of silence.
8. Our text tonight picks up at a time when Samuel is approximately 75 years of age.
9. The leaders of Israel come to him with a specific request.
10. It is this request and its fulfillment that occupy the next five chapters of this book.
11. As we look at their request, I think we will find a number of lessons which we can apply in our own lives.

**Slide 2**

## **I. Israel's Demand For A King**

**A. THE AGED SAMUEL AND HIS SONS (8:1-3)****Slide 3**

“And it came about when Samuel was old that he appointed his sons judges over Israel. Now the name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judging in Beersheba. His sons, however, did not walk in his ways, but turned aside after dishonest gain and took bribes and perverted justice.” (1 Samuel 8:1–3, NASB95)

1. Samuel has grown old (v. 1a)
  - a. Literally “and it came to pass when old Samuel became” (sounds more like the way Yoda spoke in the Star Wars saga!)
  - b. Text emphasizes the age of Samuel by reversing the normal noun/adjective order.
2. He has appointed his two sons as judges over Israel (vv. 1b-2).
  - a. They are not appointed to replace him but to assist him.
    - 1) Joel (“Yahweh is God”)
    - 2) Abijah (“Yah is my Father”)
  - c. This is interesting, because prior to Samuel, no other judge had appointed his sons to judgeships over Israel.
    - 1) In Judges 8:22, the men of Israel had requested that Gideon rule over them along with his sons and grandsons.
    - 2) However, he refused, saying, “I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; the Lord shall rule over you” (Judges 8:23).
3. He has stationed them at Beersheba, the most southern major city in Israel.
4. Sadly, Samuel’s sons “did not walk in his ways” (v. 3)
  - a. Samuel’s uprightness is the standard by which his sons are measured.
  - b. Three charges are made against them by the narrator:
    - 1) They “turned aside after dishonest gain”

2) They “took bribes”

3) They “perverted justice”

❑ These sins were clearly denounced in the Law of Moses (Deuteronomy 16:19; Exodus 23:6,8)

#### Slide 4

<sup>18</sup>“You shall appoint for yourself judges and officers in all your towns which the Lord your God is giving you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with righteous judgment. <sup>19</sup> You shall not distort justice; you shall not be partial, and you shall not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and perverts the words of the righteous. <sup>20</sup> Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue, that you may live and possess the land which the Lord your God is giving you.” Deuteronomy 16:18-20)

“You shall not pervert the justice due to your needy brother in his dispute.” (Exodus 23:6)

“You shall not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of the just.” (Exodus 23:8)

4. Unlike Eli, Samuel was not punished for his sons’ waywardness.
  - a. Either the offense of his sons, while serious, was not blasphemous like that of Eli’s sons
  - b. Or, he dealt with their sin by removing them from their positions.
- ❑ Though his sons were unworthy of their positions, Samuel would have a grandson, Heman, who would become David’s seer and chief of the choir in the house of God (1 Chronicles 6:33; 25:4f).

#### Slide 5

### **B. THE ELDERS’ REQUEST FOR A KING (VV. 4-6A)**

“Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah; and they said to him, “Behold, you have grown old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations.” But the thing

was displeasing in the sight of Samuel when they said, “Give us a king to judge us.”” (1 Samuel 8:4–6a, NASB95)

1. The elders make their request for a king (vv. 4-5)
  - a. The elders are those who represent the people.
  - b. Five grounds upon which they make their request:
    - 1) The age of Samuel
      - a) In his seventies.
      - b) Energies waning.
      - c) Needed a leader who was daring, resolute and skillful in war.
    - 2) The degeneracy of Samuel’s sons
      - a) Leaders had confidence in Samuel.
      - b) Knew that he would not condone or tolerate his sons’ wickedness.
      - c) He would do what was best in the interest of the nation.
    - 3) A king could “judge” them.
      - a) By the time of David, judging was one of the king’s major responsibilities (2 Samuel 14:1-17; 15:2-6).
      - b) A king judged the people to sustain “order” in the society.
    - 4) They would be like the other nations
      - a) Most of the other nations of that day were led by kings who passed the leadership down to their sons.
      - b) Instead of having the distinction of being a nation chosen and ruled by God, they wanted to become one among many nations.
    - 5) They had a legal right to a king.
      - a) God had anticipated this day.

**Slide 6**

- b) He prophesied through Moses concerning it (Deuteronomy 17:14-15a)

<sup>14</sup>“When you enter the land which the Lord your God gives you, and

you possess it and live in it, and you say, 'I will set a king over me like all the nations who are around me,'<sup>15</sup> you shall surely set a king over you whom the Lord your God chooses, one from among your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves" (Deuteronomy 17:14,15a)

2. The problem with Israel's request was not that they wanted a king, but that they would put their trust in him rather than God (cf. Psalm 118:8-9; 146:3).

