

A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART
WEEK 11

“But the Lord said, Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the *Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.*” I Samuel 16:7

Saul, king of Israel, had pushed God to the limit, disobeying His commandments, thinking himself to “be all that”, building a monument for himself. He had forgotten the greatness of God and that it was He who was the King of King and Lord of Lords. God had enough of this narcissistic rebellion and determined to remove Saul from his high position.

Read I Samuel 15:11 and fill in the blanks. “I _____ that I have set up Saul as king, for he has _____ from _____ Me, and has not _____.”

Read vv. 12-21. In your own words, write what was going on in these verses. _____

God never intended to set Saul over Israel as king. The Israelites took matters into their own hands and rejected God as their King. If you do not know this story, I suggest that you read it in I Samuel 8 and 9.

With the choosing of Saul as king over Israel, God gave the people a grave warning as to what was to come with Saul as their king. (8:10-18) Please read the passage.

But the people “knew better” than God.

How did they respond to Samuel’s warning from God? I Sam.8:19-22.

How sad! God had delivered these people from Egyptian captivity, brought them out of the wilderness to the Promised Land, saved them from total annihilation. He would have been their King. But they wanted to be like the rest of the world and have a human king of their choosing! Saul was the man God gave to them, a man who was so handsome that the word says that “there was not a more handsome person than he among the children of Israel.” (9:2)

Read I Samuel 10:17- 19. One more time, before Samuel anoints Saul as king, he reminds the people of their rebellion against God. Yet they forged ahead, demanding what God had never intended for them. As we read in I Samuel 15:11, the things God spoke through Samuel as a warning against Saul as king, came to pass. Now it was time to set God’s chosen one over Israel.

Read I Samuel 15:11 again and then read verse 35. Two times God says that He regretted having made Saul king over Israel. These are some of the saddest words in the Bible.

Oh, Lord, I pray that my sisters and I never live and act in such a way that makes You regret that You chose us for service to You. May it never be!!!

In chapter 16 of I Samuel, the Lord told him to stop mourning over Saul and go to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for one of his sons was the king of whom God said, “--- For I have provided Myself a king among his sons.” 16:1

The first son to pass in front of Samuel was Eliab. He was handsome and tall and Samuel thought that surely he was the man! But God’s choice was not based on appearance. (Remember James 2:1-6?????!!!!) According to verse 7 of I Samuel 16, what did God look at to determine His choice of king?

Seven of Jesse’s sons were paraded in front of Samuel, and God refused them all as king over Israel. At last, one more, a young whipper-snapper of boy was out in the fields tending his daddy’s sheep. He was brought to Samuel and found to also be good-looking with bright eyes. But it was his heart that caused God to choose him to one day take the throne of Saul.

Read I Samuel 13: 14 and write the verse in the spaces. _____

What kind of man had God chosen to take over the throne of Israel in the future?

David, the young shepherd boy, was that man.

If you do not know the story of David and Saul’s relationship while God was preparing David for his reign over Israel, please read it in the books of Samuel. It is a beautiful and intriguing story of friendship, devotion, kind heartedness, forgiveness, grace (on David’s part), war, battles, Saul’s pursuit of David to kill him, so much more! The story of David’s life that we will concentrate on is an episode during his magnificent reign as king.

Remember, this was the man chosen by God, said by God “to be a man after God’s own heart.” He truly did love and serve God, and he honored God as His Father and King. But he was also very human and the lust of the flesh got the best of him.

Read II Samuel 11: 1-27. Even if you know the story, please take the time to read it again. What a great example of how deceived we can be by the enemy and how quickly we can become entangled in a web of lies and deception, even one who is after God’s heart.

What was the first mistake that David made? V. 1

What was his next mistake? Vv. 2-5

The plot thickens as David began to try to hide his sin. What did he do to try to cover up his sin with another man’s wife? Vv. 6-13

Read II Samuel 12: 1-14 in its entirety.

