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Long Live the King
First Samuel 10: 17-27

Long live the king DIG: In publicly anointing Sha'ul, how does Samuel implicitly judge Isra'el and reward their protest (10:17-19, see 8:19-20)? Why the elimination process, when Samuel already knew Sha'ul was God's elect? In what sense was there "no one like Sha'ul?" How do the Israelites respond to their new king? Why this mixed reaction? How did Sha'ul receive the praises of the people?

REFLECT: Describe a time when people were surprised at how God was working in your life. Were you equally surprised by the grace of ADONAI? What major "calamity" in your past has the LORD delivered you from? How has the memory of that event shaped your relationship with YHVH now? How so? Why not? When you think of reigning with Messiah for eternity, how does that make you feel?

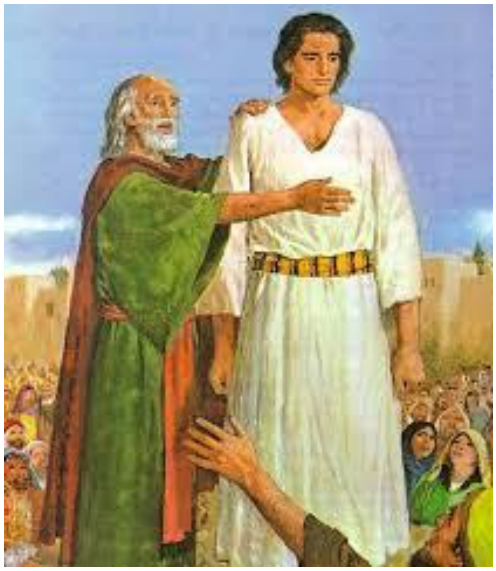
In His anger, God gave Sha'ul to Isra'el; but in His mercy, he gave us His Son, Yeshua.

Samuel, who had sent **the people** to **their homes (8:22)**, now assembles **them** once again at **Miztpah**, the very place where **he** had interceded **(7:5)**, and close to where **he** had set up **the stone of the Helper (7:12)**. Where **Samuel's** prophetic leadership had been most clearly vindicated, **he** was to inaugurate the new era that **the people** had demanded.[239] However, **He** had returned not merely to remember the prior **repentance** (**to see link click Bn – Repentance and Recommitment at Mizpah**), but in the hopes that a new repentance would occur. Therefore, while **the public coronation** would normally call for polite and formal behavior, with bland speeches and cheery affirmations, **Samuel** took the occasion to rebuke the nation for its unbelief in demanding **a king** in place of **ADONAI**.

Isra'el's unbelief rebuked (10:17-19a): Samuel called the people of Isra'el to ADONAI at Mitzpah, shortly after **Samuel's private coronation** of **Sha'ul** as **Isra'el's** first **king.** In the past **He said to them, "Here is what ADONAI, the**

God of Isra'el, says: **I brought Isra'el up out of Egypt. I rescued you from the power of the Egyptians and from the power of all the kingdoms that oppressed you. But,** speaking as **God's** mouthpiece, **he** declared: **Today you have rejected your God, who Himself saves you from all your disasters and distress. You have said to Him, 'No! Set a king over us!'**

Isra'el's king revealed (10:19b-24a): Then, after reminding **them** of **their** foolish insistence on having **a king like all the other nations**, **Samuel** demonstrated **God's** selection of **Sha'ul** by a process of elimination.[240] **So now, present yourselves before ADONAI by your tribes and clans." God Himself** guided the decision by means of **the Urim and Thummim** (see **Exodus Gb – The Urim and Thummim: The Means of Making Decisions**). **So Samuel had all the tribes come forward, and the tribe of Benjamin was taken** (Hebrew: *lakad*) **(10:19b-20).** Therefore, **the king** would come from that **tribe**. Next, **Samuel had the tribe of Benjamin come forward by families, and the family of the Matri was taken. Finally Sha'ul the son of Kish was taken.**



But when they looked for him, he couldn't be found. They asked ADONAI, "Where is he?" ADONAI answered through **Samuel, "There he is, hiding** out of fear**, in among the baggage."** Evidently, **he** didn't want to be **king**. This first official act on **Sha'ul's** part suggests that there was trouble ahead. **He** was a reluctant **ruler** who followed **his** emotions instead of building **his** faith. Anxious to hail **their** new **king, the people ran and brought him from there, and when he stood among the people he was head-and-shoulders taller than anyone**

around.[241] **Samuel** did what **he** could to salvage the embarrassing situation, and **said to all the people, "Do you see the man ADONAI has chosen, that there is no one like him among all the people" (10:21-24a)? He** presented **Sha'ul** as **God's** chosen **king** and highlighted **Sha'ul** admirable physical characteristics. **Sha'ul** had no opportunity to protest. By popular demand **a king** had been chosen, but if **Isra'el** thought **he** would solve all **their** problems by leading **them** to conquests, **they** were quite wrong.[242]

