

Saul Is Made King Of Israel

1 Samuel 9:1-12:25

MEMORY VERSE

1 SAMUEL 12:24

“Only fear the LORD, and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Enough 10” strips of ribbon as the number of children in your class, small “jingle” bells to strand on the ribbon, brown construction paper, markers and tape.

Enough “dove” patterns from the template provided with the curriculum, red construction paper, glue sticks, hole puncher and white yarn.

Gold and/or silver construction paper, scissors and tape.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Pick a King

Have the children sit in a circle and ask them the following questions. What kind of a king would you like to have? (Example: handsome, strong, fearless...!) Now ask them what kind of king would they like to serve? (Example; good, kind, big-hearted...!)

Can they see how their list changed? What kind of king is God? Isn't He the best king to serve? In today's lesson we will learn about a time when the nation of Israel rejected God's kingship over them to have a man rule over them. **God is our king and should be obeyed.**

LESSON TIME!

NOTE TO TEACHERS: This section of scripture is very long. You will want to review the chapters and decide how to best present the material to your children. You could possibly have the children act out certain portions. Don't feel like you have to present everything. As you pray this week ask the Lord for one or two areas to emphasize as you work within the general theme of obedience to God and His Kingship over us. God bless you in your ministry to the children!

In this portion of scripture, we will see how God answers the people's cry for a king by giving them Saul. It is God who instructs Samuel to appoint the king over the nation and it is God who shows Samuel whom He has chosen to be their king. As we study, we will see that Saul did not want to be the chosen king, nor was Saul the choice of Samuel to be king. Saul was chosen by God to be the king over His people. **God is our king and should be obeyed.**

1 SAMUEL 9:1-14

There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjamite, a mighty man of power.

And he had a choice and handsome son whose name was Saul. There was not a more handsome person than he among the children of Israel. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people.

Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, were lost. And Kish said to his son Saul, "Please, take one of the servants with you, and arise, go and look for the donkeys."

So he passed through the mountains of Ephraim and through the land of Shalisha, but they did not find them. Then they passed through the land of Shaalim, and they were not there. Then he passed through the land of the Benjamites, but they did not find them.

When they had come to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant who was with him, "Come, let us return, lest my father cease caring about the donkeys and become worried about us."

And he said to him, "Look now, there is in this city a man of God, and he is an honorable man; all that he says surely comes to pass. So let us go there; perhaps he can show us the way that we should go."

Then Saul said to his servant, "But look, if we go, what shall we bring the man? For the bread in our vessels is all gone, and there is no present to bring to the man of God. What do we have?"

And the servant answered Saul again and said, "Look, I have here at hand one fourth of a shekel of silver. I will give that to the man of God, to tell us our way."

(Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he spoke thus: "Come, let us go to the seer"; for he who is now called a prophet was formerly called a seer.)

Then Saul said to his servant, "Well said; come, let us go." So they went to the city where the man of God was.

As they went up the hill to the city, they met some young women going out to draw water, and said to them, "Is the seer here?"

And they answered them and said, "Yes, there he is, just ahead of you. Hurry now; for today he came to this city, because there is a sacrifice of the people today on the high place.

"As soon as you come into the city, you will surely find him before he goes up to the high place to eat. For the people will not eat until he comes, because he must bless the sacrifice; afterward those who are invited will eat. Now therefore, go up, for about this time you will find him."

So they went up to the city. As they were coming into the city, there was Samuel, coming out toward them on his way up to the high place.

Here we have the genealogy of Saul, the first king of Israel. He came from the tribe of Benjamin, which shows how Saul came from really nowhere to a very important position. The tribe of Benjamin was one of the smallest tribes in all of Israel, but God chose its king from within that tribe.

His name, Saul, means "prayed for" and he was said to be young and handsome. He was a tall man, and size and beauty were highly valued in rulers as signs of manly strength. But remember God does not look at the outward appearance as man does, but He looks at a person's heart.

Saul had been sent out by his father to search for his donkeys which had strayed. He went with his servant through the mountains of Ephraim and all over the countryside looking for

them. He finally went through the land of Benjamin and never found the donkeys.

Then when they reached the land of Zuph, he decided to go back home because he was afraid that his father might become worried about them. Then his servant tells him that there is a man of God in the city that could help them. What a wonderful way for a man to be spoken of, “a man of God.” This man was Samuel, whose heart was to serve the Lord with total commitment.

