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Cultures and Traditions

Samuel, Saul, and David Discussion

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Points Discussed:

- 1 Samuel 8 Give us a king
- 1 Samuel 15 God regrets making Saul King
- 1 Samuel 16 David anointed as king
- 1 Samuel 16 David youngest son
- 1 Samuel 17 David defeats Goliath
- 1 Samuel 28 Role of fate
- 1 Samuel 31 Saul and all sons die
- 1 Samuel 15 Saul's one mistake loses God's favor
- 1 Samuel 20 Johnathan and David's relationship
- 1 Samuel 3 Samuel first prophet in long time (and not viewed as crazy)
- 1 Samuel 18 Promise to not kill David

1. Discussion opened up with the fact that Samuel had no problem convincing people of his prophecies, though there had not been a prophet in a lengthy period of time. This was because he had more validity because his prophecies came true.
2. Discussion then went to the Israelites asking for a king. The question to be answered in this was "why now did they want a king?" God had been there king and lord so why now did the Israelites ask for a human king? We discussed the fact that God may have lost credibility with his people. The judges appointed through God were unfair and did not satisfy the people's needs. Why then should they accept God's kingship if he was not capable of selecting adequate leaders?

A question that stemmed from this was "why did God choose Saul knowing that he would mess up?" God is ALL KNOWING as well as all powerful so he must have known that Saul would disobey his commands. Why then did God still choose him to be the first king of the Israelites? The conclusion that we came to was that perhaps God was trying to show that humans, no matter who they are, are not capable of being "good" kings.

3. Next came the question of how could David be anointed as king if Saul still maintained his power as king? The response to this was that we believe Saul to have lost his "divine kingship" and was now simply "king of men". In this perspective it is entirely possible for David to be anointed "king" without being the reigning king at the time.

The question that arose from the talking of kings was why not have Samuel as king of the Israelites? Samuel was old and his sons, the eventual successors, were

all corrupt. In this light it wouldn't make sense to have Samuel as king. Also, the kings were expected to lead the men into battle and win victories over other opposing forces. Samuel was too old and not a warrior so again Samuel would not have made a good candidate for king.

4. Was it even a good idea to have a king? We answered yes, because it was a way of unifying the tribes together especially in times to defend themselves against attackers.
5. Our discussion then went to the story of David's defeat over Goliath. Goliath was close to 10ft. tall and a little guy beat this giant with a sling??? This was remarkable and we believed this a way to show that *anything* was possible through God and that this may have been similar to a "tall tale" to add to the people's identity.
6. The next part of our discussion was about Saul's promise to not kill David. Saul promised to not kill David yet he continually made attempts to spear him. Why did he make this promise and still try to kill him? We believed that it was for fear of David and jealousy or envy. The people sang better praises for David (Saul's 1,000 kills vs. David's 10,000 kills) and this may have caused much jealousy in the king because he was being out done by David.
7. Everyone close to Saul loved David. His daughter (married David), and his closest son, Johnathan, loved David. Even the people loved David. More reasons for Saul's hate of David.
8. Another question that arose with Saul was why did he propose the idea of David marrying into his family? In Saul's eyes David was his enemy and we believed this to be an example of "keeping your friends close, but your enemies closer."
9. The next question that we answered, and discussed, was how does God have evil spirits??? We answered this question of God sending evil spirits into Saul by agreeing that God had domain and ultimate control over everything so therefore God had control over evil spirits as well.
10. We finally examined the role of fate in this book. All prophesies of God came true when they were told to be direct and true prophesies of God. Why then did people continue to try and escape, or challenge, their fates? If God says that something is going to happen, then there is NO escaping it. We see a good example of this in Saul going to battle despite knowing his eminent defeat.

Many people died because of this and many innocents died in the battle. Why did God let these innocents die? Perhaps God was punishing the Israelites for having desired a king over his reign.