

Hello everyone,

PERCENT OF BIBLE COMPLETED: 24.9%

Weekly Readings will cover: 1 Samuel 9 through 1 Samuel 15, & 1 Chronicles 9:35-39

Sunday: 1 Samuel 9

Monday: 1 Samuel 10

Tuesday: 1 Samuel 11

Wednesday: 1 Samuel 12

Thursday: 1 Samuel 13

Friday: 1 Samuel 14 & 1 Chronicles 9:35-39

Saturday: 1 Samuel 15

Current # of email addresses in the group: 602

I hope each of you enjoyed the first full week in 1 Samuel. This next week contains amazing stories from the first human king of Israel. I hope you enjoy your study!

Website archive location for audio files & PDFs:

<https://www.ucg.org/congregations/san-francisco-bay-area-ca/posts/audio-links-re-three-year-chronological-deep-dive-reading-program-circa-2022-2025-903711>

3-YEAR CHRONOLOGICAL STUDY: Week 43

Read the following passages & the Daily Deep Dive on the daily reading.

Day 274 - SUNDAY: October 29th

1 Samuel 9

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: “God had long before prophesied a line of kings from Abraham and Sarah (Genesis 17:15-16). This line was to come through their grandson Jacob (Genesis 35:9-11). And God had Jacob prophesy that this kingly line would come through his son Judah (Genesis 49:10; see 1 Chronicles 5:1-2). But though God personally chooses the king for Israel, He does not yet select a descendant of Judah. Instead, Saul, Israel's first king, is from Benjamin.

God knew that Saul was the type of person the people were looking for, apparently the tallest man in the nation, and good looking (verse 2).

Through circumstances, God arranges for Saul to visit Samuel in Ramah (verse 16).

Samuel was not an Aaronic priest, and yet, as we saw in our previous reading (see 1 Samuel 7:9-10), he appears to have himself offered sacrifices—although in one case it is clear that he was simply officiating at the sacrifice, blessing it and the people (1 Samuel 9:12-14). These sacrifices were done in various locations. However, there is no record that Samuel offered sacrifices specifically at the tabernacle altar of burnt offering, wherever that was currently located. Normally, all sacrifices were to be brought to "the place where the Lord your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name for His habitation" (Deuteronomy 12:5). But with the apparent abandonment of Shiloh, and the loss of the ark, perhaps there was no obvious place where God was "dwelling" at this time. In any case, Samuel's offering of sacrifices at a variety of locations throughout the land—including the altar he had built near his home in Ramah (see 1 Samuel 7:17)—is presented in the Bible as acceptable and proper. Perhaps he had special instructions from God—we know for certain that he did in 1 Samuel 16:2." [END]

Verse 2 – Not that it's much different today, but in ancient times a great deal of respect was paid to personal appearance, and many of the eastern nations, as well as the Greeks and Romans, chose rulers in part based on personal appearance. His appearance is demonstrated in this verse to bring to light that the people would have been highly satisfied with this choice of person.

Verse 9 – The NKJV uses the word "seer". This is a very common word used 1,313 times in the OT. 67% of the time the word is translated as "see". It means "to see, to look, to perceive, to consider, to discern", etc... It's used for the first time in Genesis 1:4 that God "saw" the light, that it was good.

The word for prophet means “a spokesman, speaker, prophet or inspired man”

Verse 16 – God commands Samuel to make Saul the “captain” over His people. This word is translated in the KJV “ruler, prince, captain, leader, governor, and nobles.” This is the first place in the Bible where this word is used but will be used another 43 times after this. A different, unconnected Hebrew word is used for king and has been used since early in the Bible in Genesis 14. Both words will be used to refer to the leader of Israel (captain and king), but I think this first word shows the true intent of God.

