

“BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU ASK FOR; YOU MIGHT GET IT & REGRET IT”

1 Samuel 8:1-22

I. Last Week’s Wonderful Word from Pastor Josiah Smith Sunday, April 26th, 2026

A. The Point: *“God’s not a presence to manage; He’s a king to be worshiped”*

1. **Notable Quotable:** *“What comes to mind when you think about God is the most important thing about you.”* A.W. Tozer.
2. **Why?** Because what comes to your mind about God determines how you relate to him. Will you use, contain, avoid, appease or worship Him?

B. The ways we wrongly relate to God (A Good Devotion)

1. We **Use** God **1 Samuel 4:1-11**
2. We **Contain** God **1 Samuel 5:1-5**
3. We **Avoid** God **1 Samuel 6:1-8**
4. We **Appease** God **1 Samuel 5:10-6:16**

C. Remember: *“God’s not a presence to manage; He’s a king to be worshiped”*

II. GIVE US A KING 1 Samuel 8:1-25 *“Careful what you ask for, you might get it and regret it.”*

A. Prelude: Trouble with the line of Judges 1 Samuel 8:1-22

1. **What does 1 Samuel 8:1-3 teach us?** That the godliness of parents is no guarantee they will have godly children.

B. The Request for a King & Theocracy: 1 Samuel 8:5-22 *“Give us a king to judge us”*

1. Israel was established by God as a Theocracy: A biblical theocracy is a system where God rules as king and communicates His will through a prophet to His people (**Exodus 4:16; Deuteronomy 18:18; 1 Samuel 8:7**)
2. **Question:** What solution do the people think a king vs. a Judges could bring?
 - a. While Samuel’s sons were unqualified, it was God who would appoint Judges.
 - i. **Judges 2:16** *“Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those who plundered them.”*
 - ii. **Judges 2:18** *“Whenever the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge...”*
 3. Human nature seeks control; faith trusts God’s sovereignty oversight.

4. When God orchestrates leadership, don’t replace it, yield.

- a. There is no compulsion to accept Gods reign, yet ultimately there is no escaping it¹
- b. No throne went well that was taken but not every reign was great when given
- c. Trust in God’s sovereignty over your life more than having control of your life.
- d. Hannah giving Samuel to be raised by Godless Eli, Hophni and Phineus. This shows God’s oversight supersedes mans underperformance.
- e. In this case of a request for a king; the cure is no better than the disease!
 - a. Man brings the imperfection to things.
 - b. They said: “give us a king” but they were conducting a coup.
 - c. The truth was the people kept making 3-5 mistakes a million times.
 - d. Rather than changing, they gamed the system, removed the prophet and crowned a man in the place of God. He too would disappoint them.
 - e. **Give us a king!** *Be careful what you ask for, because you might get and regret it.*

¹ Joyce G. Baldwin, [1 and 2 Samuel: An Introduction and Commentary](#), vol. 8, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 91.

C. What the people doing to God when they say to Samuel “Give us a king”?

1. They were denying God of his throne rights over their them.
2. They were usurping the kingdom of God in rebellion.
3. They were acting in Disobedience
 1. Disobedience is the rejection of the throne rights of God.
 2. It is tantamount to pushing God off his throne and placing ourselves upon it.
4. We are no different than Israel when we usurp God and forbid his throne rights over us.
 1. In so many words we are saying to God I can do what I please & you stay out of it.
 2. Some do this covertly with phrases like “*God told me*”
 3. Others say, “*the Bible is man’s words used to gaslight people into submission.*”
 - a. Both are illegitimate ways of dethroning God meant to avoid being disputed.
 4. The request for a king flies’ arrogance in the face of God-
 - a. “We want a new rule!”
 - b. “We want input in the rules.”
 - c. “We don’t want your rule or rules.”
 - d. It’s **not** that they want a king **to be like other nations**. That’s just their way of saying “*God spoke to me*” to deflect being challenged. They don’t want God.
 - e. The rule and reign of God is not good for us. We know better than Him.
5. **Walter Beuttler PhD.** “*When you think of Adam you realize one man’s disobedience was responsible for the corruption of all humanity and the inevitable death of the Son of God. You may disagree with me, but when I think about that truth, disobedience may very well be the greatest sin of all.*” The denial of the throne rights of God.
6. **Give us a king! Be careful what you ask for; because you might get and regret it**

