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## Week Twelve

# **Spiritual Principles, Life Lessons, and Holy Warnings concerning the Enjoyment of the Good Land Seen with Five Major Figures in 1 and 2 Samuel**

Hymns:

Scripture Reading: 1 Sam. 2:27-30, 35; 3:21; 12:3-5, 23; 18:1-4; 23:16-18; 9:1-2, 17; 13:13-14; 15:19, 23; 16:1, 12-13; 30:6b-10; 26:19b; 2 Sam. 11:1-27

### §Day 1

- I. **Under Eli the old Aaronic priesthood had become stale and waning (1 Sam. 2:12-30), and God desired to have a new beginning for the accomplishing of His economy:**
  - A. **We all need to reject anything of staleness, oldness, lukewarmness, and pride and keep ourselves empty, open, fresh, new, living, and young with the Lord; we need to be one with His desire for us to be one with Christ, filled with Christ, and occupied by Christ to live Christ for the organic building up of the Body of Christ—Rev. 3:15-22; Luke 18:17; Phil. 3:7-14; Gal. 1:15-16; 2:20; 4:19; Eph. 4:16.**
  - B. **In the days of Eli the word of God was rare; God's speaking was almost lost (1 Sam. 3:1); in the priesthood the first thing that a priest should do is to speak for God (Exo. 28:30); a priest must be a person who is intimate with God, who is one with God, who knows the heart of God, and who speaks forth the unique and healthy teaching of God's eternal economy (1 Tim. 1:3-4; 6:3).**
  - C. **Eli taught Samuel to say to the Lord, "Speak, O Jehovah; for Your servant is listening"; in order to speak for the Lord and be one with Him to carry out His eternal economy, we must first treasure and listen attentively to His speaking so that we may**

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know His desire and preference—1 Sam. 3:9-10, 21; Isa. 50:4-5.

- D. Eli disregarded the priesthood in his loose disciplining of his two evil sons (1 Sam. 2:28-29); this caused the tragedy of the ending of his history, the termination of his enjoyment of the good land, and the fading of the priesthood in the divine revelation, that is, in the speaking for God; today we need to learn of Eli to have a high regard for what God has given us in His recovery.

## **§Day 2**

### **II. Samuel was faithful to God in all his God-given statuses and offices:**

- A. As a Levite, he served God his whole life; as a Nazarite, he kept his consecration without failure (v. 35); as a priest-prophet, he spoke for God honestly and initiated the prophethood to replace the fading priesthood in the divine revelation; as a judge, he was faithful to God and just to the people, terminating the judgeship and bringing in the kingship in order to change the age for the fulfillment of God's economy.
- B. As one who worked together with God for the carrying out of His economy (John 5:17; 2 Cor. 6:1a), Samuel was established as a prophet of Jehovah to speak for Him by listening to His word (1 Sam. 3:9-10, 20-21); we need to continually exercise ourselves to have an ear to "hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Rev. 2:7); furthermore, we need to follow the pattern of Mary, who "sat at the Lord's feet and was listening to His word" (Luke 10:38-42):
1. Mary sat at the feet of the Lord Jesus and not at the feet of anyone else; no method is better than coming to Him moment by moment, loving Him, worshipping Him, and unceasingly fellowshiping with Him and remaining in His presence.
  2. Mary sat at the feet of the Lord; she put herself in a humble position in order to hear the Lord's speaking and receive His blessing; humility is not belittling ourselves; humility is ignoring ourselves, negating ourselves, and considering ourselves as nothing.

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3. She was sitting down; those who are busy to the point of being distracted from the Lord's presence have a wandering mind and vacillating thoughts; they must stop themselves in order to spend personal time with the Lord on a daily basis.
  4. She was listening to the Lord's word; the words that the Lord speaks to us are spirit and life (John 6:63); her listening to the Lord's word afforded the Lord the opportunity to communicate Himself to her and to dispense Himself into her so that she could gain the Lord Himself.
- C. Samuel enjoyed his portion of the good land to the fullest for his whole life; thus, in a New Testament sense, we can say that there was no defect in his enjoyment of Christ; the only defect in Samuel's history was that he appointed his two sons as judges among the children of Israel—1 Sam. 8:1-3:**
1. The unjust ways of Samuel's sons were contrary to their father's pure and just way in his whole life (12:3-23) and gave the people of Israel cause to ask Samuel to appoint a king to judge them like all the nations (8:1-7); hence, the sons of Samuel should not be reckoned judges among the people of Israel (Acts 13:20), and their father Samuel should be considered the last judge.
  2. Humanly, Samuel made a mistake in this matter, but this mistake helped God to manage the situation among His people by bringing in the kingship for the fulfillment of His economy.

