

**Preaching Christ....
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God**

Date: 11 September 2022
Services: *Across the diocese*
Series: 1 Samuel – In search of a King
Passage: 1 Samuel 9-12
Title: The rise of Saul

✘ INTRODUCTION

- **CONSIDER WHAT GREAT THINGS HE HAS DONE FOR YOU...**
- **Grateful remembrance** is a common theme for motivating **behaviour...**
- We gather on **Anzac day** and we pledge, out of **grateful remembrance**, to be ever diligent in maintaining peace
- When people are dramatically saved by the flying doctors or a care flight helicopter, they will often make a donation to such - in **grateful remembrance for their rescue**
- Or at a funeral... you may be asked to make a donation to the **cancer council** or something similar - in **grateful remembrance for a person's life.**
- We read here in 1 Samuel 12:24, in Samuel's parting words to Israel *Be sure to fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart; **consider what great things he has done for you.***
- **Consider what great things he has done for you.**
- That's something of what we'll explore today...
- now, we're going explore these chapters by asking the same three questions we've been asking throughout the series:
 1. **what is the passage about?**
 2. **what does it teach us about God?**
 3. **how does it point us to Jesus?**
- So:

1. **WHAT IS THE PASSAGE ABOUT?**

- We're introduced to **SAUL** – a young man out looking for his dad's **donkeys** one day, when the **strangest thing happened.**
- They had been gone a few days and he and his servant were ready to head back thinking his dad by now, would be more worried about **him** than the **donkeys.**
- But his **servant** said that there was a man in **this town** who was highly **respected** and everything he says comes **true...** 'let's go talk to him – perhaps he'll tell us which way to take.'
- They were given directions as to how to find this man and then as it happened, **ran into him** as he was going up to **sacrifice.**
- His **name?** **SAMUEL.** ✘ blk

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- Samuel **immediately knew** who Saul was (that is, the one **God** has chosen as Israel's **very first king!**).
- And Samuel told Saul that he was to **eat** with him and that he would tell him all that was in his **heart**.
- He told Saul not to worry about the **donkeys** as they had been **found...** but **then** he said the **strangest** thing:
- *And to whom is all the desire of Israel **turned**, if not to **you** and all your **father's family?***
- Saul couldn't work out **what** he was saying.
- He was a **Benjamite** – the **smallest tribe** – and then from the **smallest clan within** that tribe.... ///
- Well – they went to **dinner** – and Saul and his servant were seated at the **head** of the **table...** there was about **30 people there...** And Saul was given the **largest bit of meat you'd ever seen...** more than anyone **else** and was told it had been set aside just for **him!**
- After that, **Samuel** and **Saul** talked all **night** on his rooftop till **morning**.
- As it was time for them to **go**, Samuel told Saul's servant to go on **ahead** of them and that Saul should **stay** as he had a message from **God** for **him**.
- Saul was kind of **overwhelmed** by all of this... and then – then **Samuel** took a flask of **oil** and **poured** it on Saul's **head...** and **kissed** him and said '*has not the Lord anointed **you** leader over his **inheritance?***'
- He gave him a series of **instructions** and **signs** to follow and said that the **Spirit of God** would come on him in **great power** and that he will **prophesy...** and that the Lord would be **with** him in **whatever** he **did.** ///
- Everything Samuel said **would happen // did.**
- The **Spirit of God** came upon Saul in **power**.
- He began **prophesying** and everyone was **asking** whether he was now a **prophet!** ///
- Then **Samuel** had all the leaders of **Israel** gather at **Mizpah**.
- He told them off once **more** for rejecting **God** and asking for a **king**.
- but then (by lot) – **one tribe** was **chosen** – the tribe of **Benjamin**.
- And then out of all the **clans**, Saul's clan of **Matri** was **chosen**.
- Then from **that** clan, **Saul** was **chosen...** he wasn't actually **there** – he was so **embarrassed** and **overwhelmed** – he was **hiding** among the **luggage!**
- They came and **found him...** and everyone saw that he was a **head taller** than any of the **others...** and **Samuel** said there and then – *Do you see the man the Lord has chosen? There is **no one like him** among all the **people**.*
- And then they shouted – **long live the King, long live the King ...!**
- Samuel explained how this system of having a **king** would **work...** that Samuel as **prophet** would be **essential** in **guiding** the **king** and **revealing** the **Lord's will...//** and then **everyone** went **home.** ///
- After a **terrifying battle** against the **Ammonites**, Saul was **again** confirmed **King** at **Gilgal** and there were **sacrifices and a great celebration.** /

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- Samuel charged the people of **Israel** – *again* rebuking them for having **asked** for a **King** – and said now that the Lord has set a **king** over you – **fear the Lord** and **serve** and **obey him** and do not **rebel** against his **commands**... if you **obey** – **good!**. But if you do **not** obey the Lord and if you **rebel** against his **commands**... his hand will be **against you**.
- And then in an amazing **display** of God's **enormous power**... Samuel said – **stand still** and see the thing the **Lord** is **about** to do... I will call upon the Lord to send **thunder** and **rain** and you will realise what an **evil thing** you did in the eyes of the **Lord** when you **asked** for a **king**.
- That day there was thunder and rain just as Samuel said, and everyone was in **complete awe** // - both of **Samuel** - and **God**... and they asked Samuel to **pray** for them that they would not **die**...for they **realised** that to all their **other sins** // they had added the **evil** of **asking** for a **king**.
- And Samuel **comforted** the people – telling them not to be **afraid** and urged them to serve the Lord with all their **heart** and that the Lord would not **reject** them because he had been pleased to make them his **own**.
- He said he would **pray** for them and **teach** them what was **right**... and to – **consider what great things the Lord has done for you**... ///
- Quite a **story**...!!
- So let's ask then:

