The Making of a Villain

Villains Are Made, Not Born  (Some Come From Heroes)
1 Samuel 10:20-27

Description:
Warning of the potential villain waiting to come out in us all.

BEGIN:

What do…

- Saddam Hussein
- Osama bin Laden
- Bashar Al-Assad
- Kim Jong-Un
- And Vladimir Putin...

...have in common? They can all be considered villains. Men who have...

- Bombed
- And gassed
- And poisoned
- And irradiated
- And exterminated...

...their own people, and beyond! And the question that I would like us to consider this morning is...

From where do such villains come?

➢ Is that just the way they are born?

➢ Or are they homegrown?

- Are they marked from birth, like Damien in the Omen, a child of Satan born into this world?
- Or is it more likely they were scarred for life by some early traumatic experience, like Harry Potter & Lord Voldemort?

That real villains have come into this world I don’t think can be denied.
Millions died at the hands of such men! And extraordinary measures had to be taken to stop them. But from where did these villains come? How did they come to be upon the earth?

It seems every generation has had more than their fair share of them. Which includes Bible times as well. In NT days I think of the King Herod dynasty.

- How the 1st King Herod, Herod the Great, ordered all baby boys 2 yrs old and younger to be killed in & around the vicinity of Bethlehem in hopes of killing the Christ-child!

- And when the Herod the Great died, Herod’s oldest son, Archelaus, began his reign by slaughtering 3,000 prominent citizens! Which helps explain why, when Joseph was told down in Egypt-land he could take the Baby Jesus and His mother Mary and return to Israel “for those who sought the child's life are dead,” the Bible says Joseph...

**Matthew 2:21**

...rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel.

**Matthew 2:22**

But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee.

- Later, Herod Antipas, another one of Herod’s sons, who reigned in Galilee, had John the Baptist arrested, and imprisoned AND BEHEADED at the request of his mistress. He’s also the Herod that mocked and ridiculed Jesus when Pilate learned Jesus was a Galilean and had Jesus sent to Herod to see what Herod would do with Him.

- Later still, Herod the Great’s grandson, Herod Agrippa...

**Acts 12:1**

...laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church.

**Acts 12:2**

He killed James the brother of John with the sword,

**Acts 12:3**

and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also...

“Villainous!” I don’t know a better way to describe the entire Herod Dynasty when it came to the people of God, in the NT. And they weren’t the only ones! There were plenty of others who weren’t kings, but who did whatever they could with whatever opportunity they had to thwart the plans of God. I’m thinking of men like...
• Diotrephes, who loved to have the preeminence 3 John says, and refused to support the Lord’s missionaries who had come to his Church. And refused to let others support them as well.

• Or Demetrius, the silversmith, maker of idols, who turned the whole city of Ephesus against listening to the Apostle Paul!

• Or Judas Iscariot, who looked for an opportunity to betray the Lord Jesus, AND FOUND IT, didn’t he!

From where did all these villains come?

The OT is full of them! Evil men. Treacherous men. And women! With which you didn’t dare cross paths! Men and women like…

Ahab & Jezebel who would have your throat slit just so they could have your vineyard!

Of Ahab the Bible says…

1 Kings 16:30
And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord, more than all who were before him.

There’s a reputation to try to live down! And his wife Jezebel is described as worse than him!

From where does all this evil come!

That’s what we are going to look at in coming weeks. And we’re going to look at King Saul, the man chosen by God to be the first king of Israel, as our example. And if you don’t mind me giving you a little spoiler:

➢ From the get go, this man (Saul) wanted no part of it.

➢ But before his life was over, he couldn’t let go of it!

➢ And it had to be torn from him and given to another man.

Our text this morning talks about how God chose His king. Not by election, but by lot. How God directed His prophet Samuel to bring all the tribes of Israel together…

1 Samuel 10:20
…and the tribe of Benjamin was taken by lot.

And how God directed His prophet Samuel to bring all the tribe of Benjamin together…

1 Samuel 10:21
...and the clan of the Matrites was taken by lot; and (then, finally…) Saul the son of Kish was taken by lot. But when they sought him, he could not be found.

