

I WILL TEACH YOU THE GOOD AND THE RIGHT WAY

1 SAMUEL 11:1 – 12:25

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~ In the previous leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God, I had some rather harsh words to say concerning King Saul. Some of you likely think I had no grounds to judge so harshly. To be fair, I laid out my own strong suspicion that Saul was not a genuine man of God. I said that Saul would have made a great actor, but he never made a good king. Well, I'll admit Saul had a fair enough beginning; but the account of his life that follows is not good – at all. In fact, it becomes frighteningly Satanic. I trust you are reading your Bible text very carefully and comparing the text directly against what I have to say in these reports, after praying for wisdom, judgment and discernment. If you think I am wrong, make sure you pray for me before you straighten me out....

XI

1 Then Nahash the Ammonite came up, and encamped against Jabeshgilead: and all the men of Jabesh said unto Nahash, Make a covenant with us, and we will serve thee.

2 And Nahash the Ammonite answered them, On this condition will I make a covenant with you, that I may thrust out all your right eyes, and lay it for a reproach upon all Israel.

3 And the elders of Jabesh said unto him, Give us seven days' respite, that we may send messengers unto all the coasts of Israel: and then, if there be no man to save us, we will come out to thee.

4 Then came the messengers to Gibeah of Saul, and told the tidings in the ears of the people: and all the people lifted up their voices, and wept.

5 And, behold, Saul came after the herd out of the field; and Saul said, What aileth the people that they weep? And they told him the tidings of the men of Jabesh.

6 And the Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard those tidings, and his anger was kindled greatly.

7 And he took a yoke of oxen, and hewed them in pieces, and sent them throughout all the coasts of Israel by the hands of messengers, saying, Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen. And the fear of the LORD fell on the people, and they came out with one consent.

8 And when he numbered them in Bezek, the children of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand.

9 And they said unto the messengers that came, Thus shall ye say unto the men of Jabeshgilead, To morrow, by that time the sun be hot, ye shall have help. And the messengers came and shewed it to the men of Jabesh; and they were glad.

10 Therefore the men of Jabesh said, To morrow we will come out unto you, and ye shall do with us all that seemeth good unto you.

11 And it was so on the morrow, that Saul put the people in three companies; and they came into the midst of the host in the morning watch, and 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.

12 And the people said unto Samuel, Who is he that said, Shall Saul reign over us? bring the men, that we may put them to death.

13 And Saul said, There shall not a man be put to death this day: for to day the LORD hath wrought salvation in Israel.

14 Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there.

15 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.

~ We have a very strong and ugly demand made upon the children of Israel in verse two. These men needed deliverance. Notice how Saul identifies himself with Samuel in verse seven. I think that was done because Saul still had no credibility at this time in and of himself. Well, these men came to him out of fear; and I think that fear was from two separate directions. One was a fear of what would happen to their livestock if they refused; and the other was fear of the Ammonites! That's what you call being stuck between a rock and a hard place.

Saul was a good military man, obviously, and we know that from verse eleven, because if two Ammonites were not left together, that's a pretty good scattering. However, verse twelve reveals that there was still some opposition to Saul being made king of Israel. Samuel is going to ignore that opposition until the nation becomes unified under Saul and then the opposition will be dealt with. Then, verse fifteen shows the whole nation accepting Saul as their king!

So, it may still seem my prejudice against Saul was premature and formed too rashly. It would seem as if Saul still might somehow make good at this point. But, as I have said, Saul starts off great and even seems, for a while, to be a great king. It's too bad the story doesn't end here because that would prove me wrong; but it doesn't. Unfortunately, there is a long, long, sordid way to go in the life and times of Saul as King of the nation Israel! So, let's keep moving....

XII

1 And Samuel said unto all Israel, Behold, I have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto me, and have made a king over you.

2 And now, behold, the king walketh before you: and I am old and grayheaded; and, behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day.

