

1 Samuel 9

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[0 : 00] We will be in 1 Samuel chapter 9. 1 Samuel chapter 9 is where we will be at for our text this evening. 1 Samuel chapter 9. We will look at the entire chapter.

Better to look at it together. It's really tempting just to continue on into the 10th chapter because it directly connects, but we'll limit ourselves for the sake of time to the 9th chapter of 1 Samuel.

So let's open up with a word of prayer and then we'll get right into the text with one another. Lord, we thank you so much. We just thank you for allowing us to have an opportunity of gathering together. We thank you for the gift of this time and this place.

We thank you for the grand privilege it is to be your people, your people who can gather together to look at the word of God with one another and to grow in Christ's likeness, to grow in our understanding.

We pray that all that takes place would be glorifying and honoring. We pray that it would be edifying to us, that it would mature us. We pray for all that happens in this building tonight, for the work going on with the youth and children, or the business that will be discussed later on.

[1 : 14] Lord, just in all things and all ways, we ask that you would be the focus. You would be central to all that takes place. And Lord, may we become more Christ-like in our character and our walk as a result of our time together.

We ask it in Christ's name. Amen. If you remember, last time we were in the book of 1 Samuel, in the 8th chapter, we had come to a time in the nation's history, the nation of Israel's history, really a time for which Samuel had been raised.

Samuel had been brought on the scene to be a man of transition. Samuel was the last judge who would be the person that also served as a prophet.

And he is the man appointed by God to lead in the first king. The people of God had gotten a little ahead of God. Samuel is the bridge, but that doesn't mean we have to do it right now.

If you remember in our study, even going all the way back to the last chapters of the book of Genesis, it is clear that God's purposes and plans for his people would be that a king would rule over them someday.

[2 : 28] His people are operating as a theophany, God being their king. And since God is the king of his people, then God alone reserves the right to appoint the king and even the time of the king for his people.

The king would choose his own successor, so to say. Through the blessings of Jacob upon his children, we know that there is a promise to the tribe of Judah, to the descendants of Judah, that they would reign and rule over the nation of Israel, that a king would come forth from them.

Now, when we read Genesis, the greater fulfillment is looking for the king that we see in the book of Matthew. It's looking for the king of kings. The grander fulfillment is not that there would be a king who would rule over them temporarily, but that there would be a king who would reign eternally.

But God had purposes and plans that a king would rule over his people. We go through the period of the judges, and there's no king in the land. At least there's no king who is allowed to rule in the land.

There is a king that is present, and that is God, but he's not allowed to have his rightful authority and rule upon the land. Therefore, every man is doing what is right in his own eyes. Samuel comes, and he is a righteous judge.

[3 : 46] The word of God is flowing through him and from him to all of Israel. Don't ever lose sight of that. You need to see that even tonight. The people begin to look around because they're not really fighting any battles.

Some time has passed since the Philistines have come in, taken the ark captive, and then sent it back. But they begin to look around, and they begin to look at everyone around them, and they decide they want a king just like everybody else.

Now, Samuel is going to be the one who anoints God's king, but the people are asking for a king before God has raised the king. Some Bible commentators will tell you that the king that God had in mind was in waiting, but he wasn't ready yet.

That would be David. So they're seeking a king. They want a king, and they ask Samuel for a king, and Samuel gets a little upset, and God says, they haven't rejected you. They've rejected me.

Give them what they want. And that's where we stopped in 1 Samuel chapter 8. And if you remember, it's the scary reality that sometimes the grandest discipline which God can pour out upon us is to give us what we want.

[4 : 49] And he decides to give the people what they ask for. We make our transition into the ninth chapter. And here we see a king for the people.

A king for the people. 1 Samuel chapter 9 says, Now there was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish, the son of Abil, the son of Zoror, the son of Bekeroth, the son of Aphia, the son of Abinjamite, a mighty man of valor.

