

Sunday, May 12

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1 Samuel 12:1 - 13:23

12 **1** Then Samuel addressed all Israel: "I have done as you asked and given you a king. **2** Your king is now your leader. I stand here before you—an old, gray-haired man—and my sons serve you. I have served as your leader from the time I was a boy to this very day. **3** Now testify against me in the presence of the LORD and before his anointed one. Whose ox or donkey have I stolen? Have I ever cheated any of you? Have I ever oppressed you? Have I ever taken a bribe and perverted justice? Tell me and I will make right whatever I have done wrong." **4** "No," they replied, "you have never cheated or oppressed us, and you have never taken even a single bribe." **5** "The LORD and his anointed one are my witnesses today," Samuel declared, "that my hands are clean." "Yes, he is a witness," they replied. **6** "It was the LORD who appointed Moses and Aaron," Samuel continued. "He brought your ancestors out of the land of Egypt. **7** Now stand here quietly before the LORD as I remind you of all the great things the LORD has done for you and your ancestors. **8** "When the Israelites were in Egypt and cried out to the LORD, he sent Moses and Aaron to rescue them from Egypt and to bring them into this land. **9** But the people soon forgot about the LORD their God, so he handed them over to Sisera, the commander of Hazor's army, and also to the Philistines and to the king of Moab, who fought against them. **10** "Then they cried to the LORD again and confessed, 'We have sinned by turning away from the LORD and worshiping the images of Baal and Ashtoreth. But we will worship you and you alone if you will rescue us from our enemies.' **11** Then the LORD sent Gideon, Bedan, Jephthah, and Samuel to save you, and you lived in safety. **12** "But when you were afraid of Nahash, the king of Ammon, you came to me and said that you wanted a king to reign over you, even though the LORD your God was already your king. **13** All right, here is the king you have chosen. You asked for him, and the LORD has granted your request. **14** "Now if you fear and worship the LORD and listen to his voice, and if you do not rebel against the LORD's commands, then both you and your king will show that you recognize the LORD as your God. **15** But if you rebel against the LORD's commands and refuse to listen to him, then his hand will be as heavy upon you as it was upon your ancestors. **16** "Now stand here and see the great thing the LORD is about to do. **17** You know that it does not rain at this time of the year during the wheat harvest. I will ask the LORD to send thunder and rain today. Then you will realize how wicked you have been in asking the LORD for a king!" **18** So Samuel called to the LORD, and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day. And all the people were terrified of the

LORD and of Samuel. **19** “Pray to the LORD your God for us, or we will die!” they all said to Samuel. “For now we have added to our sins by asking for a king.” **20** “Don’t be afraid,” Samuel reassured them. “You have certainly done wrong, but make sure now that you worship the LORD with all your heart, and don’t turn your back on him. **21** Don’t go back to worshipping worthless idols that cannot help or rescue you—they are totally useless! **22** The LORD will not abandon his people, because that would dishonor his great name. For it has pleased the LORD to make you his very own people. **23** “As for me, I will certainly not sin against the LORD by ending my prayers for you. And I will continue to teach you what is good and right. **24** But be sure to fear the LORD and faithfully serve him. Think of all the wonderful things he has done for you. **25** But if you continue to sin, you and your king will be swept away.”

13 **1** Saul was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned for forty-two years. **2** Saul selected 3,000 special troops from the army of Israel and sent the rest of the men home. He took 2,000 of the chosen men with him to Micmash and the hill country of Bethel. The other 1,000 went with Saul’s son Jonathan to Gibeah in the land of Benjamin. **3** Soon after this, Jonathan attacked and defeated the garrison of Philistines at Geba. The news spread quickly among the Philistines. So Saul blew the ram’s horn throughout the land, saying, “Hebrews, hear this! Rise up in revolt!” **4** All Israel heard the news that Saul had destroyed the Philistine garrison at Geba and that the Philistines now hated the Israelites more than ever. So the entire Israelite army was summoned to join Saul at Gilgal. **5** The Philistines mustered a mighty army of 3,000 chariots, 6,000 charioteers, and as many warriors as the grains of sand on the seashore! They camped at Micmash east of Beth-aven. **6** The men of Israel saw what a tight spot they were in; and because they were hard pressed by the enemy, they tried to hide in caves, thickets, rocks, holes, and cisterns. **7** Some of them crossed the Jordan River and escaped into the land of Gad and Gilead. Saul’s Disobedience and Samuel’s Rebuke Meanwhile, Saul stayed at Gilgal, and his men were trembling with fear. **8** Saul waited there seven days for Samuel, as Samuel had instructed him earlier, but Samuel still didn’t come. Saul realized that his troops were rapidly slipping away. **9** So he demanded, “Bring me the burnt offering and the peace offerings!” And Saul sacrificed the burnt offering himself. **10** Just as Saul was finishing with the burnt offering, Samuel arrived. Saul went out to meet and welcome him, **11** but Samuel said, “What is this you have done?” Saul replied, “I saw my men scattering from me, and you didn’t arrive when you said you would, and the Philistines are at Micmash ready for battle.” **12** So I said, ‘The Philistines are ready to march against us at Gilgal, and I haven’t even asked for the LORD’s help!’ So I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering myself before you came.” **13** “How foolish!” Samuel exclaimed. “You have not kept the command the LORD your God gave you. Had you kept it, the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. **14** But now your

