

The Tradgedy of Saul | Missionary Paul Taube

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[0 : 00] Right, Paul Toby's going to make his way up here to preach tonight. And before he preaches, we'll update about Nepal. So I want you to prepare your hearts to rejoice. Paul is not just the missionary strategic partner we support, but him and Amber lived here and they trained him.

And so we have an investment in Nepal. And we're super proud of them. And I'm so thankful that he's in for the weekend. I just love this family so much. I love the work that they're doing. I love to get to watch their faithfulness through the years.

I knew Paul before he could even think about growing a beard. That's how long we've been friends. And he's just doing a good work in the palm. And I'm so grateful that he's going to preach for us tonight. Thank you. I'd just like to say thank you to the church.

This always is a second church for us. Our home church is in Middletown, Ohio, where we grew up, where I was saved and baptized growing up. And they've always been our home church.

But Vision is really where Amber and I moved. We moved here right after we got married. So this is Amber and I's church, more than anywhere else. And you guys really helped us over these years and helped us become missionaries to Nepal.

[1 : 04] Jolynn, our first daughter, was born here. Shepherd was born here as well. And so this is family for us. And so we just thank you all for your love for us and all your help in allowing us to serve the Lord in Kathmandu, Nepal.

We've been there for six years now. This is our first full furlough. So we are going to be here for a year. We've been back for about two months now. It came out a little earlier than what we were, about six weeks earlier than what we were planning as the country was going back into lockdown.

And so if you pray for Nepal, pray for the churches there. The Lord's allowed us to be involved in two churches, Beginnings Baptist Church. We started four years ago. And the Lord's been blessing there.

And really with one young guy that came and got saved and disciple, he's there helping lead that church in our absence. So we praise the Lord for him. And then a second church that we got involved in about two years ago from a Bible study that was going on in my friend's house and working with the Muggedy speaking people, a different group there, a different people group.

And so as we go back, we're praying about what the Lord would have us to do, see where we can, there's so much opportunity. There's so many places that we could go, so many people that are asking us to come to their village, so many contacts.

[2 : 17] So we really just need the Lord's guidance. We need open doors and we need your prayers. I asked them if they would show a picture for you all tonight from 17 years ago when I was 15 years old.

I went to the very first, did they put it up there? Oh, there we go. Very first OG camp at Sand Mountain. I wasn't supposed to be there. I think it was for college students. But because Jacob was like some of the leaders, some of the counselors here tonight, he was in charge of the games that week.

So he brought his little brother to come along. And so June 8, 2004 is the date on there. I don't know if you can see it or not. But I signed the pledge.

I surrendered my life to the Lord as a missionary and signed that there. So it was last week, 17 years ago. It was Tuesday night of camp. And the Lord's been working to take me to where I am now 17 years later.

It was because of Vision Baptist Church. 17 years ago before Vision Baptist Church was here. But the people involved here, the people who have given and spent and loved and taken the time, and now bringing my family to the country of Nepal and what the Lord's done there.

[3 : 27] It's because of the investment that this church continues to make and the prayers and the time and all that you have done. And so we do thank you for that. But as I preach tonight out of 1 Chronicles 10, if you want to turn your Bibles there, I wish I could say, as you look at that, and many of the students that have gone this past week and many of the people here that have made decisions in the past of serving the Lord, of signing pledges, of dedicating their lives, of salvation, testimonies, and all these things, I wish I could say in the past 17 years, from the time I was 15 years old to today, that I have lived up completely to that pledge that I signed, right?

I wish I could tell you that I never sinned in the past 17 years. I've lived perfectly. I've been a, you know, as I went back from camp and I went back to high school, I wish I could say that I was the perfect high schooler that completely gave myself to my studies and I was a perfect student for my teachers.

I wish I could tell you that I was a perfect Bible college student that was completely in love with the Word of God and was studying and was working and striving to live up to the pledge.

I wish I could tell you that after getting married that I was a perfect husband and after having kids that I was a perfect father. But that's just not how the story goes, is it? And that's kind of what we see in 1 Chronicles and the message tonight really going on from what Trent preached this morning about Jesus.

