

Living Word Fellowship Church

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God and Politics

Deuteronomy 17:14-20; 1 Samuel 8:7, 10-22; 10:17-19; 12:1, 19-25

I. Introduction

It is interesting to read and reflect on how faithful the Lord reigning as Israel's King, destroying anyone or nation in their path, from one war to the next, is treated with such little respect once Israel entered the Promised Land; again please note they could not attain this if it were not for His faithful commitment to serve them as their king as a result of His promise to Abraham, a righteous man (He warned them; Deut. 8:11-20). The Red Sea swallowed the most powerful army; He protected them from every disease or wild animal, while feeding and caring for them in the wilderness; a place where they could not grow anything to eat, no doctors to care for them, and too hot to survive. He tore down the walls of Jericho and defeated giants in the Promised Land, and once they had the best warrior ever, the best Provide, the best Protector, and the best Deliverer, they wanted another king (1 Sam. 8:7; 12:1) No wonder God said; *"It is not for your righteousness or for the uprightness of your heart that you are going to possess their land, but it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the Lord your God is driving them out before you, in order to confirm the oath which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Know, then, it is not because of your righteousness that the Lord your God is giving you this good land to possess, for you are a stubborn people."* (Deut. 9:5-6; NASU)

We are no different in the New Testament. We are described as lost (Luke 19:10), enslaved people to sin (just like Israel had too powerful an enemy to get out of slavery, so are we in relation to Satan), living in darkness, full of hate (John 3:19-21), learning to lean more to our intelligence than God's Word. As a result, the world grows more evil and depraved (Rom. 1:18-32), while in the building of our wealth, or our ability to learn how to survive, we forsake God and depend on politicians.

Christ, who is the head of the church, instructs us to abide in Him (John 15:1-17) by renewing our minds (Rom. 12:2) with a commitment to be devoted to His Word (Acts 2:42), as we build His church using our spiritual gifts (Eph. 4:7-16), for His glory (1 Cor. 12:4-8) and honor. As head of the church, He instructs us that this is His mechanism for impacting the world (Eph. 1:22-23), protecting us from Satan (Eph. 3:10), healing us from disease (James 5:13-18), and to strengthening us to overcome daily challenges. This takes place when we empower His church and live as salt and light in the world (Matt. 5:13-16). Yet we forsake the assembling of ourselves together, struggle to find time to serve, become upset when we are challenged to give to build His kingdom, are quick to become upset when things don't go our way, and do not go back to church while being extremely devoted to political parties. We view them as leaders who rescue us from the evil of our enemies, from financial difficulties, and our social agendas. We are no different than Israel.

II. God's Warnings When We Choose a New King

Deuteronomy 17:14-20; 1 Samuel 8:10-22

- A. The person who rules must not be self-serving (Deut. 17:16).
- B. The person who rules must not be a womanizer (Deut. 17:17).

- C. Must not be lifted in pride (Deut. 17:20).
- D. Sons and daughters will serve his agenda and will be used at his discretion, which would include sending them to war with no guarantee (1 Sam. 8:11). When God is their King, different results:
 - 1. When Moses was Israel's leader, God defeated their enemies as Moses raised his hands (Ex. 17:8-16)
 - 2. Israel at war in Sihon against the king of the Amorites; victory (Numbers 21:21-24).
 - 3. No lives were lost at the Red Sea and no one needed to fight against the Egyptians (Ex. 14:13-20).
 - 4. When a king obeyed what God said in Deuteronomy 17:19-20, no one even had to fight in the war (2 Chron. 20:15, 21-24).
 - a) The same took place with Hezekiah (2 Kings 18-19).
- E. When it comes to our children serving them, it said he will 'take them' – there will be a draft (Deut. 8:11).
- F. Our children will work for him to enrich him and serve for his enjoyment (1 Sam. 8:12-13, 16).
- G. "He will take the best of your fields and your vineyards and your olive groves and give them to his servants." (1 Sam. 8:14; NASU)
 - 1. Take the best of the fields. Have the best land for their profit.
 - 2. Deplete households of their wealth (vs. 16).
- H. They were not willing to pay their tithes, so now they had to pay the king, who took a tenth of everything they produced; this is on top of what is said in 'G'. (1 Sam. 8:15, 16-17).
 - 1. A tenth of the seed to pay government staff (vs. 15).
 - 2. A tenth of the flocks (vs. 17).
 - 3. We will pay the government 20% of our income while we complain about God's request for 10% to build His kingdom.
- I. Instead of serving God, we will serve the government (1 Sam. 8:17).
- J. There will be no distinctiveness between us and those who are unsaved (1 Sam. 8:20). We will become just like them.
- K. The politicians will become a burden to us, and when we cry to God for help, He will not listen (1 Sam. 8:18).