

**Date:** 24.05.2020

**Time:** 11am

**Service taken by:** Rev Gavino Fioretti

**Psalm:** Psalm 146:1-6 (Scottish Psalter)

**Scripture:** 1 Samuel 8

**Outline: Solemn situation**

a) Introduction

1. The sons of Samuel

2. The sin of the people

3. The response of God

### **Solemn situation**

- **Introduction**

**Inexplicable change:** The people of Israel had realised their sin and returned to God in repentance and faith – God gave His people peace. When the people saw that Samuel’s sons didn’t follow in their father’s steps, they rejected him and wanted a king. They forgot about God’s deliverance – they wanted a king to do what God had already done time and time again. They wanted prosperity and to win battles. Their trust moved from God to man. They confused the gift with the Giver – man rather than his Maker. They didn’t trust God to provide for them and thought they had to take matters into their own hands.

**Inexcusable behaviour:** God had blessed His people and at times disciplined them to bring them back to the right way. They wanted their way. They forgot that it was God who had saved them. They weren’t rejecting Samuel, they were rejecting God.

We see a radical change in the people of Israel that can be so true of us. We go from the mountaintop to spiritual death or lethargy in a matter of days or moments. We move between obedience and disobedience. We trust in man rather than God. We are failing creatures no better than the Israelites. We are an unreliable people, but God remains reliable.

#### **1) The sons of Samuel**

**Did not walk like their father:** Sadly neither of Samuel’s sons walked as their father did. Samuel was a godly, faithful, zealous man who had led God’s people to victory and worship. He was an

exemplary man, but his sons were very different. Some might say Samuel failed as a father, but we shouldn't be quick to judge him. It was failing in his two sons that we see. Salvation is not in the DNA – even godly parents aren't always blessed with godly children. Saved parents don't save children. We believe that God is a God of families who has promises for believers' children. But the faith of parents can't save their children. Children need to put their trust in Christ for themselves.

**They perverted justice:** Samuel's sons were chosen to do what was right and just, but failed to do it. They accepted bribes. They looked out for their own interests and gain. They looked at the short-term gain rather than the eternal gain. We feel unfairness keenly. We must remember that though a challenge, what we're called to do is not about our own good, but about the good of those about us.

## **2) The sin of the people**

**They want to be like all the nations:** We see again and again in the people of Israel that they wanted to be like the other nations. They were attracted by the practices of those about them. They were called to be different, but there was a constant craving and longing to be like the other nations. They didn't want to be a different, holy people. They wanted to be the same.

This can be true of us in church denominations, in congregations and in individuals. We are constantly attracted to the glittering of the world because it looks like they're happy and we want to be like them – but it doesn't work. The Israelite people are a warning to us – let's not be attracted to the lifestyle of the world. We've been called out of this world to be God's children and treasure, so don't allow things in your life or your family that are in opposition to the will of God.

**They reject the LORD as their king:** Israel wanted a good leader, but in saying that they wanted a king, they were saying that they didn't want God to rule over them. They rejected His kingship. Their response to His goodness was with disobedience and rebellion. They wanted God's blessing, but not God.

Do we respond with submission or rejection to the kingship and lordship of God? When we sin, we're rejecting God's authority.

**They refused to obey:** The people of Israel didn't listen to what God was saying to them through His prophet, Samuel. They were warned of what would happen if they had a king. They showed no repentance, but continued rejecting Him. They didn't listen. They were not just unwise, but rebellious and unrepentant. In their actions, they were saying that the world's ways were better than God's ways.

What about us? God speaks so often through His Word to us, but we can take His warnings lightly. We continue in sin without repentance or faith. We continue to reject God's warning.

## **3) The response of God**

**Warning regarding a king:** God warns the people about what the cost would be. Having a king would come at a cost. It would not be convenient. It was not the answer to what they really needed. God

compares His lordship with the authority of man. A man would take their things and treat them as slaves; God hadn't and wouldn't treat them like that. There is grace in God. Despite the people's rejection, He speaks to them and reveals to them what would happen. He wanted His people to have the best, but they would not listen to Him.

**Will not answer them on that day:** God warned the people that a king would fail them and cause them suffering. He warns that if they insist on resisting Jehovah, then He would not answer them on the day they would turn to Him. This is a fearful thing – if God were to say “enough”. We are shown how hard-hearted God's people were that they did not care about His warning.

**Let them have it:** God says to Samuel to let the people have a king. Like a parent giving a child what they want in order for them to learn, God gives His people what they wanted. There is sometimes short-term pleasure with this lesson – there is always pain.

If we insist and plead and don't care about God's opinion, God might just give us what we want to teach us. There will be pain. The world wants to be free and to live like there's no God – God allows this for a time and the result is the world is destroying itself, panicking, hating, fighting, the poor suffer – this is because we have rejected the One who gave us all things.

Indifference is said to be worse than hatred. If we experience indifference from someone we love, it breaks us. Let's pray we never experience indifference from God. Make sure He is your King and your God.