

Victory at Mizpah (c. 1084 BC)

1 Samuel 7:2–14

2 From the day the ark stayed in Kiriath Jearim, days multiplied and became twenty years while all the house of Israel mourned after Yahweh.

3 And Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, “If with all your heart you *are* turning to Yahweh, remove the foreign gods and Ashtoreths from your midst. Commit your hearts to Yahweh and serve him alone. Then he will deliver you from the hand of *the* Philistines.”

4 So the Israelites removed the Baals and the Ashtoreths, and they served Yahweh alone.

5 Then Samuel said, “Gather all Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray to Yahweh for you.”

6 So they gathered to Mizpah and drew water and poured *it* out before Yahweh. They fasted on that day and said there, “We have sinned against Yahweh!” So Samuel judged the Israelites at Mizpah.

7 *Now* when *the* Philistines heard that the Israelites had gathered at Mizpah, the rulers of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the Israelites heard *of it*, they were afraid of the Philistines.

8 Then the Israelites said to Samuel, “You must not cease from crying out to Yahweh our God, so that he will deliver us from the hand of *the* Philistines.”

9 So Samuel took a single nursing lamb and sacrificed *it* as a whole burnt offering to Yahweh. Then Samuel cried out to Yahweh on behalf of Israel, and Yahweh answered him.

10 While Samuel *was* sacrificing the burnt offering, *the* Philistines drew near for the battle against Israel. But Yahweh thundered against *the* Philistines with a great noise on that day and threw them into confusion so that they were defeated before Israel.

11 Then the men of Israel went out from Mizpah and pursued *the* Philistines and they struck them down as far as below Beth Car.

12 So Samuel took a single stone and put *it* between Mizpah and Shen, and he named it Ebenezer and said, “Up to here Yahweh has helped us.”

13 So the Philistines were subdued and they did not come into the territory of Israel again, and the hand of Yahweh was against *the* Philistines all the days of Samuel.

14 The towns which *the* Philistines had taken from Israel *were* returned to Israel from Ekron to Gath, and Israel delivered their territories from the hand of *the* Philistines. Then there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.

Judgeship of Abdon (c. 1083 – c. 1075 BC)

Judges 12:13–15

13 After him Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite judged Israel.

14 He had forty sons and thirty grandsons that rode on seventy male donkeys. He judged Israel for eight years.

15 Then Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite died and was buried in Pirathon, in the land of Ephraim in the hill country of the Amalekites.

Judgeship of Samuel (c. 1084 – c. 1050 BC)

1 Samuel 7:15–17

15 Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.

16 He used to go *on the circuit* from year to year. He went around Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah, and he judged Israel *in* all these places.

17 Then he returned to Ramah, because his house was there, and there he judged Israel, and he built an altar to Yahweh there.

Israel Rejects Yahweh as Their King (c. 1050 BC)

1 Samuel 8

Samuel Repeats Eli's Mistake

1 When Samuel grew old he appointed his sons as judges over Israel.

2 The name of his firstborn son *was* Joel, and the name of his second son *was* Abijah. *They were* judges in Beersheba.

3 But his sons did not walk in his ways; they turned aside after gain, they took bribes, and they perverted justice.

The People Want a King

4 So all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah.

5 They said to him, “Look, you are old and your sons do not follow in your ways. So then appoint a king for us to judge us, like all the nations.

6 But the matter was displeasing to Samuel when they said, “Give us a king to judge us,” so Samuel prayed to Yahweh.

7 Then Yahweh said to Samuel, “Listen to the voice of the people concerning all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them.

8 Like all the deeds they have done from the day I brought them up from Egypt until this day, they have forsaken me and have served other gods—so they *are* doing to you also.

9 And so then, listen to their voice. However, you must earnestly warn them; you must explain to them the custom of the king who will rule over them.”

Samuel Warns the People

10 So Samuel spoke all the words of Yahweh to the people who *were* requesting a king from him.

11 He said, “This will be the custom of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and his horsemen, and they will run before his chariots.

12 He will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and *those* to do his plowing and to reap his harvest, and *those* to make weapons of war and the equipment for his chariots.

13 He will take your daughters as *his* perfume makers and as cooks and as bakers.

14 He will take the best of your fields and your vineyards and your olive trees and will give *them* to his servants.

15 He will take a tenth of your seed and your vineyards and give *it* to his high officials and to his servants.

16 He will take your male slaves and your female slaves and the best of your young men and your donkeys and will use them for his projects.

