

Dr. Robert Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, Session 8, 1 Samuel 11-12

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This is Dr. Bob Chisholm in his teaching on 1 and 2 Samuel. This is session 8 on 1 Samuel 11-12, Saul's Finest Hour, Samuel Confronts the People.

Our next lesson is going to cover 1 Samuel 11 and 12. In these two chapters, they really comprise one episode but with two different emphases. In 1 Samuel 11 I've entitled this Saul's finest hour. Saul is going to do well in this chapter.

And then in 1 Samuel chapter 12, Samuel is going to confront the people in the aftermath of renewing the kingship with Saul. You'll recall that in 1 Samuel 9 and 10, our previous lesson, the Lord led Saul to Samuel. Samuel anointed Saul as king of Israel privately and commissioned Saul to begin the deliverance of Israel from the Philistines.

Saul balked at that, was hesitant, really did not follow through on that at all. Eventually, Samuel summons all of the people to Mizpah to anoint their new king. Saul is present for the occasion but hiding among the baggage, clearly, an individual who is not excited about becoming the king of Israel.

Samuel nevertheless anoints him publicly, and declares him as king, but some of the people are not impressed. I think they realize this is not exactly what we asked for. Saul himself, though he looks good, in his demeanor is not all that impressive and king-like with his hesitation.

And also, Samuel read the rules of kingship to the people, which we read from Deuteronomy chapter 17 verses 14 through 20. And I think the people realize that this is not going to be exactly the kind of king that we wanted. He's not going to be like all the nations.

He won't be able to accumulate chariots and women and money, a different type of king still under the Lord's control. And so, there's a little bit of uncertainty as we leave chapter 10. Is Saul really going to be successful? Where do we go from here? It doesn't appear as if Israel is fully behind him and Saul himself seems hesitant.

So that brings us to chapter 11 where we read about an enemy king in the Transjordan area, east of the Jordan River, an Ammonite king by the name of Nahash, whose name oddly enough could be taken to mean snake. I doubt if his mother named him that. This may be a name that he gave himself to indicate that he was a tough guy, or maybe it's a name that his enemies gave to him, a literary name so to speak.

Anyway, he's Nahash the Ammonite. And in chapter 11 verse 1 we read that he went up and besieged Jabesh Gilead. Now Jabesh is an Israelite town, but it's located in Gilead, east of the Jordan.

And all the men of Jabesh said to him, make a treaty with us and we will be subject to you. It's interesting that in the Dead Sea Scroll of Samuel, found in cave 4 at Qumran, there's an additional verse at the beginning of chapter 11. And in this particular case, I'm not sure if it represents the original text or not.

It may just be an ancient tradition. It shows up in Josephus as well, in antiquities. But this extra verse gives us a little more background on what may have happened.

And some scholars feel that it was accidentally omitted, kind of like that material we referred to at the beginning of chapter 10. That may or may not be the case. But this additional material says Nahash, king of the Ammonites, was oppressing the Gadites and Reubenites severely.

Remember these are tribes that live over in that region. And he was boring out every right eye, allowing no one to save Israel. There was no one left among the Israelites across the Jordan whose right eye, Nahash, king of the Ammonites, had not bored out.

7,000 men had escaped from the power of the Ammonites, however, and had come to Jabesh Gilead. So, if that's accurate, it gives us some background. It's consistent with what we're going to see in the story.

At any rate, Nahash, the Ammonite, is creating some serious problems over in the Jabesh area. In verse 2 of 1 Samuel 11, he replies to the Israelites, I'll make a treaty with you, only on the condition that I gouge out the right eye of every one of you, and so bring disgrace on all Israel. So Nahash apparently doesn't care for the Israelites, and he wants to make a treaty with them.

He's not going blind them entirely. We have other examples, by the way, in the Old Testament of mutilation. Judges 1 mentions a king, the Israelites cut off his Adonai Bezek, a Canaanite king.

The Israelites cut off his thumbs and big toes, and we discover this is what he did to others. So, he's getting what he deserves. We also read in Judges 16 about the Philistines taking Samson's eyes, and blinding him, and we also have another incident along these lines in 2 Kings 25.7. But in this case, Nahash doesn't want to take out both eyes, just the right eye.

He wants to disgrace the Israelites. So, all Israelites are walking around with just one eye. But they're still going to be able to produce.

They're still going to be able to farm their land and produce and give him tribute. So I think that's the philosophy here. And so he tells the elders of Jabesh, yeah, we can strike a treaty, and this is going to be what we call a suzerain vassal treaty, where Nahash will be the Lord, the Israelites will be the subjects, and they will pay tribute.

