

Long Live the King

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[0 : 00] Let's open your Bibles to 1 Samuel chapter 10, and our text for tonight will kind of start in the middle of the chapter.

Let's open verse 17 and read all the way through to the end of the chapter, chapter 10 of 1 Samuel. Then Samuel called the people together to the Lord at Mizpah and said to the children of Israel, Thus says the Lord God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt.

I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all kingdoms and from those who oppressed you. But you have today rejected your God, who himself saved you from all your adversities and your tribulations.

You have said to him, No, set a king over us. Now, therefore, present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes and by your clans.

When Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was chosen. When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Maitre was chosen.

[1 : 40] And Saul, the son of Kish, was chosen. But when they sought him, he could not be found. Therefore, they inquired of the Lord further, Has the man come here yet?

The Lord answered, There he is, hidden among the equipment. Actually, I like the King James Version there. Hidden among the stuff, it says.

So they ran and brought him from there. And when he stood among the people, he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward. And Samuel said to all the people, Do you see him whom the Lord has chosen?

That there is no one like him among all the people. So all the people shouted and said, Long live the King. Then Samuel explained to the people the behavior of royalty and wrote it in a book and laid it up before the Lord.

And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house. And Saul also went home to Gibeah. And valiant men went with him whose hearts God had touched.

[2 : 50] But some rebels said, How can this man save us? So they despised him and brought him no presents, but he held his peace.

All right. So I've titled my message tonight, actually taken the title directly from the passage. Verse 24, Long live the King.

I think that's a pretty appropriate title for the message tonight. This particular text, Long live the King. Though he really, in the end, didn't live all that long.

That's the rest of the story. We'll get to that by and by. But that's what the people shouted. They shouted when Saul was officially anointed, identified, anointed as King.

Long live the King. Now, it might be hard to remember what we studied last time before the Christmas season. Not even really sure.

[3 : 50] I didn't look back to see how many weeks it's been, but it's been a long time. But if you remember where we were last time, Saul went out to look for some lost donkeys.

Remember? Donkeys had somehow gotten loose from the farm. And so dad said, take a servant with you. Go out and find the donkeys.

And so they went out looking for lost donkeys. Saul never did find the donkeys. Of course, they did return home, but Saul didn't find them. But God did find Saul, in a sense.

And Samuel, prophet, God's spokesman, privately anointed Saul king over Israel. So that's what we studied the last time.

And so now it is time for Saul's public anointing and official coronation. And that's really what we have here in the passage.

[4 : 46] Now, you know, as Americans, we're not really very acquainted with coronations. We don't have those here. And although maybe you've watched, or you'd have to go back a long time in Britain to remember watching a coronation.

But so we don't have that. We, of course, hold elections here, elections of our leaders. And we're a democratic republic, as if you didn't know that.

And so we don't know a whole lot about monarchies and, therefore, the coronation of kings and queens and so forth. And yet I think we know enough about them to know that this coronation that we just read about here in 1 Samuel was a little strange.

A little strange. In fact, if I hadn't mentioned that that's what this was, you might not have even thought of that. This is the coronation of a new king. A new king. In fact, the first king of Israel. So there's something about this coronation that way out of the ordinary, at least as we perceive a coronation should be. And so it was strange.

[5 : 55] Very strange. In fact, almost everything about it was strange. And so it is the strangeness of this coronation that I want us to really focus on tonight. And so let's just look at it.

It begins with a stinging rebuke. That's point number one. What a way to begin a coronation. With a rebuke.

You know, coronations are supposed to be grand, happy, joyful occasions. I mean, you know, they're supposed to be accompanied by extravagance, lavish decorations and, you know, ceremony and all of that kind of stuff.

And actually, as you look at the passage here, it looked as though it would be that. For the beginning, at the beginning, especially when you notice the history behind the place where the coronation took place.

That would be Mizpah. Mizpah. All right. So it's taking place at Mizpah. And that's by design. It's on purpose. And the history of this place is really thrilling.