He had a son whose name was Saul, a choice and handsome man. And there was not a more handsome person than he among the sons of Israel. From his shoulders and up he was taller than any of the people.

Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, were lost. So Kish said to his son, Saul, take now with you one of the servants and arise, go search for the donkeys. He passed through the hill country of Ephraim and passed through the land of Shalashah, but they did not find them.

Then they passed through the land of Shalim, but they were not there. Then he passed through the land of the Benjamites, but they did not find them. And when they had come to the land of Zoph, Saul said to his servant who was with him, come and let us return, or else my father will cease to be concerned about the donkeys and will become anxious for us.

[6 : 08] He said to him, behold, now there is a man of God in this city, and the man is held in honor. All that he says surely comes true. Now let us go there. Perhaps he can tell us about our journey on which we have set out.

Then Saul said to his servant, behold, if we go, what shall we bring the man? For the bread is gone from our sack, and there is no present to bring to the man of God. What do we have? The servant answered Saul again and said, behold, I have in my hand a fourth of a shekel of silver.

I will give it to the man of God, and he will tell us our way. Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he used to say, come and let us go to the seer, for he who is called a prophet now 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. And as they went up the slope of the city, they found young women coming out to draw water and said to them, is the seer here?

They answered them and said, he is. See, he is ahead of you. Hurry now, for he is coming to the city today, for the people have a sacrifice on the high place today. 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 until he comes, because he must bless the sacrifice.

[7 : 18] Afterward, those who are invited will eat. Now, therefore, go up, for you will find him at once. So they went up to the city, and as they came into the city, behold, Samuel was coming out toward them to go up to the high place.

Now, a day before Saul's coming, the Lord had revealed this to Samuel, saying, about this time tomorrow, I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him to be prince over my people Israel.

And he will deliver my people from the hand of the Philistines, for I have regarded my people, because their cry has come to me. When Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said to him, Behold, the man of whom I spoke to you, this one shall rule over my people.

Then Saul approached Samuel in the gate and said, Please tell me where the seer's house is. And 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 in the morning I will let you go and will tell you all that is on your mind.

As for your donkeys, which were lost three days ago, do not set your mind on them, for they have been found. And for whom is all that is desirable in Israel is not for you and for all your father's household.

[8 : 26] Saul replied, 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 to me in this way?

Then Samuel took Saul and his servant and brought them into the hall and gave them a place at the head of those who were invited, who were about thirty men. And Samuel said to the cook, Bring out the portion that I gave you concerning which I said to you, set it aside.

Then the cook took up the leg with what was on it and set it before Saul. And Samuel said, Here is what has been reserved. Set it before you and eat, because it has been kept for you until the appointed time, since I said, I have invited the people.

So Saul ate with Samuel that day. And when they came down from the high place into the city, Samuel spoke with Saul on the roof. And they arose early, and at daybreak, Samuel called to Saul on the roof, saying, Get up, that I may send you away.

So Saul arose, and both he and Samuel went out into the street. And as they were going down to the edge of the city, Samuel said to Saul, Say to the servant that he might go ahead of us and pass on.

[9 : 33] But you remain standing now that I may proclaim the word of God to you. 1 Samuel chapter 9. As we said into introduction, we could very easily read into the 10th chapter and see the continuation of this, which we will do if the Lord allows us to tarry next time we are together.

But here we see a king for the people. The people of God have rejected God as their king. That's the word of God, not the opinion of man. God has said so in the 8th chapter.

And they've asked for a king, and they want to be like the people around them. They want to be like all the other nations. They want someone, remember their request, who will go out before them into battle and win the victory.

They want someone who will go before them, who will ensure that they will be victorious in the battle, and to whom they could point and say, that's our king. Now the promise of God prior to this would be that God would always go before his people, and it is the presence of God that ensures the victory, not the presence of an individual.

But yet, the people of God are having a hard time not being able to put a face with who is going before them, so they want one to look at. They want something they can feel, they can touch, they can relate to, something that they can hold on to and say, that's the one who is before us.