And the reason Saul could not be found was because Saul wanted no part of this king-thing. Saul did not want to be king. And he had hid himself among the baggage in hopes they couldn’t find him. And the comical thing about that is the Bible says Saul stood how tall?

1 Samuel 10:23
...And when he stood among the people, he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward.

HEAD AND SHOULDERS ABOVE ALL THE PEOPLE! Does anyone else find that a bit comical? The tallest man in the nation, trying to hide himself among the baggage!

James Wright, come up here and help me, would you please. (Give James a hand this morning, would you? Because James is a lot like Saul. A gentle giant who’d rather sit back and hide out in the pews than step out into the limelight this morning. Thank you James for helping us see something about this man that God chose to be His first king this morning.)

Now, with James standing beside me, let me ask: Which of the two of us stands the best chance of hiding ourselves among the baggage? What’s the chance Saul is going to be able to pull that off? Do you see the comedy of the tallest man in the nation trying to hide himself among the baggage? Why did he do that? BECAUSE SAUL DID NOT WANT TO BE KING! Saul wanted no part of it! And a drowning man will grasp at straws! Or in Saul’s case, a giant of a man will try to hide himself in the baggage!

Give James a hand this morning for helping us see that this morning! Thank you James.

Saul wasn’t trying to hide his giant frame among the baggage with crossed fingers saying: “Pick me, oh please, pick me!” Saul wanted no part of this king thing from the get go.

And Saul wasn’t the only one! After the Lord told the people that Saul was trying to hide in the baggage, and we don’t have time to talk about the useless of trying to hide from God, but after God told the people that their God-chosen king was out hiding in the baggage, the Bible says…

1 Samuel 10:23
...they ran and took him from there. And when he stood among the people, he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward.

1 Samuel 10:24
And Samuel said to all the people, “Do you see him whom the Lord has chosen? There is none like him among all the people.” And all the people shouted, “Long live the king!”

AND KICKIN’ AND SCREAMIN’ Saul became Israel’s first king. Not because Saul wanted to be king. BUT IN SPITE OF SAUL NOT WANTING TO BE KING! You know, sometimes, what God wants trumps what you want. You know that don’t you? And that’s what Saul found out. And then, everybody went home.

1 Samuel 10:26
Saul also went to his home at Gibeah (the Bible says. Where else was Saul to go? Israel had no palace, no throne for the king to sit upon. Probably no crown for the king to wear or scepter for
the king to hold! Israel had never had a king before. So Saul went home. But look at this!), and with him went men of valor whose hearts God had touched.

And I believe the Bible tells us of that to show us what kind of cloth this man Saul was cut out of from the get-go. Because the very next sentence says…

1 Samuel 10:27
But some worthless fellows said, “How can this man save us?” And they despised him and brought him no present. But (the Bible says, Saul did what?) he held his peace.

And I believe God tells us that to show us the kind of man this man Saul was from the get-go.

• Saul’s just been chosen by God!
• Against his own will Saul’s been chosen!
• And he’s been accepted as king by the entire nation!
• And Saul is surrounded by a whole contingent of valiant men whose hearts God had touched to surround him.

And now “some worthless fellows” have the gall... to stand up, and despise him, and say, “How can this man save us!” And withhold their affection for him. Do they understand the predicament they could be putting themselves in! AND PUTTING THEIR FAMILIES IN! If they did, they might have had second thoughts about what they did AND CHOSEN TO WRITE AN ANONYMOUS LETTER TO THE NY TIMES INSTEAD! But to Saul’s credit, Saul didn’t…

• Sic his valiant men on them.
• Burn their homes down and wipe their families out.
• Saul didn’t even storm home and tap out A NASTY TWITTER FEED!!! All caps followed by three exclamation points!

No. Saul didn’t do any of those things. Instead, Saul did what? HE HELD HIS PEACE! I’m telling you there’s something impressive about the way this young man started out! And this isn’t the only time. In the very next chapter the Bible says…

1 Samuel 11:5
Now, behold, Saul was coming from the field behind the oxen. And Saul said, “What is wrong with the people, that they are weeping?” So they told him the news of the men of Jabesh.

