



WATCHMAN'S TRUMPET



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FROM THE MISSION DIRECTOR

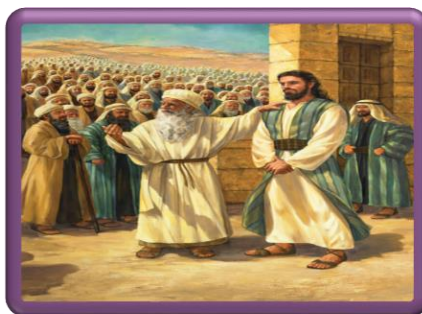
Hello,

I welcome you to this new month and present to you March 2022 edition of Watchman's Trumpet. This month, our theme is "The head that wears a crown" Our messages focus on the life and times of Saul the first king in Israel. Saul reigned between 1020 - 1000 B.C. Before His appointment, Israelites were a nation united by history, language, and religion, but not, at that point, by politics. The tribes of Israel each lived autonomously in their own regions, with the priestly tribe of Levi dispersed amongst them seeing to their religious matters. There was no central authority, and the tribes were left to their own devices politically. They were periodically attacked by various remnant of Canaanite tribes and neighbors like the Moabites and Ammonites and Philistines Periodically, when a crisis arise that required cooperation, the tribes would choose a charismatic leader, seen as divinely appointed, known as a judge who would exercise political and military power during the crisis. He or she could raise an army, demand general and war supplies, and command the troops. When the crisis was over and the threat had passed, the judge would relinquish his or her powers and return to the status quo. This was the case till the time of prophet Samuel. Samuel serve as a judge, provided spiritual and practical guidance to all who came to him and settled disputes. As he grew old, and faced with the prospect of Philistines constant threats, a group of elders asked him to appoint a permanent king of Israel. Samuel took the matter to God and God directed him to appoint Saul. God spiritually qualified Saul and gave him everything he needed

to succeed in his assignment including Samuel's prophetic guidance and counselling. His earlier years and reign portray him as a very courageous, humble, strategic and charismatic leader. But along the line, he became distracted. He became more preoccupied with public image and acceptance much more than obeying God; he became self-conceited, jealous of others' successes and proud. He ignored God and worship except when it served his personal selfish interest. He eventually lost divine support and every other influence that could helped him succeed. His tragic death was a climax of futile effort to self-manage personal crisis and national threat. One unique lesson from his story is that we cannot go far without God and intimate relationship with Him. My prayer for us is for grace abundant to apply this and other lessons in this edition of Watchman's Trumpet. Welcome!

THE CHOICE AND ANOINTING OF SAUL

Now the Lord had told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, saying, To morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me" 1 Samuel 9:15, 16.



Inside...

About Watchman Outreach	
Mission	3
Watchman Prayer Hour	3
The Ministry and Mission of Saul	4
The Failure of Saul	5
The end of Saul	7
Missionary of the Month	8

Israel requested for a king. According to the elders of Israel that came to Samuel to ask for institution of monarchy, three reasons make this appear to them a necessity. First, Samuel was old. He no longer had the agility and precision in physique that he manifested in earlier years. Second, the sons of Samuel Joel and Abiah whom he appointed judges to assist him in governing the southern part were unlike their father in the dispensation of justice. They took bribes to pervert judgment and their judgments showed clearly how covetous they were. Third, Israel envied other nations most of whom at that time were ruled by kings. So they wanted to be like other nations.

We shall consider three subtopics:

1. Search for lost Donkeys
2. Seeking divine help in our search
3. Anointing to lead God's people

1. Search for lost donkeys

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth”

Ephesians 6:1-3.

Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin (1 Sam. 9:1-2). He was very tall and equally impressive (1 Sam. 9:2). He was sent by his father to look for some donkeys that had strayed away (1 Sam. 9:3). After a futile search, Saul determined to return home, lest his father begin to worry about him. Saul's servant, however, suggested they ask Samuel the seer (prophet) who lived in a nearby town if he could help them. For Saul this journey was the beginning of the journey to kingship. Obedience brings blessings. When we obey God our heavenly Father and live as responsible children with our earthly parents, we never can say where such reverential attitude to God and to our parents can lead us. Saul's suggestion that they return home lest his father leaves off concern for his asses and start worrying about their safety revealed that Saul had a caring father. A common failure among some wealthy people is that they do not have enough time to personally stay with their children or care for them. A number of rich men's children are more of problem to the society than solution. This should not be so. We must not be too busy to spend time with our children and care for them.

2. Seeking divine help

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths” **Proverbs 3:5-6.**

Saul and the servant's decision to go to seek counsel from Samuel on the lost donkeys showed that they have great confidence in Samuel's ministry. They described him as honourable man and one whose words or counsel carries great power of fulfillment. To be able to help people spiritually we must live honourable and reputable lives and walk closely with God. On the previous day, God had told Samuel he would send a man to the prophet from the tribe of Benjamin. Samuel was to anoint this man as Israel's first king. At the meeting of the two men, God revealed to Samuel that Saul was the one. Samuel greeted the astonished Saul with a twofold message. *“Your father's donkeys have been found!” “You will become Israel's first king!”* To which Saul replied that he did not count himself worthy of such honour since his father's house was the least from Benjamin the last tribe in Israel. God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. The more grace we want, the more humble we should be under the mighty hands of God. Saul agreed to have supper with Samuel and stay with him for the night.

3. Anointing to lead God's people

“And when they came thither to the hill, behold, a company of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them. And it came to pass, when all that knew him beforetime saw that, behold, he prophesied among the prophets, then the people said one to another, What is this that is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?” **Samuel 10:10,11**

Before the men parted on the following day, Samuel anointed Saul with oil. The prophet gave Saul a threefold sign to prove he would indeed become king.



First sign—Samuel predicted Saul would meet two men near Rachel's tomb who would tell him his father's donkeys had been found. Second sign—Three men en route to Beth-el would meet him under the great tree at Tabor and offer him two loaves of bread. Third sign—Near the town of Gibeah, he would meet a procession of prophets, playing musical instruments and prophesying. Saul himself would then join in and prophesy with them in the power of God. All three signs were fulfilled. Like Samuel we should walk so intimately with God to the point that He can use us to provide solutions to men's problems.

As Saul turned to depart from Samuel God gave him another heart. This is his sanctification in preparation for the Spirit's Baptism (Ezekiel 36:25-27) which occurred when he met the procession of prophets near Gibeah. He was empowered by Holy Spirit to join them in prophesying. These experiences confirmed his choice as king by God. They are assurance of divine presence.

There are basic Christian experiences that those who intend to lead others in God's kingdom today must have. These include salvation, sanctification and Holy Spirit's Baptism. We find in this narrative how Saul acquired these experiences. Signs that are evidences of divine presence and endorsement of our preaching. Holy Spirit's manifestation in our lives is evidence of divine presence to confirm the word of God we preach.





ABOUT WATCHMAN OUTREACH MISSION

Watchman Outreach Mission as envisioned fundamentally comprises of men and women of faith who watch over one another and together watch for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Next to this primary assignment is an equally important responsibility of bringing others into the same state of watchfulness and readiness as the coming of the Lord draws near. Ours is a trans-ministerial, trans-denominational mission. Our core values include expository teaching, prayer and counselling. We train in principles and practice of Christian discipleship and equip for effective Kingdom Service.

The Lord Jesus Christ in one of His parable said “*While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept*” **Mathew 25:5**. Watchman Outreach Mission is a response of faith to this and similar warnings about events in the last days. Our response is based on the premise that prophecies, visions and revelations about the future such as the one documented in the Lord’s parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins are sign-posts by which men are warned to keep vigil to avoid disastrous end. We serve to wake up the church and men everywhere to remain alert and watch for the Lord’s return.