## **§Day 3**

- III. Jonathan loved David, made a covenant with him, and predicted that David would become the king and that the kingdom would be his kingdom—1 Sam. 18:1-4; 19:1-7; 20:8, 14-17, 41-42; 23:16-18:**
- A. Saul's intention was to preserve the kingdom for Jonathan; however, Jonathan was not willing to take the kingdom but recognized that David should be on the throne.**
  - B. Jonathan should have told his father about this and then should have left his father to be with David; in typology, for Jonathan to follow David would have signified our following Christ today and our giving Him the preeminence—Col. 1:18b; Rev. 2:4.**

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- C. Jonathan lost the proper and adequate enjoyment of his portion in the good land promised by God because of his failure in not following David according to God's will due to his natural affection for his father; although Jonathan realized that David would be king, he stayed with his father, and as a tragic result, he suffered the same fate as his father and died with him in battle—1 Sam. 31:2-6.**
- D. Jonathan stood between Saul and David; he was one man standing between two ministries; he should have followed the second ministry, but because his relationship with the first ministry was too deep, he could not disentangle himself:**
1. In every age the Lord has special things that He wants to accomplish; He has His own recoveries and His own works to do; the particular recovery and work that He does in one age is the ministry of that age—cf. Gen. 6:13-14.
  2. David was a minister of his age with the ministry of that age (Acts 13:21-22, 36a); in the Old Testament, Noah had the ministry of that age to build the ark, Moses had the ministry of that age to build the tabernacle, and David and Solomon had the ministry of that age to build the temple.
  3. A minister of the age with the ministry of the age is different from the local ministers; Luther was a minister of his age, and Darby was also a minister of his age; in order to catch up with the ministry of this present age, there is the need for us to see the vision; Michal was married to David, yet she did not see anything; she only saw David's outward condition, and she could not tolerate it; as a result, she was left behind—2 Sam. 6:16, 20-23.
  4. In the New Testament, the ministry of the Lord Jesus is to build up the church as the Body of Christ (Matt. 16:18); the many gifted persons produced in the Lord's ascension have only one ministry, that is, to minister Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ, the church; this building up is not accomplished directly by the gifted ones but by the saints who have been perfected by the gifted ones (Eph. 4:11-12, 16).
  5. In God's building ministry there are those who take the lead in that ministry in every age; may the Lord open our eyes to see that as long as we are human beings, we should be Christians; as long as we are Christians, we should enter into the Lord's ministry in this age.

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6. It is God's mercy that a person can see and come into contact with the ministry of the age, yet it is altogether a different thing for a person to take up the courage to forsake past ministries and enter into God's present ministry—cf. 1 Sam. 14:1-46; 2 Sam. 6:16, 20-23.
  7. The ministry of the age ministers the present truth to God's people; in 2 Peter 1:12 the present truth can also be rendered "the up-to-date truth"; every worker of the Lord should inquire before God as to what the present truth is—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:15-16; Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26-29; 3:5, 12, 21; Psa. 48:2; Rev. 19:7-9; 21:2.

## **§Day 4**

### **IV. Saul was chosen by God and anointed by Samuel to be the king of Israel—1 Sam. 9:1-2, 17; 10:1, 24:**

- A. Saul disobeyed God's word at least twice so that he lost his kingship and his kingdom (13:13-14; 15:19, 23; 28:17-19); when Saul disobeyed God in 1 Samuel 15, he actually rebelled against Him.
- B. In this chapter Samuel told Saul, "Rebellion is like the sin of divination, / And insubordination is like idolatry and teraphim" (v. 23a); to practice divination is to have contact with evil spirits; what Saul did in rebelling against God was like this sin of divination; he was not subordinate to God and in fact became an enemy to God; as a result, he lost his kingship.
- C. Saul's tragic end was altogether due to his not being properly related to God's economy; God, wanting to build up His kingdom among His chosen people, had brought Saul into His economy, but instead of participating in God's economy and cooperating with it, Saul was selfish and usurped God's kingdom to build up his own monarchy; he was filled with thoughts of the kingship, including thoughts about how his son would succeed him—20:31.
- D. In this, Saul was selfish and wrong to the uttermost; eventually, God gave Saul up and cut him off, tearing the kingdom away from him (15:28); because Saul was given up by God, he was left alone, like an orphan, having no provision of help when trouble

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came.

