

A Rejected King and a Chosen King

Welcome to our first week of homework! I'm so enthused to beginning a new study with you! I've had a wonderful time putting this together for you and I pray that it will be a blessing to you! This week we will be looking at four passages that will give us some background and context into the world in which David emerges as the future king of Israel. In our introductory lesson we learned about how Saul came to be king of Israel despite the fact he wasn't who God wanted to lead his nation. Saul was the king Israel desired and God used for his own plans. This week we will meet Jonathan, Saul's son and heir to the throne. We will see a severe character flaws revealed by Saul's thoughtless actions. We will meet a young David for the first time and watch him fearlessly defeat the giant Goliath. It promises to be an exciting week! I can promise you that our study will be anything but boring. God bless you in your studies this week. I pray that he opens your eyes and begins to reveal to you those traits that endear his children to him most.

Jonathan Attacks the Philistines

Today we join King Saul and his son Jonathan in the heat of battle. The Israelite army consists of 600 men, positioned at Gibeah. The Philistines are poised to the Northwest at Micmash preventing Saul's movement northward, as well as cutting off additional troops from joining Saul from the northern Israelite tribes. The Philistines had invaded Israel previously and set up a military strong hold in Geba, in the middle of the Israelite heartland, less than three miles from Israel's original capitol. 1 Samuel 13:5 describes "*[t]he Philistines assembled to fight Israel, with three thousand chariots, six thousand charioteers, and soldiers as numerous as the sand on the seashore.*" While this description comes just prior to the battle described in Chapter 13, we can see why Saul and his army are quaking with fear (13:8). Not only are the Israelites vastly out-numbered, they are facing an immense army with superior weaponry. The Philistines had made it virtually impossible for the Israelites to obtain anything made with bronze and iron that

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could be shaped into weapons (13:19-22). The Israelites, by all appearances were fighting a losing battle. Jonathan will reveal to us what Saul does not seem to understand about the Lord and his people.



Read 1 Samuel 14: 1-50 and answer the following questions.

Where is Saul camped?

How does 1 Samuel 13: 6 describe the Israelite's situation?

Where do Jonathan and his armor-bearer go?

Complete v6: *"Come, let's go over to the outpost of those uncircumcised fellows. Perhaps the _____ will act in our behalf. Nothing can hinder the LORD from saving, whether by _____ or by _____."* Where does Jonathan place his faith?

What happens next?

Who does it say rescued Israel in v. 23?

The Lord rescued Israel that day based on one man's bold faith. Jonathan's faith opened the way for the Lord to act mightily on behalf of the Israelites. Their weakness in numbers and weaponry would seem to lead one to think their position insurmountable. But nothing is impossible with the Lord. In their weak situation Jonathan's faith was their only asset which led Israel to a great victory that day. While led by his faith, and waiting for a sign from the Lord, Jonathan took the initiative the opened the flood gates for the Lord's saving action.

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Jonathan's faith when confronted by military threat of the Philistines activates a Torah promise¹. What does Deuteronomy 28:7 say?

Jonathan's faith and heroic action stands in strong contrast to Saul's lack of faith. Saul uses harmful tactics to motivate his army that will result in a spiritual downfall for many in his service.

"Now the men of Israel were in _____ that day, because Saul had bound the people under an oath, saying, "Cursed be any man who eats food before evening comes, before I have avenged myself on my enemies!" So _____ of the troops tasted food."(v24)

- Whose idea was it to impose a fast?
- What effect did this have on the soldiers?
- Why do you think Saul would impose this fast upon the soldiers?
- What was Jonathan's response when he heard about this fast? And who has caused trouble for the country? (see v29-30)

Saul's impulsive oath may sound heroic, but it had disastrous consequences. They won the physical battle, but he set up his men to fail a spiritual battle and put his son and heir in a fatal quandary. Let's take a quick look at the spiritual battle first. Read v31-35. Then read Leviticus 17:10-14. What does Leviticus have to say about blood from an animal?

"Then Saul built an altar to the LORD; it was the _____ time he had done this."(v35)

¹ New American Commentary

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Saul has been king for several years at this point, yet this is the *first* altar he has erected, and it is done as a last resort to appease God and honor himself rather than building a lasting monument of gratitude for the Lord's deliverance. Saul makes a practice of coming to the Lord as a last resort rather than coming to him as first resource.

Read v44-46. "Saul said, 'May _____ deal with me, be it ever so severely, if you do not _____, Jonathan.'"(v44)

Saul's curse was not something God would have condoned, but it was still an oath. Jonathan, although he didn't know about Saul's oath was still guilty of breaking it. Fortunately, the soldiers would not allow Saul to carry out this punishment.

Verses 44-45 point out that Saul is more concerned about ...(circle one option)

- The life of his son
- Keeping an oath to God
- Saving face
- Justice

What does this tell you about Saul's priorities?