The Mission, based in Ibadan, Nigeria, was launched in 2009 and its maiden outing took place on the 20th November of the same year. On that day, we partnered with All Nations Evangelical Ministry (ANEM), Akobo, Ibadan for Evangelistic and Medical Mission Outreach to Idi - Ose Village on Arulogun - Olorunda Road in Lagelu Local Government, Ibadan.

In the years that followed we networked with churches and other Christian groups too to implement our mandate which include conducting gospel outreaches, discipleship training for new converts, organizing and facilitating workers and ministerial training, conducting administrative reviews in churches and ministries, writing of proposals for reforms and church growth strategies that can enhance social cohesion, improve church finances and foster overall development, unity and growth of such ministries; monitoring and/or supervision of the implementation of such reforms and strategies.

Some of these Christian groups and ministries include with Christ Apostolic Church, Oke - Ife in Ajangboju, Ibadan, Nigerian Military Christian Fellowship, Adekunle Fajuyi Cantonment Chapter in Oyo - State Nigeria, Christ Gospel Mission International, Light of Jesus Evangelistic Ministry with branches in different cities in South Western Nigeria, and Ark of Salvation Church of Christ (ASCC) with headquarters at Molade, Monatan Ibadan.

Till date, although partnered ministries change from time to time depending on the leading we receive from the Lord, we remain committed to our main purpose and vision; that of service to the church and in the world to wake up men everywhere and encourage them to remain alert and watch for the Lord’s return. Through our activities, souls had been saved, believers edified and church workers’ spiritual growth and development enhanced, all to the glory of God.

WATCHMAN PRAYER HOUR



Prayer Points - For March 2022

1. Thank God for the teachings and lessons from the life of king Saul
2. Pray against self-will, carnality, pride and stubbornness
3. Pray against resentment, bitterness and jealousy
4. Pray against discouragement, depression and demonic oppression
5. Pray against spiritual attack and backsliding
6. Pray for grace to obey God promptly and fully at all times
7. Pray for divine presence and continuous guidance of the Holy Spirit
8. Pray for growing faith, courage, abiding hope and confidence in God in trying times
9. Pray that everyone of us on heaven’s highway who started well will end well
10. Pray for sufficient grace to serve God and fulfill your God-ordained ministry.

“ *men ought always to pray, and not to faint;*’ **Luke 18:1**

May the Lord hear and answer all our prayers - AMEN!

Watchman Prayer Hour holds every Saturday from 10.30am - 12.00MD. We invite you to join us at our office in 78/80 Nepa (IBEDC) Building, Opposite U.I. Second Gate, Ibadan . Oyo - State. You can also follow us on any of our Social media platforms during the prayer session and send inquiries or prayer requests to any of our digital addresses.

For more info on the Mission, log on to: www.watchmanoutreachmission.org

THE MINISTRY AND MISSION OF SAUL

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind” **2 Timothy 1:7.**

An event took place between Saul’s private anointing and public formal manifestation of authority as the first king in Israel. The event helped secure public confidence concerning his choice as a king.

We shall consider three subtopics:

1. Terrible demand by Nahash
2. Call for unity in the fight against kingdom enemies
3. Other warfare exploits of Saul

1. Terrible demand by Nahash

“And the king of Israel answered and said, Tell him, Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off” **1 Kings 20:11.**

Nahash king of Ammonites came to encamp against Jabesh Gilead to wage war against it. This city lies on the eastern side of Jordan and far removed from Shiloh, Ramah, Mizpah or other centre of recent activities in Israel. Their closeness to the territories of the threatening Ammonites make them vulnerable. We make ourselves easy preys to the enemy if we walk or live too close to the territory of the enemy and if we do not make use of the means of spiritual growth which the Lord has provided to make us formidable and resistant to enemies incessant attacks. We also see the need to be closely knit in our relationship with others. Two are better than one. When threatened by Nahash, Jabesh Gilead quickly gave in and proposes covenant with the enemy as a way to escape death and destruction. They offered to become servants to the Ammonites. However, Ammonites gave cruel, ridiculous, overbearing and shameful condition under which they may accept Jabesh Gilead’s servitude. They must accept to have their right eyes plucked out and made a reproach to all Israel. The offer of Nahash made Jabesh Gilead

