

I Samuel 8-12

“The Rise of Saul”

Introduction

- Tonight we continue in our study of I Samuel
 - And the content of I Samuel can be remembered by the fact that the book is really about 3 people, 3 main characters

The Book of I Samuel

Samuel – I Samuel 1-7

King Saul – I Samuel 8-15

David – I Samuel 16-31

- And now that we have finished looking at the chapters that focus on Samuel, we come now to the chapters that focus on Saul
 - Samuel will still play a prominent role, but the focus of the book is changing

Remember the book of First Samuel is the record of how Israel goes from being a nation led by God, through the direction of a judge, to a monarch which will dominate their history for the next 600 years

- now the first monarch in Jewish history was a guy by the name of Saul and it is his story and his rise to the throne, and the things about his life that made him a good king early on that we want to cover tonight
 - for you note takers we are going to see 5 things

The Rise of Saul – I Samuel 8-12

Saul was requested – I Samuel 8:1-22

Saul was humble – I Samuel 9:1-21

Saul was anointed – I Samuel 9:22-10:27

Saul was caring – I Samuel 11:1-15

Saul was warned – I Samuel 12:1-25

- We will consider these one at a time

The Rise of Saul – I Samuel 8-12

Saul was requested – I Samuel 8:1-22

- Now this story we went over on Sunday – so I won't go into much detail, those who missed it, I encourage you to get it online
 - But to keep the context here – the story of Saul begins with a request from the people of Israel

The reason the people begin with is because Samuel's sons did not follow in his ways

- and that phrase is interesting because it shows us that – it was not hypocrisy that Samuel was living out at home
 - sometimes kids rebel because what their parents say they are and who they really are at home are two completely different things
- But sometimes, young men and women make their own decisions to not follow the Lord and it has nothing to do with the parents
 - And this was apparently the case with Samuel's sons

But it seems the people were using his sons as a pretext for what they really wanted – they wanted a king to be like every other nation

- God reassures Samuel, they are not rejecting you, they are rejecting Me – so give them a king Samuel, but let them know what he will be like
 - You see they wanted a king like all the other nations, but they didn't live in those other nations and so they didn't know what it is like to live under a human ruler

- He takes a lot more from you than God does, he is hungry and that human government takes more money to run because it takes a lot of humans to replace God, not that humans ever can

So Samuel warns the people that Saul will take and take and the people will eventually cry out for the Lord to take that King away, more than they are crying for a King at this time in their lives

- What a lesson for us
 - So often we think we want something from the Lord – we cry out for God to give it to us
 - And we need to realize what Psalm 84:11 says

“No good thing will He withhold from him who walks uprightly.” – Psalm 84:11

- So if the Lord is withholding something from you, do you know what you can know
 - Its not good for you – at least not at this time in your life
 - So will you trust Him
- Such an important lesson because sometimes we can force our own way, or seemingly force the Lord’s hand
 - And then we like the children of Israel will cry out more than we are crying for God to give us this relation, this person, this vocation, this job, this location to live – we will cry out to take it away
 - We need to see it

The people don’t and say – no, but we will have a king

- And a King they certainly got and we meet him in chapter 9
 - And tonight – he’s great
 - But by the end of next week you will know, Saul was an unmitigated disaster

The Rise of Saul – I Samuel 8-12

Saul was requested – I Samuel 8:1-22

Saul was humble – I Samuel 9:1-21

Now next week we will get to the downfall of Saul and what his problems were, but tonight I really want to point out the good things in his life

- I mean we see little glimpses of what will go wrong with Saul all through the text tonight

I mean you get great insight into how important spiritual things were to Saul when he doesn’t know what the prophet of God looks like

- Now I know they didn’t live in a world of TV and internet where everybody knows every bodies famous face
 - But considering that Saul lived in Gibeah and that was only five miles from where Samuel lived and ministered, the city of Ramah
- You would think if you live in Vista and the spiritual leader of the nation lived in Oceanside, you may be familiar with his face
 - You think if Billy Graham lived five miles from your front door
 - If you were a serious Christian, then even before TV and the internet you would know what that man looks like
- So if he was into spiritual things, he would have known and been at events where the spiritual leader of the nation was at
 - So Saul has some spiritual issues, like it wasn’t important to him

But we also see in the text that Saul at first is humble

- He doesn’t assume that he should be the King of Israel, that he deserves to lead
 - And this is important for all of us to be used by the Lord
- What we normally think – God got a pretty good deal when he saved me – of course He would use me

We may think that but the truth is far different – the truth is God uses the foolish things

- for we are told in I Corinthians 1:26..