But you've got to let me disgrace you by gouging out your right eye. Well, verse 3 of 1 Samuel 11 tells us the elders of Jabesh said to him, give us seven days so we can send messengers throughout Israel. If no one comes to rescue us, we will surrender to you.

Now this may seem a little weird. What king in his right mind is going to let them send for help? But it actually makes really good sense when you understand how these campaigns worked in this culture. Nahash is outside Jabesh Gilead.

He's going to have to besiege the city. He can eventually take it, but he's going to have to besiege it, and that's going to take a while. It's going to take a while for the residents to run out of food and get so desperate that they give in.

So, he sees an opportunity here to finish up this campaign quickly. Hey, seven more days and I'll have them under my authority and I won't have to waste time here besieging this city. But it assumes a certain confidence on his part.

He's fairly confident no one's going to come. And if that passage that we read earlier is correct, accurate, and maybe a part of the original text, it gives us more perspective. He'd already conquered the surrounding towns.

There wasn't really anybody left. And so, I think he is so confident in his power and his army that he's thinking, okay, I'll go along with this. I'll let them send for help.

Nobody's going to come. And even if they do come, they won't be able to defeat us. So, I'd rather run that risk.

We might have to win a battle against an Israelite army in a few days, but I can terminate this campaign and I can have this city as my own quickly and not get involved in some kind of prolonged siege where some of my troops are going to have to be retained here. I think that's the logic behind this. At first, it seems as if he is being unwise in agreeing to this, but it makes sense, I think, from his perspective.

And so, they sent out messengers and messengers came to Gibeah of Saul, Gibeah where Saul lives. And they reported these terms to the people and they all wept aloud. And Saul was returning from the fields behind his oxen.

By the way, he's not looking very king-like. He's still farming. He's out in the field.

It's very reminiscent of the judges that God would call. Gideon, you know, was working with wheat when the Lord called him. And so, Saul is farming away.

He's not living in a big royal palace at this point apparently. And he asked, what's wrong with everyone? Why are they weeping? And then they repeated to him what the men of Jabesh had said. And then the Spirit of God is going to come upon Saul and he's going to go and deliver the people.

But I think we have to do a little review here. This isn't just coincidental that messengers come to Gibeah of Saul. In other words, they come to the tribe of Benjamin.

We've got to go back to the book of Judges where we discover that way back there was a connection, an ancient connection, between Jabesh-Gilead and Gibeah. If you recall, in the final chapters of Judges there was a civil war because the Israelites had abused the Levites and his concubine, the Benjaminites of Gibeah had done this, and it precipitated a civil war. And the tribes of Israel came against the Benjaminites and pretty much wiped the entire tribe out.

And according to Judges, only 600 Benjaminite men were left. And the Israelites had made a vow, a foolish vow, a rash vow, that they would not give their daughters to the survivors as wives. So, we've got 600 Benjaminites who need wives or the tribe's going to disappear.

But they discovered that the town of Jabesh-Gilead had not sent men to the battle, the Israelites, and so they wiped out the city. They kidnapped 400 virgins and then they gave them to the Benjaminite survivors. Now they were of course 200 wives short, so they concocted another plan where they kidnapped the girls of Shiloh.

And anyway, all 600 Benjaminites end up with wives, but there's this ancient connection. So as time goes on, some Benjaminites would say, yeah, my father's a Benjaminite, my mother was from Jabesh-Gilead, I have a connection to that town as well. And so I think in light of that connection, it makes sense that Jabesh-Gilead would have sent to Benjamin for help because of what transpired back in the days of the Judges.

Saul sees everyone weeping, and asks why are they weeping, and in verse 6 of chapter 11, when Saul heard their words, the Spirit of God comes powerfully upon him again, just as the Spirit did back in chapter 10. In chapter 10, I think Samuel expected Saul, once the Spirit came upon him, to do something militarily against the Philistines. He didn't do that.

Remember, he went to the high place to worship, and that was that. But this time, he burns with anger, and he takes a pair of oxen, cuts them into pieces, and sends the pieces by messengers throughout Israel. And he proclaims, after all, he is the king, he has the authority to bring an army together.

He says this is what will be done to the oxen of anyone who does not follow Saul and Samuel. And he aligns himself with Samuel at this point. The terror of the Lord falls on the people, and they come together as one.

