

**Cole Community Church Growth Groups**  
**Leader's Guide for 1 Samuel 12:1-25**  
**Week of November 27 – December 3, 2011**

**Samuel's Farewell Speech**

**Introduction:** This is the transition from a spiritual leader or judge to a king for Israel at the people's demand. Samuel's message at this transition was the combination of a coronation address, a revival sermon, and a farewell speech. He pointed out the past sins of Israel, the greatness of their sin in asking for a king and then called for new dedication. A key theme in the address is *witness*.

**The Witness of a Godly Leader (v 1-5)**

**1. What is Samuel doing as he shares about his accomplishments and faith? What does he also remind Israel of about the king?**

- ♦ Samuel first reminded the people of his own integrity before the Lord and before his anointed. No one could charge him with injustice.
- ♦ But in rejecting Samuel they had rejected this rule and God's sway over them. Samuel reminded the people it was their idea and he was merely following their wishes for a king
- ♦ The people of Israel had rejected a proven godly leader for a man whose devotion to the Lord was unknown. Samuel was disappointed but left office knowing that his conscience was clear
- ♦ Samuel was also setting the stage for the miraculous thunderstorm recorded in 12-16 and so the people could not blame him when God punished them for their selfish motives

**The Witness of History (v 6-15)**

**2. In reviewing the witness of Israel's history, what is Samuel showing the people about their cycle of choices in these verses? What is the charge that Samuel gives Saul and the people at the end of this history lesson?**

**Background:**

- ♦ Samuel summarized the descent of Jacob's family into Egypt, the Egyptian oppression, the exodus from Egypt and the conquest of Canaan.
- ♦ Samuel recounts the nation's apostasy subsequent discipline. Sisera was a Canaanite general (Judg. 4:2-22)
- ♦ Moabites were descendants of the incestuous relationship of Lot and his eldest daughter (Gen 19:30-37). The Moab oppression is recorded in Judg. 3:12-30.
- ♦ The Baals and Ashtoreths were Canaanite fertility deities
- ♦ Jerubbaal also known as Gideon delivered Israel from the Midianites (Judg. 6-8).
- ♦ The threat of Nahash was probably felt long before the threatened attack of Jabesh Gilead (11:1-3) and was probably a factor in Israel's request for a king.
- ♦ Through every event of oppression, the people cried out to God for forgiveness and salvation for their past transgressions

**Discussion:**

- ♦ Samuel shows the people of Israel their cycle of sin, judgment upon sin, crying out for forgiveness and salvation as he reminds them of past history – a reoccurring theme in their lives from Egypt to Philistines
- ♦ Saul ends this passage with a admonition to the people and Saul about obeying God and the consequences if they fail to heed his words.

**3. How does this passage 6-15 apply to us today in our walk with Christ?**

- ◆ Do we take the same cycle large or small each day in our lives as we sin, feel the pain of that sin, cry for forgiveness and seek salvation and restoration in Christ?
- ◆ Talk about this in your group and what this passage says to each of them in their daily walk or our daily backslide.

**The Witness of God's Power (v 16-18)**

**4. What is Samuel showing the people about prayer and God's power in verses 15 – 18?**

- ◆ Heavy thunder storms did not appear at harvest time
- ◆ Samuel's prayer to God definitely got the people's attention in this manifestation of God's raw power that can be called up with prayer
- ◆ This act definitely was the capstone to Samuels speech and made the people greatly fear God and Samuel – it was a raw display of the potency of God to whom they had turned their back
- ◆ Talk in your group about how God gets our attention today

**The Witness of the Covenant (v 19 – 25)**

**5. What is the Covenant God had made with his people and what has been the effect of the people turning their back on God?**

- ◆ God made Israel his people and will stand behind them no matter what.
- ◆ They will suffer consequences to their wrong choices but he will look after them

**6. What is Samuel saying her about prayer and his final reminder to the people of Israel?**

- ◆ For Samuel lack of prayer was a moral compromise, a sin. His life illustrates the importance of prayer (7:5, 1 Thess. 5:17; James 5:16). Ephesians 6:18 tells us to constantly pray for others.
- ◆ Samuel disagreed with the people in their demand for a king but he did assure them he would pray for them. We may disagree with folks but we should not withhold prayer for them which Samuel felt was a sin.
- ◆ Samuel gave the people and us the bottom line – “fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart.”
- ◆ Samuel also gave a warning to Saul and the people that if they failed in this admonition, they would be “swept away”

**7. Talk in your group about the lessons of this chapter that apply to us today...what is Samuel telling us as we walk through each day?**