

## I. SAUL AS KING

### A. Background details to bring us up to speed

#### 1. Saul anointed king of Israel and prophesied (1 Samuel 10:6)

- a. At this time Saul was pliable and humble before GOD. He was like soft potter's clay in the Master Potter's hands. He was listening to GOD and obeying Him as he ruled over Israel. But, it didn't take long before his heart became jaded and resistant toward GOD. The longer he ruled, the more stubborn and compromised he became; he refused to repent or subjugate himself before GOD; he failed to acknowledge GOD's authority. This is the primary reason why GOD rejected Saul as king of Israel; the two grievous sins that the scriptures list in 1 Samuel 13 and 15 are simply the by-products of Saul's disobedience.

#### 2. A warning to Israel & their new king

- a. *<sup>14</sup>If you will fear the Lord and serve him and obey his voice and not rebel against the commandment of the Lord, and if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the Lord your God, it will be well. <sup>15</sup>But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord, but rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then the hand of the Lord will be against you and your king.* 1 Samuel 12:14-15

### B. King Saul commits two grievous sins against GOD

#### 1. Saul's unlawful sacrifice

- a. <sup>13</sup> *And Samuel said to Saul, "You have done foolishly. You have not kept the command of the Lord your God, with which he commanded you. For then the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. <sup>14</sup> But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought out a man after his own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you."* 1 Samuel 13:13-14
  - i) If he would have kept GOD's command, his kingdom would have been established forever.
  - ii) Since he didn't, his kingdom would not endure (his kingdom would not be passed down through his descendants).
  - iii) In turn, GOD sought a man after His own heart, a preview of the character of the new king to be.
  - iv) This first grievous Sin was the beginning GOD's rejection of Saul, but this was an opportunity for Saul to get right with the LORD. Because of his stubbornness and refusal to repent before GOD and subjugate himself to GOD's authority, it didn't happen.
  - v) Regardless of how we interpret Samuel's condemnation in verses 13–14, this episode illustrates the way Israelite kingship was intended to function. The king was not free to initiate warfare whenever and against whomever he wished. He had to answer to a higher authority. He could only receive marching orders from Yahweh and his prophet—in this case, Samuel. Thus, the text demonstrates the unique nature of the Israelite version of ancient Near Eastern monarchy as well as the unique nature of prophecy in Israel. Standing beside every Israelite king was to be a prophet speaking God's word for the situation. The degree to which the king obeyed or rejected that prophetic word was the determining factor in the Bible's evaluation of his reign. In a sense, Yahweh remained Israel's king, represented by his prophet, who ordered Yahweh's anointed one (Arnold, 195-196).

#### 2. GOD rejects Saul as king of Israel (1 Samuel 15)

- a. **This second grievous Sin against GOD:** Saul didn't obey the command of the LORD to strike down (utterly destroy) the Amalekites.<sup>1</sup> And Samuel said to Saul, "The Lord sent me to anoint you king over his people Israel; now therefore listen to the words of the Lord.
  - i) Samuel is reiterating what took place in 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 10:1<sup>1</sup> Then Samuel took a small container of olive oil and poured it on Saul's head. Samuel kissed him and said, "The Lord has chosen you to lead his people Israel! You will rule over the Lord's people and you will deliver them from the power of the enemies who surround them. This will be your sign that the Lord has chosen you as leader over his inheritance.
- b. **Saul didn't comply with the word of the LORD** - <sup>2</sup>*Thus says the Lord of hosts, 'I have noted what Amalek (the Amalekites) did to Israel in opposing them on the way when they came up out of Egypt. <sup>3</sup>Now go and strike Amalek (the Amalekites) and devote to destruction all that they have. Do not spare them ("destroy*

everything that they have. Don't spare them." (NET Bible), but kill both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.'" (1 Samuel 15:2-3) (ESV)