- E. Because of Saul's selfishness, the people of Israel suffered defeat and were slaughtered in the fight against the Philistines, and Saul and his sons were killed; Saul's ambition to have the kingdom for himself and for his son, with his jealousy of David, confiscated and ended his enjoyment of the good land promised by God—20:30-34.
- F. The collective death of Saul, his three sons, and his armor bearer was God's fair judgment on the one who had rebelled against Him, had usurped Him, and had become His enemy (1 Chron. 10:13-14); from Saul's tragic end we should learn the lesson of crucifying our flesh and denying our selfishness—our self-interest and self-seeking (Gal. 5:24; Matt. 16:24; Phil. 2:3).
- G. The record of Saul's terrible end is a strong warning to all who serve in the kingdom of God not to do a separate work within the kingdom of God or to abuse anything in the kingdom; we should not be like Saul, trying to build up a "monarchy" for ourselves; rather, we should all do one unique work to build up the kingdom of God, the Body of Christ—1 Sam. 31:1-13.

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## §Day 5

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- V. **David was chosen and anointed by God through Samuel to be the king of Israel—16:1, 12-13:**
  - A. After David slew Goliath, he was praised by the women of Israel as higher than Saul (18:7), but with David there is no hint that he was made proud or that he became ambitious for the kingship; when David was under the trial of Saul's persecution, he was approved to be the right one to carry out God's economy by establishing the kingdom of God on earth.
  - B. When David was under Saul's persecution, he had two chances to destroy Saul, but David would not do this because of his fear of God in that Saul was God's anointed; this indicates that David maintained a good order in God's kingdom—chs. 24 and 26; cf. Rom. 12:3.

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- C. No doubt, David learned a lot regarding not avenging himself but denying himself for the fulfilling of God's purpose, on the basis that he was a man according to God's heart—1 Sam. 13:14a.
- D. David is a typical model of a genuine child of Israel in the enjoyment of the good land promised and given by God to His chosen people; he trusted in God and walked with God according to His sovereignty and according to His leading and instruction in all his trials; David expected to remain in the good land, sharing in God's inheritance and serving Him—17:36-37; 23:14-16; 30:6b-10; 26:19b.
- E. David's sincere trust in God and his faithful walk with God qualified him fully to enjoy the good land to a high level, even up to the kingship according to God's heart with a kingdom that became the kingdom of God on the earth; David was one with God; what was his was God's, and what was God's was his; he and God had only one kingdom; such a one enjoyed the good land, typifying Christ, to the uttermost.
- F. After the death of Saul, "there was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David; but David became continually stronger, and the house of Saul became continually weaker" (2 Sam. 3:1); David was established by God as king with his kingdom exalted for the sake of God's people Israel (5:6-25); furthermore, "David became greater and greater; and Jehovah the God of hosts was with him" (v. 10); this indicates that David had God's presence.
- G. If in any matter we do not have the inner sense that the Lord is with us, we must be careful and reconsider our way (1 Sam. 16:14); in the Lord's recovery, whenever we do anything, we must take care of the sense of the Lord's presence; we all need to learn the lesson of caring for two things: the inward presence of God and the outward confirmation in our environment (cf. 2 Sam. 5:11-12).

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## §Day 6

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**H. Furthermore, we all need to learn of David on the negative side as well as on the positive side; the lust of the flesh is a devastating element that can destroy us; if such a godly man as David could be seduced, how can we escape?—11:1-27; cf. 2 Tim. 2:22; 1 Cor. 6:13, 18:**

1. Regardless of our attainment in our spiritual pursuit, it is possible for any of us to commit such a sin; we should read this account seriously in the presence of God; this account warns us that the indulgence of the flesh is a serious thing; David was tempted simply by a glance, and then he failed to restrict himself.

