

Theme: Saul is a compulsive man, full of rash and foolish actions, rooted in his confusion over how to walk in God's favor.

I. Conspiracy Theory Movie

- A. Mel Gibson constantly tells Julia Roberts conspiracy theories
- B. He is an extremely confused, compulsive individual
- C. He had an excuse for why he was all messed up!
- D. Saul is also a man tragically compulsive and confused

II. Saul - A Compulsive King

- A. The background - Samuel's dual command to Saul
Once these signs are fulfilled, do whatever your hand finds to do, for God is with you. ⁸ Go down ahead of me to Gilgal. I will surely come down to you to sacrifice burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, but you must wait seven days until I come to you and tell you what you are to do. 1 Samuel 10:7-8
 - 1. After signs fulfilled - Saul was to act
 - a. Probably speaking of attacking the Philistines
 - b. Their outpost there; he was to defeat them as king
 - 2. After his initial action, he was to wait seven days
 - 3. Samuel would come and make offerings
 - 4. Samuel would tell Saul what to do
 - 5. Yahweh the King will direct Saul through Samuel

- B. Saul begins to act as king to deliver from the Philistines
Jonathan attacked the Philistine outpost at Geba, and the Philistines heard about it. Then Saul had the trumpet blown throughout the land and said, "Let the Hebrews hear!" ⁴ So all Israel heard the news: "Saul has attacked the Philistine outpost, and now Israel has become a stench to the Philistines." And the people were summoned to join Saul at Gilgal. 1 Sam 13:3-4
 - 1. Saul had probably waited quite a time for this
 - a. v1 in Hebrew has no years named; may say in 2nd year of reign (lit. 'the son of a year in his kingship, the 2nd year he reigned over Israel')
 - b. Or had to wait 7 days after this action as well
 - 2. Jonathan is the one who actually acts - but may be under Saul's direction
 - 3. In any event, the Philistines are finally attacked
 - 4. First part now fulfilled - will Saul obey and wait
 - 5. Who rules - Yahweh or Saul?
 - 6. Would the responsibilities of kingship drive Saul to Yahweh - or would he set up his own throne, in competition with God?
 - 7. The Game of Thrones is on!
- C. Saul shows he is a compulsive king

1. Situation grows dire for Israel during the seven days
The Philistines assembled to fight Israel, with three thousand chariots, six thousand charioteers, and soldiers as numerous as the sand on the seashore. They went up and camped at Micmash, east of Beth Aven. ⁶ When the men of Israel saw that their situation was critical and that their army was hard pressed, they hid in caves and thickets, among the rocks, and in pits and cisterns. ⁷ Some Hebrews even crossed the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. Saul remained at Gilgal, and all the troops with him were quaking with fear. 1 Samuel 13:5–7

- a. Israel is outnumbered and outgunned!
- b. Israel did not even have good weapons [13:19-22]
- c. The people are fearful and deserting
- d. This was meant to make Saul turn to Yahweh - by obeying Samuel's word!

2. Saul acts compulsively

He waited seven days, the time set by Samuel; but Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and Saul's men began to scatter. ⁹ So he said, "Bring me the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings." And Saul offered up the burnt offering. ¹⁰ Just as he finished making the offering, Samuel arrived, and Saul went out to greet him. 1 Samuel 13:8–10

- a. Saul does not see Samuel on the 7th day - and does not wait
- b. Saul offers the sacrifices himself - instead of waiting
- c. The problem - he can't see himself - he needs Yahweh to guide by His word through Samuel
- d. Just as he finishes - Samuel arrives!

3. Saul compulsively makes excuses for not trusting
"What have you done?" asked Samuel. Saul replied, "When I saw that the men were scattering, and that you did not come at the set time, and that the Philistines were assembling at Micmash, ¹² I thought, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the LORD's favor.' So I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering." 1 Samuel 13:11–12

- a. The all seeing prophet asks a question - like God asked Adam and Eve
- b. Saul blames it on the men scattering and Samuel not arriving - just like Adam and Eve
- c. "I needed to get God's favor" - his own way!
- d. Saul's excuse - 'I felt compelled' - I had to do it!

4. Saul has lost the game of thrones!

- a. This was a test - would Saul trust God's way, or make his own?
- b. Saul refuses God's provision & tries to make his own way to God
- c. He is in competition with God, not submitted to Him

D. Many examples of Saul being compulsive in these chapters

- 1. He asks the priest to seek God - and then tells him to stop so Saul can act (14:18-19)
- 2. He makes a rash, foolish oath that the men can't eat - during a day of battle! (14:24)
- 3. He makes a rash, foolish oath to kill anyone who sinned - even Jonathan - and then can't fulfill it when the men stop him (14:37-45)

4. He is compulsive, rash, and foolish throughout these chapters

III. Saul - A Spiritually Confused King

A. Saul is confused about how to walk in God's favor

1. He does not do what God commanded - wait for Samuel!
He waited seven days, the time set by Samuel; but Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and Saul's men began to scatter. ⁹ So he said, "Bring me the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings." And Saul offered up the burnt offering. ¹⁰ Just as he finished making the offering, Samuel arrived, and Saul went out to greet him. 1 Samuel 13:8-10
2. He tries to replace Samuel with Eli's forsaken family
Saul was staying on the outskirts of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree in Migron. With him were about six hundred men, ³ among whom was Ahijah, who was wearing an ephod. He was a son of Ichabod's brother Ahitub son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the LORD's priest in Shiloh. 1 Samuel 14:2-3
3. He tries to use the ark against the Philistines - like Eli's family
Saul said to Ahijah, "Bring the ark of God." (At that time it was with the Israelites.) 1 Samuel 14:18
4. He makes a series of rash, foolish oaths, thinking that will bring God's favor
5. This culminates in conjuring Samuel from the dead through a witch!

