

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

1 SAMUEL 8-11

Of all people, Americans should understand it was not a good idea for Israel to appoint a king. America was born out of outrage over the King of England's abuse of power. Author Walt Whitman sums our country's origins, "people scorned the ferocity of kings."

Israel though, wanted to be like their neighbor nations. They wanted a king, and the trappings that come with one: *a throne, a crown, a scepter, a court, a coronation, some pomp and circumstance*. Rather than faith in the invisible God, the Hebrews wanted a visible, tangible ruler on which they could fix their hopes.

The Israelis assumed it would be easier to rally around a leader they could see, than trust in God.

In contrast, from the outset *God* wanted to be Israel's king. His ideal government was a *theocracy*, not a *monarchy*. Israel ignored God's warning about "*the ferocity of kings*," and persisted in their demand for a *king made of clay*. Finally, God gave in, and gave them a king. A king they would regret again and again.

Chapter 8, "Now it came to pass when Samuel was old that he made his sons judges over Israel. The name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba. But his sons did not walk in his ways; they turned aside after dishonest gain, took bribes, and perverted justice."

Sadly, Eli's plight became Samuel's - his sons were sleaze balls. He made them judges, but they acted like jerks. They were unjust, and greedy, and crooked.

And why? We're not told. It was said of Eli "his sons made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them." Eli failed to discipline... *Samuel's failure is unidentified.*

But here's my hunch... The end of Chapter 7 told us Samuel was a circuit preacher. He traveled a four city loop. Travel was a necessary part of his job. *But you wonder if his ministry caused him to neglect his boys.*

I love this quote by Wade Horn, "My father was a great dad. I didn't always think so, of course. When I was growing up, I mostly thought of him as an overbearing, autocratic, stick-in-the-mud whose main mission in life was to make mine miserable. But I have since come to realize he had one great quality. He was there. Someone once said 90% of life was just showing up. My dad showed up..." I look back on any good I've done for my kids and I now realize what made the greatest impact was not my Father-knows-best-wisdom, or my cleverness, or my coolness... *I just stayed in the*

mix. I tried to be involved. I was there.

Don't make the mistake of thinking kids come with a pause button. You can push pause - go out, do your own thing - then return and pick up where you left off. Parents, it doesn't work that way. By the time you're ready to be a good parent your kid may no longer care. Always remember how kids spell *love*... T-I-M-E.

Now that's assuming Samuel made any mistakes at all. *Why is it we always jump to the conclusion that a child who ends up a rotten apple had parents who did a horrible job? Apply that logic, then what about God?*

God was the perfect parent, yet His kids, Adam and Eve still rebelled. All humans were created free moral agents. A child is free to carve their own path. Parents can provide a kid a godly start, but it's up to that child to make the right choices. *Holiness isn't hereditary.*

Why Samuel's sons strayed we're not sure, but they *became Israel's excuse to demand a king...* "Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, and said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations." Samuel's sons were a convenient excuse, but Israel's desire for a king predated Samuel. Recall they wanted to crown Gideon.

Their real motive is in verse 5, "make us a king to judge us like all the nations." Famous Bible commentator, G. Campbell Morgan, called this, "the supreme wrong." He writes, "Israel had been chosen to be unlike the nations, a people directly governed by God." The name "Israel" means "governed by God."

God called Israel to be holy - to march to a different drummer. To keep in cadence with His will and wisdom. Instead the Hebrews utter the familiar refrain every parent hears, "Everybody else is doing it, why can't I?"

Verse 6, "But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." So Samuel prayed to the LORD. And God reveals to Samuel Israel's root problem, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them."

The people's request for a *royal* ultimately had nothing to do with Samuel and sons. **Trust and obey was too straightforward.** *A monarchy gives you more options...* You can hide stuff from a king. He can't read your mind and heart... A king's judgments get debated and amended. God's laws are absolute... A king and his court can be manipulated, and favors gained. Whereas, God is just... Israel wanted a *system they could manipulate* - rather than a *relationship with God*.