We're going to look at that, look to Jesus at the end of the message here. But 1 Chronicles, as we look at the history of Israel, he kind of gives us, you know, all history is written to teach us something.

[5 : 17] And the author of the book of Chronicles does the same thing. He really tells us about two people. If we look at chapters 1 through 9, he gives us a history of the genealogies of all the tribes of Israel and how they've gotten to the land of Canaan and how they've all been settled into these different areas.

And then in chapter 10, where we look at tonight, we have one chapter, one single chapter, 14 verses of the man who would be, who was supposed to be, who could have been the great king of Israel, right?

The man Saul. And God raised him up. He gave him this great position, this great opportunity to lead Israel and to start this dynasty that would lead God's people and fulfill the promises of God.

But we know how that story ends. And tonight we're going to look at that. We're going to look at the tragedy of King Saul. But then in chapter 11 all the way to chapter 29, the majority of the book, we read about King David, right?

And all just chapter after chapter after chapter of all these great things that King David did. And all these victories and all these successes and all these great conquests.

[6 : 33] We read in chapters 11 and 12, David builds this great army. An army that's never been seen before in Israel. Men that are faithful to him, men that love him, men that are going to give their lives for him.

Chapters 13 through 16, we have spiritual, political establishment of Israel. He brings the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem. Jerusalem is established as the capital, a city that they said nobody could ever conquer this city.

It's an impossible task. And David goes in, he takes it over, and he has this great capital city. The Philistines, their greatest enemy the entire time. Saul cannot get rid of the Philistines.

He cannot do anything right to conquer this great enemy. David comes in, he completely wipes out the Philistines. Chapter 17, we have this covenant between God and David that he's going to establish his kingdom forever.

18, 19, and 20. Not only the Philistines, but like every other surrounding enemy, every other nation around them, they can't do anything against Israel. It's just victory after victory.

[7 : 41] Everywhere David goes, everywhere the army marches, God just gives victory after victory. Chapters 22 through 29, eight chapters of David setting up the temple, getting everything ready for this great moment when Solomon's going to come in, and he's going to bring the temple and establish it there in Israel forever, right?

It's this great history of what David is going to accomplish. And right in the middle, we have this one chapter, these 14 verses of this tragedy of Saul.

And the reason it's a tragedy, it keeps going over and over and over again in the book of 1 Chronicles, the reason, we can go ahead and read here in chapter 10, verses 1 through 14, we'll see the reason why it was a tragedy, what happened in the life of Saul.

But here in verse 1 of chapter 10, we read, it says, Now the Philistines fought against Israel, and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines and fell down, slain in Mount Gilboa.

And the Philistines followed hard after Saul and after his sons, and the Philistines slew Jonathan and Abinadab and Malchisua and the sons of Saul. And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him, and he was wounded from the archers.

[9 : 03] Then said Saul to his armor bearer, Draw thy sword and thrust me through therewith, lest these uncircumcised come and abuse me. But his armor bearer would not, for he was sore afraid.

So Saul took a sword and fell upon it. And when his armor bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise on the sword and died. So Saul died, and his three sons and all his house died together.

Great tragedy. Verse 7, And when all the men of Israel that were in the valley saw that they fled, that Saul and his sons were dead, then they forsook their cities and fled, and Philistines came and dwelt in them.

And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his sons fallen in Mount Gilboa. And when they had stripped him, they took his head and his armor and sent into the land of the Philistines round about to carry tidings unto their idols and to the people.

And they put his armor in the house of their gods and fastened his head in the temple of Dagon. And when all the Jabesh-Gilead heard all that Philistine has done to Saul, they arose all the valiant men and took away the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons and brought them to Jabesh and buried their bones under the yoke of Jabesh and fasted seven days.

[10 : 14] So Saul died. Here's the reason for his tragedy. And what I believe, as we look through 1 Chronicles, we'll see over and over again, he's trying to teach us something about seeking after God, following after God, seeking his will, staying close to God, just as we heard Trent preach this morning, that we need to stay within the will of God.

