

E18. King Saul

1 Samuel 9-10:1

Learning Objectives

1. The children will examine the story of how Saul was chosen to lead God's people.
2. The children will recognize that if we are obedient to God, He will guide our path in life.

Memory Verse: *"Your word is a lamp that shows me the way. It is like a light that guides me."*
--Psalm 119:105 (NIRV)

Getting Started

Choose One

All Ages

"Pick a King" Activity

This activity is discussion based, and you will need an easel and markers to facilitate the discussion about the qualities of a "King" from two very different perspectives. Have the children sit in a circle and ask them the following questions:

1. What kind of a king would you like to have? (Example: handsome, strong, fearless...!)
2. What kind of king would they like to serve? (Example: good, kind, big-hearted...!)
3. How are the two lists different?
4. What kind of king is God?
5. Do you think He is the best King to serve? Why or why not?

Tell the children that in today's lesson they will learn about a man who had no intention of becoming the King, but God had a different plan, and he used a few donkeys to make that plan a reality.

"God's Instructions" Object Talk

See: www.kidssundayschool.com (Grade School, Object Talks, "God's Instructions")

You will need a recipe card and an assembly sheet for this object talk. Please see the above website for detailed instructions to guide your discussion. At the end of your "talk", ask the children if they can think of any other ways that we can hear "God's Instructions" in our lives (in the divine service, for example). Then continue with the lesson.

Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions:

Message: *Let God guide your path.*

1 Samuel 9 ~ Samuel Anoints Saul to Be Israel's Leader

There was a man named Kish from the tribe of Benjamin. Kish was a very important person. Kish had a son named Saul. Saul was a handsome young man. There wasn't anyone like him among the people of Israel. He was a head taller than any of them.

One day, the donkeys that belonged to Saul's father Kish were lost. So Kish spoke to his son Saul. He said, "Go and look for the donkeys. Take one of the servants with you."

Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions – *continued*

Saul and his servant went through the hill country of Ephraim. They also went through the area around Shalisha, but they didn't find the donkeys. So they went on into the area of Shaalim. But the donkeys weren't there either. Then Saul went through the territory of Benjamin. But they still didn't find the donkeys.

When Saul and the servant who was with him reached the area of Zuph, Saul spoke to him. He said, "Come on. Let's go back. If we don't, my father will stop thinking about the donkeys and start worrying about us."

But the servant replied, "There's a man of God here in Ramah. People have a lot of respect for him. Everything he says comes true. So let's go and see him now. Perhaps he'll tell us which way to go."

Saul said to his servant, "If we go to see the man, what can we give him? There isn't any food in our sacks. We don't have a gift for the man of God. So what can we give him?"

The servant answered Saul again. "Look," he said. "I've got a tenth of an ounce of silver. I'll give it to the man of God. Then maybe he'll tell us which way to go."

In Israel, prophets used to be called seers. So if a man wanted to ask God for advice, he would say, "Come on. Let's go to the seer." Saul said to his servant, "That's a good idea. Come on. Let's go and ask the seer." So they started out for the town where the man of God lived. They were going up the hill toward the town. Along the way they met some young women who were coming out to get water from the well. Saul and his servant asked them, "Is the seer here?"

"Yes, he is," they answered. "In fact, he's just up ahead of you. So hurry along. He has just come to our town today. The people are going to offer a sacrifice at the high place where they worship. As soon as you enter the town, you will find him. He'll be there until he goes up to the high place to eat. The people won't start eating until he gets there. He must bless the sacrifice first. After that, those who are invited will eat. So go on up. You should find him there just about now."

They went up to the town. As they were entering it, they saw Samuel. He was coming toward them. He was on his way up to the high place. The Lord had spoken to Samuel the day before Saul came. He had said, "About this time tomorrow I will send you a man. He is from the land of Benjamin. Anoint him to be the leader of my people Israel. He will save them from the powerful hand of the Philistines. I have seen how much my people are suffering. Their cry for help has reached me."

When Samuel saw a man coming toward him, the Lord spoke to Samuel again. He said, "He is the man I told you about. His name is Saul. He will govern my people."

Saul approached Samuel at the gate of the town. He asked Samuel, "Can you please show me the house where the seer is staying?"

"I'm the seer," Samuel replied. "Go on up to the high place ahead of me. I want you and your servant to eat with me today. Tomorrow morning I'll tell you what's on your mind. Then I'll let you go. Don't worry about the donkeys you lost three days ago. They've already been found. But who are all of the people of Israel longing for? You and your father's whole family!"

Saul answered, "But I'm from the tribe of Benjamin. It's the smallest tribe in Israel. And my family group is the least important in the whole tribe of Benjamin. So why are you saying that to me?"

