

13.08.06 Coromandel Baptist 10:00 a.m.

Give Us A King!

Bible Readings = 1 Sam. 8:1-22; John 19:1-22

Introduction:

- (1) Over the course of the studies on this camp, Hector has led us to the time of Samuel's ministry.
- (2) The Old Testament passage before us takes us on from this historically, but also in regard to the theological history of God's people.
- (3) While what we are doing today is not related to the theme of the nations as such, there is a close connection, as we come to the heart of what constitutes true power.

Today, we turn to the exchange of kingship, and how this exchange is on the basis of the fact that the King's manner of rulership is not to our liking..

1. 1 Samuel 8: Give us a King!

(1) The nature of Samuel's 'judging' (at this stage) is not that of a deliverer-judge; so much as a dispenser of wisdom and judicial fairness.

- God himself has shown himself to be Israel's deliverer (1 Sam. 7:9-10; see this in relation to Yahweh's direct battle with Dagon in 1 Sam. 5, where no human hand was involved, and this is outworked in the victory over the Philistines in 1 Samuel 7).
 - This was always the case (the judges from Othniel onwards had been provided by the Lord), but the tendency was always to look to/for the judge to be the object of praise.

§ See, for example, the negative contribution of Gideon in this regard (e.g. Judges 8:27)

(2) The demand for a king, therefore is in the face of an immediate and present history of Yahweh's deliverance of his people directly.

- The text makes it clear that it is a rejection of *Yahweh himself* that is being worked out (1 Sam. 8:7). It is only a rejection of Samuel insofar as he is the Lord's appointed judge.
- The people did not trust Yahweh to deal with Samuel's sons, or to provide the leadership that Israel needed.
 - Somewhat ironical that in rejecting Samuel's sons (whose conduct was clearly in breach of the law of the Lord e.g. Ex. 23:6f.; Deut. 16:19; cf. Is. 5:23), the people gained kings whose corruption, greed and idolatrous actions led the nations into even greater transgression of the law! Look for human solutions to the problem, and we often wind up in a worse mess!
 - 'No English translation can fully take into account the subtle wordplay in Hebrew between the word... "justice" in vv. 9 and 11 and the root "judge" which occurs in six other places in this chapter (vv. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 20). The wordplay adds a special, almost bitter nuance. While the people had protested about the behaviour of Samuel's sons as judges and their perversion of justice, Samuel insisted that the "justice"...the people

would actually receive through the new king would be a gross miscarriage of all that was considered right in Israel.’ (R. W. Klein, WBC, 1 Samuel, p. 76).

- They did not really see that Israel was God’s *chosen son* (Ex. 4:22; Deut. 8:3; Hos. 11:1), who could rely on the heavenly father for all things. They were, as a *whole nation*, royal!
 - Later the king is a ‘son’ (2 Sam. 7:14; Ps. 2:7; 89:27), but only in the midst of the son-nation (which is why the king had to be one of the ‘brothers’ in Israel).

(3) There was provision in the Law for a king.

- See Deut. 17:14-17. Note the provision is that it will be the king that the LORD chooses; one of the brothers; not so increase army (horses); alliances and idolatry (wives); not to go down to Egypt again; not to increase gold
 - Specific criticisms of Solomon on all these counts!
- In other words: the king had greatly circumscribed power: and in this he was definitely not to be like the kings of the other nations, whose powers were absolute.
- Moreover, he was to live under the Law of the Great King ((Deut. 17:18), and thus was to be subject only to the Lord himself, and to live in simple submission to his will (as in the theme from Psalm 2, touched on last week).

(4) The issue here, then, seems to revolve around the meaning of ‘like the other nations’.

- The issue was the character and the quality of the kingship, not simply whether there would be one or not!
- In the three kings of the united nation (Saul, David, and Solomon) we see a contrast in the way of kingship.
 - Pick up comments from last week, re the king’s only responsibility being to ‘Ask’. Saul’s name = *shaul*, i.e. asked for ...and we find him asking mediums and spiritists! David is commended, as he always seeks the Lord’s face, and even in his sin is asking the Lord for forgiveness, and turning to him in repentance. Solomon begins well, by asking for wisdom, but ends up poorly, exchanging the worship of Yahweh for the idols, and entering into many marriage alliances that tell us his power base was more in the world than in heaven!

(5) In the end, the desire is for stability and security that relies on an earthly figure, rather than on the Lord of the earth.

- 1 Samuel 8:19-20 compare with 7:9-10

2. John 19: We Have No King But Caesar!

(1) There can no doubt that the theme of Jesus role as the anointed King runs throughout the whole of the New Testament like a golden thread. The question is never whether Jesus is a king, but the nature of the kingship he exercises.

- Throughout, Jesus teaches of the difference between the kingdoms of this world and his kingdom, and thus he always puts before the disciples the difference between his kingship and that of the great rulers of the earth.
- Seen here in the mocking coronation, installation, crown, and worship.

(2) The earthly 'great king' was Caesar (=emperor; title, not name), and Pilate together with Herod and all the rulers of the Jews were in power only because of his favour (hence the force of the blackmail seen John 19:12. To lose the favour of Caesar was to lose all!)

- Caesar took as one of his titles 'son of god' (probably meaning Zeus), but he claimed divine authority to rule because of his own divinity.
- Pilate is therefore the servant of a *religious*, as well as a political system!

(3) In saying 'we have no king but Caesar' (John 19:15) the chief priests (note it is they who are specified!) are in fact exchanging the worship of Yahweh for the worship of Caesar. Though the Jewish religious system remained in tact for about 40 more years, the judgement was inevitable.

- Moreover, John leaves us in no doubt that Jesus is God incarnate (from his prologue), so the exchange is clearly emphasised as the culmination of the gospel's assessment, He (i.e. God himself) came unto his own and his own received him not (John 1:11).

(4) We note that John includes a time and date reference (John 19:14): day of preparation of Passover, about sixth hour (noon).

- There is debate about the nature and timing of the events, as Mark indicates Jesus was crucified about the third hour (Mk. 15:25), and about the timing of the events of the last supper etc. (See commentaries e.g. Carson)
- However, if we can allow that this is a deliberate reference John is making a powerful point: Passover lambs needed to be sacrificed on the evening, but with such large numbers needed (100,000+ pilgrims in Jerusalem!), the priests began the work of slaughtering the animals at noon (technically, permissible interpretation of 'evening').
 - Whatever the case, Jesus is the Lamb of God (John 1:29, 36) and as such he is King! The lord of heaven becomes his own sacrifice!!
 - He provides all that is needed for his people, even to the laying down of his own life for them!
- But the reference to Jesus as Passover Lamb also indicates another theme: the nature of the deliverance.
 - Compare with Hector's study regarding the Lord's victory over Dagon.
 - Go back to the Old Testament Passover as deliverance
 - Here what is being worked out? The great exorcism! John 12:31 (cf. Luke 22:53, now is the hour, and the power of darkness are yours.)
 - This is all the Kings greatest hour!! The hour of his glory, where he fights for his people, where he gives them all that they need, and where he establishes an eternal kingdom in which they would reign forever with him!!
 - And were there any of the priests there in that kingdom? Yes!! See Acts 6:7!
- What self-giving love of the King on our behalf!
 - King Jesus mounts his throne: the Cross, from which he will reign victorious over all his enemies!
 - Allows himself to be scourged (Is. 50: 6 in context) and to become the sacrificial lamb to take away the sins of the world (Ref. to Is. 53).

(5) To whom do we look, and for what do we look? We have a king over us, unlike any king the world has ever seen!