

1 Samuel 12:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way:

Analysis

Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way:

Samuel makes an astonishing statement: failure to pray for Israel would be sin 'against the LORD.' Intercessory prayer is not optional ministry but moral obligation for spiritual leaders. The parallel commitment to 'teach you the good and the right way' pairs prayer with instruction as the prophet's dual responsibility. Samuel models the Reformed understanding that Word and prayer together constitute the minister's essential calling. Neither pastoral care through intercession nor prophetic teaching through proclamation can be neglected.

Historical Context

Samuel's commitment to continued intercession and instruction established the prophetic vocation as distinct from kingship. Prophets would serve as conscience to kings, praying for the nation while speaking God's truth regardless of royal approval.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. Do you consider failure to pray for those in your care as sin against God?
2. How are prayer and teaching connected in faithful spiritual leadership?

Interlinear Text

גַּם	אֲנֹכִי	חַל־יִלְה	לִי	מִחַט־א	לִיהוֹה
H1571	Moreover as for me	God forbid	H0	that I should sin	against the LORD
	H595	H2486		H2398	H3068
לְמַחֲדָל	לְהִתְפַּלֵּל	בְּעֵדְךָ	וְהוֹרִיתִי	אֶתְּךָ	בְּדֶרֶךְ
in ceasing	to pray	H1157	for you but I will teach	H853	way
H2308	H6419		H3384		H1870
הַטּוֹב	וְהַיָּשָׁר:				
you the good	and the right				
H2896	H3477				

Additional Cross-References

Colossians 1:9 (Prayer): For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

Romans 1:9 (Prayer): For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;

2 Timothy 1:3 (Prayer): I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;

1 Kings 8:36 (Sin): Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that thou teach them the good way wherein they should

walk, and give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance.

1 Thessalonians 3:10 (Prayer): Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

Acts 12:5 (Prayer): Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

Psalms 34:11 (References Lord): Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

Proverbs 4:11 (Parallel theme): I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths.

Jeremiah 6:16 (Good): Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.

2 Chronicles 6:27 (Sin): Then hear thou from heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, when thou hast taught them the good way, wherein they should walk; and send rain upon thy land, which thou hast given unto thy people for an inheritance.