

Preview of Samuel 1 & 2

The Book of 2 Samuel is a biography of King David, as 1 Samuel is of King Saul. In 2 Samuel we see order and faithfulness restored by David in contrast to the failure and defeat of Eli and Saul. In Saul, Israel had a king "like all the nations"; that is, a king after the heart of the people. In David, Israel had a king after God's own heart.

The Book of 2 Samuel covers a period of about forty years. Chapters 1-4 give the account of David as king over Judah; chapters 5-10 of his rule over all Israel; chapters 11-20 of his sin and its far-reaching consequences; and chapters 21-24 serve as an appendix to David's reign. In chapter 7, God graciously promised David an eternal house, kingdom, and throne. These promises would ultimately be fulfilled in David's greatest Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

This book teaches that the ultimate victory of God does not depend on the attitudes of people toward Him. If one person's attitude is wrong, the Lord will use someone else. Our attitude toward God is, however, of vital importance to our own spiritual welfare. We win only as we surrender to the will of the Lord.

Lessons 1 through 8 cover the book of 1 Samuel 9 to 30 and the remaining lessons cover 2 Samuel 1 to 10.

Lesson 1 28 October 2012

Saul Is Anointed King

Lesson Scope: [1 Samuel 9-11](#)

Lesson Focus

Israel had demanded a king in order to be like the nations around them. Samuel felt that they were rejecting him, but God viewed it as their rejection of His rule over them (1 Samuel 8:7). God wanted to be Israel's King, but He foreknew that Israel would some day have a king, and He provided for that possibility in the Law (Deuteronomy 17:14-20).

Jacob's parting blessing gave the scepter to the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10). This prophecy identified Judah as the royal line culminating in the eternal kingdom of the Messiah. How God would have fulfilled this prophecy if Israel had wholly followed Him, we are not told. We do know that God chose Saul to be king, indicating that, when God called him, Saul had the qualities God desired in a leader.

God calls men who are "little in [their] own sight" to serve in His kingdom. This outlook on life brings blessing and joy to God's people. The importance of humility cannot be over-emphasized. Remember that Saul's most important work was not leading Israel but maintaining his relationship with God. We are only an earthen vessel that can hold and dispense the treasure of the Lord of all the earth (see 2 Corinthians 4:7). Make the lesson practical by applying the principles to daily life.

Lesson Aim: To see how a humble person fills his God-given role.

Theme Verse: [1 Samuel 15:17](#). And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?

Lesson Text:

"A Choice Young Man"

[1 Samuel 9:1-5](#) ¹ Now there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of

Aphiah, a Benjamite, a mighty man of power. ² And he had a son, whose name *was* Saul, a choice young man, and a goodly: and *there was* not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward *he was* higher than any of the people. ³ And the asses of Kish Saul's father were lost. And Kish said to Saul his son, Take now one of the servants with thee, and arise, go seek the asses. ⁴ And he passed through mount Ephraim, and passed through the land of Shalisha, but they found *them* not: then they passed through the land of Shalim, and *there they were* not: and he passed through the land of the Benjamites, but they found *them* not. ⁵ And when they were come to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant that *was* with him, Come, and let us return; lest my father leave *caring* for the asses, and take thought for us.

1 Samuel 9:10 ¹⁰ Then said Saul to his servant, Well said; come, let us go. So they went unto the city where the man of God *was*.

"God Gave Him Another Heart"

1 Samuel 10:1 ¹ Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured *it* upon his head, and kissed him, and said, *Is it* not because the LORD hath anointed thee *to be* captain over his inheritance?

1 Samuel 10:9 ⁹ And it was *so*, that when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart: and all those signs came to pass that day.

1 Samuel 10:17 ¹⁷ And Samuel called the people together unto the LORD to Mizpeh;

1 Samuel 10:20-27 ²⁰ And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken. ²¹ When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken: and when they sought him, he could not be found. ²² Therefore they enquired of the LORD further, if the man should yet come thither. And the LORD answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff. ²³ And they ran and fetched him thence: and when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward. ²⁴ And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the LORD hath chosen, that *there is* none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king. ²⁵ Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote *it* in a book, and laid *it* up before the LORD. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house. ²⁶

And Saul also went home to Gibeah; and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched. ²⁷ But the children of Belial said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no presents. But he held his peace.

"The Spirit of God Came Upon Saul"

1 Samuel 11:4-6 ⁴ Then came the messengers to Gibeah of Saul, and told the tidings in the ears of the people: and all the people lifted up their voices, and wept. ⁵ And, behold, Saul came after the herd out of the field; and Saul said, What *ai leth* the people that they weep? And they told him the tidings of the men of Jabesh. ⁶ And the Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard those tidings, and his anger was kindled greatly.

