

STUDY #4 IN THE LIFE OF KING SAUL

I Samuel 13:1-14

TEXT:

- v. 1 Saul was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned over Israel forty-two years.
- v. 2 Saul chose three thousand men from Israel; two thousand were with him at Micmash and in the hill country of Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan at Gibeah of Benjamin. The rest of the men he sent back to their homes.
- v. 3 Jonathan attacked the Philistine outpost at Geba, and the Philistines heard about it. Then Saul had the trumpet blown throughout the land and said, "Let the Hebrews hear!"
- v. 4 So all Israel heard the news: "Saul has attacked the Philistine outpost, and now Israel has become a stench to the Philistines." And the people were summoned to join Saul at Gilgal.
- v. 5 The Philistines assembled to fight Israel, with three thousand chariots, six thousand charioteers, and soldiers as numerous as the sand on the seashore. They went up and camped at Micmash, east of Beth Aven.
- v. 6 When the men of Israel saw that their situation was critical and that their army was hard pressed, they hid in caves and thickets, among the rocks, and in pits and cisterns.
- v. 7 Some Hebrews even crossed the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. Saul remained at Gilgal, and all the troops with him were quaking with fear.
- v. 8 He waited seven days, the time set by Samuel; but Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and Saul's men began to scatter.
- v. 9 So he said, "Bring me the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings." And Saul offered up the burnt offering.
- v.10 Just as he finished making the offering, Samuel arrived, and Saul went out to greet him.
- v.11 "What have you done?" asked Samuel. Saul replied, "When I saw that the men were scattering, and that you did not come at the set time, and that the Philistines were assembling at Micmash, I thought, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the Lord's favor.' So I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering."
- v.13 "You have acted foolishly," Samuel said. "You have not kept the command the Lord your God gave you; if you had, he would have established your kingdom over Israel for all time.
- v.14 But now your kingdom will not endure; the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the Lord's command."

INTRODUCTION:

In the first three episodes of the life of our hero we have seen how miraculously God worked behind the scenes to bring Samuel and Saul together in our first episode. In episode #2 we witnessed the anointing of King Saul and several signs that this was of the Lord's doing.

1 Saul + Samuel
2 Anointing + Signs.

In the third study we saw Saul take the leadership and lead the people into battle against the Ammonites and confirmed his place as king over the people because of the overwhelming victory.

3 Ammonites

Samuel gives a tremendous farewell address in the 12th chapter, following the record of the great victory over the Ammonites in chapter 11.

Samuel's Speech
Chapter 12

Kirk points out "Samuel's speech on this occasion is perhaps the noblest which any governor ever uttered at the close of his public career. It reveals a spirit of the loftiest integrity, the sternest fidelity, the purest patriotism, the tenderest affection, the most ardent piety to God, and the most devoted loyalty to the new king. From the very first, although he keenly felt the demand for a king, he welcomed Saul, not only with courtesy but with cordiality. Among the vast multitude who were that day assembled at Gilgal, none was more loyal to Saul than he. And although the nation had slighted him, he displayed no resentment but an intense and disinterested affection for their true welfare and prosperity. It was his glowing piety and patriotism which led him to say to them on that day of triumph and gladness, 'Only fear the Lord and serve Him in truth with all your heart. But if you shall still do wickedly, you shall be consumed, both ye and your king.'"

Samuel punctuated his address with an object lesson by asking the Lord to send thunder and rain and the Lord responded. The result of this was that the people were reminded of the seriousness of what they had done in requesting a king.

object lesson ① Thunder + Rain.

McGee titles this chapter "Saul's Rebellion Against God" and then makes the following remark: "The real nature of Saul begins to show. His son Jonathan got the victory at Micmash, but Saul blew the trumpet and took credit for it. In presumption Saul intrudes into the priest's office. Samuel rebukes and rejects Saul. The disarmament of Israel is revealed. In this chapter I think I will be able to sustain the thesis I presented in chapter 9 relative to King Saul. Saul's exterior and outward veneer made him look like a king, but underneath he was no king at all."

v. 1 Saul was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned over Israel forty-two years.