Instead of God; Israel opted for a human chain of command, and rights of succession, and machinations of politics. They rejected God for human government. *Had they only known the quagmire they were creating.*

God goes on to tell Samuel this is the same rebellion Israel showed in the wilderness. They're behaving toward Samuel like they had acted toward God. *And here we learn a principle... Sometimes God's judgment on a people (or person) is to give them what they want.*

Verse 9, *"Now therefore, heed their voice. However, you shall solemnly forewarn them, and show them the behavior of the king who will reign over them."* They'll get their request, but first God will warn them about *"the ferocity of kings."* Verse 11, *"He will take your sons and appoint them for his own chariots and to be his horsemen, and some will run before his chariots. He will appoint captains over his thousands and captains over his fifties, will set some to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and some to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. He will take your daughters to be perfumers, cooks, and bakers."*

Welcome to big government! *The ferocity of kings* will require conscription and compulsory service. Sons and daughters will serve in the king's army and plow his fields. Bureaucracies will form. When God is king, the government is simple and streamlined. Now people will serve the king, the king will rarely serve the people.

"And he will take the best of your fields, your vineyards, and your olive groves, and give them to his servants. He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage, and give it to his officers and servants." Human government loves taxes. God doesn't have to eat, or live in earthly luxury, or pay kick-backs to his allies. But kings need money to do all the above.

Verse 18, *"And you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the LORD will not hear you in that day."* It won't be long before Israel will throw some tea in the harbor, and rebel against their abusive king, *but God won't help them remove his yoke. They'll have what they wanted.*

As the saying goes, *"Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely."* History records the reign of very few benevolent dictators. It's difficult for even a good man to handle the authority afforded a king.

And over the next 500 years, of the 42 kings who'll rule both the northern and southern Hebrew kingdoms, only nine will earn a positive approval rating from God.

Recall Israel's mistake, they wanted to be *"like all the nations."* Peer pressure was their downfall. Israel wanted to be like the Joneses... I use to tell my kids, *if your*

friends stick their heads in the oven and bake their brains does that mean you should do the same? No way! If God forbids it - there's a good reason it's forbidden. Israel will learn this lesson the hard way.

Israel needed to be governed by God, *not conformed to the world*. They need gumption to stand up, and stick out! Following God is trusting that His way is best, *even when no one else in the room thinks so!*

Yet sadly, Israel rejected *the faithfulness of God for the ferocity of kings*. They say in verse 19, "No, but we will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles." And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he repeated them in the hearing of the LORD. So the LORD said to Samuel, (And I'm sure He said it sadly) "Heed their voice, and make them a king." And Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Every man go to his city." A king will be chosen.

Chapter 9, "There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish..." We're given his genealogy since it's about to become a royal lineage. Kish was "Benjamite, a mighty man of power" or a wealthy landowner.

"And he had a choice and handsome son whose name was Saul. There was not a more handsome person than he among the children of Israel. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people." Scan the crowd and you would spot Saul - he was head and shoulders above everyone else. If the NBA had been around Saul would've made millions. And after his playing days, he would've had a movie career. Saul was the most handsome man in Israel. Imagine Saul, had an NBA *hook* and a leading man's *looks*. You could call Saul "a *hunk who could dunk*."

And of course, if Saul played in the NBA his team would've been... "the Sacramento Kings." Here're a few other Bible characters with NBA potential. **Delilah** could've been an LA Clipper, **Balaam** a Washington Wizard, **Nicodemus** would've been a NY Knick... The Temple musician, **Asaph**, would've played for the Utah Jazz... And **James and John**, the sons of thunder, would be OKC Thunder... and they were fishermen who mended their nets, so they might be Brooklyn Nets. And, there was Peter, a walk on with the Lakers.

Verse 3, "Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, were lost. And Kish said to his son Saul, "Please, take one of the servants with you, and arise, go and look for the donkeys." Saul gets sent on a round up to corral some lost donkeys. He canvasses 100 miles or more - the whole countryside - *but no sight of the donkeys*.