[7 : 03] And I don't know if you remember. You'll remember the occasion. You may not remember the place, the name of the place. But it was at this very spot that Samuel had led the armies of Israel to a great victory of the Philistines.

And to commemorate that event, they put up a stone of remembrance. Do you remember what the name of that stone was? Ebenezer. But you remember that.

We studied that passage. The Ebenezer. And so this was a place of triumph. And what an appropriate place. You know, for a coronation, an installment of a king.

And the first king of Israel. And I think all the people, you know, they would have remembered that. Obviously. You know, that Ebenezer was still there.

Okay. And so all the people had been assembled there at Mizpah. And I'm sure they were anxious.

[8 : 10] You know, about the announcement of just who would be their first king. They didn't know who it was yet. Okay. Now, we know. Because we've been reading the story.

And we read about the private anointing of Saul. But you remember, even when Saul went home, he didn't tell anybody about it. He told about meeting with Samuel.

He told about prophecy about the donkeys and the, you know, all of that. But about his being anointed, he'd said nothing about it. All right. So nobody knows. And so the people are anxious to find out who their first king is going to be.

Because they had asked for a king. Like all the other nations. Samuel first kind of balked at that idea. Then God said, let them have what they want.

And so he's relenting. And so they know that they're going to be a king. And so they're waiting for the official announcement, the official anointing. And they're anticipating the grand coronation.

[9 : 09] Possibly all the pomp and circumstance that would go along with that. Although maybe since this is their first king, maybe they don't really know how that's supposed to look. I don't know. But I don't think they were expecting what they got at this so-called coronation.

Because Samuel, the prophet, the priest, leader, judge, the last of the judges, a great man among the people of Israel.

He stands up before the people and he begins to speak. We've already read the text so you know that what he says, I'm sure, brought about a chorus of gasps.

This isn't the way it's supposed to work. And it's reverberating possibly throughout the crowd. And so instead of announcing God's selection of the king, Samuel issues a rebuke from the Lord.

And it's a strong one. It's a stinging rebuke against God's people. Verse 18. And he said to the children of Israel, thus says the Lord God of Israel.

[10:16] That's not the way you begin a coronation. That's the way a prophet begins to speak God's word. So this is how he begins. Thus says the Lord God of Israel.

So this is not merely going to be a rant from the prophet. You know, this is not Samuel voicing his offense that the people have rejected his leadership.

And so this is a word from God that Samuel is about to give. This is a prophetic judgment. A divine rebuke. And here's the rebuke. Verse 18.

I brought up Israel out of Egypt. Remember, this is God speaking. Samuel is God's mouthpiece. And he says, I brought up Israel.

And the implication is, I brought you up. You, Israel, I brought you up out of Egypt. Have you forgotten that? I deliver you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all the kingdoms and from those who oppressed you.

[11:16] Have you forgotten all about that? This is his rebuke. God is saying, I did all of that for you. But, verse 19, you have today, this day, rejected your God, who himself saved you from all your adversities and your tribulations.

You have said to him, to your God, the God, the one who has done all of these things for you. You have said to him, no. I could just stop right there.

You said no. No. Set a king over us. We don't want you to be king. We want a king like all the other nations. And so Israel's desire to have a king was, in effect, an out-and-out denial of God and a rejection of God.

Now, God is going to give them a king. In fact, God had planned all along to give them a king. And he has his reasons. And he gave them Saul for a reason. And so it's not that God is just, you know, okay, give you a king.

That was his plan, as we're going to see as we look at some other passages a little bit later in the message here tonight. But in their asking for a king, they are rejecting God.

[12:37] Rejecting him. And to be their king. This is a rejection of God. So this is why there is a rebuke to begin with here. And so is, you know, I just ask you, is this the way a coronation is supposed to begin?

Well, not my understanding of it, even though we don't have them here. But I don't think so. And I think you probably could have heard a pin drop. This is not what the people are expecting.

Though actually I think there may have been a number of different reactions from the people. Now this is just conjecture. I think some may have been thinking and even saying, oh, woe is me.

