

CCH sermon 10th March 2019 1 Samuel 8:1-22

"We want a King!"

- 1 Sam 8:7
- Start with a Q: What is your "if only"?
 - What do you find yourself daydreaming about?
 - Hoping for?
 - Thinking that "if only I had that", life would be OK.
 - Relationship- new rel'n or better one
 - Money – one teenage "Stockbroker"
 - Escape- long for a break- just a log cabin somewhere
 - Health- clear bill of health
 - We see in this passage what the people in Sam's day were wanting.
 - Answer A King
 - And we see what a disaster it was.
 - Because forgetting there's a more powerful card they were rejecting. Ace of Spades- God as King.
- Let's look at the story, and then 2 lessons.

STORY

- Starts with "groundhog day" - seen film- Bill Murray where caught in a day that keeps repeating itself.
- Look at v 1-3
 - Ring any bells?
 - Those here week 3. Eli's wicked sons.
 - Supposed to be judges bringing God's justice
 - Yet perverted justice, and were in it for what they could get
 - like Hoph and Phin who just wanted sex & best steaks.
 - Tragic- even best leaders can't guarantee offspring. Eli. Sam.
- So perhaps we can understand the request which comes v4-5.
- **NB Structure** Rest of the passage is a series of messages between God and the people with Samuel in between.
- Let's start with the LHS.

- **REQUEST** (ppl to Samuel)
 - v4,5
 - On surface deals with problems
 - Sam getting old- can't do his job
 - Whole security of the nation in jeopardy
 - In time of Judges, (still in), judge followed by miserable time of oppression.
 - Having a King would get straight to next ruler- some stability
 - But missed something big!
 - Already seen that passing leadership from Father to Son doesn't guarantee success with Judges
 - Why should it work with a King?
 - Derr! Sam has had sons who don't rule well
Let's have kings whose sons might not rule well!
- **RELAY** (Samuel relays the message to God)
 - V6
 - Samuel initially nervous.
 - He prays- and passes it all on.
 - God knows.
 - But He's the priest- intermediary
(taking people with one hand, God with other)
- **RESPONSE** (God speaks back to Sam)
 - V7
 - Need to do a bit of thinking about kings.
 - Were they intrinsically bad?
 - No Deut 17 expected the point would come when God had said "When you enter the land and you say 'let us set a king over us like all the nations around us' be sure to appoint a king the Lord chooses!"
 - It wasn't wrong to have a king
 - I don't think it wasn't even wrong to be like the nations- (though perhaps a bit of worldliness was creeping in).
 - The big thing was what we see in v7 is God is saying they are rejecting him, and they are rejecting Samuel v8.
 - Amazingly God says let them have what they ask for.

- ▲ Friend when young found Christmas presents in cupboard
 - Mum said- you can have them.
 - Tragic- they got what they wanted, but Christmas spoiled.
 - Sometimes God gives us over to what we ask for.

Let's pause story so far for first lesson...

1) HOW FOOLISH WE ARE TO WANT TO REPLACE GOD

- Let's be in no doubt that's what's going on here.
- We can have the best card- the Ace of Spades that trumps all others
 - And we settle for second best.
 - Cos we are so keen to get the King.
 - God is pushed out of the picture.
- That's what's happening when we say we want
 - Relationship
 - Money
 - Health
 - Escape
 - As our "if only".
- **If you are not a Christian**, do you realise what you are saying...
 - God is offering you life, but you are choosing to find it in other things. If only I had xyz.
 - We've learned in Hannah's Song that you can have all the
 - Weapons
 - Money
 - Power in the world
 - And yet be reduced to nothing, because God brings you low!
 - OR you can be barren and powerless, and God can intervene for you to turn your situation around.
 - We saw last week that God himself can thunder in battle to defeat your enemies
 - We see later in the book just because you have the tallest warrior with the biggest sword (Goliath), it doesn't guarantee you are going to win.
 - In fact the biggest sword gets used back on Goliath to chop his head off.

- It's not wrong to want resources- money, friends, family.
 - These are wonderful gifts.
 - But we have to hold them lightly, otherwise if we are saying "if I don't get that", life will be totally bankrupt, then we are replacing God with stuff.
 - Like we saw last week- ignoring the giver of the cake, and worshipping the cake instead.
- **And Christian brothers and sisters**, we do this too!
 - if you have God through a relationship with Jesus Christ. You have everything.
 - The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.
 - HE'S the one who can thunder against your enemies without you even needing to fight.
 - So why do we now think "IF ONLY".
 - Yes God *may* give you a husband or a healthy life
 - But if he doesn't, like Job, "still I will praise him"
- We need to relearn Hannah's Song.
 - It's having God, not weapons, or cash, or a holiday in the Caribbean that really makes the difference.
 - "There is no-one holy like the Lord, there is no one besides you, there is no Rock like our God". 1 Sam 2:3.
 - But the people were turning backwards.
- It's so tragic- particularly after last week's passage where we see a period of returning to the Lord.
 - Actually there's some comfort in this.
 - The bible is so realistic
 - Even when we turn back to God
 - There's still more turning to do
 - Like garden weeds, sin grows up again so fast
- But wonderfully it's not dependent on our repentance
 - Even our repentance needs repenting of
 - It's not our perfect response that gets us God's grace.
- And God still has a plan, even in our rebellion and stupidity, as we're going to see.
- Let's look at the fourth arrow. God has said v9.