Saul hesitated because they had no present to bring to the man of God. The bread was gone from their vessels, but the servant told him he had a quarter of a shekel which he could give. Here we see that what seems to be a “disaster” in the loss of the donkeys was actually something that God would use in bringing Saul to Samuel. Even though Saul had nothing to give to Samuel, God provided through his servant. We see that God is in control of every circumstance in our lives, and we can trust Him to lead us and to take care of all our needs.

In verse 9 we are told that before this time, if any one wished to ask God about something they would go to a seer, or prophet. Saul then decided that they would go to the man of God and ask about the lost donkeys. When they came to inquire about Samuel, they were told he was blessing the sacrifice. Samuel was busy about what the Lord had called him to do, as we should all be doing.

1 SAMUEL 9:15-21

Now the LORD had told Samuel in his ear the day before Saul came, saying,

"Tomorrow about this time I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him commander over My people Israel, that he may save My people from the hand of the Philistines; for I

have looked upon My people, because their cry has come to me."

And when Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said to him, "There he is, the man of whom I spoke to you. This one shall reign over My people."

Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, "Please tell me, where is the seer's house?"

And Samuel answered Saul and said, "I am the seer. Go up before me to the high place, for you shall eat with me today; and tomorrow I will let you go and will tell you all that is in your heart.

"But as for your donkeys that were lost three days ago, do not be anxious about them, for they have been found. And on whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not on you and on all your father's house?"

And Saul answered and said, "Am I not a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel, and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Why then do you speak like this to me?"

Before Samuel and Saul met, the Lord had told Samuel that the man was coming to him whom he was to anoint as captain over his people. We are told that God had heard the cries of his people. We can be assured that when we cry out to the Lord, He always hears us.

Then Samuel saw Saul, the Lord told him that this was the man He had chosen to be king over Israel. Now it is important to remember that in 1 Samuel 8, when the Israelites demanded a king, God didn't want to give them a king, for He was their king. Yet, they were not satisfied; it was not enough, they wanted to be like the

rest of the world. When they were told what it would be like to have a king, that they would be his servants, they still wanted a king; the Lord told Samuel that they would have a king. **God is our king and should be obeyed.**

What a sad state for God's people to be in. To want to be like the world, because they think God is not enough. We always need to examine our hearts to see if we are looking for satisfaction from the world or from God.

When Samuel and Saul meet, Samuel assures Saul that the donkeys he was searching for had been found. Thus, Samuel had proven to Saul that he truly was a prophet. Then Samuel talks to Saul about what God had directed him to. Samuel said, "The desire of Israel? Is it not on you and on all your father's house." Saul's response shows that he was a modest man, saying that he was a member of the least family of the smallest tribe of Israel.

1 SAMUEL 9:22-27

Now Samuel took Saul and his servant and brought them into the hall, and had them sit in the place of honor among those who were invited; there were about thirty persons.

And Samuel said to the cook, "Bring the portion which I gave you, of which I said to you, 'Set it apart.'"

So the cook took up the thigh with its upper part and set it before Saul. And Samuel said, "Here it is, what was kept back. It was set apart for you. Eat; for until this time it has been kept for you, since I said I invited the people." So Saul ate with Samuel that day.

When they had come down from the high place into the city, Samuel spoke with Saul on the top of the house.

They arose early; and it was about the dawning of the day that Samuel called to Saul on the top of the house, saying, "Get up, that I may send you on your way." And Saul arose, and both of them went outside, he and Samuel.

As they were going down to the outskirts of the city, Samuel said to Saul, "Tell the servant to go on ahead of us." And he went on. "But you stand here awhile, that I may announce to you the word of God."

Samuel took Saul and his servant into his house and gave them a place at the table among those who had been invited. There were about 30 persons there, and Samuel ordered the piece of meat, which he had set aside to be given to Saul. The meal itself was symbolic, for Samuel had carefully saved the shoulder, which is symbolic of government, to be given to Saul.

When the sacrificial meal was over, Samuel and Saul went down from the high place into town and Samuel talked with Saul upon the roof. Samuel was preparing Saul for what would be told him of God's purpose for his life. God always prepares us for the work He calls us to do for Him.

1 SAMUEL 10:1-8

Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head, and kissed him and said: "Is it not because the LORD has anointed you commander over His inheritance?"

"When you have departed from me today, you will find two men by Rachel's tomb in the territory of

Benjamin at Zelzah; and they will say to you, 'The donkeys which you went to look for have been found. And now your father has ceased caring about the donkeys and is worrying about you, saying, "What shall I do about my son?"'

