



LESSON SIX

The History Concerning Saul – His Origin, God’s Anointing, His Conquest of Ammonites and Samuel’s Reminder to the Israel

Scripture Reading:

1 Samuel 9 – Section 1

- 9:1** Now there was a man from Benjamin whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Becorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjaminite, a man of wealth.
- 9:2** And he had a son whose name was Saul, a choice and handsome man; and there was not a an among the children of Israel more handsome than he; from his shoulders and up he was taller than all the people.
- 9:3** Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul’s father, were lost; and Kish said to Saul his son, Take with you one of the servants, and rise up and go to search for the donkeys.
- 9:4** And he passed through the hill country of Ephraim, and he passed through the land of Shalishah; but they did not find them. Then they passed through the land of Shaalim, but they were not there. Then he passed through the land of Benjamin, but they did not find them.
- 9:5** When they came to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant who was with him, Come, and let us return; otherwise, my father will stop worrying about the donkeys and will worry about us.
- 9:6** But he said to him, There is a man of God here in this city, and he is a man held in honor; all that he says happens without fail. Let us now go there; perhaps he will tell us about our journey that we have set out on.
- 9:7** And Saul said to his servant, But if we go, what will we bring the man? For the food is gone from our bags, and there is no present to bring the man of God. What do we have?
- 9:8** And the servant answered Saul again and said, Here in my hand is a quarter shekel of silver, and I can give it to the man of God; then he will tell us our way.
- 9:9** (Formerly in Israel a man spoke this way when he went to inquire of God, Come, and let us go to the seer; for today’s prophet was formerly called a seer.)
- 9:10** Then Saul said to his servant, Well said; come, let us go. So they went to the city where the man of God was.
- 9:11** As they went up the ascent into the city, they found some girls coming out to draw water; and they said to them, Is the seer here?
- 9:12** And they answered them and said, He is; there he is ahead of you. Hurry now; for he has just come to the city today, because the people have a sacrifice at the high place today.
- 9:13** Right when 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 is the one who blesses the sacrifice. Right after that, those who have been invited will eat. Go up now then, for you will find him right away.
- 9:14** So they went up into the city. As they came into the midst of the city, there came Samuel out toward them, going up to the high place.
- 9:15** Now Jehovah had revealed this to Samuel a day before Saul came, saying,
- 9:16** At about this time tomorrow I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him ruler over My people Israel; and he will save My people from the hand of the Philistines, for I have looked upon My people because their cry has come to Me.
- 9:17** And when Samuel saw Saul, Jehovah declared to him, Here is the man of whom I spoke to you. This man shall rule over My people.
- 9:18** And Saul approached Samuel in the gate and said, Tell me, please, where is the seer’s house?
- 9:19** And Samuel answered Saul and said, I am the seer. Go up before me to the high place, for you shall eat with me today; and in the morning I will send you away, and I will tell you all that is in your heart.

- 9:20** And as for your donkeys that have now been lost three days, do not even consider them; for they have been found. And for whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not for you and for all your father's house?
- 9:21** And Saul answered and said, Am I not a Benjaminite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? And is not my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Why then do you speak to me in this way?
- 9:22** And Samuel took Saul and his servant, and brought them to the hall, and put them in the chief place among those who had been invited; and there were about thirty men.
- 9:23** And Samuel said to the cook, Bring the portion that I gave, concerning which I said to you, Set it by you.
- 9:24** And the cook took up the thigh and what was attached to it, and set it before Saul. And Samuel said, Here is what has been reserved. Set it before you and eat, because it has been kept for you for the appointed time, when I said I was inviting the people. So Saul ate with Samuel that day.
- 9:25** And when they came down from the high place to the city, he spoke with Saul upon the roof.
- 9:26** And they rose early; and around the break of dawn Samuel called to Saul on the roof, saying, Rise up, and I will send you away. So Saul rose up, and they both went outside, he and Samuel.
- 9:27** As they were going down to the end of the city, Samuel said to Saul, Tell the servant to go on ahead of us — and the servant went on — but you stand here now, and I will let you hear the word of God.