to reconsider their choice. When the tidings of Jabesh Gilead’s plight, reached Gibeah the town of Saul, the town was thrown into mourning. They were still weeping when Saul came after the herd out of the field. When Saul heard the news of what happened to Jabesh Gilead, instead of becoming depressed like the others, the Spirit of God came upon him associated with holy zeal for the love of his country and for the glory of the God of Israel whom Nahash despised. The anointing response to news of Jabesh Gilead’s experience produced a holy indignation against the threatening enemy. Anointing is the key and anointing makes the difference between men. It is the anointing that will make us react or respond to life’s issues as Christ or God would react and as the Lord would expect that we react.

2. Call for unity in the fight against kingdom enemies

“Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour” **Ecclesiastes 4:9.**

Saul took a yoke of oxen and broke them in pieces and he sent the pieces through messages to all the coasts of Israel to summon them for war against the Ammonites. God also worked with the strategy by putting His fear upon the people, making them come together as one man. For the accomplishment of divine purpose, there is the need for His Spirit to work upon the leader as well as led. This we can secure through prayers and intercession. Saul sent back to Jabesh Gilead to expect help the following day. Jabesh Gilead notified their captors that they intend surrendering the next day by which time they were sure help would arrive.

In the morning, Saul divided the three hundred and thirty thousand (330,000) men with him into three companies and launched out against the enemy. The Ammonites were defeated and scattered such that no two of them could walk together. When the victory was won, the people questioned the audacity of those who despised Saul during his unveiling in the public. They asked that such people should be put to death. However, Saul intervened that no one would be put to death on the day that God granted great victory to His people Israel.

Saul was zealous to defend God’s glory and his people but not himself. We saw in the early days of his reign, that he was a loving, caring and forgiving king who desire to rule with the fear of God.

3. Other warfare exploits of Saul

“So Saul took the kingdom over Israel, and fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, and against the children of Ammon, and against Edom, and against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines: and whithersoever he turned himself, he vexed them” **1 Samuel 14:47.**

In the concluding verses of 1 Samuel 14, we find a summary of Saul’s reign, or at least of his early years as king. Interestingly, the general tone of this summation is positive. Despite the fact that Samuel has told Saul he will not have a dynasty because of his unlawful sacrifice (13:9-14), Saul seems devoted to his duties as the commander of the armies of Israel. He *“establishes his sovereignty over Israel,”* we are told, meaning he draws the tribes of Israel together into a national unit capable of standing up to (or at least harassing) the other powers around the region. Furthermore, he builds Israel’s army by scouting out and drafting *“any strong man or any valiant man,”* just as Samuel had said the king would do (8:11). And Saul leads Israel in battle against many of its hostile neighbors, including Moab, Ammon, Edom, Zobah, Amalek, and, above all, the Philistines. These battles are not easy, the conflicts with the Philistines are said to be particularly *“fierce”* Saul, therefore, is a battlefield king, one who endures many hardships. We here learn that the execution of divine mandate must be within the context of responsible relationship. Leaders over God’s people are expected to be responsible leaders and family men.



THE FAILURE OF SAUL

“And Samuel said, Hath 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 hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king” 1 Samuel 15:22, 23.

Signs of leadership weakness and personal character flaws in Saul began to manifest early after two uneventful years. He chose three thousand (3,000) men from the initial militia mobilized to fight the Ammonites and dismissed the rest. Two thousand (2000) stayed with him in Michmash in Mount Bethel while a thousand was commanded by Jonathan his son and has its base in Gibeah.