♥ What is your impression of Saul's character based on the events of Chapter 14? What are some specific character traits that are revealed in these events? In what ways are they good or bad as exhibited in leadership?

♥ Name some specific character traits about Jonathan revealed through these events.

The Lord Rejects Saul as King

As we read our passage today we see Saul act again both arrogantly and rashly with grave consequence. Samuel prophesies a word of the Lord to Saul. The Lord instructs that it is now time for God's judgment to come against the Amalekites. This battle is a holy war against a people who dared defy God. God had given them ample time to change their ways, but God had deemed it was now time for judgment. He would use the army of the living God as a means for that judgment. As such, Saul's army would be bound by specific regulations regarding this battle. As we work through this passage we will see that Saul holds himself above God's law and will ultimately face his own judgment before God.



Read 1 Samuel 15:1-34

Through Samuel God instructs Saul to attack the Amalekites and to totally destroy everything that belongs to them, putting to death every person and animal. Read Deuteronomy 25:17-19. According to the Deuteronomy passage what did the Amalekites do when the Moses brought the Israelites up out of Egypt?

- a. Provided shelter
- b. Ignored the Israelites
- c. Cut off the those lagging behind
- d. Led them to the promise land

What did God tell the Israelites they would one day do after taking possession of the land He would give them?

The Amalekites existed by attacking and carrying off anything and everything they could get their hands on, including families! They continually raided Israelite settlements at every opportunity. There would be no peace in the Promise Land for the Israelites as long as the Amalekites existed. God knew the Amalekites' corrupt and idolatrous religious practices would always threaten Israel's relationship with him. The only way to protect the Israelites, physically and spiritually would be to utterly destroy the warlike nation and all

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their possessions, including their idols. The idols would have been there most (monetarily) valuable possessions being made of gold and silver and decorated with gemstones.

To our minds annihilating an entire people goes against what most of us believe would be God's ideal of love and justice. What do the following verses have to say about God's mercy towards wicked people?

Jonah 3:10 and 4:1-2

In Ezekiel 33:11 God commands Ezekiel:

Now look back at Deut 25:18. What does it say the Amalekites had no fear of? In this passage what does fear mean?

The Jonah and Ezekiel passages make it very clear that God's desire is to forgive and redeem all people from their evil. From what it says about the Amalekites in the Bible, it would appear that the Amalekites rejected God at every turn and would never repent of their evil ways and embrace God. The Hebrew word translated as "fear" means not only "to be made afraid, to dread"², but also "connotes 'standing in awe.' This is not simple fear, but reverence, whereby an individual recognizes the power and position of the individual revered and renders him proper respect."³ Our omniscient God, in his sovereignty not only has the ability to discern the hearts of his creation, he has the right to judge and render judgment as he sees fit for the protection of his people.

Now let's turn our attention to Saul. According to v9, what does Saul spare?

What does he destroy?

² Strong's Talking Greek and Hebrew Dictionary

³ Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words

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Why do you think he didn't destroy everything he was commanded to destroy?

♥ Verse 10 is an amazing response on the behalf of the Lord. What does it say was the Lord's (emotional) response and why is this so striking?

When Samuel confronts Saul, where is the blame shifted?

What is Saul's answer and excuse?

♥ What were Saul's motives behind his weak following out of the Lord's command? Look back at verse 12 for a clue.

- Why would he keep Agag alive?
- What would he do with the *"best of the sheep and cattle, the fat calves and lambs"*?

♥ After Saul is confronted with his sin, he asks Samuel to forgive him, but he does not. Why do you think that is? Read verses 20-26.

♥ Verse 26 says: "But Samuel said to him, 'I will not go back with you. You have _____ the word of the LORD, and the LORD has _____ you as king over Israel!'" Do you think this is just? Why, or why not?

Samuel Anoints David

In our next passage of scripture, we follow Samuel to Bethlehem for our first encounter with a young David. After Samuel reveals God's rejection of Saul, it is time to reveal, privately at least, God's chosen future king of Israel. In our lesson today we will see that God's vision is often vastly different than mankind's vision. This is a concept for which we need to frequently remind ourselves, almost on a daily basis. God sees the world from a completely different perspective than we do. Of course, he has the benefit of seeing the whole picture of how every single person fits into his plan. Often we need to remember that his plan involves every single person in the world, not just those whom we think he should use. Ask God to give you his vision and see how that impacts your perspective as you go about your day.



Read 1 Samuel 16:1-23 and answer the following questions.

In the beginning of chapter 16 the Lord tells Samuel, "*I have chosen one of his (Jesse's) sons to be king.*"(v1) As you read through verse 13, pay close attention to the word "chosen".

What is Samuel's response to each of the three sons's presented to him by Jesse?

