

1 Samuel 10

Samuel anointed Saul as King of Israel with a flask of oil. What was the significance of the oil? Anointing with oil was a symbolic act in Israel that pictured consecration to service. It was also accompanied by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit (10:6; 16:13). When Samuel poured oil on Saul's head, that act represented God's approval of Saul as leader of His people. It served as confirmation of his divine call and commission.¹

What did Samuel remind Saul of (v. 1)? God had placed him as commander over the Israelites who were the Lord's inheritance. Saul had an important job to do, taking care of a people who belonged to the Lord God.....clearly a stewardship role. **What stewardship responsibilities do you have?**

Who else was present at the anointing? No one. It was a secret/private anointing, because it was not yet time to reveal Saul as king to the nation.

Samuel next pronounced three prophecies to Saul (vv. 2-6). What were they?

1. He would meet two men near Rachel's tomb who would tell him of the whereabouts of the lost donkeys.
2. He would meet three men at the (oak) tree of Tabor who would give him two loaves of bread.
3. He would meet a procession of prophets who would be prophesying as they descended from the high place at Gibeah.²

What was the purpose of these three prophecies? They were three signs that would prove to the new king that Samuel had anointed him in harmony with God's will. As if to say, *"To prove to you that I'm correct in saying that you're going to be the king, let me tell you exactly how your journey will turn out today."* Samuel gave Saul such specific predictions that they could be easily and exactly verified.

What else did Samuel tell Saul would happen along with the coming of the prophets (v. 6)? The Spirit of God would come upon him and he would join in with the prophets in their prophesying and he would be changed into a different person. This is frequently taken to mean that Saul was converted or spiritually regenerated. However, such language for spiritual renewal is foreign to the Old Testament, and Saul's subsequent attitudes and behavior do not bear out that this was his experience (16:14; 18:12; 28:15-16).³

The Spirit of the Lord will come upon you..... (v. 6). How is that different from the role of the Holy Spirit today? In the Old Testament (Old Covenant), the Holy Spirit came *upon* people (external) for a specific assignment, for a specific (temporary) time, e.g., the Judges. In the New Testament, when Christ ushered in the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit now comes to live *within* us (internal) on a permanent basis (Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 36:26-27).

What was the big deal about Saul prophesying? This was a big change for those who had known Saul previously. The buzz around town was, *"What happened to Saul? Is he a religious guy now?"* The evidence of a changed life will catch people's attention. It is very noticeable. You will spark people's interest in the Lord by your changed life in Christ. Saul, before this time, never seems to have been a particularly spiritual man. So, for him to prophesy was real evidence that he had been turned into a different man.

What were the first orders Samuel gave to Saul as God's king (v. 8)? *"You must wait seven days..."* This was an important command. By the nature of their office, kings do not wait for anybody. Others wait on them. Saul had to show that even though he was a king, he was submitted to the Lord, and the Lord's prophet. Unfortunately he ultimately disobeyed them (13:8-14).

When he had turned his back to go from Samuel, what happened to Saul (v. 9)? The prophecy of v. 6 came true. God changed his heart. Samuel did not change it. Saul did not even change it himself. The changed heart was a gift from God. The promise of v. 7 also comes into play. **Like Saul, do you have a changed heart?**

What did God's Spirit also give Saul the ability to do (v. 10)? Prophecy. The evidence of this new gift surprised people who knew Saul, and they took note of it (v. 11).⁴

Samuel next gathered the people together at Mizpah. What was the message Samuel was sending to the people (vv. 17-19)? He reminded them that their demand for a king was a rejection of the God who brought them out of Egypt and into the Promised Land. Since they have rejected their God and King, He will now give them their wish.....a king to rule over them.

Why did Samuel go through this elaborate process (vv. 20-21a) to select Saul by lot when He had already anointed Saul as king over Israel? Saul's initial anointing had been private, but his choice by lot was public. This would show the whole nation that Saul was the right man. It would show that God had chosen Saul (based on the people's desires), not that any man had chosen him. Samuel began to pick lots to show the man that God was selecting. This was a public confirmation of God's will.

Where did they find Saul when it was time to present him as king of Israel (v. 22)? Hidden among the baggage. Again, the Scripture doesn't declare his motive. In fact, here Saul shows a healthy embarrassment and humility. He was not looking forward to being "center stage" in front of the nation; he seems to be dreading it. Saul was not made king because of his own personal ambition, or to gratify a desire for the limelight. One thing we know for sure: Saul did not set out to be king. He didn't ask for the job, didn't brag about the job, and didn't pursue the job.

How did the people respond to Samuel's proclamation (v. 24)? *"Long live the king!"* The people of Israel, in their desire for the image and pageantry of a human king had been longing to shout these words for a long time. They finally got their king! A king that would look good to the other nations. God gave them "the king from central casting"! They now, like all the other nations, would get to see royal ceremonies and pomp and circumstance. The monarchy was established.

Was there universal approval of Saul (v. 27)? Saul was brought forth and presented to the people as their king. Several valiant men attached themselves to Saul and accompanied him to his home in Gibeah, but not everyone was solidly behind the new monarch. Saul wisely held his peace in front of these rebels who despised him.⁵ An insecure or unwise leader, at this point, might feel the need to "crush" anyone that opposed him, or simply regard them as enemies. Saul did neither, understanding that it might take him some time to win over the doubters.

Leadership principle -- No matter what your position, your popularity will never be universal. Don't make it your goal to please all of the people. It's not the job of a leader to bring about consensus. The job of a leader is to do the right thing and make the right decisions. I think of Jesus, who people loved and people hated. And the same goes for the apostle Paul. We see the same phenomenon in the political polarization of our country today.

It remains very clear that God did not choose this king for Himself, but rather for the people. In other words, though God actually appointed Saul, Saul did not in the final analysis represent God's choice, but the people's choice. Yet God gave them a man with great personal strengths: wisdom, humility, sensitivity, physical attractiveness, and wealth. His gift of Saul was a good gift, as are all God's gifts to His people (Luke 11:9-13). God did not give Israel a time bomb just waiting to go off. Saul failed because of his poor choices.⁶

¹ Eugene H. Merrill, "1 Samuel," The Bible Knowledge Commentary: J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Victor Books, 1985), 441.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Dr. Thomas L. Constable, Notes on 1 Samuel 2024 Edition (published by Sonic Light), 80.

⁵ William MacDonald, Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments, ed. Arthur Farstad (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 304.

⁶ Dr. Thomas L. Constable, Notes on 1 Samuel 2024 Edition (published by Sonic Light), 83.