2. All the saints, especially the young ones, should search their hearts and make a strong resolution of heart never to go the way of the indulgence of the flesh (Judg. 5:15-16); we need to say, "Lord Jesus, I love You, I need You, and I receive You"; if we say this, He will be our Savior and our dynamic salvation; as the pneumatic Christ, He will save us, preserve us, and protect us from the contamination of this age, so that we may keep the glory that we have attained.

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## WEEK 12 — DAY 1

### Morning Nourishment

**Phil. 3:13-14 Brothers, I do not account of myself to have laid hold; but one thing I do: Forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before, I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called me upward.**

**Gal. 4:19 My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you.**

The books of Samuel, as books of history, are on Christ for our enjoyment that God may carry out His economy. These books reveal the right, the particular, and even the full way for us to enjoy Christ that we may be a part of God's economy. Concerning this we need to realize that God desires people who are according to Him, people who are His duplication. In the long period of history covered in 1 Samuel 1 to 2 Samuel 1, there are five major figures: Eli, Samuel, Jonathan, Saul, and David. We need to learn the lessons of these five persons in relation to God's economy. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, p. 127)

### Today's Reading

Eli was a priest by birth according to God's ordination. As a priest Eli had the right to enjoy the top portion of all the good land allotted to the twelve tribes of Israel (Num. 18).

Eli disregarded the priesthood in his loose disciplining of his two evil sons (1 Sam. 2:28-29). This caused the tragedy of the ending of his history, the termination of his enjoyment of the good land, and the fading of the priesthood in the divine revelation, that is, in the speaking for God. Today we need to learn of Eli to have a high regard for what God has given us in His recovery.

Eli was a priest who brought in the waning of the stale priesthood. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, pp. 127-128, 3) God's intention is to have many

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young men with every one fresh, new, and living. None of us should be old. To be old means to be set, settled, and occupied.... We always need to exercise to be young, to be new, to be renewed, to be fresh, and to be living all day long. It is only when you are young that there is a possibility for God to come in to call you, to choose you, and to use you to do something new. We need to give the Lord the way to go on in His progressive move through us. I hope that you will be a living, fresh, and new channel for the Lord to go on in His own way. This will require you to offer yourself to Him, to cooperate with Him.

I hope that we would take this fellowship and tell the Lord, "...I do not want there to be anything set, settled, or occupied with me. I want to be fully open to You for Your new move on this earth. Lord, I give myself to You. Come in and occupy, take, and possess me for Your up-to-date move on this earth." If we would pray to the Lord in this way, we will be the persons who will turn, who will transfer, the age.

There is always something new to be worked out by God. The Holy Spirit is now working and moving in the hearts of the children of God for the carrying out of His move. He is ready, but He is waiting for some people to cooperate with Him. The situation in today's religion cannot satisfy God. God wants to do something new. He wants to do something new in life, in knowing Christ, in experiencing Christ, in preaching Christ, in dispensing Christ, and in expressing Christ. The doctrines, the forms, the organization, the rituals, the regulations of organized religion, and the miraculous gifts cannot satisfy God nor can they fulfill His purpose. These are not what God's heart's desire is. God wants to do something new. He desires that Christ Himself would be known, realized, experienced, and expressed in a full and living way.... We need to tell the Lord that we are not here for religion, nor are we focused on teachings, doctrines, or gifts. But we are here one hundred percent for Christ Himself as the living One. (CWWL, 1964, vol. 1, "A Young Man in God's Plan," pp. 140-141)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1964, vol. 1, "A Young Man in God's Plan," chs. 1, 3

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## WEEK 12 – DAY 2

### Morning Nourishment

**1 Sam. 3:10 Then Jehovah came and stood by and called as at the other times, Samuel! Samuel! And Samuel said, Speak, for Your servant is listening.**

**20-21...All Israel... knew that Samuel had been established as a prophet of Jehovah...[who] revealed Himself to Samuel...by the word of Jehovah.**

**Luke 10:39 ...She had a sister called Mary, who...sat at the Lord's feet and was listening to His word.**

Samuel was faithful in all his statuses and offices. As a Levite, he served God his whole life. As a Nazarite, he kept his consecration without failure. As a priest-prophet, he spoke for God honestly and initiated the prophethood to replace the fading priesthood in the divine revelation. As a judge, he was faithful to God and just to the people, terminating the judgeship and bringing in the kingship for the changing of the age in the fulfillment of God's economy on the earth. Samuel enjoyed his portion of the good land to the fullest for his whole life. He was therefore a person who enjoyed the God-allotted portion of the promised good land, that is, Christ. There was no defect in his enjoyment of Christ.

