

March 21, 2021

Kingdom of Heaven: Obedience, Faith and Success

Last week we learned about Kingdom Leadership through Moses and Aaron. To better understand the Kingdom of God, we started in the beginning of the Old Testament. God's Kingdom does not change: it is the rule and reign of Jesus Christ in our heart that manifests on this earth. The Kingdom of God existed before this planet was created and everything was created through Him and by Him. Jesus was King of Kings and Lord of Lords before the creation of this earth. We don't worship the Kingdom, we worship the King, but by understanding His authority, His rule and reign, we will increase our faith and this will lead to success. Without faith it is impossible to please God.

Heb 11:6 *But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who **diligently** seek Him.*

Eph 3:8-11 *To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, 9 and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who **created all things through Jesus Christ**; 10 to the intent that now the **manifold wisdom of God** might be made known by the **church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places**,*

Col 1:15-17 *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 **For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.** 17 And He is **before** all things, and in Him all things consist.*

Moses' Final Days as Leader:

The children of Israel were in Kadesh, the same place the spies were sent out 40 years earlier. The people contended with Moses again because there was no water. The Lord told Moses to gather the congregation together before the rock and "speak to the rock" and it will yield water.

Num 20:10-12 *And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock; and he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels! Must **we** bring water for you out of this rock?" 11 Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank. 12 Then the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did **not believe Me**, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."*

SFL Foot Notes: "Moses failed to be open to the **new avenue** through which God intended to move. He acted on the basis of his past experience. The method worked, but the Lord was displeased at Moses disobedience. **The measure of success in the Lord's eyes is not the outcome of the effort, but the obedience of his servant.**"

"Success is determined by our obedience to the Lord and trusting in Him with the outcome." -Michael D Smith

Moses led the nation of Israel to the Promised Land, but he did not cross over the Jordan River. On Moses' 120th birthday, He announced to Israel he would not be going into the Promised Land (**Deut 31:3**). This was because Moses was **disobedient** to the Lord. Now Moses would turn over Leadership to Joshua.

The Judges Governed Israel about 300 years (Deborah, Gideon, Samson)

Israel Demands A King

The people of Israel cried out to God for a king. The nations around them all had a king. God warned them of the downfalls of a king. Up until that time, prophets and judges led the people by telling them God's will and direction. Samuel warned them that a king will take their sons, daughters and their money, but the people still cried out.

1 Sam 8:6-8 But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." So Samuel prayed to the Lord. 7 And the Lord said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.

1 Sam 8:19-20 Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, "No, but we will have 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.**"

God gave them a king after their own heart; one of pride and rebellion. His name was Saul. I wonder if this is what happened at our last Presidential election in America? People wanted to trust in our government for provision, free handouts, protection from Covid and overblown social injustice. But at the same time, millions of Americans were crying out to God for forgiveness, humbling themselves and praying, asking Him to heal our land. Many believe through voter fraud the election was stolen. Maybe God is showing America the result of what they asked for, but yet will still honor the cry of His people?

To be in authority, we have to be under authority.

Although Saul was king, Samuel was the spiritual leader. Saul did not obey Samuel as to offerings and sacrifices, or in waiting for Samuel, (**1 Sam 10:8 and 13:8-15**). This first act of disobedience caused Saul to lose succession (naming the next king) by taking matters into his own hands. **Foot Notes SFLB:** "The first rule of having authority over others is to be under authority oneself."

Obedience is Better Than Sacrifice

King Saul was told by Samuel to go to war with Amalek and utterly destroy everything.

1 Sam 15:3 Now go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey. "'

1 Sam 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.

Samuel confronted King Saul about being disobedient and Saul said "I obeyed the voice of the Lord...**but the people plundered sheep and oxen the best of the things...to sacrifice to the Lord your God...**" King Saul first said he obeyed the Lord, and justified his disobedience because they were sacrificing to the Lord and then he blamed it on the people.

1 Sam 15:22-23 So 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.**"

1 Sam 15:24-25 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.** 25 Now therefore, please pardon my sin, and return with me, that I may worship the Lord."

1 Sam 15:28 So Samuel said to him, "The Lord has **torn the kingdom of Israel** from you today, and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you. 29 And also the **Strength of Israel will not lie nor relent.** For He is not a man, that He should relent."

Samuel was sent to anoint David as King (**1 Sam 16:13-15**) and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David and departed from Saul and a distressing spirit came upon him. Saul ruled Israel for another 15 years.

Obedience builds our faith and leads to success. Disobedience will cause problems and limit victories.