

1 Samuel 10
June 12, 2022

Open with Prayer

HOOK:

Q: How do you know when God is calling you to either a role or task? How do you discern it?
[Let people engage]

Transition: Saul is going to find himself in an interesting situation. You will recall from last week that he was out looking for lost donkeys, and his servant points him to Samuel for help to find them. Through lost donkeys, the Lord introduces Saul to Samuel, who anoints Saul as Israel's first king. Imagine going out looking for donkeys, but instead end up being anointed as a king! You might want some assurances that God's hand was in it. Let's see how God confirms His calling for Saul as Israel's first king. Let's begin.

BOOK:

10 Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on Saul's head and kissed him, saying, "Has not the LORD anointed you leader over his inheritance?"² When you leave me today, you will meet two men near Rachel's tomb, at Zelzah on the border of Benjamin. They will say to you, "The donkeys you set out to look for have been found. And now your father has stopped thinking about them and is worried about you. He is asking, "What shall I do about my son?"

³ "Then you will go on from there until you reach the great tree of Tabor. Three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you there. One will be carrying three young goats, another three loaves of bread, and another a skin of wine."⁴ They will greet you and offer you two loaves of bread, which you will accept from them.

⁵ "After that you will go to Gibeah of God, where there is a Philistine outpost. As you approach the town, you will meet a procession of prophets coming down from the high place with lyres, tambourines, flutes and harps being played before them, and they will be prophesying."⁶ The Spirit of the LORD will come upon you in power, and you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed into a different person."⁷ Once these signs are fulfilled, do whatever your hand finds to do, for God is with you.

⁸ "Go down ahead of me to Gilgal. I will surely come down to you to sacrifice burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, but you must wait seven days until I come to you and tell you what you are to do."

Saul Made King

⁹ As Saul turned to leave Samuel, God changed Saul's heart, and all these signs were fulfilled that day.¹⁰ When they arrived at Gibeah, a procession of prophets met him; the Spirit of God came upon him in power, and he joined in their prophesying.¹¹ When all those who had formerly known him saw him prophesying with the prophets, they asked each other, "What is this that has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?"

¹² A man who lived there answered, "And who is their father?" So it became a saying: "Is Saul also among the prophets?"¹³ After Saul stopped prophesying, he went to the high place.

¹⁴ Now Saul's uncle asked him and his servant, "Where have you been?"

“Looking for the donkeys,” he said. “But when we saw they were not to be found, we went to Samuel.”

¹⁵ Saul’s uncle said, “Tell me what Samuel said to you.”

¹⁶ Saul replied, “He assured us that the donkeys had been found.” But he did not tell his uncle what Samuel had said about the kingship.

¹⁷ Samuel summoned the people of Israel to the LORD at Mizpah ¹⁸ and said to them, “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: ‘I brought Israel up out of Egypt, and I delivered you from the power of Egypt and all the kingdoms that oppressed you.’ ¹⁹ But you have now rejected your God, who saves you out of all your calamities and distresses. And you have said, ‘No, set a king over us.’ So now present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes and clans.”

²⁰ When Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, the tribe of Benjamin was chosen. ²¹ Then he brought forward the tribe of Benjamin, clan by clan, and Matri’s clan was chosen. Finally, Saul, son of Kish, was chosen. But when they looked for him, he was not to be found. ²² So they inquired further of the LORD, “Has the man come here yet?”

And the LORD said, “Yes, he has hidden himself among the baggage.”

²³ They ran and brought him out, and as he stood among the people, he was a head taller than any of the others. ²⁴ Samuel said to all the people, “Do you see the man the LORD has chosen? There is no one like him among all the people.”

Then the people shouted, “Long live the king!”

²⁵ Samuel explained to the people the regulations of the kingship. He wrote them down on a scroll and deposited it before the LORD. Then Samuel dismissed the people, each to his own home.

²⁶ Saul also went to his home in Gibeah, accompanied by valiant men whose hearts God had touched. ²⁷ But some troublemakers said, “How can this fellow save us?” They despised him and brought him no gifts. But Saul kept silent.

