

Hear now the word of the Living God!

Read 1st Samuel 8:

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever!

Now that we have read **1st Samuel Chapter 8**, I want to ask you if there is another passage in the Bible that comes to mind that is very similar to what we read here in 1st Samuel...

Now, with that question hanging in your mind, let's take a look at what is taking place in the life of one of the most powerful Judges in the History of Israel of which the book we are preaching through is named after... Samuel!

We first came to know Samuel, even before he was born to his mother, Hannah...for we read in chapter 1 of her desire to have a son.

I'm sure you remember how Chapter 1 tells us, in great detail, of this aching desire Hannah had for a Son...it was constantly in her heart and it was on her quiet lips that day in the Temple...

But according to the Word of God, we know that Hannah was praying in perfect union with the will of God...for what was in the heart of Hannah was also in the mind of God...

Several hundred years after the ministry of Samuel, God told Jeremiah these words in **Jeremiah 1:5**
“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you. And before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

Even the Apostle Paul in **Galatians 1:15** writes of how God separated him from his mother’s womb and called him to reveal His Son to the Gentiles...

I believe we can make a strong case that God even orchestrated the very circumstances of Hannah’s barrenness to drive her to her knees in prayer for a child...

More than that, I also believe that God designed even the mockery from Peninnah, Elkanah’s other wife, as a means to drive Hannah to her knees to offer up to God a prayer that was in perfect union with the plan and the purpose of God...

So many times we fail to see how God uses even adversity and suffering to drive us to righteous prayer and we curse the very circumstances that God Himself has orchestrated as a means to bring our hearts in line with His perfect will...

Brothers and Sisters, we should learn what Paul writes concerning prayerful thanksgiving in passages such as...

“give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

1 Thessalonians 5:18 ESV

In **Colossians 2:6-7** Paul writes...

“Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.” (The New King James says...”**Abounding in it with thanksgiving.**” Meaning that we are to have abundant gratefulness for being rooted, built up and established in the faith that comes with the fullness of Christ at salvation!)

Paul also wrote in **Philippians 4:6-7...**

6 “do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

What I like about the prayer of Hannah is what we are told after she prayed...

Eli told her to **“Go in peace and the God of Israel grant your petition...”**

Then the scriptures tell us that Hannah went her way with the peace of God, knowing He had heard her request!

So Samuel is born in **Chapter 1** according to the plan of God to be a Prophet and a Judge to the nation of Israel in a time of great spiritual darkness...

It is very difficult to grasp the impactful ministry Samuel had as a Godly Judge without knowing the

ungodly atmosphere of the time in which he was born...

This is why, in our introduction of **1st Samuel**, we referred to the overview of the **book of judges** through the lens of 2 verses that said “**everyone did that which was right in his own eyes...**”

Judges 17:6 said this, as well as **Judges 21:25** which brings us directly into the book of **Samuel...**

So Samuel serves in the Temple, it is confirmed that God has called him to be a Prophet and a Judge, and then Samuel disappears from the pages of scripture...

It is interesting that we read nothing about Samuel in chapters 4,5 and 6!!!

A whole generation passes between chapter 3 and chapter 7 and the question must be asked.... What was Samuel doing?

I believe we are not left without an answer to that question because of what is said at the end of **chapter 3 in verses 19-21...**

Look at what is said in those verses just before Samuel disappears from the content of the next three chapters...

19 “And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground.

20 And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of the Lord.

21 And the Lord appeared again at Shiloh, for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the Lord.”

So what was Samuel doing for the past 20 years? I believe Samuel was humbly and obediently serving the Lord in obscurity!

So what did that actually look like in the life of Samuel?

You and I do not know because the scriptures do not tell us the specific details of Samuel’s humble obedient life in obscurity!

But I do believe that the Humble and obedient life that Samuel lived in obscurity was the platform God

used to launch Samuel into a powerful influence he had beginning in **chapter 7** when Samuel said in **verse 3...**

3 “If you are returning to the Lord with all your heart, then put away the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth from among you and direct your heart to the Lord and serve him only, and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.”