Here again is a section from yesterday’s reading program (“The problem is that Israel *already had a King*—ever since the time of Moses and the Exodus, around 1445 B.C., when Israel became a true nation. The King at that time and for the next nearly 400 years was the Rock of Israel, the Eternal God Himself—in fact, the preincarnate Word, Jesus Christ (compare Deuteronomy 32:4; 1 Corinthians 10:4; John 1:1-3, 14; 17:5). Though ruling through His chosen “judges”—from Moses and Joshua all the way to Samuel—God in the person of Christ sat on the throne of Israel (compare Judges 8:22-23). Indeed, Samuel later tells the Israelites that the period of the judges was the time “when the Lord your God was your King” (1 Samuel 12:12). And it is the reason that when the Israelites told Samuel around 1050 B.C. that they wanted a human king like the nations around them, the Lord told him, “They have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them” (1 Samuel 8:7). So God then gives them a physical monarch.

It is interesting to note, as we will see in the next few chapters, that unlike other ancient rulers, the king of Israel was not to be an absolute despot. God will have Samuel anoint Saul “commander” (9:16; 10:1) or “captain” (KJV) over His people. This Hebrew term *nagiyd* used here could be rendered in English as viceroy or governor-general—the stand-

in for the *real* monarch. In fact, the very act of anointing a ruler in the ancient world implied a vassal relationship. It is later explained that Israel's king "sat on the throne of the Lord," reigning as king *for* Him (1 Chronicles 29:23; 2 Chronicles 9:6-8).")

Verse 17 – Notice, that even as Saul rules over the people, they are always first and foremost God's people ("My people"). Even as a pastor, I sometimes use the words "my congregation" or "my members", but they are never mine. I use the words to mean those whom I have the responsibility to serve, but we must never forget, that the people are always God's.

Verse 21 – The Benjamites had almost been eradicated as a tribe (compare Judges 20:29-48). From this small tribe, God chose someone from the least influential family within that tribe. This is similar to how God called Gideon out of the weakest clan and being the least in his father's house. God never chooses the way man does, it's why it's critically important when we choose leaders for God's church that we seek those God has called to positions and not choose based on our ideas of who would be best.

Day 275 - MONDAY: October 30th

1 Samuel 10

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: "Saul's initial anointing is done in secret, after his servant is asked to make himself scarce (9:27-10:1). Saul is then given several signs to encourage him and prove God is behind this.

Among the instructions is one involving a visit to Gilgal, and the command to wait there a week for Samuel to arrive for a sacrifice. This is one of the tests Saul will not pass (see 13:8-14).

The "group of prophets" mentioned in 1 Samuel 10 (verses 5, 10) points to the emergence of an institution that accompanied the emergence of the Israelite monarchy. In 1 and 2 Kings, what is evidently a continuation of the same group is called the "sons of the prophets." In its entry on them, *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* says they are "members of a prophetic guild, or order, first appearing in the time of Saul and Samuel in the service of Yahweh.... The sons of the prophets appear again prominently in the ninth century B.C. in association with Elisha.... The guilds of professional prophets continue to appear variously indicated [in Scripture] (I Kings 18:4, 19; 22:6; II Kings 23:2; Jer. 26:7-8, 11) until the fall of Jerusalem in the early sixth century B.C."

Saul chooses not to tell his family about being anointed as king. Then, when Samuel calls the nation together at Mizpah to announce to them the king God had appointed at the insistence of the elders, Saul, in a moment of either humility or outright fear of his new responsibility, hides himself. God lets them know where to find him, he is accepted by most of the people, and he returns to his home with a bodyguard, not quite sure what he is to do now." [END]

Verse 1 – Notice again as stated yesterday that Saul is anointed "commander" and not the Hebrew word for king. While we understand he will serve in the human position of king for the nation, it's interesting to see the words God uses.

Verse 12 – John Gill's commentary states: "their fathers were not prophets, no more than Saul's was; their Father that taught them is the Lord, and he was able to teach Saul, and bestow on him the gift of prophecy, as well as on them".

