

# (Through the Bible) 1 Samuel 11-16

by Chuck Smith

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*The story of Saul's reign highlights the consequences of disobedience and the importance of repentance and serving God with all one's heart.*

**Duration:** 1:23:55

**Scripture:** 1 Samuel 14:6, 1 Samuel 15:22-24, Proverbs 29:1, Matthew 6:33, Hebrews 10:25

**Topics:** "Faith And Obedience", "Godly Leadership"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the story of Jonathan and his armor-bearer facing the Philistine army. Despite being vastly outnumbered and outgunned, Jonathan and his companion bravely attacked the enemy camp and successfully defeated a group of Philistines. Meanwhile, King Saul, who was unaware of the battle, eventually noticed the chaos and realized that God had chosen Jonathan as a leader. The speaker emphasizes the importance of genuine love for God, even in the face of obstacles, and warns against disobedience and rebellion.

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## Transcript

Now, in the study last week, we came to the place where Saul was anointed king over Israel. We remember at the time of his anointing that he was hiding in the stuff. And so as Samuel got ready to present, you know, the trumpet fanfare and all, and now you're king and the curtain's open kind of a thing.

There's nobody there. And so Samuel said, Lord, what's going on? Have we got, you know, the right man? Is this the right date? And the Lord said, he's over hiding in the stuff. So they went over and got him and brought Saul before the people and all the people joined together in a cry, God save the king.

But there were some men who were objecting to Saul's reign. And the children of Belial, now the children of Belial are usually the evil men. Belial being a term for Satan, the children of the devil, they were saying that, you know, shall Saul rule over us? And they were creating a little undercurrent against Saul's reign.

Now Saul returned to his home and just went back to his work of farming. When the king of the Ammonites came against the Israeli settlement of Jabesh Gilead, and so he demanded that they surrender, or when he came against them, they volunteered some kind of a tribute. You know, what must we do to be your servants? And he said, let all of the men pluck out their right eyes and put them in a basket to be a reproach against all Israel, and then, you know, we'll be your servants.

And they said, well, give us seven days to think about that. And so they sent to Saul, and they told him, you know, the demands that this fellow was making, the king of the Ammonites was making against them. And so Saul took the oxen that he was plowing with, and he cut them up into pieces and sent them throughout Israel and said, and so shall the man's oxen be cut up and all who doesn't come and follow me in battle.

And in other words, it was a call to battle, and if you don't come, you know, when we get back, we're going to cut your oxen all up. So the men of Israel gathered together with Saul, some 300,000 plus another 30,000 from the tribe of Judah. And so they came down.

They sent a message back to the men of Jabesh-Gilead and said, don't worry, help is on the way. And so the seventh day, the men of Jabesh-Gilead sent a message out to the king of the Ammonites and said, we're going to fight instead of pluck out our right eyes. And so about this time, Saul's first contingent arrived and began to smite them, and the second contingent moved in and the third contingent.

And they utterly wiped out all of this invading force that had come against them. Were thoroughly defeated until there weren't two men left together. Just really decimated the troops.

And God gave unto Saul a great victory, and it really was the thing that sort of catapulted him into the real position of king. This is what the people were looking for, a man who would go out and lead their armies into battle against their enemies and all. And so when this great victory was given to Saul over their enemies, then the people said, where are those guys that said, who is Saul that he should reign? Bring him out and we're going to wipe him out.

And Saul said, hey, wait a minute. No, no, no, let's not have any recriminations. God has wrought salvation for Israel today and let's rejoice in the victory of God and let's not have any recriminations.

Now, this is Saul at the beginning of his reign and at the beginning of his reign, he does show many marvelous characteristics and among those, that of humility. In reality, when Samuel first met Saul and said, behold, the man upon whom is all the desire of Israel, Saul said, hey, you can't mean me. I'm from the tribe of Benjamin.

We're the little tribes and my dad's family is nothing. You surely can't mean me. And there was a real humility manifested in this fellow Saul.

When Samuel laid out the fact that he was to be the king and all, when he got home and his uncle said, well, you know, what took you so long? He said, oh man, we really got lost and all. And he said, finally he ended up with Samuel. And he said, oh, what did Samuel tell you? And he said, oh, he told us that the donkeys had come home.

But he didn't say to his uncle when he told me that I was going to be king and this kind of stuff. I mean, there was none of that. There seemed to be a true humility.

It is tragic that as the story progresses of the life of Saul, one of the bad characteristics of his later life is the lack of humility. This spiritual pride and this more than just plain pride that took over in his life. Starting out a very humble man, but as time progressed, he became a very proud man.

But in this particular case, here the men were ready to go out and wipe out these guys who had spoken against him. He said, oh no, God has wrought salvation in Israel and thus there will be no recrimination.

So, here is still, right at the beginning, signs of real good qualities of humility.

So, all of the people went to Gilgal and there they made Saul the king before the Lord and they sacrificed the sacrifices of peace offerings and Saul and the men of Israel rejoiced greatly. And so there was a reconfirmation, but this was really, hey, this is the fellow, this is the man, and now the general acknowledgement of Saul as king. Now in the twelfth chapter, Samuel is now sort of stepping down because they have now proclaimed the king.

And so, his career as the judge over Israel has pretty much come to an end as the reins of government are now turned over from the theocracy, Samuel the judge speaking for God to the people, now to a monarchy where Saul is ruling. So, Samuel is stepping down and this is more or less his farewell speech to the people. He is going to go into pretty much political obscurity after this point.

He's going to step into the background. He will be dealing, not with the people, he will be dealing with Saul and with individuals, but no longer the public figure in leading Israel. And so this is his last final speech to Israel in chapter 12.

