



*Honing in on the Heart!’ Sermon Series*

**Sermon #17:**

*‘The Private Plot!’*

Wednesday, May 29th, 2024

*Last week in ‘Honing in on the Heart:*

- Last week we looked at 1st Samuel 9:3-27, with a sermon entitled *‘From Donkeys Missing to a Divine Meeting!’*
  - I asked the question: *What circumstances arise in this passage that were brought about by God, to show Samuel that Saul was to be the next king of Israel?*
    - **Point 1:** *Sent on a Working Mission. (V. 3-4)*
    - **Point 2:** *Specific Words Mentioned. (V. 5-10)*
    - **Point 3:** *Searching Wholeheartedly for the Man. (V. 11-14)*

- **Point 4:** *Supernatural Words that Matter. (V. 15-21)*

- **Point 5:** *Special and Wonderful Meal. (V. 22-27)*

- When we concluded last week, I challenged you to think and ponder, and ask yourself, are you chasing missing donkeys in your life?
  - And if you were, to ask God to guide you and show you through whatever wilderness you’re currently going through.

*‘The Private Plot!’*

*1st Samuel 10:1-16*

**Sermon in a Sentence:**

*The private plot that unfolds in this text, before Saul is introduced to the nation as king, unfolds as we look at the Anointing, the Affirmations, the Acquisition, the Appearance, and the Asking.*

**Intro:**

- Tonight we will continue our study in 1st Samuel, as we look at how Saul was privately anointed by Samuel, before being publicly introduced as the King of Israel.
  - *I truly believe tonight that through our study of this text, we will be able to see how Saul reluctantly accepted this anointing.*
    - We will see that God does a work in Saul’s life. Yet, over the course of Saul’s life, we are going to see the tragic

downfall that he took his eyes off of Jesus.

- ***In verses 1-8 of our text tonight, we find the longest recorded speech that Samuel ever gave to an individual.***
  - ***147 words in the Hebrew text that Samuel said to Saul here, privately.***
  - ***In what we find tonight, scholar Robert D. Bergen said that these 147 words accomplished these three main things:***
    - ***'#1 he revealed that Saul was God's choice to be Israel's first King. #2 he laid out for Saul a series of Confirmatory signs. #3 Then intimated to Saul the proper relationship that was to exist between king and prophet in Israel.'***
- What I believe we find in the private plot that we will read of tonight, is that Saul started out on the right foot.
  - Samuel gave him the right foundation to be able to be a 'good' king for the nation of Israel.
  - ***As we will soon find out, Saul started out as a very great king, but he did not stay that way. He did not continue to keep his eyes on the Lord, but focused more on himself and his own ego.***

***\*Read 1st Samuel 10:1-16\****

**Question to Ask:**

***What occurs privately and publicly in this text to show us the plot and the plan of Saul becoming the first King of Israel?***

**Point 1: *The Anointing. (V. 1)***

- 'Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head and kissed him and said, "Has not the LORD anointed you to be prince[a] over his people Israel? And you shall reign over the people of the LORD and you will save them from the hand of their surrounding enemies. And this shall be the sign to you that the LORD has anointed you to be prince[b] over his heritage.'
- ***What we find here in verse 1, is that Samuel follows what the Lord told him to do, back in 1st Samuel 9:16.***
  - "Tomorrow about this time I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him to be prince[a] over my people Israel. He shall save my people from the hand of the Philistines. For I have seen[b] my people, because their cry has come to me."
- ***So, Samuel puts into action what the Lord told him to do.***
  - Historically, anointing was reserved for sacred objects as is seen in Leviticus 8:10-11 and Numbers 7:1. It was also reserved for Aaronic priests according to Leviticus 8:30.
  - Scholar R.L. Harris said this concerning this anointing that Saul experienced:
    - ***'The act of pouring a flask of specially prepared olive oil on Saul's head***

**apparently symbolized the staking of a divine claim on him, as well as the outpouring of the Lord's enabling Spirit into the newly designated king's life.'**

- **Remember, God is giving the people what they wanted and what they asked for.**
  - When looking at how Samuel words this in the Hebrew text, it is clear that Samuel wants saul to know that this comes from God.
  - Saul was chosen for this.