"Is Saul also among the prophets?" became a saying. John Gill's commentary states: "that when a person of a mean parentage, and of a low life and education, was raised up to any degree of dignity in sacred

and civil things, they used to apply this proverbial expression to him, or speak of him in this manner, is Saul among the prophets?”

Verse 25 – Samuel likely shared the words that are recorded in 1 Samuel 8:9-18.

Verse 27 – This word for “rebels” (NKJV) is the Hebrew Belial showing that they are “worthless, wicked, evil” in their behavior and lack of respect for the position God just placed Saul into.

Day 276 - TUESDAY: October 31st

1 Samuel 11

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: “Jabesh Gilead, located east of the Jordan in Manasseh's territory, had nearly been destroyed by the Israelites following the war with Benjamin in order to obtain wives for the few remaining Benjamites (see Judges 21). Now Jabesh Gilead is threatened by the Ammonites, one of the two nations descended from Lot, and sends to the rest of Israel for help.

When the messengers come to the Benjamite city of Gibeah, the very city which had committed the grievous sin that precipitated the war against Benjamin years earlier, and which happens to be the home of Saul, the residents seem particularly distressed. As two thirds of the wives provided for the remnant of Benjamin had come from Jabesh Gilead, it is probable that many of Gibeah's inhabitants had ancestors who came from there. Saul himself may have traced his roots to that city.

In any case, the Ammonite threat against Jabesh Gilead unites the Israelites in a common cause under Saul, who conscripts 330,000 troops under penalty of the loss of livestock. Their victory under Saul and Samuel assures Saul's acceptance by the nation as king, and on the

way back home, they stop at Gilgal (the location of Joshua's first encampment after crossing the Jordan) to reaffirm his kingship.” [END]

I don't have anything else to add to this chapter.

Day 277 - WEDNESDAY: November 1st

1 Samuel 12

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: “Samuel reiterates to the people that asking for a human king was not a good thing. To reinforce his statements, he calls on God to bring about an unseasonal and sudden thunderstorm. In great fear, the people realize that God was not pleased with their demands, and they ask Samuel to intercede for them. Samuel makes it clear that whether they are ruled by a human king or not, the important thing is to obey God. A human king would not save them from God's anger if they behaved wickedly. Faithfully obeying God would bring blessings, and failure to do so would destroy the nation and its physical ruler.

Samuel's statement that he will continue to pray for Israel demonstrates his spiritual character. If he had been a man given to pettiness, he might have held a grudge against Israel for their request to have a king. But he did not. Indeed, Samuel recognizes failure to constantly pray for others as a sin against God (verse 23). We should remember this as we go about our daily lives.” [END]

Verse 4 – What an amazing testimony of Samuel. Advanced in age, no one could bring any charges against him. Truly a special leader for God!

Verse 9 – This was recorded in Judges 3:14, 4:2 and 13:1.

Verse 11 – Jerubbaal was the name given to Gideon (see Judges 6:32). Bedan is not mentioned in the Bible. The Septuagint (and also in the

Syriac and Arabic), instead of Bedan they have “Barak”. The Targum has Samson. Instead of Samuel, the Syriac and Arabic have Samson. This might make more sense that Samuel wouldn’t list himself. It’s interesting to me that the Apostle Paul says in Hebrews 11:32 “And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also *of* David and Samuel and the prophets:”.

Verse 21 – This remains just as true for us today. Nothing else we pursue has any real value. Satan wants us to value and pursue “empty” things and waste our time and attention on things of no value.

Day 278 - THURSDAY: November 2nd

1 Samuel 13

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: “Saul creates a small standing army. The thousand under his son Jonathan's leadership (a bold and courageous fellow, as we will see further in the next chapter) attacks a garrison of the occupying Philistine forces. This incites the Philistines to gather against Israel to put down the rebellion, and Saul assembles his worried forces at Gilgal, while others in the threatened region hide themselves in the caves and thickets. As Samuel had instructed (10:8), Saul waits seven days for Samuel to arrive to make the offerings. But Samuel does not arrive right on time. Perhaps his slight delay was a test for Saul. Whatever the case, Saul becomes impatient and, just before Samuel arrives, he presumptuously makes the offering himself. This sin of not following God's explicit instructions is enough to lose the kingdom for Saul's descendants (verse 14). But greater offenses follow.

