



OLDER KIDS
Explore
the Bible®

THE FIRST BOOK OF
SAMUEL

...a certain man of Ramathaim, in the land of Benjamin, and his name was Elkanah, and he was of the tribe of Judah. And he had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other was Peninnah. And Peninnah had many children, but Hannah had none. And as they sacrificed unto the Lord yearly, as the custom is, Elkanah would take Hannah, and offer her unto the Lord, as he had commanded, because she was barren. And she would weep, and fast, and would say unto the Lord, My Lord, because I am barren, therefore have I said, Give me a child. For if I have said, Give me a child, then will I give it unto the Lord for ever. And the Lord remembered Hannah, and opened her womb. And she conceived, and bore a son, and she called his name Samuel, because I have said, Give me a child. And when she had weaned Samuel, she brought him to the Lord, as she had said, and offered him with a yearling calf, and with an ephod, and with a shewbread, and with a ram. And she said unto the Lord, My Lord, because I am barren, therefore have I said, Give me a child. For if I have said, Give me a child, then will I give it unto the Lord for ever. And the Lord remembered Hannah, and opened her womb. And she conceived, and bore a son, and she called his name Samuel, because I have said, Give me a child. And when she had weaned Samuel, she brought him to the Lord, as she had said, and offered him with a yearling calf, and with an ephod, and with a shewbread, and with a ram.

1 SAMUEL

Leader Guide > Summer 2016

Eric Geiger, General Editor



QUARTER OVERVIEW

SUMMER 2016

SAMUEL

Through the life of Samuel, God ended the line of judges as the people begged for a king. Samuel served faithfully and was known for his honesty. Girls and boys will hear of Samuel's birth, calling, and his ministry with Eli the priest.

1 SAMUEL

The Book of 1 Samuel guides boys and girls on an adventure through three prominent lives in a pivotal transition point for the Israelite nation. Kids will learn stories of Samuel (the final judge of Israel), Saul (the first king of Israel), and David (Saul's successor).

SAUL

The people asked for a king and God gave them Saul. Saul was anointed and crowned king of Israel. Samuel prayed for Saul and the people but Saul was ultimately rejected as king because of his sin.

DAVID

David followed Saul as the second king of Israel. Kids will hear of David's anointing, his battle with a giant, his success as a soldier, his gracious spirit in preserving life, and his military victories.

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We believe that the Bible has God for its author; salvation for its end; and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter and that all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy.

To review LifeWay's doctrinal guideline, please visit www.lifeway.com/doctrinalguideline.

AT A GLANCE

SESSION	SUGGESTED FOR THE WEEK OF	CORE PASSAGE	TEXT TRUTH
1	June 5	1 Samuel 1:10-18,26-28	We can trust God to answer our prayers in the way that is best for us.
2	June 12	1 Samuel 3:1-10,17-21	God wants faithful leaders and followers.
3	June 19	1 Samuel 5:1-6; 6:11-16	Only God is holy and worthy of worship.
4	June 26	1 Samuel 8:4-9,19-22	God's people rejected God because they wanted to be like other people instead of being like God.
5	July 3	1 Samuel 12:12-25	God gives us mercy and grace despite our sin.
6	July 10	1 Samuel 15:7-15,22-23	Sin separates us from God and the good He had planned for us.
7	July 17	1 Samuel 16:4-13	God knows our hearts and He wants us to seek Him.
8	July 24	1 Samuel 17:32-37,42-50	Despite how it looks, God will provide His people with victory when they rely on Him.
9	July 31	1 Samuel 18:1-5; 20:35-42	Godly friendship seeks God's will above personal gain.
10	Aug. 7	1 Samuel 22:6-17	When we sin, we hurt ourselves and others.
11	Aug. 14	1 Samuel 25:14-17,32-38*	God protects His people and His name.
12	Aug. 21	1 Samuel 26:7-12,21-25	To obey God, we must love others, even when they mistreat us.
13	Aug. 28	1 Samuel 30:6-8,18-25	God is our strength.

	BIBLE STORY	MEMORY VERSE
	Hannah's Prayer was Answered (<i>1 Samuel 1:1-2:11,18-21</i>)	1 Samuel 2:1
	Samuel was Called (<i>1 Samuel 3:1-21</i>)	1 Samuel 3:10
	The Ark was Captured and Returned (<i>1 Samuel 4:1-7:1</i>)	Psalms 21:13
	Israel Demanded a King (<i>1 Samuel 7:15-8:22</i>)	1 Samuel 8:7
	Saul, the New King (<i>1 Samuel 9-10</i>)	1 Samuel 12:20
	Saul's Bad Decisions (<i>1 Samuel 13; 15</i>)	1 Samuel 15:22
	Samuel Anointed David (<i>1 Samuel 16:1-13</i>)	1 Samuel 16:7
	Goliath Was Defeated (<i>1 Samuel 17:1-50</i>)	1 Samuel 17:46
	Jonathan Protected David (<i>1 Samuel 19:1-12; 20:1-42</i>)	1 Samuel 18:3
	David Was Protected (<i>1 Samuel 24:1-22</i>)	Psalms 31:7
	Esther Asked for Peace (<i>Esther 3:7-7:8; 8:3-17</i>)	Romans 14:19
	David Resisted Sin (<i>1 Samuel 26:1-25</i>)	Romans 12:17
	David Rescued His Family (<i>1 Samuel 30:1-25</i>)	1 Samuel 30:6



Session

1

HANNAH PRAYED FOR A SON



1 Samuel 1:10-18, 26-28

In the Hebrew Bible, the Book of 1 Samuel immediately follows the Book of Judges (*unlike the English order of books, where 1 Samuel follows Ruth*). Judges ends with Israel in moral chaos and enduring severe oppression under the Philistines. The last judge, Samson, was a mighty warrior and saved Israel from the Philistines. Although Samson did kill a lot of Philistines, he was morally undisciplined and did nothing to improve Israel's spiritual life.

First Samuel begins very simply with a story about a man named Elkanah and his wife, Hannah, who, like Samson's parents, were barren. The birth of Samuel was, therefore, another work of God for Israel. And Samuel would succeed where Samson had failed. Samuel would effectively keep the Philistines in check; he would be the spiritual authority behind the two great enemies of the Philistines: Saul and David. But Samuel would also be an example of godliness.

The story of Hannah also has a parallel in the New Testament, in the story of Mary. She had no kids, albeit not because of infertility, but because she was a young virgin. Yet God also did a great work of salvation through her pregnancy and her son. Like Hannah, Mary celebrated the event with a memorable song of praise (*1 Samuel 2:1-10; Luke 1:46-55*). In fact, if we compare Hannah's song to Mary's, it seems certain that Mary's words are modeled on Hannah's. Both women speak at length on how God elevates the poor and humble but casts down the proud and mighty.

The first story of the book is not political or even grandly theological. It is about an ordinary woman who was in great distress and who prayed to God. This is what gives it such appeal. Life is made up of the struggles of ordinary people, and while God's work may have meant deliverance for Israel, it also meant deliverance for the private burdens of individuals.

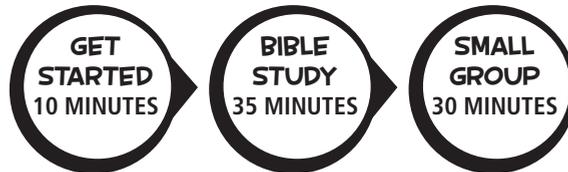
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 1:10-18,26-28

CONNECTION PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 1:1-2:11,18-21

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: 1 Samuel 2:1

TEXT TRUTH: We can trust God to answer our prayers in the way that is best for us.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Introduce the Book of 1 Samuel: “1 Samuel” (*Books of the Bible Posters*), “1 Samuel Quiz Cards” (*enhanced CD*)

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In:** *baby book, Family Cards*
- Examine the Text:** *Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack)*
- Tell the Bible Story:** *Bibles, biblical times clothing (optional), baby doll, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (Poster Pack)*

- Video:** *Explore the Bible on Location video*

- Family Memory Verse:** “1 Samuel 2:1” (*Poster Pack*)

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide:** *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Review:** *sticker name tags, markers, construction paper, tape, “Review Questions” (enhanced CD)*

- Move:** *new egg cartons, index cards, marker, prizes, scissors*

- Make:** *Bible, construction paper, markers or crayons, magnets, stickers (optional), glitter glue (optional), jewels (optional)*

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the *Digital Video Bundle*. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the *Music and Print Extras Bundle*. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

HANNAH'S PRAYER WAS ANSWERED

CONNECTION PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 1:1–2:11,18-21

Hannah was married to Elkanah, but they did not have any children. This made Hannah extremely sad. Every year, Elkanah and Hannah would travel to the tabernacle in the city of Shiloh so they could worship God and ask forgiveness for their sin.

While at the tabernacle, Hannah prayed to God. While she prayed, she cried. Hannah said, “Lord, if You will remember and not forget me and give me a son, I will give him to the Lord.”

Eli the priest was sitting on a chair by the doorpost of the tabernacle. He saw Hannah praying. Hannah told Eli that she was very sad and was praying to God. Eli told Hannah, “Go in peace, and may God grant your request.”

Hannah and Elkanah traveled back to their home. Later, God answered Hannah’s prayer and she had a baby boy. She named him Samuel. When Samuel was a young boy, Hannah traveled back to Shiloh. She took Samuel to Eli and said, “I prayed for this boy and God gave me what I asked for. I now give him to the Lord.”

Hannah prayed to God: “My heart rejoices in the Lord. There is no one holy like the Lord. There is no one besides You! And there is no rock like our God.”

Hannah returned home, but Samuel stayed in Shiloh with Eli to serve the Lord. Every year Hannah made Samuel a new garment and took it to him. Later Hannah had more children—three boys and two girls. Samuel grew up, serving God in the tabernacle.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

The Book of 1 Samuel tells the story of three powerful leaders in Israel: Samuel, Saul, and David. Through each man and his leadership of Israel, the need for a perfect leader is evident. God’s people hoped for a day when a Messiah—the one true King—would rescue them. When Jesus came, He fulfilled God’s promise that a perfect Prophet, Priest, and King would rule over His people.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

Hannah loved God. God gave her a son and she gave her son to God.

