

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

SEPTEMBER 30TH-OCTOBER 1ST, 2023 // 1 SAMUEL

THE KING (1 SAMUEL 10:17-27)

"TODAY YOU HAVE REJECTED YOUR GOD"

After Saul is anointed by Sam and touched by God, Sam calls the people to Mizpah and officially declares Saul as the first king of Israel.

- Before the coronation, Sam reminds them God is the only deliverer from "troubles and afflictions" and by wanting a human savior, they've rejected the true King.

THE SELECTION OF THE KING

Though God had already chosen who would be king, Samuel went through the proper process to show that it was God's choosing.

- Sam used the Urim and Thummim to narrow down the people until the lot finally landed on Saul. Very little is mentioned about this process in the Bible.

WE HAVE TO BE CAREFUL WITH BIBLICAL ANOMALIES

In the OT, God may have used odd means because the Spirit hadn't been "poured out" (Joel 2:28). Jesus used odd means in the NT because He knew what the situation called for (John 9).

- God can speak how He pleases, but the Bible shows us the normative pattern of prayer, knowing the Word, and listening.

WHERE IN THE HECK IS SAUL?

After the lot fell on Saul, the "impressive" young man who stood a head taller than everyone was found hiding behind baggage. Samuel seems to give a sarcastic and prophetic response, "Do you see the one the Lord has chosen? There is no one like him among the entire population."

FORESHADOWING

There is vivid foreshadowing and a valuable lesson in Saul's coronation. We learn that looks can be deceiving and our measure of heroic is different from God's (David).

- Saul's fear and inconsistency with God will be his downfall. We must make sure we trust and rely on God more than our abilities.

A TURNING POINT IN HISTORY

Sam proclaimed and documented the rights of the king (8:11-18) and sent everyone home. Saul also went home along with "brave" men willing to serve and honor God. He was also criticized by "wicked men," but Saul held his tongue.

- Leadership draws support and criticism. Do we react well and pick our battles wisely?

RIGHTEOUS ANGER (1 SAMUEL 11:1-11)

THE FIRST TEST

Shortly after Saul was made king, Nahash the Ammonite from east of the Jordan river tested the strength of the new king by attacking Jabesh Gilead near Ammon.

- At first, the men of Jabesh tried to make a treaty by becoming their servants, but Nahash wanted to disgrace the Israelites.

A PRETTY SICK CONDITION

Nahash told the people in Jabesh he would only keep the peace if they allowed him to "gouge out everyone's right eye and humiliate all Israel."

- The response was for Nahash not to do anything for seven days, and if no one would come to their rescue, they would surrender.

RIGHTEOUS ANGER AT OPPRESSION AND INJUSTICE

As the people in Saul's hometown heard the news about Jabesh, they wept. But, when Saul heard, "The Spirit of God...came powerfully on him," and he burned with righteous anger.

- Christians should feel a righteous anger towards brutality and sin and long to rescue people with truth and love.

"THE TERROR OF THE LORD FELL ON THE PEOPLE"

After cutting up a team of oxen, sending them throughout Israel, and threatening to do the same to the oxen of anyone who refuses to help Jabesh, Saul unites an army.

- There should be a level of fear when we fail to obey God by not standing up for truth and justice.

A GOOD MILITARY STRATEGIST (V9-11)

We learn that Saul was quite the military leader. He divided the troops into three groups, surprise attacked Nahash, and "slaughtered them until the heat of the day." This act confirmed Saul's call and saved lives.

- Good leaders protect the innocent, hate evil, and strategically make decisions.

LEADERSHIP (1 SAMUEL 11:12-15)

JUMPING THE GUN

After the overwhelming victory in Jabesh, some people said to Sam, "Who said that Saul should not reign over us?" and they wanted to kill them. This was a prideful kneejerk reaction to a single win, which is very foolish.

- A trademark of good leadership is consistency, and it takes time to display it.

CONSISTENCY IS SIMILAR TO FAITHFULNESS

There would be many more crises to come, and we will learn that Saul lacks consistent faithfulness to God.

- If we expect to be led by God through crises, lead our family, and be the light of Christ to the lost, we must be faithful and consistent with a relationship with Jesus!

SAUL RESPONDS WITH MERCY

Saul has no desire to get revenge on his critics and he responds to them with mercy. Mercy is another key element of good leadership.

- Mercy comes from healthy theological understanding that we all fall short and need grace and all victories in our lives come from God.

CONFIRMING THE KING

Sam and the people went to Gilgal and sacrificed fellowship (peace) offerings "in the Lord's presence, and...Israel rejoiced."

- Peace offerings were made to show thanks for God's provision, to fulfill a promise to God, or show thankfulness for deliverance in a time of great need.

HOW WE HANDLE SUPPORT AND CRITICISM

- In life, we will receive support and criticism, especially when we accept greater responsibility. How will we handle each?
- We must remain humble in times of praise, merciful in times of critique, hold our tongue, and pick our battles wisely. This is only possible by the guidance of God's Spirit.

RIGHTEOUS ANGER AND JUSTICE

- Like Saul, when we see oppression and evil, righteous anger should well up in us.
- Anger is not a sin, but how we act in times of anger can be sinful (Ephesians 4:26).
- So, we're to hate evil and love justice, but remember to fight for it in a biblical way and know that justice is ultimately God's.

FAITHFULNESS AND MERCY

- Two marks of a godly person or leader are faithfulness and mercy.
- Without consistency, we cannot be led by God or lead anyone else in the ways of God.
- Without mercy, we cannot show the love, grace, and patience of God, nor can we fully experience it (Matthew 5:7, James 2:13).

MAKING PEACE WITH GOD

- Wisdom in times of praise and criticism, justice, being faithful and merciful, and experiencing faithfulness and mercy are all contingent on making peace with God.
- Peace with God comes through acknowledging the work of Christ on the cross (Romans 5).

ACKNOWLEDGING JESUS' WORK

- We properly acknowledge the work Jesus did for us by having faith. Faith is not just something we say. It is a lifestyle dedicated to the honor and love of God by walking in a relationship with Jesus through prayer and living out His Word.

AN INVENTORY

- How do we handle praise and criticism?
- Do we hate evil and love what is biblical?
- Are we consistent and faithful?
- Are we merciful and loving?
- Are we at peace with God? Are we repentant, do we pray, and are we living out God's Word?