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Samuel 9

Saul Chosen as King

1Now 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.

Bona Fides were of great importance during this time. It still is even today in our politics and even religions.

The Tribe of Benjamin was known for their bravery and fierceness and military prowess even though they were the smallest of the tribes by number. Jerusalem also sat within Benjamin's boundaries. They were situated between the Northern and Southern Tribes of Israel and were well respected by all other tribes. The lineage is given to confirm the prestige of the man that would be chosen for Israel's first King would come from the tribe of Benjamin.

2And he had a son, whose name was Saul, a choice young man, and a goodly: and *there was not* among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward *he was* higher than any of the people.

The term “goodly” is referring to his appearance. He was in our vernacular a handsome man. He was also tall, standing taller than anyone in his family or possible the entire tribe of Benjamin.

These next verses seem to come out of nowhere, the point of Samuel is that it demonstrates Saul’s fathers trust in him and his ability to overcome and think on his feet. It also reveals how God will use animals and men to move certain people in a direction that will carry out God’s Will. Sometimes in life when we find ourselves at a detour, don’t discount God intervening in some manner for His Purpose. Those detours, like the one Saul is going to experience often test out patience. It is those times that God grows our patience, or we totally fail and have the meltdown of an idiot and throw a tantrum. I know from experience.

3And the asses of Kish Saul's father were lost. And Kish said to Saul his son, Take now one of the servants with thee, and arise, go seek the asses. 4And he passed through mount Ephraim, and passed through the land of Shalisha, but they found *them* not: then they passed through the land of Shalim, and *there they were* not: and he passed through the land of the Benjamites, but they found *them* not.

Just for a point of geography, Saul and his servant first went north into the Tribe of Ephraim’s land. In that land are several markers that are mentioned. Shalisha and Shalim are thought to be near

each other. It is an area where three valleys or canyons converge into one Wadi. Not finding the donkeys there they turned to go back into their tribe's homeland.

5And when they were come to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant that was with him, Come, and let us return; lest my father leave *caring* for the asses, and take thought for us.

More geography, the land of Zuph is along the northern border of Benjamin near Ephraim.

From Strong's Concordance:

"(2) The Septuagint's Codex Vaticanus and Codex Alexandrinus have Seiph; Lucian has Sipha, "the land of Zuph," a district in Benjamin, near its northern border ([1 Samuel 9:5](#))."

Saul and his servant had been gone sufficient time that Saul believed his father would be worried about them, and thought it best to return home even though emptyhanded.

6And he said unto him, Behold now, *there is* in this city a man of God, and *he is* an honourable man; all that he saith cometh surely to pass: now let us go thither; peradventure he can shew us our way that we should go.

The servant, master relationship at this time was not harsh and uncaring but more of a partnership, enduring dangerous and difficult challenges together. So, the servant had an idea that he

shared with Saul. The idea was most likely placed in the servant's mind by God, moving Saul in a direction that would fulfill God's Will.

7Then said Saul to his servant, But, behold, *if* we go, what shall we bring the man? for the bread is spent in our vessels, and *there is* not a present to bring to the man of God: what have we?

Saul was mindful of the family values and prestige within the Tribe of Benjamin and within Israel. It was customary to give the “seer” something as a token of respect when asking a question. Saul knew they had depleted the provisions for their trip indicating it must have taken them several days to reach this point.

8And the servant answered Saul again, and said, Behold, I have here at hand the fourth part of a shekel of silver: *that* will I give to the man of God, to tell us our way.

Silver was a common trading currency in this time even though silver was rare. They would take a silver ingot and score it with a cross dividing it into 4 equal pieces. When a fraction of an ingot was needed, they would break it off for payment. In this case the servant had $\frac{1}{4}$ of the ingot and offered it to Saul for a gift to the seer. The servant as well as Saul believed that God communicated with “seers” or what became known as Prophet's

of God and could tell them which way they should go to find the lost donkeys.

9(Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the seer: for *he that is now called* a Prophet was beforetime called a Seer.) 10Then said Saul to his servant, Well said; come, let us go. So they went unto the city where the man of God was.

We knew from earlier study that Samuel lived in Ramah and had built an altar there to God.

1 Samuel 7:17 And his return was to Ramah; for there was his house; and there he judged Israel; and there he built an altar unto the LORD.

Based on that it is believed that Saul and his servant went to Ramah to find the Prophet Samuel.

11And as they went up the hill to the city, they found young maidens going out to draw water, and said unto them, Is the seer here?

Prophets in general and the Prophet Samuel were well known in the nation and their whereabouts were known by most inhabitants of Israel.



12And they answered them, and said, He is; behold, *he is* before you: make haste now, for he came to day to the city; for *there is* a sacrifice of the people to day in the high place:

“**He came today to the city**” likely reveals that Samuel had just returned from one of his journeys around Israel providing his function as Priest, Prophet and Judge. Samuel was preparing a sacrifice to the Lord in Ramah that day.

