

joyous occasions, for they were feasts of rejoicing. Israel had many things for which to be thankful, and it was quite appropriate that they offer such sacrifices. Samuel again demonstrates that he is serving as a priest in leading the people to make such offerings.

CHAPTER 11 IN REVIEW

1. Who was the king of the Ammonites who died? _____
2. What town of Israelites did the Ammonites attack? _____
3. In what area was the town located? _____
4. What influence came to Saul? _____
5. What animal did Saul dissect and distribute? _____
6. Where did Israel assemble to go to battle? _____
7. How many men of Israel went to fight? _____
8. How many men of Judah went to battle? _____
9. Who won the battle? _____
10. Where did Israel meet for a sacrifice? _____

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 12

- Vv. 1- 5 *Samuel reviews his career.* Although Samuel had many more years of service to give to his people, they had rejected him as being their most prominent leader. They had demanded and received a king. Samuel took advantage of an opportunity to rehearse his manner of life among them. It is a man of sterling character who can say, “. . . ye have not found ought in my hand” (v. 5).
- Vv. 6-15 *Israel's history reviewed.* While Samuel was speaking to the people, he reminded them of their heritage. God had been with them throughout many thrilling experiences. In no

STUDIES IN SAMUEL

case had they found God to be unfaithful to them. They had been unfaithful to God.

Vv. 16-25 *Samuel rebukes the people.* God worked a wonder among the people that caused them to tremble. They realized that they had been ungrateful to God and to His chosen servant, Samuel. As they repented, they asked Samuel to pray for them; and the unswerving love of Samuel for his people prompted him to reply that he would without fail remember them in prayer.

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *The blessing of good leaders.* Debates rage over the question as to whether times make men or men make times. Great leaders are demanded in perilous times. Opportunities and occasions may bring out the best in great men. In this passage of scripture, however, the emphasis is laid on the true value of faultless leaders. Samuel was one of these, and his career had been a blessing to his people.
2. *The challenge of a rich heritage.* People dare not rest on their laurels. To do so is to decay. They can take courage from what has been accomplished. Israel should have done this. God had amply demonstrated that He was with them. This fact should have encouraged them to remain faithful to God.
3. *The power of prayer.* When the people asked Samuel to pray for them, Samuel replied that it would have been a sin against God for him to cease to pray for them. Regardless of their attitudes toward him, Samuel ever had the best interests of his people at heart. Nothing could cause him to stop praying for them. Good leaders of God's people must always be in prayer for God's blessings to be upon both people and their leaders (I Timothy 2:2).

Samuel Reviews His Career. 12:1-5

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 aught 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 aught in my hand. And they answered, *He is* witness.

1. How could Samuel speak to all Israel? 12:1

Samuel could not find a place where all the millions of Israelites could gather. His message must have been given to leaders from various tribes. His message would then be carried back to the many thousands in each tribe. On occasions great numbers did gather at one place. They were expected to come to the Tabernacle on the three annual feast days. Samuel's address may have been given at one of these times.

2. What was Samuel's appearance? 12:2

Samuel describes himself as being gray-haired. He must have been a venerable man. His appearance would have commanded respect. The dignity that goes with a venerable, silver-thatched man was his; and in addition his godly life would have won him the admiration of all good men.

3. *Was Samuel without fault? 12:3*

Samuel asked a series of questions which, perhaps purposely, are cast in rhythmical form with assonance at the end of each question in the Hebrew forms. These are the questions:

1. Whose ox have I taken?
2. Whose ass have I taken?
3. Whom have I oppressed?
4. Whom have I maltreated?
5. From whose hand have I taken a gift that I might blind mine eyes with it?

The tendency of the prophets to cast their oracles in poetic form is illustrated elsewhere. The questions asked by Samuel all refer to judicial honesty which has always been rare in the East. Samuel was not without sin, but his work was irreproachable.

4. *Who was the Lord's anointed? 12:5*

The king was the Lord's anointed. Samuel himself had anointed Saul to be king, and Samuel knew that Saul was not taking over the leadership in Israel because he found fault with Samuel's judgeship. God Himself could testify to the good work of Samuel, and the people were impressed with the sacred testimony which they were bearing to him on this occasion.

Israel's History Reviewed. 12:6-15

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 forgat 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.

5. *Why did Samuel rehearse Israel's history? 12:6-9*

History is a great teacher. It has been facetiously said that the only thing we learn from history is that we do not learn from history. Many people forget their past history and make the same mistakes that their forefathers made. Those who are wise will look into their past and see mistakes which have been made. They will profit by good examples which have been set for them. In review-

ing their history they learn how to live in the present and to lay plans for the future. Samuel's use of Israel's history was of such nature as to remind them that their forefathers turned their backs on God. God sold them into the hand of such people as Sisera and into the hand of the Philistines, as He did in the days of Samson. When Israel was reminded of these things, they would learn from the experiences.

