

Long Live King Jesus

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- [0 : 0 0] Well, if you've been tracking with us through our time in 1 Samuel, you'll know that last week we saw the kind of king that God chooses.
- ! And this week, we're going to see the way in which God makes Saul king. So it's going to be the way in which God makes Saul king.
- Now, the kind of king that God chooses and the way in which God makes him king both instilled confidence in the people.
- It gave the people at that time confidence. And you can see that confidence expressed in verse 24 when the people shout, Long live the king!
- And of course, when they say, Long live the king, it's not just that they want him to live a long time. It is this expression that, Yes, this is our king.
- [0 : 5 8] That we will live for him. That this is what we want. And in light of all that has gone in 1 Samuel so far, this king will fight our enemies.
- He will bring us peace. We will flourish under him. There's so much in that phrase, Long live the king.
- Now, we don't say, Long live King Saul. In fact, we don't say, Long live any king except for King Jesus. It's except for King Jesus.
- Last week, as we saw the kind of king God chooses, and this week, as we'll see the way in which God makes him king, what it does is it ultimately points us to King Jesus, to give us confidence in him, that we can trust him and have faith in him.
- And you know, though we may not use those words exactly, Long live King Jesus, we want to say it a thousand times a day in our actions, in our thoughts, in our words, that what we are communicating by our lives is, Long live King Jesus.
- [2 : 1 2] I live for him. I'm glad that he rules over my life. He has fought my enemies. He is the one who gives me peace. And so let's dwell a little while on the way in which God has made Saul king and allow that to shed light on Jesus for us.
- So the way in which God makes Saul king, we see, first of all, that he is chosen by God. He is chosen by God. So in verse 27 of chapter 9, we see at the end of the verse that Samuel says to Saul, stay here a while that I may give you a message from God or a word from the Lord.
- So God is going to say something clearly to Saul through Samuel. Samuel was the prophet of God and the prophet's job was to communicate the word of God with the authority of God to God's people.
- And so we see that Saul is going to be chosen by God's word. God is going to make it clear to Saul. You might be wondering, well, why the oil? Why the oil?
- In verse 1 of chapter 10, Samuel takes a flask of olive oil. I wonder how big the flask was. Was it like one of those one liter bottles you get in Tesco or one of the five liter ones that you can budget by?

- [3 : 33] I don't know how much oil was in the flask, but it was pretty memorable, I'd imagine, for Saul to have oil put on his head in this way. Why the oil?
- Well, it was a symbol of his being chosen by God. And so this symbol went along with the word of God to make it clear that Saul was going to be king.
- And so Samuel anoints Saul. He is chosen by God's word. God says it and it will happen. Not only is he chosen by God's word, he's chosen to save.
- In verse 1, has not the Lord anointed you ruler over his inheritance? And you'll see down in the footnote that the kind of idea of ruler is this idea of saving them. That he is going to save them from their enemies.
- That he's going to act on behalf of the people leading them to victory over their enemies, leading them to peace and to flourishing. And so he's chosen to save them. Not only is he chosen to save them, but he's chosen, or the choice of Saul is confirmed by these signs that God is going to give him.
- [4 : 39] So at the end of verse 1, where it says, has not the Lord anointed you to rule over his inheritance? Samuel then starts to outline these signs.
- In verse 2, there's this sign to do with these two men and the donkeys. We haven't forgotten the donkeys. In verse 3, there's this sign to do with three men and the great tree of Tabor.
- In verse 5, there's a sign that involves a group of men. These prophets and the Spirit of God. And so God gives Saul these signs to confirm the fact that he is chosen by God.
- It is for Saul's sake that these signs are given primarily. So you'll see at the end of verse, or in verse 7, it says, once these signs are fulfilled, do whatever your hand finds to do, for God is with you.
- So God's choice will be confirmed to Samuel through these signs being fulfilled in precise detail. We haven't walked our way through the signs because there's so much detail in there that it would take a long time to look at each one of them in detail.
- [5 : 53] But it would have been remarkable for Saul to hear this level of detail and then to see these events unfold before his eyes just as God had said. It would have been confirming for Saul that God had chosen him.
- A few months back we had a guy doing a bit of work in our house and I asked him because he was in the trade, I asked him did he know anybody who could do a bit of work on the roof of the house.
- And so he said to me, oh there's this guy called Richie. Richie is great at working on roofs. The problem with Richie is because he is so good that he is hard to get hold of.
- And so we're walking out of the front door of our house and this guy is telling me about Richie the roofer who's impossible to get hold of. And then he said to me, but you know what, Richie's mother-in-law lives across the road from you.
- And I said, wow, that's amazing. And then he looked across the road and he saw a white van with two ladders on top of it and he said, actually that's Richie's van. And we thought, whoa, that's amazing.
- [6 : 56] And then the door of his mother-in-law's house opens and who walks out? Only Richie holding a little fluffy dog and the other guy says, that's Richie. So we went across and talked to Richie.
- And in my mind, I'm thinking, okay, surely Richie is the guy to work on our roof and he did. Now, if I had been told in advance that that was going to happen with that level of detail, it's going to be a white van, two ladders, one fluffy dog, dark stormy night, what it would have done for me is to be sure, okay, Richie is the man.