The people were weeping because of the way the Ammonites were threatening violence against their Israelite brothers in the town of Jabesh. And Saul’s going to call the Israelites to arms against the Ammonites. And deliver their Israelite brothers in Jabesh. But before he does, the Biblical writer wants us to notice what Israel’s newly crowned king was doing, where he was “coming from" when he was told the terrible news of what was happening?

“Saul was coming from (Where?) the field behind the (What?) oxen!”

Saul’s just been crowned king! Which was something Saul never wanted. But now that he is, what’s the king’s first order of business? Saul's coming in from the field behind the oxen! HOW
MANY THINK WE COULD USE A FEW MORE WORKING MEN AND WOMEN LIKE THAT LEADING OUR NATION!

There’s a story about Abraham Lincoln who was caught by a senior official polishing his own shoes after being elected President of the United States. And the senior official said, “Mr. President! You polish your own shoes!” And supposedly the president looked up incredulously and said, “Whose shoes do you polish?” I DON’T KNOW ABOUT YOU BUT THAT’S THE KIND OF MAN, OR WOMAN, I’D LIKE TO SEE LEADING THIS COUNTRY!

That was the kind of man God chose to be the first king of His people! One in a million! Saul, first King of Israel, chosen by God Himself, WAS COMING IN FROM THE FIELD BEHIND THE OXEN! I’m telling you, there’s something really impressive about the way this young man starts out. And when he hears about the way the Ammonites are threatening violence against their Israelite brothers, he calls the entire nation to arms! And Saul musters an army of 330,000 strong! And he leads them in battle “like one man” against the Ammonites, the Bible says!

1 Samuel 11:11
...they came into the midst of the (Ammonite) camp in the morning watch and struck down the Ammonites until the heat of the day. And those who survived were scattered, so that no two of them were left together.

And listen to this, the Bible says…

1 Samuel 11:12
Then the people said to Samuel, “Who is it that said, ‘Shall Saul reign over us?’ Bring the men, that we may put them to death.”

And what do you think Saul says? The first King of Israel, victorious in battle, now raised to HEROIC status?

“Where are those worthless fellows who said, ‘How can this man save us?’ Bring them out that we may put them to death!”

1 Samuel 11:13
But Saul said, “Not a man shall be put to death this day, for today the Lord has worked salvation in Israel.”

Man! I’m tellin’ you: Can the Lord pick’em or what! And instead of execution, they worshipped the Lord!

I’m telling you, there was something really impressive about this young man, the way he started out. IT’S HARD TO BELIEVE THE VILLAIN HE BECOMES BEFORE HIS LIFE IS THROUGH! And here our sermon takes a screeching turn. Because our series is not about “The Making of A Hero” but “The Making of A (What?) Villain!” And Saul is our example. A young man who starts out so impressively heroic, turns into such a villain THAT GOD HAS TO TEAR THE KINGDOM AWAY FROM HIM. It doesn’t happen overnight. But…

Proverbs 16:18
Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.
And Saul... falls. And becomes... A VILLAIN! A villain that no one could have imagined from the beginning. How does such a humble young man... BECOME SUCH A VILLAIN? I'll let others tell you how that happened in coming weeks. But what I want us all to see this morning is that it did.

➢ From the get go, this man (Saul) wanted no part of this king-thing.

➢ But before his life was over, he couldn’t let go of it!

Those kingly robes kind of grew on him! And he became more concerned about remaining on the throne & protecting his reign, than obeying the reign of the God of heaven!

➢ And the kingdom had to be torn from him and given to another man.

The time will come when God’s prophet will be sent to this treacherous king to say...

1 Samuel 15:26
...you have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you from being king over Israel.”

1 Samuel 15:27
As Samuel turned to go away, Saul seized the skirt of his robe, and it tore.

1 Samuel 15:28
And Samuel said to him, “The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you.

Better than you... since you have became such a... villain.

And the scary thing about all this is that if this is something that could happen to such a promising, God-chosen, young man, filled with such heroic potential-- THEN IT COULD HAPPEN TO ANYONE! It could happen to you! And it could happen to me! And we could end up learning first hand how “Villains Are Made, Not Born.” In fact, some come from heroes!

