

November 3, 2019

Saul's Derangement and David's Desperation

Text – 1 Samuel 21 and 22

Congregational Reading – 1 Samuel 21:1 – 2; 12 and 13

Introduction

First, Let's talk about King Saul. Let's review what we have seen so far in the life of King Saul.

As we have seen, the story of the life of Saul, Israel's first king, is a very sad tale indeed. No one had a better start than he did, and no one had more potential. Yet, we have studied through these chapters in 1 Samuel how this humble, intelligent, and very gifted young man develops into a prideful, insecure, and downright ungodly king. What a shame it is that we often observe this same scenario today in the lives of some of the people around us. Sometimes we see it in our family, oftentimes it happens to individuals within our church. What a shame to witness somebody start out so well and finish so badly.

We have observed three steps of downward progression (retrogression) in the life of Saul so far.

Saul started out as a very good guy – desiring nothing but to please his parents and the Lord. He is very much inside the will of God. He was very humble. (1 Samuel 9:21; 10:20 – 22)

He was submissive and obedient to his father. Chapter 9 is all about Saul obediently searching throughout the cities of Benjamin for his father's asses.

The Spirit of God was upon him, which enabled him to prophesy. (1 Samuel 10:10)

In the beginning, Saul was a man of faith. He seems to be completely trusting in God, but as we read further, we see that things begin to change for the worse.

He Begins to Think Independently of God

1 Samuel 13:5 – 14 – Saul offers a burnt offering, which was not his job.

Saul could have repented after this, but there is no indication that he does.

1 Samuel 15:1 – 31 – Saul disobeys the Lord. Notice v. 30 – Saul is very concerned about what the elders of Israel think.

Independent thinking begins with pride, and pride always ends up destroying us if not dealt with. When we think independently, we will pick and choose which principles in the Bible are good for us. God will become a mere counselor to us, instead of the Lord of our lives.

*"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."
(Proverbs 14:12)*

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil." (Proverbs 3:5-7)

When we think independently, we also begin to forsake the house of God, because we feel we no longer need to be accountable to others.

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised); And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." (Hebrews 10:23-25)

Joshua acted independently of God when he went into Ai.

Illustrate – my first devotion for Boy's Brigade; first adult Sunday School class lesson.

He Becomes Troubled with Insecurity

When you get used to thinking independently of God, you will eventually be troubled with insecurity. Why? Because when you live the absolute truth and security of God, you enter into the insecurity of man's reasoning. Instead of just being worried about what God thinks, you become obsessed with what others think – the opinion polls.

When Saul gets to this place:

He is no longer trusting in God. He trusts himself; his life is no longer in God's hands, but in his own.

He becomes very insecure.

He doesn't know what to believe.

He doesn't know who to trust.

When your life is in your own hands, you can never be secure; but, when your life is in God's hands you have total security.

When you put your life in God's hands you can live worry free.

1 Samuel 17 – Saul should have been the one to fight Goliath, but he was insecure because he was trusting in himself, and he knew that he wasn't good enough.

David, however, could face Goliath because he wasn't trusting in himself, he was trusting God.

David fought the giant in God's strength and wrought a great victory.

This caused the people to love David, which gave Saul more insecurity.

Saul's son, Jonathan, loved David also, which gave Saul more insecurity.

The more good David does, the more insecure Saul becomes, and the more Saul hates David.

Eventually, Saul becomes obsessed with David.

Eventually we see Saul devolve into complete insanity.

Twice, he tries to kill David with a javelin.

Once, he tries to kill his own son.

He tries to kill David by sending him into battle against the Philistines.

Instead of focusing on Israel's enemies, Saul is now sending his army out after David, yet David never retaliates. Why? Because David was in submission to God, and God said not to.

In chapter 22, we will witness the complete unravelling of Saul when he has 85 of the priests of God slaughtered. You have to be completely out of your mind to kill 85 of God's servants (1 Samuel 22:9 – 19).

Eventually, Saul will go even further and seek counsel from a witch (1 Samuel 28:7 – 20), and he will be put to death for what he did by God through the Philistines:

"So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, even against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it;" (1 Chronicles 10:13)

But this chapter (21) is not about Saul, it is about David. Here in this chapter we will see the desperation of David as he tries to deal with Saul, as he tries to flee from Saul. Unfortunately, David's desperation will cause him to do some things that are wrong. He begins to lie in order to cover his tracks. He might try to justify his sin of lying by blaming it on Saul, but that will not be an acceptable excuse for God.

