



# FEED MY SHEEP

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## The Commandments of “Saul”

As we explore the character marks of Saul and David, we are actually discovering how to be an overcomer. No one knows who will ultimately be in the overcomer group. The overcomers are the elite. Yet it is the paradoxical nature of God’s plan that it is generally not the high and mighty of the world, but the meek and the humble who are more qualified to be overcomers. The way up is down. To be a ruler in God’s kingdom, one must become a true servant. To be among the elite, one must become “lowly in heart,” as the Savior was.

As we look at Saul and David and think of how this applies on the individual level, we all want to be in the David group. Nobody wants to be a Saul. When we each look at our own life, we can point to one or more people and identify them as being “a Saul” to us. It may be a family member; it may be our boss; it may be somebody in the church; it can be anybody. We will see how to identify Sauls as we study further into the story and see the character marks of Saul.

Although we can accurately identify some of the Sauls in our own life, if the full truth be known, we might be shocked to learn that just *maybe* that person who is a “Saul” to me or you will look upon him- or herself as a David and see you or me as a Saul to himself. The humbling thing is...there may be some truth to that as well.

We *all* have some of the character marks of Saul in us. But as we strive to be more like David and Jesus, we always recognize that only God knows who the true overcomers are. Therefore, if from time to time, we refer to ourselves as overcomers, it must always be understood that it simply means we are all *aspiring*

overcomers. We never claim to *actually* have attained that blessing.

Thus far in our study, David has not yet appeared on the scene. It was not too long into the reign of Saul—only in the second year—when he made his first major error. The story is told in 1 Samuel 13. The Philistines were amassing to attack Israel. In these early years, Saul is a firm believer in Yahweh and in his power to deliver Israel from their enemies.

The prophet Samuel had given the king the word from Yahweh to wait seven days until Samuel arrived, whereupon Samuel would offer sacrifice for success against the Philistines. On the seventh day, Saul was growing fearful of both the imminent strike by the Philistines and by the fact that many of his men were leaving camp for home. Too impatient, Saul took it upon himself to proceed with the sacrifice without Samuel. Big mistake! When Samuel arrived late on the seventh day, he excoriated Saul and pronounced Yahweh’s judgment on him:

**1 Samuel 13:13 And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of YHWH thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would YHWH have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever.**

**14 But now thy kingdom shall not continue: YHWH hath sought him a man after his own heart, and YHWH hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which YHWH commanded thee.**

Thus what could have been a royal dynasty for Saul and his descendants was now a shattered dream. Saul's disobedience to God had brought about this sentence and with it the promise that Yahweh would replace him with David (although David is not actually named at this time).

Meanwhile, not waiting for the Philistines to attack, Jonathan takes his armor-bearer and stages a two-man commando raid upon the Philistine garrison. It creates panic among them and they begin slaughtering one another. While the Philistines are retreating back to their homeland in panic, Saul's armies join in the rout, but they are weak and exhausted from lack of food. Saul, knowing that a leader is expected to "do something," had decreed that everyone would fast that day in the hope that God would be pleased to grant them victory on that account. Not having been present to hear the decree, Jonathan finds great quantities of honey all over the land and begins to eat. Saul, meanwhile, not knowing whether to continue the chase of the Philistines, inquires of the Lord in the matter. When he receives no answer, he attributes it to someone having disobeyed his commandment about fasting and is ready to put the culprit to death, even if it turns out to be Jonathan. But Saul is unable to enforce the decree due to the howls of protest from the people for the hero Jonathan.

The foregoing is a much abbreviated account of the story in 1 Samuel 14. Aside from being a record of an actual event in the history of Israel, what meaning could it have for us today? The apostle Paul tells us that the Old Testament stories are types and shadows for our admonition and learning (1 Corinthians 10:11). We remember that Saul is representative of the church as a whole, but especially of church leadership, during the age of Pentecost, the "church age." That is the corporate level. And as noted above, on the personal level, we all have individual Sauls in our lives.

On the personal level, the heathen symbolize all the weaknesses, frailties and character flaws of our body, soul and spirit in the fallen state. Many Bible teachers in the past have recognized that the Philistines in particular symbolize the carnal or flesh nature. The giants are our five senses. Goliath was only one giant. Did you know he had four brothers? We can develop that theme at a later time.

At the time of this story, the children of Israel have their first king, Saul, and they begin to try to

shake off the Philistines. Symbolically, this is battling the flesh nature. But can they be completely successful under Saul the Pentecostal? No, they cannot be. In the same way, we have had a Christian church under a Pentecostal anointing for nearly the past two millennia, and it cannot perfect us either.

