

We Want A King!

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Deuteronomy 17:14-20 (NKJV):

14 When you come to the land which the Lord your God is giving you, and possess it and dwell in it, and say, I will set a king over me like all the nations that are around me,

15 you shall surely set a king over you whom the Lord your God chooses; one from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who is not your brother.

16 But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the Lord has said to you, You shall not return that way again.

17 Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself.

18 Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites.

19 And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes,

20 that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel.

You may look at this passage of the scripture and say: Why in the world does this place have any significance? I'll show you why this scripture blew me away when I was reading the book of Deuteronomy today. Back in the days when Moses was reiterating the law to the Israelites, before he died and before they inherited the promised land, God predicted them that the nation would rebel against God and would request a king just like the surrounding nations have. That's why God, knowing people's hearts, gave them the rules they should abide by when electing a king and the regulations by which the king should live. To me this is fascinating to see God foreseeing everything down to the last day. The span of time between Moses and what Samuel said is about 600 years apart. God instructed the Israelites that they would rebel against Him, and they would demand a king like the surrounding nations have, but He gave them a clear manual for the king about 600 years ahead of time.

This tells us that when God says something, He makes sure we have a full knowledge to make us accountable and responsible for our actions. He never says it only once, or unclear, or to the current circumstances. No, when God tells something, he makes sure He forewarns people ahead of time, so we couldn't claim any excuses not to obey His word.

We read in 1 Samuel 8:4-9 (NKJV):

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4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, 5 and said to him, â Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.â 6 But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, â Give us a king to judge us.â So Samuel prayed to the Lord. 7 And the Lord said to Samuel, â Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them. 8 According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even to this dayâ with which they have forsaken Me and served other godsâ so they are doing to you also. 9 Now therefore, heed their voice. However, you shall solemnly forewarn them, and show them the behavior of the king who will reign over them.â

You may look at these scriptures and still not understand the significance of it, so let me illuminate this. God knows our hearts, and He knew from the start that the Israelites didn't want God to guide them and lead them; they've done that since the day they left Egypt. Why? Because it required discipline and sacrifice on their part, it required humbling their flesh and rejecting the lusts of their flesh which no human being wants to do since the day of creation. Adam and Eve were the very first ones who rejected God and chose their lust of the flesh to try the forbidden fruit, so are the Israelites chose a king to govern them and to lead them instead of the direct hand of the Lord.

Does that sound familiar to you? It does sound familiar to me. I've had my days when I tried to find a replacement and an easier way out to provide for me and to guide me, only so I wouldn't have to humble my flesh and sacrifice for the Lord. By doing that, I was no different from the Israelites who rejected God as their Leader.

Not only did the Lord know that the nation would request a king, but God knowing that, already ahead of time provided them with the manual of how to elect a leadership and the standards for their power.

We read that a king should have the following attributes:

- No foreigner may be a king who is not your brother
- Specific standards and methods of potential prosperity: no self-profit or nation's profit by returning to the Egypt (cannot return to the life of sin)
- No multiple wives, so the heart doesn't turn away from the Lord (Solomon fell right in this area)
- No greed allowed (greatly multiplying gold or silver for himself: cannot serve God and Mammon at the same time)
- Once the king is inaugurated, he must write out the law for himself, so he could dwell in God's word in order to steer people in the righteous and right direction
- The fear of the Lord is the foundation of king's ruling (based on the Word of God)
- No pride is allowed: â his heart may not be lifted above his brethrenâ

We'll go over each one of these requirements and see how each of them applies to us today because it does apply.

So the very first requirement for the king: No foreigner may be a king who is not your brother. In US, the president must be born here in order to ever qualify to run for the president. This is a Biblical principle as we clearly see here. Why did God require this? I don't know of any foreigner who would care enough about the

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nation and it's wellbeing if the heritage and roots are place else. That's just the way we as humans are created.

We were created by God to care only about true heritage which is with God, and this is why each human being has this yearning and emptiness that only God can fulfill through our personal relationships with Him. Our initial heritage was with Him in Paradise; that was our start point and homeland in the Garden of Eden.