[10 : 49] So they've asked for this, and now God's going to give them what they want. Again, the idea of having a king is not sinful, it is the reality that they asked for it in the wrong time, and in the king that they wanted.

Nowhere is the character of the king discussed. Nowhere is the life of the king brought into question. Nowhere is the morality of the king brought into question. The only thing they wanted was a king that looked good and would go ahead of them and make sure they win the battle.

And God finds a king for the people. He gives them what they want. And we meet it here in the ninth chapter. Now, the tenth chapter is the anointing and the appointing and the actual ceremony, but here we see this king.

And we cannot help but be amazed that the sovereignty of God in this episode, how he weaves everything together according to his purposes, which reminds us, I mean, Romans chapter 8 tells us that God causes all things to work together for the good for those who love him and are called according to his purposes, right?

That all things means all things. And that God is in control of all things. Even in our stumbling, in our sin, in our times when we get ahead of God.

[12 : 09] That does not mean there will not be chastisement and discipline and a calling back to him, but that means even in those rebellious moments for those who love him and are called according to his purposes, he is working out for his good in our life.

Now, what he works out in Saul, we know the rest of the story. We have read, at least I hope we have read and we understand the nation history and we want to put in a nutshell, God gives him a king that looks good on the outside before he gives him a king that has a heart for him on the inside.

Now, David has faults and failures and stumbings, we understand that, but David is also referred to as a man after God's own hearts. But before the people knew they needed a king with a heart for God, they needed to move beyond what it meant to have a king that looked good to man.

So God gives them what they want. He's a king for the people in order to prepare them for the king for God. We see in this sovereignty and his leading and his guiding a number of things.

The first thing we see is a singled out person, a singled out person. When the people ask for a king, this is not catch God by surprise.

[13 : 24] We think at times that the people's rebellion, the people's faults, or the people's sin, and even ours, catches God by surprise and then God has to figure out how he's going to readjust to what man is all of a sudden doing.

That displaces the sovereignty of God. God absolutely knows all things before they will happen. We forget at times that past, present, and future do not exist in the presence of God.

He sees beginning and end in one moment. Now, I know that that blows our mind, but he is not constrained by time. He does not see things in the past.

He does not see things in the future. He sees everything in the eternal presence. Now, to me, that is mind-blowing, but the only reason it is mind-blowing is because I am finite and I am not infinite.

And since we understand that, then we also have to agree that God does not readjust to us. He is always working for his purposes.

[14 : 28] He did not have to readjust because the people got ahead of him. He is sovereignly leading. He has a person in mind already. And we see this person being defined by his lineage.

Now, keep in mind, the people wanted a king who would go before them and win the battle. We know the promise in the book of Genesis. The promise in the book of Genesis, and this is how we know God is working in a disciplinarian manner, not in a really intentional manner for an eternal purpose.

We know he is working to discipline his people because the promise in the end of the book of Genesis is very clear that the king would come from Judah. But yet, we are introduced, there was a man of the tribe of Benjamin.

That should be a red flag to us, right? Because this isn't supposed to be the king. But this is a king for the people. Now, last time we met the tribe of Benjamin, they were almost wiped off the face of the earth.

Remember that? There was a civil war in the book of Judges. Do you remember why the tribe of Benjamin was almost wiped off the face of the earth? It's because they refused to obey God, which should be another red flag.

[15 : 37] And then they compromised with the people and they made an agreement and they went and stole their wives so that they didn't have to, anybody had to give them their wives. So they're kind of working in backroom dealings and all this other good stuff. So the tribe of Benjamin doesn't necessarily have the character we look, but they sure had the look because this singled out person comes from a man named Kish.

Now, Kish has a good family heritage. He is a Benjamite, but Kish is also known as a mighty man of valor. He's a mighty man of valor, which tells us he's a warrior.

If you want a king who's going to go before you into battle to make sure you win, then you want to make sure he comes from warrior stock. Well, Kish is a mighty man of valor.