B. The sad picture of a spiritually confused man

1. He had many good qualities - but need guidance

2. Samuel was his spiritual guide - but he did not wait
3. Over time he grows more and more confused spiritually - with disastrous consequences

IV. The Bitter Fruit

- A. Saul's dynasty will not continue - it ends with him
"You acted foolishly," Samuel said. "You have not kept the command the Lord your God gave you; if you had, he would have established your kingdom over Israel for all time. ¹⁴ But now your kingdom will not endure; the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the LORD's command." 1 Samuel 13:13-14
 1. Saul's dynasty would not endure - his sons will not rule
 2. Jonathan is the hero of chapter 14 - this is a loss!
- B. The men are exhausted because of Saul's compulsive, confused, foolish oath
Now the men of Israel were in distress that day, because Saul had bound the people under an oath, saying, "Cursed be any man who eats food before evening comes, before I have avenged myself on my enemies!" So none of the troops tasted food. 1Sa 14:24
- C. The famished men fall into sin because of Saul's compulsive, confused, foolish oath
That day, after the Israelites had struck down the Philistines from Micmash to Aijalon, they were exhausted. ³² They pounced on the plunder and, taking sheep, cattle and calves, they butchered them on the ground and ate them, together with the blood. ³³ Then someone said to Saul, "Look, the men are sinning against the Lord by eating meat that has blood in it." "You have broken faith," he said. 1 Samuel 14:31-33

D. Saul violates a solemn oath - that he never should have made!

Saul said, "May God deal with me, be it ever so severely, if you do not die, Jonathan." ⁴⁵ But the men said to Saul, "Should Jonathan die — he who has brought about this great deliverance in Israel? Never! As surely as the Lord lives, not a hair of his head will fall to the ground, for he did this today with God's help." So the men rescued Jonathan, and he was not put to death. 1 Samuel 14:44–45

E. Saul does not destroy the Philistines his whole reign
Then Saul stopped pursuing the Philistines, and they withdrew to their own land....⁵² All the days of Saul there was bitter war with the Philistines. 1 Sa14:46, 52

V. Applying the Word

- A. Am I compulsive and confused like Saul?
1. Do I find myself acting like Saul?
 2. Do I feel compelled to extra-biblical things?
 - a. This is a perennial struggle for all humans!
 - b. Like Micah 6:6-8 - we complicate the simple!
 - c. We feel compelled to all kinds of crazy things - and ignore what God has called us to
 3. Do I have naked faith in God's provision & promise?
 4. Do I try and earn atonement - Jewish article this week - forgive, other things for atonement - NO!!!!
 5. Do I realize that Jesus is enough?
 6. Look to Jesus - and rest in Him!

B. The Lord's table - our meal of rest & peace

1. Table points us to Jesus - and away from all else
2. Come feast today - and find rest & peace for your weary soul

A Compulsive and Confused King

1 Samuel 13:1-15
September 28, 2014
Communion
Deuteronomy 1:11

Teaching keywords: Biblical Characters; Anxiety and Worry; Fear; God's Will and Guidance; Legalism; Self-control; Testing and Trial

May the Lord, the God of your fathers, increase you a thousand times and bless you as he has promised! Deuteronomy 1:11

1 Saul was [thirty] years old when he became king, and he reigned over Israel [forty-] two years.

2 Saul chose three thousand men from Israel; two thousand were with him at Micmash and in the hill country of Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan at Gibeah in Benjamin. The rest of the men he sent back to their homes.

3 Jonathan attacked the Philistine outpost at Geba, and the Philistines heard about it. Then Saul had the trumpet blown throughout the land and said, "Let the Hebrews hear!" 4 So all Israel heard the news: "Saul has attacked the Philistine outpost, and now Israel has become a stench to the Philistines." And the people were summoned to join Saul at Gilgal.

5 The Philistines assembled to fight Israel, with three thousand chariots, six thousand charioteers, and soldiers as

numerous as the sand on the seashore. They went up and camped at Micmash, east of Beth Aven. 6 When the men of Israel saw that their situation was critical and that their army was hard pressed, they hid in caves and thickets, among the rocks, and in pits and cisterns.

7 Some Hebrews even crossed the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. Saul remained at Gilgal, and all the troops with him were quaking with fear. 8 He waited seven days, the time set by Samuel; but Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and Saul's men began to scatter. 9 So he said, "Bring me the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings." And Saul offered up the burnt offering. 10 Just as he finished making the offering, Samuel arrived, and Saul went out to greet him.

11 "What have you done?" asked Samuel. Saul replied, "When I saw that the men were scattering, and that you did not come at the set time, and that the Philistines were assembling at Micmash, 12 I thought, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the LORD's favor.' So I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering."

13 "You acted foolishly," Samuel said. "You have not kept the command the Lord your God gave you; if you had, he would have established your kingdom over Israel for all time. 14 But now your kingdom will not endure; the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the LORD's command."

15 Then Samuel left Gilgal and went up to Gibeah in Benjamin, and Saul counted the men who were with him.

They numbered about six hundred.

1 Samuel 13:1–15