

# 1 SAMUEL—WEEK 7

## THE NEW MAN



F. Michael Slay

*A DEEP Study*

**The Fellowship of Ailbe**

*The Cover Picture is David and Goliath by Titian (1487–1576)  
On display in the church of Santa Maria della Salute in Venice, Italy*

This week's readings begin with Samuel anointing Saul as king. Yet it will be an entire chapter later before the process is complete. In the meantime, Saul will get a new heart and then become a new man.

Yet he hides from his new role.

---

We're pleased to provide *the DEEP* studies in PDF format at no charge. We hope you will find them helpful and encouraging as you press on in your journey toward spiritual maturity in the Lord.

The Fellowship of Ailbe offers many opportunities for training, prayer, personal growth, and ministry. To subscribe to the daily DEEP email, visit our website at [www.ailbe.org](http://www.ailbe.org) and click the sign-up button at the bottom.

There, you will also discover many other resources, including many email newsletters, such as our worldview study *ReVision*, our devotional newsletter *Crosfigell*, and *the DEEP*.

We are a spiritual fellowship patterned after the Celtic Revival. Our goal is to promote revival, renewal, and awakening, following the teaching of Scripture and the example and heritage of our forebears in the faith.

T. M. Moore, Principal  
[tmmoore@ailbe.org](mailto:tmmoore@ailbe.org)

Thank you.

All the individual weekly study guides are available for download here:

<https://www.ailbe.org/resources/itemlist/category/91-deep-studies>

! Samuel, Week 7 — The New Man  
Copyright 2022 F. Michael Slay  
The Fellowship of Ailbe  
[www.ailbe.org](http://www.ailbe.org)

*Except as indicated, Scripture taken from the New King James Version. © Copyright 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved. ESV stands for the English Standard Version. © Copyright 2001 by Crossway. Used by permission. All rights reserved. NIV stands for The Holy Bible, New International Version®. © Copyright 1973 by International Bible Society. Used by permission. All rights reserved. KJV stands for the King James Version.*

1 1 Samuel 9:25–27, 10:1–8

*When they had come down from the high place into the city, Samuel spoke with Saul on the top of the house. They arose early; and it was about the dawning of the day that Samuel called to Saul on the top of the house, saying, “Get up, that I may send you on your way.” And Saul arose, and both of them went outside, he and Samuel.*

*As they were going down to the outskirts of the city, Samuel said to Saul, “Tell the servant to go on ahead of us.” And he went on. “But you stand here awhile, that I may announce to you the word of God.”*

*Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head, and kissed him and said: “Is it not because the LORD has anointed you commander over His inheritance? When you have departed from me today, you will find two men by Rachel’s tomb in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah; and they will say to you, ‘The donkeys which you went to look for have been found. And now your father has ceased caring about the donkeys and is worrying about you, saying, “What shall I do about my son?” ’ Then you shall go on forward from there and come to the terebinth tree of Tabor. There three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you, one carrying three young goats, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine. And they will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you shall receive from their hands. After that you shall come to the hill of God where the Philistine garrison is. And it will happen, when you have come there to the city, that you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place with a stringed instrument, a tambourine, a flute, and a harp before them; and they will be prophesying. Then the Spirit of the LORD will come upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man. And let it be, when these signs come to you, that you do as the occasion demands; for God is with you. You shall go down before me to Gilgal; and surely I will come down to you to offer burnt offerings and make sacrifices of peace offerings. Seven days you shall wait, till I come to you and show you what you should do.”*

Samuel gives Saul (and, presumably, his servant) a place to sleep. Given the events of the last few days, they can both use a good night’s rest. However, given the action at dinner, it may be a fitful one.

So Saul is filled with anticipation when Samuel says, “*Tell the servant to go on ahead of us. But you stand here awhile, that I may announce to you the word of God.*” At last, Saul gets to find out what’s going on. And despite his servant’s great contribution to recent events, this is for Saul’s ears only.

Then Samuel anoints Saul as king. The significance of this cannot be overstated. “Christ” in Greek and “Messiah” in Aramaic both mean “anointed.” Presumably, this rivets Saul’s attention for what’s next.

So Samuel drops this bomb— “*Then the Spirit of the LORD will come upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man.*”

Saul is to be born again.

---

The Holy Spirit doesn’t just clean us up a bit; it makes us new.

