

1 **TRUE GRIT**

1 Samuel 13-14

2 **WARRIORS AND POETS**

- A step-by-step, verse-by-verse, story-by-story walk through the Unified Kingdom period of Israel: the kingships of Saul, David, and Solomon.
- We begin our series by looking at Saul, a deeply-interesting, conflicted character.
- Much more than the villain in the David story, Saul begins full of promise and ends in tragedy.

3 **SAUL'S FORTUNES FALL**

- *And Samuel arose and went up from Gilgal. The rest of the people went up after Saul to meet the army; they went up from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin. And Saul numbered the people who were present with him, about six hundred men. And Saul and Jonathan his son and the people who were present with them stayed in Geba of Benjamin, but the Philistines encamped in Michmash.*

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4 **SAUL'S FORTUNES FALL**

- *And raiders came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies. One company turned toward Ophrah, to the land of Shual; another company turned toward Beth-horon; and another company turned toward the border that looks down on the Valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness.*
(1Sa 13:15-18)

5 **SAUL'S FORTUNES FALL**

- Saul has just been on the losing side of a running Battle with the Philistines as they have driven him back from his base at Michmash, first to Gilgal, and then to Gibeah, his home town.
- His army has dwindled from 3000 men to roughly 600.

6 **SAUL DISOBEYS**

- After growing tired of waiting for Samuel, Saul decided to salvage his own bleak situation and offer the Burnt Offering to seek the favor of God - something that only priests could do. In so doing, he disobeyed both the command of Samuel and the Law of God.
- The Philistine forces now break up into three raiding parties and began moving through Israel, to punish them and put down the rebellion.

7 **NO SWORDS IN ISRAEL**

- *Now there was no blacksmith to be found throughout all the land of Israel, for the Philistines said, "Lest the Hebrews make themselves swords or spears." But every one of the Israelites went down to the Philistines to sharpen his plowshare, his mattock, his axe, or his sickle, and the charge was two-thirds of a shekel for the plowshares and for the mattocks,*

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8 **NO SWORDS IN ISRAEL**

- *and a third of a shekel for sharpening the axes and for setting the goads. So on the day of the*

battle there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people with Saul and Jonathan, but Saul and Jonathan his son had them.
(1Sa 13:19-22)

9 **NO SWORDS IN ISRAEL**

- There were no swords or spears (in other words, no dedicated weapons of war) in Israel; of all of the Israelites, only Saul and his sons were able to afford the luxury of having dedicated fighting weapons.
- The majority of the men of Israel went to battle with farm implements.

10 **NO SWORDS IN ISRAEL**

- The Philistines were technologically suppressing Israel and the rest of the Levant region, preventing them from acquiring the kind of technologies that would allow them to mount a serious military resistance.
- Hampered and crippled, without the favor of God, the advantage of numbers, or even the necessary equipment to wage a conventional war, Saul was growing even more desperate.

11 **NO SWORDS IN ISRAEL**

- This situation would form the catalyst for the kind of desperation we will see from Saul in our next lesson.
- *And the garrison of the Philistines went out to the pass of Michmash.* (1Sa 13:23)
- Now, with their raiding parties ravaging the land, the Philistine army comes out after Saul.

12 **A MAN OF COURAGE**

- *One day Jonathan the son of Saul said to the young man who carried his armor, "Come, let us go over to the Philistine garrison on the other side." But he did not tell his father.* (1Sa 14:1)
- Jonathan is a man of courage – in many ways, he is a foil for Saul.
- Where Saul is timid and absorbed in what other people will think about him and his kingship, Jonathan is interested in solving the problem.

13 **A MAN OF COURAGE**

- Although we cannot say that Saul was a coward, in the physical sense, he did lack a much more important kind of courage: moral courage, the kind of courage necessary to do the right thing regardless of the consequences.
- *The following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Take courage, for as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, so you must testify also in Rome."* (Act 23:11)

14 **COURAGE CHOOSES ACTION OVER SELF-PITY**

15 **A MAN OF COURAGE**

- Jonathan decides to take his armor bearer and do something about the Philistine problem.
- Perhaps he initially only intended to scout out the enemy's position.
- Evidently, though, somewhere either before or after his decision to go and seek out the Philistines' camp, Jonathan's purpose becomes much more specific.