KEY CONNECTIONS TO 1 SAMUEL

CORE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 1:10-18,26-28

- God heard and answered Hannah’s prayer.
- Hannah praised God for answering her prayer.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

“1 Samuel” (Books of the Bible Posters), “1 Samuel Quiz Cards” (enhanced CD)

- Prior to class, print the “1 Samuel Quiz Cards” and cut apart so that the question cards are in one pile and the answer cards are in another. Cover up the “1 Samuel” poster until the activity is completed.

INTRODUCE THE BOOK OF 1 SAMUEL

- Pass out the quiz cards, giving half of the group the question cards and half of the group the answer cards. Ask the kids to move around the room and try to match their card with someone that has the question or answer corresponding to their card. After this is completed, reveal the “1 Samuel” poster and instruct kids to change their partners if they see their match is incorrect. Discuss each question and answer once everyone is correctly matched.
- Explain that the books of the Bible are part of different genres: Law, History, Poetry and Wisdom, Prophecy, Gospels, and Letters. Ask if anyone knows which genre 1 Samuel is in. Affirm or correct any answer given. Explain that 1 Samuel is a historical book, which means that it is a story of how God worked through people.
- Share: “Over the next 13 weeks, we will be studying the exciting Book of 1 Samuel; so let’s jump in!”
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Greet kids with enthusiasm and welcome them to Bible Study.
- Say: “Today we begin a new journey with our study of the Book of 1 Samuel. This book begins with an answered prayer, and we will talk more about that very significant prayer later.”
- Continue: “A baby’s birth is a very special event. It is so special that many people have a whole book dedicated to writing down important things about the birth and first year of the baby’s life.” (*Show baby book and read a few of the facts recorded in baby book: weight, length, eye color, hair color, place of birth, and so forth.*)
- Ask: “Do any of you know the name of the city where you were born?” (*Encourage answers.*)
- Say: “The place where we are born is considered something worth recording and remembering. The same is true for the birth of Samuel.”
- Pass out Family Cards and ask for someone to read the text on the card.
- Share: “This is where people think Samuel was born and buried. Nebi Samwil is located on top of a mountain, one half mile above sea level and about three miles north of Jerusalem. Let’s get into today’s story to learn more about the events surrounding Samuel’s birth.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Guide kids to find the Book of 1 Samuel in their Bibles.
- Ask: “Have any of you ever prayed for something really special to happen, and even begged the Lord to answer your prayer?” (*Encourage those that feel comfortable to share those special requests.*)
- Say: “Today’s passage is about a very special prayer.”
- Ask kids to listen for the main participants of the story as you read 1 Samuel 1:10-18,26-28.
- Ask: “Can someone identify a main participant in today’s passage and tell me about him or her?” (*Repeat until Hannah, Eli, and Samuel are mentioned and described.*)
- Say: “Today’s Text Truth is **We can trust God to answer our prayers in the way that is best for us.** Let’s say the Text Truth together.”
- Connect: “Based on the Text Truth, does that mean that God will answer our prayers just the way we want every time we ask something? (*Allow for responses.*) Why or why not? It says that He will answer in the way that is best for us, but we do not always know what is best for us.”
- Say: “Let’s get into our Bible story and find out more about this special prayer and the way God answered it.”

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

- This is a great story to act out. The use of biblical times clothing is optional. Use the Bible Story script provided for you. You or another leader should play the narrator. Assign kids the remaining Bible people.

TOOLS:

- Bibles; baby book; Family Cards; “Text Truth Strips,” “Connection Statements,” and “1 Samuel 2:1” (Poster Pack); biblical times clothing (opt.); baby doll; Explore the Bible on Location video
- Prior to class, obtain a baby book to use for the introduction of today’s object.
 - Make copies of the Bible Story script for each actor and highlight their parts.

- Ask: “What made Hannah very sad?” (*She and Elkanah had no children.*)
- Ask: “What did Hannah do at the temple?” (*Prayed for a son.*)
- Ask: “How did we see the Text Truth in today’s story?” (*Hannah trusted that God would answer her prayer for a son and was blessed with Samuel.*)
- Introduce the Connection Statement. Say: “God heard Hannah’s prayer and gave her a son. Hannah did what she promised God and dedicated Samuel to the Lord by sending him to live at the tabernacle and serve with Eli. Let’s say our Text Truth again: **We can trust God to answer our prayers in the way that is best for us.**”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 1” video. Ask: “What did Hannah pray to ask God for? How did God answer her prayer? What does the name Samuel mean? (*Heard by God.*) Was Hannah’s prayer heard by God?”

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE

- Display “1 Samuel 2:1” poster.
- Say: “The Family Memory Verse this week is 1 Samuel 2:1.”
- Read the verse as a group. Then repeat while doing actions that correspond to some of the words.

PRAYER

- Say: “Our whole lesson today is about prayer, so let’s make sure we spend some time in prayer this morning. Hannah prayed, requesting something from God, and then she prayed, thanking God for answering her prayer. As I lead us in prayer, you can pray silently, either requesting something from God or giving thanks.”
- Dismiss to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and help boys and girls locate today's pages, "Hannah Prayed for a Son."
- Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 1. Invite a volunteer to read aloud Hannah's prayer in 1 Samuel 1:11.
- Ask kids to think about Hannah's willingness to give Samuel back to God. Lead kids to examine "Give It to God?" Remind kids that after Samuel was given to Eli, Hannah didn't see him everyday. Her gift to God was much greater than any of the things listed that are valued so highly today.
- Invite kids to read about "Samuel's Home." Select some kids to read aloud about the "Biblical Birthplaces."
- Ask a volunteer to read about the information about Shiloh.
- Direct everyone to examine today's "Word to Know." Help kids find the word in their own Bibles. Invite volunteers to try pronouncing the word. Explain that this word was originally written in Hebrew. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew long before the English language was created.
- Review the Text Truth. Encourage kids to spread out a little and complete the activity, "Answered Prayers."

TECH CONNECT (OPT.)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.
- You may also listen to the "Word to Know" pronunciation on the app. Encourage everyone to try to say the word together.

PRAYER TIME

- Ask for prayer requests and pray for each kid and his requests.

EXPLORATION APPLICATION (15 MINUTES)

Choose one or more of the following activities to complete as time allows.

X MARKS THE SPOT



Tools: sticker name tags, markers, construction paper, tape, "Review Questions" (enhanced CD)

- Prior to class, write the answers to questions on pieces of construction paper. Hang the answers around the room, mixing up the order.
- Form pairs. One person is to be the "X" and the other person is the "Guide." Have them write their titles on a name tag and stick it to their shirts. Instruct the "Guide" to lead his "X" to mark the spot with the correct answer to the question.
- Ask review questions and have pairs take turns identifying the correct spot. Ask the group if the answer is correct, then give the pair another chance to find the correct answer if the first is incorrect.
- Say: "Our Text Truth says **We can trust God to answer our prayers in the way that is best for us.** Sometimes we find the answers to our prayers in God's Word. The more we know His Word, the more we know God's plan for our lives."



BIBLICAL SCRAMBLED EGGS

Tools: new egg cartons, index cards, marker, prizes, scissors

- Prior to class, gather enough egg cartons for as many groups as you will divide the class into and write the Family Memory Verse on the same number of index cards. Cut the verse up into 12 pieces and scramble it up, putting one piece into each egg spot.
- Divide the class into groups and pass out an egg carton to each group.
- Say: "Each group was given an egg carton containing the scrambled Family Memory Verse. When I give the signal, open your carton and work as a team to put the Bible verse in order and back into the carton. When you finish, close your carton and bring it to the front. If it is incorrect, you will be sent back to try again. The first team to correctly unscramble the verse will be the winner and receive an "egg-cellent" prize."
- Ask: "What is today's Text Truth? (**We can trust God to answer our prayers in the way that is best for us.**) How did God answer Hannah's prayer in the way that was best for her?" (Allow for answers.)

P-R-A-Y-E-R



Tools: Bible, construction paper, markers or crayons, magnets, stickers (optional), glitter glue (optional), jewels (optional)

- Begin: "Today we talked about the importance of prayer."
- Ask for someone to say today's Text Truth from memory. If no one can, guide the class to review it.
- Say: "Today we are going to make an acrostic (*explain what an acrostic is*) of the word *Prayer*."
- Instruct kids to use markers or crayons to write the letters *P, R, A, Y, E, R* vertically on their construction paper. Then guide them to write a word or phrase beginning with each letter that describes prayer. Give examples if needed. Encourage kids to use their Bibles or concordances if they need more help.
- Allow kids to decorate their papers with stickers, glitter glue, jewels or other decorative items you provide. Then have them attach a magnet to the back of the sheet.
- Say: "This will remind you of the importance of prayer in your relationship with God. Put this acrostic somewhere you will see it everyday (*locker or refrigerator*) and let it remind you to pray."
- Lead a prayer for the kids, asking that prayer be a very important part of their daily lives.



Session 2



GOD CALLED SAMUEL

1 Samuel 3:1-10,17-21

Samuel, the last judge of Israel, was born at the end of one of the most tumultuous periods of the history of Israel. It was the latter part of the time of the judges, after Israel had gone through a long, slow descent into idolatry and moral degradation. Samson, the last major judge before Samuel, was a man whose passions were entirely out of control. The Book of Judges also tells of the superstition, violence, and moral outrage that characterized the era.

But at the root of all of this ungodly behavior was Israel's persistent idolatry. The people did not flat out abandon the Lord. Rather, they thought they could serve both God and Baal. They went back and forth between the two—like an addiction. Many times God sent an oppressor to punish them, and each time, after they had suffered enough, they called out to God for help. He would then send a judge to deliver them. But then they went back to their old ways. No matter how many times this happened, the people never learned their lesson. In fact, with every cycle they only got worse.

Samuel's ministry was a call for Israel to put an end to this spiritual inconsistency and decline. God spoke to Samuel and Samuel answered the call, serving God faithfully as the last judge of Israel. However, the people's thirst for autonomy was not quenched, and the stage was set for the next chapter in Israel's history—the cry for a king.

