



A Summary of the Old Testament

within the word

Lesson Ten | Saul, the First King of Israel

Day One

1. Last week we saw the people of Israel were crying out for a king. God is about to give them what they have been begging for.

Read 1 Samuel 9:15-17.

How did Samuel know who he was to anoint king of Israel?

2. We are not given Saul's age, but we know he was old enough to leave with a servant on a journey to find his father's lost donkeys. When he met Samuel, the prophet invited him to a banquet he was hosting that day. Saul was surprised by this great honor, since he was of the tribe of Benjamin, the smallest of all the tribes. Not only was he invited to a banquet, he was given the seat of honor.

Later that same night, Samuel took Saul to his home and he was his guest for the night. When it was time to leave in the morning Samuel instructed Saul to send his servant on ahead, he had a message from God to share with Saul.

Read 1 Samuel 10:1-8.

What was the message Samuel shared with Saul that day?

List all the details you see here; each is of great importance for Saul's new calling.

3. Samuel told Saul that he would be changed; what was the change that was about to happen?
4. God's Spirit did not dwell in the heart of the people in the Old Testament, like it does those believers in the New Testament. The Spirit of the Lord would normally come upon them, and then fade.

2 Corinthians 3:7-13 describes the ministry of the Spirit in the Old Testament, by comparing it to the glorious ministry of the Spirit in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit was given selectively and temporarily to certain individuals for special ministries. It was not universal, nor was it permanent. The New Testament mentions Moses.

How was Moses different, after time spent with the LORD?

5. Later in this study we will see the Holy Spirit departed from Saul.

What is the effect of the Holy Spirit on Saul in 1 Samuel 10:6-7?

6. I love reading 1 Samuel 10:11!

What was the question being asked?

As believers and followers of Christ, this should be the question others ask about us, when we receive the Holy Spirit.

7. Read 1 Samuel 10:17-19.

Why do you believe Samuel gave this brief history lesson?

8. Read 1 Samuel 10: 19-24.

All the tribes were assembled, lots were cast, and of the twelve tribes, Benjamin was chosen. Of the tribe of Benjamin the clan of Matri was chosen; of the clan of Matri; the family of Kish was chosen. Saul was nowhere to be found.

Where was he?

9. What was the response to their first king?

Day Two

1. Finish reading the remaining few verses of chapter 10.

Was everyone wholeheartedly on board with Saul being king?

What did Saul do about it?

This might serve as a good lesson for us.

How should we handle situations if our team is not 100% behind us?

2. Read 1 Samuel 11:1-11.

Saul's first battle as king was against the Ammonites. The Ammonites had come up to attack Jabesh Gilead. The territory of Gilead had been given to the tribe of Gad and Judah. Numbers 32

What did the men of Jabesh Gilead propose as a solution?

What was the Ammonites counter offer?

(this suggestion gives us an insight into the type of people the Ammonites were)

3. In response, what did the men of Jabesh Gilead ask for?

4. When king Saul heard this news, what was his strategy for rallying the other tribes to join the fight?
5. Word was sent to the people of Jabesh Gilead, *“By tomorrow afternoon you will be delivered from this threat.”*

The people of Jabesh Gilead believed the report and told the Ammonites they would surrender to them the following day.

What took place just before sunrise and lasted until the heat of the day?

There are three basic watches of the night referred to in scripture.

The beginning watch: sunset to 10:00pm

The night watch: 10:00pm to 2:00am

The last watch: 2:00am to sunrise.

The Romans would later change this to four watches of the night.

6. After this amazing victory we see Saul confirmed in the hearts of the people.

Read 1 Samuel 11:12-15.

What did the Israelites suggest?

In what way did Saul show true spiritual wisdom and leadership?

7. Read 1 Samuel 12:1-15.

Samuel is getting old and he speaks frankly with the people. He draws their attention to his faithfulness to lead well all these years, from his youth to his old age. He reminds them of the goodness of God to the nation of Israel, despite their frequent wanderings from him.

The LORD loves Israel and will come to their aid when they repent and turn to him. He reminds them that their fear of men and their lack of trust in God's care had been the motivating factors in their desire for a king.

In your Bible circle the word 'if,' found in 1 Samuel 12:12-15.

What are the warnings given by Samuel?

8. Read 1 Samuel 12:16-25.

Samuel calls the people to stand and see the great thing the LORD is about to do, before their eyes.

Where have the Israelites heard words like these before?

Look up Exodus 14:13.

Who spoke similar words to the Israelites as they witnessed God's great deliverance?

9. Samuel's words are not calling them to witness God's great deliverance. Samuel is calling them to witness God's mighty hand as their true Sovereign.

What was the response of the people to the events that day?

10. God does not continue to love Israel because they are greater than other nations.

What does the text say is God's reason for continued long suffering with this wandering people? Have you ever wondered why God chose you?

