



7: Trading *THE King* for A king (1 Sam 8-10)

Today we watch Israel trade the King of creation for a king of their own making, the same ancient misstep that mirrors our modern hearts. Are you trading THE KING for A king?

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teachingnotes

* All Scripture is from the Christian Standard Bible (CSB) unless otherwise noted.

1 Samuel 8:1-5

When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons as judges over Israel. His firstborn son's name was Joel and his second was Abijah. They were judges in Beer-sheba. However, his sons did not walk in his ways—they turned toward dishonest profit, took bribes, and perverted justice. So all the elders of Israel gathered together and went to Samuel at Ramah. They said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Therefore, appoint a king to judge us the same as all the other nations have."

The people recognized a difference between how Samuel lived & ruled, compared to his Samuel's sons. While godly parents are commanded & expected to raise their children to follow Yahweh...there is no guarantee that the children will follow in their footsteps. When Samuel dies...his 2 sons will NOT be the leaders the people of Israel need - and everybody knows it. The people think the answer is in giving them **a king**. Not having a human king is one thing that has set Israel apart from other nations so far. The people had those who judged & led them, but until this point, it was understood that Israel didn't have a HUMAN as their king, but Yahweh as their king. But that's about to change.

1 Samuel 8:6-8

When they said, "Give us a king to judge us," Samuel considered their demand wrong, so he prayed to the LORD. But the LORD told him, "Listen to the people and everything they say to you. They have not rejected you; they have rejected Me as their king. They are doing the same thing to you that they have done to Me, since the day I brought them out of Egypt until this day, abandoning Me and worshiping other gods."

It's obvious that both Samuel & Yahweh are frustrated with the Hebrew people. Samuel did what we often do; when people reject the gospel that we follow, we often see them as rejecting us instead of rejecting Jesus.

1 Samuel 8:9-22

Listen to them, but solemnly warn them and tell them about the customary rights of the king who will reign over them." Samuel told all the LORD's words to the people who were asking him for a king. He said, "These are the rights of the king who will reign over you: He will take your sons and put them to his use in his chariots, on his horses, or running in front of his chariots. He can appoint them for his use as commanders of thousands or commanders of fifties, to plow his ground and reap his harvest, or to make his weapons of war and the equipment for his chariots. He can take your daughters to become perfumers, cooks, and bakers. He can take your best fields, vineyards, and olive orchards and give them to his servants. He can take a tenth of your grain and your vineyards and give them to his officials and servants. He can take your male servants, your female servants, your best cattle, and your donkeys and use them for his work. He can take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves can become his servants."

When that day comes, you will cry out because of the king you've chosen for yourselves, but the LORD won't answer you on that day." The people refused to listen to Samuel. "No!" they said. "We must have a king over us. Then we'll be like all the other nations: our king will judge us, go out before us, and fight our battles." Samuel listened to all the people's words and then repeated them to the LORD. "Listen to them," the LORD told Samuel. "Appoint a king for them." Then Samuel told the men of Israel, "Each of you, go back to your city."

The Hebrew people have now made a decision that WE have made before. They want someone else to sit on the throne, rather than Yahweh Himself. They want to replace the all Powerful with a fallen human being. God makes it clear that the throne of your heart was made for HIM, yet we try to replace Him with material possessions, sensual desires, & other people (including ourselves). After all, that's what everybody else is doing - isn't it?

1 Samuel 9:1-2

There was a prominent man of Benjamin named Kish son of Abiel, son of Zeror, son of Becorath, son of Aphiah, son of a Benjaminite. He had a son named **Saul**, an impressive young man. There was no one more impressive among the Israelites than he. He stood a head taller than anyone else.

The name "Saul" means "to ask for." How interesting that the Hebrew people were ASKING FOR a king, and this is the name of the man God chooses to give them. Notice too that Saul's physical size & stature is **impressive**. If you looked at a long line of young men and chose who should rule based on the physique - this would be your guy. But, Yahweh doesn't choose leaders based on their physique nor by how skilled they are.

1 Samuel 9:3-17

One day the donkeys of Saul's father Kish wandered off. Kish said to his son Saul, "Take one of the servants with you and go look for the donkeys." Saul and his servant went through the hill country of Ephraim and then through the region of Shalishah, but they didn't find them. They went through the region of Shaalim—nothing. Then they went through the Benjaminite region but still didn't find them. When they came to the land of Zuph, Saul said to the servant who was with him, "Come on, let's go back, or my father will stop worrying about the donkeys and start worrying about us." "Look," the servant said, "there's a man of God in this city who is highly respected; everything he says is sure to come true. Let's go there now. Maybe he'll tell us which way we should go." "Suppose we do go," Saul said to his servant, "what do we take the man? The food from our packs is gone, and there's no gift to take to the man of God. What do we have?" The servant answered Saul, "Here, I have a little silver. I'll give it to the man of God, and he will tell us which way we should go." Formerly in Israel, a man who was going to inquire of God would say, "Come, let's go to the seer," for the prophet of today was formerly called the seer.