The only defect in Samuel's history was that he appointed his two sons as judges among the children of Israel. His sons did not follow in his ways, and this gave cause for the children of Israel to ask for a king (1 Sam. 8:1-7). Humanly speaking, Samuel made a mistake in this matter, but this mistake helped God to manage the situation among His people for the fulfillment of His economy. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, p. 128)

### Today's Reading

Mary had a proper attitude. There are at least four aspects to a proper attitude.

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(1) She was at the feet of the Lord Jesus,...drawing near to the Lord. This is the shortest and quickest way to grow in life. No method is better than coming to Him moment by moment, loving Him, worshipping Him, and unceasingly fellowshiping with Him and remaining in His presence. Many who know God in a deep way have found this way... Paul also charged us to pray unceasingly (1 Thes. 5:17). If a man unceasingly fellowships with the indwelling Christ with an unveiled face, he will be changed into the Lord's likeness (2 Cor. 3:18).

(2) She sat at the feet of the Lord. This means that she put herself in a humble position. Humility is a crucial condition for receiving God's blessing. God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble (1 Pet. 5:5). Humility is not belittling ourselves; humility is ignoring ourselves, negating ourselves, and considering ourselves as nothing. If we draw near to God with deep humility, He will give grace to us.

(3) She was sitting down. She was not busy like her sister. Quietness is often the source of spiritual strength. The greatest challenge man faces is being quiet before the Lord. His eyes and thoughts often are distracted to the outside world. Of all the members in the body, the eyes are the busiest, and of all the faculties in the soul, the mind is the busiest. Those who are busy cannot receive revelation easily. A wandering mind and vacillating thoughts are like restless waves on a lake; the lake will never be able to clearly reflect the flowers and trees on the shore. If a man wants to have the Lord's image imprinted in him and to be transformed into the Lord's image, quietness is a necessity.

(4) She was listening to the Lord's word. The words that the Lord speaks are spirit and life. Through this word, the Lord dispenses Himself to men. Her listening to the Lord's word afforded the Lord the opportunity to communicate Himself to her so that she would gain the Lord and become like Him. She was continually receiving the Lord Himself. She did not just hear words; she was meeting the Lord.... It is a pity for anyone to just hear man's voice in a sermon and not meet the Christ behind the voice. (CWWN, vol. 38, pp. 271-272)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 38, ch. 39; Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, msg. 19, 1-18, 21-22, 33-34, 38

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## WEEK 12 – DAY 3

### Morning Nourishment

**Col. 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things.**

**Acts 13:36 Now David, having served his own generation by the counsel of God...**

**Eph. 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ.**

Jonathan loved David, covenanted with him, and predicted that he would be the second in David's kingdom when David would be the king (1 Sam. 18:1-4; 19:1-7; 20:8, 14-17, 41-42; 23:16-18). Saul's intention was to preserve the kingdom for Jonathan. However, Jonathan was not willing to take the kingdom but recognized that David should be on the throne. Jonathan should have told his father about this and then should have left his father to be with David. In typology, for Jonathan to follow David would have signified our following Christ today and our giving Him the preeminence.

Jonathan realized that David would be the king, but instead of going to follow David, Jonathan stayed with his father because of his natural affection toward his father. Because Jonathan would not leave his father, he suffered the same fate as his father and died with him in the battle. Jonathan lost the proper and adequate enjoyment of his portion in the good land promised by God because of his failure in not following David according to God's will due to his natural affection toward his father. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, p. 129)

### Today's Reading

In every age there is the ministry of that age. These ministries of the ages are different from the local ministers. Luther was a minister of his age.

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Darby was also a minister of his age. In every age the Lord has special things that He wants to accomplish. He has His own recoveries and His own works to do. The particular recovery and work that He does in one age is the ministry of that age.