**Slide 7**

"It is better to take refuge in the Lord  
Than to trust in man.

It is better to take refuge in the Lord  
Than to trust in princes."

(Psalm 118:8-9, NASB95)

"Do not trust in princes,  
In mortal man, in whom there is no salvation."

(Psalm 146:3, NASB95)

3. Israel sought a substitute for God — "a king for us" (v. 5).

**Slide 8**

**POINTS TO PONDER:**

1. **We have a tendency to assess our problems mechanically rather than spiritually.**

We make the assumption that there is something wrong in our techniques. We just need to make an adjustment here, try a new method there. What we do not consider is our need for repentance, a new heart.

**8a**

2. **Instead of looking to God for help we are more interested in prescribing what form God's help must take.**

Our attention is not on God's deliverance in our troubles but on specifying the method by which he must bring that deliverance. We are not content with

seeking a saving God, but desire to direct how and when he will save.

### 8b

#### 3. The Lord will sometimes give us our request to our own peril (8:7a, 9).

God's granting our request may not be a sign of his favor but our stubbornness. Sometimes God's greatest kindness is in not answering our prayers exactly as we desire. In speaking of Israel's stubbornness in the wilderness and their intense craving, Psalm 106:15 states, "So He gave them their request, but sent a wasting disease among them."

### Slide 9

#### C. THE LORD'S ANSWER TO SAMUEL (8:6-9)

"But the thing was displeasing in the sight of Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." And Samuel prayed to the Lord." (1 Samuel 8:6-9, NASB95)

1. The request "displeased Samuel" (v. 6)
  - a. Literally "the thing was evil in the eyes of Samuel"
  - b. Reasons for this:
    - 1) He saw their request as a rejection of his own leadership.
    - 2) Such a visible ruler would cause the people to forget their true King, God.
    - 3) The elders had determined to have a king without consulting the will of God.
    - 4) The elders had demanded the wrong kind of king.
      - a) Not a man after God's own heart.
      - b) But, a king like all the nations.
2. Samuel's response to the request (v. 6)
  - a. He did not let his own personal feelings decide.
    - 1) He did not fume or accuse the people of being ungrateful.
    - 2) Even though he stood to lose governing power.
  - c. He took the matter to the Lord.

- 1) He sought to learn the will of the Lord in the matter
- 2) He was willing to do whatever the Lord said was in the best interest of the nation.

**Slide 10****3. God's response to Samuel's prayer (vv. 7-9)**

"The Lord said to Samuel, "Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them. "Like all the deeds which they have done since the day that I brought them up from Egypt even to this day—in that they have forsaken Me and served other gods—so they are doing to you also." (1 Samuel 8:7-9, NASB95)

- a. He directed Samuel as to what he should do.
  - 1) Twice God told Samuel to listen to the request of the people.
  - 2) Samuel was to grant their request.
- b. He gave Samuel a word of consolation.
  - 1) He assured Samuel that this was not a rejection of Samuel and his long years of service.
  - 2) Instead the people were rejecting the kingship of the Lord (cf. 2 Kings 17:15)
    - a) His statutes
    - b) His covenants
- c. He gave Samuel a word of perspective
  - 1) Israel had forsaken the Lord and served other gods since the day they came out of Egypt.
  - 2) This request was simply more evidence as to how rebellious they were.
- d. The Lord gave Samuel a word of commission.

**Slide 11**

"Now then, listen to their voice; however, you shall solemnly warn them and tell them of the procedure of the king who will reign over them." (1 Samuel 8:9,

NASB95)

- 1) He was to “warn them solemnly” (lit., “bear witness”)
    - a) He was to point out all the disadvantages of having a king.
    - b) They must not be able to say later that they had acted without knowledge.
  - 2) He was to “let them know what the king who will reign over them will do”
4. The sins of Israel lies in . . .
- a. A failure to trust in the Lord to provide for them what He promised He would give them.
  - b. A desire for the splendor of a visible monarch.
  - c. A desire to order their national affairs by sight and not by faith.