“For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; that no flesh should glory in His presence.” – I Corinthians 1:26-29

- not many wise are called, not many noble, in fact we are told that what God does is choose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise – and the reason is, so He gets the glory, not the man
 - so if God is using you, lets be honest about ourselves – God says – that guy is foolish enough, the girl is weak enough for me to bless their lives and I get the glory
- that is the truth and we need to remember it

Psalm 147 says God lifts up the humble, but tears down the prideful

- And so humility is so key if we are going to be spiritual leaders
 - We need to start humble and we need to stay humble – because later we will see next week, Saul goes from humble to prideful and Samuel will say when you were little in your own eyes, God could use you, but you have gotten to big for your britches
- And when we get that way we are setting ourselves up for a fall

The Rise of Saul – I Samuel 8-12

Saul was requested – I Samuel 8:1-22

Saul was humble – I Samuel 9:1-21

Saul was anointed – I Samuel 9:22-10:27

- Saul with all his faults, that we will delve into next week, he was still anointed by God
 - David certainly was aware of that fact as we will see in a few weeks how many times it seems that Saul is just delivered into David’s hand and David won’t kill Saul, because He is God’s anointed, God put him in the position of King
- Now we use that term anointed a lot and what we normally mean by it is that person we are talking about is gifted in an area
 - We say – that worship leader is anointed, I just love the music God gives to Him
 - Or that preacher is anointed, I just love to listen to him teach the Word of God
 - We mean by the term anointed, gifted by God

The word “anointed” literally means, “To consecrate or call for service”

- You see “anointed” doesn’t just mean gifted, it means called by God to do something
 - And of course, I hope a worship leader or a pastor is called by God, consecrated by God to do a particular ministry
 - But sometimes we can think anointing is just for people in full time ministry
- And I think the enemy uses that to get us to believe that what you are called to do for the Lord is somehow less significant that what I am called to do for the Lord
 - And that is just not true

Some of you are called to be parents and raise kids to love and know God – God has called you to that ministry

- Some of you are called to disciple one on one and help people grow
 - Some of you are called to counsel – not in some sterile office, but over coffee
- When we were still at the church in Texas we would joke that Debbie Bryson was the pastor’s wives whisper – that there was nothing that she couldn’t fix in your heart as you sat down with her over coffee
 - She’s anointed, she is called by god
 - But so are you!

➤ You have a calling – you have something God has consecrated, anointed you to do
And I find it interesting in this chapter that besides the obvious of dumping oil on Saul's head, there were a couple of other things in that chapter that I think had everything to do with preparing Saul for what God had called him to do

- we see in verse 27, that Samuel declared to him to the Word of God
 - and I love this verse in some other translations

“Stop here for a while, that I may make known to you the Word of God.” – 1 Samuel 9:27 ESV

“Stand still a while, that I might show you the Word of God.” – 1 Samuel 9:27 KJV

- you want to grow in your calling as a parent, as husband or a wife, as a discipler, worship leader and bible teacher
 - you need to stand still before the Word of God
 - we are in such a rush for everything – it is part of the culture we live in

If my burger isn't done in 3 minutes or if my coffee requires some patience well I have none, and they put those little clocks next to windows to show me the right I have to be impatient – that clock is flashing and I know because I used to work fast food – that means your boss thinks I should have my burger by now

- we live in a world with little patience
 - but we bring that to the Word of God – well I have 15 minutes, lets power read
- and I believe there is time for that
 - I love to have three relationships with the Word of God
 - I am called to read it, to just let it wash my brain
 - I am called to study it, to dig in and let it dig in me
 - And we are called to meditate – to slow down and think it through

And some of us need to not neglect that last aspect of the Word – to stand still for a while and let God make His Word known to me

- And I don't know what that means practically for you
 - But I know something happens as I read not just to get through some chapter, I do that
 - Not just as I read to study, to figure it out
- But as I read to slowly think through what God is saying to me in my life situations
 - So important to grow in the Word of God as we sit before Him to grow in anointing, calling
 - as is verse 6 of chapter 10 – filled with the Spirit

Israel did not invent the practice of anointing their Kings

- many of the pagan nations anointed their Kings
 - but most of them did it with animal fat, it would be melted down and poured over the King