Not to be the king, but to work on the roof. For Saul, what it would have done for him to see these three signs fulfilled in such detail would be to confirm the word of God.

This isn't just Samuel coming up with his own ideas. This is confirmation that God has chosen you. And so we see that the way in which God chooses, or the way in which Saul is made king is because God has chosen him to be king.

And you know, it's the same with Jesus, isn't it? We have God's word about Jesus. And God's word about Jesus comes to us not just through one prophet, but through all of the prophets.

[8 : 12] As you read through the Old Testament, you realize there's this growing chorus of voices that are joining with one another in this wonderful song that is pointing us forward to Jesus so that by the time he comes on the scene you realize that it has all come to fruition in him.

This is the one who God has chosen to be king. This is the one who God has chosen to save people not from the Philistines but from their sin as he has given his perfect life as a perfect sacrifice in our place.

And in the case of Jesus, his being chosen by God is confirmed by signs as well. Some people would say that the first half of John's gospel should be called the book of signs because there are seven signs that John draws our attention to culminating in the resurrection of Lazarus, the raising of Lazarus from the dead.

And John says these signs have been told to you so that you may believe. In other words, so that you may say long live King Jesus. He has been chosen by God.

This is the way he has become king. And so we want to say long live King Jesus chosen by God. Back to Saul and we see the way he is made king is not only that he was chosen by God but that he is led by God's spirit.

[9 : 38] He is led by God's spirit. So in verse 9 as Saul turns to leave Samuel, God changed Saul's heart and all these signs were fulfilled that day.

So all the signs were fulfilled and our attention is drawn in verse 10 to a procession of prophets meeting Saul and the spirit of God came powerfully upon him and he joined in their prophesying.

So what's happened to Saul? He's become a new man in a sense. In verse 6 back over the page we saw that it said you will be changed into a different person and as the spirit of God comes on Saul in this way he is prophesying and you kind of wonder well what's the nature of the change with Saul because he seemed like a pretty nice guy last week and I'm sure he was a pretty nice guy but I think the nature of the change here is that he is now being made into God's man equipped for God's work as the king that God has chosen and you can see this a little bit in the fact that he is caused to prophesy by the spirit of God.

He's caused to prophesy in other words to speak God's truth with God's authority to God's people. Now the interesting thing is that we're not told what he said.

We're told that he prophesied but we're not told what he said. And so what's being done here is our attention is being drawn to the fact that he prophesied rather than what he prophesied.

[11 : 15] In other words the fact that Saul is prophesying in this way it functions as a sign externally of what has gone on in his heart as the spirit of God is poured out on him.

So the people they don't see the spirit we don't see the spirit of God. It's like the wind that blows here and there. But we see the effects of the spirit and so Saul now has been changed.

And the people see this. So that they say in verse 11 what is this that has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?

They see clearly the change in Saul. Now they don't have all the pieces of the puzzle yet about Saul being king but they have seen this clear significant change in Saul.

Now it's worth pausing in a sense for a moment and just highlighting the harmony between the spirit of God here and the word of God that Saul had heard.

[12 : 24] So he had heard this word of God from Samuel saying that he was going to be king and then the spirit of God works in perfect harmony with the word of God. You see that in the life of Jesus as well where God says to Jesus this is my beloved son in whom I'm well pleased.

