



# GOD OF THE FATHERLESS

The Story Of God  
& Samuel



## Yes, No & Maybe

1. Most of the time a family member asks me to search for something, I feel like I'm on a fool's errand.
2. I have so many responsibilities, I couldn't imagine having any more.
3. When God sends you on a new path, your past becomes meaningless.
4. Part of our responsibility is to discern what God wants us to do.
5. When you follow God, you give up control of what you do.

## Dig Deeper

### ➤ READ 1 Samuel 10:1-11

Then Samuel took a flask of olive oil and poured it on Saul's head and kissed him, saying, "Has not the Lord anointed you ruler over his inheritance? 2 When you leave me today, you will meet two men near Rachel's tomb, at Zelzah on the border of Benjamin. They will say to you, 'The donkeys you set out to look for have been found. And now your father has stopped thinking about them and is worried about you. He is asking, "What shall I do about my son?"'"

3 "Then you will go on from there until you reach the great tree of Tabor. Three men going up to worship God at Bethel will meet you there. One will be carrying three young goats, another three loaves of bread, and another a skin of wine. 4 They will greet you and offer you two loaves of bread, which you will accept from them.

5 "After that you will go to Gibeath of God, where there is a Philistine outpost. As you approach the town, you will meet a procession of prophets coming down from the high place with lyres, timbrels, pipes and harps being played before them, and they will be prophesying. 6 The Spirit of the Lord will come powerfully upon you, and you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed into a different person. 7 Once these signs are fulfilled, do whatever your hand finds to do, for God is with you.

8 "Go down ahead of me to Gilgal. I will surely come down to you to sacrifice burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, but you must wait seven days until I come to you and tell you what you are to do."

9 As Saul turned to leave Samuel, God changed Saul's heart, and all these signs were fulfilled that day. 10 When he and his servant arrived at Gibeath, a procession of prophets met him; the Spirit of God came powerfully upon him, and he joined in their prophesying. 11 When all those who had formerly known him saw him prophesying with the prophets, they asked each other, "What is this that has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?"

### FROM SEARCHING FOR DONKEYS TO SEARCHING FOR CLUES [a little backstory]

➤ **9:1-4 The search.** Saul's father, Kish, sends him and a servant to search for this lost donkeys. They search all throughout the countryside, but do not find them.

➤ **9:5-10 Find the seer.** When Saul decides to return home, his servant suggests that they go to the town of the "seer" that he's heard about. Perhaps he can tell them where to look for the donkeys.

➤ **9:14-17 Samuel expected them.** When they found Samuel, "the seer," God spoke again to Samuel and said, "This is the one I spoke to you about; he will govern my people."

- Why do you think God chose Saul to be the first king of Israel?

### GOD DOESN'T JUST LEAD YOU ANYWHERE:

➤ **10:2 Rachel's tomb** - Rachel was Jacob's second wife and the mother of Joseph and Benjamin. She had died giving

## Notes

## Dig Deeper... Continued

birth to Benjamin (Genesis 35:16–20). Her tomb was a particular reminder of the origins of Saul's own tribe, Benjamin. Rachel's tomb pointed Saul back to where the promises of God for his people had started.

» **10:3 Great tree of Tabor** - "Meet 3 men going up to Bethel" (house of God). It received its name from Jacob's extraordinary encounter with God there [Jacob's Ladder] (see Genesis 28:10–22 and 35:1–15; cf. 12:8; 13:3, 4). Bethel was the place where God repeated his astonishing promise to Jacob, the promise that defined Israel (Genesis 28:13–15; 35:9–12).

» **10:5 Gilbeah of God** - Literally, "Hill of God." There is a garrison of Philistines on God's hill. This is the place where God's Spirit comes upon Saul, changes him, equips him, and directs him. Those who read this location and description would have immediately seen the contradiction of the name and the occupants.

- When God is taking you to a new level of responsibility, does He typically take you through a tour of your past? Why?

» **10:7 Whatever your hand finds to do** - Empowered by the Spirit of God, Saul was to act, assured of God's presence with him. But what was he to do? "Do what your hand finds to do" does not mean that Saul would be free to do whatever he liked. Rather, the words indicate that there would be a task for Saul to do.

- How can you determine what God's will is for your life? How does He let you know what to do next?

» **10:8 Go down to Gilgal** - Gilgal was the first resting place for the Israelites in the promised land (Joshua 4:19). Gilgal was the place where the wilderness wanderings ended for Israel, and life in the land began (see Joshua 5:11, 12). Passover (the memorial of the redemption from Egypt) was celebrated at Gilgal as the nation began its new life in the land God was giving them (Joshua 5:1–10). Gilgal's name provided a wordplay with the Hebrew verb "to roll": there the Lord said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you" (Joshua 5:9). Gilgal was a very appropriate place for Saul to learn what his responsibilities as Israel's new leader would be.

- How does God speak to us when He launches us into something new?

- What do God's intentional directions to Saul demonstrate about His character?

» **10:9 God changed Saul's heart** - The Hebrew is remarkable: "When he turned his shoulder to go from Samuel, God also turned for him another heart," i. e. God turned him round by giving him a changed heart. He grew internally up to the level of his changed circumstances. No longer had he the feelings of a husbandman, concerned only about corn and cattle; he had become a statesman, a general, and a prince. No man could have gone through such marvelous events, and experienced such varied emotions, without a vast inward change, which might have been only to vanity and self-complacency. Saul's change was into a hero.

- In what ways does God change our hearts? How does He do this and maintain our personal freedom of choice?

## My Prayer...

1. Where has God been leading me, and what might this be saying about His plans for me?
2. In what ways do I need to be open to a change of heart?
3. What new aspect of God's character does He want me to know?