And besides giving him a serious case of acne, the reason the poured melted animal fat over the King was to infuse him with the nature of a beast

- it was saying I am wild man, powerful, untamable like a beast – fearless in all I do – I have become like the animal
 - But for God's men, He instructed that they not be anointed with animal fat, and I'm glad God made that decision, can you imagine if James said, “and if any of you are sick, let them call upon the elders of the church and let them anoint you with animal fat and pray” – you come into my office, Steve breaks out the lard and we rub it all over your forehead – no teenager would ever ask to be prayed for – no thank you – I have enough trouble with clear skin
- No – instead of animal fat – God said anoint my people and anoint my leaders with oil, olive oil

- And the reason is instead of God's man saying, I need to be a wild man, fearless, the spirit of an animal
- No - It was saying – I need to be filled with your Spirit

The anointing with oil spoke symbolically of what would happen with the Holy Spirit

- That God's leaders were not to be infused with the power of an animal
 - But they were to be infused with power from on High, with God Himself filling them and molding them not into the image of a wolf or a bear
 - But into His own image, the image of God

You see it says in verse 6 of chapter 10 that the Spirit of God came upon Saul and he became another man

- Now be careful to read into that that Saul was saved, he might have been, or to read into it that Saul was walking in the power of the Holy Spirit
 - The phraseology there simply means that God gave Saul the heart of a King, not just a farmer as we will see in that next chapter
 - He now had a heart for the nation, the ability to lead – he was a different man

But the wording I think is important for all of us to grow in our callings as well because it does speak of what God does in my heart and your heart when we are filled with the Spirit

- We have talked about this before, but it bears repeating
 - We must be filled with the Spirit – not to give you the Holy *heebie jeebies*
 - It is because we need to be turned into different men and women
- And we can get on all type of programs and products but the reality is what we really need is His Spirit

Paul in Ephesians chapter 5, verse 18 contrasts being filled with the Spirit to being drunk with wine

- and the reason is just as alcohol abuse can turn you into a different person and we all know people who that is the case
 - so too the Holy Spirit can change us from the inside out into different men and different women
 - to be filled doesn't mean to be stuffed with, it means to be controlled by, directed by
 - I become a different man under the power of the Holy Spirit – and that is what I need, and you too by the way

I don't like who I am in the flesh and if my flesh is allowed to dominate, well the pages of church history are littered with the results of men and women who have been disqualified from service

- So what do I do

You must be filled with the Spirit – this happens not just at the moment of Salvation – but Paul in Ephesians 5:18, says “be being filled” – it happens at the moment of salvation – certainly – but it also needs to happen everyday – Lord I need you to walk in holiness, I need your Spirit to become a different man or woman

- I know when someone is talking to me or coming up for prayer and they know and love the Lord but can't seem to have victory over a besetting sin, I want to know, “are you filled with the Spirit.”
 - Do you recognize your need to not operate in your power but in His
 - That anything in our lives – overcoming sin, breaking down walls – it is going to happen, not by might and not by power, but by My Spirit says the Lord
- Saul was anointed – yes with some oil, but more importantly by the Word of God and the Spirit of God in His life
 - And that is a huge need in my life and yours as well

The Rise of Saul – I Samuel 8-12

Saul was requested – I Samuel 8:1-22

Saul was humble – I Samuel 9:1-21

Saul was anointed – I Samuel 9:22-10:27

Saul was caring – I Samuel 11:1-15

- (As you read Nahash means snake and I hope that was a nickname given to him by his enemies, not the name his momma gave him, but you never know)

This is Saul's first test – Nahash wants to hurt the people

- The men of Jabesh want terms, he wants to take their right eye – that is kind of a deal killer – shows he wants to hurt them but also use them as slaves – nice guy, Mr. snake man

Now Jabesh Gilead has a history in Israel

- back in the book of Judges, when all of Israel decided to go to battle against the tribe of Benjamin, for their toleration of what happened in their territory in chapter 19 of Judges
 - all of Israel joined in the battle, all that is except the men of Jabesh Gilead, they decided they didn't need to go to war with their countrymen
 - but now how ironic, they needed their countrymen to go to war for them
- And Saul could have justified standing down – we will teach these doves a thing or two about why strong national defense policy is important
 - He could have said, there is no way I can muster an army, the whole nation doesn't even want me to rule

