

THE OLD SEER AND THE NEW KING

1 Sam. 9:15-24

Intro: We are considering the life of Samuel, not Saul. But in the course of any man's life many other lives touch his. And so we have this section in which Samuel, the old seer, is brought together with Saul, Israel's first king.

What does Samuel represent in his leadership of Israel?

SAMUEL WAS FROM THE VERY FIRST THE VOICE OF GOD TO A REBELLIOUS, SPIRITUALLY IMMATURE NATION OF ISRAEL.

His first official action set the pattern of his entire ministry. Cf. 1 Sam. 3:18-21. Although it was a most painful experience, he was forced to tell Eli what God had said. FROM THAT TIME ON THERE WAS A PROPHET OF GOD IN ISRAEL, AND THE LORD BLESSED AND CONSTANTLY ENLARGED THE MINISTRY OF SAMUEL.

This kind of a life, however, was not easy. What can we learn from Samuel, especially when we know, as he did, that what the people wanted was not the will of God for that time. In fact, it amounted to a rejection of God by the people.

I. SAMUEL CONTINUED TO BE OBEDIENT TO THE WORD OF GOD.

Cf. 1 Sam. 8:21, 22.

Do you see this as a test of Samuel's obedience—a very severe test? If you are committed to the will of God when no one else seems to be interested, should you not stand for the will of God in spite of everything.

Listen carefully. It was not the will of God for the people to have a king at this time, BUT IT WAS THE WILL OF GOD FOR SAMUEL TO GO ALONG WITH THE DESIRE OF THE PEOPLE.

"And the Lord said ~~to~~ Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king."

How easily Israel's disobedience could have been the occasion for Samuel's disobedience! He was not sinning in helping them get a king even though they were sinning in asking for one. He would have been sinning not to help them because God had said, "Make them a king."

II. SAMUEL WAS SENSITIVE TO THE PROVIDENTIAL LEADING OF THE LORD.

Note how the Lord can talk with Samuel. Cf. 1 Sam. 9:15-17. Once you know what the will of God is, it is often a real

problem to know how to do His will. WHERE WOULD SAMUEL GO TO FIND A KING FOR ISRAEL?

Here is another interesting point. SAMUEL QUITE EVIDENTLY BELIEVED THAT WHEN GOD TOLD HIM TO MAKE ISRAEL A KING, THAT HE WOULD GUIDE TO THE VERY MAN WHO WAS TO BECOME KING.

Even in our times of disobedience God does not forsake us. He does not take His hands completely off of our lives.

Chapter 9 begins like an entirely unrelated incident, and yet the hand of God was at work when "the asses of Kish, Saul's father, were lost" (1 Sam. 9:3).

The hand of God is still evident when in v. 4 "they found them not."

And we see it again when Saul's servant said, "Behold now, there is in this city a man of God . . . let us go there."

In every little detail we see God leading.

And the "day before Saul came," God told Samuel that he was coming (1 Sam. 9:15).

When God tells us to do something, He makes Himself responsible for all of the details.

III. SAMUEL SAW THE GOODNESS OF GOD IN THE CHOICE OF SAUL.

What kind of a king would you have given them?

What kind of a person was Saul?

- (1) He was physically attractive. His very presence inspired confidence. Cf. 1 Sam. 9:2; 10:23, 24.
- (2) He was conscientious. Cf. 1 Sam. 9:5.
- (3) He was humble (1 Sam. 9:21).

In addition to all of this, Samuel knew what God had promised to do for Saul, and then saw Him do it. Cf. 1 Sam. 10:6, 9-11.

Samuel is being led of God to appoint his own successor when Saul begins to speak as a prophet.

THE MORE YOU SEE OF SAMUEL, THE MORE YOU ARE ATTRACTED TO HIM!

At this point in the history a very unusual thing happens. Samuel in chapter 12 is relinquishing the place of leadership he has had in Israel. He calls on anyone to challenge the

leadership he has given them. Note their response in v. 4.

But, then, he tries to show them the one mistake they have made which outweighs all of their other mistakes. You see it by contrasting the statement, "It is the Lord who advanced Moses and Aaron" (1 Sam. 12:6) with "Now, therefore, behold the king who ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired" (v. 13).

God had chosen their leaders when he led them out of Egypt, but now they had chosen their own king and, in so doing, had rejected the right of God to rule over them.

FINALLY HE HAD GOTTEN THROUGH TO THEM AFTER THE THUNDER AND RAIN CONFIRMED THAT WHAT HE WAS SAYING WAS THE WORD OF GOD.

What do you say to people when they come to the place where Israel was in 1 Sam. 12:19?

They could not undo what they had done. This is often the case with us. How gladly we would retrace some of our steps if we could, BUT WE CANNOT!

Is all hope of blessing then lost? Absolutely not! Note

IV. SAMUEL'S GRACIOUSNESS IN DEALING WITH A DISOBEDIENT PEOPLE.

They needed prayer, but they also needed teaching. They needed to know the Word of God for circumstances such as they were in.

What did Samuel say?

Three things: something for the people to do, something that the Lord would not do, and, finally, something that he, Samuel, would do for them.

A. What the people should do.

Three times in this one passage Samuel speaks of the same thing. Cf. vv. 14, 15, 20, 21, 24, 25.

Obedience. . . fearing . . . serving . . . following, etc.

Regardless of where we might be spiritually tonight, there is one major concern for each of us: personal obedience to the Word of God.

Disobedience is the root of our trouble; obedience with all that it involves is the way back to God and to His blessing. The people did not know the Word. How won-

derful that Samuel was there!

But there was a second thing.

B. What God would never do. Cf. 1 Sam. 12:22.

This is certainly one of the most amazing verses in the Bible, and it forever sets God apart from man.

C. What Samuel would do. Cf. 1 Sam. 12:23.

This probably shows the spiritual character of Samuel more than anything else that is said about him. IF GOD WOULD NOT FORSAKE HIS PEOPLE, THEN SAMUEL SHOULD NOT FORSAKE THEM EITHER.

There are many things that we do not understand about prayer, but anyone who reads his Bible will know that God has asked us to pray, God hears our prayers, and God answers.

How easy it is to become so disgusted with each other that we do not pray for one another!

Concl: If ever a man had an opportunity, in spite of all of the things that were wrong, SAUL WAS THAT MAN. No one could ever say that Samuel stood in the way.

He made it perfectly clear that their security was not in having a king like all of the other nations, but in walking with and loving and trusting the God who had made them His people and who had never changed His mind about His choice of them.

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