

A Reluctant King

1 Samuel 9:1-10:27

Big Idea : Samuel anointed Saul as God's chosen king of Israel, but Saul was reluctant and not everyone accepted him.

Aim : To teach that the right response to God's word is to listen and obey, trusting that God will supply all we need.

The Story So Far

Week 1:

- Israel rejected God as their king and demanded a human king so they could be like the other nations.
- Samuel warned them what a human king would do, but they insisted so he agreed to anoint a king.



Leader's Study Notes

Read 1 Samuel 9:1-10:27 noting how Saul responded to his call to kingship.

Use the following notes to help you think about the passage in more detail.

In the previous lesson God surprisingly commanded Samuel to anoint a human king for Israel even though their request for such a king was a blatant rejection of God's rule (1 Samuel 8:7). This passage reveals the man whom God had chosen to be this king, but there are a number of indicators in this passage that Saul was not going to be the ideal king for Israel despite his outward appearance.

- 9:1-5 Benjamin was the smallest tribe in Israel, but Kish and his son, Saul, were both impressive men. Saul obeyed his father and went to search for the lost donkeys. When he became discouraged, however, he tried to return home.
- 9:6-14 Ramah, Samuel's home town, was in the district of Zuph. Saul's servant recognised that the seer (prophet) lived there and encouraged Saul to seek him.
- 9:15-21 The Lord told Samuel in advance that he had chosen Saul to lead and deliver his people in response to their plea. Saul doubted Samuel's words because he was from an insignificant tribe and clan.
- 9:22-26 The portion of meat that was given to Saul had been set aside for him at the time

that Samuel had arranged the feast. God had already told Samuel that Saul would arrive the next day (9:15-16). It should have been clear that Saul was the man God had chosen.

9:27-10:8 Anointing with oil was a symbol of kingship. Samuel anointed Saul privately at first, commissioning him to lead God's people. Not even Saul's servant knew about this. Samuel told Saul what would happen to him, who he would meet and what God would do. These signs and their fulfilment should have been obvious to Saul and have made him recognise that this was God's plan.

10:9-16 God changed Saul's heart by his Spirit and enabled him to prophesy (speak God's words). But Saul didn't tell his uncle that Samuel had anointed him as king over Israel.

10:17-27 Samuel called all Israel together to witness the choosing of their new king. He spoke God's words to the people, reminding them of God's past provision and their rebellion in asking for a king. Saul was chosen out of all the people and publicly declared to be king. Although Saul's heart had been changed he was still reluctant to accept God's calling and hid. Most of the Israelites accepted Saul as king, but there were some who doubted his ability to rule and to rescue God's people.

Although the people had demanded a king, it was God who chose who that would be and who decided what the job would involve. God is still the real king, but now working through a human ruler. The success of Saul as king would depend on his response to the word of the Lord in the mouth of his prophet. Saul seems to waver between doubt and trust, reluctance and confidence in God's plan. It's a shaky start!

Activity - Job swap

- Print out the table with different jobs.
- Place these facedown on a board and invite one child to choose one of the pictures and turn it over to reveal their job.
- Talk briefly about that job and ask them whether they feel qualified (able) to do it.
- A second child may then choose a picture, but has the choice of swapping their job with the one already revealed by the first child.
- Why did/didn't they swap? What was it about the job they originally received that they did/didn't like?
- A third child may then do the same, but can swap with either the first or the second child.
- Continue in this way until all the pictures have been revealed.
- Which children are happy with their job? Which are not? Why? Do they think that they would be able to do their job well?
- In today's true story from the Bible someone was chosen to be king, but he didn't seem very happy about this.

Activity - Seeking Saul.

- Choose one child to be Saul and ask them to hide while the other children close their eyes and count to ten.
- Ask the other children to find Saul and bring him to you. When they do so, place a crown on his head and say, "Do you see the man the Lord has chosen?"
- Encourage the children to respond with, "Long live the king!" then point to one child as you say, "But some scoundrels said" and get them to say, "How can this man save us?"
- Repeat this a number of times, choosing a different child to be Saul each time and pointing to a different child to be the scoundrel.

- Remind the children that in today's true story from the Bible Saul didn't believe that he could be the king. Instead of trusting God's word he hid among the baggage.

Doctor	dentist	Hair dresser	Surgeon
accountant	builder	cashier	gardener
Domestic worker	chef	pastor	electrician
plumber	Street sweeper	janitor	Teacher



Activity

For 3-7s – choose either Activity A (pages 28 and 29) or Activity B (page 30).

Activity A – Print page 28 onto paper (one copy for every two children) and page 29 onto paper or card (one copy for every six children). Each child will also require one lollipop stick and a paper cup.

Before the lesson cut out the cup sleeves on page 28 and cut along the bold lines on page 29 as marked. Also pierce a hole in the bottom of each cup.

The children colour in the picture and the cup sleeve.

