

Church of God Sunday School

ISRAEL CHOOSES TO HAVE A KING

1 Samuel 8-10

Samuel was now old. He knew that he could not judge Israel much longer. Therefore, he made his two sons judges over Israel. But those men were not good judges. They went after rewards, took bribes, and made bad judgments.

The people came to Samuel. They told Samuel that, since he was old and his sons were not good judges, they would rather be like other nations and have a king over them.

Have a king! Samuel was displeased. He went straight to God and prayed about it. What would God say? God's answer was not what Samuel had expected. God told Samuel to listen to the people and do as they wanted. The Israelite nation had been rejecting God's way ever since He had brought them out of Egypt. They had often turned to false gods and to their own way. Now, God was going to give them what they wanted.

The Lord told Samuel to explain to the people just how a king would rule over them. He said a king would take their sons to drive his chariots, to be his bodyguards, horsemen, and soldiers. Some of their sons, he would take to run ahead of his chariots. Some men would be made captains over his army. Others would have to make his chariots and weapons of war and be his farmers. Still others would have to work in his vineyards.

Samuel said their daughters would be taken to be cooks and bakers and makers of all kinds of candies and sweet things for the king; and the king would take the best of their fields, vineyards, and olive trees for his own servants. He would also take a tenth of their seed and vineyards and sheep too.

And, Samuel told the people, when they began to cry out to God because of all that their king took from them and because of all that he was doing, then God said He would not hear their cry. Nevertheless, after hearing of all those things that would take place and change their lives so much, the people still wanted a

king, to be like other nations; so God told Samuel, "Make them a king."

Now, there was a man named Kish, who was of the tribe of Benjamin. He had a son named Saul. This young man was the best of all the young men of Israel in many ways. He was nice looking—and he was the tallest of all the men in Israel.

When Saul's father had lost some animals called asses, he told Saul to take a servant and go look for them. Saul and the servant searched for three days in all the places where the animals might be, but they could not find them. Finally, in the land of Zuph, Saul wanted to return home. He did not want his father to begin to worry about him and the servant too. But the servant said that since they were so near a certain city where a prophet was, they should go talk to the prophet. He could tell them where the animals were.

Saul and the servant went to the city, but before they entered the city, they met some young women, coming to the well for water. The men asked the young women if the man of God was in the city. They said he was, for there was to be a sacrifice and a meal

that day. As soon as the men entered the city, they met the Prophet Samuel, going up to the high place to bless the sacrifice.

Now, the day before, God had told the Prophet Samuel that He would be sending him a young man to anoint to be the first king of Israel. Therefore, when Samuel met Saul, God said to Samuel, "Behold the man whom I spake to thee of! this same [man] shall reign over my people."

Saul did not know of the conversation between God and Samuel. He said to Samuel, "Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer's [the prophet's] house is."

Samuel said: "I am the seer: go up before me unto the high place; for ye shall eat with me to day, and to morrow I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that is in thine heart. And as for thine asses that were lost



three days ago . . . they are found. And on whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not on thee, and on all thy father's house?"

Saul answered, "Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? wherefore then speakest thou so to me?" Saul was puzzled by the words of Samuel.

Samuel took Saul and his servant to the feast and had them sit in places of honor among the thirty people who had been called to the sacrifice. Then Samuel told the cook to bring out the shoulder portion of meat that had been set aside earlier and place it before Saul. Samuel said to Saul, "Behold that which is left! set it before thee, and eat: for unto this time hath it been kept for thee . . ." (This was more puzzling to Saul, no doubt.) So Saul ate with Samuel.

After the meal, Samuel, Saul, and the servant left the high place and went back into the city. Early the next day Samuel told Saul, "Up, that I may send thee away." They went as far as the city limits. There Samuel said to Saul, "Bid the servant pass on before us . . . but stand thou still a while, that I may shew thee the word of God."

As soon as the servant had gone ahead, Samuel took a vial (a container for oil), opened it, poured oil on Saul's head, and kissed him. Samuel said, "Is it not because the LORD hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?" Saul was surprised by that! He may have thought to himself, Am I to be Israel's first king?

Samuel told Saul of three signs that would occur to show him that God was with him. The first sign would be that Saul would meet two men: they would tell him the asses had been found and his father was worried about him.

The second sign would be that he would meet three more men: one man would be carrying three kids (baby goats), one man would have three loaves of bread, and one man would have a bottle of wine. All of them would stop and greet him respectfully. He would be given two loaves of the bread.

The third sign would be that Saul would meet a company of prophets: they would prophesy. The Spirit of the Lord would come upon Saul, and he would prophesy too.

As Saul turned to leave Samuel, God changed Saul's heart. He did meet up with all those men. Everything happened just as Samuel had told him.

Later on, Samuel called the people together at Mizpah, to show them who would be their king. He reminded the Israelites how God had been their deliverer in the past, in adverse times, and how He had blessed them and their fathers and grandfathers too. But Samuel said: ". . . ye have this day rejected your God . . . and ye have said . . . set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the LORD . . ."