17 He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you *yourselves* will become his servants.

18 So you will cry out on that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, but Yahweh will not answer you on that day!”

The People Refuse to Listen

19 However, the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel and they said, “No, but there must be a king over us,

20 so that we also may be like all the nations, and our king may rule us and go out before us and fight our battles.”

21 Now when Samuel heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the ears of Yahweh.

22 Then Yahweh said to Samuel, “Listen to their voice, and appoint a king for them.” So Samuel spoke to the men of Israel, “Each of you go to his *own* town.”

Samuel Anoints Saul King of Israel (c. 1050 BC)

1 Samuel 9–10

Introduction to Saul

9:1 Now there was a man from Benjamin whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Becorath, the son of Aphiah, the son of a Benjaminite, a very wealthy man.

2 He had a son whose name was Saul, a young and handsome man. There was not a man from the Israelites more handsome than he *was*; from his shoulders up, he was taller than all the people.

God Uses Lost Donkeys to Bring Saul to Samuel

3 Now the female donkeys of Kish the father of Saul got lost, and Kish said to Saul his son, “Please take one of the servants with you and get up; go and seek the female donkeys.”

4 So he passed through the hill country of Ephraim; he passed through the land of Shalisha but they did not find *them*. They passed through the land of Shaalim but they were not there. He passed through the land of Benjamin but did not find *them*.

5 When they entered the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant who *was* with him, “Come, let us return, lest my father cease *caring about* the female donkeys and worry about us!”

6 But he said to him, “Look, a man of God *is* in this town, and the man *is* honored. All that he says certainly comes true. So then let us go there; perhaps he will tell us about our journey on which we have gone.”

7 So Saul said to his servant, “Look, we may go, but what should we bring to the man? For the bread *is* gone from our bags, and there *is* no present to bring to the man of God. What *do we have* with us?”

8 The servant again answered Saul and said, “Look, I have in my hand a quarter shekel of silver! I will give it to the man of God so that he will tell us our way.”

9 (Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he would say: “Come, let us go up to the seer.” For the prophet of today was formerly called a seer.)

10 So Saul said to his servant, “Your suggestion is a good one. Come, let us go.” And they went to the town where the man of God *was*.

11 They *were* going up the ascent of the town when they found young women going out to draw water. They said to them, “Is there the seer here?”

12 They answered them and said, “There is. Look, *he is* just in front of you! Hurry now, because he has come to the town today, because there *is* a sacrifice for the people today at the high place.

13 As soon as you enter the town, you will 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. Then afterward the invited *guests* will eat. So then, go up, because you will find him today!”

14 So they went up to the town. As they *were* entering into the middle of the town, Samuel was coming forth to meet them, to go up to the high place.

God Chooses Saul to be Israel's King

15 Now Yahweh had revealed this to Samuel the day before Saul arrived, saying,

16 “This time tomorrow I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you must anoint him as leader over my people Israel. He will deliver my people from the hand of *the* Philistines. For I have seen *the suffering of* my people, because their cry of *distress* has come to me.”

17 When Samuel saw Saul, Yahweh answered him, “Here *is* the man about whom I told you! This *is the* one *who* will govern my people.”

18 Then Saul approached Samuel in the middle of the gate and said, “Please tell me, where *is* the house of the seer?”

19 Samuel answered Saul and said, “I *am* the seer. Go up ahead of me to the high place, and you will eat with me today; then I will send you away in the morning. I will tell you all that *is* on your mind.

20 And as for your female donkeys that were lost three days ago, do not be concerned about them, because they have been found. For whom *is* all the desire of Israel? Is it not for you and for all the house of your father?”

21 Saul answered and said, “Am I not a Benjaminite, from the smallest of the tribes of Israel, and my family the humblest of all the families of the tribes of Benjamin? Why do you speak to me in this way?”

22 So Samuel took Saul and his servant and brought them to a room in the building and gave them a place at the head of the invited guests. There were about thirty men.

23 Then Samuel said to the cook, “Bring the portion that I gave to you, about which I said to you, ‘Keep it with you.’”

24 So the cook took up the shank and what was on it and put it before Saul, and he said, “Look, the saved portion *is* placed before you—eat, because it has been kept for you for the appointed time,” and he said, “I have invited the people.” So Saul ate with Samuel that day.