#### Slide 12

### C. THE DISADVANTAGES OF HAVING A KING (8:10-18)

1. Samuel reports back to the people.
  - a. He introduces his speech with “this is what the king who will reign over you will do” (v. 11).
  - b. Notice the number of times we find the phrase, “he will take”

#### Slide 13

2. “He will take your sons” and “your daughters”(vv. 11-13)

“He said, “This will be the procedure of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and place them for himself in his chariots and among his horsemen and they will run before his chariots. “He will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and of fifties, and some to do his plowing and to reap his harvest and to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots.” (1 Samuel 8:11–12, NASB95)

- a. “He will take your sons”
  - 1) To serve as personal retainers



- a) Horsesmen and runners on foot (cf. 2 Samuel 15:1; 1 Kings 1:5) will escort the king's chariot (2 Kings 9:21).
  - b) Gone are the simple days of the judges.
- 2) As "commanders of thousands and fifties" (v. 12a)
- a) From the largest to the smallest divisions of the army.
  - b) A standing army would be costly.
- 3) To perform manual labor for the king (v. 12b)
- a) Working in the king's fields.
  - b) Producing weapons of war.
  - ❑ The king's interests would come first.
- b. "He will take your daughters for royal service (v. 13)
- 1) "Perfumers" — makers of the ointments and scents for which the people were so fond.
  - 2) "Cooks and bakers" — the daughters would serve in the royal kitchen.

**Slide 14**

## 3. What the king would confiscate for his own ends (vv. 14-17)

"He will take the best of your fields and your vineyards and your olive groves and give them to his servants. "He will take a tenth of your seed and of your vineyards and give to his officers and to his servants. "He will also take your male servants and your female servants and your best young men and your donkeys and use them for his work. "He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his servants." (1 Samuel 8:14-17, NASB95)

- a. The best of their fields, vineyards and olive groves
  - 1) This would be given to his officers and attendants.
  - 2) The Israelites would be forced to make do with what remained.
  - 3) The seizure of Naboth's vineyard by Ahab and Jezebel is one illustration of how this warning became a reality (1 Kings 21:1-16)

- b. Ten percent of their grain and vintage (v. 15)
  - 1) The people would own less property.
  - 2) Yet, ten percent of what that property produced would go to the king.
- c. The male and female servants, the best young men and their donkeys (v. 16)
  - 1) This was an appropriation of available manpower for the king's own use.
  - 2) Such a conscripting of labor would leave many farmers with no way to gather their own crops.
- d. One tenth of their flocks (v. 17a)
- e. "You yourselves will become his servants" (v. 17b)

**Slide 15****4. Israel's eventual reaction and God's response (v. 18)**

"Then you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the Lord will not answer you in that day." (1 Samuel 8:18, NASB95)

- a. They would "cry out" for relief from the oppression of their chosen king.
- b. God promises that He will not listen.

**Slide 15****D. THE DETERMINATION TO HAVE A KING (8:19-22)****1. The people's reaction (vv. 19-20)**

"Nevertheless, the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel, and they said, "No, but there shall be a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles." (1 Samuel 8:19-20, NASB95)

- a. They refuse to listen.
- b. They insist on having a king.

- c. They reject the notion that as God's people they should be different from the nations (Numbers 23:9; Deuteronomy 33:28)
- d. They desire a leader who will . . .
  - 1) Judge them
  - 2) Fight their battles
    - a) Before it had been God who led them in battle (Deuteronomy 20:1-4; Judges 4:14; 2 Samuel 5:24), now a king would lead them.
    - b) Before the battles were considered "God's battles" (1 Samuel 18:17; 25:28), now they were their battles.

**Slide 16****2. Samuel goes to God again (v. 21-22)**

"Now after Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the Lord's hearing. The Lord said to Samuel, "Listen to their voice and appoint them a king." So Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Go every man to his city.'" (1 Samuel 8:21-22, NASB95)

- a. He tells the Lord what the people have said.
  - 1) Not because God doesn't know.
  - 2) Because Samuel needs God
- b. God tells Samuel to listen to the people and appoint them a king.
  - ☐ Not knowing who this king will be, Samuel sends the Israelites to their homes until God will indicate the identity of the new king.

## Conclusion

- 1. Our text tonight has served as a mirror for our own lives.
- 2. It reveals us for who we are.
  - a. How many of us put our trust in the wrong people or things rather than God?

“Those who trust in the Lord are as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved but abides forever.” (Psalm 125:1, NASB95)

- b. How many of us are ashamed to stand out from the crowd, to be different?
    - 1) Joshua & Caleb chose to go against the crowd when the other ten spies said that the promised land could not be taken.
    - 2) At the end of his life, Joshua told the Israelites to choose whom they would serve but that he and his house would serve the Lord (Joshua 24:15).
  - c. How many of us are resistant to any word that does not agree with our opinion?
    - 1) Some say there are many paths to heaven.
    - 2) Jesus said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me” (John 14:6).
    - 3) The apostle Peter said, “there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).
3. Will you submit to God’s will in your life tonight?