● **\*Word Study\***

- The word 'annointed' that occurs in verse 1, comes from the Hebrew word **'Mashach'**

**מָשַׁח** which literally means here in the context of verse 1 as anointed.

- The term can also mean and will be later be translated as 'the Lord's anointed' or 'the Lord's Messiah'.
- **Hebrew scholar Stephen J. Andrews notes 'The familiar Hebrew term Messiah is derived from the same verb as 'annointed' here, Masach'**
- **This is significant because David would also be known as the Lord's anointed, and Jesus, our Messiah, came from David's lineage.**

- Samuel tells Saul in this private meeting, that he is going to be the 'prince' of Israel, some translations say 'leader'.
- Either way, Saul doesn't quite understand what all this means, yet, but in due time he will.
  - **For now, we see that the anointing has occurred.**

**Point 2: The Affirmations. (V. 2-8)**

- 'When you depart from me today, you will meet two men by Rachel's tomb in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah, and they will say to you, 'The donkeys that you went to seek are found, and now your father has ceased to care about the donkeys and is anxious about you, saying, "What shall I do about my son?"' 3 Then you shall go on from there farther and come to the oak of Tabor. Three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you there, one carrying three young goats, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine. 4 And they will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you shall accept from their hand. 5 After that you shall come to Gibeath-elohim, [c] where there is a garrison of the Philistines. And there, as soon as you come to the city, you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place with harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre before them, prophesying. 6 Then the Spirit of the LORD will rush upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man. 7 Now when these signs meet you, do what your hand finds to do, for God is with

you. **8** Then go down before me to Gilgal. And behold, I am coming down to you to offer burnt offerings and to sacrifice peace offerings. Seven days you shall wait, until I come to you and show you what you shall do.”

- ***Samuel does not stop and explain what this anointing means and it's significance.***

- Instead, Samuel sends Saul on a journey that we will encounter 4 specific signs that will affirm that God really has chosen Saul to be the first king of Israel.

- *We find these four affirmations straight from our text, in verses 2-8.*

- ***First Sign of Affirmation. (V. 2)***

- ‘When you depart from me today, you will meet two men by Rachel's tomb in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah, and they will say to you, ‘The donkeys that you went to seek are found, and now your father has ceased to care about the donkeys and is anxious about you, saying, “What shall I do about my son?”’ 1st Samuel 10:2
- First, Samuel tells Saul to go to a direct location to men that would have connections to his family.

- *Remember, all of this started off with lost donkeys in the first place.*

- *So, these two men would have connections to his family, and let them*

*know that his dad was worried about him, and the donkeys were fine.*

- The words of these men affirm that it was God who was leading Samuel to accurately predict this. But it also shows that Saul's dad was still in the dark on what all had been happening.

- ***The words of these two strangers affirms that God was changing Saul's path.***

- ***While his dad thought that he was still out looking for Donkeys, his son had just been anointed the first king of Israel.***

- ***Second Sign of Affirmation. (V. 3-4)***

- ‘Then you shall go on from there farther and come to the oak of Tabor. Three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you there, one carrying three young goats, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine. **4** And they will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you shall accept from their hand.’
- ***Back in 1st Samuel 9:7 in the conversation between Saul and his servant, Saul had stated that they had no bread left in their sacks.***

- ***Now we see that three men were on their way to Bethel and they would be giving him some bread.***

- This shows that God is fulfilling Saul's needs.
      - **God will not call you to do something that He has also not equipped you for.**
  - The meat, bread, and wine is significant because these men were headed for some sort of sacrificing ritual at Bethel.
    - **John Woodhouse pointed out 'The presentation of some of the bread to Saul suggests a recognition that Saul now had a special status in God's presence.'**
  - Nowhere else in the scriptures is the 'Oak of Tabor' mentioned except here in verse 3.
    - **In Genesis 35, there is an oak that is mentioned that was below Bethel. It's possible that this is the same one, although we can't be certain.**
      - 'And Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and she was buried under an oak below Bethel.' Genesis 35:8
- **Third Sign of Affirmation. (V. 5)**
  - 'After that you shall come to Gibeath-elohim, [c] where there is a garrison of the Philistines. And there, as soon as you come to the city, you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the

high place with harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre before them, prophesying.'