Notice in **verse 4** how the people responded to what Samuel said...

4 So the people of Israel put away the Baals and the Ashtaroth, and they served the Lord only.”

So where did Samuel get such a powerful influence over the people?

It is so easy to skip to the overarching answer to that question by saying “God gave Samuel that powerful influence...”

But what were the means in which God used to elevate Samuel into such a powerful influence over all of Israel?

I tell you, it was His humble obedience in obscurity for 20 years that God used to elevate Samuel to the place of influence that he had in chapter 7 that lead Israel into repentance and then to great peace!

Peter writes in **1st Peter 5:6** “**Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you,**”

I am quite certain that Samuel practiced Humble Obedience in obscurity and God used that as the means to exalt him at the right time!

Now, I want to bring this home! Listen very carefully! Here we are at Awakening Church in little St Marys Georgia...

We are a small church and in the grand scheme of things, we could consider our ministry to be relatively obscure with nothing much to write home about!

The voice of the enemy accuses us of being insignificant!

But that is not the voice of truth! The Voice of Truth tells us that even in the midst of humble obedience in obscurity there is an eternal impact, an eternal purpose and one day even a Godly Exaltation!

Do not see our eternal impact in little St Marys, Ga as insignificant! That is exactly how the enemy would love to discourage you!

Awakening Church may seem to exist in obscurity, but just as God placed Samuel, Esther, Jeremiah and Paul in the exact place and time of his good pleasure...so has God placed Awakening Church exactly where he wants us, doing exactly what He wants us to do, even if it seems (in the eyes of the world) we are not even on the map!

Take heart....Due Season is coming!

Alastair Begg says that Samuel's life "is marked by long periods of silence and then moments where he comes to the fore... and he says that he could not have come to the fore in such usefulness if it were not for the fact that long periods of silence were marked by steady faithfulness!"

What I am trying to say is that all we do in the regular daily monotonous routine of our private lives matters because God uses such things to make us what he desires us to be... useful in His hands to do exactly what He desires when He desires such things to be done!

And one thing we must settle in our minds and in our hearts is the fact that nothing of His elect is insignificant, obscure and too small for God to bring Glory to Himself and good to His people!

Settle that truth in your heart! Write it down and memorize it! Wrap it up in the memorization of **Romans 8:28** that says “We KNOW!!! (We Know WHAT?) “**And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.**”

So we saw last week in **chapter 7** that Samuel was used by God to call the people to repentance and ushered in a wonderful time of peace for Israel...

You remember that God didn't design their repentance to be a time of just laying around and sulking...

In **chapter 7**, we not only saw true repentance from the lips of the people, we also saw “Fruits of Repentance” in the fact that they put away their Idols and armed themselves for Battle...

And although they were fearful of the enemy, they were more fearful of God and trusted the Lord with the final outcome...

And that “outcome” as we read last week, was that God gave them great victory, God gave them respect among the nations, and God gave them Peace to enjoy...

Now we come to **chapter 8** and the first thing we read in **verse 1** is that **Samuel is Old!**

Now if you are a student of the Scriptures (which I hope you are) you already know what is about to transpire in this chapter and the chapters ahead...

I am sure that you know there are several things that take place that is leading the people of Israel to request from Samuel a king!

Now before we go any further, I think it is important to say that there was nothing sinful in Israel asking for a King!

In fact, we can see that God anticipated the people to have a king to rule over them because of what Moses said in **Deuteronomy 17:14-15...**

““When you come to the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and you possess it and dwell in it and then say, ‘I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me,’ you may indeed set a king over you whom the Lord your God will choose.

So it wasn't a sin to have a king... but, as we will soon see, it was sinful in many ways in which Israel entered into a Dynasty Monarchy ruling system...

God had already set up a system in which Judges were given to Israel...they were supposed to offer Godly leadership...

But they were not Kings.... This is one of the reasons there is the phrase “in those days there was no king in Israel...

There were Judges, but there was no King...a Judge was not a King!

