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Lesson Title: #4 The Nations: Part 1

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Question:

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Lesson 4

*April 19–25

The Nations: Part 1

SABBATH AFTERNOON

Read for This Week's Study: Gen. 10:1–12, Gen. 12:1–9, 1 Sam. 8:4–18, Matt. 20:25–28, Rev. 18:1–4.

Memory Text: " 'Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed' " (Daniel 7:14, NKJV).

TUESDAYApril 22

Given What You Asked For

As originally established, Israel was not to have a human monarch, the way that other nations did. In time, however, Israel's faith faltered, and they found themselves pining for the things that "the nations," the Gentiles, had.

Read 1 Samuel 8:4–18. Why do you suppose the elders found the idea of a king appealing? In what ways do we fall prey to similar temptations?

1 Samuel 8:4–18 4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah,

5 and said to him, "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."

6 But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." So Samuel prayed to the Lord.

1 Samuel 8:7 And the Lord said to Samuel, "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.

"For what great nation *is there* that has God so near to it

Deuteronomy 4:-8 5 "Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should act according *to them* in the land which you go to possess.

6 Therefore be careful to observe *them*; for this *is* your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation *is* a wise and understanding people.'

7 "For what great nation *is there* that has God so near to it, as the Lord our God is to us, for whatever *reason* we may call upon Him?

8 **And what great nation *is there* that has *such* statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law which I set before you this day?**

1 Samuel 8:8 According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even to this day—with which they have forsaken Me and served other gods—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.”

1 Samuel 8:10 So Samuel told all the words of the Lord to the people who asked him for a king.

11 And he said, “This will be the behavior of the king who will reign over you: He will take your sons and appoint *them* for his own chariots and *to be* his horsemen, and *some* will run before his chariots.

12 He will appoint captains over his thousands and captains over his fifties, *will set some* to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and *some* to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots.

13 He will take your daughters *to be* perfumers, cooks, and bakers.

14 And he will take the best of your fields, your vineyards, and your olive groves, and give *them* to his servants.

15 He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage, and give it to his officers and servants.

16 And he will take your male servants, your female servants, your finest young men, and your donkeys, and put *them* to his work.

17 He will take a tenth of your sheep. And you will be his servants.

18 And you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the Lord will not hear you in that day.”

1 Samuel 8:19 Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, “No, but we will have a king over us,

20 that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles.”

Hos 13:11 I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took *him* away in my wrath.

>[=] Story: God’s permissive will ?

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When men choose to have their own way, without seeking counsel from God, or in opposition to His revealed will, He often grants their desires, in order that,

through the bitter experience that follows, they may be led to realize their folly and to repent of their sin. Human pride and wisdom will prove a dangerous guide. That which the heart desires contrary to the will of God will in the end be found a curse rather than a blessing. PP 605.3

It is important to notice that the request for a king was a rejection of God's reign over His people. As established, the nation was to answer directly to the Creator, and their relationship to Him was put on display through the sanctuary and its services among other things. By requesting a king, they would bring the same kinds of suffering on themselves that the Gentile kingdoms experienced: **military conscription in the king's wars, confiscation, taxation, and other ills.**

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They would discover that human potentates tend to rule in their own favor, instead of benevolently, as God does.

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Also, the new arrangement would be permanent: Israel would be given what they asked for, but when they realized that it was a downgrade, they would be stuck with it. " 'And you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the LORD will not hear you in that day' " (1 Sam. 8:18, NKJV).

God knows the weakness of His people, and He predicted early on that Israel would request a human king. They did, and so much of sacred history is the story of the consequences of that choice.

]]> history of Israel shows that there is great danger in imitating the world, and following the ways of the world. When the world comes in you're asking Christ to come out from among you. We don't need to be like the world to win sinners to Christ, they already have what the world has they want something different.

Read Deuteronomy 17:14–20. Notice that God does not say, “I will give them a king,” but rather, His people decide that they want one. God put safeguards in place to protect His people from some of the evils of human government—though, as the history of the nation and its kings showed, the safeguards often were ignored.