We have really done it now. I think there probably were some that took to heart what Samuel said. They probably were thinking, you're absolutely right.

Samuel, what were we thinking? And yet I think there were some others who said, oh, not that again. I mean, that's all this Bible thumper ever knows, you know, it says.

[13:52] Why does he just get off of that? I'm tired of hearing about this. And I kind of bring up these scenarios because we still have some of those same kind of reactions when God's prophets today get up and speak his word.

You know, there's some who really take it to heart and they understand it's God's word and they respond in their hearts. And sometimes it's, oh, woe is me. I've messed up.

Then there are others saying, I'm so sick of hearing that. You know, that kind of stuff. All right. Now, we need to go on to make a kind of mental connection in the minds of the people.

A mental connection to these words of rebuke. He does something rather strange. And so that brings us to the second point. First, a stinging rebuke and then a strange revelation.

It's very strange. As you look at this and consider how this was all done, he's about to announce the identity of God's choice for Israel's king.

[15:01] And the people are waiting to hear. They don't know who it is. So he's about to make that announcement. And yet he still wants the people of God to experience the full weight of God's rebuke.

So he adds a little extra thing here. That's not Samuel. This is God's design. And I want you to see what I'm talking about here. Verse 9. Now, therefore. All right. So he's just rebuked them.

God has through Samuel. And now in verse 9. Now, therefore, present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes and by your clans.

The word clans is literally in the Hebrew thousands. So it's kind of a subset of people, you know, ruled by rulers.

So you're thousands. So by your tribes, that would be the larger number. And by your clans, it might be a collection of families. By your thousands.

[15:59] And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was chosen. And when he had caused the tribes of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family Mairi was chosen.

And Saul, the son of Kish, was chosen because he's of that family. All right. So what's he doing? He's whittling it down to the one. But why do this? And really, it's very interesting. There's a purpose for this. But really more than one purpose, but one primary purpose.

This process, the process used here. And we don't really know how it worked. You know, how the decision was made. God is directing this. All right.

So we don't know if they're casting lots or, you know, whatever they're doing. But it's a process that's ordained by God. God's using it to identify, to get down to that one person.

[17:05] And this process reveals a number of things. And if nothing else, it reveals that Israel's king would be by divine selection.

It's taking the human element out of this altogether. You see. It's not by human manipulation. It's by divine selection.

And again, we're not told anything about how each group was selected. But, of course, the clear implication is that all of this is God-directed. From the tribe down to the family to the person.

All right. So if nothing else, it reveals that. It reveals more than that. Secondly, it reinforced, I think, the effect of God's rebuke in the previous verses.

It goes along with the rebuke. Because, you see, Israel would have remembered the only other occasion where this method of selection was used.

[18:10] Do you remember? Remember? I didn't. I had to look it up. It was in Joshua chapter 7. And so it was right after the defeat of Jericho.

And after Jericho, what was the next city? Ai. Ai. And what happened there? Well, initially, a dismal defeat.

Right? Now, there were a lot of reasons for that. But one primary reason was there was sin in the camp. Someone had committed a sin. What was it?

Well, it had to do with a certain man by the name of Achan. God had commanded the armies of Israel not to take from Jericho forbidden things.

God had forbidden things that were dedicated to him. You might remember when we studied that way back in Joshua 7. Well, Achan disobeyed. He took several items.

[19:15] A wedge of gold, garments, other things. Took them and hid them in his tent. He dug a hole and buried them in his tent. All right. So, and then they go on to Ai.

And they are defeated. And other than the fact that they were being presumptuous and getting out ahead of God, the primary reason for their defeat was Achan's sin.

Somebody sinned in the camp, but they didn't know who it was. Joshua didn't know. How's he going to find out? Well, by this same method. In fact, let me just remind you.

I'll read it to you. Joshua 7. Starting with verse 16. So Joshua rose early in the morning and brought Israel by their tribes. And the tribe of Judah was taken.

Selected. Again, no word about how they were selected. God is directing this. Joshua doesn't know who sent. So we're down to the tribe of Judah.