2 1 Samuel 10:9–13

*So it was, when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, that God gave him another heart; and all those signs came to pass that day. When they came there to the hill, there was a group of prophets to meet him; then the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them. And it happened, when all who knew him formerly saw that he indeed prophesied among the prophets, that the people said to one another, “What is this that has come upon the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?” Then a man from there answered and said, “But who is their father?” Therefore it became a proverb: “Is Saul also among the prophets?” And when he had finished prophesying, he went to the high place.*

What happens at the beginning of this passage is important. What does “*God gave him another heart*” mean?

The Hebrew idiom is tricky. The word translated as “gave” (הִפְקֵד, ha-pakh) literally means “turned” or “overturned.” The word translated as “another” (אֲחֵר, ah-khair) means another in the sense of one coming behind. The ESV translates this idiom the same, but the NIV translates it as, “*God changed Saul’s heart.*”

In any case, Saul’s heart was not the same after God did this. And, most importantly, this clearly precedes Saul being *turned into another man* when the Holy Spirit comes upon him. But what is the significance of this change in Saul’s heart?

This is clearer in Hebrew. While almost no Hebrew words make it into English, the colloquialisms do. One of the most common is “Set your heart on.” In Hebrew, just as in English, it means the opposite of ignore—almost like “obsess on.” This illustrates the Hebrew view of the role of the heart with respect to desire, knowledge, and faith. The mind is important, but the heart is in charge.

So, when God transforms Saul’s heart, it’s the ultimate attitude change. We can’t be sure which parts of his attitude needed changing, so we don’t know exactly what the changes were.

But Saul is now much more ready to be made into a new man.

---

So, the transformation of Saul turns out to be a two-step process. This leads to a ton of questions. Why did God do it this way? What are we to learn from this?

All we can be sure of is that it did happen in steps. That seems reasonable. Our experience with change is that while there are milestones, big changes are typically the sum of many smaller ones. Thus, Saul’s two-step transformation has a “natural” feel to it. This is analogous to preparing the soil in evangelism.

There’s a great lesson in this. The author of nature likes His creation. God works through natural processes, even when miracles are involved. Here, Saul was made ready for his transformation into a new man through the transformation of his heart. That seems more reasonable than some instant, bang, highly unnatural process.

It’s still quite a shock to his system, but the blow is softened by the preparation of his heart.

3 1 Samuel 10:14–16 (ESV)

*Saul's uncle said to him and to his servant, "Where did you go?" And he said, "To seek the donkeys. And when we saw they were not to be found, we went to Samuel." And Saul's uncle said, "Please tell me what Samuel said to you." And Saul said to his uncle, "He told us plainly that the donkeys had been found." But about the matter of the kingdom, of which Samuel had spoken, he did not tell him anything.*

Why did Saul withhold information here? Was he being humble, or deceptive?

Either way, Saul was being wise. We aren't told why his uncle asked the question. Both Saul and his uncle are from a wealthy family.

*There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, son of Zeror, son of Becorath, son of Aphiah, a Benjaminite, a man of wealth. — 1 Samuel 9:1 (ESV)*

Everything in scripture is there for a reason, and everything not in there is not there for a reason. The uncle's question is pointless, and scripture portrays it as being pointless. Given all that, his question sounds suspicious. Saul's knowledge about what's coming next is less than complete anyway.

Why say something that might be inaccurate or misunderstood?

So, Saul sounds wise in keeping confidential information confidential. Remember, Samuel wouldn't let Saul's servant hear the things he said to Saul. Confidentiality was already established by Samuel.

Given that, the uncle asking Saul specifically about what Samuel said may have been a red flag for Saul.

---

There's a line sometimes used about briefings in a military context— "Above all else, don't blurt out the truth." That's a bit tongue-in-cheek, but it wouldn't be funny if it wasn't apt. Truth in our society is a joke. This state of affairs offends many Christians.

Today's passage shows an example where secrecy, even deception, appears right. People who deal with classified information (which tends to be military) are explicitly trained to watch out for people who are interested in things that are none of their business. Red flags are a reflex, and it takes training to build this reflex. But it's important; a spy's job is to tease information out of an unsuspecting mark.

Unfortunately, this no longer just applies just to spies and military secrets. Scams and "phishing attacks" are everywhere. Christians are called to be honest—much more so than is normal in our society—but that doesn't mean that we should ignore red flags.

So how can you tell when to be suspicious? What's the secret to recognizing when something is fishy?

Curiously, in a non-military environment, there's an obvious flag—numbers. Everything valuable to a scammer involves numbers: bank numbers, social security numbers, credit card numbers.

