

THE BOOK OF 1 SAMUEL

"Samuel's Last Days"

1 Samuel 12:1-25

Introduction

1. There is no question about it. Samuel was one of the greatest and most important judges in the history of Israel. It is recorded that he judged Israel his entire life (7:15). He was the last of the judges. Israel wanted a king (8:4, 5) and the Lord granted them their request (8:7-22).

2. God's selection for the king was Saul. He provided Samuel with a specific identification of him (9:1 - 10:8). A second broader selection system was provided by which Saul was singled out as the king (10:7-27; cf. Josh. 7:16-18).

3. It was not, however, until the defeat of the Ammonites that Saul was given general acceptance by the population (11:1-15). This having been gained, Samuel then reviewed his own life before the nation. At the same moment, he sought to secure the king to his kingdom. This is the way he did it:

1. He DECLARED Samuel's integrity vv. 1-5.

a. In his position v. 1.

As a judge, he responded to the request for a king. He "made" a king over them. He senses he was not wrong in doing this.

b. In his person v. 2.

He gives in one huge sweep the fact that his life from childhood until old age had been in the presence of the people. How true this was since it all took place in the tabernacle. He was open to their gaze.

c. In his practice vv. 3-5.

Those who have positions often take advantage of others. Samuel had not. He calls three witnesses to this: the people, God, and himself. He had avoided stealing, defrauding, oppressing, and bribing. His record was clear.

2. He ENUMERATED God's faithfulness vv. 6-12.

a. Example A: Egyptian deliverance vv. 6-8.

Samuel asks for the opportunity to "reason" with Israel how God expressed Himself in "righteous acts" in dealing with the nation from Moses until the Egyptian bondage was broken. Without using a verb, Samuel just accents

the gracious work of "the Lord."

b. Example B: Judges period vv. 9-11.

The sinfulness of the nation is mentioned. Their crying unto God and ultimate deliverance is recorded. A new name, Bedan, appears among the judges here. He is not mentioned in the Book of Judges or elsewhere in the Bible. He may well be "Barak" which is the name suggested by the LXX. Samuel is included in the enumerated list, and some feel the text should read Samson.

c. Example C: Ammonite defeat v. 12.

Even the victory under Saul over the Ammonites is claimed as a faithful act of God on behalf of Israel. That was fresh on their minds.

NOTE: This method of Samuel to call up the past to give God praise is a lesson for us all. Romans 8:28 must not only be employed for a present emergency, but a testimony to His faithfulness in the past. Glory to God!

3. He ANTICIPATED Israel's future vv. 13-25.

a. It was conditioned vv. 13-15.

Here is affirmative action toward God. It was up to Israel as to whether blessing would be theirs. The three verbs: fear, serve, and obey, are the key. To rebel against the Lord would mean disaster again. Oh, how often the principle of Psalm 1 is announced in the Bible!

b. It was accredited vv. 16-18.

To confirm his word as from the Lord, Samuel appealed to God to perform a miracle. It was the dry season, yet God sent a thunderstorm! Weather was used to prove God's word through Samuel (cf. 7:10). It was all of God.

c. It was supported vv. 19-25.

Two basic supports for the nation are given, despite their choice of a king: 1) God's continued claim on the people as His own, and 2) Samuel's own prayers for them.

Conclusion Following this stirring appeal of Samuel to Israel, he was called of God to rebuke Saul twice (13, 15). Later he anointed David (16:1-13). His school of the prophets is mentioned (19:18-24). Finally his death comes (25:1). Israel was in tears for this. The passing scene includes, thank God, the likes of Samuel. God, teach us from his life and ministry! Amen.