

# **Servants of the church**

**Saul: chosen by men**

**David: chosen by God**

**Our learning**

# The background of Saul as a king chosen by men (the main leading one of the church)

Israelis (church; **probably us**)

- Want to have a king (a servant) who can be seen by our eyes and is capable of ruling, like the nations (in the world), but do not know that God is our king for everything in the world, and it should be Him as the only serving one to govern the church .
- Enjoy the peace brought from God (through Samuel) for many years, but the Israelis (what about us?) did not know, cherish and serve God Who provided the peace.
- See the weakness of the old servant (Samuel), but fail to see and learn that Samuel (also God expects us) trusts God completely all his life.

Then God gave the Israelis up at that time. (please refer to Rom. 1:24,26,28)

1<sup>st</sup> Sam. 8:

- 5 And they said to him, You are now old, and your sons do not follow in your ways. **Appoint now for us a king to judge us like all the nations.**
- 6 **But the matter displeased Samuel** when they said, Give us a king to judge us. **Then Samuel prayed to Jehovah.**
- 7 And Jehovah said to Samuel, Listen to the voice of the people according to all that they have said to you; **for it is not you whom they have rejected, but they have rejected Me from being King over them.**
- 8 Like all the deeds that they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt to this very **day by forsaking Me and serving other gods**, so they do also to you.
- 9 **Now therefore listen to their voice**, but you shall solemnly warn them and declare to them the practice of the king who will reign over them.

**God admonished Israelis that how the kings of the world reign over them (seemingly these kings can reign even well in a short period of time but without the eternal power of God and selfishness love)**

**Israelis did not listen to God or Samuel, the servant of God, but made their own decision. How about us?**

**1<sup>st</sup> Sam. 8:**

- 10 So Samuel spoke all the words of Jehovah to the people, who had asked him for a king.
- 11 And he said, **This will be the practice of the king who will reign over you:** He will take your sons and appoint them for himself to his chariots and as his horsemen, and they will run before his chariots;
- 12 And he will appoint them for himself as captains of thousands and as captains of fifties, and to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war and the equipment for his chariots.
- 13 And he will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers.
- 14 And he will take your best fields and vineyards and olive groves, and give them to his servants.
- 15 And he will exact a tenth of your seed and of your vineyards, and give it to his eunuchs and servants.
- 16 And he will take your male servants and your female servants and your best young men and your donkeys, and put them to his work.
- 17 He will exact a tenth of your flocks, and you will be his servants.
- 18 And you will cry out in that day on account of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves; but Jehovah will not answer you in that day.
- 19 **But the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel, and they said, No; but there will be a king over us,**
- 20 That we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles.
- 21 And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he spoke them in the hearing of Jehovah.
- 22 Then Jehovah said to Samuel, Listen to their voice, and appoint a king to them. And Samuel said to the men of Israel, Go, each one to his city.

- People choose the servants often from their outward appearance, but they may not know their heart.
- People choose servants often from the aspect of good or bad, but do not pay attention to whether the servants trust God or not.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Sam. 9:

- 1 Now there was a man from Benjamin whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Becorath, the son of Aphiah, **a Benjaminite, a man of wealth.**
- 2 And **he had a son whose name was Saul, a choice and handsome man;** and there was not a man among the children of Israel **more handsome than he; from his shoulders and up he was taller than all the people.**

### Acts 13:

- 21 And afterward **they asked for a king;** and God gave them Saul, the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Sam. 16:

- 7 But Jehovah said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For Jehovah sees not as man sees: **man looks on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looks on the heart.**"

- **God always knows whether we trust Him or other people or things in our hearts.**

# Did God choose Saul or why God chose Saul?

## 1<sup>st</sup> Sam 9:

- 15 Now Jehovah had revealed this to Samuel a day before Saul came, saying,  
16 At about this time tomorrow I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him ruler over My people Israel; and he will save My people from the hand of the Philistines, for I have looked upon My people because their cry has come to Me.  
17 **And when Samuel saw Saul, Jehovah declared to him, Here is the man of whom I spoke to you. This man shall rule over My people.**

## 1<sup>st</sup> Sam. 10:

- 6 And the Spirit of Jehovah will rush upon you; and you will prophesy with them and **be turned into another man.**  
9 And so when he turned his back to depart from Samuel, **God gave him another heart.** And all these signs happened that day.