It's a hard lesson for us to admit this morning: but every one of us in this room is a person filled with so much potential... for good or for evil. And if we could see the future self of the person sitting on the pew beside us we might be tempted to bow down and worship such a hero! AND IF THEY COULD SEE OUR FUTURE SELF SITTING BESIDE THEM THEY MIGHT GASP IN HORROR AT THE VILLAIN WE WILL BECOME!

That's what C.S. Lewis was talking about in his book, The Weight of Glory, when he reminds us that we have never met a mere mortal. But only those who will live forever; either in unimaginable glory or in eternal horror! That's “The Weight of Glory” that each of us carries upon our shoulders. Heroes, and villains, among us, one and all.
That’s what G.K. Chesterton meant when a major London newspaper in Victorian England asked the question “What is the problem with the world?” and many Victorian intellectuals were sending back long essays delineating the complexities of everything wrong with the world G.K. Chesterton responded with a handwritten note that simply read, “I am. Sincerely yours, Chesterton.”

What’s wrong with the world?

I am.

Sincerely yours,
Chesterton.

Why did that Christian man say that? Because he knew...

Two natures beat within our breast
The one is cursed, the one is blessed
The one we love, the one we hate.
But it’s the one we feed that will dominate.

And we might not find out which one that is until we find ourself the most powerful person in the room. Because most of us are never going to sit on thrones. But there will come a time when we find our self the most powerful person in the room. Maybe the room will be...

- A bedroom (where there are only two of you in the room. But where one of you needs to be the hero... and say no. Are you going to be the hero? Or the villain? When you find yourself the most important person in the room.)
- A boardroom (where a dozen or so are looking up to you as to what should or should not be done.)
- The living room (where you hold the remote control and you get to decide what is let into your home.)
- The classroom (where so many little eyes are looking up at you to be told what is right and what is wrong.)

“What are you going to do when your time comes, and you find yourself the most important man, the most important woman, in the room?” Will you be the hero? Or the villain? And is there anything you can do about that now?

Andy Stanley says there is. Andy says we can begin erecting what he calls Biblical “Guardrails” into our lives now to help warn us and keep us from falling off God’s path when those future times come. That’s what our LifeGroups will be looking at over the next five weeks. If you haven’t signed up for one you can still do that this morning. Jody will be in the back after Church to show you when and where our LifeGroups will be meeting and she will help you find one that will be right for you. A LifeGroup, a smaller group of five, ten, twenty individuals that meet in circles, not in rows, where these Biblical “Guardrails” can be discussed and help you decide if you might want to erect some of these Biblical “Guardrails” into your life. And here’s why Andy says you need to seriously consider erecting some of these “Guardrails” into your life, because guardrails are...
“They’re everywhere, but they don’t really get much attention… until somebody hits one. And then, more often than not it’s a lifesaver.”

A LIFESAVER! That’s what joining a LifeGroup and erecting some Biblical “Guardrails” could be for someone down the road this morning. And I pray you give it due consideration.

END:

Just as you did before you came to Church this morning. You had to give that due consideration as to whether this was really that important to your life. To come out on as rainy a day as this!

Now maybe it wasn’t your decision. Maybe it was your mom or dad’s decision, or grandma’s or grampa’s. Maybe you’re here for the same reason Tom Sawyer found himself in Church most Sunday mornings. He didn’t want to be there but Aunt Polly thought it was important for Tom to be there, if for no other reason than TO KEEP THE INJUN JOE AND HUCK FINN DRIVEN OUT OF HIM! Maybe that’s why you’re here, I don’t know. But I pray that sooner or later you come to the realization on your own that you need to be here because of Jesus.

- You need to be here because of what Jesus did. Just to say thank you.
- But that you also need to be here because of what you might end up doing without Him!
- You need to be here because of the future hero, or villain, that is waiting to come out within you!
- And you don’t want to take the chance of waiting to see which that will be without Jesus!

If that’s your decision, that you need Jesus, and you need His Church’s continual reminder of how important Jesus is in your life, then you come and make that known as we stand and sing.