Samuel said unto all Israel, Behold, I have hearkened unto your voice, in that you have asked that I should set a king over you. And now behold, the king is walking there before you. And I am old, I am gray-haired, and my sons are with you.

And I have walked with you from my childhood to this day." So you do remember that he started out his career extremely early. As soon as he was weaned, he was a public figure. He was there in the place of worship.

And the people who would gather for worship saw this little boy year by year as he grew and as he developed. And they recognized that God's hand was upon this young man. And he just sort of naturally grew into the position of leadership and judge over Israel.

Now he declares, Here I am, and I want you to witness against me before the Lord and before His anointed. Whose ox have I taken? Whose donkey have I taken? Who have I defrauded? Who have I oppressed? Or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind my eyes? Tell me, and I will restore it. In other words, he is declaring his innocency before the people.

Look, I didn't take from you at all. I didn't take your oxen, your donkeys. I didn't accept bribes.

I have not oppressed you. If anyone feels that I have oppressed you, anyone feels I have defrauded, one step forward and I will pay. And really, Samuel did have a very beautiful and remarkable career as the judge of Israel.

Extremely outstanding person. And so, they answered, You haven't defrauded us nor oppressed us, neither have you taken anything from us. And he said unto them, The Lord is witness against you and His anointed is witness this day that you have not found anything in my hand.

And they answered, God is witness. Did you swear God is witness? I have not taken anything from you. That's right.

We swear to that. So Samuel said unto the people, rehearsing now their history a little bit, that it is the Lord that advanced Moses and Aaron. And they brought your fathers out of the land of Egypt.

Now, stand still for a minute that I might reason with you before the Lord of all of the righteous acts which the Lord did to you and to your fathers. Now, he is seeking now to justify God. He's justified himself.

Look, I've taken nothing. Right. I'm clean.

Right. Now I want to show you that the Lord is also clean. That the Lord has treated you right.

That He has never mistreated you or your fathers. That which the Lord has done has been fair and just. When Jacob was come to Egypt and your fathers cried to the Lord, then the Lord sent Moses and Aaron and they brought your fathers out of Egypt and made them to dwell in this place.

And when your fathers forgot the Lord, their God, He sold them into the hands of Sisera, who was the captain of the host of Hazor, and then into the hand of the Philistines, and then into the hand of the king of Moab, and they fought against them. And they cried unto the Lord and said, We have sinned because we have forsaken the Lord and we have served Balaam and Ashtoreth, but now deliver us out of the hand of our enemies and we will serve you. And the Lord sent Jeroboam and Bedum and Jephthah and Samuel and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side and you dwelt safely.

And when you saw that Nahash, the king of the children of Ammon, came against you, you said unto me, No, but a king shall reign over us when the Lord your God was your king. Now, I want you to acknowledge this. That God was fair and just.

Your father Jacob went down to Egypt and there your fathers were oppressed. They cried unto God. God sent Moses and Aaron who brought them out of Egypt and to this place.

But when your fathers began to forsake God, then they were forsaken of God. And it was only after they had forsaken God that their enemies came in and began to oppress them. But they cried unto God and God sent deliverers, these various judges.

And He names some of the judges that God used as a deliverer finally Himself. But now you're faced with another crisis. And rather than crying out unto God for His deliverance, you are now asking for a king.

And in thus doing, you are rejecting God from being king. So, you are going from the theocracy, a people governed by God, to a monarchy, people governed by a earthly king. Now therefore, behold the king that you have chosen and you have desired.

Here he is. Take a look at him. And behold, the Lord has set a king over you.

If you will fear the Lord and serve Him and obey His voice and not rebel against His commandment, then shall both you and the king that reigns over you continue following the Lord your God. But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord and you rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then shall the hand of the Lord be against you as it was against your fathers. Now, I want you to stand and see this great thing which the Lord is going to do before your eyes.

Today is the day of the wheat harvest. I'm going to call unto the Lord and He's going to send thunder and rain that you might perceive and know that your wickedness is great, which you have done in the sight of the Lord in asking for a king. So Samuel called unto the Lord.

The Lord sent thunder and rain that day and the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel. And the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God that we die not. For we have added

unto all our sins this evil thing to ask us a king.

And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not, ye have done all this wickedness, yet turn not aside from following the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart. And turn ye not aside, for then should ye go after vain things which cannot profit nor deliver, for they are vain." So Samuel says, look, you've done an evil thing. And asking for a king.

And you might know how wicked it is. God's going to show you a wonder. I'm going to ask God to send thunder and rain upon your wheat harvest.

And there inside the people God sent thunder and rain. So as the thunder began to clap around them and the rain began to fall, they said, Oh, we've sinned. We've done wickedly.

Pray that God not destroy us. Now it is interesting, they aren't really repenting. A repentance means a change.

A true repentance, they would have said, Oh, get rid of Saul. We'll let God serve us, or rain over us. We'll serve God.

That would have been repentance. But theirs is, Oh, we're sorry. But we still want our king.

Now, there is a difference between sorrow and repentance. And the Lord requires repentance from sin. Not just a sorrow for sin.

So often we have a sorrow because of the consequences of our sins. But we go right on doing it. God wants a repentance.

That is a turning away from the evil in our lives. And God requires repentance. And so, they said, Pray that we will not die.

And Samuel said unto them, You're not going to die, but just make sure that you don't quit serving the Lord. For if you do, you're going to start serving other gods, vain things, which cannot profit or deliver. Now, he declared this because he knew the nature of man.

You've got to serve somebody. And if you are not serving God, you're going to be serving some vain thing that really can't help you or deliver you. That is really no profit to you.

And we look around the world today and we see the vain things that men are worshiping or serving. But you cannot serve God and mammon. They are mutually exclusive.

