

The King's Order

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[0 : 00] both for leading us in prayer. If we can turn back for the time that we have left to the passage that we read in 1 Samuel. We'll consider just for the time that we have the God who ordains all things in our lives and how he does so in this, as I said, this snippet.

Last time we looked at Israel gathered at Mizpah and the Philistines had come upon them. When they were recommitting themselves and putting away the other gods, the Philistines came upon them.

And we parallel that passage to 5th Catechism that asks, are there more gods than one? And there is, but only the one, the living and true God.

And we look at chapter 8 now. And when we look at the people of Israel in the passage here, we see and have that sense that there are people that are struggling to commit themselves to God, commit themselves to this Lord.

And we've seen them as a people from the beginning of the book of Samuel. And they're not necessarily opposing God outright. They're mindful of God, but they're never really grasping who God is.

[1 : 27] They're never really fully understanding the Lord, their God, who should be their God, who they should be relying upon as their one God. And the best that we saw of Israel was, if you remember, when the Ark of the Covenant came back in to Israel.

And they stood there in awe. Who can stand before this God? This Lord, this holy God. Who can stand before it?

They realized who God was, and the power of his characteristics, and the holiness of his being. And another quality that we see in them, a good quality, was last two weeks ago when we saw them at Migma.

And they put away their other foreign gods. And then they committed themselves to this one Lord. And they had the Philistines come upon them.

They weren't prepared for battle. They weren't ready to fight. They were like sitting ducks, ready to fail. They had nothing to do but to cry out to God.

[2 : 44] And asking Samuel not to cease to cry out for God for them. And God proved him to his people. God showed himself as one.

The one Lord that could be trusted. God listened to their cry. God listened to their prayer. But we see them in the passage again here.

They're wanting to satisfy their own desire. They're wanting to be like the other nations. And to have over them a king. Like the other nations.

And you watch them and you can almost ask, you know, what's happening? You're going in the wrong direction again. But God grants their wishes.

And he employs the prophet Samuel to send words of warning against them having this king and their desire to be like the other nations.

[3 : 51] And he's saying to them, you know, this isn't going to be for your benefit. But still, there is a man put over them. And when God spoke in verse, in chapter nine at verse 16, he says, there will be a prince.

You shall anoint him to be a prince. It's funny that God didn't title this man as a king. Maybe God didn't see this man as a king. And we can look in this passage.

And as I said, it's like they're getting it all wrong again. They're going in the wrong direction. We feel like saying to us, you know, look at what God has just done for you.

He set you free from the Philistines. Is he not one that you should be trusting in as your king?

Rather than fulfilling your desires to have this worldly king over you.

And the overarching words, in a sense of this section, is in chapter eight and verse 22, where God says to Samuel, obey the voice of the people and make for them a king.

[5 : 07] God allows it to happen. It was in his will. It was his ultimate purpose that this should happen and take place. And when we see it now, we know that, you know, it was for his glory.

It was for God's purposes. And this ties into Catechism seven. What are the decrees of God? The decrees of God at his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby for his own glory, he has foreordained whatever whatsoever comes to pass.

God's eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby for his own glory, he has foreordained whatever comes to pass. And paralleling, it was never my intention to do this, but they seem to fit well with what the chapters are referring to and what we can learn from the chapter to parallel them with catechisms.

And, you know, hopeful that when we read through these chapters again, we can go, oh yeah, when, when they came to miss parents, Samuel told them to return to the one God.

Because God is the one and only true God. And then you can maybe think of this passage here and see where Israel went after, wanted to fulfill their desires.

[6 : 40] But God allowed it because God had a purpose. Because God established this kingdom where all other kings would fail.

and he would put in place his king that would rule over them. Just to help us and to tie these doctrines of teachings into the passages and we understand clearly what they are.

And the scope of God's eternal purpose is far beyond this chapter. God's purposes are from the beginning to all eternity.

beyond what we can understand. God's purpose, God's will, God's providence in our lives even tonight as we sit here.

That we should be here. And that he knew that we would be here. And that all his ways are fulfilled in every step that we take in our lives.

[7 : 44] They are his ways and they are for his glory and we trust in him. Not that we fully understand his ways.

His ways are mysterious. And you can dig so deep in these things of God that's, well, you don't know where to start. God's God's provisions God working things out for his own glory.

You know, you can dig so deep but it's a Wednesday night and many of us have been working and many of us don't have the headspace to go into these things so deep. So I just want to use the passage that we read and just skim through the snippet of time and see how God outworks all things for his eternal purpose in the people, the different people, the people of the nation, the prophet Samuel and the prince.

And maybe we can, as we look at these things, look back in our lives and see that they are true experiences in our Christian life.

So we look at the people and the people coming for four and five asking to appoint a king over the nations over their nation to be like the other nations.

[9 : 15] Someone that they can look up to. Someone that they could look up to and admire. Someone they can honor. And Samuel was not on board with this.

