

Message #20

I Samuel 8:19-22

God never intended that His people would be governed by godless politicians. He warned His people that if you want politicians leading you rather than My word, they will dominate you, tax you on everything and spend your money the way they want to spend it.

There have always been those who have understood this. In fact, in N.T. times both Jesus and Paul had to tell God's people that they did need to pay their taxes because some said we aren't going to do it (Luke 20:25; Romans 13:7).

Now this business of wanting to be governed by some political leader and not a man who knew God and knew His word started in I Samuel. The nation Israel got tired of a man of God leading them and wanted a political leader so God said we will let them have one.

This text deals with Israel wanting something and doing something that is actually contrary to the will of God. They don't consult God; they don't listen to the word of God and they are not interested in obeying God.

So God lets them get what they want. God decides to let them have their way. This causes us to think about the subject of the will of God. There are four aspects to the will of God that we need to consider in understanding this text:

Aspect #1 - There is the sovereign will of God in which God controls and decrees all things that come to pass.

No one may escape being under the sovereign will of God, no matter who they are or what they do. The Bible makes it very clear that God can sovereignly do whatever He wants, with whom-ever He wants, whenever He wants. He can overrule anything and any one at any time.

- 1) Psalm 115:3 - "But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases."
- 2) Psalm 135:6 - "Whatever the LORD pleases, He does, in heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all the deeps."
- 3) Prov. 16:4 - "The LORD has made everything for its own purpose, even the wicked for the day of evil."
- 4) Prov. 16:9 - "The mind of man plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps."
- 5) Prov. 16:33 - "The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD."
- 6) Prov. 21:1 - "The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes."
- 7) Prov. 21:31 - "The horse is prepared for the day of battle, but victory belongs to the LORD."
- 8) Eph. 1:11 - "also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will."

When we read verses like this we realize that God can do whatever He wants. Nothing we do or say will ever beat the sovereign will of God. He controls everything.

He could have turned Israel's mind so that the whole nation would submit to Samuel. But that is not what God did in this case.

In fact, it is scary to think what God has in mind if He lets people do that which is contrary to Him. No one gets out from under the umbrella of the sovereign will of God at any time. If a person does exactly the opposite of what God wants, that person is still under the sovereignty of God and will still end up accomplishing something in the ultimate plan of God and for the ultimate purpose of God.

Aspect #2 - There is the prescribed will of God that specifically and directly states God's will.

Basically the entire Bible gives us the prescribed and revealed will of God. But there are statements in the Bible that dogmatically say this is God's will.

- 1) Exodus 20:1-17 - These famous ten commandments state clearly what God's will is in regard to Himself and to other people.
- 2) I Thess. 4:3 - "For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality."
- 3) I Thess. 5:18 - "in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."
- 4) I Peter 2:15 - submit to human government "for such is the will of God."

In these verses we see it plainly stated that this is God's will. We don't have to pray about it or wonder about it for it specifically says it is God's will. This is the prescribed and revealed will of God.

Even though this government structure was not His will, His will is that His people submit to it.

Aspect #3 - There is the unknown will of God.

The unknown will of God is the will of God that is unknown to us but certainly not unknown to God. There are certain situations and circumstances that come into our lives in which we do not specifically or instantly know the will of God at that moment. In these cases and situations, we need to ask God for wisdom, stay faithful to His word and known will and walk through doors God may open.

- 1) Romans 12:2 - "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."
- 2) Colossians 1:9 - "For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding."

Those who desire to know God's will, will be led step-by-step to it. The best way to know God's will is to be willing to do God's will before you actually know what it is.

Someone has said, "To know the will of God is the greatest knowledge; to find the will of God is the greatest discovery; and to do the will of God is the greatest achievement."

Aspect #4 - There is the permissive will of God, in which God sovereignly permits something that is contrary to His prescribed will in order to accomplish His mysterious, sovereign purposes.

In Psalm 106:15 we read "So He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul."

One of the scariest things that can ever happen to a nation like Israel or a country like the United States or an individual is that God permits one to do something that is contrary to His will. If God permits this there are two things to remember:

- 1) Doing something contrary to the will of God, will not leave a person happy;
- 2) Doing something contrary to the will of God, will not beat God's sovereignty.

When we read I Samuel 8, there is no way you can say this was God's perfect, prescribed will. The will of God was that Israel submit to Him and His word until He sent His Son (Gen. 49:10; Num. 24:17).