1 Samuel 10 – Section 2

- 10:1** Then Samuel took the vial of oil and poured it upon his head, and he kissed him and said, Jehovah anoints you ruler over His inheritance.
- 10:2** When you depart from me today, you will find two men by Rachel's tomb in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah; and they will say to you, The donkeys that you went to look for have been found; and now your father has stopped worrying about the donkeys and is worried about you, saying, What shall I do about my son?
- 10:3** Then you will go on further from there and come to the terebinth of Tabor; and three men will meet you there, going up to God at Bethel, one carrying three kids, and another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine.
- 10:4** And they will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, and you will take them from their hand.
- 10:5** After that you will come to the hill of God, where the Philistines' garrison is. And as you come to the city there, you will encounter a group of prophets coming down from the high place, preceded by harp and tambourine and pipe and lyre; and they will be prophesying.
- 10:6** And the Spirit of Jehovah will rush upon you; and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man.
- 10:7** And when these signs happen to you, do as you find occasion, for God is with you.
- 10:8** And you shall go down before me to Gilgal; and behold, I will come down to you to offer up burnt offerings and to sacrifice sacrifices of peace offerings. You shall wait seven days, until I come to you; then I will make known to you what you shall do.
- 10:9** And so when he turned his back to depart from Samuel, God gave him another heart. And all these signs happened that day.
- 10:10** And when they came there to the hill, there was the group of prophets, coming to meet him. And the Spirit of God rushed upon him, and he prophesied among them.
- 10:11** And when all who had known him previously saw that now he was prophesying with the prophets, the people said one to another, What is this that has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?
- 10:12** And someone from there answered and said, And who is their father? Therefore it became a proverb, Is Saul also among the prophets?
- 10:13** And when he finished prophesying, he came to the high place.
- 10:14** And Saul's uncle said to him and his servant, Where did you go? And he said, To look for the donkeys; and when we saw that they were not to be found, we went to Samuel.
- 10:15** And Saul's uncle said, Tell me then what Samuel said to you.
- 10:16** And Saul said to his uncle, He told us clearly that the donkeys had been found. But he did not tell him about the matter of the kingdom that Samuel had spoken of.
- 10:17** Then Samuel gathered the people together to Jehovah at Mizpah.

- 10:18** And he said to the children of Israel, Thus says Jehovah the God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all the kingdoms that oppressed you.
- 10:19** But today you have rejected your God, who Himself saved you from all your calamities and distresses, and have said, No; but set a king over us. And now present yourselves before Jehovah according to your tribes and according to your thousands.
- 10:20** So Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin was taken.
- 10:21** And he brought the tribe of Benjamin near according to its families, and the family of Matri was taken. And Saul the son of Kish was taken. But when they sought him, he could not be found.
- 10:22** Therefore they asked of Jehovah again, Is there yet another man coming here? And Jehovah said, There he is; he has hidden himself among the baggage.
- 10:23** And they ran and took him from there. And when he stood up among the people, he was taller than all the people from his shoulders and up.
- 10:24** And Samuel said to all the people, See him whom Jehovah has chosen, that there is none like him among all the people. And all the people shouted and said, Long live the king!
- 10:25** Then Samuel told the people the practice of the kingdom, and he wrote it in a book and laid it before Jehovah. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house.
- 10:26** And Saul also went to his house at Gibeah, and the men of valor, whose hearts God had touched, went with him;
- 10:27** But some worthless men said, How can this man save us? And they despised him and brought him no present. But he kept silent.