And if you forsake serving the Lord because you've got to serve somebody, you're going to start serving vain things which when your time of trouble and peril arises, they'll not be able to profit you or to deliver you. But, if you will serve the Lord, He will not forsake you for His great name's sake, because it has pleased the Lord to make you His people. Now, for God's reasons, He's pleased to make you His people.

And if you'll just serve Him, He will not forsake you. 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 right way. Now, here Samuel brings up something that to me is quite interesting.

They said, when they realized their wickedness, they said, pray for us that we not die. In response to that, Samuel said, as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you. In other words, not praying is sinful.

Not praying is sinning against the Lord. God forbid that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you. Now, if God has commanded us to pray one for another, then our failure to pray for one another is disobedience to the command of God, and disobedience to God's command is sin.

And the Lord has told us we are to pray one for another. Therefore, we are all of us required to pray for each other. And God forbid that we should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for one another.

Oh, that we would realize the awful sin of prayerlessness in our lives. That not to pray, not to spend time in prayer with the Lord, is actually sinning against the Lord. It's sinning against His commands to us.

Only fear the Lord and serve Him in truth with all your heart, for consider how great things He has done for you. Just consider the wonderful things God has done for you. And then serve Him with all your heart.

But if you continue in wickedness, just know you're going to be consumed both you and your King. Now, Saul reigned for one year over Israel. And in the second year of his reign, he chose 3,000 men of Israel, and he took 2,000 under his command in Michmash, and 1,000 were given to Jonathan under his command, the son of Saul, in Gibeah.

And the rest of the people he sent to their own tents. And Jonathan smote the garrison of the Philistines that was in Gibeah. And the Philistines heard it, and Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, Let the Hebrews hear.

And all Israel heard say that Saul had smitten the garrison of the Philistines, and that Israel also had an abomination with the Philistines. And the people were called together after Saul to Gilgal. So, Jonathan was out wiping out the Philistines, and Saul was around blowing the trumpet and taking the glory and announcing that he had smitten the Philistines, so that the Israelites heard that Saul had smitten the Philistines with a great slaughter.

Now the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, and they really gathered the whole army, 30,000 chariots, 6,000 horsemen, and people like the sand of the sea for multitude. And they came up and pitched in Micmash east of Beth-Avon. And when the men of Israel saw that they were there sort of trapped, for the people were distressed, then the people started hiding in caves and thickets and rocks, in the mountaintops and in the pits.

And some of the Hebrews went over Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead, for Saul was down there in Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling. I mean, this was a tremendous, formidable force of the Philistines that had come against them. People were hiding.

Some were actually deserting, crossing Jordan, going over to the other side to Gad, to Gilead. And those that were with Saul were trembling. And he waited for seven days according to the set time that Samuel had appointed.

For Samuel said, I'll meet you there in Gilgal in seven days. And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt offering to me and a peace offering. And he offered the burnt offering.

And it came to pass that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came. And Saul went out to meet him that he might greet him. And Samuel said, What have you done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me and that you did not come within the days that were appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash.

Therefore, I said, the Philistines will come now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication to the Lord. So I forced myself therefore and offered a burnt offering. And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly.

Thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee, for now he would have established thy kingdom upon Israel forever. In other words, he would have made it the dynasty of Saul. Now, Samuel is straightforward.

What have you done? Oh, I forced myself. You know, he gave all of his excuses. He said, You have done foolishly in that you have not obeyed the commandment of the Lord.

Any time you deliberately, willfully disobey the commandment of God, you are doing foolishly. God's ways are best. God's ways are right.

And for me to presume that I can do or improve on God's ways is sheer folly. If I think I can improve my position by disobeying God, that's sheer folly. And so the prophet laid it out to him.

You have done foolishly in that you have not obeyed the commandment of the Lord, for the Lord would have established your kingdom forever upon Israel. But now, thy kingdom shall not continue, for the Lord hath sought Him a man after His own heart. And the Lord hath commanded Him to be captain over His people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee." So here is Saul's rejection by God as the continuing king.

And God is now searching out a man to take His place. And Samuel arose and went from Gilgal to Gibeah, there among the tribe of Benjamin. And Saul numbered the people that were present with him, about 600 men.

Now you remember, there are 30,000 chariots, 6,000 horsemen, and Philistines like the Sands of the Sea. And Saul has 600 that haven't deserted him. And the spoilers came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies.

And one company turned unto the way that leads to Ophron, the other to the land of Shul. And another company turned by way of Beth-horon. And another company turned to the way of the border that looks toward the valley of Zibbon, toward the wilderness.

Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel. I thought that was interesting in searching for my heritage. So at this time, interestingly enough, the Jews had not yet developed any forging kind of processes or the development of iron implements.

Though the Philistines and all the people of the land around them had entered into the Iron Age, the Hebrews had not yet really developed the capacity for smelting and all, and they had not yet themselves entered into the Iron Age. In fact, when they wanted to sharpen their picks or their hoes or their farm implements, they had to go down to the Philistines to have them sharpened and all, because they really didn't have any blacksmiths in Israel at this particular time. By the time of Solomon, they began to really

develop in these skills.

In fact, they were highly developed by the time of Solomon. But at this time, they had not yet developed these skills, and actually the Philistines had deliberately kept them from developing these skills because they didn't want them making swords and all and really being able to create real fighting implements. So all the Israelites had to go down to the Philistines to sharpen every man his share or colter or the axe or the mattock.

And yet they had a file for the mattocks and the colters for the forks and for the axes and to sharpen the goads. So it came to pass in the day of battle that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan. Only Saul and Jonathan had spears.

Now, that's not a very well-equipped army against the 30,000 chariots and the horsemen. Guys, all you've got are sticks. You fashion a club or something.