You can see that in verse six. And he comes to God in prayer and God answers him, obey the people. They have not rejected you. They have rejected me from being king over them.

Ever since I brought them out of Egypt, they've adopted other gods. God this time I'll let them have their way. But you Samuel must warn the people what it will mean to have their desires fulfilled, not to have me as their king, but to have this other worldly king over them.

And verse 10 down to verse 18, that's the warnings about having a king over them. There's a list there of things that this king will do.

He will rob them off so much. He will take their sons. They will have to work for him. He will take their daughters. He will take their food.

[10 : 29] He will take their slaves. He will take their livestock. And it's interesting that of all their produce that they had, it was a tenth that would be taken by this worldly king.

Now it was always a tenth god I asked for. And why maybe they hadn't been giving their tithe to God. We don't know why, but it was guaranteed that it would be taken from them and so much more would be taken from them by adopting this worldly king.

Maybe it's a thought for us to consider that if they hadn't been given their tithe, does God take that even from the people of God by some other means if we don't give it.

Just a thought, maybe worth discussion. But at the end of this list, God says you're going to cry out because of these things. For this king you have chosen, but the Lord will not answer you in that day when you realise.

It's almost like when you realise what you've done, I won't answer you. And they say to themselves, no, to all these warnings, there will be a king over us.

[11 : 52] It's amazing. They know God, they've experienced God, God's revealed himself to them, shown how he can be trusted, that he would deliver them from the Philistines and still they're refusing Samuel's words and saying, no, I want my desire to be fulfilled.

Because we're looking at it and going, what are you doing Israel? And it's easy to look at them and say it when we look at ourselves. It's so tempting for us to fit in with the world.

We look at the world and we want to adopt the things that they are doing. They give us all sorts of ideas. attractive ways, but they work.

And these things can infiltrate into us as people and as a nation of God in a sense. And when these swirly things come in, we as the people of God lose our identity.

That's what happened to the people here. They adopted what they wanted as a king of a nation, a worldly king, but they lost their identity.

[13 : 16] The distinction of the people and having the Lord as their king was lost. They started to blend in with the world. And when we start adopting the things of the world, we'll blend in.

We lose our distinction, we lose our identity. But we need to look at ourselves as well. And where do I go wrong?

As a believer in God. We make bad decisions. And you can put it so simply, I just thought when I was a wee bit hungry, in the middle of the afternoon, I went down to the kitchen, you'll all fit in with this image that I'm giving.

I went down to the kitchen, I was feeling a bit hungry, there's a bowl of fruit there, but there was also a cake. And you think, well, I've not had any fruit today, I should probably eat the fruit.

But I didn't, you know, the cake was there. And as you think about it, the fruit is good for you. It's good for your teeth.

[14 : 35] It'll benefit you, it'll give you more energy. It'll do you good. The cake, it's bad for you. It's bad for your teeth, bad for your body.

But I ate the cake. And I think, well, why did I do that? You know, I'm attracted to the thing that's bad for me. And the cake was one of the worst things I could have had.

And the fruit would have been one of the best things I could have. The cake would have had no benefit for me. The fruit would have benefited. And the cake, you know, I'd pay for it at some point. Maybe I'd come in one day with a belly. But, you know, you'll pay for taking the cake. It's funny how you, it's funny, isn't it?

We know what's good for us, but we go for the thing that's not the best, the thing that won't benefit us, the thing that will bring trouble maybe later on in our lives.

[15 : 48] we have poor preferences, don't we? We prefer these things and it's a poor choice.

We have poor preferences in our lives. We want to read the Bible, but we pick up our phones. We want to pray, or we should pray, and we'll put out the rubbish, we'll clean the house, we'll find something else to do.

We can go through this cycle where we can enjoy the good things, and we can feel the benefit of the good things, but then we can slip into adopting the things that have no benefit for us, and we know they have no benefit for us, we know they are bad for us, and it's like in a Christian experience, we eat what's good for us in the word of God, and we consume things that we shouldn't, and we have this peaks and troughs of our experience, we trust God with one hand, and we refuse him with the other, we consume what we like, and we don't grow, our poor preferences doesn't make us grow, we lose out, we suffer, why are we not content, with what God has given us, we're always looking and desiring after other things, like the people of Israel, but then, even then, God can use us in the bad decisions we make, the bad things we desire, the poor preferences of our lives, God can use them for his glory, and that baffles us, that he would, and it's not an excuse for sin, we should always put to death the sin that grows within us, we should always exercise self-control, control, we need to be careful in our lives, where our desires are, and

to put these poor preferences and turn it to good preferences in the word of God, that's the people, and briefly the prophet, Samuel is the prophet of God, revealing his word to the Israelites, and you can't help it when you read the passage, they want a king, Samuel is saying, God doesn't want a king, and then God's, well, Samuel is saying this isn't right, and all these warnings are coming from God, and then God grants it anyway, and was Samuel confused by this, maybe he's asking, why is this happening, what is God doing, we can imagine him praying to God, this is not right, saying to Israel, this is not good for you, this is going to cost you, and though he doesn't agree that he's submissive to the voice of God and to his word, and it was actually God's plan that a king would be set over them, you can go back to Deuteronomy 17, verse 14, it says that when you come into the land of Canaan, there will be a king set over you, there will be a king of his choosing, but they're wanting this king, you know, where is Samuel understanding this?