Teaching Revelation in thunder + light in storm
Real Nature Begins to show
What's in the heart will begin to show

30 years old
42 length of reign
12 yrs. old when he dies !!

Delitzsch points out "The history of the reign of Saul commences with this chapter. And according to the standing custom and the history of the kings, it opens with a statement of the age of the king when he began to reign, and the number of years that his reign lasted."

The rest of the accounts in the book of I Samuel then are the record of these 42 years.

v. 2 Saul chose three thousand men from Israel; two thousand were with him at Micmash and in the hill country of Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan at Gibeah of Benjamin. The rest of the men he sent back to their homes.

Because of the constant harassment and the seeming certainty of an invasion from the Philistines, Saul has 3,000 men from Israel that he holds onto. Two thousand were with him and there were a thousand with Jonathan. He then sent the rest of the forces home until there was a real need for them.

Delitzsch points out "In all probability Saul did not consider that either he or the Israelites were sufficiently prepared as yet to undertake a war upon the Philistines generally. And therefore resolved in the first place only to attack the outpost of the Philistines which was advanced as far as Gibeah, with a small number of picked soldiers. According to this simple view of affairs the war here described took place at the very commencement of Saul's reign, and the chapter before us is closely connected with the preceding one."

v. 3 Jonathan attacked the Philistine outpost at Geba, and the Philistines heard about it. Then Saul had the trumpet blown throughout the land and said, "Let the Hebrews hear!"

This is a message of good tidings for the Hebrews, but it's also a message to the whole nation to be motivated and rise and make war against the Philistines. It is not only the responsibility of the Hebrews to hear, but to observe what is going on and lay it to heart, and act accordingly.

v. 4 So all Israel heard the news: "Saul has attacked the Philistine outpost, and now Israel has become a stench to the Philistines." And the people were summoned to join Saul at Gilgal.

McGee points out "The true character of Saul is beginning to emerge. When we get a good view of him, we are going to see him as a phony. We read in these verses that 'Jonathan smote the garrison of the Philistines.' Who got credit for the victory? It was Saul. Jonathan

When you deal God with the picture Human stuff Are meaningless

Saul - 2,000
Jonathan - 1,000
Gideon - 300

were not ready yet

Follow Saul + Samuel in the last study !!

"The Lord has rescued Israel"...

Tozer Quote

-4-

appears to be a capable military leader. Later on we will find that he gains another great victory by using very interesting strategy. But in this particular battle, Jonathan did the fighting and Saul blew the trumpet. Saul took the credit for winning. Saul believed in the motto 'He who tooteth not his own horn, said horn will go untooted!' Saul blew his own horn. He did not give his son credit for winning the battle. He called all of Israel together and gave a phony report. The army knew Saul's report was not true and so did the followers of Jonathan. Folks are beginning to suspect that there is a weakness in Saul's army, and that it is his Achilles' heel. Is he humble? I said at the beginning that Saul had a case of false humility, and this fact is coming to light now."

Always Caring About How he looks before the people

Always the Center of Attention!!

v. 5 The Philistines assembled to fight Israel, with three thousand chariots, six thousand charioteers, and soldiers as numerous as the sand on the seashore. They went up and camped at Micmash, east of Beth Aven.

As the Philistines have done on prior occasions, they now have mustered quite an army and are ready to go to battle against the Israelites.

v. 6 When the men of Israel saw that their situation was critical and that their army was hard pressed, they hid in caves and thickets, among the rocks, and in pits and cisterns.

Evidently, the men of the army of Israel got their eyes off the Lord and on the situation around them, and were struck with fear.

Proverbs 29:25 says "The fear of man brings a snare, but whoso puts his trust in the Lord shall be safe."

* 2 Timothy 1:7 "God hath not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."

