

1 Samuel

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[0 : 00] This evening I will ask you to turn back again to 1 Samuel chapter 12 and we're reading verse 24.

In the 1st book of Samuel chapter 12, reading this evening verse 24, Only hear the Lord and serve him in truth with all your heart, for consider how great things he hath done for you.

This afternoon we were considering the 20th verse, or particularly, I hope, this evening may be something of a follow-on from those thoughts of this afternoon.

So I don't intend to go back, I try not to be repetitive, I don't guarantee that at all. I tend not to be, and will come to speak upon this 24th verse.

The man of God, Samuel, the Lord's prophet, is exhorting the people. They have been very anxious to be like the nations round about, and to have a king, and so Saul has been appointed king.

[2 : 02] That has been done, Saul was anointed. Samuel reminds the people of their responsibilities.

He has also reminded them of their sin against God, and the greatness of that sin. And yet, he has spoken in a very gracious and comforting way of the Lord's mercies, of forgiveness.

So he comes to speak now of their need as they go on. There is the going on.

There is a lot of grace, and it is right, right to understand and consider of the past, what we have been, what we have done, our sinfulness, the Lord's mercies.

And yet, life carries us on. We are going on in this journey of life. And however much or little, as in a human sense we may say, however little time, however much time is before us, we need certain things, we need the grace of God, we need to serve him, we need help, we need to consider only the other Lord.

[3 : 48] Well, Samuel puts a great thing before the people, to fear the Lord. Now, this expression comes throughout the Bible, not only in the Old Testament, it comes into the New Testament.

There are, I think, some people who regard it as an odd idea. Here, well, they think that belongs to the Old Testament.

Indeed, I have met people who have tried to argue that there are different gods. The God of the Old Testament is different to the God of the New Testament.

But that is quite false, and it isn't supported by Scripture at all. The Lord Jesus Christ, who speaks of the living God.

He reminds the Pharisees how Abraham rejoiced to see his day. Although he found that very difficult. They couldn't understand what Jesus meant.

[5 : 09] Abraham was dead, and the prophets are dead. So they argued in that very logical way. What was this man getting at, and what was he meaning?

Jesus was speaking to them of the same truth, the same God, the same way of salvation, the same truths that are through all time and through all the Bible.

Anyway, let's understand that there is no change in the law. And let us understand that Jesus is the same, the same yesterday and today and forever.

True, the New Testament speaks of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ into the world, and that fulfillment of the great work of salvation.

And it speaks of the grace of God in a very sweet and precious way, and of the love of God manifested in his dear Son. It speaks of the grace of God in a very sweet and precious way, to fear the Lord.

[6 : 52] Fear him, says Jesus, who have power to cast both body and soul into hell.

Yea, he says, I say unto you, fear him. Fear him, then he speaks of the fear of God. Fear.

The Apostle Peter exhorts and encourages believers to be in the fear of the Lord. Masks the time of your sojourning here in fear, he says, forasmuch as we know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things of silver and gold.

from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ. Redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, he says, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.

We read a very sweet word in the Acts of the Apostles. After that, he has time of persecution to temporarily pass.

[8 : 15] Then have the churches rest and walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost when multiplied.

They walk in the fear of the Lord. And it wasn't in the troubled and dangerous and persecuting times, you see, but it was in the times of comfort and blessing that they walked in the fear of the Lord.

Of course, this fear doesn't mean a terror. It doesn't make people to run away from the Lord.

They run away from the Lord when they're guilty. They run away from the Lord when they're obstinate and willful. They run away from the Lord when they're disobedient like Jonah.

They run away from the Lord when they do not know the knowledge of his ways and do not know him. But the fear of the Lord draws poor and a needy people to him.

[9 : 36] It is a reverence. It is a holy love. It is a concern to know and to do his will. It is a longing to be kept from that which is wrong and offends our God and displeases him and a great desire to do what is right in his son.

It is a humble and holy awe. I think someone described it once as a reverent awe coupled with love.

And that seems a very good description. The fear of the Lord. We read in the scriptures various things concerning the fear of the Lord.

One of the Joseph Hart's hymns there are all very much put together. As he sings of the fear of the Lord, it is the beginning of wisdom.

An awareness in the heart of our standing in his sight. An awareness of what God requires and what we need.

[11 : 09] Though, O God, seest me. Thou hast searched me and known me, says the psalmist. It is one thing, of course, to say, yes, we agree.

God sees everything. He knows everything. He is omnipotent. But day by day, we can go about and we can act and speak and think as if really that were not true.

If we really understood and felt in the fear of God that he saw us and knew everything and was contemplating everything that we thought, said and did, would it make us different?