- a. The Lord rejects
- b. The Lord has not chosen
- c. The Lord loves
- d. The Lord despises

Please keep in mind that Samuel has come to Bethlehem for the specific task of anointing the Lord's chosen person to be king. All of Israel is the Lord's chosen people. He is not rejecting them as his people, but just for the specific task of being a king. This family is very special in the eyes of God, it is from this family line that his own son will come. They are a "chosen" family indeed! But only one is chosen for the kingship. If you turn back to 1

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Samuel 13:14 it says, "...the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people...." The Lord already knows whom he has chosen.

In John 15:16 Jesus says: "You did not choose me, but I _____ you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last."

Look up the following verses. What does each of them say?

Ephesians 1:4-5

1Peter 1:1-2

Colossians 3:12

What do these verses tell you about the Lord's choices? What does this mean to you as chosen by the Lord?

David finally arrives and the Lord says to Samuel, "Rise and anoint him; he is the one." What does the next verse (v13) say?

♥ So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came upon David in _____.

Now complete the next verse: "Now the Spirit of the LORD had _____ from Saul..."

Before Pentecost believers were not sealed with the Holy Spirit. It descended upon the Lord's servants to fulfill or perform certain tasks. It would come, then through the body of the Lord's chosen it would fulfill the will of the Lord, and then it could depart. After Pentecost, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit. It comes upon us in power and does not depart. Now read Acts 1:8. This is the very same power!

♥ What do the following scriptures tell us we cannot be without the Spirit?

Romans 8:9

1 Corinthians 6:17

Romans 8:14-17 and Galatians 4:6-7

1 Corinthians 12:13

Sadly, as the Holy Spirit withdrew his power something else occurred:

"...and an _____ from the LORD tormented him."(v14)

This is a hard verse to accept. It is hard to believe the Lord would send an evil spirit upon anyone. We must believe the Lord allowed or permitted this to happen *with reason*. In Luke 11 Jesus drives an evil spirit from a man. In his teaching to the crowd assembled he says to them:

"When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' ²⁵When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. ²⁶Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first."

What Jesus is telling them (and us!) is that the evil spirit that had been sent out of a man finds no other place to go it will come back to its old home that has been "swept clean" and is empty because no other spirit - whether of God or not - has taken up residence. If the man had clung in faith and devotion to God there would be no room for the evil spirit to return. We as Christians who have come to faith after Pentecost are sealed in the Holy Spirit. There is no room for anything else! Note, I am not saying that anyone who is not a Christian has an evil spirit. But if a person is not a Christian and therefore not sealed by the Holy Spirit, his soul is open to all the vices, distractions and idolatries of the world.

I think this is much the same with Saul. When the Spirit of the Lord departed, it created a vacancy in Saul's soul. He did not choose to be obedient to the Lord, he did not value a life devoted to the will of God. Something would fill this void. God also used this opportunity to bring David into the court. This young shepherd-would-be-king is going to need some training in the ways of the court! He will need to acquire the skills of governing a kingdom and commanding an army.

In what shape or form does David gain his first entry into Saul's court?

David and Goliath

This has to be one of the most familiar stories about David. We all grew up hearing about this epic, larger than life battle where little David armed with just his staff, a sling shot and a few river rocks defeats the Philistine warrior-giant. Please take the time to read this story carefully and appreciate anew how David, with such an idealistic faith in the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, is able to deliver his nation from the oppressive tyranny of the Philistines.



Read 1 Samuel 17:1-58 and answer the following questions.

In verse 26 what does David ask of the soldiers standing around him?

It amazes me that the soldiers in the army saw and feared the warrior-giant, but David saw a mortal man defying almighty God! Goliath was a target too big to miss! Did you notice where Saul is? He's hiding in his tent. Take a quick look back at the description of Saul when he was first made king: "*...as he stood among the people he was a head _____ than any of the others.*"(1 Samuel 10:23) Saul, a grown man, seasoned warrior, and king should have been the one facing the giant, but all he could see was an impossible situation in defeating the giant before him. He had no faith in God's deliverance. Because of his fear and insecurity he sent a teenage boy to fight the giant.

Young David knows what Saul never learned. Write 1 Samuel 17:47 below.

When we face Goliath sized obstacles in our lives, our first instinct tends to be to measure the size of our obstacle to that of our strength. Then we become overwhelmed with fear and worry because we don't have that strength required to surmount the obstacle before us. David succeeded in facing his giant obstacle – Goliath – because he didn't measure the obstacle against his own strength, but against the strength of the God he

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serves. Next time you are faced with a goliath sized crisis, measure the size of your obstacle against the size of your God.

One last note. Read verses 57 and 58 again. What does Saul ask David?

♥ Why do you think Saul doesn't recognize his own musician and armor bearer?