Like Peter when we get our eyes off the Lord and on our circumstances, we begin to sink in the waves of the sea.

Peter Got His eye OFF the Lord

Just as Elisha prayed when he was surrounded by the hosts of Syria that the Lord would open the eyes of his servant so that he might behold the chariots of fire and the horsemen surrounding them, protecting them. So Saul and his men needed to look beyond the host of the Philistines to the victory that the Lord was ready to give. Even the victory that he had given recently under Samuel's leadership. This is a real chance for Saul to declare his dependence upon the Lord, and in the impossible circumstances call the people back to the Lord. Similar to what Jehoshaphat does in 2 Chronicles 20:3 it says, "Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the Lord and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah. The people of Judah came together to seek help from the Lord; indeed they came from every town

ISA. 26:1
II Kgs. 6:
look beyond the Philistines to the Lord who stands ready to deliver His own

Saul really Fails here to lean on the Lord
Encourage his followers

When we don't know but our eyes...

when a man fails to pray he limits himself to his own ability...

"When the enemy shall come in like a flood..."

in Judah to seek him. Then Jehoshaphat stood up in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, at the temple of the Lord, in front of the new courtyard and said, (the conclusion of his prayer is in verse 12) "O our God, will you not judge them? For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you."

Exodus 14:13, 14
MOSES

All the men of Judah, with their wives and children and little ones, stood there before the Lord. And then the Lord gives them the instructions, "You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions, stand firm, and see the deliverance the Lord will give you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid, do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow and the Lord will be with you."

✱✱

2 Chronicles 32:7ff Hezekiah, as he is threatened by the king of Assyria, in speaking to his people says, "'Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or discouraged because of the king of Assyria and the vast army with him; for there is a greater power with us than with him. With him is only the arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles.' And the people gained confidence from what Hezekiah the king of Judah said."

Rom 8:27
"Nay, in All
These Things"

Virtue
valor
Christ. Princ.

What a pathetic sight to see the failure of real godly leadership here on the part of Saul. As the people face this difficult situation, there is no one to call upon the name of the Lord and to move out in confidence that the Lord is going to give the victory. Instead, the people are off hiding in various places to protect themselves against the onslaught from the Philistines.

Conviction
Character
Courage

v. 7 Some Hebrews even crossed the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. Saul remained at Gilgal, and all the troops with him were quaking with fear.

Some of the army had even felt like it would be safer to go on and get across the Jordan on the east side, and there go into hiding.

Saul, however, remained in Gilgal and everybody that was there with him was quaking with fear. Evidently, Saul must have been in a similar condition because he does not speak to encourage or strengthen his forces at all.

Creath Davis points out in his book Beyond This God Cannot Go: "A paralysing fear of the unknown can squelch life in us. It blocks the full expression of our potential. As one laymen put it on a retreat, 'It's like living with your brakes on. You're not going very far and you're burning yourself out in the process.'"

You Never
See Saul humbly
calling upon
the Lord...

Proverbs 29:25

✱✱

Why Such A Change From last week !! ??
Failure to call upon the Lord...

Napoleon Hill in his book Think and Grow Rich says, "The six basic fears become translated into a state of worry through indecision. Relieve yourself forever of the fear of death by reaching a decision to accept death as an inescapable event. Whip the fear of poverty by reaching a decision to get along with whatever wealth you can accumulate without worry. Put your foot upon the neck of the fear of criticism by reaching a decision to accept it, not as a handicap, but as a great blessing which carries with it wisdom, self-control and understanding not known to youth. Acquit yourself of the fear of ill health by the decision to forget symptoms. Master the fear of the loss of love by reaching a decision to get along without love if that is necessary. Kill the habit of worry in all of its forms by reaching a general blanket decision that nothing which life has to offer is worth the price of worry. With this decision will come poise, peace of mind, and calmness of thought which will bring happiness."

