

# 1 Samuel 8-9

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Preacher: Joe Sutton

[ 0 : 00 ] Okay, so this is session number six, if I'm able to count in the book of 1 Samuel.! We're going to be back in Matthew.

So we'll be coming back to this once a month schedule to be determined. So where are we in our narrative then?

Well, you'll remember, if you've been following along, that Israel had tried to take the Ark of God into battle. Duh! Shouldn't be doing that.

They were treating it like a good luck charm or as if it would somehow oblige God to then fight on their behalf. And needless to say, the Philistines defeated Israel and they stole the Ark, which is an unprecedented act.

But then they endured, the Philistines endured seven months of torture as God afflicted them town by town. And you remember how they had to go from town to town.

[ 1 : 22 ] We don't want that thing. And as Tony mentioned last week, it could have been something like the bubonic plague. Because, you know, the Bible spoke of tumours and then mice or possibly rats.

Don't know for sure. What we know, I guess two things. One, it was horrible. Absolutely loathsome. And secondly, bearing in mind, this is the Ark of God, which even the Levites, who were not of the correct clan, which I think was the Kohathites, they couldn't even look at this thing.

Or they would die. So, actually, anything less than death is a mercy. Although they probably didn't agree with that at the time. And then we read last week about how eventually the Philistines sent it back to Israel with a guilt offering.

But then Israel failed to give the Ark the reverence that it was due and there were deaths in Beth Shemesh due to the mishandling. And then we read about how Israel began to do acts of repentance with the Baals and the Ashtaroth being removed, which are two sort of pagan worship monument type things.

And Samuel led them in national repentance and we saw God work a miraculous victory. That big old thunderclap. Wakey. Just like that, right?

[ 2 : 50 ] And victory against the Philistines. And Tony mentioned that the place where the Ark had rested until then, Shiloh, is most likely destroyed at this point in the narrative.

Samuel doesn't cover that explicitly. Samuel says that the Ark was removed and remember the news came back to Shiloh, where Eli was, and he fell over backwards and died.

But it would seem that at the same time, Shiloh was destroyed. What do we know? Well, what we know is Jeremiah 7.12, where it says that God says there, he destroyed it.

He destroyed Shiloh due to Israel's wickedness. And then one psalm, which we'll get to in about 12 weeks, Psalm 78, which is written by Asaph, who was one of David's assigned worship leaders.

So we're talking, you know, a couple of generations from where we are now in our narrative. It gives a fascinating history all through the Exodus, the taking of the land, and then the choosing of David to king.

[ 4 : 00 ] And then right between that is this verse, which is verse 60 to 61 of Psalm 78. So that he abandoned the dwelling place at Shiloh, the tent which he had pitched among people.

He gave up his strength to captivity and his glory into the hand of the enemy. Which seems to me clearly talking about this debacle with the Ark. So, again, good reason to think that's when it happened and why it happened.

I did think it was a bit of a slight that the name of Saul doesn't appear in Asaph's Psalm at all. But maybe there were some political sensitive issues. So, we closed chapter 7.

If you just look there, it talks about Samuel judging Israel all the days of his life. And then he used to go on this circuit through Bethel, Gilead, Mizpah. And he judged Israel.

And then it says that he made an altar, or he built an altar in Ramah. And that's where his house was. And it seems to me this is, with the removal of the tabernacle and with the removal of Shiloh, it's almost like he's gone back to how Abraham would build altars, Isaac would build altars, Jacob would build altars.

[ 5 : 16 ] The difference, of course, is that there is now a Levitical tribe. And Samuel is of the tribe of the Levites. And what we'll see today in our text is Samuel, the Levite, presiding over a sacrifice in Ramah.

And so I presume it is on that self-same altar. So, anyway, that's enough of a preamble. What we'll read today is the demand from the people for a king.

So, verse 1. Now, it came about when Samuel was old that he appointed his sons as judges over Israel.

The name of his firstborn was Joel, or Yoel, and the name of his second, Abijah, or Abiyah. And they were judging in Beersheba.

