

2/12/22 - 1 Sam. 9:1-10:27 - "The Path of Man and Plan of God"

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 12 February 2023

Preacher: Brenton Beck

[0 : 00] We are reading first from 1 Samuel 9. There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish, the son of Abio, son of Zerar, son of Bekarath, son of Aphiah, a Benjamite, a man of wealth. And he had a son whose name was Saul, a handsome young man. There was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than he. From his shoulders upward, he was taller than any of the people. Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, were lost.

So Kish said to Saul, his son, take one of the young men with you and arise, go and look for the donkeys. And he passed through the hill country of Ephraim and passed through the land of Shalaz Shah, but they did not find them. And they passed through the land of Shalem, but they were not there. Then they passed through the land of Benjamin, but he did not find them. When they came to the land of Zuth, Saul said to the servant who was with him, come, let us go back, lest my father cease to care about the donkeys and become anxious about us. But he said to him, behold, there is a man of God in the city. And he is a man who is held in honor and all that he says comes true. So now let us go there. Perhaps he can tell us the way we should go. Then Saul said to his servant, but if we go, what can we bring the man? For the bread in our sacks is gone and there is no present to bring to the man of God. What do we have? The servant answered Saul again, here I have with me a quarter of a shekel of silver and I will give it to the man of God to tell us our way. Formally in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he said, come, let us go to the seer for today's prophet was formerly called a seer. And Saul said to the servant, well said, come, let us go. So they went to the city where the man of

God was. As they went up to the hill to the city, they met young women coming out to draw water and said to them, is the seer here? They answered, he is. Behold, he is just ahead of you. Hurry, he has come just now to the city because the people have a sacrifice today on the high place. As soon as you enter the city, you will find him before he goes up to the high place to eat. For the people will not eat till he comes since he must bless the sacrifice. Afterward, those who are invited will eat. Now go up for you will meet him immediately. So they went up to the city. As they were entering the city, they saw Samuel coming out toward them on his way up to the high place. Now the day before Samuel came, the Lord had revealed to Samuel, tomorrow about this time, I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin and you shall anoint him to be prince over my people Israel. He shall save my people from the hand of the

Philistines. For I have seen my people because their cry has come to me. When Samuel saw Saul, the Lord told him, here is the man of whom I spoke to you. He it is who shall restrain my people. Then Saul approached Samuel in the gate and said, tell me, where is the house of the seer? Samuel answered Saul, I am the seer. Go up before me to the high place. For today you shall eat with me and in the morning I will let you go and will tell you all that is on your mind. As for your donkeys that were lost three days ago, do not set your mind on them for they have been found. And for whom there is all that is desirable in Israel, is it not for you and for all your father's house? Samuel answered, am I not a Benjamite from the least of the tribes of Israel? And is not my clan the humblest of all the clans of the tribe of Benjamin? Why then have you spoken to me in this way? Then Samuel took Saul and his young man and brought them into the hall and gave them a place at the head of those who had been invited, who were about 30 persons. And Samuel said to the cook, bring the portion I gave you, of which I said to you, put it aside. So the cook took up the leg and what was on it and set them before

Saul. And Samuel said, see what was kept is set before you. Eat because it was kept for you until the hour appointed that you might eat with the guests. So Saul ate with Samuel that day. And when

they came down from the high place into the city, a bed was spread for Saul on the roof and he lay down to sleep. Then at the break of dawn, Samuel called to Saul on the roof up that I may send you on your way. So Saul arose and both he and Samuel went out into the street. As they were going down to the outskirts of the city, Samuel said to Saul, tell the servant to pass on before us. And when he has passed on, stop here yourself for a while that I may make known to you the word of God. Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head and kissed him and said, has not the Lord anointed you to be prince over his people Israel? And you shall reign over the people of the Lord and you will save them from the hand of their surrounding enemies. And this shall be the sign to you that the Lord has anointed you to be prince over his heritage. When you depart from me today, you will meet two men by Rachel's tomb in the territory of Benjamin at Zelza. And they will say to you, the donkeys that you went to seek are found. And now your father has ceased to care about the donkeys and is anxious about you saying, what shall I do about my son? Then you should go on from there further and come to the Oak of

