

1 SAMUEL CHAPTER 7

THE ARK REPRESENTED THE PRESENCE OF GOD AMONG HIS PEOPLE. THE ISRAELITES HAD CARRIED IT INTO BATTLE AGAINST THE PHILISTINES WHEN ELI WAS STILL HIGH PRIEST AND IT HAD BEEN CAPTURED AND CARRIED OFF TO ASHDOD, ONE OF THE PHILISTINES' FIVE MAJOR CITIES. IT HAD BEEN TAKEN BACK INTO ISRAEL AND NOW WAS RESTING IN THE HOUSE OF ABINADAB IN THE TERRITORY OF BENJAMIN. SHILOH HAD BEEN DESTROYED BY THE PHILISTINES AND WAS NO LONGER THE LOCATION OF THE SANCTUARY OF THE LORD. THIS WAS UNDOUBTEDLY A LEVITICAL FAMILY, FOR AFTER WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO THE MEN OF BETH-SHEMESH, THE MEN WEREN'T LIKELY TO TAKE ANY MORE CHANCES BY BREAKING THE LAW! IT WOULD BE MANY YEARS BEFORE THE ARK WOULD BE MOVED TO JERUSALEM BY KING DAVID.

VS 1 KIRIATH-JEARIM WAS A FORTIFIED CITY. THE ARK OF THE COVENANT WAS NOW OUT OF ENEMY HANDS AND RESTING IN THE TERRITORY OF BENJAMIN. BUT HAVING THE ARK IN JEWISH TERRITORY DIDN'T AUTOMATICALLY SOLVE ISRAEL'S PROBLEMS, FOR DURING THOSE TWENTY YEARS WHEN THE ARK WAS IN ABINADAB'S HOUSE, A NEW GENERATION HAD ARISEN AND WAS CRYING OUT FOR RADICAL CHANGES IN ISRAEL'S GOVERNMENT. THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL HAD LOOKED TO JEHOVAH AS THEIR KING, BUT NOW THEY ASKED THE LORD TO GIVE THAM A KING JUST LIKE THE OTHER NATIONS. IT WAS A CRITICAL TIME IN THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL AND IT TOOK THE PRAYERS AND GUIDANCE OF SAMUEL TO BRING THEM SAFELY THROUGH THIS DANGEROUS TIME.

VS 2 WHAT DO WE LEARN ABOUT THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL? DURING THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES, THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL HAD FALLEN INTO A CYCLE OF SIN AND REPENTANCE. THEY WOULD TURN AWAY FROM OBEDIENCE TO THE LORD AND HE WOULD PERMIT AN ENEMY TO OPPRESS THEM. AFTER A PERIOD OF SUFFERING, THE PEOPLE WOULD CRY OUT TO GOD FOR HELP, AND HE WOULD RAISE UP A LEADER TO SERVE AS JUDGE AND DELIVERER. UNDER SAMUEL'S DIRECTION THE NATION WAS BEGINNING TO LAMENT THE LOSS OF THEIR SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD. HOW LONG DID ISRAEL NEGLECT GOD AND CHASE AFTER FOREIGN GODS?

VS 3 WHAT DOES SAMUEL TELL THE PEOPLE? COULD YOU DESCRIBE IN ONE WORD WHAT SAMUEL IS SAYING? IF THEY REPENT WHAT WILL THE LORD DO? PUTTING AWAY THEIR FALSE GODS WAS ONLY THE BEGINNING OF THEIR RETURN TO THE LORD. THEY HAD TO PREPARE THEIR HEARTS AND DEVOTE THEMSELVES TO THE LORD ALONE. REMEMBER THE FIRST COMMANDMENT? (EX 20:3). WHAT IS AN IDOL? DO WE HAVE IDOLS TODAY? "IDOLS IN THE HEART ARE FAR MORE DANGEROUS THAN IDOLS IN THE TEMPLE". WHY?

