

Calvary Chapel of El Paso Morning Ladies' Bible Study – After God's Heart  
Lesson 4 – October 5, 2021 – Portrait of Saul

*1 Samuel 8:4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, 5 ... now make us a king to judge us like all the nations. 6 But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD. 7 And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. 8 According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee...*

The king that the people demanded – like all the nations  
Be careful what you ask for. (*verses 11-18 warnings*)

So what was the problem?

NOT “After God’s Heart” – this year’s study is mostly centered on David, a man after God’s heart. *Acts 13:22 And when he had removed him [Saul], he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.*

Background that we have seen:

God was their King (*1 Sam. 12:5*) for the 300 years of Judges, yet *In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes. – Judges 21:25.*

NOT after God’s heart – NO king.

BUT God had a plan, and a king that would be after God’s heart – David. However, Israel certainly was not yet ready.

We saw Hannah and her son Samuel – both were after God’s heart. This was to prepare Israel for the king of God’s choosing – a man after God’s heart.

Samuel was good and godly, and was hurt by the people’s rejection of him. But as we saw, they were rejecting God. They did not like having to live God’s ways. Little did they know the danger of stepping so far out of God’s will.

They were warned by God repeatedly but still insisted that they wanted a visible king like those of the other nations.

What did God say? Ok. Perhaps He was allowing them to live out another generation of grief for this rebellion.

A Portrait of Saul

Saul was the best the world had to offer. Impressive, but there was a seed of destruction that always seems to come with this kind of worldly leader – pride, hunger for power and recognition, and a willingness to do anything to get it.

*1 Samuel chapters 9 and 10* tell of the divine appointment for Saul to be anointed as king of Israel by Samuel (*10:1*). We also see how much Samuel worked with Saul to

prepare him – teaching, instructing, foretelling signs that would confirm Saul’s kingship.

AND (10:9) God gave Saul another heart. Yet we soon see that even that was not enough for this worldly king to have a heart after God. Perhaps Saul, like his fellow Israelites, just did not understand God’s holiness, righteousness and goodness. He was always trying to work the system for his benefit. He just did not KNOW God. But I’m getting a little ahead.

After the private anointing by Samuel (10:1), things seemed to be going well. Saul went home and told no one. Then it was time for him to be presented as king, when Samuel called the people to gather at Mizpeh. But when his name was called he hid in the baggage. Finally – here he is. Then all the people shouted and accepted Saul as their king. Samuel again warned them to obey the Lord.

Saul’s beginning as king was good – victory, wise behavior, support of the people. He was a great guy! Samuel warned again.

Then a test. (Samuel 13) After only two years. Sadly this was the “red line.” It disqualified Saul as king. Although he would continue as king – a very troubled one – for many years – he and his descendants were now disqualified forever. NOT after God’s heart.

When Samuel anointed Saul privately, he gave him a number of instructions. Many, but not all, were to be followed that day. Another instruction was for later: *1 Samuel 10:8 And thou shalt go down before me to Gilgal; and, behold, I will come down unto thee, to offer burnt offerings, and to sacrifice sacrifices of peace offerings: seven days shalt thou tarry, till I come to thee, and shew thee what thou shalt do.*

This was when Saul had been king for only two years. At first Saul obeyed. But the people were afraid and began to leave, so Saul took matters in his own hands. *I Samuel 13:9 And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and peace offerings. And he offered the burnt offering.* ONLY the priest was to sacrifice.

Now we see another side of Saul:

Impatient

Did not respect or understand the sacrifices or Samuel

Wanted his way

Made excuses

Bent the rules - disobeyed

This cost him his authority as king. When a leader loses his authority (power), he will resort to force.

ALSO, Samuel had to tell Saul, *1 Samuel 13:14 But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.*

So life went on, but it was trouble from then on. Saul’s actions also affected his godly son Jonathan (*1 Samuel 14*).

Another time Saul worked the system is detailed in *1 Samuel 15*. Let’s take a look.

God’s instructions: verses 2-3

Saul’s failure to follow them: verse 9

Saul’s power trip: verse 12 – he set up a memorial TO HIMSELF

Saul lied and blamed others: verses 15, 21

Samuel was trying to reason with Saul, to no avail. Then he makes a well-known statement with several truths: *1 Samuel 15:22 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. 23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.*

[Note that rebellion and stubbornness are so serious because it is actually rejecting God.]

Saul regretted getting caught, not that he had done wrong: verse 24

“I have sinned = I got caught”

Saul still proud, working the system: verses 28, 30

Samuel no more went to see Saul (perhaps 20 years before Saul’s death)

When David was anointed by Samuel to be king, things got worse and worse. Did Saul become insane?

In the end, Saul and his three sons died the same day in battle.

### Looking forward to David, a man after God’s heart

From the beginning, David displayed this.

When Saul and his sons were killed, David grieved. (*2 Samuel 1:7*)

Next week we will learn about Jonathan. So far we see God’s preparation and background for the king, David, as a man after God’s heart. Jonathan also contributed to this as a close and dear friend of David.

In Summary, we have learned from all that Saul did that was not after God’s heart, that a man or woman after God’s heart:

Follows His will, not mine

Desires the things of the Kingdom, not of the world

Follows the Spirit of the law, not just the letter of the law

Knows HIM – so knows His holiness, righteousness, goodness

Knows that to obey is better than sacrifice

*For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink;  
but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.  
– Romans 14:17*