



The Story of Salvation

Chapter 12 - "Israel Wants a King"



**I Samuel 8-9; 11; 14; 17-18; 31;
II Samuel 1; 5; 11**

Opening Prayer:

O God, You have given us the gift of good government and the blessing of civil and religious liberty. Preserve this priceless treasure among us and help us to obey You and so to discipline ourselves that we do not put our trust in princes, nor misuse our freedom to satisfy our selfish desires. For a life in sin will destroy the freedom of any nation and lead us astray from the greater freedom of Your grace. Awaken us to our responsibility to pray for and honor those in authority over us and grant that they may rule according to Your will in all justice and wisdom. Above all, keep us in faith, and give us hearts that delight in Your commands. This we pray for Jesus' sake. **Amen.**

Hymn: LSB 966 "Before You, Lord, We Bow"

SAMUEL

Samuel was getting old and there seemed to be no one to take his place. He had made his sons assistant judges, but they were not honest. In their courts the question was not who was right, but who paid the largest bribe.

God's plan for self-government under the laws He had given to Israel did not work for the people because the people refused to obey God's commands. They failed in disciplining themselves. They desired someone who would be the visible image of what they thought they needed: a strong leader whom other nations would respect.

NOT GOD, BUT A KING

One day a delegation came to Samuel asking that he anoint a king over them. Samuel replied, "God is your king." The people refused and did not like it. They wanted an earthly king for themselves like all of the other nations had.

God told Samuel, "They have not rejected you. They have rejected Me. They don't want Me to reign over them. Since the day I brought them out of Egypt they have wanted to serve other gods. Show them the kind of king they will have, one who will take their sons and daughters to work as slaves and fight for him. He will take their best fields and vineyards and give them to his servants. He will take a tenth of what they produce and give it to his officers. They will finally cry out for help, but I will not hear them."

When Samuel told the people this, they would not listen. They insisted that they wanted to be like the other nations that had a king who fought their battles. Little did they understand that to get their wish they would now have to submit to the authority of an imperfect human being as their ruler and dictator. Samuel reported this to God. God told Samuel to anoint Saul as king.

KING SAUL

There was a man of the tribe of Benjamin named Kish who had a son named Saul. Saul was just the sort of image the people desired in a king. The people admired him because he was a brave and able leader, he was tall and handsome, and in every way he looked impressive.

His main task was to drive the enemies out of the country. He made a good beginning by defeating the Ammonites on the eastern border. Then half-heartedness (complacency and weakness) overtook him. For two years he left the Philistines alone, though they sorely oppressed Israel. Saul's brave and energetic son, Jonathan, finally took it upon himself to drive them out of one of their strongholds in the land. However, Saul did not make a whole-hearted use of the opportunity. Again and again Saul rejected the word of God and failed when God put him to a test. As a result, his conscience troubled him. He became gloomy and depressed and extremely jealous.

SAUL AND DAVID

It was the war with the Philistines that brought young David, the shepherd boy from Bethlehem, into Saul's life. David came to the army camp with supplies of food for his brothers. In those days the soldiers provided their own food. When he came to the camp everybody was talking about the swaggering Philistine giant who daily walked back and forth in front of the camp daring any man of Israel to come and fight him. The next day David stood listening when Goliath again ridiculed the Israelites. "You are cowards," he told them. It stirred and humiliated David to hear a heathen heaping insults upon the army of God. David determined he would go and fight him in God's name.

Saul said to David, "You can't fight against this Philistine. You are only a boy. He has been a warrior from his youth." David responded, "Your servant has been caring for his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear has come to take a lamb from the flock, I have gone after him, killed him, and freed the lamb. If it attacks me, I grab it by the hair and kill it. I have killed both lions and bears. This uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, since he has defied the armies of the living God. Yahweh who delivered me out of the paws of the lion and the bear will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." Saul urged David to take his armor and said, "Go, and may Yahweh be with you."

But David refused the armor and instead took his sling and a few stones to face the giant. The first stone that flew from David's sling hit Goliath and sank into his forehead. David ran to the fallen giant, drew the Philistine's sword, and cut off his head. When the Philistines saw their champion fall, they became frightened and fled, and it was easy for the Israelites to defeat them.