Called it **RIGHTS** (Samuel is now going to talk to the people again). V9.

- He's going to tell them what the King will claim as his rights.
- And it's quite a long speech.
- Count up the number of times the king will "Take!"
- V10-18

- Now there's a bit of a play on words with that word "rights"
- Literally it's judgements.
- You want a King to replace me as *judge*.
- Let me tell you what his *judgment* will involve.

- He will TAKE TAKE TAKE TAKE TAKE TAKE x6
- You want a King?
- Are you sure?

- Their suggestion for a king is looking about as sensible as when they suggested they should bring the ark into the battlefield in ch4.
- A resounding disaster.
 - Your sons will be traffic wardens & arms manufacturers.
 - Your daughters will be slaving in his eau de cologne sweatshop, or icing cakes for him.
 - The first pick of your crops (tithe) will go to him (when they probably should go to God)
 - Your servants will become his servants
 - Oh and by the way.... you will become his servants too

- It's like you get a credit card thinking it will give you what you want
 - And it ends up taking taking taking.
 - And just what happens to the rest of the history of the OT. Take, take, take

- What happens? Do they listen?
- No- we go round the whole cycle of 4 arrows again, and it's a repeat performance.

- 1. REQUEST (v19-20)
 - Oh disaster- didn't they remember that God can fight their battles with no human help.
- 2. RELAY (v21)
 - Sam passes it back to God.
- 3. GOD's RESPONSE (v22)
 - God is giving them over to judgement.
 - Give them the Christmas presents.
 - Show them what their folly has got them.
- 4. RETURN (v22b)
 - Called it "return"- slightly different from 1st time around.
 - It's full of pathos
 - Samuel just tells them to go home. Return home.
 - Party over.

- I find this chapter really tragic.
 - And it's the furthest on we get to in the book this series.
- It's not that a king is totally wrong.
- But wanting a King instead of God
 - Playing the King of Spades card
 - Thinking that a KING in and of himself is the answer to all your problems is a disaster.
 - Replacing God with a King.
- A chapter that brings us face to face with our stupidity again.

- Where's the happy ending?
 - Read on in the book- Saul? No
 - David- yes- a man after God's heart. But *no!* He too was a taker.
 - Remember Nathan's little parable about the lamb (2 Sam 12) A rich man had a visitor and didn't want to kill one of his sheep for a bbq, so he TOOK! the ewe lamb belonging to the poor man. You took Uriah's wife to be your own.

- This goes on through the OT with better kings, bad kings, ugly kings.

- Oh- we need a King who is like God.
- Deut 17, a king who turns people BACK to God and his ways, not away from them.
- One who perfectly does what the Father does.
- One who passes on the picture perfectly (kids spot)
- A King who gives rather than takes.
- A King after God's own heart.
- BUT.
 - Joy of Joys.
 - 1000 years after this
 - A baby is born in David's line.
 - In David's town of Bethlehem
 - And he doesn't take selfishly.
 - He gives sacrificially.
 - In fact he gives up his life for his people.
 - He doesn't obscure God's ways
 - He lives under them.
- And so our final lesson.... Where our studies in 1 Samuel lead us. To Christ.

2) HOW KIND GOD IS TO GIVE US JESUS!

- The whole Kingship project was doomed to failure since the start, because of humanity's ability to twist what is good, and replace it with Bad. Kings can lead us away from God not to him.
- And yet God hasn't thrown out the whole kingship project completely, he's redeemed it, rescued it, turned it good by sending his Son.
- And Jesus gives us a window onto God. He is God. He perfectly represents him.

- And here's what God is like.
- He sees us floundering in our sin, and he gives himself up in our place.
- A King who is a servant.
- A king who is self giving not self serving.
 - A king who goes to die so you don't have to
 - A king who is bound to a cross to set you free
 - A king who never leaves us or forsakes us
- Don't you love Jesus? Don't you want to love and worship him!
- When Satan tempts me to despair,
And tells me of the guilt within,
Upward I look, and see Him there
Who made an end to all my sin.
Because the sinless Savior died,
My sinful soul is counted free;
For God the just is satisfied
To look on Him and pardon me
- And a King who will never end- who will never get replaced by a dodgy relative, like Eli and Samuel, and many of the best OT kings.
- No- Jesus is an everlasting prophet, whose words stand forever
- An everlasting priest who always brings us back to God
- An everlasting King. Who will reign forever and ever!
 - (I can hear the Hallelujah chorus! Forever and ever)
- HOW KIND GOD IS TO GIVE US JESUS!
 - Have you come to him?
 - Do you love him?
 - Will you serve him this week?

- HE is the king we need.

- **Let's pray.**