Then Samuel brought Saul and his servant into the room where they would be eating. He seated them at the head table. About 30 people had been invited. Samuel said to the cook, "Bring the piece of meat I gave you. It's the one I told you to put to one side."

So the cook went and got a choice piece of thigh. He set it in front of Saul. Samuel said, "Here is what has been kept for you. Eat it. It was put to one side for you for this special occasion. We've saved it for you ever since I invited the guests." And Saul ate with Samuel that day. They came down from the high place to the town. After that, Samuel talked with Saul on the roof of Samuel's house.



Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions – *continued*

The next day they got up at about the time the sun was rising. Samuel called out to Saul on the roof. He said, "Get ready. Then I'll send you on your way." So Saul got ready. And he and Samuel went outside together.

As they were on their way down to the edge of town, Samuel spoke to Saul. He said, "Tell the servant to go ahead of us." So the servant went on ahead. Then Samuel continued, "Stay here awhile. I'll give you a message from God."

1 Samuel 10

Then Samuel took a bottle of olive oil. He poured it on Saul's head and kissed him. He said, "The Lord has anointed you to be the leader of his people."

Discussion Questions:

1. What kind of person is Saul described as at the beginning of our Bible text? (*Handsome, very tall, like no one else in Israel...see Bibles for help if needed.*)
2. What tribe of Israel were Saul and his family from? (*The tribe of Benjamin – remind the children about the 12 tribes, after the names of Jacob's 12 sons.*)
3. What did Saul's father ask him to do? (*Go and find the 3 lost donkeys that belonged to their family.*)
4. Did he go alone to find the donkeys? (*No, he took a servant with him.*)
5. Who did Saul and his servant go and talk to in order to help find their donkeys? (*A man of God named Samuel.*)
6. Explain how Samuel knew about Saul before he even met him. (*Discuss together – emphasize how God made this come into being.*)
7. Do you think that Saul wanted to be the king of Israel? (*Discuss together...talk about how God had a plan for Saul, even though Saul did not understand it.*)
8. How would you feel if you were Saul and found out you were chosen to be the leader of God's people in Israel? (*Discuss together.*)

Application to Real Life

All Ages

"Funny Face" Activity

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade School → Activities → "Funny Face"

You will need pencils and two sheets of paper for each child. This is a great activity to demonstrate what it might be like to go through life without God guiding our path. Please see the website above for detailed instructions. Please also remind the children that in addition to reading the Bible and praying, we need to attend the divine services and find ourselves in the fellowship of God's children. These are all ways for us to keep God in our life and allow Him to guide our footsteps.

Saul's journey to become King all started by him following his father's instructions to go and look for those three donkeys. If we are obedient to God, then we are able to begin our own journeys in life, just as God has planned for us. Let God guide your path (message statement).

Memory Work Fun

1. Recite the memory verse.
2. Practice finding the memory verse and/or Bible text in their Bible!
3. Play a game to review a Commandment (toss the bean bag/stuffed animal, the person who catches it says the next word...try to go faster and faster).

All Ages**Role Play: God's Chosen Kingdom**

You will need a nice bottle or small jug, and a chair for Samuel for this roleplay activity. You will also need to print a copy of the play for each character. Assign children to the various roles in the play and have fun!

Game: Who is the King

Ask the children to sit in a circle on the floor or on chairs. Explain to them that you are going to select one person to be in the middle. Select a child and ask them to stand in the middle of the circle and close their eyes. Then tell the other children you are going to select another person to be the king. Walk around the circle and lightly touch someone's back. After someone is selected to be the king, tell the person standing in the middle to open their eyes and begin asking the other children questions to identify who was chosen to be the king. For example, they may ask if the king has blonde hair or green eyes or if he is tall, etc. When the person in the middle feels they have enough information, they should tell everyone the name of the person they think was chosen to be the king.

After playing the game several times, briefly discuss how Samuel knew who the first king of Israel would be. The children should understand that God pointed out Saul to Samuel so he would know who to anoint.

Grades K-2**"Crown Him" Activity**

There are many options for making crowns. You may purchase precut ones inexpensively (see www.orientaltrading.com), OR you could cut them out of poster board, OR you could check your local fast food chain restaurant for free crowns (these would need to be spray painted ahead of time). Provide items to decorate the crowns (stickers, jewels, feathers, glue, etc.). Remember to keep the conversation going. Remind the children that God had a plan for Saul, even though he didn't know it. We want to let God guide our path in our lives too (message statement).