We shall consider three subtopics:

1. Inconsistencies, faithlessness and insecurity
2. Fear of men and disobedience to God
3. Jealousy, cruelty and fighting against God's will

1. Inconsistencies, faithlessness and insecurity

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him” James 1:5.

As time passed and Saul's reign solidified, character traits appeared in him that resulted in catastrophe. He was impetuous, often rash in his judgments, almost thoughtless in his conclusions. Passionate, he was swift to anger, quick to violence. He stubbornly held strong allegiances that, at times, led to mistaken judgments, while at the same time forsaking other allegiances that that would have helped him. He slowly became insensitive, even calloused in his relationships with other people.

To achieve his ends, he was willing to manipulate others, even his own loved ones. He feared criticism. He developed a great need for popular approval. This last weakness was the major consequence of his stubborn pride, which was his tragic flaw.

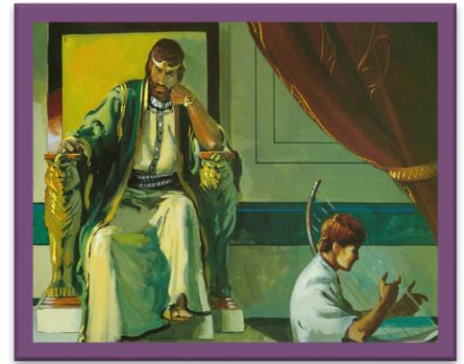
Saul's insecurity showed early. Too often, under pressure, he chose to do what he thought would give him popular approval, regardless of an opposing commandment of God. For example, faced with an immense Philistine invasion—thirty thousand chariots, six thousand horsemen, and innumerable foot soldiers, with only six hundred men, he had great need for divine help. Samuel had told him that he would come to make the required offerings before the battle. But as the Philistine horror built, Saul saw his people leaving. He took it upon himself to offer the required sacrifices as a means to hold people to him. When Samuel arrived, he condemned Saul. Saul said defensively that the people were scattering from him and that he “forced” himself to make the offerings, but Samuel answered, “Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord.” (1 Samuel 13:13.)



2. Fear of men and disobedience to God

“The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe” Proverbs 29:25.

Saul's final rupture with the prophet Samuel and with the Lord was caused by this same weakness of insecurity, desire for men's approval and popularity as well as vainglory. The Lord commanded Saul to destroy the Amalekites—every man, woman, and child; every ox, sheep, and camel; everything that belonged to the Amalekites. Saul went as commanded, he chased the enemy from Havilah to Shur, but he allowed his people to bring home



the best sheep and oxen.

Saul himself captured the Amalekite king, Agag, and proudly brought him back alive. Confronted by Samuel, Saul made many excuses. He tried first to say that he had fulfilled the commandments of God, but Samuel rejected that—“*What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?*” Then Saul tried to blame it on the people, saying that the people had spared the best sheep and oxen “*to sacrifice unto the Lord.*” (1 Samuel 15:14–15.), ignoring the fact that he, the king, was responsible for the people bringing back the animals.

Samuel answered him, “*Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifice, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice.*” (1 Samuel 15:17–22.). Every time we remember that God called us and we owe Him primary allegiance, it becomes easy for us to stand on firm ground against censure and approbation of men; it becomes easy for us to take a clear stand against compromise.

Samuel told him that God priced obedience higher than sacrifice and views stubbornness and rebellion as comparable to witchcraft and idolatry. This event played out to make us understand that partial obedience amounts to disobedience before the Lord and that whosoever offends in one of God's law offends in all. We live in days of great services and sacrifices. Men today pay more attention to order and length of service than living with the fear of God and godliness. We must rediscover the religion that considers Christianity as a way of life rather than social gathering on worship days that does not in any way impacts on one's day to day living and relationship.



