

The United Kingdom (3)
Saul Rejected,
David Anointed
1 Samuel 13-16

- In our last lesson, we continued the 9th of 17 time periods of Bible history – the United Kingdom. This was a period where Israel is governed by a king.
- This period lasted 120 years under 3 kings – Saul, David and Solomon. From ~1050-930 BC.
- It was a period of relative peace and expansion
- Biblically - **1 Sam. 8 – 1 Kings 11, 1 Chronicles 1 - 2 Chronicles 9.**
Also, the period of much poetic literature.

- In our last lesson, we addressed Saul anointed and coronated as Israel's first king by Samuel.
- He then begins his reign with successful conquest.
- **1 Sam. 13** But shortly thereafter, while the Philistines are threatening battle against Israel again, he fails to wait for Samuel and offers an unlawful sacrifice.
- As a result, when Samuel arrives he notes that God had rejected him as king.
- That brings us to our text for this lesson.

Saul's spiritual decline

- **1 Sam. 13:16-23** - The Philistines are preparing to further invade Israel. They are in the territory of Benjamin. Israel cannot properly defend themselves (without YHWH). No weapons, only farming tools that were sharpened for a high fee and controlled by their enemies.

Saul's spiritual decline

- **1 Sam. 14:1-23** - As Saul's small army is with him (most of Israel has fled and gone into hiding), Jonathan (Saul's son) and his armor bearer find a place to engage the enemy.
- They put their trust in God and seek a sign, which is granted. Wondering if YHWH would deliver them, when seen, if the Philistines said, "We are coming to you" they knew God was not with them. But if they said, "Come here to us" then God would be with them.
- They said, "Come here to us." On the way Jonathan and his servant killed 20 men one by one. The Philistines trembled, the earth quaked and they turned on each other in fear. Then they fled.

Saul's spiritual decline

- **1 Sam. 14:1-23** - Saul and his army see this and gain courage. They muster their army and bring the ark of God with them (Ahijah is mentioned as priest – **vs. 19**)
- As they see the confusion in the Philistine camp, Israelites come out of hiding and together they pursue the Philistines and drive them away.
- **14:23**, “So the LORD saved Israel that day...”

Saul's spiritual decline

- **1 Sam. 14:24-46** - while pursuing their enemies, Saul made a rash oath forbidding anyone to eat that day until the enemy was subdued. Because of this, the people were weak but would not eat.
- However, Jonathan, not aware of the oath, sees honey and eats some and is strengthened. When told of his father's oath, Jonathan observes the consequence of that rash oath.

Saul's spiritual decline

- **1 Sam. 14:24-46** - After driving away the enemy the people rushed the spoil and began eating without proper preparation (eating meat with its blood).
- Saul is upset, but he urges the people to bring their food and prepare it properly.
- Saul also built an altar to YHWH, his first (**vs. 35**)

Saul's spiritual decline

- **1 Sam. 14:24-46** - Saul then prepares the people to finish the job, but a priest requests that first they inquire of God. But He does not answer.
- Saul knows there is sin in the camp. Lots are cast and he determines that it was Jonathan who broke the oath. He prepares to kill him, but the people stop Saul noting that what Jonathan had done was working with God.
- Saul relented and returned from pursuing the Philistines and returned to his own place.

Saul's spiritual decline

- **1 Sam. 14:47-52** – describes how Saul established his sovereignty over Israel and fought against numerous enemies with success.
His family and commander (Abner) are named. Saul has 2 daughters – Merab and Michal.
- All the days of Saul there was war with the Philistines. Note vs. **52**.

Saul's spiritual decline

- **1 Sam. 15:1-9** – as some point later, Sameul tells Saul that YHWH wanted him to utterly destroy the Amalekites, leaving no one or nothing – including men & women, children, and all livestock.
- Saul gathers an army of 210,000. They attack the city of Amalek and destroy it. Saul tells the Kenites in the area to leave (vs. 6).
- But Saul spared Agag the king, and the people took the best of the livestock and “all that was good.” They destroyed everything else.

Saul's spiritual decline

- **1 Sam. 15:10-35** – YHWH tells Samuel that He regretted making Saul king because he was not obeying Him. Samuel is grieved all night.
- He then goes to Carmel and meets Saul. Saul is glad to see him and declares how he had obeyed the LORD. But Samuel asks, “Why do I hear sheep and oxen?” (**14**)
- Saul says(?) the people brought the best to sacrifice to YHWH. “and the rest we have utterly destroyed.”

Saul's spiritual decline

- **1 Sam. 15:16-19** – Samuel silences Saul. He reminds him how when he was “nothing” YHWH anointed him as king, but now being sent on a mission, he did NOT obey the command.
- **15:20-21** – Saul declared, “But I have obeyed the voice of YHWH.” But he brought back the king Agag. “The people” took the plunder that should have been destroyed to sacrifice.
- **15:22-23** – Samuel rebukes Saul noting that God desires obedience more than sacrifice. What he had done was rebellion and stubbornness. BECAUSE of this, YHWH had rejected Saul as king.

Saul's spiritual decline

- **1 Sam. 15:24-30** – Saul NOW says, “I have sinned” “because I feared the people” (excuse). He begs for pardon and asks Samuel to return with him to worship YHWH.
- As Samuel turns, Saul grabs his garment and it tears. Samuel tells him that in that same way God would tear the kingdom from him. AND He had chosen “a neighbor better than you.”
- **29** – God will not relent!”
- **30-31** – Saul again says, “I have sinned” but “honor me before the people...” Saul worships YHWH.
- **32-34** – Samuel executes Agag
- **35** – Samuel saw Saul no more until he died.

