

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

OCTOBER 8TH, 2023 // 1 SAMUEL

PASSING THE TORCH (1 SAMUEL 12:1-5) A SHIFT IN LEADERSHIP

Samuel is making the shift from the time of judges into the time of kings; essentially, Samuel's days were over, and Saul's were beginning.

- Samuel still judged Israel **"all the days of his life"** (7:15), but now, with Saul as king, his role would change. **He didn't fight the change, nor did he grasp for a position when God wanted to change it.**

"NOW YOU CAN SEE THE KING IS LEADING YOU."

Samuel makes it clear this was not his idea, but he simply communicated to God their request to appoint a king. There was no mistake or error on his part because he had **"carefully listened to everything [they] said."**

- God allowed it and even directed its implementation, but it was the voice of the people that prompted it.**

OPEN TO CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM

Samuel opens himself up to honest evaluation from those he had led. He essentially told all of Israel, **"My sons were corrupt, and I removed them from leadership, but if I have wronged anyone, bring it up so I can make it right."**

- We can make a similar request out of humility, but we must address anything brought to our attention with humility.**

ABOVE REPROACH

The people of Israel confirm that Samuel had been a faithful and godly leader. When things do not go in the favor of Israel, they would be **unable to change what they just confirmed.**

- Samuel did not leave a mess for Saul to come in and clean up, and **when Saul proved to be a bad leader, no one could say it was because of a bad example set by Samuel.**

A HEAVENLY DISPLAY (1 SAMUEL 12:6-25) HE IS RIGHTEOUS IN ALL HE DOES

In verses 6-12, Samuel is recounting the work of God from the time of Exodus up until their current situation with Nahash. His inspired discourse is not meant to focus on the history of Israel as much as it is **meant to focus on the righteous acts of God.**

- God was righteous in freeing Israel from Egypt and just as righteous when He handed them over to Sisera.**

HE IS LOVING IN DISCIPLINE AND DELIVERANCE

Throughout the OT, we see God allowing a disobedient Israel to be dominated by their enemies. **God allowed this to take place as a form of judgment but also as discipline meant to bring them to repentance.**

- When we rebel, God disciplines us** (Hebrews.12:6), **but when we cry out to God, He delivers us.**

SINFUL DESIRE FOR A KING

Saul is not the king they need but the king they want. Though their desire for a king was wicked, God would still bless them if they would **"fear the Lord and serve Him."**

- We must choose a path: submit to God through obedience or continue in rebellion and disobedience. God will not bless the wrong path.**

A SIGN AND JUDGMENT

Samuel calls on God to provide a sign proving the greatness of the wickedness. God brought thunder and rain at a time that was unusual, and that would also damage the crops.

- Why didn't God send a sign earlier? Perhaps **God knew they wouldn't see it until now** (Matthew 12:39; John 12:37).

ISRAEL ACKNOWLEDGES THEIR SIN

Samuel displayed that he was a man of prayer (Psalms 99:6; Jeremiah 15:1), so they asked him to pray for them. They have seen their sin, and God can turn it for good if they continue to repent and seek the Lord under Saul's kingship.

- True repentance will remove the eternal consequence of sin but may not remove the consequence of our actions in this life.**

BEAUTIFUL REMINDERS

Samuel urges Israel to **remember the great things God has done and that He will not abandon His people.**

- God loves us not because of what we have done, are doing, or will do, but **because of "His great name."** We serve, obey, and love God not to persuade Him to do great things but **because of what He has already done.**

CONFLICT INITIATED (1 SAMUEL 13:1-7) ISRAEL'S FIRST ARMY AND COMMANDER

We are introduced to Saul's son, Jonathan (brave and admirable man), who initiated a conflict with the Philistines, showing that **they would not continue to surrender meekly.**

- As long as the Israelites remained weak and submissive, there was no issue, but now **they**

showed a boldness that made the Philistines consider them an "abomination."

"LET THE HEBREWS HEAR!"

Instead of acknowledging his son's role in this attack on the Philistine garrison, he takes credit and says, **"Saul has attacked the Philistine Garrison."** The text does not seem to indicate that he ordered this attack or that he is due credit as the king.

- His own insecurities will not allow anyone to overshadow him.**

FEAR IN DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

The Philistines amassed a huge army in response to the attack on their garrison.

- Jonathan was bold enough to launch an attack, but now his men are in great fear of retaliation and hide themselves. **The Israelites looked for a "silver bullet" to fix all their problems but quickly realized their problems still existed.**

FAILURE TO LEAD AND INSPIRE

We see that while all of this unfolds, Saul is still at Gilgal. He had a number of troops that followed there but now are **"gripped with fear."**

- Saul lacked the courage necessary to lead, **and the men under his command began to lose confidence in his leadership.**

WAITING ON SAMUEL (1 SAMUEL 13:8-14) WE CANNOT REACT SINFULLY TO FEAR AND PANIC

Saul was told to wait seven days for Samuel so he could spiritually prepare them for battle. On the seventh day, Saul became anxious and offered the sacrifices and offerings himself.

- We are to **"not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God"** (Philippians 4:6, NIV).

LOSING CONTROL AND GRASPING AT STRAWS

Samuel approached Saul and asked him what he had done, and he quickly gave excuses for his sin. His quick justification shows that **he knew he did wrong and had excuses ready.**

- Saul justified his actions by claiming there were **no other options** and he had to get the support of his men back. He even **blamed Samuel** for delaying his coming.

SAUL DID THE OPPOSITE OF GOD'S COMMAND

Because of Saul's **"foolish"** (*lacking morality and spirituality*) behavior, God tells Saul that his kingship was supposed to be passed down to his descendants, but now his reign will end with him.

- Throughout Scripture, we see God pronounce a judgment on a person or people group as **an invitation to repent. When the judgment is met with repentance, God relents.**

SURROUNDED (1 SAMUEL 13:15-23) OUTNUMBERED AND OUTGUNNED

Israel's military is reduced to 600, and they are now surrounded by an army greater in size and weaponry. The Philistines controlled the metal trade, leaving the Israelites with a rag-tag cache of wooden and stone weapons.

- Saul is facing a great test of faith: **Does he believe that God is great enough to deliver them from so many with so few?**

AFTER GOD'S HEART

- Though God rejected Saul, He did not reject His people. God promised to raise up a king **"after His own heart."**
- To be after His own heart means **we honor the Lord by viewing His will as more important than ours. Are we more concerned with fulfilling our will than His?**
- We view God as King. **Do we see God as something to help us achieve our goals, or is He the Goal?**
- We have a soft and repentant heart. **When faced with our sin, do we make excuses or repent?**
- Are we loving and serving others?**
- Will God find a people after His own heart?**