



K I N G S A U L

1 SAMUEL 8-12

GOAL

- ▶ **To help children understand that no ruler on earth will be everything we need; only Jesus can fill this role.**
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CHARACTERS

- ▶ **Samuel:** This faithful prophet helped to find, prepare, and anoint Israel's new king, Saul.
- Saul:** He became the first king of Israel but later turned against God.
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MEMORY VERSE

- ▶ **1 Samuel 15:22:** To obey is better than sacrifice.
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OVERVIEW

- ▶ **Read 1 Samuel 8-12:** Israel demanded a king, and God gave them one. Samuel searched for Saul, brought him before the people, and anointed him as Israel's first king. Saul, like any human ruler, was a disappointment.



SUGGESTIONS

- ▶ Much of the Old Testament is a cycle of disappointing human kings. Keep in mind that the Old Testament is also like a big arrow pointing to Christ, who would come and provide a sacrifice for sin. He is the one who will reign as our perfect king forever.

God gave the people of Israel what they wanted by allowing them to have a king rule over them. God taught them the lesson that a king won't satisfy them or solve their problems.

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PRE-LESSON ACTIVITY

- ▶ **Put the Pieces Together | Supplies:** large printout of a biblical character, cardboard, glue, and scissors

Glue a large printout of a biblical character onto a large piece of cardboard. Cut up the image into puzzle-size pieces, and hide them around the classroom. Tell the students to find the pieces and put the puzzle together.

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MEMORY VERSE MEANING

- ▶ **1 Samuel 15:22:** To better understand the verse, it is important to understand the complex system of sacrifices and offerings that the Israelites were required to make before the coming of Jesus. God wants obedience way more than He wants the hypocritical show of adherence.



POST-LESSON ACTIVITY

- ▶ **Crown Craft | *Supplies:*** aluminum foil, plastic gems, glitter, tape, glue
Give each student a piece of aluminum foil. Let the students decorate their crowns.
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TAKE HOME

- ▶ Saul's reign as king teaches us two main things:
1. Sometimes the things we want aren't the best things for us. If God gave us these things, it would cause us trouble in some way.
 2. When we sin, we are forgiven. Though we have assurance of this forgiveness we shouldn't just do anything we want. God wants us to obey Him and stay away from sin.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 1



Q1a: What did the people of Israel want?

A1: They wanted a king.

Q1b: If all of your friends got a cool new toy, but it eventually explodes, would you want one too?

TN: Every time we would play with this toy, any fun we may have with it would be overshadowed by the fear of it suddenly blowing up. That sounds more dangerous than fun. Every other nation had a king, and Israel wanted one too. Even though they could look around and see the problems these kings caused for the surrounding nations, they wanted one anyway.

SLIDE 2



Q2a: What did God tell Samuel to do?

A2: God told Samuel to warn the people about how a king would rule over them.

Q2b: When taking a flight, would you rather have a pilot or someone who has had only a couple of flight lessons?

TN: We'd be much more comfortable with an actual pilot flying our plane! For some reason, the people of Israel wanted a man to be their leader instead of God, which is like choosing a person who has never flown a plane before to be their pilot. This was not a very good decision!



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 3



Q3a: What tribe was Saul a part of?

A3: Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin.

Q3b: What traits do good leaders usually have?

TN: They are usually wise, strong, and kind. If people have these qualities but they are short and unattractive, it wouldn't make them bad leaders. Being tall and attractive isn't enough to make a person a good leader; we need to know more about their character before we are confident that they would do a good job of ruling an entire nation. The people of Israel looked to Saul's outward appearance, and without knowing anything else about him, decided he would be a good king.

SLIDE 4



Q4a: What did King Saul do after a city in Israel was invaded by an enemy army?

A4: He summoned the people, and hundreds of thousands of men came.

Q4b: How well could you skateboard if your skateboard didn't have wheels?

TN: Without wheels, a skateboard is just a board. No matter how talented we are as skateboarders, we can't do anything on a board. No matter how skilled the men of Israel were in battle, without the Lord on their side, they would not have been victorious.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 5



Q5a: What did Saul do that Samuel said was a sin?

A5: Saul made a sacrifice to God on his own instead of waiting for the priest.

Q5b: You want to visit a friend, but your parent won't drive you there for 30 minutes. Do you wait or drive yourself?

TN: There are a number of reasons why we should definitely wait for a ride. First, we don't know how to drive! We could hurt ourselves or someone else. Second, it's against the law to drive without a license. We could get ourselves and our parents into a lot of trouble. Saul was supposed to wait for the priest to offer the sacrifice after the victory because the priest had been trained how to do it properly and because the priest told Saul to wait for him to make the sacrifice. In offering the sacrifice on his own, Saul disobeyed God.