- c. **GOD regrets making Saul king** - <sup>10</sup>The word of the Lord came to Samuel: <sup>11</sup>"I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following me and has not performed my commandments." And Samuel was angry, and he cried to the Lord all night. (1 Samuel 15:10-11) (ESV)
- d. **Samuel confronts Saul** - <sup>18</sup>The Lord sent you on a campaign saying, 'Go and exterminate those sinful Amalekites! Fight against them until you have destroyed them.' (1 Samuel 15:18) (NET Bible)
- e. **Why then did you not obey the voice of the Lord?** - <sup>26</sup> Samuel said to Saul, for you have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you from being king over Israel!" (NET Bible)
  - i) Because of Saul's stubbornness and his refusal to repent before the most High, GOD rejects him as King over Israel. (Remember Saul had been King for about 25 years to this point) (Bickle)
- f. **Saul tears Samuels robe** - <sup>27</sup>When Samuel turned to leave, Saul grabbed the edge of his robe and it tore. <sup>28</sup>Samuel said to him, "The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day and has given it to one of your colleagues who is better than you! <sup>29</sup> The Preeminent One of Israel does not go back on his word or change his mind, for he is not a human being who changes his mind." (1 Samuel 15:27-29) (NET Bible)
  - i) Samuel was telling Saul that the kingdom has been given to another that is better than him and this judgement is permanent!
- g. **Samuel leaves to Ramah** - <sup>34</sup>Then Samuel went to Ramah, and Saul went up to his house in Gibeah of Saul. <sup>35</sup> And Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death, but Samuel grieved over Saul. And the Lord regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel. (1 Samuel 15:34) (ESV)
  - i) 15:34–35 Following the completion of this gruesome task, "Samuel left for Ramah" (v. 34), his hometown; Saul returned to "his home" and seat of power, "Gibeah of Saul." **The separation that occurred between the Lord's anointed and his prophet as they departed from Gilgal was to be permanent. But though Saul was gone from Samuel's field of view, he was not gone from his heart: "Samuel mourned for him"** (v. 35). The word translated "mourned" (Hb. 'ābal) suggests an intense emotional reaction in response to a distressing turn of events (cf. Exod 33:3) or death (cf. 2 Sam 19:1). Significantly, Saul's sin not only weighed heavily on Samuel but it also affected the Lord, who "was grieved that he had made Saul king over Israel." In combination with v. 11 this note regarding the Lord's grief frames the judgment narrative of vv. 12–35 and sets the tone for its interpretation. In view of the double use of this verb with the Lord as its subject, chap. 15 must be viewed as one of the darkest passages of the Former Prophets. As clearly as any passage in the Bible, it shows how seriously God takes the failings of those he places in positions of authority (cf. Heb 13:7; Jas 3:1; also 2 Sam 11:27; 12:7–12) (Bergen, 165).
  - ii) Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death is to be interpreted as - Samuel came no more to see Saul. **The friendly communication which had previously existed was now broken off**, and though they met again (1 Samuel 19:24), it was neither in an amicable manner, nor was their interview of Samuel's seeking. But the words have a higher meaning than the mere seeing or meeting one with the other. They involve the cessation of that relation in which Samuel and Saul had previously stood to one another as respectively the prophet and king of the same Jehovah Saul was no longer the representative of Jehovah, **and consequently Samuel no more came to him, bearing messages and commands, and giving him counsel and guidance from God** (*Pulpit Commentary 1 Samuel 15:32*)
  - iii) When his hostility was first openly declared, his eagerness to seize upon his enemy carried him to such a length that he got into the company of prophets at Ramah, and was so completely overpowered by the Spirit of God dwelling there, that he lay before Samuel for a whole day in a state of prophetic ecstasy (1 Samuel 19:22.). But this irresistible power of the Spirit of God over him produced no change of heart (Keil and Delitzsch).
  - iv) Through Saul's life as King of Israel, we have an example of what not to do! To reiterate what has already been said, he became stubborn and compromised; he refused to repent or subjugate himself before GOD, he failed to acknowledge GOD's authority, he simply self-destructed. Way back in the 70's, there was a cartoonist by the name of Walt Kelly and he had character that he would draw for the local newspapers named Pogo Possum, and he was known for reciting famous quotes. Here's a famous quote from Pogo that fits King Saul perfectly (it may also fit us as well), "We have met the enemy and he is us!" Sometimes our greatest enemy is our self, when we rely on our own strength and we refuse to press into GOD and lean on Him for our needs, it can lead us down a path of no return.

## II. DAVID ANOINTED KING

### A. Samuel still grieving

#### 1. How long will you grieve over Saul

a. <sup>1</sup>Now the Lord said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, **for I have selected a king for Myself among his sons.**” <sup>2</sup> But Samuel said, “How can I go? When Saul hears of it, he will kill me.” And the Lord said, “Take a heifer with you, and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.’” <sup>3</sup> “And you shall invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for Me the one whom I designate to you.” 1 Samuel 16:1-3 (NASB)