[20:15] Of the 12 tribes. And he brought the clan of Judah. And he took the family of Zerahites.

Or Zerahites. And he brought the family of the Zerahites, man by man. And Zabdi was taken. Then he brought his household, man by man.

And Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken. Now Joshua said to Achan, My son, beg you.

Give glory to the Lord God of Israel. And make confession to him. And tell me now what you have done. Do not hide it from me. And Achan answered Joshua and said, Indeed, I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel.

And he goes on to describe it. And they go there. And they find the stuff. And they stone him. And his family. And his livestock. You know the story.

[21 : 16] All right. So this is the only other time that this method is used. Here they're using the same method. Here. On this day where they're supposed to be. Anointing and having a coronation for a new king.

All right. So what are the people thinking? I mean, what would you be thinking? I mean, because you know very well this story about Achan. All of the Jews would have remembered that story. And God's judgment upon Achan and his family. And the method that God used to identify the sinner. And to identify the focus of his judgment.

So what would you be thinking? You'd be thinking, well, God is about to lower the boom on us here. You know, this isn't about a coronation. We have really messed up.

God's about to judge us. I mean, Samuel has just issued a stinging rebuke of the people. And now the people are transported in their minds back to a time when God used the same method to identify the sinner and to meet out his judgment.

[22 : 28] I mean, is this a coronation? Or is it judgment day? It's got to be what they're thinking. Actually, it's both.

It is both. Because, you see, this method of selection reveals something else. Something similar to this second thing. But let me take that a step further. It reveals that Saul's selection is king.

Albeit, I mean, even though God was the one who selected him. It reveals that Saul's selection as king was actually a divine judgment against Israel because of their rejection of God.

Saul as the first king turned out not to be a blessing, but God's judgment. God's judgment. As I already pointed out, the only other occasion in which an individual was selected using this method was when Achan was identified by using this method.

So clearly, it points to judgment. And so the people of God, they had rejected God. They had rejected him as their king.

[23 : 46] And the people demanded a king like all the other nations, and that is exactly what God gave them. I've said that a number of times before. I'll say it some more as we go along.

They wanted a king just like the other nations around them, and that's exactly what God gave them, a king like all the other nations. A weak king. Wicked and weak.

And that's what Saul was. A weak leader. Now, here's the point that's made so clear. I mean, it's just right there, you know, staring at you.

How Saul appeared on the outside was not at all what he was on the inside. Contrast that with later the selection of his replacement.

King David. What was on the inside was the important thing. God doesn't look on the outside. He looks on the heart.

[24 : 48] And so he is giving them someone who looks great on the outside, but he didn't have anything on the inside. Because that's the kind of king they wanted. Now, did God know that about Saul?

Absolutely, he did. That's why he chose him. That's why he chose him. That's why we have this rebuke from Samuel.

That's why we have this particular method used to identify the king. It all smacks of God's judgment. And that's the message we're supposed to get. Verse 21. And Saul, the son of Kish, was chosen. I mean, just think about all that's revealed about Saul here.

He is chosen. But when they sought him. And Saul's chosen, but where is he? They're looking for him.

[25 : 51] I mean, he's been identified as the king, but they can't find him. He's nowhere. He could not be found. Therefore, they inquired of the Lord further.

They had to ask God where he is. Has the man come here yet? And the Lord answered, there he is. Hidden among the stuff.

Baggage. The equipment. So they ran and brought him from there. Now, what's he doing there? Hiding. This is a glimpse into, not the first one, by the way, but a glimpse into the character, the nature of Saul.

This first king, he's hiding there in the stuff. They ran and got him. And when he stood among the people, he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward.

That means everybody else, their head came about right here. And here's Saul. He's, you know. Now, why? This is the second time this is mentioned, too. It's not going to be the last time.

[26 : 57] Why is this mentioned? Because the author of the scripture, well, the Holy Spirit first, big A author, and the author that is inspired to write these things down is wanting to clue us into something.

