**Faithful Regardless**

**Rejecting God - Requesting a King**

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**Review:**

Samuel was the son of Hannah (a previously barren woman) and Elkanah a kind and righteous man who remained faithful to God.

He was given to the service of the Lord by His mother at a very young age and grew up in the household of Eli the High Priest.

He was “Faithful regardless” of the fact that his influences were not, mainly Hophni and Phineas the sons of Eli.

He grew up seeking and hearing from God and became the Leader of Israel, both as a prophet and also the final Judge.

His sons, however, were not faithful to God, and when Samuel was old, the people rejected both of them as his successors.

So, they asked for something that they never had before…a king.

Up until this point the people of God were led by Patriarchs, Prophets, Priests and Judges, but never a king.

God wanted to be their King, and to speak to them through the prophets and priests, but Israel demanded a king, so that they could be like other nations.

Here’s what happened…

**1st Samuel 8:1-22**

**8**When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons as Israel’s leaders. **2**The name of his firstborn was Joel and the name of his second was Abijah, and they served at Beersheba. **3**But his sons did not follow his ways. They turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice.

Interestingly, even though Samuel was faithful to God, his sons were not. Much like Hophni and Phineas, Joel and Abijah used their father’s position of influence for selfish gain.

This reminds us as Fathers (*and mothers*) that each one of us, and each one of our children are responsible for their own actions and pursuit of God. You can train, prepare, influence, and teach your children as best you can, but it is they that must decide to surrender their will to God on their own.

**4**So all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. **5**They said to him, “You are old, and your sons do not follow your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have.”

This is the epitome of covetousness (*extreme envy of what someone else possesses*). Israel was a special nation, they did not have a king like the pagan nations had, because God was their King, their ruler, and their Heavenly Father. They took their special designation for granted and coveted the other nations.

**6**But when they said, “Give us a king to lead us,” this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the Lord. **7**And the Lord told him: “Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king.

This shows the heart of God for His people. He wanted to hold them close, to speak to them through the prophets and to lead them to victory and salvation, but the people rejected Him and wanted to choose a man, a human leader instead.

Then God reminds Samuel of how His people have behaved since he brought them out of Egypt…

**8**As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are doing to you. **9**Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will claim as his rights.”

God warns them, through Samuel, that having a King is not all it’s cracked up to be, it comes with many problems and hardships…

**10**Samuel told all the words of the Lord to the people who were asking him for a king. **11**He said, “This is what the king who will reign over you will claim as his rights: He will take your sons and make them serve with his chariots and horses, and they will run in front of his chariots. **12**Some he will assign to be commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and others to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and still others to make weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. **13**He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. **14**He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves and give them to his attendants. **15**He will take a tenth of your grain and of your vintage and give it to his officials and attendants. **16**Your male and female servants and the best of your cattle[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Samuel%208&version=NIV#fen-NIV-7386c)] and donkeys he will take for his own use. **17**He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his slaves. **18**When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, but the Lord will not answer you in that day.”

Samuel does his best to convince them that having a King is a terrible idea. He lists all the awful things that will happen if they choose a king to reign over them instead of just having God lead them;

He will…

* + Take your some of your sons as servants, and make them drive his chariots or fight in his army.
  + Other sons will be forced to plow his fields,
  + Other sons will be forced to make his weapons
  + He will take your daughters as servants and make them work in his household,
  + He will steal your fields and vineyards and give them to his attendants,
  + He will take a tenth of your grain and wine and give it away,
  + He will steal your, servants and animals and make them his own.
  + He will even make YOU his slaves,

Then, worst of all …When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, but the Lord will not answer you in that day.” (v.18)

Samuel did all he could to convince them to NOT have a king…

**19**But the people refused to listen to Samuel. “No!” they said. “We want a king over us.

(even after all that, they insisted on having a King)

**20**Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles.”

(They were completely motivated by envy, jealousy, covetousness…Ignoring God!)

**21**When Samuel heard all that the people said, he repeated it before the Lord. **22**The Lord answered, “Listen to them and give them a king.”

Then Samuel said to the Israelites, “Everyone go back to your own town.”

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God gave them what they asked for, over time they would see the consequences of what they decided.

So begins a new era in Israel’s history, the time of the Kings… (about 400 years)

From Saul, to David to Solomon to the over 40 kings that ruled over Israel and Judah, some of them were wise and righteousness, but most of them did not lead their people in the ways of God and the nation suffered terribly as a result.

What is most evident in this chapter is that God wanted to be the one to lead and guide His people, but they rejected Him and choose a man instead.

All God wanted was for them to trust in Him, obey Him and abide in Him, so that he could protect them, provide for them and dwell with them,

His original Covenant:

**Lev. 26:6**“‘I will grant peace in the land, and you will lie down and no one will make you afraid. I will remove wild beasts from the land, and the sword will not pass through your country. **7**You will pursue your enemies, and they will fall by the sword before you. **8**Five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall by the sword before you.

**9**“‘I will look on you with favor and make you fruitful and increase your numbers, and I will keep my covenant with you. **10**You will still be eating last year’s harvest when you will have to move it out to make room for the new. **11**I will put my dwelling place among you, and I will not abhor you. **12**I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people.

But the people did not want this arrangement. They wanted a man who they could see and talk to. They wanted “a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles” (v.20)

REJECTING GOD – REQUESTING A KING

Rejecting God as their leader, pursuing a man as their leader

Does this sound familiar?

Does this take place with God’s people today?

God wants us to pursue Him and Him only.

He will provide for us, he will protect us He will even teach and guide us. Sometimes through others, sometimes through the word and often simply through the Holy Spirit, but it is He who is our leader, Lord and God not a person.

This is why we have to be careful not to put a person in that place;

Not a Pastor, Leader, President, or *anyone else*.

None of these can give you the security, protection, and guidance that God can.

Putting your trust in any of these instead of God is a huge mistake!

There is only one person who you could look to for these things…JESUS!

**1st Tim. 2:5“**For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus.”

As a Pastor, I know it is my job to teach, guide and lead people not to myself, but to God. The best I can do is bring people to a place where they are not dependent on me, but find all that they need in God alone.

(I get concerned when someone becomes too reliant or dependent on me for their inspiration and spiritual sustenance, because I know at some point, I will let them down.)

God is our Heavenly Father, our Eternal Father and our Everlasting Father,

He wants to lead, guide, and take care of us as only a dad can.

**Jer. 31:1,3** 1“I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they will be my people.” **3** “I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness.

God, *our Father* offers us an everlasting love and unfailing kindness that no one else can give us.

**Even as we Honor our Fathers on this day,**

**let’s also honor our Everlasting Father,**

**who loves us with an everlasting love.**