Saul could have done those things

- but instead Saul chops up an ox and sends it to the tribes of Israel and says to them, your oxen will look like this if you don't go to battle with me
 - and 330,000 men respond – that's huge
- And then Saul marches them all night to come to the aid of this city who, let's face it, didn't really deserve all the effort and sacrifice

What Saul did was simply an act of Love and service to the people of Israel

- and after God gave them a great victory that day, the people say, "who didn't want Saul to rule, kill them"

But Saul again showing mercy and love, says, no one is dying today

- And all of Israel responds by making Saul their King

This is the highlight of Saul's Kingship

- it is sad that the highlight is day one, but that is the truth, it is all down hill from here, he is at the pinnacle of his success
 - but notice with me what brought him to this point
 - He was humble, important, he was anointed, that is essential
- But when it came to getting the people to follow, he simply loved them, cared for them
 - The old adage is so true - they will not care how much you know until they know how much you care

And the application for you who want to serve is simply that

- you need to be humble
 - there is no substitute for anointing
 - But even with humbleness and anointing, no one will follow you without knowing you love them, care for them
- Whoever God has called you to serve – Love them! Care for them

Love those kids – love those ladies, love those men, love those teens – if you serve here, if you serve anywhere – love them

I have told the staff here and they know it's true. They can fall in many areas and I will try if possible to restore them, be graceful toward them and keep them serving the Lord – but if they are not going to be loving toward you, if they are going to treat you with contempt, there is no place for

them on my staff. And I don't care how gifted, how essential they may seem, if they can't love the people God has called them to serve, they need to find a new job.

And isn't that what Paul said in I Corinthians 13,

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.” – I Corinthians 13:1-3

- Humbleness – important
 - Anointing – essential
 - Love – the key, to fruitful ministry and service

We see in this chapter that Saul in this story more than any other time in his life is a lot like Jesus

- Jesus who went all night, being beaten and spit upon before He was crucified for you and for me
 - And while on the cross, while people were yelling insults, I would have been tempted to say – Father can you get those two right there for me – Jesus said father forgive them for they know not what they do
- The people align behind the leadership of Saul because they feel like he loves them and cares for them
 - People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care
 - You can have all the annotating, all the gifting in the world
 - But if your kids, or congregation don't know how much you care about them, they won't really be into how much you want to speak into their lives
 - So we need this lesson from Saul

The Rise of Saul – I Samuel 8-12

Saul was requested – I Samuel 8:1-22

Saul was humble – I Samuel 9:1-21

Saul was anointed – I Samuel 9:22-10:27

Saul was caring – I Samuel 11:1-15

Saul was warned – I Samuel 12:1-25

(As you read verse 11, or it should be translated Barak as in Deborah and Barak)

- The last thing we are going to consider tonight is Saul's coronation, where he is warned by the Lord on how to behave

Samuel says to the people, I have served you a long time and what have I ever taken from you – that is a pretty bold statement for a guy who has been in service for so long

- I mean the best pastors in the world, you serve at a church for 40 years, you upset some people in that time, some people feel like they have been slighted by you – but not the people by Samuel – they attest – You have never treated us in a way that was unbecoming at all

So Samuel points out that he is blameless and more than that – that the Lord has been nothing but good to them for their whole history

- But you have rejected God from being your king and have requested a human – so here is your King
 - This would have been a bummer to be Saul at that moment – you rejected God and asked for a man, and here is your man you wanted – you would want to look down at that moment
- But this sermon was as much for Saul as it was for the people

- You have a king, but it doesn't get you out of following the Lord – you follow the Lord with your King and just like before I will bless you

If you don't follow me and my law, then King or no King – you will be judged

- You have messed up – but what you do next is important – you need to serve God with all your heart
 - And if you do – I will bless you and your king
 - But if you turn from me, to these empty things – then you and your king will perish
- The people needed to hear it, Saul needed to be warned
 - And so do we
 - We make choices, poor choices and most of the time we have to live with the consequences
- But the enemy will want us to think that all is lost and we should just continue deeper down the road of rebellion
 - But I believe God would say to you and me – no way
 - You have made your choice, you have to live with the consequences
 - But I still want to be your God – I still want to lead you into good things – and so following me is now more important than ever
- Saul will not – and his story is nothing but disappointment from this point on
 - Saul's story has been written
 - Ours, the next chapter of ours has not
 - Choose to Serve the Lord – be faithful to Him, stay away from empty things
 - And He will bless you