God does not look down in amazement of our great character and choose us. Scripture says, "...while we were sinners, Christ died for us."

What should be our response to such a love as this?

Day Three

1. We do not know how old Saul was when he became king. There are even differing views as to how long he ruled. Some of the original text are missing numbers, so scholars differ on this issue.

How long he ruled is not as important as the type of ruler he was as king. 1 Samuel 13 tells us that Saul chose 3,000 men of Israel to command as troops. He kept 2000 men with him in Michmash and 1000 men with his son Jonathan in Gibeah. The Philistines gathered their army 30,000 chariots, 6000 horsemen, and their foot soldiers were so many it was like

2. Read 1 Samuel 13:6-7.
What did the Israelite troops think when they saw the Philistine army?
3. King Saul had been given specific orders from Samuel concerning this battle. What were his orders in 1 Samuel 10:8?
4. Do you find waiting difficult? We have talked about this before, in previous lessons. But it is good to stop and think about it once again.

What we do while we wait says much about our faith in God. It is natural to have some anxiety about how a situation may work out, but we must not give in

to fear. Fear and faith cannot co-exist. It has been said, *“Who you become while you are waiting is as important as what you are waiting for.”*

What do you do while you are waiting?

5. Read 1 Samuel 13:8.
How dire was this situation?
What resources has Saul forgotten?

Praise God for giving us the writings of the apostle Paul.

Read Romans 8:31.
You might even commit this verse to memory.

See how many times this week you can apply this great encouragement from the apostle Paul to a situation. We can remain confident. If God has called us to a battle, he will see us through.

6. Read 1 Samuel 13:8-12
King Saul grew anxious, himself, while waiting for Samuel. He took matters into his own hands.

Often when this section is taught, the teacher emphasizes the fact that Saul was not a priest and he should not offer the burnt offering. While that is true, I do not believe that was the greatest problem of this event.

Saul was Israel’s king, anointed by God, to lead the nation well. Part of godly leadership is to point hearts to our sovereign God.

What did King Saul do, which led the army to believe it is religious action that is the key to blessing and victory?

7. Just as King Saul finished making his offering, Samuel arrived. Samuel asked Saul, *“What have you done?”*
What do we see Saul do at this point?

8. Have you ever tried to justify your actions?
You knew what you were supposed to do but things were not working so you took matters into your own hands.

How did it work out for you in the long run?
Did you have any regrets afterwards?

Day Four

1. Read 1 Samuel 13:13-15.
What did Samuel say this bad decision would cost king Saul?
2. What did Samuel say God was looking for in a king?
3. King Saul was guilty of many other unwise decisions. He made a foolish oath in 1 Samuel 14:24, and in 1 Samuel 15 he disobeyed God's direct orders.

Read 1 Samuel 15.

What had God clearly commanded the army of Israel to do?
What did they do?

4. Read 1 Samuel 15:12.

It is impossible for us to know all the innermost thoughts of a person's heart, but their actions can give us insight.

Who did Saul give credit to for the great victory over the Amalekites?

5. The next day Samuel arrived in Gilgal; this is a very telling conversation. The first statement out of King Saul's mouth is a lie.
What was the lie?

Next, he shifts the blame.
Who does he blame?

Samuel will have none of this foolish talk; he has a word from the LORD for Saul.
What did Samuel point out?

Once again, we see Saul offer an excuse and lie instead of owning and repenting of his sin? According to Saul, whose fault is all this mess?

Day Five

1. Samuel replied to the King, telling him, *"...you are not in line with God. You think you know better than God how to deal with those who oppose Him."*

The Amalekites were a cruel and heartless people who had been given many opportunities to repent. God knew there would never be true peace in the land, if the Israelites did not destroy the Amalekites. He knew they would always be a

hindrance, which would continue to influence Israel to turn away from God. The time of God's longsuffering and patience had come to an end.

What was God trying to do for Israel?

2. King Saul has not changed; read 1 Samuel 15:30-31. Did you notice the wording, "*I'm sorry...but...*"?

Real apologies should never contain the word, 'but.'

According to King Saul's own words, who is still the most important person in this scenario? Who is deserving of honor?

3. Samuel called for King Agag, the Amalekite, and he killed him with the sword, himself. Then Samuel went to Ramah and Saul went up to Gibeah.

Read 1 Samuel 15:35.

What other facts do you learn in this verse?

4. In Luke 12:48 we see the words of Jesus, "*To whom much is given, much is required.*"

How might this universal truth apply to King Saul?

5. How does the truth of Luke 12:48 apply to you, this day?

6. 1 Samuel 16:1 begins a new chapter in Israel history. What is about to happen?

7. As we have done each week, add God's character qualities you have seen to your list on **The Character of God** page. Some of His qualities may be repeated from chapter to chapter but you may also see new ones as well.

Please, do not leave this undone. The purpose of our study is to get to know our God.