

The following is a rough transcript, not in its final form and may be updated.

Rules for the Ruler

I Samuel 10:17-27

Intro: In **Ch8**, the elders of Israel came 2 Samuel & demanded that he install a king over them, a king “*like all the nations*.” The context of **ch8** (Samuel’s reaction & YHWH’s response) indicate that Israel’s request constitutes a *rejection* of the rule of YHWH over Israel that they had enjoyed since He delivered them from the bondage of Egypt. After the amazing revival of **ch7**, Israel’s reverting 2 their age old sin of trying 2 *substitute* YHWH, this time w/ a king!

Ch9-10:16 describes 4 us just how YHWH goes about answering Israel’s demand 4 a king. He finds the perfect candidate, a man who really looks the part of a king, at least the kind of king that Israel was demanding. Thru the divine arrangement of common, everyday circumstances, YHWH brings Saul 2 meet w/ Samuel who explains 2 him God’s decision & what was expected of him. Then Samuel anoints Saul as king over Israel. The problem is, Samuel & Saul are the only people that knew about it. In fact, when Saul is questioned by his uncle on what Samuel had said to him, he was cagey w/ his response (**vs16**). Was this *humility*, *unbelief* or just plain *selfishness*? When the verse is read alone, its difficult 2 say. But when it is read in context w/ the rest of the chapter, Saul’s character seems 2 really reflect that of Israel’s. So, how does 1 go about telling a selfish people that their selfish prayer’s been answered? In the rest of **ch10**, YHWH, thru the ministry of Samuel, is going 2 present Israel w/ the kind of king she deserves.

17- Mizpah- Samuel calls Israel together 4 another convocation. It’s time 2 make a *public* presentation of their brand new king. This is not going 2/b a normal coronation. True 2 his calling, Samuel begins the proceeding w/ a sermon.

18-19- rejected- Wow, Samuel seems 2/b being a little harsh here. He keeps pounding away at Israel w/ the Lord’s own rebuke against them, attempting 2 shake them up enough 2 simply recognize their own sin. He’s reminding them of their miraculous *redemption* from bondage in Egypt & their deliverance from all the kingdoms that surrounded them as well as all their oppressors by YHWH’s grace & power & He did all this 4 Israel w/o a king. Of course, referring 2 Israel’s redemption & deliverance also points 2 their *obligation* under the covenant obey YHWH.

Now, Samuel’s already made this same valid point in **ch8** so why put a damper on the occasion? Why kick off this historic event w/ such a *negative* note? B/c, **4 God’s people**, *truth* must take precedence over *diplomacy*. Samuel knows it’s more important 4 him 2/b *faithful* 2 God’s Word than 2/b *cordial* 2 God’s people. If Israel’s truly rejecting the *God who saves them* & has *not* recognized it *nor* repented of it, we can’t expect Samuel 2 just stand there & say, “*Its wonderful 2 see you all here...*” We serve the same God today. Have you ever considered that Israel’s God may love **us** way too much 2 just be nice 2 us? If we are His children but are “rejecting” His *will 4* & *call on* our lives, we must know that His Word will pursue us relentlessly *until we hear it*. He may even go so far as 2 ruin a lovely occasion if it will get our attention & lead us 2 repentance. **Its difficult 2 resist an irresistible heavenly Father.**

20-21- chosen- How? By *casting the lot* or by use of *Urim & Thummim*. If Saul was already anointed, why go thru this long, drawn-out process. B/c these were the 2 methods the people were familiar w/ 4 *determining YHWH’s will*. Only the Lord, Samuel & Saul knew that the king had already been selected & appointed but Samuel wanted all of Israel 2 understand that YHWH was completely in charge of the selection process. This way, no 1 could accuse Saul of being installed by Samuel. You know how uptight people get when it comes time 2 install a leader, “*Who died & made you boss?*” At least this way, every tribe & family can say they had a fair shot at it. When the final determination is made, all *should* recognize the selectee as being YHWH’s choice 2/b king, effectively preventing any disputes (?). So, by this process, what God had *disclosed privately* 2 Samuel, He now *declares publicly* 2 Israel.