Process Observations/Questions:

Q: What did you most like about this passage? What resonated with you? [Let people engage]

- God’s predictions always come to pass
- The Spirit of God gives us power
- God allows His Holy Spirit to empower us for divinely appointed tasks
- We can either have God’s best, or His second best.
- We can have God’s directive will, or His permissive will
- If God calls you to a role or task, He will make you fit for it.
- A new heart via the Holy Spirit is God’s gift to us

Q: What did you least like about this passage? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you find in this passage that you didn’t understand? [Let people engage]

Q: What do we learn about Jesus in this passage? [Let people engage]

LOOK:

Saul started out with so much promise. He was chosen and anointed by God. He was filled with the Holy Spirit. He had the support of a man of God like Samuel. He had been given gifts appropriate to royalty. But despite all these great advantages, Saul can still blow it. Will he walk in the advantages God had given him so far, or will he go his own way? What about us? Are we stewarding His gifts and His anointing?

Close in Prayer

Commentaries for Today's Lesson:

Wiersbe, W. W. (1993). Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament (1 Sa 9-10). Victor Books.

Chapter 9 explains how Saul was brought to Samuel and privately anointed for the kingship. Note his humility in 9:21, and also in 10:22 when he hesitated to stand before the people. God gave Saul three special signs to assure him (10:1–7). Samuel also instructed Saul to tarry at Gilgal and wait for him to come (10:8). Verse 8 should be translated, “When you go before me to Gilgal”—that is, at some future date when King Saul would have the army ready for battle. This event took place some years later; see chap. 13.

Saul had everything in his favor: (1) a strong body, 10:23; (2) a humble mind, 9:21; (3) a new heart, 10:9; (4) spiritual power, 10:10; (5) loyal friends, 10:26; and most of all, (6) the guidance and prayers of Samuel. Yet in spite of these advantages, he failed miserably. Why? Because he would not allow God to be the Lord of his life.

Merrill, E. H. (1985). 1 Samuel. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures (Vol. 1, pp. 441-442) Wheaton, IL: Victor Books

1. SAUL'S CHOICE BY ISRAEL (CHAP. 10)

10:1–8. As **Samuel** prepared to reveal God's purposes to Saul, he first anointed him with **oil**. In the Old Testament anointing with oil symbolized the setting apart of a person or even an object for divine service (Ex. 30:23–33). It was also accompanied by the presence and power of

the Holy Spirit (1 Sam. 10:6, 10; 16:13). When Samuel **poured oil on Saul's head**, that act represented God's approval of Saul as **leader** of His people. In confirmation to both Saul and the people of his divine call and commission, Saul was told that he would experience three signs: (a) he would **meet two men near Rachel's tomb at Zelzah on the border of Benjamin** and Ephraim, who would tell him of the whereabouts of the lost **donkeys**; (b) he would meet **three men** at the (oak) **tree of Tabor**, somewhere between Zelzah and Gibeah, who would give him **two loaves of bread**; and (c) he would **meet a procession of prophets** descending **from the high place** at **Gibeah**. Remarkably, he would join in with the prophets in their **prophesying** as **the Spirit** of God enabled him and he would **be changed into a different person**. This is frequently taken to mean that Saul was converted or spiritually regenerated. However, such language for spiritual renewal is foreign to the Old Testament, and Saul's subsequent attitudes and behavior do not bear out that this was his experience (16:14; 18:12; 28:15–16). Actually the Spirit made the inexperienced and unlettered Saul able to assume kingly responsibilities in much the same way as the judges before him were blessed (Jud. 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14).

10:9–13. After **Saul** left **Samuel**, the promised **signs** came to pass. So amazed were the witnesses to Saul's dramatic and powerful change of character that they created a proverb which thereafter was quoted to describe a totally unexpected and unexplainable phenomenon: **Is Saul also among the prophets?** This does not suggest, of course, that Saul became part of the prophetic ministry led by Samuel, but only that he was able to exercise a prophetic gift, at least on this occasion, though never having received prophetic training. This was a remarkable and convincing sign of God's presence and power in Saul's life.