VS 4 DID ISRAEL DO WHAT SAMUEL SUGGESTED?

VS 5 WHAT DID SAMUEL HAVE THEM DO? WHAT DID SAMUEL DO FOR THEM?

VS 6 IT WASN'T ENOUGH JUST TO DESTROY THEIR IDOLS, THE PEOPLE ALSO HAD TO CONFESS THEIR SINS AND SURRENDER THEMSELVES TO THE LORD. TWO CONSIDERATIONS SUGGEST THAT THIS MEETING OCCURRED DURING THE TIME OF THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES. 1. THE PEOPLE Poured OUT WATER BEFORE THE LORD WHICH BECAME A PRACTICE AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES. IT COMMEMORATED THE TIMES THE LORD PROVIDED WATER IN THE WILDERNESS. 2. THE PEOPLE FASTED, AND THIS WAS REQUIRED ONLY ON THE ANNUAL DAY OF ATONEMENT, WHICH PRECEDED THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES. THE KEY ACTIVITY THAT DAY WAS THEIR CONFESSION, "WE HAVE SINNED AGAINST THE LORD."

VS 6 "AND SAMUEL JUDGED THE SONS OF ISRAEL AT MIZPAH." SAMUEL WOULD REPRESENT THE TRANSITIONAL FIGURE IN ISRAEL'S FORM OF GOVERNMENT FROM VARIOUS JUDGES TO A SINGLE KING. THE ROLE OF JUDGE INCLUDED LEADING THE PEOPLE IN WARFARE AND SETTING DOMESTIC DISPUTES. SAMUEL WAS ALSO A PROPHET WHO WAS GIVEN SPECIFIC REVELATIONS FROM THE LORD, WHICH HE COMMUNICATED TO THE PEOPLE THROUGHOUT HIS LIFETIME. WE ARE GOING TO SEE HIS ROLE AS BOTH HIGH PRIEST AND PROPHET INCLUDED ACTING AS A COUNSELOR AND ADVISOR TO THE FUTURE KING.

VS 7 WHAT HAPPENS? WHEN THE PHILISTINES LEARNED ABOUT THIS LARGE GATHERING OF JEWS, THEY BECAME SUSPICIOUS THAT ISRAEL WAS PLANNING TO ATTACK, SO THEY SUMMONED THEIR TROOPS AND PREPARED TO INVADE. REMEMBER ISRAEL HAD NO STANDING ARMY AND NO ONE RULER TO ORGANIZE ONE, SO THEY FELT HELPLESS. BUT WHAT WAS THEIR GREATEST WEAPON? THEY HAD A FAITH THAT WAS EXPRESSED IN PRAYER. PSALM 20:7 TELLS US, "SOME TRUST IN CHARIOTS AND SOME IN HORSES, BUT WE WILL REMEMBER THE NAME OF THE LORD OUR GOD." HOW DID ISRAEL REACT?

VS 8 WHAT DID THEY WANT SAMUEL TO DO? HERE WE SEE THEY HAD INDEED REPENTED AND TURNED THEIR HEARTS BACK TO GOD. WHAT DO THEY CALL THE LORD? OUR _____.

VS 9 WHEN SAMUEL OFFERED THE APPROPRIATE SACRIFICES TO THE LORD FOR ISRAEL AND CRIED TO THE LORD FOR ISRAEL, WHAT DID THE LORD DO?

VS 10 WHAT WAS THE LORD'S ANSWER? THE LORD USED A VARIETY OF SPECTACULAR METHODS TO BEAT ISRAEL'S FOES- HE HAD CAUSED THE SUN TO STAND STILL (JOSHUA 10), HE HAD RAINED DOWN HAILSTONES OR EVEN FIRE FROM HEAVEN. ON THIS OCCASION HE EVIDENTLY SENT SOME TREMENDOUS NATURAL PHENOMENON, SUCH AS A TERRIFIC THUNDERSTORM OR PERHAPS AN EARTHQUAKE. THE LORD HAD SHOWN ONCE AGAIN THAT HE WAS THE ONE TO FIGHT FOR HIS PEOPLE AND THE VICTORY WAS ENTIRELY HIS.