Like God lamented Saul's kingship, He laments the waste of resources and privileges by every sinner. Each and every one of us need to pause to consider God's appraisal of our lives, of the resources He placed at our disposal and of the privileges of leading others or of serving that He granted us. Do our lives bring God joy or make Him sad? Implicit obedience and God-honouring lives is the minimum, on ways we can show our gratitude to the Lord for all that He has made us, given us or done for us. We need to be weary of pressure from men. The fear of man will bring us into a snare. If we are too conscious of what people will say or do, we shall not be able to please the Lord.

3. Jealousy, cruelty and fighting against God's will

"... love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave..." **Songs of Solomon 8:6**

After some time God told Samuel to stop lamenting the backsliding of Saul and go and anoint for Him another king in the house of Jesse. This he did during a worship service in Bethlehem on God's instructions. All seven sons of Jesse present at the worship service passed by but the Lord did not choose any of them. Samuel asked Jesse if he had no other child. Jesse informed him that he still has one, the youngest who keeps his sheep. Samuel told Jesse to send for him and when David arrived, at God's command he was anointed in the midst of his brethren. The Holy Spirit came upon him and began work in him from that day onward. The Holy Spirit's Baptism

followed David's anointing because he was a vessel already prepared and made ready for the Lord to fill with His presence and glory. Anointing oil designate appointment but Holy Spirit equips. The power in his anointing became evident when he was brought into royal court to sing and play on instrument to relieve Saul of demonic oppression by the demon that came into him after God's Spirit departed from him on account of his stubbornness and persistency in sin, especially sin of disobedience.

Saul had been told earlier that God already has His mind on a replacement for Saul, a man after God's heart and better than him. The realization that David was the one chosen of the Lord came as a shock to Saul. He became jealous especially after David killed Goliath and women gave David more honour in their victory song when he killed Goliath.

Saul's son Jonathan, apparent heir to the kingdom, also loved David, admitting freely that he knew David would rule in his place. He beseeched David not to destroy his children when that time came. Old King Saul, heartsick and angry, struggling to maintain the kingdom and give it to Jonathan, spoke to his son: *"As long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom. Wherefore now send and fetch him unto me, for he shall surely die."* (1 Sam. 20:31.)

But Jonathan defended David, and Saul, angered beyond control, cast his spear at his own son. God's wisdom and foreknowledge makes Him to go ahead to provide a way of escape for His children in times of persecution or temptation. Jonathan's relationship on the human part provided the soothing comfort David need against the pains of persecution by his father. There is no temptation that would come to us greater than what is common to men. However, God is faithful; He would not allow us to be tempted beyond



measure but will with the same temptation provide a way of escape so that we would be able to bear it. 1 Corinthians 10:13. Saul had lost all control. As he struggled against the decision of God, personified in David, he became more and more aware that his efforts were futile. But this dawning recognition was at war with his stubborn will. There was no fault in David—David respected Saul as the anointed of the Lord. Twice he spared Saul's life—first in the dark cave at En-Gedi, and second in Saul's camp in the wilderness of Ziff. Realizing this, Saul wept and cried aloud, admitting his evil to David and calling out plaintively to him that he, too, knew that David would surely be king over Israel.



"...Hath 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 hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry..."

1 Samuel 15:22

THE END OF SAUL

"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 one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it;" 1 Chronicles 10:13

Saul reigned forty years. At the beginning of his reign the Israelites were almost free from the Philistines, and for a time Saul seemed to have success in driving the Philistines out of the land. But after Saul forsook the Lord and would no longer listen to Samuel, God's prophet, he became gloomy and full of fear and lost his courage, so that the land fell again under the power of its enemies. David could have helped him, but he had driven David away; and there was no strong man to stand by Saul and win victories for him. So at the end, when Saul fell in battle, the yoke of the Philistines was on Israel heavier than at any time before.

We shall consider three subtopics:

1. The beginning of the end
2. The implication of self-murder
3. Ode to fallen heroes

1. The beginning of the end

"... The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you" 2 Chronicles 15:2.

