

A CHARACTER STUDY IN

THE LIFE OF SAMUEL

SAMUEL REMEMBERS THE LORD'S
RIGHTEOUS ACTS

I Samuel 12

Adult Sunday School
Gethsemane Baptist Church
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SAMUEL REMEMBERS THE LORD'S RIGHTEOUS ACTS

“Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired! and, behold, the LORD hath set a king over you. If ye will fear the LORD, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the LORD your God: But if ye will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, as it was against your fathers.”
I Samuel 12:12-15

God has allowed His people to place a king to rule over them. Samuel was the last Judge to lead Israel. He also was the first priest to represent the people to the Lord. He also is used of God as a prophet of the words of God. In chapter 10 Saul is anointed king and begins his rule by gathering an army and defeating Nahash the Ammonite at Jabesh-gilead. The reason he was able to effectively lead his people is because *“the*

Spirit of God came upon Saul” (11:6)
However, he still felt that it was necessary to use the name of Samuel as he called the people to battle. He sends the message in the name of Saul and Samuel. (11:7) In this way Samuel is used to validate the new king in the eyes of the people. The result of the battle was that Saul *“slew the Ammonites until the heat of the day: and it came to pass, that they which remained were scattered, so that two of them were not left together.”* (11:11) The people were so please with the victory they formally installed Saul king. Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there. *“And all the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king before the LORD in Gilgal; and there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace offerings before the LORD; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.”* (11:14-15)

Now that the monarchy has begun, Samuel reminded the people of several important things. He begins chapter 12 by reminding the people that he gave them a

king at their insistence. They had been very disappointed in the spiritual leadership that had ruled them to this point. The horrors of Eli's Sons were still fresh in their minds. (I Samuel 3) As Samuel rules the people, he had placed his two sons in positions of authority only to see them also begin to sin and take advantage of the people. (I Samuel 8:1-3) Now in chapter 12 Samuel feels it necessary to point out that it was not God who had disappointed them. It was sinful men. We expect our spiritual leaders to be trustworthy and most of the time they serve well. When they disappoint us they cause many to be discouraged in their faith. However, just because the servants of God are sometimes less than faithful, God is always faithful. A life lived in subjection to the Lord will always bring us blessings. We should never look to men to be our examples. They will disappoint us. Follow Him, who is lord of all.

At verse thirteen Samuel places a promise before the people. They have a king to lead them but God would always be watching over them. Therefore, he told them, "*If ye*

will fear the LORD, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the LORD your God.” (Vs. 14) God expected the people to be faithful in four things. They were to “fear the Lord”. That is, they were to honor and reverence Him. When they did that, they would naturally serve the Lord. They would not be led astray by the gods of the people that lived around them. He asked them to obey His words. In doing so they would be kept from the harmful results that come when they step away from Him. He tells them to not rebel against following Him. As humans we are so many times distracted from serving the Lord and resent Him. Our rebellion always brings pain. By keeping these three or four things they are promised the blessing of God.

In verse 15 Samuel promises that if they do not follow the commands of verse 14 then they would not know the blessing of God and He would judge them accordingly. These instructions were given to Gods

people the Jews who were being led spiritually by Samuel. The instructions are also good for us New Testament believers. It reminds us of the words of Jesus in John 14:21. *“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him.”*

To prove the reliability of the Lord’s promise Samuel gave them the sign of a thunderstorm in the time of the wheat harvest. “That season in Palestine occurs at the beginning of May, when it seldom or never rains, and the sky is serene and cloudless. There could not, therefore, have been stronger or more appropriate proof of a divine mission than the phenomenon or rain and thunder happening, without any prognostics of its approach, upon the prediction of a person professing himself to be a prophet of the Lord, and giving it as an attestation of his words being true.”

Notes