- ① Death
- ② Poverty
- ③ Criticism
- ④ Ill-health
- ⑤ Loss of love
- ⑥ Worry

Paul Adolph in his book Release from Tension says "The real remedy is replacing our fear of man and circumstances with the fear of God, which is reverential trust in Him, with hatred of evil. When true trust in God enters, fear of man departs. Trust in God and fear of man cannot abide together. David the psalmist learned the conquest of fear as he roamed the land of Palestine pursued by an insane ruler whose mental aberrations he had formerly appeased with his harp. Not even music could slow up the alarm system in either Saul or David anymore. The fears had to be dealt with. And having learned the secret, David burst forth in song, 'What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee.' (Psalm 56:3)"

Feeding of 5,000...

v. 8 He waited seven days, the time set by Samuel; but Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and Saul's men began to scatter.

Back in chapter 10:8 evidently Samuel had made it clear to Saul to wait the seven days before going into battle, and that he would be there to offer sacrifices and bring the people before the Lord.

Two things converge here to press Saul into action:

- ① The first being he had waited seven days.
- ② His army was beginning to scatter through fear and discouragement.

v. 9 So he said, "Bring me the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings." And Saul offered up the burnt offering.

McGee points out "Here is another revelation concerning Saul. He presumed that because of his position as king, he could offer a burnt offering. Later on we will find that another king by the

when you get your eyes off the Lord + on circumstances you will always have an uncontrollable urge to act in some way.

Mat. 11:28-30
Ph. 1:4:6,7
worry is Accepting the responsibility
God never intended for you to have

until I come to you + tell you what you are to do

Chance to jump in take over... I'm a one man show. Prophet - Priest + King. Been w/ the people I am a King. That's left is Priest

Uzziah also presumed he could perform a priestly duty. God judged him severely. He became a leper. Saul ignored God's explicit instructions that only a priest from the tribe of Levi could offer a burnt offering. Saul was not willing to wait for Samuel. He was impatient and presumptuous. He thought he had three good reasons for not waiting for Samuel to appear:

- ① The people were scattered.
- ② The Philistines were coming against him.
- ③ Samuel was a little late in arriving.

Saul was rationalizing, of course. He was blaming everything and everyone else."

Jamieson Fausset and Brown point out that "Saul, though very patriotic in his own way, was more ambitious of gaining the glory of a triumph to himself than ascribing it to God. He did not understand his proper position as king of Israel; and although aware of the restrictions under which he held the sovereignty, he wished to rule as an autocrat who possessed absolute power both in civil and sacred things. This occasion was his first trial. Samuel waited til the last day of the seven in order to put the constitutional character of the king to the test. And as Saul and his impatient and passionate haste knowingly transgressed by invading the priest's office and thus showing his unfitness for his high office. As he showed nothing of the faith of Gideon and other Hebrew generals, he incurred a threat of the rejection which his subsequent waywardness confirmed."

It was F. B. Meyer who said, "When you are most eager to act, is when you will make the most pitiful mistakes. Satan rushes men, God leads them. Never act in panic, nor allow man to dictate to you. Calm yourself. Force yourself into the closet."

Kirk points out "In this Saul wished to be taken as a proof of his patriotism and piety. But in reality what he was most eager about was not to secure the favor of the Lord, but to prevent anymore defections among the people by at once beginning the campaign. His action was determined by considerations of effecting the number and courage of his men. Again he speaks as one who had forced himself to act as he had done. The truth seems to be that Saul's difficulty lay not in forcing himself to act, but in restraining himself from acting for nearly the whole of the seven days."

v.10 Just as he finished making the offering, Samuel arrived, and Saul went out to greet him.

No sooner had Saul committed his act of disobedience than Samuel arrived. He certainly was in the confines of the seven day stipulation that he had placed on Saul earlier.

Proud people love to take over...
Diotrophes Loves to be First...

Notice Just
the burnt; No
Fellowship offering.

Play every
Position!!

Pride
Passion
Power

Stress Always
reveals the
true heart!