"Then you shall go on forward from there and come to the terebinth tree of Tabor. There three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you, one carrying three young goats, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine.

"And they will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you shall receive from their hands.

"After that you shall come to the hill of God where the Philistine garrison is. And it will happen, when you have come there to the city, that you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place with a stringed instrument, a tambourine, a flute, and a harp before them; and they will be prophesying.

"Then the Spirit of the LORD will come upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man.

"And let it be, when these signs come to you, that you do as the occasion demands; for God is with you.

"You shall go down before me to Gilgal; and surely I will come down to you to offer burnt offerings and make sacrifices of peace offerings. Seven days you shall wait, till I come to you and show you what you should do."

Samuel then pours oil upon Saul's head, symbolizing that he is anointed with the Spirit of God. Before this, there had been no other anointing among the people of God than that of the priests and sanctuary. When they are alone, Samuel tells Saul of his calling by God to be the king of Israel. **God is our king and should be obeyed.**

Saul had a hard time understanding how he could lead the nation of Israel, so God gave him three signs. The first sign was meeting two men who told him that his father's donkeys had been found. The second sign was that he would meet three men going to Bethel, one would be carrying three goats, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a bottle of wine. When they meet him, they will give him two loaves of bread. This sign would confirm what Samuel had told Saul about the donkeys, and give him proof of what Samuel said about becoming king was true.

The third sign was to occur at the place where the Philistines, Israel's enemy, had set up military posts. The Spirit of God was to come upon Saul, and endow him with the power that was required for the position God called him to fill. Again, God was faithful and in that faithfulness, showed Saul that He would help Saul in all that he undertook as king.

An Instrument of Praise

This is a good activity for the younger kids. You will be making bracelets for the ankles or arms of each child which can be used as instruments of praise.

Use a 10" strip of ribbon or yarn for each child. You can use various colors. Thread and tie a jingle bell every 2" across the ribbon (you may need at least 3 bells per child.)

You can also make flutes. Roll up brown colored construction paper and tape. Color small holes on top and have those who

whistle “play.” Using the tape players in your classroom you can play a children’s praise tape and praise the Lord as Samuel did in our lesson.

1 SAMUEL 10:9-16

So it was, when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, that God gave him another heart; and all those signs came to pass that day.

When they came there to the hill, there was a group of prophets to meet him; then the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them.

And it happened, when all who knew him formerly saw that he indeed prophesied among the prophets, that the people said to one another, "What is this that has come upon the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?"

Then a man from there answered and said, "But who is their father?" Therefore it became a proverb: "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

And when he had finished prophesying, he went to the high place.

Then Saul's uncle said to him and his servant, "Where did you go?" So he said, "To look for the donkeys. When we saw that they were nowhere to be found, we went to Samuel."

And Saul's uncle said, "Tell me, please, what Samuel said to you."

So Saul said to his uncle, "He told us plainly that the donkeys had been found." But about the matter of

the kingdom, he did not tell him what Samuel had said.

When Saul left Samuel to return to Gibeah, “God changed him, and gave him another heart;” and all these signs happened on the very day. We see that only God can change a person’s heart, only God can transform a person. God changed Saul’s heart to make him the man God wanted him to be. Would Saul respond to that all his life? Unfortunately not, as we will see in later lessons. Do we respond to what God wants to do in our hearts? We must think about that, and be willing to yield our lives to Him. **God is our king and should be obeyed.**

With this sign, his anointing as king was inwardly sealed. When he prophesied with the prophets, the people were amazed, and wondered what had happened to Saul. An encounter with God should never leave us the same person we were before. When Saul’s uncle asked him where he had been, he told him that since they had not found the donkeys, they had gone to Samuel, and had found out that the donkeys were found. Saul did not say anything to his uncle about what Samuel had told him regarding the kingship of Israel.

The Helper

The Holy Spirit came upon Saul to help him do what God had called him to. God’s Spirit and power was with Saul.

In this activity, make copies of the dove template provided with your curriculum (one per child). Cut out the dove. Using a piece of red construction paper cut out a heart shape large enough to paste the dove on. With a hole puncher make two holes at the top of the heart. Cut white yarn, just long enough to attach to the heart so that the children can wear them as necklaces.

The dove represents the Holy Spirit and the heart represents our heart. When we become Christians the Holy Spirit lives inside of our hearts. Like Saul, the Holy Spirit will help us to do what God has asked us to do.