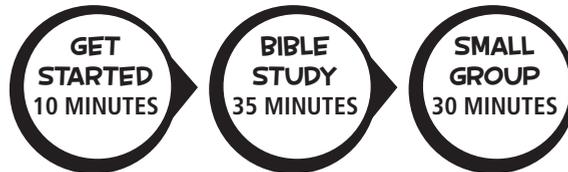
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 3:1-10,17-21

CONNECTION PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 3:1-21

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: 1 Samuel 3:10

TEXT TRUTH: God wants faithful leaders and followers.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Popcorn Pass: “Allergy Alert” (enhanced CD), popcorn

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In: Family Cards, Bibles
- Examine the Text: “1 Samuel 3” (enhanced CD)
- Tell the Bible Story: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (Poster Pack)
- Video: Explore the Bible on Location video

- Family Memory Verse: “1 Samuel 3:10” (Poster Pack)

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens
- Move: blindfold
- Make: clothespins, washi tape, permanent markers or paint pens, scissors, glue, 1 set of earbuds (optional)
- Review: paper plates, pizza boxes, “Review Questions” (enhanced CD)

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SAMUEL WAS CALLED

CONNECTION PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 3:1-21

Samuel served God with the priest Eli in the town of Shiloh. One day, Eli was lying down in his room. Samuel was lying down in the tabernacle. The Lord called Samuel and Samuel answered, "Here I am." Samuel ran to Eli and said, "Here I am. You called me." Samuel did not know that God was calling him. He thought Eli had called his name.

"I didn't call you," Eli answered. "Go back and lie down." Samuel went back and laid down.

Again God called, "Samuel." Again Samuel thought that Eli had called him, so he ran to Eli. "Here I am. You called me," Samuel said.

"I didn't call." Eli said. "Go back and lie down."

For a third time, God called to Samuel." Samuel got up and went to Eli. "Here I am. You called me."

Now, Eli understood that the Lord was calling Samuel. Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down. If He calls you again, say, 'Speak, Lord, for Your servant is listening.'" Samuel went and laid down again.

The Lord came and stood there. He called again, "Samuel, Samuel."

Samuel answered just as Eli had told him. "Speak, for Your servant is listening."

God gave Samuel a special message. God was going to punish the sin of Eli's family. They would no longer be able to be priests and serve God in the tabernacle.

The next morning, Samuel got up. He was afraid to tell Eli about God's message. Eli asked Samuel to tell him the message. Samuel told Eli everything. Eli heard the news and said, "The Lord will do what He thinks is good."

Samuel grew up and continued to serve God. The Lord was with Samuel and He fulfilled everything that Samuel prophesied. All of Israel knew that Samuel was a prophet of God. God continued to appear to Samuel in Shiloh and to reveal His word to Samuel.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

The Book of 1 Samuel tells the story of three powerful leaders in Israel: Samuel, Saul, and David. Through each man and his leadership of Israel, the need for a perfect leader is evident. God's people hoped for a day when a Messiah—the one true King—would rescue them. When Jesus came, He fulfilled God's promise that a perfect Prophet, Priest, and King would rule over His people.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

God chose Samuel to be the next prophet and priest for the people of Israel.



KEY CONNECTIONS TO 1 SAMUEL

CORE PASSAGE:

1 Samuel 3:1-10,17-21

- Samuel obeyed God.
- The sin of Eli's family had consequences. Sin always has a price.
- God continued to speak to Samuel and Samuel told the people what God said.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- “Allergy Alert” (enhanced CD), popcorn
- Prior to class, display the “Allergy Alert” and pop a bag of popcorn.

OPTION:

Substitute table tennis balls for popcorn, if allergies are a concern.

POPCORN PASS

- Instruct kids to line up in two lines facing each other, approximately 10 feet apart, so that each kid has a partner. If you have an odd number, have another leader play. Give one person from each pair a piece of popcorn and have them toss it to their partner. They will not be able to catch it from this distance. Tell them to take a step forward and try again. The game ends when a pair successfully catches the popcorn. Allow kids to eat the remaining popcorn (*have more bags ready if needed*).
- Ask: “Can anyone tell me what last week’s Text Truth was? (*Make sure this is covered if it is displayed in your room.*) **We can trust God to answer our prayers in the way that is best for us.**”
- Say: “We also learned that God answered Hannah’s prayer. What was her prayer and how was it answered?” (*Allow for responses.*)
- Connect: “In today’s story we continue learning about the life of Samuel and the importance of listening to God. If we want to hear God, we must be close to Him. In the game we played, we found that it was hard to catch the popcorn the farther away we were from our partner. The same is true in our relationship to God; the further we are from Him, the harder it is to hear Him.”
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- As kids enter, pass out today's Family Cards showing the lampstand.
- Begin: "Today our object comes from 1 Samuel 3:3. Do I have a volunteer to that would like to read that verse?"
- Continue: "It is hard for us to imagine the significance of this lampstand not burning out; after all, we can leave lights on for several days or weeks before the light bulb burns out. But this lampstand required someone watching it around the clock to ensure it kept burning. The room that it was in, the Holy Place, had no windows. This lampstand was the only light in the Holy Place."
- Transition: "Let's find out more about the verse we read and why God was calling to Samuel in the night."

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Divide your group by having them number off 1, 2, 1, 2, and so on.
- Distribute copies of "1 Samuel 3."
- Say: "Instead of looking up our first text in your Bible, I want us to read it from the sheets being passed around. I will read until Samuel and Eli speak. When Samuel speaks, all of the 1's read his part. When Eli speaks, all of the 2's read his part. Raise your hand if you are a 1; you are now *Samuel*. Raise your hand if you are a 2; you are now *Eli*."
- Read the passage with each group reading its part.
- Say: "Let's reread verse 1."
- Continue: "This is why this story is so significant. The word of the Lord was rare in those days and in this story, God's Word came to a boy ... not a man, not a priest ... but a boy. What a neat thing for God to do and include in the Bible for us to read. God speaks to men, women, boys, and girls. So let's listen as we continue reading this story."
- Read verses 17-21 and say: "Samuel told Eli everything that God told him in the night. We will find out what that message was when we finish today's Bible story."

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

- Tell the rest of the story in your own words. A script has been provided for your reference.
- Say: "From the first time sin entered the world in the Garden of Eden it has had consequences. Eli and his sons had to face the consequences of their sin. God used Samuel to deliver this message and he continued to speak through Samuel to the people."
- Introduce the Connection Statement.
- Ask: "Why was Samuel able to receive God's message for Eli and deliver it? He was listening."
- Continue: "It is very important that we listen for God to speak to us. What are some ways that God speaks to us today? He speaks to

TOOLS:

Bibles; Family Cards, "1 Samuel 3" (enhanced CD); "Text Truth Strips," "Connection Statements," and "1 Samuel 3:10" (Poster Pack); Explore the Bible on Location video

- Prior to class, make copies of the "1 Samuel 3" printable in the Bible translation of your choice. This will help everyone read the text in unison.

us through the Bible, prayer, other believers. Let's make sure we are listening for God's message, whether it is when we are reading His Word, talking with Him, asking for help from other Christians, or listening to a Bible study or sermon. There is nothing more important than hearing and doing what God says."

- Relate: "Have you ever had a friend that did not listen? It is hard to be good friends with someone that does not want to listen. Our Text Truth today says **God wants faithful leaders and followers**. Part of being faithful involves listening."

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the "Session 2" video. Inquire: "Name the items that were in the tabernacle. What was Samuel learning about when he lived at Shiloh?"

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE

- Display "1 Samuel 3:10" poster.
- Say: "Our story today was all about the importance of listening to God and obeying him. This week's Family Memory Verse is an easy way to remember those main points. Let's read it together. Now let's try saying it again in different ways (*whisper, to a tune, sitting, standing, to a partner*)."
- Continue: "We should be able to remember that verse now that we have said it in so many ways. It also reminds us that God speaks to us in a variety of ways and in many different situations. Samuel was lying down, asleep. Use this verse and today's object to talk about the story with your family!"

PRAYER

- Say: "Let's pray, asking that God helps us have listening ears to hear His message for us."
- Ask for a volunteer to pray or ask a teacher to pray.
- Lead boys and girls to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and help boys and girls locate today's pages, "God Called Samuel."
- Tell kids to open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 3. Invite a volunteer to read aloud 1 Samuel 3:1. Then invite another volunteer to read 1 Samuel 3:21. Ask kids to identify what changed between the two verses.
- Review the Bible story by helping kids complete "Bible Recap." You may need to assist them in identifying the wrong word in each sentence.
- Lead the boys and girls to read the Text Truth aloud. Help them think about what it means in their lives by guiding them to indicate their answers on the "Easy or Hard to Follow?" scale for each prompt.
- Choose two volunteers to read aloud the "Festival of Lights" information and the information about the lampstand. Guide kids to look at the reconstruction of the tabernacle.
- Assist kids in locating today's "Word to Know" in their own Bibles. Affirm any kids who want to attempt to pronounce the transliteration of the original Hebrew word.

TECH CONNECT (OPT.)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.
- You may also listen to the "Word to Know" pronunciation on the app. Encourage everyone to try to say the word together.

PRAYER TIME

- Allow kids to find a quiet place alone in the room and pray to God, taking time to allow God to speak to them.

EXPLORATION APPLICATION (15 MINUTES)

Choose one or more of the following activities to complete as time allows.



HERE I AM! GAME

Tools: blindfold

- Ask for a volunteer to be blindfolded and turn him or her around a few times. At the signal, have the rest of the kids begin calling out “Here I am.” The one that is blindfolded will then try to tag one of the kids. The one who is tagged then sits out the rest of the game. Continue to play until only one kid has not been tagged. If time permits, play the game again, blindfolding the kid that was not tagged in the first game.
- Say: “That was just a fun game of tag, but it helps us to remember how important it is to listen and be available to God. Similar to when you were blindfolded, Samuel could not see God, but he could hear Him. Let’s say our Family Memory Verse again.”
- Review the Text Truth: **God wants faithful leaders and followers.** Discuss the difference in leading and following. Invite kids to share why both are important.