i) The previous chapter ended with a note that Samuel mourned over the loss of Saul as king. But Yahweh is a God of action, and He commands his prophet to move forward regardless of his sense of personal loss: “Fill your horn with oil and be on your way” (16:1). We learned earlier that Yahweh selected someone of his own choosing (“after his own heart,” 13:14), someone better than Saul (15:28), to replace him as king. Now we learn that the chosen someone is from the family of Jesse of the city of Bethlehem. Jesse is the grandson of Ruth and Boaz (Ruth 4:17–22) and comes from the tribe of Judah (Ruth 4:12; cf. Gen. 38). From this time forward, the name of Jesse, the city of Bethlehem, and the tribe of Judah will always be linked to Israel’s Messiah. The reference to “Jesse of Bethlehem” in 16:1 appears again in 17:58 and serves as a literary envelope (a so-called inclusion) tying chapters 16 and 17 together. **The last phrase of verse 1 contains a subtle but powerful statement about David, though the NIV’s rendering obscures its significance: “I have chosen one of his sons to be king.” The Hebrew stresses that David is Yahweh’s own choice. A better translation is: “I have provided for myself a king from among his sons.”** This suggests a contrast with the circumstances surrounding Saul’s selection, when Yahweh made a concession for the sake of the people: “Listen to them [i.e., the people] and give them a king” (Arnold, Bill).

ii) “How can I go when Saul hears of it, he will kill me.”? Samuel understands exactly what GOD was asking him to do. In Samuel’s mind he understood this to be treason; he was being asked to anoint a king while the existing king is still ruling and reigning. God isn’t put off by this remark; He just gives Samuel a way through “Take a heifer with you, and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.’”

#### 2. This wasn’t David’s only anointing: David was anointed on three occasions, receiving enabling grace for three different purposes. The anointing of the Spirit empowers us with God’s grace to do God’s will in each season of our life (Bickle, “David’s Training”).

a. **First**, David was anointed in Bethlehem (1 Sam. 16:13). God’s assignment to David was to do small tasks while developing his spiritual identity and meekness with a servant spirit.

i) First he was anointed in Bethlehem, though the assignment of God for him when David was in Bethlehem was to do small tasks, to be faithful doing small things. He was not supposed to be king right then even though he was anointed to be king. He was developing his spiritual identity and his meekness. He was growing in meekness, faithfulness in small tasks, developing and being more established in his spiritual identity of seeing himself through the lens of his relationship with God, not through the lens of how other people applauded him or responded to him. (Bickle, “David’s Training”).

b. **Second**, David was anointed in Hebron (2 Sam. 2:4). God’s assignment to David here was to govern God’s people without losing his primary identity or his servant spirit.

i) Well, some years later, maybe thirteen, fourteen years later, when he was thirty, he was anointed in Hebron. When he was in Hebron he was anointed to govern God’s people. He was anointed as king but over Judah, only one of the twelve tribes, only a twelfth of what God promised him. He was anointed to govern. This season was that he would govern but he would not lose his sense of his identity with God. He would not get his identity in being king. He would maintain his identity in his relationship with God while he was king over only one of the twelve tribes.

What happens so often is that God promises somebody a certain place of influence. In David’s life we will call it being king but for others it might be a marketplace assignment, it may be a ministry role, whatever. God promises them a certain influence, a certain favor, impact, etc. Then they begin to get their identity from being king or from that place of favor. That is disaster! That is what the enemy wants to happen because he can destroy someone’s life easily if they get their identity in their promises of blessing, in their public ministry or their public profile in the marketplace or wherever that public profile is. (Bickle, “David’s Training”).

- c. **Third**, David was anointed in Jerusalem (2 Sam. 5:3) he would be King over all of Israel. God's assignment to David here was to fully conquer God's enemies without losing his primary identity or servant spirit.
- i) When he was thirty-seven—seven years after Hebron—he was anointed in Jerusalem. This was the time when he was going to fulfill all of the promise of God, in that season of his life from age thirty-seven to seventy. That was the time where his assignment would come to completion and he would fully conquer all the enemies of God that he was assigned to conquer. He would fulfill the whole will of God is the idea (Bickle, "David's Training").