Ironically, the word **taken** (Hebrew: *lakad*) is normally translated *to capture or seize.* **Ha'Shem** gave **them their king**, but it ended up being part of **His** judgment against **the nation**. After being *captured* and **taken** to **Babylon** (see the commentary on **Jeremiah Gu – Seventy Years of Imperial Babylonian Rule**), **Zedekiah** would be the last human **king** of **Isra'el** (see **Jeremiah Fy – A Warning to Zedekiah**). **God's** ultimate answer to **their** foolish decision is recorded in **Hosea 13:9-11, "It is your destruction, Isra'el, although your help is in Me. So now, where is your king, to save you in all your cities? Where are your judges, of whom you** said: **Give me a king and leaders'? I gave you a king in my anger; and in my fury I took him away."**[243]

Isra'el's king confirmed (10:24b and 26-27): Then all the people shouted, "Long live the king" (10:24b)! As Richard Phillips recounts in his commentary in **1 Samuel**, with those words, **Isra'el** welcomed **her** new **king, Sha'ul the son of Kish.** But had **the people** consulted **God's Word**, **they** would have known that however long **Sha'ul** might reign, **his** dynasty could not endure. For as **Isra'el's** patriarch **Jacob** had prophesied, **the royal scepter** was destined for **the tribe of Judah**. **The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet until He comes to whom [obedience] it belongs; and it is He whom the [Gentile nations] will obey (49:10).**

First Samuel will tell the story of how the **kingship** passes from **Sha'ul** to **David**, and from **the tribe of Benjamin** to **Judah**. **Isra'el's kings** were types of **the true King** over **God's Kingdom**, **His** own **Son, Yeshua Messiah**, who was born of the line of **David** from **the tribe of Judah**. In **Sha'ul's** case, we see more of a foil of **Messiah**: as **a** tainted **king**, **he** serves more to contrast with **Yeshua** than to typify the reign of **God's Son**.

First, whatever we may think of **Sha'ul's hiding among the baggage**, **Yeshua** also hid **his** royal calling from **the people** of **Isra'el**. **Mark** records that when **Yeshua** performed miracles of healing, **he** instructed **the people**: **Do not tell**

anyone about **His** divine power **(Mark 7:36)**. The reason for **Messiah's** "messianic secret" was not **His** fear or reluctance, but that **He** had already been rejected by the Great Sanhedrin, and the fact that **He** had come to die for our **sins** and only later to return in royal glory and power.

A second contrast in **Samuel's** praise of **Sha'ul** that **there is none like him among all the people (10:24a).** This was true outwardly of **Sha'ul**, but it is true inwardly of **Messiah's** character and being. In this respect, **Sha'ul** shows us **Yeshua**, by what was missing in **Sha'ul's** life. Our **Lord** alone is utterly pure and without **sin (John 18:38)**. The book of **Hebrews** hails **Him** as **greater** than **the angels**, **greater** than **Moshe**, **greater** than **Joshua**, and **greater** than **the high priest Aaron**. For this reason Scripture says that **God has crowned Messiah with glory and honor, putting everything in subjection under His feet (Hebrews 2:7-8**, quoting **Psalm 8:5-6)**. There is truly **none like Yeshua among all the people**. **Hebrews 7:26** describes **Him** as **holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens,** and **He** is worthy to reign over **God's people** as **King** for all eternity.

Furthermore, we noted that **Sha'uls public coronation** was preceded by **Samuel's rebuke** of **Isra'el's unbelief**. In demanding **a** worldly **king**, **the Israelites** had sown the seeds of **their** own captivity and bondage in **Babylon**. **Yeshua**, however, came to deliver us *from* bondage, and to deliver **God's** remedy for **sin**. **His** blood sacrifice fully satisfies all of **YHVH's** wrath against our **sin**. **The** apostle **John** testified to this when **he** said: **For you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).** The Bible declares **Yeshua's** kingship as a reign of grace over **sin**, so that all who belong to **His Kingdom** are those who have come to **Him** for cleansing, forgiveness, and redemption.

