

God's Message to Us in 1 Samuel 1-31

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Introduction

Today we continue our sermon series in which we look at God's message to us today in every book of the Bible.

- I would remind you that in Romans 15:4, it says:
 - **Rom 15:4: For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.**
 - The Holy Spirit spoke through the prophets who wrote the scriptures for us in such a way that their message was especially shaped so that it would help those who lived after Jesus came.
 - I started to call this series, "Jesus in every book of the Bible," because we certainly do see Him again and again.

For the last couple of weeks, we have been looking at the period of the judges.

- First, in the book called Judges, we saw how God sent judges or *shaphateem* to lead His people back to Him over this 323 year period (1418-1095 BC).
 - The pattern was that they would rebel, God would turn them over to their enemies to chasten them, then He would send a judge to reform them and to lead them in victory against their enemies.
 - One judge after another had to be sent, which highlights for us how Christ, our Shaphat has to come to deliver us and reform us again and again throughout the years of church history.
- Last week, we looked at the book of Ruth which occurs during this period...
 - Here we saw a typical family of the period going to Moab in the time of trouble, and the sons of this family taking Moabite women as wives.
 - God chastened this family so that the father and the two sons died, leaving behind only the mother, Naomi, and the two Moabite daughters-in-law, Ruth and Orpah!
 - But Ruth was converted and came to Israel with her mother-in-law where she met a man named Boaz who represented Christ.
 - He became her kinsman redeemer and married her, and God gave her a son who was the grandfather of King David from whom Christ came.
 - It was a beautiful picture showing that even in times of the apostasy, God still reserves a remnant in Christ, still saves Gentiles, and still restores some of those who have gone astray as He did Naomi.
- Today we come to the book of First Samuel.
 - It gets its name from the last judge of Israel who is different from the others in that he is called to serve not only as a prophet and a deliverer, but also as a priest.
 - The book covers the 97 year period from 1152 BC to 1055 BC when Saul died, so it includes the last 57 years of the period of the Judges which ends when Saul becomes king in 1095, and then it tells of his 40 year reign till his death.

In looking at God's message to us in this book, we are going to look at three men who give us three pictures.

- With Samuel, the judge, we see a rich picture of Christ our Judge.
- With Saul, the king, we see a picture of the antichrist.
- With David, the rising king, we see a picture of the heart of Christ our King.

So let's begin with the first display...

I. Samuel the last judge—a rich picture of Jesus Christ our Judge.

- Remember that the judges (*shaphateem*) of Israel were reformers and deliverers.
- Let's look at three ways that Samuel represents Christ our Judge.

A. Samuel, like Christ, is brought forth by God (miraculously) to barren Israel.

1. All through the Bible, Israel is seen as a barren woman.
 - a. They could bring forth children, but not the godly son to save them.
 - b. Consider Abraham (Hagar & Sarah).
2. The book of Samuel opens with a description of the family of Elkanah (1:1-7).
 - a. This family represents barren Israel.
 - 1) Elkanah has two wives...
 - godly Hannah, representing those looking for a deliverer, who is barren.
 - mocking Peninnah, representing those who are not looking for a deliverer in Israel and have many children.
 - 2) Israel is incapable of bringing forth a deliverer.
 - b. Hannah pleads with God.
 - 1) She makes a vow—if God gives her son, she will give him back.
 - as a first-born son, he would not be redeemed, but would serve...
 - 2) God hears her, so she names her son Samuel (God hears).
 - 3) She is given a beautiful prophetic poem of praise (2:1-10) which speaks of God scattering the proud (Peninnah's stripe) and blessing the needy.
3. All of this represents Jesus, the ultimate deliverer.
 - a. God brought Him forth by divine power—by a virgin, Mary.
 - 1) Mary praised God with a similar prophetic poem (Luke 1:46-55)
 - 2) She also spoke of God scattering the proud and blessing the hungry—those yearning for redemption.
 - b. This is what is spoken of in Isaiah 54
 - **Isaiah 54:1: “Sing, O barren, you *who* have not borne! Break forth into singing, and cry aloud, you *who* have not labored with child! For more *are* the children of the desolate than the children of the married woman,” says the LORD.**
 - Jesus our Shaphat was brought forth by divine power to a people incapable of bringing Him forth, just as Samuel was.

TRANS> Now let's look at a second way that Samuel is a picture of Christ our Judge.

B. Samuel, like Christ, is a priest who replaces the failed priesthood of Israel.

1. As high priest, the family of Eli was misrepresenting the Lord in their ministry.
 - a. They ate the portion of the offerings belonging to God (2:12-17).
 - The priests in Jesus' day made the temple into a place of merchandise.
 - b. They committed sexual sin with women at the tabernacle (2:22).