6. *When had Israel been delivered into the hand of the king of Moab? 12:9*

The Moabites were descendants of Lot's older daughter by Lot himself. Israel had only recently been engaged in a war with the Ammonites, descendants of Lot by his younger daughter (11:1). The Moabites had afflicted Israel in the days of Ehud, a judge from the tribe of Benjamin (Judges 3:12). Since Saul, their new king, was from Benjamin, this reminder of how they were oppressed in the days of a Benjamite judge would be a particularly helpful lesson to the Israelites.

7. *Who was Bedan? 12:11*

Bedan is a name of one of Israel's former leaders. His name is not given in this form in any of the canonical history. Jerubbaal is another name for Gideon. Jephthah is a later judge in the history of Israel. Since Bedan occurs between the two names, it is generally concluded that this is another name for Barak. Barak had helped Deborah in their war against Sisera (Judges 4:6). The earlier mention of Sisera by Samuel in this passage lends credence to the belief that this is a reference to Barak.

8. *What additional reason does Samuel give for their asking for a king? 12:12*

The reason emphasized the most by the Israelites was that they wanted to be like all the other nations. They had excused themselves by saying that Samuel was old and that his sons were not following in his good ways.

The ascendancy of Nahash to a place of prominence on Israel's eastern border evidently aggravated their request for a king. Nahash threatened the national security of the people. They had this added reason for asking for a military and political leader under whose authority they might unite.

9. *What was the condition of their future prosperity?*
12:14, 15

Samuel solemnly threatened the people that they would prosper only if they obeyed God, served Him, and feared Him. God's voice would be made known to them through those prophets who spoke for God. Israel already had many ordinances and statutes to keep as they served God in regular worship. Their fear of the Lord would be reverence for Him and His appointments. Samuel warned them that if they rebelled against the commandments their national existence would be threatened. The king was not exempt from these conditions. He was another man in the sight of God and would be subject to the same frailties as the others. He would be expected to fear God, serve Him, and obey His voice.

Samuel Rebukes the People. 12:16-25

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

17 *Is it* not wheat harvest today? 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.

10. *Why did Samuel ask for a sign? 12:16-18*

Miracles were performed throughout the Old Testament and the New Testament in order to attest either the message or the messenger. When a truth pronounced by a prophet was in doubt, God often vindicated it by a sign. On other occasions a sign was given to authenticate a messenger of God. As Samuel was bidding farewell to his people, he asked them to stand still and see the great thing which the Lord would do for them.

11. *What was the effect of the sign? 12:17, 18*

Very little rain fell in Palestine during harvest time. Seasons were marked by dry periods and wet periods. The temperature did not vary a great deal. Rain falling in harvest time would be very unusual. The people realized this. The thunder they heard and the rain that fell caused the people to fear the Lord greatly. They also stood in awe and reverence of Samuel.

12. *Why did the people think that they would die?* 12:19

A great number of the people had died when they had shown improper respect for the Ark as it was brought back to Beth-shemesh (6:19). When Manoah saw the angel of the Lord, he said to his wife, "We shall surely die, because we have seen God" (Judges 13:22). One of man's natural reactions upon the realization of his own guilt and the complete holiness of God is to realize that sin cannot abide in the presence of God. Since he is a sinner, he wonders that he is able to stand in God's presence (Psalm 24:3). As the Israelites realized their sinful nature they believed that they would perish in the presence of the Holy God.

13. *Why did Samuel reassure the people?* 12:20-22

God will not reject the broken and contrite heart (Psalm 51:17). The people of Israel had repented completely of their iniquity. They admitted that they had the wrong motives for asking for a king. Samuel sensed this repentant spirit and reassured the people that God would pardon them. Throughout the ages God had not forsaken His chosen people. He had threatened to destroy them in the days of Moses when they made a golden calf and Moses had interceded for them asking God to blot his name out of the book of life, but to spare the people of Israel (Exodus 32:32). Moses prayed that God would not forget His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (32:13). God did not forget His covenant, and Samuel reassured the Israelites that the Lord would not forsake His people.

14. *Why would it be a sin to cease praying for them?*

12:23

Samuel would have demonstrated a reprehensible degree of selfishness if he had prayed only because he was an official. Once he was not serving as a judge, he assured the people that he would be faithful in remembering them in prayer. He would be concerned for them as long as he

lived. In addition to praying for them, he would continue to teach them as a faithful prophet. Samuel stands as a good example for a model preacher.