[6 : 44] Tabor. Three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you there. One carrying three young goats, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine. And they will greet you and give you two loaves of the bread, which you shall accept from their hand. After that, you shall come to Gibeath Elohim, where there is a garrison of the Philistines. And there, as soon as you come to the city, you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place with harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre before them, prophesying. Then the Spirit of the Lord will rush upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man. Now when these signs meet you, do what your hand finds to do, for God is with you? Then go down before me to Gilgal, and behold, I am coming down to you to offer burnt offerings and to sacrifice peace offerings. Seven days you shall wait until I come to you and show you what you shall do. When he turned his back to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart, and all these signs came to pass that day. When they came to Gibeah, behold, a group of prophets met him, and the Spirit of God rushed upon him, and he prophesied among them. And when all who knew him previously saw how he prophesied with the prophets, the people said to one another,

What has come over the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets? And a man of the place answered, And who is their father? Therefore it became a proverb, Is Saul also among the prophets?

When he had finished prophesying, he came to the high place. Saul's uncle said to him and to his servant, Where did you go? And he said, To seek the donkeys.

And when we saw that they were not to be found, we went to Samuel. And Saul's uncle said, Please, tell me what Samuel said to you. And Saul said to his uncle, He told us plainly that the donkeys had been found.

But about the matter of the kingdom of which Samuel had spoken, he did not tell him anything. Now Samuel called the people together to the Lord at Mizpah, and he said to the people of Israel, Thus says the Lord, 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 were oppressing you.

[9 : 19] But today you have rejected your God, who saves you from all your calamities and your distresses, and you have said to him, Set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes and by your thousands. Then Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin was taken by lot. He brought the tribe of Benjamin near by its clan, and the clan of the Matrites was taken by lot. And Saul the son of Kish was taken by lot. But when they sought him, he could not be found. So they inquired again of the Lord, Is there a man still to come? And the Lord said, Behold, he has hidden himself among the baggage. Then they ran and took him from there, and when he stood among the people, he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward.

And Samuel said to all the people, Do you see him whom the Lord has chosen? There is none like him among all the people. And all the people shouted, Long live the king! Then Samuel told the people the rights and duties of the kingship, and he wrote them in a book and laid it up before the Lord.

Then Samuel sent all the people away, each one to his home. Saul also went to his home at Gibeah, and with him went men of valor whose hearts God had touched. But some worthless fellows said, How can this man save us? And they despised him and brought him no present, but he held his peace.

This is the word of the Lord. Father, thank you for your word today. Father, thank you for just this gathering known as an assembly of believers, known as the church. And Lord, we know that we are not merely identified by geography of an address and a street, that we are your people, and where your people are, there is your church.

We are so grateful that we are not confined to a building. And so, Father, help us to be invigorated by your word today to propel us into the communities that are within our lives, that are within our grasp.

[11 : 47] And may we be changed by your word. And anybody who may not know you today, draw them by the power of your word. And we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.

It is wonderful to be going through the series. And we are in a series in 1 Samuel. And I'd like to start out with a little bit of a proverb that should spark some curiosity in our minds as it relates to what's going on in this book. An old proverb says, Be careful what you ask for, because you just might get it.

Or if we consider the human dilemma, as we're talking about our problems, we've got lots of problems. The human dilemma, everybody says they want to have more leisure, only to find themselves unemployed and complaining about loss of a paycheck. Right? This is the human dilemma. We want something, but we don't realize the consequence of the things that we want. You see, our desire to ask causes us to be undiscerning regarding the consequences of our tenacity and insistent asking. At most times, we often regret the answers to such blind requests, those things that we tenaciously ask for. We often regret the answers that we receive. If you're newer with us in this series, if you're newer with the church body, welcome. It's great to be gathered under his words. And we're walking through this book known as 1 Samuel.

