

**CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE-  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

[Adapted from Bethel Bible-Presbyterian  
Church, 10 Downing St. Oakleigh, Vic.,  
3166]

**DHW BIBLE CLASS**

**LESSON 6B**

**FIRST SAMUEL**

**CHAPTER 10**

**INTRODUCTION**

The calling and anointing of a person into the ministry that God has prepared for him is very important. This is the knowledge from God that the person has been saved and purposed to do that particular work. Israel had asked for a new king like all the nations. God would give him to them.

God not only had to prepare the man but also the people to accept their new king. In this chapter, Saul was called into the kingship with miraculous signs. These signs were given to make sure that Saul knew without a shadow of a doubt that he was indeed called by God for a very important task.

He might function as a king but he was God's king, the Lord's anointed for God's people. Saul would have no excuse if he failed as a king.

The calling was both private and public. Saul needed to know personally and the people needed

to accept publicly. This is true today of anybody's calling into the Lord's ministry. "A person's private calling is personal and he can claim that he is called to do this or that. But if he is not confirmed or accepted by the people publicly, then his calling would very possibly be false." Is this statement absolutely true?

The public acceptance of Saul as Israel's first king would put the people onto the responsibility platform. If Saul turned out to be a bad king, they would have no one to blame but themselves. They had been warned in the last chapter of the types of imposition that a king would demand from his people but they had chosen to ignore the warnings. In this chapter, they would publicly accept the king and in the future, they would have to put up with all that he stood for whether good, bad or ugly! Israel would become a monarchy by the end of the chapter! The monarchical road of no return had begun.

**COMMENTARY**

**Three Signs were Given— vv. 1-8**

As a means of authenticating the word of God, Samuel gave Saul three signs. The first one was that Saul and his servant would meet two men near Rachel's tomb, which was at the border of Benjamin and Zelzah. The locality

indicated here was further north of the present traditional site. These men would inform Saul that his father's lost donkeys had been found and that his father was not worried for him. The question is how did these men know who Saul was and what he was doing in the first place? This would confirm to Saul that his "mission" to look for his father's lost donkeys was no accident, and that all the events that followed including the meal with Samuel and their conversation culminating with Saul's calling were all ordained of God. His calling to be the first king of Israel had begun even before Saul knew about it! In other words, it was pre-planned by God.

The second sign was that as they went on from there, they would come to the plains of Tabor where they would meet three men on their way to Bethel to worship the LORD, one with three kids (young male goats), another with three loaves of bread and the third with a bottle of wine. These items were their respective sacrificial offerings. These men would "salute" (*shalom*, greet) Saul and give him two loaves of bread. Samuel told him to accept the bread. Actually these loaves of bread were to be offered to the LORD, and as such could only be eaten by the priest and the king. Samuel's instruction to Saul to accept the loaves was another

confirmation that Saul was to be made ruler over Israel. The specificity of this second sign with all the details carefully given and fulfilled would make Saul realize the definiteness of his calling. If he had doubts after the first sign, this second sign would definitely remove all doubts. The acceptance of the loaves would give clear indication to Saul demanding him to accept the calling given by God.

The third sign would be given at "the hill of God" (Hebrew, *Gibeah-elohim*) which is a place about six miles north of Jerusalem – there they would meet a group of prophets on their way down from the "high place" (the altar) where they had worshipped. These prophets would be carrying a psaltery (some kind of harp), a tabret (tambourine), a pipe (flute) and a harp. They would prophesy and the Spirit of the LORD would come upon Saul and he would "be turned into another man" (10:5, 6). Saul would prophesy together with these men. Again one could see the details in this third confirmatory sign given by God to Saul. He would experience first hand the calling of God by prophesying which he had never done before. He would be made a new man for the purpose of equipping him for the ministry to rule as a godly king. All that was needed to make him king and remain as king were given to him by God. These were all

external factors that God granted to Saul to help him do well as king.