King Saul took David with him when he returned from the battle. But then the trouble started. The women that gathered to welcome the men sang, "Saul slew a thousand, but David slew ten thousand." Saul's jealousy was aroused, and he became resentful of David.

SAUL TRIES TO KILL DAVID

The situation grew steadily worse. When Saul had his gloomy spells, David was called to play the harp for the king, because music soothed him. One day when David was playing, Saul threw his spear at him. By a quick jump David avoided the spear, but he had to flee for his life. Then began the real downfall of Saul as king over Israel. Fueled by personal jealousy, the king of Israel used his time and his soldiers to hunt David and his men, who had to hide in caves and in the wilderness in the southern part of the country. During all this time the Philistines robbed and oppressed the Israelites. Finally Saul tried to drive the robbers out of the country, but lost the battle and in despair killed himself. And so Saul's kingdom ended in complete failure, all because of his selfish pride and personal vendetta.

AN IMPORTANT FRIENDSHIP

At the time David killed Goliath, a friendship began between the brave Jonathan, Saul's son, and David. Jonathan knew that God had chosen David to be king, but he did not permit this knowledge to destroy their friendship. When his father tried to kill David, the young prince risked his life to save his friend. This friendship made it easier for David to be loyal to Saul, and to live for years as a fugitive without losing his faith in God.

Jonathan fell in Saul's last battle and David wrote a funeral song that reveals how these two friends had been attached to each other. In this song David also speaks of Saul in words of high respect and without any bitterness. (2 Samuel 1)

DAVID THE KING (ABOUT 1000 B.C.)

At Saul's death David became king. He was well-suited for this task. He was sincere and honest in his devotion to Yahweh and was a man of faith and prayer. By nature he was brave and energetic, a leader of men, and a good administrator. He defeated the Philistines and other enemies and gradually restored the feeling of unity among the tribes of Israel.

At first only the tribe of Judah recognized David as king, but after seven years, about 340,000 warriors and 1,200 chiefs from all the tribes met at Hebron and anointed him king over all Israel. He then conquered the Canaanite fortress on Mount Zion in Jerusalem and made Jerusalem the political, as well as the religious, capital of the country.

THE CITY OF GOD

David moved the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem and placed it on Mount Zion in a tabernacle that was probably new. The move created the occasion for a great festival to which all Israel was invited. In one of the Psalms composed for the occasion David speaks to the gates of the fortress on Zion to enlarge themselves so that the ark of the covenant and the King of glory would have free passage. The heads of the gates are the wooden cross-pieces of the frame above the gates.

Lift up your heads, O gates!

And be lifted up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.

Who is this King of glory?

Yahweh of hosts,
he is the King of glory! (Psalm 24:7, 10)

This psalm became a part of the service of praise that David added to the official service of the tabernacle. From now on Jerusalem was spoken of as the city of God.

YAHWEH'S COVENANT WITH DAVID

David built himself a house of cedar wood in Jerusalem, and he also wanted to build God a temple. He did not feel that it was right that he should live in a house of cedar while the ark of the covenant stood in a tent. God, through the prophet Nathan, told David that he should not build the temple, for he was a man of war. This work should be left to his son, who would be a king of peace. However, David was permitted to make all necessary preparations so that both materials and funds and a complete blueprint were ready for his son, Solomon.

On this occasion God established a covenant with David. It was the old covenant with the forefathers: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, which was now to be fulfilled in the house and line of David. "Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever" (2 Samuel 7:16). The words pointed forward to the kingdom of Jesus, the promised Messiah. Christ would be born of the house and line of David (Luke 2:4). Speaking about this covenant, God said to Israel long afterward, "I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David." (Isaiah 55:3)

It was this covenant that made David speak of Christ both as his son and as his Lord. When Jesus asked the Pharisees how Christ could be both David's Son and David's Lord, they were unable to answer (Matthew 22:45/Luke 20:44). With all their studies and zeal they failed to recognize and believe God's plan of salvation, which had been revealed through the Scriptures.