We need to stay close to him and look to his will, not the will of the world around us. Verse 13, So Saul died for his transgression, which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of the one that had a familiar spirit to inquire of it, and inquired not of the Lord.

inquired not of the Lord. Therefore he slew him and turned the kingdom unto David, the son of Jesse. Not just brought judgment on Saul, but he handed over the kingdom.

He canceled the kingdom from the family of Saul, and he gave it to one, as we read about David, who would seek after God, who would look to God as his master, as his king, as his leader, who would inquire after God.

We see this over and over again. Two very important stories, I think, in the book of 1 Chronicles. Two great mistakes that King David made.

[11 : 39] Like I said, we all, we make decisions for the Lord. David was a great king, but David made mistakes. David did not always live up to what he was supposed to live up to.

He didn't always live up to the king that he was supposed to be. And 1 Chronicles gives us two stories. The first one is when David is bringing in the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem.

And instead of carrying it the way God commanded them to, he did not give attention to the Word of God. He did not give attention to the command of God. Instead, they put it on a cart, right? And they bring it on a cart, and as the oxen, the bulls that are carrying it, as they hit bad terrain, the Ark starts tumbling over, a guy reaches out, puts his hand on it, and God strikes him dead, right?

And this devastates David. Devastates him. And he cries out to God, and he goes back, he figures out what to do, what he's supposed to do, and later he repents, he figures out what the will of the Lord is, he figures out where he did wrong, he didn't run away from God, he didn't abandon the things of God, but he committed his life to it, and then brought the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem, the way they were supposed to do with sacrifice, with repentance, with thanksgiving to the Lord over and over and over again as they brought in the Ark.

The second one we see is in, as David disobeys in counting the people, right? And very interesting, as we look in 1 Chronicles, as we compare it to Samuel, when we read the same story, Samuel, he tells us that it was the sin of the people that God's upset with, that it was Israel who was in sin, Israel who was not following after God, and so God comes against the people of Israel, and he uses this event to punish Israel, to bring repentance to Israel.

[13 : 35] But Chronicles looks at the same event, and he looks at it at a little different angle. He looks at it through the lens of David, and David's sin, and David's pride, and disobeying the commandment that we read in Exodus chapter 30, verses 12 through 16, that a king, that God's people were not to take a census, that they're to do it in a very specific way, that they're to do it to honor God, and that they're supposed to do it in a God-honoring way, and David does it the way he wants to do it.

David does it in his pride. David does it in a way to see what he can accomplish. And so God, again, we read in 1 Chronicles that a different lens, that Satan is using it to tempt David.

And I think it's very interesting that Chronicles, the author of Chronicles, takes this event, same event happening, but we look at it in two different ways, and Chronicles wants us to understand something, that David has temptation as well, that God has taken his hands of protection away from David and given Satan this opportunity, similar to probably what we see in the book of Job, that God has taken his hands of protection away from David and allowed this temptation to come in to bring David back closer to God, to bring David back into that close relationship with God where he needs to depend and seek after God for his leadership, for his help.

And so David, again we see him repent there and call upon the Lord, again sacrificing and thanksgiving and coming and seeking the Lord again.

But the tragedy that we see here in 1 Chronicles 10, right in the middle of this book, and a lot of times I think growing up in church and we'd hear stories of Saul and we'd hear stories of David, I always thought that Saul must have been king maybe like three or four years.

[15 : 28] And David had to be king for like 50 years. He just had this great long reign and David did all these great things and Saul, he just, he became king. The Bible doesn't say anything good that Saul ever accomplished.

Everything he did, he couldn't even find his father's goats. He made, he was, just made brash decisions. He was gonna, he told everybody they had to fast until they had victory and the whole army is starving to death and he won't, he just won't back down.

He's ready to kill his son who didn't even hear the vow that he had made. It was just every decision he made. He was just, he was trying to accomplish everything in his own strength. He was trying to do everything himself and just as Trent preached this morning, he had no patience for waiting on God and God's timing and God's victory.