So there's the word of God and the very next thing that happens is that Jesus is driven into the wilderness by the spirit of God and you think is the word of God and the spirit of God doing two different things here?

Not at all. When Jesus is in the wilderness he's just after hearing from the father this is my beloved son in whom I'm well pleased. What does Satan come and say to him?

If you are the son of God. If you are the son of God Satan tries to attack Jesus in his identity as the beloved son of God and Jesus doesn't give in to the temptation for a moment.

He proves himself to be who he is the son of God as he perfectly fulfills the word of God. Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

[13 : 33] And so you see this harmony between the spirit and the word. You see Jesus led by the spirit as Saul was led by the spirit but in a far greater way.

And so we can say long live king Jesus who was led by the spirit. We need to realize in our own lives that the spirit of God will never ask us to do something or lead us to do something that is in conflict with the word of God.

So it's the spirit of God that has breathed out the Bible for us. And so the spirit will never ask us to do something that is in conflict with the word of God. And so if you're feeling led by the spirit and it's asking you to do something clearly in contradiction to the word of God that's not the spirit of God.

And the word of God is always in harmony with the spirit. So the word says that we are not to grieve the spirit or quench the spirit. We grieve the spirit when we do something that the spirit would not have us do.

And we quench the spirit when we don't do that thing that we are called to do. And so the spirit and the word are working in harmony with each other in the life of Saul.

[14 : 52] The way in which he has become king is that he's chosen by God. The spirit is leading him. People are starting to put the pieces together. And yet there's a bit of a delay.

In verse 14, Saul's uncle asked him and his servant, where have you been? Looking for the donkeys, he said. But when we saw they were not to be found, we went to Samuel.

And you wonder, is the servant kind of stinging in the donkeys again? Saul's uncle said, tell me what Samuel said to you. Saul replied, he assured us that the donkeys had been found.

But he did not tell his uncle what Samuel had said about the kingship. So there's this strange delay. Why doesn't Saul tell his uncle what has happened?

Is it that he's shy? Is it that he's humble? Is it that he's reluctant? Is it that he's fulfilling verse 8, where Samuel has told him to wait? Well, no, he's not fulfilling verse 8. That will be fulfilled in chapter 13.

[15 : 53] We don't know why. And yet, there is this delay that the pieces of the puzzle are starting to be put together. And yet, Saul hasn't been revealed as the chosen king led by God's spirit.

I don't know if you saw years ago those Pepsi ads with Uncle Drew in them. Anyone see those ads? Okay. Daniel. So, Pepsi ads, they had this great basketball player, and they would dress him up as somebody who was much, much older, put on prosthetic nose and hair and all this kind of stuff.

And so he'd walk over to the basketball court, and there'd be these younger guys playing basketball who were pretty good themselves. And they're kind of looking at him, they're thinking he can't play basketball.

And then one of the guys invites him on. Come on, Uncle Drew, come on. So Uncle Drew goes on and initially he can't play basketball at all, or so it seems, but then he starts to play and he just runs rings around them and he's firing in three-pointers from like halfway down the court.

And they're just like trying to figure this out. Who is this guy? And they're kind of getting it because now he is one of the basketball players. Clearly you can see that evident in him.

[17 : 12] And yet they're like this doesn't compute, this doesn't make sense, they don't have all the pieces of the puzzle. As Saul is prophesying with the prophets, they're kind of starting to think there's something going on here, but it hasn't been made clear to them yet.

But it is going to be made clear to him because the way God makes Saul king, thirdly, is that he is revealed to the people. So he's chosen by God, he's led by the Spirit, and now he's revealed to the people.

In verse 17, Samuel summoned the people of Israel to the Lord at Mitzpah and said to them, this is what the Lord, the God of Israel says, I brought Israel up out of Egypt and I delivered you from the power of Egypt and all the kingdoms that have repressed you.

But now you've rejected your God who saves you out of all your disasters and calamities and you have said no, appoint a king over us. Samuel is a brave guy, isn't he?

It would have been so easy to just go ahead with the ceremony, just pop the crown on Saul's head and just pretend that all was well. But Samuel is a prophet of God and he speaks God's truth with God's authority to God's people even if it is not pleasant to hear.

[18 : 34] And Samuel draws attention to the fact that by them choosing a king, wanting a king like the nations around them, they are effectively rejecting God as their king. Samuel makes that abundantly clear for them.

