

The Kingdom of God

Lesson 8: The Mediatorial Rulers

From Moses to Saul

I. Tying Judges Into The Mediatorial Kingdom

- a. When tracing the mediatorial kingdom from Moses to Samuel, the **book divisions** of the OT make it more difficult to see that there is a continuous kingdom thread that runs through the period of the Judges to Samuel.
- b. However, a careful review of the first seven OT books reveals that God's **three characteristics** of kingdom rulers were also present in the rulers during the period of the Judges.
- c. Even though the Book of Judges closes with the statement that Israel had no king in those days, the Book of Ruth, which takes place during that same period, affirms that the judges **ruled** the kingdom. Ruth 1:1 *Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons. KJV*
- d. Thus, rather than seeing the period of the Judges of Israel as a disconnected and chaotic **interlude** in the Biblical record, we are able to see that it is actually a part of God's grand scheme in deploying His mediatorial kingdom.

II. Three Characteristics of Mediatorial Rulers

- a. They were **chosen** directly by God
 1. As the life of Moses draws to a close God chooses Joshua to continue the **line** of mediatorial rulers. Deut 31:14 *And the Lord said unto Moses, Behold, thy days approach that thou must die: call Joshua, and present yourselves in the tabernacle of the congregation, that I may give him a charge. And Moses and Joshua went, and presented themselves in the tabernacle of the congregation. KJV*
 2. Of the leaders that came after Joshua, the Word of God also declares the operation of the hand of God in selecting (**raising up**) specific leaders to act on His behalf. Judges 2:16 *Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them. KJV*
 3. The Hebrew word *shophetim* (judge) is used in a **special sense** in the Book of Judges that differentiates it from the customary use of that word which is *a judge chosen by the people*.
 4. As applied to the special judges of the Book of Judges, they were extraordinary authorities who were differentiated because of the **source**, purpose and extent of their power.
 5. Samuel, who was the last of these **special** judges, was also the link between the judges and the period of Israel's kings. Both his birth and his commission reveal the direct hand of God upon his life. 1 Sam 1-3
 6. Like Moses, Samuel closes the biblical old order and through his mediatorial rule **guides** the nation of Israel toward the national greatness and prosperity ordained for them by God. 1 Sam 2:35 *And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever. KJV*
- b. They were vested with **regal** functions.
 1. In the cases of Joshua and Samuel there can be **no dispute** about the extent to which God gave to them the specific authority to rule and to judge. Josh 1:5 *There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. KJV* 1 Sam 3:19 *And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. KJV*
 2. But the *shophetim* of the Book of Judges are not always regarded by expositors as belonging in the same general category with Joshua and Samuel. That is until one looks more closely at their **functioning**.
 - a. The hallmark of a true ruler rests upon his **judicial** authority. Hence, God the highest King is also judge of all the earth. He judges concerning right and wrong and rules accordingly. Gen 18:25 *That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? KJV*
 - b. For this reason, God raised up judges who would represent His righteous rule over the people, **not princes** who would reign after their own desires. Judg 8:23 *And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the Lord shall rule over you. KJV*
 - c. Repeatedly in the Book of Judges, when the practice of the law ceased and sin prevailed in Israel, God appointed judges who would **restore** His Kingdom to the authority of the law and to righteousness. Judg 2:15 *Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil, as the Lord had said, and as the Lord had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed. KJV*
 - d. The fact that some of these judges, like Samson, were **gifted** with heroic qualities should not dim our understanding that their primary purpose was to restore righteousness to Israel. Judg 13:1 *And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years. KJV* Judg 13:5 *For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines. KJV*
- c. They received an anointing of the **Spirit**

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1. Joshua was “full of the spirit of wisdom” an expression used by Isaiah as a **title** for the Spirit of God. Deut 34:9 *And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom;KJV*; Isa 11:2 *And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, KJV*
2. While the Biblical record does not specify that each of the twelve judges raised up by God to execute judgment in Israel was anointed by the Spirit, we can deduce this from their **ordained** functions. Judg 3:9-10 *And when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer to the children of Israel, who delivered them, even Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother.10 And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he judged Israel, and went out to war:*

III. Rise of The Monarchy in Israel

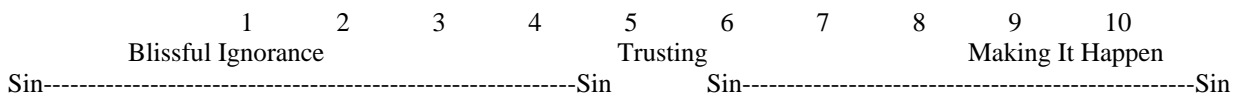
- a. The monarchy which emerged under Samuel was **revealed** in the plan of God as early as His covenant with Abraham. Gen 35:11 *And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; KJV*
- b. Further, God gave detailed **instructions** to Moses as to the qualifications of the future king that Israel would demand when they had settled the Promised Land. Deut 17:14-20 *14 When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me15 Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother.16 But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the Lord hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.17 Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.18 And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites:19 And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them:20 That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel. KJV*
- c. Even though it was foreseen by God, when Israel demanded a king “like other nations” it was an outright **rejection** of God and revealed their contempt for His standard. 1 Sam 8:7 *And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. KJV*
- d. It is clear from this example that like many other sins of man, God used the **evil intentions** of men to bring about His purposes. 1 Sam 12:17 *I will call unto the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking you a king. KJV*

IV. Gleanings About God

- a. This study proves yet again that God knows the **end** even from the beginning.
- b. It also shows that against all odds and **all circumstance**, in spite of the outward appearance of chaos and destruction, His kingdom on earth continues according to His plan and purpose.
- c. It reveals that God’s plan will be accomplished **regardless** of the evil intentions of man to the contrary.

V. Application

- a. We, as believers, can learn from Israel’s hot and cold relationship with Jehovah during the period of the judges. Perhaps one of the biggest lessons is that God’s plan is always being executed. Nothing shall deter or delay it.
- b. God’s plan and purpose for your life is utterly dependent upon God. Believers tend to vacillate between two extremes as they attempt to live their lives before God. Where are you on this scale? (Rom 14:23)



- c. What can you do to increase your trust?

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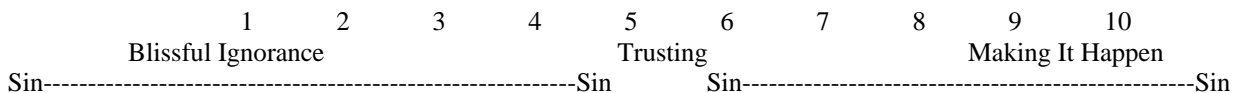
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