

ENCORE | 1 Samuel 8:1-22: Looking for a King

- 1) Samuel's sons turned out to be ungodly men (v. 1-3). How could a wonderful judge and prophet like Samuel raise two sons who did not follow the Lord?

- 2) What was the main reason the people gave for wanting a king (v. 5)?

- 3) Is it wrong for God's people to want to be like the "nations" or the world? Explain your answer.

- 4) What other reason did they give for wanting a human king (v. 20)?

- 5) Read Joshua 12; what do you think God wanted His people to learn from this chapter?

- 6) In verses 7-8, God tells Samuel he was being rejected by the people in exactly the same way they had rejected God so many times in the past. When you share the gospel with someone today and they reject the message, who are they really rejecting?

- 7) What is the main message from the Book of Judges?

Looking Ahead | Introduction to the Book of James

Monday (James 1:1) - Today begins our new series through the book of James. For this week's Looking Ahead we are going to do things a bit differently than normal. All this week we are going to look at the different Scriptures concerning James the brother of Jesus. There are several people in the New Testament named James; one is the apostle James (the brother of John or son of Zebedee). He could not have written this epistle because he was put to death by Herod (**Acts 12:2**). Another apostle was named James the son of Alphaeus (**Matthew 10:3 Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13**). He also did not write this epistle. Look up the following verses in their context and note anything significant about James the brother of Jesus (**Matthew 13:55; 27:56; Mark 6:3**).

Daily Bible Reading: Ps. 143-145; Jn.18:1-18

Tuesday (John 7:1-10) - James was the brother of Jesus in that they shared the same mother and same human father (though Joseph was only Jesus' adoptive father). We could call them half brothers and not be incorrect; the problem is that some will call James and Jesus half brothers meaning to say that Mary had no other children. They go on to teach that all of Jesus brothers & sisters belonged to Joseph from a previous marriage. We do not find this in the Bible. James grew up with Jesus, they shared parents, they shared a home, they would have eaten together, played together and worked together. All of the time that they spent together and yet James did not believe Jesus was the Christ (v.5). From this passage what would you say Jesus' brothers expected of Him?

Daily Bible Reading: 1 Kings 1-2; Jn. 18:19-40

Wednesday (John 2:1-12) - This is the record of Jesus first miracle. The text does not explicitly say that Jesus' brothers were there to witness the miracle, but they were present after the miracle and went down to Capernaum with Him (v.12). I think it is safe to say that they were all together at this wedding; at the very least they would have heard about Jesus changing the water into wine first hand. Now read **Mark 3:31-35** Jesus family (His brothers) were often around when He was doing some of His most notable miracles and when He was teaching the masses. We have already seen that they did not believe He was the Christ. What do you think they thought of Jesus at this time? Do you think Jesus' teaching had an impact on his brothers?

Daily Bible Reading: 1 King 3-4; Prov. 1; Jn. 1:19-22

Thursday (Acts 1:13-14) - After the resurrection of Jesus Christ we find the early church huddled together in an upper room. Something amazing had happened; Jesus had appeared – risen from the dead (**1 Cor. 15:5-7**)! Notice that Jesus' mother & brothers were among the early church. Initially they had not believed that Jesus was the Christ, now there could be no doubt; Jesus had risen as He said He would. James would go on to be a key leader in the early church; look up the following passages (**Galatians 1:19; 2:9, 12; Acts 12:17; 21:17-18**)

Daily Bible Reading: Prov. 2-4; Jn. 19:23-42

Friday (Acts 15:13-21) - This passage is the record of James' speech to the Jerusalem council regarding what God requires of the Gentiles. There had arisen a controversy regarding the keeping of the Law. Some had been teaching that everyone (including the newly saved Gentiles) needed to keep the Law of Moses to be truly saved. Keep this in mind as we study the book of James, it should be very helpful information. Read over the passage a few times and note the key ideas or themes. What is the main point of this message?

Daily Bible Reading: Prov. 5-7; Jn. 20

Saturday (James 1:1) - James the brother of Jesus, who originally did not believe Jesus was the Christ (**John 7:5**) now calls himself a bondservant of Christ (Jude also a brother of Jesus used the same salutation Jude 1:1). It seems that a radical transformation had occurred. James who once did not believe the claims of Christ was now one of His most zealous servants and joined the ranks with Paul & Timothy (Philippians 1:1) and David (Psalm 84:10). James calling himself a bondservant or slave of Christ is significant as we study the book of James. Read John 7:1-10 again, how had James' attitude changed? How does this help you prepare to study the book of James?

Daily Bible Reading: Prov. 8-9; Jn. 21

Sunday –

Daily Bible Reading: Prov. 10-12; Acts 1