“LISTENING EAR” BUDS HOLDER

Tools: clothespins, washi tape, permanent markers or paint pens, scissors, glue, 1 set of earbuds (optional)

- Say: “Our story today talked about the importance of listening to God. A lot of peoples’ time today is spent listening to electronic devices. Our craft today will remind us to take time throughout our day to allow God to speak to us.”
- Provide each kid with two clothespins. Guide kids to decorate only one side of each clothespin with the tape. Encourage kids to print *Your servant is listening* on the two sides they decorate.
- Help kids glue the non-decorated sides of the clothespins together. The clothespins should be stacked with the mouths of the clothespins facing opposite directions.
- After the glue has dried, demonstrate how to place the plug end of a set of earbuds inside of one of the clothespin mouths, wrap the cord around the body of the clothespins, and clamp the earbuds in the opposite mouth.
- Remind: “Today’s Text Truth says **God wants faithful leaders and followers.** We said that part of being faithful involves listening to God. How can you listen to God this week?”

REVIEW FLYING DISC

Tools: paper plates, pizza boxes, “Review Questions” (enhanced CD)

Prior to class, gather pizza boxes (or something similar) and paper plates. The number depends on the amount of teams you need to divide your class into, based on size and time allowance.

- Give each team a pizza box and a paper plate. Have one team member hold the pizza box at one end of the room and the rest of the team line up at the other end. The first person will hold the paper plate.
- Say: “I will ask a review question, and the first team member holding the paper plate flying disc to raise their flying disc and answer correctly will get a chance to throw their flying disc into the pizza box. One point is given each time a player gets the flying disc in the box.”
- Play until all players on each team have had a chance to answer a review question. If you need more questions than what is provided from today’s story, consider asking last week’s questions, the Family Memory Verses, or the 5 Ws of 1 Samuel.





Session 3



THE ARK WAS CAPTURED AND RETURNED

1 Samuel 5:1-6; 6:11-16

Prior to the building of the Jerusalem temple, Israel's primary sanctuary was the tabernacle, a structure built under Moses according to guidelines given by God. It became something of a permanent fixture at Shiloh soon after the conquest under Joshua.

The tent housed several sacred items, including a lampstand, a table for the daily offering of bread, and a small altar for burning incense. Most importantly, it housed the ark of the covenant. This was a small chest that contained tablets of the Ten Commandments, a jar of manna, and Aaron's staff that budded. (*See Hebrews 9:4.*) It served as a symbolic throne of God, and thus implied that God was present in the sanctuary. This was important because the tent did not contain the one thing that ancient people would have considered essential for a sanctuary: an idol representing the resident god.

After losing an initial skirmish, the Israelites carried the ark with them to battle, thinking that it would ensure victory. The Philistines were frightened but rallied, and they inflicted a major defeat on Israel, taking the ark as a battle trophy and destroying the sanctuary at Shiloh.

The name "Ebenezer" marks the beginning and ending of this part of the story in 1 Samuel. In 4:1, we learn that the Israelites were encamped at Ebenezer prior to their disastrous battle with the Philistines. But in 7:12, after the Israelites routed the Philistines, Samuel set up a stone and called it "Ebenezer," which means "The stone of (*God's*) help." At first, the Israelites thought that God would help them because they had the ark of the covenant. But after they listened to Samuel, God intervened. He felled the statue of Dagon and secured the ark for His people, illustrating that God is the one true God worthy of worship, praise, and allegiance.

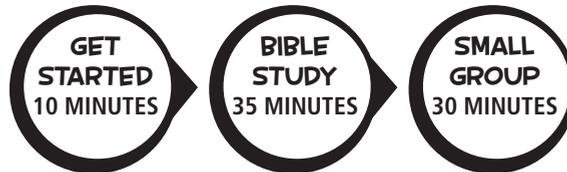
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 5:1-6; 6:11-16

CONNECTION PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 4:1-7:1

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 21:13

TEXT TRUTH: Only God is holy and worthy of worship.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Indoor Capture the Flag: cloth or paper “flags,” “Review Questions” (enhanced CD), “1 Samuel” (Books of the Bible Posters), “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack)

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In: Family Cards
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack)

- Tell the Bible Story: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (Poster Pack)
- Video: Explore the Bible on Location video
- Family Memory Verse: “Psalm 21:13” (Poster Pack)

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens, “Christ in Context: 1 Samuel” (Poster Pack)

- Move: 2 pool noodles, 2 shoe boxes, large piece of yellow paper, “Review Questions” (enhanced CD), scissors
- Explore: pool noodle, cut in half lengthwise; bouncy balls; tape
- Music: “Psalm 21:13” and “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack), one worship song about God’s strength and power, one worship song about God’s holiness

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THE ARK WAS CAPTURED AND RETURNED

CONNECTION PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 4:1–7:1

God's people, Israel, fought with the Philistines and they lost. When everyone returned to the camp, the leaders of Israel asked, "Why did God let the Philistines win? We should bring the ark of the Lord from Shiloh. We will take it with us and then it will save us from losing again."

Eli's two sons, Phineas and Hophni, came with the ark to the camp. When the ark arrived at the camp, everyone cheered and shouted.

The Philistines heard the sound of the Israelites. They heard that the ark of the Lord was in the Israelites' camp and they began to panic.

The Israelites and the Philistines fought again. Many of the Israelites, including Eli's sons, died. The Philistines won and they captured the ark of the covenant. When Eli heard the news about his sons, he fell off his chair and died.

The Philistines carried the ark to the city of Ashdod and put it in the temple of their false god, Dagon. The next morning, the people got up and saw the statue of Dagon had fallen on his face in front of the ark of the covenant. The people picked up the statue, but the next morning it had fallen on the ground again. This time the head and hands had broken off and were on the doorway of the temple. The people of Ashdod became very sick because God was upset that they had the ark.

The people knew that God was against them because of the ark, so they sent the ark to the city of Gath. But the people of Gath became very sick, so they sent the ark to the city of Ekron.

After seven months, the Philistines decided to send the ark back to Israel. They put the ark on a new cart pulled by two cows. They even put a box of gold on the cart as an offering to God.

When the Israelites saw the ark coming back, they were overjoyed.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

The Book of 1 Samuel tells the story of three powerful leaders in Israel: Samuel, Saul, and David. Through each man and his leadership of Israel, the need for a perfect leader is evident. God's people hoped for a day when a Messiah—the one true King—would rescue them. When Jesus came, He fulfilled God's promise that a perfect Prophet, Priest, and King would rule over His people.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

The people learned that God is serious about worship. We are to only worship Him.



KEY CONNECTIONS TO 1 SAMUEL

CORE PASSAGE:

1 Samuel 5:1-6; 6:11-16

- The Israelites made bad choices. Their choices had bad consequences.
- The Philistines learned that God is all-powerful. He is the one true God.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

cloth or paper “flags,” “Review Questions” (enhanced CD), “1 Samuel” (Books of the Bible Posters), “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack)

- Prior to class, make or obtain several small, generic paper or cloth flags (shaped like a pennant). Use the last two week’s review questions, Text Truths, and 5 Ws of “1 Samuel” as the questions for the game. Hide any posters displayed that would give away answers.

OPTION:

Provide tap lights for kids to “ring” in.

INDOOR CAPTURE THE FLAG

- Form two teams. Stand at the front and in between the two teams. *(If you have a very large group, you may split into more teams and have other teachers lead the game simultaneously.)*
- Say: “I will ask a question to the first two people from each team. The first one to reach me and answer the question correctly will “capture” the flag and take it back to their team. If the first person answers incorrectly, the other team gets a chance to answer and capture the flag. We will repeat until everyone has a chance to play. At the end, the team with the most flags is the winner.”
- Introduce: “In today’s Bible story we will learn of something that was very special to the Israelites that was captured.”
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Say: “Good morning, kids! I hope you had a great time capturing the flag this morning! Games like that are fun, but today that game had a special meaning as it relates to our story. I mentioned that there was something captured from God’s people that was very special to them.”
- Ask: “What is your most special possession? (*Allow kids to share and share your own.*) Before I pass out the Family Cards, does anyone want to guess what was captured?” (*Allow for responses.*)
- Pass out Family Cards.
- Continue: “The ark of the covenant was so special to the Israelites because it symbolized God’s presence among His people. It also contained the Ten Commandments. In today’s story we will talk about a battle and how the ark was captured in this battle.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Say: “There are many stories in the Bible that are more exciting than even the best, most adventure-filled movie you have seen. Today’s lesson is that kind of story! While we read and talk about the story, pretend you are watching a movie. Imagine the scenery, the people, and the action, and the story will come to life. Remember, many of the books you read and movies you watch are just made up stories, but all of the stories that we learn about from the Bible are true. They really happened! Knowing this should make us want to read more and learn more. Let’s do that right now!”
- Have kids open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 5, and then later direct them to 1 Samuel 6:11.
- Read 1 Samuel 5:1-6, 6:11-16 dramatically as if a narrator in a movie, announcing “Scene 1” for 5:1-6 and “Scene 2” for 6:11-16.
- Ask: “Were you able to imagine that Bible passage like a movie in your head? What happened in the first scene? (*Allow for answers.*) And then what happened in the second scene?” (*Allow for answers.*)
- Say: “We learned last week when studying about Eli ignoring the wicked actions of his sons, that sin has serious consequences. This battle occurred because the Israelites made bad choices. The ark, representing God’s presence, was stolen because of this disobedience. The Philistines also paid the price for stealing the ark of the covenant. They learned that their gods were not all powerful, and that the God of the Israelites is the one true God. This is what our Text Truth explains: **Only God is holy and worthy of worship.**”

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

- Say: Let’s talk a bit more about what happened between the time the Israelites and Philistines battled and the Philistines returned the ark.

TOOLS:

Bibles; Family Cards; “Text Truth Strips,” “Connection Statements,” and “Psalm 21:13” (Poster Pack); Explore the Bible on Location video

- Tell the Bible Story in your own words. A script has been provided for your reference.
- Say: “The Israelites thought, after losing the first battle with the Philistines, that if they had the ark of the covenant with them, then God would help them win the next battle. God was not happy with His people because they kept sinning, they lost the second battle, and the ark was captured. The Philistines thought their god, Dagon, helped them capture the ark, but they found out they were wrong. Throughout this whole story we see the consequences of bad choices and disobedience to God. We also see God’s power in every situation. Let’s say our Text Truth again: **Only God is holy and worthy of worship.**”
- Introduce the Connection Statement too. Invite kids to identify specific ways the people learned that God is serious about worship.