Israel wants a king and she does not want Samuel leading her, who knows God's word. In **I Samuel 8:7**, God specifically says this is a rejection of Him. In **I Samuel 8:8**, God says that this is a forsaking of Him. In **I Samuel 8:9-18**, God specifically tells Samuel to warn these people that this is not His will.

Now look at **verse 22**. This is where this gets complicated. God tells Samuel to "listen to their voice and appoint them a king." **What God is doing here is permitting them to have their own way, which is actually contrary to His specific word and will.**

What we see here is this:

GOD HAS A WONDERFUL PLAN FOR HIS PEOPLE AND IF THEY OBEY HIM, THEY WILL EXPERIENCE MANY BLESSINGS; BUT IF THEY DO NOT OBEY HIM, HE MAY SOVEREIGNLY PERMIT THEM TO SUCCEED IN THEIR REBELLION BUT THERE WILL BE SERIOUS NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES.

That point starts to be clearly seen right here in I Samuel. In these verses there are three responses:

RESPONSE #1 – The response of Israel to Samuel. **8:19-20**

The response of the people to the word of God, which was spoken by Samuel, was "No," we are not going to listen.

They totally and completely rebelled against the word of God that Samuel spoke to them. This was a blatant rejection and blatant rebellion against God's revealed will. In all reality, they are saying we want a king who will tax us and take our money and take anything he wants.

Flavius Josephus, who himself was a Jew, said this group was "still so foolish as to be deaf to these predictions of what would befall them" (*The Complete Works of Josephus*, p. 126).

There is no greater level of accountability for a nation or an individual than to specifically know what God's word and will are and blatantly say "no" to it. But that is precisely what Israel is doing here.

She wanted a king and there was nothing Samuel or God could say that would change that. Now here is where this gets theologically profound. God could have turned their minds so they did not want a king. But He didn't. Why? **Because His permissive will is still part of His sovereign will.**

God may permit you to sin. He may permit you to march right into sin and enjoy it for a season. But that season will end and there will be consequences.

In **verse 20**, Israel gives three reasons why she wanted a king:

Reason #1 - Because she wanted to be like all the other nations that had a king. **8:20a**

This is one of the biggest reasons people rebel; they want to be like all the other people. They want to do what they are doing. They want to have what they have.

Israel should have been thankful that she was the only nation on earth that actually had Almighty God leading her. Instead, she would rather have a human king because the other nations had one.

This is what will get people into big trouble. I think of Biblical institutions that were once known to be places that produced serious men of the word. Some of those places said, well we want to be like other colleges. We want their curriculum. We don't just want Bible and Greek and Hebrew and Theology. We need Psychology and Sociology and Comparative Religions. These schools are turning out theological imbeciles because they want to be like everyone else.

Reason #2 - Because she wanted a king to judge her. **8:20b**

The people were tired of being judged by a man who knew God's word. They wanted a more upscale legal and judicial system. They wanted a system classier than just some man of God, who knows the word of God and will of God. They want a king who will really be an upgrade, in their way of thinking.

Reason #3 - Because she wanted a king to fight her battles. **8:20c**

She did not want to have to worry about whether or not they should go to war; she wanted a king to figure it out.

These are logical, rational reasons for disobeying God. She thinks she has a better grasp of what is best than God does.

I have never met a person yet, including myself, who cannot give you their logical psychobabble for disobeying God. But disobedience, any way you cut it, is still disobedience and it will lead to disaster.

RESPONSE #2 – The response of Samuel to the people. **8:21**

Samuel was a man of prayer. Here is great insight for us all. When you see people connected to you that are doing what you know to be something contrary to God's word and will, go to God in prayer about it. That is what Samuel did. He prayed and he told God specifically what the people said.

RESPONSE #3 – The response of God to Samuel. **8:22**

God said to Samuel, "listen to their voice and appoint them a king." This was not God's prescribed will, but it was His permissive will. We learn from Hosea's commentary on this that God was not happy about this (Hosea 13:4-6, 11).

God permitted their rebellion. He permitted His people to get their own way. But even at this, they will not frustrate the sovereign plan of God.

In Genesis 50:20, Joseph said the horrible things his brothers did to him were actually part of the sovereign plan of God.

In Acts 2:23, Luke says that the horrible things that happened to Jesus were part of the sovereign plan of God.

No one will beat the sovereign plan of God.

The truth is, had Israel waited for 10-12 years, she would have had David. God would have brought a man into power, who was after His own heart.

You may disobey God and God may permit you to do it. You will end up miserable, but you will not beat God's sovereignty.