But you're going out against guys with shields and spears and swords and all. And so you've got a small army and surely you are mismatched in equipment and all. Hopelessly mismatched.

There's absolutely no way that you can go out against this highly developed army with their superior weapons and superior numbers and hope to have any kind of victory. You've got 600 men with clubs and sticks and you're facing an army that can't even be counted with spears, swords, shields. Which introduces chapter 14, which is one of my favorite chapters in the Bible.

Now, it came to pass. Upon a day that Jonathan, the son of Saul, said to the young man that bears armor, Come and let us go over to the Philistines' garrison on the other side. But he did not tell his father.

And Saul tarried in the uttermost parts of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree, which is at Migron. And the people that were with him were about 600 men. And Ahaiah, the son of Ebtub, Ichabod's brother and son of Phinehas and so forth.

He gives these guys in the background you don't even remember them anyhow. Let me just tell you the story. Jonathan, the son of Saul, woke up early one morning.

And he got to thinking. No one else was awake yet. And he got to thinking, you know, the whole army of the Philistines is over there.

And maybe God wants to give Israel the victory over that army of the Philistines today. Now if the Lord wants to give the victory to Israel over those Philistines, he doesn't need a whole army. He can give the victory to one man as well as 600.

Or to two. It really doesn't make any difference to God whether we have a huge army or whether we just have a few if God wants to give the victory to Israel. And he was just lying there thinking about these kind of wild thoughts, you know.

After all, God is great and the greatness and the power of God. He doesn't need a whole army. He can give the victory to just two men.

So he woke up his armor bearer. He said, I've been thinking about something really weird and wild. I want to pass it by you.

He said, I've been thinking, if God wants to give the victory to Israel today over the Philistines, he doesn't need the whole army. He can give the victory to just a couple guys. Why don't we go over there and see if God wants to give the victory to Israel today? Talk about a venture in faith.

I love them. And so, he and the armor bearer got dressed quietly and they slipped out of camp while everybody else was still sleeping. And Jonathan on the way towards the Philistines said, now, we want to make sure God's in this thing.

So when we get near the garrison of the Philistines, when the sentries spot us, if they say, hey you fellas, come up here, we'll show you a thing or two, then we'll know that God wants to give the victory to Israel and we'll go at them. But if they say, hey you guys, wait down there, we're going to come down and show you a thing or two, then we'll know that God doesn't want to get the victory to Israel and we'll get out of here as fast as we can. So as they got over near the garrison of the Philistines and the sentries spotted these two guys coming, they said, look at those stupid fools coming right up here to the camp.

Hey you guys, come up here, we'll show you a thing or two. Jonathan said, alright man, let's go, you know. Because they said they started climbing with their hands and feet, really, just, you know, scrambling up that hill to get into the camp of the Philistines.

And man, they jumped right in the middle of the garrison and Jonathan started knocking the guys over and his armor bearer was running them through. And about a half acre of ground, they wiped out 20 of the Philistines and the rest of the guys began to wake up, were all discomfited. They began to swing at each other and all and they began to run and flee.

And over on the other side of the valley, old Saul finally woke up and he rubbed his eyes, he looked across and he saw the Philistines all running and he saw the battles going on. He saw two guys in the middle just really wiping them out. And he said, number off quick, who's missing? And they numbered off and they said, it's Jonathan and his armor bearer.

Now, Saul at this point makes a foolish statement. Saul said, let the man be cursed who eats anything today before God has avenged Saul of all of his enemies. Now, the man who was so humble to begin with is now beginning to manifest some real pride.

Saul of all of his enemies. God curse any man who eats anything today before Saul is avenged of all of his enemies. A foolish curse and vow.

So the men with Saul began to pursue the Philistines all day long as the Philistines were in disarray and were retreating. And as they were running through the woods, there was a honeycomb and it was dripping honey down to the ground. And old Jonathan running through took his spear and put out the end of it and began to eat the honey and he was revived.

He was refreshed. Actually, he had been chasing Philistines all day and he was just about shot physically. And honey is such a quick energy source.

It just zings right into your system. Oh, he was refreshed and he took off again chasing the Philistines. And God gave a great victory to Israel that day over the Philistines.

But I like the philosophy of Jonathan. I like the daring. I like the venture in faith.

Who knows what God wants to do today? And if God wants to do something, He doesn't need a whole army. He can do it with one as well as a thousand. Let's see what God wants to do.

Let's venture out and find out what God might want to do today. And I love those kind of days when you just sort of venture out to see what God might want to do. Now, as the troops gathered together and sort of surveying the victory, Saul said, let's chase them tonight.

We've got them on the run. Let's go after them tonight and wipe them out completely. And so they called the priest there and they said, inquire of the Lord.

Shall we chase them? And there was no answer from God. And so Saul said, alright, who ate today? He figured that someone had broken his vow because God wasn't answering by the priest. And so, none of the men would say anything.

And he said, if it is even Jonathan my son, surely he shall be put to death. And so he said, you guys all stand over there. Jonathan and I will stand here and God give us a perfect lot.

They cast lots and it fell on Jonathan and Saul. So they cast lots again and it fell on Jonathan. And Saul said, what did you do? And he said, well, Dad, I really didn't know that you had made that curse and all.

And I was running through the woods and I saw this honeycomb dripping honey and I was famished and I was about wiped out. So I took and ate some of the honey. And he said, my soul was revived.

He said, Dad, it wasn't very smart for you not to let these guys eat. Had you let them eat of the spoils today, they would have had enough strength. We could have continued to pursue and totally wiped out the Philistines.

It wasn't so smart, Dad, the thing that you said. Saul said, put him to death. And at this point, the men stepped in and they said, oh, no way.

For he has wrought or fought with God today. No man's going to touch him. No man will lay his hand upon him.

