

## I Samuel 8-16

### Introduction

#### I. Series title: “Faithfulness through Adversity”

David’s life was full of adversity, and while he was far from perfect, he exhibited a consistent faith-fulness to God (he had great faith in God and he constantly returned to God)

II. Today we look at the story of Saul because you can’t understand David until you understand Saul

### The Passage

#### PART I: Saul: The “asked for” King

##### I. The people “ask for” a king (ch. 8)

###### A. The people’s request (v. 4-5)

1. Motivated by practical concerns
2. Deeper spiritual issues

- a. revealed a lack of faith in God as their king (Dt 20:3-4)
- b. revealed a desire to be like the other nations rather than be God’s holy people (Exodus 19:5-6)

###### B. God surprisingly tells Samuel to give them a king

###### C. Samuel warns the people of the consequences of having a king (v. 10-18)

##### II. God gives them this “asked for” king (Ch. 9-10)

###### A. Samuel anoints Saul in private (ch. 9)

9:1-2:

“Saul” = a form of the verb “to ask”: “asked for”

He is the ideal king from a human point of view (huge and impressive)

###### B. Saul is made king in public (10:17-25)

1. Samuel reminds the people of their evil in asking for a king (v. 17-19)
2. Chosen by lot, v. 20-22 (sounds like Achan’s act of disobedience in Joshua 7), Saul found hiding in the baggage
3. The people are impressed with this huge king (v. 23-24)

###### C. Saul’s great military success (Ch. 11)

###### D. Samuel’s farewell speech (Ch. 12)

##### III. The “asked for” king does not obey/listen to God (Ch. 13-15)

###### A. Saul offering the sacrifice (ch. 13)

###### 1. The sin

- a. The Philistine army (v. 5-7)
- b. The desertion and fear of Saul’s troops (v. 5-7)
- c. Saul disobeys by not waiting for Samuel (v. 8-12)

###### 2. God’s choice of another king (v. 13-14)

“God is choosing for himself a man according to his heart”

###### B. Saul doesn’t destroy the Amalekites completely (ch. 15)

###### 1. The sin

- a. God's command (v. 2-3)
    - b. Saul's disobedience (7-9)
    - c. Samuel's confrontation (13-25)
  - 2. God's choice of another king (v. 26-29)
- C. The rest of Saul's kingship
  - A downward spiral ending in total defeat by the Philistines at the end of 1 Samuel

#### IV. What was God doing in giving Israel their "asked for" King, Saul?

- A. A king was always part of God's plan, but he wanted Israel to realize that a human king would never solve their problems and that God would always remain their ultimate king, so he allowed Israel to experience the failure of a human king who did not obey God, so that they would continue to put their ultimate trust in him.
- B. 1 Samuel 13:14: "The Lord has sought out a man after his own heart"
  - 1. Literal translation: "The Lord has sought out for himself a man according to his heart."
  - 2. The emphasis here may not be so much on something in David's heart that makes him worthy of being king, but rather the contrast between the people's choice in seeking a king for themselves and God's choice in seeking a king for himself. God is saying, "You asked for a human king and I gave you the kind of king you were hoping for. But now I'm going to choose a man, I'll do the choosing this time, I've set my heart on a man who will be the king I want."

#### PART II: David: the man of God's own choosing (ch. 16)

God chooses the youngest and probably littlest of Jesse's sons to be the next king. He is not tall and impressive like Saul. God probably chooses him so that it will be clear to everyone that the power to save comes from God and not this young shepherd boy—so that Israel (while appreciating the king) will still recognize that God is ultimately their king and their source of hope and security.

#### Conclusion

##### I. We can relate to the Israelites:

- A. In midst of adversity we want to cling to something tangible security
  - = \$, a human leader, a relationship, an institution, etc
- B. But God wants to be our security; he wants our ultimate trust

##### II. Samuel's farewell speech (Ch. 12)

- A. He warns (v. 21)
  - What are those things you're clinging to find security, comfort that are ultimately useless and unable to deliver?
- B. He comforts (v. 22)
  - In spite of our disobedience, God will not abandon us "for the sake of his name." His own glory is on the line, so he will remain faithful to us.

## Discussion Questions

1. Opening questions: What struck you most about the sermon/the passage? What surprised you? What confused you? What did you disagree with?
2. Do you think it's going too far to say that God giving Israel Saul was in some ways an act of judgment on them similar to Romans 1 where God hands people over to their sinful desires to let them experience the consequences of those desires? How would you understand what God was doing with Saul?
3. Explain the two possible interpretations of that famous verse 13:14: "God has sought out a man after his own heart" or "God has sought out for himself a man according to his heart." How did the interpretation given on Sunday change your understanding of what God was doing with David?
4. What are those tangible securities you tend to cling to rather than clinging to God? Or, what are those tangible gifts God gives that you're tempted to focus your heart on rather than the Giver of those gifts?