Finally, **Sha'ul's public coronation** brought division to **Isra'el**. As **the new king** went home to **Gibeah**, **he** was **accompanied by valiant men whose hearts God had touched**; part of the believing remnant of that day. Yet, **there were** others, **some worthless rebels** (the same expression is translated **wicked men** in **2:12**) who **despised him and brought him no gift,** rejecting **his** authority**,** saying: **How can this man save us** from **our** enemies **(10:26-27)?** Likewise, the coming of **Messiah** has divided the world. Some, **their hearts** touched by the Gospel of **God's** grace, have reacted to **Yeshua's** cross to be cleansed of their **sins** and to

live as **His** disciples. But many **others despise the Lord** and withhold both **their** praise and **their** faith. Like **Sha'ul**, **Messiah held his peace** during **His** lifetime. But when **He** returns in glory (see **Isaiah Kg – The Second Coming of Jesus Christ to Bozrah**), with **His mighty angels in flaming fire (2 Thess 1:7-8)**, **Yeshua** will judge **the nations (Matthew 25:31-33)**, and inflict eternal destruction on those who oppose **His** reign **(2 Thess 1:8-9)**.

When **Sha'ul** was presented to **Isra'el**, **the people** cried out **"Long live the king!"** What shall we say to **the Lord Yeshua** when **He** returns? Seeing **Him** who exceeds all others, who died for our sins on the cross, and who reigns now forever . . . we can surely echo **the Israelites'** words with much greater hope. In **His** anger, **God** gave **Sha'ul** to **Isra'el**; but in **His** mercy, he has given us **His Son, Yeshua Messiah**. If our **hearts** are opened by **YHVH** to see **Yeshua** in the glory of **His** grace, we can one day cast our **crowns before the throne** (see **Revelation Cd – And There Before Me was a Throne in Heaven**), each of us gladly yielding our **hearts**, and crying out to **Yeshua, "Long live the King!" His** reign will never fail and never end, and those who bow to **His throne will reign forever and ever with Him in glory (Revelation 22:5)**.[244]

The Torah reaffirmed (10:25): The wisest thing **Samuel** did that day was to link **his kingship** to **the Torah**. After **the people's** acclamation of **Sha'ul** as **their king**, **Samuel reminded the people** of the **rulings** governing the conduct of **their kings**, probably based on what **Moses** had already written (see the commentary on **Deuteronomy Dh – The King**).[245] **He wrote it on a scroll and set it down before ADONAI** at **the Tabernacle** at **Nov** (see **the Life of David Av – David at Nov**)**. After that, he sent all the people away, everyone to his own home. Sha'ul too went home to Gibeah,** because at this point, **Isra'el** had no capital for **him** to go to**.**

At this point in our Bible, at the break between First Samuel 10 and 11, there is a sudden transition from Sha'ul to a new character, Nahash the Ammonite, and to a new location, Jabesh-Gilead, to the east of Jordan. In the Qumran manuscript 4QSam[a], however, the extra paragraph does provide a helpful introduction to the Ammonite war (see **Bz – The Ammonite War**)**, and Josephus reveals that it was part of text he used (Josephus, Antiquates 6.5.1). It appears to have been omitted from the LXX and MT. It explains that Nahash had been oppressing the tribes of Reuben and Gad, putting out the right eyes of all the men they captured,**

but that seven thousand had taken refuge in the city of Jabesh-Gilead. The last words of First Samuel 10:27 are transformed by a slight change in the Hebrew to the meaning "About a month later," as in the LXX and Josephus, thus giving the indication of the passing of time between the two incidents. However, the text does not add anything substantial to the meaning of the bible. The manuscript reads:

> **Now Nahash, king of the Ammonites, had been severely oppressing the tribes of Reuben and Gad by gouging out the right eye of each of them, and allowing no deliverer. No Israelites were across the Jordan whose right eye Nahash, king of the Ammonites, had not gouged out. But seven thousand men had escaped from the Ammonites and entered into Jabesh-Gilead.**[246]

*Dear heavenly **Father**, praise **You** that **You** always know the perfect timing for everything! Sometimes I get anxious when something happens, or I think that **You** need my help; but it is always wisest to trust **You** in all situations. Praise **You**, my great and wise heavenly **Father**. Words cannot express my admiration of how wise **You** are, and **Your** love and ability to see the future and plan for how to have all the right pieces in place to help me – exactly when I need your help. **You** are never late! I bow in awe of **Your** love and gracious help when I have a problem or trial. Thank **You** for choosing to live within those who **love You**. **Yeshua answered and said to him: If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word. My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our dwelling with him (John 14:23).***

*Praise **You** for making those who **trust** and who **love You** to be **Your children**. **But whoever did receive Him, those trusting in His name, to these He gave the right to become children of God. (John 1:12)**. Thank **You** for never leaving me, but for being right there and ready to help when I call out to **You**. **For God Himself has said, "I will never leave you or forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5c).** I praise and worship **You** for being such a wonderful heavenly **Father**. In **Messiah Yeshua's** holy **Name** and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*