2. WHAT DO WE LEARN ABOUT GOD?

✘ **He is still the King!**

- God may have given them a **king** like the **nations** to **lead them** – but there is no doubt that the **Lord God** still **calling** the **shots**.
- **He arranged** for Saul's **donkeys** to go missing so he would run into **Samuel**
- God **revealed** to **Samuel** the day before that he would run into **Saul** and he was to **anoint** him **King**.
- God had **arranged** for **Samuel** to anoint Saul **King** whom **HE** had chosen to be **King!**
- He put his **Spirit** upon **Saul** for the task of **being King**.
- He who arranges how the **lots fall**, **arranged** for Saul to be **elected King** in front of **all the people**.
- He granted **Israel** success over the **Ammonites**.
- He caused **thunder and rain** which dramatically reminded Israel of his great **power**.
- God is **King**. The King of **Kings** and Lord of **Lords**.
- **He's still calling the shots!** //

✘ **that God's people still owe him complete allegiance**

- have a look with me at **12:24** *But be sure to fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart; consider what great things he has done for you*
- **consider what great things he has done for you!**
- For **keeping in mind what he has done for you** will cause you to **LONG** to **fear** him and **serve** him **faithfully** with all your **heart!!** //
- For Israel... what was it they were to remember... what great things had he done for them?

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- Brought them into **being** as a **nation**
- **through Joseph, provided for them in the great famine**
- With great power, **rescued** them from the cruel slavery of the **Egyptians**
- he brought them into the **promised land**
- he fought their **battles...** was **patient** with them in their **rebellion...** he **persisted** with them... **loved** them... /////
- We **too** are to consider what great things he has done for **US...** //
- **Loved** us in **creation** and **all** that he has **provided** for us
- **Loved** us in the gift of His **son** to **reveal himself** to us and show us the way of **compassion** and **love**
- Loved us in the **life, death and resurrection** of his **Son** so that we might be **reconciled** to him
- Loved us in the **gift** of the **Spirit** to empower us in **love and service and obedience**
- Loved us in the gift of the **church** – his **body** – our **family** – so that we might **spur one another** on to **love and good works...**
- **Loved us** in the promise of a **future** with him – **without sin** and **evil** or **pain** or **death** or **tears...** ////
- **Consider what great things he has done for you //**
- Consider what great things he has done for you!! //

3. HOW DOES THIS POINT US TO JESUS?

✘ everything happens through God's word

- the Bible teaches us that God **speaks**.
- God **rules** things by his **word** (see Heb 1:3).
- By his **word**, creation was brought into being (see Gen 1:14, Psalm 33:6, Heb 11:3).
- Jesus Christ himself is God's **word** that became flesh (John 1:14), and the good news (Gospel) about Jesus is now God's **word** to the **world** (Col 1:25).
- In other words, we see the significance of the events recounted in these chapters only when we see that the **word** of God was at the **heart** of it all.
- God said to Samuel, "Obey their voice and make them a king" (1 Sam 8:22a). Then he said, "tomorrow . . . I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin" (1 Sam 9:16).
- Everything that **happens** in these **chapters** was according to God's **word**.
- Saul became Israel's king by the word of God, and he would be required to **listen to** and **obey** the **word** of **God**.
- So even in the seemingly **mundane details** of the story, God was **sovereign**.
- God was making Saul **king** by his **word** and he rules – even through the **tiny details**, by appointing Saul to be Israel's leader.
- God **spoke definitively** in the person of **Jesus...** THE **WORD** of **God...** and speaks now through his **written word...** we ignore it at our peril!

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We are involved now in battle fighting but with a difference

- We don't go out and fight the **Ammonites**... but we are involved in a spiritual battle.
- Paul in Ephesians 6 - *our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*
- Every day – we're in that battlefield – whether we like it or not.
- But here's the thing: Jesus has already won the battle... in his resurrection he conquered death, he conquered evil, he conquered the Evil One!
- So we are involved in a battle which Jesus has already won... but we're involved if you like in a mopping up operation... we continue to fight against the **loser**... but we're clearly on the **winning side**... .///
- Jesus – God's ultimate King... **conquered evil** in his resurrection – and he rules the world!!

CONCLUSION

- Let me leave with you the line from these chapters which caused me to search my heart this week:
- As Samuel was urging Israel to 'fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart' he said ***Consider what great things he has done for you...***
- And I want to urge you this morning to - ***Consider what great things he has done for you...***
- Hear Jesus say – I came not to be served, but to serve – and ***consider what great things he has done for you***
- Look at Jesus before Pilate, and being flogged, and walking out to Calvary and ***Consider what great things he has done for you...***
- See him on the cross... ***Consider what great things he has done for you...***
- See the empty tomb and the risen Lord standing in the midst of the disciples and ***Consider what great things he has done for you...***
- Sense the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit – dwelling within you – and ***Consider what great things he has done for you...***
- ***Consider, what great things he has done for you!***

NEXT week - 1 Samuel 13-15, "The fall of Saul".