1 Samuel 11:12-15 ¹² And the people said unto Samuel, Who *is* he that said, Shall Saul reign over us? bring the men, that we may put them to death. ¹³ And Saul said, There shall not a man be put to death this day: for to day the LORD hath wrought salvation in Israel. ¹⁴ Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there. ¹⁵ And all the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king before the LORD in Gilgal; and there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace offerings before the LORD; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

Questions for Study

"A Choice Young Man"

1. What was the significance of Saul being "a choice young man, and a goodly"?
2. How does faithfulness in lowly tasks contribute to filling our God-given role in life?

"God Gave Him Another Heart"

3. Explain the other heart that God gave Saul (10:9).
4. Is hiding "among the stuff" a sure sign of humility? Explain.
5. What attitudes identify children of Belial?

"The Spirit of God Came Upon Saul"

6. Why was Saul moved to action by the injustice in 11:5 but not by that in 10:27?
7. What purpose did renewing the kingdom serve?
8. What lessons can we learn from Saul's response in 11:13?

Analyzing the Passage

Saul was "a man of Benjamin" (9:1), a small tribe. They were fierce fighters but had nearly been wiped out (Judges 20).

Samuel anointed Saul with oil (10:1). Only the priests and kings were anointed with the holy anointing oil. This pointed forward to Christ, God's anointed one to be our Priest and King.

Mizpeh (10:17) was a town near Ramah in the land of Benjamin. Samuel had gathered Israel there previously to pray for them.

"The manner of the kingdom" (10:25) likely included the directives given in Deuteronomy 17:14-20 and additions to them. Samuel wrote these things in a book and placed them in the house of God for safe-keeping.

Belial (10:27) means "worthless" and is sometimes translated "wicked" or "ungodly."

In chapter 11, Nahash threatened the men of Jabesh-gilead. Disunity among God's people made victory for Nahash seem certain, emboldening him to propose a cruel servitude in exchange for the destruction of war. Saul united the fragmented loyalties of Israel and defended the men of Jabesh-gilead (11:6-11), gaining a great victory for God's people.

Principles and Applications

"A Choice Young Man"

1. Submission to the authorities in one's life is a mark of humility (9:3, 5). When Saul's father asked him to leave the security of home and go look for the asses, he willingly accepted his father's plan. Disobedience is pride. Sometimes we are tempted to think that if we have good-sounding excuses or can convince the one over us to let us do it our way, we are obeying. The humble person is open to the direction of authority and willing to learn from the more mature. He does not despise lowly work or shun laboring among the lowly.

2. A humble person considers the feelings of others (9:5). Saul did not think only of his own feelings when he made decisions, but he thought of his father's concern and considered the servant's suggestion. He also wanted to be considerate of Samuel by giving him a gift for his service. Taking a genuine interest in the affairs and feelings of others shows character and humility.

3. Humility motivates a person to take his difficulties to the Lord (9:10).

The humble recognize their insufficiency and are quick to seek help from God. Our brethren are an indispensable part of God's work, and the humble person depends on them for help and direction in serving the Lord. An elevated opinion of our abilities, whether conscious or unconscious, is pride, which leads to impatience, frustration, and disappointment. A humble person is grateful for the help of others and often shows gratitude when help is offered.

"God Gave Him Another Heart"

4. Divine power enables the humble (10:9; 11:6). God's work is accomplished only with help from God. Just as Saul received power from God for the task assigned him, so the humble can depend on God to give grace for each day (1 Peter 5:5, 6). God told the apostle Paul, "My strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9). When we understand our weakness, God will empower and use us. When we feel strong in our own sight, we hinder God from working through us.

5. Humility attracts godly associates (10:26). People generally attract others with similar interests. Those with a high opinion of themselves seldom feel comfortable in the presence of the godly, since their goals and ambitions constantly clash. Humble people feel a kindred spirit with those who seek to glorify God rather than self.

6. Insults do not provoke the humble person to retaliate (10:27). The humble person does not feel the need to right all wrongs against him. He knows that it is only the power of God in his life that makes his efforts worthwhile. He is content to let God even the score. What others say about us is not as important as what we are. The fear of God keeps us from retaliating when we are misjudged or defamed. Love for others inspires kindness rather than retaliation. Love also respects the opinion of others even when they seem to be wrong or are expressed in a wrong way.

