

## Samuel

### 1 Samuel 7:3-6

3 Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, "If you return to the LORD with all your hearts, then put away the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths from among you, and prepare your hearts for the LORD, and serve Him only; and He will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines." 4 So the children of Israel put away the Baals and the Ashtoreths, and served the LORD only. 5 And Samuel said, "Gather all Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray to the LORD for you." 6 So they gathered together at Mizpah, drew water, and poured it out before the LORD. And they fasted that day, and said there, "We have sinned against the LORD." And Samuel judged the children of Israel at Mizpah.

Samuel was a great leader. He lived in very perilous times for Israel. The Philistines had never been driven out of the land like God had commanded Israel to do. For this disobedience Israel would suffer all their days.

But Samuel loved his country, but like most people of God he could only do so much. The battles that had been fought in the past had taken thousands of the lives of their best young men. The nation had been in servitude to different nations over a period of about four hundred years. All of this was because of disobedience on the part of God's chosen nation Israel.

But Samuel does what he can, and it is through him that the nation is finally brought to revival. Through Samuel two leaders will come on the scene who will subdue Israel's enemies and finally bring peace to the nation. But how did Samuel do all that? What can we learn from his life? How can we duplicate that in our nation? Can we ever have peace or is it only an mirage that seems sure until just before we get there and then it vanishes away.

#### I. Samuel's Early Life

##### A. He got off to a good start

1. He had very godly parents.
2. His mother, as we have seen, has a tremendous view of God.

##### B. He came to know the Lord in his youth

1. He did not know the regret of wasted years.
2. From his youth he had known God and served Him.

##### C. He stood faithful to God even when he was young.

1. When God gave the message to him concerning Eli Samuel did not shirk from his prophetic responsibility.

#### II. Samuel's Early Adult Years

##### A. The ark of God was no longer in Shiloh.

1. As we saw last week it was captured by the Philistines.
  2. They have it for about seven months.
  3. When it is sent back, God strikes hundreds of Israelites dead for desecrating the ark by looking inside.
  4. So it is removed finally to Kerjath Jearim. 1 Sam 7:2 So it was that the ark remained in Kirjath Jearim a long time; it was there twenty years. And all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD.
  5. It is at this point this morning's text begins.
- B. But Samuel spends his time serving God.
1. He established the first school of the prophets
    - a. Often referred to as the "sons of the prophets"
      - (1) Prophets had been rare but now they are everywhere.
      - (2) This group of trained men had an influence on the nation.
      - (3) Understanding this helps us understand how the nation could come to a place of revival so suddenly.
    - b. This was very long range thinking on Samuel's part.
      - (1) As goes the faith of a people so goes their nation.
      - (2) Tomorrow we will observe Memorial Day formally called Decoration Day when people would decorate the graves of the soldiers who died in the Civil War.
      - (3) But if you will study history, you will find that the Civil War was the most unnecessary war our nation ever fought.
      - (4) In England the slavery issue had been settled through the tireless efforts of William Wilberforce.
      - (5) But in America we would have to kill over half a million soldiers to settle the matter, and then that really didn't settle it.
      - (6) Be sure your sin will find you out, Moses said in Numbers 23:23 and for any nation that is still true today.
    - c. These continued for the remainder of the history of the nation.
      - (1) We will continue to see these "sons of the prophets" through the remainder of Israel's history.
      - (2) We see them in the days of Elijah and Elisha and beyond.

- (3) Very few of us leave a legacy that lasts a hundred years but Samuel's legacy lasted another 400 years.

III. He brought the first real repentance & revival to Israel

- A. During the time of the Judges when the people called on God it is more or less because they are being afflicted and they want relief.
  1. Our prisons are full of people who are sorry, sorry they got caught; sorry they are in prison; sorry for all the results of their sin.
    - a. This type of repentance does not last.
    - b. It has no life changing results.
  2. But real repentance is a deep contrition for the sin itself, without regard to the results.
  3. It involves change in the way we live.
    - a. "If you return to the LORD with all your hearts, then put away the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths from among you,
  4. It involves preparing our hearts.
    - a. Prepare your hearts for the LORD
  5. It involves service.
    - a. And serve Him only
    - b. This is primarily worship, prayer, and fasting as we see in our text.

IV. Samuel and the Kings

- A. He anoints the first kings of Israel
  1. He anoints Saul, the people's choice.
  2. He anoints David, God's choice.
- B. He stands up to the king.
  1. He shows that even the king is subject to the word of God.
    - a. He set an early precedent that the king is accountable to God.
    - b. Throughout Israel's history this is true.
    - c. Nathan confronts David and Jeremiah confronts Zedekiah.
  2. He was very concerned about his nation
    - a. For its safety
    - b. For its morality.

- (1) He knew that as goes the people so goes the nation.
- (2) He knew that God blesses righteousness and curses wickedness.
- c. For its relationship to God
  - (1) We see his sorrow when the nation rejected God in their desire for a king.
- d. We see his sorrow when Saul was rejected by God for his disobedience.

Samuel was a great man. He helped change a nation. There is no limit to what people can do when they are dedicated to God.