

Parallel Lives

The Bible is the most amazing book ever written. It is a very humbling moment for one to discover something the vast majority of Bible readers cannot see. Scripture is replete with treasure for anyone who wants to dig into the messages God has left for man to find. The problem is most 'Christians' have no interest in treasure hunting and instead think that their 'churches' give them all they need to know about God. The fact of the matter is, the Bible is like an onion without a middle. This article is but a mere peel of the onion that may never have been considered by most, yet shares a great historical importance to understanding how God works through men to accomplish His purposes.

There are connections between two individuals that are so deep, once seen you wonder how it was not noticed previously. For a little biblical mental exercise, before continuing on, stop reading and contemplate who these two individuals may be that are similarly linked. One is from the Old Testament and the other from the New Testament. Take a moment and ponder who these two could be. Close your eyes if you need and try to name two 'called' people whose stories are intersected even though they lived centuries apart in time.

Let's see how you did.....

*⁹ That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and **there is nothing new under the sun.***

Ecclesiastes 1:9 (emphasis mine)

We are told everything repeats. This does not mean there is one-hundred percent harmony in events, circumstances or characters (individuals). And in the case of the two individuals that lived parallel lives, as much as they are connected, there are many aspects of their lives that are so contradictory that these differences are uncannily similar.

We will first introduce the character of the Old Testament. After seeing who this is, see if you can name the individual from the New Testament.

¹ There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjamite, a mighty man of power. ² And he had a choice and handsome son whose name was Saul. There was not a more handsome person than he among the children of Israel. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people.

1 Samuel 9:1-2 (emphasis mine)

The bloodline connection between the two sets the foundation for the connection. As David is connected to Jesus by the blood, so is Saul connected to his counterpart who came along after Christ's resurrection.

Before God called Saul to be king over all of Israel, the people ruled themselves and used Judges to settle their disputes and lead the nation in war. Samuel warned the people of the consequences of accepting the rulership of a king. *1 Samuel 8:10-18* goes into great depth of what was to come but the people did not care.

¹⁹ Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, "No, but we will have a king over us, ²⁰that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles."

1 Samuel 8:19-20

God, having thrown up His hands to the cry of the people, gave them the most dominant figure amongst them. King Saul's New Testament counterpart was himself a dominant figure although in a different way. Instead of standing out in admiration, this man stood out in fear of persecution.

*²⁶ And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; **but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple.***

Acts 9:26 (emphasis mine)

Now that we can see King Saul's counterpart is, indeed, Saul who we now know as Paul, the depth of the treasured information buried in plain sight can be exposed.

*¹ I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! **For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.***

Romans 11:1 (emphasis mine)

We can now see the bloodline connection between these two men. There is Godly intent with this, no different than both King David and Christ being born of the tribe of Judah. The next connection between King Saul and Saul, who we now call Paul, cannot be seen nor understood by most 'Christians' simply because they have no clear understanding about God since they believe in the 'Trinity.' This article cannot go into the depths of this false doctrine, so the best recommendation that can be made for now is to accept this point at face value. If asked, who is the God of the Old Testament, the vast majority would answer by simply saying "God" and if pressed, they would most likely answer "God the Father" when in fact the God of the Old Testament is Christ.

¹⁵ Now the **LORD [CHRIST]** had told **Samuel** in his ear the day before **Saul** came, saying,
¹⁶ “Tomorrow about this time I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him commander over My people Israel, that he may save My people from the hand of the Philistines; for I have looked upon My people, because their cry has come to Me.”
¹⁷ So when **Samuel** saw **Saul**, the **LORD** said to him, “There he is, the man of whom I spoke to you. This one shall reign over My people.”

1 Samuel 9:15-17 (emphasis and bracket mine)

Christ is the one who called out Saul to Samuel anointing him king. Saul was called upon to lead and guide God's people before He came down as the Son of Man. The anointing of one Saul led to the anointing of another.

³ As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven.

⁴ Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?”

⁵ And he said, “Who are You, Lord?”

Then **the Lord** said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads.”

⁶ So he, trembling and astonished, said, “Lord, what do You want me to do?”

Then **the Lord** said to him, “Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”

Acts 9:3-6 (emphasis mine)

Christ is the one who called out Saul to lead and guide God's people after His resurrection.

Before Saul was anointed king, he was sent on a journey where he would encounter other men of God where he would receive the gift.

⁵ After that you shall come to the hill of God where the Philistine garrison is. And it will happen, when you have come there to the city, that you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place with a stringed instrument, a tambourine, a flute, and a harp before them; and they will be prophesying. ⁶ Then **the Spirit of the LORD** will come upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man. ⁷ And let it be, when these signs come to you, that you do as the occasion demands; for **God is with you**.

