

Theme: Saul fell because he did not really seek to know God and His will, preferring to attempt to manipulate God into blessing his own desires and actions.

I. The End of Saul's Story

- A. We are at the end of a 7 week study of Saul
- B. Saul started well - but he ends poorly
- C. How do we end with Saul's suicide, Israel shattered, David's lament?
- D. What do we learn from this? How does it point to Jesus?

II. David's Lament for Saul and Jonathan

- A. David laments over the loss of Saul and Jonathan
David took up this lament concerning Saul and his son Jonathan, ¹⁸ and ordered that the men of Judah be taught this lament of the bow (it is written in the Book of Jashar): ¹⁹ "Your glory, O Israel, lies slain on your heights. How the mighty have fallen! 2 Samuel 1:17–19
 1. David laments the death of Saul and Jonathan
 2. He loved Jonathan - and Saul!
 3. He does not rejoice - like the young Amalekite thought he would
 4. He orders everyone to learn this lament
 5. We should never rejoice over the fall of a brother - we should grieve
- B. The key refrain - how the mighty have fallen!
"Your glory, O Israel, lies slain on your heights. **How the mighty have fallen!...** ²⁵ **How the mighty have fallen** in

battle! Jonathan lies slain on your heights... ²⁷ **How the mighty have fallen!** The weapons of war have perished!" 2 Samuel 1:19, 25, 27

1. This refrain is repeated three times
2. It is at beginning and end - like bookends
3. He is lamenting the loss of Israel's mighty warriors
4. But Scripture intends it as a statement of HOW Saul fell as well
5. We lament that Saul fell - and we learn from his fall

III. How the Mighty Have Fallen

- A. The sad summary of Saul's reign
Saul died because he was unfaithful to the Lord; he did not keep the word of the Lord and even consulted a medium for guidance, ¹⁴ and did not inquire of the Lord. So the Lord put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse. 1 Chronicles 10:13–14
 1. Saul started so well - but the mighty have fallen!
 2. He fell because he was unfaithful to Yahweh
 - a. He did not obey the word of the Lord (but consulted a medium for guidance)
 - b. He did not really seek the Lord
- B. Saul did not keep the word of Yahweh
Saul died because he was unfaithful to the Lord; **he did not keep the word of the Lord** and even consulted a medium for guidance, ¹⁴ and did not inquire of the Lord. So the Lord put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse. 1 Chronicles 10:13–14

1. Saul had disobeyed God's command to wait (1 Sam 13-14)
2. Saul did not destroy the Amalekites (1 Samuel 15)
3. He did not respond to God's rebuke through the prophet (1 Samuel 15)
4. In fact, his pattern was to disobey the word of God
5. Rather than obeying the Word, he went to mediums
Saul died because he was unfaithful to the Lord; he did not keep the word of the Lord **and even consulted a medium for guidance**,¹⁴ and did not inquire of the Lord. So the Lord put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse. 1 Chronicles 10:13–14

a. This had been noted by Samuel regarding Saul
But Samuel replied: "Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in **obeying the voice of the Lord?** To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams.²³ **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

b. Isaiah notes the same problem and temptation
When men tell you to **consult mediums and spiritists**, who whisper and mutter, should not a people inquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living?²⁰ **To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn.** Isaiah 8:19–20

1. The people went mediums instead of the Word
2. Moses had warned about the same thing in Deut 8:10-18 - mediums forbidden - listen to prophets!
3. Rudyard Kipling En-Dor poem

Oh the road to En-dor is the oldest road
And the craziest road of all!
Straight it runs to the Witch's abode,
As it did in the days of Saul,
And nothing has changed of the sorrow in store
For such as go down on the road to En-dor!

4. This is clearly an ever present temptation - and Saul gave in!

6. The mighty fall - by not obeying God's Word

C. Saul did not really seek the Lord

Saul died because he was unfaithful to the Lord; he did not keep the word of the Lord and even consulted a medium for guidance,¹⁴ and **did not inquire of the Lord**. So the Lord put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse. 1 Chronicles 10:13–14

1. The Hebrew word for inquire - drsh - has the idea of seeking, especially for guidance
2. It is used for the word "guidance" at the end of v13
3. But didn't Saul try to seek God?
He inquired of the Lord, but the Lord did not answer him by dreams or Urim or prophets. 1 Samuel 28:6
 - a. Different word for 'inquire' here (same as 'consulted' a medium in 1 Chronicles 10), but still isn't this seeking the LORD?
 - b. He tried three legitimate means - dreams, urim and prophets - but no answer
 - c. So how can Chronicles say this? It knows this text!
4. Saul already had God's Word of guidance - and rejected it!
 - a. That is his pattern - he has rejected God's Word, and so God no longer speaks to him

