

WEEK 1: Reading From 1 Samuel

1 Samuel

Saul anointed king

When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons to be judges in Israel. The oldest son was named Joel and the second Abiah; they acted as judges in Beersheba. His sons did not follow their father's footsteps but were intent on their own profit, taking bribes and perverting the course of justice. So all the elders of Israel met, and came to Samuel at Ramah and said to him, ' You are now old and your sons do not follow in your footsteps; appoint us a king to govern us, like other nations.' But their request for a king to govern them displeased Samuel, and he prayed to the Lord. The Lord answered Samuel, 'Listen to the people and all that they are saying; they have not rejected you, it is I whom they have rejected, I whom they will not have to be their king. They are now doing to you just what they have done to me since I brought them up from Egypt: they have forsaken me and worshipped other gods. Hear what they have to say now, but give them a solemn warning and tell them what sort of king will govern them.' Samuel told the people who were asking him for a kind all that the Lord had said to him. 'This will be the sort of king who will govern you,' he said. 'He will take your sons and make them serve in his chariots and with his cavalry, and will make them run before his chariot. Some he will appoint officers over units of a thousand and units of fifty. Others will plough his fields and reap his harvest; others again will make weapons of war and equipment for mounted troops. He will take your daughters for perfumers, cooks, and confectioners, and will seize the best of your cornfields, vineyards, and olive-yards, and give them to his lackeys. He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage to give to his eunuchs and lackeys. Your slaves, both men and women, and the best of your cattle and your asses he will seize and put to his own use. He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his slaves. When that day comes, you will cry out against the king whom you have chosen; but it will be too late, the Lord will not answer you.' The people refused to listen to Samuel; 'No,' they said, 'we will have a king over us; then we shall be like other nations, with a king to govern us, to lead us out to war and fight our battles.' So Samuel, when he had heard what the people said, told the Lord; and he answered, 'Take them at their word and appoint them a king.' Samuel then dismissed all the men of Israel to their homes.

