



## How have the Mighty Fallen!

*2 Samuel 1:17 Then David chanted with this lament over Saul and Jonathan his son, 18 and he told them to teach the sons of Judah the song of the bow; behold, it is written in the book of Jashar. 19 Your beauty, O Israel, is slain on your high places! How have the mighty fallen!*

David writes this lament upon the death of Saul and Jonathan. He doesn't write it as a question, but as a declaration - The Mighty are Fallen!!!!

In our day, with the recent events of a well know minister falling to immorality, we are wise to not only declare that a mighty man has fallen, but to ask ourselves and the Lord, "How is it that so many mighty men are falling?"

Some would say, "He must not have been guarding his moral boundaries." I'm sure this is true.

Other's might say, "He may have had some severe childhood issues he never dealt with." This is possible too.

Some, "The pressures of the ministry made him vulnerable to satanic attack, and he is simply a casualty of the spiritual warfare for leaders." This could also answer a part of the question.

There are perhaps many reasons why such a man has given way to the snare of the enemy, but there is one reason that few will have the fortitude to admit to, to study out, to see the connections with, and to heed. It is this reason I would like to tackle in this short article.

For our answer we need not look beyond the historical figure and story of Saul, the first king of Israel. What was it that led to his demise? Scriptures are abundant and clear on the answer. Saul loved the power, the prestige, and the money connected to his title and his position.

It is so fascinating how the Lord encouraged Samuel, when Israel clamored for a king, so as to be "like" all the other nations.

*1 Samuel 8:4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah; 5 and they said to him, Behold, you have grown old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations. 6 But the thing was displeasing in the sight of Samuel when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed to the Lord. 7 And the Lord said to Samuel, Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me*

*from being king over them. 8 Like all the deeds which they have done since the day that I brought them up from Egypt even to this day, in that they have forsaken Me and served other gods so they are doing to you also. 9 Now then, listen to their voice; however, you shall solemnly warn them and tell them of the procedure of the king who will reign over them.*

Israel, like the days shortly after the death of the apostles, made a choice to forsake the singular headship of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in its place chose a man (a king / a senior pastor) to rule over them. They wanted to be like the other nations/worldly corporations.

Jesus being the Gracious One that He is, made a decision to allow them to have a human leader to be "over" them, and in like manner, beginning in roughly 150 AD, He allowed the same thing, in the form of regional bishops, and later in the development of human headship, allowed a Pope to emerge, and later a Senior Pastor.

As with Israel, so also with the Church, both nations were never the same.

In time, Saul, and every single king following Saul, allowed their headship authority to go literally "to their heads," and such desire for power, prestige, and money, became, to one degree or another, their demise. So also, for the last 1850 years, whether we are looking at regional bishops, Pope's, Senior Pastors, or a myriad of other manifestations of human headship over the Church of Jesus Christ, the position either ruined or nearly ruined the men who held these roles.

My question to the Church, worldwide, is how many times do we have to see the same thing happen to awaken to the true problem?

My friends, as bad as immorality is, and I will not diminish it here, there is an even greater sin, and that sin is such that it tends to create an environment where one form of immorality, breach of ethics, failure of integrity, or abuse will abound. It is the sin of taking what should be the singular and rightful place of headship, to the Lord Jesus, and taking it unto ourselves, in the forms of these positions, titles, agendas, and programs.

Fallen humanity, as evidenced by the history of abuses that result from man usurping the place of Jesus, simply cannot long manage successfully the temptations that come with too much power, especially in the realms of spiritual authority. It is one thing to be a CEO of a corporation, and face the incredible temptations of mammon, but an even more powerful demon awaits those who actually usurp the role of God, and take up titles and positions in "His" Church that displace His authority.

Let Jesus' words impact our lives:

*John 7:18 He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him.*

From whence come moral, spiritual, and ethical collapses? From "speaking on one's own, i.e. giving one's self, titles, positions, privileges, their vision for the Church, etc.," so as "to gain honor for himself."

If Jesus and His apostles did not favor titles for His gifted leaders, nor pulpits to dominate the services from, nor salaries to create professional ministries from, nor buildings to enslave congregations with debt and enhance pastors' images, etc., etc., then who did

these things? I'll tell you who did these things, and it will possibly offend you, but it's a little voice inside our fallen humanity that tells us "Do all these things to enhance your sense of self worth, but tell yourself its all for Jesus." Ouch, if this stuff hadn't been so true of my own life I'd probably never be able to see through it all, but because I have struggled with this, as has every single pastor and senior pastor, I can see how insidious it all is.

Let me say here, that not all senior pastors manifest a dangerous degree of "king of their realm" mentality, to the hurt of the flock, but because such a concept of leadership exists it leaves far too much room for this error to creep in.

It is time to lift the reproach off of the Church of Jesus Christ. Any observant and smart unbeliever knows our entire system is more about money, power, and personal prestige, than anything else. They see our hypocrisy much clearer than we do. Are they shocked our brother fell from grace? Not at all. They're largely happy that he did, because they hope that now some of us will let them see the real Jesus, instead of our hypocritical religious garb. They want the real thing, and they've smelled a rat in our approach to Church for a long time. When will we?

For centuries we have lied to ourselves and our congregations, that tithing was Jesus' means for building his Church, when if we would just be honest, we'd have to admit it is much more about building our agenda, our reputation, creating security in a consistent paycheck, leaving behind a monument to ourselves, than to glorify Jesus. We all know, if we look deeply enough, that we all teach against requiring the body of Christ to walk under the Mosaic Law, but then we become guilty of picking and choosing which laws we will apply so we can build our own empires and protect our own agendas. It is time for this hypocrisy to come to an end.

I don't condemn our brother. I call his sin the sin it is, but I know He is forgiven. I pray for his personal and family restoration. Beyond this, I call for the Church worldwide to wake up and recognize what this debacle really teaches us.

God bless each of you as you struggle with these things.

Until we see that these things are all about how we've stolen His glory we will continue to do the same things.