In fact, Judges were appointed, you didn't inherit the position of being a Judge just because your father was a Judge!

There was a time in the book of Judges where the people asked Gideon, who was a Judge appointed by God, to rule over them as well as all his sons which would have started a Dynasty Monarchy but Gideon refused...

Listen to the reason why Gideon would not become their king in **Judges 8:22-23...**

22 “Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, “Rule over us, you and your son and your grandson also, for you have saved us from the hand of Midian.”

23 Gideon said to them, “I will not rule over you, and my son will not rule over you; the Lord will rule over you.””

Gideon would not rule over them as a King would rule, neither did he permit his Sons and Grandsons to become their King...

In fact, Gideon told them that the Lord is their King!

The sin of Israel was not in having a King... The sin of Israel is in their unrighteousness reasoning to have a King...

You can see it in the text...

Verse 1: They reasoned Samuel was Old...

But God, as their King, had always provided human leadership through the judges so that they would not do that which was right in their own eyes...

God would raise up a Judge who would die of old age and then God would provide another Judge...

All the people had to do was to follow what God told the Judges to tell them. They simply were to be obedient to the Godly Words of Godly Judges!

But they looked at Samuel's old age as a problem instead of Samuels service in wisdom being a great asset!

Old age, indeed has its limitations, but it also has great positivities as well.

The people didn't trust that God, as their King, would continue to lead them by the Judges He would send them.

This fear lead them to ask for a King...

Another reason why they asked for a King is because Samuel had two sons that he appointed as Judges who perverted judgement by taking bribes from the people...

So the people came to Samuel in the first 5 verses in chapter 8 with two reasons that lead them to ask for a King...

First, Samuel's age and Second, Samuel's succession plan didn't look good...

This is summarized quite well in verse 5 where the people said...**“Behold, you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations.”**”

At the end of **verse 5** there are 4 words that also speak of Israel's sinful disposition in their request for a King...

The words “**like all the nations**” is referred to twice in **chapter 8**... it is said in **verse 5** and it is also said again in **verse 20**...

This phrase “**like all the nations**” seems too be a big deal to the people of Israel...

There is a desire that has long plagued the people of God throughout the ages...

That desire is the desire to be like others in the world!

You may raise your children up in a Christian home, but if you don't prepare them with the truth that the enemy will sow sinful desires into their hearts to conform to the ungodly worldly systems that oppose all that took place on Calvary...you have failed your children in one of the most critical areas of Spiritual Warfare!

Romans 12:2 tells us “**Be not conformed to this world...**”

In other words, do not copy the behavior and the customs of this world, as a popular paraphrase puts it...

In the day in which we live, we must prepare our kids to not fall into the trap of being like the world... This is a major problem in the church today! Churches today copy the world often in their sincere evangelistic effort to win people to Christ!

But they do not know what they are doing!

They are diminishing the character of Jesus so that the average lost person will feel comfortable around the King...

But even though the King is Good, the King is not safe to be around for those who are in sinful rebellion!

So instead of conforming to the standards of the world, we must lift high the standards of our King so that people can see how low their standards actually are (like filthy rags) and then see what the King has done to make them totally and wonderfully clean!

Not only do we face such an evil influence to be like others in the world, the young church did as well...

In fact, Paul writes the first chapter of the book of Romans to encourage believers in Rome to not be ashamed of the Gospel and to not become fools by participating in worldly pursuits!

Today, in our text, we see the people of Israel wanting to be like other nations and have a King!

But in **verse 6** we can see that this rubbed Samuel wrong...

6 “But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, “Give us a king to judge us.” And Samuel prayed to the Lord.”

So they told Samuel that he is an Old Dude, then they said His succession plan concerning his ungodly sons is not good... then they tell him they want to be like other nations and have a King!

I think it is possible and even reasonable that these things would disappoint Samuel greatly for a couple of reasons...

Now before I identify the two reasons for Samuel's disappointment in their request for a King, I want to remind you that we just left chapter 7 where we saw excellent Biblical leadership in the leadership provided by Samuel himself!

