

I. Introduction.II. What do you expect from your leaders? v. 1-9

- A. Why do Israel's elders think that 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 – government corruption. v. 1b-3,5b  
Dt. 16:19 Ex. 18:21 23:6,8 Amos 5:7,11-12 Pr. 28:16 16:23
  3. How tragic that Samuel, who witnessed the failure of Eli's house, has sons who turn out like Eli's sons. 2:12ff Eze. 18:5ff Lu. 12:52 Pr. 2:1ff
  4. Israel wants to be like the other nations. v. 5c, 20
  5. They want a king to judge them and to lead them into battle. v. 5b, 20b
- 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 monarch. 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 12:22 Lev. 18:2-4 19:2 20:26  
Ex. 19:5 11:7 Deut. 4:6 26:19 Ps. 118:8f 146:3-5 Dt. 20:4 Josh. 10:14
  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 12:3-5
1. The people are not merely seeking a substitute for Samuel, but for the LORD. v. 8  
12:10 Lu. 19:14 Ex. 16:8 32:1 Judg. 2:11-13 Josh. 24:16,20
  2. Why then does the LORD tell Samuel to obey the people? v. 7a,9a Gen. 50:20
  3. 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. It is foolish and evil to try to achieve greatness (utopia) without God. Gen. 11:1ff  
Dan. 4:1ff 2:1ff
  2. Don't look to political leaders as saviors. v. 5b,20 Jer. 17:5-6
  3. The majority is often wrong. Pr. 14:12
  4. Don't give to human spiritual leaders the headship which belongs to Christ alone.  
Col. 1:18 Eph. 5:23 Acts 14:23 20:17ff I Tim. 5:17ff Titus 1:5 Phil. 1:1 I Pe. 5:1-4
  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. Samuel warns of what will happen to Israel under their kings. v. 10 Dt. 17:15ff
- B. Your king will be a taker. v. 11-17 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 and give it to his followers. v. 14 22:7 I Ki. 21:7 Eze. 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. v. 17b I Ki. 12:1ff
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

C. Application.

1. Power corrupts -- in the government, in the church, and in business. v. 3b
2. Big (messianic) government comes at a big price. Pr. 22:7 Dan. 3:1ff 6:1ff
3. What does the Bible say about the role of government? I Pe. 2:13ff Rom. 13:1ff
4. All-powerful church government can also be costly.

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

- A. They refuse to heed Samuel's warning. v. 19-20 Judges 2:17 Pr. 12:15
- B. Why does God allow them to have a king? Dan. 4:25ff
- C. Do you heed wise counsel? Pr. 11:14 12:15 19:20
- D. We often get the rulers we deserve. Jer. 5:30-31

V. Concluding applications.

- A. Stop hoping in men who will drain and disappoint you. Jer. 17:5-8
- B. Turn to God's King, Jesus.
  1. He fully meets the qualifications for leadership. Ps. 24:3-4,7-10 2:6
  2. He is different from earthly kings. John 18:36
  3. Jesus came not to take, but to give. John 3:16 10:11 Mark 10:45 II Co. 8:9
  4. Jesus brings true salvation to His people.
  5. Jesus conquers our enemies. Col. 2:15
  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. 2:10-12
  10. He is worthy. Rev. 5:11-14 I Tim. 1:17

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 in the world 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 about 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)?