

GAME OF THRONES

GETTING STARTED.

In the various elections coming this week, who is a candidate you support on their own merits? Who is a candidate you only prefer to their opponent?

EXPLORE THE PASSAGE. Read **1 Samuel 8**.

1. This lesson took place during the time of the Judges. Samuel was judging Israel and a group brought him a request (**vv. 4–5**). What made the request? What was the request? What condition had made people want this change?
2. If you had been in the group, how would you have expected Samuel to react?
3. **Leviticus 20: 22–26** explains the purpose of God that lies behind the dietary restrictions and other parts of the *Torah* (Jewish Law)? What is that purpose?
4. How is this request to Samuel at odds with God's greater purpose for Israel?
5. Six times, Samuel says of a king, "he will take." (**vv. 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17**). What will the king take? Is "take" part of the request that the people made to Samuel?
6. How is the final request of the people (**vv. 19–20**) different from the original form?

APPLY THE LESSON.

7. Think of a time someone requested something you disagreed with. Did you, like Samuel, pray before responding to the request? God clarified the problem for Samuel and gave him direction. Which would have been more helpful to you then?
8. The people are thinking about what a leader can do for them, but Samuel reminds them what the leader will take from them. How does that apply to modern political campaigning?
9. When Israel demands a king, God grants their request. Many kings that follow are truly bad rulers, but the better kings point to the coming Messiah (**Isaiah 9:2–7**). How this is a model of the way God brings good out of evil?

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

MONDAY

Read **Genesis 2: 4-22**. Who is the ruler? How many rules are there? What services does the "King" provide? What does he "take" in order to provide them?

TUESDAY

The book of Judges recounts a downward trajectory that Israel followed under a series of judges. Read **Judges 3: 7-14**. What is the immediate problem? What greater problem lies beneath it? What do the people do? How does God respond? Read **Judges 21: 25**. How does it characterize the deeper problem? When have you done "what was right in your own eyes" and suffered because of it?

WEDNESDAY

Read **Titus 3: 1**. Did the results of the election make that easier or harder for you? Read **1 Timothy 2: 1-2**. What can you do to make this an ingrained habit?

THURSDAY

Read **Jeremiah 17: 5-10**. What causes someone trouble? What enables them to flourish? What is the cause of the problem (v. 9)? What is God's plan to address the problem, according to Jeremiah 31: 31? (See also **Ezekiel 36: 25-27**.)

FRIDAY

Read **1 Kings 21: 1-16**. How does this story from the time of Israel's kings fulfill the prophecy made by Samuel about kings? Compare that story with the promise Jesus makes in **Revelation 22: 1-5**. Who gives and who takes? What is given?

SATURDAY

Read **1 Peter 2: 11-17**. How should followers of Jesus behave? Is it a condition of their acceptance into his kingdom, or something they do after he has rescued them? How do their actions bring glory to God (v. 12) and make an impact in the world?