



THE RISE AND FALL OF KINGS: Be Careful What You Ask For

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¹ When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons as Israel's leaders. ² The name of his firstborn was Joel and the name of his second was Abijah, and they served at Beersheba. ³ But his sons did not follow his ways. They turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice. ⁴ So all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. ⁵ They said to him, "You are old, and your sons do not follow your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have."

1 Samuel 8:1-5 NIV

1. Asking for a King Rejects God

⁶ But when they said, "Give us a king to lead us," this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the Lord. ⁷ And the Lord told him: "Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king. ⁸ As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are doing to you."

1 Samuel 8:6-8 NIV

"...now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have."

1 Samuel 8:5b NIV

⁹ Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will claim as his rights.”

¹⁰ Samuel told all the words of the Lord to the people who were asking him for a king. ¹¹ He said, “This is what the king who will reign over you will claim as his rights: He will take your sons and make them serve with his chariots and horses, and they will run in front of his chariots. ¹² Some he will assign to be commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and others to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and still others to make weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. ¹³ He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. ¹⁴ He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves and give them to his attendants. ¹⁵ He will take a tenth of your grain and of your vintage and give it to his officials and attendants. ¹⁶ Your male and female servants and the best of your cattle[c] and donkeys he will take for his own use. ¹⁷ He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his slaves. ¹⁸ When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, but the Lord will not answer you in that day.”

1 Samuel 8:9-18 NIV

2. Rejecting God is a Return to Slavery

¹⁹ But the people refused to listen to Samuel. “No!” they said. “We want a king over us.

²⁰ Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles.”

1 Samuel 8:19-20 NIV

⁹ “You are destroyed, Israel, because you are against me, against your helper. ¹⁰ Where is your king, that he may save you? Where are your rulers in all your towns, of whom you said, ‘Give me a king and princes’? ¹¹ So in my anger I gave you a king, and in my wrath I took him away.

Hosea 13:9-11 NIV

3. God Has a Plan to Save Us

¹⁴ When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, "Let us set a king over us like all the nations around us," ¹⁵ be sure to appoint over you a king the Lord your God chooses. He must be from among your fellow Israelites. Do not place a foreigner over you, one who is not an Israelite. ¹⁶ The king, moreover, must not acquire great numbers of horses for himself or make the people return to Egypt to get more of them, for the Lord has told you, "You are not to go back that way again."

¹⁷ He must not take many wives, or his heart will be led astray. He must not accumulate large amounts of silver and gold.

¹⁸ When he takes the throne of his kingdom, he is to write for himself on a scroll a copy of this law, taken from that of the Levitical priests. ¹⁹ It is to be with him, and he is to read it all the days of his life so that he may learn to revere the Lord his God and follow carefully all the words of this law and these decrees ²⁰ and not consider himself better than his fellow Israelites and turn from the law to the right or to the left. Then he and his descendants will reign a long time over his kingdom in Israel.

Deuteronomy 17:14-20 NIV

I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you.

Genesis 17:6 NIV

The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he to whom it belongs shall come and the obedience of the nations shall be his.

Genesis 49:10 NIV

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who[a] have been called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:28 NIV