

1st Samuel 9

Verses 1 - 2

Now there was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish the son of Abiel, son of Zeror, son of Becorath, son of Aphiah, son of a Benjaminite, a valiant mighty man. ² He had a son whose name was Saul, a young and handsome man, and there was not a more handsome man than he among the sons of Israel; from his shoulders and up he was taller than any of the people.

Saul stood out amongst all the sons of Israel

1. His father had a reputation for being a heroic and powerful man.
2. Saul looked like a king because of his physical stature and good looks.
3. Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin which was strategically located between Judah & Ephraim, the two strongest tribes in Israel.

See Map 905

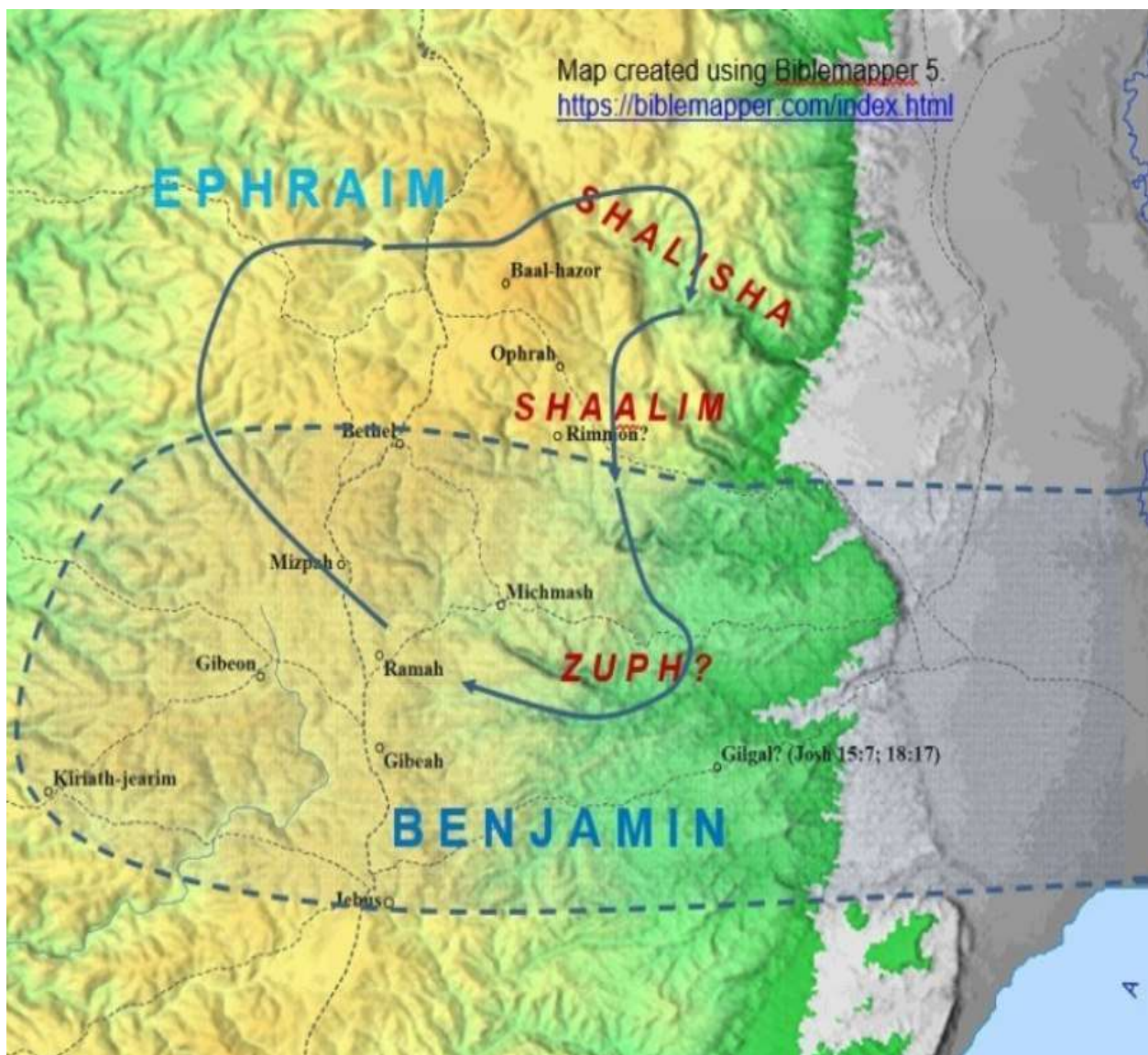


Verses 3 – 4

³ Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, had wandered off. So Kish said to his son Saul, "Now take with you one of the servants and arise, go search for the donkeys." ⁴ So he passed through the hill country of Ephraim and passed through the land of Shalishah, but they did not find *them*. Then they passed through the land of Shaalim, but they were not *there*. Then he passed through the land of the Benjaminites, but they did not find *them*.

