

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

SEPTEMBER 24TH, 2023 // 1 SAMUEL

## GOD LEADS SAUL (1 SAMUEL 9:1-14A)

### SAUL "LOOKED" THE PART

Saul was a man born in wealth and influence. We are told about his family ("*son of a Benjaminite*") and his appearance ("*a head taller; no one more impressive*").

- There was **nothing mentioned about a relationship with God**, but if leading was all about **image and appearance, Saul looked the part.**

## GOD IS STILL ON THE THRONE

Israel's chosen king (8:18) set out with an unnamed servant to find the lost donkeys, unaware that lost animals would lead to an anointing.

- The name "*Saul*" means "*asked of God*." The rebellious Israelites rejected God and his plan by requesting a king. **Though God gave them a king as "asked of Him," that does not mean God gave up authority over His people.**

## A BIBLICAL AND BALANCED VIEW

God used a few lost donkeys to arrange a meeting between Saul and Samuel.

- **We may have no idea how God will use seemingly normal and sometimes inconvenient circumstances of life.** Not every event is steeped with deep meaning from God, and though nothing happens by accident, not everything has great purpose.

## THEY WENT FROM TOWN TO TOWN

Saul is about ready to give up. They had been gone for a long time, and Saul feared that his father would "**stop worrying about the donkeys and start worrying about [them].**"

- The servant suggests that they find a man in a neighboring city in hopes that he could "**tell [them] which way [they] should go.**"

## GUARD YOUR TESTIMONY

Samuel's character ("*a man of God... highly respected; everything he says is sure to come true*") is known by Saul's servant. However, they didn't seek Samuel for spiritual guidance but because they wanted help finding the lost donkeys.

- **Our character matters, not because we aim to please men over God, but because bad character tarnishes our witness.**

## NOT ARRIVING EMPTY-HANDED

It was a courtesy to bring a prophet a gift, but not payment for their services. Once they decide what gift to bring to the seer, women at a well inform them the seer is in town for a special occasion.

- We should not assume that Samuel required payment for his "prophetic services," but **we do not know if Saul brought silver as a courtesy to a prophet or as payment to a fortune-teller.**

## SAUL & THE SEER (1 SAMUEL 9:14B-27)

### GOD INFORMED SAMUEL

Samuel was given a *revelation* the day before meeting Saul. Revelation comes from the Greek word *apokalypsis*, meaning **removal of a veil so that something can be seen.**

- The text literally translates as "uncovered the ear of Samuel," like pushing aside a headdress in order to whisper in secret.

### "A MAN FROM THE LAND OF BENJAMIN"

God tells Samuel to "anoint him ruler over [His] people," and **He would save them from the Philistines.** God can save His people despite being led by a leader whose heart is far from Him.

- **A "move of God" does not guarantee a "man of God."** We must be careful in pledging our allegiance to man because of a move of God when He alone is where our allegiance lies.

## SAMUEL IS GIVEN CONFIRMATION

When Samuel saw Saul, the Lord confirmed that he was indeed the man the Lord spoke of who would "*govern*" His people. The Hebrew verb used here can also mean "*to restrain*" or "*to imprison.*"

- This foreshadows that **Saul's rule over Israel would imprison or hold God's people back from the blessings promised to them.**

### "I'LL TELL YOU EVERYTHING THAT'S IN YOUR HEART."

The first person Saul asked about the seer was the seer, Samuel.

- Samuel confirmed he was the seer, and to prove it, he told Saul that the donkeys lost three days ago had been found. **The lost donkeys were not what he truly sought after, but they were what brought him where God wanted him.**

## THE DESIRES OF SAUL AND ISRAEL ALIGN

Samuel spoke to Saul's true desire and told him he was the "**desire**" of all of Israel. Samuel used a word that has a double meaning. It can mean a positive desire as well as a "**sinful craving.**"

- Saul's response seems to be one of **false modesty and untruthfulness** because his father and family were prominent (9:1)

## PLANNING A BANQUET FOR THE KING

Samuel was told by God of this meeting, so he planned for it appropriately. Samuel **had a special portion of meat set aside.**

- **Saul was placed in a seat of honor and given a special portion of meat** reserved for those the host wished to honor. The next morning, the servant went ahead so Sam could "**reveal the word of God to [Saul].**"

## SAUL IS ANOINTED (1 SAMUEL 10:1-16)

### A SYMBOLIC CEREMONY

Samuel literally anointed the head of Saul. To anoint means to rub, sprinkle on, or apply ointment or oily liquid.

- The private ceremony that took place where oil was poured on the head of Saul was a **picture of what God was doing in him spiritually. It was the outward symbol of an inward work.**

### A BIBLICAL VIEW OF ANOINTINGS

In the OT, we see the physical act of anointing used as an outward symbol **that God has chosen and set the recipient apart** for a specific holy purpose.

- The act would have been symbolic with kings, priests, and prophets displaying that **God's presence was with them and His favor was upon them.**
- Anointing oils were used in ceremonies, grooming, refreshing the skin, medical treatments, and burial.
- In Scripture, we see **anointing oils used to show honor** (Psalms 23:5; Luke 7:46; Mark 14:3-9; John 12:3) as well as with **healing and prayer** (Mark 6:13; James 5:14)

### ANOINTED THROUGH CHRIST

There is a sense in which all believers are anointed through Christ, the Holy One (1 John 2:20). This is not expressed in an outward ceremony but through sharing in the gift of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:11).

- At the moment of salvation, **we are sealed by the Holy Spirit** (Ephesians 4:30) **and joined with Christ to share in His anointing** (2 Corinthians 1:21-22).

### A NON-BIBLICAL VIEW OF ANOINTINGS

Some today have talked about anointing as something we should seek out in others or ourselves to unlock the ability to use our gift to a "higher degree."

- A desire for signs and wonders puts us on the pursuit of **an experience that requires more outpourings, more spiritual baptisms, and more anointings.**

### THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

There is one anointing of the Spirit as there is one baptism.

- Instead of chasing anointings, we should remember that we as believers already have the gift of the Holy Spirit. We do not receive the Spirit in portions, and He is not taken away from us. **We have been given everything we need** (2 Peter 1:3).

### A CALL TO STEWARD

Saul's anointing was a private meeting and not some flashy public spectacle. The time had not come to reveal him as king.

- Samuel kissed Saul, showing his personal support. He also reminded Saul that **Israel belongs to God, and they are His inheritance. We should take great care of the "things" that belong to God.**

### REMOVING ALL DOUBT

When Saul left Samuel, he was to come across two men at Rachel's grave, three men would give him two loaves of bread, and he would prophesy with a group of prophets.

- **Saul was transformed and given a new heart away from Samuel, so there would be no doubt it was the Spirit who did this and not Samuel.**

### INVENTORY

- **Have we traded in the lasting power of the Holy Spirit for a temporary emotion or experience?**
- The anointing you received from Him remains in you, and Satan cannot steal that from you (1 John 2:27; 2 Timothy 1:14).
- **Have we allowed someone or something to rise into a place reserved for God?**