His sons, however, did not walk in his ways, but turned aside after dishonest gain, and they took bribes and perverted justice. Samuel is now old.

[ 6 : 25 ] Which is an interesting comment to make, because actually, Samuel will live for a significant period after this. We're going to read him... Well, let me show you, actually.

I've got these slides, I might as well. So, I haven't sort of... I can't really vouch for the veracity of this. I've just nicked it off of BibleHub. Spoiler. Or a disclaimer.

But the highlighted lines I put in there show you approximately when the time was. And you've got 1100 BC, Samuel was born. 1143 BC, which by my math is 57 years later, Saul is anointed.

So, that's roughly where we are now. Now, so 57, is he old? I mean, I don't know. That's what the Bible says. But then we've got David anointed.

What's that? Nearly 20 years later. And so Samuel will be 76. And it doesn't pass away until 1011 BC, because we're going to see David interact with Samuel after he's been anointed.

[ 7 : 29 ] So, and Samuel's death doesn't occur until chapter 25. So, yeah. There's that.

So, anyway, I just share that because Samuel is not in the... He's not coming to the end of his ministry, I guess that's what I'm saying. And I did think it was, you know, interesting that although there is a lot that we know about Samuel, there's also loads we don't know.

I don't think anywhere is it mentioned the name of his wife. We don't know if he had other children.

Or we, you know, we know of his ministry. And obviously he was married because he has sons.

But we don't know a lot about that. So, but we do know about these two guys. Samuel's sons. Joel means Yahweh is God.

The Yo is often short for Yah. And El is God, obviously. And then Abiyah is... Abiyah is my father. And then Yah, again, Yahweh. My father is Yahweh, is what that name means.

[ 8 : 37 ] So they're good names, right? Joel, Yahweh is God. Abiyah, my father is Yahweh. Good names. The kind of name that a man of God might give his sons. But, I'm going to read a little quote from Josephus, the Jewish historian who lived around 100 AD.

I don't know whether he drew... Let me just read what he has to say about these turkeys. He says this. Now, these men afford us an evident example and demonstration of how some children are not of the like dispositions with their parents.

I love the way he puts it. But sometimes perhaps good and moderate, though born of wicked parents. And sometimes showing themselves to be wicked, though born of good parents. For these men, turning aside from their father's good courses and taking a course that was contrary to them, perverted justice for the filthy lucre of gifts and bribes, and made their determinations not according to truth but according to bribery, and turned aside to luxury and a costly way of living, so that as, in the first place, they practiced what was contrary to the will of God, so did they.

In the second place, what was contrary to the will of the prophet, their father, who had taken a great deal of care and made a very careful provision that the multitude should be righteous.

So that's his view. And interesting, isn't it? How is it that you can have sons turn out so different from their father?

[ 10 : 13 ] Well, you know, it happened. And it did make me reflect back on Elijah, because I know I had some choice words for him. And in many ways, he was a good example of poor leadership.

But, you know, actually, he isn't necessarily fully for blame for how his sons turned out, because we can't blame Samuel. So, but, what we've read is that Samuel appointed his sons as judges over Israel.

And I think, did he consult God before doing this? Was he conscious of their corruption? You know, these three things that are highlighted for us.

Dishonest gain, they took bribes, they perverted justice. Moses said in Deuteronomy 16, verse 18, to 20, Moses said this. He said, You shall appoint for yourself judges and officers in all your towns, which the Lord your God is giving you according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with righteous judgment.

You shall not distort justice. You shall not show partiality, and you shall not accept a bribe, because bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and distorts the words of the righteous. Justice and only justice you shall pursue, so that you may live and possess the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

[11:37] So, I think Samuel was in error to appoint his sons as judges on the basis of that verse. You know, unless we want to hold that Samuel somehow didn't know, but given the insightful nature of Samuel, I mean, he's a prophet of God, you would expect him to know.

In fact, the people are, well, let's hear from the people. Verse 4. Verse 4, 1 Samuel 8. Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, and they said to him, Behold, you have grown old, and your sons do not walk in your ways.