I. David Lies to Ahimelech About His Mission (vs. 1 – 9)

David wrote many of his psalms during this period of being in exile, on the run from Saul. Wiersbe states: "While it's difficult to determine the background of every psalm, it's likely that David's fugitive years are reflected in Psalms 7, 11–13, 16–17, 22, 25, 31, 34–35, 52–54, 56–59, 63–64, 142–143. Psalm 18 is his song of praise when God gave him triumph over his enemies. It's wonderful that David wrote so many encouraging psalms during this period of great

suffering, and from them God’s people today can find strength and courage in their own times of testing.”¹

Nob was town inhabited by priests and Levites. The Tabernacle was located at Gibeah, which was three miles from the city of Nob at this time. According to 1 Samuel 7:1, the ark was still in the home of Abinadab in Kirjathjearim at this time.

Unless David is referring to Jehovah the King, he is certainly lying to Ahimelech.

See Exodus 25:23 – 30; Leviticus 24:5 – 9.

Notice that there is not much food available at the Tabernacle, which indicates that this was a period of spiritual decline. If the nation was right spiritually there would have been plenty of food for the priests brought in through the tithes and offerings of God’s people.

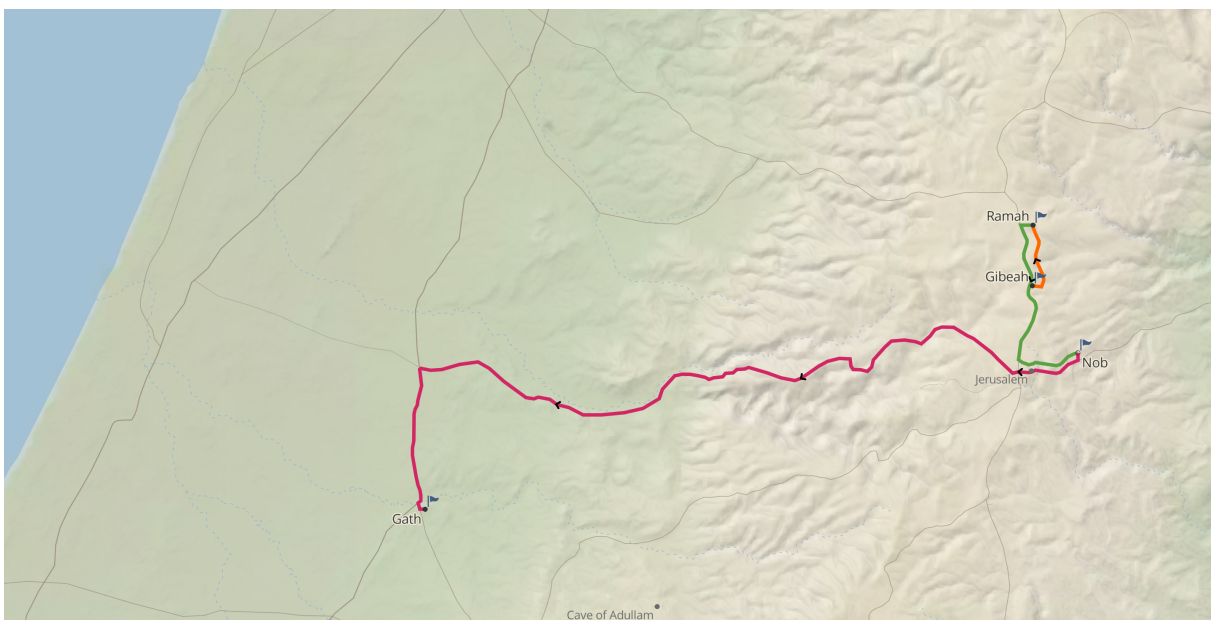
Jesus uses this story as an illustration in Luke 6:1 – 5.

Notice Doeg in verse 7. He saw what had transpired. By involving the priests, David had jeopardized their lives.

II. David Lies to Achish About His Mental Condition (vs. 10 – 15)

David then flees to the land of the Philistines so that he could get away from Saul. David was now in enemy territory. This was the hometown of Goliath, and David was carrying Goliath’s old sword.

David pretends to be insane. He graffities on the doors, and lets spittle run down on his beard. Apparently, Achish buys the act and allows David to live.



¹ Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Successful*, “Be” Commentary Series (Colorado Springs, CO: Victor/Cook Communications, 2001), 115.

