

Choosing a Leader...

King Saul

1 Samuel 8: 1-9/ 1 Samuel 10: 1-26

Won't have time to look at all the scriptures... Copy of my notes?

Motives matter...

We want a king!

- Enemies without Ch1-7
- A failing system? 8: 1-3
 - old age/succession problems
 - inter-tribal conflict
 - low morale
 - Danger of turning to secular solutions...management theory, pop psychology etc
- Wanted to be like everyone else 8: 4-5
- Enemy within... 8: 6-9
 - the real problem was not with the leaders
 - the "Judges cycle" ...sin...saviour...deliverance...forget...
- Who's being rejected? 8: 6-8
 - Covenant Community v Kingdom
 - God is the King..he fights Israel's battles
 - all people have freedom and equality
 - all people have rights and responsibilities to God and to each other
 - even with a Godly king this still possible
 - Christ is head of church
 - all members have freedom and equality based on gifting and calling
 - all members have rights and responsibilities..having a pastor not an excuse for lack of involvement/vision etc or get situation of apostles in Acts 6: 1-4) Church leadership is always team leadership with maximum involvement of everyone. Pastors and other leaders have calling, time, gifting and responsibility to God...like everyone else
- "It will cost you!" 8: 10-18
- Leaders need followers 10: 26-27
 - leaders need two things: divine choice and acceptance by the people

A good start...

God gave him a new heart.

- He was humble 9: 19-21; 10:20-22
- God changed his heart 10: 9
- He was filled with the Spirit 10: 10
- He looked the part 10: 23
- He was God's choice! 10: 24
- He looked after others
 - Rescue from the Ammonites 11: 1-11
 - Grace towards his opponents 11: 12-13

Truth will out...

"You have rejected the word of the Lord..."

- Impulsive actions **13: 7b-14**
 - "foolish" means to lack moral character
 - a penalty (God must ensure this fledging institution of "kingship" has a sound foundation)
- Rash promise before God (note the personal vengeance involved) **14: 24-46**
- A people pleaser **15: 24**
 - concerned for his position and prestige
 - Wants to be liked!! Because of this:
 - sacrifice he shouldn't make **13: 11-12** (already considered)
 - son he should punish **14: 45** the food oath)
 - sin of disobedience **15: 24** (see later)
 - Samuel's summary:

[15:17] Samuel said, "Although you were once small in your own eyes, did you not become the head of the tribes of Israel?"

- Disobedient **15: 13-26**
 - It's not just the disobedience
 - He won't accept responsibility
 - "I *did* do it!" v **13/20** arrogance
 - "I was *them*, not me" v**24**
 - "I don't want to lose face" v**30**
 - Like so many modern politicians who get caught...
 - Contrast with David... **2 Samuel 12:13**
 - Leader must be able to say, "I was wrong".
- The Spirit leaves him **16: 14**
- Jealous self-interest **18: 6-9**
- Abusive
 - Spear throwing **18: 10-11**
 - Tricks and traps **18: 17-29**
 - Murderer of priests **22: 6-23**
- Lost and alone **28: 3-25**
 - Finally turned to the Lord, but Samuel was dead, so went to a medium etc

Postscript...

Appearance isn't everything...

- Looks, education, observance, looking spiritual, saying the right thing...
- Need to appreciate our strengths and weaknesses
- A heart that loves, trusts and obeys God and truly cares for the people

“Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination And arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He has rejected you as king.”

1 Samuel 15: 22-23

Perhaps that's why, when Samuel was sent to choose Saul's successor, God had to tell him:

[6] When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, “Surely the LORD's anointed stands here before the LORD.”

[7] But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things human beings look at.

People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”

1 Samuel 16: 6-7