- The third sign is quite interesting.
- **Here, Samuel says that Saul will return home at Gibeah and there will be a garrison of Philistines in his hometown.**
  - How alarming this might have been for Saul to here.
- **This garrison of philistines represented the problem that Saul was chosen to solve as the first king of Israel.**
  - Then, we see an interesting turn of events as Samuel tells Saul that a group of prophets will come down with different instruments and will be prophesying.
    - **It is likely that this is the first time Saul ever encountered a group of prophets, because we know prior to this whole lost donkey chase, Saul was not interested in the things of God.**
- While this surely alarmed Saul, I'm sure, God was still very much at work in the details of Saul's story.
  - **Just as He is at work in the details of each of our own individual lives.**
- **Fourth Sign of Affirmation. (V. 6)**

- ‘Then the Spirit of the LORD will rush upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man.’ 1st Samuel 10:6
- **Here in verse 6 of 1st Samuel 10, we have strong evidence that God is the only one that can change someone.**
  - As a youth Pastor, I remember hearing kids say that they would be able to ‘change’ someone once they started dating.
  - You can’t change anybody, but God certainly can.
- **This is not the first time in scripture that we see the breath or Spirit of God rush over someone.**
  - Judges 14:6 tells us that the Spirit of God rushed over Saul.
- **The guy who just a day before had no interest in God, had now been radically changed by God. Never underestimate how God can change someone.**
  - That’s why we should never stop praying for God to change people’s lives.
- **In verses 7 & 8, we see that Samuel tells Saul what he is to do after these signs were completed.**
  - Saul was now empowered and enlightened by God’s Spirit. So, what was he to do?
- **Samuel tells him in verse 7 ‘do what your hand finds to do’.**

- **What makes this interesting is that this same idiom is found in Judges 9:33**
  - ‘Then in the morning, as soon as the sun is up, rise early and rush upon the city. And when he and the people who are with him come out against you, you may do to them as your hand finds to do.’
- **Based on this, the context in Judges 9:33 makes it clear that this idiom was to be a military action against a certain enemy.**
  - **I believe here that Samuel is telling Saul, that once the Spirit of God has rushed upon you, act against the enemies of Israel.**
- Remember the detail of the garrison of the Philistines that was there at Saul’s hometown?
  - It seems as if this was an obvious enemy and that Saul was to be the one to defeat them.
- **If defeating the philistines is what God wanted Saul to do, verse 8 gives Saul further instructions.**
  - ‘Then go down before me to Gilgal. And behold, I am coming down to you to offer burnt offerings and to sacrifice peace offerings. Seven days you shall wait, until I come to you and show you what you shall do.’
- **Now Saul was to go to Gilgal and wait for Samuel for 7 days.**

- *This is an early lesson that Saul was to listen to Samuel and the prophets, because they were God's mouthpiece.*
- While Saul would not always adhere to this in his time as king, from the beginning he was taught that he was to be subordinate to the Prophets.

**Point 3: *The Acquisition.* (V. 9)**

- *'When he turned his back to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart. And all these signs came to pass that day.'* 1st Samuel 10:9
- First, God changed Saul's heart, and then these signs came to pass.
  - *Before you can see the incredible things that God does on our behalf each and everyday, you have to have that time in your life where God changed your heart.*
    - *This country boy who had anxiety over his dad's lost donkeys just 24 hours before, was changed by God totally and completely.*
  - The acquisition that Saul had here is that His heart was changed totally and completely by God.
    - *Have you had this acquisition in your life?*
  - *\*Word Study\**

- The ESV says 'God gave him another heart', other translations say God changed his heart.
- *What is translated here in the ESV as 'gave' comes from the Hebrew verb 'Hapak' הָפַק which literally means to turn something upside down.*

- *God is the only one who can turn someone upside down.*
  - Instead of resisting the change that God can do in our own lives, we need to embrace it.
  - Through Him, we can have the acquisition of a new heart before Him.
- So far tonight in this private plot we've seen the Anointing, the Affirmations, the Acquisition, next we see...

**Point 4: *The Appearance.* (V. 10-13)**

- 'When they came to Gibeah, [d]behold, a group of prophets met him, and the Spirit of God rushed upon him, and he prophesied among them. 11 And when all who knew him previously saw how he prophesied with the prophets, the people said to one another, "What has come over the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?" 12 And a man of the place answered, "And who is their father?" Therefore it became a proverb, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" 13 When he had finished prophesying, he came to the high place.'