So one thing that Saul has going for him is Saul has good heritage. His dad was a soldier. Saul also has good looks because there was no one more handsome than him and all of Israel.

From his shoulders up, he was taller than anyone else. So not only is his dad a warrior, Saul looks good. So the person God selects fits everything they were looking for.

[16 : 56] It is someone who has the heritage of valor, someone who has the appearance of splendor, and someone who seems to have the stature to lead them and go before them.

It is exactly what they look for. God has his man. He has his man selected. And God is going to move in a sovereign way to ensure that his man fills the place.

So we see the singled out man and then the singled out man runs into an uncontrollable problem. This man, who was a mighty man of valor, Kish, had some donkeys and his donkeys went missing.

And since his donkeys went missing, he decided to send his son, Saul, who nobody could miss because Saul stuck out like a sore thumb. Literally, he was taller than everybody else.

He could send Saul and a servant to go look for the donkeys. Saul at least obeyed his dad. He went. And he traveled all around looking for these donkeys, going in a circle.

[18 : 00] You can read the cities that he went to. For three days, he was looking for these donkeys. So he who was from the right stock, he who had the good pedigree and he who had the good looks couldn't find any donkeys.

And he's chasing donkeys and the whole time God is leading his steps. Because the book of Proverbs says a man plans his steps but God directs his ways. And while he's chasing donkeys, he ends up in Zuff, the city of Zuff.

You see it there in the fifth verse. Now you may not remember but if you go to 1 Samuel chapter 1, you will find that Zuff is Samuel's grandfather.

That would be his grandfather on his dad's side. So what we're saying is he ends up near Samuel's hometown. He's went around in circles chasing donkeys but God has brought him to a place here because this problem was used of the Lord to move his person.

God used a disruption that he could not control or overcome to bring him to the place he needed to be. God used something that was inconvenient to ensure that he would be where he needed to be so that God could bring about what he intended to do.

[19 : 22] Sometimes God uses disruptions and problems in our lives for his purposes. The disruptions quite often bring us to places we don't want to be but it is where God intended us to be so that he could do what he wanted to do.

Some of the grandest moments in my own personal walk have been times where God created a disruption which I could not control. A problem that was uncontrollable that would lead me around in circles and I could never overcome it and that's the purpose because God was disrupting it in order to bring me to a place where he could do what he intended to do.

It took some donkeys wandering around to bring Saul to Zuth. He had no other reason. You want to know how far it is from where he some Bible scholars will tell you he only went five miles from his home.

He went in a big circle to end up five miles away from where he started. Now five miles walking is a pretty good distance but it's not I mean it's not uncomfortable it can be done.

It's a pretty short distance even if you're walking. It doesn't take that long. But he went in a big circle trying to come up with a problem and it is because it is the problem that brought him to a place of desperation.

[20 : 38] If he had went to Zuth first and not seen the donkeys he would have left but after three days of going in circles something had to give. And God used this problem to lead to the third thing and encountered prophets.

this problem brought him to the place where he needed a prophet. Warren Wearsby is right in that he says and this is what I ask you to remember.

Remember what we read about Samuel. The word of God went to all of Israel because Samuel was confirmed as a prophet. Remember that? Samuel became confirmed as a prophet very early on at an early age when he spoke to Eli regarding his sons.

And the word of the Lord again returned because of Samuel's confirmation. And then we read of Samuel riding a circuit. He's a circuit prophet much like a circuit preacher. He's going around and then coming back to Ramah which is in this location.

He's always coming back home. He's going around in all of Israel from the furthest south to the furthest north. He's traveling all the land all of Israel. But here's a man that lives five miles away from him that doesn't know he's in the hometown of a prophet.

[21 : 58] Because it is Saul's servant who tells him there's a man of God here. Which by the way is the third red flag because one of two things.

Actually probably both things. Saul probably had no concern for the things of God and we very clearly know he never went to any of the festivals of God. Because there wasn't but one man in all the land that God was speaking through and to his people and that is Samuel.