Help them to fold and glue the picture of Saul around a lollipop stick. They will also need help gluing the sleeve around the cup. Push the stick through the bottom of the cup and pull down to partially hide Saul among the baggage.

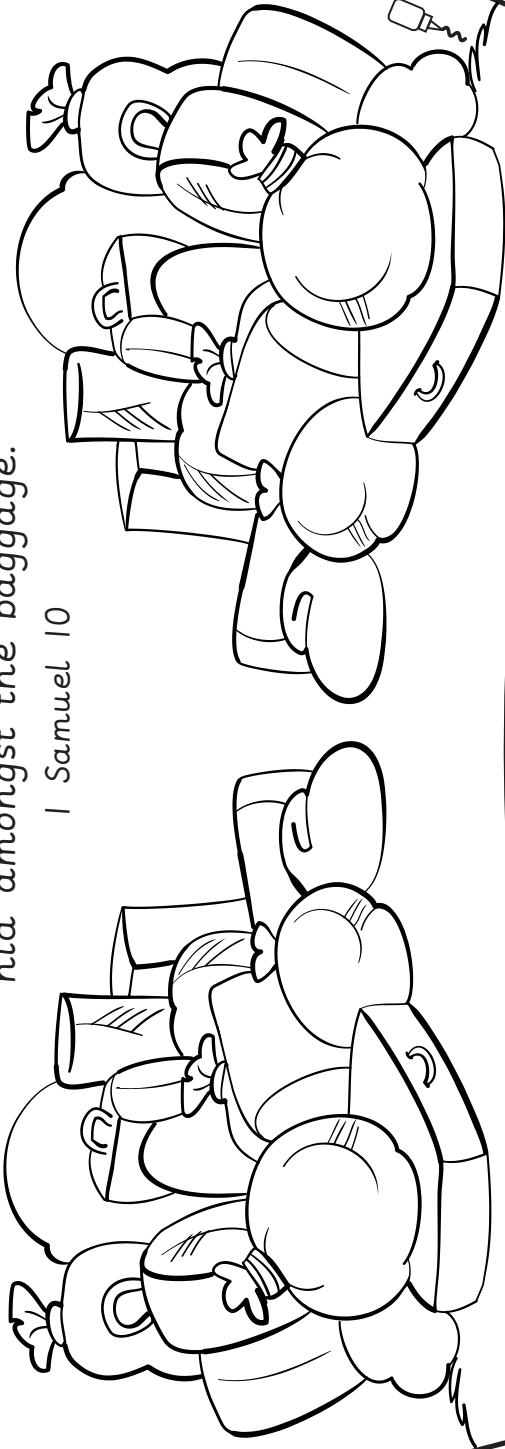
Push the stick upwards to show Saul coming out from hiding to be anointed publicly as king. Remind the children that Saul didn't think that he could be king because he came from a tribe and family that weren't very important.

Activity B – Print page 30 onto paper (one copy for every child). The children colour in the page.

Remind them that not everyone was happy to have Saul as their king. Some people grumbled and didn't give him gifts.

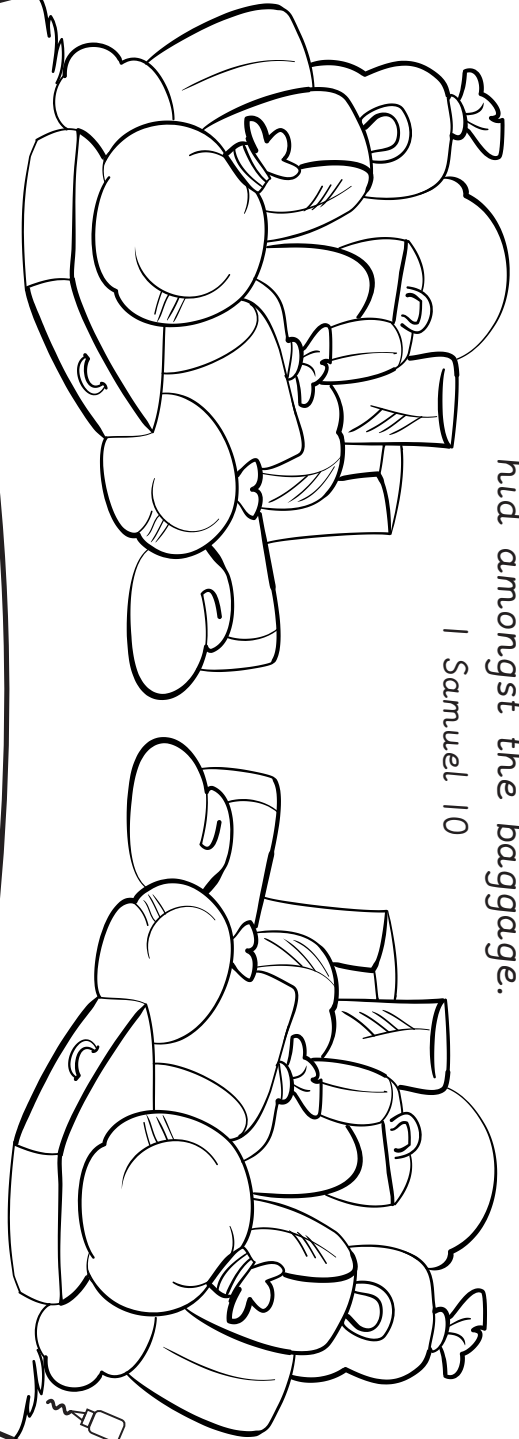
Saul didn't want to be king so he
hid amongst the baggage.