- The priests in Jesus' day were known for their moral corruption.
- c. They allowed the ark to be treated like a good luck charm (4:1-11).
 - The priests in Jesus' day trusted in rituals instead of God.
- 2. God prophesies of a new priesthood.
 - a. He sends a prophet to Eli to tell him his house will be destroyed,
 - Then He reveals this to Samuel as a boy serving in Eli's house.
 - b. God promises to replace the family of Eli with a faithful priest.
 - 1 Sam 2:34-35: **“Now this *shall be* a sign to you that will come upon your two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas: in one day they shall die, both of them. ‘Then I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest *who* shall do according to what *is* in My heart and in My mind. I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before My anointed forever.”**
 - This faithful priest is Samuel, but the prophecy reaches beyond Samuel to Christ the ultimate priest.
 - He is the faithful priest who replaces all the others.
- 3. Look at how things about Christ as priest are revealed here.
 - a. First, that Samuel (like Christ) is not from the priestly tribe of Levi
 - This shows the radical change of the priesthood emphasised in Heb 7...
 - **Heb 7:14-17: “For *it is* evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. For He testifies: “You *are* a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”**
 - b. Second, Samuel, like Christ, corrects the superstition related to the priestly service.
 - God never intended for His people to trust in rituals.
 - We are told in First Samuel that when they took the ark of the covenant into battle as a good luck charm, God caused it to be captured.
 - When the Philistines tried to use it as a good luck charm, they received judgment instead on their god and their city.
 - After the ark was taken, Samuel became priest, but not at Shiloh.
 - Likewise, Jesus did not serve at the temple in Jerusalem.
 - Instead He sent destruction to Jerusalem in 70 AD.
 - This judgment was a rejection of the corrupt priesthood.
 - It was, at the same time, a fulfilment of the rituals God had appointed until Jesus came.
 - Before He came, there was ritual purification—it was purification of sinners symbolised by sacrifices of animals by priests with robes.
 - You must see that Jesus is the true eternal priest who actually takes away sin by offering Himself as a sacrifice of atonement.
 - Heb 10:11-14 declares: **And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies**

are made His footstool. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

- How thankful we should be for His service.

TRANS> Samuel also represents Christ in a third way.

C. Samuel, like Christ, delivered God's people from bondage.

1. In chapter 7, he, like Jesus, calls Israel to repentance.
 - They put away their Baals and Ashtoreths.
 - Immediately, even while Samuel is sacrificing for them, God delivers from bondage to the Philistines: **1 Sam 7:10: Now as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel. But the LORD thundered with a loud thunder upon the Philistines that day, and so confused them that they were overcome before Israel... v. 13: So the Philistines were subdued, and they did not come anymore into the territory of Israel. And the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.**
2. In a similar way, Christ in His ministry called Israel to repentance and those who repented formed the church under the New Covenant.
 - Having delivered them from sin, He then delivered them from bondage to the Roman Empire.
 - The Jews had wanted this deliverance from the Romans, but it was the church of Jesus Christ that was given it.

TRANS> But then a terrible thing happened—

- Instead of the church using their liberty to serve God, they became *like* the Roman Empire.
 - And that brings us to the second major picture we are given in First Samuel where we have:

II. Saul, the king—a picture of the antichrist (a false substitute for Christ).

A. God's redeemed people reject Him by demanding a king like the nations.

1. God declares that this is a rejection of Him as their king.
 - In 1 Sam 8:7, He says to Samuel: **for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.**
 - a. The problem was not just in wanting a king, but in wanting a king like the nations.
 - They should have seen that that was the *last* thing they needed!
 - The kings of the nations act as if they are God.
 - They needed a king that was manifestly *not* like the nations.
 - They needed a king that would lead them to God.
 - b. Samuel rebukes them and tries to dissuade them, but they do not listen:
 - 1 Sam 8:19-22: **Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, "No, but we will have a king over us, ²⁰ that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles."** ²¹ **And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he repeated them in the hearing of the LORD. ²² So the LORD said to Samuel, "Heed their voice, and make them a king."**