16 **KNOW YOUR HISTORY**

- Perhaps he was inspired by the heroic acts of Samson, or Shamgar (who killed 600 Philistines with an ox goad) or some of the other great heroes of his people who were still

in relatively recent memory.

- These were all men upon whom God's spirit had come, allowing them to accomplish superhuman feats of valor.

17 **A MAN OF ACTION**

- Either way, Jonathan was not the kind of man who could sit still for long - he was not the kind of man to wallow in self-pity or be overwhelmed by his circumstances.
- Jonathan was the kind of man who took action.
- Contrast this kind of "taking action" with that of his father in last week's lesson.
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18 **COURAGE KNOWS WHERE GLORY BELONGS**

19 **THE ISRAELITE CAMP**

- *Saul was staying in the outskirts of Gibeah in the pomegranate cave at Migron. The people who were with him were about six hundred men, including Ahijah the son of Ahitub, Ichabod's brother, son of Phinehas, son of Eli, the priest of the LORD in Shiloh, wearing an ephod. And the people did not know that Jonathan had gone. (1Sa 14:2-3)*

20 **AHIJAH THE PRIEST**

- There are a couple of interesting things happening:
 - Saul is sitting under a tree, basically feeling sorry for himself.
 - Ahijah the priest is here, with the priestly ephod, serving mostly as an army chaplain.
- The text goes out of its way to give us Ahijah's lineage.

21 **ICHABOD**

- The text goes out of its way to give us Ahiah's lineage:
 - To contrast him with Samuel. Samuel is the spiritual heir of Eli's priesthood, while Ahiah is the physical descendant of Eli's wayward sons.
 - Ahiah is the nephew of Ichabod. Ichabod was born after Phinehas was killed in battle with the Philistines and the Ark of God was taken from Israel. Ichabod's name means "the glory has departed." It's a stunning indictment of the state of Saul's kingship.

22 **ICHABOD**

- But the story of Ichabod is more than just an indictment of the current state of Saul's kingship: It is a potent reminder of the danger of misplaced priorities in worship.
- *So the people sent to Shiloh and brought from there the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, who is enthroned on the cherubim. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God. (1Sa 4:4)*

23 **ICHABOD**

- *And the man said to Eli, "I am he who has come from the battle; I fled from the battle today." And he said, "How did it go, my son?" He who brought the news answered and said, "Israel has fled before the Philistines, and there has also been a great defeat among the people. Your two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been captured." (1Sa 4:16-17)*

24 **ICHABOD**

- *As soon as he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell over backward from his seat by the side of the gate, and his neck was broken and he died, for the man was old and heavy. He had judged Israel forty years. (1Sa 4:18)*

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25 **ICHABOD**

- *Now his daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was pregnant, about to give birth. And when she heard the news that the ark of God was captured, and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bowed and gave birth, for her pains came upon her. And about the time of her death the women attending her said to her, "Do not be afraid, for you have borne a son." But she did not answer or pay attention. (1Sa 4:19-20)*

26 **ICHABOD**

- *And she named the child Ichabod, saying, "The glory has departed from Israel!" because the ark of God had been captured and because of her father-in-law and her husband. And she said, "The glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has been captured." (1Sa 4:21-22)*

27 **SELF-CENTERED SANCTITY**

- Phinehas was one of the men responsible for removing the Ark of the Covenant from the Tabernacle to take into battle against the Philistines as a "good-luck" charm.
- Both Phinehas and Saul wanted to use the rites and rituals of the Mosaic Law as a talisman to gain God's favor and accomplish their own goals.

28 **SELF-CENTERED SANCTITY**

- Ultimately, both Saul and Phinehas' religion and worship were about themselves.
- They were only interested in the law and the sacrifices and the things of God when they enabled their own selfish desires.
- Worship, the church, missions, service, giving, etc. are not to be for our own gratification.

29 **SELF-CENTERED SANCTITY**

- There are many ways in which we gratify ourselves through worship:
 - It gives us a reason to condemn others with less perceived devotion
 - It allows us to seek out an "emotional experience" through a time of worship or act of service
 - It offsets the week's sin and helps us balance our mental ledger
 - It helps us maintain an image to our friends and family

30 **REAL COURAGE**

- Anyone can come to church on Sunday, stand in a pew, sing songs, and act like they have their acts together.
- Anyone can come to church and fool the rest of the church into thinking that everything is okay and that they are "blessed" (at least for a while).
- It takes real courage to humble yourself before God and before your brothers and sisters.