- **The outward appearance and actions of Saul changed.**

- So much that people said ‘What has come over the son of kish?’
- *If God has really turned your heart upside down, then people should be asking, ‘wow, what made them change?’*

- **People shouldn’t have to LOOK to see if God has changed you or not, they should be able to SEE it.**

- **The emphasis in these verses is in the fact that God really and truly changed Saul. Which makes the rest of 1st Samuel that more interesting.**

- *The scriptures make it clear here that God did change Saul, but Saul decided to change himself later on, and go against God.*

- *God is the only one who can truly change us, but we make the decision whether or not to live and walk in that change that He has made in us everyday.*
  - Saul’s story will end up becoming very sad. But it’s very similar to our story today. God has saved us and changed us. Yet we’d rather not live the changed life but the estranged life that looks and seems more fun in the here and now.

- This proverb that is first mentioned here, will not be the last time it is mentioned in 1st Samuel.

- **It occurs again in 1 Samuel 19:24:**

- ‘And he too stripped off his clothes, and he too prophesied before Samuel and lay naked all that day and all that night. Thus it is said, “Is Saul also among the prophets?”’

- **The next time that this proverb occurs, will be at the time that Saul loses His ability to be able to lead Israel anymore.**

- **Verse 13 is important:**

- ‘When he had finished prophesying, he came to the high place.’

- **Instead of making a move against the Philistine garrison, Saul goes to the high place.**

- So, Samuel told Saul to ‘Do what your hands find to do, for God is with you’ which alludes to military action.

- **But Saul does not do this. Interestingly enough Saul and the narrator are ignoring the elephant in the room, the Philistines!**

- We’ve seen the anointing, affirmations, acquisition, and appearance. Lastly tonight, we see a family member comes asking Saul some questions.



**Point 5: *The Asking. (V. 14-16)***

- ‘Saul's uncle said to him and to his servant, “Where did you go?” And he said, “To seek the donkeys. And when we saw they were not to be found, we went to Samuel.” 15 And Saul's uncle said, “Please tell me what Samuel said to you.” 16 And Saul said to his uncle, “He told us plainly that the donkeys had been found.” But about the matter of the kingdom, of which Samuel had spoken, he did not tell him anything.’
- Saul's Uncle ask him ‘where did you go?’
  - *I don't think the uncle is asking for a geographic location of where Saul was in searching for donkeys, but rather, ‘what happened to you?’*
- *Perhaps the uncle had noticed the change in Saul that everyone else in town had seen in him.*
  - *Saul chooses his words very carefully. He did not lie to his uncle, he just didn't tell him all the things that God had done in he and Samuel's interaction.*
- As soon as Saul tells his uncle that he had gone to Samuel, the uncle seems more interested. Almost like the uncle put two and two together.
  - *It's possible that Saul's uncle was more aware and involved in the nation's crisis that was mentioned in 1st Samuel 8.*
  - *As soon as the uncle heard Samuel's name, the uncle wants to know.*

- Why did Saul not tell his uncle what all had happened to him?
- We can not be certain as to why Saul was silent about this matter.
- Robert D. Bergen pointed this out concerning this question: *‘David's Kingship likewise would have a two-stage beginning. Both were selected as kings by the Lord, yet the kingship of both was hidden from their family members for a period of time.’*
  - This would all come out in God's timing, but for now, it was still a private plot and pruning, for Saul.

**Conclusion:**

- *What we saw tonight occurred in private.*
  - *But very soon, God would allow this to become a public proclamation. The whole nation would soon know that Saul was to be the first king of Israel.*
- *Notice, that before Saul is publicly announced as the King, he is first privately changed by God.*
  - *Before Moses became the leader of Israel God used a burning bush and His very presence to change Him.*
  - *Before the Apostle Paul became the greatest evangelist apart from Jesus, that the world has ever seen, God met Him privately on the road to damascus and changed Him.*

- God has to have that ‘Private Plot’ moment with you, before you can be publicly used for His Glory.
  - Has God changed you? Have you had that moment in your life where He changed your heart for good?
- *Maybe tonight it’s been a really long time since that change occurred. Maybe tonight you know you’re saved, but you just need the Lord to refine and revive you in this place tonight.*
  - *God wants to change you privately (sanctification), before He can use you publicly for His Glory.*
- Tonight we saw this private plot unfold by looking at:
  - **Point 1: *The Anointing. (V. 1)***
  - **Point 2: *The Affirmations. (V. 2-8)***
  - **Point 3: *The Acquisition. (V. 9)***
  - **Point 4: *The Appearance. (V. 10-13)***
  - **Point 5: *The Asking. (V. 14-16)***
- What kind of Private Plot is God working on in you, that will soon be brought to the light?