25 When they came down from the high place to the town, he spoke with Saul on the roof.

26 They got up early, and as dawn was breaking, Samuel called to Saul on the roof, saying, “Get up, so that I can send you away.” So Saul got up and the two of them, he and Samuel, went outside.

27 As they were going down to the outskirts of the town, Samuel said to Saul, “Tell the servant to pass on before us. When he has passed, you stand here a while, so that I can make known to you *the* word of God.”

Samuel Privately Anoints Saul as King

10:1 Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it over his head and kissed him and said, “Has not Yahweh anointed you as leader over his inheritance?”

The Signs of Saul's Kingship

2 As you go from with me today, you will find two men near the burial site of Rachel in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah. They will say to you, ‘The female donkeys that you went to search for have been found.’ Now look, your father is no longer concerned about the female donkeys and has begun worrying about you, saying, ‘What should I do about my son?’

3 Then you will go on from there and further you will come to the oak of Tabor. There three men will meet you, who *are* going up to God at Bethel. One will be carrying three male kid goats, one will be carrying three loaves of bread, and one will be carrying a skin of wine.

4 They will ask how you are doing and will give you two loaves, which you will take from their hand.

5 After this, you will come to the Gibeah of God, where there are sentries of *the* Philistines. Just as you enter the town there, you will meet a procession of prophets coming down from the high place, with harp, tambourine, flute, and zither before them, and they will be prophesying.

6 Then the Spirit of Yahweh will rush upon you, and you will prophesy with them; and you will turn into a different person.

7 When these signs come to you, do for yourself what your hand finds *to do*, for God *will be* with you.

8 Then you will go down before me to Gilgal. Look, I am coming down to you to offer burnt offerings and to make fellowship offerings. You must wait seven days until I come to you. Then I will let you know what you should do.”

God Gives Saul a New Heart

9a Just as he turned his shoulder to depart from Samuel, God changed his heart.

God Confirms the Signs Given by Samuel

9b And all these signs were fulfilled on that day.

10 When they went from there to Gibeah, a procession of prophets met him, and the Spirit of God rushed upon him, and he prophesied among them.

11 And when all who knew him formerly saw that he prophesied with prophets, the people said to one another, “What *is* this *that* has happened to the son of Kish? *Is* Saul also among the prophets?”

12 And a man from there responded and said, “And who *is* their father?” Therefore it became a proverb: “*Is* Saul also among the prophets?”

13 When he finished prophesying, he went to the high place.

Saul Conceals His Anointing and Empowerment

14 Then Saul’s uncle said to him and to his servant, “Where did you go?” And he said, “To search *for* the female donkeys; and when we saw none, we went to Samuel.”

15 So Saul’s uncle said to him, “Please tell me, what did Samuel say to you?”

16 Then Saul said to his uncle, “He told us for certain that the female donkeys had been found.” But he did not tell him about the matter of the kingship *of* which Samuel had spoken.

Samuel Publically Proclaims Saul as King

17 Then Samuel summoned the people to Yahweh at Mizpah,

18 and he said to the Israelites, “Thus says Yahweh the God of Israel: ‘I brought Israel up from Egypt, and I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all the kingdoms that *were* oppressing you.’

19 But you today have rejected your God who always delivers you from all of your calamities and your distresses. You have said to him, ‘No, but you must appoint a king over us!’ So then present yourselves before Yahweh by your tribes and by your clans.”

20 So Samuel brought near all the tribes of Israel, and the tribe of Benjamin was selected by lot.

21 Then he brought near the tribe of Benjamin according to its families, and the family of Matri was selected by lot. Then Saul the son of Kish was chosen, and they sought him, but he could not be found.

22 So they inquired again of Yahweh, “Did the man come here?” And Yahweh said, “Look, he *is* hiding himself among the baggage.”

23 So they ran and took him from there, and when he took his stand among the people, he was taller than all the people from his shoulders and up.

24 Then Samuel said to all the people, “Do you see him whom Yahweh has chosen? For there is no one like him among all the people!” And all the people shouted and said, “Long live the king!”

25 Then Samuel told the people the custom of the kingship, and he wrote *the rules* down on a scroll and laid *it* before Yahweh. Then Samuel sent all the people away, each to his own house.

26 And Saul also went to his house at Gibeah, and the troops whose hearts God had touched went with him.

27 However, some worthless men said, “How can this *man* deliver us?” So they despised him and brought no gift to him, but he kept silent.

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