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 3” video. Ask: “What did the Philistines learn about God? What do you think Israel learned about God in today’s Bible story? How did the Israelites get the ark of the covenant back from the Philistines?”

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE

- Display “Psalm 21:13.”
- Say: “Take a moment to think of the strongest person you know. Imagine how big their muscles are and how much they can lift or carry. Our Family Memory Verse talks about strength and says that God should be praised for His strength and power. Let’s say it together. When you say the word *strength*, make a muscle flex pose, and when you say *power/might*, say it with a fist pump.”
- Say the verse a few times together with the accompanying actions. Ask for volunteers to say it by themselves.

PRAYER

- Ask for a teacher to pray, asking God to help us make good choices and obey the one true God.
- Lead boys and girls to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and help kids locate today's pages, "The Ark Was Captured and Returned."
- Introduce the "Christ in Context: 1 Samuel" poster.
- Lead kids to open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 6. Read aloud 1 Samuel 6:7-12. Ask: "How did God show the Philistines that He was not pleased with their actions? What did the Philistines learn about God? What did you learn about God in today's Bible story?" Invite kids to list how they could describe God in the space provided.
- Continue reviewing the Bible story by helping girls and boys complete, "Who?" Encourage them to use their Bibles to examine 1 Samuel 4:1-7:1 if they need help locating an answer.
- Help everyone locate today's "Word to Know" in their open Bibles.
- Invite a volunteer to read about the Philistine's pottery. Ask another volunteer to share about the ark of the covenant.
- Say: "In the Old Testament, the ark of the covenant was a symbol of God's presence with His people. It was also the place where the high priest made atonement for the Israelite people once a year. Why do we no longer need the ark of the covenant? Jesus paid the price for our sin, once and for all. When we repent of our sin and trust Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we are forgiven. God also sends the Holy Spirit to dwell with us. We have God's presence with us all of the time."
- If you have time, review "The Gospel" located in the back of the Explorer Guide. Provide kids with an opportunity to speak with a leader if they have questions or want to respond to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

TECH CONNECT (OPT.)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.
- You may also listen to the "Word to Know" pronunciation on the app. Encourage everyone to try to say the word together.

PRAYER TIME

- Ask for kids to say sentence prayers about God's strength and power similar to the Family Memory Verse.

TOOLS:

Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens,
"Christ in Context: 1 Samuel"
(Poster Pack)

EXPLORATION APPLICATION (15 MINUTES)

Choose one or more of the following activities to complete as time allows.



ON THE RUN RELAY

Tools: 2 pool noodles, 2 shoe boxes, large piece of yellow paper, "Review Questions" (enhanced CD), scissors

- Prior to class, make an ark by covering a shoe box with a large piece of yellow paper. Print and cut apart the review questions. Place them inside the unwrapped box.
- Form pairs and place the unwrapped box on the opposite side of the room. Instruct the kids that at the signal they will carry the ark on the pool noodles to the other end of the room. Help them put a pool noodle over each shoulder so that they are both balancing the noodles, holding the noodles with their hands. Then place the "ark" in the gap between them, on top of noodles. They can walk fast or run, but if they drop the "ark" they must go back and start over. Once they reach the other side, they can open the other box and try to answer a question. Then they return to the other side.
- Say: "Who remembers our Text Truth? **Only God is holy and worthy of worship.** How did the Israelites and Philistines learn this truth?"



RETURN THE ARK

Tools: pool noodle, cut in half lengthwise; bouncy balls; tape

- Prior to class, tape a road pattern on the floor. At the end of the road, place a small tape circle to represent a rock.
- Invite a kid to read 1 Samuel 6:7-14.
- Share: "The Philistines had a plan to figure out if God was causing their problems. And what happened? The cows carried the cart in a straight path."
- Form two or more teams. Explain that each team will take turns rolling its bouncy ball down the inside of the pool noodle onto the floor and down the tape path. Challenge teams to try to get their ball to travel in a straight line and reach the "rock."
- Allow each team to take several turns and experiment with placement of the pool noodle and the bouncy balls. Discuss how hard or easy it was to get the ball to travel just the way each team wanted.
- Ask the kids to think about the cows. They had never been hitched to a cart, but they traveled perfectly down the road.
- Conclude: "God showed the Philistines over and over again that He is the one true God. **Only God is holy and worthy of worship.**"

NAME THAT TUNE

Tools: "Psalm 21:13" and "Text Truth Strips" (Poster Pack), one worship song about God's strength and power, one worship song about God's holiness



- Ask for a volunteer to recite the Family Memory Verse, using the poster if needed.
- Say: "The Psalms were songs that were sung to God by His people. Let's sing a song of praise to God, one that talks about His strength and power."
- Sing one song.
- Say: "Let's say today's Text Truth: **Only God is holy and worthy of worship.** Now let's sing a song about God's holiness."
- Sing another song.
- Say: "We sing songs to God because of what our Text Truth says: **Only God is holy and worthy of worship.**" Invite kids to name some more reasons why God is worthy of worship.

Option: Use the worship music provided on the enhanced CD.



Session

4



ISRAEL'S CRY FOR A KING

1 Samuel 8:4-9,19-22

When Israel was on the plains of Moab and about to invade Canaan, Joshua was named as Moses' successor. Under Joshua's leadership, the conquest was carried out and the territory allotted to the tribes. After Joshua, early Israel had no king or national ruler, no capital city, no bureaucracy, no tax collectors, and no standing army. They did have judges, but judges served more as heroes and champions than as governors. Their authority tended to be more local than national, and they had no administration serving under them.

How was Israel supposed to survive in this disorderly situation? There was a kind of local government. Groups of city elders would meet to make decisions and especially to adjudicate in cases of crime or civil lawsuits. Local militias served as defense against outside attack. And in case of a national emergency, there would be an ad hoc national assembly. Most importantly, Israel was supposed to be faithful to their covenant with God and to regard Him as their king. The people were expected to understand that God enforced the laws and punished all disobedience.

If the Israelites had been faithful to God, their society would have been orderly and a model of righteousness. But they were not faithful. Because of disobedience to God, they descended into true anarchy. Being a lawless, disorganized people, they were prey to many outside invaders. Since the Israelites would not have God as their king, they wanted a human king to protect them. It is important to recognize that the original plan was for the Israelites to live with God as their only king. They were to be faithful to Him by keeping all the commands Moses had given them. This was their covenant duty.

Israel cried for a man to lead them. The people rejected God as their king and God—in His infinite wisdom and mercy—granted their request.

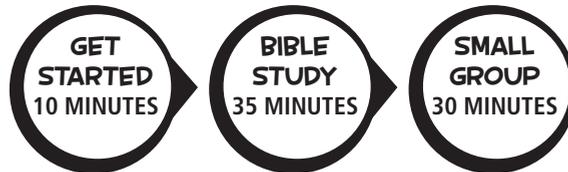
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 8:4-9,19-22

CONNECTION PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 7:15–8:22

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: 1 Samuel 8:7

TEXT TRUTH: God's people rejected God because they wanted to be like other people instead of being like God.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Judgment Call: *none*

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In: *Family Cards, bag, gavel, crown, paper airplane, notebook, badge, Bible, photograph of children*
- Examine the Text: *Bibles*
- Tell the Bible Story: *Bibles, "Text Truth Strips" and "Connection Statements" (Poster Pack)*

- Video: *Explore the Bible on Location video*
- Family Memory Verse: *"1 Samuel 8:7" (Poster Pack)*

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide: *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Move: *clean wastebaskets, balls, tape, "Review Questions" (enhanced CD), whiteboard, dry erase marker*

- Make: *construction paper, stapler or tape, stickers, pens, markers, scrap paper*
- Examine: *sheets of paper, pens or pencils*

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ISRAEL DEMANDED A KING

CONNECTION PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 7:15–8:22

Samuel was a judge for Israel throughout his life. Every year he traveled through Israel and judged the people. When Samuel was old, he appointed his sons Joel and Abijah to be judges over Israel. But Samuel's sons did not love and follow God. They were sinful and dishonest. The leaders of Israel gathered together with Samuel. The leaders said, "Samuel, you are old and your sons do not follow your example. Appoint a king to judge us like all the other nations have."

Samuel thought their demand for a king was sinful, so he prayed to God. The Lord told Samuel, "Listen to the people and what they are asking. They have not rejected you as their leader; they have rejected Me as their king. Since I brought them out of Egypt they have abandoned Me and worshiped false gods. Warn them about the rights of the king who will rule over them."

Samuel told the people what God said. Then he warned the people about what having a king might be like. A king might take their sons to take care of his chariots or to plant and harvest the fields. He might take their daughters to cook and bake for him. He can take the best fields and orchards from you. A day will come when you will be sad that you have a king," Samuel said.

The people refused to listen to Samuel. "We must have a king. Then we will be like the other nations. Our king will judge us. He will fight for us."

Samuel listened to the people and told God what they said. The Lord told Samuel, "Appoint a king for them."

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

The Book of 1 Samuel tells the story of three powerful leaders in Israel: Samuel, Saul, and David. Through each man and his leadership of Israel, the need for a perfect leader is evident. God's people hoped for a day when a Messiah—the one true King—would rescue them. When Jesus came, He fulfilled God's promise that a perfect Prophet, Priest, and King would rule over His people.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

Sometimes God allows us to have what we want so we will learn to trust Him better in the future.

KEY CONNECTIONS TO 1 SAMUEL

CORE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 8:4-9,19-22

- The Israelites rejected God as their king.
- The Israelites wanted to be like everyone else instead of being like God.
- Fear can lead us to make bad decisions.
- When we are afraid, we should trust God.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

none

DEFINITION:

Judge: an official with authority to administer justice by trying cases. Also a deliverer who called for Israel to repent and led them to defeat their enemy. Samuel served Israel in both ways.