And this is a book concerning leadership, dilemmas, and solutions. Leadership, dilemmas, and solutions. And the days of 1 Samuel are quite tumultuous. These days are quite tumultuous days in the history of Israel. It's like generation after generation, the people are finding themselves suffering from that human dilemma. They want something, but have no idea the consequence of their asking. They want a leader, but they only want it their way. Following the narrative up to chapter 9 of where we're at today, we would be, we would remember that the issue of the people was suffering under corrupt leadership of Eli and his sons all the way back in chapter 2. And this led to the need to find an adequate leader in chapter 4 to 6. And a boy named Samuel seemed to pop up intermittently throughout all these chapters, from 1 chapter 1 all the way to chapter 8. This boy, Samuel, in chapter 1, chapter 3, and chapter 7.

And last week in chapter 8, the elders pressed Samuel hard, give a solution for us, right? And the nation demanded a king. They demanded a king like all the other nations. Give us something like they have. They got the guy. Give us that. And such a request comes from rebelling against God's rule. That's where we've been, okay? And you see, this is huge. God grants their request.

[15 : 27] But this did not represent His blessing of such a request. We saw that last week, that sometimes when God answers our prayers, there's actually judgment upon us. An answered prayer doesn't always mean His blessing. And this turns into a complicated situation that we read in chapter 9 and 10, which the entire story is actually going to take until chapter 12 to tell. I'm so imaginative that you're upset that we're not going to be reading to chapter 12 today. But we'll do chapter 9 and 10, and we'll unfold this story as we go. But let's begin now. And the sermon title today is The Path of Man and the Plan of God. And so what we're going to do, we're going to break this up into a couple different sections. I wrestled around just doing one section because it's almost like just one narrative. But me being a Baptist preacher, we're just going to break it up into three, just to keep an equilibrium in my mind. And so the first section that we're going to see today is that the Lord guides

Saul's path. And so these are going to kind of capture the theme within these verses, as the Lord guides Saul's path. Like we said, within the context, within the verses that come before, I know that's probably bizarre for a preacher to talk about the verses that are before, right?

Did you know that there's also some chapters before in 1 Samuel? There's eight of them before this. And those actually bring emphasis into where we're at today. And chapter 8 verse 19 says that the people wanted a king like all the other nations. And so God began that process of granting their request. And after all, their demand for a king to go out before them and to fight their battles, just like chapter 8 verse 20, that isn't actually a bad thing to desire. For somebody to go out before them in battle and to be their leader. So it's hard to blame them for such a request.

But today we might ask, what's that job description entail? What's a job description for that position? What leadership style is suitable? However, the text is pressing us for even a deeper question. What kind of leader does God want for His people? In other words, is it all based on competency or is it based upon character and calling? You see, in ancient Near Eastern ideals, leaders would be chosen. There would be a premium upon the head of different leaders within the nation of Israel based upon physical attributes. If they looked like a leader and smelled like a leader, well, by golly, they're going to be the leader. So, the men with the chiseled jawline, like Carmen has, the strong arms like Carmen has, they would receive the position.

[19 : 09] Even though Carmen's actually very intelligent and he has competency, but these leaders, they could be dumber than a pile of rocks. But if they looked the part, if they looked like Joe back there with the arms and they would be the leader, they would be the leader based upon just physical attributes.

And let me just take a moment. No wonder Israel's in this leadership problem, right? They're choosing leaders based on jawlines, upon stature, not on competency, not on calling, not on character, nothing.

And so, we meet a man named Saul. His name actually means asked for. And this is the man whom the nation of Israel asked for.

He's a Benjaminite. It's a tribe marked in corruption. We won't get into another sermon about that. You'll have to read the pages before in the establishment of the tribe of Benjamin.

