

## Simple, But Not Easy: The Exchange at Gilgal (1 Samuel 12:16-25)

**Samuel's Superior Leadership** (v.1-4): Samuel has been exonerated from any major character flaw from his youth until the present. His motivation behind this is not rooted in pride. Instead, he is going to rebuke the nation for their sin. There is more persuasive power in the petition when the life matches the lips.

**Shallowness and Stupidity of the People in their Wickedness** (v.5): Even though the nation can find no major flaw in his character, and regardless of Samuel's warning of the rights and powers of the king (8:11-18), the people still demand a king.

**Structure (A.B.C.D.) and a Summary of Deliverance by the LORD** (v.6-13): The LORD has delivered the nation as they cried out to the LORD and turned from their ways. This began as the nation departed from Egypt and continued until their national repentance at Mizpah (7:1-6). The LORD delivered them through Samuel (7:9-11).

**Sequence of Events** (v.12-13): Saul was already on his search for the lost donkeys (9:1-4), at least one day prior to the nation requesting a king. The threat of the Ammonites pressed the nation to "call an audible." Instead of crying out in repentance for their sin (worldliness and idolatry), they demanded a king (8:4-5, 19; 12:12). While their demand for a king was sinful (12:17-19), the LORD chose their king even before they expressed their desire for one (9:1-4, 16; 10:24).

**Scenario for Success** (v.14-15): even with this new arrangement, there is still hope: they must serve Him, fear him, obey Him, and not rebel against Him.

### 1. The Storm and Sincere Confession of their Sin (v.17-19)

- Despite Samuel walking them through God's faithfulness, their fickleness, and infidelity to the LORD, there is no response from them.
- The LORD has been good to the nation. While their oppression was mostly the consequence of their sin, the LORD still delivered them.

#### The Storm:

- The LORD must sovereignly bring about their repentance. He does this through a storm, which is reminiscent of the Levitical predecessor, Moses (Exod. 9:23):
  - It is the harvest season of wheat in Palestine (May-June). Samuel called upon the LORD for rain and thunder to verify and validate his message. The LORD created a storm, which was "unnatural" at this time of the year, to symbolize Israel's relationship with their covenant God. This storm would have threatened the harvest (future famine). Storms and famines were oftentimes judgments of God (Exod. 9, Lev. 26:14-26; Deut. 28:15-68).
- Only the act of God could awaken their spiritually dead hearts. We learn that their renewal at Gilgal was done with a cold and impenitent heart.

#### Sincere Confession of their Sin (v.19):

- Hebrew: "we have added evil to our many sins." They also identified themselves as Samuel's servants, and are too ashamed to call the LORD their God; they ask Samuel to pray for them. The LORD God is Samuel's God. He is not their God.

### 2. Samuel's Intercessory Prayer and Warning (v.20-25)

- The nation who rejected the LORD as their king and Samuel as their prophet judge (v.11), now is asking that Samuel pray for them in light of their great sin.
- Principles of Godly Reconciliation:
  - A. Confession and Acknowledgement of Sin by the Offending Party (v.19): true repentance specifies the sin committed, owns full responsibility of it, and in no way attempts to justify its sin on anyone/anything else.
  - B. Acknowledgement that there was sin by the party offended (v.20): the party that is offended is transparent and honest that the sin committed was sinful. Ultimately, the wrong done was not to the individual, but to the LORD. Sin against the LORD will have more power to reform and change.
  - C. Encouragement to do what is right (v.20): the offended party seeks to make this process of reconciliation as redemptive as possible by moving beyond the "hurt" to encouragement. He urges the people not to negate the genuineness of their repentance by re-committing the very sin they seek forgiveness of.
  - D. Stern warning not to repeat the matter (v.21-24): genuine repentance can be measured by how long after the confession and/or repentance the same sin is committed. There are consequences when sinful tendencies and matters are repeated.

#### Intercessory Prayer (v.20, 23):

- Enlarges the heart of the one who is praying; it does just as much good for the one who is praying as the one who is being prayed for.
- If praying for those who offend you is your immediate default, you are in step with the mind of the Spirit (Matthew 5:44-45). If grumbling and complaining proceeds the wrong done, you are not acting as sons of God.
- Evidence of regeneration and spiritual maturity can oftentimes be measured by how quickly concerns are taken to the LORD in prayer.
- Intercessory prayer can infuse spiritual power into those for whom the prayer is directed towards.

As a Levite after the tradition of Moses (Exod. 32:11-14; Num. 11:2; 21:7; Deut. 9:20, 26), Samuel possessed two additional responsibilities; prayer and instruction.

#### Samuel's Warning:

- There is a new dispensation and system of government: the king's sphere will be the social life, while the prophet/priests will be the spiritual sphere.
- Regardless of both spheres, the king and the people must honor the LORD.
- The system of government will not be used as justification for their sin of worldliness and idolatry. Government does not have the authority from God to determine how the people of God conduct their spiritual life; fear the LORD and serve Him with all of your heart, and everything will go well.