Would it make our lives different? Would we go on to say the same as we are? When you think of it, you ponder that question.

Don't hurry to an answer. Something to deeply consider. The fear of the Lord is clean.

[12 : 25] I think one good hymn writer puts it in that way. They hate the things. The Savior hates and loves the men he loves.

Himliness. They hate the things he hates. Oh, he says, David, I hate, I hate them with a perfect hatred.

He has that concern. He loves the word of God. He wants it to be written upon his heart.

He wants constantly to walk in the light of it. He wants his delight to be in it all the day. He wants it to be that which will support him and guide him in every step and direct him in every path.

That which will bring him. And he wants it to be that which will bring him back. When he goes astray. That which will lift him up when he falls down. That which will comfort him in sorrow.

[13 : 40] that which will enable him to resist temptation, to overcome the evil one. In the word, he wants the word of God to kill him and to entirely control him, to be in the fear of the Lord all the day long.

Only fear the Lord. That is something that is to be constant, not intermittent, not something to be restricted, to one day of the week, just to gather in public worship and think that that is fearing the Lord.

But it is to be in our life, all our life. Every power be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long, says the wise man, all day and every day.

Fear the Lord, I say, is to recognize his greatness, to recognize his holiness, to have that reverence of him, to have that awe, to have an understanding of his greatness, who know that he is just in his requirements, and to know that we are entirely helpless before him.

Fear the Lord, is to be amazed and astonished at his goodness and mercy to us, and humbly to recognize the wonder of his saving work.

[15 : 54] If the ever Lord is to want to walk in his steps, and to do his will, and to be grieved, then we should ever wander from his commandments.

David, help them. Have you observed? Perhaps it has been pointed out to you. At the end of the 119th psalm, he has spoken in that long psalm of his delight in the word, of his desire to serve the Lord, of his obedience, of the great things God has done.

He has spoken the way in which he praises the Lord, of how the word is his constant companion, and constant comfort, and so on.

And he comes to the end of the psalm, and he says, I've gone astray like a lost sheep. Seek thyself, for I do not forget thy commandments.

And you may ask, how can a man so favoured end upon, has it seen such a low note?

[17 : 20] You'd think he'd end on a great crescendo, wouldn't you, of praise? You'd think that he'd end on the highest note. And he doesn't. Why?

Because he realises something, of the foolishness of his heart. Because he realises something, of the need.

Because he realises something, of the dangers in the way. Now he is just a poor sheep. Just a poor sheep.

And often wandering and going astray. Well, it's a good thing, isn't it? To realise this. To have some understanding.

Only fear the Lord, and serve him, in truth, with all your heart. This is a great consideration, too.

[18 : 24] We have the saying, don't we, of a thing's worth doing, it's worth doing well. And that is very true. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, says the wise man, in the book of Ecclesiastes, do it with thy might.

Don't be heart-hearted. Don't be, be slant. The service of the Lord, demands, vigor, and whole-heartedness.

It calls for energy. And that's why I do. So, again, I'm speaking to myself. We get, discouraged.

We get, cast down. We get, faint and feeble, don't we? Our tongues hang down. Our, feet, faltering the way.

And back to, years of past work, and, how one started to go. Open, energy and desire.

[19 : 32] Well, is it still not the service of the Lord? Has his promise failed?

Is there not still that great work to be done? Serve him, in truth, with all your heart. If we say, that the things are discouraging, and difficult, well, they have been so, in other days, have they not?

Remember, me and my, when he came back, from the, the captivity, there was the message, saying, that Jerusalem, was, in a sad, and desolate state.

And he came, and he found it so, with his very eyes, he saw it, he went round the city, and discovered the desolation. What a daunting prospect it was.

How his enemies said, oh, what a, what a foolish thing, to think that, out of the heaps of, rubble, and the burned, timbers, they were going to, build the wall, and set up gates.

[20 : 51] That's just what he did. I told them, says Nehemiah, the hand, of the law, was good upon me. God had taught him, to do that work.

And that, that work, he was to do. So, we might, think of others, who, have been, wholehearted.

Great discouragement, great difficulties. Not a very, seemingly, opportune time. I often, think of, Nehemiah.

He had, not only the outward opposition, but he had the inward, troubles as well, didn't he? The strength, of the bearers of burdens, is decayed, they said, and there is much, rubble.

Here were, the people, his helpers, and they were, painting. Not to get the man down, wasn't he? But the Lord, sustained, and encouraged, he had the work to do, and he would, do it wholeheartedly.

