

# 1st Samuel

## Lesson 15

### (iii) To Find a Group of Prophets (10:5-6)

From the oak of Tabor, Samuel told Saul to find a group of Prophets. Verse 5.

*“Afterward you will come to the hill of God where the Philistine garrison is; and it shall be as soon as you have come there to the city, that you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place with harp, tambourine, flute, and a lyre before them, and they will be prophesying. <sup>6</sup>Then the Spirit of the LORD will come upon you mightily, and you shall prophesy with them and be changed into another man. <sup>7</sup>It shall be when these signs come to you, do for yourself what the occasion requires, for God is with you.”* (10:5-6)

Where was the hill of God? The Hebrew word for the hill of God is *Gibeah-Elohim*. It is the hill of Elohim located in the hometown of Saul, Gibeah. More than likely, the name *Gibeah-Elohim* was the old name for the high place when it was controlled by the Canaanites before Israel took it for the Promised Land. On the hill, Saul would find a group of prophets having the religious time of their lives. There, the LORD would come upon Saul, and he would join them in prophesying the Word of God. There, Saul would be changed by the LORD into the man he needed to be as the LORD's king of Israel. These three signs would be presented in the exact order and circumstances to prove to Saul that what Samuel had told him and why Samuel had consecrated him to be king was true.

### (iv) To Wait a Week (10:8)

But there was one last instruction from Samuel for Saul. He was to go to Gilgal and wait a week. Verse 8.

*“And you shall go down before me to Gilgal; and behold, I will come down to you to offer burnt offerings and sacrifice peace offerings. You shall wait seven days until I come to you and show you what you should do.”* (10:8)

It was the final instruction from Samuel that morning when Samuel anointed Saul to be king. What could be so hard with the instructions? On the way out of Ramah, all Saul had to do was walk. Walk to Rachel's tomb. The two men would approach Saul. Walk to the oak of Tabor. The three men would be ready with his meal. Walk home. The prophets would already be on the hill in joyous worship. Then, not mentioned here, but it will be what transpires; after checking in with his father, he was to walk to Gilgal and wait a week for Samuel to arrive. What could be easier?

### (6) The Transformation of Saul (10:9-13)

Saul had his marching orders from Samuel. It was time to leave Ramah. As he turned to leave Samuel, the transformation of the Benjamite occurred in a heartbeat. Verse 9.

*“Then it happened when he turned his back to leave Samuel, God changed his heart; and all those signs came about on that day. <sup>10</sup>When they came to the hill there, behold, a group of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him mightily, so that he prophesied among them. <sup>11</sup>It came about, when all who knew him previously saw that he prophesied now with the prophets, that the people said to one another, “What has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?” <sup>12</sup>A man there said, “Now, who is their father?” Therefore it became a proverb: “Is Saul also among the prophets?” <sup>13</sup>When he had finished prophesying, he came to the high place.”* (10:9-13)

All of Saul's old friends saw and heard the difference in him. He was a changed man. He was changed by the LORD. He was a choice man, to begin with. Now he had the heart to be the King of Israel. If you will remember, in those days, the priests were the ultimate authority in the Nation of Israel. Behind the priests were the prophets of the LORD, chosen by the LORD to proclaim the Word of the LORD. Finally, the special judges were identified by the LORD to protect the Nation of Israel from the surrounding nations. Saul could not be a priest because he was not a Levite. But he could be a prophet. Even though Samuel was a Levite, a prophet, and a judge, that was unusual.

In most cases, the judges were set in place by the magistrate system organized by Moses in the last month of his life to manage civil issues in the Promised Land. These judges could have been from any tribe. The prophets could also be from any tribe. The only requirement of a prophet was when he said, “Thus says the LORD...” it better come true, or he is a false prophet. For Saul to prophesy truth, it was a sign to the people that the LORD was upon him in a great and mighty way.

### (7) The Investigation of Saul (10:14-16)

There in his hometown, the investigation of the Benjamite occurred when Saul’s uncle questioned him. Verse 14.

