

ENCORE - 1 Samuel 7:1-17: The Last Judge in Israel?

- 1) 1 Samuel chapters 1-6 has many contrasts; Hannah & Elkanah and Samuel are contrasted with Eli Phinehas and Hophni. How was Samuel different than:
 - a) Phinehas & Hophni
 - b) Eli
 - c) Samson

- 2) What was the spiritual and political climate like in Israel when Samuel became judge?

- 3) How do people tend to react to hard or fearful circumstances?

- 4) Would you call Samuel's leadership passive or active?

- 5) Describe Samuel's message (v.3).

- 6) How did the people respond (v.4)?

- 7) What can we learn from Samuel's example?

- 8) Samuel did not simply preach a revival and then move on; what else did he do?

- 9) How is God's mission for His church similar to Samuels's ministry?

Looking Ahead - 1 Samuel 8:1-22 Looking for a King

Monday (v.1-3) In his old age Samuel decided to make his sons judges. I do not know if this was necessarily sinful but the pattern from the book of Judges was that God would raise up a judge; they were not appointed by men nor were they judges by birthright. Notice the bad report we find in verse three; Samuel's sons were ungodly men. Wow! This wonderful judge and prophet had sons who did not follow the Lord. We do not know for certain how Samuel raised them, he might have failed as a father or he might have done everything right and his sons just rejected the truth (notice God does not rebuke Samuel for the ungodliness of his sons).

Daily Bible Reading: Ps. 39-41; Jn. 12:27-50

Tuesday (v.4-5) Ah the famous "make us a king" passage. We saw something similar to this with Gideon and, shortly thereafter, Abimelech. Samuel's sons were wicked men so the people asked for a king. Their desire for a king to (to judge them or rule over them) was linked to their desire to be like the nations around them (v.5). This desire was a continual stumbling block for the Children of Israel. They kept falling back into default mode which was something like; look at those other nations, they seem to be doing so well – why can't we be like that?

Daily Bible Reading: Ps. 53, 55, 58; J. 13:1-20

Wednesday (v.6-8) "The thing displeased Samuel" I think this shows us his heart as to why he might have made his sons judges. The people wanted a human king probably a great deal because of their spiritual condition and due to the fact that it can seem hard to relate to God as King when He is a spirit. They wanted a king who was like them, a king they could relate to. Notice two things about these verses 1) Samuel felt like the people were rejecting him because they wanted a king 2) The people were actually rejecting God as their King. It's amazing how quickly people forget the goodness of God! Israel had been a wonderful, peaceful and secure place to live under Samuel's ministry (because God had brought deliverance) yet the people were not satisfied!

Daily Bible Reading: Ps. 61-62, 65; Jn. 13:21-38

Thursday (v.9-10) God granted their (sad) request. God is so gracious! This is a good lesson for us as well – be careful what you ask for and be certain to always seek the will of the Lord; He knows what you really need. God graciously granted the request of the people for a human king; but God gave Samuel one caveat; tell them how this king will treat them. Samuel did as he was instructed...

Daily Bible Reading: Ps. 68, 72, 86; Jn. 14

Friday (v.11-18) Read verses 11-18; sounds like a great deal doesn't it? God doesn't explicitly remind the people how gracious He has been or how well He has provided for them but you would think things like that might have crossed their minds as Samuel was speaking! If you laid it all out in two columns you would put the burdens, restrictions and taxes a human king will pose in one column and the wonderful things God has graciously provided in (an infinitely longer) column on the other side. It wouldn't seem to be a hard choice to make! Samuel even gives them one last stern warning; you will cry out...but "the Lord will not hear you in that day."

Daily Bible Reading: Ps. 101, 103, 108; Jn. 15

Saturday (v.19-22) Samuel tried to reason with the people but their minds were made up "no." It's like they were saying "yeah we understand all that; but 1) we don't really believe you and 2) we will cross that bridge when we get there, get us a king!" As God had already told Samuel the issue was not really with him or his ministry but with the hearts of the people; they had rejected God. God in his mercy and wisdom graciously granted their request; they would have a king.

Daily Bible Reading: Ps. 109-110, 138; Jn. 16