D. What does 1 Samuel 8:7 teach us? “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.”

1. A man or woman of God cannot take rejection personally when leading biblically.
2. God does not wish to place the agony of rejection on you but some of us get the privilege to bear his burdens time to time.
3. As a leader of families, ministries and church, you need to realize if God was there, they would take it out on him. Since you’re there. People will take it out on you.
 - a. Learn from Jesus’ example: “**Father, forgive them. They know not what they do.**”

E. God reflects on human nature: 1 Samuel 8:8 “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.”

1. **Human Nature: “Past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior.”**
 - a. This truth is as theological as it is psychological.
 - b. Measurable performance and track records are the results of ongoing habits.²
 - c. We are what we repeatedly do, and we become what we practice every day.
 - d. Being excellent or unskilled comes from habits, not one moment.”
 - e. God knows who are his. There is always a remnant of committed in the crowd.
 - f. We don’t make a million mistakes; we make 3-5 mistakes a million times.
 - g. The first mistake is memorable, the second less so. It becomes auto biology.

² Drucker, Peter F. *The Effective Executive*. New York: Harper & Row, 1967. (See discussion on performance, results, and executive effectiveness.)

- h. Neurons that fire together wire together. The more you repeat a behavior the more your brain wires together making it natural nature. You literally become mentally wired to make the same poor choices again and again.
- 7. What God said to Samuel speaks to many of his people but not all of them or all of us.
 - a. **Admonition:** Strive for excellence in Christ living biblically so you can become the example to others for Christ.
- 8. Following Jesus by enthroning him on your heart.
 - a. Turn your back on sin (temptation from what your body craves, what the world has to offer or Satan leverages).
 - b. It's a daily exercise of 3-5 decision repeated a million times.
 - c. Following Christ means we die daily but also that we resurrect daily!
 - d. We grow daily or die gradually based on our 3-5 choices a million times.
- 9. To experience the overcoming life, you need to come over to a new, ongoing consistent habits God has given and follow through.
- 10. Change comes through challenge and choices (**Deut. 30:19**).
- 11. **Einstein** *"Insanity is doing the same thing over and over expecting different results."*³
- F. **1 Samuel 8:9** *"warn them and show them of the ways of the king who shall reign over them."*
 - 1. Be careful what you ask for, because you might get and regret it.
 - 2. Everyone understands sin, not everyone understands consequences.
 - 3. God instructs Samuel to explain the consequences of a king's throne over Gods.
- G. **1 Samuel 8:18** *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.*
 - 1. As sure as there is always forgiveness there are consequences for choices.
 - a. I'm terrified God can explain consequences, yet I still may remove his crown.
 - b. **"Give me a king!"** Be careful what you ask for because you may get it and regret it.
- H. **1 Samuel 8:10-17**
 - 1. This will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: "He" and "Me"
 - 2. The **"He"** of Consequences: He will take - for himself - to make his - his chariots - his ground - his harvest - He will take - his implements of war - give them to his servants - He will take - put them to his work - He will take
 - 3. The **"Me"** of Consequences: take your sons - commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties – take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards - take your daughters - take the tenth of your grain and of your vineyards - take your male servants and female servants - the best of your young men and your donkeys - take the tenth of your flocks - and you shall be his slaves.
- I. **1 Samuel 8:19-22** If we're determined to dethrone God the best among us , not even Samuel the prophet can talk you out of it.
 - 1. Prophets always speak truth to power. God tells Samuel, 'Don't waste your breath.'

III. CONCLUSION: Give me a king! Be careful what you ask for because you may get it and regret it.
A Cardio Coronation that offers your heart his throne rights, embrace forgiveness for the 3-5 things we do wrong a million times and ask he offers us 3-5 things to pursue to bless him a million times.