1 SAMUEL 10:17-27

Then Samuel called the people together to the LORD at Mizpah,

and said to the children of Israel, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all kingdoms and from those who oppressed you.'

"But you have today rejected your God, who Himself saved you from all your adversities and your tribulations; and you have said to Him, 'No, set a king over us!' Now therefore, present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes and by your clans."

And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was chosen.

When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was chosen. And Saul the son of Kish was chosen. But when they sought him, he could not be found.

Therefore they inquired of the LORD further, "Has the man come here yet?" And the LORD answered, "There he is, hidden among the equipment."

So they ran and brought him from there; and when he stood among the people, he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward.

And Samuel said to all the people, "Do you see him whom the LORD has chosen, that there is no one like him among all the people?" So all the people shouted and said, "Long live the king!"

Then Samuel explained to the people the behavior of royalty, and wrote it in a book and laid it up before the LORD. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house.

And Saul also went home to Gibeah; and valiant men went with him, whose hearts God had touched.

But some rebels said, "How can this man save us?" So they despised him, and brought him no presents. But he held his peace.

In this passage, we have the public installation of Saul as king. After Samuel had secretly anointed Saul king by God's command, it was now his duty to recognize the man whom God had chosen to the people also. But before he did, he reminded the people of their sin in rejecting God as their ruler. **God is our king and should be obeyed.**

Samuel then called the people to Mizpah, and instructed the tribes to choose a king by lot. Of course the lot fell upon Saul, the son of Kish. When the lot fell upon Saul, they sought him, and he could not be found. When they asked if there was another, they were told he was there, but hiding. It is a sad thing for someone to hide from God's calling upon his or her lives. Here is the first manifestation of the weakness of character, which eventually became his ultimate failure.

Saul had been given a clear understanding of the will of God, and then on the day when he was to be presented to the people he was found hiding away among the baggage. Even if he was being

modest, we must realize that it becomes sin when it stops us from doing what God called us to do. We must always be true to God's will in our lives.

Warren Wiersbe says, "His modesty in saying nothing about the kingdom (verse 16) and his self-control in not answering his critics (verse 27) are commendable, but what about this hiding on coronation day? Was he genuinely humble, or was he just unwilling to take responsibility? This much is sure: he did a great deal of "hiding" in the years of his leadership, but God found him out. As the book of Proverbs warns, 'He who covers his sins will not prosper'(28:13)."

When he is finally brought before the people, they cry out, "Let the king live!" Men so often look at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart. Samuel then told the people the rights of the monarchy, writes it in a document and laid it before the Lord. Saul then went back to his home in Gibeah, along with the crowd of men whose hearts God had touched, to show their readiness to serve him. **God is our king and should be obeyed.**

And often as it happens, where a person is suddenly exalted, there are sure to be jealous or envious people, as we see in verse 27. But Saul did not let it bother him, and held his peace.

1 SAMUEL 11:1-5

Then Nahash the Ammonite came up and encamped against Jabesh Gilead; and all the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, "Make a covenant with us, and we will serve you."

And Nahash the Ammonite answered them, "On this condition I will make a covenant with you, that I may put out all your right eyes, and bring reproach on all Israel."

Then the elders of Jabesh said to him, "Hold off for seven days, that we may send messengers to all the territory of Israel. And then, if there is no one to save us, we will come out to you."

So the messengers came to Gibeah of Saul and told the news in the hearing of the people. And all the people lifted up their voices and wept.

Now there was Saul, coming behind the herd from the field; and Saul said, "What troubles the people, that they weep?" And they told him the words of the men of Jabesh.

After Saul was declared king he went back to his father's house. It would seem that he was not taking the active responsibility of being the king until Nahash, the king of the Ammonites attacked the tribes on the east of the Jordan. They begged the Ammonites to make a covenant with them and then they would surrender to them. Nahash shows his hatred of the people by his response. The people of Jabesh asked for seven days to think about it. They went to the people of Gibeah with their cries. Saul did not hear about it until he returned home from the field and found the people crying over the terrible news.

1 SAMUEL 11:6-11

Then the Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard this news, and his anger was greatly aroused.

So he took a yoke of oxen and cut them in pieces, and sent them throughout all the territory of Israel by the hands of messengers, saying, "Whoever does not go out with Saul and Samuel to battle, so it shall be done to his oxen." And the fear of the LORD fell on the people, and they came out with one consent.