It is interesting to consider that verse 13 says Saul's dynasty would have continued forever if he had followed God's commands—when God had earlier prophesied that the kingly line to the Messiah would come from Judah and not from Benjamin (Genesis 49:10; see 1 Chronicles 5:1-2).

Yet, this would actually have been a rather simple matter. Probably, God would have had Saul's lineage merge with the Judahite lineage through intermarriage. Indeed, Saul's daughter will later marry David. But there will be no children from their marriage.

An insight into the dominance of the Philistines over the Israelites at this time is shown by the fact that no smiths were allowed to work in the land. As a result, only Saul and his son Jonathan had swords.” [END]

Verse 1 – “Saul reigned one year” should likely end chapter 12. Chapter 13 then opens with what occurred when Saul had reigned two years over Israel.

Verse 5 – The translation of 30,000 chariots may not be accurate. Adam Clarke’s commentary states: “There is no proportion here between the chariots and the cavalry. The largest armies ever brought into the field, even by mighty emperors, never were furnished with thirty thousand chariots. I think שלשים *sheloshim*, Thirty, is a false reading for שלש *shalosh*, Three. The Syriac has *telotho alpin*, and the Arabic *thalathato alf*, both signifying Three thousand; and this was a fair proportion to the horsemen. This is most likely to be the true reading.” [END]

Verse 8 – Saul waited until the 7th day, but the day was not over. God allows us to be tested and through those tests to see our true character revealed. Abraham was willing to give God everything, even his one and only son that he had waited so long for and God said “now I know.” These moments in our lives are important.

Verse 9 – JFB commentary states: “Saul, though patriotic enough in his own way, was more ambitious of gaining the glory of a triumph to himself than ascribing it to God. He did not understand his proper position as king of Israel; and although aware of the restrictions under

which he held the sovereignty, he wished to rule as an autocrat, who possessed absolute power both in civil and sacred things. This occasion was his first trial. Samuel waited till the last day of the seven, in order to put the constitutional character of the king to the test; and, as Saul, in his impatient and passionate haste knowingly transgressed (1Sa 13:12) by invading the priest's office and thus showing his unfitness for his high office (as he showed nothing of the faith of Gideon and other Hebrew generals), he incurred a threat of the rejection which his subsequent waywardness confirmed." [END]

Day 279 - FRIDAY: November 3rd

1 Samuel 14 & 1 Chronicles 9:35-39

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: "Saul's son Jonathan recruits his armor-bearer for a courageous attack on a group of Philistines. He has faith that God can back them up, and asks God to reveal through specifically requested circumstances whether He will, in fact, do so. The two men kill 20 Philistines, sending panic throughout the Philistine ranks, which is aggravated by an earthquake. The rest of Saul's army discovers that Jonathan is missing, and that the Philistines are in disarray and retreat, and begins to pursue them. They are joined by Hebrews who were already in the Philistine camp, probably as mercenaries or volunteers trying to get in good with the occupational forces (not unlike what David pretended to do in 1 Samuel 27), and by others who were hiding in the caves and rocks nearby (verses 21-22; 13:6).

Eli's great-grandson Ahijah is mentioned here wearing the priestly ephod (verse 3). It is not clear from this passage whether Ahijah himself was a priest in *Shiloh* at the time, indicating the city was still functioning in some religious capacity, or whether, as seems more likely, this is just

referring back to Eli as having been the priest in Shiloh. Ahijah was probably serving as priest elsewhere.

