

Day 274 - SUNDAY: October 29th

1 Samuel 9

1 Samuel 9:1-27 NKJV

There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjamite, a mighty man of power. And he had a choice and handsome son whose name was Saul. There was not a more handsome person than he among the children of Israel. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people. Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, were lost. And Kish said to his son Saul, "Please take one of the servants with you, and arise, go and look for the donkeys." So he passed through the mountains of Ephraim and through the land of Shalisha, but they did not find them. Then they passed through the land of Shaalim, and they were not there. Then he passed through the land of the Benjamites, but they did not find them. When they had come to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant who was with him, "Come, let us return, lest my father cease caring about the donkeys and become worried about us." And he said to him, "Look now, there is in this city a man of God, and he is an honorable man; all that he says surely comes to pass. So let us go there; perhaps he can show us the way that we should go." Then Saul said to his servant, "But look, if we go, what shall we bring the man? For the bread in our vessels is all gone, and there is no present to bring to the man of God. What do we have?" And the servant answered Saul again and said, "Look, I have here at hand one-fourth of a shekel of silver. I will give that to the man of God, to tell us our way." (Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he spoke thus: "Come, let us go to the seer"; for he who is now called a prophet was formerly called a seer.) Then Saul said to his servant, "Well said; come, let us go." So they went to the city where the man of God was. As they went up the

hill to the city, they met some young women going out to draw water, and said to them, "Is the seer here?" And they answered them and said, "Yes, there he is, just ahead of you. Hurry now; for today he came to this city, because there is a sacrifice of the people today on the high place. As soon as you come into the city, you will surely 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 therefore, go up, for about this time you will find him." So they went up to the city. As they were coming into the city, there was Samuel, coming out toward them on his way up to the high place. Now the LORD had told Samuel in his ear the day before Saul came, saying, "Tomorrow about this time I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him commander over My people Israel, that he may save My people from the hand of the Philistines; for I have looked upon My people, because their cry has come to Me." So when Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said to him, "There he is, the man of whom I spoke to you. This one shall reign over My people." Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, "Please tell me, where is the seer's house?" 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 tomorrow I will let you go and will tell you all that is in your heart. But as for your donkeys that were lost three days ago, do not be anxious about them, for they have been found. And on whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not on you and on all your father's house?" And Saul answered and said, "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 do you speak like this to me?" Now Samuel took Saul and his servant and brought them into the hall, and had them sit in the place of honor among those who were invited; there were about thirty persons. And Samuel said to the cook, "Bring the portion which I gave you, of which I said to you, 'Set it apart.' " So the cook took up the thigh with its upper part and set it before Saul. And Samuel said, "Here it is,

what was kept back. It was set apart for you. Eat; for until this time it has been kept for you, since I said I invited the people." So Saul ate with Samuel that day. When they had come down from the high place into the city, Samuel spoke with Saul on the top of the house. They arose early; and it was about the dawning of the day that Samuel called to Saul on the top of the house, saying, "Get up, that I may send you on your way." And Saul arose, and both of them went outside, he and Samuel. As they were going down to the outskirts of the city, Samuel said to Saul, "Tell the servant to go on ahead of us." And he went on. "But you stand here awhile, that I may announce to you the word of God."

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.