Now appoint us a king to judge us like all the nations. But the matter was displeasing in the sight of Samuel when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed to the Lord, and the Lord said to Samuel, Listen to the voice of the people regarding all that they say to you, because they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them.

Like all the deeds which they have done since the day that I brought them up from Egypt, even to this day, in that they have abandoned me and served other gods, so they are doing to you as well. Now then, listen to their voice. However, you shall warn them strongly and tell them of the practice of the king who will reign over them. So the people are sensitive to the failures, the shortcomings, the sin of the sons of Samuel.

[13:12] So, and this is where it gets interesting, doesn't it? Is it wrong or is it right for the people to request a king? What's going on here?

Because if you were to read Deuteronomy 17 verse 14 and on, then you will, and I think I read that on a prior study, so I won't read it again. Israel were, they were to install a king.

When you're in the land, you're going to install a king. And by the way, this is how he needs to act. We read that, I think. Deuteronomy 17, that is. And, bearing in mind what we just read in Deuteronomy 16, it was right, I think, to reject unworthy judges and leaders.

So what's the problem? Well, the problem is those four words, like all the nations. That's the problem.

They wanted a king, not for the sake of righteousness, but so that they were like all the other nations. When we get to chapter 12, which is sort of, again, it's called Samuel's farewell address, but he has many years to go still.

[14:30] He's going to rebuke Israel and say, God was your king. God was your king. God had said to Moses on Mount Sinai in Exodus 19 verse 5, he said, Now then, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, then you shall be my own possession among all the peoples.

For all the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. That was God's will and desire and intent for Israel.

They're different from all the other nations in that they are God's possession. They are God's, God was king in a unique way over Israel. Now, you may recall from that narrative, well, this is from Deuteronomy 5.29, the people had a real fear of God.

They saw the awesome, again, they saw the awesome things that were taking place on top of that mountain. And they're like, Moses, you go and speak to God.

You speak to him and then tell us what he said. And God says to Moses, If only they had such a heart in them to fear me and keep all my commandments always so that it would go well with them and with their sons forever.

[15:47] That was the nation that Israel was supposed to be, different and distinct. God always intended them to have a king, a human king, but he certainly didn't intend it to be like all the other nations.

On the contrary, there were to be a light to the nations. And I love how often in the Psalms of David we'll read, he will say, God is the king, God is the judge.

I'm just the guy that God's installed. It's God who is ultimately the authority. It's almost like the people of Israel are just one generation too early in their request.

But at the end of the day, the thing that is wrong here is they had wrong motives. They weren't motivated particularly by Samuel's sons and their incompetence to judge.

They were motivated by a desire to be like all the other nations. Verse 10. So Samuel spoke all the words of the Lord to the people who had asked him for a king.

[17:01] And God said, sorry, and he said, this will be the practice of the king who will reign over you. He will take your sons and put them in his chariots for himself and among his horsemen and they will run before his chariots.

He will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties and some to do his ploughing and to gather in his harvest and to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots.

He will also take your daughters and use them as perfumers, cooks and bakers. He will take the best of your fields, your vineyards and your olive groves and give them to his servants and he will take a tenth of your seed and your vineyards and give it to his high officials and his servants.

He will also take your male servants and your female servants and your best young men and your donkeys and use them for his work. He will take a tenth of your flocks and you yourselves will become his servants and then you will cry out on that day because of the king whom you have chosen for yourselves but the Lord will not answer you on that day.

Yikes. Samuel's description of what the king is going to do, what he's going to be like, it doesn't seem to be explicitly a prophecy to me.

[18:20] God did say to him, you tell the people what they're going to be like and then Samuel says this. What I mean is that as we read through the story there's no record that Saul ever took and appointed perfumers, cooks and bakers.

Which doesn't mean he didn't, I'm just saying that that doesn't seem, if it were a prophecy you generally expect it to see and this was the fulfilment. So I think it's best understood as a presentation this is how your kings in general going forwards, this is what you're asking for.

You know, Saul was pretty good in comparison with a lot of the guys who are lined up. So until now, Israel has been led by judges, we know this right, raised up by God for a time and a season to provide leadership, coordination, guidance.