1 Samuel 11 – Section 3

- 11:1** Then Nahash the Ammonite went up and encamped against Jabesh-gilead. And all the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, Make a treaty with us, and we will serve you.
- 11:2** And Nahash the Ammonite said to them, On this condition I will make a treaty with you, that all your right eyes be gouged out; and I will make it a reproach upon all Israel.
- 11:3** And the elders of Jabesh said to him, Give us seven days' respite that we may send messengers throughout all the territory of Israel. And if there is no one to save us, we will come out to you.
- 11:4** Then the messengers went to Gibeah of Saul, and they spoke these words in the hearing of the people. And all the people lifted up their voice and wept.
- 11:5** And Saul was just coming from the field after the oxen, and Saul said, What is wrong with the people that they weep so? And they related to him the words of the men of Jabesh.
- 11:6** And the Spirit of God rushed upon Saul as he heard these words, and his anger was greatly kindled.
- 11:7** And he took a yoke of oxen and cut them into pieces and sent them throughout all the territory of Israel by means of the messengers, saying, Whoever does not come forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done to his oxen. And the dread of Jehovah fell upon the people, and they came forth as one man.
- 11:8** And he mustered them in Bezek; and the children of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah were thirty thousand.
- 11:9** And they said to the messengers who had come, Thus shall you say to the men of Jabesh-gilead, Tomorrow you will have deliverance by the time the sun is hot. So the messengers went and told this to the men of Jabesh; and they were glad.
- 11:10** And the men of Jabesh said, Tomorrow we will come out to you, and you may do to us all that seems good in your sight.
- 11:11** And on the next day Saul put the people into three companies, and they came into the midst of the camp at the morning watch. And they struck Ammon until the day was hot; and those who remained were so scattered that not two of them remained together.
- 11:12** And the people said to Samuel, Who said, Shall Saul reign over us? Bring the men that we may put them to death.
- 11:13** But Saul said, No man shall be put to death on this day, for today Jehovah has accomplished deliverance in Israel.
- 11:14** Then Samuel said to the people, Come and let us go to Gilgal and there renew the kingdom.
- 11:15** And all the people went to Gilgal. And there they made Saul king before Jehovah in Gilgal, and there they sacrificed peace offerings before Jehovah, and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

1 Samuel 12 – Section 4

- 12:1** And Samuel said to all Israel, I have now listened to your voice according to all that you have said to me, and I have placed a king over you.
- 12:2** And now, here is the king who goes before you. But I am old and gray, and my sons are here with you, and I have gone before you from my youth until this day.
- 12:3** Here I am; testify against me before Jehovah and before His anointed. Whose ox have I taken? Or whose donkey have I taken? Or whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed? Or from whose hand have I taken a bribe in order to blind my eyes with it? Then I will restore it to you.
- 12:4** And they said, You have not defrauded us or oppressed us or taken anything from anyone's hand.
- 12:5** And he said to them, Jehovah is Witness against you, and His anointed is witness this day, that you have not found anything in my hand. And they said, He is witness.
- 12:6** And Samuel said to the people, It is Jehovah who appointed Moses and Aaron and who brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt.
- 12:7** Now therefore stand here, that I may plead with you before Jehovah concerning all the righteous acts of Jehovah, which He did to you and to your fathers.
- 12:8** When Jacob went to Egypt, and your fathers cried out to Jehovah, Jehovah sent Moses and Aaron; and they brought your fathers out from Egypt and caused them to dwell in this place.
- 12:9** But they forgot Jehovah their God, and He sold them into the hand of Sisera, the captain of Hazor's army, and into the hand of the Philistines and into the hand of the king of Moab; and they fought against them.
- 12:10** Then they cried out to Jehovah and said, We have sinned, for we have forsaken Jehovah and have served the Baals and the Ashtaroth; but deliver us now from the hand of our enemies, and we will serve You.
- 12:11** And Jehovah sent Jerubbaal and Bedan and Jephthah and Samuel, and He delivered you from the hand of your enemies all around; and you dwelt securely.
- 12:12** And when you saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, you said to me, No; but a king will reign over us, though Jehovah your God was your King.
- 12:13** Now therefore here is the king whom you have chosen and whom you have asked for. See then, Jehovah has set a king over you.
- 12:14** If you fear Jehovah and serve Him and listen to His voice and not rebel against the commandment of Jehovah, and if both you and the king who reigns over you follow Jehovah your God, fine.
- 12:15** But if you do not listen to the voice of Jehovah, but rebel against the commandment of Jehovah, then the hand of Jehovah will be against you, as it was against your fathers.
- 12:16** Now therefore stand here and see this great thing that Jehovah will do before your eyes.
- 12:17** Is it not the wheat harvest today? I will call to Jehovah, that He send thunder and rain; and you will know and see that your wickedness which you have done in the sight of Jehovah by asking for a king for yourselves is great.
- 12:18** And Samuel called to Jehovah, and Jehovah sent thunder and rain on that day. And all the people feared Jehovah and Samuel greatly.
- 12:19** Then all the people said to Samuel, Pray to Jehovah your God for your servants that we would not die, for we have added to all our sins the evil of asking for a king for ourselves.
- 12:20** And Samuel said to the people, Do not be afraid. You have done all this evil, yet do not turn away from following Jehovah, but serve Jehovah with all your heart.
- 12:21** And do not turn away, for your turning away would be after vain idols, which cannot profit or deliver you, for they are vanity.
- 12:22** For because of His great name Jehovah will not forsake His people, for Jehovah has been pleased to make you a people for Himself.
- 12:23** Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I would sin against Jehovah by ceasing to pray for you, but I will instruct you in the good and right way.
- 12:24** Only, fear Jehovah and serve Him in truth with all your heart, for consider what great things He has done for you.
- 12:25** But if you still do wickedly, both you and your king will be consumed.