It's marked by inhospitality. It's marked, this tribe is marked in rape. This tribe is marked in murder. If you were to lay out the geography of all the tribes laid out, it would look like the little sliver of Rhode Island.

[20 : 20] It was the smallest tribe of them all. And this was a rich man, Saul was. His family was rich. They had donkeys. And he was the most handsome man of all. He was tall.

Man, from Israel's perspective, this guy's got it. He's got to be the guy, right? Sounds like a winner. And then the donkeys get loose, which takes us into this sort of comedy in the narrative.

I almost chuckled a couple times. I'm glad my microphone was off. But the donkeys get loose. The country journey in verse 3 that leads all the way to verse 15, it plays into this sort of Lord of the Rings, Sam, and who's the other Hobbit character? Frodo, into the journey, right?

All throughout these country lands, they don't have a ring that they're trying to destroy. They have donkeys that they're trying to find. And the country journey of Saul and his servants develops as a comedy.

Saul's character and competencies are exposed here. This man is clearly dumber than a pile of rocks, to say the most flattering description. He's fumbling here.

[21 : 44] He's finding excuses to turn back. In verse 5, he blames his anxiety for his father's concern. He needs to turn back. And then all of a sudden, this servant has an idea to seek out a seer, a prophet in that day.

In verse 7, Saul says, well, we don't have any money to pay him. We don't have any bread. And he's completely clueless throughout this country journey. Saul is a man who is developed into someone unable.

He's unwilling to make positive change to any situation, even that would benefit the well-being of his own family. Saul is hesitant in consulting God.

He doesn't even know who Samuel is. And the only obedience that we see from Saul is the voice of another human being, which will foreshadow into his obedience to the voice of a nation, not God.

Saul was resistant to any godly pursuit, even for his own well-being, even for the well-being of a nation coming up.

[23 : 09] He needed God to intervene in his life to change him. He needed God to intervene in his life to change him. And God was doing just that.

Their donkey excursion led them right to Samuel. And it's like these two storylines all of a sudden intersect between this wandering excursion looking for donkeys and then Samuel going to the land of Zuth.

This is Samuel's fourth great-grandfather's land. And might the narrator of this story, might the narrator be making us question, what in the world does this wandering donkey seeker have to do with anything that's going on?

What is going on in this passage? And we will find that answer in verse 15. Verse 15, look with me here. Now the day before Saul came, the Lord had revealed to Samuel, Tomorrow about this time, I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him to be prince over my people Israel.

He shall save my people from the hand of the Philistines, for I've seen my people, because their cry has come to me.

[24 : 35] You see, Saul, as much of a mumbling, incompetent fool that he was, the Lord saw fit to hear the cry of His people, and God chose Saul.

In other words, something larger is developing here that I want you to see, is that Saul was chosen based upon the cry of God's people, and sadly God warned them that their cry will soon be silenced because of the man they cry out for.

And so something is developing within a larger structure. And one thing we can certainly see, church, is that our first impressions must not be mistaken for divine discernment.

Things in life may look like it's the part that we need, look like the man, look like the thing that we need, look like the house that we need, look like the city that we need to live in.

It might look good. It might seem all appealing. You might even get the fuzzy little tickle in your belly that it just feels like God, right?

[26 : 08] But unfortunately, we cannot mistaken our problem of seeing these situations and playing God in them.

There is a slow process in prayer, a slow process in testing that must never be cast aside, even based on the most strongest, personal, subjective intuition that may come and give us the butterflies in our stomach.

It is certainly true. Our tenacious asking will cast that aside, to act, God is doing something new and He's doing something fast. Okay. Not according to Scripture.

God seems to be taking His time. And you see, the narrator makes it seem like Saul. He's a guy that shows promise. He's compassionate.

He's thinking about his father, worrying about him in the country. He's generous. He wants to give the seer money. And he's even honored with Saul in the city.