"The Spirit of God Came Upon Saul"

7. The humble person is stirred to action by threats against God's people (11:6). Saul did not respond to insults against himself, but insults to his brethren were something to be concerned about. A humble man is quick to defend his brother's reputation. He wants to believe good about his brethren. He looks at insults against God's people as insults against God. The humble man wants his brethren to prosper and God to be glorified.

8. Humble people show mercy and forgiveness toward those who wrong

them (11:12, 13). The humble man understands his need for mercy from God and therefore extends mercy to his fellow men. Many men, when tested with success, fail to maintain a merciful attitude toward those who wrong them. Humility equips men with the ability to love the unlovely, to forgive the injurious, and to extend kindness to the disrespectful. He knows that God may receive more glory when he humbly forgives injustice than when he defends himself.

9. Humble leadership promotes gratitude and joy among God's people (11:15). Humble men thank God for victory rather than taking victory as proof of personal invincibility. Saul rightly concluded that the Lord had marvelously delivered His people from their enemies; this was not the time to punish those who had insulted him. Saul recognized the battle as the Lord's, and he used the victory to glorify God.

Important Teachings

1. Submission to the authorities in one's life is a mark of humility (9:3, 5).
2. A humble person considers the feelings of others (9:5).
3. Humility motivates a person to take his difficulties to the Lord (9:10).
4. Divine power enables the humble (10:9; 11:6).
5. Humility attracts godly associates (10:26).
6. Insults do not provoke the humble person to retaliate (10:27).
7. The humble person is stirred to action by threats against God's people (11:6).
8. Humble people show mercy and forgiveness toward those who wrong them (11:12, 13).
9. Humble leadership promotes gratitude and joy among God's people (11:15).
10. The humble person does not seek attention or position (10:21, 22).

Answers to Questions

1. What was the significance of Saul being "a choice young man, and a goodly"?

Saul was a choice young man, well fitted for the job. God chose a man who had attractive physical features. This seems to be the kind of king the people wanted—a handsome man, a king like other nations had. See 1 Samuel 16:6, 7; 2 Samuel 14:25, 26.

2. *How does faithfulness in lowly tasks contribute to filling our God-given role in life?*

Lowly tasks are a part of the Christian's life, regardless of his social position. The humble man does not view hard work as being below his dignity. Faithful service in the matters that are least prepare us for greater responsibility (Luke 16:10, 11).

3. *Explain the other heart that God gave Saul (10:9).*

Saul's heart was changed by the Holy Spirit, empowering him for the work he was anointed to do. This in some ways is similar to the gift of the Holy Ghost that the believer receives at conversion, but it was different in that Christ's work on Calvary was not yet finished.

4. *Is hiding among the stuff a sure sign of humility? Explain. ,*

No. Hiding from responsibility may be a sign of laziness or stubbornness, or it may also be motivated by a desire to be noticed. It may be a method of running away, as Jonah did. We should be willing to serve when asked but not be bold and seeking to be noticed.

5. *What attitudes identify children of Belial?*

Disrespect for authority is a characteristic of the children of Belial (10:27). They despise people and reject God's revealed will (11:12).

6. *Why was Saul moved to action by the injustice in 11:5 but not by that in 10:27?* Saul could endure injustice against himself because he was humble, but he viewed injustice against the people of God as an act against God Himself.

7. *What purpose did renewing the kingdom serve?*

Renewing the kingdom refocused the people's minds from crediting Saul with the victory to giving God the glory. Renewing the kingdom after the victory at Jabesh helped to unify the people and give those who had not previously supported the new king an opportunity to support him publicly. It was also another opportunity for Samuel to remind the people that having a king did not lessen their responsibility to obey God (see chapter 12).

8. *What lessons can we learn from Saul's response in 11:13?*

Victory is an opportunity to glorify God. Times of victory should not be used to usurp authority or to settle grievances. We should do good to those who despitely use us. The humble man is more thankful for victory than he is worried about what people think of him.

Research Guide

1. Look up "Humility" in a topical Bible and acquaint yourself with the traits of humility.
2. Read Exodus 30:22-33 related to the anointing oil. See also *Strong's* numbers 4899 (Hebrew), and 5547 and 5548 (Greek).

Summarizing the Lesson

The kingdom of heaven is made up of humble men and women. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (James 4:6). Only people who crucify the desires of the flesh and choose to love God above all else will enter the kingdom of heaven. Humble men realize that they are only earthen vessels used to carry the priceless treasure of the Almighty to a dark and dying world, who need to see the treasure rather than the vessel (see 2 Corinthians 4:5-7).