

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

Samuel told Israel, “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 Sam 12:22). I praise you today as the God who never forsakes his children! You discipline me when I sin, and there are consequences for disobedience, but you are always faithful. I worship you and glorify your great name. Hallelujah!

Today in Your Word

Today you told me about Saul’s defeat of the Ammonites, Samuel’s farewell speech and Saul’s first sin. Saul passed the first challenge to his kingship with flying colors. The fact that he was still out working in the fields shows that he was humble and hardworking. Your Spirit empowered him, gave him wisdom and helped him lead the people into battle. You gave him a decisive victory, and instead of seeking revenge on those who had rejected him as king, he was merciful and forgiving. Saul seemed to be everything a king should be. Samuel took the opportunity of the kingship renewal at Gilgal to warn the people not to forget you. Their request for a king had been an attempt to gain deliverance from their enemies without true repentance (1 Sam 12:12), but now that they had a king, they should recommit themselves to following you. This teaches me that your will for my life is dynamic. Sinful choices in the past need not keep me from getting back into the center of your will. At each decision point, I have the ability, through your grace, to “fear the LORD and serve him and obey his voice” (1 Sam 12:14–15). Sadly, Saul failed the next challenge to his kingship. This shows me that a person’s true character is only revealed under intense pressure. Instead of repenting, Saul justified himself to Samuel (1 Sam 13:12), and his refusal to humble himself cost him the perpetuation of his kingly dynasty.

Reflection

When you asked Saul, “What have you done?” he excused his sin by pointing out all the extenuating circumstances. How often do I justify myself and refuse to take ownership of my lack of faith?

Request

Father, help me not to act foolishly as Saul did. Help me to keep your commands no matter the cost and believe your word no matter the circumstances.

Thanksgiving

Thank you for the outpouring of your grace in my life. I rejoice in adversity because I know “that the testing of my faith produces endurance” (James 1:3 NASB).

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “[Who Seeks in Weakness an Excuse](#)” – Bernard W. Marperger.

Meditation Verse: 1 Samuel 12:20.