God saw future - warned the people of Israel about them asking for a king

Deuteronomy 17:14–20 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.**

One simply has to look at the history of Israel after they decided to have a king in order to see just how badly things went for them under these kings. Though some kings were better than others, even the “good” ones had done wrong (think of David and Bathsheba). **In many cases, the nation lived under the rule of one king after another who did “evil in the sight of the LORD”** (see 1 Kings 11:6, 1 Kings 15:26, 1 Kings 16:30, 2 King 3:2, etc.).

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Back then, or even today, all human governments share one thing in common: sinners governing other sinners. *What possibly could go wrong?*

Jhn 19:15 But they cried out, Away with *him*, away with *him*, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

REF:>>> “Like all the nations.” The Israelites did not realize that to be in this respect unlike other nations was a special privilege and blessing. God had separated the Israelites from every other people, to make them His own peculiar treasure. But they, disregarding this high honor, eagerly desired to imitate the example of the heathen! And still the longing to conform to worldly practices and customs exists among the professed people of God. As they depart from the Lord they become ambitious for the gains and honors of the world. **Christians are constantly seeking to imitate the practices of those who worship the god of this world. Many urge that by uniting with worldlings and conforming to their customs they might exert a stronger influence over the ungodly. But all who pursue this course thereby separate from the Source of their strength.** Becoming the friends of the world, they are the enemies of God. For the sake of earthly distinction they sacrifice the unspeakable honor to which God has called them, of showing forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. 1 Peter 2:9. PP 607.2

The history of Israel shows - kings did evil in the sight of the Lord

1 Kings 11:6, 6 But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites—

2 from the nations of whom the Lord had said to the children of Israel, “You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods.” 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.

4 For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not [a]loyal to the Lord his God, as *was* the heart of his father David.

5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom[b] the abomination of the Ammonites.

6 Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and did not fully follow the Lord, as *did* his father David.

7 Then Solomon built a [c]high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the hill that *is* east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon.

8 And he did likewise for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.

1 Kings 15:25-26, 25 Now Nadab the son of Jeroboam became king over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and he reigned over Israel two years.

26 And **he did evil in the sight of the Lord**, and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin by which he had made Israel sin.

1 Kings 16:30, 30 Now **Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord**, more than all who were before him.

2 King 3:2, 2 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, but not like his father and mother; for he put away the sacred pillar of Baal that his father had made.

God desired His people to look to Him alone as their Law-giver and their Source of strength. Feeling their dependence upon God, they would be constantly drawn nearer to Him. They would become elevated and ennobled, fitted for the high destiny to which He had called them as His chosen people. But when a man was placed upon the throne, it would tend to turn the minds of the people from God. They would trust more to human strength, and less to divine power, and the errors of their king would lead them into sin and separate the nation from God. PP 606.1

Isa 32:18 And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places

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Additional notes

Deuteronomy 4:32 32 “For ask now concerning the days that are past, which were before you, since the day that God created man on the earth, and *ask* from one end of heaven to the other, whether *any* great *thing* like this has happened, or *anything* like it has been heard.

33 Did *any* people *ever* hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as you have heard, and live?

34 Or did God *ever* try to go *and* take for Himself a nation from the midst of *another* nation, by trials, by signs, by wonders, by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?

35 To you it was shown, that you might know that the Lord Himself *is* God; *there is none other besides Him.*

36 Out of heaven He let you hear His voice, that He might instruct you; on earth He showed you His great fire, and you heard His words out of the midst of the fire.

37 And because He loved your fathers, therefore He chose their descendants after them; and He brought you out of Egypt with His Presence, with His mighty power,

38 driving out from before you nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in, to give you their land *as* an inheritance, *as it is* this day.

39 Therefore know this day, and consider *it* in your heart, that the Lord Himself is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; *there is no other.*

40 You shall therefore keep His statutes and His commandments which I command you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may prolong *your* days in the land which the Lord your God is giving you for all time.”