"Good," Saul replied to his servant. "Come on, let's go." So they went to the city where the man of God was. As they were climbing the hill to the city, they found some young women coming out to draw water and asked, "Is the seer here?" The women answered, "Yes, he is ahead of you. Hurry, he just now entered the city, because there's a sacrifice for the people at the high place today. As soon as you enter the city, you will find him before he goes to the high place to eat. The people won't eat until he comes because he must bless the sacrifice; after that, the guests can eat. Go up immediately—you can find him now." So they went up toward the city. Saul and his servant were entering the city when they saw Samuel coming toward them on his way to the high place. Now the day before Saul's arrival, the LORD had informed Samuel, "At this time tomorrow I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin. Anoint him ruler over my people Israel. He will save them from the Philistines because I have seen the affliction of my people, for their cry has come to me." When Samuel saw Saul, the LORD told him, "Here is the man I told you about; he will govern my people."

Samuel is the seer - the **prophet** to whom Yahweh gives insight. Yahweh commands Samuel to anoint Saul as the ruler of His people, Israel. The term "**ruler**" is NOT the word used for "king" (melek). Saul will not be called "king" until later (1 Sam 10:24). *Why?* It could be a literary way to still point to Yahweh, not Saul, as King over Israel. And the next day, it happens just as Yahweh had told Samuel.

1 Samuel 9:18-27

Saul approached Samuel in the city gate and asked, "Would you please tell me where the seer's house is?" "I am the seer," Samuel answered. "Go up ahead of me to the high place and eat with me today. When I send you off in the morning, I'll tell you everything that's in your heart. As for the donkeys that wandered away from you three days ago, don't worry about them because they've been found. And who does all Israel desire but you and all your father's family?"

Saul responded, "Am I not a Benjaminite from the smallest of Israel's tribes and isn't my clan the least important of all the clans of the Benjaminite tribe? So why have you said something like this to me?" Samuel took Saul and his servant, brought them to the banquet hall, and gave them a place at the head of the thirty or so men who had been invited. Then Samuel said to the cook, "Get the portion of meat that I gave you and told you to set aside." The cook picked up the thigh and what was attached to it and set it before Saul. Then Samuel said, "Notice that the reserved piece is set before you. Eat it because it was saved for you for this solemn event at the time I said, 'I've invited the people.'" So Saul ate with Samuel that day. Afterward, they went down from the high place to the city, and Samuel spoke with Saul on the roof. They got up early, and just before dawn, Samuel called to Saul on the roof, "Get up, and I'll send you on your way!" Saul got up, and both he and Samuel went outside. As they were going down to the edge of the city, Samuel said to Saul, "Tell the servant to go on ahead of us, but you stay for a while, and I'll reveal the word of God to you." So the servant went on.

1 Samuel 10:1-19

Samuel took the flask of oil, poured it out on Saul's head, kissed him, and said, "Hasn't the LORD anointed you ruler over His inheritance? Today when you leave me, you'll find two men at Rachel's Grave at Zelzah in the territory of Benjamin. They will say to you, 'The donkeys you went looking for have been found, and now your father has stopped being concerned about the donkeys and is worried about you, asking: What should I do about my son?' "You will proceed from there until you come to the oak of Tabor. Three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you there, one bringing three goats, one bringing three loaves of bread, and one bringing a clay jar of wine. They will ask how you are and give you two loaves of bread, which you will accept from them. After that you will come to Gibeah of God where there are Philistine garrisons. When you arrive at the city, you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place prophesying. They will be preceded by harps, tambourines, flutes, and lyres. The Spirit of the LORD will come powerfully on you, you will prophesy with them, and you will be transformed. When these signs have happened to you, do whatever your circumstances require because God is with you. Afterward, go ahead of me to Gilgal. I will come to you to offer burnt offerings and to sacrifice fellowship offerings. Wait seven days until I come to you and show you what to do." When Saul turned to leave Samuel, God changed his heart, and all the signs came about that day. When Saul and his servant arrived at Gibeah, a group of prophets met him. Then the Spirit of God came powerfully on him, and he prophesied along with them. Everyone who knew him previously and saw him prophesy with the prophets asked each other, "What has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?" Then a man who was from there asked, "And who is their father?" As a result, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" became a popular saying. Then Saul finished prophesying and went to the high place. Saul's uncle asked him and his servant, "Where did you go?" "To look for the donkeys," Saul answered. "When we saw they weren't there, we went to Samuel." "Tell me," Saul's uncle asked, "what did Samuel say to you?" Saul told him, "He assured us the donkeys had been found." However, Saul did not tell him what Samuel had said about the matter of kingship. Samuel summoned the people to the LORD at Mizpah and said to the Israelites, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'I brought Israel out of Egypt, and I rescued you from the power of the Egyptians and all the kingdoms that were oppressing you.' But today you have rejected your God, Who saves you from all your troubles and afflictions. You said to him, 'You must set a king over us.' Now therefore present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes and clans."

This is the 1st time a man has ever been anointed as king among the Israelites. Until this point, anointing was restricted to the tabernacle & the priests. The oil represents the empowerment of Yahweh & Saul is privately anointed as "ruler" over Yahweh's people.