"The Helper" Craft

<http://children.cccm.com/curriculum/> → OT Teacher Guide → Page 8 → "Saul is made King of Israel" → Page 26

You will need red construction paper, scissors, glue, a hole puncher, white yarn, and enough copies of the dove template (on Page 26 of the lesson above). Please see the website for detailed instructions. This activity is a craft, so remember to keep the conversation going. The dove will represent the Holy Spirit, which is something we all have, and it can help to guide us on God's path.

Grades 3-5**"Claim to Fame" Activity**

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade School → Activities → "Claim to Fame"

You will need to print enough copies of the activity page for each child before class. This activity will help the children think about and discover how God took ordinary men (in the Bible) and made them extraordinary. God was able to direct their paths.



Grades K-2

Draw a picture of Samuel talking with Saul and his servant.

Grades 3-5

Did you ever start out with a plan and have things turn out totally different? Why do you think that was? Write about it.

Why do you think Samuel chose Saul to be the king? Write about it.

What qualities do you possess that make you a great “soldier” for the Lord? List those qualities and tell why they help you to be a better servant for God and His work. Write about it.

Homework Ideas

- Read the lesson **“David is Anointed King”** (1 Samuel 16:1-13) and practice looking up the Bible text reference in your Bible.
- Learn the memory verse: *“...man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”*
--1 Samuel 16:7 (NKJV)
- Work on memorizing commandment #_____.
- Color the **“David is Anointed King”** coloring sheet as your parents read you the Sunday School Lesson. Return your coloring page for a sticker.
- Which one are you most like, a sponge or a rock? Think about it. Be ready to talk about it in class.

Other Resources

<http://children.ccm.com/curriculum/> → OT Support Curriculum → Page 8 → “Saul is made King of Israel”
www.kidssundayschool.com → “Old Testament” → See the lessons under “The Rise and Fall of Saul”





Role Play: God's Chosen King

Narrator: *(When the narrator starts to talk, Samuel is sitting on a chair and the elders are standing in front of him.)* When Samuel was old, he made his sons judges over Israel. One day the elders gathered together and went to Samuel.

Elder 1: Samuel you have always been a fair and just prophet and we have always respected you.

Elder 2: You have grown old now and we would like to have a king.

Samuel: But I have made my sons judges and... *(3rd elder cuts him off).*

Elder 3: *(Scoffs.)* Your sons. *(Shakes his head no.)* They are corrupt and unjust.

Elder 1: We are sorry, Samuel, but they are greedy. They steal from the people and are only fair where it profits them.

Elder 2: We want a king to rule over us as the other nations have. *(Elders leave the stage and sit down.)*

Samuel: *(Samuel kneels down and looks very sad.)* God, please show me what to do. I love your people and only want what is best for them.

Narrator: God spoke. He told Samuel that the people were rejecting Him, not Samuel. Sadly, Samuel called the elders together.

Samuel: *(The elders enter and Samuel turns to them.)* If you have a king, he will rule over you. You will have to pay taxes and give up a portion of your harvest. Your sons will become soldiers for his army and your daughters serving-maids in his palace and you will become his servants.

Role Play: God's Chosen King

Elder 1: We do not care. We are prepared to do those things. Give us a king. *(Elders sit down again.)*

Narrator: Meanwhile not too far away, a man named Saul and his servant had lost two donkeys. They came to the town where Samuel lived in search of them. When Samuel saw Saul, God told him this was the man He had chosen to be king, and so Samuel anointed him and told him what was going to happen. Later, the people of Israel talked amongst each other asking, who would be the best king. They struck the lot and it fell on the tribe of Benjamin, then on Saul's family and finally on Saul himself.

Elder 3: *(The Israelites talk with each other.)* Saul will be our new king.

Israelites: Long live the king!



Name: _____

David is Anointed King



"...man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."
-1 Samuel 16:7 (NKJV)

Take Home Page: E18. King Saul

Today I learned...

Today your child learned that we should **let God guide our path**. The children explored the story of how Saul was chosen to lead God's people. They also discussed that if we are obedient to God, He will guide our path each day.

Help me learn my memory verse...

*"Your word is a lamp that shows me the way. It is like a light that guides me."
--Psalm 119:105 (NIRV)*

Ask me...

1. What happened to Saul in today's lesson?
2. How did Samuel know to choose Saul?
3. How would you feel if you were chosen by God to be the king?

Live Your Faith...

Get out some paper and crayons and practice drawing "footsteps". Then try to draw different footsteps that animals might have on your paper. As you work on your drawings, talk about how when we follow God's footsteps and the path, He provides for us, we allow God to bless us and our lives in ways we cannot even imagine. If possible, share about a time when you followed His path and footsteps, and what happened. Pray together and ask God to help you to follow Him more and more each day.