

"LEARNING FROM FAILURE"

PSALM 32

This morning we need to soberly look at a story of two men.

Men who towered over their generations.

Men who held the highest offices to be had on earth.

Yet from their privileged position one is elevated to heavenly proportions and the other slips hellishly down.

One started a royal line that shall never end. Even to this day his name is spoken and sung with the joys of heaven. The other ended his miserable earthly life apostate, hardened and distant from God. Blinded by bitterness, driven by pride, shackled by fear he spends his last supper with a witch at Satan's side, dines on an ox roasting by a fire that would soon roast his tormented soul.

Yes, King Saul and King David are a striking contrast in so many ways.

The Life of David	The Life of Saul
<p>GOD PICKED DAVID: 2 Samuel 7:8 "Now therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts: "I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people, over Israel.</p>	<p>PEOPLE PICKED SAUL: 1 Samuel 10:23-24 So they ran and brought him from there; and when he stood among the people, he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward.24 And Samuel said to all the people, "Do you see him whom the Lord has chosen, that there is no one like him among all the people?" So all the people shouted and said, "Long live the king!" NKJV</p>
<p>DAVID FOLLOWED GOD'S PRAISES: Acts 13:22 "And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.' NKJV</p>	<p>SAUL FOLLOWED PEOPLES PRAISES 1 Samuel 18:6-8 Now it had happened as they were coming home, when David was returning from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women had come out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy, and with musical instruments.7 So the women sang as they danced, and said: "Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands." 8 Then Saul was very angry, and the saying displeased him; and</p>

	<p>he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed only thousands. Now what more can he have but the kingdom?" NKJV</p>
<p>DAVID'S KINGDOM WAS IMMORTALIZED THROUGH CHRIST: 2 Samuel 7:29 "Now therefore, let it please You to bless the house of Your servant, that it may continue forever before You; for You, O Lord God, have spoken it, and with Your blessing let the house of Your servant be blessed forever." NKJV</p>	<p>SAUL'S KINGDOM WAS DEMONIZED AT HIS OWN HANDS: 1 Samuel 15:23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He also has rejected you from being king." NKJV</p>
<p>DAVID WAS KIND AND GIVING: 1 Chronicles 19:2 Then David said, "I will show kindness to Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father showed kindness to me." So David sent messengers to comfort him concerning his father. And David's servants came to Hanun in the land of the people of Ammon to comfort him. NKJV</p>	<p>SAUL WAS CRUEL AND SELFISH: 1 Samuel 20:30-34 Then Saul's anger was aroused against Jonathan, and he said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious woman! 33 Then Saul cast a spear at him to kill him, by which Jonathan knew that it was determined by his father to kill David. 34 So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and ate no food the second day of the month, for he was grieved for David, because his father had treated him shamefully. NKJV</p>
<p>DAVID WAS FORGIVING: 1 Samuel 26:24 "And indeed, as your life was valued much this day in my eyes, so let my life be valued much in the eyes of the Lord, and let Him deliver me out of all tribulation." NKJV</p>	<p>SAUL WAS BITTER: 1 Samuel 18:9 So Saul eyed David from that day forward. NKJV</p>
<p>DAVID ACCUSED HIMSELF: 2 Samuel 12:13 So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." And Nathan said to David, "The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die. NKJV</p>	<p>SAUL EXCUSED HIMSELF: 1 Samuel 15:21 "But the people took of the plunder, sheep and oxen, the best of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice to the Lord your God in Gilgal." NKJV</p>
<p>DAVID WAS FULL OF BOLDNESS: 1 Chronicles 18:1-2 After this it came to pass that David attacked the Philistines, subdued them, and took Gath and its towns from the hand of the Philistines. 2 Then he defeated Moab, and the Moabites became David's servants, and brought tribute. NKJV</p>	<p>SAUL WAS FULL OF FEAR: 1 Samuel 17:11 When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid. NKJV</p>
<p>DAVID WAS AT PEACE WITH GOD: Psalm 4:8 I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; For You alone, O Lord, make</p>	<p>SAUL WAS AT WAR WITH GOD: 1 Samuel 16:14 But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and a distressing spirit</p>

King Saul was a colossal misfit because he refused to learn God's way to deal with sin. He was a prince of a man and a demon of a man. He was a study in paradoxes. Saul was a total contradiction in God's sight:

- From man's perspective he was tall but, in God's sight he was very short of God's plan;
- Humanly speaking he was quite handsome outwardly, but when his heart was exposed as the Lord sees, he had an ugly heart of sin.
- His body was physically strong but within that body was incredible spiritual weakness.
- As king he was among the richest people of Israel, but his real condition was utter spiritual bankruptcy.
- Saul look healthy on the outside but the cancer of sin was rotting him internally.
- God says who we really are spiritually is far more crucial than what we look like on the outside!

