



# The Book of SAMUEL

**Everybody Has Choices**  
**(1 Samuel 12:12-25)**

# 1 Samuel 12:12-25

- <sup>12</sup> And when you saw that Nahash the king of the Ammonites came against you, you said to me, 'No, but a king shall reign over us,' when the Lord your God was your king. <sup>13</sup> And now behold the king whom you have chosen, for whom you have asked; behold, the Lord has set a king over you.
- <sup>14</sup> If you will fear the Lord and serve him and obey his voice and not rebel against the commandment of the Lord, and if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the Lord your God, it will be well. <sup>15</sup> But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord, but rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then the hand of the Lord will be against you and your king.

# 1 Samuel 12:12-25

- **16** Now therefore stand still and see this great thing that the Lord will do before your eyes. **17** Is it not wheat harvest today? I will call upon the Lord, that he may send thunder and rain. And you shall know and see that your wickedness is great, which you have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking for yourselves a king."
- **18** So Samuel called upon the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day, and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel.

# 1 Samuel 12:12-25

- <sup>19</sup> And all the people said to Samuel, "Pray for your servants to the Lord your God, that we may not die, for we have added to all our sins this evil, to ask for ourselves a king."
- <sup>20</sup> And Samuel said to the people, "Do not be afraid; you have done all this evil. Yet do not turn aside from following the Lord but serve the Lord with all your heart. <sup>21</sup> And do not turn aside after empty things that cannot profit or deliver, for they are empty. <sup>22</sup> For the Lord will not forsake his people, for his great name's sake, because it has pleased the Lord to make you a people for himself."

# 1 Samuel 12:12-25

- <sup>23</sup> Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you, and I will instruct you in the good and the right way.
- <sup>24</sup> Only fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart. For consider what great things he has done for you.
- <sup>25</sup> But if you still do wickedly, you shall be swept away, both you and your king."

# God Gives Us Free Will to Choose

## 1 Samuel 12:12-25

God gives you  
the ability to  
choose.



**“Everybody Has Choices;  
Everybody Makes Decisions”**



# **“Tough Love”: Own Your Decisions**

- Everybody has choices; everybody makes decisions
- AND
- Take responsibility for the consequences of your decisions



**TWO  
OPTIONS**



# God's Blessings and Curses

- <sup>26</sup> See, I am setting before you today **a blessing and a curse**: <sup>27</sup> the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, <sup>28</sup> and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way that I am commanding you today, to go after other gods that you have not known. (Deuteronomy 11:26-28)



# 1 Samuel 12:14

## Will You Serve and Obey the Lord?

- **<sup>14</sup> If you will fear the Lord and serve him and obey his voice** and not rebel against the commandment of the Lord, and if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the Lord your God, it will be well. (1 Samuel 12:14)
- And if you **faithfully obey the voice of the LORD your God**, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. **<sup>2</sup> And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you**, if you obey the voice of the LORD your God. (Deuteronomy 28:1-2)
- **<sup>38</sup> give, and it will be given to you**. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you. (Luke 6:38)

# 1 Samuel 12:15

## Will You Rebel Against the Lord?

- **<sup>15</sup> But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord**, but rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then the hand of the Lord will be against you and your king. (1 Samuel 12:15)
- **The fall of Jerusalem (586 B.C.):**
- <sup>5</sup> “Thus says the Lord GOD: this is Jerusalem. I have set her in the center of the nations, with countries all around her. <sup>6</sup> And she has rebelled against my rules by doing wickedness more than the nations, and against my statutes more than the countries all around her; for they have rejected my rules and have not walked in my statutes. . . .
- <sup>8</sup> therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I, even I, am against you. And I will execute judgments in your midst in the sight of the nations. . . .
- **Therefore, I will withdraw.** My eye will not spare, and I will have no pity. <sup>12</sup> A third part of you shall die of pestilence and be consumed with famine in your midst; a third part shall fall by the sword all around you; and a third part I will scatter to all the winds and will unsheathe the sword after them. (Ezekiel 5:5-12)

# 1 Samuel 12:16-18

## God Sends Signs of His Power

- <sup>16</sup> Now therefore stand still and see this great thing that the Lord will do before your eyes. <sup>17</sup> Is it not wheat **harvest [season]** today? I will call upon the Lord, that he may send thunder and rain. And you shall know and see that your wickedness is great, which you have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking for yourselves a king."
- <sup>18</sup> So Samuel called upon the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day, and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel.