kingdom must end, for the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart. The LORD has already appointed him to be the leader of his people, because you have not kept the LORD 's command."15 Samuel then left Gilgal and went on his way, but the rest of the troops went with Saul to meet the army. They went up from Gilgal to Gibeah in the land of Benjamin. When Saul counted the men who were still with him, he found only 600 were left! 16 Saul and Jonathan and the troops with them were staying at Geba in the land of Benjamin. The Philistines set up their camp at Micmash. 17 Three raiding parties soon left the camp of the Philistines. One went north toward Ophrah in the land of Shual, 18 another went west to Beth-horon, and the third moved toward the border above the valley of Zeboim near the wilderness. 19 There were no blacksmiths in the land of Israel in those days. The Philistines wouldn't allow them for fear they would make swords and spears for the Hebrews. 20 So whenever the Israelites needed to sharpen their plowshares, picks, axes, or sickles, they had to take them to a Philistine blacksmith. 21 The charges were as follows: a quarter of an ounce of silver for sharpening a plowshare or a pick, and an eighth of an ounce for sharpening an ax or making the point of an ox goad. 22 So on the day of the battle none of the people of Israel had a sword or spear, except for Saul and Jonathan. 23 The pass at Micmash had meanwhile been secured by a contingent of the Philistine army.

John 7:1 - 30

7 1 After this, Jesus traveled around Galilee. He wanted to stay out of Judea, where the Jewish leaders were plotting his death. 2 But soon it was time for the Jewish Festival of Shelters, 3 and Jesus' brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea, where your followers can see your miracles!4 You can't become famous if you hide like this! If you can do such wonderful things, show yourself to the world!" 5 For even his brothers didn't believe in him. 6 Jesus replied, "Now is not the right time for me to go, but you can go anytime. 7 The world can't hate you, but it does hate me because I accuse it of doing evil. 8 You go on. I'm not going to this festival, because my time has not yet come." 9 After saying these things, Jesus remained in Galilee. 10 But after his brothers left for the festival, Jesus also went, though secretly, staying out of public view. 11 The Jewish leaders tried to find him at the festival and kept asking if anyone had seen him. 12 There was a lot of grumbling about him among the crowds. Some argued, "He's a good man," but others said, "He's nothing but a fraud who deceives the people." 13 But no one had the courage to speak favorably about him in public, for they were afraid of getting in trouble with the Jewish leaders. 14 Then, midway through the festival, Jesus went up to the Temple and began to teach. 15 The people were surprised when they heard him. "How does he know so much when

he hasn't been trained?" they asked. **16** So Jesus told them, "My message is not my own; it comes from God who sent me. **17** Anyone who wants to do the will of God will know whether my teaching is from God or is merely my own. **18** Those who speak for themselves want glory only for themselves, but a person who seeks to honor the one who sent him speaks truth, not lies. **19** Moses gave you the law, but none of you obeys it! In fact, you are trying to kill me." **20** The crowd replied, "You're demon possessed! Who's trying to kill you?" **21** Jesus replied, "I did one miracle on the Sabbath, and you were amazed. **22** But you work on the Sabbath, too, when you obey Moses' law of circumcision. (Actually, this tradition of circumcision began with the patriarchs, long before the law of Moses.) **23** For if the correct time for circumcising your son falls on the Sabbath, you go ahead and do it so as not to break the law of Moses. So why should you be angry with me for healing a man on the Sabbath? **24** Look beneath the surface so you can judge correctly." **25** Some of the people who lived in Jerusalem started to ask each other, "Isn't this the man they are trying to kill? **26** But here he is, speaking in public, and they say nothing to him. Could our leaders possibly believe that he is the Messiah? **27** But how could he be? For we know where this man comes from. When the Messiah comes, he will simply appear; no one will know where he comes from." **28** While Jesus was teaching in the Temple, he called out, "Yes, you know me, and you know where I come from. But I'm not here on my own. The one who sent me is true, and you don't know him. **29** But I know him because I come from him, and he sent me to you." **30** Then the leaders tried to arrest him; but no one laid a hand on him, because his time had not yet come.

Psalms 108:1 - 13

108 1 My heart is confident in you, O God; no wonder I can sing your praises with all my heart! **2** Wake up, lyre and harp! I will wake the dawn with my song. **3** I will thank you, LORD, among all the people. I will sing your praises among the nations. **4** For your unfailing love is higher than the heavens. Your faithfulness reaches to the clouds. **5** Be exalted, O God, above the highest heavens. May your glory shine over all the earth. **6** Now rescue your beloved people. Answer and save us by your power. **7** God has promised this by his holiness : "I will divide up Shechem with joy. I will measure out the valley of Succoth. **8** Gilead is mine, and Manasseh, too. Ephraim, my helmet, will produce my warriors, and Judah, my scepter, will produce my kings. **9** But Moab, my washbasin, will become my servant, and I will wipe my feet on Edom and shout in triumph over Philistia." **10** Who will bring me into the fortified city? Who will bring me victory over Edom? **11** Have you rejected us, O God? Will you no longer march

with our armies? **12** Oh, please help us against our enemies, for all human help is useless. **13** With God's help we will do mighty things, for he will trample down our foes.

Proverbs 15:4

15 4 Gentle words are a tree of life; a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.