

Saul's victory over the Ammonites & leader Nahash established him as a leader in the eyes of the people. Saul is coroneted immediately after. Do-nothing leader is no leader. Whenever you are able to bring a sense of security and peace to those threatened by an enemy people will follow you & look to you for leadership. But that's only the first stage of leadership, what happens afterwards proves if you are God's leader or not.

1 Saul was forty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty-two years over Israel. 2 Now Saul chose for himself 3,000 men of Israel, of which 2,000 were with Saul in Michmash and in the hill country of Bethel, while 1,000 were with Jonathan at Gibeah of Benjamin. But he sent away the rest of the people, each to his tent.

Forty in scripture is referred to as a young man (of course they lived 175). He now recruits a standing army of 3000. 2K for Saul & 1K for Jonathan about 15 mi apart. Saul reigns 40 years Acts 13:21

Henry Morris Contrast Acts 13:21 which indicates that Saul reigned forty years. Actually the Hebrew text in this verse is defective, possibly because of some ancient copyist error. The Septuagint omits it altogether. The fact is, however, that the actual numbers are unknown, so the best chronology for this period must come from Paul's summary in Acts 13:21

3 And Jonathan smote the garrison of the Philistines that was in Geba, and the Philistines heard of it. Then Saul blew the trumpet throughout the land, saying, "Let the Hebrews hear." 4 And all Israel heard the news that Saul had smitten the garrison of the Philistines, and also that Israel had become odious to the Philistines. The people were then summoned to Saul at Gilgal.

Who a person really is will eventually come out in life. Jon does battle, Saul takes credit. In government, corporate world, egotistical world we want the credit-being on top is recognition-ego. Good reason trans men in women's sports--mediocre competing w/ men but honors competing w/ women. a need for notoriety no matter what the cost—even shame & humiliation.

Jon provoked Philistines to war. Saul signals, *trumpet*, his men to war. He calls the people of Israel 'Hebrews'. Why? It is how Israel's enemies spoke of them. How he really saw them? Ambition doesn't care about people only self-image—people are the means of achieving goals, status.

Odious stinks – Pick a fight—Saul likely told Jon to smite, easy to pick a fight but no guarantee how it will turn out. One thing it does prove....who you really are...do you know what you're doing...are you a real leader or a want-a-be leader. Character comes out in times of crisis. Talk is cheap, actions are everything.

5 Now the Philistines assembled to fight with Israel, 30,000 chariots and 6,000 horsemen, and people like the sand which is on the seashore in abundance; and they came up and camped in Michmash, east of Beth-aven.

God puts us in circumstances to show what's in us...faith or fear, prayer of panic, God leading or man. God test w/ overwhelming situations to find out where we will turn...God already knows but we don't. Peoples' perspective of what they wanted in a king, their own choice was one who looked like a king. They will discover, looks aren't everything...that he doesn't have the heart of a king. In the natural (*like sand on seashore*) Jews have lost before the battle begins. Only option is God's help, He has them just where He wants them.

6 When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait (for the people were hard-pressed), then the people hid themselves in caves, in thickets, in cliffs, in cellars, and in pits. 7 Also some of the Hebrews crossed the Jordan into the land of Gad and Gilead. But as for Saul, he was still in Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling.

As is the leader so goes the people he leads. Saul doesn't inspire faith & courage in the people. Instead they hide out & run, crossing the Jordan the opposite way they came in when conquering the land. Those that stuck w/ Saul followed trembling or terrified, paralyzed w/ fear.

Those who lead should have more vision & faith than their followers. Leaders are a source of stability & security to those weaker in faith. People can read a face of fear and a face of faith. Apparently people were reading obvious signs that Saul had no faith & they were reacting.

Michmash where Philistines gathered less than 20 miles from Gilgal

8 Now he waited seven days, according to the appointed time set by Samuel, but Samuel did not come to Gilgal; and the people were scattering from him. 9 So Saul said, "Bring to me the burnt offering and the peace offerings." And he offered the burnt offering. 10 And it came about as soon as he finished offering the burnt offering, that behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him *and* to greet him.