### 3. Something of interest:

- a. **Which king did GOD Choose:** It's been suggested that Saul was Israel's choice to be king and David was GOD's choice. Actually, GOD chose both to be king, GOD chose Saul in His anger because of Israel's insolence in their rejection of Him as their King. When GOD presented Saul to Israel in a public setting, they chose him as their king and in turn rejected GOD. GOD chose David as a king for himself for His pleasure.
- i) For upwards of five centuries a general state of lawlessness prevailed: "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25). Following this was Israel's demand for a king, and that, that they might "be like all the nations" (1 Sam. 8:20); therefore did Jehovah declare, "I gave thee a king in Mine anger, and took him away in My wrath" (Hosea 13:11) (Pink, 10).
- ii) John Gill's Exposition of the Bible: for I have provided me a king among his sons; but which he says not; this was reserved for a later discovery; however God had in his own mind picked him (David), whom he would hereafter make known; this was a king for himself, raised up to fulfil his will; Saul was chosen by him, but then it was at the request of the people, and so he was rather their king than his; but this was not at their desire, nor with their knowledge, but of his own good will and pleasure; the one (Saul) was given in wrath, and the other (David) in love; the one (Israel) was to the rejection of God as King, the other to the rejection of Saul by the will of God.
- iii) The new king will genuinely act in accordance with Yahweh's wishes in a way that Saul does not. He will exhibit a certain "like-mindedness" with Yahweh. Though both kings are said to have been chosen by Yahweh (David here and Saul in 8:22; 10:24), the circumstances of Saul's selection were clearly different, marred by the insolent demand of the people. The implication is that David is chosen on the basis of different criteria, that is, divine criteria unencumbered by the exigencies of human demands. "David was Yahweh's choice in a way that Saul, given in response to the people's request, was not." (Arnold, 198-199).
- iv) By contrast, David, a shepherd like God, was God's choice for king, a man after his own heart. David lived by the words of the Torah, keeping the Lord always before him. When he sinned with Bathsheba, he was beside himself with sorrow, because he knew he had turned from God (Vander Laan, Ray).
- b. **Did GOD want a king for Israel:** It's also been suggested that GOD didn't want Israel to have a king. The scripture doesn't support this idea, just read Deuteronomy 17:14-20, it wasn't that GOD didn't want Israel to have a king; He just had a certain kind of king in mind (Vander Laan, Ray).
- i) *<sup>14</sup>When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, "Let us set a king over us like all the nations around us," <sup>15</sup>be sure to appoint over you a king the Lord your God chooses. He must be from among your fellow Israelites. Do not place a foreigner over you, one who is not an Israelite. <sup>16</sup>The king, moreover, must not acquire great numbers of horses for himself or make the people return to Egypt to get more of them, for the Lord has told you, "You are not to go back that way again." <sup>17</sup>He must not take many wives, or his heart will be led astray. He must not accumulate large amounts of silver and gold. <sup>18</sup>When he takes the throne of his kingdom, he is to write for himself on a scroll a copy of this law, taken from that of the Levitical priests. <sup>19</sup>It is to be with him, and he is to read it all the days of his life so that he may learn to revere the Lord his God and follow carefully all the words of this law and these decrees <sup>20</sup>and not consider himself better than his fellow Israelites and turn from the law to the right or to the left. Then he and his descendants will reign a long time over his kingdom in Israel.*
- c. **David's Rejection:** David was rejected by his parents, his siblings, and friend (Psalm 27:10; 38:11-15; 69:4, 7-12, 19-21). Following is a fascinating account (based on extra-biblical Jewish text) of the story of David's rejection by his parents and siblings

([https://www.chabad.org/theJewishWoman/article\\_cdo/aid/280331/jewish/Nitzvet-Mother-of-David.htm](https://www.chabad.org/theJewishWoman/article_cdo/aid/280331/jewish/Nitzvet-Mother-of-David.htm))

