

1 Samuel 10

Chapter 10 begins with Samuel anointing Saul. To anoint is to apply some amount of liquid to another person or an object such as an altar. The liquid is most often oil but not always. In John 9 Jesus anoints a blind man's eyes with mud!

A common use of anointing oil in the ancient Mideast was as a cosmetic. Oiled hair was considered attractive. Oil also has many medicinal properties (like Vaseline). James 5 tells the elders to pray over a sick person and also to anoint him with oil, thought by most commentators to be medicinal rather than sacramental (showing that prayer and medical treatment are not mutually exclusive). Anointing was often performed on guests to honor them.

In the Levitical law the priests were to be anointed, thereby being set apart as holy, before they could serve before the Lord.

October 14, 2020

And here we have Saul anointed to elevate him to the throne. Both the priestly and royal anointings reach their pinnacle in the person of the Lord Jesus. The Hebrew *Messiah* and Greek *Christ* both mean Anointed One.

How about you? Have you ever been anointed? If you believe in Christ you have. "And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee" (2 Corinthians 1:21-22). You are anointed and sealed with the Spirit. Spend some time to think about how this agrees with all the senses of anointing given above: You are made more presentable, healed, welcomed, set apart as holy to God, and lifted up above your previous common life.

Questions for study and discussion:

1. In what ways does God demonstrate that Saul is appointed by Him to be king?

2. Read verse 9 and 10. Do you think Saul was saved?

3. Saul still seems reluctant to become king. Is this humility commendable?

4. What fateful instruction does Samuel give to Saul?

5. What is the lesson for us in verse 7?

6. In verses 20 and 21, a rigorous process of “drilling down” by tribe and clan is used to pinpoint Saul as the chosen king. Where else is a similar process used?

7. Any ideas on the rights and duties that are set down in the book in verse 25?

8. We know that the Lord’s choice of Saul was not His true intent but only His accommodation of the unfaithful people of Israel. Knowing that, are the grumblers of verse 27 justified in despising him? Is there a lesson for us?