SLIDE 6



Q6a: How did Saul disobey God?

A6: Saul disobeyed God when he kept some of the things from the city instead of destroying everything.

Q6b: You get lice, and your favorite stuffed animal can't be washed, so it has to be thrown away. Do you save it or let it go?

TN: If we save it, we could also be saving some lice that will get back into our hair, and we'd have to go through all of the treatments all over again. While we're not sure why God commanded the Israelites to destroy everything that belonged to the enemy, we can trust that He had a good reason for not wanting Saul and the Israelites to profit off of this victory over their enemy.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 7



Q7a: Who did God choose to be the next king of Israel?

A7: God chose David to be the next king.

Q7b: You get caught cheating on a spelling test. Do you feel bad or get mad at your teacher for catching you?

TN: The teacher didn't do anything wrong to us, so why would we get mad? When we do something wrong, we should admit it and apologize. Getting mad at the people who call us out for doing wrong is an inappropriate reaction. Saul sinned and lost God's favor, but instead of admitting he was wrong and moving aside for God's new chosen king, he became jealous and tried to kill David.

SLIDE 8



Q8a: How did Saul die?

A8: He fell on his own sword.

Q8b: When we do something wrong, will God reject us like He did Saul.

TN: No, Jesus' death on the cross made it so when we fail to obey and do the right thing, we are forgiven. In life, we will fail, but we should always pick ourselves back up and try again. Nothing can ever separate us from the love of God, even the worst mistakes or hurtful choices. His love is huge, saving, and unstoppable!



**MEMORY
VERSE**

▷ **1 Samuel 15:22:** To obey is better than sacrifice.

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BIG IDEA

▷ Even the best leader cannot match the greatness found in God.

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**CLOSING
PRAYER**

▷ Dear God, thank You for wanting the best for us. Help us to obey You. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 1



During the time of the prophet Samuel, Israel was a nation under the guidance of prophets and judges who were called and led by God; however, the people of Israel wanted a king. Like all other nations, they wanted a man of their own choosing to rule them. Samuel was perplexed by this idea and knew this was a bad decision. The people of Israel demanded a king!

SLIDE 2



As usual, Samuel prayed for answers. God answered his prayer and told Samuel, "Obey the voice of the people. They have rejected me from being king over them. Solemnly warn them, and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them." Samuel did just that. He told the people, "You'll be disappointed in the king. He will tax you, take land and crops from you, and work you harder than you thought possible!" The people were persistent.

SLIDE 3



In the tribe of Benjamin, there lived a young man named Saul. He was taller and better looking than anyone else in the whole nation. This was the kind of king the Israelites wanted. Samuel anointed Saul as the king of Israel. In a grand coronation ceremony, Samuel presented Saul to the people. "Long live the king!" Israel shouted.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 4



The new king got right to work. One of Israel's enemies, the Ammonites, invaded a city in Israel. Saul summoned the people, and hundreds of thousands of men came. They gathered as an army, surrounded the invaded city, and slaughtered the enemy. Saul went out again with his army, and slaughtered another invading force. The more victories Saul had, the prouder he became. Israel and Saul soon forgot that God was responsible for their victories.

SLIDE 5



Then something changed. After yet another successful battle, Saul was supposed to wait for the priest, Samuel, to come so he could offer a sacrifice. Instead, Saul decided that he was worthy of sacrificing to God. This was a big mistake. Samuel showed up soon after and confronted him. "You have sinned," Samuel told him. God's favor and blessing on Saul was about to change. Things got worse. Sure, Saul was enjoying great military success, but he was also disobeying God's commandments.

SLIDE 6



As Saul prepared to conquer another enemy city, God told Saul and his army, "Destroy everything!" But Saul disobeyed, and he took the good stuff for himself. By not destroying everything as God had commanded, Saul was stealing. Samuel again confronted Saul. Saul's rebellion and disobedience had gotten out of hand. God had to reject Saul as king of Israel.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 7



Later on, when God chose David to be Israel's next king, Saul became jealous of David. In his fury, Saul called out his entire army to find David and kill him.

SLIDE 8



Sadly, Saul's life came to an end during a battle with the Philistines. An arrow from the enemy wounded him, but rather than be killed by the enemy, he decided to end his own life. He fell upon his sword and died. What a tragic end for Israel's first king. The people of Israel had wanted a king so badly. They thought they had found him—tall, handsome, and a great warrior. But Saul rejected God, so God rejected him as king.