Saul and one of the family servants searched throughout the land of Benjamin and Ephraim looking for the donkeys that had wandered away.

See map 910



Verses 5 – 10

⁵ When they came to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant who was with him, “Come, and let’s return, or else my father will stop *being concerned* about the donkeys and will become anxious about us.” ⁶ But he said to him, “Behold now, *there is* a man of God in this city, and the man is held in honor; everything that he says definitely comes *true*. Now let’s go there, perhaps he can tell us about our journey on which we have set out.” ⁷ Then Saul said to his servant, “But look, if we go, what shall we bring the man? For the bread is gone from our sacks and there is no gift to bring to the man of God. What do we have?” ⁸ The servant answered Saul again and said, “Look, I have in my hand a fourth of a shekel of silver; I will give *it* to the man of God and he will tell us our way.” ⁹ (Previously in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he used to say, “Come, and let’s go to the seer”; for *he who is called* a prophet now was previously called a seer.) ¹⁰ Then Saul said to his servant, “Good idea; come, let’s go.” So they went to the city where the man of God was.

⁵ When they came to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant who was with him, “Come, and let’s return, or else my father will stop *being concerned* about the donkeys and will become anxious about us.”

See Map 910



The land of Zuph was the territory in which Ramah, the home town of Samuel, was located.

The two men had been gone long enough that Saul knew his father would begin to worry about Saul and the servant.

⁶ But he said to him, “Behold now, *there is a man of God in this city*, and the man is held in honor; everything that he says definitely comes true. Now let’s go there, perhaps he can tell us about our journey on which we have set out.”

Saul's servant knew that a man of God was available in that city but that was not the case with Saul.

One of the two tests of a true prophet was that what he says will come true.

See Deuteronomy 18:21-22

²¹ And if you say in your heart, ‘How will we recognize the word which the LORD has not spoken?’ ²² When the prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, and the thing does not happen or come *true*, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you are not to be afraid of him.

The other was that the teaching of the prophet must be in keeping with scripture;

See Deut. 13:1-3

If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, ² and the sign or the wonder comes *true*, of which he spoke to you, saying, ‘Let’s follow other gods (whom you have not known) and let’s serve them,’ ³ you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer of dreams; for the LORD your God is testing you to find out whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

⁸ The servant answered Saul again and said, “Look, I have in my hand a fourth of a shekel of silver; I will give *it* to the man of God and he will tell us our way.”

Silver shekels were sometimes cut into halves or quarters. A quarter of this coin weighed one-tenth of an ounce.

It seems like this servant was more prepared than Saul.

He who is now called a prophet was formerly called a seer

The word prophet was first used in Genesis 20:7 while this is the first use of the term seer.

Therefore many scholars believe this was once a marginal comment that was accidentally included in the text.

People have written notes in their bible for a long time.

¹⁰ Then Saul said to his servant, “Good idea; come, let’s go.” So they went to the city where the man of God was.

The straying away of Kish's donkeys, Saul's arrival at the city where Samuel lived and the fact that he just happened to be home was quite a coincidence don't you think. 😊

Verses 11 -14

¹¹ As they went up the slope to the city, they found young women going out to draw water, and they said to them, “Is the seer here?” ¹² They answered them and said, “He is; see, *he is* ahead of you. Hurry now, for he has come into the city today, because the people have a sacrifice on the high place today. ¹³ As soon as you enter the city you will find him before he goes up to the high place to eat, for the people will not eat until he comes, because he must bless the sacrifice; afterward those who are invited will eat. Now then, go up, for you will find him about this time.” ¹⁴ So they went up to the city. As they came into the city, behold, Samuel was coming out toward them to go up to the high place.

¹¹ As they went up the slope to the city, they found young women going out to draw water, and they said to them, “Is the seer here?”

Young women supplied the household with water. The servant of Abraham met Rebekah when she was performing this task.

See Genesis 24:15

¹⁵ And it came about, before he had finished speaking, that behold, Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of Abraham’s brother Nahor, came out with her jar on her shoulder.