**God gave Saul a new heart. Did this heart keep trusting in God (when the circumstances changed)? What about us?**

# Saul's initial attitude

## 1<sup>st</sup> Sam. 9:

- 21 And **Saul answered and said, Am I not a Benjaminite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? And is not my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin?** Why then do you speak to me in this way?

## 1<sup>st</sup> Sam. 10:

- 19 But today you have rejected your God, who Himself saved you from all your calamities and distresses, and have said, No; but set a king over us. And now present yourselves before Jehovah according to your tribes and according to your thousands.
- 20 So Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin was taken.
- 21 And **he brought the tribe of Benjamin near according to its families, and the family of Matri was taken. And Saul the son of Kish was taken. But when they sought him, he could not be found.**
- 22 Therefore they asked of Jehovah again, Is there yet another man coming here? And Jehovah said, There he is; he has hidden himself among the baggage.
- 23 And they ran and took him from there. And when he stood up among the people, he was taller than all the people from his shoulders and up.
- 24 And Samuel said to all the people, See him whom Jehovah has chosen, that there is none like him among all the people. And all the people shouted and said, Long live the king!

**Before becoming a king, Saul was a very humble man.  
But did he trust the Lord ? (how about us?)**

# Saul's situation 1

1<sup>st</sup> Sam. 13:

- 5 **And the Philistines assembled themselves for battle with Israel, thirty thousand chariots and six thousand horsemen and people like the sand that is on the seashore in multitude.** And they came up and encamped in Michmash, east of Beth-aven.
- 6 When the men of Israel saw that they were in distress (for the people were hard pressed), the people hid themselves in caves and in thickets and among rocks and in cellars and in pits.
- 7 And some Hebrews crossed over the Jordan into the land of Gad and Gilead; but Saul was still in Gilgal, and all the people trembled behind him.
- 8 **And he waited for seven days, until the time appointed by Samuel, but Samuel did not come to Gilgal. And the people scattered from him.**
- 9 **Then Saul said, Bring the burnt offering and the peace offerings to me. And he offered up the burnt offering.**
- 10 **And just as he finished offering up the burnt offering, there came Samuel; and Saul went out to meet him and greet him.**
- 11 And Samuel said, What have you done? And Saul said, When I saw that the people were scattered from me and that you had not come at the appointed time and that the Philistines assembled themselves at Michmash,
- 12 I said, Now the Philistines will come down on me at Gilgal, and I have not entreated the favor of Jehovah. Therefore I forced myself to offer up the burnt offering.
- 15 **Then Samuel rose and went up from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin. And Saul mustered the people who were with him, about six hundred men.**

- **But Saul relied on Samuel (representing the main servant of the church), but did not trust God Whom Samuel had trusted throughout his life. When the negative environment came, Saul did not know how to trust God, because he had no experience of God and faith in God.**
- **In the church life, if we are not careful, sometimes we trust the main serving ones, and we do not have the growth in the subjective experience of and trust in God in our hearts.**

## God's response

1<sup>st</sup> Sam. 13:

- 13 Then **Samuel said to Saul, You have acted foolishly; you have not kept the commandment of Jehovah your God**, which He commanded you. For now Jehovah would have established your kingdom over Israel forever;
- 14 **But now your kingdom will not continue. Jehovah has sought a man according to His heart for Himself, and Jehovah has appointed him ruler over His people; for you have not kept that which Jehovah commanded you.**

**Saul did not obey what God commanded him, because in his living he relied on Samuel and did not know God and God's heart desires.**

## Saul's situation 2

1<sup>st</sup> Sam. 15:

2 Thus says Jehovah of hosts, I will punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel when they set themselves against them in the way as they came up out of Egypt.

3 **Go now and strike the Amalekites; and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them, but kill both man and woman, infant and suckling, oxen and sheep, camel and donkey.**

7 Then Saul struck the Amalekites from Havilah as you go toward Shur, which is opposite Egypt.

8 And he captured Agag the 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 and of the oxen and of the fatlings, and the lambs and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them; but everything that was despised and worthless, this they utterly destroyed.**

12 Then Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning. And it was told Samuel, saying, Saul went to Carmel and has now set up a monument for himself, and he has returned and passed on down to Gilgal.