- **1 Sam. 16:1-13** – As Samuel mourns, YHWH tells him to move on. Fill his horn with oil and go to the house of Jesse in Bethlehem. One of his sons would be king.
- **2-3** - He expresses concern that if Saul hears he would kill him. He is told to take a heifer as a sacrifice and invite Jesse to the sacrifice.
- **4-5** – Samuel goes to Bethlehem and the elders tremble and inquire why he had come.
- **6-13** – Jesse's 7 sons pass before Samuel, but none are it. He inquires if there is another. David is brought in and anointed. The Spirit of the Lord came upon David then.

- **1 Sam. 16:14-23** – Saul continues to spiral downward. A distressing spirit troubles him.
- **16-18** – it was recommended that a skillful player of the harp be found to soothe him when he was distressed. A servant recommended David (see **vs. 18**)
- **19-25** – Saul sends for David. Jesse sends him with gifts. Saul immediately accepted David and loved him. He became Saul's armor bearer and remains in Saul's house. Whenever the distressing spirit came upon Saul, David would play the harp and Saul would be refreshed.

- Our demeanor drives our life – Saul is a failure as a leader (spiritually). His decisions are driven by his disposition – pride, lack of humility, insecurity, failure to take responsibility, etc.
As Christians, leaders or not our attitudes will define us.
- Another lesson in faith – Jonathan and his armorbearer fight trusting God
Hebrews 11:1, 6; 1 John 5:4

- God is sovereign and all powerful– in these accounts we are continually reminded of who He is. **Jeremiah 32:27, Matthew 19:26**
- Rash vows – Saul makes a careless vow and it comes with consequences. Even then we are expected to keep our vows (and our word) – **Ecclesiastes 5:4-6**

- When God gives specific instructions – Saul “sort of” obeyed God, but not completely. It was considered disobedience. This is why what we do and HOW we do it is important.
Cf. James 2:10, 1 John 5:3
- Weak repentance – Saul says, “I have sinned” 2x (**15:24, 30**), but both times he makes excuses or qualifiers. **2 Corinthians 7:10.**

- We cannot ignore unpleasant tasks – Samuel needed to go and confront Saul. Sometimes doing the right thing is hard and unpleasant. **Hebrews 12:9-11, 2 Corinthians 7:8-9**
- To obey is better than sacrifice – Obedience is not a suggestion. God expects us to obey Him from the heart. **Matthew 7:21, Hebrews 5:9. John 14:15.**
NOTE: This did not mean the sacrifices were not important! They were commanded. **Cf. Amos 5:21-24**

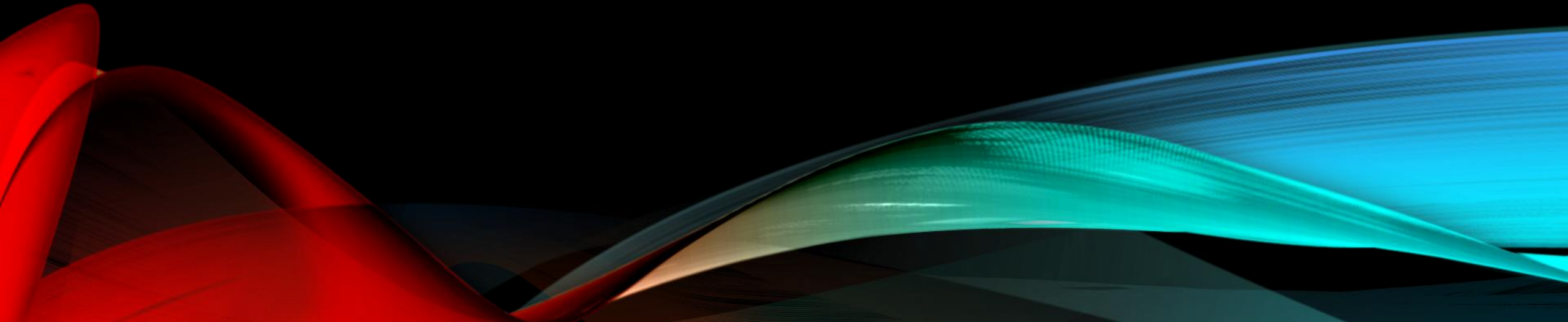
Lessons to Consider

- God is not a man that He should relent – He can and does keep His word. But in this is merciful and caring.

- Why did God command the total destruction of the Amalekites, including infants? Skeptics indict the character of God with this. Consider:
 - The Amalekites were not innocent - **Exodus 17:8-16, Deut. 25:17-19.**
 - They continually harassed Israel – **Judges 3:13, 6:3-5, etc.**
 - They were given 400+ years to repent. They did not and would not!
 - Their judgment was national because God knew their wicked character.
 - Concerning innocent children, etc. – An act of mercy as they would be spiritually safe.

- We cannot live our lives in mourning because of difficulties – Samuel has work to do.
- God looks at the heart – We are introduced to David in this text. Chosen because his heart was right and tender. In many ways the opposite of Saul. We need tender hearts
- Our life gives us lessons - **Psalm 23** – the shepherd psalm. With this we introduce the psalms of David into our journey. This psalm was likely written while David was a shepherd (he was a poet and musician). He made application to God in relatable terms.

How will you serve your King?
Is your heart for or against Him?



Let us pray!