Saul is God's judgment. And Saul is God's judgment on the people of Israel. There's nothing to him. I mean, he's tall, dark, and handsome.

Yeah. Looks like he'd be the perfect candidate for a king, a king like all the other nations. Right? And Samuel said to all the people, oh, I really suspect that there's something snide in the way he says this.

Samuel. Because I think Samuel's privy to God's purpose here. And so what does Samuel say? See, do you see him? You see him whom the Lord has chosen?

That there is no one like him among all the people. Just look at this guy. He is, he is perfect. Shoe in for this job. Tall. Strong.

[28 : 12] He looks so good on that. He looks so kingly on the outside. So all the people shouted and said, long live the king. And they're all in for this.

So they got what they wanted. But the king that they got is really hollow on the inside. He didn't think to him. He's just a facade of greatness. As we're going to see as his story is told.

There's no real substance of greatness. So what a happy coronation. This was exciting. You know, should have been televised for the whole world to see it.

How exciting. It begins with a stinging rebuke from the Lord. It continues with this kind of strange revelation from the Lord about who the king, he selected as king.

And all that smacks only of judgment. Then third, a stringent requirement. This is really the only positive thing in here.

[29 : 15] I mean, positive in the sense of this is important information. Not just for King Saul, but for all kings.

Verse 25. Then Samuel explained to the people the behavior of royalty. How they're supposed to act. What they're supposed to do. And he wrote it down.

And he wrote it down. What his speech, his instructions, he wrote it down in a book and laid it up before the Lord. This would be something that Saul would have access to as king. And kings after him.

And yet I really think and many think that this is a reference to Deuteronomy chapter 17 verses 14 through 20. And where God gives certain instructions for the king of Israel.

You say, well, way back then he did that? Well, yeah. Because see, God not only foresaw that Israel would have a king, but he foreordained it. That they would have be governed by a king.

[30 : 20] And so this was back in the days of Moses. Back during Israel's wilderness wanderings. Back before they had come into the promised land. And so God had written down certain laws that governed those who would be one day be king.

Let me read it to you real quickly here. Deuteronomy 17 starting with verse 14. When you come into the land which the Lord your God is giving you and possess it and dwell in it.

And say, I will set a king over me like all the nations that are around me. See, you knew they were going to be asking for that. You shall surely set a king over you whom the Lord your God chooses.

One from among your brethren. So here's some stipulations, some instructions here. Some parameters. One from among your brethren you shall set as king over you.

You may not set a foreigner over you who is not your brother. But he shall not multiply horses for himself. Nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses.

[31 : 30] For the Lord has said to you, you shall not return that way again. Not only that's reference to Egypt, but also really this whole idea of over prospering because you're king.

Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away. Nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself. Solomon got into some trouble because of all of that.

Also, it shall be when he sits on the throne of his kingdom that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book.

So he's to actually in longhand. He's to write these words down for himself. Kind of interesting. Not just take notes on these instructions, but word for word.

To make his own personal copy of it for himself. From the one before the priests and Levites. And it shall be with him and he shall read it all the days of his life.

[32 : 36] That he may learn to fear the Lord his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes. That his heart may not be lifted above his brethren.

That he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left. And that he may prolong his days in his kingdom. He and his children in the midst of Israel.

So these are some short instructions. There's a whole lot behind a lot of these. And the entire moral code comes into play here in these instructions.

That he's to keep. So God's moral law. Here's the application for us. God's moral law. Not today the ceremonial law and those particular laws given in the Old Testament that were specifically for Israel.

That have now passed away. But the moral law. God's moral law is binding. For all people at all times.

[33 : 41] Whether they obey it or not is not the issue. It's binding. And that includes, since we're on the subject here. It includes kings and queens.

It includes dictators. It includes presidents. Duly elected by the people. Includes presidents. Now, they can and often do choose to disobey God's law.

Right? Absolutely. And they will pay for it. They will pay for it. In this life. Certainly in the next. All right.

So, the stringent requirement. And then one last thing will be finished for tonight. A silent rebellion. It's kind of weird. Not weird.