Verse 5, "When they had come to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant who was with him, "Come, let us return, lest my father cease caring about the donkeys and

become worried about us." This sounds like a noble concern, but Saul's tendency to stop short of his father's will eventually becomes his downfall.

"And (the servant) said to him, "Look now, there is in this city a man of God, and he is an honorable man; all that he says surely comes to pass. So let us go there; perhaps he can show us the way that we should go."

Then Saul said to his servant, "But look, if we go, what shall we bring the man?" They'll need to be able to thank him for his guidance. "For the bread in our vessels is all gone, and there is no present to bring to the man of God. What do we have?" And the servant answered Saul again and said, "Look, I have here at hand one fourth of a shekel of silver. I will give that to the man of God, to tell us our way." (Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he spoke thus: "Come, let us go to the seer"; for he who is now called a prophet was formerly called a seer.) A "seer" was a mystic - a person who saw into the spiritual realm.

"Then Saul said to his servant, "Well said; come, let us go." So they went to the city where the man of God was. As they went up the hill to the city, they met some young women going out to draw water, and said to them, "Is the seer here?" Jewish legend says these girls stopped to talk to Saul because of his good-looks.

And they tell Saul, *The seer is just ahead. He's in town for the sacrifice.* They should hurry to catch him.

Verse 14, "So they went up to the city. As they were coming into the city, there was Samuel, coming out toward them on his way up to the high place." Saul and Samuel end up in the same city on the same day, a result of God's providence. *Samuel's circuit* and *Saul's search* combined to produce **a divine appointment.**

Another point, Samuel was headed to the high place to oversee a sacrifice. High places were elevated altars usually associated with idolatry. When Israel entered the land these high places were prohibited. Sacrifices were offered at the Tabernacle. Yet Jeremiah 7:12 tells us when the Ark was stolen by the Philistines, the Tabernacle in Shiloh was destroyed. Thus, with the Tabernacle out-of-order, God allowed His sacrifices on these high places, as long as it was supervised by a Levitical priest. This is what Samuel was in town to do.

Verse 15, "Now the LORD had told Samuel in his ear, the day before Saul came..." God spoke in his ear, not to his heart. That might mean He spoke audibly.

"Saying, "Tomorrow about this time I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him commander over My people Israel, that he may save My people from the hand of the Philistines; for I have looked upon My people, because their cry has come to me." The day before God had told the prophet about his

rendezvous with Saul. *This was a God thing!*

Now when Samuel sees Saul the Lord speaks to him again in verse 17, "There he is, the man of whom I spoke to you. This one shall reign over My people." Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, "Please tell me, where is the seer's house?" It was their first encounter. Saul didn't know he was speaking to Samuel. "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 tomorrow I will let you go and will tell you all that is in your heart. But as for your donkeys that were lost three days ago, do not be anxious about them, for they have been found."

Then Samuel drops a bombshell. "On whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not on you and on all your father's house?" Saul is God's response to Israel's longing for a king. He'll rally Israel to defeat the Philistines.

And you would expect Saul to be honored - to accept God's call... but look at his reaction in verse 21, "And Saul answered and said, "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 like this to me?" At first glance you might think Saul is humble. But often humility and insecurity look alike, yet are very different attitudes. Humility is others-centered. I care so much about you, I'm not worried about me. But insecurity is the ultimate form of self-centeredness. I'm so concerned with my image I'm afraid to step up lest I fail and embarrass myself. Later we'll see that Saul was far more insecure than humble.

"Now Samuel took Saul and his servant and brought them into the hall, and had them sit in the place of honor among those who were invited; there were about thirty persons..." Samuel prearranged a meal - no doubt, **a meal fit for a king**. And they finish the night on the roof of the house. Folks in the hot, arid Middle East often sleep on rooftops to be in the cool night air.

Verse 26, "They arose early; and it was about the dawning of the day that Samuel called to Saul on the top of the house, saying, "Get up, that I may send you on your way." Not sure if the king-to-be overslept or not, but Samuel has to wake up Saul to get him going.

