

**Date:** 10.05.2020

**Time:** 11am

**Service taken by:** Rev Gavino Fioretti

**Psalm:** Psalm 126 (Scottish Psalter)

**Scripture:** 1 Samuel 7:3-17

**Outline:**

a) Introduction

1. God's people

2. God's conditions

3. God's deliverance

4. God's appointed Mediator

## Great changes

- **Introduction**

In previous chapters, we saw Israel acting just like the Philistines. 1 Samuel 7 marks a radical change in the people of God and around the people of God.

**In the people:** God intervenes and works a change in His people's hearts. In God's providence, His people realise that only God can save them. They then seek Him.

We as a church need to turn from sin, to seek Him and serve God and God alone. We need God to change and revive us, to give us repentance and faith.

**Around the people:** God delivers His people from their Philistine enemies. He turns the situation around, so that the Israelites now rule over the Philistines. God changes His people and the situation around them. God's people are established – He extends His kingdom – He defeats His enemies.

We need this chapter to become a reality in the church.

### 1) **God's people**

It took a long time, but eventually, God's people understood that the gods around about them couldn't save them. They saw their need. The illness of their sin was shown. God allows symptoms in our lives to show us the serious disease of sin. We need to fight the disease, not the symptoms.

**Lamenting: (v. 2)** The Israelites lamented when they saw the slavery as a result of their sin. They confessed that they had sinned against God.

**Repenting: (v. 4, 6)** The people didn't stop with their words, they also gave away their gods. They repented. To repent is to turn from what is wrong to what is good. It's not just an emotional thing. It's not just feeling sorry. It's practical – a change of mind and a turning is involved. The Israelites abandoned their idols.

**Fearing: (v. 7)** Even after repenting, the Israelites' situation didn't improve right away. God didn't deliver them right away or promise them that they would be delivered. And so the response of the people when faced with their enemies was to be afraid. When things weren't right with God's people, fear always resulted.

**Pleading: (v. 8)** The people plead with Samuel to keep praying for them. There is now an understanding of sin and faith and dependence on God starting to show.

**Trusting: (v. 8)** The people no longer hope in an object or symbol, but in God Himself. Pleading and trusting often go together. We ask for help from someone when we hope help will be given and so prayer itself can be seen as an act of faith. When we pray, we are acknowledging our hope, trust and faith to be in God, even when mightn't feel like we're praying in faith.

## 2) God's conditions

God speaks to Samuel and Samuel speaks to the people, sharing God's conditions.

**Repentance:** God requires that the people repent. He requires that they turn from their evil ways and that they return to the LORD.

**Devotion:** God requires devotion that is whole-hearted. He doesn't want His people to turn to Him for temporary gain or deliverance. He wants them to turn to Him for good with their whole hearts. In our culture, we see the heart as ruling our emotions – in Jewish society it was seen as the centre of the man.

God wants comprehensive repentance, involving the whole of the person. He doesn't want people devoted to Him in part – He wants whole-hearted devotion. This is not a game. It is life and death. It is Heaven and Hell.

**Obedience:** Obedience to God shows in serving Him. You can't get half of Jesus. He is Saviour and Lord. We need to turn to Him whole-heartedly. Obeying God changes us, making us servants of God. Obedience to God won't save us, but it is a mark of faith.

**Dedication:** God requires His people to serve Him only; no-one else. The people had multiple gods, with Jehovah as one among many. But God must be God alone. Idols needed to be removed.

We have gods in our lives. We can make gods even of good things – creation, family, work, hobbies, self. God requires our faithfulness. God has to be the only God of our lives.

### 3) God's deliverance

**Direct intervention: (v. 10)** God's intervention here is direct. This is not always the case. This was the easiest battle ever because God does the fighting for His people.

**Great victory: (v. 11)** God granted that day a great victory, a victory that changed the course of history. Israel was delivered from the Philistines for a long time to come.

**Lasting peace: (v. 13-14)** As God comes and saves His people, there is peace – not because the ark was with them, but because God was with them. Others came to be fearful of the Israelites – they knew that One was greater than them. God was glorifying Himself. The people of Israel went from being slaves of the Philistines to ruling over them and having a God-given peace.

### 4) God's appointed Mediator

The Messiah would have three offices; to speak to the people words from God (prophets pointed to this); to speak for the people to God (priests pointed to this); to lead, rule and judge people (kings pointed to this).

Samuel demonstrates all three of these offices, giving us a picture of the perfect Messiah that was to come.

**Prophet: (v. 3)** Jesus would speak to the people from God, but provide a perfect revelation.

**Priest: (v. 9)** Jesus would speak to God for His people and be heard. He would intercede for them. Jesus didn't offer a lamb, but Himself in order to intercede for us. He never stops interceding for us. He is our priest and the way we speak to God. Through Jesus, God speaks to us and we speak to God.

**King: (v. 15)** Jesus would lead the people to God. He is King. He is Lord. He fights for us. He guides us. He leads us. He fights with and for us in the spiritual battle. As our King, He demands our faithfulness and loyalty.

Is Jesus your mediator? There is no other way to have fellowship with the Father. It is only through Jesus being our Lord and King that we can ask anything of God.

All you need to be right and at peace with God is Jesus.

Jesus gives us more than temporary deliverance. He gives us eternal life.