The second principal that God names here is to never ever return back to the Egypt and attempt gaining treasure by the method of going back. Why? Egypt represents the past of slavery and bondage to the sin. When we get saved we repent of our sins and start afresh our lives as new creations in Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:17). This is the same prototype that God refers to in the Old Testament: do not go back to the Egypt by any cost. Even if it means that you have no gain financially. Don't ever turn to your old life, old ways, but look forward to the Lord.

The third requirement was not to multiply wives. Why? In the Old Testament multiple wives caused in majority of the instances idolatry; they would bring their idols and lead people away from the Lord. Solomon was guilty of having 700 wives and 300 concubines who led him into idolatry and as a result his heart was turned away from the Lord.

But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittitesâ 2 from the nations of whom the Lord had said to the children of Israel, â You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods.â Solomon clung to these in love. 3 And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart (1 Kings 11:1-3 NKJV).

How much more clearer than this could God reiterate and explain the harm of a potential sin of multiple wives in the house of the king? This is very clear that there were forbidden nations with which no Israelite was allowed to intermarry, and the reason for that was potential sin of idolatry, which is exactly what happened to the king Solomon (the wisest man who ever lived on this earth), and to the entire nation.

You may think this is just a history, and it doesn't apply to us these days. Really? I would beg to differ. How about the plague of pornography, strip joints and all other immoral perverted sexual sins that our society provides at such a free access anytime of the day? The implication is the same: sexual immoralityâ sin leading to idolatryâ straight back to Egypt: the bondage of sin.

My family literally disintegrated within years by the cause of pornography and other lies. For many years I suspected that something was wrong, but I was never brave enough to confront my husband with those questions until one day when I could stand those doubts no more. I confronted him and he immediately denied his involvement with pornography. It wasn't until a couple of days after the conversation that he admitted to everything that was going on with him for decades.

God made it very clear that these kinds of relationships are forbidden, and we should take them at heart to examine ourselves and see if we need to repent to turn to the Lord for help.

The fourth standard for selecting a king was no greed allowed by the Lord. Why? Because God knew the potential harm of obsession with the riches of this world.

24 â No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (Matthew 6:24 NKJV).

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Jesus said it Himself to reiterate for us once again: no two masters could be allowed in one's heart because the outcome would be idolatry. This is the same principle God told the Israelites regarding the king rulingâ he cannot multiply the gold and silver to the access, so he doesn't start cleaving to the riches of this world more than to the Lord.

How does this apply to us? We face these temptations of ambition for a better career and more money every day. The world is very competitive nowadays, and it really requires us to prove something in order to be selected for a higher grade, higher paying job, and any type of promotion. God's word doesn't change, and His standards require that we choose: either ambition for more money and fame, or humbling ourselves to dwell in His word to serve Him. I had the opportunity to choose between both, and I found no comfort in pursuing career because it offered unfulfilled emptiness which only God is capable to complete.

The fifth requirement was for the king to write out/copy the law. The important factor here: the king must write out the law himself and not delegate this task to his servants. The second important factor here is the law must be written once the king has been already inaugurated. Why? The king only could preserve a humble heart by dwelling on the word of the Lord. God's implication here is for the king to preserve this humble heart just like before he was elected and inaugurated to be the king over the nation. The third important factor here is the law must be obtained from the priests. The authenticity of the scripture had to be preserved, and that was done by the specific group of scribes who were trained in re-writing/copying the word of God over and over again assuring that not one jot and tittle was omitted.

How does this apply to us today? Where do we go for the source of our information? Is it the word of God or is it some place of alternative literature that is so vast on the market nowadays. God requires us to go straight to the main source of the direction and truth: His word. There are so many Bible version that are available on the market today, and we have to be very careful what we read and which version we study because some of the contemporary wordings omit many important truths of the Lord. God's word cannot be compromised, and it's our responsibility to make sure that we read the authentic and true version. I think the overwhelming selection of the choice only allows more room for the error. I read my bible in my native language, and there are only a couple of versions. This is just something that we have to be cautioned about.

God commanded the king to dwell in the law, and that was purposely done, so the king could steer the nation in the righteous and godly direction. The king had a power to lead the nation into the sin or out of the sin, so the Lord made this explicitly clear to dwell in the word of the law all the days of king's life, so he could fear the Lord and follow Him.