"Saul arose, and both of them went outside, he and Samuel. As they were going down to the outskirts of the city, Samuel said to Saul, "Tell the servant to go on ahead of us." And he went on. "But you stand here awhile, that I may announce to you the word of God." A private coronation of the first king of Israel will follow....

Chapter 10, "Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head, and kissed him and said: "Is it not because the LORD has anointed you commander over His

inheritance?" Samuel commissions the first king of Israel by pouring a flask of oil on his head. The High Priest was also anointed with oil. Olive oil was a symbol of the Holy Spirit. The king needed the Spirit's wisdom and power to rule well. Saul was the first of many kings who will be crowned and anointed with oil.

If you've ever watched a championship football game you've seen the triumphant players sneak up behind the victorious coach, and dump a bucket of Gatorade on his head. He gets an anointing with Gatorade.

Well, the king got a bucket-full of God's Spirit. And when the Spirit comes upon us it gives us a confidence and boldness. For Saul this was particularly important. This anointing was God's cure for his insecurities.

And in addition, to further fortify his confidence Samuel gives to Saul a series of signs that confirm his coronation. God understands Saul's self-doubt, and goes overboard to help him find his identity in God.

Verse 2, **"When you have departed from me today, you will find two men by Rachel's tomb in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah; and they will say to you, 'The donkeys which you went to look for have been found. And now your father has ceased caring about the donkeys and is worrying about you, saying, 'What shall I do about my son?'"** This is a sign **and** a lesson. God found the donkeys. He did for Saul what Saul couldn't do for himself. *Saul needs to learn to trust God.*

"Then you shall go on forward from there and come to the terebinth tree of Tabor. There three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you, one carrying three young goats, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine. And they will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you shall receive from their hands." And again, God is saying to Saul, I'll provide all that you need - if you trust Me!

"After that you shall come to the hill of God where the Philistine garrison is. And it will happen, when you have come there to the city, that you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place with a stringed instrument, a tambourine, a flute, and a harp before them; and they will be prophesying." A worship encounter is the third proof of Saul's anointing. This is ironic, for as we'll see, David, Saul's successor had the worshipful heart. Saul knew little of true worship.

And the fourth confirmation is in verse 6, **"Then the Spirit of the LORD will come upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man."**

The Holy Spirit will come upon Saul, and his character will change. Again, Saul battled feelings of inferiority. He was always concerned about stacking up to others. But when God's Spirit comes upon him, Saul will get caught up in the praise of God. He'll forget about Himself in a tsunami of love, joy, peace, power, and the glory and

presence of God. Saul will forget about himself and rejoice in God... *sadly it won't last.*

Yet notice the sequence of these signs. For how God confirms His blessing on Saul is how He blesses us. **First**, Jesus finds and returns us like lost donkeys, and without our effort, solely by His grace... **Second**, He meets our spiritual hunger with prearranged blessings, a feast fit for a king... **Third**, we receive a new song, and join in God's praise... **Finally** we're filled and transformed by His Spirit. We're caught up in God. And as a result you and I are *"turned into another man."*

This is what transformed the Apostle Peter from *petrified* to *power-packed*. This is what we need today, an outpouring of the Spirit. If you lack confidence and battle insecurities, ask God to fill you with His Spirit!

Verse 7 *"And let it be, when these signs come to you, that you do as the occasion demands; for God is with you."* And notice here how obedience to God is a spontaneous act, *"as the occasion demands."* We don't always get our marching orders in advance. Be open - be flexible - be ready to follow God's still small voice.

Samuel tells Saul to go to Gilgal, and wait a week. He'll join Saul and give him further instructions.

Verse 9, *"So it was, when (Saul) had turned his back to go from Samuel, that God gave him another heart; and all those signs came to pass that day. When they came there to the hill, there was a group of prophets to meet him; then the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them. And it happened, when all who knew him formerly saw that he indeed prophesied among the prophets, that the people said to one another, "What is this that has come upon the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?"* The changes God worked in Saul were obvious to all. His role as a prophet became proverbial among the people of Israel.