3 Behold, here I am: witness against me before the LORD, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you.

4 And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man's hand.

5 And he said unto them, The LORD is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found ought in my hand. And they answered, He is witness.

6 And Samuel said unto the people, It is the LORD that advanced Moses and Aaron, and that brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt.

7 Now therefore stand still, that I may reason with you before the LORD of all the righteous acts of the LORD, which he did to you and to your fathers.

8 When Jacob was come into Egypt, and your fathers cried unto the LORD, then the LORD sent Moses and Aaron, which brought forth your fathers out of Egypt, and made them dwell in this place.

9 And when they forgot the LORD their God, he sold them into the hand of Sisera, captain of the host of Hazor, and into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab, and they fought against them.

10 And they cried unto the LORD, and said, We have sinned, because we have forsaken the LORD, and have served Baalim and Ashtaroth: but now deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, and we will serve thee.

11 And the LORD sent Jerubbaal, and Bedan, and Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side, and ye dwelled safe.

12 And when ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the LORD your God was your king.

13 Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired! and, behold, the LORD hath set a king over you.

14 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:

15 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.

16 Now therefore stand and see this great thing, which the LORD will do before your eyes.

17 Is it not wheat harvest to day? I will call unto the LORD, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking you a king.

18 So Samuel called unto the LORD; and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel.

19 And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the LORD thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king.

20 And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not: ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart;

21 And turn ye not aside: for then should ye go after vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver; for they are vain.

22 For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people.

23 Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way:

24 Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you.

25 But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.

~ Here, the autobiographical swan song and final speech of Samuel is written. He was certainly a remarkable man. Samuel spent his entire life in a fishbowl of the tabernacle; where everyone could view every move he made. I can't seem to find any man in the Bible who had quite the public life Samuel had. Many men are accepted in public life today, but suddenly, there appears a black past that makes everyone gasp for air as they realize what they have done by choosing the wrong person as their hero falls flat on his face - like the idol of Dagon. Well, not Samuel.

Samuel was dedicated to the tabernacle by Hannah in faith and Samuel served the Lord wholly. He lived as a judge under the watchful eyes of the people. Verse three is quite a statement regarding oneself after all those years. I'm sure Samuel had many opportunities to become rich monetarily but exercised great self-restraint and control. Samuel is certainly one of the great men of God whom God made great in the Word of God. Samuel had a life that could stand public inspection and adverse opinion. It would have been very easy for someone to accuse Samuel of not being fair with them, even if the accusation were false – and I'm sure there were more than a few.

It's a sad note in verse two when Samuel asks the people why they didn't accept his sons as they did him. He attempted to force them into a position

over Israel, but God wouldn't have them; and we read how and why they were unacceptable to the Lord in chapter eight. What that reveals is that Samuel was a howling failure as a father. This happens to many public figures, and even outstanding Christian leaders. See, this is the same way families have been descending down through the centuries and millenniums of the past. Nothing has changed.

We see Samuel rehearse the deliverances of Jehovah beginning in verse six; just as Moses, Gideon and Joshua had done. Steven, appearing before the Sanhedrin, rehearsed the history of the nation Israel, too. Moses, Gideon, Steven and Joshua were just ordinary men whom God made great! This happens to be very important to understand. It's wonderful to say the Lord is my Shepherd as we move into the future; but it's equally as important to be able to say hitherto hath the Lord led us. That is exactly what Samuel is doing in this chapter. Samuel is standing at that rock of Ebenezer that we learned about in chapter seven; and Samuel tells them to remember the story about how they have been led by God thus far!

Saul was still Israel's – the people's - choice and, even though God did not approve of Saul, God still promised to bless them if they would obey Him. Even in the midst of this rebellion against God He is going to give Saul and the people every opportunity available to them to act out in obedience. That's also very important to note in this chapter that we have just read. Samuel moves into their present history and talks about the king they chose in verse thirteen.