10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding (Proverbs 9:10 NIV).

When we dwell in the word of God, He changes our attitudes and us within. Without Word's knowledge, we cannot discern what's right and wrong. What's more, we become more susceptible to sin because there is no guard against our flesh. We know that flesh and spirit are contrary to one another, and the flesh wants what's contrary to the spirit as Paul writes to Galatians:

16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law (Galatians 5:16-18 NKJV).

The Lord commanded the king to dwell in the law, and this was done, so he could fulfill the desires of the Spirit rather than his flesh. The same applies to us: if we don't exercise our daily walk with the Lord through the dwelling in His scriptures, we begin to fulfill the desires of the flesh instead of the Spirit living in us.

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Lastly, God command for the king not to exalt himself over his brethren. God does not tolerate pride in any shape or form. The ultimate ladder to being exalted in God`s economy is through humiliation.

5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your* elders. Yes, all of *you* be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for â God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.â (1 Peter 5:5 NKJV)

The king could prolong his days in the kingdom by being humble and walking in the ways of the Lord. This is a simple enough concept to understand, but tough to implement. When given the power to riches, military, servants and entire nation, the temptation is too grate to fall for the pride. This is why God reiterated to dwell in His law all the days of king`s life.

The same applies to us today having all these riches at our feet: the endless opportunities that beckon us to fall for the career, for the ambition, for the promotion at any cost; those temptations would surely lead us astray from the Lord.

God knows our hearts so well, and we see it over and over again when reading these scriptures. Moses was laying out the rules for the king hundreds of years prior to the nation actually requesting one.

I would exhort you today to think through the way you live your life. All the standards that we looked for the king, they apply to us today. God is our ultimate King, and He wants to rule our lives, but we must willingly desire that and ask Him for that. God would never force us into following Him if we wouldn`t ask Him of that ourselves.

I would like to emphasize that God commanded the king to get the law from the priests and Levites, so he could study it himself all the days of his life. This means that by coming to the church once a week and by listening to the priest it`s not enough for us to succeed in our walk with the Lord. He commands us to study His word day in and day out.

8 Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful (Joshua 1:8 NIV).

The second part of it, the law must be studied personally. God did not say that the king must come to the priests or Levites and ask for guidance or interpretation, but for the king to study the law himself and ask God directly for the guidance.

As believers, we have no excuses for this as Jesus gave us an example of His praying lifestyle on the mountain day in and day out with the Father. He always found time to get alone with the Lord and to dwell in His word. We should not look for guidance from the pastors only. Relying on the pastors and teachers only makes us dependable on the people instead of the Lord Himself. He wants us to come directly to Him with all the questions that we might have regarding the word that we read, and He would be faithful to direct us and to explain to us the meaning of the passage.

God knows if you use excuses not to study His word yourself, and if you choose to rely on the church or a pastor for direction solely.

Jeremiah 17:5-8 (NKJV):

5 Thus says the Lord:

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â **Cursed is the man who trusts in man And makes flesh his strength, Whose heart departs from the Lord.** 6 For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, And shall not see when good comes, But shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, *In a salt land which is not inhabited.*

7 â **Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, And whose hope is the Lord.** 8 For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, Which spreads out its roots by the river, And will not fear[b] when heat comes; But its leaf will be green, And will not be anxious in the year of drought, Nor will cease from yielding fruit.

When God guides, God provides. Let Him be your strength and reliance. Israelites demanded a king, and they rejected the only true King who could lead them because their heart was deceitful and wicked to accept His word. Israelites did not want to follow God`s word, and that`s why they looked for excuses to build this wall and a layer between them and the Lord. They could not stand in the presence of the Lord due to their wicked motivations.

How about you? Do you choose to come to the pastor, to the friends, to the books rather than seeking God personally and directly? Do you choose to have these excuses of â not understanding what the word of God saysâ , so you don`t read it yourself? God is merciful and kind to give wisdom and knowledge to those who truly seek it.

I want to be blessed, so I choose to rely on the Lord and to seek Him rather than to come to the people. I urge you to examine your heart and to surrender your life to the ultimate King-our Lord Jesus Christ.

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