

## In Spite of Their Sin, God's Mercy Provides Hope if His People Will Believe and Obey Him (Part 1)

### 1 Samuel 12:14-25

- 1) Vs. 1-5: Samuel has been faithful. God has been faithful in giving them Samuel. 2) Vs. 6-11: God has historically demonstrated this faithfulness in giving them deliverers, in spite of their lack of trust and disobedience. 3) Vs. 12-13: They have repeated their unbelief in asking for a king.
  - Even though God has always been perfectly faithful, Israel has once again demonstrated unbelief and disobedience in asking for a king. But now, God will mercifully bless his people if they will turn to him. They must believe that he is capable of providing for them, acknowledge their sin, and turn wholly to him. This mercy and blessing, and the contrasting punishment for unbelief and sin, are just as significant for us now as for Israel then.
  - Israel as singular and plural.
- I. Vs. 14-15 - God presents Israel and the king with two choices with connected consequences.
- This mirrors the scene of Joshua 8:30-35, in which Israel pronounces blessing and curses from Gerizim and Ebal.
- A. This itself is an act of God's mercy (Vs. 12-13).
- B. Vs. 14 -They have opportunity to trust and obey the Lord, and receive his blessing.
- Five "conditions" in **vs. 14** - **If you will fear the Lord** (a reverential awe of God that grips your heart so you're willing to listen to his wisdom, submit to his commands, surrender your will, and rest in the awesome promises of his grace. It makes you run toward him, not away from him and causes you to live in a way you would not live apart from him. Belief.) **and serve him** (Vs. idolatry. Seeing value. With heart.) **and obey his voice and not rebel against the commandment of the Lord** (These two - follow what his Word says.), **and if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the Lord your God** (The king corporately representing God's people. This touches on truly loving him as a response to his worth.), **it will be well** (God will fulfill all of his promise of blessing. More on perfectly doing this later. But will Israel and the king believe and obey?).
- C. Vs. 15 - Or, they will suffer the consequences for unbelief and disobedience.
- **Vs. 15** - **But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord, but rebel against the commandment of the Lord** (Continue in patterns of unbelief and disobedience.), **then the hand of the Lord will be against you and your king** (Again, God connects the whole of Israel to the king's love, trust, and obedience. Different "fear.").
  - We can trace this reality in the record of Israel's, and then the divided kingdoms', trajectories.
- II. Vs. 16-18 - God's miraculous demonstration emphasizes their sin, but also shows his power to bless or punish.
- **Vs. 16** - **Now therefore stand still** (Emphasis.) **and see this great thing that the Lord will do before your eyes.**
- A. Vs. 17 - It's to show their sin. The God who can do this is capable of taking care of them, yet they've not believed.
- **Vs. 17** - **Is it not wheat harvest today (May/June. Rain very scarce.)? I will call upon the Lord** (Emphasis on him as God's representative.), **that he may send thunder and rain. And you shall know and see that your wickedness is great, which you have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking for yourselves a king (Verdict.)."**
- B. Vs. 18 - It's to show God's power to bless or punish.
- **Vs. 18** - **So Samuel called upon the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day...**
    1. This power will be directed in blessing when there is belief and obedience.
    2. But this power to punish is just as real, and the depth of it should be terrifying.
- C. Vs. 18 - It creates awe and fear, of the Lord, and of the one he has given them, Samuel.
- Vs. 18 - **And all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel** (See vs. 14 and fear.).
- III. Vs. 19 - There is hope as Israel responds in acknowledgement of sin and recognition of their need for God's mercy.
- A. They acknowledge their sin and its culmination and fullness.

- **Vs. 19** - "We have added to all our sins (History. Vs. 8-12.) this evil, to ask for ourselves a king."
- B. They know their only hope is God's mercy.
- **Vs. 19** - "That we may not die..."
- C. They realize their need for Samuel's mediation.
- **Vs. 19** - And all the people said to Samuel, "Pray for your servants to the Lord your God..."
- IV. Vs. 20-23 - God's mercy, for his glory, is promised, if they will wholly turn to him.
- V. Vs. 24-25 - A final call to trust and obedience magnifies the significance of what's happening.
- VI. The realities here are just as relevant and profound for us now as they were for Israel then.
- A. God has always been faithful.
- Ro. 8:32 - He who did not spare...
- B. The revelation of unbelief and sin is universally true, and is why the gospel is necessary. Unbelief will be punished, and belief rewarded.
- The garden. Jesus. Ro. 6:23.
- C. Revelation of sin and repentance are a gift not to be ignored.
- Mt. 6:12 - Forgive us our debts...
- D. In our walk as believers, we resonate with the vast difference between God's record and ours, and this is why the gospel is still necessary, for God is for us and faithful, though we are weak.
- Saul won't. David will do better, but fall short. Only one did this perfectly. We have to trust in his perfection, and mediation, to be made right, and for any hope of living this. 2 Ti. 2:13 - if we are faithless, he remains...
- E. Simultaneously, God blesses when we in faith obey, and disciplines us when we disobey.
- He. 11:6 - And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.
  - He. 12:6 - The Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives."
- F. Therefore, to fear, trust, obey, and love the Lord are immeasurably good.
- Jn. 14:21 - Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.
- G. For God's infinite and glorious power to save and bless are real.
- His hand was against Jesus so it won't ever be against us. It takes this sort of power to overcome sin.
  - Ep. 1:19-20 - What is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead.
  - Ep. 2:1-10.
- H. Likewise, there is no situation too far gone for God in his power to extend mercy and blessing.
- Ge. 50:20 - As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive.
- I. Above all, let us remember the abounding mercy, grace, and love that God has shown to us, continues to show to us, and will forever show to us.
- Jn. 1:16 - From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.