¹² They answered them and said, “He is; see, *he is* ahead of you. Hurry now, for he has come into the city today, because the people have a sacrifice on the high place today.”

If the Tabernacle had not been destroyed then sacrificing at a high place would have been wrong because God had commanded that all sacrifices were to be offered at the place where He would put His name (Shiloh for about 300 years).

Shiloh was destroyed around 1070 BC and nearly 20 years have passed but the Tabernacle has not been rebuilt.

So where should the people sacrifice to the Lord?

¹³ As soon as you enter the city you will find him before he goes up to the high place to eat, for the people will not eat until he comes, because he must bless the sacrifice;”

Blessing a sacrifice is not mentioned anywhere else in the O.T.

Verses 15 - 21

¹⁵ Now a day before Saul’s coming, the Lord had revealed *this* to Samuel, saying, ¹⁶ “About this time tomorrow I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him as ruler over My people Israel; and he will save My people from the hand of the Philistines. For I have considered My people, because their outcry has come to Me.” ¹⁷ When Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said to him, “Behold, the man of whom I spoke to you! This one shall rule over My people.” ¹⁸ Then Saul approached Samuel at the gateway and said, “Please tell me where the seer’s house is.” ¹⁹ And Samuel answered Saul and said, “I am the seer. Go up ahead of me to the high place, for you shall eat with me today; and in the morning I will let you go, and will tell you everything that is on your mind. ²⁰ And as for your donkeys that wandered off three days ago, do not be concerned about them, for they have been found. And for whom is everything that is desirable in Israel? Is it not for you and for all your father’s household?” ²¹ Saul replied, “Am I not a Benjaminite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel, and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Why then have you spoken to me in this way?”

¹⁶ “About this time tomorrow I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him as ruler over My people Israel; and he will save My people from the hand of the Philistines.”

The conflict between the Philistines and Israel was one that lasted for many years. During the time of Samson (1118 -1078) Israel was subject to the Philistines for 40 years. During the last 20 years of that time Samson caused a lot of havoc for the Philistines but Israel was still subject to them.

Then the Philistines killed 34,000 men of Israel and destroyed Shiloh in 1070 BC.

Now Saul is about to become King (1050 BC) and God promises that Saul will save His people from the hand of the Philistines. That event took place in 1048 BC. So the Philistines had a heavy hand over Israel for about 70 years (1118 – 1048).

¹⁹ And Samuel answered Saul and said, “I am the seer. Go up ahead of me to the high place, for you shall eat with me today;”

Having Saul go ahead of him was Samuel's way of showing respect and honor to Saul.

And for whom is everything that is desirable in Israel? Is it not for you and for all your father’s household?” ²¹ Saul replied, “Am I not a Benjaminite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel, and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Why then have you spoken to me in this way?”

Saul understood that this statement of Samuel was a promise of the kingship. But that didn't make sense to him considering his lowly position in Israel.

Verses 22 – 24

²² Then Samuel took Saul and his servant and brought them into the hall, and gave them a place at the head of those who were invited, who were about thirty men. ²³ And Samuel said to the cook, “Serve the portion that I gave you about which I said to you, ‘Set it aside.’” ²⁴ Then the cook took up the leg with what was on it and placed *it* before Saul. And *Samuel* said, “Here is what has been reserved! Place *it* before you *and* eat, because it has been kept for you until the appointed time, since I said I have invited the people.” So Saul ate with Samuel that day.

And Samuel said, “Here is what has been reserved! Place *it* before you *and* eat, because it has been kept for you until the appointed time,

We learned earlier (vs 15) that God told Samuel when Saul would show up and Samuel planned the meal and what would be saved for Saul based on that information. None of this was left to chance.

Verses 25 – 27

²⁵ When they came down from the high place *into* the city, Samuel spoke with Saul on the roof. ²⁶ And they got up early; and at daybreak Samuel called to Saul on the roof, saying, “Get up, so that I may send you on your way.” So Saul got up, and both he and Samuel went out into the street. ²⁷ As they were going down to the edge of the city, Samuel said to Saul, “Speak to the servant and have him go on ahead of us and pass by; but you stand *here* now, so that I may proclaim the word of God to you.”

We don't know how large a city this was, but we know there way a street (whatever that might have been in 1050 BC) and 30 men had been invited to the meal.

Samuel had a personal message from God to give to Saul so the servant was asked to go ahead of the two of them.