VS 12 JOSHUA HAD THE PEOPLE BUILD A PILE OF STONES BESIDE THE JORDAN RIVER TO REMIND THEM OF THE LORD'S MIRACLE IN PARTING THE JORDAN FOR THEM TO CROSS ON DRY LAND. SAMUEL WAS NOW CONTINUING THE PRACTICE BY SETTING UP A

MONUMENT COMMEMORATING THE LORD'S GREAT VICTORY. IS IT IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER WHAT THE LORD HAS DONE FOR US? WHY?

VS 13 HOW LONG WAS THE LORD AGAINST THE PHILISTINES? WHY DO YOU THINK THE LORD HONOR SAMUEL IN SUCH A WAY? NOTE: THEY DID RESUME THEIR OPPRESSION DURING THE KINGSHIP OF SAUL.

VS 14 WHAT TWO IMPORTANT POINTS DO WE SEE IN THIS VERSE? CITIES WERE _____ AND THERE WAS _____ BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE AMORITES.

VS 15 WHAT DO WE LEARN? IT IS LIKELY THAT THIS MEETING AT MIZPAH MARKED THE BEGINNING OF SAMUEL'S PUBLIC MINISTRY TO THE WHOLE NATION OF ISRAEL, SO THAT FROM THAT TIME ON HE WAS A FOCAL POINT FOR POLITICAL UNITY AND SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY.

VS 16-17 HE MADE HIS HOME IN RAMAH AND ESTABLISHED A CIRCUIT OF MINISTRY TO TEACH THE PEOPLE THE LAW, TO HEAR CASES, TO GIVE COUNSEL, AND TO PASS JUDGMENT. HIS TWO SONS ASSISTED HIM BY SERVING AT BEERSHEBA. ISRAEL WAS BLESSED TO HAVE A MAN LIKE SAMUEL TO GUIDE THEM BUT THE TIMES WERE CHANGING AND ISRAEL'S ELDERS WANTED THE NATION TO CHANGE AS WELL.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT THE LORD IN THIS CHAPTER?

1 SAMUEL CHAPTER 8

THIS CHAPTER IS AMONG THE MOST SIGNIFICANT IN THE HISTORICAL BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. IT MARKS THE TRANSITION FROM JUDGESHIP TO KINGSHIP IN ANCIENT ISRAEL. PROBABLY TWENTY OR TWENTY-FIVE YEARS HAVE ELAPSED BETWEEN THE EVENTS IN CHAPTER 7 AND CHAPTER 8. LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS...

VS 1 WE LEARN TWO IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT SAMUEL: 1. _____ WE HAVE SEEN HOW SAMUEL SERVED AS A JUDGE TO THE PEOPLE AND LED THEM TO A GREAT MILITARY TRIUMPH OVER THEIR ENEMIES. AS TIME PASSED, HE CONTINUED TO FAITHFULLY ACT AS BOTH JUDGE AND PROPHET IN ISRAEL. HE LITERALLY DEVOTED HIS ENTIRE LIFE TO SERVING ISRAEL. AT THIS POINT, WE MIGHT EXPECT THAT HE WOULD BE TREATED WITH RESPECT AND HONOR. WHAT DID SAMUEL DO 2. _____

2. WE MEET THE "BOYS". WHAT WERE THEIR NAMES? 1. _____ "THE LORD IS GOD" AND _____ "MY FATHER IS LORD". THEY WERE JUDGING IN _____ (57 MILES SOUTH OF RAMAH).

3. WHAT DO WE LEARN ABOUT THE SONS? DOES THIS SOUND FAMILIAR? SAMUEL'S SONS WERE REPEATING THE SAME PATTERN AS ELI'S SONS, ABUSING THEIR POWER AND LIVING IN WICKEDNESS. WHY DO YOU THINK SAMUEL LET THIS HAPPEN?