One could say we are doomed to failure under Pentecost; but yet it would not be proper to use the phrase "doomed to failure" because it is all part of the divine plan. We *must* go this way; it is part of the process of perfection. But it is not all fun and games! The realm of Pentecost on a personal level for an aspiring overcomer is fraught with many trials and tribulations.

We have identified Saul as being self-willed and disobedient, impatient and impulsive. And now he makes this very foolish and rash oath or vow which nearly results in him executing his own son. Here is our first example of a Saul-type causing a great trial for an aspiring overcomer.

Was Saul's oath or curse something that *God* had told him to do? No, he was simply being impulsive. Then *why* did Saul make such a foolish vow? We can make some educated guesses. Being impulsive, Saul-type leaders are easily excitable and emotionally high-strung. They are more prone to act before they think. They are impetuous. Someone could point out that Jonathan's bold attack on the Philistines means he must have inherited some of those same qualities as well. Yes, that could be; but the difference is that Jonathan was less *self-willed*, more inclined to seek and obey the will of the Lord. He is associated with the overcomers, while his father is stuck in the Pentecost realm, unable to envision Tabernacles.

Perhaps an underlying or subconscious reason why Saul made the vow is simply to show off. By that I mean that, *being the king and all*, he feels the need to do or say *something*. ...to be on stage, to be the center of attention, to continuously or regularly let the people know that he's in charge and he is in control. This really points to a great inner insecurity being masked by these outward actions and pronouncements. This kind of behavior often results in harm to the people, especially to those who are prospective overcomers.

We can see this on a corporate level throughout church history. We have mentioned the general

principle before. That since the church under Pentecost was symbolized by wheat mixed with leaven, that we would find both great good and great evil in church history. Perfection does not come until the age of Tabernacles. Since we are discussing the character of Saul and not David at this point, we will note how the spirit of Saul, and the character marks of Saul, have manifested in the evil in church history.

Not to pick on the church of Rome exclusively, but since they were basically the only game in town for a millennium or more, they come to mind first. Space precludes quoting any more than a morsel of history here. Unfortunately, it seems that most Christians today are woefully ignorant of church history. Just to get a glimpse of the Saul character—the wheat mixed with leaven—character of the church, I would encourage readers to read the 50-page outline of church history in the back of *Halley's Bible Handbook*. It provides a very clear understanding of why that period is called the Dark Ages. There was every type of wickedness imaginable going on in the corridors of church politics. It is King Saul to a tee.

Furthermore, like Saul, the hierarchy of the church made decrees and church laws and new commandments for the people, not because they heard them from the Lord but primarily because they felt they needed to bolster their own authority. They were impulsive. They were insecure in that authority—as well they should have been—for like Saul, they were not chosen to be an everlasting dynasty.

An important point to remember in all this is that just as King Saul became a persecutor of David, so the Saul church were specialists in persecuting overcomer candidates. Anyone who did not agree with the doctrines promulgated by Rome was declared a heretic, tracked down and put to death, preferably, by burning at the stake. Since their teaching including a burning hellfire, they figured God would not mind if they simply “helped” Him get a head start on punishing the heretic. Surely many of these victims must have remembered Jesus’ words as they went to the stake.

**John 16:2 They shall put you out of the synagogues [excommunicate you from the church]: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.**

Later, after the Protestant Reformation had

grabbed hold in Europe and some Protestant monarchs came to the throne in (primarily) northern European nations, though their *doctrines* were more biblically correct, their *attitude* was the same as Rome’s. “We’ve got the power now; let’s use it to wipe out *our* enemies; we’ll just call them *God’s* enemies, and that makes it okay.” They were Sauls in their own right. They simply turned the tables. They were the persecutors of not only Catholics, but of any others who did not agree with the new boss and the new “truth,” as defined by them.

Interestingly, we can easily discern a very literal fulfillment (antitype) of the type provided in the story of Jonathan eating the honey. I recall very clearly as a boy being raised as a strict Roman Catholic. (For the record, I left Catholicism when I left the seminary in 1967.) But as a lad, I remember being fearful of not obeying the commandments...oh, not merely the Big Ten, but Rome’s big six as well, and all the other commandments of men which I was indoctrinated to believe—such as: Rome’s (Saul’s) commandment: Ye shall fast from midnight until after “Holy Communion” the next day. Another: On Friday ye shall fast from meat (except fish). All this on pain of (eternal) death in hellfire, (supposedly)—just as Saul had decreed death for any who broke his commandment on fasting! The church of Rome has long since revoked those “laws,” but I have often wondered about the fairness to all those poor souls who are now in hell for breaking them during all the prior centuries. (Grin.)