Jonathan stood between Saul and David. He was one man standing between two ministries. He should have followed the second ministry. However, because Jonathan's relationship with the first ministry was too deep, he could not disentangle himself. In order to catch up with the ministry of the age, there is the need for us to see the vision. Michal was married to David, yet she did not see anything. She saw only David's condition before God, and she could not tolerate it. As a result, she was left behind (2 Sam. 6:16, 20-23).

It is God's mercy that a person can see and come into contact with the ministry of that age. Yet it is altogether a different thing for a man to take up the courage to forsake the past ministry.... Whether or not one can set aside his past ministry is entirely up to God's mercy. (CWWN, vol. 57, pp. 260-261)

During the age of David and Solomon, God desired to build the temple.... At that time there were not two different ministries building the temple; hence, there were not two different leaderships. In David's age it was David who was taking the lead. After David..., Solomon was the one taking the lead.

The first one who participated in the ministry of building the church was the Lord Jesus [Matt. 16:18]. The Lord's ministry was to build up the Body of Christ. For this He chose twelve apostles and brought them into the ministry of building the church.

It stands to reason that in this age also there should be the continuation of the Lord's ministry. We cannot deny that on the earth today there is the Lord's building. May the Lord open our eyes to see that as long as we are human beings, we should be Christians; as long as we are Christians, we should enter into the Lord's ministry in this age. (CWWL, 1987, vol. 2, "Words of Training for the New Way," pp. 99-100)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 57, ch. 25; CWWL, 1987, vol. 2, "Words of Training for the New Way," ch. 2

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## WEEK 12 – DAY 4

### Morning Nourishment

**1 Sam. 15:23 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.**

**Gal. 5:24 But they who are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and its lusts.**

**Matt. 16:24 ...If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.**

Saul was chosen by God and anointed by Samuel to be the king of Israel (1 Sam. 9:17; 10:1, 24).

Saul disobeyed God's word at least twice so that he lost his kingship and his kingdom (13:13-14; 15:19, 23; 28:17-19). When Saul disobeyed God in chapter 15, he actually rebelled against Him. Thus, in this chapter Samuel told Saul, "Rebellion is like the sin of divination, / And insubordination is like idolatry and teraphim" (v. 23a). To practice divination is to have contact with evil spirits, something that is utterly contrary to God's principle. What Saul did in rebelling against God was like this sin of divination. Saul was not subordinate to God and in fact became an enemy to God. As a result, he lost his kingship. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, pp. 129-130)

### Today's Reading

From the tragic end of Saul we can learn many things concerning God's economy. The tragedy suffered by Saul was altogether due to his not being properly related to God's economy. God is carrying out His economy on earth, and He brought Saul into His economy. Instead of participating in God's economy and cooperating with it, Saul was selfish. God wanted to build up His kingdom among His chosen people, but Saul usurped God's

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kingdom to build up his own monarchy.... After Saul was appointed to be the king, he was immediately filled with thoughts of the kingship, including how his son would succeed him (1 Sam. 20:31). In this Saul was selfish and wrong to the uttermost.

Eventually, God gave Saul up and cut him off, tearing the kingdom away from him [cf. 15:28].... Because Saul was given up by God, he was left alone, like an orphan, having no provision of help when trouble came. Even though David was the most skillful and experienced fighter, he was of no use to Saul because of Saul's selfishness and envy. Actually, because Saul wanted to do away with him, David was forced to go to a country that was Israel's biggest enemy (27:1-2).

When the Philistines gathered their camps to fight against Israel, David, who had become the bodyguard to King Achish, was in a dilemma of being one with the Philistines to fight against Israel. This dilemma was the result of Saul's selfishness. The people of Israel suffered defeat and were slaughtered also because of Saul's selfishness. But God in His sovereignty came in to deal with Saul and to rescue David from his dilemma.

We need to muse upon every aspect of this story, for it contains some lessons that we need to learn. First, from this story, this illustration, we should learn the lesson of crucifying our flesh. Next, we should learn to condemn our selfishness—our self-interest and self-seeking. Furthermore, Saul was full of self, and from his tragic end we must learn to deny our self. As the Lord Jesus said, if we would follow Him, we must deny the self and take up the cross (Matt. 16:24).