Samuel preached repentance and the people repented... Samuel was a praying prophet and a good and a Godly Judge over the people...the Army of the Philistines was in ruin and they had great peace! They even set up an Ebenezer or a Stone of remembrance for all the Lord had done through the ministry of Samuel...

Is it little wonder why Samuel took offense to the people requesting a King? As I said, I think the text offers two reasons for Samuel being disappointed...

First, Samuel probably took personal issue with their rejection of his leadership and using his age as one of those reasons for that rejection must have been insulting!

I can think that in Samuel's mind, he Believes that he had lead the people well and that He still had

many more years of serving the Lord and His people ahead!

And Secondly, this is possibly the first that he had heard of His Son's ungodly behavior...

Beersheba (where his sons were) was over 50 miles from where Samuel served... Samuel's sons were out from the influence of their Godly father and they began to pervert justice...and word may not have come back to Samuel about his sons being on the take until now when these men came to him...

Now, to Samuel's credit and to his Godly Character, notice what he does right after these men present their request that displeases Samuel...

At the end of **verse 6** it says “**And Samuel prayed to the Lord.**”

Is this your natural inclination when you in the midst of great disappointment?

I think most people default to immediately whining and complaining to others when faced with painful disappointment...

Not Samuel...He went straight to the Lord in prayer!

Look at what God said to Samuel in **verse 7** “**And the Lord said to Samuel, “Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them.”**

God tells Samuel to do what the people requested him to do...give them a King!

I think the text bears two reasons for the content of **verse 7**...

First, I believe God establishes someone who can identify with Him being rejected...

This is not the only time in scripture where someone can identify with the Lord in how he is treated by his own people...

For example, the book of Hosea is mostly about a man who can somewhat identify with the Lord concerning having an unfaithful bride!

Here, Samuel feels rejected, but God sets the record straight and tells him that its not Samuel that is being rejected...it is God the people are rejecting!

Verse 7 also gives us a better understanding of the reason why God does what He does in giving them a king!

He tells Samuel to obey the voice of the people in their rejection of Him (God) being their King!

You see, God giving the people their request may look like he is sanctioning and permitting the request for a King, but as we read further we can see that He is definitely not blessing it!

In fact, you can make a good case that God in granting their request uses it as a punishment for their sinful disposition in that request!

So what is their sinful disposition? Well, God knows it quite well...

Look what God says about their character in **verse 8... “According to all the deeds that they have done, from the day I brought them up out of**

Egypt even to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are also doing to you.”

BTW, do you see the identification factor in this verse... God is saying, “What they have done to me all the way back to the day I brought them out of Egypt, they are now doing to you Samuel!”

Just a few days after their great celebration of being delivered from Egypt, it only took a few bumps in the road to Canaan and they were ready to go back to Egypt to have a horrible King to rule over them!

What was their sinful disposition! They had the best King possible and yet they desired a king of flesh!

So God, as a punishment gives them exactly what they ask for!

But He tells Samuel to give them a warning about what this King will do...

Verse 9 is a command to show the people exactly what a King will do to them and their children...

9 “Now then, obey their voice; only you shall solemnly warn them and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them.””

So what will the King do?

Look at **verses 10-17...**

10 “So Samuel told all the words of the Lord to the people who were asking for a king from him.

11 He said, “These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen and to run before his chariots.

12 And he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and some to plow his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his implements of war and the equipment of 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 orchards and give them to his servants.

15 He will take the tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and to his servants.

16 He will take your male servants and female servants and the best of your young men and your donkeys, and put them to his work.

17 He will take the tenth of your flocks, and you shall be his slaves.”

The very things Deuteronomy 17 warn about what a human king should not do will be exactly what this human will do as their king!

The punishment is in the granting of the request! Be careful what you ask from God!

Now notice in **verse 18** what God says the people will do after He gives them their request...

18 “And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the Lord will not answer you in that day.””

Cry, Cry Cry!!!

Before, they cried that they did not want God to be their King but wanted a King they could actually see just like the other nations!