And Saul musters them at Bezek, and there's a large army that has come together. This is also reminiscent of the Judges. When the Levites' concubine was gang-raped and murdered, he was so angry that he cut her up and sent body parts throughout Israel, mustering the Israelites to come and fight against the Benjaminites.

He basically said, this is what Benjamin did to my wife, and you all need to come and fight against the Benjaminites. They are not willing to turn over the culprits, and so we are going to launch a campaign against them. So it's reminiscent what Saul does here, but it's much different if you think about it.

In contrast to the Levites, Saul is cutting up and sending the body parts of a team of oxen, not a murdered woman, but a team of oxen to the tribes. And he is rallying the Israelites to rescue fellow Israelites, rather than kill their brothers. And furthermore, this event would end with the residence of Yahveh's Gilead being delivered, not murdered or kidnapped.

And so the point of the contrast seems to be that a new era has arrived, perhaps with Saul. One in which the nation is going to be unified, truly united against a common enemy, Nahash the Ammonite, and not torn apart by civil war. So if the similarities are intended, maybe that is the significance of what's going on here.

Also, when it says that the Israelites came together as one man in verse 7, that language echoes Judges 20. Back in Judges 20, the tribes unified as one man against Gibeah in order to fight against their own brothers. But here, Saul, a resident of Gibeah, musters the Israelites as one man in order to fight against a foreign enemy.

So I think there are some contrasts with that earlier event. And this one is viewed more positively. Israel seems to be unifying here under their new king Saul against a common enemy.

Whereas in the Judges period, there was dissension, civil war, and a lot of tragedy. And so Saul is going to lead his army up to Yahveh's Gilead with the intention of delivering the city from this awful Ammonite king Nahash. And so they send a

message to the people of Yahveh, by the time the sun is hot tomorrow, you will be rescued.

And the messengers went and reported this to the men of Yahveh, and they were elated. As you might expect, we're not going to have to lose our right eyes after all. And they said to the Ammonites, tomorrow we will surrender to you.

A little bit of deception here. And you can do to us whatever you like. So, they're buying some time.

The next day, Saul separates his men into three divisions. And that is reminiscent to me of Gideon's tactics against the Midianites. So it may be that Saul is being portrayed as a new Gideon during the time when Gideon had gotten past his fear and was ready to actually believe the Lord and fight.

So, you have hesitant Gideon progressing in Judges chapter 7 to the point where he does lead Israel to victory. Maybe here you've got hesitant Saul making progress to the point where he's going to win a victory as well. There are some parallels there.

And so, he divides the men up into three divisions. During the last watch of the night, they broke into the camp of the Ammonites, and they slaughtered them until the heat of the day. So, they ambushed the Ammonites.

Surprise attack. And those who survived were scattered so that no two of them were left together. And then the people said, who was it that asked, shall Saul reign over us? Turn these men over to us, so that we may put them to death.

So, remember, at the end of chapter 10, there were individuals who had not bought into the idea of Saul being king. And now some individuals are saying, where are they? Where is that group of people? We're going to put them to death. Saul obviously is a capable leader.

But Saul, to his credit, says no one will be put to death today. For this day, the Lord has rescued Israel. This is clearly Saul's finest moment.

He is not seeking revenge at this point. He recognizes nobody's going to be put to death. The Lord has won a great victory over Israel, and we're going to celebrate that fact.

And this is a lot like Gideon as well. After Gideon won a great victory, he got in trouble with the Ephraimites. They were ticked off that they had not been invited to the battle or whatever.

Their pride was hurt. But Gideon was able to get them calmed down and avoid a civil war on the heels of this great victory over the Midianites. Saul does the same thing here.

He's promoting unity among the people, not taking revenge on those who have challenged him. And he's basically saying, let's celebrate what the Lord has done. Saul's finest hour, I think the main theme that emerges here comes right from Saul's lips.

The Lord has rescued Israel. And this is an important point because the people wanted a king because they felt insecure. There were guys like Nahash the Ammonite in their world who were threatening, and they just wanted to feel secure.

And they felt like if we have a king that we can see with a standing army, we'll be secure. When the Lord was their king and fully capable of protecting them. And what we're seeing here is a reminder right from Saul himself.

The Lord is the Savior of Israel. It's not a king. It's not really me.

It's the Lord that has rescued his people. And so, this is the main theme of this first part of this episode here in 1 Samuel 11. The Lord alone is his people's Savior and source of security.

A very important lesson for us today, and it was certainly a vital lesson for the Israelites at this point in time, given their lack of faith and the problems that they were experiencing. And so we could flesh that out a little by saying the Lord is fully capable of delivering his people from their enemies. And he must be the sole object of his people's trust.