[22 : 07] And you think of Jeremiah, and Jeremiah, it isn't any wonder, but Jeremiah, felt faint, and weary, and thought, there was no point, in going on, that he had been, preaching the word, for ten years, he tells us, and nobody listened, they didn't seem, any point.

Jeremiah, was forgiving up, he calls, on the Lord, he speaks, in a way, of complaint, to God. And the, the answer, of the Lord, seems, rather robust, rather a challenge, isn't it?

As Jeremiah, could you believe, crying out, how hard it is, for him to go on? What does God say to him? Thou hast run, with a footman, and they have wearied thee, how wilt thou contend, with horses?

And that in the land, of peace, wherein thou trustest, they wearied thee, how wilt thou do, in the swellings, of Jordan? And God, was saying to Jeremiah, Jeremiah, my servant, is going to get worse yet, it's going to get harder, what if it gets tougher?

Something of a prospect, isn't it? And I'm saying to you, today, what about you? You serve the Lord, even serving, whatever.

[23 : 46] It's great, and a noble, expression of, good eater. You've got to know, his weakness, and you've got to know, how difficult it was, to carry it out.

It was a great expression, of Peter, though all men forsake thee, yet will not I. Serve him, truth, with all your heart, or, consider, how great things, he hath done, for you.

For you. This word, bashed upon my heart, and, I must say for myself, it rather, scared me.

When I came, to the end of the year, I must honestly say, I didn't feel much enthusiasm. To me, frankly, when I, came to the end of the year, it seemed to have been, a disappointing, year.

That was the word, that was, uppermost in my mind, discipline. Look for great things, they seem not to have.

[24 : 59] There, could mean, various, troubles, anxieties, difficulties, sadnesses, and losses, and these seem, to weigh upon this, from where, I know I'm putting a sad picture to you, I'm only doing it, for a purpose, because, it's not right, is it?

It's unfair, it's unbelieving, just to, stop at that point. Because, looking back, and thinking, upon, the past year, there have been many mercies, and great things.

Consider, how great things, you have done for me. what great things, God has done for his people. We might think of it, in a general way, what great things, God has done.

Yes, hasn't he done great things, for his people? We can say with the psalmist, the Lord, have done great things for us, whereof we are glad.

thinking in prayer, of the great things, he has done, he has preserved for us, that peace and freedom.

[26 : 35] Now, we know, that there are fears, we know there are anxieties, we know there is uncertainty, in this world, and the changes may come, doesn't mean to say, they will, forever as it were, things will continue, as they were, but to me, it is amazing, and remarkable, what privileges we have, what benefits, we are able, to hear the word, we are able, to meet together, with the surprise, and support, what a great benefit, it is, what blessings, there are, what great things, the Lord does, through his word, how he calls, and nourishes, and guides, and supplies, his people, though, there are, those testimonies, and how ungrateful, it would be, to overlook them, the Lord, has, fed his people, through another year, he has fed them, he has supplied them, from the gospel, of his grace, it is a great thing, isn't it, the Lord, has done, great things, in calling, out of darkness, into life, he says, very truly, and purely, about, the fullness, of the, our, congregations, some of us, who go about, preach at, various places, are, very conscious of this, acutely conscious of it, we've seen some places,

Detroit, in numbers, steadily, over the years, and, there seems to be, no reversal, of that, as well, and this is sad, no doubt, it is sad, but still, let me, tell you, that the church, of Christ, never decreases, it never can, it only increases, and day by day, there are those, avid, to the law, to praise, how amazing it is, it, it, accomplished, it continues, years ago, I, I remember reading, about Napoleon, I suppose it was, actual, but it is said, of the, the emperor,

Napoleon, in his, last days, of, exile, on the island, of Elba, he, was reflecting, upon many things, and he, said, something to the effect, of the, kingdom of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the only kingdom, that truly, was never, of the, of the, and in love, overcame, all its enemies, eventually, he could see this, he had aspired, to be, conqueror of the world, he has hoped, from being, that, despite, many successes, he failed, in the end, but he could see, the kingdom, of the Lord, Jesus Christ, despite, some, seeming, reverses, how it, continues, and the, cross, does, and the, increase, but that's, a good thing, isn't it, a great thing, to,

I know, it doesn't, take all, the sadness, away, perhaps, it should be, it should be, take all, the edge, of that, concern, away, but isn't, it a great thing, to conquer, the Lord, but the Lord, has done, great things, too, it, it would be, right, to say, that with us, at home, it has been, all lost, we have lost, dear friends, come into old age, and died, there have been, with, there have been, with various anxieties, and concerns, for the Lord, has constrained, one and another, to gather, hasn't been all along.

How much is done in the heart? Well, it's very difficult, isn't it? Not for me to assume. But I'm sure that there have been those times of mercy.