Before, they cried we do not want to be a chosen people and a Royal Priesthood serving a righteous King...we want a king who is like us!

So God will give them their request and that king will make them slaves!

They will be back in bondage to a king and it will not be much different than being back in Egypt!

And why will they cry? Because the King God gives them will be just like the kings of other nations... they will take, take, take!

He will take your daughters (vs 13)

He will take your fields, vineyards and orchards (vs14)

He will take your grain (vs 15)

He will take your servants (vs 16)

He will take your flocks (vs 17)

And He will take you and make you his slaves! (Also vs 17)

And whose fault will that be for bringing yourself back into bondage???

18 “And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves...”

Now you would think that these words that Samuel spoke to Israel would have had an impact on them to the point of withdrawing their request... but it didn't!

In fact, they were so determined to be like other nations, it was almost like Samuel never said a word of warning to them...

Look at **verses 19-20...“But the people refused to obey 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, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles.””**

It was almost like they had this fantasy of a kingship that was not based on reality!

Rebellion often begins with a fantasy that is not based on reality...so look closely at what this world promises!

If you bathe the promises of this world in the water of the Word, you will see that what the world offers is ultimate misery! It doesn't matter if it is wealth, power or pleasure... if the world offers it, the end result will be misery!

But Samuel could not persuade the people and so the last two verses tell us...

21“And when Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the ears of the Lord.

22 And the Lord said to Samuel, “Obey their voice and make them a king.” Samuel then said to the men of Israel, “Go every man to his city.””

Now, it is so easy to judge the people of Israel concerning rejecting the perfect King... but it happens all the time, even today...

Remember at the beginning of this message I asked you if there is another passage in the Bible that

comes to mind that is very similar to what we read here in 1st Samuel???

For me, when I read 1st Samuel chapter 8, my mind goes to John chapter 19... let me read it to you...

“So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Behold the man!” When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, “Crucify him, crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him.” The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God.” When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, “Where are you from?” But Jesus gave him no answer. So Pilate said to him, “You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?” Jesus answered him, “You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin.” From then on Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you

are not Caesar's friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar." So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" They cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar.""

Isn't it sad that people today still desire to be ruled by a human king that only offers bondage!

But the true eternal King of the Universe offers true freedom from sin and eternal life as a gift...

When other Kings are taking, our King is giving!