I like this statement. For he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan that he wasn't killed by his father.

So we see now there's a bit of madness beginning to enter this man. Started out such a beautiful way. Started out with such tremendous potential and possibilities.

But pride entered in. And we see now the pride developing. And this man again who had such a marvelous potential is gradually deteriorating before our very eyes as he begins to exalt himself and turn from God.

Now, as we get into chapter 15, Samuel came to Saul and said, the Lord sent me to anoint you to be king over His people, over Israel. Now, hearken unto the voice of the words of the Lord. Now, he has shown a pattern of disobedience up to this point.

He has become self-willed, doing his own thing. So the prophet is coming and warning him. And this to me is very significant because God does seek to warn us from our self-willed path of destruction.

God doesn't just let you trip off into the path of destruction without coming and giving you fair warning. And oftentimes, repeated warnings. The Bible said, he that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck.

And so God is faithful. And God comes and He warns you, hey, the path you're choosing, the way of self-will, it's destroying you. Don't go it.

Now listen to God. Pay attention. Obey the voice of the Lord.

And so Samuel is coming with a warning for him and telling him of a mission that God is sending him on. Now, hearken to the voice of the words of the Lord. For the Lord said, I remember this, the Amaleks, that when you were trying to come into the land, they withstood you.

And therefore, God wants you to go down and utterly wipe out the Amaleks. Every man, woman, child, animal. Don't take anything back alive.

Utterly slay everything in order that God might be avenged against the Amaleks. Now, you think, oh, that's a horrible command of God. You would think so until historically you would study the practices and all of the Amaleks and they were so corrupt, they were going to wipe out themselves and God was just ordering really the eradication of a cancer within the society.

They were like mad dogs. If you don't destroy them, they're going to hurt innocent people. So, God ordered the utter destruction of the Amaleks.

Now, another factor here is that the Amaleks are always a type of the flesh in the Scripture. And the Amaleks being a type of the flesh, God is ordering the utter destruction of the flesh. Wipe it out completely.

Don't give any place for the flesh, the Bible says, to fulfill the desires thereof. Crucify the old man, the old nature. If you by the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh, put it to death, God says.

Don't give place for it. Utterly wipe it out. Now, Saul went down with the armies and God gave victory over the Amaleks.

However, they saw some of the cattle and some of the sheep were really good stock. And so they set them aside. And He spared the king alive.

But the sickly sheep, the sickly cows, they really hacked them to pieces. Didn't give them a chance. That which was sickly and that which is not so good.

They just utterly destroyed that. But the good, the healthy, the strong, they preserved them. Now, whatever this is, it is disobedience to the command of God.

It is again another opportunity for Saul to redeem himself in obeying the command of the Lord. But it is disobedience, his failure to utterly wipe out the Amaleks, all of their cattle, and all of their sheep, and so forth. Now, as we progress in history, and we're going to go into the time machine now, and we're going to go ahead in history a few hundred years.

And a story that is familiar with many of you, all of you who have read the Bible, how that when Esther was chosen queen in Persia, there was one man in the kingdom of Persia that was seeking to destroy all the Jews because he could not stand this Jew Mordecai who refused to bow to him. He had such a hatred for this man, he perpetrated a scheme whereby all of the Jews were to be wiped out, and he had the king sign

a decree that on a given day, all the Jews would be wiped out in all the kingdom of Persia. This wicked man's name was Haman.

Now, soon the Jews are going to have, I think March 2nd, the Feast of Purim. And the Feast of Purim is in celebration of God's delivering them from the hand of this wicked Haman. Now, in Israel, it is like Halloween almost in that the little children dress in costumes, and the boys dress in the costumes of the villain Haman.

Ugly masks and their costumes. And the little girls dress up like Esther. And all the little girls are so beautiful, and of course they have their masks and their little wands and everything else.

And it is like a Halloween. They'll gather together, and they have sort of a party actually, and they have the cookies and so forth, the Haman's hat cookies and all of this. And it's quite a thing over there.

It's actually a holiday, the Feast of Purim. But, the thing I want to point out is the nationality of Haman. He was a descendant of the king of the Amaleks, Agag.

He was an Agagite. A descendant from Agag, so that Saul, failing to completely obey God, almost cost Israel its whole national existence later on. Because he failed to completely obey the command of God, it almost cost the Jews, in later history, their very existence.

This Haman the Agagite almost wiped them out completely. Which, if you do not bring your flesh to the cross, if you do not mortify the deeds of the flesh, if you seek to make allowances and tolerances and say, well, that's a pretty good part of me, you know, that isn't too bad. Your flesh will come back to destroy you.

We must bring the old man to the cross. We must not give place to the flesh to fulfill its desires. We must reckon the old man to be dead.

And failure to do so can create real problems down the line. Your flesh will come back to haunt you. And will come back to destroy your relationship with God.

God wants you to bring your flesh to the cross. And there reckon the flesh of the old man to be dead. Saul failed to obey the command of God, keeping the best cattle and sheep and so forth.

And so as he came back with the spoils of war, old Samuel, who is now an old man, can't see very well. He comes out to meet Saul. And Samuel came to Saul and Saul said to him, blessed be thou of the Lord, I have performed the commandment of the Lord.

Liar. But notice the spiritual language. Blessed be thou of the Lord.

You know, a lot of people can use spiritual jargon. But it really doesn't mean anything. You know, they can go around saying, oh, praise the Lord.

Oh, bless God. While they're picking your pocket. That's right, there's a young boy in Israel.

He meets us always at the... He's an Arab boy and he meets us always when we're coming down the path of Mount of Olives. Oh, Christians, America. Oh, praise the Lord.

Praise the Lord. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Oh, Christians from California. Oh, yes, you know. Brother, brother.