13 And Samuel came to Saul, and **Saul said to him, Blessed are you of Jehovah! I have fulfilled the word of Jehovah.**

14 And Samuel said, What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears and the lowing of oxen that I hear?

15 **And Saul said, They have been brought from the Amalekites; for the people spared the best of the sheep and oxen to sacrifice to Jehovah your God, and the rest we have utterly destroyed.**

**Saul cherished the best cattle and sheep (which can represent the natural goodness in our flesh), and wanted to offer them to God, but he did not know that God desires us to live by Him and walk by Him. God did not appreciate any of good and evil in our flesh (outward) rather our person to trust and live out Him.**

# God's response

1<sup>st</sup> Sam. 15:

10 And the word of Jehovah came to Samuel, saying,

11 **I repent that I made Saul king, for he has turned back from following Me and has not fulfilled My words.** And Samuel was angry, and he cried to Jehovah all night long.

22 And **Samuel said**, Does Jehovah delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices As much as in obeying the voice of Jehovah? Behold, **to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed, than the fat of rams.**

23 For rebellion is like the sin of divination, And insubordination is like idolatry and teraphim. Because you have rejected the word of Jehovah, He has also rejected you from being king.

24 **And Saul said to Samuel, I have sinned; for I have transgressed the commandment of Jehovah and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice.**

25 Now therefore pardon my sin, I beg you, and return with me so that I may worship Jehovah.

26 But Samuel said to Saul, I will not return with you, **for you have rejected the word of Jehovah, and Jehovah has rejected you from being king over Israel.**

**Because Saul forsook (because he did not know and have subjective experience how to obey) God's command, God also forsook Saul as the king of Israel (the main serving one of the church).**

# Saul worships Samuel (a man) and not God

## 1<sup>st</sup> Sam. 28:

- 8 Then Saul disguised himself and put on other clothes. And he and two men with him went, and they came to the woman by night. And he said, Consult a departed spirit for me, and bring up to me the one whom I tell you.
- 11 So the woman said, **Whom shall I bring up to you? And he said, Bring up Samuel to me.**
- 14 And he said to her, What is his appearance? And she said, An old man is coming up; and he is wrapped in a cloak. Then Saul knew that it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to the ground and paid him homage.
- 15 And Samuel said to Saul, Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up? And Saul said, I am greatly distressed; for the Philistines wage war against me, and God has turned away from me and answers me no more, neither through the prophets nor by dreams. Therefore I have called you, that you may make known to me what I shall do.

**These verses tell us that Saul violated God's will and asked the woman who practiced magic to call up the dead Samuel to ask for guidance and help, instead of asking God desperately.**

**How about us?**

# God forsook Saul and chose David

## 1<sup>st</sup> Sam. 16:

- 1 And Jehovah said to Samuel, How long will you mourn for Saul, though **I have rejected him from being king over Israel?** Fill your horn with oil, and go; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite; for I have selected for Myself a king among his sons.
  
- 12 So he sent for him and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and a handsome appearance. And Jehovah said, Arise; anoint him, for this is he.
  
- 13 **And Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers, and the Spirit of Jehovah rushed upon David from that day forward.** Then Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.

**For the accomplishment of His will, God must raise up other servants (David) among the people of Israel (in the church) who are close to him, know Him and His will, have subjective experience of Him, and obey His leading and command.**

# Why did God choose David?

## 1<sup>st</sup> Sam. 17:

- 45 Then David said to the Philistine, You come to me with sword and spear and javelin, but **I come to you in the name of Jehovah of hosts, the God of the ranks of Israel**, whom you have defied.
- 46 On this day **Jehovah will deliver you up into my hand**, and I will strike you and remove your head from you. And I will give the corpses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of heaven and to the animals of the earth on this day. And all the earth will know that there is a God in Israel;
- 47 And all this congregation will know that it is not by sword or spear that **Jehovah saves, for the battle is Jehovah's and He will deliver you into our hand**.