When he numbered them in Bezek, the children of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand.

And they said to the messengers who came, "Thus you shall say to the men of Jabesh Gilead: 'Tomorrow, by the time the sun is hot, you shall have help.' " Then the messengers came and reported it to the men of Jabesh, and they were glad.

Therefore the men of Jabesh said, "Tomorrow we will come out to you, and you may do with us whatever seems good to you."

So it was, on the next day, that Saul put the people in three companies; and they came into the midst of the camp in the morning watch, and killed Ammonites until the heat of the day. And it happened that those who survived were scattered, so that no two of them were left together.

This seems to have stirred a sense of responsibility in Saul as the Spirit of God came upon him, and he responded immediately. He took oxen, cut them into pieces and sent them to all in Israel saying that whoever did not follow Saul and Samuel their oxen would be cut into pieces.

Using Samuel's name after his own, is a proof that Saul even as king still recognized the authority which Samuel had in Israel as the prophet of God. Saul had assembled 300,000 men of Israel and 30,000 men of Judah together and sent word that they would help the people of Jabesh. After receiving the good news of help, they told the Ammonites, "Tomorrow we will come out to you, and you may do to us what seems good to you," a lie by which they hoped to surprise the enemy with an attack. The next day Saul arranged

the people in three divisions and victoriously fought the Ammonites.

1 SAMUEL 11:12-15

Then the people said to Samuel, "Who is he who said, 'Shall Saul reign over us?' Bring the men, that we may put them to death."

But Saul said, "Not a man shall be put to death this day, for today the LORD has accomplished salvation in Israel."

Then Samuel said to the people, "Come, let us go to Gilgal and renew the kingdom there."

So all the people went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul king before the LORD in Gilgal. There they made sacrifices of peace offerings before the LORD, and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

In light of this great victory the Lord brought through Saul, the people remembered those who were against Saul and wanted to kill them. But Saul refused to have anything ruin the day of God's victory by punishing these men. Samuel then calls upon the people to go with him to Gilgal and to confirm Saul as their king.

1 SAMUEL 12:1-12

Now Samuel said to all Israel: "Indeed I have heeded your voice in all that you said to me, and have made a king over you.

"And now here is the king, walking before you; and I am old and grayheaded, and look, my sons are with you. I have walked before you from my childhood to this day.

"Here I am. Witness against me before the LORD and before His anointed: Whose ox have I taken, or whose donkey have I taken, or whom have I cheated? Whom have I oppressed, or from whose hand have I received any bribe with which to blind my eyes? I will restore it to you."

And they said, "You have not cheated us or oppressed us, nor have you taken anything from any man's hand."

Then he said to them, "The LORD is witness against you, and His anointed is witness this day, that you have not found anything in my hand." And they answered, "He is witness."

Then Samuel said to the people, "It is the LORD who raised up Moses and Aaron, and who brought your fathers up from the land of Egypt."

"Now therefore, stand still, that I may reason with you before the LORD concerning all the righteous acts of the LORD which He did to you and your fathers:

"When Jacob had gone into Egypt, and your fathers cried out to the LORD, then the LORD sent Moses and Aaron, who brought your fathers out of Egypt and made them dwell in this place.

"And when they forgot the LORD their God, He sold them into the hand of Sisera, commander of the army of Hazor, into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab; and they fought against them.

"Then they cried out to the LORD, and said, 'We have sinned, because we have forsaken the LORD and served the Baals and Ashtoreths; but now deliver us from the hand of our enemies, and we will serve You.'

"And the LORD sent Jerubbaal, Bedan, Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side; and you dwelt in safety.

"And when you saw that Nahash king of the Ammonites came against you, you said to me, 'No, but a king shall reign over us,' when the LORD your God was your king.

In this chapter Samuel speaks to the people in what is almost like a farewell address. He tells the people that he had given them a king, as they had wanted, who would now walk before them. Warren Wiersbe said, "The people had rejected a proven godly leader for a man who had won only one victory and whose devotion to the Lord was as yet unknown." **God is our king and should be obeyed.**

Samuel was disappointed, but he left office knowing that his conscience was clear. Samuel's conduct was one of honor and truth. There could be no injustice found in all of his years as their prophet. The people answered Samuel, that he had not done them any type of injustice. To confirm this declaration on the part of the people, he then called God and his anointed as witnesses against the people, and they accepted these witnesses.