So, each of the tribes of Israel passed before God; and the tribe of Benjamin was taken. It was the smallest of all the tribes! That tribe passed before Samuel by its families. The family of Matri was taken, and Kish was chosen. Then of all the sons of Kish, Saul was chosen, but when they looked for him, he could not be found!

When the Lord was asked where Saul was, God said, "Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff [the baggage]." The people ran and got Saul. (Why had Saul hidden himself? Was he afraid? Did he feel that he was not worthy enough to be king?)

When Saul was finally among them, he stood out, because he was so much taller than any of the others, "from his shoulders and upward."

"See ye him whom the LORD hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people?" asked Samuel.

"God save the king," the people shouted.

Though Samuel was heartbroken, because the people had rejected the divine leadership of God and chose to have a man lead them, still he did what God told him to do. After telling the people what kind of kingdom they would have, Samuel wrote all about it in a book and "laid it up before the LORD." Then Samuel sent everyone back to their homes, and Saul went to his home in Gibeah, to wait for God's direction.



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**MEMORY VERSE:**

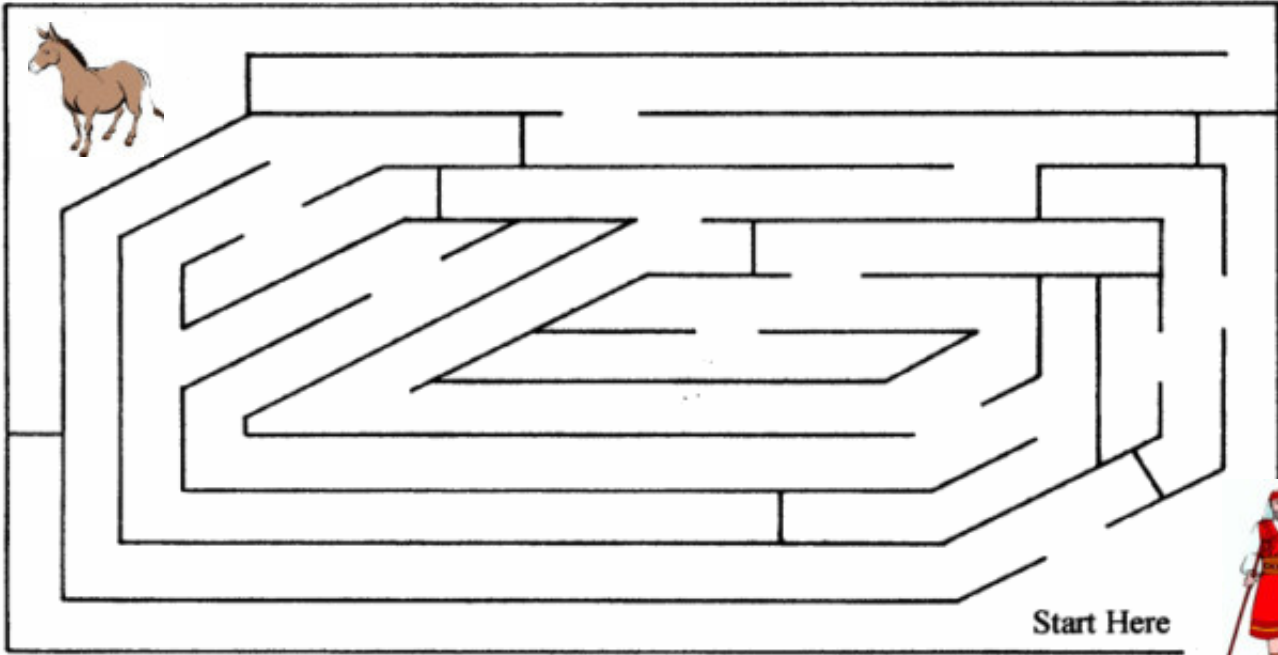
*"Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."*

—Ephesians 5:17

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Kish sent his son, Saul, to look for his donkeys.



T	U	L	S	H	Z	N	Y	T	F	E	O	I	L
T	N	A	E	U	D	Z	F	O	O	V	S	K	T
G	U	A	L	U	B	C	Z	O	U	I	Y	Y	Y
L	A	S	V	F	M	E	I	G	N	E	E	B	Z
K	I	N	G	R	Z	A	G	O	D	C	K	L	J
V	O	Y	O	J	E	Z	S	A	E	E	N	Q	P
N	E	N	U	I	B	S	E	Q	S	R	O	X	P
A	X	O	T	H	N	H	X	I	S	S	D	X	N
C	P	M	C	Q	B	T	H	S	O	A	E	D	P
H	B	J	H	Q	O	T	H	L	X	D	O	M	N

Find the words in the puzzle.
 Words go across, up, down, diagonal and backwards.

Saul	servant	Samuel	message
king	God	anoint	found
oil	receive	donkeys	

HISTORY
 The people of Israel wanted a king like other countries had. Samuel was not happy about this. He felt the people were rejecting God. They wouldn't listen, so God told Samuel to give them a king.



Samuel Anoints Saul as King of Israel