2. And then God deliberately gives Israel a king like the nations...
 - a. God Himself chooses Saul and has Samuel anoint him.
 - He is a king like the nations.
 - He is impressive to look upon (9:1-2), but makes himself to be God.
 - b. Learn from this that when we want leaders like the nations, God gives us such leaders.
 - The antichrist is raised up from within the church, not from outside.
 - He was lawfully ordained by the Lord,
 - but puts himself in the place of Christ like Saul did.
- B. Over time, it becomes increasingly clear that Saul is in competition with God.
1. As soon as we meet him, he is shown to be a man of fear rather than faith.
 - a. He is always worried about how things will turn out—
 - He is worried about his father and about paying Samuel...
 - After he is king, he worries about his enemies—you have him trembling with his armies before Goliath.
 - He is worried about the people scattering, about people not supporting him... it goes on and on.
 - He is nervous and insecure because he is unable to leave things in God's hands where they belong.
 - b. But we also see that, like antichrist, he has an outward religious form.
 - He talks about the Lord.
 - He calls for fasting (in awkward times—such as in the middle of a battle).
 - He talks about righteousness and even confesses sin in a superficial way as when he says that David is more righteous than he is—
 - He takes vows—such as not to harm David—and then goes back on them.
 2. The worst thing about him is that he does not care about the will of God.
 - a. He wants God to help him—
 - He is willing to do some things for God to get that help,
 - but it is not as though he has a heart to please God.
 - b. In chapter 13, he offers his own sacrifices to God in place of the sacrifices that God requires.
 - Saul is not a priest... he is not to offer sacrifices.
 - But Samuel the priest is delayed, so Saul decides to take matters into his own hands and to offer the sacrifice...
 - Here you see his superstition and lack of faith—
 - **1 Sam 13:11-14: And Samuel said, “What have you done?” And Saul said, “When I saw that the people were scattered from me, and *that* you did not come within the days appointed, and *that* the Philistines gathered together at Michmash, ¹² then I said, ‘The Philistines will now come down on me at Gilgal, and I have not made supplication to the LORD.’ Therefore I felt compelled, and offered a burnt offering.” ¹³ And Samuel said to Saul, “You have done foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you. For now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. ¹⁴ But now your**

kingdom shall not continue. The LORD has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you.”

- c. In chapter 15, we are given a similar example of his taking matters into his own hands.
 - This time, God has told him to utterly wipe out the Amalekites and to destroy all of the flocks and herds.
 - But Saul spares King Agag and many of the flocks and herds which he assures Samuel would have been offered as sacrifices (like a person who steals money and then speaks of how he was going to tithes it to the Lord).
 - It is at this time that the LORD utterly rejects Saul as king.
 - He will find a man with a heart for Him to be king.

TRANS> Saul soon learns that God has chosen David to be the next king.

- So what does Saul do?

3. Saul resists God’s plan to establish David as king—

- His pursuit of David becomes more and more unreasonable and obsessive.
 - The Antichrist cannot bear Christ or those who follow Him.
 - All through the history of the church, the godly prophets and kings are pursued relentlessly and attempts are made to murder them.
- a. Even though David is faithful and true to Saul, Saul despises him.
 - David is one of his best warriors and wins favour with the people, but that only makes Saul all the more jealous of him.
 - Even Saul’s son Jonathan rebukes his father for pursuing David, and at first Saul admits that Jonathan is right, but then he is right back to throwing spears at David, even while David is ministering to him with music.
 - Twice David has occasions when he could kill Saul, and he lets Saul know that, and both times Saul repents, but both times Saul quickly returns to pursuing David again.
 - He is unable to bear the thought of David becoming king.
- b. This is exactly how it is with those who oppose Christ.
 - They have no reason to oppose Him except that they cannot bear for Him to be king instead of them.
 - They do not want Him to rule over them because they want to be as God.
 - And the more they are pushed and exposed, the more obsessive their resistance becomes.
 - Consider how the Jews opposed Christ—so ridiculously.
 - Consider how the Pope so opposed Christ that he could not bear to have His word published in the language of the people and set out to torture and kill anyone who published or distributed Bibles.

TRANS> And this brings us to the third thing we learn from 1 Samuel...

- Here we see...

III. David the chosen king—a picture of Christ, the king that God wants.

A. A man after God’s own heart.

1. When He rejects Saul as king, the Lord declares to Saul that He wants a man as king who has a heart for Him.
 - He says (1 Sam 13:14): **“But now your kingdom shall not continue. The LORD has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you.”**
2. This is dramatically shown when Samuel goes to Jesse’s house to anoint one of his eight sons as king.
 - When Samuel sees Eliab, Jesse’s firstborn, he is sure that he is the one...
 - **1 Sam 16:7: But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”**
 - David, the youngest of Jesse’s eight sons, is not even present because he is looking after the sheep—but he is the one God chooses.
3. Jesus Himself was raised up from the stem of Jesse...
 - After the house of David had fallen into ruins and there was only a stump left of Jesse’s house, Jesus came forth in poverty.
 - He was not impressive in His appearance (as He is always portrayed in man’s pictures of Him), but He had a heart for God.
 - In fact, David is only a type of Him—his failings are well known.
 - Only Jesus truly had the heart that God requires of His king—and that is why He was made a king forever—not just for a lifetime.
 - He is the eternal king, and He always pleases the Father as our king.
 - We can follow Him wholeheartedly with absolute confidence.