The people admitted that there was no reason for their request for a king and that Samuel's conduct was excellent. Samuel then proves this still further to the people by reminding them of their history. He reminds them of two things. First, God's consistent faithfulness; and then their constant failure. He is very honest with them, even with Saul there, to let them know that they have

sinned in wanting a king, and did it in a way to make them realize they were wrong. We must always remember God is always faithful, He never ever fails us.

1 SAMUEL 12:13-19

"Now therefore, here is the king whom you have chosen and whom you have desired. And take note, the LORD has set a king over you.

"If you fear the LORD and serve Him and obey His voice, and do not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then both you and the king who reigns over you will continue following the LORD your God.

"However, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then the hand of the LORD will be against you, as it was against your fathers.

"Now therefore, stand and see this great thing which the LORD will do before your eyes:

"Is today not the wheat harvest? I will call to the LORD, and He will send thunder and rain, that you may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which you have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking a king for yourselves."

So Samuel called to the LORD, and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day; and all the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel.

And all the people said to Samuel, "Pray for your servants to the LORD your God, that we may not die; for we have added to all our sins the evil of asking a king for ourselves."

Samuel told the people that the welfare of the nation would depend on whether they would obey the Lord or rebel against Him. Their obedience would bring blessing and disobedience would bring destruction.

Samuel then reminds them of God's power, for he prayed for rain and thunder to come at an unusual time of year. It scarcely ever rained at this time. So when God sent thunder and rain in answer to Samuel's prayer, this was a miracle showing the people that the judgments of God might fall upon the sinners at any time. This put a fear in the people's heart. They cried to Samuel to "Pray for your servants unto the Lord your God, that we may not die," acknowledging their sin, in asking for "ourselves a king."

It is a good thing that God does not always give us things we want for "ourselves," because He knows that it may become a problem in our lives. We can always trust ourselves to Him, because He is always faithful. **God is our king and should be obeyed.**

1 SAMUEL 12:20-25

Then Samuel said to the people, "Do not fear. You have done all this wickedness; yet do not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart.

"And do not turn aside; for then you would go after empty things which cannot profit or deliver, for they are nothing.

"For the LORD will not forsake His people, for His great name's sake, because it has pleased the LORD to make you His people.

"Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you; but I will teach you the good and the right way.

"Only fear the LORD, and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you.

"But if you still do wickedly, you shall be swept away, both you and your king."

Samuel then reassures the people that the Lord would not forsake His people for His great name's sake, if they would only serve Him with uprightness. He told them again though that they had done wrong, but that now they were not to turn away from the Lord, but to serve Him with all their heart, and not go after idols, which could never bring them either help or deliverance. **God is our king and should be obeyed.**

As they served the Lord with all their heart, they could only be called "His" people. What a precious thought to be "His." It means that we are so very special to the Lord, loved deeply by Him. Samuel then gives the people a wonderful promise of his constant intercession for them. To Samuel, it would be a sin if he stopped praying for the people of Israel. He also tells them that he would teach the "the good and the right way."

Samuel never sways from the calling of God upon his life, even if the people had rejected it. And in his teaching them the good and right way, he again reminds them to "only fear the Lord and serve him in truth with all your heart, for consider how great things he has done for you." We can take that same instruction, to have

reverence for the Lord in our hearts, and serve Him in truth with all of our hearts, and to think about all of the wonderful things He has done for us.

But, if we choose to go our own way, and want to be like the world, the warning Samuel gave the Israelites can apply to us as well, “But if you still do wickedly, you shall be consumed, both you and your king.” Let us remember God’s faithfulness, and remain faithful to such an awesome Lord.

Crown Him King

You will need enough construction paper (yellow or silver/gray, 2 sheets for every two children in your class). Place two sheets of construction paper together and fold in 1/2 lengthwise to mark the middle. Cut in a zig zag pattern down the middle of your construction paper. This will make the “peaks” of your crown. You will now have four strips of paper. Cut a 1” slit on each side of the pieces to inter lock the crown. You can adjust the size needed for each child by cutting away any excess paper. You will probably need 2 halves depending on the child’s head size.

Allow the children to decorate their crown any way they like. Reinforce the story of how the Israelites didn’t want God to be their king any more, but they wanted a man to rule over them. What can we learn from this story? **God is our king and should be obeyed.**

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to never look anywhere for their security except for the Lord. Ask the Lord to help them to never look at how the world is doing something as an example of what they should do. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.