Verse 14, *"Then 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 were nowhere to be found, we went to Samuel. And Saul's uncle said, "Tell me, please, what Samuel said to you." So Saul said to his uncle, "He told us plainly that the donkeys had been found. But about the matter of the kingdom, he did not tell him what Samuel had said."* Even after multiple confirmations, Saul still hesitates to embrace his God-given role. He's silent on the news of his kingdom. Saul's attitude is a false humility. Often, we act humble to cover up our unbelief. It's easier to say, *"O, God can't use the likes of me"* - than to have faith.

In verse 17 Samuel calls Israel to Mizpah to publicly present their king... He recounts their history. God brought them out of Egypt and saved them from their

“adversities and tribulations.” And here’s how they thank Him, verse 19, they say, “... set a king over us!”

And so God establishes a selection process... *“Now therefore, present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes and by your clans.”* And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was chosen. When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was chosen. And Saul the son of Kish was chosen. But when they sought him, he could not be found.” They go through all twelve tribes, and narrow it to the families of Benjamin... then the sons of Kish. God finally reveals the man, Saul, yet he’s nowhere to be found! And *too-tall-Saul* wasn’t an easy guy to miss.

“Therefore they inquired of the LORD further, “Has the man come here yet?” And the LORD answered, “There he is, hidden among the equipment.” And Saul wasn’t just hiding among the stuff, he was hiding from the call of God. *Is that where you are this morning? Are you hiding from what you know God wants you to do?*

Rather than trust God for what he himself lacks, and take a step of faith, Saul shrinks back from the start.

As I said earlier, humility and insecurity are two very different attitudes... True humility is conscious of its inadequacies - but it rises up to trust God to do what only God can do. God had prepared Saul for this day. He had changed his heart - made him *“another man.”*

But it’s possible for God to change a man - and that man fail *to act on the fact* that he’s been changed. This happens often. We allow fear and insecurities to slip back in, and keep us from being what God intended. Saul failed to walk in the blessings God granted him.

During World War 1 a munitions factory had a huge banner across its entrance. Emblazoned on the sign were five letters, *“I A D O M.”* One day, a visitor entered the factory, and asked about the letters. The supervisor explained them, *“I A D O M, “It All Depends On Me.”*

This was Saul’s motto. God’s Spirit had done a work in Saul, yet rather than rely on God and step out in faith he succumbs to his insecurities. It paralyzes his efforts. We find him hiding in fear among the supplies.

Verse 23, *“So they ran and brought him from there; and when he stood among the people, he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward. And Samuel said to all the people, “Do you see him whom the LORD has chosen, that there is no one like him among all the people?” So all the people shouted and said, “Long live the king!”* Again our text mentions Saul’s natural advantages, but nothing about his faith.

Saul was a *physical giant*, but also a *spiritual midget*.

Shakespeare described King Lear, “**Every inch a king.**” That’s the conclusion you would’ve drawn if you had simply looked at Saul. He looked so kingly. But looks can be deceptive. Saul had potential for greatness, but it was lost in unbelief. Rather than trust God, he’d shrink back and act on his own impulses.

Saul had a problem many of us share. He was an **externally motivated person**. He was a reactionary who lived for other people’s approval. Circumstances and opinions dictated his behavior. To Saul *perception* was more important than *principle*. This was due to his insecurities. He had no internal compass. His only way to feel good about himself was to please other people.

But God wanted Saul - and us - to be **internally motivated** - guided by virtue, and conviction, and truth.

Before his coronation Saul’s fear masqueraded as humility, but when Saul gains some notoriety it goes to his head and he becomes enslaved to the attention. He tries to hold on to it at all costs. **When Saul lacked power he was fearful to assume it. When he possessed power he was fearful of letting it go.**

You may be like Saul. You’ve been called to step up, but you’ve shrunk back. You’re hiding among the stuff, while God wants you to take the lead. You need to be filled with the Spirit - act on the fact - and walk by faith.