1 Samuel 10:5-7 (emphasis mine)

It must be noted that very few people received the Holy Spirit (from God the Father) before Pentecost as written in the book of Acts. Christ's disciples did not receive this gift during His ministry. They needed to wait until the Spirit (from God the Father) was poured out on the day of Pentecost following His death and resurrection. King Saul was one of the very few who had received the gift before this time.

Saul (Paul) was on his journey to Damascus when Christ overtook him. From that meeting, losing his sight, he ventured to Damascus where he sat in darkness without eating or drinking until Samuel's counterpart in this connection named Ananias received word about the role he would play.

¹⁵ But the Lord [Christ] said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. ¹⁶ For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."

Acts 9:15-16 (emphasis and bracket mine)

Just as King Saul was anointed by Christ by receiving the Holy Spirit, Saul (Paul) became anointed by Christ and he too received the same gift from God the Father.

*¹⁷ And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight **and be filled with the Holy Spirit.**" ¹⁸ Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized.*

Acts 9:17-18 (emphasis mine)

Paul, when he was known as Saul, persecuted the Jews who turned against the teachings of the Pharisee's.

¹¹ And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities.

Acts 26:11

After Paul's encounter with Christ and subsequent meeting with Ananias, having received the Holy Spirit, he received a new heart.

¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel.

Acts 9:15

(King) Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin during the days of the *Judges*, in the time when the people turned from God's intended plan of self-rule with Him being King. God needed to change Saul's heart to one that would honor His intentions while knowing man's behavior could eventually succumb to personal gain and pride.

⁷ And the LORD said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them. ⁸ According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even to this day—with which they have forsaken Me and served other gods—so they are doing to you also. ⁹ Now therefore, heed their voice. However, you shall solemnly forewarn them, and show them the behavior of the king who will reign over them."

1 Samuel 8:7-9

God, knowing man's behavior while not knowing each personal direct action, through the Holy Spirit changed Saul's heart.

⁹ So it was, when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, that God gave him another heart; and all those signs came to pass that day.

1 Samuel 10:9

From here we must deviate in the story in order to explain God's calling. Having shared earlier that God is not a 'Trinity' as 'Christianity' teaches, it must be understood that God is looking for obedience from each of us. God the Father and Christ are looking to expand their family and this is done through a calling and demonstrated obedience (choosing). For simplicity's sake, having the heart of God. Here is one example of verses read and passed over without understanding.

¹⁴ "For many are called, but few are chosen."

Matthew 22:14

As you can see through the direct correlations thus far, both Saul's were called by God the Father. Having shown earlier in this article that it was Christ who worked through Samuel to bring forth Saul as king and it was Christ who came to Saul (Paul), *John 14:6* takes on a depth unseen by most.

⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 14:6

As we continue to explore the connections between these two men of the same birth name, we will see how Saul became Paul with his new heart while King Saul's actions led to the Spirit leaving him (which completely deconstructs the “once saved, always saved” modern day ‘Christianity’ false doctrine).

¹⁴ But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and a distressing spirit from the LORD troubled him.

1 Samuel 16:14

The connection of these two men held within their birth name and it's meaning along with Saul becoming known to us as Paul shows the power of God and His messages for those who have intertest. These names and their meanings directly tie into *Matthew 22:14* of being called and chosen.

The meaning of the name Saul is “Asked for” which is biblically connected to being “called” as has been made clear, both men were. The meaning of the name Paul is “small or humble” which is exactly what needs to happen for an individual to become chosen as Christ made known.

⁴⁴ And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Mark 10:44-45

Paul, who was originally a hardened and confident man became small and a humble servant, as opposed to King Saul, who started out humble but turned and went on to do his own will and not that of God's.

¹⁰ Now the word of the LORD came to Samuel, saying, ¹¹ “I greatly regret that I have set up Saul as king, for he has turned back from following Me, and has not performed My commandments.” And it grieved Samuel, and he cried out to the LORD all night.

1 Samuel 15:10-11 (emphasis mine)

Up until this point we have set the foundation of the linkage between these two men. From here we will explore in greater depth how these two lives correlate.

King Saul killed the Lord's priests.

