



THE RISE AND FALL OF KINGS: The King They Wanted

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Mount Paran North

1. People Choose Based on Appearance

¹ There was a wealthy, influential man named Kish from the tribe of Benjamin. He was the son of Abiel, son of Zeror, son of Becorath, son of Aphiah, of the tribe of Benjamin. ² His son Saul was the most handsome man in Israel—head and shoulders taller than anyone else in the land.

1 Samuel 9:1-2 NLT

But the Lord said to Samuel, “Don’t judge by his appearance or height, for I have rejected him. The Lord doesn’t see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

1 Samuel 16:7 NLT

What people applaud may not be what God approves.

2. Pressure Exposes Character

⁸ Saul waited there seven days for Samuel, as Samuel had instructed him earlier, but Samuel still didn’t come. Saul realized that his troops were rapidly slipping away. ⁹ So he demanded, “Bring me the burnt offering and the peace offerings!” And Saul sacrificed the burnt offering himself.

1 Samuel 13:8-9 NLT

¹¹ Saul replied, "I saw my men scattering from me, and you didn't arrive when you said you would, and the Philistines are at Micmash ready for battle. ¹² So I said, 'The Philistines are ready to march against us at Gilgal, and I haven't even asked for the LORD's help!' So I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering myself before you came." ¹³ "How foolish!" Samuel exclaimed. "You have not kept the command the LORD your God gave you. Had you kept it, the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. "But now your kingdom must end, for the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart. The Lord has already appointed him to be the leader of his people, because you have not kept the Lord's command."

1 Samuel 13:11b-14 NLT

Who you are under pressure reveals who you really trust.

3. Partial Obedience Is Still Disobedience

⁷ Then Saul slaughtered the Amalekites from Havilah all the way to Shur, east of Egypt. ⁸ He captured Agag, the Amalekite king, but completely destroyed everyone else. ⁹ Saul and his men spared Agag's life and kept the best of the sheep and goats, the cattle, the fat calves, and the lambs—everything, in fact, that appealed to them. They destroyed only what was worthless or of poor quality.

1 Samuel 15:7-9 NLT

¹³ When Samuel finally found him, Saul greeted him cheerfully. "May the LORD bless you," he said. "I have carried out the LORD's command!" ¹⁴ "Then what is all the bleating of sheep and goats and the lowing of cattle I hear?" Samuel demanded.

1 Samuel 15:13-14 NLT

²² But Samuel replied, "What is more pleasing to the LORD: your burnt offerings and sacrifices or your obedience to his voice? Listen! Obedience is better than sacrifice, and submission is better than offering the fat of rams. ²³ Rebellion is as sinful as witchcraft, and stubbornness as bad as worshiping idols. So because you have rejected the command of the LORD, he has rejected you as king." **1 Samuel 15:22-23 NLT**

What you refuse to surrender today may become what rules you tomorrow.