And if he didn't know there was a man of God five miles away from his own home we got a problem. He may look good. He may be of the right pedigree.

He may be of the right stock. But that's it. Where does Saul get in trouble later? Because he doesn't wait on the man of God.

He tries to take the place. Because there's no priority to what God is doing. But yet he comes here and his servant tells him there's a prophet and he says okay.

[23 : 00] And he said well we got to bring him something. They come up with it so they decide to go into the land and they're going into the city and they encounter the ladies coming out together so it's in the evening time. That's how we do chronological timing in scripture.

It's in the evening so they encounter him and the ladies say yes he's here there's a festival today. He's going up to the high place. Why is he going up to the high place? You ought to remember this because Eli fell off his stool and Shiloh fell so there's no temple anymore.

See the sins of the people continuing on. So now we can't go to Shiloh anymore. It's not there anymore. They had abandoned. God had abandoned them. Ichabod written across that because they chose to try to force God to go to battle with him that he hadn't sanctioned and all this stuff.

So anyways now we're coming to where we worship on the high places which is what everybody else is doing but at least this was sanctified worship because Samuel was there. Now their worship looks like everybody else's but in a different manner but Samuel was there and they're at least doing it the right way so you're going to catch him.

He's going to go to the high place. He's got a meal and they're not going to eat until he prays but you got to hurry you got to catch him and he says and then Saul and his servant walk into the city notice this again we see the sovereignty of God as soon as they come into the city about that time Samuel was walking out.

[24 : 11] Now it just so happens that the day before the Lord had revealed to Samuel this time tomorrow you will encounter a man from the tribe of Benjamin and at that time Saul walks up to Samuel and says hey do you know where the seer lives?

Samuel says I'm the seer come with me. Now the focus is no longer on the donkeys. Samuel tells him don't worry about your donkeys the donkeys have been found.

The donkeys that went missing three days ago. Now the focus is no longer on the donkeys now the focus is on the man because God has his man next to his prophet.

Samuel and Saul are together. God has worked all this out because this is his purposes. Samuel didn't have to go look for him. Remember at the end of chapter 8 Samuel sent the people home.

They wanted a king. God says you're going to give them a king. Samuel sent the people home and Samuel waited on God to bring the man to him. Now the next king Samuel will have to go to him.

[25 : 20] That's David because David is serving in the field and all this other but this time Samuel is waiting and the Lord God brings Saul literally face to face with him as he's walking through the streets of the city.

He had been prepared. The prophet had made provisions. The prophet had set aside Samuel had set aside a portion. So he looks at him. He says don't worry about the donkeys.

To whom is all of Israel long? Is it not you? Now I'm saying this and Saul says what are you talking about? Who am I? Now he kind of he shows at least a false sense or maybe it's true humility but he says I'm from the tribe of Benjamin the smallest of all the tribes and my family is the least of all the families in the tribe of Benjamin.

I don't know how true that is because he's walking around with the servant and he's looking for some possessions for some donkeys right? I don't know if he's the smallest he's got a servant that's something but he says who am I?

But the prophet says you come with me we're going to go up to the festival. Which then brings us to the fourth and final thing because God has his king for the people. See he singled out a person he used a problem to bring that person where he wanted him to be and that person encountered a prophet and then we have declared promise or purpose either one.

[26 : 35] It's a declared promise. Samuel looks at him and says you come with me and he Samuel takes him up to the high place and there's thirty men gathered there and he seats Saul at the head of these thirty men.

The head is a place of prominence and he instructs the cook to bring out what had been set aside and it's the best portion of the meal. So he's elevating Saul among these men and he's doing it because this is what God is declaring.

Here's your king. This is who you want and who wouldn't have if those thirty men had been sitting there. This man walks in. He's taller than everyone else. He's from that region. He looks like a warrior.