QUESTIONS:

Section 1:

1. Explain that Saul was a choice to people. What was God's purpose in anointing Saul to be king?
2. How do we see God's sovereign arrangement for Saul to meet Samuel?
3. Explain that Saul's humility was a pretense.

Section 2:

1. How did Saul make King by Samuel?
2. Explain that on one hand Saul was useful in the sight of God and on the other hand he was evil in God's sight.

Section 3:

1. Why did Samuel anoint Saul as a king when he clearly knows Saul's real condition?
2. What did Saul do to make himself attractive and gain the heart of the people?

Section 4:

1. Why did Samuel speak about his integrity first in his reminder? What did His word imply?
2. What was Samuel trying to say in his reminding of Israel of their wickedness in asking for a king? How was his word confirmed by Jehovah?
3. Use a verse to explain that not to pray for God's people is a sin against Jehovah.

----- [SECTION 1] -----

In this message we will begin to consider the history concerning Saul. Although Saul's history is neither positive nor encouraging, I believe that our study of it will be quite encouraging to us.

I. HIS ORIGIN

In 9:1 and 2 we have a word regarding Saul's origin.

A. Of the Tribe of Benjamin

Saul was of the tribe of Benjamin, the smallest tribe (v. 1a).

B. Of His Father, Kish

Saul's father Kish was a man of wealth (vv. 1b, 2a). The Hebrew word for "wealth" here may also be rendered "valor." Kish was a man rich in wealth and perhaps rich also in valor.

C. Named Saul

The name Saul means "asked for" (v. 2b).

D. A Handsome Young Man

Saul was a handsome young man (v. 2c). The Hebrew word for "young" in verse 2 also means "choice." As a young man, or, a man of choice, Saul was a choice to people. The fact that he was handsome, or, comely, indicates that he was attractive to people. Humanly speaking, Saul was a good choice for king.

II. GOD'S ANOINTING

Saul became king through God's anointing. God's purpose in anointing Saul to be king was to use him as a "whip" to discipline Israel.

A. Through the Loss of His Father's Donkeys under God's Sovereignty

Saul's becoming king took place through the loss of his father's donkeys under God's sovereignty (vv. 3-10). I believe that the loss of these donkeys was arranged by God for His purpose in making Saul the king of Israel. Surely this was the only time in history that a person became king through the loss of donkeys.

1. His Father Asking Him to Search for the Donkeys

When Kish, Saul's father, learned that his donkeys were lost, he asked his son to take one of the servants and go to search for the donkeys (v. 3). It was a difficult task to find the donkeys, for no one knew where they went, and it is likely that there was no way to trace them.

2. Saul Not Finding the Donkeys, and the Servant Proposing That They See a Man of God (Samuel) for Their Journey

Saul and his servant passed through the hill country of Ephraim, the land of Shalishah, the land of Shaalim, and the land of Benjamin, but they did not find the donkeys. When they came to the land of Zuph, Saul told the servant that they should return; otherwise, his father would stop worrying about the donkeys and start worrying about them (vv. 4-5). But the servant said to him, "There is a man of God [Samuel] here in this city, and he is a man held in honor; all that he says happens without fail. Let us now go there; perhaps he will tell us about our journey that we have set out on" (v. 6). I believe that this proposal, which exactly fit the need, was inspired by God. Eventually, Saul accepted the servant's proposal, and they went to the city where Samuel, the man of God, was (v. 10).

B. By Meeting Samuel under God's Arrangement and God's Call through Samuel

God's anointing of Saul happened by Saul's meeting Samuel under God's arrangement and God's call through Samuel (vv. 11-27).