We often see the term “High Place” as meaning an evil location where debauchery was performed as an evil worship false gods. This term used here was before that time. This was a legitimate monument to God by his Prophet Samuel.

13As soon as ye be come into the city, ye shall straightway find him, before he go up to the high place to eat: for the people will not eat until he come, because he doth bless the sacrifice; *and* afterwards they eat that be bidden.

This “high place” was apparently used by the community as a gathering place, and they would wait upon Samuel for him to sanctify and bless their meal. Samuel would apparently make a sacrifice as part of this event.

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Now therefore get you up; for about this time ye shall find him. 14And they went up into the city: *and* when

they were come into the city, behold, Samuel came out against them, for to go up to the high place.

Interesting phrases indicating that Samuel came out of some structure, likely his home at the same time Saul and his servant arrived. It was of course no accidental meeting Samuel had been told by God that Saul would be arriving. Samuel was on his way to the “high place” in order to bless the sacrifice and the food.

15Now the LORD had told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, saying, 16To 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. 17And when Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said unto him, Behold the man whom I spake to thee of! this same shall reign over my people.

Prophets had a special calling and connection with God. It was a relationship, relationship between Master and servant. We have a different relationship with Jesus today, brothers and sisters to the Son of All Mighty God.

Hebrews 2:11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

Romans 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

18Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer's house *is*.

It is a bit strange that Saul did not know by face the Prophet Samuel, but that appears to be the case.

Samuel wastes no time revealing to Saul that he not only knows him and his searching journey but tells him a lot more.

19And Samuel answered Saul, and said, I *am* the seer: go up before me unto the high place; for ye shall eat with me to day, and to morrow I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that *is* in thine heart. 20And as for thine asses that were lost three days ago, set not thy mind on them; for they are found. And on whom *is* all the desire of Israel? *Is it* not on thee, and on all thy father's house?

Samuel reveals his direct knowledge of what Saul was sent to do and that the animals have been found. Now we need to talk about more important things like the desires of Israel for a King. This colossal burden falls on Saul's family and on him.

21And Saul answered and said, *Am* not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? wherefore then speakest thou so to me?

At this point in Saul's life, he was a humble servant of his fathers. As with most power it has a tendency to corrupt humbleness. "Lord Acton writes to Bishop Creighton that the same moral standards should be applied to all men, political and religious

leaders included, especially since “Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely” (1887)”

Saul would not only suffer from power corruption, but he would be the target of Satanic demon possession.

22And Samuel took Saul and his servant, and brought them into the parlour, and made them sit in the chiefest place among them that were bidden, which were about thirty persons.

It is a small matter as we read this several thousands of years later but both Saul and his servant were treated with respect and seated together as equals in the Prophets home.

23And Samuel said unto the cook, Bring the portion which I gave thee, of which I said unto thee, Set it by thee.

Another small detail that God had told Samuel about and that was the feast that was to be done in honor of Saul. Not only the feast but the specific piece of meat that was to be set aside for Saul.

24And the cook took up the shoulder, and *that* which was upon it, and set *it* before Saul. And Samuel said, Behold that which is left! set *it* before thee, *and* eat: for unto this time hath it been kept for thee since I said, I have invited the people. So Saul did eat with Samuel that day.

Samuel was clearly appraised by God of not only who was coming but how to treat him when he was with Samuel.

25And when they were come down from the high place into the city, *Samuel* communed with Saul upon the top of the house.

We are not exactly what was said on the roof top but it likely did not contain what Saul's role was to be, that would be addressed the next day. So, if you were Samuel talking to who was to become Israel's first King, what would you talk about? Would you tell Saul about the decaying nature of Israel, the turning from God to other gods. Your successes in turning many Israelis' back to God over the many years you have served as Judge, Prophet and Priest. Would you tell Saul how important it was to uphold the Law and traditions of the Prophets? Many possibilities but what we do know is that Samuel did not tell Saul of his impending crowning.

26And they arose early: and it came to pass about the spring of the day, that Samuel called Saul to the top of the house, saying, Up, that I may send thee away.

It is obvious that Saul slept on the roof. In this era and location, the roof was often the coolest spot of a dwelling and a great place to sleep. Saul intends by God's Will to start Saul on his new mission before the sun would rise. It was not only a new day for Saul it was the begging of a new day for Israel. Not to turn out the

way Israel hoped but non-the-less a new direction, one filled with pain and suffering as the Judgement from God had been said by Samuel to Israel when they demanded a King.

Vs 26 continued:

And Saul arose, and they went out both of them, he and Samuel, abroad.

Meaning they left Samuel's house and started to the exit of Ramah starting Saul back towards his own home and what lay ahead.

27And as they were going down to the end of the city, Samuel said to Saul, Bid the servant pass on before us, (and he passed on,) but stand thou still a while, that I may shew thee the word of God.

It is now time for Samuel to show Saul what God's Will was, to fulfill the demand of the Israelis Nation and have a King.

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