Kings, on the other hand, are going to demand tax. They're going to not just rally together the troops for a particular battle, they're going to have a standing army, they're going to conscript armies but also other staff and then they're going to have staff to serve their staff.

So, it's going to be a different thing. It's going to be a much more of a burden for the people to bear. Now there are aspects here that I think are probably reasonable.

[19:42] The king, as a military leader, he does need to organise the army. He does need to think about things like training and so forth. And Moses himself did organise the army back in Deuteronomy chapter 1.

And we see it all throughout judges, right? But then there's aspects that are new here. The managing of luxury goods, perfumers and cakes.

Taking seed and vineyards as tax. And I found myself going down a bit of a rabbit trail about what is reasonable for governments to demand of their subjects and I thought, this could really blow the morning.

So, what to say? I think I'll say this. Israel, Israel was created different, right? Israel was a theocracy where God was king. There always was a tax, by the way.

It was called the tithe. It was 10%. But what was it for? It was for the priesthood. It was for the priesthood. There was never a tithe for the king or for that side of things.

[20:48] It was for the support of the priesthood. And again, God did intend Israel to implement a monarchy but that was part of the theocratic reign of God.

God remained the king of kings and the judge of judges, if you like. And David understood this but most of the kings did not. And I think the other key thing to remember is why did God create a line of kings?

Because he was going to bring a Messiah. Right? That's the only reason God was king and God remains king in Jesus Christ. but Jesus Christ has a claim to the throne of Israel because he is he succeeds King David.

So that's the point. It was always a theocracy. It should always have been and there should never have been any mutterings of like the other nations. So that's Israel. But that's Israel. What about the church?

Well, if you want to do a bit of homework you can read Romans 13 which is a key text for how the church should live under government because you may have noticed we don't live in a theocracy. [ 21 : 54 ] And I guess the too long didn't read version is it's live in peace and pay your taxes. Be subject to them. Jesus was asked about paying taxes himself in Luke 20 and he responded with this.

He said, pay your taxes to Caesar pay to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's. And I think what that did for me as I re-read it was we as a church should operate differently to the world just like Israel was to operate differently to the world so should we.

And we should pay what the world demands but the bigger demand is what God demands. You know, there's a I don't know if you're aware of that, there is a little bit of a I was going to say a pun it's not really a pun it's just a clever oratory device.

The coin has got the image of Caesar on it so pay it to him. We are the image of God so we pay ourselves to God. Well, and then leadership in the church and I think this is critical for us and this is something that's near to Ray's heart and to mind leadership in the church shouldn't look like leadership in the world.

If you look at Mark 10 verse 42 to 45 I think this is off the back of the disciples saying grant me to sit on your right hand Lord and tell that bloke to share stuff with me.

[ 23 : 21 ] Calling them his disciples to himself Mark 10 42 sorry Mark 10 chapter 42 to 45 calling them the disciples to himself Jesus said to them you know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles domineer over them and their people in high position exercise authority over them but it is not this way among you rather whoever wants to become prominent among you shall be your servant and whoever wants to be first among you shall be slave to all for even the son of man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many and I think it's important for us to keep this in mind because the church does have a lot to say about leadership and it will put on leadership conferences and prominent people in the church will stand up and talk about leadership and you look at what they're building and you think it's got an org chart it looks like it just looks like a business when the highest priorities for

Christian leadership they are faith they are humility they are prayer they are repentance and I think those are the four and if we have those four things then you will start to see the fruit of the spirit bloom and blossom the love the joy the peace the patience and the kindness the goodness faithfulness gentleness and self-control those are the priorities for Christian leadership and then after we got those things down Ray after then we can think about strategy and planning because we should plan right we should have a vision and I don't mean to diminish the need for church leaders to think about how do we want how do we want to grow this church what is God saying to us what I'm saying is the priority is the spiritual aspects of faith the power of the gospel and the spirit to transform people anyway I said I wasn't going to go too far down on that so I'm going to move on back to Samuel and to Israel they want a secular kingdom which is to say they don't want the theocracy that God had ordained for them and Samuel says well ok but this is what it's going to be like he's going to take the best of your things and even your sons and daughters verse 19 yet the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel and they said no but there shall be a king over us so that we also may be like all the nations and our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles now after

