

THE ISRAELITES WANTED A KING

1 SAMUEL 8-10



KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 103:19

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: *Who is our King? Jesus is our King forever, and He rules over the world.*

CHRIST CONNECTION: The Israelites rejected God as King and chose Saul to be their king. When we sin, we also reject God's rule in our lives as King. Jesus, the King of kings, died for our sin and rose again so we could be forgiven.

STORY POINT: Israel rejected God as King and chose Saul to be their king.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

As the time of the judges came to an end, God’s people grew discontent with the leadership of Samuel’s sons. The elders of Israel, desiring to be more like the nations surrounding them, commanded Samuel to appoint a king to rule over them. In His perfect wisdom, God would give His people over to their desire for an earthly king. Yet, God revealed how Israel’s desire for an earthly king ultimately showcased their rejection of Him as their one true King.

What were the spiritual implications of the Israelites’ desire for a king? How does Christ fit into the narrative?

The Israelites once again found themselves in a season of discontentment—unhappy with their circumstances, as well as God’s provision and leadership in their lives. Like their ancestors before them, they forgot how He freed them from slavery and preserved and provided for them as His chosen people. Rather than seeking the Lord with hearts of worship, the Israelites placed their focus on the nations around them. They did not trust in the faithfulness of God to continue providing for them.

Consider the ways we are tempted to place our hope in earthly things rather than on the things above (Colossians 3:2). The people rejected God as their King, and we fall into the same pattern when we seek the things of the world in place of the God who created it.

Lead boys and girls to see how Israel had a divided heart toward God and how Christ came to free us from the power of sin that separates us from Him. When we trust in Jesus by faith, He gives us new hearts that worship Him alone as King. Pray for children’s eyes to be opened to the love Christ has shown us through His life, death, and resurrection—freeing us to follow the God who rules and reigns with all power and with all care for His creation.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10-15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25-30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “Have you ever wanted something so much you could not stop thinking about it? Did you get it? If you did, how did it feel to finally have what you wanted?”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: FOLLOW DIRECTIONS

Provide kids with paper and markers. Tell kids that you will direct them to draw four things in order. Explain that they must listen carefully because you will only repeat the list of four things twice. Direct kids

to draw a fish, a tree, a smiley face, and a triangle. Allow kids time to draw. Then

invite kids to share their drawings, seeing who could follow the directions.

SAY *Was it hard to remember the order and what you were supposed to draw?*

Following directions can be challenging.

In fact, no one perfectly follows God's commands. We all sin. Today, we will learn how Saul was a great warrior but chose to disobey God. He didn't follow God's

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Story Point Mix Up” activity page.

SAY *Today, we will see how the Israelites looked up to Saul and were happy he was their king. However, we’ll also learn that Saul was not a perfect king, and he disobeyed God.*

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles, and display the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 8. Explain that the book of 1 Samuel, where today’s story takes place, is found in the Old Testament section of the Bible and is named after Samuel, Israel’s last judge.

Consider comparing the Old Testament Mediterranean Map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where this story took place. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around modern-day Israel [F10]). Choose a volunteer to read aloud 1 Samuel 8:9, or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verse aloud.

SAY “God told Samuel to warn the people of Israel about what it would be like to have a king like the nations around them. God did this out of His love and mercy toward His people, but they rejected God as King and rejected His warning.

God warns us to turn away from sin and the ways of the world. He tells us to be on guard and to follow Him closely. Sometimes we might think our way is better than God’s way. But anytime we reject God as King in our lives, we sin. God is a good and righteous King who made the way for sinful people to be saved. When we trust in King Jesus, we follow God’s plan for our lives.”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “Why did the Israelites choose Saul to be their king?”

Remind kids that the Bible tells us the people looked at Saul’s outward appearance and thought he would make a good king. Discuss how God desired for His people to trust Him, even though they couldn’t see Him. Encourage kids to trust in God as King, submitting to His good authority, no matter the circumstance. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read John 7:24.)

SAY “How can comparison and wanting what others have tempt us to reject God’s authority?”

Tell kids that when we begin comparing our lives to others and wanting what others have, we can fall into the trap of thinking we know what is best for us or that God is keeping good things from us. God is King over everything and knows what is best for us. We can trust God’s Word and remember how God proved His love for us through His Son, Jesus. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Ps. 119:68.)

SAY “What can we do when we sin and reject God’s Word?”

Discuss how God tells us in His Word that when we confess our sins, He will forgive us and cleanse us. When we confess our sins to God, we must also turn away from repeating that sin. Instead, we follow God’s instructions, trusting that He has the best plans for our lives. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Isa. 55:7.)

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: JESUS IS KING

Distribute scissors and a “Crown Cards” printable to each kid. (Tip: Print the cards on cardstock for more durability.) Direct kids to cut out each card and shuffle them into a pile. Form kids into groups of two to four. Lead kids to place their card piles face down. Direct kids to take turns removing a card from the top of their pile and place it face-up in a pile alongside it. Play continues until two face-up piles have identical cards on top. When two cards on the tops of any of these piles are identical, the first kid to shout “Jesus is King!” takes both face-up piles with the identical cards and adds them to the bottom of their own stack. The player who accumulates all the cards wins.

SAY “As we’ll come to see, no earthly king is perfect or can save people from their sin. Saul was just a man, who the people chose as their king. Jesus, the King of kings, died for our sin and rose again so we could be forgiven. The King we need to rule our hearts is King Jesus.”

OPTION 2: THE KING WHO SAVES



Form kids into groups of three or four, and provide each group with a Bible, paper, and a pen. Instruct groups to look up 1 Samuel 10:17-19. Lead kids to write down all the good things God had done for His people. Then invite groups to share their responses (*Example: rescued Israel from Egypt, saved Israel from distresses, etc.*).

Guide groups to look up and read Isaiah 33:22. Discuss how Saul would never be a king who could save people from their sin. Share how after Saul, the Israelites had many kings, yet none of them could bring salvation. In fact, the people continued sinning and were eventually taken captive by foreign nations. Share how Isaiah reminds us who the true King is—the Lord—and how He alone saves His people.

SAY “Israel rejected God as King and chose Saul to be their king. Jesus is the true King who saves people from their sins. We can ask God to give us hearts that accept Jesus as Savior and King.”

2 JOURNAL AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page. As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas.

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God’s glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Review the gospel, and encourage kids to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions. Then pray, asking God to help us trust Him as King in every area of our lives. As time allows, lead kids to complete “King of Kings” on the activity page.