

Lecture 20- The Rise and Fall of King Saul (V)

There was a Benjamite, a man of standing, whose name was Kish son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Becorath, the son of Aphiah of Benjamin. He had a son named Saul, an impressive young man without equal among the Israelites—a head taller than any of the others.

1 Sam 9:1-2

One of the servants answered, “I have seen a son of Jesse of Bethlehem who knows how to play the harp. He is a brave man and a warrior. He speaks well and is a fine-looking man. And the LORD is with him.

1 Sam 16:18

Key Terms

Physical presence, faltering, reluctance, unbelief-disobedience, thinking humanly, thinking theologically

Lecture Objectives

- Outline the fuller content of Saul’s life as presented in 1 Samuel, noting how this deepens our understanding of the issues surrounding Saul’s rise and fall.
- Identify applications from the story of Saul’s life for our own Christian life and service.

Preliminary Questions

- Having spent the last several lessons considering the rise and fall of King Saul, consider the following questions:
 - * In what ways are we like Saul?
 - * In what ways are we unlike him?
 - * In what ways are we like the Israelites?
 - * In what ways are we different?

The Rise and Fall of King Saul (V)**I. The Surrounding Context**

- A. First appearance of Saul (1 Sam 9:1-2)
1. Physical presence
 2. What is missing? 1 Sam 16:18

Lineage does not reveal anything about character.

Does Saul listen to the people too much?

- B. Saul looks for the donkeys (1 Sam 9:3ff)
1. The servant’s comment
 2. Saul’s question concerning a gift
 3. The servant girl’s response
 - a. How do we know Samuel is the prophet?
 - 1) Zuph (1:1)
 - 2) 3:19 and 9:6
 - b. Why is Samuel not mentioned from the beginning?
 4. Saul does not recognize Samuel.

What is Saul’s knowledge of the Lord (based on this passage)?

- C. The anointing scene 1 Sam 10:11
 - 1. 1 Sam 10:16 Saul's faltering
- D. The lot-casting episode 1 Sam 10:17ff
 - 1. Saul's reluctance

Does 10:11 appear to make the seer someone other than Samuel? No, see 10:5
 Is this weakness or disobedience? Failures stemming from unbelief, not weak belief.

- E. The Jabesh incident 1 Sam 11
 - 1. "The messengers went to Gibeah"
 - 2. Farming
 - 3. Cutting up oxen – reminiscent of time when there was no king in Israel

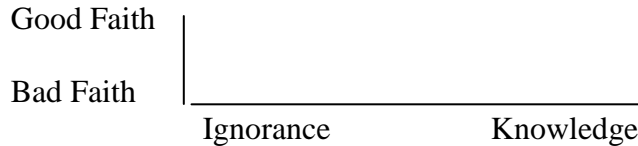
What is the theological significance of chapter 11 in its context?

- F. Conclusion
 - 1. Biblical narratives often convey their message in subtleties
 - 2. Saul's problem was fundamental unbelief which led to various kinds of disobedience.

What are some of the subtleties of these passages used by the narrator?
 Is Saul all that different from other men of the faith? Recognition of unworthiness is good; failure to obey is culpable.

II. Saul's Psychological Transformation

A. Graph of Saul's digression



B. Saul's responses

- 1. How did Saul initially respond? Fear, timidity
 - a. Root cause of fear: lack of faith
 - b. Life is terrifying if God is not in control.
- 2. How did Saul respond when he was successful? Pride and arrogance
 - a. Root cause of pride: denial of God's hand in success

As Saul spirals downward, is it God judging Saul? (Rodney Storz, Pastor of Twin Oaks Presbyterian Church in St. Louis)

How do you explain God's repenting in 15:11 and 15:29?