Samuel had heard all the words of the people he repeated them in the Lord's hearing and the Lord said to Samuel listen to their voice and appoint a king for them so Samuel said to the men of Israel go every man to his city so the people add a detail here for their motivation they want someone to fight their battles someone who can make all my problems go away please and I guess that is what the judges did but the people want someone permanently in that office they want a deliverer right they want a strong man they want someone who is mighty to save and I thought so do I that sounds alright but we have one who is mighty to save and it's Jesus and the people had God and they said nah I'd rather have some bloke but I also want you to see that I love Samuel's heart here because

he goes he keeps going back to the Lord this is what they said this is what they said and I think that really speaks well of Samuel and his heart of prayer to keep seeking God and it also speaks to the relationship that Samuel had with God because he hears he converses with God and I think beautiful beautiful thing and then he dismisses the people every man go to his city and we have a bit of a gap

I don't know how long the gap is I know there's a gap because right now he's in the place he's in Ramo I think and then we're going to see when Saul shows up we're going to see that Samuel's returning to Ramo so the inference is that he's gone off on his yearly circuit so could have been a year could have been more could have been less what did they say on Bible Hub don't know five six seven years but we don't know is the point it doesn't say in the narrative so chapter nine verse one so now there was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish the son of Abiel son of Zeror son of Bekorath son of Aphiah son of Benjamin a valiant mighty man as a point of amusement it amused me so now I'm going to share it with you I'm going to say it Kish but actually it's Kish sorry son of Kish did make me hungry that bit of the study Saul the son of Kish it's even a queue anyway and Samuel in this text again assuming Samuel is the author he has preserved for us the lineage of Kish but these guys here Zeror Bekorath and Aphiah their names don't appear anywhere else so I can't really say much more about that 1st Chronicles 9 verse 35 to 39 has got a bit more detail about the immediate family of Saul so he's got his uncles and his brothers but even these guys Zeror Bekorath and Aphiah their names don't show up in Chronicles either so Samuel was presumably drawing on some record that is lost but the key thing is that they are from the tribe of Benjamin Benjamin and Benjamin of course was the 12th and final son of Jacob he was the second and final son from his favourite wife

[ 29 : 43 ] Rachel and Genesis 49 is that key prophetic chapter where Jacob prophesies over his sons but it's very far reaching prophecies that talk about the character of the tribe and there Israel says Benjamin is going to be like a wolf one who will devour prey and divide the spoils and you might remember when we studied through Judges that there was that episode where there was civil war between Benjamin and the rest of the tribe because of a sort of thing that I'm not going to repeat but the point is Benjamin was fierce and they were nearly a match for the entire rest of Israel I think it took Israel three goes before they managed to wallop them and I'm like whoa these are they were an imposing bunch but Benjamin was defeated and the tribe was nearly wiped out and they had to contrive this morally questionable way to save the tribe of Benjamin from being made extinct if you remember then you know the tribe of Benjamin wow now there was another

Saul from the tribe of Benjamin of course Rabbi Saul of Tarsus who later becomes Paul and when you read through what Paul said about this he seems to mention twice that I'm from the tribe of Benjamin me as if it's a good thing that it's a sign of status and I think there's reasons for that two being it's going to produce the first king as we will soon see and also because Benjamin was loyal to Judah when we have the Israel and Judah split in many chapters time so it was a fierce tribe it will be a tribe of good repute in Jesus day but right now it's a small tribe actually have I got I can't remember if I had a slide for this or not yeah it's oh where's my mouse pointer it's that little guy there there's Benjamin it's teeny tiny I thought no this one's smaller and then I realised no that's the Sea of Galilee it's not a tribe so yeah there's Benjamin right a humble tribe and then Kish is described as a valiant mighty man actually this is the exact same description the same two Hebrew words that was used of Boaz in the book of Ruth and you'll remember at the time I explained that it's what it means is that he's a man of significance he's a man who has the capacity to get things done and make things happen so it doesn't necessarily mean that he is strong and powerful or it could mean that it could mean that he's rich that he's a man of significance he can get stuff done and verse 2 he had a son whose name was Saul a young and handsome man and there was not a more handsome man than he among the sons of Israel from his shoulders and up he was taller than any of the people Saul's description he's young and handsome and tall yes tall very tall he's young which is a word that means the choicest or the best it's young in the sense of his body isn't starting to break down with age