The account of the death and burial of Samuel in 1 Samuel 25 demonstrated how low Saul had brought the nation at a time of Israel's desperate need for the Lord and for His anointed. God promised to honour those who honour Him and lightly esteem those who despise Him. 1 Samuel 2:28-30. Those who seek the Lord shall find Him but those who forsake Him He will forsake them. 2 Chronicles 15:2. Those who despise and trampled upon God's commandments and institutions, God will leave to themselves when it matters most and when they need Him most. Proverbs 1:24-31. Thus, Saul in absence of David and Samuel was left to himself.

He sought the Lord for guidance; God neither answered him by prophets nor Urim. When the Lord did not respond to Saul's inquiry, he turned to a witch at Endor for comfort and direction. Two things condemned this act. First, it was outrightly forbidden by the Lord. In fact there was an indictment edict upon those who do so that carries a death penalty in the the Law. Deuteronomy 18:9-14; Exodus 22:18; Leviticus 19:31. Saul disguised himself as he went to consult the witch at Endor. He forgot that God's eyes are all-seeing. Hebrews 4:13. The evil spirit that the woman invoked told him that he had forfeited the crown to David, reminded him of his error in the assignment the Lord sent him against the Amalekites and what to expect - the defeat of Israelites by the Philistines, his death and that of his sons in battle the following day. Saul came to Satan for comfort and assurance. He in return heard his doom read to his ears to pave way for subsequent depression, collapse and eventual suicide. It is therefore dangerous to fraternize with Satan the enemy of our soul or his agents.



2. The implication of self-murder

The fear of man bringeth a snare; but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe" Proverbs 29:25.

Saul obviously came out from the damning counsel of the witch at Endor with weakened rather than strengthen hearts and hands to engage the enemies. The initiatives were on the side of the Philistines. Saul on Mount Gibeah watched his three sons die as well as many of his guards. He himself received fatal wound from archers and may have been much wounded, so he opted for suicide.

Saul's suicide is not an act of bravery, or courage, or honor. It is an act of desperation and fear. Saul's death extols no elevating value. Saul's suicide signals the pathetic disintegration of a once brave warrior-leader. As the text presents Saul's death, the battle is not over.

Rather when the men of Israel are informed of his death and that of his sons, they fled, thus allowing the Philistine takeover. Not until the next morning do the Philistines discover Saul's body and proceed to strip and mutilate it. The fact that the men of Israel fought up to the time that they learn of Saul's death, suggests that they did not consider the battle lost, until Saul was known to be dead. Then they scatter in fear for they have lost their leader. His suicide betrayed the confidence they had in him. The same judgment that murderers will receive is what awaits all who commit suicide in eternity. Suicide is cowardice and an evidence of faithlessness and unbelief. With God nothing is too late or impossible.

3. Ode to fallen heroes

"How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!" 2 Samuel 1:27

David Lamented for the Defeated 2 Samuel 1:17-27. He was greatly affected by the turn of events and displayed his despair in song. To David's credit, he refused to slander the fallen king (Proverbs 10:18). David challenged the people to keep silent concerning the bad tidings. He knew the nation would be slandered and he wanted none of the Israelites to help in the matter. There is no need to loudly eulogize our faults and failures in public. Instead we can seek God's forgiveness and move forward (Philippians 3:13-14). Believers' successes brings glory to God rather than failure. The song commemorated the events that had transpired, the beauty of Israel was slain and the mighty had fallen. The beauty may refer to Saul personally or may be a general statement referring to all of the valiant men that died in battle. Saul and Jonathan were both mighty warriors and many powerful fighters fell alongside them. David in his song particularly celebrated Jonathan's affection which he greatly missed. Shall we be missed, though by others succeeded, reaping in harvest, the seed we in spring time have sown? We shall be remembered by what we have done.

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www.watchmanoutreachmission.org

Richard Wurmbrand a Romanian evangelical Christian minister, author, and educator was born in Bucharest in March 24, 1909, as the youngest of four boys in a Jewish family. He lived with his family in Istanbul for a short while; his father died when he was 9, and the Wurmbrands returned to Romania when he was 15.