22- There he is- focal point of entire passage, significance implied by final statement of **vs21** “*he could not be found.*” Its significant b/c this same phrase was used no less than 12Xs in **9-10:16**, not the least of which involved the search 4 lost donkeys. When you compare **9:4** w/ **21c-22** it presents a striking & ironic parallel. **Left 2 her own devices, Israel would be no more successful in finding her king than Saul had been in finding those lost donkeys.** So, the Lord has 2 tell them that Saul is *hiding among the equipment*: the wagons & *baggage* the people had brought w/ them.

Now, if anyone had been paying attention, this minor setback should have alerted them 2 some truths about Saul & about Israel: **1)** Saul’s hiding place is *telling* b/c when he takes the throne, he’ll bring a lot of emotional baggage. This “*hiding*” is just the 1st indication. Imagine how difficult it is 4 a 7 footer 2 hide, yet Saul was able 2 pull it off. Is Saul being humble here? No, Saul’s avoiding God’s call. This w/b revealed as 1 of his most serious character flaws.

There’s a huge difference between: **a.) true humility**, **b.) false humility** & **c.) insecurity**. True humility doesn’t measure itself, whether it’s up 2 the challenge. **Andrew Murray**, “*True humility isn’t thinking meanly of one’s self; it’s simply not thinking of one’s self at all.*” It would be more concerned about Israel. It’s others-centered, not self-centered. **False humility** is self-centered. It’s simply playing the part of humility, 4 the purpose of *being noticed* as humble. **Insecurity** - based on the fear of man. Often, it’s a learned behavior (from others or just life) & all God’s servants are plagued w/ it at some point in their spiritual walk but; when the Lord calls us & sets us apart 4 His work, then true

humility yields 2 that call. We're all flawed & none of us deserve 2/b in His service, none of us are really capable of being used by Him, but that's the beauty of God's call – He makes us capable 2 respond, able 2 serve His purposes!

So, this less about **modesty** & more about **fear** b/c true humility accepts God's will while still depending on God's strength & wisdom 2 perform that will. Saul was hiding b/c he was worried about Saul. If he had been properly concerned w/ glorifying God, he'd have been at the meeting & would have humbly accepted **YHWH's** decision.

2) Israel should have seen how utterly **dependent** they were on **YHWH**, even 2 the point of finding their king 4 them once he'd been chosen! Israel can't seem 2 manage w/o **YHWH** even in the simplest of matters.

23-24- see- So, the reluctant ruler was following the dictates of his emotions instead of building his faith, thus, someone had 2 go retrieve him 2 the meeting. Shunning national popularity is 1 thing but shunning God-given responsibility is quite another. "If God called a man 2 kingship, he has no right 2 hide away." **G. Campbell Morgan**. Samuel did what he could 2 salvage an embarrassing situation. He presented Saul as **YHWH's** chosen king so the people **had** 2 accept him. He also accentuated Saul's physical appearance & the people were duly impressed. But it was all externals, they were simply going by what they could see – but what they couldn't see was more important.

25- behavior- **YHWH's** law regulating how the king is 2 conduct himself (**Deut 17?**) = Saul's not really a king but a vice-king, also under the law of **YHWH**, Israel's true King. Royal submission 2 Law should eliminate tyranny & abuse. But, all God's people are in the same position, a people under God's law; & we **ought** 2/b; in fact, we **need** 2/b! Israel came under **YHWH's** law at Mt. Sinai & that wasn't a tragedy as some may think. You'll never look at the law incorrectly as long as you always remember that **Ex 20:2** comes b/4 **Ex 20:3-17**. **YHWH** says, "**I delivered you from bondage, it wasn't your doing. Pharaoh was destroyed by My power; you were protected by My lamb; the sea split open by My hand. Now that you're free, here's how free people are 2 live: by My commandments. You don't keep them in order 2 earn freedom – freedom is My gift 2 you! **No**, you keep them in order 2 **enjoy** freedom, 2 **preserve & maintain** it, 2 avoid becoming slaves again 2 anyone or anything else again.**" That was & is the purpose of the law.

