

Whose Kingdom Is It Anyway? The Kingdom of Saul and the Kingdom of Jesus

TYPOLOGICALLY

Saul's Kingdom = the Kingdoms of the World

David's Kingdom = Jesus' Kingdom NOW

Solomon's Kingdom = Jesus' Kingdom NOT YET

BUT

Saul's story is also a warning to us of how we can lose our grip on the Kingdom of Jesus!
1 Samuel 8-31

1 Sam 8 – Israel Demands a King

- Samuel's prophetic leadership was waning
- "We want to be like the other nations"
- Rejecting Samuel was rejecting prophetic leadership which was rejecting God from the socio-political structures
- NB God said **listen** to the people but **warn** them
- Warning, a king will:
 - o Protect/promote himself with your sons
 - o Make them into his army
 - o Make them his servants
 - o Build his house with your daughters
 - o Take your wealth and land
 - o Take your future
 - o Take those who work for you – business
- Nevertheless, we want a king who will *judge us; go before us; fight our battles*
- **Israel asking for a King represented a rejection of FAITH and PROPHETIC LEADERSHIP in favour of the FLESH (human might and wisdom) and MILITARY POWER**
- Which way sounds more like the Kingdom of Jesus?

12 Times “KINGDOM” in Saul’s Story

1. **1 Sam 10:1 & 14-16 (10:16)** Saul carried the kingdom in his heart
2. **1 Sam 10:17-18 (10:18)** The kingdoms that oppress
3. **1 Sam 10:25-27 (10:25)** Samuel sets out the kingdom distinctives
4. **1 Sam 11:11-15 (11:14)** An invitation to the rebellious to join the kingdom
5. **1 Sam 13:5-13 (13:13) The kingdom forfeited**
6. **1 Sam 13:14 (13:14)** “Saul’s kingdom” will not endure
7. **1 Sam 14:47-48 (14:47)** A kingdom struggling
8. **1 Sam 15:17-28 (15:28)** Saul rejected as king
 - Philippians 2:5-11 Contrast King Jesus
 - *harpagmon* = grabbing and taking
9. **1 Sam 18:6-9 (18:8)** Saul’s fear of losing the kingdom to David
 - Philippians 2:5-11 Contrast King Jesus
 - *harpagmon* = clinging and hanging on
10. **1 Sam 20:30-31 (20:31)** Saul is going to take the kingdom by force
 - Philippians 2:5-11 Contrast King Jesus
 - *harpagmon* = snatching and robbery
11. **1 Sam 24:8-20 (24:20)** Saul acknowledges the true king
1 Sam 25 – Samuel dies – end of Saul’s reign beginning of David’s
12. **1 Sam 28:13-19 (28:17)** The ghost Samuel repeats God’s original word: the kingdom is lost to Saul

Saul's kingdom as a picture of the world's kingdoms

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|---|-------------------------------|
| - Based on a desire to be like the world (1 Sam 8:4) | John 17:14-16;
1 John 2:15 |
| - Determined by human wisdom rather than Godly wisdom through prophets (1 Sam 8:7) | Mark 6:2; James 3:15-17 |
| - Built on outward appearances (1 Sam 9:2) | Isaiah 53:2-3 |
| - Relied on his own ability and leadership, not God's (1 Sam 13:9) | John 5:19 |
| - Tried to invoke spiritual power to serve his objectives (1 Sam 14:18, 24, 35, 39) | Luke 9:55; Matt 7:21-23 |
| - Served himself (1 Sam 15:9) | John 6:26&66 |
| - Valued popularity over what is right (1 Sam 15:24) | Matt 20:28 |
| - Clung to power at all costs (1 Sam 15:27) | Matt 26:55 |
| - Fell into the paranoia of power (1 Sam 18:10-16) | Luke 22:31-34 |
| - Used brutality and cruelty to gain loyalty (1 Sam 22:11-18) | John 18:36 |

CONTRAST JESUS

Saul's kingdom as a picture of losing grip on Jesus' kingdom:

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|--|-----------------------|
| - A king NOT God's ideal but he responded to the people (1 Sam 8:9) | Mark 7:24-30 |
| - Saul a devoted and dutiful son, humble and spiritual good attributes (1 Sam 9) | Matt 3:17; Matt 26:39 |
| - Saul was clearly God's choice (1 Sam 9:15-17) | Luke 9:35 |
| - The prophetic was still driving things at the start (1 Sam 10) | Luke 6:12 |
| - The Spirit empowered him (1 Sam 11:6) | Luke 4:18 |
| - Saul wasn't vengeful, he gave glory to God (1 Sam 11:13) | Mark 9:38-40 |
| - The people and Samuel carried responsibility for the success or failure of the king (1 Sam 12:14, 15 & 23) | Matt 26:39-41 |
| - Starts in faith but gives way to fear, impatience, uncertainty | John 11:6 |

COMPARE JESUS

Saul's Character Pitfalls:

CONTRAST JESUS

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|---|------------------|
| - Wanting the world's adulation/appreciation
(1 Sam 15:24) | Mark 15:6-15 |
| - Hiding stuff but not dealing with it (1 Sam 10:27) | Mark 14:32-36 |
| - Insecurity (1 Sam 10:21) | John 13:1-4 |
| - Fear (1 Sam 18:12) | John 19:10-11 |
| - Rejection (1 Sam 15:26) | John 1:11-12 |
| - Needing other people's authentication
(Samuel, Jonathan, David, other mighty men)
(1 Sam 14:52) | Matt 11:19 |
| - Feeling unrecognized/unappreciated (1 Sam 18:8) | Matt 13:57 |
| - Resentment and anger (1 Sam 18:8) | Luke 23:34 |
| - Jealousy (1 Sam 18:8) | John 14:12 |
| - Suspicion and paranoia (1 Sam 18:9) | John 2:25 |
| - <i>"David my son..." (1 Sam 24:16)</i> | <i>Luke 6:45</i> |

Conclusions from Saul's Kingdom

- **God's Kingdom operates by**
 - Faith
 - The prophetic (Holy Spirit)
 - People taking responsibility (not just leaving it to the leaders)
 - Prayer

- **Is it possible for us to pursue a worldly version of Jesus' Kingdom?**
Danger of demonic pollution

- **Is it possible for us to pursue a failing version of Jesus' Kingdom?**
Start by faith then fall into fear

- **What can we learn from Saul about engaging with our society and politics?**
Salt & Light