

- Recap: Israel has asked for a King “like all the other nations” (I Samuel 8:20). God had planned to give them a King anyway. God had told them He would eventually create a King for them and outlined how that King would conduct himself. (Deuteronomy 7:14-20) But Samuel has made clear what the consequences of selecting a King “like other nations” around them would be instead of following God’s plan for a King. (I Samuel 8:10-18) The problem is that the Kings of other nations around them are not ones to imitate and so asking for a king “like other nations” is an obvious problem. Nevertheless, God eventually tells Samuel to give in because He says the people are rejecting God and Samuel should not take it personally. (I Samuel 8:7) The moral is to be careful about not just what we ask for, but why we are asking for it.
- There as a man of the tribe a Benjamin named Kish, and he was known as a “mighty man of power.” (I Samuel 9:1)
- Kish he has a son named Saul who is taller by head and shoulders than all his peers. (I Samuel 9:2)
- Saul goes with some of his dad’s servants looking for some of his dad’s lost donkeys who have wandered off. He looks all over for the donkeys but can’t find them so he decides to return home so his father doesn’t think he is lost too! (I Samuel 9:3-5)
- Saul says to those that are with him – let’s go see the priest here (remember Samuel had gained notoriety throughout Israel (I Samuel 4:1)) – he’ll know what to do. God had already told Samuel that someone from the tribe of Benjamin is going to come to you and you are going to make him captain (as in captain of the army, not King yet) and he is going to lead Israel to success against the Philistines. Saul asks around and find Samuel’s place and God confirms to Samuel that Saul is indeed the person He was taking about. (I Samuel 9:6-18).
- Samuel tells Saul to stay and eat with him so that he can share the word of the Lord with him and that the donkeys are found (I Samuel 19-20).
- Saul is confused by this and protests that he is from Benjamin the smallest tribe and even a poor family at that. (I Samuel 9:21). Remember that Gideon had made the exact same objection (Judges 6:15). Also remember that God sometimes chooses the weak things of the world to humble the strong. (I Corinthians 1:26-28) It doesn’t matter what circumstances you are born into, if God is with you, you are strong.
- After they share a meal together, Samuel tells Saul to send the servants on ahead so that Samuel and Saul can talk privately. (I Samuel 9:22-27)
- Samuel tells Saul that he will be captain of the army, and he anoints his head with oil. (I Samuel 10:1)
- Samuel proceeds to tell Saul a series of things are going to happen. First he says Saul will meet two men by Rachel’s tomb who will tell him that his dad’s donkeys have been found but not his dad is worried about him. Second, he says at a city called Bethel he is going to meet three men, one carrying a goat, one carrying three loaves of bread, and one carrying a bottle of wine and they will greet him and give him two loaves of bread. Third, he says he will meet a group of prophets coming from the area of the Philistine army and they are going to have four specific musical instruments, they are going to prophesy, and God’s spirit will come upon you, you will prophesy with them, and you be changed into a new man. Then Samuel says to Saul, after all this happens to you, you will know that you will need to follow God’s instruction so then go to a place called Gilgal and wait for me there for seven days. Note that the instruction to go to Gilgal

was probably not immediately because we read of this happening two chapters later, two years into Saul's reign as king. (I Samuel 10:2-8)

