

PLAYING THE FOOL

TEXT: I SAMUEL 26

Introduction:

1. In I Samuel 24 we read how David spared Saul's life. David's men wanted to kill Saul, and David could have easily done so but he would not (24:10-13).
2. David recognized that the Lord had delivered Saul into his hand (24:10). Here in I Samuel 26, we see how the Lord once again delivered Saul into David's hand and once again David would not kill Saul (26:8-10).
3. In chapter 24, after Saul realized that David spared his life, he sounded contrite and humble (24:16-18).
4. But Saul was a deceiver. The Bible says, "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (II Tim. 3:13).
5. Saul was inconsistent. He put away the wizards and witches and those with familiar spirits, but then he went to the witch at Endor for help.
6. At times Saul would sound contrite and repentant, but it wouldn't last very long (I Sam. 26:21). And so David learned he could not believe a word Saul said. "So David went on his way..." (26:25).
7. As far as we know he never spoke to Saul again.
8. The life of King Saul is tragic, and this entire chapter 26 of I Samuel is fascinating, but there are two verses in particular I would like for us to consider right now.
9. I Samuel 26:10 -- "David said furthermore, As the LORD liveth, the LORD shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish."
10. This prophecy was fulfilled a few years later (cf. I Samuel 31:6).
11. Note also that David said, "As the LORD liveth, the LORD shall smite him" (cf. I Chron. 10:14).
12. The second Scripture is I Samuel 26:21. "Then said Saul, I have sinned: return, my son David: for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly."
13. "Behold, I have played the fool."

I. PRIDE

1. Saul started out humble, but he grew very proud. In Scripture, pride always leads to foolishness. Saul played the fool because he was blinded by pride.
2. Proverbs 16:5 says, "Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD."
3. Proverbs 16:18 says, "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."
4. The LORD told Saul to destroy the Amalekites. First Samuel 15:9 says, "But Saul and the people spared Agag (the king of the Amalekites), and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them."
5. The prophet Samuel was grieved over Saul's disobedience, and had to reprove him (I Sam. 15:10-28).
6. Samuel said to Saul, "When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?" (15:7).
7. But Saul no longer saw himself as little. He saw himself as a great king.
8. Galatians 6:3 says, "For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself."
9. Saul had deceived himself. And that is a foolish thing to do.
10. Romans 12:3 says, "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."
11. Saul had become to think very highly of himself, and this is what led to his downfall.

II. DISREGARDING GOD'S COMMANDS

1. Back in I Samuel 13 we are told that King Saul grew impatient waiting for Samuel, and so he usurped the office of a priest by offering his own sacrifice.
2. When Samuel arrived and saw what Saul had done, he said to Saul, "Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever" (I Sam. 13:13).
3. Samuel told Saul, "Thou hast done foolishly." It is foolish to disregard God's commands.

4. Day in and day out people disregard God's commands.
5. God says, "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain" (Ex. 20:7).
6. "The LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."
7. But people take God's name in vain all the time.
8. God says, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Ex. 20:8), but people disregard the Lord's Day, and desecrate the Lord's Day, and defile the Lord's Day.
9. God says, "Honour thy father and thy mother" (Ex. 20:12), but children talk back to their parents, and are rude to their parents, and disobey their parents.
10. The Bible says, "Thou shalt not kill" (Ex. 20:13). In 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion-on-demand nationwide. Since that decision, more than 53 million babies have been murdered in abortion here in America!
11. Fifty-three million babies!
12. In Genesis 4:10, the LORD said to Cain, "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground."
13. Today, it is the voice of fifty three million babies' blood crying to heaven!
14. Another one of God's commandments is, "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Ex. 20:14). But people often disregard that commandment.
15. In fact, this commandment is mocked on television.
16. It is mocked in the movies.
17. It is mocked in the nasty and vulgar rap music and rock and roll music.
18. Proverbs 14:9 says, "Fools make a mock at sin."
19. Sexually transmitted disease infections increase year after year.
20. People die of AIDS. And sinners think this is all a big laugh!
21. That foolish comedian David Letterman was caught in adultery with one of his employees when her boyfriend tried to blackmail him.
22. Then Letterman went on his television show and made jokes about the whole mess, and his foolish audience laughed and cheered!
23. Marriages and families are destroyed by sin, but the world thinks its all a big joke.

24. Nearly every day we hear about another politician or athlete or movie star caught in an ugly adultery scandal.
25. Up until last year, Tiger Wood had a good reputation. Then he got caught playing the fool and became a laughing stock.
26. When most people think of President Bill Clinton, they think of his numerous sex scandals. He played the fool and the whole world laughed.
27. It is foolish to disregard God's commandments.
28. First Samuel 15:10, 11 says, "Then came the word of the LORD unto Samuel, saying, It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments."

III. BY AVOIDING GODLY COMPANIONS

1. After a while Saul stopped listening to Samuel the prophet.
2. First Samuel 15:35 says, "And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul: and the LORD repented that he had made Saul king over Israel."
3. Samuel could no longer see Saul because of Saul's rebelliousness, but the Bible says Samuel continued to mourn for Saul.
4. There are certain individuals we do not see anymore. They refuse to come to church. They avoid the companionship of Christians. But we should still mourn for them.
5. And we should continue to pray for them.
6. Saul tried to kill David on several occasions, but David was always good to Saul. In I Samuel 24:16 Saul wept over his sin.
7. "And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil" (I Sam. 24:17).
8. Saul sounded remorseful and contrite. He acknowledged that David was righteous and he himself was not. And he acknowledged that David was to be the king of Israel (24:20).
9. But this was not genuine repentance, and before long Saul went back to his wicked and foolish ways (26:21).
10. Saul not only tried to kill David, he even tried to kill his own son Jonathan, because Jonathan was a loyal friend to David.
11. When sinners avoid church, and turn from godly people, they invariably surround themselves with wicked people.
12. "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners" (I Cor. 15:33). I have seen this over and over again.

13. People drop out of church and they start associating with bad companions.
14. The Bible calls them "children of Belial."
15. Acts 17:5 refers to these sort of people as "certain lewd fellows of the baser sort."

CONCLUSION:

1. Saul played the fool till the end of his life.
2. It is recorded in I Samuel 25:1 that Samuel died. This is repeated again in I Samuel 28:3.
3. Saul was in a tough spot. He was surrounded by the fierce Philistine army and "he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled" (28:5).
4. But Saul had crossed the line and now God would not hear his cry (28:6; cf. Pro. 1:24-33).
5. In I Samuel 26:10, David said, "As the LORD liveth, the LORD shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish."
6. This prophecy was soon fulfilled when Saul was killed on the battlefield.
7. D.L. Moody said, "My friends, if you went into the cemeteries, and looked upon the tombstones, and could see what God has written on them, how many times you'd see the word, 'FOOL.' 'FOOL.' May God wake us up today, that we may plan a little further than just from the cradle to the grave! It's too short a journey. It's soon over."