What a leader does under pressure tells you what kind of leader they are—Panic or patient; worried or waiting; taking matters into own hands or allow hand of Lord to work. God tests us so He can use us to do His work not our own. *Faithful in a little, give charge over much.* Are we accountable to God's word or not? Do we do what we want, disregarding integrity of God.

11 But Samuel said, "What have you done?" And Saul said, "Because I saw that the people were scattering from me, and that you did not come within the appointed days, and that the Philistines were assembling at Michmash, 12 therefore I said, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not asked the favor of the LORD.' So I forced myself and offered the burnt offering." 13 And Samuel said to Saul, "You have acted foolishly; you have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, for now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. 14 "But now your kingdom shall not endure. The LORD has sought out for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has appointed him as ruler over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you."

He makes excuses for disobedience—small things are big things to God.

Chuck cigarette butts. Close to end of 7th day 10:8 & Sam not come yet.

Crisis of people scattering. Take action? Should he violate God's word?

Saul intrudes on office of Priest & offers a sacrifice. Immediately after Sam

shows up. Saul knew he was guilty or wouldn't make so many excuses. Saul not priest or prophet yet did it anyway. Blames & uses God as excuse 'can't go to battle w/o seeking God first'

"Never did any true piety arise out of man's brain; if it does not flow from heaven it is odious to heaven". The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination in the sight of the Lord. Saul played the fool & lost his calling. *30 minutes of unchecked sin can lead to 30 years of regret.* We only see the outward acts of a person God sees the attitude of the heart.

Saul is saying circumstances made me do it. People made me do it they were scattering. You Samuel made me do it because you were late & didn't come. Enemy made me disobey because they were threatening—Blame game so I'm not responsible.

If you don't know you've done wrong God will not impute it to you but if you do know then you are guilty & need to repent, change directions, head back to God. *If there is no law sin cannot be imputed.* No speed limit. Excessive speed? Destricted areas of German autobahn no limit

Saul uses God as an excuse—I had to go to God & get his approval. I forced myself against what I knew I was supposed to do. Saul played the fool flushed his calling down the toilet and lost the kingdom over a few short hours

15 Then Samuel arose and went up from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin. And Saul numbered the people who were present with him, about six hundred men. 16 Now Saul and his son Jonathan and the people who were present with them were staying in Geba of Benjamin while the Philistines camped at Michmash. 17 And the raiders came from the camp of the Philistines in three companies: one company turned toward Ophrah, to the land of Shual, 18 and another company turned toward Beth-horon, and another company turned toward the border which overlooks the valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness.

Philistines, raiders KJ 'spoilers' *Is 42:24 Who gave Jacob up for spoil, and Israel to plunderers? Was it not the LORD, against whom we have sinned, And in whose ways they were not willing to walk, And whose law they did not obey?* 3 companies to plunder & terrorize lands Israel conquered. Enemy in our life in 3 companies world, flesh, devil to terrorize and spoil.

19 Now no blacksmith could be found in all the land of Israel, for the Philistines said, "Lest the Hebrews make swords or spears." 20 So all Israel went down to the Philistines, each to sharpen his plowshare, his mattock, his axe, and his hoe. 21 And the charge was two-thirds of a shekel for the plowshares, the mattocks, the forks, and the axes, and to fix the hoes. 22 So it came about on the day of battle that neither sword nor spear was found in the hands of any of the people who were with Saul and Jonathan, but they were found with Saul and his son Jonathan. 23 And the garrison of the Philistines went out to the pass of Michmash.

Israel is outmatched--their fighting weapons are garden tools, slings (not close quarters), staff, clubs, only Saul and Jon had sword, spear.

Wise move for Philistines to keep iron works away to keep in subjection, not able make weaponry. Tyranny happens when there are no weapons to fight with (2nd Amm. Bill rights). Gods' strategy is that Israel is now in place of total dependence on God.

Saul at the start of his reign left the people vulnerable to their enemy--army is w/o weapons to fight & w/o God....scenario where people waiting to be conquered. Remember Saul had fought & conquered Nahash, Ammonites but neglected to take spoils of victory & weapons of defeated enemy to arm his men. People w/o weapons to protect their freedom are vulnerable to dictatorship.

Little sins result in big consequences—they wanted status of a king like other nations ended up dependant on enemy to sharpen garden tools in order to till the soil to eat.