- All the signs come to pass. God's spirit does come on Saul and people are surprised that he is prophesying. We don't read about Saul going to Gilgal right away until chapter 13 so there is a timing thing here. His uncle asks him there to tell what Samuel told him but Saul only mentions the part about the donkey's being found to them. (I Samuel 10:9-16)
- Samuel calls all the Israelites together at Mizpeh, reiterates the fact that they want a king, and has each family come by tribe before Samuel so that he can anoint a king. When Saul's family comes Saul is hiding in some baggage and so folks go get him and Samuel anoints him King. Saul then goes home with a bunch of men "whose heart God had touched" and there are some people who don't believe or accept Saul being king. (I Samuel 10:17-27)
- There is a stark contrast we will see between the way Saul is made King and the way David is eventually made King. Note that all Saul's qualifications are physical (most notably his height) whereas David's are internal because he as a "man after God's own heart." We know that God had to essentially intervene to get Saul to prophecy and we do not read of Saul praying or devoting himself to God. By contrast, David writes LOTS of Psalms which make it obvious he spends lots of time in prayer and devotion. Acts 13:21-22 Which King would you rather be like?
- The Ammonites led by King Nahash come to a city called Jabesh in Gilead. This was most likely closely associated with the tribe of Benjamin. King Nahash tells the people there that he will accept their surrender only if he can put out their right eyes. Saul hears about this, tears up some oxen, sends them around Israel and says "this is what will happen to you oxen if you don't show up to support these people." The result is an army of 330,000 people – much larger than any we have ever seen or read about. They completely rout the Ammonite army. The Israelites want to execute anyone who objected to Saul's Kingship then but Saul stops then. (I Samuel 11)
- Samuel tells Israel that he is old and he has given them a king and they also have his sons with them now. He asks if he has done any wrong to them and the Israelites say "no." (I Samuel 12:1-5)
- Samuel reviews for the Israelites how they are victorious when God is with them and how they are defeated when they forsake God. (I Samuel 12:2-15)
- So Samuel says "checkout God's power" and he calls forth God to create a mighty thunderstorm and all the people are afraid of both Samuel and God. (I Samuel 12:16-18)
- Samuel reiterates that there is no need to fear if they are going to follow God, but there is only reason to fear if they do not walk in His ways. (I Samuel 12:19-25)
- After Saul has reigned a couple of years, he gets an army of 3,000 together and with his commander Jonathan kills a garrison of Philistines in one city. Saul makes a big deal out of this victory throughout Israel. (I Samuel 13:1-4)
- The Philistines decide to retaliate so they amass a huge army and the Israelites are so scared they are fleeing and hiding anywhere they can. (I Samuel 13:5-7)
- Saul goes to Gilgal and waits for Samuel for 7 days. This appear to be what Samuel and Saul had arranged in (I Samuel 10:7-8) Samuel doesn't show up after the seven days so Saul makes the priestly sacrifice himself. Samuel then gets there and chastises Saul for acting on his own and says that because of his disobedience his kingdom will not continue and God will appoint someone "after his own heart" (implying that Saul was NOT). (I Samuel 13:8-14)
- Chapter 13 ends with the Israelite army not being able to find a single blacksmith (craftsman) to make weapons. To even get non -military items sharpened, they have to go the Philistines and

pay exorbitant rates. The Philistines are doing that on purpose in order to keep the Israelites from getting weapons. (I Samuel 13:15-23)

Questions

1. Why did the Israelites want a king?
2. What was wrong with the Israelites wanting a king?
3. Why does God eventually tell Samuel to give in and let Israel have their king?
4. What was Saul's Dad name?
5. What was a distinguishing feature of Saul's dad?
6. What tribe was Saul from?
7. What is a distinguishing feature of Saul?
8. What does Saul go looking for when he is young?
9. Why does Saul give up looking for the donkeys and eventually go home?
10. Why does Saul decide to go see Samuel before he goes home?
11. Who tells Samuel that Saul is going to show up before he comes?
12. What specific thing does Samuel find out that Saul is going to do?
13. Why does Samuel tell Saul he should stay and eat with him?
14. Why does Samuel tell Saul not to worry anymore about his father's donkeys?
15. Why does Saul question Samuel about staying with him?
16. What famous figure does Saul's excuse remind us of?
17. What does God sometimes use to humble the strong?
18. Why does Samuel tell Saul to send the servants on ahead?
19. What does Samuel do to Saul to signify that he is chosen to be captain?
20. How many prophecies does Samuel tell Saul he is going to experience?
21. After Saul experiences the prophecies where is he to wait for Samuel?
22. How long is Saul supposed to wait for Samuel after the prophecies?
23. Where does Saul hide out while he is supposed to be made king?
24. What is better, to be like Saul or David? Why?
25. What do the Ammonites threaten to do to the people of Jabesh-Gilead?
26. What does Saul do when he hears about the Ammonite threat?
27. How big is the army Saul raises against the Ammonites?
28. What happens after the army of Israel defeats the Ammonites?
29. What does Samuel call upon God to do in order to show his power to the Israelites?
30. What does Saul do that will cause him to lose his Kingdom?
31. Why was the lack of a blacksmith in Israel so important?