

“Give Us a King”

Introduction:

1. No doubt most of us have made trades which turned out bad, and we greatly wished those trades had never been made. The trade might have involved the purchase of an automobile, which turned out to be a high priced “lemon,” or it may have involved something else in which what we received was not worth nearly as much as we paid.
2. Esau, the twin brother of Jacob, made such a bad bargain, Gen. 25:29-34; Heb. 12:16.
3. Esau’s “trade” involved one person; it did not involve a nation. But in I Samuel 8:1-8 we read of the Israelites making a “trade” which involved the whole nation; God was really their king, but they rejected God for a human king.
4. Title: “*Give us a King.*”
5. Text: I Sam. 8:1-8.

Discussion:

I. Background.

- A. God had promised to make of the descendants of Abraham a “*Great nation,*” Gen. 12:2.
 1. As it unfolded, Abraham fathered Isaac; Isaac fathered Jacob whose name God changed to Israel, Israel or Jacob fathered 12 sons, who became the heads of twelve tribes, who formed the nation of Israel, Gen. 12-Ex. 19.
 2. God raised up Moses to lead His people out of the land of Egypt, Exodus 4-14.
 - a. In a real sense God became their king at the exodus, Deut. 33:5; cf. Judges 8:23.
 3. God gave to the nation of Israel a law, Exodus 20:1-17; cf. Gal. 3:19,24.
 4. God brought the nation of Israel into the land of Canaan, Joshua 3.
 5. In time, God raised up judges to lead his people, the first judge being Othniel, Judges 3:9, the last judge being Samuel, I Sam. 7:15, who was also a prophet, I Sam. 3:20.
- B. In the time of Samuel, the Israelites approached Samuel, and said “*Give us a king,*” I Sam. 8:6.
- C. The Reasons given for this request:
 1. They said to Samuel, “*You are old,*” I Sam. 8:5.
 - a. It has been estimated that he was around 60 years old at the time; he still served for many years as a prophet.
 - (1) Truth be told, they were not rejecting Samuel, but they were rejecting God that **He** should not “*reign over them,*” I Sam. 8:7.
 2. “*Your sons do not walk in your ways,*” I Sam. 8:5.
 - a. This statement was true, I Sam. 8:3; taking bribes was contrary to the Law of Moses, Deut. 16:19.
 3. The **real** reason, to be “*like all the nations,*” I Sam. 8:5.
 - a. In verses 10-18 Samuel explained to them the sad consequences they, and their posterity, would suffer if they received a king, but they ignored his warnings and said “*but we will have a king over us,*” v. 19-20.
 - b. However, Israel was never designed to be like the nations, Exodus 19:6.
 - c. God’s people today are not designed to be “*like the*” nations, Matt. 5:13,16; Rom. 12:1-2.
- D. God gave them what they asked for, I Sam. 8:22.
 1. Note Hosea 13:11.

II. The History of the Human Race is a history of Apostasy!

- A. Examples:
 1. Adam and Eve, Gen. 3:1-6.
 2. The sons of God, Gen. 6:5.
 3. Judah, Jer. 2:13, 32.
- B. Consider the Pattern of Judah’s apostasy.
 1. They refused to listen to the word of God, Jer. 6:10; cf. Matt. 13:15.
 2. Materialism, Jer. 6:13; cf. Luke 12:15.
 3. They deceived themselves with lies, Jer. 6:14.
 - a. They did not want the truth; so it is with many today, 2 Thess. 2:10-12.
 4. They became hardened by sin, Jer. 6:15.
 - a. Multitudes today are in the same condition! Phil. 3:19; Eph. 5:12.
 5. They rejected the only possible cure for their problems, Jer. 6:16.
- C. Summed up, they were acting like the nations around them.

III. Application:

- A. Jesus Built His church, Matt. 16:18.
 1. He purchased it with His own blood, Acts 20:28.
 2. It constituted the body of Christ, Eph. 1:22-23.
 - a. God's plan called for "*one body*," Eph. 4:4.
 3. It can be identified by:
 - a. Its Creed book, the Bible, 2 Tim. 3:16-17; I Peter 4:11.
 - b. The names by which its members are called – "*disciples*," "*saints*," "*brethren*," "*Christians*."
 - c. The designations by which the church is called – "*the church*," "*the church of God*," "*churches of Christ*," "*the church of the living God*."
 - d. The terms of pardon, Rom. 10:17; John 8:24; Luke 13:5; Matt. 10:32; Mark 16:16.
 - e. Its worship, Acts 2:42.
 - f. Its organization, Phil. 1:1.
 - g. Its mission, Eph. 4:12.
- B. But Many brethren are trying to be "**like the**" denominations around them!
 1. By Extending the boundaries of fellowship beyond God's plan, Eph. 5:11; I John 1:5-6; 2 John 9-11; I Cor. 4:6.
 - a. In the first century some fellowshipped error, Rev. 2:14-15, 20.
 - b. Some of our brethren are doing the same today.
 - (1) A case in point is that of Max Lacado and the Oak Hills church in San Antonio, TX, and his "swapping pulpits" with some of the denominational preachers in the area. A church in Huntsville, AL, "invited a rabbi to speak at their special Easter service."
 - (2) Using Romans 14 to justify both "doctrinal and moral" sin! However, that chapter comes between two important "book marks," Rom. 13:14 (moral sin), and Rom. 16:17.
 - (3) Churches having their own ball teams to compete with the teams of denominational churches.
 2. By Perverting the work of the church.
 - a. Its work outlined, Eph. 4:12.
 - b. But it is so often perverted, by adopting the hand-me-downs of modern denominationalism.
 - (1) The building of fellowship halls, sponsoring boy scout troops, special programs for entertainment, acceptance of denominational baptism, even denominationalism itself!
 3. By Perverting the worship of the church.
 - a. Taking the Lord's supper on any day of the week. Cf. Acts 20:7
 - b. According to an article published on Sept. 4, 2012, the Highland church of Christ in Abilene, TX joined an increasing number of churches to add instrumental music to their worship services.
 - c. According to one article, the White Station church in Memphis, TN has opened a coffee shop in their building; they say it is "for social activities, birthday parties, cards games, etc."
 - d. For several years now the Madison "church of Christ" in Madison, TN has had "traditional worship" and "contemporary worship," with its instruments of music, "praise teams," hand clapping, lights dimmed, female "leaders," etc.
 4. By Perverting the organization of the church.
 - a. Just recently I learned of a "church of Christ" in Kentucky Which had appointed a "woman elder. Note I Tim. 3:2.

IV. The Solution:

- A. Make sure we have a right attitude toward the word of God.
 1. We must love the truth, 2 Thess. 2:10-12.
 2. We must preach the truth, 2 Tim. 4:1-2.
 3. We must stand for the truth, I Tim. 6:12; Jude 3.
 4. We must study the word, 2 Tim. 2:15; Acts 17:11.
 - a. God's people have often been destroyed because of a "*lack of knowledge*," Hos. 4:6.
- B. We must remember that Christ is the head of the church, Col. 1:18.
 1. In all things He is to have "*the preeminence*," Col. 1:18.
 - a. Jesus is our King! I Tim. 6:15. We don't need another one!
- C. Must make sure we have divine authority for all that we teach and practice, Col. 3:17.

Conclusion:

1. Consider the fate of religious bodies built by men, Matt. 15:13. If we do not want to suffer their fate, we must not try to be "like the denominations" around us.

--Bobby Witherington, Dec. 18, 2016

