

“The Wages of Sin”  
1 Samuel 13:15-23  
(Preached at Trinity, March 12, 2017)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. In **Chapter 12** we read God's words of hope for Israel and her new king. If they feared God and followed Him in covenant faithfulness His rich blessings would be upon them. **1 Samuel 12:24-25 NAU** - "Only fear the LORD and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you. <sup>25</sup> "But if you still do wickedly, both you and your king will be swept away."
2. We entered **Chapter 13** with high expectations but we were quickly disappointed as we witnessed the tragic fall of Saul. He did not set his heart on following God but ignored God's commands. The consequences were tragic. **1 Samuel 13:13-14 NAU** - "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. <sup>14</sup> "But now your kingdom shall not endure."
3. Over and over in the Old Covenant God promised His blessings for covenant faithfulness. **Deuteronomy 4:39-40 NAU** - "Know therefore today, and take it to your heart, that the LORD, He is God in heaven above and on the earth below; there is no other. <sup>40</sup> "So you shall keep His statutes and His commandments which I am giving you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may live long on the land which the LORD your God is giving you for all time."  
**Deuteronomy 5:33 NAU** - "You shall walk in all the way which the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong *your* days in the land which you will possess."  
**Deuteronomy 6:1-3 NAU** - "Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments which the LORD your God has commanded *me* to teach you, that you might do *them* in the land where you are going over to possess it, <sup>2</sup> so that you and your son and your grandson might fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged. <sup>3</sup> "O Israel, you should listen and be careful to do *it*, that it may be well with you and that you may multiply greatly, just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you, *in* a land flowing with milk and honey."  
**Deuteronomy 12:28 NAU** - "Be careful to listen to all these words which I command you, so that it may be well with you and your sons after you forever, for you will be doing what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God."

4. If Saul had followed God with his whole heart God would have established the kingdom with Saul and his heirs forever. God would have defended Saul and would have been mighty on Saul's behalf.

**1 Samuel 13:13 NAU** - "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."

5. What follows next is the immediate consequences of Saul's sin.

6. Sin ultimately has eternal consequences.

Paul says in **Romans 6**, "The wages of sin is death."

This refers to death in terms of our mortality but also death in terms of being eternally forsaken by God.

- A. Most people today don't really see this as a reality. They don't believe hell is a literal place. Their denial does not diminish the reality.

- B. Hell speaks of the ultimate expression of God's divine wrath

1. It is everlasting – an infinite punishment
2. It is a place of darkness – void of all light which is the reflection of God's glory. They spent a lifetime running from the Light, they will spend eternity where there is no light.

**John 3:19-20 NAU** - "This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup> "For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed."

3. It is the ultimate misery. A place of torment, an eternal lake of fire where there will be endless shrieks of suffering.

**Matthew 13:49-50 NAU** - "So it will be at the end of the age; the angels will come forth and take out the wicked from among the righteous, <sup>50</sup> and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

7. But there are also consequences of sin in this life, some direct, some indirect. The effect of Saul's sin was immediate.

- I. God removed His Word from Saul

- A. **Verse 15** implies that Samuel departed from Saul; that Saul was left without a sure Word from God.

**1 Samuel 13:15 NAU** - "Then Samuel arose and went up from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin."

1. Saul had been commanded to wait upon Samuel. In **Verse 8** it is referred to as "the appointed time set by Samuel." In **Verse 13** we read that it was clearly commanded by God - "you have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you"
2. It would seem that Samuel as God's prophet had gone to seek a word from God regarding the Philistines and he instructed Saul to tarry for seven days. Saul dismissed the importance of waiting upon a sure Word from God. Since he saw no value in hearing from God Samuel departed from him.

3. In the absence of God's prophet, Samuel Saul employed Ahijah, the grandson of wicked Phinehas who was wearing the ephod. The ephod contained the Urim and Thummim which was used to determine the will of God. You can see how sin causes ever increasing spiritual decline.
- B. Samuel doesn't appear again until **Chapter 15** when he once again brings Saul a word from God.
- 1 Samuel 15:1 NAU** - "The LORD sent me to anoint you as king over His people, over Israel; now therefore, listen to the words of the LORD."
1. And again Saul dismisses it.  
**1 Samuel 15:11 NAU** - "I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following Me and has not carried out My commands."
  2. This resulted in God's final forsaking of Saul  
**1 Samuel 15:26 NAU** - "But Samuel said to Saul, "I will not return with you; for you have rejected the word of the LORD"  
**1 Samuel 15:35 NAU** - "Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death"
- C. It is a terrible thing to become hardened towards God's Word.
1. Paul described it:  
**2 Timothy 3:7 NAU** - "always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."
  2. The words of our Lord:  
**Matthew 13:12 NAS** - ""For whoever has, to him shall *more* be given, and he shall have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him."  
**Matthew 13:15 NAS** - "For the heart of this people has become dull, And with their ears they scarcely hear, And they have closed their eyes Lest they should see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart and return, And I should heal them."
- II. Sin brings temporal suffering upon the earth – sin has consequences
- A. Israel fled in terror
- 1 Samuel 13:6 NAU** - "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."
1. When you reject the power of God where shall you flee?
  2. Compare this with David  
**Psalms 18:2-3 NAU** - "The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. <sup>3</sup> I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, And I am saved from my enemies."  
**Psalms 18:19 NAU** - "He brought me forth also into a broad place; He rescued me, because He delighted in me."