[32 : 06] His word has been helpful. It's a great thing. Now, when we think of ourselves, when you think of yourself, your way, the past year, what has the Lord done?

Has he done great things for you? Perhaps he hasn't done all he wanted. Well, I didn't ask you that question. That wasn't the question particularly.

I know, I say they were disappointed, frankly. I think of it. But has the Lord not done great things? What has he done?

Perhaps you can go back, you can recollect, whenever it was, that he called you by his grace.

He quickened you by his holy spirit. He began a good work in your heart. He's performed it. He's kept that work and continued it.

[33 : 19] He's kept you alive. He's kept you alive. He's kept you alive. He has replenished it. He has nourished that life that he first gave. He's made it to spring up, special of times that has sprung up, that well, that eternal life.

God hopes have centred upon the Savior. Has he forgiven your sins?

What a great thing he has done. Forgiving many sins. We are thinking this afternoon something of the sin and the greatness.

Remembering our times, we confess in a general way. But perhaps we should remember and confess in a more particular way.

Great sin. Of a multitude of sins. He has spoken. Having forgiven you, says all to the Colossians, all your sins.

[34 : 33] Plotted them out by the blood of Jesus. What a great thing he said. Beyond measure. Has he not lifted you up and given you hope and revived you when you have been faint and weary?

There are times, especially, when we seem to come to an end. When our strength is gone.

How about times when I've been ready to give up? How can we go on? And yet, the Lord has relied on and refreshed. He's brought encouragement when it has been so necessary.

He has sent a word and healed our hurts. He has given a word of guidance and light and refreshed the spirit of a great thing.

God, who comforted those that are cast down, said Paul, comforted us by the coming of time. Paul got to the point where it seemed as though he was going to die, as though it was an end, but the Lord regrets the rhythm, resurrected, the great thing.

- [36 : 09] He taught him, he said, and brought him to that point. We should not trust in ourselves, but in God, who raiseth the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.
- And several times, I remark upon that expression that it shows that Paul might realise that he wasn't over all the troubles yet.
- There might be times yet when he would need that same reviving power. Well, I'm sure he found it. He would yet, yet, in the future, deliver us.
- What great things. What a great thing he has done, providing an inheritance. But hope that Jesus has done is gone to prepare a place of a great thing.
- What an inestimable benefit that is. How her affection should be placed on those things of the great thing that he has done for his people.
- [37 : 42] Now, consider, then, think upon this. we saw in our reading something of the great things that Jesus did, just a little selection of them as it were.
- The great things he has done. Opened the ears of the dead. Well, he has done that. perhaps, we feel sometimes hardly to believe it, but there is that entrance of his world.
- He has opened deaf ears. He has opened the eyes of the blind. there are those who did not see things.
- There is a lady who has been coming to us for a while now. The knowledge of the Bible was so small that, for instance, she didn't know who Joseph's father was.
- And she can face openly to her being immersed in her business. many years quite godless.
- [39 : 05] But there is this desire, this willingness to hear, this concern to know. Well, it's good, isn't it?
- It's encouraging. I don't know what goes on in the heart, but that's encouraging for something.
- The door is open. He has opened those to speak. He has opened the mouth to show his praise. We wish we could say it were in many places, but there are those.
- There are those who have been drawn, who walk in, who be used, to be baptized in the name of Jesus to confess the great things he has done for them, to be added to this church, to school.
- we see then how they said he has done all things well. He's done these great things. We are forgetful at times we need to consider.
- [40 : 25] It is a very natural tendency with us to remember the hard things, to think of the difficulties, to dwell upon the painfulness.
- No, unless I mistake the human heart, I think it is so. It seems to me that that is so. The disciples were like that.
- They had a present crisis in the boat, didn't they? Forgotten to bring their bread with them. And it seemed to add to it when Jesus spoke of the leaven of the scribes and Pharisees.
- This was the very major thought in their mind, the present difficulty. No bread. So everything seemed to add to it.
- It's because we have no bread. Jesus rebukes them in his tender and loving way. How is it that you don't consider?
- [41 : 31] Don't you remember? here's one who multiplies the loaves and the fishes. Here's one who took them miraculously and he went with them in the boat.
- They can't see any surprise. Well, I don't know about you. I'm afraid sometimes I will leave them blind and fear.

It's a great thing, isn't it, for the Lord to be near. His promise is supreme. His promise will never leave nor forsake.

His promise to the who wait upon him shall not want any good thing. You may think of many promises and I hope you will realize something of the faithfulness and security of you.

So, bless his word and bless you as you venture on in this meeting. . You can show the phone

[43 : 41] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.