In verse 18, Saul tells Ahijah to bring to him the ark of God, which is still in the house of Abinadab in Kirjath Jearim. However, the account here does not state that it was actually brought at this time. In fact, Saul's request is interrupted and the fighting soon ends with Israel victorious, the request for the ark now apparently moot. (This appears to be another example of Saul's impatience—not waiting to receive the instructions he sought from God before heading off to battle, verse 19.) Furthermore, when David later has the ark brought to Jerusalem, it is brought from Abinadab's house—there being no mention anywhere in Scripture that it had ever been moved from there.

Before leaving this account, it will no doubt come as news to many that Jonathan's strategy was actually employed within the last century. Werner Keller writes in *The Bible As History*: "One example, unique in its way, shows how accurate the Bible can be even in the smallest details and how reliable its dates and information. We owe to Major Vivian Gilbert, a British army officer, this description of a truly remarkable occurrence. Writing in his reminiscences he says, 'In the First World War a brigade major in Allenby's army in Palestine was on one occasion searching his Bible with the light of a candle, looking for a certain name. His brigade had received orders to take a village that stood on a rocky prominence on the other side of a deep valley. It was called Michmash and the name seemed somehow familiar.

"Eventually he found it in I Sam. 13 and read there: 'Saul, and Jonathan his son, and the people that were present with them, abode in Gibeath of Benjamin but the Philistines encamped in Michmash.' It then went on to tell how Jonathan and his armour-bearer crossed over during the night 'to the Philistines' garrison' on the other side, and how they passed two sharp rocks: 'there was a sharp rock on the one side, and a

sharp rock on the other side: and the name of the one was Bozez and the name of the other Seneh' (I Sam. 14⁴). They clambered up the cliff and overpowered the garrison, 'within as it were an half acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plough.' The main body of the enemy awakened by the mêlée thought they were surrounded by Saul's troops and 'melted away and they went on beating down one another' (I Sam. 14¹⁴⁻¹⁶). Thereupon Saul attacked with his whole force and beat the enemy. 'So the Lord saved Israel that day.'

"The brigade major reflected that there must still be this narrow passage through the rocks, between the two spurs, and at the end of it the 'half acre of land.' He woke the commander and they read the passage through together once more. Patrols were sent out. They found the pass, which was thinly held by the Turks, and which led past two jagged rocks—obviously Bozez and Seneh. Up on top, beside Michmash, they could see by the light of the moon a small flat field. The brigadier altered his plan of attack. Instead of deploying the whole brigade he sent one company through the pass under cover of darkness. The few Turks whom they met were overpowered without a sound, the cliffs were scaled, and shortly before daybreak the company had taken up a position on 'the half acre of land.' The Turks woke up and took to their heels in disorder since they thought that they were being surrounded by Allenby's army. They were all killed or taken prisoner.

"And so,' concludes Major Gilbert, 'after thousands of years British troops successfully copied the tactics of Saul and Jonathan'" (1981, pp. 182-183). What a surprising confirmation of Scripture! In the face of this and other proofs of the Bible, let us not doubt the reliability of God's Word."

Verse 6 – What faith of Jonathan to understand that God can do anything He wants.

Verse 13 – Adam Clarke’s commentary states: “Jonathan knocked them down, and the armor-bearer despatched them. This seems to be the meaning.”

Verse 24 – Here again the UCG reading plan states: “Once again Saul's rash behavior becomes an issue. He has made his troops swear that they will not eat anything until the battle is over. This weakens the troops, Jonathan inadvertently breaks the oath, and eventually, in their hunger, the troops ravenously devour the spoil without properly bleeding the animals. When Saul finally attempts to seek God's counsel again, at Ahijah's suggestion (verse 36), God does not answer. Saul concludes that somebody must have sinned in the previous battle (as at Jericho/Ai) and asks God to reveal the culprit by lot. He is surprised to learn it was his own son—whom he then immediately condemns to death.