[27 : 22] He's given portions of food in verse 22 and 24 that are typically reserved for a priest. And he even receives a bed. This guy is whining and dining like a king.

And Saul originally was set out to recover his donkeys, but in God's providential guiding and His plan, and he is actually set out to recover God's Word.

I've got to ask anybody who may have found themselves here today wondering, is this the right church? They just read two chapters? They don't have any fog machines?

There's no tambourines. There's no flags. What is going on? Might this be you today? Might this be you having all this other impression of what you were going to seek today and that what you were going to seek today that you expected to seek, you found something else.

That you too have recovered God's Word in your life today. You see, the recovery of God's Word expresses and enacts God's purposes. God's Word, God's Word, it rules over all things.

[28 : 40] Hebrews 1, 3, God rules all things by His Word. And by His Word, all creation came to be in Genesis 1. And God was made flesh.

The Word was made flesh in John 1, 1. And this news about Jesus Christ is now God's Word to the world in Colossians 1, 25. The bloodstained cross testifies to God's ultimate purpose of His creation.

So make no mistake, you may have questioned your coming here, but by no means should you ever question God's leading you here because you indeed are recovering God's Word.

So come to Jesus Christ today. Allow God to capture your heart by the power of His Word. And come by faith.

It's as easy as that and be forgiven. Be cleansed white as snow. But a looming question exists.

[29 : 46] Will the recovering of God's Word be enough for Saul? Will the recovering of God's Word be enough for Saul? And maybe if you've straggled in here, will it be enough for you?

This takes us to the second section that the Lord guides Samuel's path now into chapter 10. Verse 1, Saul is anointed.

Saul is anointed as prince. I guess that's okay, right? As prince.

The word used here is actually not any word used to describe a king. It's used to more describe a leader. Isn't that interesting?

And not only that, Saul is anointed prince of not an inheritance of his, but God's heritage.

[30 : 52] You see, this is not what the people wanted at all. This isn't what they wanted. The people wanted to dispose of God completely.

And look what God does. In other words, you can have your role, Saul. You can be prince, have a couple people, but you can't have them because they're my people.

And the foundation of a monarchy is being laid within our midst. And God intended to regulate that.

Not only that, God intended to use the passivity of Saul to enact God's judgment upon his people.

And it's like, knowing Saul, we saw this excursion looking for those pesky donkeys out in the wilderness. Just as Saul was having a little bit of cluelessness there, God knew that he needed a little bit of confidence to at least muster up the strength to lead his people, at least at some portion.

So God gave him a couple signs. He gave them three signs to give him a little assurance. And let me just say that when God gives people signs, when God's people ask for signs to verify things, it's never a good thing.

[32 : 12] Belief doesn't need proof. Amen? And so, he gives them signs. Verse 2, Samuel says that you're going to be led to Rachel's tomb.

You're going to find a couple men there that say, good news, the donkeys are found. We can rejoice. And Rachel's tomb, though, is an interesting location because Genesis 35, this is where the promises of God were established.

And the birth of Saul's tribe occurred at the death of Rachel. And Rachel's tomb. Took him there to where the promise was established.

In verse 3, he would lead him to the Oak of Tabor. And this takes us back to Genesis 35 again. The Oak below Bethel. Bethel was, again, a location where God repeated his astonishing promises to Jacob.

And he'd find three men there who were going up to Bethel to worship. And then, the third sign was a location known as the Hill of God where a governor, a garrison, would be found of the Philistines.

[33 : 26] And he's going to meet a group of prophets coming down from a high place. And God is going to change Saul. You see, all three of these signs serve as a geographical emphasis of Saul's proximity with the promises of God.

Do you catch that? That all these geographic locations serve to make known that Saul was in the great proximity of the promises of God.

Going up, coming down, and this ought to not only bring confidence to Saul, but bring kind of confidence to the readers. Maybe Saul is the guy.

And in verse 7, is a crucial verse. It would have a star by it if it were in my Bible. Minor suggestion for you. Verse 7, Now when these signs meet you, do what your hand finds to do, for God is with you.