He was trying to do everything himself. But we look at the history, we see that Saul's reigning time, his time on the throne of Israel and David's time on the throne were pretty similar, almost identical.

Forty years, forty years, maybe Saul a little bit less, maybe David a little bit more, but they both had the same amount of time. They both had the same amount of opportunity. God didn't bring, he gave Saul many opportunities, decades of opportunities to serve God as a godly king to seek after him, but Saul would not seek after God.

[17 : 00] He would not come on his knees before God and ask God for forgiveness and help to do the right thing. We see here that Saul failed to keep the word of the Lord in 1 Samuel 13, 13.

He took matters into his own hands. In 1 Samuel 13, 13, Samuel tells him, God would have established you as king. If you would have listened to the word of God, if you would have sought after God, God would have given it to you.

It would have been yours. Instead of repenting, as we saw David in 1 Chronicles, the same book, the same author, he shows David's mistake and David's response and how he came.

And many times we make those mistakes. We say we're going to do a certain thing for God. We make these decisions. We tell God how we're going to live for Him. And in our mistakes, we go farther from God.

And what God wants us to do is go back to Him. To go to Him, repent, and to go on our knees and ask God for the strength to continue on. That's what we see here.

[18 : 08] The tragedy in verse 14, he says, He inquired not of the Lord. When God brought the judgment, when God brought the rebuke, when God showed His mistakes, he would not inquire after the Lord.

He would not seek after Him. Instead, he went farther and farther away from God. Two other kings that we can compare this to. We see Ahab, the husband of Jezebel, the most evil king in the Word of God.

At the end of his life, after all his wickedness, God brings the rebuke. He brings the judgment. And Ahab, he inquires after the Lord. He asks for forgiveness.

And what does God do? He says, I'll forgive him. That's all right. Okay, I won't judge you. I'll bring the judgment later. I'm still going to bring punishment. I'm still going to judge.

But I'll bring it in the next generations. Ahab, because you sought after me, because you inquired after the Lord, I will forgive it. I'll postpone it.

[19 : 11] And then we look at Asa, Asa, however we want to say his name, lived a life that was pleasing to God. A life that was honoring to God and bringing revival back to Israel and doing what God wanted him to do.

And at the end of his life, he ran away from God. He had a disease in his feet. He couldn't walk. He couldn't do anything. And the Word of God tells us he would, in his stubbornness, in his anger, in his refusal of the things of God, he would not inquire of the Lord.

And instead, he went to the physicians, he went to the world, he went to other countries. He sought for help and guidance in this world instead of the things of God. And he died in his disease.

He died in his stubbornness. And so, 1 Chronicles, with Saul and with David, we see these two comparisons of one who would not inquire after the Lord.

He would not go after the things of God. He would not seek God's forgiveness and love and mercy and grace and forgiveness. And instead, he would go farther and farther into his bitterness, into his anger, and go farther and farther away from God.

[20 : 27] And David, who in his life as well, made many mistakes and many disappointments, he would continue to go back and seek after God, inquire after the Lord with thanksgiving, with sacrifice, with begging for forgiveness.

And every time, God would bring grace. Every time, God would bring mercy. And that's the reason that in 1 Chronicles, these two kings are very similar, same amount of time on the throne, the same opportunity given by God.

We have 14 verses set aside for Saul. 14 verses. And the rest of the chapter is all these things that God did for David and all these victories that he brought.

But at the end of 1 Chronicles, if you would turn with me, chapter 29, as David comes in of his life and he's getting ready to turn over the kingdom to Solomon, he's prepared the temple, he's prepared everything, God has done so many great things, given him so many opportunities, and he comes to the end and he has this poem, this song of praise to the Lord before the people of Israel.

In verse 10, he says, Wherefore David blessed the Lord before all the congregation, and David said, Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel, our Father, forever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty for all that is in heaven and the earth is thine.

[21 : 55] Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor came of thee and thou reignest over all, and in thine hand is power and might, and in thy hand it is to make great and to give strength unto all.