But strange how this ends. And you would almost think that this last verse would be a transition into the next chapter. Often.

[34 : 40] Often. You know, when something just kind of tagged on to the end. That it's kind of an allusion to something that's to come. And maybe it is. I haven't discovered it. If it is. But verse 25 says.

And Samuel sent all the people away. Every man to his house. All right. So, the coronation's over. Okay. As exciting as it was. And Saul also went home to Gibeah.

And that's a little kind of word about who's still in charge. In Israel. And that is God is. All right. Samuel is God's mouthpiece.

And so, Samuel dismissed the people. He dismissed Saul too. But he's king. But he dismissed him. And he went home. And valiant men went with him. Went with Saul.

Whose hearts God had touched. They're going to be valuable to Saul going forward. In fact, in the very next chapter. But. Some rebels said.

[35 : 38] How can this man save us? So, they despised him. Brought him no presents. But he held his peace. Saul knew it.

But he didn't do anything about it. Say anything about it. All right. So, what's going on here? Well, these rebels. They were saying no.

Not just to Saul. They were saying no to God. Saying no to God's choice of a king. So, they gave him no support.

They gave him no respect. He's going to be a terrible king. Right? Yes. Yet, God has chosen him. And he chose him for a purpose.

Part of it, I believe. Big part of it is. Judge God's people. But God chose him. Even though he's a lousy king. And so, God chose him.

[36 : 37] And God expects respect. For this king. All the people of Israel. Even though it is their sin. That has brought this upon them.

And it is their rejection of God. That has brought this judgment. And they get this king. That's like all the other nations. This pretty lousy guy.

Yet, they're still supposed to respect him. Honor him. Follow him as king. And so, these rebels are not in the right place. We might. In our way of thinking.

In our day. In our culture. You know, in the. Kind of the context of. Terms should I use.

Conservatism. Christian fundamentalism. Not theologically. But politically. In our day. We're thinking. You know, our mindset.

[37 : 35] Is kind of almost been conditioned. To think. Well. You know. Kudos to those rebels. I mean, this king. This king Saul. He's a pitiful excuse for a king. So, why should they follow him.

And respect him. And yet, God expects them. Demands it. There are some Christians. Who need to learn that truth. Today. You know.

The Bible says in Romans 13. 1. Let every soul be subject. To the governing authorities. That includes the president. Guards. Don't you think about it. For there is no authority. No authority. Except from God. Now that is huge. And it's difficult for us to. Even comprehend it. Even if we can go to the. To the extent of saying. Well, yeah. In America. Even if. You know. He's of that other party. And even if he's.

[38 : 35] A liberal. Even if he. You know. You know. Doesn't follow. The word of God.

And. Does these terrible things. We might be able to go. So far. As to say. Well, okay. Understand. God. Is by God's.

Ordinance. That he. Has become present. But then to. Extend that out to. Other nations. Pagan nations. Down through history. And the tyrants. Who have.

Held places of authority. Over nations. Peoples. Have. You know. Brutalized. Their people. And. And so forth. But it says.

All. There is no authority. Except from God. And the authorities that exist. Are appointed. By God. Now. We enjoy something. In our nation.

[39 : 31] That. Really very few. Enjoy. Throughout the world. That is. We can vote. For our president. And. Other government officials.

Sometimes. We feel like. We're wasting. But we can vote. And. And so. We have. That recourse. If we don't like. The guy.

Who's sitting. You know. On the throne. So to speak. Of Oklahoma. Well. Gal. Or. Our nation. There in Washington. Or whatever. Then we have.

We have. Our vote. And we exercise that. Should exercise that. But at no time. Do we have. The right. To.

Be disrespectful. Dishonor. Those. God has placed. In authority. Over us. And so. These. Rebels. As the Bible. Calls them.

[40 : 30] Here. Are on the wrong. Side of God. And. Who the king is. And what kind of person. He is. He is. Make any difference. Make any difference.

God had chosen. Placed him in authority. And there to respect him. Thank you.