SAUL'S TRAIL OF DAMNING DISOBEDIENCE:

- SAUL WAS PRESUMPTUOUS WITH GOD'S GRACE. He intrudes into office of priest 1 Sam 13:8-10.
- SAUL WAS IMPATIENT WITH GOD'S TIMING. There he was alone, his military resources running out, Saul only saw the ritual as important and not the faith that prompts obedience 1 Samuel 13:11-12. To offer sacrifices was not legal for Saul:
- GOD HAD A CHOSEN TIME: 1 Samuel 10:8 "You shall go down before me to Gilgal; and surely I will come down to you to offer burnt offerings and make sacrifices of peace offerings. Seven days you shall wait, till I come to you and show you what you should do." NKJV The crisis of the moment revealed what Saul was really like on the inside. It revealed his character. His character was one that disobeyed God in the crisis. He was his own boss, the Lord had not become his Master. His goals were more important than the Lord's. His reputation was more important than God's.
- GOD HAD A CHOSEN PLACE Deuteronomy 12:13 "Take heed to yourself that you do not offer your burnt offerings in every place that you see; 14 "but in the place which the Lord chooses, in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I command you. NKJV
- GOD DEMANDS OBEDIENCE: Saul had plenty of excuses but Samuel gets to the heart of the problem as he says, 1 Samuel 13:13 And Samuel said to Saul, "You have done 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. NKJV
- SAUL WAS CARELESS WITH GOD'S TRUTH. HE HAD GOD'S WORDS (he had prophesied under the power of God's Spirit in (1 Samuel 10: ; 19:20) BUT NOT HIS THOUGHTS. Because of this he took everything as a sign for what he had planned to do. He thought (23:7) God had delivered David into his murderous hands. When you are out of touch with the Lord only confusion follows.
- SAUL WAS LACKING GENUINE LOVE. He seeks to kill his own son, Jonathan (14)
- SAUL WAS DEVOID OF A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD. Saul was false.
- HIS OBEDIENCE TO GOD WAS FALSE. 1 Samuel 15:8 He also took Agag king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.9

But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were unwilling to utterly destroy them. But everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed. NKJV

- HIS MERCY FOR GOD WAS FALSE. He had compassion on God's enemies (Agag) instead of God's friends (David) 1 Samuel 15:9 But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were unwilling to utterly destroy them. But everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed. NKJV
- HIS ANSWER BEFORE GOD WAS FALSE. He spoke to the Lord's prophet untruthfully. First Samuel 15:13-20 Then Samuel went to Saul, and Saul said to him, "Blessed are you of the Lord! I have performed the commandment of the Lord."¹⁴ But Samuel said, "What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?"¹⁵ And Saul said, "They have brought them from the Amalekites; for the people spared the best of the sheep and the oxen, to sacrifice to the Lord your God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed."¹⁶ Then Samuel said to Saul, "Be quiet! And I will tell you what the Lord said to me last night." And he said to him, "Speak on."¹⁷ So Samuel said, "When you were little in your own eyes, were you not head of the tribes of Israel? And did not the Lord anoint you king over Israel?"¹⁸ "Now the Lord sent you on a mission, and said, 'Go, and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.'¹⁹ "Why then did you not obey the voice of the Lord? Why did you swoop down on the spoil, and do evil in the sight of the Lord?"²⁰ And Saul said to Samuel, "But I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and gone on the mission on which the Lord sent me, and brought back Agag king of Amalek; I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. NKJV
- HIS DESIRE TO WORSHIP GOD WAS FALSE. 1 Samuel 15:21-23 "But the people took of the plunder, sheep and oxen, the best of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice to the Lord your God in Gilgal."²² Then Samuel said: "Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams.²³ For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He also has rejected you from being king." NKJV
- HIS CONFESSION TO GOD WAS FALSE. 1 Samuel 15:24 Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice. NKJV
- HIS REPENTENCE TO GOD WAS FALSE. He had ungodly regret rather than godly mourning 1 Samuel 15:30 Then he said, "I have sinned; yet honor me now, please, before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, that I may worship the Lord your God." NKJV
- HIS RELATIONSHIP TO GOD WAS FALSE. Saul actually admits his lack of a personal knowledge God. 1 Samuel 15:30 Then he said, "I have sinned; yet honor me now, please, before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, that I may worship the Lord your God." NKJV
- HIS HEART BEFORE GOD WAS FALSE. 1 Samuel 16:7 But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." NKJV

So dies Saul, an apostate.

One who experienced the Word of God, the Spirit of God, the power of God and the leading of God – and willfully turns from it!

Apostates know the truth and have received knowledge from God, but then turn from it. King Saul the apostate refused the new heart the Lord had given him (I Samuel 13:14).

Think of his last supper.). Last Suppers are important to God; note the last suppers of 3 men:

- Saul's was a last supper of demons, horrors and the bitterness of death alone in suicide. Driven by fear, dogged by his hatred, led by his pride – he goes to the witches cave (I Sam. 28:25) to eat his last meal.
- Judas' was a supper of deceit, darkness and the bitterness of hell (Matthew 26) as he eats with a heart of darkness as he sat next to the Light of the World.
- But Jesus' was a Last supper of triumph, of blessing, of forgiveness and of hope. . .