Watch out. Your wallet or your pen or something will be gone after his embrace. Praise God.

Oh, hallelujah. Fat wallet. Praise the Lord.

Spiritual jargon. It doesn't prove anything. You can be a crook and use spiritual language.

Often it is used as a disguise. Blessed be thou of the Lord. I've done everything.

I've performed all the Lord commanded me. And though Samuel was not deceived, he said, if you've done everything the Lord has commanded you, then what means the bleeding of the sheep and the lowing of the cows that I hear? Don't give me that business. And Saul said, oh, they've brought them from the Amalekites.

For the people spared the best of the sheep and the oxen to sacrifice to the Lord thy God. And the rest we have utterly destroyed. Now again, remember, Saul has developed a pattern of making excuses when faced with his wrong rather than repenting.

When he offered the sacrifices in disobedience to God and Samuel called him for it, he said, oh, the people, you know, they were scattered and I forced myself. It was because of the people and all. And now again, faced, what do you mean you've done everything? If you have, how come I hear the sheep and the cattle? Oh, well, the people, you know, they kept the best.

They brought them back to sacrifice. Religious excuses are the most damnable of all. And Samuel said unto Saul, just wait a minute, pal, I'm going to tell you what the Lord said to me tonight.

And Saul said, say on. And Samuel said, when you were little in your own sight, you were made the head over the tribes of Israel and the Lord anointed you to be king over Israel. And the Lord sent thee on a journey and said, go and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites.

Notice the sinners. The Amalekites. And fight against them until they be consumed.

Why then did you not obey the voice of the Lord, but you did fly upon the spoil and you did evil in the sight of the Lord? And Saul said unto Samuel, yes, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord and I've gone the way which the Lord sent me and I've brought Agag, the king of Amalek, and I've utterly destroyed the Amalekites. He was lying. He was not repenting.

But you see, when he was little in his own sight, there was a difference then. But now he's become puffed up. Pride has filled his life and it's about to destroy him.

Samuel said, hath the Lord as great a delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obedience to the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than to sacrifice and to hearken to God is better than the fat of the rams which is burned in the sacrifices. Flimsy excuse. God isn't interested in the sacrifices from a disobedient heart and life.

God would much rather you obey Him than offer sacrifices. Many times, people are giving to God in order to cover their feelings of guilt. And giving to God is not a sign necessarily of great spirituality.

People can feel very guilty. Oh, I'm going to make a sacrifice unto God because they feel so guilty for their disobedience. God would rather have your obedience than your sacrifice.

To hearken to the voice of God is better than to offer the fat of rams upon the altar. 4. Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. In other words, if you're rebelling against God, that's just as bad as if you were into witchcraft.

If you have a stubborn spirit, you're no better off than the person who is worshiping an idol. This business of rebellion and stubbornness is something that God is not pleased with in our lives. Rebellion is just as bad as witchcraft.

Stubbornness is just as bad as idolatry. And because you have rejected the Word of the Lord, He has also rejected you from being king. The official rejection, that's it.

God has rejected your kingship. And Saul said to Samuel, I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord and Thy words. But notice, it isn't a full repentance, because he said, I feared the people and obeyed their voice.

Oh, he didn't fear the people. Again, he's just offering a lame excuse for his disobedience. God would rather have just a straight, frank confession.

God, I blew it. I was wrong. I sinned.

God, I'm sorry. I repent. There's no sign of repentance in this at all.

Some people think it's cute to say, oh, I'm a sinner. That isn't repentance. It's only a declaration of a blasphemous truth.

Oh, I've sinned. Doesn't make anything out of you. Forsaking the sin is what is important.

Turning from the sin. The repentance is what God is seeking. Now therefore, he said, I pray Thee, pardon my sin and turn again with me that we might worship the Lord.

And Samuel said to Saul, I will not return with you for you have rejected the word of the Lord and the Lord has rejected you from being the king over Israel. And Samuel turned to go away and he grabbed hold of him and tore his coat. And Samuel said unto him, The Lord has torn the kingdom from you this day and has given it to a neighbor that is better than you are.

And also, the strength of Israel will not lie nor repent for he is not a man that he should repent. Now the strength of Israel here being a reference to God. And notice, the strength of Israel will not lie or repent.

Now in Numbers we read, For God is not a man that he should repent. Hath he not spoken? Shall he not make it good? But in just a few verses, we're going to read where he says God repented that he made you king. How come this kind of a dichotomy? The strength of Israel will not lie nor repent for he is not a man that he should repent.

Then Saul again said, I have sinned, yet honor me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people. In other words, you know, make me look good in front of the people. I've sinned.

And before Israel, turn again with me that I may worship the Lord thy God. Notice, not the Lord my God, the Lord thy God. So Samuel turned again after Saul and Saul worshiped the Lord.

Then said Samuel, Bring hither Agag, the king of the Amalekites. And Agag came unto him delicately. And Agag said, Surely the bitterness of death is past.

And Samuel said, As your sword has made women childless, so shall your mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal. Then Samuel went back to Ramah, and Saul went up to his house in Gibeah.

And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death. Nevertheless, Samuel mourned for Saul, and the Lord repented that he had made Saul king over Israel. So, God, the strength of Israel will not lie nor repent.

Then what does it mean? It repented the Lord that he made Saul king over Israel. There is always a difficulty in expressing God and the characteristics of God and the actions of God in human language. But all we have is human language.

Now, God has characteristics, abilities that we have no human language for, for we have no way of experiencing these things. I cannot even think how God thinks because He knows everything. How does He even think when He knows everything to begin with? Now, how can I even express the way that God thinks? How can I express the actions of God? I can only express them with human terms as they appear to be from my human standpoint.