Verse 25, “**Then Samuel explained to the people the behavior of royalty...**” In Deuteronomy 17:14-20 Moses left instructions to the kings that would come. Before the idea of a king existed, God said he was not to accumulate horses, wives, and treasure. For all three - *broncos*, *babes*, and *bucks* - will lead a leader astray.

God wanted the king to trust in his God, not in his cavalry. To love God, not long for women. And to rely on God’s provision, not rest on his wealth and treasure.

I’m sure Samuel’s instructions to Saul included Deuteronomy 17 *plus some...* We’re told he “**wrote it in a book and laid it up before the LORD.**” *Samuel’s* kingly dos and don’ts were certainly important. But apparently, God didn’t choose to include it in the Bible.

“**And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house.**” And there was a split in the polls. “**Saul also went home to Gibeah; and valiant men went with him, whose hearts God had touched. But some rebels said, "How can this man save us?" So they despised him, and brought him no presents. But he held his peace.**”

The first real test of Saul’s administration comes in Chapter 11. “**Then Nahash the Ammonite came up and encamped against Jabesh Gilead; and all the men of Jabesh**

said to Nahash, "Make a covenant with us, and we will serve you." Jabesh Gilead was an Israelite city east of the Jordan River. It was vulnerable to attacks from the Ammonites, so the city wants to make peace.

"And Nahash the Ammonite answered them, "On this condition I will make a covenant with you, that I may put out all your right eyes, and bring reproach on all Israel." A peace treaty for an eyeball is a steep price. Nahash asks for the right eye since its loss will insure Israel won't fight. In antiquity, the left eye was behind a shield, while the right eye was fixed on the opponent.

"Then the elders of Jabesh said to him, "Hold off for seven days, that we may send messengers to all the territory of Israel. And then, if there is no one to save us, we will come out to you." *We don't like the idea of losing a right eye. We're examining other options...*

Remember, this was the city in Judges 21 that didn't fight with Israel against Gibeah and the Benjaminites. They didn't help Israel, but now they need Israel's help.

So the men of Jabesh come to Saul at Gibeah. When Saul hears what's happened, verse 6 tells us, "Then the Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard this news, and his anger was greatly aroused." Saul cares. He started out a noble and merciful king.

Verse 7, "So he took a yoke of oxen and cut them in pieces, and sent them throughout all the territory of Israel by the hands of messengers, saying, "Whoever does not go out with Saul and Samuel to battle, so it shall be done to his oxen." And the fear of the LORD fell on the people, and they came out with one consent. When he numbered them in Bezek, the children of Israel were 300,000, and the men of Judah 30,000." Large numbers of Israelites rally to the new King Saul.

And they send word to Jabesh Gilead. "Tomorrow, by the time the sun is hot, you shall have help." And so "the men of Jabesh" said to the Ammonite, "Tomorrow we will come out to you, and you may do with us whatever seems good to you." It's a fake surrender.

"So it was, on the next day, that Saul put the people in three companies; and they came into the midst of the camp in the morning watch, and killed Ammonites until the heat of the day. And it happened that those who survived were scattered, so that no two of them were left together." The Ammonites were trounced.

And Saul's approval rating goes through the roof! His popularity sweeps the nation. Israel has a victorious king. That's when someone remembers the rebels who opposed Saul in Chapter 10, "Who is he who said, 'Shall Saul reign over us?' Bring the men, that we may put them to death." How dare they oppose our king!

“But Saul said, “Not a man shall be put to death this day, for today the LORD has accomplished salvation in Israel.” Here Saul shows true humility. Nothing will overshadow God’s deliverance, especially not selfish vindictiveness from Saul... Sadly, an older and jealous Saul won’t treat David with the same graciousness.

“Then Samuel said to the people, “Come, let us go to Gilgal and renew the kingdom there.” So (they) went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul king before the LORD in Gilgal. There they made sacrifices of peace offerings before the LORD, and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.” No one realizes it at the time, but this is Saul’s finest hour. Saul will go downhill from here. Sadly, never again will he act this honorably.