We can see here the "new Saul," an arrogant, defiant, heartless and self-willed man—quite a long way from the man who hid rather than be proclaimed king. Saul's actions illustrate how bizarre and corrupt his thinking had become. He himself had disobeyed God and yet when his own son disobeys one of his own foolish commands, he decides that his son should die. Saul is prohibited from carrying out his intent because the people insist that this is going too far, and they refuse to let Jonathan be killed. After all, Jonathan had not even heard Saul's oath.

Saul continues to expand the kingdom against the nations around them. The accompanying passage from Chronicles highlights some of the additional wars being fought, during this time of Israelite strength and expansion, by the tribes east of the Jordan.” [END]

Verse 32 – This was against God’s law (compare Genesis 9:4 and Leviticus 19:26).

Verse 49 – His son Jishui was also known as “Abinadab” (Compare 1 Chronicles 8:33). Saul would also have another son named Ishbosheth (also sometimes called Eshbaal) (compare 1 Chronicles 8:33 & 2 Samuel 2:8).

The daughter Merab would be given to Adriel (see 1 Samuel 18:19) and Michal would marry David (see 1 Samuel 18:27).

Day 280 - SATURDAY: November 4th

1 Samuel 15

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: “God had given instructions through Moses that the attack on Israel by Amalek during the first weeks of their journey from Egypt (see Exodus 17:8-16) should be avenged (Deuteronomy 25:17- 19). Israel has finally grown strong enough to do this, and Samuel instructs Saul to carry out the mission. The destruction is to be complete, including the animals.

The Kenites had a generally peaceful relationship with Israel. Moses’ father-in-law is called a Kenite (Judges 1:16). Jael, who killed Sisera in the days of Deborah the judge (Judges 4:11, 17-22), was married to a Kenite. And apparently there had been other favorable encounters with Israel, prompting Saul to encourage them to escape before the fighting starts (1 Samuel 15:6).

Saul carries out a successful attack on the Amalekites. But he is “unwilling to utterly destroy them,” leaving alive their king and the best of the livestock (verse 9). Interestingly, Saul maintains that he has obeyed God (verse 20). He does blame the people for keeping the livestock. Yet this was in his power. He could have ordered the livestock destroyed. But it evidently made sense to him to preserve the livestock for sacrificing to God. And the statement that this was Saul’s reason was apparently not a lie—as lying is not what Samuel criticizes him for

(though Saul's apparent self-deception that he had obeyed God in the matter would fall under the category of lying).

Samuel's answer in verses 22-23 is an important one for us today. Obedience supersedes any attempt to honor God. And He cannot be honored with disobedience. If God has forbidden something, we cannot honor Him with that thing. Yet people try to do this all the time in the world around us. For instance, God says not to use pagan worship methods in an attempt to honor Him (see Deuteronomy 12:29-32). But people use holidays that originated in paganism, like Christmas and Easter, in an attempt to do just that. Some people even think this is obedience to God. But it isn't. No matter how sincere, this is actually dishonoring God because it is disobeying Him. When people knowingly do this, it is rebellion and, as Samuel told Saul, is on par with witchcraft and idolatry. If you want to truly honor God, then do what He says—obey Him. (To learn more about the pagan origins of Christmas and Easter, request or download our free booklet [*Holidays or Holy Days: Does It Matter Which Days We Keep?*](#))

Although God had already stated that Saul's dynasty would not continue (1 Samuel 13:13-14), this latest act of rebellion causes Saul himself to be rejected as king. God will anoint someone else instead. Samuel refuses to have anything more to do with Saul, but Saul persuades Samuel to honor him one more time before the elders. Samuel finishes the execution God had ordered Saul to fulfill. And then he returns home, never to go to see Saul again—although Saul will later come to see him one last time in pursuing David (see 19:18-24)." [END]

Verse 17 – This verse clearly demonstrates that Saul at one time was humble, but had not remained that way.

Verse 23 – Notice that God hates witchcraft and idolatry but that rebellion and stubbornness are put on an equal level. Rebellion and

stubbornness must be rooted out of our lives. How many problems have we seen even in church history due to these two sins?