The record of Saul's terrible end is a strong warning to all the serving ones in the kingdom of God not to do a separate work within the kingdom of God or to abuse anything in the kingdom. In the Lord's recovery we must be in fear and trembling, always working for God's kingdom and not for our own work. Saul's tragic ending should warn us not to play with God.... We are all here to build up the kingdom, the Body of Christ.... No matter where we may be, we have only one work. We should not be today's Saul, considering only the work in our region and trying to build up a monarchy for ourselves. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, pp. 113-114, 125, 119)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 34, "The Glorious Church," ch. 3

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## WEEK 12 – DAY 5

### Morning Nourishment

**1 Sam. 13:14 ...Jehovah has sought a man according to His heart for Himself, and Jehovah has appointed him ruler over His people...**

**30:6...But David strengthened himself in Jehovah his God.**

**2 Sam. 5:10 And David became greater and greater; and Jehovah the God of hosts was with him.**

David was chosen and anointed by God through Samuel (1 Sam. 16:1, 12-13). After David slew Goliath he was praised by the women of Israel as higher than Saul (18:7). With David there is no hint that he was made proud nor that he became ambitious for the kingship.

After David was anointed and before he was enthroned as the king of Israel, he went through the trial of Saul's persecution for about seven years, from about 1063—1057 B.C. While he was under the trial, he was approved to be the right one to carry out God's economy by establishing the kingdom of God on the earth.

When David was under Saul's persecution, he had two chances to destroy Saul. However, David would not do this because of his fear of God in that Saul was God's anointed (chs. 24, 26). The fact that David would not do anything to damage God's anointed indicates that David maintained a good order in God's kingdom. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, pp. 130-131)

### Today's Reading

At the death of Saul David did not rejoice but rather sentenced to death the reporter of Saul's death and then sang a dirge praising and uplifting Saul to the uttermost (2 Sam. 1). No doubt, David learned a lot regarding not avenging himself but denying himself for the fulfilling of God's purpose, on the basis that he was a man according to God's heart (1 Sam. 13:14a).

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David was a person who trusted in God and walked according to God's sovereignty in all his trials (17:36-37; 23:14-16; 30:6b-10). While he was under trial, he sought God's leading. He was one with God and behaved according to God.

David is a typical model of a genuine child of Israel in the enjoyment of the good land promised and given by God to His chosen people, by trusting in God and walking with God according to His leading and instruction. David expected to remain in the good land and share in Jehovah's inheritance and serve Him (26:19b). His sincere trust in God and his faithful walk with God qualified him fully to enjoy the good land to a high level, even up to the kingship in the good land according to God's heart with a kingdom which became the kingdom of God on the earth. David was one with God. What was his was God's, and what was God's was his. He and God had only one kingdom. Such a one enjoyed the good land, Christ, to the uttermost.

David's being established by God is seen...in the building of Zion as his stronghold and of Jerusalem (2 Sam. 5:9). Furthermore, "David became greater and greater; and Jehovah the God of hosts was with him" (v. 10). This indicates that David had God's presence. In serving the Lord, we need to have the assurance that we have His presence. If we are really following the Lord for the fulfillment of His economy, we will certainly have His presence. If in any matter we do not have the inner sense that the Lord is with us, we must be careful and consider our way.... In the Lord's recovery, whenever we do anything, we must take care of the sense of the Lord's presence.

Everything concerning David was arranged under God's sovereign direction to accomplish one thing: the building up of His kingdom in His elect through the proper person. At that time the proper person was David, but today it should be the people in the Lord's recovery.... In this age...the particular thing that God intends to accomplish is to recover everything that has been lost and is missing in today's worldly Christianity. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, pp. 131-132, 142, 144)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1964, vol. 4, "The Vision of God's Building," ch. 11

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## WEEK 12 – DAY 6

### Morning Nourishment

**2 Tim. 2:22 But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.**

**Judg. 5:15-16 ...Among the divisions of Reuben there were great resolutions in heart... In the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart.**

David...willingly committed adultery. In his record of Christ's genealogy, Matthew purposely wrote, "David begot Solomon of her who had been the wife of Uriah" [Matt. 1:6b]. This indicates the seriousness of David's sin.