[19 : 28] he's like the man that's eating the good word of God, listening and obeying to the voice of God, even when it's not what he wants to hear, even when he thinks it's wrong, and it's an interesting point that God's people are going the wrong way, Samuel knows that it is not aligned with the favour of God, they want this king, but he doesn't walk away, he doesn't take humbrage to this, he doesn't take the huff with God, he doesn't take the huff, he doesn't fall out with the people over it, he doesn't go looking for a better people, he doesn't refuse to do the job that God had given him to do, God says to tell the people it is wrong, this is your job, tell the people it is wrong and you must tell them, but if they want their king,

I will grant it to them, I know that they have rejected me, and Samuel it's hard for you to understand, but be faithful to him, you don't understand what's going on, but be faithful, this is part of my eternal purpose, to bring this kingdom into formation, and to set this kingship, this new season of kings in my eternal purposes.

You know, sometimes we look at ourselves and we wonder what's going on, and we look around and think what's happening? We ask God what's going on in this world, why are you people adopting the world's methods?

But then, in all honesty, we ask ourselves, why am I adopting the world's methods? What am I doing in my life?

And like, it's almost as if we're suffering through our lives against these sins. We look at ourselves and we say, why was I doing, why have I done that?

[21 : 45] Why have I not been given my time to reading God's word? Why have I not been praying? You know, I thought I would have grown so much more if I had been eating the good fruit, if I had been in the word of God, feeding of this goodness.

that my poor preferences has left me suffering through life with these sins. We struggle to understand ourselves, we struggle to understand God's times, God's so mysterious to us.

And there's many days where we ask, you know, what's going on? How can this be for your good? You know, Samuel would have been asking, is your student the wrong thing? And how can this be for any good?

And God is the God who works all things for good. No matter where we are, however we feel, the best place for us is to listen and consume this goodness of God, to listen to God's words.

And the most beneficial place to us, the most beneficial thing for us as Christians, is to feed off this goodness of God that he has given us through his word.

[22 : 57] We'll never be like Samuel. like a prophet. But we must be faithful to him, not understanding what's happening in the times, how he has placed these things in my life.

You know, you look at Job and you wonder, you know, how did he feel? But he held to God, he held to his word. We must be obedient to what God asks of us, whatever God asks us, whether it's to tell the people that they are wrong, whether God uses us in whichever way, we listen to him.

And if we listen to him, it will be within his will. And that is the best place for us to be. We listen to God because he is a God worth trusting and he is a God worth waiting upon in our lives.

and briefly the prince, and all I want to say about the prince is that Samuel came as this man. He was going about his daily duty.

He was looking for donkeys. And he came to this prophet, this seer, to ask that they would show him the way to find the donkeys.

[24 : 19] God's eternal purposes surprise us. Maybe you can look back in your life and think, you know, I thought this should have happened this way, but God changed it.

And it was the right time then, looking back, that God didn't allow me to go the way I did. It was hard at the time and I didn't understand it. Maybe God sent someone in your experience and just what you needed at that time.

And it was a complete surprise to you that he did it. Maybe it was someone just talking to you and giving you a word in season. I didn't understand it at the time, but it was the best, most beneficial thing for me.

How we can go about our daily lives and God can use us. We often feel like we're not doing any good, but God God's providence over all things, God's providence over us as his created beings, how God works out his providence in our lives.

We struggle to understand it because we don't know the big picture, but we must be faithful to him, faithful that he is one that will put a king over us.

[25 : 44] He will be our king. put all the desires to the side. We eat the goodness of the word of God and trust in this word and trust in the king that God took and placed higher than any other king, the king over all kings, the Lord Jesus Christ, a king that is worth trusting, a king that is worth waiting upon, a king that will do us good if we trust in him, a king that we can rely upon.

All the other kings of the Bible failed, so all failed, but King Jesus will not fail us. He is our mighty king, and he is a king that can use us for his glory, as strange as it is, people that are so flawed, and people that struggle with their sins, and choose the wrong thing, but God in his eternal purpose will bless it to his glory.

So I pray that we know God's hand working in our lives, even when we're confused and don't understand what's going on, even when we're going the wrong way, even when we're going about our daily business, we're God intervened, and God revealed to us that he is our king, and that he is a king that we can trust in.

Amen. May these thoughts be blessed to us. We will sing in conclusion in Psalm 24, the Scottish Salter.