From that last supper King Saul completes his despair and defeat by his death. So he dies in his sin, a murderous, wicked, bitter and angry old man. He is slain by one of the very people he was to exterminate, the Amalekites! He like so many others came so close to God and ended so far from God eternally!

What about that other man who sinned? How did David do? Where are the lessons David learned in this horrible pit of sin? Forever recorded in Psalm 32 "The Song of a soul set free"

- David sings with DELIGHT when his SINS WERE CLEANSED v. 1-2 Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered. 2 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit.
- David sings in DESPAIR when his SINS WERE CONCEALED v. 3-4 When I kept silent, my bones grew old Through my groaning all the day long. 4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was turned into the drought of summer. Selah
- David sings of DELIVERANCE when his SINS WERE CONFESSED v. 5-7 I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," And You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah 6 For this cause everyone who is godly shall pray to You In a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters They shall not come near him. 7 You are my hiding place; You shall preserve me from trouble; You shall surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah
- David sings about his DESIRE that his SINFUL WAYS BE CRUSHED v. 8-11 I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye. 9 Do not be like the horse or like the mule, Which have no understanding, Which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, Else they will not come near you. 10 Many sorrows shall be to the wicked; But he who trusts in the Lord, mercy shall surround him. 11 Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you righteous; And shout for joy, all you upright in heart!

David's Song of DELIGHT when his SINS WERE CLEANSED v. 1-2

THREE HEBREW WORDS FOR FORGIVENESS IN PSALM 32:

1. PULLED OFF: "Forgiven" means literally to have our sin lifted off. As Pilgrim it rolls off and into Christ's tomb. "My sin oh the bliss . . .". We are being crushed by any sins we keep around. They suffocate, smother and squish the very life of our soul. But there is a Redeemer who can set us free. And to his only hope, David fled.
2. SHEILDED FROM: "Covered" speaks of the strong imagery in the events of the day of atonement. On that day the High priest took the blood of an animal and sprinkled it onto the mercy seat. Above the mercy seat was the presence of God portrayed by the outstretched arms of the cherubim. Beneath the lid of the ark was the tablets portraying God's divine law. In essence, the blood stood between a holy God and the sinners who broke His law, averting His wrath. David cried for joy when the wrath of God was turned away from him. So our sins are covered away by the blood of Jesus shed for us!
3. CLEARED OUT: "Not Counted" speaks of a list of debts no longer held against us. David had become utterly bankrupted by his sin. The bills were piling up, mounting like a flood and drowning him. Desire, deceit, cruel deception, cunning craftiness and shameless murder all charged heavy debts to his soul. And now in sheer delight all the mountain of impossible debt is cleared from the ledger. "My sins are gone, and shall not be remembered, God in mercy tenderly forgives."

- God cleansed David's Sin that smothers: now they were forgiven "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven"
- God cleansed David's Sin that soils: now they were covered by the cleansing blood. "Whose sin is covered"
- God cleansed David's Sin that steals: now they were not imputed to his account as debts. "2 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity"
- God cleansed David's Sin that slithers: now there was no guile. "And in whose spirit there is no deceit."

David's Song of DESPAIR when his SINS WERE CONCEALED v. 3-4

- David's Concealed sin sickened him "v. 3 When I kept silent, my bones grew old"
- David's Concealed sin saddened him "Through my groaning all the day long"
- David's Concealed sin burdened him "4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me;"
- David's Concealed sin stifled him "My vitality was turned into the drought of summer. Selah" (like sun parched brown grass)

David's Song of DELIVERANCE when his SINS WERE CONFESSED v. 5-7

- David acknowledged his responsibility for the sin "v.5 I acknowledged my sin to You"
 - David acknowledged God's ability to see "And my iniquity I have not hidden"
 - David acknowledged God's desire to forgive "I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,"
 - David acknowledged God's power to remove sin "And You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah"
 - David acknowledged his great opportunity.
1. Now he understood the Lord is Approachable "v. 6 For this cause everyone who is godly shall pray to You In a time when You may be found;"
 2. Now he understood the Lord is Trustable "; Surely in a flood of great waters They shall not come near him."

3. Now he understood he could Rest in the Lord "v. 7 You are my hiding place"
4. Now he understood he could Delight in the Lord "You shall surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah"

David's Song of DESIRE that his SINFUL WAYS BE CRUSHED v. 8-11

- David now longs God YOU LEAD ME "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye."
- David now longs God YOU GUARD ME "v. 9 Do not be like the horse or like the mule, Which have no understanding, Which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, Else they will not come near you."
- David now longs God YOU TEACH ME "v. 10 Many sorrows shall be to the wicked;"
- David now longs God YOU SURROUND ME "But he who trusts in the Lord, mercy shall surround him."
- David now longs God YOU FILL ME "v. 11 Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you righteous; And shout for joy, all you upright in heart!"

#201 Grace greater than all our sin
Where sin abounded