

Rise & Fall (King Saul)

Andy Deane · 5/28/2023 · 1 Samuel 8-11

As we learn about Israel's first king we'll discover relevant insights on how God desires to lead and shape us.

FALL: Worldliness

1 Samuel 8:5-9, 19-20, 22, ...5 They said to him, "You are old, and your sons do not follow your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have." 6 ...this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the Lord. 7 And the Lord told him: "Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king... 9 Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will claim as his rights."... 19 But the people refused to listen to Samuel. "No!" they said. "We want a king over us. 20 Then we will be like all the other nations..." 22 The Lord answered, "...give them a king"...

- Proposed Solution: appoint a king (8:5b) —not wrong, but...
- Wrong Motivation: *as all the other nations have* (8:5, 20)
- Real Issue: "Worldliness" (thinking, behaving, desiring like unbelievers do)
- 1 John 2:15, *...If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them.*
- How to respond if you see this temptation in others (or yourself):
 1. Acknowledge your feelings: *this displeased Samuel* (8:6)
 2. Bring it to God: *so he prayed to the Lord* (8:6b)
 3. Listen carefully: *listen to them* (8:9)
 4. Warn them: *but warn them solemnly* (8:9)
 5. Respect their freedom: *give them a king* (8:22)
- The beauty of the gospel is that we are invited to something so much better than just being like other people. We are invited to be like God Himself (Christlikeness, Godliness, Holiness):
 - Romans 8:29, *For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son...*
 - Romans 12:2, *Do not conform to the pattern of this world...*
 - Colossians 3:2, *Set your minds on things above...*

RISE: Embrace Your Calling

1 Samuel 9:2-3, 5-6, ...2 Kish had a son named Saul, as handsome a young man as could be found anywhere in Israel, and he was a head taller than anyone else. 3 ...Kish said to his son Saul, "Take one of the servants with you and go and look for the (lost) donkeys."... 5 When they reached the district of Zuph, Saul said to the servant who was with him, "Come, let's go back, or my father will stop thinking about the donkeys and start worrying about us." 6 But the servant replied, "Look, in this town there is a man of God; he is highly respected, and everything he says comes true. Let's go there now. Perhaps he will tell us what way to take." ...

- God created you to perfectly to match what he's called you to this season.
 - Saul had: Physical Stature (9:2), Discernment (9:5), and Humility (9:6)
 - While God created you for this season, what you have still isn't enough to succeed. We need God's help.
- God offer's spiritual assistance to help us in our calling. Saul received:

God's PROVIDENCE - 1 Samuel 9:15, *Now the day before Saul came, the Lord had revealed this to Samuel: 16 "About this time tomorrow I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin. Anoint him ruler over my people Israel... 18 Saul approached Samuel in the gateway and asked, "Would you please tell me where the seer's house is?" 19 "I am the seer," Samuel replied. "Go up ahead of me to the high place, for today you are to eat with me, and in the morning I will send you on your way and will tell you all that is in your heart. 20 As for the donkeys you lost three days ago, do not worry about them; they have been found. And to whom is all the desire of Israel turned, if not to you and your whole family line?"*

God's ABILITY - 1 Samuel 9:21, *Saul answered, "But am I not a Benjamite, from the smallest tribe of Israel, and is not my clan the least of all the clans of the tribe of Benjamin? Why do you say such a thing to me?"*

God's LOVE - 1 Samuel 9:24, ...*Saul dined with Samuel that day.*

God's CONFIRMATION - 1 Samuel 10:1, *Then Samuel took a flask of olive oil and poured it on Saul's head and kissed him, saying, "Has not the Lord anointed you ruler over his inheritance? 2 When you leave me today, you will meet two men... They will say to you..."*

God's SPIRIT - 1 Samuel 10:6, *The Spirit of the Lord will come powerfully upon you, and you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed into a different person...*

1 Samuel 10:24, *Samuel said to all the people, "Do you see the man the Lord has chosen? There is no one like him among all the people." Then the people shouted, "Long live the king!"*

RISE: Meekness

1 Samuel 10:27; 11:12-14, ...*27 But some scoundrels said, "How can this fellow save us?" They despised him and brought him no gifts. But Saul kept silent... [SAUL PROVES HIMSELF BY DEFEATING THE ENEMY]... 12 The people then said to Samuel, "Who was it that asked, 'Shall Saul reign over us?' Turn these men over to us so that we may put them to death." 13 But Saul said, "No one will be put to death today, for this day the Lord has rescued Israel." 14 Then Samuel said to the people, "Come, let us go to Gilgal and there renew the kingship."*

- Matthew 5:5, *blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.*
- The word meek means "strength under control". So meekness, biblically, is letting God be in control.
- God purposefully places difficult people in our paths to test and grow us.
- Twice Saul has a gracious response to difficult people. How? He knew he was the king regardless of them.
 - They were "*scoundrels*" (10:27). Saul was king. He acted like it.
 - Knowing our identity in Christ empowers us to be meek with difficult people.
- Jesus knew who He was (God in flesh), and yet he was gentle and merciful with people.

How do we live out one of these truths we learned about today?

Choose one prayer and practical goal to do this week to aim for real change in our lives:

- Worldliness
 - Prayer: "Lord, my heart often desires ungodly pleasures. Please forgive me and help me to find joy in you."
 - Practical: Fight against worldliness by fasting from a meal this week to spending time reading and praying.
- Embrace Your Calling
 - Prayer: "Lord, the season I'm in is hard. Help me to trust that you are here with me, helping me each day."
 - Practical: Make one change this week that will make your calling more joyful or peaceful to embrace.
- Meekness
 - Prayer: "Lord, my flesh wants to respond to some with yelling and harsh words. Help me to love them instead."
 - Practical: Find a simple way this week to practically bless the person who brings out the worst in you.