Psalm 27:14

"When
Circumstances
say 'go' learn
to 'wait' on
God..."

Elijah by
Cherith...

- v.11 "What have you done?" asked Samuel. Saul replied, "When I saw that the men were scattering, and that you did not come at the set time, and that the Philistines were assembling at Micmash,
- v.12 I thought, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the Lord's favor.' So I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering."

So easy to be blind spots
Self Justification

McGee points out "Saul forced himself to offer an offering and make supplication of the Lord. May I say that he was lying. He was being falsely pious. This is the real Saul who is beginning to emerge."

Blaikie points out "When Samuel came, Saul was ready with a plausible excuse. On the ground of expediency, he vindicated his procedure. He could not deny that he had broken his promise to wait for Samuel, but there were reasons exceedingly strong to justify him in doing so. Samuel had not come, the people were scattered from him, the Philistines were concentrating at Micmash and might have come down and fallen upon him at Gilgal. All very true, but not one of them by itself, nor all of them together, a real vindication of what he had done. Samuel, he might be sure, would not be an hour longer than he could help. There were far more people left to him than Gideon's band, and the Lord that gave the victory to the 300 would not let him suffer for want of men. The Philistines might have been discomfited by God's tempest on the way to Gilgal, as they were discomfited before on the way to Mizpah. O Saul, distrust of God has been at the bottom of your mind. The faith that animated the heroes of former days has had no control of you. You have walked by sight and not by faith. Had you been faithful now and honored God and waited till his servant sent you off with his benediction, prosperity would have attended you and your family would have been permanently settled in the throne. But now your kingdom shall not continue."

Delitzsch points out "But wherever, as in the present instance, there is a definite command given by the Lord a man has no right to allow himself to be induced to transgress it by fixing his attention upon the earthly circumstances in which he is placed. As Samuel had instructed Saul as a direct command from Jehovah to wait for his arrival before offering sacrifice, Saul might have trusted in the Lord that He would send His prophet at the right time and cause His command to be fulfilled and ought not to have allowed his confidence to be shaken by the pressing danger of delay. The interval of seven days and the delay in Samuel's arrival were intended as a test of his faith, which he ought not to have lightly disregarded. Moreover, the matter in hand was the commencement of the war against the principle enemies of Israel and Samuel was to tell him what he was to do. So that when Saul proceeded with the consecrating sacrifice for that very conflict without the presence of Samuel, he showed clearly enough that he thought he could make war upon the enemies of his kingdom without the counsel and assistance of God. This was an act of rebellion against the sovereignty of Jehovah, for which the punishment announced was by no means too severe."

When you are looking at circumstances you will make wrong decisions.

Ones who stayed would have the joy of being used by the Lord...

Situation Ethics.

Never right to do wrong to accomplish the good...

1. When you Act with the limitations of your own wisdom + circumstances you will Always Act Foolishly.

-9-

Psalm 14:1

"The Supreme test is Obedience"

v.13 "You have acted foolishly," Samuel said. "You have not kept the command the Lord your God gave you; if you had, he would have established your kingdom over Israel for all time."

Samuel tells Saul that he has acted in a foolish fashion because he has been disobedient. In his pride he has rationalized away through the threatening circumstances the command of the Lord and took over for Samuel in the making of the sacrifices.

v.14 But now your kingdom will not endure; the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the Lord's command."

McGee points out "Saul was told in the beginning that if he obeyed God, he would be blessed. But if he disobeyed, there would be judgment. The ruler must obey the Lord. And what the world needs today is a ruler who is being ruled by the Lord. Our problems stem from the fact that we don't have that kind of ruler. Of course we will not get one until the Lord Jesus comes back to earth. That is God's ultimate goal for this earth. Saul has disobeyed, so God has another man to be a king. He is going to bring him on the scene a little later. Even Samuel at this time does know who he is."

