

I. Introduction and review.

II. Israel's leaders seek a king -- What do you seek from your leaders? v. 1-9

A. Why do they think they need a king? v. 1-5

1. Samuel is growing old. v. 1a, 5a
2. Samuel's sons are not fit to replace him. v. 1b-3,5b Dt. 16:19 Ex. 18:21 23:6,8 Amos 5:7,11-12 Pr. 28:16 16:23
 - a. How tragic that Samuel, who witnessed the tragedy of Eli's house, has sons who turn out like Eli's sons. 2:12ff
 - b. Is Samuel to blame for his sons' wickedness? Eze. 18:5ff Lu. 12:52 Pr. 2:1ff
3. Israel wants to be like the other nations. v. 5c,20
4. They want a king to judge them and to lead them into battle. v. 5b, 20b 11:1ff

B. What they are asking for is not merely a new judge, but a new system of government.

1. During the era of the Judges, the LORD ruled His people, raising up leaders as needed. Judges 2:16,18 3:10,15 6:12 11:29
2. Now the people want a powerful hereditary king. 8:11

C. What was wrong with their request?

1. This is not the first time they sought a king. Judges 8:22-23
2. The LORD reigns as King over His people. v. 7 Ex. 15:6,18
3. Hadn't the LORD previously revealed that one day Israel would have kings? Gen. 17:6,16 35:11 36:31 49:10 Num. 24:7-9,17 Deut. 17:14-20 28:36 Judges 17:6
4. Their motives for seeking a king are wrong. v. 5,7,20 4:3
 - a. Israel isn't supposed to be like the other nations! v. 5 20 12:22 Lev. 19:2 20:26
 - b. They are rejecting God as king by putting a human king in His place. v.7 7:10
 - c. They want to trust the monarch rather than the LORD for security. v. 20 Ps. 118:8f 146:3-5 Dt. 20:4 Josh. 10
5. They should have waited for the LORD's timing and received a king in His way.

D. Samuel is displeased and prays to the LORD. v. 6-9

1. Why is Samuel so upset? v. 6-7 Ex. 16:8
2. The people are not merely seeking a substitute for Samuel, but for the LORD, as they are yet again rejecting His leadership. v. 8 12:10 Luke 19:14 Ex. 16:8 32
3. Why then does the LORD tell Samuel to obey the people? v. 7a,9a
4. The LORD charges Samuel to warn the people of the consequences of their decision. v. 9b Ezek. 3:18 Deut. 4:26 30:19

E. Application.

1. Power corrupts -- in the government, in the church, and in business. v. 3b
2. Don't look to political leaders as saviors. v. 5b,20 Jer. 17:5-6
3. The majority is often wrong -- the voice of the people is not the voice of God. Church government is not democratic. Heb. 13:17 I Tim. 5:17 I Th. 5:12
4. Don't give to human spiritual leaders the headship which belongs to Christ alone.
 - a. Christ is the head of His church. Col. 1:18 Eph. 5:23
 - b. The New Testament churches were lead by a plurality of Elders. Acts 14:23 20:17ff I Tim. 5:17ff Titus 1:5 Phil. 1:1 Heb. 13:17 I Pe. 5:1 f
 - c. There is no Senior or Chief Pastor, other than Christ. I Pet. 5:4
 - d. We may want to be like the other churches with a Senior pastor to lead us.
5. The church often is guilty of becoming like the surrounding world. v. 5b

III. Your king (government) will cost you. v. 10-18

A. Your king will be a taker. v. 10-17 Ezek. 34:1ff

1. He will take (draft) your sons for his military. v. 11-12 Dt. 17:16 II Sam. 15:1
2. He will take your daughters to serve his household. v. 13
3. He will take your property (eminent domain) and give it to his servants (cronies). v. 14 22:7 I Ki. 21:7 Ezek. 46:18
4. He will take (tax) your income (crops) and your wealth (animals, servants, and fields) to pay for his bureaucracy. v. 14-17a
5. He will take away your freedom (liberty) – you will be like slaves. v. 17b I Ki. 12
6. When you finally realize your folly and cry out to the LORD, He will not answer. v. 18 12:8 7:8-9 Isa. 1:15 8:21 Mic. 3:4 Ex. 2:23-24

B. Application.

1. Government help comes at the expense of your economic and personal freedom. Pr. 22:7 Dan. 3,6
2. Too much church government can also be costly. Mt. 18:15ff Heb. 13:17
 - a. Denominations claim that a hierarchy over local churches has many benefits.
 - b. Denominational authority often goes sour and becomes oppressive.

IV. The people remain determined to have their king. v. 19-22

A. The people refuse to heed Samuel's warning. v. 19-20 Judges 2:17 Pr. 12:15

B. Samuel again mediates. v. 21 Why does Samuel have to repeat what the people said?

C. Why does God allow them to have a king?

1. God is able to work out His good purposes in spite of our sin. Ge. 50:20 Ro. 8:28
2. The kings will bring us closer to and foreshadow the Messianic king.
3. The failures of their king will make them long for the true King.

D. Application.

1. Do you heed wise counsel? Pr. 11:14 12:15 19:20
2. God sometimes lets us choose and then pay the price.
3. People often get the rulers they deserve. Jer. 5:30-31

V. Concluding applications.

A. Stop hoping in men who will drain and disappoint you.

B. Turn to God's King, Jesus.

1. He fully meets the qualifications for leadership. Ps. 24:3-4,7-10
2. He is different from earthly kings. John 18:36
3. Jesus came not to take, but to give. John 3:16 Mark 10:45 II Co. 8:9
4. Jesus brings true salvation to His people.
5. Jesus conquers our enemies.
6. He brings heaven to earth – utopia. Rev. 21:1-5 Dan. 2:44
7. He will reign forever. Rev. 11:15
8. His yoke is easy and His burden is light. Mt. 11:28-30
9. Turn to Him today because He also is a king who will judge. Ps. 2
10. He is worthy. Rev. 5:11-14

Discussion questions.

1. Why did the Israelites seek a king?

How big a change was this from their previous system of government?

2. Why was it wrong for Israel to ask for a king?

3. Why did the LORD agree to give them a king?

4. How are we prone to trust men rather than God -- in the government and in the church?

5. Does the Bible teach a particular form of civil government?

6. Does the Bible teach a particular form of church government?

7. How are we tempted to avoid being different – as individuals and as a church?

8. What are the dangers of big government (civil and ecclesiastical)?

9. What does the Bible say about the role of government?

10. Are there things for which you have asked God which you are now glad He said “no”?

11. How does Jesus meet the qualifications of an ideal king (in contrast to Israel’s kings)?