Then in verse 8, he's to wait in Gilgal for seven days until God's Word comes back to him again.

And for us, we would read this and it would appear that things are going pretty well for Saul.

[34 : 49] Everything that Samuel has said is coming to fruition. The signs from God came true in verse 9 through 13. Even to the point of Saul being changed, being empowered by God and prophesying just like the people at the hill of God.

Saul among the prophets, they say. It became a saying in this day. Well, it appears so. However, we might not know where Saul is yet, but we know God is among the prophets.

Was recovering God's Word, church, enough for Saul? was recovering God's Word enough for obedience?

Not the least bit. The monumental event of being anointed by Samuel and being chosen by God never interested Saul in verse 14.

You have those family members that just know when something's wrong, know something's up.

They can just tell. Let's just be honest, we're really terrible liars to people who really know us.

[36 : 09] And we could try to hide and his uncle comes and he's like, kind of like, has that uncle's suspicion. Saul, what's going on? Something wrong. What happened? And Saul doesn't speak a single word and he rejects God in the process even after being changed and impacted personally by God.

And secondly, Saul fails to follow through with verse 7. As I said, do what your hand finds to do for God is with you.

This is Old Testament Samson empowerment by the powerful Spirit of God rushing upon men at this point in redemptive history.

verse 7. Do what your hand finds you to do for God is with you. This is an idiom and it's also found back in Judges 9 verse 33 which refers to military action against an enemy.

So together with the promise of God being with Saul and the summons from Samuel, Saul was to engage the enemy immediately after being changed and he failed to act.

[37 : 31] It's as if God intended Saul to be empowered by God to turn around, see the governor of the Philistines and destroy their entire army and the Lord would have seen that through.

But it seems like Saul has his own plans in mind. And so this asks a couple legitimate theological questions.

Was God's anointing insufficient? Was God not enough? Was God lacking something? Was the spirit of God hindered by Saul? Well, sound doctrine will tell us that God is sufficient and cannot be hindered.

So then what's going on here? Well, you see, God is doing here is validating the relationship between faith and works.

The followership that is required based upon being changed by God. You see, God doing a mighty work in you is only validated by Him working through you.

[38 : 48] Saul's God was not the God who empowered him. His God was the God of passivity rooted in self-rule just like the nation.

We know that faith without works is dead and Saul's faith was dead. We get a glimpse of this in Matthew 7.

There were people who would come to Jesus Christ and say, Lord, Lord, we did signs in your name. We did wonders in your name. We did all of this. And what does Jesus say to those people? Depart from me, you workers of lawlessness. Behold, I never knew you. Might God be giving a little lamentable reminder to Saul for his future and a warning for us today.

After all, Saul is the object of sin in Israel, an object to restrain God's people. Just as sin pulls us away from God, so too Saul will pull God's people away from him.

[40 : 05] And this is a sobering reality then and a warning for us today. And it would be difficult, I think, to learn something about us according to Saul's actions other than faith without works is dead.

But God is working uniquely here. He's allowing himself to, he's allowing man to have their way and actually disobey him in a sense of the image.

And in that, we can certainly learn something extraordinary about God here. Yeah, Saul's ridiculous in this passage, and we can hoot and holler about all Saul and everything like that, but do you see something greater in this passage happening?

The extraordinary working of God. Look, God's people are his heritage. Even when they reject God, his commitment to them remains.

God is patience. He's merciful. He's compassionate. And this is the God of the universe who holds all things together by the word of his power.

[41 : 25] And we see this sort of closing in this episode before everyone returns home. and it's back to this nation that's rejected God.

And we see this third section. The Lord guides Israel's path. It closes with what must have originally been intended.

This was probably supposed to be the celebration ceremony for Saul. This is supposed to be the celebration. They were supposed to grab Saul, lift him up. He just destroyed the enemy, the Philistines in the hill of God.