JUDGMENT CALL

- Say: “Today we will talk about Samuel as a judge in Israel. To get our minds thinking about what a judge does, let’s consider a few situations that require a decision. You are all the ‘judges’ and can share what your decision would be for each ‘case.’”
 - 1.** You and some of your friend’s are at Shane’s house. Shane is a really popular guy at school and you are very excited to be invited to his house. Shane says that since his parents are not home, you can watch whatever you want on TV. He puts in a movie that you know your parents would not let you see. Your friends seem to think this is cool and all sit down to watch the movie. Judgment call! What should you do?
 - 2.** You fell asleep studying for the last science test of the school year. You did not do well on your last two tests and really need a good grade. You know that you are not prepared. The teacher leaves the room for a minute and you see your notes sticking out from your bag. Judgment call! What should you do?
 - 3.** There is a new kid in your Sunday School class. He does not have a Bible and does not know about Jesus. The other kids in class do not talk to him or invite him to join in their conversations. You want to talk to him and be his friend but then your best friend yells for you to come sit with a group who seem to be having a lot of fun. Judgment call! What should you do?
 - 4.** Your parents tell you that you are only allowed to ride your bike to the end of the block and back. One day you see the ice cream truck and a lot of your friends laughing and eating ice cream, but they are 2 blocks away. Your parents will not know if you go a little further than the end of the block. Judgment call! What should you do?
- Conclude: “Sometimes it is hard to be the judge and make decisions for other people. Samuel relied on God to help him make decisions and he did what God said.”
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Have a bag filled with items that belong to people that are authority figures: gavel (*judge*), crown (*king or queen*), paper airplane with *Air Force One* written on the side (*president*), notebook with *Grades* written on the outside cover (*teacher*), badge (*policeman*), Bible (*pastor*), and photograph of children (*parents*).
- Greet kids warmly and with enthusiasm.
- Ask for volunteers to come pull an item out of the bag and guess to whom it belongs. If they do not know, ask the rest of the group to guess.
- Say: “Our object today is a crown. (*Pass out Family Cards.*) In the story, the people want Samuel to appoint an earthly king to rule them. Kings still wear crowns today to signify their authority and importance. Let’s turn in our Bibles to 1 Samuel 8 and learn more about the people’s request for a king.” (*Assist kids in locating 1 Samuel.*)

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Say: “Think about the people that we just talked about who are authority figures. When faced with a decision, their role is to do what is best for those they are leading. Many times those they are leading may not know what is best for them. Think about a time when your parents told you to do something and you did not understand why, but later realized that they were looking out for you. (*Give an example, such as yelling at them to stop before crossing the street, and ask them for an example.*) Sometimes we think we need things but God knows that those things could harm us and they are not what He desires for us.”
- Ask for a volunteer to read 1 Samuel 8:4-9.
- Ask: “Why did the people want a king? (*Allow for answers.*) The people were afraid and wanted a leader that was good, not dishonest like Samuel’s sons. Fear can lead us to make bad decisions. That seemed to make sense, but Samuel knew that God was the only king the people needed.”
- Ask for a volunteer to read verses 19-21.
- Say: “Sometimes God allows us to have our way even though He knows His way is better. He allowed the people to reject Him as their king and told Samuel to appoint an earthly king for them.”
- Ask: “What should we do when we are afraid like the Israelites were? Trust God.”

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

- Tell the rest of the Bible Story in your own words. A script has been provided for your reference.
- Ask: “What kind of warning did Samuel give the people about having an earthly king? (*Allow for answers.*) What was the people’s response?” (*Allow for responses.*)

TOOLS:

- Bibles; “Text Truth Strips,” “Connection Statements,” and “1 Samuel 8:7” (Poster Pack); Family Cards; bag; gavel; crown; paper airplane; notebook; badge; photograph of children; Explore the Bible on Location video
- Write *Air Force One* on the side of the paper airplane
 - Write *Grades* on the outside cover of the notebook

- Connect: “We may judge the Israelites and think they were very wrong to choose an earthly king, especially after hearing Samuel’s warning. It is easy to look at others and judge their decisions. It is more difficult to choose to trust God when it is our own situation.”
- Introduce the Connection Statement.
- Continue: “We think we know best and have the answers. It is especially hard when we look at our friends and see what they are doing. We think ‘I want to be like them and do what they do,’ even when we know it would cause us to be disobedient to God. Our Text Truth today says **God’s people rejected God because they wanted to be like other people instead of being like God.** Let’s say that together.”
- Say: “The next time you think you want to be like someone else, ask yourself if that would make you more like God or less like God.”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 4” video. Ask: “Why did God want His people to be different? Why did Israel want a king?”

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE

- Display “1 Samuel 8:7” poster.
- Ask kids to read the verse together. Then divide the group in half and assign each group half of the verse, saying it three times aloud. Switch parts if time allows.
- Say: “Review the verse this week with your family and talk about the importance of looking to God as our ruler instead of man.”

PRAYER

- Lead the group in prayer, asking God to help each of them look to Him instead of others when they are afraid.
- Transition to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute the Explorer Guides and lead kids to locate the pages, “Israel’s Cry for a King.”
- Direct everyone to list the qualities she would want in a king in the activity “King Me!” Encourage kids to share some of their ideas aloud.
- Choose a volunteer to read aloud about the Philistine’s weapons. Explain that the Israelites were afraid of the Philistines.
- Invite boys and girls to open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 8:6-9. Ask: “Was this the first time that the people had rejected God? Do people today reject God? Do you ever reject God?” Allow kids to think about their answers and share if they want to.
- Inquire: “Why do we reject God?” Explain that usually we reject God because we do not trust that His plan is what is best for us.
- Guide kids to complete the activity, “Trust God.” Assist as needed.
- Select a volunteer to read the information about today’s object, the crown. Select other volunteers to take turns reading about the other famous crowns people have worn.
- Help everyone locate today’s “Word to Know” in his own Bible.

TECH CONNECT (OPT.)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled “Explorer Plus” on the app.
- You may also listen to the “Word to Know” pronunciation on the app. Encourage everyone to try to say the word together.

PRAYER TIME

- Ask kids to share things they are afraid of and lead a prayer, asking God to help them not to be afraid.

EXPLORATION APPLICATION (15 MINUTES)

Choose one or more of the following activities to complete as time allows.

BIBLE REVIEW BASKETBALL



Tools: clean wastebaskets, balls, tape, "Review Questions" (enhanced CD), whiteboard, dry erase marker

- Put tape down on the floor marking a 2- and a 3-point shot line. Use the wastebaskets as basketball goals. Form at least two teams, or more depending on the size of your group. Allow each group to come up with a team name and mascot so that they can cheer for their teammate when it is their turn to shoot. Write their team names on the board to keep score.
- Using your best announcer voice, say: "We are getting ready to play an exciting game of Bible Review Basketball!"
- Announce the team names and mascots. Ask: "Are you ready for the game to begin?" (*Wait for cheers.*)
- Ask the first player from the first team a review question. If the player answers correctly, he may shoot the ball at the "basket" from the 2- or 3-point shot line. Keep score on the board and tally up the total when every player has answered a question.
- At the end of the game, review today's Text Truth: **God's people rejected God because they wanted to be like other people instead of being like God.** Invite kids to share ways they can trust God instead of rejecting Him.



FEAR & TRUST CHEER

Tools: construction paper, stapler or tape, stickers, pens, markers, scrap paper

- Instruct kids to write a cheer about being afraid and trusting God. Let them jot their ideas on scrap paper and write the final copy on a piece of construction paper. This will be for them to hang up at home, so let them decorate with markers and stickers.
- After writing their cheer, show the kids how to make a megaphone that they can use to shout their cheer. Take a piece of construction paper and roll into a cone shape, leaving a small opening at the small end to talk through. Staple or tape the megaphone together, then decorate the megaphone.
- Invite kids to share their cheer using their megaphone. Lead in shouts and claps after each kid shares.
- Say: "In today's Bible story, the people made bad decisions because they were afraid and did not trust God. Our Text Truth today said: **God's people rejected God because they wanted to be like other people instead of being like God.** When you are afraid, read your cheer and remember that trusting God is always the best choice."

EVERYBODY'S DOING IT

Tools: sheets of paper, pens or pencils



- Instruct kids to draw six big boxes on their sheets of paper. Then ask them to write in each box things that kids their age like to have or like to do. Go around the room having each kid read one of their boxes. When they read their box, anyone that has the same idea written in one of their boxes should mark an X through that box. After everyone has had one turn, the person with the fewest X's is the winner.
- Say: "One of the reasons that the Israelites wanted an earthly king was because they wanted to be like other nations. They wanted a leader they could see to follow even though they had the greatest leader, God. Wanting to be like others, to follow the crowd, to do something because 'everybody else is doing it' can cause us to get our eyes off of God and focus on others. Our Text Truth today said: **God's people rejected God because they wanted to be like other people instead of being like God.**"
- Ask: "How can you trust God and desire to be like Him instead of like others?" (*Allow for answers.*)

SAMUEL'S SPEECH AND PRAYER



FOR THE
LEADER

1 Samuel 12:12-25

First Samuel 12 marks one of the most significant episodes in the history of Israel. It signaled the end of the period of judges and the beginning of the Israelite monarchy. From the day that Samuel gave the address recorded in 1 Samuel 12 until the fall of Jerusalem, kings would rule the Israelites. Samuel's speech marked the standard by which God would judge Israel, now that they were a monarchy. From then on, God's judgment would always make reference to the ruling kings. The nation would be evaluated in terms of whether the king did good or evil in the eyes of the Lord.

Samuel established his credentials first by asking if anyone had cause to accuse him of having abused his power. The people willingly affirmed that he had done no such thing. If Samuel had behaved in such a manner, he would have had no moral authority to rebuke the people or to lay down God's requirements. Since no one could make such a charge, Samuel told the people to brace themselves for what he had to say.

As Samuel retold the story of Israel, he focused on how God had always saved them from their troubles. God gave mercy and grace. Through Moses and Aaron, God had saved the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. When they sinned, God punished them with attacks from the Moabites, Philistines, and other enemies. When they repented, God gave them judges. These heroic figures gave them victories and security. But when Nahash of the Ammonites began to terrify Israel, the old strategy of calling out to God for help was no longer good enough for them. They wanted a king.

