

Give Us a King!

by George Warnock

God's sovereignty is demonstrated through His choice of leaders, even when they are not men after His own heart.

Scripture: 1 Samuel 8:5

Topics: "Leadership", "Spiritual Disobedience"

Description

George Warnock discusses the transition of Israel from a theocracy to a monarchy, emphasizing that their desire for a king stemmed from a longing to be like the surrounding nations, which displeased both Samuel and God. He highlights that God allowed Israel to choose a king compatible with their wayward hearts, illustrating how a nation's leadership reflects its spiritual state. Warnock warns that while God is sovereign, the hearts of rulers can be influenced by the prayers of a righteous people, and he reflects on the consequences of disobedience seen in King Saul's reign. Ultimately, the sermon serves as a reminder that true leadership must align with God's will rather than the desires of a sinful populace.

Transcript

God was in the process of judging the old order in preparation for the new. He had dealt with the priesthood. God always deals with the priesthood before He deals with the kingdom. What about the kingdom?

Israel, as we have mentioned, had become like the heathen nations which they were to subdue. There seemed to be just one thing lacking; and so they came to Samuel and cried, "Give us a king, that we may be like the nations." This greatly displeased Samuel, and it greatly displeased the Lord. Had not God planned a king for them? True, His original promise to them was that they were to be a "kingdom of priests." But they wanted a king so they could be "like the nations," whereas the kingdom God had in mind would make them very much unlike the nations.

It seems that God will usually permit man to go his own way--to try and fail, and to learn the hard way--that out of man's failure God Himself may be glorified. And so the Lord went along with their cries, picked for them a king that He knew would be very much to their liking, but he was not a man after His own heart. Then why did He not give them the kind of king that He knew they needed? Because they had become an ordinary people like the nations about them--self-seeking, self-centered, and wayward from God. And God had no alternative but to give them a king that would be very much compatible with their own hearts. For whether we have a democracy or not, God is still Sovereign over all, and He continues to set in office the

man He has chosen. Not because such a one is a man after His heart, but because such a one is compatible with the heart of the nation; and who therefore will not, or cannot, make and enforce laws that would curtail the crime and the corruption that abounds in a sinful, rebellious nation. (We need to be reminded, however, that a people walking with God can, through prayers and intercessions, change the hearts and minds of rulers to do His will). For "the king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will" [Prov. 2 1:1].)

With the anointing of Saul as king new hope was born in the hearts of the people; and of course for a season all seemed to go reasonably well. But the facts are there in the scripture for us to read: Saul walked down the pathway of disobedience. He "spared Agag and the best of the sheep" when God required utter destruction. He "forced himself" and yielded to the wishes of the people, when God had commanded otherwise. (And this explains very clearly why a democratic society and a democratic form of government cannot establish righteousness in the land, when the inhabitants of the land are in sin and rebellion against God. In the final analysis the leader must yield to the wishes of the people or he will be thrown out of office. This is what democracy is all about.)

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