Blaikie points out "What a solemn and impressive condemnation have we here my friends of that far too common practice, deserting principle to serve expediency. 'I don't like to tell a lie,' someone may say, 'but if I had not done so, I should have lost my situation.' 'I dislike common work on the Sabbath day, but if I do not do it, I could not live.' 'I don't think it's right to go to Sunday parties or to play games on Sunday, but I was invited by this or that great person to do it and I could not refuse him.' 'I ought not to adulterate my goods and I ought not to give false statements of their value, but everyone in my business does it and I cannot be singular.' What do these vindications amount to but just the confession that for motives of expediency, God's commandment may be set aside. These excuses just come to this, it was better for me to offend God and gain a slight benefit, than it would have been to lose the benefit and please God. It is a great deal to lose a small profit in business or a small pleasure in social life or a small honor from a fellow man, but it is little or nothing to displease God. It is little or nothing to treasure up wrath against the day of wrath. Alas for the practical unbelief that lies at the bottom of all of this. It is the doing of the fool who hath said in his heart, There is no God. Look at this history of Saul. See what befell him for preferring expediency to principle. Know that the same condemnation awaits all who walk in his footsteps."

"What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

it is Never right to take matters into our own hands...

4 Ruler Ruled by The Lord...

Always A mistake to desert principle under pressure.

Breedlove on The Spiritual and Psychological Failure of Saul points out "On the seventh day when Samuel did not appear at the expected time and Saul saw his forces scattering from the camp in even greater numbers, he succumbed to the fear and doubt of his humanly impossible situation and offered the sacrifices himself. With this official piece of business accomplished, he prepared to enter battle without the guidance of the Lord or of his prophet. He had disobeyed God's direct command and had failed to discern the test of faith the Lord had set for him. The new king had failed to do what was of highest importance for him, to submit completely and publicly to the sovereign direction of Yahweh."

Ultimately Saul failed to discern the basic theocratic ideal which was being tested. Namely, a godly king submitting entirely to the Lord and a mighty God bringing victory and prosperity in the face of human hopelessness. Summarizing this situation, Unger states, "As a leader it was Saul's first concern to ascertain the will of Yahweh through the ordained means of his honored prophet Samuel. And having certainly apprehended to execute it fully. This is precisely what Saul failed to do. Saul was always to be subject to Samuel, and by refusing to wait on him, the king entertained active rebellion against God." Wood states, "At Gilgal Saul showed himself to be proud, self-sufficient, and rebellious."

The repercussions of this public sin were vast. First of all, although Saul retained his throne, his sons would not succeed him. Second, he suffered a public break with Samuel. Third, he now had no confidence in God's leading in the conflicts with the Philistines, and fourth, and most importantly, the stage was set for future spiritual failures. This resulted not from what was done at Gilgal so much as what was not done. Saul did not repent when confronted with his sin. A man after God's own heart would have repented. Instead Saul excused himself, feeling that his actions were justified. As a result of this impenitence, his heart was hardened and he began to suffer the consequences of deep seated rebellion against the Lord.

Ridout points out "Samuel's reply is startlingly frank. Saul has done foolishly. He does not attempt to take up his reasons in detail. The people may have been scattered. He does not refer to that. The enemy may be threatening. He does not even explain his own tarrying, though its purpose was manifest. One thing he has to say to the king, 'You have not kept the commandment of the Lord your God which he commanded you.' How all his paltry excuses are scattered to the winds by that solemn arraignment. What excuse can there be for disobedience. Then, too, as to the consequences of this, they were not temporary. Nor would they be immediately manifested. But this act has shown him to be utterly incapable of rule, to be certainly not the man after God's heart.

If indeed he had stood this test, his kingdom would have been established, for it would have been seen that he was a man of genuine faith. One thing he lacked, and that one thing was absolutely needful. It was really everything--it was faith in God. Everything else may be present. But where this is wanting, one cannot be used of Him. His kingdom, therefore, shall not continue. God must have a man after his own heart. One who knows him and his goodness and love. And who, in spite of many shortcomings, still has a true spirit of obedience to God, which springs from confidence in him. A little later on we will see poor Saul with wonderful zeal and rigidity of external obedience, but we will notice always that wherever the will of God came in conflict with the wishes of man or the desires of his own heart, Saul was wanting. How unspeakably sad and solemn is this! Yea, how searching to our hearts. God grant that it may search out every vestige of self confidence in us. Every particle of unbelief which would turn us from obeying God rather than man."

