

## **Saul, The King who Fell From Grace – Wednesday, March 4, 2009**

By Pastor Vern Oestmann

In our continuing review of the kings of Israel during our Lenten series, we come to King Saul, the first king of Israel.

If you remember, the children of Israel were under the rule of Judges appointed by God. However, when Samuel, God's prophets, appointed his own two sons to be judges, they were evil. This caused great distress for the children of Israel. They began to continuously ask Samuel for a king to rule them. Samuel became angry at their request because God was their king, but the children of Israel wanted to be like the other nations around them and have a king like them. God told Samuel, "My people have not rejected you, Samuel. They have rejected me." God provided the children of Israel with a king.

Saul was chosen because he was an impressive young man without equal among the Israelites—a head taller than any of the others. He was from the tribe of Benjamin, the smallest tribe of the twelve tribes.

One day God told Saul to conquer the people of Amalek and not let anyone live. Saul disobeyed God and allowed the king of Amalek to live. Saul ordered that all the possessions and animals be taken for a sacrifice to God for the victory, which was also against God's command.

Samuel, the prophet of God, was the only one allowed to make sacrifices unto God. Saul had asked for Samuel to come, but Samuel was delayed. Saul proceeded to offer the sacrifice up to God, therefore disobeying God again. When Samuel arrived, he told Saul, "God requires obedience, not sacrifices." From that day on, Saul no longer did anything that was right in the sight of God. Eventually, Saul took his own life.

I tell you this account that you can read in 1 Samuel 8-16, because it is to remind us that God requires from us to be obedient to His Word. Oftentimes we do not listen to God's Word and we are disobedient. Sometimes, we think we can take matters into our own hands, like Saul did, and determine what we think is right in the sight of God. However, we still disobey God.

The old nursery rhyme of Humpty Dumpty reminds us of our great fall. Remember the words:

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall; Humpty Dumpty had a great fall. All the king's horses and all the king's men; could not put Humpty Dumpty together again.

King Saul was like Humpty Dumpty. His disobedience caused him to have a great fall. No matter what King Saul tried to do or even others around him tried to do to make things right before God, they were not able to put King Saul back into the right relationship with God.

The same would be true for us. We disobey God every day. We live life thinking that we can do what we think is right and good, when at times it may be against God's commands. Thus, we, too, have a great fall. We would be lost, no matter how hard we try to make things right on our own, if it were not for God's love for us. When God sent his Son, Jesus, into this world because he loved us, he did so to mend our brokenness and restore our broken relationship with God back into the right relationship with him. Through the cross and empty tomb God accomplished this. It is available to all who believe in Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

Unlike the first nursery rhyme of Humpty Dumpty, because of Christ we have a new version.

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall, Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.

Humpty Dumpty shouted, "Amen! God can put me together again."

God indeed puts us together again because of what he has done for us through Jesus Christ. When we come before God and confess our sin, God is faithful and just and forgives all our sin. That's worth an "Amen!" The word "Amen" literally mean "So Shall it be." Saying Amen is saying that what God promises he accomplishes and we are recipients of his grace and mercy and love.

Tonight, you might be facing a time in your life where you feel like Humpty Dumpty. There may have been a great fall in your life and you are thinking that I can never be put back together again. I want to assure you that God wants you to know his love for you. He wants to put you back together again and make you whole. He is inviting you to come to him with all the things that have caused brokenness in your life and to lay it at the cross. When you come to the cross of Jesus, look up and see his face looking down upon you and the blood flowing down from the crown of thorns he wears on your behalf. He comes to you tonight to say, "My son, my daughter, I forgive you. I'm here to restore you and to make you whole again." As you confess your sin and receive his forgiveness, lift up your heads and say "Amen." God has put you together again!

God's peace be with you now and always!

Amen.