

## Flawed Leadership – We want a King!

### I Samuel 8

1. The nation of Israel requests a King. What is the irony in this request? (I Sam 2:27-29, 3:13, 19-20; I Sam 8:1-3)
2. Why did God say that with the request of a King the people had rejected him? (Ex 15:18, I Sam 12:12)
3. Compare God's expectations of a King (Deut 17:18, 19) with the expectations of the Israelites (I Sam 8:20) of a King.
4. The Israelite people were in a continual struggle against the surrounding nations. Their request showed a lack of confidence in God as he was the one to deliver them in the past (Ps 44:4-8). What are some of the people/things/means you use to deal with life's challenges rather than trusting God?
5. Up until this point in history each family was autonomous, with no conscription or taxation. Samuel warns the Israelites of the demands of a King (I Sam 8:11-18). How often is the word 'take' used?
6. Give some examples of how the things that rule our lives in place of God drain us with demands?
7. What was the real reason for the request of a King? (I Sam 8:21) Why is this a problem for Israel and ourselves? (Rom 12:2)

### Pray Together

Support each other in prayer in areas of your life you are learning to trust God fully in.

# Flawed Leadership – A Good Shepherd?

I Samuel 9:1 – 10:16

## Qualities of a good leader

1. What do we learn about Saul that might look like good credentials to be a King? (9: 1-2)
2. Compare Saul and his servant as shepherds looking for the donkeys. What do we learn about Saul's character? (9:3-13, 18)
3. What credentials should we be looking for in Christian Leaders? (1 Tim 3:1-12)
4. Our society claims that a leader's personal life is separate from their work/political role and should not exclude someone from leadership. Yet, society is not consistent and at times is critical of leaders for their stance on issues important in today's world. To what extent should character impact our choice of secular leaders?

## Call to leadership

*I am satisfied that when the Almighty wants me to do, or not to do, a particular thing, he finds a way of letting me know it. (Abraham Lincoln)*

5. Saul was undertaking an ordinary task of searching for lost donkeys when he met Samuel and his life was turned around. Who initiated his call to be King of Israel? (9:15-16)
6. Saul had clear validation of his call to kingship (10:5-13). Mostly when God asks us to commit to a role or task it is within a local context such as our family or church. While we cannot always expect such dramatic confirmation as Saul received to his call to kingship, Christians have often felt God's hand in their decisions. Share some experiences of how you have come to the realization that a particular role or task is what God wants for you.
7. During Samuel's lifetime the Israelites were at war with the Philistines (1 Sam 7:13-14). Yet we see them encroaching on Israelite territory again (10:5). What did God intend Saul would find to do? (9:16; 10:7) Note, there was a Philistine garrison stationed at Gibeah where Saul was to go. Initially, what did Saul do? (10:14-16) Ultimately, who did achieve God's purpose of delivery from the Philistines? (1 Sam 17:50-52)
8. We too, can have reservations concerning a role God asks of us or we may fail to act on what he is calling us to do. Think of some of the Bible characters such as Moses, David, Jonah, Peter who all failed in some way. What encourages you as you reflect on God's grace in their lives?

## Pray Together

What are the current opportunities you have to serve God? Pray 2 Thess 2:16-17 for each other.

Pray for each other to grow in godly character for whatever sphere of leadership God has placed you in.

## Flawed Leadership – A False Start

I Samuel 10:17-11:15

### Saul, a reluctant start (10:17-27)

1. The Israelites used lots to find out God's will or choice in a matter. Why might Samuel have used this with the people even though God had already told him Saul was his choice of King (I Sam (:17)?
2. Despite expecting the moment of his presentation as King before the people Saul had not prepared himself and was reluctant to step up to what God wants for him. What are some of the reasons we shy away from roles and tasks that God might have chosen for us?
3. The people wanted a King like the nations around them. How would God's chosen king be different to those of other nations? (see v25; Deut 17:14-20) What principles apply to Christian leaders today?

### Saul transformed (11:1-25)

4. Nahash, the leader of Israel's enemies was feeling so confident he made unreasonable demands of the Israelites and even allowed them time to call for rescue. In today's world there are leaders, people of influence and voices who feel so confident in their opinions the church is made out to be the 'bad guys' no-one should trust. Can you name some issues and incidents where this is the case?
5. What confidence can we have as Christians in a world where the truth is not accepted and Christians are not trusted? (See I Cor 1: 18-25)
6. V6 Saul was filled with the Spirit of God. In what way does this transform Saul as leader?
7. In v12-13 we see Saul's character in a positive light. How does the Holy Spirit prepare and empower us for service? (See 1 Cor 4-7; 2 Thess 1:11-12)
8. In our own strength and wisdom we often fail. How can we serve effectively despite our own weakness? (See 2 Cor 4:7; 2 Cor 12:9-10)

### Pray Together

Pray 2 Thess 1:11-12 for each other in whatever God roles God has given you.

## Flawed Leadership – The king disobeys the King

### I Samuel 13:1-15

1. Saul's role description can be found in Deuteronomy 17:14 – 20. What is his top priority to be (see Deut 17:18-20)?
2. How did Saul rate in fulfilling this priority? (1 Sam 13: 8-13)
3. The Israelites wanted a King to lead them into battle (1 Sam 8: 19-20). Who had defeated Israel's enemies and given them their land? (See Deut 17:14; I Sam 11: 13)
4. Compare the size of Saul's army with that of the Philistines. (I Sam 13: 2, 5). Why should this not have been a problem (See Ps 20:7; Ps 21: 1, 7). Instead, what happened? (I Sam 13:6-7)
5. Think of some modern day equivalent situations where the task ahead seemed overwhelming and impossible. What are some common responses?
6. None of Israel's Kings were able to fulfil the expectations God had of a king. In what way did Jesus fulfil the role of perfect King? (See Is 9: 7; Jn 15:10; Phil 2: 6-8)
7. As Christians, we too are urged to trust and obey God (Jn 14:1; Jn 15:10). The reality is that we, like Saul, often fail. How might you appropriate I Pet 1:3-4 as you seek to live out the Christian life?

### Pray Together

Pray for each other as you seek to live your life under Jesus' rule, trusting and obeying God in whatever is coming up for you this week.