- b. But he already has God's Word through the prophet Samuel said, "Why do you consult me, now that the Lord has turned away from you and become your enemy? ¹⁷ The Lord has done what he predicted through me. The Lord has torn the kingdom out of your hands and given it to one of your neighbors — to David. 1 Samuel 28:16–17
 - c. The problem was not that God had not spoken - it was that Saul did not like what He had spoken
 - d. Saul reinforces this by referring to Yahweh 7 times in his answer to Saul!
 - e. Like a child who goes to the other parent to get what they desire
5. When we don't like God's Word, we resort to other things to get guidance and approval
- a. Woman who told me dream showed her adultery and leaving her husband was God's will
 - b. And she had been an evangelical for years!!
 - c. We might not go to mediums - but we seek God's will in other ways than His Word - so we can hear what we want
6. The difference between witchcraft and worship
- a. Worship - we use God's appointed rituals to seek Him and conform ourselves to His will
 - b. Witchcraft - we use His rituals or others to seek to get God to approve of and conform to our will
 - c. This is the essence of the Game of Thrones - who rules?
 - d. This was what ensnared Saul - and it seeks to ensnare us!
7. The mighty fall - by refusing God's guidance through

His Word and seeking it elsewhere

IV. The Mighty Fall - But the Mightier Rise!

A. Saul's fall is great and tragic

1. Saul dies - and so does Jonathan, his heir
2. Saul is killed by a Philistine - and an Amalekite tries to take advantage
3. Saul and his sons die on the same day after losing to the philistines - like Eli and his sons
4. Saul has to resort to suicide - like Abimelech in Judges 9

B. God's redeeming grace has the final word

1. Saul's body is rescued by the men of Jabesh Gilead
2. Saul is lamented and included in the book of Jashar - the book of the upright
3. David is on the rise - and he is the anointed one!
 - a. He defeats the Amalekites and will crush Philistines
 - b. He delivers captives & gives gifts from his victories

C. Saul's kingship has failed - but Christ will come!

1. Saul's dynasty is ended - but the Son of David will come
2. Saul eats his last supper with a witch - but Christ has overcome and brings us to His Table
3. Saul did not deliver from the enemy - but Christ has conquered death and Satan for us!

4. Saul is dismembered in death - Christ has conquered death and is risen!
5. Saul the king is dead - but Christ the King lives forever!

V. Applying the Word

- A. Do I seek God's word and will - or my own way?
 1. What did Saul in - he wanted to win the GOT
 2. Do I see that worship can be an attempt to curry God's favor - to do my will?
 3. This is evident when I come to God in crisis - and not other times
 4. Do I see that trying to manipulate God through ritual is really witchcraft and not worship?
 5. where do I stand on this in my own life?
- B. Look to Christ - the Mighty King
 1. Christ the King rules over all - embrace Him today!
 - a. All other kings fail - just like Saul
 - b. Christ is the only way to God and to true life
 2. Believers - make sure you build well on foundation of Christ
 - a. Remember the warning of 1 Corinthians 3!
 - b. Real life is found by submitting to Christ and obeying His Word
 - c. Salvation is by faith alone - but we can waste our life
 - d. Don't escape as through flames

e. Don't have a sad lament like Saul - we want to run well, finish well

3. If your story has been like Saul's - look to Jesus!

C. Coming to the Table of worship

1. This simple Table - shows the power is in God
2. The power is not in the symbols - but God Himself
3. Come looking to Him - and giving yourself to Him Who was given for you

How the Mighty Have Fallen

1 Samuel 28-2 Samuel 1; 1 Chronicles 10 (1 Samuel 28:4-7; 1 Chronicles 10:13-14; 2 Samuel 1:17-27)

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Communion

Psalm 79:9

Teaching keywords: Biblical characters, worship, sin, anxiety and worry, God's will and guidance, suicide, grieving

May God our Savior help you, for the glory of His Name; may he deliver you and forgive your sins for His names sake. Psalm 79:9

4 The Philistines assembled and came and set up camp at Shunem, while Saul gathered all the Israelites and set up camp at Gilboa. 5 When Saul saw the Philistine army, he was afraid; terror filled his heart. 6 He inquired of the Lord, but the Lord did not answer him by dreams or Urim or prophets. 7 Saul then said to his attendants, “Find me a woman who is a medium, so I may go and inquire of her.” “There is one in Endor,” they said. 1 Samuel 28:4–7

13 Saul died because he was unfaithful to the Lord; he did not keep the word of the Lord and even consulted a medium for guidance, 14 and did not inquire of the Lord. So the Lord put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse. 1 Chronicles 10:13–14

17 David took up this lament concerning Saul and his son Jonathan, 18 and ordered that the men of Judah be taught this lament of the bow (it is written in the Book of Jashar): 19 “Your glory, O Israel, lies slain on your heights. How the mighty have fallen! 20 “Tell it not in Gath, proclaim it not in the streets of Ashkelon, lest the daughters of the Philistines be glad, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised rejoice. 21 “O mountains of Gilboa, may you have neither dew nor rain, nor fields that yield offerings [of grain]. For there the shield of the mighty was defiled, the shield of Saul — no longer rubbed with oil. 22 From the blood of the slain, from the flesh of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan did not turn back, the sword of Saul did not return unsatisfied. 23 “Saul and Jonathan — in life they were loved and gracious, and in death they were not parted. They were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. 24 “O daughters of Israel, weep for Saul, who clothed you in scarlet and finery, who adorned your garments with ornaments of gold. 25 “How the mighty have fallen in battle! Jonathan lies slain on your heights. 26 I grieve for you, Jonathan my brother; you were very dear to me. Your love for me was wonderful, more wonderful than that of women. 27 “How the mighty have fallen! The weapons of war have perished!” 2 Samuel 1:17–27