

1 Samuel 9

Who are we introduced to (v. 1)? Kish

What do we know about Kish? He was a Benjamite.....a man of wealth and influence.

How did the author describe his son Saul (v. 2)? Saul was physically impressive: he was of kingly stature - unusually tall and handsome. At this time he would have been in his late 20's (cf. 13:1). God gave the people just what they wanted: Saul looked like a king.¹

Though a son of Kish, a man of some influence (1 Sam. 9:1), Saul had little to commend him to the high position of king except his physical impressiveness (9:2). God had to convince both Saul and the people that he was the proper candidate.²

What was the problem Kish's father was facing (v. 3)? His donkeys were lost.

What directive did Kish give to Saul (v. 3)? Take a servant with you and go find the donkeys.

NOTE: In retrospect, it's easy to see the sovereignty of God unfolding here. This was God's way of getting Saul in contact with Samuel – by chasing after lost donkeys!

What did Saul do (vv. 4-5)? He looked all over but there was no trace of the missing donkeys.

What did Saul recommend doing (v. 5)? *"Let's go back home so my father won't worry himself sick about our well-being."* Saul's concern for his father's peace of mind was commendable. It shows a sensitivity that would have been an asset in a king (v. 5).

What did his servant recommend (v. 6)? To seek the advice of a local man of God.

What was the dilemma Saul faced (v. 7)? They didn't have any money to pay him. Saul's desire to give Samuel a present for his help was praiseworthy. Saul had some appreciation for social propriety. His servant, however, comes across as more resourceful than Saul (vv. 6-8).

What was the servant's solution (v. 8)? He had his own personal money they could use as a gift.

As they were going to find the seer, who did they encounter (v. 11)? A group of ladies. Saul was also humble enough to ask directions from a woman.

What information did the ladies give to Saul (vv. 12-13)? The location of the man of God. When Saul and his servant arrived in Samuel's town, they found that the prophet was on his way to a nearby high place (a place of worship on a hill) to offer a sacrifice. Undaunted, they continued on until they located him.³

As they entered the town, who did they encounter (v. 14)? Samuel who was walking toward them. As they hurried along, they met the man they sought. Little did Saul realize that the prophet was also looking for him!

What did the Lord reveal to Samuel (vv. 15-16)? That Saul was on his way and that he was the divine choice to be the first king of Israel. This does not mean that Saul satisfied God's ultimate requirements but only that He was graciously letting the people have their own way.⁴

What did the Lord say to Samuel (v. 17)? On the preceding day the LORD had promised to direct Samuel to the man who was to be king. Now it was revealed to him that Saul was the man.

What did Samuel reveal to Saul as he was looking for the seer (v. 19)? He revealed himself as the seer Saul was looking for. Then, he invited him to a feast at the high place. Samuel then told the tall, handsome Benjaminite that he would have some important news for him in the morning.

Canaanite-type 'high places' are mentioned frequently in the Old Testament and regularly in a context of divine disapproval as they are usually connected with the worship of idols (1 Kings 12:31; 14:23; 15:14; 22:43; etc.). The fact is noteworthy, therefore, that during this time when the ark was away from the Tabernacle, such 'high places' were used by the Israelites for the worship of Jehovah and clearly with the approval of God.⁵

What did Samuel tell Saul next (v. 20)? Samuel not only put Saul's mind at ease concerning the lost donkeys but also told him that he was God's choice to lead the nation of Israel.⁶

How did Saul respond to Samuel's proclamation (v. 21)? Astounded, Saul could only reply that he was unworthy of this high honor. The transparency and humility of Saul are evident at this stage of his career.

Saul took this statement with apparent modesty. Benjamin was certainly the smallest tribe in Israel. In the past their numbers had been reduced to 600 because of their wickedness (Judges 20).

How did Samuel treat Saul (vv. 22-24)? Samuel then invited Saul to sit with him as guest of honor at the sacrificial feast and then to spend the night in his home in the town below. Giving the special leg of meat to Saul was a sign of special honor.

The next day, as they prepared to part ways, what did Samuel say to Saul (v. 27)? Wait, so He could give Saul a message directly from God. Samuel detained him so that he might communicate with him alone (with Saul's servant going on ahead) a specific revelation of God (vv. 25-27).

¹ Dr. Thomas L. Constable, Notes on 1 Samuel 2024 Edition (published by Sonic Light), 74.

² Eugene H. Merrill, "1 Samuel," The Bible Knowledge Commentary: J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Victor Books, 1985), 440.

³ Ibid., 441.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Dr. Thomas L. Constable, Notes on 1 Samuel 2024 Edition (published by Sonic Light), 75.

⁶ Eugene H. Merrill, "1 Samuel," The Bible Knowledge Commentary: J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Victor Books, 1985), 441.