When these signs were fulfilled, Saul was to “do as the occasion serve him” for God would be with him (10:7). This was the greatest blessing any servant of God could ever wish for -- the promise of the presence of God in his life and ministry. Then Samuel told Saul to go ahead of him to Gilgah to offer burnt sacrifices and make sacrifices of peace offerings. He would have to stay at Gilgal for seven days until Samuel arrived. At the appointed time, he would be shown what he had to do. Saul needed to be empowered to carry out the responsibilities and duties as a ruler of Israel. He would be faced with different and new situations and he would have to adapt to the demands of the occasion. He needed to change and have different aspirations from before he was anointed. Samuel assured him that God would be with him.

**Saul was Given a  
New Heart—vv. 9-16**

So, Saul left Samuel. God gave Saul “another heart” (10:9) as He had promised. The Spirit of God roused him to his new task and work. The three signs prophesied by Samuel all came to pass exactly as revealed by God.

When Saul and his servant came to “the hill of God” (*Gibeah-*

*elohim*), a company of prophets met him. The Spirit of God came upon Saul and he too prophesied among them. When the people who knew Saul saw him prophesying among the prophets, they made critical remarks: “What is this that is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?” And one of them in the same place remarked: “But who is their father?” These disparaging remarks became a proverbial saying: “Is Saul also among the prophets?” (10:12). Saul needed to realize from the onset that there would be resistance from the enemies or unspiritual men. He should not be discouraged for they had come to test his faith and his trust in God.

Saul returned to his home in Gibeah. His uncle asked him where he had been. He answered that he had been searching for the lost donkeys and when he could not find them, he and his servant had gone to Samuel. His uncle earnestly asked him what Samuel had said. Saul answered that Samuel had told him that the donkeys had been found. But he kept mum concerning the matter of “the kingdom”, that is, his anointing as the first prince/ruler of Israel. Saul failed his first test. His position as the first king of Israel was confirmed beyond a shadow of doubt. He was asked by his uncle what Samuel the seer had said to

him and for him to hold back was a demonstration of false humility. Saul should have told the whole truth the way Joseph did in Genesis and Samuel did as a young boy when Eli asked him what God had said to him in the dream. Saul's nature of practising situation ethics was coming to the forefront. He was indeed very much a king like all the nations, a worldly king!

**Saul Chosen as the king of  
Israel—vv. 17-27**

Samuel summoned the children of Israel to gather in Mizpeh. Samuel's choice of Mizpeh was meaningful because it was there that Samuel had earlier called them to assemble to confess their sins, repent and recommit themselves to serve the LORD God only. It was also where they had completely defeated the Philistines when they had launched an attack. When the children of Israel gathered once more in Mizpeh, Samuel reminded them of how the LORD had delivered them from the oppression of the Egyptians, and from the hands of all the kingdoms, definitely a reference to their claims of the Promised Land (the Book of Joshua), and the frequent conflicts in the land with their neighbours (the Book of Judges). Samuel then charged them that they now rejected God who had saved them from all of their adversities and

tribulations and wanted a king to rule over them. In obedience to the LORD'S instruction (8:9), Samuel called them to present themselves before the LORD in an orderly manner by their tribes and by their thousands.

Samuel cast lots to choose their king. The casting of lots was an acceptable way to discern the will of God then. In choosing which of the two goats was for the LORD and which was for the scapegoat, Aaron cast lots (Leviticus 16:8). Joshua cast lots before the LORD when allotting the land to the 12 tribes of Israel (Joshua 18:10). The children of Israel were familiar with this method of discerning God's will. However, only two persons knew that the LORD had already chosen Saul, the son of Kish from the tribe of Benjamin to be the king of Israel. In the casting of the lots, Samuel would show to the people that it was the LORD who had chosen Saul. The procedure of drawing the lots was by an elimination process. From the nation, a tribe was chosen, then a family, and then the person. And the lot fell on Saul.