But yet, I am bound with human language. Now, I am certain that there is a vocabulary of heaven that is far broader and incapable of expressing these things in languages that if we heard it, we wouldn't know it because we have nothing that will equal it in human experience. So, we are seeking to describe now an action of God, and that is the action of turning away His favor from Saul.

The change of God's attitude towards Saul. Now, the word repent meaning change. God is changing now His attitude towards Saul.

We have only one word to describe that change. Repent. But yet, we have just read in a true sense, God is not a man that He lies or repents.

But yet, we have this human language barrier. And so, we have to express the activities of God with human language. And the only word we have to express this particular action of God's obvious change in attitude towards Saul, the only word that we have to express this obvious change is repent.

And yet, because it is God's action, it isn't a repentance as we think of repent in our human minds. But it is the only vocabulary word that we have to express this change of attitude, so we use the word, but it isn't repent in the same way that a man repents from his decisions or his doings. I hope I've helped you.

I don't know. So, the Lord said to Samuel, how long are you going to mourn for Saul seeing I've rejected him from being the king or reigning over Israel? This change of attitude. I've rejected him.

Now, how long are you going to mourn? Fill your horn with oil and go and I will send you to Jesse, the Bethlehemite, for I have provided a king from among his sons. And Samuel said, Lord, if Saul hears I've gone down to anoint someone else to be king, he'll kill me. Now, that shows you how far Saul has strayed from the Lord and the things of the Lord.

He would actually kill the prophet of God. Samuel realized this. This guy has really gone off the deep end.

Lord, if he hears I'm going down to anoint another king, he's going to kill me. And the Lord said, well, take with you a heifer, and if they say where you're going, just say I'm going to offer a sacrifice. And then invite Jesse and his sons to come to the sacrifice.

So, Samuel came down to the house of Jesse and he said to Jesse, Jesse said to him, have you come peaceably? And he said, yes, I've come peaceably. I've come to sacrifice to the Lord. So, sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.

And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, called them to the sacrifice. So it came to pass, when the first son came in, Eliab, he was a good-looking fellow. And Samuel thought, oh, surely this good-looking young fellow is the one the Lord has chosen.

This is God's choice. And God spoke to Samuel and said, don't look on the outward appearance. Because I don't judge as men judge.

Men judge from the outward appearance, but God said, I judge the hearts. So, don't judge from just the outward appearance. I'm judging the hearts.

Eliab isn't the one. For the Lord does not see as man sees. Man looks on the outward.

God looks on the heart. So, he called his next son, Abinadab. The Lord said, nope.

And so, he called Shammah. The Lord said, nope. And he made all seven sons to pass before Samuel.

And the Lord said no to all of them. Samuel, uh-oh, what's going on here? He said, do you have any more sons? Is that all? Well, the other one's just a little boy. He's out watching the sheep.

Samuel said, call him in. And as David came in, with the smell of the sheep and the fields upon him, just a little boy, the Lord spoke to Samuel. Now, he was ruddy.

He had a good tan. But with all, he had a beautiful face. And he was just good looking.

And the Lord said, arise and anoint him, for this is the one. And Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward.

So, Samuel arose and went back to Ramah. So, here's the anointing of David. To be king over Israel.

Now, Saul was still on the throne. Though David is now God's anointed and God's choice for king, still Saul is on the throne. And we're going to notice in the next few chapters that Saul is now going to do his very best by force to hang on to that which is no longer rightfully his.

In a true rightful sense, David is king. He's been anointed king. The anointing of God and the power of Spirit and the anointing of God is resting upon David as king.

However, Saul is still on the throne. And Saul is going to try to drive David out of the kingdom by force. The kingdom which is now rightfully his.

There's a sequel to this. Jesus, through His death upon the cross, has redeemed the world back to God and is now the rightful king. God's choice and God's anointed.

However, Satan is still upon the throne. And Satan is doing his best to hold by force that which is no longer rightfully his. And doing his best to hold back the kingdom of God from the earth.

But, Jesus Christ is the rightful king. And we can claim His victory. And we can force the enemy off of His territory.

But the enemy is stubborn. He only yields what he must. Thus, your prayers must be specific.

Instead of God save the world, you've got to bring individuals before God, specific individuals, and say, Lord, You died that You might reign as king in their lives. And they're being held by the power of Satan and the power of darkness. But Jesus has defeated the powers of the enemy.

Colossians 2. He triumphed over these principalities and powers through His cross making an open display of His victory. And therefore, I claim the victory of Jesus Christ in this life. And I come against the power of Satan that is holding them captive.

I come against the powers of darkness that have blinded their eyes to their truth. In Jesus' name, release them from this blindness, from the prejudice that Satan has poisoned their minds against the Lord. And I can set them free from this power of Satan that they might have a freedom of choice.

Why do not men choose Christ? Because Satan has so controlled their minds and holds them under his grip so that they cannot have a free choice. They are actually being held captive by Satan who has taken them captive even against their wills. The God of this world has blinded their eyes that they cannot see the truth.

So my prayer has to be directed towards the enemy. Claiming the victory of Christ in that life. And claiming Christ's victory until I see them set free from the blinding influence of Satan so that they can make a free choice.

And any man, when he can actually look at it in a free choice without all the poison and prejudice that Satan has planted in their mind, would surely choose Jesus Christ. Only a fool would reject Him. And so it is mine to bring them from the power and the captivity of Satan and set them free from this binding force in order that they might make their choice for the true King.

And I can deliver people out of the power of darkness through prayer. This great spiritual weapon that God has made available to us. But Satan is stubborn.

He only yields what he must. Therefore, your prayers have to be specific. And he will counterattack as soon as you drive him off of territory.

He'll counterattack and try and take it back. Therefore, prayers must be persisted in even after you begin to see the first signs of victory. Many times we make a mistake.

