

# The Crowns We Choose

## Rejection

### 1. Israel's Fear Looks Like a Reasonable Request

(1 Samuel 8:4–6)

- “Give us a king to judge us like all the nations.”
- On the surface, it seems wise: Samuel is old, his sons are corrupt.
- But underneath, it's fear, not faith. They want **security without surrender**.

**Fear always wants to control the outcome.**

**Galatians 5:1** – “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.”

Freedom in Christ is relinquishing the responsibility for the outcome.

Israel weren't just asking for a king—they were choosing **a yoke of slavery**, thinking it would make them feel safe.

### 2. God Exposes the Real Issue

1 Samuel 8:7–8

“They have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being King over them.”

This wasn't new. God links it to their entire history: “Since the day I brought them out of Egypt, they have forsaken Me.”

Israel's request wasn't just about government. It was about **not trusting God to lead them anymore**. They were tired of living by faith. They wanted something predictable—even if it meant giving up real freedom.

**And we do the exact same thing.**

Me. You. All of us.

We stop trusting God when:

- His timing feels slow
- His leadership feels unclear
- His way feels costly

So we **take control**. We grab the crown. We choose **something visible**—a relationship, a job, a plan, a title—something we can manage, something we can *call king* without having to

surrender.

But what feels safe quickly becomes slavery.

We didn't ask for a king to bless us—we demanded a king to replace Him.

“God, I want You close enough to help—but not close enough to lead.”

We want enough Jesus to feel covered, but not so much that we have to die to ourselves.

**That's what Israel did. And that's what we do when we reject trust and cling to fear.**

### 3. “He Will Take...” – The Cost of Replacing God

**(1 Samuel 8:10–17)**

God tells Samuel to warn them. And five times, He says: “**He will take...**”

The Breakdown:

1. **Your sons** – legacy, strength
2. **Your daughters** – love, dignity
3. **Your fields/vineyards** – provision, work
4. **Your servants/livestock** – capacity, resources
5. **You yourselves** – identity, freedom

**John 10:10** – “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

**When we reject God's rule, we open the door to what steals life.**

### 4. Fear Leads to Control, Control Leads to Slavery

**(1 Samuel 8:18)**

- “Then you will cry out... but the Lord will not answer you.”
- This isn't God abandoning them. This is God **letting them taste what they've chosen.**

**Romans 1:24** – “Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts...”

Sometimes the discipline of God is Him **letting us live in the consequences of our decisions.**

### 5. Nevertheless... They Refused to Listen

**1 Samuel 8:19–20**

“Nevertheless, the people refused to listen...”

This is the moment Israel locks in their decision to trust fear instead of God. They've been warned. They've been told what it will cost. But they choose the crown anyway.

And now, the question:

**What kind of man will this king be?**

He will be exactly what they asked for—a **mirror of their fear**.

## **Reflection: Two Kinds of Rejection**

- **Israel rejected God** out of fear. They didn't want faith—they wanted control.
- **Samuel was rejected by the people** because he stayed faithful.

And this is still the tension today:

You will either be **rejected by the world because you're obedient**,  
or you will **reject obedience because you want the world's approval**.

**Choose your rejection.**

One leads to **freedom**.

The other leads to **bondage**.

## **And Then We Cry**

We walk into slavery, into exhaustion, into frustration—and then we cry.

**We blame God.**

**We say He didn't show up.**

**We say, "This isn't what I signed up for."**

**And we go to the Victim's License Bureau.**

**We wait in line.**

**We get our badge.**

**We rehearse our pain and pass it off like credentials.**

**But the reality is...**

**You and I chose this.**

**We demanded our own way.**

**We crowned our fear.**

**We bowed to control.**

**We traded trust for a throne we could touch.**

**Selah.**

Sit with it.

Not in shame, but in clarity.

Because if we can see this clearly, we're almost ready for the good news.

**If Only There Were Hope...**

If only there were a **better kingdom**.

If only there were a **different kind of King**—

One who doesn't take, but gives.

One who doesn't reflect our fear, but **redeems it**.

**There is. And He's coming.**

The King we didn't ask for...

But the one our souls were made for.

## **Gospel Shift**

Jesus is the King we didn't ask for—but He's the King we needed.

He doesn't take—He gives.

He doesn't enslave—He sets free.

**John 8:36** – “So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”

Where Saul will be a king who rules by fear, so concerned with public perception he is driven to disobedience, Jesus is a King who conquers fear with love.

He wore the crown of rejection so you could wear the crown of freedom.

## **Setup for Saul: The Mirror King**

What kind of man will he be?

God will give them a **king who matches their hearts—externally impressive, internally unstable**.

Saul will look strong, but he will lead from fear. He will say the right words, but be driven by insecurity.

He will be **the reflection of Israel's own rejection of God**.

**They didn't just choose a man—they chose a mirror.**

## **Summary Takeaway**

**When we reject God's leadership out of fear, we don't gain freedom—we step into bondage. God may let us wear the crown we demand, but we also bear the weight that comes with it.**

## **Small Group Discussion Questions**

1. **What stood out most to you about Israel's demand for a king in 1 Samuel 8?**  
How did their fear affect their decision-making?
2. **When in your life have you demanded something from God instead of trusting Him?**  
What was the result?
3. **Review the five things God says "He will take."**  
Which of these losses (sons, daughters, fields, servants, freedom) hits you hardest—and why?
4. **How do fear and insecurity show up in your choices or relationships?**  
Where have you made decisions to control rather than trust?
5. **In what ways is Jesus different from the kind of kings (or solutions) we often ask for?**  
How has His leadership been different in your life?

## Home Study / Journal Assignment

**Title:** *Fear Takes, Love Gives*

Read: **1 Samuel 8** and **John 10:10**

Write down your honest answers to these reflection prompts:

1. **Where am I currently feeling fear or instability?**  
How is that fear tempting me to grab control?
2. **What "crown" have I put on—something I'm relying on instead of God?**  
(Examples: reputation, relationship, success, comfort, safety)
3. **What has that crown cost me so far?**  
Be specific—has it taken peace, joy, time, energy?
4. **What would it look like for me to trust Jesus with this area again?**  
What step can I take this week to let go?

Close your time by writing a short prayer of surrender, asking God to take back His rightful place as King in that part of your life.