

The Cry for a King

I Samuel 8: 1-9 (text verses)

As we begin to consider the passage today, we need to understand that this was a defining moment in the journey of God's people as a nation. God had been faithful in bringing them out of Egypt's bondage and they have enjoyed the Land of Canaan for around 450 years. Samuel, the great and last judge, is nearing the end of his life. It is during these last days of Samuel's leadership that Israel begins to cry out for a king.

This is not the first time that Israel had desired a king. After Joshua died, Israel no longer had a man to lead them. It was then that God established judges to rule over the governmental affairs of Israel. During the rule of Gideon, Israel began to desire a king. Gideon refused their request, encouraging them to follow God as their King. [Jud.8:23 – And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the Lord shall rule over you.](#) Time has passed and once again Israel desired a king, but this time they would not be deterred. They were determined to have a king to reign over them.

The decisions that Israel made were not what the Lord desired. He had given them His best and yet they wanted something other than what God had given. We are far removed from the days of Samuel, but the attitudes and principles of that day remain. God has a plan for our lives, but many today have no desire for the will and ways of God. I want us to consider the [conditions](#) surrounding Israel's desire for a king as we think on: [The Cry for a King](#).

I. A Sobering Reality (1-8) – Our text verses reveal the sobering attitude and atmosphere that was prevalent in Israel at that time. Consider:

A. Their Corruption (1, 3) – [And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel. \[3\] And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.](#) What a tragedy we find in these verses. The sons of Samuel had been entrusted with judging Israel, but they did not follow God as Samuel had. Their judgment wasn't based on the Word of God, but according to the highest bidder. The sons of Samuel were a reflection of the corruption that had invaded the hearts of God's people.

- Sadly we are seeing much of the same in our day as well. Individuals are not seeking the ways of God, but rather the lure of this world and the pleasures of the flesh. Pastors and churches have abandoned the Word of God in an attempt to please men and keep the money coming in. Our leaders in office are not governing according to what is right in the eyes of God, but what pleases the special interests.

B. Their Motivation (5) – Notice how the elders of Israel responded to Samuel. [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. They were displeased with the sons of Samuel, and rightfully so, but there was a deeper motivation involved. This was viewed as the right time to make their move. They had looked at the nations around them and desired to be like them. They too wanted a king so that they could be like everyone else.

- Do you see the danger in that line of thought? God had established His rule in Israel, but they were no longer happy with the ways of God. They wanted the modern ways of the world.
- They disregarded all that God had done for them in the past. They failed to remember the blessings, provision, and protection He had provided. God was their King, but they wanted another king!
- Would you not agree that we are seeing that same motivation on a large scale today? Society places enormous pressure on individuals to conform to the ways of the world. Our young people are encouraged to “be like the crowd.” Our churches have abandoned the truths of God’s Word and a faithfulness to preach that Word for “seeker friendly” services. They are no longer concerned with honoring the Lord. Their focus is to be like other churches. Even our government is facing mounting pressure to be like the European nations. It seems that the influence of the world takes precedent over the Constitution.
- Individually, corporately, and nationally we are facing challenges. We don’t need to conform to the ways of this world. We need the presence and power of God!

C. Their Rejection (7-8) – And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken 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. [8] According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. Samuel was displeased with their request, and likely took it personally, but God reveals the heart of the problem was their rejection of Him.

- More and more we are seeing an outright rejection of God in our modern society. He is the One who blessed us, established this great nation, and made us what we are today, and yet it appears that God is hated by the mainstream. Society has embraced, and even promotes, an “anything goes mentality.” There is no moral standard or accountability. Government worries more about political correctness than truth and justice.
- I hate to admit it, but even the modern church is guilty of rejecting the Lord. We are more concerned with the opinions of society than we are the truth of God. Few are willing to confront sin and preach the gospel for fear of offending someone. In essence this is rejecting the Lord.

- I pray that we as God's people will never be guilty of rejecting the Lord or His Word in any regard. We need to embrace truth, proclaim it, and seek the Lord in all we do. We need Him nearer now than ever before, not further away!

II. A Solemn Rebuke (9-18) – V.9 – 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. Have you ever wanted something so bad until you got it and found out that it wasn't what you had hoped or thought it would be? Often God brings chastisement by giving us what we desire. Samuel offers a solemn word from the Lord regarding their decision. Notice:

A. The Cost Described (11-17) – A life of disobedience always comes at a cost. You may not realize it at first, but there will be a cost involved. Having things your way is good until you realize it cost you your joy and fellowship with God. What does this disobedience cost?

1. A Measure of Bondage (11-13) – 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. [12] 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. [13] And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. They would get their king, but he would bring a measure of bondage to their lives. They would no longer enjoy the freedoms they had before. The saved are free in Christ; I realize that, but we can bring a measure of bondage on our lives. It is possible to become entangled with cares of life so as to hinder the fullness of joy God intended.

- The people also consented to bondage for their children. May I remind you that the life you live doesn't just affect you? We don't live in a bubble. Our actions and decisions today can and will affect our lives and families tomorrow. Let's not be guilty of selling out at the expense of our children. Let's keep our church strong for their sake!

2. A Multitude of Burdens (14-17) – And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. [15] And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. [16] And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. [17] He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants. Not only did it cost them some freedoms, it cost them financially. The king would bring about taxes and demand that offerings be brought to him. The people were agreeing to saddle themselves with undue burdens.

- Do you realize that many of our burdens result from poor decisions? We desire and agree to things without counting the cost. Living contrary to God's will brings about

unnecessary burdens. Often we miss the joys of life because of burdens we carry. We'll have enough without creating more. Live for God, in His will and avoid all the burdens you can.

B. The Consequences Declared (18) – 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. Samuel is telling them, “You’ll be sorry for the choice you’ve made, but it will be too late. God will not hear your cries to remove the king.” We can choose to travel the road of rebellion and disobedience, but it always has consequences.

- It is a lonely road when it seems the heavens are brass and you can't get a prayer above your head. I know; I've been there. I want to walk close to God enjoying daily fellowship with Him. Bad decisions can find forgiveness, but often the consequences remain. Let's heed the solemn warning and keep Jesus upon the throne of our hearts and Lord of our lives.

III. A Sequential Rebellion – Samuel delivered the warning but the people had made up their minds. This is a sad situation to be in. They had chosen the road they would travel, and it was a downward spiral. Consider:

A. Their Defiance (19-20a) – Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; [20] 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. They rejected the call of God, seemingly more interested in having their way than obedience. I pray that we will be sensitive to God's will for our lives. I don't want to develop a heart of rebellion, rejecting God's will. I want Him to be the center of all we do!

B. Their Dependence (20b) – God had done so much for them. He completely sustained them, meeting every need they had. He alone was worthy of their confidence. He had driven out their enemies and yet they desired a king to fight their battles.

- Listen, I want God to fight our battles. I'm not depending on men to carry me through this life. God will be responsible for whatever we achieve down here. All that we will ever do will be done by and through His mighty power.

C. God's Compliance (22) – And the Lord said to Samuel, Harken unto their voice, and make them a king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, Go ye every man unto his city. The people in no way altered the sovereignty of God, but He did allow them to have their king. He will not force any of us to live for Him. He desires that of us, but you make that choice each day.

- God may allow you to live as you please for a season, but that will bring ultimate judgment. I want to live pleasing unto Him rather than myself. My King sacrificed greatly for me!

How is it with you today? Do you desire another king? Is Christ Lord of your life? Have you submitted to Him in salvation? We must submit our lives to His sovereign authority. If you have a need please come and bring it to Him!