

Saul, The First King of Israel

1 Samuel 9:1-10

Life Group Discussion – June 3rd, 2018

The prophet Samuel had succeeded in his ministry. But even in his success as a pastor, he did not raise his children in faith.

Because Samuel's children were not faithful, the Israelites asked for a king to rule over them instead. This passage is when the Israelites asked Samuel to find someone to rule over them. That man was Saul, a son of the tribe of Benjamin.

There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, son of Zeror, son of Becorath, son of Aphiah, a Benjaminite, a man of wealth. And he had a son whose name was Saul, a handsome young man. There was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than he. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people. (1 Samuel 9:1-2)

Out of all 12 tribes of Israel, the tribe of Benjamin had experienced the most pain. This tribe had fought against the nation of Israel and 600 men had died. They had been rebellious and stubborn, yet God not only forgave the people but He allowed the first king to come from this tribe.

Do not be discouraged if you experience failure. Even when this failure is your own wrongdoing or from your own mistakes, God is able to use you because He searches for those who are sincere and honest in their faith, not someone who is perfect. God is the one who sets up his follower for success, not the other way around.

David was the weakest of his 8 brothers. But even though he was weakest, God knew that David loved the Lord the most and was willing to sacrifice everything in order to grow closer to Him.

And David said to Michal, "It was before the Lord, who chose me above your father and above all his house, to appoint me as prince over Israel, the people of the Lord—and I will celebrate before the Lord. (2 Samuel 6:21)

But today's passage is about Saul and how God allowed difficulties in Saul's family in order to make Saul king.

Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, were lost. So Kish said to Saul his son, "Take one of the young men with you, and arise, go and look for the

donkeys." And he passed through the hill country of Ephraim and passed through the land of Shalishah, but they did not find them. And they passed through the land of Shaalim, but they were not there. Then they passed through the land of Benjamin, but did not find them. (1 Samuel 9:3-4)

Losing one's livestock was like losing your most precious possession. It's interesting that the first thing that happened to Saul and his family when God anointed him king was a difficult situation.

This is why we should not be disappointed or discouraged when we encounter hardships. Instead, continue to pray and believe that God allowed these things to happen for a reason.

Saul decided to go to a man he had heard about for direction and guidance on his lost donkeys. This man happened to be the prophet Samuel.

But he said to him, "Behold, there is a man of God in this city, and he is a man who is held in honor; all that he says comes true. So now let us go there. Perhaps he can tell us the way we should go." (1 Samuel 9:6)

It was through this difficulty of losing the donkeys that Saul was able to meet Samuel. Saul's connection to kingship was through hardship.

So they went up to the city. As they were entering the city, they saw Samuel coming out toward them on his way up to the high place. (1 Samuel 9:14)

Samuel was not an easy person to meet. He was constantly on the move to different places preaching the words of God.

But God had his own timing for when Saul would meet Samuel. He knew exactly what Saul and what Samuel needed to go through in order to meet.

The biggest blessing we can receive is knowing the Lord. For those that don't know him, their trust and hope is only in themselves. It is difficult for them to lay down their pride and listen to others when they are completely self-reliant.

This is why we must meet the Lord on a personal level. It's only through knowing God that we understand how

sinful we are and how much He did to save us. And it is through this understanding that we become humble.

Even though Saul did not fulfill all the requirements for a king, God chose him because of his humility.

And Saul said to his uncle, “He told us plainly that the donkeys had been found.” But about the matter of the kingdom, of which Samuel had spoken, he did not tell him anything. (1 Samuel 10:16)

Saul told his uncle that the donkeys were found but did not go further in explanation about his kingship.

Why did Saul hide the fact that Samuel anointed him king?

This is because Saul did not believe he was qualified enough to become king. He wanted to his actions to speak rather than tell everyone first.

If he was not humble, then he would have gone to everybody he knew to tell him or her of what happened. Everyone would have immediately heard that Saul was to become king.

And Samuel said, “Though you are little in your own eyes, are you not the head of the tribes of Israel? The Lord anointed you king over Israel. (1 Samuel 15:17)

But it is important to understand that false humility comes from a lack of belief in God’s power.

Why then did you not obey the voice of the Lord? Why did you pounce on the spoil and do what was evil in the sight of the Lord?” (1 Samuel 15:19)

Saul had disobeyed the voice of God because he believed his weaknesses outweighed God’s power.

This is a difficult part of our lives.

A Christian is not someone who is simply humble. We believe in the power of the Holy Spirit and that our God is more powerful than anything in this world. We do not move away from responsibility and what God tells us, we move forward into it because we understand that He is stronger than anything we can do on our own.

Our responsibility is not to become perfect people. All we must do is believe in what God can do through us.

When we believe we can accomplish things on our own and do not need the Lord, we become like the “stiff-necked” Israelites who constantly complained and disobeyed.

Even though Saul was humble, his humility became a problem when he believed his weaknesses were more powerful than God’s abilities. Let us hold on to our faith and make sure that our humility is based on God alone.

My brothers and sisters,
God called Saul to become king because of his humility. But his humility began to turn away from God and onto his own weaknesses.

I hope that we remember Saul’s attitude and live in a humble way. We must become small and God must become big in our lives. Let’s live in a way that shows God is more powerful than anything we encounter.

SHARING-----

1. Saul is asked what Samuel told him. Saul talked about the donkeys but did not mention his kingship. If I were Saul, how would I have responded to my uncle? Please share with one another.
2. Have you met someone with godly humility? On the opposite side, have you met someone that did not have any trace of it? As you share, talk about what true humility looks like.