

1 Samuel 8-16 Small Group Bible Studies St Andrews, Roseville. July 2023

Introduction

- Jesus Christ is the goal, the end, & the fulfillment of the Old Testament. This means that every part of the OT points to him in some way. Therefore, one cannot properly or fully understand the OT without Jesus, for it is about him. Both Jesus and his Apostles affirmed this (Jn1:45, Lk24:46-47, Acts10:43, 18:28, 1Pt1:10-12. etc). For example, in John 5:39 Jesus said, *'You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, 40 yet you refuse to come to me to have life.'*

All this is to say that the Bible is about Jesus before it is about us. But of course, it is also about us, for we are the object of his saving love, we're just not the hero of the story. This may frustrate us at first since we often want it to be all about us. There is an appropriate instinct in this (we want the bible to be relevant to us) ... but we can only really know ourselves in the light of Christ. First, we need to behold him before we can see ourselves clearly. The true and perfect human shows us ourselves in contrast and reveals our need. Our need is him, not a personal list of dos and don'ts. Rather, what we need is a fresh appreciation of a person and growth in our relationship with him (which may indeed entail some dos and don'ts).

So, as we meditate on the twists and turns of 1 Samuel 8-16, may we see the different aspects of Jesus glorious kingship, and be drawn into deeper appreciation of him and so grow in our trust and obedience.

Brief Context

- The last verse of Judges (21:25) tells us, *'In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit.'* Everyone ruled their own lives. There was thus a desperate need for godly national leadership. 1 Samuel begins at this point. Here is a snapshot summary of 1 Samuel 1-16.
- 1 Sam 1-7 reveals a leadership crisis. Samuel is raised up to help.
- 1 Sam 8 The people ask for a King like the nations.
- 1 Sam 9-10 Finding and appointing a King.
- 1 Sam 11 The King leads a victory.
- 1 Sam 12 Israel reject the ultimate King, but there is mercy.
- 1 Sam 13-15 Saul is rejected as King.
- 1 Sam 16 God raises up David, the new King.

Remember that at Church the first 3 weeks of our 1 Samuel series will be outreach focussed. George Athas will explain the gospel from 1 Samuel 8, 9 and 10-11. It is a great opportunity to invite those who don't follow Jesus. Please be praying for opportunities each week at Small Group.

Bible Study 1 – 1 Samuel 8 (Leaders Notes)

For Starters

- In what ways do we as God's people want to be like everyone around us?

Read 1 Samuel 8:1-22

- What are your initial impressions?

- What is wrong with the request for a King? After all, in the OT provision is made for the possibility (Dt17:14-20). Indeed, the last chapter of Judges anticipates the need for a King! (Jdg21:25). So, what's the prob?

Read 1 Samuel 8:11-18

- Sum up in your own words the characteristics of the King they are requesting (v11-18). Contrast what Jesus says about leadership (Mk10:42-45)

- If Jesus kingly authority is so much more attractive, why do we find it hard to submit to his will?

Read 1 Samuel 8:19-22

- Why do the people reject Samuel's warning? What is driving their desire for a King?

- Why do you think God allows them to have one? (v22)

- What sorts of things do we effectively replace Jesus as King with, in our lives?
 - o How is this related to our desire to be like others/the nations?
 - o What persuades us that this is a 'good' idea?

- How do these things end up enslaving us?

- 'Being a servant of Jesus is true freedom'. How so?

Bible Study 2 – 1 Samuel 9-10 (Leaders Notes)

For Starters

- Is it possible to treat Jesus as your saviour but not your Lord? What would this look like?

★ There is a great leadership crisis in Israel. By requesting a King like the nations (8:7), Israel have rejected God as King (8:14). God then warns them that this action won't go well for them (8:10-17). The best King over them (and us) is God himself. Despite this warning the people double down on their insistence of having a King just like the nations (8:19-20). God says, 'very well' and commands Samuel to give them one (8:22). We now wonder who this 'King like the nations' will be ... so let's meet him.