We need to learn of David on the negative side as well as on the positive side. The lust of the flesh is a devastating element that can destroy us. If such a godly man as David could be seduced, can we escape? Human beings are human beings, flesh is flesh, and lusts are lusts. We should always keep a distance between ourselves and those of the opposite sex. A young man or young woman should not talk privately with someone of the opposite sex in a closed room. No godly person should be loose in contacting the other sex. Regardless of our attainment in our spiritual pursuit, it is possible for any of us to commit such a sin. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, pp. 213, 216)

### Today's Reading

David's defect was that he did not restrict his flesh. When he was crowned in Hebron at thirty years of age, he already had at least six wives (2 Sam. 3:2-5). Later, he abused his kingship by murdering Uriah and robbing him of his wife.

In His creation God ordained that man have one wife so that man may have godly children (Mal. 2:14-15). However, some men broke this principle. For instance, Gideon, one of the judges of Israel, had many wives

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(Judg. 8:30). Boaz, an important ancestor in the genealogy of Christ, was a good pattern because he controlled the lust of his flesh (Ruth 3). Samuel was also a good example. His mother consecrated him to God as a Nazarite, and he kept the vow of his mother throughout his life. David, on the contrary, even though he was a man according to God's heart, had a great failure in the matter of the lust of the flesh.

God exercised a severe punishment upon David because his sin was very evil. God loved David, but because of his sin David lost his standing and position and eleven of the twelve tribes. Only the tribe of Judah remained with David (2 Sam. 20:1-2). After Solomon's reign the kingdom was divided, and eventually Judah and Israel were taken into captivity. The children of Israel lost their nation and the land of their fathers; they were scattered around the globe; and they were persecuted and killed. Today, although they have a narrow strip of land near the Mediterranean Sea, they have no peace with their neighbors.

The account of God's punishing judgment on David is written as a warning to us today (1 Cor. 10:11). We should read this account seriously in the presence of God. This account warns us that the indulgence of the flesh is a serious thing. David was tempted simply by a glance and then he failed to restrict himself. In contacting the opposite sex, we in the Lord's recovery need to be sanctified and separated unto God. The evil concerning sex is very contagious. We must exercise our spirit to overcome our flesh and our old man. This must not be a mere teaching; it must be a practice in our daily life.

All the saints, especially the young ones, should search their hearts and make a strong resolution of heart (Judg. 5:15-16) never to go the way of the indulgence of the flesh.... We need to say, "Lord Jesus, I love You, I need You, and I receive You." If we say this, He will be our Savior and our dynamic salvation. As the pneumatic Christ, He will save us, preserve us, and protect us from the contamination of this age, so that we may keep the glory that we have gained. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, pp. 217-220)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1953, vol. 1, "Knowing Life and the Church," chs. 16, 19-20

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<< **WEEK 12 — HYMN** >>

**Hymns, #904 We have a most glorious King**

Service — By Dwelling with the Lord

1

We have a most glorious King;  
The heavens, He says, are His throne;  
All worlds are His mighty domain,  
All kingdoms His scepter shall own.  
He dwells with His people below,  
He loves in their trials to share;  
We dwell with the King for His work,  
His burden we willingly bear.

2

I'm dwelling with Jesus my King;  
I've found where He dwells with His own;  
I've opened the door of my heart;  
He's made it His temple and throne.  
Like Mary I sit at His feet,  
Like John I recline on His breast;  
His presence is fulness of joy,  
His bosom is infinite rest.

3

I dwell with the King for His work,  
I've part in His glorious plan  
To bring in His kingdom to earth  
And tell His salvation to man.  
The world has its work and rewards,  
I count them but folly and loss;  
My business is only His work,  
My message is only His cross.

4

I dwell with the King for His work,  
The work, it is His and not mine;  
He plans and prepares it for me  
And fills me with power divine.

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So duty is changed to delight,  
And prayer into praise as I sing;  
I dwell with my King for His work  
And work in the strength of my King.

5

We'll dwell with the King for His work  
And work thru each day of the year.  
Perhaps ere it passes, the King  
In glory Himself shall appear.  
Oh, then in some closer embrace,  
Oh, then in some nobler employ  
We'll dwell with the King for His work  
In endless, ineffable joy!