15. *How is this a tribute to Samuel?*

Every local minister could study Samuel's Farewell Address with profit. Every leader of any congregation in quest of a preacher might well use him as an example. This is the sermon outline which has been suggested by this chapter:

THE IDEAL PREACHER

- I. Blameless in character (Vv. 1-5)
 - A. He speaks concretely of besetting sins
 1. He knows well the pitfalls
 2. He knows the misdeeds of his own ministerial sons, as well as those of Eli's boys
 - B. He has not otherwise abused the powers
 1. He has never yielded to the lure of money
 2. He doesn't have to assure his friends that he has never stolen any man's wife, or dallied with any woman's affections
 - C. He is free from the following:
 1. Ambition
 2. Greed
 3. Lust
- II. Gifted as a teacher (Vv. 6-18)
 - A. The ideal preacher teaches all day
 1. Cherishes the ideal of a teaching
 2. Like Ezra, he set his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and ordinances
 - B. He wants these things for his hearers:
 1. To get every hearer right with God

FIRST SAMUEL

2. To lead everyone in doing the will of the Most High

C. His sermon is a model

1. He uses facts, facts, facts

2. He makes clear what they mean

3. He appeals to the head and to the heart

D. He speaks with authority—"Thus saith the Lord"
ill. George Whitefield, upon being asked for a copy of the sermon that had made such an impact, said that he would upon one condition—the hearer and inquirer must supply the lightning and thunder that had driven home the message of the hour.

III. Mighty in prayer (Vv. 19-25)

A. He was the son of a woman who prayed and the pupil of a man who interceded

1. He relied chiefly on prayer

2. He had also taught the most spiritual-minded of them to pray

3. Many are fearful of the future, but not a true man of God

B. In the hour of dread concern about the unknown morrow the eyes of those deluded mortals were opened

1. They could see their sin

2.. They understood why their asking for a king made Samuel grieve

Conclusion

1. A test of the minister's work is in seeing how many of them seek him out to ask for prayer

2. The secret lies largely in learning to pray

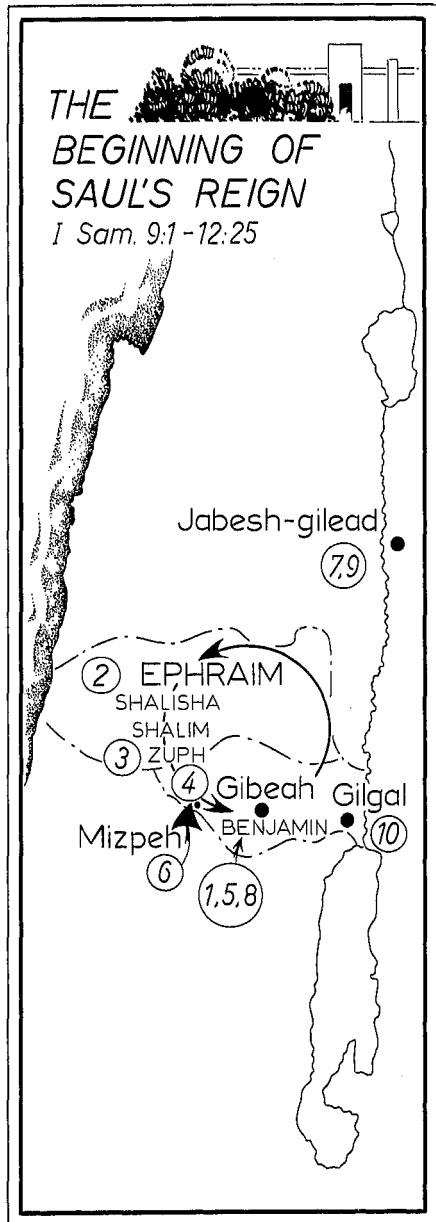
3. This is the ideal-blameless in character, gifted in teaching, mighty in prayer!