That's, I mean, mind you, to have an enemy in the hill of God should not be too flattering of a remark saying that, what is going on here, God's people?

A celebration ceremony. Saul, the mighty defeat of Saul. But it sort of turns into this awkward moment of where's the donkey again?

[42 : 29] The donkey being Saul. Samuel brings all these tribes together in verse 17 of chapter 10 and proclaims to them nice and loud, the Lord, the God of Israel says, I brought Israel out of Egypt and I rescued you from the power of the Egyptians and all the kingdoms that were oppressing you.

But today you have rejected your God who saves you from all your troubles and afflictions. You said to him, you must set a king over us.

Now therefore present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes and your clans. And in verse 20 and 21 it's like there's this massive assembling of all these tribes together.

For anyone who knows the tales of Joshua, this would probably serve as a trigger warning of what's going on because that sounded like a rebuke and now we got to gather this happened once with Joshua and there was a problem with Achan, right?

Is this Joshua's story on repeat? What's going on here? And the people have rejected God, chose the one who would ultimately reject him, and God has granted their request, but where is their king? [43 : 53] Where is their mighty man with the big strong arms? It ends up with about as much comedy as it began with the lost donkeys.

You got this tall guy hiding in baggage, which mind you is imagery of the sin hidden in the baggage in Joshua's day that Achan held because Saul is the object of Israel's sin.

They inquire of the Lord of where their king can be found, but the narrator makes a point. Get this, they're asking for something that can't be found.

They're asking for something earthly that cannot be found. Isn't that interesting? But the retrieval of some handsome man, it's like God's like, well, look underneath all the rugs over there among the baggage, and maybe there's a tall guy there that will be suitable.

So in verse 23, there's this retrieval process and this big grand welcome of this man. Samuel in verse 24 said to all the people, do you see him whom the Lord has chosen?

[45 : 15] In Samuel's mind, it's like, uh, nope. And there is none like among, none like him among all the people. I would imagine there's a little bit of sarcasm there.

And all the people shouted, long live the king! As he's brushing himself off from all the dirt from the baggage.

Such a shout. I just, I could see this reverberating throughout the pages of scripture because it's a human dilemma of mistakenly holding so tightly to our self rule and our agendas that we have.

Getting things our way. Naming and proclaiming it and making it come to be. And it was the same shouts upon the road of Jerusalem as their messianic political king of Israel as a fulfillment of Zechariah 9.

9. 9. Jesus was the choice man's agenda. Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest! Long live the king!

[46 : 25] Conquer Rome for us! And unfortunately their praise ended the moment man wouldn't get their way and their expectations were let down which turned their praises to rejection.

Crucify him! Get rid of that guy! You see, those who hailed Jesus as their hero reject and abandon him whenever man doesn't get their way.

This is childish, isn't it? But we do this constantly. I could take ownership over it. I do this constantly. Saul was not the king that God chose but allowed the choice of God's people to be honored. But an honorable king of God's choice would come.

He would come one after God's own heart. The one God chose just like Jesus Christ. You see, the story of Saul's rise in this, as fumbling around as it was, looking for donkeys, hiding in baggage, making excuse of passivity over passivity over passivity.

[47 : 53] The story of Saul's rise is an account of the remarkable commitment of God to establish his kingdom. In fact, God's kingdom is at war with man's kingdom.

It's oil and water they will never mix. And this wild story should challenge every reader, even exiled Israel, who would read this story, and us today as we read this story.

It should challenge us to focus on the Lord as their king and not to place any of their faith in human leaders, especially those with only superficial qualifications.

You see, there's a warning here too. Failure to keep their eyes focused on their king, their true king, can only lead to painful discipline. When we do make the mistake and it leads us astray, this can only lead to painful discipline, hard times.

But at a larger scale, God is actually saving Israel from themselves and in God's discipline in our lives today, the same is true.

[49 : 13] He saves us from ourselves by His discipline in our lives. God does just that by regulating the rights and the duties of kingship in verse 25.