1. Jehovah Having Foretold to Samuel That He Would Send Saul to Him

Jehovah had foretold to Samuel that He would send Saul to him, whom Samuel was to anoint as the leader over His people Israel (vv. 15-17). The day before Saul came, Jehovah had spoken to Samuel, saying, "At about this time tomorrow I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him as the leader over My people Israel" (v. 16a).

**2. Samuel Telling Saul
That His Father's Donkeys Had Been Found
and That All the Desire of Israel
Was for Him and All His Father's House**

According to God's foretelling, Samuel told Saul that his father's donkeys had been found and that all the desire of Israel was for him and all his father's house (v. 20).

3. Saul's Answer to Samuel

Saul was shocked by Samuel's word and answered, "Am I not a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? And is not my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Why then do you speak to me in this way?" (v. 21; 15:17). Saul's humility here was a pretense. From the beginning he was a pretender. As we will see, when he knew that Samuel would appoint him to be king, he hid in "humility" (10:22). That he was not genuinely humble is seen in his being unwilling to give up the throne. Because he was altogether self-seeking, he tried desperately to keep the throne for his son Jonathan (20:30-31).

All the events recorded in 9:3-21 were under God's sovereignty. God caused the donkeys to be lost; He caused the servant to make a particular proposal; He revealed certain things to Samuel; and He sent Saul to Samuel. All these matters were used by God to accomplish something crucial—to make Saul king in order to discipline, to train, the children of Israel that they would learn not to have a king to replace God.

----- [SECTION 2] -----

C. By Samuel's Anointing with Oil

"Samuel took the vial of oil and poured it upon his head, and he kissed him and said, Has not Jehovah anointed you as prince over His inheritance?" (10:1). Here we see that Saul was made king by Samuel's anointing him with oil.

D. Confirmed

In 10:2-13 we are told how God's anointing of Saul to be the king was confirmed.

**1. By the Spirit of Jehovah
Rushing upon Him Mightily
and Causing Him to Prophesy**

Samuel told Saul that he would encounter a group of prophets who would be prophesying and that the Spirit of Jehovah would rush upon him (vv. 5b-6a). This word was fulfilled later that day when a group of prophets met him. Then the Spirit of God rushed upon him, and he began to prophesy among them (vv. 10-13).

**2. By God Giving Him Another Heart
and Making Him Another Man**

Samuel also told Saul that after the Spirit of God rushed upon him, he would "be turned into another man" (v. 6b). This word was later fulfilled (v. 9a).

E. Checked by His Uncle

When Saul's uncle checked with Saul where he had gone with his servant, Saul told him that they had gone to look for the donkeys, and when they were not to be found, they went to Samuel (v. 14). Then Saul's uncle said that he should tell him what Samuel said to him. Saul told him the part about the donkeys, but "he did not tell him about the matter of the kingdom that Samuel had spoken of" (vv. 15-16).

F. Made King by Samuel

Verses 17 through 27 give an account of how Saul was made king by Samuel.

1. Before the People of Israel

Samuel gathered the people together to Jehovah at Mizpah (v. 17). This indicates that Saul was made king by Samuel before, in the sight of, the people of Israel.

**2. By Casting Lots to Prove
That He Was Chosen by God**

Saul was made king by the casting of lots to prove that he was chosen by God (vv. 20-23a). Saul was chosen by lot, but he was hiding himself among the baggage, and the people could not find him. But Jehovah told them where he was hiding, and they took him from there.

3. By Showing His Person to the People

Samuel then showed Saul's person to the people (vv. 23b-24). Concerning Saul, who was taller

than all the people from his shoulders and up, Samuel said, "See him whom Jehovah has chosen, that there is none like him among all the people" (v. 24a). All the people shouted and said, "Long live the king!"

4. By Telling the People the Custom of the Kingdom

According to verse 25a, Samuel told the people the custom of the kingdom. He wrote it in a book and laid it before Jehovah.

5. Issuing in the Men of Valor, Whose Hearts God Had Touched, Going with Saul to His House

Saul went to his house at Gibeah, and the men of valor, whose hearts God had touched, went with him (v. 26). This was the issue of Saul's being made king by Samuel.

6. Some Worthless Men Despising Saul

Some worthless men said, "How can this man save us?" They despised him and brought him no present (v. 27). Whereas the others brought presents to celebrate Saul's kingship, these worthless men refused to participate in the celebration. But Saul kept silent.