This gathering of the tribes seems like a moment of judgment. There are 2 other times when the people gather by tribes and clans to determine who is judged guilty OR - in this case - who should be king (see Jos 7:14-18 and 1 Sam 14:41-42).

Strangely, God allowing this to play out - giving them a human king - DOES later turn out to be a judgment on the people

1 Samuel 10:20-24

Samuel had all the tribes of Israel come forward, and the tribe of Benjamin was selected. Then he had the tribe of Benjamin come forward by its clans, and the Matrite clan was selected. Finally, Saul son of Kish was selected. But when they searched for him, they could not find him. They again inquired of the LORD, "Has the man come here yet?" The LORD replied, "There he is, hidden among the supplies." They ran and got him from there. When he stood among the people, he stood a head taller than anyone else. Samuel said to all the people, "Do you see the one the LORD has chosen? There is no one like him among the entire population." And all the people shouted, "Long live the king!"

Saul...was selected. They could not find him. But WHY? Why would Saul bug out like that? Wouldn't any man want this position? He is likely afraid, uncertain about his ability to do this.

We must consider the reality that: 1) God has had Samuel anoint him 2) Saul had seen 3 signs confirming this is God's hand at work 3) Saul has been empowered by the Spirit to prophesy. Yet, he is STILL hesitant. This does NOT speak well of Saul's trust in God.

Notice, one more time, that it is the height of Saul's physique, not the DEPTH of his soul - that is highlighted as the reason why he should rule. The people wanted a KING - an **impressive** one **like the other nations** - and now they've got what they want. And as we will find out in this study - it won't be a good thing for long.

1 Samuel 10:25-27

Samuel proclaimed to the people the rights of kingship. He wrote them on a scroll, which he placed in the presence of the LORD. Then Samuel sent all the people home. Saul also went to his home in Gibeah, and brave men whose hearts God had touched went with him. But some wicked men said, "How can this guy save us?" They despised him and did not bring him a gift, but Saul said nothing.

Remember **the rights of kingship** that Samuel had warned the people about? - taking your sons, daughters, employees, farm animals, & land? That's about to happen. But, at this point, Yahweh is protecting and empowering Saul, while others insult Saul. To his credit, Saul holds his tongue & his hand from harming these wicked men.

Despite Saul's moments that cause us to question his character, he reminds us of another King of Israel... One whom wicked men also said, 'How can this guy save us?' But, to a much greater degree than King Saul, King Jesus allowed His own people to ridicule and crucify Him as they cried out,

Matthew 27:41-44

In the same way the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him and said, "He saved others, but he cannot save himself! He is the King of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God rescue him now—if he takes pleasure in him! For he said, 'I am the Son of God.'" In the same way even the criminals who were crucified with him taunted him.

② Am I Trading THE KING for a king?

WHAT or WHO are you living for? WHAT or WHO is sitting on the throne of your heart?

heretoserveyou

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

- * Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Christy** (850-673-9764), **Caleb** (864-315-8015), **Gary** (850-673-2507), **Betty** (850-973-3266), or another follower of Jesus soon!
- * Or call our **deacons & wives: Alan & Christy Androski** (850-464-1428), **Steve & Debbie Bass** (850-673-7952), **Noel & Patricia Barnes** (813-767-2881), **Derek & Emily Beaty** (813-763-4421), or **Tim & Joni Hughey** (850-464-1156).

discussionquestions

These open-ended questions are designed to help you LIVE what you LEARN with your Family, Friends, or Small Group.

1. Trading the King

Israel wanted a visible ruler "like all the nations." What "visible" substitutes most often tempt you to edge God off the throne of your own heart?

2. Permissive Will & Consequences

God granted the people's persistent request even after warning them (8:9-18). Describe a time God allowed you to choose something that later proved costly. What did you learn?

3. Leadership Criteria

The elders pointed to Samuel's corrupt sons; the people admired Saul's stature. Read 1 Samuel 16:7. How should God's criteria for leadership reshape the way we evaluate pastors, mentors, or even ourselves?

4. Ebenezer Moments

Samuel raised a "stone of help" to mark God's faithfulness (7:12). What physical or habitual reminders help you recall God's past help? Where might you need a new "Ebenezer" today?

5. Signs, Spirit, & Hesitation

Saul received undeniable signs and the Holy Spirit's power, yet hid among the baggage (10:22). What fears or insecurities can cause us to shrink back even when God has clearly called and equipped us?

6. From Saul to Jesus

Contrast Saul's kingship (takes, taxes, conscripts) with Jesus' kingship in Mark 10:45 and Philippians 2:5-8. How does seeing the true King re-orient your ambitions and daily decisions?

7. Household Application

Parents: Samuel's faithful life didn't guarantee his sons' faithfulness. How can families cultivate genuine, personal faith in the next generation without relying on heritage alone?

8. Next Step

Identify one specific "king" you've allowed to rule—approval, comfort, career, etc. What concrete action will you take this week to dethrone that idol and enthrone Christ afresh?