Nathan the prophet was sent by God to confront David on his sin. What was David’s response to the story that Nathan told him about the rich man’s treatment of the poor man?

How did Nathan respond to David's outcry against the rich man? Vv. 7-12

Read vv. 13-14. What was David's immediate response? Defensiveness or repentance?

Whom did David say he sinned against? _____

What was the consequence of David's sin? _____

Did David respond to the loss of his son with anger and bitterness or with worship and praise to God? _____

Do you think you could have responded to God in the same way? _____

Read vv. 24-25. What did God do for David and Bathsheba?

Now read Psalm 51 This is a beautiful and wonderful psalm of confession and repentance from David. Again, who did David say his sin was against? _____

When you sin, no matter what it is, do you truly realize that your sin is against God? Why is that true? _____

Write verses 10-11. _____

In verse 14 does David praise God for what He does or for Who He is? _____

Do you sometimes find yourself seeking the blessing rather than the Blessor? _____

Do you agree that if we seek the Blessor, God, then the blessings will come in some way? Why or why not? _____

In verses 16-17 what does David say that God does NOT desire from us? _____

Rather, what sacrifices does God require of us? _____

Read I Samuel 15:22 When Samuel confronted Saul with his sin, what did he say that God delights in? _____

In verse 16, what is rebellion, or doing exactly opposite of what the Lord tells us to do, equal to? _____

What is stubbornness? _____

What did Saul reject? _____

Do you see the similarities between the two scripture passages in I Samuel 15 and Psalm 51: 16 & 17? If so, what are they? _____

Read II Samuel 15:30 What is the difference between the way Saul responded to the Lord's rebuke through Samuel and David's response to the Lord's rebuke of him through Nathan?

The Lord God Almighty is so serious about our obedience to His word. It is not because He is a heavy handed dictator who demands His subjects' obedience. Not only is it right because HE IS GOD, it is for our good. Just as it is good and profitable for earthly children to obey and honor their parents, (Ephesians 6:1-3 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise: that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.") so is it good and profitable for us to honor and obey our heavenly Father. We will reap peace, joy, freedom, grace, and mercy among other blessings, when we do as He tells us to do; not only in actions, but in our hearts as well. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and contrite heart-----these O God, You will not despise." Psalm 51: 17

How long has it been since you checked the condition of your heart? How often do you find your self running around offering "sacrifices to the Lord" that He never required or wanted? Do you find yourself showing partiality to one person over another? Do you harbor resentment and bitterness toward someone for a hurt or wrong committed against you? Do you find your self angry with God at times for the bad things that have happened to you? Do you find yourself wondering if God could really ever forgive and use you in His kingdom because of the disobedience and junk in your heart? Look again at David. The man shirked his responsibilities as leader of Israel; he lusted after another man's wife, a man who went into battle on behalf of David and totally gave of himself for his fearless leader; David had this loyal man and husband of Bathsheba murdered in order to try to hide his sin; he slept with Bathsheba and conceived a child with her. Yet, it is all a matter of the heart. Not that having a good heart excuses disobedience and sin, but that God sees who truly loves Him and, with rebuke and correction, will come back to their senses in repentance. God looked deep into David's heart and saw a man with a heart after His own heart. He knew that David would respond in the right way to His rebuke, and he did. He repented in dust and ashes; he threw himself at the mercy of God and begged for His cleansing and forgiveness, no matter the price. God cleansed him, picked him up, accepted his praise and worship, and used him over and over again in His kingdom work. God even placed David in the lineage of Jesus Christ our Lord, His only Son.

Take time to get alone with God and let go a heart cry to Him, asking Him to show you what may be in your heart that is not pleasing to Him, what doesn't line up with His word, what disobedience you may be walking in. Ask for His cleansing, His brokenness, His healing. Receive it with gut level praise and gratitude, get up off that floor, wash yourself, and worship the King of Kings and Lord of Lords!

Arise! Shine! For your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you!" Isaiah 60:1