

The Downfall of a King

1 Samuel 15

Introduction:

1. This is an extremely sad and sobering portion of God's Word. Last week, we saw some spiritual warning signs in King Saul. Unfortunately, Saul did not heed the warning signs.
 - Illustration: Stop signs are there to warn you that you need to stop and pay attention. What if you go blasting through stop signs? Your attitude is, "I'm going to do whatever I want to do."
 - Eventually, it is going to catch up with you, isn't it? You will end up in a wreck, maybe in the hospital, or worse.
2. Saul's downfall was not due to a military loss, political scandal, or internal insurrection within his government. Have you heard the expression, "He's his own worst enemy?" That was King Saul. Let me give you a quick recap of what happened. vs. 1-9
3. Saul lost his throne due to his **own** rebellious heart. vs. 23
 - To rebel simply means to disobey. Deuteronomy 21:18
 - To rebel against God (which is what Saul did) simply means to reject and disobey God's Word. vs. 19, 23, 26
 - Stubbornness is associated with rebellion, because outward rebellion always begins with a heart of self-will. We want **our** way. Psalm 78:8; Isaiah 65:2
4. Saul's stubborn, self-willed, rebellious heart cost him everything he had. But there is some "King Saul" in all of us (Isaiah 53:6)! All of us, in our natural, carnal state, are bent towards rebelling against God and seeking to just blaze our own trails.
5. May this text challenge us and convince us that we must keep ourselves from rebellion against God. Why?

First, because our rebellion grieves the heart of God. vs. 22-23

1. Satan was once the anointed cherub of God. Do you know what led to Satan's downfall? You say, "He fell because he sinned." No! He fell because of his rebellious heart against God's authority. Sinning was a mere product of his inward rebellion.
2. This is why Samuel told Saul that rebellion was as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness as iniquity and idolatry. When we violate God's authority we are operating under the satanic principle of rebellion, and God cannot be pleased.
3. Saul reasoned and said, "But we were going to take these animals that we got from Amalek and offer them in religious sacrifices to God." vs. 15
4. Notice Samuel's response to this idea (vs. 22). Obedience is what pleases God, pure and simple. God couldn't accept the people's worship in sacrificing these animals. Why? Because the satanic principle of rebellion was involved. Proverbs 21:2-3

5. Some people are under the delusion that the end justifies the means. We reason, "God isn't that concerned with my disobedience as long as some good may come out of it."
6. You can serve God outwardly, but **if** within you is a rebellious heart, God cannot be pleased.
7. God desires obedience to His Word more than anything else.

Second, because our rebellion always affects others. vs. 10-11, 35

1. The prophet Samuel loved Saul very much. When God told Samuel what had happened, notice the effect it had on him. vs. 10-11
2. Samuel is the one that had to go and give Saul the news that God was taking his throne from him, and giving it to another man. Samuel did what he had to do, but it absolutely broke Samuel's heart. vs. 34-35
 - I wonder how many moms and dads have lain awake at night weeping over the rebellion of a son or daughter. How many kids have lain awake at night crying, because dad is caught up in rebellion and has left them or is abusing mom.
3. Our rebellion affects others. Every one of us has influence over somebody else. There are other sets of eyes watching us. I have grieved over church members that have gotten caught up in rebellion and sin. It breaks my heart. I know how Samuel felt.

Third, our rebellion always catches up with us. vs. 13-14

1. Sometimes we live under the false assumption that we are somehow "getting away" with our rebellion. Saul thought he could get away with his rebellion.
2. Saul was taking a little victory tour and set up a monument to himself in Carmel (vs. 12). Samuel finally caught up with him, and when Saul saw Samuel, he lied to Samuel (vs. 13). "The Lord bless you Samuel. I have performed the commandment of the Lord."
3. But notice Samuel's response in verse 14. Saul's rebellion found him out because Samuel began to hear the animals making noises. cf. Numbers 32:23
4. Paul taught there is a law of sowing and reaping (Galatians 6:7-8). We cannot continually sow to our flesh and expect to never have it catch up with us. Saul's rebellious spirit eventually caught up with him, as it always will.
5. A heart attitude of rebellion always ends up manifesting itself. We can lie, we can try and cover it up, but it always comes to the surface.
6. And even if we could somehow cover it up our entire lives, it will still catch up with us. Do you know when? When we stand before the Lord and give account.
 - God sees our every action (Proverbs 5:21), and God sees inside our hearts and thoughts and can see if a rebellious spirit is within us. Proverbs 21:2; Jeremiah 17:10

Fourth, because our rebellion carries serious consequences. vs. 23-28

1. Instead of simply obeying God's command, Saul did what he thought was right for him, and what he thought made sense. His rebellion cost him dearly. He not only lost his kingdom, he lost his testimony, and he lost the fellowship of the best friend he had ever had. vs. 35
2. When we are rebelling, it may look right, it may feel right, it may seem right, but we must remember that it never **is** right, and it will lead us into nothing but heartache. Proverbs 16:25
3. When we have an attitude of rebellion, we are operating under Satan's principle of rebellion. Let's not be naïve to think that we can rebel and disregard God's Word and there will be no consequences.

In Conclusion:

1. Why did Saul fall and lose his throne? He couldn't blame his friends, government leaders, or family members. The reason why Saul fell was staring him in the mirror.
2. Are there actions in your life that you know are not right and that are absolute rebellion against God's commands? Turn to God and humble yourself.
3. Maybe you are not outwardly rebelling yet, but there are some heart attitudes of rebellion in you. Remember, rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft.
4. Remember the illustration at the beginning of the message of going through stop signs?
5. Maybe you are here today, and spiritually you are barreling through God's stop signs. You can choose to do this, but there are and will be consequences. Turn to God today and trust and believe His Word. His commands are for your good and protection. 1 John 5:3