

Message #24

I Samuel 10:17-27

Years ago I knew of a minister who said before he would accept any Pastorate, he had to have 100% vote. Now actually he manipulated that a bit because if the congregation voted to call him as pastor, he would let them take another vote to get it to 100%. So in some respects the 100% numbers was skewed.

But regardless of that, what this fails to realize is that in any organization of God, there will be worthless people who cannot discern the will of God on anything. It doesn't matter what the decision being made, there will always be some people who are out of step with the Spirit of God, the word of God and the will of God.

This can be true concerning voting on a leader, a building, color of carpet or selection of a hymnal. In any operation there are those worthless people who are out of step with God's will. It is true for the church and it was certainly true for Israel in the selection of King Saul.

It was not God's original intent for Israel to have a king. God's original plan was that the nation be led by Him and His word through His appointed priestly leader. But Israel wanted a king, so God decided to give them a king. He selected Saul to be the king.

Saul was not looking for this job. He was not looking to become a king. He was not sending out resumes and soliciting this. He was not out holding political rallies and trying to drum up support. **This was clearly God's choice. God made His choice of king known to Samuel and to the leadership of Israel and to Saul.**

Now it was time to make this selection known to the people of Israel. Most of the people get it, but not all. What we clearly see here is this:

WHEN GOD SELECTS SOMEONE TO BE HIS LEADER, HE WILL CONFIRM IT TO THE INDIVIDUAL, TO OTHER LEADERS AND TO THE PEOPLE; BUT THERE WILL BE SOME WORTHLESS PEOPLE WHO WILL NOT SUPPORT HIM AND WILL BE AGAINST HIM.

Whenever and wherever God is working, there will be some worthless people who are going the wrong direction. There are some people who just do not ever get dialed into the will of God.

There are six historical realities we want to observe here:

HISTORICAL REALITY #1 – Samuel calls a national meeting of Israel. 10:17

It was time to show the nation Israel what Samuel already knew. It was time to announce to Israel who would be their King. So Samuel called a meeting of all Israel at Mizpah.

Mizpah was one of the circuit cities where Samuel would judge (I Sam. 7:15-17). He would leave his home in Ramah and then travel to Bethel, Gilgal and Mizpah.

Mizpah was a place where the people had gathered a few years earlier for a revival and it is a place where a decisive victory took place over the Philistines (I Sam. 7:1-14). Mizpah was centrally located, about two miles north of Ramah, and about 4-5 miles north of Gibeah, where Saul lived.

Now to call a national meeting at Mizpah would have taken a little time and would not have been easy. For some people, it would have taken many days travel by foot or donkey or mule or horse. The people did not have the luxury of jumping in a car and driving, so this would have not been as simple as it is today.

It is a shame that when a congregational meeting is called today, there are always those who refuse to get in their nice car, out of their nice home and drive to a nice church. Congregational meetings sometimes have a difficult time producing a quorum.

Congregational meetings for Israel were not simple. They required planning, provisions, time and travel. But most took these meetings seriously and they went because they needed to be there.

HISTORICAL REALITY #2 – Samuel communicates negative truth to the Israeli congregation. 10:18-19a

Now Samuel is not functioning here as a judge but as a prophet. This must have been somewhat of a shock to Israel and it certainly is not the way you are taught in homiletics to sway an audience by your introduction. Samuel starts with an introduction that blasts the congregation.

When the meeting got underway, Samuel reminded Israel that their desire for a king was a rejection of God. He starts off this meeting by rebuking the entire nation.

Think about the context of this. These people had sacrificed to get to this meeting but that does not change the message they needed to hear. There are some people who say, “We don’t go to church to hear something negative that steps on our toes; we want some loving encouragement.” Well Samuel didn’t seem to buy into that philosophy.

These people needed to be rebuked and Samuel starts off by doing just that. He reminded them that God had done so much for them in bringing them out of Egypt to the Promised Land. He had delivered them via Moses from the Egyptians and He had delivered them via Joshua from all the other powers.

God had delivered Israel from all of her enemies one by one. But Israel was not happy with that. She was not happy with the way God did it. They were not happy with a man like Samuel leading them and they wanted a king, so God decided to give them one.

There are some people who think nothing negative should ever be shared at Church, not even if it is straight from the word of God. Well the word of God reproves and rebukes and it corrects and often that is negative whether people like it or not. Any true place of God will proclaim God's word even when it is negative.

HISTORICAL REALITY #3 – Samuel communicates God's selection to the congregation of Israel. **10:19b-24**

At this point in time, Samuel knew Saul was God's choice of king, the thirty leaders knew Saul was God's choice of king and Saul knew he was to be God's choice of king, but now it was time for the people of Israel to know. So this is something being done publicly that is designed to show that Saul is God's choice, not some human choice.