# 1 Samuel 12:19-20

## Will You Embrace God's Second Chances?

- <sup>19</sup> And all the people said to Samuel, "Pray for your servants to the Lord **your** God, that we may not die, for we have added to all our sins this evil, to ask for ourselves a king."
- <sup>20</sup> And Samuel said to the people, "Do not be afraid; you have done all this evil. Yet **do not turn aside from following the Lord** but **serve the Lord with all your heart**.
- <sup>37</sup> "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! **How often would I have gathered your children together** as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, **and you were not willing!** (Matthew 23:37)

# 1 Samuel 12:21

## Will You Chase after “Empty Things”?

- <sup>21</sup> And **do not turn aside after empty things** that cannot profit or deliver, for they are empty.
- What “empty things” does the world offer that, though tempting, have proved to be unfulfilling to you?
- **Caveat:** Pursuing truth and righteousness creates disillusionment with worldly things. What remains?
- **Seek “higher” things:**
- <sup>8</sup> Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. (Philippians 4:8)



# 1 Samuel 12:22

## God Keeps His Covenant

- <sup>22</sup> For the Lord will not forsake his people, for his great name's sake, because it has pleased the Lord to make you a people for himself. (1 Samuel 12:22)
- <sup>8</sup> He remembers his covenant forever,  
the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations,  
<sup>9</sup> the covenant that he made with Abraham,  
his sworn promise to Isaac,  
<sup>10</sup> which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute,  
to Israel as an everlasting covenant, (Psalm 105:8-10)
- “God will never contradict his own character . . . Therefore, he always keeps his covenant promises, even if his people do not” (*NLT Study Bible*).

# 1 Samuel 12:23a

## Will You Pray for Each Other?

- <sup>23</sup> Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you (1 Samuel 12:23a)
- <sup>9</sup> And so, from the day we heard, **we have not ceased to pray for you**, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, <sup>10</sup> so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; <sup>11</sup> being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; <sup>12</sup> giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. <sup>13</sup> He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (Colossians 1:9-14)

# 1 Samuel 12:23b

## Will You Teach Others the Ways of God?

- “and I will instruct you in the good and the right way.” (1 Samuel 12:23b)
- **Teach your children well:**
- Train up a child in the way he should go;  
even when he is old he will not depart from it. (Proverbs 22:6)
- **The Gospel:**
- <sup>6</sup> I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— <sup>7</sup> not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. <sup>8</sup> But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. (Galatians 1:6-8)
- <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

# 1 Samuel 1:24

## Will You Remember God's Previous Blessings?

- <sup>24</sup> Only fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart. For consider what great things he has done for you. (1 Samuel 12:24)
- <sup>11</sup> I will remember the deeds of the LORD;  
yes, I will remember your wonders of old.  
<sup>12</sup> I will ponder all your work,  
and meditate on your mighty deeds.  
<sup>13</sup> Your way, O God, is holy.  
What god is great like our God? (Psalm 77:11-13)

# Choices and Decisions: Will You Follow the Lord?

- <sup>14</sup> “Now therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. . . . choose this day whom you will serve . . . But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD. (Joshua 24:14-15)



**Let Us Pray**

A photograph of two hands raised in prayer, holding a glowing white cross. The hands are silhouetted against a bright, golden sunset sky with clouds. The sun is visible through the cross, creating a lens flare effect. The background shows a horizon line over water.