³ Rita Mae Brown, *Sudden Death* (New York: Bantam Books, 1977).

BACKGROUND OF THE GOD DAGON & THE PHILISTINES

I. THEORY ONE: DAGON WAS A HALF FISH GOD OF THE GREEKS.

B. The Fish God of the Greeks

1. The Philistines were Greeks ('Sea Peoples') invading the Middle East.
2. The Bible first mentions Dagon in the story of Sampson **Judges 16:23**.
3. The first association of Dagon connected to a fish happens in 200 AD.
4. **Philo of Byblos 200 AD** "And Dagon, after he discovered grain and the plough, was called Zeus Arotrios. But some say that he was called Dagon because he discovered the fish (*ichthys*)."⁴ Gods discover or create things.
5. The Greek word for fish is **ἰχθύς** (*ikh-thus*).
6. The Hebrew word **דָּג** '**Dag**' means "fish" and **דַּגָּן** '**Dagon**' is the god's name.
7. There's no Greek word for Dagon, just a spelling of how it sounds **Δάγῶν**



Greek god Triton
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C. Dagon, Greek and Middle Eastern Culture:






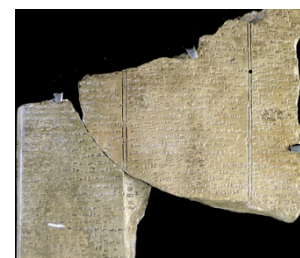
Triton and Hercules
©Wikimedia-Commons

1. The Greek god of the sea, Poseidon had a son named **Triton**.
2. Unlike his father Poseidon, who is always fully human in ancient art, Triton's lower half is that of a fish, while the top half is presented in a human figure.
3. Greek Culture did trade goods with the Canaanites before the Philistines arrival. So if they exchanged goods its possible of an exchange of gods.
4. One might conclude Dagon is Triton who fell before the ark; **1 Samuel 5:1-5**

II. THEORY TWO: DAGON, THE FATHER OF THE CANAANITE god BAAL.

D. The Father of Baal and god of the grain.

1. The name Dagon predates the Philistines in the Middle East. His names found in Canaanite cultures: Sidonians, Phoenicians, Ugarit etc. (Countries: Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, & Israel).
2. While **דָּג** '**Dag**' means "fish" in Hebrew **דַּגָּן** '**Dagon** means '**grain**' in the ancient semitic languages **Cuneiform**  **Phonetician**  **Akkadian** 
3. The story of Baal revolves around him being god of the storms He often holds a lightning bolt in his hand like a spear of wheat.
4. No image of Dagon or written description of Dagon has ever been found, just temples & the brief mention of his name



Ugarit Text 1400 BCE
Dagon, "grain"
©En-Wiki.org



The Ancient Mesopotamian Sages
©TimelessMyths.com

5. The theory of connecting him to the Hebrew word fish **דָּג** '**Dag**' does not exist until 1,100 years after the events in **Samuel** (see footnote 1).
6. The Ancient Sages of Mesopotamia often are mistaken as images of Dagon as a fish god. In Babylonian culture the gods sent sages to guide men on how to build civilization. They clothed themselves in many outfits. The fish robe is one, other times they are like winged birds or fish with a basket of acorns. They are not the god Dagon.
7. A Canaanite king of Sidon (Beirut, Lebanon), referred to Dor & Joppa (Near Gaza) in the Plain of Sharon as '**the mighty lands of Dagon.**'⁵
This is the land of the Philistines and open fields of grain on the coast.

Conclusion: Dagon as the father of Baal and his name translating to "grain" has stronger evidence than the Greek god Triton from the Hebrew word for fish, **דָּג** '**Dag**' from languages, cultures & dates.

⁴ Eusebius of Caesarea, *Praeparatio Evangelica* 1.10.31–32, quoting Philo of Byblos; trans. E. H. Gifford, *Eusebii Pamphili Evangelicae Praeparationis Libri XV* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903), 1:64–65.

⁵ John H. Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 292.