

Kings of Israel



“A Better Idea” – Demand for a King – 1 Samuel 8:1 – 9

Sermon Discussion Guide

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STUDY NOTES

Such as all the other nations (8:5). Israel's real motive for requesting a monarch was now public: "Everyone else is doing it." Apparently, the people expressed concerns about the wickedness of Samuel's sons, while valid, it was a cover.

They have rejected me (8:7). God directed Samuel to look at the deeper spiritual issue. Samuel's wounds were understandable. His leadership was being rejected. The more important issue, however, was that God's leadership was being rejected.

He will take your sons. (8:11). Samuel's words carried an underlying question: Do you really know what you are asking for? Every king would have an army, and every army would require soldiers. Those soldiers would be the sons of the Israelites. So, in asking for a king, and thus a more formal national identity, the people were offering their sons to war.

We seem to always be searching for things that will make our lives better. Dr. Jonas Salk saw the need to cure Polio, so he developed a vaccine for it that made Polio practically extinct. In technology with have grown from receiving less than 3 channels on television to being able to stream a myriad of movies and videos on our handheld devices. However, in spite of creating a bigger version of something or making a new version of it doesn't mean the idea makes it better (just look at Windows Vista or New Coke). Look at the nation of Israel during the period of the Judges. Israel thought they had a better idea than God did and wanted a king. Israel wanted a king like the other nations and thought a king would make them better and stronger.

1. Share a time when your parents let you learn something the hard way.

Read 1 Samuel 8:1 – 21.

2. Why did Israel want a king?
3. What was God's response to Israel's request for a king?
4. Why did God include the request for a king in the same category with idolatry?
5. What warnings did Samuel give to the people?
6. Do you think God has ever given you what you wanted even though it wasn't the best thing for you? Why?
7. When are you inclined to want or do something just to be "like everyone else"?

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8. In what way was Israel more "free" than other nations before it was ruled by a king?
9. In what way is the desire to be like the people around us more of a hindrance than a help to our spiritual lives?
10. What is the "king" who sometimes rules your life?
11. Matt shared three Scripture passages that remind us to trust God rather than trying to pursue our own ideas we think are better. What do the following passages say to you about whom you should trust most?
- Job 13:15
 - Proverbs 14:12
 - Isaiah 55:8 – 9
12. Before you make requests of God this week, how could you go about seeking His perspective on what is best for you?