¹⁶ And the king said, “You shall surely die, Ahimelech, you and all your father's house!” ¹⁷ Then the king said to the guards who stood about him, “Turn and kill the priests of the LORD, because their hand also is with David, and because they knew when he fled and did not tell it to me.” But the servants of the king would not lift their hands to strike the priests of the LORD. ¹⁸ And the king

said to Doeg, “You turn and kill the priests!” So Doeg the Edomite turned and struck the priests, and killed on that day eighty-five men who wore a linen ephod.¹⁹ Also Nob, the city of the priests, he struck with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and nursing infants, oxen and donkeys and sheep—with the edge of the sword.

1 Samuel 22:16-19

Saul (Paul) punished the Lord’s called even unto death.

¹ Now Saul was consenting to his death.

Acts 8:1

³ As for Saul, he made havoc of the church [called of God], entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.

Acts 8:3 (brackets mine)

God [Christ] made Saul king but Saul failed to carry on with a humble heart, listen to Samuel or be faithful and trust in God. Had King Saul believed God with his new heart that he was a place holder and not all powerful, he would have been blessed.

¹¹ And Samuel said, “What have you done?” Saul said, “When I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that you did not come within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered together at Michmash,¹² then I said, ‘The Philistines will now come down on me at Gilgal, and I have not made supplication to the LORD.’ Therefore I felt compelled, and offered a burnt offering.”¹³ And Samuel said to Saul, “You have done foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you. For now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever.¹⁴ But now your kingdom shall not continue. The LORD has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you.”

1 Samuel 13:11-14

Paul, on the other hand, trusted Christ.

² And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry,¹³ although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

1 Timothy 1:12-13

King Saul, through his words, demonstrated he did not embrace his calling and the relationship God was looking to establish with him through his anointing. Instead of embracing a personal relationship with God, he demonstrated unfaithfulness by not embracing the worship of God.

³⁰ *Then he said, “I have sinned; yet honor me now, please, before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, that I may worship the Lord your God.”* ³¹ *So Samuel turned back after Saul, and Saul worshiped the Lord.*

1 Samuel 15:30 (emphasis mine)

Where King Saul went on to worship Samuel's God, Paul, through his words, demonstrated he embraced his calling and relationship that God established through his anointing.

⁶ *And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!”* ⁷ *Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.*

Galatians 4:6-7 (emphasis mine)

Reading this, one might ask if it was Christ who interacted with these two men, how it was God the Father who was doing the calling discussed earlier in *Matthew 22:14*? Christ answers this question in John's gospel and He explains both the calling and the choosing.

First there is the calling.

⁶⁵ *And He said, “Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.”*

John 6:65

Then comes the choosing.

²⁶ *If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.*

John 12:26

Here it must be explained that there is a disconnect in 'Christianity' with the calling and choosing. This was touched on already in this article but surely passed over by most reading. Christ said one must follow HIS commandments.

¹⁵ *“If you love Me, keep My commandments.*

John 14:15

MOST who call themselves 'Christian' while thinking they follow the commandments, surely DO NOT. Serving Christ, as shared in *John 12:26*, is measured by actions commanded throughout Scripture (such as *John 14:15*) but unseen because of the deceptive teachers of this world known as pastors/ministers/priests misunderstanding the differences between the old and new covenants.

A simple personal test to consider; do you currently walk/follow as the Israelite's did?

*¹⁶because they despised My judgments and **did not walk in My statutes, but profaned My Sabbaths**; for their heart went after their idols.*

Ezekiel 20:16 (emphasis mine)

Today, this would be known as Sunday, Christmas, Easter and all that surrounds these pagan days of worship. Or do you follow what God the Father and Christ command (statutes) which can be found in Leviticus 23 but is compacted a few verses later in Ezekiel (and many other verses in Scripture).

*¹⁹I am the LORD your God: **Walk in My statutes, keep My judgments, and do them;** ²⁰hallow My Sabbaths, and they will be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I am the LORD your God.'*

Ezekiel 20:19-20 (emphasis mine)

No different for each of us today, we can look to both Saul's for a foundation of being chosen.

King Saul served himself. Paul, being humbled, served both God the Father and God the Christ.

Paul, once confronted by Christ, did not turn from understanding his place.

¹⁶However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life. ¹⁷Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

1 Timothy 1:16-17

Both men, called by God, took different directions in faith, trust, obedience and persecution. One trusted God's word through torment and persecution.

²⁴From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. ²⁵Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; ²⁶in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own

countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

2 Corinthians 11:24-26

And the other, holding a kingdom's reign, did not trust God and put himself above all. King Saul even went beyond the scope of faith, searching out a medium over God for answers, of which led to his death.

¹³ So Saul died for his unfaithfulness which he had committed against the LORD, because he did not keep the word of the LORD, and also because he consulted a medium for guidance.