We have been brought up in America to believe that the voice of the majority is the undeniable voice of God. I hate to tell you this, but the Bible contradicts that philosophy wholesale. The Word of God says He uses the weak things to confound the wise. The world's wisdom is foolishness to God. If you are a genuine child of God being used by Him, you are in an extreme minority. Martin Luther said, *"... one with God is a majority!"* Well, the people chose Saul; and, because he is the people's choice, God did not reject him. God gave Saul the opportunity to fear Him. However, since that isn't going to happen, God will be the One Who chooses David as King. What a difference there is between two men when God makes the decision.

Samuel has no compunction telling it like it is in verse fifteen; if they obey, God will bless them – if they disobey, God is going to be against them. The choice was theirs to make in and of their own free will. So, we see God responding in a very definite and dramatic way starting at verse sixteen. We see very definitely that the people had done wickedness asking for a king in verse seventeen.

Samuel was to the first man that could preach up a storm, literally; and no pun intended. Elijah will pray for rain later, but Samuel was the first to do so. I believe this is God's seal of approval upon the life of Samuel. This is how we know Samuel was God's choice as prophet. Well, the people realize what they have done in asking for a king in verse nineteen. We need to be very careful that our past sins – and even their ramifications – don't spoil our lives. I don't care who you are, or what you've done, you cannot allow the past to destroy your present or your future; even if you are reaping what you have sown! God can make a way when there is no way. Those are powerful promises to test the spirit by. We need to move out today for God irrespective of the mistakes that likely plague us!

By the same token, we need to stop the gimmicks as we serve God. The church has employed every tool from speaking in tongues to sham healings to other methods that do not work. Those people who engage in such activities deny that it is the Lord God ALONE Who can bless our life. We need to hold on to the Word of God so God will hold onto us. So many people are trying to defend the Word of God – but the Bible needs explaining – not defending! The Word of God needs to be proclaimed properly, completely and correctly; THEN the Scriptures will present their defense. I believe that is ALL-important and is why I teach the Bible as I do. We need the exclamation point and a declaration of it so much more than we need question marks that we see these days. But it must be grounded in the sound doctrine of the apostles.

Have you taken the Name of the Lord? Is He your Savior today? Are you resting in His Sabbath rest continually? If your answer is a genuine yes – then God says He'll not leave you nor forsake you, friends. It has pleased the Lord to make us His people. If you have a question about why He chose

Israel, don't look at the people of the nation – look to God. God says He chose them and that should be enough for us – because that's how He chose you! Maybe your friends and family wonder why God chose you – they sure wonder about me. God could have simply passed us both by, my dear readers. How marvelous and wonderful this all really is when we understand God correctly by listening to Samuel. Are you glad you're the Lord's child? Are you happy that you have trusted Him as your Savior? Do you believe God is for you and not against you? Well, our Savior wants to help us today – and He is able to save us to the uttermost.

I have found that many people who read this safari have a powerful gift of prayer. Prayer is one of the greatest ministries and one of the greatest gifts we can have! The ONLY reason I am enjoying this ministry of mine is certainly not for the donations – because I don't get many – it's because of the prayers of God's people, and their true desire to learn the Word of God. All of you readers who constantly tell me that you are praying for me makes me drop down on my knees and thank Him for each and every one of you. It's wonderful to pray for others and I am praying for each of you always.

Samuel is praying for the nation. Samuel says he would be sinning against the Lord if he didn't pray for the people. That means each one of us has a very definite responsibility in prayer. I certainly feel that responsibility to pray for each of you who have bothered reading this far. I know a lot about many of your problems, and that creates responsibility. The same is true for my family because if I don't pray for my family, who will? I also pray about this so-called safari – and for this I pray a WHOLE lot! We ought to pray for one another daily.

I really enjoyed football at one point in my life and I have sat next to some people that acted as if the world had been won when just one yard was gained. I wish I had that type of enthusiasm for the things of God! We need to serve God with all our hearts. Fear the Lord, friends; and consider what great things He hath done for you. What a tremendous message Samuel has brought to us at this time ~