

Behold Your King – 1 Samuel 10:17-11:15

Introduction:

The nation has cried out for a king. God has heard them, and God has chosen a man to take on that role. He is a man who stands out because he is good looking and taller than the rest of men. At this point only Samuel and Saul know of this choice. It is time to let the secret out. The passage in this study shows the way God presents Saul as the new king, and how God provides a crisis that confirms his leadership. We see a man who, like the judges before him, functions best when the Spirit of God comes on him. Here at the beginning of Saul's reign a good foundation is being laid. Nonetheless, there are shadows hanging over the king. See if you can spot them as we walk through the scriptures.

Saul Proclaimed King – 1 Samuel 10:17-27

1. Where did Samuel call the people to gather (v. 17)? (In 7:5 that was the place Samuel gathered the people to confess and renew their covenant with God.)
2. In verse 18 we begin a message from the Lord through Samuel. What is the message of verse 18?
3. According to verse 19, what were the people doing as they asked for a king?
4. How was Saul chosen to be king according to verses 20-21? Describe the process.
5. When Saul's name was "drawn" by lot, where was he found (v. 22)? Why might he be there? What might be revealed about Saul's character?
6. Saul is now revealed to the people as the one chosen by God to be their leader. What impresses the people the most about Saul (v. 23)? How do they respond to him? (v. 24)
7. Samuel told the people the "rights and duties of the kingship." What was done so that this king, and future kings would not forget this message (v. 25)?

8. Samuel sends everyone home. Who accompanied Saul back to Gibeah, his home (v. 26)? How important would a band of men like this be?
9. Who are we introduced to in verse 27? What is their opinion of Saul as king? How do they express their opinion? (of note, the men of Gibeah who were responsible for the terrible rape and murder of the concubine (Judges 19) were also called “worthless fellows” – the exact same words. Is there a connection?)

The Ammonite Threat – 1 Samuel 11:1-4

10. Who threatens the people of Jabesh-Gilead (v. 1)? What do the men of that city propose?
11. What condition does Nahash say is necessary before he will sign a treaty with them? What was the purpose of this action? (v. 2)
12. What do the elders of Jabesh they want to do (v. 3)? What are they hoping for?
13. Verse 4 indicates that Nahash must have agreed to their proposal. Why would he? How do we deduce he gave them the seven days?
14. Messengers were sent to try and round up support for Jabesh. When the people of Gibeah heard what was happening in Jabesh, how did the people respond (v. 4)? Why might they be particularly upset?

Saul Rallies an Army – 1 Samuel 11:5-11

15. What was Saul, the new king, doing when the messenger arrived in town (v. 5)?
16. Saul is told what is happening in Jabesh, explaining why all the people are weeping. In contrast to the weeping of the people, how does Saul respond (v. 6). What does scripture tell us is the source of this emotion?

17. What “prophetic action” does Saul use to get the attention of the other tribes (v. 7)? When was another time a severed body was used to call the tribes to action?
18. Who does Saul say the people will be following (v. 7)? How did the people respond to this call to arms?
19. Verse 8 tells us about the number of men who gathered around Saul to fight. How many men were there (v. 8)?
20. Saul sends the messengers back to Jabesh-gilead with what message (v. 9)? How did the men of Jabesh respond to this news?
21. So the men of Jabesh send what message back to Nahash (v. 10)? What is their plan?
22. Who led that army against the Ammonites (v. 11)? What strategy did he use? How successful was Saul’s leadership at this battle?

Saul – the People’s Choice – 1 Samuel 11:12-15

23. How important was the victory in battle to the securing of the kingship for Saul? According to verse 12, what did the people want to do?
24. How does Saul respond to their suggestion (v. 13)? What might this tell us about Saul’s character? Is he showing good leadership?
25. What does Saul call the people to do in verse 14? Why?
26. What things did the people do in Gilgal? What is the mood of the nation? (cf. vs. 15)

Conclusion:

Saul has now been accepted as king by the people. They heard God’s choice through the prophet Samuel. They saw Saul chosen when the lots were cast. They experienced Saul’s leadership in the battle field resulting in the salvation of the

people in Jabesh-gilead. The people are now ready to accept Saul as their king. They seem to have everything they wanted. And truly, things do look good. Saul seems to be both a capable leader of men and a spiritual example. When God is honoured, the people are safe. But what if the king turns from obeying God? What happens if the king is no longer a spiritual leader?

Today God has raised up people to govern over us – Prime Ministers, and Presidents, Premiers and Governors, Mayors and Councillors. How good will these leaders be if they do not heed first the Word of the Lord? Though we respect those in authority, how “successful” will they be if they do not honour God, and acknowledge that they too are under God’s authority? May we pray for our leaders – not just wisdom for their tasks, but for their salvation.