THE BOOK OF
1 SAMUEL
CHAPTER 8

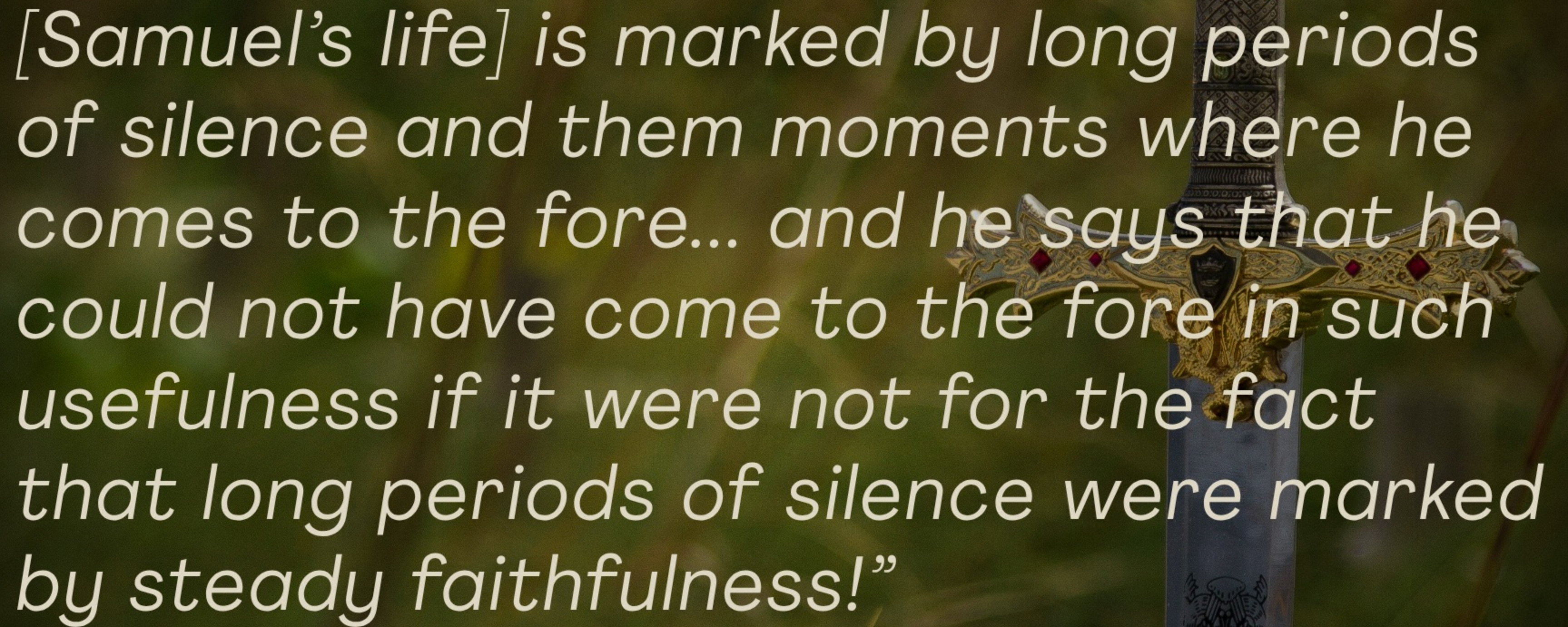


INTRODUCTION

- Recall Samuel's conception & his mom's faithful prayers for God's will
 - Jeremiah 1:5, Galatians 1:15
- Prayerful thanksgiving
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:18, Colossians 2:6–7, Philippians 4:6–7
- The context of Judges: “Everyone did that which was right in his own eyes”

INTRODUCTION

- Samuel serves in the Temple, is confirmed by God to be His prophet & judge, then “disappears”
- Samuel was serving the Lord faithfully in the waiting
 - 1 Peter 5:6

A sword with an ornate hilt and a scabbard, set against a blurred green background. The hilt is decorated with gold and red gemstones. The scabbard is dark with a gold-colored design. The sword is positioned vertically on the right side of the image.

[Samuel's life] is marked by long periods of silence and then moments where he comes to the fore... and he says that he could not have come to the fore in such usefulness if it were not for the fact that long periods of silence were marked by steady faithfulness!"

-Alastair Begg

INTRODUCTION

- Chapter 7 – God's call to repentance ushered in a time of peace
- The immediate context: God gave Israel great victory, respect among the nations, and peace to enjoy

CHAPTER 8

- Samuel has aged & is described as “old”
- The people request a king, which was not inherently sinful [Deut. 17:14–15]
- Current system in place: judges
- Not the first time the people wanted a king – Gideon in Judges 8:22–23 refuses

CHAPTER 8

- Israel's unrighteous reasons for desiring a king:
 - Samuel was old & they didn't trust God as King to continue to lead them with judges
 - Samuel's 2 sons were corrupt
 - They wanted to be like all the other nations [A warning to Christians today, see Romans 12:2]

CHAPTER 8

- Samuel was displeased at the request
 - Personally may have still capable to lead regardless his age
 - Caught off guard about his sons
- Samuel's response: prayer
- God's answer was to give them a king
 - Comforts Samuel in saying the people are rejecting God as their King
 - Uses a king punitively after warnings

CHAPTER 8

- Cry, Cry, Cry... Why? The king will take...
 - Your daughters (v. 13)
 - Your fields, vineyards and orchards (v. 14)
 - Your grain (v. 15)
 - Your servants (v. 16)
 - Your flocks (v. 17)
 - You as his slaves (v. 17)

CHAPTER 8

- The people ignored God's warning as if Samuel hadn't said a word
- "Rebellion often begins with a fantasy that is not based on reality."
- 1 Samuel 8 & John 19
- When other kings are taking, our King is giving