That was true then and it's still true today. And also, God's supernatural enablement is the key to effective spiritual leadership. Saul demonstrates some leadership qualities here.

He's made some progress from the time when he was hiding among the baggage. And it's the Lord's supernatural enablement that was the key in this, because remember in verse 6 it was the Spirit of God that came upon him. Now that's not always a guarantee.

Human responsibility is also an important factor in all of this. The first time the Spirit came upon Saul and he was prophesying didn't lead to obedient, wise action. This time it does.

But it's the Lord that enables. That's not a guarantee that people will still do the right thing. I mean, we who are Christians possess the Holy Spirit.

That doesn't mean that we always walk in the Spirit. But in this case, Saul was in line with God's purposes and God's supernatural enablement was the key to him being a successful leader, in this case in the form of a military victor who delivered the Israelites from this Ammonite king. Well, Samuel sees an opportunity here to renew the kingship.

At the end of chapter 10 when Saul was chosen and presented to Israel, not everyone was on board. And so, it's appropriate at this point in time after this military victory to really renew the kingship. And so he says in verse 14, come let us go to Gilgal and there renew the kingship.

And so, all the people go to Gilgal and they make Saul king in the presence of the Lord. They offer fellowship offerings and Saul and all the Israelites hold a great celebration and chapter 11 comes to an end. Then Samuel is going to say some things.

It looks to me as if it's within this same context historically because chapter 12 verse 1 begins, Samuel said to all Israel, so now that we've renewed kingship and we're having this celebration, Samuel feels it's important to confront the people. And so this is the second major part of this episode. Samuel is going to confront the people and he's going to remind them that the security of God's covenant people depends on their allegiance to the Lord who remains committed to them.

So, they won a great victory. Saul has given the Lord the credit. They have renewed kingship.

Everybody's excited about Saul as king now it seems. But Samuel is going to use this occasion to confront them and challenge them to maintain their allegiance to the Lord because it's not so much the king that is their source of security, it's the Lord himself. And so, Samuel's going to confront them in this chapter.

And he's also going to defend himself because there's a sense in which Samuel has been the leader of Israel. Samuel earlier led Israel into battle in 1st Samuel chapter 7 and won a great victory. So, there's a sense in which now that the king has been solidified, the kingship has been renewed in chapter 11, Saul is in place, and there's a sense in which Samuel is going to move aside for this king.

And as he does this, he wants to make sure that the people understand that he has been an honest leader. Remember they complained that his sons were not like him and so he wants to make sure that his quality as a leader is recognized by the people and they don't accuse him of anything. And so, as we go into chapter 12, he says to all Israel, I have listened to everything you said to me and have set a king over you.

That sounds like what we read in chapter 8 with some qualifications we've seen. The Lord isn't just giving them a king like all the nations. There are some assumed qualifications here.

The king is not going to do what the typical king does. But Samuel is saying, I've given you the king you wanted. Now you have a king as your leader.

As for me, I am old and gray and my sons are here with you. I have been your leader from my youth until this day. So, Samuel is recalling his service on their behalf and he says, here I stand, testify against me in the presence of the Lord and his anointed.

If you have any problem with me, a lingering problem, you need to state that right now. If I have been dishonest in any way, you need to bring that up right now. Whose ox have I taken? Whose donkey have I taken? Whom have I cheated? Whom have I oppressed? From whose hand have I accepted a bribe to make me shut my eyes? If I have done any of these things, I will make it right.

So, I have not taken anything from you. I have not accepted bribes. I have been an honest judge and leader.

And the people recognize this. They say you have not cheated or oppressed us. You have not taken anything from anyone's hand.

And so, Samuel then says, the Lord is witness against you. And also, his anointed, the king, is witness this day that you have not found anything in my hand. So, he is a witness, they said.

Samuel wants to just be really clear here. I have been an honest leader. As I step aside, you have nothing against me.

And they agree. And then he says to the people, it is the Lord who appointed Moses and Aaron and brought your ancestors up out of Egypt. At this point, Samuel is going to kind of do a rehearsal of their history as a background for his exhortation to them.

He's going to be reminding them that it's the Lord who is ultimately your king. And now then stand here because I'm going to confront you with evidence before the Lord as to all the righteous acts performed by the Lord for you and your ancestors. So, I want to remind you, that I have been a just leader and I want to remind you that the Lord has been a faithful, faithful king for you.