I'm sorry to put it that way but that's basically what it means in terms of his language he doesn't have you know creaking knees and bad back he's young his body still works properly and then he's handsome the word for handsome is tov which you may know is just a word that means simply good he's good he's good he's good to look at and he's tall yes very tall he would and what that means why is that a good thing it means he would be imposing on the battlefield you know it made

me think of when we get to the battle with Goliath Saul might have been the second tallest guy on the battlefield but he didn't go out to fight anyway but he's exactly what Israel's looking for someone to fight their battles someone who is you know of good stock from this man who can get stuff done and he looks good and he's tall someone to fight our battles perfect but how is he to be anointed king let's find out verse 3 now the donkeys of Kish

Saul's father had wandered off so Kish said to his son Saul now take with you one of the servants and arise go and search for the donkeys so he passed through the hill country of Ithraim and passed through the land of Shalisha but they did not find them then they passed through the land of Sha'alim but they were not there then they passed through the land of the Benjaminites but they did not find them now Saul's hometown is in Gibeah we don't know that yet but there's a detail that we get at the end of chapter 10 a map now again a strong caveat for this map here nobody knows where the land of Shalisha is nobody knows where the land of Sha'alim is we do know where the land of Benjamin is and it's where well it's where Saul lived and therefore we can infer that he does something resembling a loop starts at Gibeah down here goes toddling around Shalisha and Sha'alim but no one knows where they are and then he eventually comes all the way back to around here so that's it could be something like that actually the location of these places has been lost for a long time

[ 35 : 54 ] Josephus did not know where they were all he can say about this is that Saul and the servant travelled in his own tribe and then he went to other tribes plural that's it I don't know don't know where they are what we do know is that his travel is three days in total over hilly terrain and according to chat GBT that means he probably did about 100 miles three days walking pace over hilly terrain about 100 miles there you go so is that 100 miles I don't know but they end up in Ramah in Zuth Samuel's hometown right there which makes this map wrong I didn't make it oh dear one thing to draw your attention to is there is an unnamed servant and whenever you see an unnamed servant in the Bible it's well worth taking note because quite often that will be a model a picture a type of the Holy Spirit let's not go too far down that it'll take forever so let's read on shall we verse 5 when they came to the land of Zuth

Saul said to his servant who was with him come let's return or else my father will stop being concerned about the donkeys and will become anxious about us but he said to him behold now there is a man of God in this city and the man is held in honour everything that he says definitely comes true now let's go there perhaps he can tell us about our journey on which we have set out then Saul said to his servant but look if we go what shall we bring to the man for the bread is gone from our sacks and there is no gift to bring to the man of God what do we have and the servant answered Saul again and said look I have in my hand a fourth of a shekel of silver I will give it to the man of God and he will tell us our way previously in Israel when a man went to inquire of God he used to say come let's go to the seer for he who is called a prophet now was previously called a seer then Saul said to his servant good idea come let's go so they went to the city where the man of God was so the land of Zuf and you may remember that this is one of Samuel's ancestors was named

Zuf actually so we're back in Samuel's neighbourhood the city is unnamed which may be why this map author didn't put it as Ramah now Josephus assumes that it is Ramah Samuel's home and I think that's right as the story unfolds we're going to see again there's a worship offering that takes place and I believe that it's the same one that Samuel built and of course the servant expects him to be there why would the servant expect him to be there if it wasn't his home so we observe the council of the unnamed servant Saul wants to head home and bear in mind they're only about five miles away from home at this point it's a bust the donkeys are lost let's go home but the servant guides him towards Samuel and Saul objects and says well we haven't got the obligatory fee and the servant has what was lacking and I thought that was awesome he is the

