

# *The Kingship of God: How Every Government Works For Our Good*

## *Ichabod*

1 Samuel 4:1–7:17

October 2, 2016

Sunday Evening Bible Study

So far in 1 Samuel, there seems to be a recurring theme of the birth or lineage of Jewish sons who have significant impact on the government of Israel.

Hannah’s Son: Samuel  1:1–2:11  <i>Every government will be judged by the Lord (2:10).</i>	Eli’s Sons Hophni and Phinehas  2:12–3:21  <i>Every government is fraught with corruption (2:12).</i>	<b>Phinehas’ Son Ichabod</b>  <b>4:1–7:17</b>  <b><i>Every government rises and falls by God’s decree (4:3).</i></b>	Kish’s Son: Saul  8:1–13:23  <i>Every government tends to exploit the governed (8:11).</i>	Jesse’s Son: David  14:1–16:23  <i>Every government needs leaders with integrity (16:7).</i>
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1. The Lord dramatically humbles his people (4:1–3).

1.1 Caution: In the Old Testament, the people of God are bound together in a nation called Israel. In the New Testament, the people of God are bound together in a body called the church. ***Do not make a one-to-one correspondence of Israel to the United States or apply to the United States promises that God made specifically to Israel.***

Israel	Church
Bound by physical borders.	Transcends physical borders.
God promised national greatness (strong economy, secure borders, peace, and prosperity) if Israel obeys God’s laws (2 Chron. 7:14; Lev. 26).	No such promise from God to the United States, or any other “Christian Nation.” However, God does reward righteousness and punish evil wherever he finds it (Romans 1; Gen. 18:26; 1 Cor. 10:11).
Bears the sword to defend borders, enforce the law, and punish idolaters and heretics.	Forbidden to use the sword (physical force) in the cause of the gospel (Jn. 18:36). But God still kills directly (Acts 5:5; 1 Cor. 11:30).
The gospel is to come and hear in Israel.	The gospel is to go and tell the world.
Kingdom is limited to a few hundred square miles in Mid-East.	Kingdom extends to every nation (Jn. 18:36; Mt. 28:18-20).
God’s people have single-citizenship, subject to the government of Israel.	God’s people have a dual-citizenship, subject to the government of the church <i>and</i> the government of their home nation (Ro. 13; Acts 5:29).

- 1.2 Israel (the people of God) vs. Philistines (the instruments of God)
- 1.3 God raises up nations and sets them down for his glory and our good (Isa. 10:15; Dan. 2:20-23; Pr. 21:1).
- 1.4 “Success” is not necessarily a sign of God’s pleasure with you.
- 1.5 Prosperity theology is either way too late or way too early.
- 1.6 God uses disobedient, rebellious, people to accomplish his sovereign purposes.
- 1.7 All of God’s people suffer when their leaders disobey (cf. Joshua 7).
- 1.8 God loves his people so much that he crushes them.

## 2. The Elders brazenly design a new religion (4:4–9).

- 2.1 Designer religion takes features of true religion and mixes it with false religion.
- 2.2 We are inclined to use the symbols of our faith as good luck charms
- 2.3 Designer religion is always marked by religious hypocrisy.
- 2.4 We are tempted to put God in a box, take him with us when we want to use him to *get* what we want, and leave him at home when we want to *do* what we want.

## 3. The glory of the Lord departs (4:10–18).

- 3.1 The Lord decisively rips away Israel’s idols
- 3.2 They trusted in 30,000 soldiers, two corrupt priests, one weak priest, and the ark of the covenant of God, rather than the God of the covenant.
- 3.3 The Ark of the Covenant represents the glory of God and the only way of salvation through atonement.
- 3.4 The gifts of God become the most dangerous idols.
- 3.5 An orphan named Ichabod will remind them of God’s discipline for a generation.

## 4. The Lord humbles the Philistines (5:1–6:18).

- 4.1 Dagon bows: God alone is above all worthless idols (5:1–5; cf. Isa. 44:9-20).
- 4.2 Tumors grow: God alone is sovereign over disease and death (5:6–12).
- 4.3 False teachers speak truth: God alone defeats our enemies (6:1–18).
- 4.4 There is some truth in all religions, but where they contradict God’s Word, they are wrong.

## 5. The Glory of the Lord returns (6:19–7:2).

- 5.1 To draw near to God without reverence is dangerous.
- 5.2 God keeps his promises to us, even when we don’t keep our promises to him (Ex. 6:7).
- 5.3 When we persist in sin, God may withdraw and feel far away, so that we return to him.
- 5.4 Sometimes sorrowful worship is more appropriate than “happy clappy” worship.
- 5.5 Every page of the Bible is about Jesus (6:20; Ro. 3:25; Heb. 7:25-27).