## Simple, But Not Easy: The Exchange at Gilgal (1 Samuel 12:16-25)

**Samuel's Superior Leadership** (v.1-4): Samuel has been exonerated from any major character flaw from his youth until the present. His motivation behind this is not rooted in pride. Instead, he is going to rebuke the nation for their sin. There is more persuasive power in the petition when the life matches the lips.

**Shallowness and Stupidity of the People in their Wickedness** (v.5): Even though the nation can find no major flaw in his character, and regardless of Samuel's warning of the rights and powers of the king (8:11-18), the people still demand a king.

**Structure (A.B.C.D.) and a Summary of Deliverance by the LORD** (v.6-13): The LORD has delivered the nation as they cried out to the LORD and turned from their ways. This began as the nation departed from Egypt and continued until their national repentance at Mizpah (7:1-6). The LORD delivered them through Samuel (7:9-11).

**Sequence of Events** (v.12-13): Saul was already on his search for the lost donkeys (9:1-4), at least one day prior to the nation requesting a king. The threat of the Ammonites pressed the nation to "call an audible." Instead of crying out in repentance for their sin (worldliness and idolatry), they demanded a king (8:4-5, 19; 12:12). While their demand for a king was sinful (12:17-19), the LORD chose their king even before they expressed their desire for one (9:1-4, 16; 10:24).

**Scenario for Success** (v.14-15): even with this new arrangement, there is still hope: they must serve Him, fear him, obey Him, and not rebel against Him.

### 1. The Storm and Sincere Confession of their Sin (v.17-19)

- Despite Samuel walking them through God's faithfulness, their fickleness, and infidelity to the LORD, there is no response from them.
- The LORD has been good to the nation. While their oppression was mostly the consequence of their sin, the LORD still delivered them.

#### The Storm:

- The LORD must sovereignly bring about their repentance. He does this through a storm, which is reminiscent of the Levitical predecessor, Moses (Exod. 9:23):
  - It is the harvest season of wheat in Palestine (May-June). Samuel called upon the LORD for rain and thunder to verify and validate his message. The LORD created a storm, which was "unnatural" at this time of the year, to symbolize Israel's relationship with their covenant God. This storm would have threatened the harvest (future famine). Storms and famines were oftentimes judgments of God (Exod. 9, Lev. 26:14-26; Deut. 28:15-68).
- Only the act of God could awaken their spiritually dead hearts. We learn that their renewal at Gilgal was done with a cold and impenitent heart.

#### Sincere Confession of their Sin (v.19):

- Hebrew: "we have added evil to our many sins." They also identified themselves as Samuel's servants, and are too ashamed to call the LORD their God; they ask Samuel to pray for them. The LORD God is Samuel's God. He is not their God.

### 2. Samuel's Intercessory Prayer and Warning (v.20-25)

- The nation who rejected the LORD as their king and Samuel as their prophet judge (v.11), now is asking that Samuel pray for them in light of their great sin.
- Principles of Godly Reconciliation:
  - A. Confession and Acknowledgement of Sin by the Offending Party (v.19): true repentance specifies the sin committed, owns full responsibility of it, and in no way attempts to justify its sin on anyone/anything else.
  - B. Acknowledgement that there was sin by the party offended (v.20): the party that is offended is transparent and honest that the sin committed was sinful. Ultimately, the wrong done was not to the individual, but to the LORD. Sin against the LORD will have more power to reform and change.
  - C. Encouragement to do what is right (v.20): the offended party seeks to make this process of reconciliation as redemptive as possible by moving beyond the "hurt" to encouragement. He urges the people not to negate the genuineness of their repentance by re-committing the very sin they seek forgiveness of.
  - D. Stern warning not to repeat the matter (v.21-24): genuine repentance can be measured by how long after the confession and/or repentance the same sin is committed. There are consequences when sinful tendencies and matters are repeated.

#### Intercessory Prayer (v.20, 23):

- Enlarges the heart of the one who is praying; it does just as much good for the one who is praying as the one who is being prayed for.
- If praying for those who offend you is your immediate default, you are in step with the mind of the Spirit (Matthew 5:44-45). If grumbling and complaining proceeds the wrong done, you are not acting as sons of God.
- Evidence of regeneration and spiritual maturity can oftentimes be measured by how quickly concerns are taken to the LORD in prayer.
- Intercessory prayer can infuse spiritual power into those for whom the prayer is directed towards.

As a Levite after the tradition of Moses (Exod. 32:11-14; Num. 11:2; 21:7; Deut. 9:20, 26), Samuel possessed two additional responsibilities; prayer and instruction.

#### Samuel's Warning:

- There is a new dispensation and system of government: the king's sphere will be the social life, while the prophet/priests will be the spiritual sphere.
- Regardless of both spheres, the king and the people must honor the LORD.
- The system of government will not be used as justification for their sin of worldliness and idolatry. Government does not have the authority from God to determine how the people of God conduct their spiritual life; fear the LORD and serve Him with all of your heart, and everything will go well.