

RULES FOR THE NATION

TRANSITION INTO A KINGDOM

Introduction:

1. Chapters 1 – 8 took place during the time of the Judges and focused on the life of Samuel.
2. Chapters 9 – 12 deal with the transition of the nation into a kingdom.
 - a. Chapters 9 – 10 saw the anointing of Saul as King.
 - b. Chapter 11 saw the eventual acceptance and recognition of Saul as King.
 - c. Chapter 12 is the final act of Samuel as the last Judge of Israel.
3. Following this, the focus will be on Saul and the United Kingdom of Israel.

- I. The Words of Samuel the Judge (12:1-5)
 - A. When Israel had demanded a king, they had rejected God and the leadership of Samuel.
 - B. Samuel used the victory over the Ammonites as an opportunity to gather the people at Gilgal and unite them under King Saul.
 - C. However, it was also an opportunity to set the record straight concerning his integrity as a Judge and the sins of the nation.
 - D. First, Samuel reminded them that his role in selecting their king was their choice, not his.
 1. Samuel had given his life – from youth to old age – in the service of his people.
 2. Also, God had instructed him to go along with their wish (8:7).
 - E. Second, he demanded that if anyone knew of any way that he had misused the office the judge, he or she should testify of that fact.
 1. It was not uncommon in the culture of Samuel's day for a judge or other official to use his office as a means of personal gain.
 2. Even Samuel's sons were guilty of this (8:3).
 3. But Samuel was a man of honesty and integrity.
 - F. The people of Israel acknowledged the faithfulness of Samuel in his service as Judge.
 - G. This served to prove that their rejection of him (and of God) was not because of any wrongdoing by Samuel – instead, it was their own rebelliousness.
 - H. Thus, Samuel called God as a witness between him and the nation he had served.

- II. A Reminder and a Warning (12:6-18)
 - A. In his role as judge, and based upon his honest character, Samuel took the opportunity to remind Israel of their history.
 - B. His purpose in recounting to them their story was to show that God had always been faithful to them – it was they who had sinned against Jehovah.
 1. It was God who chose Moses and Aaron to lead the people out of Egyptian bondage.
 2. God allowed them to suffer at the hands of their enemies only when the people forgot Him and sinned against Him.
 3. When they repented and cried out for deliverance, it was God who raised up the Judges to save them.
 - a. Jerubbaal is another name for Gideon (Judges 6:32; 8:35).
 - b. Bedan is likely Barak (who served with Deborah) (Heb. 11:32).

1 Samuel 12:1-25

- c. However, it may refer to Abdon or Samson (son of Dan).
 - C. Their response to all that God had done for them should have been loyalty and faithful service.
 - D. Instead, when trouble arose from the Ammonites, Israel demanded a king – thereby rejecting God as their true King.
 - E. Now, Samuel declared, you have gotten your wish – God has set a king over you.
 - F. But, His laws had not changed!
 - 1. Even though Saul was their human king, God still ruled over them.
 - 2. They still were required to fear, serve, and obey Jehovah.
 - 3. They still were expected not to rebel against God’s commandments.
 - 4. They still were obligated to follow the Lord.
 - 5. And, if they did not, God would allow them to suffer – king or no king.
 - G. In order to prove his point, Samuel called upon God to perform a great wonder (a sign) before the people.
 - H. He literally “prayed up a storm” in order to prove the sinfulness of the nation and the righteousness of God.
 - 1. The wheat harvest takes place during the driest time of the Hebrew calendar (mid-May to mid-June).
 - 2. Yet, in response to Samuel’s prayer, God sent thunder and rain as a sign to the people of Israel.
 - 3. This also hearkens back to the 10 plagues in Egypt (Exo. 9:23).
 - I. The point of Samuel’s words is this – God still ruled over His people.
 - 1. Their king could not deliver them unless God allowed it.
 - 2. Their king could not protect them unless God allowed it.
 - 3. Their king did not perform miracles, Samuel (God’s prophet) did.
 - J. Thus, the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel.
- III. The Words of Samuel the Prophet (12:19-25)
 - A. Though Samuel would no longer be the Judge of Israel, he would continue as God’s prophet and as priest.
 - B. Thus, when the people ask Samuel to pray for them, he encourages them to “fear not.”
 - 1. Notice that the Israelites recognized their sin in asking for a king.
 - 2. They also understood that they deserved punishment, even death, for their transgressions.
 - 3. There seems to be genuine fear, sorrow, and repentance among the people of God.
 - C. Samuel acknowledged their sin, but he encouraged them to continue serving the Lord with all their hearts and without turning aside to idolatry.
 - D. God would not forsake His people; for through them He would accomplish His purpose of bring salvation to the world.
 - E. Samuel would not forsake them, for he would sin by not trying to help them.
 - 1. He would continue to pray for them.
 - 2. He would continue to teach them the Word of God.
 - F. Thus, they must continue to reverence Jehovah, serve Him in truth, and remember all His goodness toward them.
 - F. For, if they failed to do this, both they and their king would be destroyed.