

## **I Samuel – Lessons from three disobedient groups**

**3-28-2021**

In nearly every engineering firm and agency I worked for, each has a database called “lessons learned” database or something similar. Those databases contain mistakes or accidents and the corresponding corrective actions that one made in the past including those mistakes I made. Each member in the company can study it, before or during a project, to watch for potential pitfalls. In a similar way in our spiritual walks, we can learn from mistakes others made as well as mistakes one made himself. I keep a simple log of my past spiritual blessings and failures also. The book I Samuel has examples of many mistakes the people made which were mainly disobedient to God. We can learn to avoid making the same mistakes.

Book of I Samuel and II Samuel were used to be one book. The translators of the Septuagint separated them and that separation remains today. The events of I Samuel cover approximately 100 years, from about 1100 B.C. to 1000 B.C. The time span of II Samuel is about 40 years. Thus, the writing should be after 960 B.C. I Samuel is about the Israelites in Canaan as they moved from the rule of judges to a unified nation under kings. Samuel was the last judge and he (with God’s approval) anointed king Saul and later David. The book is divided into 4 main sections: God raised up Samuel as prophet and judge, Israel demanded a king and Saul was the first king, God raised up David to be the king, and Saul hunt for David out of jealousy. Lessons from the three disobedient groups from I Samuel:

### **1) Disobediences of the Israelites**

The Israelites were worshiping foreign gods (I Sam. 7:3-4). Today, we can put material wealth, fame or anything else but God as our top priority. This is equivalent to worship foreign God.

Samuel’s sons were disobedient to God. They turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice (I Sam. 8:3). Some Israelites of position at that time had similar sins like giving and accepting bribes and perverted justice.

Another problem with the Israelites was they want a king like the other countries which was not God’s intent. They rejected God as their king (I Sam. 8:7). In today’s society, it can be easy for one to look at non-Christians’ life styles

or values, and start following them. It is very important for each of us today to follow God's heart.

## **2) Disobedience of the Philistines**

The Philistines attacked God's people. The Philistines even captured the Ark (I Samuel Chapter 4). They misused the Ark because they had the wrong idea of it. As we can see in I Samuel chapter 5, the Philistines were badly hurt.

We know we should not attack or hurt God's people. Sometimes we still do hurt our Christian brothers and sisters. Church internal conflicts sometimes can lead to serious emotional attack and hurt. We need to be careful on our actions.

The Israelites were not much better than Philistines. They did not take the ark to the tabernacle but instead placed it into the house of Abinadab. Some also worshiped foreign gods as I mentioned earlier (I Samuel chapter 7). Samuel reminded people that repentance needs to start from the heart first, and then action to show it (got rid of foreign gods) as stated in I Sam. 7:3.

## **3) Disobediences of King Saul**

There were three main areas where King Saul had disobedience.

The first one occurred in Saul's early stage of being a king. Samuel was sent by the Lord to anoint Saul as king. Saul as a king should be responsible to keep the commands of God. He did not completely destroy the Amalekites (I Sam. 15) as God commanded. It is important to remember obedience is what the Lord want as stated in I Sam. 15:22 "To obey is better than sacrifice".

Then later in Saul's governance, the people started to notice David and gave praises to David for his fighting victory. Saul began jealous of David and plotted to kill him. Saul wasted most of his time on chasing David instead of building up God's people and the country. Jealousy is a very dangerous sin. It can totally take over one's emotion and thinking.

King Saul at the end of his governance was fighting against the Philistines. The Philistines had a huge battle against the Israelites. King Saul was desperate. He consulted a medium and tried to raise Samuel's spirit. This kind of satanic activity angered God (I Sam. 28). King Saul died at the end.

In summary, there are many forms of disobedience to God. We often encounter similar temptations such as worship idols, injustice, hurt others, jealousy, and not doing what God has commanded. We need to pay attention at all time. A log of past failures and consequences can remind us not to repeat the same mistakes again.