Read 1 Samuel 9-10

- What are your initial impressions? What stood out as interesting?
- From Saul's point of view, he's looking for some Donkeys, but what is really happening behind the scenes? (9:15-16)
- What are your impressions of Saul? (Positive & Negative). Does he seem like the desired leader of 8:20?

★ Four things take place to designate Saul as King. First, Samuel anoints him with Oil (v1 'Messiah' means 'Anointed one'. A ruler anointed by God to rule on his behalf). He then outlines three signs which will confirm him as King (1) Two men will meet him at Rachel's tomb to tell him the lost Donkeys are found and safe (v2), (2) Three men will meet at Bethel and offer him food, (3) A group of prophets will meet him at Gibeah and he will prophesy with them by the Spirit (v5-7, v9-11). Presumably, God's spirit will help him to rule in a godly manner. He is thus anointed with oil, and by the Spirit.

Read 1 Samuel 10:5-7 & 9-11

- What pattern do we see repeated in Jesus?
 - o Luke 3:21-22 & Acts 10:38
 - o Luke 4:16-18

★ "1 Samuel chapters 9 – 10 tell the story of Saul's "ascent" to his throne. He went "up" to the city (9:11), "up" to the high place at the city centre (9:14), "up" to the head of the table (9:22), and "up" to the roof of a house to spend the night (9:25). This is significant. The king of Israel literally "ascends" to the throne." (Tim Chester, *1 Samuel For You*). It is a mini picture of the true King's ascension, when Jesus ascends to his heavenly throne in his resurrection.

- What strikes you about Ephesians 1:20-21, and how do you think you should respond?
 - *Eph 1:20-21. He raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, 21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.*

- Are you trusting in Jesus as saviour, but not treating him as Lord? What areas of your life do you need to bring under his Lordship? What do we fear losing or missing out on by surrendering every area of our life in obedience to his will? Think of examples and convince each of the folly of this.

- As we explain the good news of Jesus Kingship to the world around us (Mt 24:14), some will respond positively (10:24), but others will not (10:27). What would you say to a friend who objected to your explanation of the gospel by saying,
 - "I don't need saving!"

 - "I am my own Lord!"

Bible Study 3 - 1 Samuel 11 (Leaders Notes)

For Starters

- What do most people consider their worst enemies to be?

★ Context: Israel have rejected God as King and demanded a King like the nations who can lead them into battle (8:5-7, 19-20). And so, God grants their request, and Saul is appointed King (Ch9-10). We have our doubts about Saul, for he seems clueless, passive, and reluctant. And though most of Israel are glad they finally have a King (10:24 'Long live the king!'), not all are convinced. In 10:27 some critics ask, 'How can this fellow save us?' Let us see how ...

Read 1 Samuel 11

- What are your initial impressions?

Read 1 Samuel 11:1-4

- If you sat next to Nahash at a dinner party, what would you want to say to him?

- Given that they requested and got a King to lead them into battle (8:20, 9:16), why don't they immediately call for Saul (or God)?

Read 1 Samuel 11:5-8

- How does Saul respond when he finds out? Is this appropriate?

- What sorts of things stir up your anger? How often is it righteous anger? (E.g. Mk3:5)

- After the victory (11:9-11), why doesn't Saul kill his detractors (11:12-13) (c.f. 10:27)?

- What enemies does Jesus rescue us from? And how does he do it?

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| Heb9:26, 1Tim1:15 | |
| Col2:15, 1Jn3:8 | |
| 1Thes5:13-14, 1Cor15:54-57 | |
| Rom8:1, 1Thes1:10 | |

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- How does the cross of Christ display both God's righteous anger (justice) and his mercy?
- What is the relationship between the deeper spiritual enemies and our daily setbacks? (Refer back to the starting question).

★ Jesus had his mocking detractors too (Lk23:39 'Are you not the Christ? Save yourself, and us!'), but we know that because of his victory "he is able to save completely those who come to God through him" (Heb7:25).

- What are some ways we can respond to Jesus' victory in similar fashion to 11:12?
 - o What stops us from offering every part of our lives in service to him? (Rom12:1-2)
 - o What robs us of the joy we have in Christ's victory? (Phil4:4)

Pray