1 Chronicles 10:13

King Saul had received God's Spirit but did not adhere to 'Its' guidance, he did not become a servant but wanted to be served. Whereas Paul was continually facing tribulation for his servitude. What man measures is not the same as what God measures.

⁷ But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

1 Samuel 16:7

It was because King Saul's heart did not accept the guidance from God the Father's Spirit that He removed It.

¹⁴ But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and a distressing spirit from the LORD troubled him.

1 Samuel 16:14

This is what led Saul to search elsewhere for comfort.

⁷ Then Saul said to his servants, "Find me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her." And his servants said to him, "In fact, there is a woman who is a medium at En Dor."

1 Samuel 28:7

King Saul continually lived in fear and chose to go to the one who God utilized as His messenger to find answers to things that were troubling him.

¹⁶ Then Samuel said: "So why do you ask me, seeing the LORD has departed from you and has become your enemy? ¹⁷ And the LORD has done for Himself as He spoke by me. For the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David. ¹⁸ Because you did not obey the voice of the LORD nor execute His fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore the LORD has done this thing to you this day. ¹⁹ Moreover the LORD will also deliver Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines. And tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The LORD will also deliver the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines."

1 Samuel 28:16-19

Showing the exactness of the relationship in a contradictory implication, Paul did not live in fear and asked Festus that he be taken to the head of the empire, Ceasar.

¹⁰ So Paul said, "I stand at Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged. To the Jews I have done no wrong, as you very well know. ¹¹ For if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying; but if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them. I appeal to Caesar."

Acts 25:10-11

King Saul's life was focused on himself, his power and position even though God was with him from the beginning. Whereas Paul, knowing God was with him, focused on teaching and proclaiming God the Father and Christ Jesus.

The Bible is clear about fear and we are to have it established in our lives in a positive way. Because King Saul lived with a negative personal fear of losing what had been established for him by God to lead His people, his life was centered on his personal power and position. Saul, who became Paul, was humbled when God [Christ] came to him and lived in fear (awe, reverence) of the Lord.

¹⁰ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever.

Psalm 111:10

Both King Saul and Paul lived in constant discomfort. One suffered in an emotional sense while the other suffered physically. King Saul was personally threatened in his mind by David even though David never gave him any reason to live in fear of being replaced as king. King Saul's actions as leader led to his self-esteem issues causing him to always have to look over his shoulder. Saul showed his true character when he allowed a youth to fight his battle.

³³ And Saul said to David, “You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.”

1 Samuel 17:33

³⁷.... And Saul said to David, “Go, and the LORD be with you!”

1 Samuel 17:37

From that moment King Saul’s emotional discomfort had been established and later solidified when David came back from another battle.

⁷ So the women sang as they danced, and said: “Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.” ⁸ Then Saul was very angry, and the saying displeased him; and he said, “They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed only thousands. Now what more can he have but the kingdom?” ⁹ So Saul eyed David from that day forward.

1 Samuel 18:7-9

David had become King Saul’s emotional thorn in the side. Paul, on the other hand, was given a physical thorn in the side.

⁷ And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.

2 Corinthians 12:7

King Saul tried to have his thorn removed physically with numerous attempts on David’s life.

¹⁰ Then Saul sought to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he slipped away from Saul’s presence; and he drove the spear into the wall. So David fled and escaped that night.

1 Samuel 19:10

Removal attempts also came by ordering others to eliminate the thorn.

¹¹ Saul also sent messengers to David’s house to watch him and to kill him in the morning. And Michal, David’s wife, told him, saying, “If you do not save your life tonight, tomorrow you will be killed.”

1 Samuel 19:11

Paul, whose thorn was a constant physical infirmity, instead of taking measures into his own hands or looking to other men for relief, went straight to God in prayer and was given an answer directly.

⁸ Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. ⁹ And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

2 Corinthians 12:8-9

Paul (when he was known as Saul) caused great physical torment to God's called out ones [ecclesia – poorly translated in the Bible as church] before the day he was walking to Damascus and became blind. Being named Saul at the time, he had many of the same attributes as his Old Testament predecessor. God [Christ] humbled him and henceforth he became known as Paul. Where David became King Saul's emotional thorn, which he could not overcome, Paul was given a physical thorn which he graciously accepted.

There is so much more connecting these two men, their actions and others around them. The depths of the Bible are impossible for us to fully comprehend, especially if we only feed on milk. As should have been seen, the connection between these two men goes well beyond circumstance. Their connections and how God worked with and through them ties directly into our personal stories today. The question for each of us is which Saul do we mimic in our own walk?

NKJV is used throughout.