

"Standing Tall, Falling Hard"

Sunday Morning Message by Ray Reynolds (October 20, 2013)

Introduction: The Psalmist exhorts us to meditate on Scripture day and night. The word for "meditate" is the Hebrew word *haga* and it carries the image of reading the Scriptures like a dog chewing its bone. It is almost with a ferociousness that we should approach the Bible every time we open it to read and devour each line. The key idea today is "distortion." Webster defines distortion as follows: "To twist something out of its original shape." As we come to **The Story** in the book of First Samuel, we will examine three major distortions of the perfect picture God set before His people. Let's study together....

Discussion:

I. The Backdrop of the Three Major Distortions

- A. A heartbreaking story (**I Samuel 1:1-8**)
- B. A heartfelt prayer (**I Samuel 1:9-18**)
- C. A heartwarming ending (**I Samuel 1:19-2:11**)

II. The Three Major Distortions of God's Purpose

- A. The Distortion of Phoniness
 - 1. Hophni and Phineas abuse the sacrificial system and commit immoral acts.
 - 2. Eli refused to reprimand his sons and God's judged them with death.
 - 3. The Ark of the Covenant was stolen from Shiloh (**I Samuel 3-4**).
- B. The Distortion of Conformity
 - 1. The people ask Samuel to anoint a king (**I Samuel 8:6**).
 - 2. God tells Samuel they are not rejecting him, but God (**I Samuel 8:20**).
- C. The Distortion of Misrepresentation
 - 1. God allows the people to have a king (permissive will vs. perfect will).
 - 2. Samuel anoints Saul who is empowered by the Spirit to defeat the Ammonites (**I Samuel 11:1-11**).
 - 3. Saul disobeys God by not obeying God's command to destroy the Amalekites for their sin (**I Samuel 15**).
 - 4. God rejects Saul as king for misrepresenting God to the other nations.
 - 5. This is when David is chosen (**I Samuel 15:23, 26**).

Conclusion: Have you found yourself frozen by your fear? Have you allowed doubts to cloud your view? It is at that moment when you must trust your Father. He is the Living God who knows all things and can do all things. Don't worry about falling! God wants us to have that moment with Him. He wants us to trust in Him. Will you stand tall? Are you ready to turn your life over to God? Are you ready to surrender to the will of God?