You see, Saul, interestingly, will find himself under Yahweh's rule. You can have your rule, but you're not going to have my people, in other words.

Samuel regulates his rule. Isn't that interesting? That Saul will be in subordination to Samuel, in subordination to God.

And it didn't matter if Saul agreed to that or not. And the same exists today. Those reckless, those worthless fellows definitely didn't get their way, didn't get what they wanted at the end in verse 27. They're like, what are you talking about, Samuel? You don't got any say in the matter. We're replacing you. We're dethroning God. We're having it our way. But God regulated Saul's kingship. [50 : 23] And therefore, the kingship that stretches all the way until King Jesus coming to this earth. And the story ends with no more than just one more failure of inability to act by Saul.

He held his peace. Samuel dismisses all, he dismisses Saul, and Saul dismisses God. And this story of King Saul has only just begun.

This story and this narrative is going to take us all the way to chapter 12. Amid all the comedy, amid all this awkwardness and disorder, one thing is certain, church.

Whether Israel had an earthly king or not, they certainly had a heavenly king. And if they had a heavenly king, what matters is the king's kingdom.

Do you see what this whole narrative says about our strategies? Do you see what this narrative says about our schemes?

[51 : 37] Even our best schemes, even the best butterfly feelings that we can get, all of our plans, like, man, this just makes sense.

Everything fits together. It must be God's will. Do you see what it says about our abilities to discern God's will?

Our inabilities, for that matter. Do you see what it says about our leadership models that we often try to invest in kingly kingdom matters?

You see, the world is unimpressed. The world will despise, the world will laugh at the ways of the kingdom. They will want strategies like all the other nations, plans, like the corporate world, methods like the world of power politics, and power marketing.

It's all foolish. It is all foolish. The ways of the kingdom of God are foolish and weak. We have to be reminded of that today.

[52 : 52] 1 Corinthians 1.25. And so, for Christians, this would realign us. We must submit all human power and cleverness and the butterfly feeling to the Word of God.

Okay? We must submit to the Word of God regardless of the most clear, visible confirmations that we can see.

If we do not rest for a moment in prayer, in petition, and submitting things to God, all in the name of God working very expeditedly in our lives, and we all of a sudden just baptize all these ideas, oh, let's buy a house, baptize, and all of a sudden it's holy.

We cannot baptize our ideas and our feelings. We have to submit all human power and cleverness to the Word of God. Our hope that the kingdom of God will come rests not in any form of human power.

It is not in Washington, D.C. It is not in human power. It's not cleverness, but it's on the one whose kingdom it belongs to, King Jesus.

[54 : 11] This is good news for the church. I believe Colossians, Paul says in Colossians 3, the best, if then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. That's for the church. But I believe an invitation stands for those who have found themselves outside of God's kingdom, who have never made a profession of faith to God, who know that deep down inside they're not a Christian, not a believer, who have never been baptized, that has never walked the road of obedience through church assemblies.

There is an invitation, I believe, that stands for those outside the kingdom who have not placed their faith in Jesus. And that is an invitation to come. Be changed, changed, but that's the beginning. God is calling you to be changed and to follow. Don't get just one side of the coin right lest your faith actually be proved to be insufficient and you stand unjustified.

[55 : 49] This is a matter of life and death. I think I got a little serious here. And I think this is a serious matter. Because the Word of God says that we will one day be judged, each and every one of us.

And it would be an utter failure on my part to do a funeral next week for any one of you, knowing that you are living a life of just lavish sin, unrepentant sin, and rejecting the God who you claim you have faith in.

This should be a warning to the church, should be a warning to unbelievers. And if you have ears to hear today and a heart to receive by the power of God working in you, come to faith.

If you're a Christian, come back to faith and follow Jesus Christ. Come to Him. Rest in Him. our King is mighty.

Our King is good. Jesus reigns. Let's pray. Okay.