

Context:

A massive transition is happening in Israel's history, where Israel is moving from a theocracy (God ruling as King) to a monarchy (humans ruling as king).

- In CH 9, we were introduced to the man who will be the first king of Israel, Saul.
- Thus far, Saul has been a bit of a mystery. He looks good on the outside, but he appears weak on the inside.
- In CH 10, Saul is anointed and proclaimed as the king, but the question of who Saul is, is further highlighted, leading some in Israel to question, *“How can this man save us?”*

The Story:

**I. THE ANOINTING OF SAUL AS KING (vv1-16)**

<sup>1</sup> 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 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 over his heritage. <sup>2</sup> 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?”’ <sup>3</sup> 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. <sup>4</sup> And they will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you shall accept from their hand. <sup>5</sup> After that you shall come to Gibeath-elohim, 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. <sup>6</sup> Then the Spirit of the Lord will rush upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man. <sup>7</sup> Now when these signs meet you, do what your hand finds to do, for God is with you. <sup>8</sup> 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.” <sup>9</sup> When he turned his back to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart. And all these signs came to pass that day. <sup>10</sup> When they came to Gibeah, behold, a group of prophets met him, and the Spirit of God rushed upon him, and he prophesied among them. <sup>11</sup> 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?” <sup>12</sup> And a man of the place answered, “And who is their father?” Therefore it became a proverb, “Is Saul also among the prophets?” <sup>13</sup> When he had finished prophesying, he came to the high place. <sup>14</sup> 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.” <sup>15</sup> And Saul's uncle said, “Please tell me what Samuel said to you.” <sup>16</sup> 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 not telling his uncle about “the matter of the kingdom” (v16) is curious, given all that has happened in these verses.

- God has clearly indicated to Saul that he will be king, with the task of saving God's people from the hands of their surrounding enemies (v1). Three specific, clear-cut signs are given (vv2-6) to confirm that what God has said will come to pass, and yet Saul says nothing about it to his uncle

\* What this seems to indicate (and what will be made clear in later chapters) is that Saul lacks faith and trust in God and His Word. Nevertheless, this is the man that God is going to use

The significance of this section is that God is going to use this weak and faithless man, in a powerful way, by His Spirit, to accomplish His purposes.

\* The Spirit of God rushing upon Saul and turning him into another man, giving him a new heart (**vv6, vv9-10**) is not referring to regeneration or the new birth. This doesn't mean Saul was converted, but rather given the context, it means that God is turning Saul into a man who will be fit for the position he's been given by God (a king who will save God's people from the hand of their surrounding enemies).

That God would use a man like Saul is both an encouragement and a warning to us:

#### Encouragement:

- God can use anyone (even weak people, regardless of how much they are lacking) in powerful ways, by His Spirit, to accomplish His purposes.

#### Warning:

- God can use anyone (even weak people, regardless of how much they are lacking) in powerful ways, by His Spirit, to accomplish His purposes.

\* This is a warning because it means that just because God is using us in powerful ways, does not necessarily indicate that we are right with God.

\* We must be continually checking our hearts to make sure we are right before the Lord.

### **I. THE PROCLAMATION OF SAUL AS KING (vv17-27)**

<sup>17</sup> Now Samuel called the people together to the Lord at Mizpah. <sup>18</sup> And he said to the people of Israel, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, 'I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all the kingdoms that were oppressing you.' <sup>19</sup> But today you have rejected your God, who saves you from all your calamities and your distresses, and you have said to him, 'Set a king over us.' Now therefore present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes and by your thousands." <sup>20</sup> Then Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin was taken by lot. <sup>21</sup> He brought the tribe of Benjamin near by its clans, and the clan of the Matrites was taken by lot; and Saul the son of Kish was taken by lot. But when they sought him, he could not be found. <sup>22</sup> So they inquired again of the Lord, "Is there a man still to come?" and the Lord said, "Behold, he has hidden himself among the baggage." <sup>23</sup> Then they ran and took him from there. And when he stood among the people, he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward. <sup>24</sup> And Samuel said to all the people, "Do you see him whom the Lord has chosen? There is none like him among all the people." And all the people shouted, "Long live the king!" <sup>25</sup> Then Samuel told the people the rights and duties of the kingship, and he wrote them in a book and laid it up before the Lord. Then Samuel sent all the people away, each one to his home. <sup>26</sup> Saul also went to his home at Gibeah, and with him went men of valor whose hearts God had touched. <sup>27</sup> But some worthless fellows said, "How can this man save us?" And they despised him and brought him no present. But he held his peace.

Saul hiding among the baggage (**v22**) is yet another indication of his weakness. He is full of fear, and lacking in faith.

- As a result (in part), this leads some "worthless fellows" to question "How can this man save us?", despising Saul as the king (**v27**).

- The description of these fellows as "worthless" points us back to **1 Samuel 2:12= Now the sons of Eli were "worthless" men. They did not know the LORD.**

These worthless fellows did not know the Lord, which implies that what they were really reacting against, was the fact that Israel's kings would be kings under the kingship of the Lord - In **verse 25**, Samuel was very likely reciting **Deuteronomy 17:14-20**, which is a prescription for Israel's kings to be kings, not like the kings of the nations, but kings who fear the Lord all the days of their lives.

\* These worthless fellows do not want a king who trusts in the Lord because they do not know the Lord or believe that He can save.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. The fact that God uses a man like Saul, in spite of his weaknesses, is an encouragement to us in that it reminds us that God can use anyone, in powerful ways, to accomplish His purposes. In what ways do you struggle to believe this and why? Are there ways that you are not making yourself available to be used by God because you do not think you have much to offer? What can help you to combat against this thinking?
2. The fact that God uses a man like Saul, in spite of his weaknesses, is also a warning to us in that it reminds us that being used by God, significant ways, is not necessarily a sign that we are right with the Lord. In what ways is this true in your own life (where God is using you, but your heart is not necessarily right with Him)? What steps of repentance can you take this week to ensure that your heart is right before the Lord?
3. The “worthless fellows” who rejected Saul and asked, “How can this man save us?” (v27) were not simply doubting Saul himself as the king, but were doubting Saul as a king who had to trust and obey the Lord. Essentially they did not trust that the Lord could save because they did not know Him or care about Him. In what areas of your life do you struggle to trust King Jesus as your Lord and Savior? Why do you think you struggle in these particular areas? What would it look like for you to trust Jesus in these particular areas?