

Day 273 - SATURDAY: October 28th

1 Samuel 8

1 Samuel 8:1-22 NKJV

Now it came to pass when Samuel was old that he made his sons judges over Israel. The name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba. But his sons did not walk in his ways; they turned aside after dishonest gain, took bribes, and perverted justice. Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, and said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations." But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." So Samuel prayed to the LORD. And the LORD said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even to this day—with which they have forsaken Me and served other gods—so they are doing to you also. Now therefore, heed their voice. However, you shall solemnly forewarn them, and show them the behavior of the king who will reign over them." So Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who asked him for a king. And he said, "This will be the behavior of the king who will reign over you: He will take your sons and appoint them for his own chariots and to be his horsemen, and some will run before his chariots. He will appoint captains over his thousands and captains over his fifties, will set some to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and some to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. He will take your daughters to be perfumers, cooks, and bakers. And he will take the best of your fields, your vineyards, and your olive groves, and give them to his servants. He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage, and give it to his officers and servants. And he will take your male servants, your female servants, your finest young men, and your donkeys, and put them to his work. He will take a tenth of your

sheep. And you will be his servants. And you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the LORD will not hear you in that day." Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, "No, but we will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles." And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he repeated them in the hearing of the LORD. So the LORD said to Samuel, "Heed their voice, and make them a king." And Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Every man go to his city."

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: "But as Samuel gets older, Israel's faith begins to waver again. Samuel's sons are not righteous. (It is interesting to note, however, that Samuel's grandson, Joel's son Heman, becomes one of the chief musicians in David's time, see 1 Chronicles 6:32-33; 15:16-19). The people (or at least the elders, verse 4) worry about what will happen to them when Samuel dies, and decide that what they really need is a human king like those ruling and leading the nations around them. God had anticipated this years earlier (see Deuteronomy 17:14-20). But He has Samuel describe to them the problems inherent in having a human king, which they either don't believe or think they can endure.

The problem is that Israel *already had a King*—ever since the time of Moses and the Exodus, around 1445 B.C., when Israel became a true nation. The King at that time and for the next nearly 400 years was the Rock of Israel, the Eternal God Himself—in fact, the preincarnate Word, Jesus Christ (compare Deuteronomy 32:4; 1 Corinthians 10:4; John 1:1-3, 14; 17:5). Though ruling through His chosen "judges"—from Moses and Joshua all the way to Samuel—God in the person of Christ sat on the throne of Israel (compare Judges 8:22-23). Indeed, Samuel later tells the Israelites that the period of the judges was the time "when the Lord

your God was your King" (1 Samuel 12:12). And it is the reason that when the Israelites told Samuel around 1050 B.C. that they wanted a human king like the nations around them, the Lord told him, "They have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them" (1 Samuel 8:7). So God then gives them a physical monarch. It is interesting to note, as we will see in the next few chapters, that unlike other ancient rulers, the king of Israel was not to be an absolute despot. God will have Samuel anoint Saul "commander" (9:16; 10:1) or "captain" (KJV) over His people. This Hebrew term *nagiyd* used here could be rendered in English as viceroy or governor-general—the stand-in for the *real* monarch. In fact, the very act of anointing a ruler in the ancient world implied a vassal relationship. It is later explained that Israel's king "sat on the throne of the Lord," reigning as king *for* Him (1 Chronicles 29:23; 2 Chronicles 9:6-8).

Also quite different than in other realms was the fact that the king was not also priest over the national religion. Furthermore, in other countries, kings made law and were thus above it. But in Israel, God's prophet will explain "the rights and duties of the kingship" (1 Samuel 10:25, NRSV). The ruler was *subject* to the law (see Deuteronomy 17:14-20).

Essentially, the Almighty set up a constitutional limited monarchy—in which He would send a prophet as His representative to the king to give him his "report card." [END]

Verse 3 – Like so much of mankind, the power and position went to their head.