Holy Spirit in type the Holy Spirit is providing gentle counsel hey why don't we go this way and then he provides what may be lacking for the journey and also observe that note there that editorial comment about prophet and seer this is I think I mentioned a couple of weeks ago about how the word for prophet Nevi was not yet coined I think I said and Linda very correctly pointed out actually that's not true the word for prophet appears in Genesis even Abraham is described as a prophet so thank you for the correction this is the verse I had in mind where it seems certainly at this point at least there was this sort of role of seer and in Samuel or with Samuel it will develop into a more formal role that is known as Nevi or prophet and we'll soon see actually that Samuel will establish a

school of prophecy anyway moving on so off they go to Ramah verse 11 as they went up the slope to the city which I'm sure that remark makes archaeologists very excited about finding him anyway as they went up the slope to the city they found young women going out to draw water and they said to them is the seer here and they answered them and said he is see he's ahead of you hurry now for he has come into the city today because the people have a sacrifice on the high place today as soon as you enter the city you will find him before he goes up to the high place to eat for the people will not eat until he comes because he must bless the sacrifice afterward those who are invited will eat now then go up for you will find him about this time so they went up to the city as they came into the city behold Samuel was coming out towards them to go up to the high place what a coincidence Samuel only came into town today because he's on this circuit itinerary if the donkeys had wandered off a day earlier they would have missed each other if they'd wandered off a day later then

[ 41 : 39 ] Samuel would still have been wandering around in the hill country of Ephraim and then he would have missed the feast what a coincidence now we have Samuel the seer acting in the role of priest and again I mentioned earlier that as far as I can tell if Shiloh were still standing as a place of worship then actually this would have not been legitimate because the word of God does say the law said if you want to offer sacrifices you've got to bring him to the ark to the tabernacle and I remember reading what does Samuel think he's doing well Shiloh is gone Shiloh is destroyed the ark is in Kiriath I think and it is established as a place where offerings can be done so this is acceptable high place is a phrase that often has a bit of a negative connotation because most often high place is used to talk about high places to pagans pagan gods that is

I mean but this is a high place to God so right reading let's move on verse 15 now a day before source coming the Lord had revealed this to Samuel saying about this time tomorrow I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin and you shall anoint him as ruler over my people Israel and he will save my people from the hand of the Philistines for I have considered my people because their outcry has come to me now in the last chapter again God has said listen to their voice and appoint a king and Samuel seems to have waited for God to provide the next step again don't know how much time has passed but some and it's only now that God reveals to Samuel I'm sending you a bloke from Benjamin he's the one and I have no doubt that Samuel was prayerfully waiting for God to reveal the right man now one point I want to make because I observed this and once you see something you can't not see it God doesn't say anoint him as king God says anoint him as ruler which is a different word and I think that the NASB title of God's choice for king is incorrect and misleading because he isn't God's choice for king God is going to subsequently say I reject I wish I hadn't made Saul king he says I can't remember the exact wording now but he basically says I repent of making Saul king Saul was never God's choice he is the people's choice and I think it's noteworthy that God says here anoint him as a ruler the word is nagid rather than melech for king and actually I couldn't find anywhere in the narrative where God says of Saul he is king now Samuel will say he is king the people will say he is king but

I couldn't see anywhere as I skim through God says he is king other than when he comes to and says I reject how I made him king so I don't know no other commentators make anything of that so you can probably just reject it but anyway the point I think is Saul is the people's choice and David will be God's choice verse 17 when Samuel saw Saul the Lord said to him behold the man of whom I spoke to you this one shall rule over my people then Saul approached Samuel at the gateway and said please tell me where the seer's house is and Samuel answered Saul and said I am the seer! go up ahead of and as for your donkeys that wandered off three days ago do not be concerned about them for they have been found and for whom is everything that is desirable in Israel is it not for you and for all your father's household so I love that interaction Saul says I'm looking for the seer I've got my quarter of silver I've got my shekel and the seer says no no no I'm looking for you I've been waiting for you I've got some food set aside I know what I need to tell you I've been preparing for your arrival and I saw there a picture of how God is with us we think that we're seeking after him no no no no no it's God has always been seeking!