Samuel's point was obvious. For hundreds of years God had proven that He could save Israel from any foe, so long as they put aside their idols and turned to Him for help. But now they were placing their hope in a king. God gave Saul to the people to fulfill that role, and usher in the new kingdom of Israel.

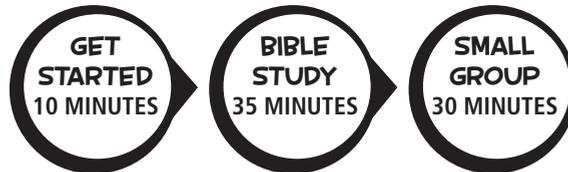
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 12:12-25

CONNECTION PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 9–10

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: 1 Samuel 12:20

TEXT TRUTH: God gives us mercy and grace despite our sin.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Pin the Crown on the King: *blindfold, "Paper Crown" (enhanced CD), figure cutout or poster, sticky tack*

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In: *Family Cards*
- Examine the Text: *Bibles, "Text Truth Strips" (Poster Pack)*
- Tell the Bible Story: *Bibles, "Text Truth Strips" and "Connection Statements" (Poster Pack)*

- Video: *Explore the Bible on Location video*
- Family Memory Verse: *"1 Samuel 12:20" (Poster Pack)*
- Prayer: *"The Gospel" (enhanced CD)*

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide: *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Move: *royal costume props: toilet paper, tape, streamers, colored paper, cotton balls, markers, stickers, rubber bands, old clothes, fabric scraps, yarn; lively music*

- Make: *black construction paper, white glue, salt, watercolor paints, paint brushes, chalk*
- Review: *"Review Questions" and "Numbered Cube Pattern" (enhanced CD), interlocking block pieces, whiteboard, markers, tape, heavyweight paper, dry erase markers*

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

SAUL, THE NEW KING

CONNECTION PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 9–10

Saul was an impressive man. In all of Israel, no one was more impressive than Saul. One day, the donkeys belonging to Saul's father wandered away. Saul and his helper traveled around searching for the animals. They could not find them. Saul was ready to give up, but the servant suggested they ask the man of God for help. Saul agreed.

The two men went into the city to find Samuel. Now, the day before, God had told Samuel that he would meet a man the next day that he should appoint as the new king.

When Samuel saw Saul, the Lord told Samuel, "This is the one I told you about. He will be the king."

Samuel invited Saul to eat with him. Samuel told Saul, "When you leave tomorrow, I will tell you everything that's in your heart. Also, your father's donkeys have been found."

The next day, Saul and his helper prepared to leave. The attendant went on, but Saul stayed with Samuel a little while.

Samuel took a container of oil and poured it on Saul's head. Then he told Saul that God had chosen him to be the king of Israel. Samuel also told Saul about several things that would happen that day to help Saul know that Samuel was telling the truth from God. Saul left and everything happened just as Samuel said.

Later, Samuel gathered all of the people together. He told the Israelites, "This is what God says, 'I have brought you from Egypt. I rescued you. But today you have rejected Me—the one who saves you from your troubles.'"

Samuel had the twelve tribes of Israel come forward. He selected the tribe of Benjamin. Then he selected the family of Saul. Finally, he selected Saul to be the next king. But Saul was missing. They couldn't find him.

God told Samuel that Saul was hiding in the supplies. When Saul came and stood among the people, they were happy. They said, "Long live the king!"

Samuel officially made Saul the king and sent the people home.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

The Book of 1 Samuel tells the story of three powerful leaders in Israel: Samuel, Saul, and David. Through each man and his leadership of Israel, the need for a perfect leader is evident. God's people hoped for a day when a Messiah—the one true King—would rescue them. When Jesus came, He fulfilled God's promise that a perfect Prophet, Priest, and King would rule over His people.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

Samuel reminded the people to worship God with their whole heart and to obey His commands.



KEY CONNECTIONS TO 1 SAMUEL

CORE PASSAGE:

1 Samuel 12:12-25

- God chose Saul to be the king of Israel.
- The people were happy that Saul was their king.
- Israel rejected God as their King.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

blindfold, “Paper Crown” (enhanced CD), figure cutout or poster, sticky tack

- Prior to class, cut out an outline of a person to hang on the wall or use a poster of a generic man to be the “king.” Print out “Paper Crown.” If possible, laminate the crown so that it will remove easily from the “king.”

OPTION:

Allow kids to close their eyes instead of using a blindfold.

PIN THE CROWN ON THE KING

- Blindfold the first player and give them the crown. Lead the player to another spot in the room, then have other kids call out directions to guide them to the “king.” Play until everyone has a turn.
- Ask: “Was it difficult to follow the directions with your eyes covered to find the ‘king’?” (*Allow for responses.*)
- Continue: “Sometimes that is how life can be, though. You feel like you are trying to get somewhere, but you cannot see the way and you have many different people telling you which way to go or what you should do. That can make it difficult to navigate! The same is true when we are trying to follow God. It can be difficult to shut out all of the other voices and distractions and focus on what He is saying.”
- Introduce: “Today’s Bible story is about Samuel appointing a king as the people requested. Samuel has to pay careful attention to God’s leading and direction to know who the man is that God has chosen to be king.”
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Say: “I need a few volunteers to describe their dream house. How many bedrooms, bathrooms, and what kind of special features would it have?” (*Allow for responses.*)
- Continue: “Those sound like they would be amazing homes! Many of them sounded like they would be fit for a king!”
- Pass out Family Cards.
- Connect: “Today’s object shows the location of the palace of the first king of Israel, Saul. Just like today, though, a fancy house does not mean that a person is happy. We will find out in the weeks ahead that Saul made some bad choices and had to suffer the consequences.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Ask: “How many of you like to get up in front of people and speak? How many of you are terrified of speaking to large crowds?”
- Continue: “It can be very frightening to stand before a large group of people and speak, and even more intimidating when your message is one that is rebuking or giving bad news. That is the kind of speech that Samuel made to the people of Israel in our text today.”
- Ask: “Can anyone recite last week’s Text Truth? (*Make sure that the strip is covered if it is displayed in the room. Answer: **God’s people rejected God because they wanted to be like other people instead of being like God.***) What did the people want so that they could be like other nations? An earthly king. Why did Samuel think this was a bad idea? Because God was their King and all they needed.”
- Share: “God gave the people what they wanted, a king. We will talk more about the choosing of that king in a moment. After the people got what they wanted, they realized they had done wrong. Let’s read what Samuel said and the people’s response.”
- Ask for a volunteer to be Samuel and read 1 Samuel 12:12-17. You then read verses 18-19 and ask another volunteer read the rest of Samuel’s speech in verses 20-25.
- Say: “I am sure Samuel did not like bringing this message and might have been afraid of what the people would say. The people did realize their sin and feared for the future consequences. Samuel then encouraged them to do right from now on and reassured them God would not abandon them. Today’s Text Truth reminds us of God’s protection and love for His people: **God gives us mercy and grace despite our sin.** That is truly good news, and I know that it was as much a comfort to the people then as it is to us now.”
- Ask: “How did Samuel end his speech? With a warning—that if the people did wickedly then they and their king would be destroyed.”
- Say: “Let’s read what happened as Samuel went in search for the one God chose as the king.”

TOOLS:

Bibles; Family Cards; “Text Truth Strips,” “Connection Statements” and “1 Samuel 12:20” (Poster Pack); “The Gospel” (enhanced CD); Explore the Bible on Location video

OPTION:

Instruct kids to make certain sounds when key words are said in the story: Saul (*cheers for a king*), King (*trumpet sound for announcing the entrance of a king*), Samuel (*whisper “hush” to signify listening since he is a prophet and speaks on behalf of God*).

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

- Tell the Bible Story in your own words. A script has been provided for your reference.
- Say: “God gave the people what they wanted, an earthly king. They also realized their mistake in asking for one.” Introduce the Connection Statement.
- Continue: “There are always consequences when we sin and disobey God, but our Text Truth reminds us that there is still good news.”
- Ask for a volunteer to say today’s Text Truth: **God gives us mercy and grace despite our sin.**
- Say: “That is something to get excited about—that we can receive grace and mercy even when we do wrong. Let’s cheer some more for that good news!”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 5” video. Ask: “What did Samuel encourage the people to do? How can you follow and obey God?”

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE

- Display “1 Samuel 12:20” poster.
- Say: “Let’s read our Family Memory Verse together.”
- Say: “Now use actions (*turn aside, point to heaven for Lord, spread arms out in front for serve, and draw a heart with their finger tips*), then repeat.”

PRAYER

- Share: “The story today talked about the sin of the Israelites. We know from Scripture that we all sin and that we need to confess those sins to God and repent or turn away from them. This is something that we need to do every day as a Christ follower so that we have good fellowship with Him. If you have never trusted Jesus and do not know Him as your Lord, we would love to share how you can have a relationship with him. If you have questions about what it means to know Jesus, while heads are bowed, slip your hand up and I or one of the teachers will know to spend some time talking to you in a bit.”
- Use the “The Gospel” as a guide when talking with each kid.
- Provide kids with someone to talk to if they have questions.
- Lead boys and girls to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and lead kids to find the pages, “Samuel’s Speech and Prayer.”
- Invite kids to complete “Bible Story Recall.” Allow kids to share their responses. Add any important details that are not mentioned.
- Ask a volunteer to read aloud the information about “Saul’s Fortress.”
- Select another volunteer to read about the “Magna Carta.” Invite kids to share what warnings Samuel gave about a king’s rights.
- Help everyone locate today’s “Word to Know” in the Bible. Allow kids to try pronouncing the word.
- Guide kids to read about the harvest calendar.
- Lead girls and boys to open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 12. Select 6 volunteers to each read 1 verse from the following passage:
1 Samuel 12:13-15,20-22.
- Ask kids to spread out and to quietly complete the activity, “Raindrops.”
- Review the Text Truth.

TECH CONNECT (OPT.)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled “Explorer Plus” on the app.
- You may also listen to the “Word to Know” pronunciation on the app. Encourage everyone to try to say the word together.

PRAYER TIME

- Ask for prayer requests and then ask for volunteers to pray for the requests.

EXPLORATION APPLICATION (15 MINUTES)

Choose one or more of the following activities to complete as time allows.