You don't need numbers in normal conversation. Beware of giving out numbers.

4 1 Samuel 10:17–23

*Then Samuel called the people together to the LORD at Mizpah, and said to the children of Israel, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all kingdoms and from those who oppressed you.’ But you have today rejected your God, who Himself saved you from all your adversities and your tribulations; and you have said to Him, ‘No, set a king over us!’ Now therefore, present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes and by your clans.”*

*And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was chosen. When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was chosen. And Saul the son of Kish was chosen. But when they sought him, he could not be found. Therefore they inquired of the LORD further, “Has the man come here yet?”*

*And the LORD answered, “There he is, hidden among the equipment.”*

*So they ran and brought him from there; and when he stood among the people, he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward.*

Samuel cleverly lets the choosing of the new king be a “live event” that everyone participates in. This precludes any griping about who Samuel “picked” as their king.

Saul wins this lottery, but he’s *hidden among the equipment*. What in tarnation is going on here?

First off, the Hebrew word translated as “equipment” (כְּלִים, kay-leem) is very broad. The ESV translates it as “baggage.” It can mean implements or tools. The one who carries the kay-leem for a soldier is the armor bearer. All we can know is that they were things in storage.

Fortunately, the word translated as “hidden” (נִכְבֵּה, nekh-bah) means exactly that (literally “hidden himself”). So, Saul has hidden himself in a storage area. It wasn’t so good a hiding place (like a closed shed) that he couldn’t be found. He was just hiding in the shadows amongst stored items.

But that still doesn’t tell us why he was hiding. What was his goal?

Since hiding means avoiding being found, that has to be related to his goal. But being found in this case means being selected as king.

The only conclusion that fits is that Saul didn’t want the job.

---

Good. The desire for power is often associated with great sin. History is filled with stories of people killing their relatives because of their desire for power. This dreadful sin path will end up affecting Saul and many other Israeli kings.

But at least it doesn’t start out that way.

5 1 Samuel 10:24–27

*And Samuel said to all the people, “Do you see him whom the LORD has chosen, that there is no one like him among all the people?”*

*So all the people shouted and said, “Long live the king!”*

*Then Samuel explained to the people the behavior of royalty, and wrote it in a book and laid it up before the LORD. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house. And Saul also went home to Gibeah; and valiant men went with him, whose hearts God had touched. But some rebels said, “How can this man save us?” So they despised him, and brought him no presents. But he held his peace.*

Samuel gives Saul a glowing introduction, and the people respond accordingly, but then we see the first hint of opposition.

Samuel’s description of Saul’s opponents is strikingly harsh. The Hebrew word translated as “some rebels” (בְּנֵי בְלִיַּאל, *b-nay b-li-ya-lal*) is rendered “some worthless fellows” in the ESV. It literally means “sons of worthlessness.” (*b-li-ya-lal* is rooted in the verb *ba-lal*, which means to be worn out.)

I doubt there’s a slur anywhere in English that’s this explicit. “Trailer trash” comes close, but is less precise. Samuel doesn’t hold back.

But Saul lets it slide.

Saul’s kingship is off to a great start. He’s anything but a megalomaniac. He starts off acting like he doesn’t even want the job. Then he sloughs off some rather offensive opposition.

And the opposition isn’t just to Saul; it’s to the choice of him as king. These sons of worthlessness doubt the wisdom of the choice. That an affront to God (and Samuel) as much as it’s an affront to Saul.

Thus Samuel’s slur against them isn’t surprising. These fellows have absolutely no grounds to complain about the process; they just looked at the guy chosen and announce that they doubt he can *save us*.

Curiously, this is an error of timing. If they had wondered earlier, “How can a king save us?” that would have been impressive. That was Samuel’s attitude back then.

But now they’re just being trouble-makers. That’s why the NKJV translates *b-nay b-li-ya-lal* as rebels. They’re being anything but team players.

But that adds another twist. We might initially be impressed that Saul *held his peace*. He’s letting their opposition roll off like water on a duck’s back. That’s often a sign of strength.

But not always; some kinds of opposition shouldn’t be ignored.

Failing to address opposition can be a critical weakness.

*Questions for reflection or discussion*

1. What is the most impressive change you've seen from conversion?
2. Have you seen someone go through multiple change "steps"?
3. What's the latest scam to beware of?
4. How are people corrupted by power or the desire for power?
5. How can you deal cleverly with trouble-makers?

*Items for prayer:*