[ 46 : 45 ] come to seek and save the lost and that was us and God is revealed to Samuel about the donkeys which authenticates the message as divinely inspired verse 21 then Saul replied am I not a Benjamite of the smallest of the tribes of Israel and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin why then have you spoken to me in this way interesting because as I mentioned Benjamin was a humble and a humbled tribe because of what happened fairly recently but Saul's

father Kish was a noteworthy man so I think that this is an expression of humility I don't think that his family was the least of the tribes in Benjamin but what he's saying is I'm just Saul I'm just a bloke nobody from nowhere verse 22 then

Samuel took Saul and his servants and brought them into the hall and gave them a place at the head of those who were invited who were about thirty men and Samuel and Samuel said to the cook serve the portion that I gave you about which I said to you set it aside then the cook took up the leg with what was on it and placed it before Saul and Samuel said here is what was been reserved place it before you and eat because it has been kept for you until the appointed time! since I said the leg or the thigh contribution was for Aaron and his sons forever Exodus 29 is all about the offerings prescribed for the priests and that's what it says there the breast of the way of offering and the thigh of the contribution shall be for Aaron and his sons as their portion forever so I think this was Samuel his portion right he was the Levi this was his portion and he said!! need to take note of the faith of Samuel here God told Samuel that he was sending him a man tomorrow God didn't say to Samuel Samuel off of his own back he believed what God had said and he made preparations knowing that it was true because Samuel believed God he took action he did works if you like in the setting aside of food faith displayed in action verse 25 then when they came down from the high place into the city Samuel spoke with Saul on the roof and they got up early and at day break Samuel called to Saul on the roof saying get up so that I may send you on your way so Saul got up and both he and Samuel went out into the street and they were going down Saul speak to the servant and have him go on ahead of us and pass by but you stand here now so that I may proclaim the word of God to you you know at this point Samuel hasn't directly told Saul what's going on he hasn't said I'm going to make you king or ruler and I can imagine Saul thinking what is going on I came here by chance with my little coin asking for help with my donkeys and then I find out that this whole town was waiting here 30 guys around the table I'm at the head of the table they've got a choice cut of meat for me delicious and then I get to spend the night in the upper room with Samuel probably Samuel's own upper room and now we have to pause sorry but we are 50 minutes in so I appreciate your patience with me and there's no way we would have time for chapter 10 so what's our application for today well I touched on it as I went through really I think there was a couple that really struck me one was that qualification for leadership it isn't charisma it isn't eloquence it isn't influence it isn't assertiveness it isn't any other thing that the world would put forth or try to train in leadership in the church what needs what's required is character character is what matters you know and I think as we go forward in our reading we're going to see a contrast between [ 51 : 38 ] Saul and Samuel and we'll continually ask ourselves what is it that made Samuel a good leader and what made Saul a bad leader but one thing that I was always very impressed by with Samuel is that he was a man of courage we're going to see Samuel rebuke Saul twice Saul's the king and Samuel was going to say you're wrong on this you're wrong but he manages to do it in a way that never diminishes!

Saul's respect for Samuel so that anyway qualifications for leadership in the church I think is one thing and again the other the other thing was that the church we need to beware seeking to look like the world and avoid how looking like the world and how it does things and then finally the people of Israel were looking at for someone to fight their battles and I thought yeah again that's not a bad thing and it was an encouragement to me to look to the Lord when I'm struggling when I'm battling something I want to look to the Lord and I want to encourage us all to look to Jesus Christ King of Kings when we're struggling Father we thank you Lord for your word today Lord we are so so grateful that you are our king that that you have an eternal kingship headship over us and I pray God that we would be a people who are comfortable depending on you as our king Lord help us to learn what it is to to live in these days and how we as your church and your body should act and the things that we should do and how we should prioritize Lord I pray that you would move and speak to each of us Lord in Jesus name Amen Amen