Further evidence that Saul did not actually become a prophet lies in the stem of the Hebrew verb here. **He joined in their prophesying** means literally, "He acted like a prophet among them," that is, to all outward appearances he was a prophet because he was able to enter into their activities.

10:14–16. **Saul** told **his uncle** about finding **the donkeys** with Samuel's help, **but Saul said nothing about the kingship**.

10:17–27. Sometime later **Samuel** gathered the leaders **of Israel** together **at Mizpah**, a favorite place for assembly in Samuel's day (cf. 7:5–6). After reminding them of their foolish insistence on having **a king** apart from the directive will of **God**, he set about to demonstrate God's selection of Saul by a process of elimination (10:18–19). By lot or some similar means the choice was made of **tribe**, that **of Benjamin ... clan**, that of Matri; and family, that **of Kish** (vv. 20–21). But when **Saul** was **chosen**, he was nowhere **to be found**. Indicative of his unassuming humility were his initial attempts to avoid the glare of publicity (v. 22) and his refusal to be vindictive against those who ridiculed his selection as king (v. 27). But the masses were convinced of his eminent suitability for the high office and in jubilation cried out, **Long live the king!**

However, in the eyes of the Lord, Saul was disqualified. The prophetic word of Jacob was that the scepter (of kingship) would not depart from Judah (Gen. 49:10). The promised dynasty of kings which would eventually produce the Messiah must originate in Judah. Saul as a Benjamite could not, then, meet the basic prerequisite of lineage. Nonetheless the people had made their demand, and **the LORD** had acquiesced. All that **Samuel** could do was invest Saul with his authority and responsibility as outlined in **a scroll** prepared for this occasion of coronation (1 Sam. 10:25). Undoubtedly the scroll included the Mosaic regulations for kingship found in Deuteronomy 17:14–17. Interestingly **valiant men** were immediately attracted to Saul **in Gibeah** (see comments on 1 Sam. 9:1).

Mathews, K. A. (1998). *The Historical Books*. In D. S. Dockery (Ed.), *Holman Concise Bible Commentary* (p. 112). Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Saul Anointed (10:1–27). The message was that God had chosen Saul to be king over Israel. Samuel anointed him with a flask of oil, indicating the special relationship between God and king (see Deut. 17:15). Because of this custom, the king of Israel became known as the “anointed one” (*Messiah*). Three signs followed the anointing to confirm to Saul that God had indeed chosen him. Saul sought after lost donkeys, but he discovered a kingdom.

Samuel anointed Saul again but this time publicly at Mizpah. The people found Saul hiding among the baggage, and they hailed him king. They longed for a king to rival the nations; ironically, they were elated with a shy keeper of donkeys.

Philbeck, B. F. (1972). *1 Samuel*. In H. F. Paschall & H. H. Hobbs (Eds.), *The Teacher’s Bible Commentary* (p. 169). Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers.

Saul Designated King (1 Sam. 10:1–27)

The passage—The reader can discern in the background of this passage some of the drama of the original experience. Saul’s first meeting with Samuel left him stunned and uncertain. He had been royally welcomed (chap. 9), privately anointed, and confronted with the challenge of serving as Israel’s first king (10:1). As evidence of Saul’s divine selection, Samuel gave a detailed preview of his homeward journey. Nevertheless, Saul refused to tell his family about the kingship (v. 16).

The public phase of the selection of Israel’s king came at a national assembly at Mizpah (vv. 17–27). God’s will in the matter would be determined by using the sacred lot. In this procedure a two-sided object was thrown so that it indicated a positive or negative response. Questions were carefully phrased by the priests, and the results were considered indications of God’s will. First by tribe, then by family, and then individually Saul was singled out. Still reticent about becoming king, Saul was found hiding in the baggage train!

The picture is ironic and real. Israel’s new king was reluctant to accept the task, and, in spite of the decision of the sacred lot, the people were divided in their support of him (v. 27).

The Holy Bible: New International Version. (1984). (1 Samuel 10). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.