Saul, the son of Kish, had gone to search for the lost donkeys and he returned to his father with the kingship. Regarding this, Samuel cooperated with God for His eternal kingdom, that is, for the eternal economy of God.

As we read the history recorded in 1 and 2 Samuel, we need to realize that, no matter what was happening, God was behind the scene directing everything. We see this in a particular way in the history concerning Saul.

Saul, who was very tall and handsome, matched Israel's human concept of a king, and they immediately recognized him as the king. But God sees through all things from beginning to end and knew what was within Saul's heart. In the sight of God, Saul was useful at a certain juncture for carrying out God's temporary purpose. He was needed by God to discipline and train Israel. Israel needed an education under a king who was apparently good but who actually was very selfish. On the one hand, Saul was qualified and capable and had the capacity, humanly speaking, to rule Israel. On the other

hand, he was evil in the sight of God and also a pretender who could put on many different masks. At the time of his inauguration, Saul put on a mask of humility, but near the end of his life, he was exposed as actually being an evil person before God.

----- [SECTION 3] -----

After Saul's forty years of reigning, Israel surely learned not to follow the nations in a human way. As a peculiar people, a particular possession belonging to God, their way should be according to God's heart. This is the kind of person Samuel was. He was absolutely according to the heart of God, not according to the customs of the nations. Although Israel had been delivered from tyranny in Egypt and had been brought into the promised land to be a particular treasure in the sight of God, they were not willing to be such a treasure but instead followed the customs of the nations. Therefore, God used Saul to discipline them.

Because Samuel, a Nazarite, was fully in submission to God as the Head, he was willing to do whatever God wanted him to do, without expressing his opinion. For this reason, when God told Samuel to anoint Saul to be the king over Israel, Samuel was obedient.

III. SAUL'S CONQUEST OF THE AMMONITES

A. The Threatening and Reproach of the Ammonites

After Saul was anointed king, the Ammonites came to threaten and reproach the children of Israel (11:1-5). Nahash the Ammonite encamped against Jabesh-gilead, and the men of Jabesh told him that if he made a treaty with them, they would serve him. Nahash replied that he would make a treaty on the condition that all their right eyes would be gouged out. He would thus make it a reproach upon all Israel. The elders of Jabesh asked for seven days' respite to see if there was one who could save them, and they sent messengers to Gibeah of Saul. This created an opportunity for Saul to make a show. He was not for the kingdom of God but for his monarchy.

B. Saul's Conquering of the Ammonites

Saul conquered the Ammonites (vv. 6-11). God sent the Spirit to rush upon Saul (v. 6), and he was empowered by God. Then he gathered the people, divided them into three groups, and slaughtered the Ammonites (vv. 7-11).

C. Saul's Forgiveness of His Despisers on the Day of His Victory

Saul's victory uplifted him in the eyes of the people of Israel. Some of the people said to Samuel, "Who said, Shall Saul reign over us? Bring the men that we may put them to death" (v. 12). However, Saul forgave his despisers, saying, "No man shall be put to death on this day, for today Jehovah has accomplished deliverance in Israel" (v. 13). Saul behaved in an attractive way and gained the heart of the people, but Samuel was clear concerning Saul's real situation.

IV. SAMUEL'S REMINDER TO ISRAEL

A. The Renewing of the Kingdom and the Confirmation of Saul's Kingship before Jehovah by Samuel

After Saul conquered the Ammonites and forgave his despisers, Samuel spoke to Israel about renewing the kingdom, saying, "Come and let us go to Gilgal and there renew the kingdom" (v. 14). All the people went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul king before Jehovah and sacrificed peace offerings before Jehovah. There at Gilgal Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly (v. 15). Although Saul had been victorious over the Ammonites and appeared to be such an attractive, humble person, according to Samuel the nation of Israel was still not the kingdom of God on earth.

----- [SECTION 4] -----

B. Samuel's Reminder

In 12:1-18 we have Samuel's reminder. This reminder implies a comparison between Samuel and Saul. If we compare Saul with Samuel, we will be able to see what is truly of God's heart and for God's heart.

