

SERMON NOTES

Sermon Title: Israel's Hope

Scripture Passage: [1 Samuel 8-12](#)

Call to Worship

- [Psalm 115:1-13](#) – Glorifying God's name for His mercy and truth; trusting in the Lord as our help and shield.

Introduction: The Search for a King

- **The Predicament in Israel:** God used judges as temporary band-aids to sustain Israel amidst ongoing moral and spiritual decline.
 - [Judges 17:6](#) – *"In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes."*
- **The Rise of Samuel:** Following the rejection of Eli's corrupt house, God raised up Samuel as a faithful prophet and judge.
 - [1 Samuel 2:35](#) – God promised to raise up a faithful priest who would act according to His heart and mind.
 - [1 Samuel 3:19-21](#) – The Lord was with Samuel, let none of his words fall to the ground, and revealed Himself to him.
- **Failure of Samuel's Sons:** While Samuel served faithfully, his sons appointed as judges turned aside after financial gain, took bribes, and perverted justice.
 - [1 Samuel 8:3](#) – Samuel's sons did not walk in godly ways.
- **True Salvation:** God raised Samuel to save Israel from themselves and their own idolatry rather than an external threat.

I. The Ark Treated as an Idol

- [1 Samuel 4:1](#) & [1 Samuel 4:3](#) – Following a military defeat against the Philistines, Israel attempts to bring the Ark of the Covenant into battle as a weapon.
- **Misunderstanding God's Presence:**
 - [Exodus 25:21-22](#) – The Ark was instituted for meeting and communing with the Creator, not as a tool or lucky charm for success.
 - Treating the Ark as an idol resulted in a severe defeat: 30,000 Israelites died, and the Ark was captured.
- **True Deliverance:**
 - [1 Samuel 7:3](#) – Samuel instructs Israel to return to the Lord with all their heart and reject foreign gods.
 - [1 Samuel 7:10](#) – Victory comes when Samuel presents an offering and God defeats the Philistines, demonstrating that trust in YHWH brings true deliverance.

II. Rejecting God as King ("Like All the Nations")

- [1 Samuel 8:5](#) – Prompted by the wickedness of Samuel's sons, Israel requests a king to judge them "like all the nations".
- **The Heart Behind the Request:**
 - [Deuteronomy 17:14-15a](#) & [Deuteronomy 17:18-20](#) – God foretold and allowed a monarch under strict divine guidelines emphasizing humility and the Torah.
 - [1 Samuel 8:6-7](#) – The sin was not the request for a king itself, but their heart posture: *"They have not rejected you, but they have rejected me as king over them."*
 - [1 Samuel 8:19-20](#) – Israel wanted a human king to fight their battles, ignoring how God had repeatedly fought for them with supernatural power.
 - [1 Samuel 8:22](#) – God responds with sovereign mercy, granting their request to set up a king.

III. Saul's Rise & Early Leadership

- [1 Samuel 9:16-17](#) – God providentially brings Saul to Samuel and commands him to be anointed as leader over His people, maintaining God's ultimate authority.
- **Empowered Leadership:**
 - [1 Samuel 11:6](#) – The Spirit of God rushes upon Saul when the Ammonites threaten an Israelite city.
 - [1 Samuel 11:8](#) – Saul rallies 300,000 from Israel and 30,000 from Judah to defeat the Ammonites.
 - [1 Samuel 11:13b](#) – Saul recognizes the true source of victory: *"For today the Lord has worked salvation in Israel."*
 - [1 Samuel 11:15](#) – Saul is publicly made king and peace offerings are sacrificed before the Lord.

IV. Samuel's Caution: The Vanity of "Empty Things"

- [1 Samuel 12:14](#) – Blessing remains tied to wholehearted obedience: *"If you fear the Lord and serve him... both you and the king... it will be well."*
- **The Futility of Idols:**
 - [1 Samuel 12:19-21](#) – The people confess their sin; Samuel warns them not to turn aside after "empty things" that cannot profit or deliver.
 - [Genesis 1:2](#) – The word "empty" signifies void or nothing, underscoring that human kings and idols have no inherent power.
 - [Romans 13:1](#) – All authority originates from God alone; no created thing can provide genuine security, control, or peace.
- **God's Unfailing Faithfulness:**
 - [1 Samuel 12:22](#) – The Lord will not forsake His people for His great name's sake and His sovereign reputation.
 - [1 Peter 1:3](#) – Though humans constantly pursue empty things, believers have a living hope grounded solely in Jesus Christ.

Benediction

- [Romans 15:13](#) – May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.