- B. Israel suffered greatly at the hands of their enemy
1. **Verses 15-23** record the sad state of affairs for Saul and his kingdom.
  2. The Philistines were still assembled against Israel – **Verse 5**  
But when Saul numbered his army he was barely able to muster a force of 600 men. That's only one out of five of the original 3000.
  3. Raiders were sent forth by the Philistines to subjugate the people of Israel and their king was powerless to do anything about it.
  4. The Philistines banished every blacksmith in all of Israel. This made not only the producing of weapons impossible, it also made everyday labor most difficult. The Philistines charged to sharpen their farming tools.
  5. We find the terrible plight of a king who turned from God in **Verse 22**.  
On the day of battle not only were they vastly outnumbered, only Saul and his son had weapons!

#### Conclusion:

1. All sin has consequences  
**Galatians 6:7-8 NAU** - "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. <sup>8</sup> For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life."
2. Saul's great predicament was not really the size of the Philistine army, nor the weakness of his own army. Saul's great predicament was the absence of God. This is the effect of sin. God demands obedience of His people. Saul and Israel were not willing to comply. The issue here was their sin.  
**1 Samuel 13:13 NAU** - "You have acted foolishly; you have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you"
3. Sin always has consequences
  - A. Sin ruins lives
    - a. It will lead to broken homes and misery within the home  
We'll see a rising division between Saul and his son, Jonathan  
**1 Samuel 14:29 NAU** - "Then Jonathan said, "My father has troubled the land."  
**1 Samuel 20:30 NAU** - "Then Saul's anger burned against Jonathan and he said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious woman! Do I not know that you are choosing the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of your mother's nakedness?"
    - b. It will lead to broken health (by careless living, indulging the flesh)
    - c. It also leads to unsettled minds, unhappiness, fear, anxiety, paranoia,  
**Psalms 38:3-4 NAU** - "There is no soundness in my flesh because of Your indignation; There is no health in my bones because of my sin. <sup>4</sup> For my iniquities are gone over my head; As a heavy burden they weigh too much for me."  
**Psalms 38:8 NAU** - "I groan because of the agitation of my heart."  
**1 Samuel 16:14-15 NAU** - "Now the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD terrorized him. <sup>15</sup> Saul's servants then said to him, "Behold now, an evil spirit from God is terrorizing you."

- B. Sin continues to blind and harden our hearts  
We become less able to see the corruption, the evil of sin – a desensitization  
**Ephesians 4:18-19 NAU** - " being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; <sup>19</sup> and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness."  
Sin unchecked always escalates to greater sin
4. As Christians we must be particularly mindful of the consequences of sin
- A. It will ruin your witness before the world
- B. It will ruin your reputation & disqualify you from leadership in God's church
- C. It may bring a reproach upon the household of God resulting in discipline, shame and humiliation
5. The good news is God is always ready to defend those who look to Him.
- A. We find no indication that Saul ever repents and find's God's mercy of restoration.
- B. But we will find Israel's next king, David fall into sin with dreadful consequences but eventually finding God's forgiveness.  
**Psalms 51:7-12 NAU** - "Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. <sup>8</sup> Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which You have broken rejoice. <sup>9</sup> Hide Your face from my sins And blot out all my iniquities. <sup>10</sup> Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. <sup>11</sup> Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. <sup>12</sup> Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit."
- C. And although the leadership of Saul would never be fully regained, we will continually find God's mercy upon Israel. In the next chapter we find the turn of events for Israel through the valiant courage and faith of Jonathan.  
**1 Samuel 14:6 NAU** - "Come and let us cross over to the garrison of these uncircumcised; perhaps the LORD will work for us, for the LORD is not restrained to save by many or by few."
6. We must always remember, there is good news in the Gospel. Yes, there are terrible consequences for sin, but grace for all who look to Christ.  
**Romans 6:23-7:1 NAU** - "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. "