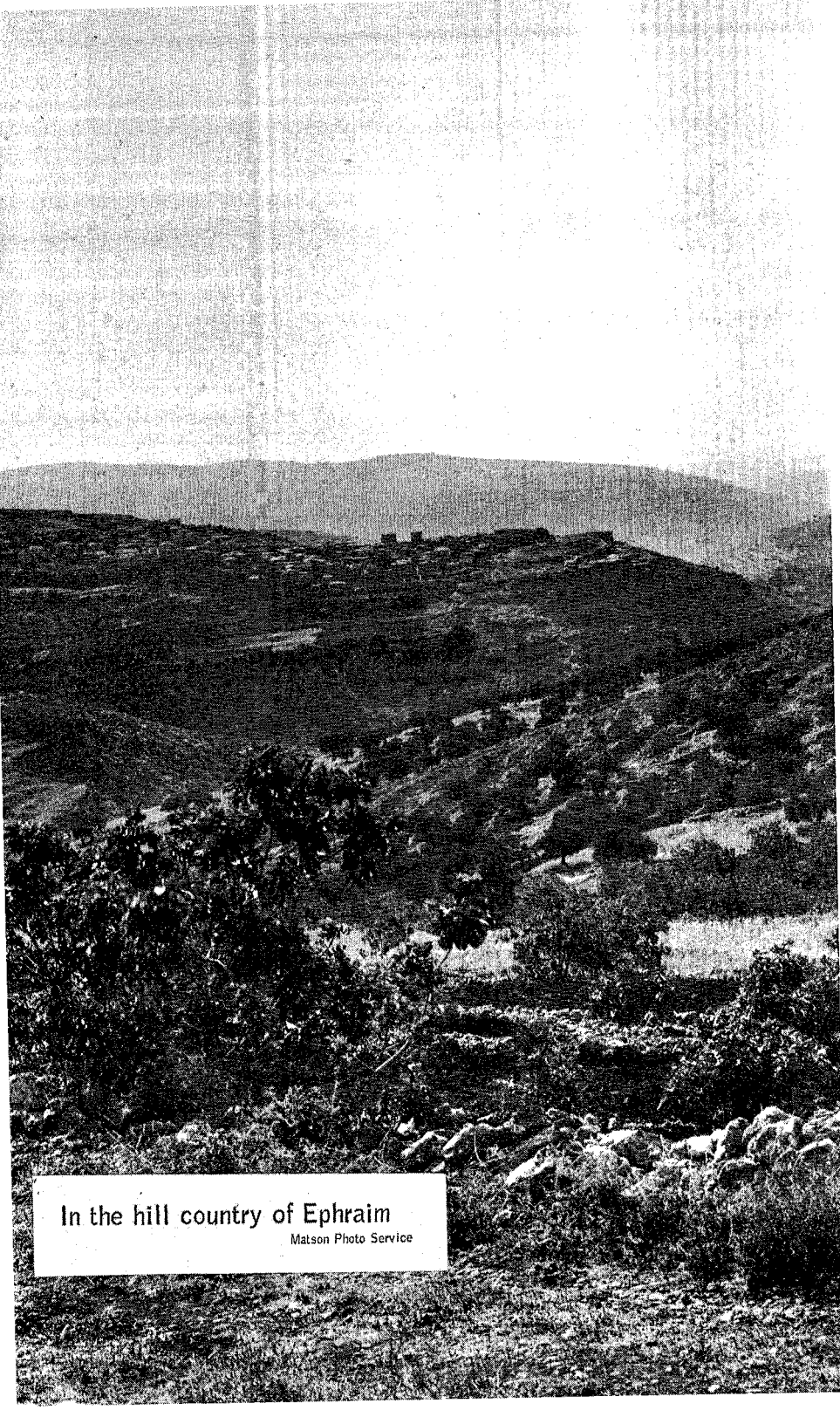
STUDIES IN SAMUEL
CHAPTER 12 IN REVIEW

1. How many questions did Samuel ask the Israelites? _____
2. What color was Samuel's hair when he stood before them? _____
3. What two leaders did Samuel mention as leading Israel out of Egypt? _____
4. What is another name for Jerub-baal? _____
5. What is another name for Bedan? _____
6. The rise of what king had prompted Israel to ask for a king? _____
7. What three things was Israel to do in order to receive God's blessings? _____
8. What sign did Samuel call for to substantiate his word? _____
9. What time of year was it? _____
10. What did they ask Samuel to continue to do for them? _____

**THE BEGINNING
OF SAUL'S REIGN**
I Samuel 9:1 - 12:25

1. Gibeah
—Saul sent to seek asses;
9:1-3
2. Ephraim, and lands of
Shalishah and Shaalim;
—seeking asses; 9:4
3. Land of Zuph
—Meeting with Samuel,
and anointing of Saul;
9:5-8
4. Between Zuph and Gibeah
—Saul meets three groups
of men.
—fulfilling Samuel's
prophecies; 10:9-13.
5. Gibeah
—Saul is questioned by his
uncle; 10:14-16
6. Mizpah
—Saul publicly proclaimed
king; 10:17-27
7. Jabesh-Gilead
—Attack by Nahash the
Ammonite; 11:1-5
8. Gibeah
—Saul gathers army;
11:6-10
9. Jabesh-Gilead
—Saul defeats Ammon;
11:11-13
10. Gilgal
—Samuel's address to
Israel; 11:14—12:25





In the hill country of Ephraim

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PART TWO

THE
REIGN
OF SAUL

13:1—31:13