**David had a living and subjective experience of trusting God when he was young (less than 20 years old). Therefore, the church needs to pay great emphasis on the service of children and young people, and never underestimate their ability and experience of trusting God.**

## David's humanity and serving

1<sup>st</sup> Sam. 16:

21 And David came to Saul and entered his service. And Saul loved him greatly, and **he became his armor bearer.**

**David loved and served the saints whom were anointed by God (Saul; a brother in the church)**

## David's situation 1

**1<sup>st</sup> Sam. 17:**

- 34 But David said to Saul, **“Your servant used to keep sheep for his father. And when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb from the flock,**
- 35 **I went after him and struck him and delivered it out of his mouth.** And if he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and struck him and killed him.
- 37a And David said, **“Jehovah who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.”**

**David attributed all his powers, victories in the battles, and gains to God's salvation.**

## David's situation 2

### 1<sup>st</sup> Sam. 17:

45 Then David said to the Philistine, You come to me with sword and spear and javelin, but **I come to you in the name of Jehovah of hosts, the God of the ranks of Israel**, whom you have defied.

46 On this day **Jehovah will deliver you up into my hand**, and I will strike you and remove your head from you. And I will give the corpses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of heaven and to the animals of the earth on this day. And all the earth will know that there is a God in Israel;

47 And all this congregation will know that it is not by sword or spear that **Jehovah saves, for the battle is Jehovah's and He will deliver you into our hand.**

**David had a deep experience and trust in God from his youth. Therefore, he knew that the victory or defeat of the battle depended on God, so he was not afraid of the Philistine giant Goliath (representing the harsh environments around us).**

# David's humanity and serving

## 1<sup>st</sup> Sam. 21:

- 1 And **David went to Nob to Ahimelech the priest**. And Ahimelech came trembling to meet David and said to him, Why are you alone, and no one with you?
- 2 And David said to Ahimelech the priest, The king has charged me with some matter, and he said to me, Let no man know anything about the matter that I have sent you on and charged you with. So I have made an appointment with **my young men** at such and such a place.
- 3 Now then what do you have on hand? **Give five loaves of bread into my hand, or whatever there is to be found.**
- 4 And the priest answered David and said, There is no common bread on hand; yet there is holy bread, but only if **the young men** have kept themselves from women.
- 5 And David answered the priest and said to him, Women have indeed been kept from us, as previously when I went forth; and the vessels of **the young men** were holy, even if it was a common journey. How much more then today will their vessels be holy!
- 6 So the priest gave him what was holy, for there was no bread there except the bread of the Presence, which was taken from before Jehovah, to be replaced by hot bread at the time it was taken.

## Matt. 12:

- 4 how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for **those who were with him**, but only for the priests?

**David still took care of his companions when he was in danger and hunger.**

# God's response

## Matt. 12:

- 3 But He said to them, Have you not read what David did when **he became hungry, and those who were with him**;
- 4 How he entered into the house of God, and **they** ate the bread of the presence, which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for **those who were with him**, except for the priests only?
- 5 Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless?
  
- 7 But if you knew what *this* means, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice," you would not have condemned the guiltless.

**God appreciated David's humanity much. Coupled with David's trust in Him, God said that David was a man according to His heart and would do all His will.**

## Acts 13:

- 22 And when He had deposed him, He raised up David for them as king, to whom also He testified and said, I have found David, the *son* of Jesse, **a man according to My heart, who will do all My will.**

## **David's heart toward God**

**David wrote about 73 psalms toward God including 7 psalms of repentance.**

# A healthy way to avoid being Saul is

to have fellowship (prayers) with the saints: fellowship (prayers) upon fellowship (prayers)

**Matt. 18:15** “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, **between you and him alone**. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother.

**Firstly pray to the Lord, then fellowship with the spiritual companion**

**Matt. 18:16** But if he does not listen, **take one or two others along with you**, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.

**And then fellowship with the spiritual team members.**

**Matt. 18:17** If he refuses to listen to them, **tell it to the church**. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

**And then fellowship with the relatively mature ones in the church**

**Acts 2:42a** And **they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship,**

**Always abide in the teachings and fellowship of the apostles and the servants of the Lord.**