And he has performed righteous acts. He has delivered you time and time again and has come through for you. And then he goes on after Jacob entered Egypt, they cried to the Lord for help.

And the Lord sent Moses and Aaron who brought your ancestors out of Egypt and settled them in this place. But they forgot the Lord, their God. So, he sold them into the hand of Sisera.

And now Samuel is in the judges' period. He points out that actually Moses and Aaron didn't bring them into the land. They set it in motion and Joshua completed what they started.

Remember the Lord wouldn't allow them to go into the land. But during the judges' period, they forgot the Lord. And so, he sold them into the hand of Sisera, the commander of the army of that's Judges 4. And into the hands of the Philistines.

If you read through judges, you'll see there were times when the Philistines lorded it over Israel, especially during the time of Samson. And the king of Moab, remember Eglon, the king of Moab, Judges 3, Ehud assassinated him. And so, the Moabites at times oppressed the Israelites who fought against them.

And they cried out to the Lord. You know, the cycles in judges where the Lord will bring punishment upon the people, disciplining them because of their idolatry. And then they cry out to the Lord and the Lord sends a deliverer.

That's kind of the basic pattern that we see in judges. Oddly enough though, in the Samson narrative, they don't cry out for help as far as we can see. Yet the Lord still decides to bring them relief and deliverance through Samson.

They cried out to the Lord typically and said, we have sinned. We have forsaken the Lord and served the Baals and the Ashtoreths, but now deliver us from the hands of our enemies and we will serve you. And then the Lord typically would send a deliverer.

And he mentions Jeru Baal, which is another name for Gideon. In the Hebrew text, it talks about Badan. We don't know anybody named Badan from the judges' period.

And so, you'll see emendations in English translations here. NIV reads Barak. Maybe Badan is a corruption of the name Barak.

We're not entirely sure what's going on there. But then Jephthah, and he mentions himself, Samuel, which seems a little odd. But Samuel is in a sense the last of the judges and he brought deliverance to the people.

Some people would say it would be a little weird for Samuel to refer to himself in the third person here. Maybe that's a later scribal edition, albeit inspired, that just wants to glorify Samuel as well as these other judges. We're not sure, but he is mentioned there.

And he delivered you of someone to read Samson instead of Samuel. But at any rate, what Samuel is doing here, he's rehearsing the basic contours of the history. You rebelled against the Lord during that period.

When you cried out and repented of your sins and threw your idols away, the Lord would raise up judges to deliver you. And he delivered you from the hands of your enemies all around you so that you lived in safety. And this is relevant for their complaint, you know, earlier complaint because they want to be secure.

And I think Samuel is reminding them here, you know, any time when you didn't feel like you were secure, it seemed as if you'd lost battles and enemies were oppressing you. It wasn't because of the Lord being weak or negligent. It was because of your sin.

Whenever you've been insecure and oppressed, it was because of your sin. But then when you repented and you cried out, the Lord would deliver you. In other words, you've been just fine.

If you really had followed the Lord, you'd be just fine. The Lord has always taken care of you and delivered you. But when you saw that Nahash, king of the Ammonites, was moving against you, you said to me, no, we want a king to rule over us, even though the Lord, your God, was your king.

So he's not letting them off the hook here. He's taking them back to the incident in chapter 8, and he's reminding them, you know what, you were complaining about my sons being dishonest. But what really was the problem was your fear of Nahash, even though the Lord, your God, was your king.

Now here is the king you have chosen. And it's interesting that he says, you've chosen him, even though earlier the Lord had emphasized that he had chosen him. Both are true in a sense.

You wanted a king, you got one. The one you asked for, there is, you know, the Saul idea. See, the Lord has set a king over you.

And so now Samuel's going to emphasize, that just because you have a king, don't think you can just do whatever you want to do. You're secure now that you have this king. If you fear the Lord and serve and obey him and do not rebel against his commands, and if both you and the king who reigns over you follow the Lord, your God, good.

So, it's pretty clear that the king has a responsibility. And we saw this in Deuteronomy 17 verses 14 through 20, which we looked at in our last lesson. The

king is supposed to be familiar with the law, read it, and lead the people in obeying it.

And so, it's very clear here that just because they have a king, there's no guarantees. The rules are the same as they were during the judges' period. If you turn away from the Lord, he will have to discipline you.

If you obey him, you'll be fine. But just having a king doesn't guarantee anything at this point. You still are responsible for fearing the Lord and obeying him.