Do you remember when maps used 2 come in books? A **road atlas (GPS)** can be very restricting, confining & picky but you don't throw them out the car window. Tho a road map may severely **limit** your options, it still **preserves** your freedom. Freedom from **wandering in circles**, freedom from **trusting your gut**, freedom from **wasting a lot of time** & the inevitable **frustration** that comes from wasting time. In their own way, maps are very much like God's laws & commandments, when you properly submitting 2 them, they truly bring real freedom, not more bondage.

Saul's under a law governing kingship, **not** 2 make his reign **difficult** but 2 **help** it **function effectively**. Likewise, we as God's people should also live under the influence of His law & commandments, not 2 make the Christian life difficult but 2 order it & protect it from bondage. Yes, even as blood-bought believers, we can place ourselves in bondage. The Christian living sections of all the Epistles are simply the authors application of the commandments 2 the Christian life. They teach us that our freedom is maintained thru **purity in life**, in **cultivating holy desires**, in **maintaining clean speech**, in **rejecting bitterness**, in **building balanced relationships**, in **spiritual warfare**, etc. For believers, the law shouldn't be a dreadful chore but a glad obedience – if we prize our freedom.

26-27- valiant...rebels- 2 completely different responses 2 Saul's coronation. Some valiant men are drawn 2 follow him by **YHWH's** leading, that had 2/b a source of encouragement 4 Saul. But there were also some who rebelled (go figure). "**What can this country bumpkin, this Benjamite hayseed do 4 us?**" This is after Saul has been selected by due process, declared by Samuel & recognized by the nation as **YHWH's** appointed king over Israel! Welcome to public life, Saul! At least he had the good sense 2 ignore them. But, there's a deeper application here in this scene. Note: the king causes division & suffers rejection w/in Israel. This should stand out as an interesting parallel 2 us.

Now, don't misunderstand me, Saul is **never** in any way, by his life or his character, a **type** of Christ. But, on the basis of his **divinely appointed office as king**, he is. These local hooligans weren't just rejecting the person of Saul, they were also rejecting him in his office as **YHWH's** appointed king – Saul is the 1 God **chose** 2 save His people but they were having none of it! "**How can this man save us?**" The KJV calls them **sons of Beliel: worthless, wicked, ruin**.

Jesus faced the same detractors when He walked the earth. He said that part of His mission was 2 bring division (**Luke 12:51**) & there were many in Israel who doubted His claim 2 deity, "**we know his father & mother; how can He say, 'I have come down from heaven?'**" (**Jn 6:42**). It continues today. People still despise & reject God's appointed Servant & King. "**How can this man save us?**" What can a Jew, executed as a criminal over 2K+ yrs ago – what can He have 2 do w/ how I face eternity? What can He do 4 my life, fears, failures? **Everything**, He's the only 1 who can.

Israel was so excited they shouted, "**Long live the king**" but Saul is already proving 2/b a vastly different king than **YHWH** had been. When Saul was announced, they couldn't find him. When you seek the Lord, He's never hard 2 find. In fact He says, "**you will seek Me & find Me**" (**Jer 29:13**) & "**call 2 Me & I will answer you**" (**Jer 33:3**). The Lord never hides from any who diligently searches 4 Him & He always responds 2 those who fervently call out 2 Him.

Another great thing about Jesus is that nobody has 2 say, "**Long live the King**" b/c He's eternal – w/o beginning & w/o end. If you have 2 say, "**Long live the King**" then you have the wrong king! Israel will rue the day they substituted **YHWH's** rule 4 the rule of man. It is no less damaging & unfulfilling when we fail 2 recognize Jesus as the rightful

king of our own lives. Only the Prince of Peace can bring true peace & keep the peace in our hearts.