- d. **How many sons did Jesse, father of King David, have?** 1 Samuel 16:10-11 clearly implies that Jesse, the father of Israel's King David, had at least eight sons, of which David was the eighth. But 1 Chronicles 2:13-15 indicates that Jesse had only seven sons, and that David was the youngest. Which text is correct? How many sons did Jesse really have?
- i) Both texts are no doubt correct. It is most likely that one of Jesse's sons died before making any significant impact during David's reign—thus being of no account to the chronicler. You will note that 1 Chronicles 2:13-15 does not state that Jesse only ever had seven sons. It simply names seven of his sons (including David) and two of his daughters. If one of Jesse's sons had died before being married, or without having had any children of his own, or without having ever done anything particularly noteworthy, it would not be unusual for his name to be omitted from the written record in 1 Chronicles. Even today it is often common practice (except in formal genealogical registers) to refer to only the surviving children (ChristianAnswers.Net).
4. **More about GOD than David:** This passage is more about GOD than David, to this point we know very little about this man that GOD has selected for Himself to be king, we only know his name in hindsight, since his name isn't even given to us in this passage until verse 13 when Samuel the prophet anoints him and the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him. The only thing we know about him, is that, he is a man after GOD's own heart and we only know this because Samuel states it in 1 Samuel 13:14. At this point, the prophet didn't even know his name, GOD simply said *"I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided (selected) for myself a king among his sons."* All Samuel knew was Jesse's name and that he lived in Bethlehem.
- a. **Why didn't GOD give Samuel his name?** - GOD had something else in mind; He had a revelation for His prophet; He wanted to teach him about His character through His Upside-Down Kingdom. He wanted him to understand that He doesn't judge people by their exteriors; He judges them by what's in their heart. This process of selection as laid out through Jesse's sons bear out this important Godly principle.
- b. **GOD's Upside-Down Kingdom:** It doesn't make sense to the world or the natural mind
- i) In the natural David was a child, a nobody, he was sheep-herder doing a menial task but in GOD's eyes he was a man after his own heart.
- ii) GOD spent an enormous effort in his word to tell us about this nobody, in fact, he's talked about more in the scripture than any other person other than Yeshua. Why?
1. The importance of David's story is that it can be our story, simply by making the choices that he made in his youth. It is the story of how God both enjoys and uses weak and broken people who set their heart on Him. It is the story of how God sees our heart and how we move His heart (Bickle, 2010).
  2. God made David a witness [picture, example], of how God wants us to relate to and live before Him. We learn what David saw about God's heart (as a student of God's emotions), about himself in God's sight (how God enjoyed him), and about his circumstances (God is in control of our life). We can become familiar with the life of David by reading it many times (1 Sam. 16–2 Sam. 24). (Bickle, 2010).  
*<sup>4</sup>Indeed I have given him [David] as a witness [example] to the people. (Isa. 55:4)*
  3. The Lord "sought" for David, and is still seeking for this type of person (2 Chr. 16:9; Jn. 4:24). (Bickle, 2010).  
*The eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. (2 Chr. 16:9)*  
*The true worshipers will worship...for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. (Jn. 4:23)*
  4. If GOD can take someone as unqualified as David and make him King, He can use anyone! This gives us hope.
  5. GOD isn't bound by anything, He can take a shepherd boy with his seemingly menial skills and turn that upside down and make him King to shepherd His people Israel! GOD uses this illustration in many places in the scriptures in reference to David to teach us about his upside-down Kingdom (Ps.78:70-72; 2 Sam. 5:2; 7:8).
5. **The turning point:** After David is anointed king and the spirit of GOD came upon him mightily, we see a distinct contrast between David and Saul, the Spirit of GOD rests on David and the Spirit of GOD departed from Saul. We see David's rise as well as Saul's decline and this will be the theme for the rest of 1 Samuel. One other thing to note, not only did the Spirit of GOD departed from Saul but a distressing spirit came upon him to torment him, this was a judgment from GOD for Saul's disobedience.

6. **Saul's servants:** <sup>15</sup>And Saul's servants said to him, "Behold now, a harmful spirit from God is tormenting you. <sup>16</sup>Let our lord now command your servants who are before you to seek out a man who is skillful in playing the lyre, and when the harmful spirit from God is upon you, he will play it, and you will be well. (1 Samuel 16:15-16)
- Saul's servants recognize that this was a judgement against Saul from GOD, they ask for permission to seek out a man skilled in playing the lyre (harp/stringed instrument of some sort), so that the distressing spirit would flee.
  - Saul agrees. One of the young men answered, "Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who is skillful in playing, a man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a man of good presence, and the LORD is with him."
  - Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, "Send me David your son, who is with the sheep
    - Jesse complied - <sup>20</sup>And Jesse took a donkey laden with bread and a skin of wine and a young goat and sent them by David his son to Saul. <sup>21</sup>And David came to Saul and entered his service. <sup>22</sup>And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, "Let David remain in my service, for he has found favor in my sight." (1 Samuel 16:20-22)
    - Saul loved David and made him his armor-bearer and when he played the harmful spirit departed and was refreshed. <sup>21</sup>And Saul loved him greatly, and he became his armor-bearer....<sup>23</sup>And whenever the harmful spirit from God was upon Saul, David took the lyre and played it with his hand. So Saul was refreshed and was well, and the harmful spirit departed from him. (1 Samuel 16:21, 23)
      - Whatever kind of spirit afflicted Saul, David's sweet music reduced its ill effects. Saul was becoming dependent on the one who would replace him (Constable, 119).
      - Music is still prescribed as a therapy treatment to mental issues today (Baldwin).

### III. LESSON POINTS (APPLICATION)

- God wanted the Prophet and us to understand that He does not see man the way we do.
- If GOD can take someone as unqualified as David and make him King, He can use anyone! This gives us hope.
- GOD's calling on our lives isn't intended for us, it isn't about us, it's always about Him and His Kingdom, it's for GOD's pleasure not ours!
- Read and search GOD's word, pray and listen to GOD, then act on what GOD has spoken to you.
- If you only take away one thing from this message, let it be the importance of the story of David's life, his story is important because it can be your story, you're probably not going to be king but you can certainly be a man or woman after GOD's own heart.

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