Whether we are discussing Sauls in church or state, it is a fact that whenever “ethically-challenged” persons ascend to high office, they always live in fear of the next criminal who will be trying to dethrone them. The twentieth century’s machinations among Catholic hierarchy to ascend to the papal office were hardly different from the Dark Ages. There are certain things that have leaked out in recent decades, such as the probable murder in 1978 of Pope John Paul I, who preceded the present pope.<sup>1</sup>

John Paul I had reigned only 33 days. He was likely poisoned to death. The reason: he was not one of “da boys.” Somehow, the “wrong” man had managed to win the papal office. He quite possibly was an ethical man because he had immediately launched an investigation into the shady dealings of the Vatican Bank. After 32 days the new pope had seen enough. He gave a list of people to be replaced to

Cardinal Jean Villot, the Vatican Secretary of State. (Incidentally, the very fact that the Vatican has a secretary of *state* tells us that the Roman “church” is more than a church. They still see themselves as both church and state—as in the Dark Ages. But that’s another story.)

The huge and far-reaching financial scandals of the Vatican Bank which were about to be exposed caused panic among six major players behind the scenes. It would spell ruin to Buenos Aires banker and Mafia money-launderer Roberto Calvi. He quickly contacted his protector, Licio Gelli, the powerful head of the secret Masonic organization P2. The exposure would likewise ruin New York Sicilian banker Michele Sindona who was tied directly with the head of the Vatican Bank, Bishop Paul Marcinkus.

Marcinkus in turn was a close friend and “business partner” of Chicago Cardinal John Cody. The record of Cody is one of a man so ruthless, wicked and powerful that the word “tyrant” may have been coined for him. In one decade of Cody’s rule, one-third of the priests in his archdiocese quit the priesthood. Cody was among those on the new pope’s list to be replaced. The sixth man who would have been ruined was one whom John Paul I’s investigations had not yet ferreted out. How did the other five learn of their impending financial and political ruin? From the sixth man, Cardinal Jean Villot, the secretary of state!

With Albino Luciani (John Paul I) out of the picture, the way was clear for the “right” man to be installed at the helm of the Roman church, Karol Wojtyla (aka Pope John Paul II), a man who knew how to “play ball with da big boys.” After all, had he not risen to be the top dog of the church in Poland? A cardinal in a Communist country?? I had always thought that the God-hating Communist regimes persecuted and killed *true* Christians—they had done so by the tens of millions in Russia and China. Yet, we are to believe that Wojtyla is a *bona fide* Christian who somehow escaped notice of the Communist regime? I think not! Da guy was playing ball with the antichrist communists from the “git go.”

Therefore, since Wojtyla’s ascension to the papal throne in 1978, it has been business as usual at the Vatican. All six players remained in place, at least for a time. Calvi was later found “suicided,” hanging under the Blackfriar’s Bridge in London. Villot was ill

and died six months after John Paul I. Truth is always stranger than fiction. For while the Roman Catholic church pretends to fight Freemasonry and the Mafia, the truth is that at the very highest levels, the Great Whore is in bed with them! Although this theme is evident in all the “Godfather” books and movies, the last in the series provides the best glimpse. It is a fictionalized version of the six players and the Vatican Bank scandal, with the fictional “Michael Corleone” in the middle.

The widespread corruption of the Saul church is not limited to financial scandals, Machiavellian political intrigues and assassinations. Occasionally in recent decades, the widespread practice of some priests preying on people, especially young boys, has been revealed. In just the past few weeks, it has once again hit the headlines. If such revelations were to come out in every diocese in the nation—I believe the potential is there—the judgments from civil suits alone could bankrupt the Catholic church. Although the church of Rome is enormously wealthy,<sup>2</sup> imagine multimillion dollar judgments in every jurisdiction in America. The age of Pentecost is over. Therefore, the Saul church must come down. Not Christ’s true and universal church, mind you; but the false churches must fall and give way to the church under a Tabernacles anointing.

The pedophile scandals are only the tip of the iceberg in the Catholic church. The Protestant clergy, not being bound by the silly celibacy rule, does not have near the problem with pedophilia, but there is plenty of dirty laundry among the Protestant Sauls as well. But whether the Sauls be Catholic or Protestant, it is always about *love of money* and the power and *control over people* that it buys. For as the Scripture declares “There is none righteous, no, not one.”

#### ENDNOTES

1. See *In God’s Name* by David Yallop, 1984
2. See *The Vatican Empire* and *Vatican, U.S.A.*, by Nino Lo Bello, 1972

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