CHRIST THE KING

Another contribution to the growing knowledge of Christ came through David. He was to be a king. The idea was not new, but now it became a distinct part of the hope of Israel. Born of God and the family line from David, Christ is truly King of Heaven and Earth. David speaks of Christ as sitting at the right hand of God and ruling among His enemies. The enemies were not only evil men, but the devil and his minions. (See Psalm 110)

DAVID'S FALL AND REPENTANCE

At the height of his success, David committed a grievous sin. He lusted after the wife of another man, Uriah, who was one of his most loyal officers, and committed adultery with her. He arranged it so that Uriah was given a very exposed command in the war. Uriah was killed and David married the widow. Then God sent that prophet Nathan to David. He told the king about two men. One had herds of cattle and sheep, the other had only a lamb. When a guest came to the rich man, he took

the poor man's lamb and killed it for food for his guest. David's anger was aroused. "The man that has done this shall die and the price of the lamb shall be repaid double its worth," David demanded. Nathan pointed his finger at the king and said, "You are the man! You have many wives, but you killed Uriah and took his only wife to be your wife." David humbled himself, confessed his sin, and sought God's forgiveness. (See Psalms 51 & 32)

God forgave David, but many sorrows darkened the rest of his days. Twice his sons started rebellions and tried to take the kingdom from their father. David had to flee to save his life. A man of the tribe of Benjamin publicly cursed the fleeing king as a man of blood. One son was killed by his half-brother. Another son committed adultery with his father's concubines.¹ David had failed to discipline his sons and paid dearly for it.

Before his death David appointed Solomon to be king. Later he called him to his deathbed and said to him, "Be strong and be a man; listen to the word of Yahweh and walk in His ways and keep His statutes and commandments. Then you will prosper in all that you do wherever you go."

CATECHETICAL CONNECTION:

As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household
from The Table of Duties
Of Civil Government

Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. **Rom. 13:1-4**

Of Citizens

Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's. **Matt. 22:21**

It is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience. This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor. **Rom. 13:5-7**

I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior. **1 Tim. 2:1-3**

Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good. **Titus 3:1**

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. **1 Peter 2:13-14**

Luther. (2017). [Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation](#) (p.34-35). St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House.

PRAYER FOR THE CLOSE OF DAY: *Lutheran Service Book p. 298*

Readings for the Next Chapter - Ch. 13 "Solomon: Success and Failure":

- Scripture: I Kings 3, 5-6, 8, 11, 12; Proverbs 1; Ecclesiastes 1-3
- Small Catechism: 6th Petition of the Lord's Prayer

¹ Concubine: "A wife of inferior or lower standing than the chief wife."

“Before You, Lord, We Bow”

LSB 966



1 Be - fore You, Lord, we bow, Our God who reigns a - bove
2 The na - tion You have blest May well Your love de - clare,
3 May ev - 'ry moun - tain height, Each vale and for - est green,
4 Earth, hear your Mak - er's voice; Your great Re - deem - er own;
5 And when in pow'r He comes, Oh, may our na - tive land



And rules the world be - low, Bound - less in pow'r and love. Our thanks
From foes and fears at rest, Pro - tect - ed by Your care. For this
Shine in Your Word's pure light, And its rich fruits be seen! May ev -
Be - lieve, o - bey, re - jice, And wor - ship Him a - lone. Cast down
From all its rend - ing tombs Send forth a glo - rious band, A count -



we bring In joy and praise, Our hearts we raise To You, our King!
bright day, For this fair land—Gifts of Your hand—Our thanks we pay.
'ry tongue Be tuned to praise And join to raise A grate - ful song.
your pride, Your sin de - plore, And bow be - fore The Cru - ci - fied.
less thron, With joy to sing To heav'n's high King Sal - va - tion's song!

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✠ **Prayer for the Close of Day** ✠

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

The Lord Almighty grant us a quiet night and peace at the last.
Amen.

It is good to give thanks to the Lord,
to sing praise to Your name, O Most High;

To herald Your love in the morning,
Your truth at the close of the day.

Apostles' Creed

**☐ I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life ✠ everlasting. Amen.**

**Lord, now You let Your servant go in peace;
Your word has been fulfilled.
My own eyes have seen the salvation
which You have prepared in the sight of every people:
a light to reveal You to the nations
and the glory of Your people Israel.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Continued on the back →

Visit our dwellings, O Lord, and in Your great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of Your only Son, our Savior Jesus Christ.

Amen.

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Lord's Prayer

**☩ Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

Then go to sleep at once and in good cheer.

Acknowledgments

Close of the Day from Lutheran Service Book

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