Israel was divided into Tribes. The tribes were subdivided into families or clans. The families or clans were subdivided into houses. The houses were subdivided into individuals. Samuel called all of the tribes together and then he cast lots to determine which tribe would be the one who would produce the king (**10:20**). Samuel was doing this to show this was God's choice.

In O.T. times, the casting of lots was not a game of chance, but a legitimate means of determining the will of God (Prov. 16:33). Lot casting was a typical way to determine God's will in O.T. times on "yes" and "no" decisions. One pebble would represent "yes" and another would represent "no." Lots were cast usually on a cloth or person's lap. Ever since Pentecost in Acts 2, God's people have the Holy Spirit in them and the Holy Spirit leads people so there is no longer a need for casting lots (Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:18). Generally speaking, when God's people gather together, God's Spirit works in and through the majority of people to reveal His will.

In perfect consistency with the will of God, Samuel publicly did something he already knew. He cast the lot and the lot fell to the tribe of Benjamin. **Verse 21** says that Samuel brought the tribe of Benjamin to him and the lot fell to the "Matrite family" and from there the lot fell to Saul.

This is the only place where this term "Matrite" is used. What we assume is that it was a family in the tribe of Benjamin, somehow connected with Kish and Saul. This is certainly not a famous or lasting pedigree, like that of David.

The lot fell to Saul, but **verse 21** says he could not be found. So as **verse 22** says, they "inquired further of the LORD." That phrase is connected to the Urim and Thummim (Num. 27:21). This was something the High Priest wore in his breastplate (Ex. 28:30). This apparently was a special way of ascertaining the will of God in Kingdom matters.

The process of how this works is not stated, but apparently they appealed to God and God revealed that Saul was hiding in the luggage area, among the wagons and baggage. Remember he is the tallest man in the nation Israel and he is trying to hide. The luggage area was probably in some "perimeter" area of the camp.

Saul was not looking for this job. He was not looking to become a politician who ruled the entire nation. Some would have loved that power, but not Saul. He was modest, humble and scared.

Certainly he was not a confident man, even though he was taller and better looking than anyone else (9:2). He was insecure. Just because someone is good-looking and has a good physique does not mean they have confidence.

Frankly, there will be times when you are called to do a job for God, when you will feel totally insecure and be completely afraid. At times you will be totally overwhelmed with the task. Just remember, it was God who called you.

Verse 23 says the people ran and got Saul and brought him to Samuel. He was the tallest man in Israel and Samuel pointed out this is God's choice. When God picks a person for a job, there will be no better choice.

We need to remember that. When God gives us a job, we are God's choice for that job and even though we may have insecurities and doubts, we need to remember our job was from God.

According to **verse 24**, Samuel announced to the people that this was God's choice and there was no one like him and the people shouted "Long live the king."

HISTORICAL REALITY #4 – Samuel communicates and writes the Word of God for Israel.
10:25a

We cannot help but see the emphasis on the word of God in this setting. **Verse 18** says, "thus says the LORD" and **verse 25** stresses the written ordinances of the Kingdom.

More than likely Samuel went over the Mosaic instructions concerning the King and Kingdom life (Deut. 17:14-20). Samuel also specifically wrote down data pertaining to this event. Most of what we are actually studying tonight is due to the fact that Samuel wrote this down. This does in fact prove Samuel wrote much of this very book.

The point that we need to see is that Samuel is totally and completely focused on God's word and will at this gathering. This is exactly what a true gathering of God's people should have as their focus. When God's people are gathered together at church, their focus needs to be the word of God.

HISTORICAL REALITY #5 – Samuel dismisses the congregation of Israel. **10:25b-26**

Samuel ended the meeting by dismissing the people and sending them home. Saul went to his home in Gibeah, but God raised up some valiant men who immediately went with him. This would be like an immediate secret service raised up by God.

HISTORICAL REALITY #6 – Some worthless men oppose Samuel's teaching and Saul.

10:27

Notice **verse 27**, there were some “worthless men” who did not accept the word of God and will of God and they would not support Saul. These were “sons of Belial” or Satanic men. These worthless men despised Saul, would not contribute to Saul and criticized and questioned Saul.

The text says Saul kept silent. In response to his critics, Saul kept silent. Now this appears to be a good mark of leadership, but perhaps it is not. This passivity in letting these guys get away with this could lead people to think, well if he cannot even put a stop to these worthless men, how will he deliver us from worthless enemies?

Most believe this was a positive mark of leadership. Just keep quiet and don't respond to critics.

When we are where we are supposed to be and doing what we are supposed to be doing, God will confirm it; but there will be those who will oppose us. That point is clear from this text in I Samuel.