1. Of His Integrity

First, Samuel reminded Israel of his integrity—that he was pure and just in dealing with the people (vv. 1-5). He reminded them that he had not taken anything from them, defrauded them, oppressed them, or taken any bribe from them. He said, "Jehovah is Witness against you, and His anointed is witness this day, that you have not found anything in my hand" (v. 5a). Samuel's word implied that Saul would pervert justice and take away many things from the people. Samuel had this kind of foresight concerning Saul.

2. Of Jehovah's Righteous Acts for Israel

In his wisdom, Samuel did not first speak about God to the people of Israel. Instead, Samuel reminded the people of his integrity and then went on to speak to them of Jehovah's righteous acts for Israel. He reminded them that it was Jehovah who appointed Moses and Aaron and who brought their fathers up out of the land of Egypt (v. 6). Then he reminded them that Jehovah delivered them from the hand of their enemies all around (v. 11).

3. Of Israel's Wickedness in Asking for a King, though Jehovah Their God Was Their King

Finally, Samuel reminded Israel of their wickedness in asking for a king, though Jehovah their God was their King (vv. 12-18). Jehovah was their King, yet they wanted another king (v. 12). Here Samuel was rebuking Israel for leaving her Husband. Because they wanted a king as a replacement for God, they would not have the proper enjoyment of the good land.

After Saul's conquest of the Ammonites, the people were happy, but they had been deceived by Saul, and Samuel was not happy about this situation. Samuel seemed to be saying to Israel, "You should have remained under the kingship of God, taking Him as your Husband and your Head. Then you would have enjoyed a good life, for He would have had His kingdom among you. But you have done wrong in taking a man as your head instead of God. You have actually divorced God and married Saul. You regard him as a handsome man, a man of choice, a man who is kind and humble. But this is only his outward appearance. Within him there is something dark. He will cause you to suffer and will take away many things from you."

a. Confirmed by Jehovah's Sending Thunder and Rain on That Day

Samuel's words were confirmed by Jehovah's sending thunder and rain (vv. 16-18). Samuel told them to stand and see the great thing that Jehovah would do before their eyes. Then he went on to say, "I will call to Jehovah, that He would send thunder and rain; and you will know and see that your wickedness which you have done in the sight of Jehovah by asking for a king for yourselves is great" (v. 17). Then Samuel called to Jehovah, and Jehovah sent thunder and rain on that day. These were not positive signs,

for they were signs not of God's happiness but of His displeasure.

b. All the People Fearing Jehovah and Samuel Greatly

After Samuel called to Jehovah and He sent thunder and rain, all the people feared Jehovah and Samuel greatly (v. 18b).

C. The People's Confession and Samuel's Charge

Verses 19 through 25 record the people's confession of their sin and Samuel's charge to them and his praying for them.

1. The People's Confession of Their Sin and Their Begging Samuel to Pray for Them

The people confessed their sin, saying that they had added to all their sins the evil of asking for a king for themselves. Thus, they begged Samuel to pray to Jehovah his God that they would not die (v. 19).

2. Samuel's Charge to Them That They Would Not Turn Away from Following Jehovah but Serve Jehovah with All Their Heart

Samuel charged the people of Israel not to turn away from following Jehovah but to serve Him with all their heart (v. 20). He warned them not to turn away to vain idols, which, being vanity, could not profit them or deliver them. The people needed to have only one heart, a heart that was toward God and with God. Therefore, Samuel said, "Only, fear Jehovah and serve Him in truth with all your heart, for consider what great things He has done for you. But if you still do wickedly, both you and your king will be consumed" (vv. 24-25).

3. Samuel's Praying for Them without Ceasing, so that He Would Not Sin against Jehovah

In verse 23a Samuel told the people, who had begged him to pray for them, "As for me, far be it from me that I would sin against Jehovah by ceasing to pray for you." This reveals that Samuel considered not praying for God's peculiar people to be a sin against Jehovah. We need to learn of Samuel to pray not only for our own children but also for God's children. If we pray for our children without praying for God's

children, we may be selfish and sin against God. Praying for God's children actually includes praying for our children. As we pray for God's children, our children will be under His care.

The record in 1 Samuel shows us that Samuel's heart was only for God's elect. The term elect is precious to the ears of God and to the heart of God. His elect are His peculiar, personal possession as a treasure. Caring for God's elect was a crucial aspect of the history concerning Samuel, which was in sharp contrast to the history concerning Saul.