He points to the elephant in the room. It's not a case that if we just ignore the problem between us and God that it will just go away or that God will forget or the time will heal all wounds or we'll just get used to it.

Samuel says no, this is just as serious now as it was when I first highlighted it to you. And he just leaves that awkwardly hanging there with no resolution.

This tension of their sin before God. And then they get on with the ceremony. What happens next is God makes it known to them by lot in verse 20 when Samuel had made all Israel come forward.

The tribe of Benjamin was taken by lot. Then he brought forward the tribe of Benjamin clan by clan and Matri's clan was taken by lot.

[19 : 43] And finally Saul son of Kish was taken. And as this is progressing, this would have taken a little bit of time as they moved around and so on. As this is happening, the tension is building.

Who is our new king going to be? And they cast lots to do this, which seems strange to us. What they have in mind is something like Proverbs 1633, the lot is cast into the lap, but as every decision is from the Lord.

So this is how they're choosing their new king under God's direction. Now just as a side note, because I know some will be kind of intrigued by this idea of casting lots and showing God's will.

The last time we see them casting lots in the Bible is at the end of Acts chapter 1. So at the end of Acts chapter 1 they cast lots and the lot fell to Matthias and he was added to the 11 apostles.

So they choose another apostle to replace Judas who had betrayed Jesus. So they cast lots at the end of Acts chapter 1. The very next thing that happens is that Pentecost comes, the Spirit of God is poured out on his people in an unprecedented way.

[21 : 03] And they never cast lots again. They make decisions and choices according to God's word, by God's spirit, prayerfully discerning as best they can.

So if we want to choose an elder or a deacon in Court Baptist Church, we don't cast lots and hope for the best. We look at God's word and we see what his criteria are for an elder or a deacon or other decisions in life.

And we have God's spirit guiding us through those decisions, giving us discernment as we make those decisions. And we prayerfully commit the process to him.

Now that's a bit of a side note. Back to Saul and Samuel and their casting lots. there's a lot of humor in this, isn't there? In verse 21, finally Saul son of Kish was taken.

He's going to be our king. He's going to be our king. But when they looked for him, he was not to be found. And there's kind of that awkward moment of radio silence where all the guys are running around looking for him and the guys with the dark glasses and the suits and the microphones up their sleeves.

[22 : 14] It's like, this is going so well so far, but we actually can't find the guy who's supposed to be the king. sea. Well, they inquire further of the Lord in verse 22.

Has the man come here yet? Is he finishing off his coffee? And the Lord said, yes, he has hidden himself among the supplies. And immediately you're thinking, why is Samuel, sorry, Saul, who's like a head over everybody else, hiding among the supplies?

And you kind of wonder, was his leg sticking out over here or like a little bit of his shoulder sticking out or was he like really well hidden? You're wondering why he was hiding.

Was he shy? Did he have stage fright? Did he get cold feet? I don't know. But the point is not why Saul was hiding. The point is that the people could not find their king unless God revealed him to them.

They couldn't find him unless God made it known to them. not only that it was Saul but that he's over there in the baggage. It'd be pretty funny if it wasn't so serious that even as they continue to reject God they are utterly dependent on him.

[23 : 30] It kind of reminds me of the prodigal son. The prodigal son in Jesus' wonderful parable says to the father essentially, I'm going to live my way. I'm going to live my life.

I'm going to go to a far away country and I'm going to party and I'm going to live the high life and I'm going to live however I want to live. But can you give me the money to do it? Or a teenager, rebellious teenager saying, I'm going to go to the disco no matter what.

But can you give me a lift? And it's this idea that even as they reject God they are totally dependent on him to make Saul known to them.

And if you're here this morning, if you don't know Jesus, if you're not following him, whether you're passively just not interested in him, or whether you're actively turning your back on him, can you see that there's humor in this?

That this rejection of Jesus, you're still totally dependent on God. Every breath in your lungs is a gift from God. There's a humor in it. And there's a kindness in it on the part of God.

[24 : 47] There's a kindness in it that he continues to bless people even as they turn their back on him. He continues to show them kindness. But his kindness is meant to lead us to repentance, lead us back to him.

Well, eventually, somehow or another, the people of Israel and Saul get to the moment that they've all been waiting for in verse 23. Do you see, sorry, verse 24, Samuel said to all the people, do you see the man the Lord has chosen?

