

Theme: Israel rejected the LORD as their King, preferring to be led by a human king to be like the nations around them.

## I. Cliff-Hanger Endings

- A. March 21, 1980 - Season end for Dallas - JR Ewing shot
- B. Who shot JR - the huge cliff-hanger in my teen years
- C. Became a huge catch phrase all summer
- D. We will have a cliff hanger today in Game of Thrones
- E. Moving to Israel asking for a king - today they do
- F. But we will not pick up the story until the next 'season'

## II. The End of the Reign of the Judges

- A. Samuel and his sons
  - 1 When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons as judges for Israel. 2 The name of his firstborn was Joel and the name of his second was Abijah, and they served at Beersheba. 3 But his sons did not walk in his ways. They turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice. 1 Samuel 8:1–3
  - 1. Samuel is getting old and appoints his sons as judges
  - 2. Joel (Yahweh is God) and Abijah (Yahweh is my Father)
  - 3. But they are corrupt and unlike their father
  - 4. Dishonest, bribes, pervert justice
- B. The request of the elders
  - So all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. 5 They said to him, "You are old,

and your sons do not walk in your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have." 1 Samuel 8:4–5

- 1. "Your sons are not like you - they can't be our leaders."
- 2. But we don't want a judge - we want a king.
- 3. Key theme in this chapter - Hebrew root שפט - occurs 8 times - judge, justice, lead, etc.
- 4. This marks the end of the period of the judges
- 5. The Game of Thrones now moves to a new phase

## III. A King for Israel

- A. They wanted a king like the other nations
  - They said to him, "You are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways; now **appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have.**" 1 Samuel 8:5
  - 1. Could just be using phrase from Deuteronomy
    - When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, "Let us set a king over us like all the nations around us," <sup>15</sup> be sure to appoint over you the king the Lord your God chooses. He must be from among your own brothers. Do not place a foreigner over you, one who is not a brother Israelite. Deuteronomy 17:14–15
    - a. Moses had used this phrase - could be ok
    - b. God knew they would need a king
      - In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit. Judges 21:25
  - 2. In this case it revealed bad motives in their heart

But when they said, “Give us a king to lead us,” this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the Lord. <sup>7</sup> And the Lord told him: “Listen to all that the people are saying to you; **it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king.** 1 Samuel 8:6–7

- a. A king was not the problem - God had provided for that
- b. The problem - they wanted to be like the nations
- c. The problem - they were rejecting Yahweh as King
- d. A key theme in 1 Samuel

But **you have now rejected your God, who saves you out of all your calamities and distresses. And you have said, ‘No, set a king over us.’** So now present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes and clans.” 1 Samuel 10:19

“But when you saw that Nahash king of the Ammonites was moving against you, you said to me, **‘No, we want a king to rule over us’ — even though the Lord your God was your king.** 1 Samuel 12:12

- e. It is possible to do right things - and even quote Scripture - with a sinful motive
  - f. But God is looking at the heart in this Game of Thrones
3. This was the culmination of a long pattern
- As **they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods,** so they are doing to you. 9 Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will do.” 1 Samuel 8:8–9
- a. This was not a new problem - very old!
  - b. The root problem is rejecting Yahweh’s rule

- c. When sin is found out, it usually has been there for a while
- d. The fruit is not the beginning but the end of the process
- e. A rejection of God’s rule will eventually show itself in actions

B. Samuel - and God! - try to dissuade them from this choice

Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them **will do.**” 10 Samuel told all the words of the Lord to the people who were asking him for a king. 11 He said, “This is what the king who will reign over you **will do:** ... 1 Samuel 8:9–11

1. God tells Samuel to warn the people
2. Samuel tells them about the coming kings “justice”
  - a. Verb translated “will do” or “rights” is same root as “judge” and “justice”
  - b. You don’t like justice of the judges - wait till you see the kings justice!
3. The kings rights/justice
  - a. He will take children as servants (slaves)
  - b. He will take your lands as tribute
  - c. He will take crops and animals as taxes
  - d. Fits the description of Canaanite kings well
  - e. This is what you want???
4. Summary - you will be his vassals/servants - slaves  
He will take a tenth of your flocks, and **you yourselves will become his slaves.** 1 Samuel 8:17

5. The final warning - you do not want this!

When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, and the Lord will not answer you in that day.” 1 Samuel 8:18

- a. You will get what you want - and not like it!
- b. CS Lewis - Everyone will get what they want, but not everyone will want what they get!
- c. But when you cry for relief then - it will be too late!
- d. DON'T DO THIS!!!

C. The people respond - give us a king!

But the people refused to listen to Samuel. “No!” they said. “We want a king over us. <sup>20</sup> Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles.” 1 Samuel 8:19–20

1. NO!!! Don't tell us this! We WANT a king
2. We WANT to be like other nations
3. We WANT a king to lead us in battle
4. What was Yahweh? Their KING Who led them in battle!
5. The sad cliffhanger ending to this season of GOT  
When Samuel heard all that the people said, he repeated it before the Lord. <sup>22</sup> The Lord answered, “Listen to them and give them a king.” Then Samuel said to the men of Israel, “Everyone go back to his town.” 1 Samuel 8:21–22
  - a. We are left with a cliffhanger - who will the king be?
  - b. But one thing we know - this will not work out well
  - c. They tried to win the Game of Thrones - and lose

## IV. Applying the Word - Receiving Our King

A. This sad choice has been repeated endlessly

1. Adam and Eve made it in the Garden - and lost
2. Israel made it here at Ramah and at Mizpah later
3. Israel made it in Jesus' day - Hosanna on Palm Sunday, crucify on Good Friday
4. This is our tendency - to reject Jesus as King
5. Like Israel, current sin is merely the latest instance
6. Our sin has deep roots - our desire to win the Game of Thrones

B. The Good News - Jesus is King

1. Despite our waywardness, God gives us a King
2. We get a King we don't deserve!
3. Our King does not come to enslave but to free
4. Our King does not pervert justice but establishes it
5. Our King does not take - He gives
6. Our King takes our sin - and gives His righteousness
7. Our King does not take our food as tax - He gives us Himself

C. Coming to the Table of the King

1. Today we come to the Table of the King to feast
2. Today we come to the Table to renew covenant

3. Today we proclaim and embrace Jesus the King
4. Come - feast, embrace, worship the King!

### A King for Israel

1 Samuel 8  
April 13, 2014  
Communion  
1 Timothy 6:15-16

[May you be blessed by] God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Go forth in His blessing. Amen. 1 Timothy 6:15–16

19 But the people refused to listen to Samuel. “No!” they said. “We want a king over us. 20 Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles.”

21 When Samuel heard all that the people said, he repeated it before the Lord. 22 The Lord answered, “Listen to them and give them a king.”

Then Samuel said to the men of Israel, “Everyone go back to his town.” 1 Samuel 8:19–22