Heb. 11:1

dependence or lack of it is revealed in our periods of waiting

Saul also was to be tested as to his dependence upon God and patient waiting brings out the inherent unbelief of the heart more quickly than activity.

Gen 16:
Abraham
+
Hagar

Ridout also points out "Also we know something doubtless in our own experience of this restlessness of the flesh which recognizes that something must be done, but never does the only thing that is suitable, wait upon God for His time. So Saul offers the sacrifices, intruding himself in this way into the priest's office and practically ignoring all need of that which was at the basis of sacrifice, a mediator. The flesh, with all its religiousness and punctiliousness never grasps the fact that it has no standing before God. It would intrude into the holiest things, and as we have already said, this is the very essence of Philistinism, which would thrust nature into the presence of God; and according to its own thoughts, build up a system of approach to him which would at the same time quiet natural conscience and foster the pride of the unregenerate heart. This was an awful fall for the king. It was the very thing against which the prophet had guarded him in the beginning. The very thing, too, which was the peril of the people, that is, acting without God in their choice of a king. Saul had had ample warning, abundant opportunity to manifest his faith and obedience if he had any. The very place where he was had but lately witnessed the solemn testimony of Samuel and heard the voice of Jehovah in thunder at the time of harvest. Had the fear of God really filled his soul? It would have eclipsed all other fear and the king would have waited patiently, though the wait was long, for the word from the Lord. But he is tested and fails. So soon as the failure occurs, the divine mercy on the one hand and justice on the other, Samuel appears on the scene. What unavailing regret doubtless fills Saul's bosom

HOME WHERE I BELONG by B. J. Thomas

I can't be perfect and it's futile to try to be. What I do try to be is surrendered. It's not easy and I fail often--too often. But I know where to go for healing and a new slate. I don't have to be shot down to ground level again every time I sin. I can get things right with God, ask his forgiveness and strength, and pick up where I left off. The dying to self and the growing are what it's all about. It's not the trying, it's the dying.

p.142

#10 When you get your eyes off the Lord & on Circumstances you will always have an uncontrollable urge to act in some way. -12-

as he saw the prophet. Oh had he only waited but a few minutes longer! This is not the point. God would test him to see whether he would wait. He had not almost held out, but he had simply manifested the state of his soul. There is no such thing as almost obeying the Lord. The heart that is truly his will obey; and testing, no matter how far it is carried, will never bring out disobedience from a heart that is truly subject to God."

Praise #4 Ecc 3:11
He makes everything beautiful in His time.

CONCLUSION:

What are the lessons that we can draw from this particular study?

LESSON #1: Saul has begun to take credit for what the Lord has done through Jonathan.

LESSON #2: Fear and discouragement is the result of getting our eyes on circumstances.

LESSON #3: Saul is being tested with regard to divine authority and the obedient heart.

LESSON #4: Expediency never takes priority over obedience.

LESSON #5: Self-justification often accompanies the disobedient heart.

The disobedience of Saul resulted in the Lord's seeking a man after His own heart. I ask you the question: Are you that type of a person? That is, a person who is a servant; who is submissive to divine authority; who is supportive of the divine plan and manifests that by a total obedience of heart to the commands of the Lord?

Lesson #6 you will Always make a mistake when you take matters into your own hands.

Lesson #7 dependence or lack of it is revealed in periods of delay... Gal. 5:16,17

Lesson #8 when you act with the limitations of your own wisdom & circumstances you will Always Act Foolishly...

Lesson #9 The Lord wants to do His thing in the midst of impossible circumstances