Now it seemed strange that Saul was not there. The people looked for him and they could not find him. They asked the LORD further whether Saul would come and accept the appointment. The LORD answered and told them where they could find Saul. Saul

had hidden himself among the articles and equipment brought by the people. Seemingly, Saul was lacking in self-confidence although Samuel had given him three signs. It also seemed that Saul did not seek the kingship. His behaviour seemed to reflect humility and modesty. When Saul was brought out, his physical appearance impressed the people. Samuel presented Saul as the LORD'S choice and the people responded, "God save the king" (10:24). Later events would point to Saul as showing a false humility which is common in today's churches.

Then Samuel rehearsed "the manner of the kingdom" which he had told them (8:11-17). The word "manner" (Hebrew *mishpat*) included the "rights and duties" of the monarchy. It would be obvious that the monarchy must be like all other nations. These rules and stipulations were designed to protect the people and prevent an oppressive manner of rule. These rules formed the constitution of the nation. The king was to be constantly reminded of the articles of the constitution so that he learned to fear God. He should not lift up his heart above his people, and he should not deviate from the constitutional law so that there might be peace and prosperity in the kingdom (Deuteronomy 17:14-20).

Having done this, Samuel dismissed the people. Saul went back to his home in Gibeah and he found that there was a "force" (Hebrew, *chayil* = an army, men of valour) of people whose hearts God had touched. These men followed Saul and were his first supporters. They supported his style of kingship as declared by Samuel and written in a book. But there was also a group of people, "the children of Belial" who did not accept the kind of theocratic kingship as pronounced by Samuel. They did not hide their feelings. They remarked skeptically: "How shall this man save us?" They despised Saul and even stayed away from the crowning ceremony. They made no bones about their thoughts and feelings about Saul as their king. Saul on the other hand, conducted himself well in the face of such opposition. He held his peace! It appeared on the surface that Saul might turn out to be a good king. He demonstrated self control and long suffering in the face of verbal abuse and rejection.

### **PRACTICAL VALUE**

God's gradual preparation of Saul as the ruler of Israel is most instructive. Saul was called privately and then publicly. Samuel did not hurry through the revelation of God's plan to Saul. He sought to

gradually introduce his calling to Saul and then Saul to the people. He allayed Saul's doubts by giving him three confirmatory signs concerning God's call to him to be the king of Israel. Saul's calling was made very clear to him. When he failed the LORD in the near future, it would be a classic case of clear-cut self condemnation.

Above all else, God prepared Saul by giving him a new heart, wisdom, power and His Spirit.

It would appear that Saul was a modest man when Samuel first indicated to him that he would be made ruler of Israel. But what was required of Saul as king was total loyalty and submission to the will of God. Modesty is a virtue but we must be aware that it is sometimes used as a subtle means of gaining selfish ends. In the case of Saul, the modesty and humility appeared genuine at first. However, only time would tell if he would remain loyal to the LORD. AMEN.

**DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**Daily Readings**

**Monday:** 1 Samuel 10:1-8.

**Tuesday:** 1 Samuel 10:9-16; Deuteronomy 17:14-20.

**Wednesday:** 1 Samuel 10:17-27.

**Thursday:** 1 Samuel 10:1-27.

**Friday:** 1 Samuel 10:1-27.

**Analysis**

Text	Practical Value
1 Samuel 10:1-8	
1 Samuel 10:9-16	
1 Samuel 10:17-27	

**Discussion Questions**

1. What three signs were given to Saul (10:1-8)? What were the purposes of these signs?

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2. Is it true that for a person's calling to be really from God, it must be approved by the people? In our church's context, is this done by election?

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3. Should Saul have kept his calling to be king from his uncle when his uncle asked him what Samuel had said to him? Did Saul lie to his uncle?

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4. How does this section (9:1-10:16) show that when God calls, He also equips?

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5. Do you think that Saul demonstrated genuine humility when he hid from Samuel even though he knew that God had already called him? What do you think would have been the proper behaviour or conduct?

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