4. SAMUEL WAS GOING TO FACE A BIGGER PROBLEM AS THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL HAD FOCUSED THEIR EYES ON THEIR NEIGHBORS AND BEGAN TO IMITATE MEN RATHER THAN GOD. CAN THIS HAPPEN IN OUR LIVES IF WE TAKE OUR EYES OFF THE LORD? DO YOU THINK THE PEOPLE WOULD NOT HAVE PRESSED FOR A KING HAD SAMUEL'S SONS PROVED AS FAITHFUL TO THE MOSAIC COVENANT AS THEIR FATHER? IT SEEMS THIS REQUEST HAD NEVER BEEN BORN IN PRAYER. THEY HAD HELD A COMMITTEE MEETING INSTEAD OF A PRAYER MEETING. WHAT IS THE WARNING TO US?

VS 5 WHAT DO THE PEOPLE WANT? WHY? REMEMBER THAT GOD'S PURPOSE FOR ISRAEL WAS THAT THEY BE DIFFERENT FROM THE NATIONS-TO BE A LESSON FOR THE NATIONS. WAS THIS A SURPRISE TO GOD? GOD PROMISED ABRAHAM, SARAH, AND JACOB THAT KINGS WOULD BE AMONG THEIR DESCENDANTS (GEN 17:6 I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you.; 16 I will bless her, and indeed I will give you a son by her. Then I will bless her, and she shall be a *mother of nations*; kings of peoples will [a]come from her."). THIS WASN'T THE FIRST TIME THE PEOPLE HAD REJECTED THEIR LORD. AT SINAI, THEIR REQUEST WAS "MAKE US GODS!" (EX 32:1) GOD HAD MADE PROVISIONS FOR KINGS TO RULE HIS PEOPLE IN THE MOSAIC LAW-LOOK AT DEUT. 17:14-15. **14** "When you enter the land which the Lord your God is giving you, and you take possession of it and live in it, and you say, 'I will appoint a king over me like all the nations who are around me,' **15** you shall in fact appoint a king over you whom the Lord your God chooses. *One* from among your countrymen you shall appoint as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves, *anyone* who is not your countryman.

VS 6 HOW DID SAMUEL REACT TO THEIR REQUEST? SO WHAT DOES HE DO? IS THIS AN EXAMPLE FOR US?

VS 7 HOW DOES THE LORD RESPOND? DR WIERSBE SAID, "THE GREATEST JUDGMENT GOD CAN GIVE IS TO LET US HAVE OUR OWN WAY." HAS THIS EVER HAPPENED TO YOU? WHAT ARE SOME THINGS WE TRUST TODAY INSTEAD OF THE LORD?

VS 8 HOW DOES THE LORD ENCOURAGE SAMUEL IN THIS VERSE? PEOPLE WHO REJECT GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY AND LORDSHIP WILL ALSO REJECT THOSE WHO SERVE HIM. WHEN WE STAND FOR OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S WORD WE WILL OFTEN EXPERIENCE THE HATRED OF THE WORLD. WHY DO YOU THINK THIS IS TRUE?

VS 9-10 WHAT WAS SAMUEL TO DO? (4 THINGS)

VS 9 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

VS 10 4. _____. IN 1 SAMUEL 3:19 THE LORD HAD SAID, "LET NONE OF (SAMUEL'S) WORDS FALL TO THE GROUND". SAMUEL'S LIFE WAS CHARACTERIZED BY HIS FAITHFULNESS TO GOD'S WORD.

WARNING CONCERNING A KING

VS 11 WHAT IS THE FIRST WARNING? _____ ISRAEL HAD NEVER HAD A STANDING ARMY BEFORE THE TIME OF THE KINGS. WHO HAD BEEN THEIR PROTECTOR? IT WAS NEVER ISRAEL'S ARMY THAT DEFEATED HER FOES; IT WAS ALWAYS THE LORD'S MIGHTY ARM.