*Now Saul’s uncle said to him and his servant, “Where did you go?” And he said, “To look for the donkeys. When we saw that they could not be found, we went to Samuel.”<sup>15</sup> Saul’s uncle said, “Please tell me what Samuel said to you.”<sup>16</sup> So Saul said to his uncle, “He told us plainly that the donkeys had been found.” But he did not tell him about the matter of the kingdom which Samuel had mentioned.” (10:14-16)*

The part about Saul’s journey to find his father’s donkeys were easy to explain. All his uncle had to do was question his brother Kish for that truth. But for the rest of what had happened to Saul, it would be hard to explain. Wisely, Saul sought to keep those things to himself. We have to wonder if Samuel told Saul to keep his consecration secret or if it came to Saul as part of the LORD’s wisdom that came to him through prophecy on the hill of God. I choose to believe it was the latter of the two.

## 2. The Story of Introduction of Saul’s to the Nation

### a) The Summons of the Tribes (10:17-19)

At this point in the story, Saul was to walk on to Gilgal and wait seven days for Samuel to arrive to tell him what to do. But the writer does not continue with that storyline at this time in the life of Saul as king. The writer will pick up the story of Saul going to Gilgal in chapter 13 when Saul made the terrible mistake at the beginning of his rule by not waiting for Samuel to arrive at Gilgal as instructed when he was consecrated. Instead, the writer will jump to a different storyline. This story deals with Samuel leading the nation to select Saul as king at Mizpah. It will be the story of the introduction of Saul to the nation, and the story begins with the summons of the tribes of Israel to Mizpah. Verse 17.

*“Thereafter Samuel called the people together to the LORD at Mizpah;<sup>18</sup> and he said to the sons of Israel, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, I brought Israel up from Egypt, and I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the power of all the kingdoms that were oppressing you.”<sup>19</sup> But you have today rejected your God, who delivers you from all your calamities and your distresses; yet you have said, ‘No, but set a king over us!’ Now therefore, present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes and by your clans.” (10:17-19)*

The word “After that” is extremely important in this verse. It means that the call of the people to meet with Samuel at Mizpah happened after Saul met the two men at Rachel’s tomb, the three men with the food at the oak of Tabor, the prophets on the hill of God, and Saul’s meeting in Gilgal with Samuel. That story will pick up with a twist in chapter 13. As stated, this story, beginning with verse 17 of chapter 10, jumped over the Gilgal story to share how the people came to accept Saul as their king at a meeting at Mizpah.

As the LORD correctly did, through Samuel, He chastised the nation of Israel and instructed them as to how the process of selecting the king would occur that day even though He had already consecrated Saul to be their king.

### b) The Selection of Benjamin (10:20-21a)

The first step in revealing Saul as the new king was the selection of the tribe of Benjamin. Verse 20.

*“Thus Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin was taken by lot.<sup>21</sup> Then he brought the tribe of Benjamin near by its families, and the Matrite family was taken.” (10:20-21a)*

Lots were cast in this process to select the tribe and the family of the tribe. The process of the casting of lots is used in the Bible, but without an explanation as to how the process was accomplished. It might have been that the Urim and the Thummim were used for this purpose, but that is only conjecture. Why bring it up? The Urim and Thummim was a breastplate that contained twelve stones. Each stone was a precious stone of a different color from the rest. When a question was asked of the Urim and Thummim, such as "Which tribe was to lead the Israelites into battle?" in most cases, the stone of Judah would light up or flash to answer. At Jericho, when the same question was asked, the three stones of Rueben, Gad, and Manasseh would have lit up. That explanation is an easy way to understand how the Urim and Thummim were used to cast lots or receive an answer from the LORD. Be that as it may, without using the Urim and Thummim, each tribe did have a stone as their symbol, and the color of that stone represented the tribe and was used on its standards and flags. Perhaps twelve stones were collected, put in a container, and one was drawn out as a way to cast lots. That would have been a very easy way to cast such lots to select a tribe. But what about choosing a family from that tribe? It was just as easy in principle. Each head of a family or division in the tribe of Benjamin could put in a shoe, a sash, a belt, or a piece of jewelry. The one drawn out identified the family to be selected. Such was an easy way to cast a lot for the family. In this case, the tribe of Benjamin was selected, and the family of Matrite was also taken. We have no clue about the origin of this family in Benjamin's line. On my part, I believe this should be rendered the *Bekrites*, coming from the line of Beker or Becher. When we harmonize the descendants of Benjamin to Saul from Genesis 46:21, 1 Samuel 14:51, 1 Chronicles 7:6-8, 1 Chronicles 8:29-33, 1 Chronicles 9:35-39, we come up with the following lineage of Benjamin to Saul:

Benjamin, **Becher**, Aphish (Abiah), Bechorath, Zeror (Zur), Abiel, Ner, Kish, and then Saul.  
 [Names in parenthesis are alternate spellings found in the English Bible.]

If this is the case, there would be no confusion as to the family that was chosen because Benjamin only had three sons that formed all the families of Benjamin - Bela, Becher, and Jediael. Saul was a descendant of Becher.

#### (1) Saul Chosen (10:21a)

From the family of Matrite, or Bekerite (Becherite), Saul was chosen. Verse 21a. "*And Saul the son of Kish was taken;*" (10:21a)

The casting of lots for Saul had to be much harder than selecting the tribe and the family. In this case, it would be reasonable to assume that the casting of lots continued down the line of Becher until it landed at Kish, and with Kish, lots were cast for his different sons. Did Kish have other sons besides Saul? To our knowledge, Saul was the only male child of Kish. Once Kish was selected, Saul was the only one left. But Saul was missing.

#### (2) Saul Missing (10:21b)

Why was Saul missing at Mizpah? He was not missing. Verse 21b. "*but when they looked for him, he could not be found.*" (10:21b) Where was Saul? The writer will tell us next.

#### (3) Saul Hiding (10:22)

But Saul was hiding in the crowd. Verse 22. "*Therefore they inquired further of the LORD, "Has the man come here yet?" So the LORD said, "Behold, he is hiding himself by the baggage.*" (10:22)

No one knew where Saul was hiding, but the LORD did. The LORD told them where to look. No doubt, the LORD spoke to Samuel, who ran the meeting.

#### (4) Saul Presented (10:23)

We come to see Saul presented to the people in verse 23.

*“So 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.”* (10:23)

Can you imagine in your mind’s eye this scene? All the people of Israel had arrived in Mizpah for the meeting called by Samuel. When they came, they would be there at least overnight, if not longer. Because the people were traveling from each tribal area, when they arrived somewhat together at Mizpah, they surely stored their baggage together by tribes. Some tribes had come from about seventy miles away for the meeting. Perhaps Saul was hiding among the baggage of that which belonged to the tribe of Benjamin. Even though the meeting at Mizpah was in the tribal area of Benjamin, Mizpah was too far for many of the Benjamites to return home on the day of their meeting. We must wonder if each family had set their tents in place for the night or the tents were still among the baggage. That is where they found Saul and paraded him before the people. He was taller than all the men of Israel. He could not be missed.

#### [\(5\) Saul Accepted \(10:24\)](#)

Once Saul was presented, Samuel spoke, and we see that Saul was accepted as the new king. Verse 24.

*“Samuel said to all the people, ‘Do you see him whom the LORD has chosen? Surely there is no one like him among all the people.’ So all the people shouted and said, ‘Long live the king!’”* (10:24)

“*Long live the king!*” This passage is the first time we hear these words through the ages of eternity in the Bible. It will not be the last. More than likely, it was not the first time it was used and heard by the Nation of Israel. They may have heard it used in Egypt when a new king (Pharaoh) came to the throne. They may have heard it among the Canaanites when they took the Promised Land. Perhaps they heard it among their Moabite and Ammonite cousins who had kings. Who knows? What we do know is this; it was the first time the Nation of Israel used it for their human king.