

Lecture 17- The Rise and Fall of King Saul (II)

After the Philistines had captured the ark of God, they took it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. Then they carried the ark into Dagon's temple and set it beside Dagon. When the people of Ashdod rose early the next day, there was Dagon, fallen on his face on the ground before the ark of the LORD! They took Dagon and put him back in his place.

1 Sam 5:1-3

Key Terms

God's man, God's power, God's victory, people's demand, thinking humanly, thinking theologically, resignation, demonstration, confirmation

Lecture Objectives

- Describe the episode of the Ark of the Covenant in the Philistine lands especially noting its historical and literary context.
- Describe the significance of this event in furthering our understanding of God and his redemptive work.
- Identify parallels between Israel's motives in asking for a leader and our own.

Preliminary Questions

- What do you know about why and how Israel got its first king? What were these circumstances? How was the desire for a king related to those circumstances?

The Rise and Fall of King Saul (II)

I. Before the Monarchy: God Rules and Rescues His People (1 Sam 1-7)

A. God's man: Samuel and Eli at Shiloh (1 Sam 1-3)

How are Samuel and Eli contrasted in the first seven chapters?

B. God's power: the Ark of God at large in Philistia (1 Sam 4:1-7:1)

1. Eli dies under his own weight
2. Ichabod - "Where is the glory?" or "There is no glory."
3. Dagon
4. The heavy hand of God
5. Ashdod was a port city.
6. Gath is an inland city.
7. Ekron
8. Weight / honor
9. Theme: God is to be honored

C. God's victory: Samuel versus the Philistines at Mizpah (1 Sam 7:2-17) (God's power working through God's prophet to bring victory to God's people)

1. Important to see that this chapter is juxtaposed with chapter 8.
2. Ebenezer = "stone of help"
3. 8:20 = we need a king to fight our battles

Were the Israelites trying to walk by sight rather than by faith? Standard temptation. The king is not wrong, but the type of king.

II. The Beginning of Monarchy: The People Demand a King (1 Sam 8-12)

A. The *locus classicus* of source criticism in Samuel (classic point or classic text)

1. Primary place, it is said, to see sources combined in a wrong way. Why?

a. Anti-monarchial and pro-monarchial accounts

1) ch. 8 - Elders demand a king (anti-monarchial)

2) 9:1-10:16- Saul anointed (pro-monarchial)

3) 10:17-27- Lot-casting (anti-monarchial)

4) ch. 11- Saul's defeat of Ammonites (pro-monarchial)

5) ch. 12- Samuel's retirement speech (anti-monarchial)

But pro-accounts = action; anti-accounts = Samuel addressing assembly

b. Multiple accession accounts- too much happening

But recent study has shown a three-part process in coming to power:

1) Designation

2) Demonstration

3) Confirmation

Evaluate Israel's request for a king and explain your judgment.

How would you explain the seeming contradiction between vv. 10:7 and 10:8?