This is our man. And you got the prophet, the man of God who is elevating him in their midst and he's there. Now we don't know what they talked about but when they left there, Saul is still confused about all this but it tells us that Samuel stopped and they talked on the roof.

It is here probably that Samuel begins to tell Saul all that the Lord had instructed him and then the next morning he gets him up and they're walking out. He said I'll send you away the next morning. So they're getting up and as they're walking out he tells the servant he can go because it's not about the servants, it's not about the donkeys, it's about Saul.

[27 : 52] Saul is the man and Samuel begins to declare the promises that God has made. Very next verse in the 10th chapter he says and then Samuel anointed him.

We didn't read that because that anointing also comes with confirmation and I wanted us to read all that together but here are these promises of God. God says I will give you a king. I will give you what you want.

God has a king for the people. The problem is because of his own rebellion against the Lord, Saul will not fulfill the purpose that God is intending for the king to do, that is to deliver his people from the hand of the Philistines.

Remember all the way back in the book of Judges, Samson came up and he would begin to deliver the people from the hand of the Philistines. He didn't finally deliver them, he was going to begin to. The king is going to be the one who delivers them from the hand of the Philistines.

Samuel anoints Saul, Saul goes to battle, the first thing Saul does is he wins a victory against the Philistines. Then we go forward a couple years and all of a sudden we see Saul shaking in his armor just like everyone else because the Philistines have a giant on their side, there's Goliath.

[29 : 14] Now we know that there's a young ruddy shepherd boy who comes and kills Goliath but then later on we find Saul in one more great battle, the battle in which he takes his own life because he's injured and he's fighting the Philistines because he will not be the king who can deliver them from the Philistines because he cannot walk in obedience, he looks good, he has the right heritage, everything seems right, he's everything they wanted.

He's what the people wanted. But he doesn't have a heart that's right. All this to say, sometimes when God gives his people what they want, they get more than what they bargained for.

And the grand desire ought to be God, what is it that you want from me? Not what is it that I want? Because as we see in the story of Saul, when God gives us what we want, at times it ends up costing us dearly.

It changes the trajectory of everything. How much better it is to be still and know that he is God and to trust that his purposes and plans are right. Now, he is still working, he is moving.

We see his sovereignty over the whole chapter throughout all of scripture. Sure, God is still in control, but look at the discipline that's going to happen. Look at the rebuke that's going to come as a result of this.

[30 : 53] Look at the years of, I mean, the prophets, Nob, slain. I mean, there's just so much tragedy that comes as a result of this selection. All these things.

In the delay, the whole time that God's anointed king, David, is fleeing from the presence of Saul, there's his king out there in the wilderness, feigning insanity, you know, doing all kinds of stuff.

There's the warrior out there, but in the palace, unfortunately, is one sitting that the people asked for. All too often, God's people delay his work.

We cannot thwart his purposes. We cannot thwart his plans, but we delay his work because of our desires. I'm reminded, and I'll say this in closing, there's this account in the Gospels that's always kind of shaking me, and it's when Christ went back to his hometown.

And it's a verse that simply says, and he did not do many miracles there. Actually, it says he could not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.

[32 : 04] Because of their unbelief. Which has always been astounding to me. Here is he who is doing the miraculous. More than we know, more than we have recorded for us, John tells us that the world could not contain the books of what Christ did when he was traveling.

But when he went back to his hometown, because of their unbelief, the people hindered what he could have done. We see the same thing being played out in the story of Saul and David.

Unbelief in God as a good, sovereign king, and then God brings them what they want, and it hinders and delays. God's purposes will come about. They will.

There will be a king from the tribe of Judah. He will sit upon the throne that will be established with the Davidic covenant. He will have the lineage that goes all the way to Christ. It's there.

But we have this delay, this period of delay that is a direct result of the sin of the people getting ahead of God and wanting what everybody else had. And God gives it to them.

[33 : 09] He's beginning that process because he has his man here now in 1 Samuel chapter 9. Thank you, brothers. Thank you, brothers. Thank you.