There's no one like him among all the people. Then the people shouted, long live the king. And if you just arrived late and that was all you saw, you think, wow, that went well, didn't it? They get there in the end by the kindness of God.

And it reminds us of Jesus. And here's the reason it reminds us of Jesus, this not knowing who their king was or where he was until God reveals it to them. It reminds us of Jesus because all the way through the Gospels we are let in on a secret in a sense.

In Matthew's Gospel, in the very first verse, he says, this is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah. In other words, Jesus the King. And we're told that from the very start, Matthew chapter 1 verse 1, Mark chapter 1 verse 1.

[26 : 11] It's not until chapter 16 in Matthew's Gospel, chapter 8 in Mark's Gospel, that Peter says, behold, you are the Messiah, you are the Christ.

It's not until then that Peter gets it, who Jesus is, that he is the king chosen by God, led by God's Spirit. And what does Jesus say to Peter?

Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. Just as God was revealing Saul in the baggage to the people, it is God who has revealed Jesus to Peter, and helped Peter to see that Jesus is the king.

And if you're here this morning and you recognize that Jesus is the king, how did you come to know that Jesus was the king? You might have thought it through, you might have chatted to somebody, you might have done this, that, or the other, all of these things might have been part of it.

But the way in which we have come to know Jesus as the king is because God has revealed him to us. He has made Jesus known to us, and if he had not done that, we could not have figured it out for ourselves.

[27 : 24] It's not about our intelligence, it's not about logic, it's not about being reasonable, or the books that we read, it is God's gracious revealing of Jesus to us that has enabled us to see that Jesus is king.

And so we want to say long live king Jesus, who was made known to us by the father. father. Let's think about one last one, more briefly.

We want to say long live the king under God's law. The people wanted a king, they longed for a king, they demanded a king, and as they were doing it, they were rejecting God.

And God warns them, if you do this, he will rule selfishly, and he will rule in a way that brings about your suffering, and your enslavement. And so they demand it, and so God gives them a king.

And yet in verse 25, Samuel explains to the people the rights and duties of a kingship. He wrote them down on a scroll and deposited it before the Lord.

[28 : 42] And we're brought back to this idea that we saw a couple of weeks ago. Is the king going to be a law unto himself? Or is the king going to submit to God's good law?

Is it going to be rex, lex, which is the king is law? Or is it going to be lex, rex, that the law of God is king? Samuel, as God's prophet, makes it very clear to the people that the king is going to need to live in a way that is pleasing to God.

God is for the good of the people. And it's God's mercy and kindness that he has granted this king to them, but he has made it clear that the king is to be governed by God, to rule the people for their good.

They don't know what's good for them. And yet God graciously gives them a king, and then explains to the king and to them how the king is to operate.

He doesn't abandon them to their sin and to their foolishness, and he hasn't abandoned us either. Isn't it amazing when Jesus says in the gospels that he came to fulfill the law of God, that he came and he keeps the father's commandments because he loves the father, and the father loves him.

[30 : 06] Jesus comes as the son of God and he's not a law unto himself. His desire is to do the will of the father. And this is the king that we serve, and it is life under his rule that is a flourishing life.

And so we want to say long live king Jesus, who has fulfilled God's perfect law. And so we want to say that throughout the week in a thousand different ways in how we think and how we speak and how we act.

We want to say long live king Jesus. We recognize him as the king that has been chosen by God, that has been led by God's spirit, that has been made known to us by God, and who lives God's law perfectly.

And we will say it with a smile, won't we? Long live king Jesus because we know he is a king unlike any other. Every other king you can go and visit their tomb when they pass away.

But we have a king who has overcome sin, who has overcome death, and so we say long live king Jesus and we will continue to say it knowing that he will live eternally and we with him.

[31 : 22] So let's pray and ask God to help us in the days ahead. Father, we rejoice in our king Jesus. Father, we praise you for him.

Thank you that you have blessed us with such a good king to be our ruler. And Lord, that life under him is the flourishing life. Father, help us to live for him though we may not say it out loud throughout this week.

Long live king Jesus. Help our lives to show it clearly. Lord, to those around us, that it is him for whom we live.

And Lord, give us opportunity to point people to him. Lord, that they too may bow the knee to this wonderful king. Amen.