TRANS> So the man God wants as king is first of all a man with a heart after God. Second:

- B. The man God wants as king is motivated by a zeal for God’s honour and glory.
1. David’s zeal for God is seen in 1 Samuel 17 when he sees Goliath.
 - a. Saul and the whole army of Israel are terrified by this giant—no one is willing to fight with him.
 - b. But David shows his heart for God when he says:
 - **1 Sam 17:26: “For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?”**
 - It is God’s name that David is concerned about!
 - That is the kind of man that God wants as His king.
 - c. And as one trusting God, David is very bold, even as a youth—
 - He knows that the battle is the Lord’s.
 - When Saul tries to dissuade David (this is before he hated David) because he is only a youth, David will not accept it.
 - **1 Sam 17:32-36: Then David said to Saul, “Let no man’s heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.”** ³³ **And Saul said to David, “You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.”** ³⁴ **But David said to Saul, “Your servant used to keep his**

father's sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, ³⁵ I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it. ³⁶ Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God."

- With this zeal and this faith in the Lord, David not only defeats Goliath, but goes on to become a great warrior in Saul's army.
2. This is what we see of Christ.
- Even His enemies described Him as one who feared the face of no man.
 - He constantly seeks to bring glory to God instead posturing for position and personal advancement.
 - In John 17, as He heads for the cross, His prayer is that God would be glorified through Him.
 - That is all that matters to Him.
 - That is why He came to earth as the Son of God—to glorify the Father among men.

TRANS> So David shows us that the king God wants is:

- first, a man after God's own heart...
- second, a man with a zeal for God's glory who is courageous...
- And now third...

C. A man who refuses to take matters into his own hands.

1. Unlike Saul, David does not act as if he is God.
 - He knows that he is only a man.
 - He knows that a king ought to be king for God—a king who is careful to lead the people according to God's will and not for his own selfish purposes.
2. Nowhere is this seen so clearly as in David's refusal to harm Saul.
 - a. As we saw, Saul, in jealousy, was relentlessly pursuing David to kill him.
 - But David refuses to harm Saul.
 - He always said that he would not lift his hand against the Lord's anointed.
 - He knew that he had been anointed to be king in place of Saul, but God had not called him to take Saul down.
 - Until God took Saul down, Saul was God's anointed king.
 - David was committed to wait for years as a chased man until God chose to take Saul down.
 - b. Twice, David had opportunity to kill Saul...
 - Once when Saul came into a cave to relieve himself—a cave that David was hiding in—and David only cut off the hem of his robe.
 - A second time when David came upon Saul and his men fast asleep and came and took his spear and his water jug that was next to him.
 - Both times, David's men encouraged him that God had given Saul into his hands, and both times David refused.
 - He showed that power and authority is not to be used for selfish purposes, but for the Lord!

- Did you hear that?
 - David showed that authority is not to be used for selfish purposes, but for the LORD!
 - Oh that we could learn this as Christian fathers, as elders in the church, in all of life: Authority and power are to be used for the LORD!
- 3. No one exhibited this the way Jesus Christ did!
 - a. Jesus could have gotten all the nations to follow Him if He had used His authority in selfish ways.
 - But He did not want that.
 - He wanted the nations to be reconciled to God the Father.
 - He wanted them to follow Him as the one leading them to the Father.
 - b. Satan appealed to Jesus again and again to take matters into His own hands.
 - But Jesus came to do the will of God—and that was to go to the cross to atone for our sins—that we might be redeemed.
 - c. And that is what Jesus did.
 - As Philippians 2 says: **Phil 2:6-8: who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of death*, even the death of the cross.**
 - That is the kind of king that God wanted!
 - And therefore God made Jesus king forever: **Phil 2:9-11: Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

Conclusion:

How beautifully King Jesus is presented to us in the book of Samuel...

- By Samuel, the judge God brought forth to the barren woman who replaces the failed priests as our priest forever, and delivers us from our enemies.
- By Saul, who shows us what He is not: a king who does not use his authority for the Lord.
- And by David, who shows us that Christ is: a man after God's own heart.

And because Jesus is the Son of God, let us worship and serve Him not only as our priest and king, but also as our most merciful and gracious God.