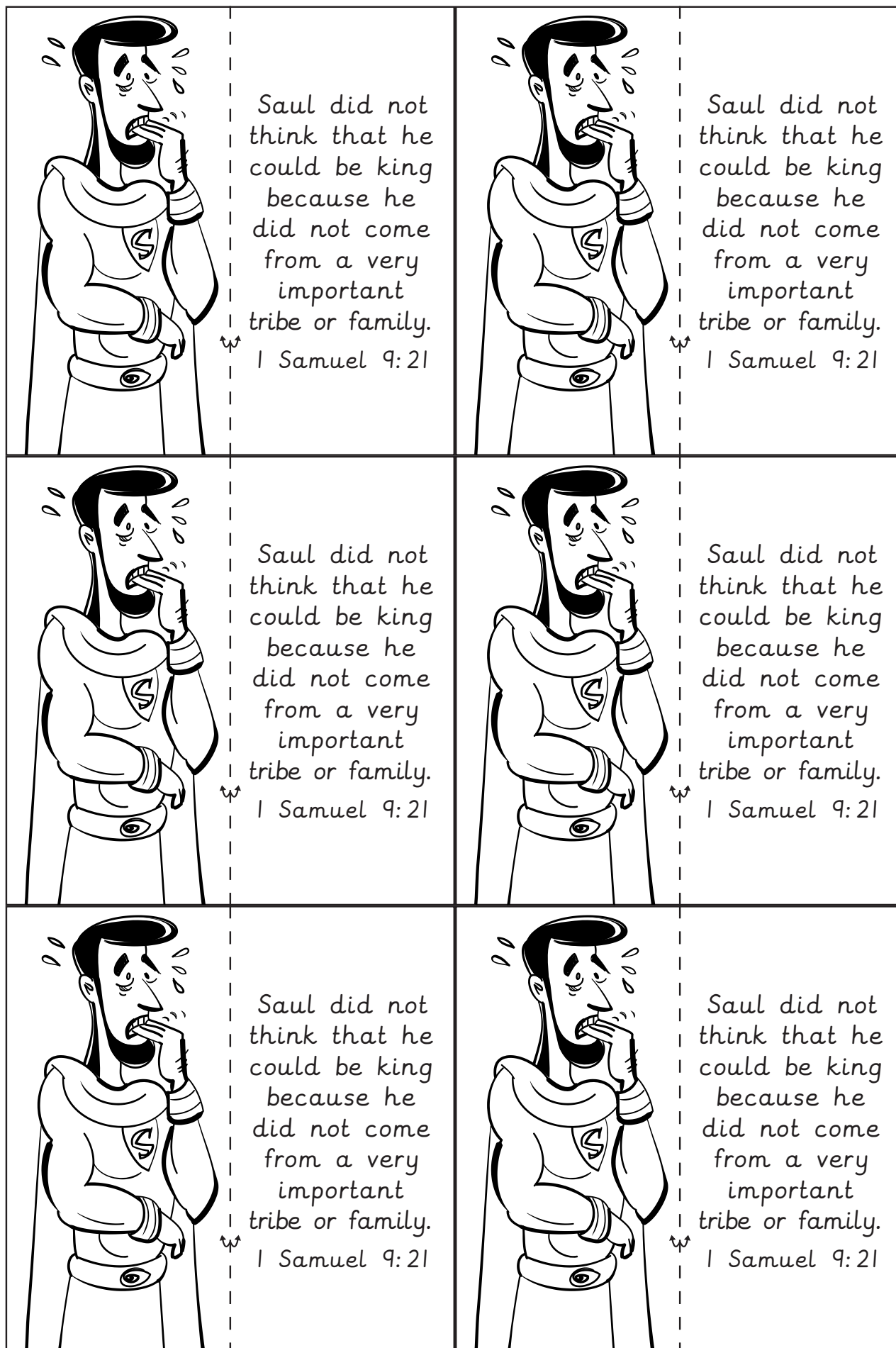
| Samuel 10



Saul didn't want to be king so he
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| Samuel 10







Samuel anointed Saul as king of
Israel, but some people didn't think
he could save them.

1 Samuel 10