As an adolescent, he became attracted to communism, and, after attending a series of illegal meetings of the Communist Party of Romania (PCR), he was sent to study Marxism in Moscow, but returned clandestinely the following year. Pursued by Siguranța Statului (the secret police), he was arrested and held in Doftana prison. Wurmbrand subsequently renounced his political ideals.

He married Sabina Oster on October 26, 1936. Wurmbrand and his wife were converted to Christianity in 1938 through the witness of Christian Wolfkes, a Romanian Christian carpenter; they joined the Anglican Mission to the Jews. Wurmbrand was ordained twice - first as an Anglican, then, after World War II, as a Lutheran pastor.

In 1944, when the Soviet Union occupied Romania as the first step to establishing the communist regime, Wurmbrand began a ministry to his Romanian countrymen and to the Red Army soldiers. When the government attempted to control the churches, he immediately began an "*underground*" ministry to his people. He was arrested on February 29, 1948, while on his way to church services. Wurmbrand, who passed through the penal facilities of Craiova, Gherla, the Danube-Black Sea Canal, Văcărești, Malmaison, Cluj, and ultimately Jilava, spent three years in solitary confinement. His wife, Sabina, was arrested in 1950 and spent three years of penal labour on the Canal.

Pastor Wurmbrand was released in 1956, after eight and a half years, and, although warned not to preach, resumed his work in the underground church. He was arrested again in 1959, and sentenced to 25 years. Eventually, he was the recipient of an amnesty in 1964. Concerned with the possibility of further imprisonment, the Norwegian Mission to the Jews and the Hebrew Christian Alliance negotiated with the Communist authorities for his release from Romania for \$10,000. He was convinced by underground church leaders to leave and become a voice for the persecuted church.

MISSIONARY OF THE MONTH

RICHARD WUMBRAND
1909 - 2001



Wurmbrand traveled to Norway, England, and then the United States. In May of 1965, he testified in Washington, D.C. before the US Senate's Internal Security Subcommittee. He became known as the "*The Voice of the Underground Church*", doing much to publicize the persecution of Christians in Communist countries.

In April of 1967, the Wurmbrands formed *Jesus To The Communist World* (later named *The Voice of the Martyrs*), an interdenominational organization working initially with and for persecuted Christians in Communist countries, but later expanding its activities to help persecuted believers in other places, especially in the Muslim world. In 1990 Richard and Sabina Wurmbrand returned to Romania for the first time in 25 years. The Voice of the Martyrs opened a printing facility and bookstore in Bucharest. He preached about God together with pastor Ioan Panican. The Wurmbrands had one son, Mihai. Wurmbrand wrote 18 books in English and others in Romanian. His best-known book is entitled *Tortured for Christ*, released in 1967. His wife, Sabina, died August 11, 2000.

Pastor Wurmbrand died on February 17, 2001 in a hospital in Long Beach, California. His last address was in Palos Verdes, California. In 2006, he came fifth among the greatest Romanians according to the Mari Români poll.

SCRIPTURE FOR MEDITATION

"...Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you."

Jeremiah 7:23

SONG OF THE MONTH

TRUST AND OBEY

1. When we walk with the Lord
in the light of his word,
what a glory he sheds on our way!
While we do his good will,
he abides with us still,
and with all who will trust and obey.

Refrain:

*Trust and obey, for there's no other way
to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.*

2. Not a burden we bear,
not a sorrow we share,
but our toil he doth richly repay;
not a grief or a loss,
not a frown or a cross,
but is blest if we trust and obey.
[Refrain]
3. But we never can prove
the delights of his love
until all on the altar we lay;
for the favor he shows,
for the joy he bestows,
are for them who will trust and obey.
[Refrain]
4. Then in fellowship sweet
we will sit at his feet,
or we'll walk by his side in the way;
what he says we will do,
where he sends we will go;
never fear, only trust and obey.
[Refrain]

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