We say, oh, look, they went forward. Oh, praise the Lord. Now who are we going to work on? And we're no longer praying and holding that ground against the enemy.

But Satan is going to counterattack and going to try and take back the territory from which he's been driven. Therefore, we've got to hold it in prayer. We are in a real warfare.

We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers. These forces of darkness. But, though there is a tremendous battle that is going on between the forces of darkness and the forces of light, yet there is a decided victory already determined there at the cross.

And it is ours to bring the victory of the cross into lives and into situations through prayer. But Satan, as Saul, seeks to hold on to that which is no longer rightful he is. But when you come against him in the authority and the name of Jesus, he has to yield because he was defeated.

But he is a brassy, stubborn guy. He'll come in where he has no business being. He'll take hold of that which he has no business having.

Therefore, you have to deal with him very firmly in prayer. Not give place to him. Not give him a place at all.

But claim and lay claim to those victories of Christ. And you can. You can have real victory in your life.

You can bring victory into the lives of others around you through prayer. So, David was anointed to be king over Israel. Now, at this particular point, we have an interesting scripture, difficult to understand.

Verse 14, But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him. What does that mean, an evil spirit from the Lord? Well, I guess it means an evil spirit from the Lord. But that is difficult for us to reconcile in our minds.

Now, I don't want you all to get up and leave in a huff because I say something that may sound very radical. But I am convinced that in a unique and unusual kind of a way, Satan is actually serving God. He is serving purposes of God.

If it were not for Satan, then we would have no power of choice. If we had no power of choice, then God wouldn't know if you really loved Him or not. Satan could not exist unless God allowed him to exist.

And the very fact that God allows him to exist means that he must be serving a purpose for God. Otherwise, there would be no reason of having Satan around at all. If he were not serving a purpose of God, then God surely wouldn't allow him his freedom today.

But because he is serving a purpose of God, in order that you might be tested, in order that your love for God might indeed be a love of free choice, God has allowed Satan the liberty for he serves a purpose of God. So in a broad sense, all of creation is still serving the purposes of God. Even Satan in his rebellion, for God has a purpose in that.

You see, to give us the power of choice, and yet if there is no choice to make, what value is it to have a power of choice? Here, choose what book you want out of my hand. Well, there is no choice. In order to exercise choice, there has to be the opposing side.

So, God has allowed Satan's rebellion, has allowed Satan to go on, has allowed Satan the freedom, has allowed Satan the freedom to come and to tempt you and to hassle you and to work on you and to make it difficult for you to serve God, so that as you serve God, it is because of choice of serving God in spite of the obstacles, in spite of the difficulties. God, I do love you, and my love for God is more or less proved by my choice to love Him in spite of the difficulties and obstacles that are placed in my way. And thus, God is assured that my love is genuine and my love for Him is true.

If I would say to my son, stay in the backyard while I go downtown and I go out and chain him to the big tree. And when I get home, I go in the backyard and unlock him and say, ha ha, I'm proud of my boy. He's obedient to his dad.

Stayed right there in the backyard. Good boy. Proud father.

My neighbor would say, you should have heard him cursing and screaming trying to get free. You see, he had no choice. There has to be the open door, the possibility, the opportunity to disobey in order that obedience is meaningful.

God wants from you meaningful love. Therefore, the choice must be given. And thus, an evil spirit from the Lord, or God allowed, perhaps, if that fits you better, an evil spirit to come.

The Spirit of the Lord... Now, I am convinced that when the Spirit of God departs from your life, the door is open for evil spirits to really come. And so, an evil spirit, allowed by the Lord at least, came and began to harass Saul. The Spirit of God departed from him.

What a sad time in a person's life when God's Spirit departs from his life. And an evil spirit began to move in. And it troubled him.

And Saul's servant said, you need to find someone who is skillful at playing the harp. And when you get in these bad moods, and of course, that's actually what it was. It was a bad mood.

You get mean. You get sullen. And when these sullen, mean streaks come on you, then let him play on the harp skillfully and let the beautiful music soothe you.

And Saul said, provide me a skillful harp player. And one of the servants said, I've seen the son of Jesse. He is a skillful player.

He's a valiant man. A man of war. Prudent in matters.

He's a beautiful person. And the Lord is with him. These qualifications of David capped off by the Lord is with him.

I love that. Wherefore, Saul sent messengers to Jesse. And he said, send David your son, which is with the sheep.

And Jesse took a donkey that was laden with bread, a bottle of wine, a young goat. And he sent them by David, his son to Saul. And David came to Saul and stood before him.

And he loved him greatly. And he became his armor bearer. Actually, David had a great admiration for Saul.

Of course, just a young boy. And he was at that hero age. And Saul, big, tall, handsome fellow, became sort of a hero in David's eyes.

And David always respected Saul right to his death and even after his death. David never lost his respect for this man. And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David, I pray thee, stand before me, for he has found favor in my sight.

And it came to pass when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul that David took the harp and he played with his hands. So Saul was refreshed and was well. And the evil spirit departed from him.

Now, how long this went on, we are not told. But this beautiful relationship was soon to be shattered as we get into chapter 17. And because of the time, we'll wait until next week and we'll start with chapter 17 next Sunday night.

Shall we stand? Listen in next week. Same time, same station. Continuation.

Again, may God grant to you a special blessing tonight as you drive home. May the Lord be with you even as He was with David. And may your heart and life be open to the things of God's Spirit.

And may you have blessed communion with the Lord through the week. May God bless you, especially for the sacrifices that you have made to gather together in obedience to His command of not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together in these last days. And may the strength of the Lord and the joy of the Lord be your portion for this week as you walk in beautiful fellowship with Him.

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