But if you do not obey the Lord, verse 15 of chapter 12, and if you rebel against his commands, his hand will be against you as it was against your ancestors. So now then, verse 16, stand still and see this great thing the Lord is about to do before your eyes. What the Lord is going to do here is give them a sign, a confirming sign that Samuel is speaking the truth to them and they need to listen carefully to him.

Is it not wheat harvest now? In ancient Israel, wheat harvest was going to take place after barley harvest in May or June, after the winter rains. So you're not expecting to have a thunderstorm during the wheat harvest. And now I will call on the Lord to send thunder and rain.

And of course, this is a little disturbing because that kind of a storm could ruin some of the wheat harvest. And so maybe they're thinking, no, is the Lord going to take the harvest away from us? And you will realize what an evil thing you did in the eyes of the Lord when you asked for a king. So, the Lord's going to give you a sign here that what I'm telling you is true.

And Samuel called on the Lord and that same day the Lord sent thunder and rain. So all the people stood in awe of the Lord and of Samuel. So the Lord answers Samuel's prayer and demonstrates his power over the thunder and rain.

There's no reference to it destroying the harvest or anything like that, but it got the people's attention and they realized that what Samuel says is true. And the people all said to Samuel, pray to the Lord your God for your servants so that we will not die. They, I think, understand the gravity of what they've done, perhaps for the first time.

You know, there's always that time in life when you sinned and then you realize, yeah, I really blew it on that. I really sinned. The Lord has been very patient with me, but I'm worried where you really come to grips with what you've done.

And I don't think you can truly repent until that happens. And they see that here. They understand we have added to all our other sins the evil of asking for a king.

So, they understand that asking for a king was wrong and they're worried that maybe the Lord is going to punish them very severely for this. And so, they asked Samuel to intercede on their behalf. And by the way, Samuel is emerging here as the intercessor of Israel.

We saw that in 1st Samuel 7. When they threw away their idols, they came back to the Lord. Samuel led them in repentance and then led them to victory over the Philistines. And here he is also functioning as the intercessor.

The people are coming to him and they're saying, you pray to the Lord your God for your servants so that we will not die. In other words, we know that you have a relationship with him. Pray on our behalf.

And I think what we see here is, historically speaking, Samuel is a prophet like Moses. Remember Moses said, the Lord will raise up a prophet like me. And Samuel, in many ways, as you read through Samuel, is portrayed as a new Moses.

He is very much like Moses. But I don't think that exhausts the Deuteronomic statement by Moses. Samuel is the first expression of this.

He's the first fulfillment of this. Ultimately, Jesus is the one who is the prophet like Moses. But there is a sense in which Samuel is functioning that way here.

And Samuel is going to go to bat for the people. In verse 20, he says, do not be afraid. You have done all this evil.

Yet do not turn away from the Lord. I agree, you've sinned. But don't turn away from the Lord.

But serve the Lord with all your heart. You're not going to die. But you do need to turn to the Lord and serve him.

Do not turn away after useless idols. They can do you no good, nor can they rescue you, because they are useless. For the sake of his great name, the Lord will not reject his people, because the Lord was pleased to make you his own.

So, he says, the Lord's not going to reject you. The Lord is committed to you via covenant. As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you.

So, Samuel realizes, that if I don't intercede on behalf of the people, they're the Lord's people. He has not rejected them. And if I don't do my job as a prophet, I will be sinning.

So, you realize, yes, I'm going to intercede for you. But be sure to the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart. Consider what great things he has done for you.

Yet if you persist in doing evil, both you and your king will perish. So, it's quite clear that having a king is no guarantee. Rules are the same as they've always been.

If you're faithful to the Lord, he will protect you and make you secure. If you fall away from the Lord, he will have to discipline you because of that. So, in this particular chapter, which we've entitled, Samuel Confronts the People, I think the big idea is the security of God's covenant people depends on their allegiance to the Lord, who remains committed to them.

It's not so much about a king, it's about obedience. And we could flesh that out a little bit in this way. We could say, that even when his people rebel, the Lord offers them security in exchange for their renewed covenantal allegiance to him.

And the Lord remains faithful to his covenant commitment, even when his people prove unworthy. So that brings us to the end of this lesson. In chapter 13, we'll begin to read more about Saul's career.

Unfortunately, 1 Samuel 11, Saul's finest hour was just that. Things are going to go downhill from here. And so, we'll take that chapter up in our next lesson.

This is Dr. Bob Chisholm in his teaching on 1 and 2 Samuel. This is session 8 on 1 Samuel 11-12, Saul's Finest Hour, Samuel Confronts the People.