Now therefore, our God, we thank thee and praise thy glorious name. But who am I and what is my people? And what should we be able to offer so willingly after this sort?

For all things come of thee and of thine own have we given thee. For we are strangers before thee and sojourners, as were all our fathers. 1 Chronicles, we start chapters 1 through 9, all through the history, all the genealogies, leading up the failure of Saul, the tragedy of Saul, and then the victory of David.

But David says, we're all sojourners, we're all strangers before thee. As were our fathers, our days on the earth are as a shadow and there is none abiding.

David comes to the end and he says, there's no hope. Saul failed. I am done. I have failed over and over again, but it's by the riches of God, the riches of his grace, the riches of his mercy that I'm still here, all that I have done, all of my strength, it's all God.

[23 : 13] David comes to the end and he says, it's not me. We read this great history of all the things that David accomplished and David at the end says, none of it was me. It wasn't my strength, it wasn't my ability, it wasn't my power, it wasn't my victory, it wasn't my glory, it was all God that did it in my life and the only one, as we heard this morning out of the book of Luke, the only one that could come and live according to the will of God, the perfect son of God, was Jesus Christ, right?

That he had a commitment to the Lord from the time he was born, from eternity past, he fulfilled the commands of God, he never sinned like we do, like Saul did, like David did.

He completely did the will of the Father. John 5, verse 19, he said, then answered Jesus said unto them, verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do.

For what things whoever he doeth, there also doeth the Son likewise. Jesus said, whatever the Father wants, whatever the Father wills, whatever the Father commands, I do accordingly.

I do likewise. He says in verse 30, I can of my own self do nothing. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just because I seek not my own will.

[24 : 39] I don't do what I want, I don't seek my own will, but the will of the Father which has sent me. John 8, verses 28 and 29, then said Jesus unto them, when ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am he and that I do nothing of myself.

But as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me. The Father hath not left me alone, for I always, always do those things that please him.

Jesus said, I always do the things that please the Father. He is the King of Kings. Amen? He is the one who our hope is in. David failed, Saul failed, we all fail, but Jesus is the Son of God, the King of Kings, the one who sat on the throne of God and he always did what pleased the Father.

He brought our hope, he brought salvation. And so this morning, as we look at the tragedy of Saul, and we see the failures of David, and we learn from these lessons, we see the history that the author of the book of Chronicles is trying to tell us is that we need to be close to God.

We're going to fail. We make these commitments. Our teenagers have made these commitments these past weeks. We in our past have made these commitments to God and we've told them we're going to live a certain way.

[26 : 03] We've committed as a husband that I'm going to love and cherish and I'm going to take care, I'm going to do all these things. And so often, we fail. We come short of doing what we say we're going to do.

as an employer, as an employee, as a father. We fail. But the Word of God teaches us if we'll come to the Father, how do we come to the Father?

Through the perfect Son of Jesus Christ. He says we come close. Don't run away from the Father. Don't run away from Jesus Christ. But we inquire after Him and He will help us.

He will continue us on. He will help us to be what He would have us to be and help us to live a life that is pleasing to Him. Not in our strength. David said, it's all His.

It's His glory. Fathers have come. They've all passed. I'm on my way out. There's none abiding. There's no hope in man but in the man, Jesus Christ.

[27 : 01] We can stay close to the Father. We can have a relationship with the Father. And we can continue on even when we fail. We can seek after the Father. Father. And He will lift us up again and He will make us new again.

He will renew our strength and make us what He would have us to be. I'll ask Trent to come as I pray this evening. Lord God, I thank You for the Word of God that teaches us over and over again that You are loving and forgiving.

And if we come to You, if we come before You, inquire after Your help and Your strength and Your glory and Your love and Your mercy and Your forgiveness time and time again, You will never fail us.

You will never leave us. Forgive us when we have failed You. Help us to continue on even when we fail, even when we cannot keep going, that You would strengthen us, that You would help our unbelief, that You would help our doubts, that You would help us to be who You would have us to be.

We love You, Lord. And we ask this in Jesus' name.