VS 12 ISRAEL HAD NEVER EXPERIENCED A CENTRALIZED GOVERNMENT BEFORE AND THERE HAD NEVER BEEN "CIVIL SERVICE". THEY DID NOT REALIZE THIS WOULD MAKE THEM VASSALS TO THEIR KING RATHER THAN FREE AND SELF-SUFFICIENT FARMERS AND SHEPHERDS.

VS 13 WHAT ABOUT THE DAUGHTERS?

VS 14-15 LAND OWNERSHIP IN ISRAEL WAS PASSED FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION AS PART OF A FAMILY'S INHERITANCE. IT WAS A GREAT VIOLATION OF THE LORD'S INTENDED SYSTEM OF LAND OWNERSHIP TO HAVE A KING SEIZE ONE'S LANDS FOR HIS OWN USE. THE ISRAELITES HAD NEVER PAID TAXES BEFORE. THE TEN PERCENT THEY SET ASIDE WAS GIVEN TO THE TEMPLE OR TO THE PRIEST FOR THEIR SERVICE. NOW SAMUEL TELLS THEM IF THEY ADDED A KING, THEY WOULD HAVE AN ADDITIONAL TITHE TO PAY AS WELL.

VS 16-17 THE KING WOULD DEMAND TO BE THE PEOPLE'S SOVEREIGN. THE KING WOULD EXERCISE AUTHORITY OVER EVERY ASPECT OF THEIR LIVES-LAND, INCOME,

LIVESTOCK, EVEN THE PEOPLE THEMSELVES. AS THE KING GREW LARGER THE MORE HE WOULD SET HIMSELF IN GOD'S PLACE.

VS 18 WHAT DOES THE PHRASE "ON THAT DAY" REFER TO? CENTRAL HUMAN GOVERNMENT WAS NOT THE LORD'S ORIGINAL DESIGN FOR SOCIETY, BECAUSE THE LARGER IT GREW, THE MORE IT WOULD SET ITSELF IN GOD'S PLACE.

VS 19 SO THE PEOPLE CHANGED THEIR MINDS? HERE AGAIN WE SEE THE PRINCIPLE THAT THE LORD DOES PERMIT HIS PEOPLE TO BRING SUFFERING ON THEMSELVES IF THEY DEMAND IT.

VS 20 NOW WE SEE THEIR MOTIVE. WHAT DID THEY WANT? WHAT DID THEY WANT FROM A KING? LOOK AT JOSHUA 10:14 There was no day like that before it or after it, when the Lord listened to the voice of a man; for the Lord fought for Israel. AND 1 SAMUEL 7:10 Now Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, and the Philistines advanced to battle Israel. But the Lord thundered with a great [a]thunder on that day against the Philistines and confused them, so that they were struck down before Israel.. HOW QUICKLY WE FORGET ALL THE LORD HAS DONE FOR US.

VS 21-22 IF THE PEOPLE HAD WAITED FOR GOD TO INAUGURATE THE MONARCHY, THEIR KING WOULD HAVE BEEN A GREAT JOY TO THEM INSTEAD OF A GREAT DISAPPOINTMENT. AS BECOMES CLEAR LATER IN SAMUEL, DAVID WAS GOD'S CHOICE TO LEAD ISRAEL FROM THE BEGINNING. IF THE PEOPLE HAD NOT BEEN IMPATIENT, DAVID WOULD HAVE BEEN THEIR FIRST KING. IS THIS A WARNING TO US TODAY? DO WE SEEK THE LORD FOR GUIDANCE AS OFTEN AS WE SHOULD? ARE WE AN IMPATIENT PEOPLE? IT IS ALWAYS THE BEST COURSE TO OBEY THE WRITTEN WORD OF GOD, EVEN IF THAT COURSE MAY SEEM COSTLY AT THE TIME. IN THE LONG RUN LIVING GOD'S WAY IS THE BEST WAY.