ROYAL DRESS-UP

Tools: royal costume props: toilet paper, tape, streamers, colored paper, cotton balls, markers, stickers, rubber bands, old clothes, fabric scraps, yarn; lively music

- Divide the group into teams and instruct them to select one person to “anoint” as king or queen. Explain that they must make their king or queen look as royal as possible using only the props provided. Play some lively music while they work. When the time is up, have them present their king or queen to the “people,” or if you have a large group, consider having a parade of royalty.
- Say: “The Israelites were happy that Saul was their king. Even though Samuel told them that they were wrong to ask for an earthly king, he also reminded them that God loved them and would not abandon them. Our Text Truth today says that **God gives us mercy and grace despite our sin**. Let’s thank God that He does the same for us.”



SALTY CROWN

Tools: black construction paper, white glue, salt, watercolor paints, paint brushes, chalk

- Start by having kids draw a crown on the construction paper with the white glue. (*Instruct them to keep it a thin outline. The activity does not work well if there are big chunks of glue.*) Sprinkle salt over all of the glue and then pour off excess salt. Start painting immediately; you do not have to wait for the glue to dry. When the paintbrush touches the salt, the color will spread quickly.
- Say: “Samuel anointed Saul, God’s chosen man for Israel’s first king. We will learn later that Saul made some bad choices while he was king. Write the Family Memory Verse under the crown with chalk as a reminder that even kings need to follow God. It will also be a reminder to you not to turn away from God. Use this craft, along with your Family Card, to talk about today’s lesson with your family. Discuss what your family can do to serve the Lord with all of their hearts.”
- Review the Text Truth: **God gives us mercy and grace despite our sin.**

REVIEW TOWER

Tools: “Review Questions” and “Numbered Cube Pattern” (enhanced CD), interlocking block pieces, whiteboard, markers, tape, heavyweight paper, dry erase markers



- Prior to class, print the “Numbered Cube Pattern” onto a piece of white heavyweight paper. Color each block of the numbered cube by the directions and assemble. Depending on the size of your group, either play as individuals or in pairs.
- Write the color key for the numbered cube on the whiteboard. Give each person (*or pair*) 10 interlocking block pieces to get their tower started. Ask the first person (*or pair*) a review question, and if they answer correctly, they can roll the numbered cube and do what the color says to do. Continue playing as long as time allows. The winner is the person (*or pair*) with the tallest tower.
- Say: “That was a fun way to review our lesson! Let’s all say our Text Truth again together: **God gives us mercy and grace despite our sin.**”



Session 6

SAUL REJECTED AS KING

FOR THE
LEADER

1 Samuel 15:7-15,22-23

The account of the reign of Saul jumps from one incident to another to illustrate the nature of Saul's reign. First, Saul was a great leader and military commander. He laid the foundation for the great empire of David and Solomon. Because of Saul's leadership, Israel was no longer the prey of the greedy peoples all around them. In that sense, the Israelites got exactly what they asked for, a king to go out and fight for them.

Second, we learn that the Philistines were Saul's most formidable enemy. Because his whole life was spent fighting them, he was constantly on the lookout for good soldiers. He wanted a core of competent, professional soldiers. This was the beginning of a standing army in Israel. Third, we learn the names of Saul's family.

Saul had many qualities that made for a great king. But he also had fatal flaws that would make him a tragic figure. Saul was, in some respects, a devout man, but he could also be headstrong, rash, and superstitious. This is illustrated by his foolish command that put the whole army under a vow not to eat anything while they were in the midst of a day of battle (*1 Sam. 14:24*). Saul's son, Jonathan, not knowing about the vow, ate some honey. Because of this, Saul nearly killed his son (*1 Sam. 14:42-45*). Also, Saul could be persuaded to disobey a direct command from God, as when he did not wait for Samuel but personally officiated at a sacrifice. Saul's disobedience would be his undoing.

Sin separates us from God and the good He has planned for us. Although Saul's reign began hopeful, his sinful choices brought ruin and rejection by God. God is just, and Saul's sin reaped consequences for Saul and his family.

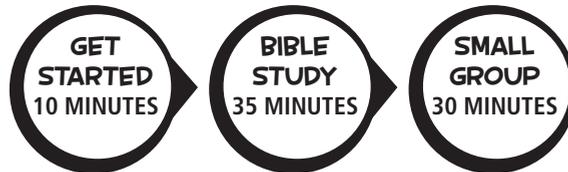
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 15:7-15,22-23

CONNECTION PASSAGES: 1 Samuel 13; 15

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: 1 Samuel 15:22

TEXT TRUTH: Sin separates us from God and the good He had planned for us.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Heart of the Problem: “Allergy Alert” (enhanced CD), large wrapped box, dirt, paper bag, individually wrapped chocolate candy, string

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In: camouflage clothing or canteen, Family Cards
- Examine the Text: Bibles
- Tell the Bible Story: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (Poster Pack)

- Video: *Explore the Bible on Location* video

- Family Memory Verse: “1 Samuel 15:22” (Poster Pack)

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens
- Move: flying disc; laundry baskets; 10-, 25-, 50-point signs; “Review Questions” (enhanced CD); tape

- Review: chopsticks, index cards, marker

- Drama: video recorders (optional), microphone prop, paper, pens, “The Gospel” (enhanced CD)

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

SAUL'S BAD DECISIONS

CONNECTION PASSAGES: 1 Samuel 13; 15

Saul was 30 years old when he became the first king of Israel and he was king for over 40 years. But Saul was not always a good king. Saul made some wrong choices.

One day the Israelites were in a war with the Philistines. Both of the armies had gathered to fight a battle. The Israelites saw the mighty Philistine army and they were afraid. For seven days, Saul waited for Samuel to arrive and offer the offerings to God before the battle. The soldiers became so afraid of the Philistines that they began to leave. Saul said, "Bring me the offerings." Then he offered the offerings to God.

Samuel arrived and asked Saul what he had done. Saul told Samuel that he had made the offering because the soldiers were running away.

Samuel explained, "You have not kept the command God gave you! Your family will not be kings after you. God has found a man that loves Him. That man will be the next ruler of the people because you disobeyed God."

Later, Samuel came to see Saul. Samuel had instructions from the Lord for Saul. Saul was to fight the Amalekites and defeat them. Everything the Amalekites had was to be destroyed because they had sinned against God.

Saul fought the Amalekites and he won! But he did not obey God. Saul did not destroy all of the Amalekites things. He kept some of the animals.

God was sad that He had made Saul the king because Saul did not love and obey God.

The next morning, Samuel went to meet Saul. When Saul saw Samuel he said, "I have obeyed God's instructions."

Samuel asked, "What is the sound of sheep and cattle that I hear?"

Saul said that they kept the animals so they could sacrifice them to God.

"Stop!" Samuel said. "Why didn't you obey the Lord? Obeying God is better than offering Him a sacrifice. Because you have rejected the word of God, He has rejected you as king."

Saul admitted that he had sinned, and Samuel left. Samuel did not visit Saul again. He was sad that Saul had disobeyed God. God was sad that He had made Saul king because Saul did not love and obey God.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

The Book of 1 Samuel tells the story of three powerful leaders in Israel: Samuel, Saul, and David. Through each man and his leadership of Israel, the need for a perfect leader is evident. God's people hoped for a day when a Messiah—the one true King—would rescue them. When Jesus came, He fulfilled God's promise that a perfect Prophet, Priest, and King would rule over His people.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

Saul's choices to sin had serious consequences for Saul and his family.



KEY CONNECTIONS TO 1 SAMUEL

CORE PASSAGE:

1 Samuel 15:7-15,22-23

- Saul did not obey God.
- There is not a good excuse for disobeying God.
- Samuel was sad that Saul did not obey God.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

“Allergy Alert” (enhanced CD), large wrapped box, dirt, paper bag, individually wrapped chocolate candy, string

- Prior to class, get a large box, fill it with dirt and wrap it beautifully and elaborately. Then take a paper bag and crumple it so that it is wrinkled looking, put chocolate inside the bag (consider putting enough pieces for each kid to have a piece), and tie with a simple string.

HEART OF THE PROBLEM

- Place both packages where the kids have a good view of them.
- Say: “I have two gifts here in front of me. They are very different in appearance. Think about which one you would choose if you could pick one to take with you. Raise your hand if you would pick this package (*point to the pretty one*). Now raise your hand if you would pick this package (*point to the pitiful looking package*).”
- Ask for a volunteer to come and open the pretty package. Hold it up once it is open to show what it contains. Then have another kid open the other package and show what it contains. Have kids raise their hands again to show which package they would choose now.
- Say: “It is easy to judge something or someone just by how they look on the outside, but it is not always accurate. We learned last week that Saul was chosen to be Israel’s king and that he was a very impressive man. In fact, the Bible said he was very rich and there was no one better looking than him! After Saul became king though, he made some very bad choices and did not obey God. If we looked at Saul from the outside we would choose him as a leader; but if we saw his heart and how he disobeyed God, we would think again. Today we are going to talk about Saul’s bad decisions that he made as king.”
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Greet kids and give them high fives as they are seated.
- Show a piece of camouflage clothing and/or a canteen.
- Ask: “What kind of clothing is this? Who wears this? *(Allow for responses.)* How do you think soldiers looked during Saul’s reign as king?” *(Allow for more answers.)*
- Distribute Family Cards.
- Say: “This is an example of what a Judean soldier would have looked like during the time period we are studying. As king, Saul was the leader of the Israelite army. He led them into battle against other nations and he determined their strategies and timing. He made all of the decisions. That is a lot of responsibility.”
- Ask: “Do you think it would be hard to make all of those decisions? *(Allow for answers.)* Who would you rely on to help you make those big decisions?” *(If no one says God, try to steer the conversation in that direction.)*

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Ask for a volunteer to read 1 Samuel 15:22.
- Ask: “What were the burnt offerings and sacrifices for that Samuel mentioned? They were offerings to God to pay for the sins the people committed. What did Samuel say God preferred more than sacrifices and offerings? Obedience.”
- Say: “Imagine that your teacher told you to clean up the art supplies in the classroom and instead you painted a picture and made a bigger mess to clean. Then your teacher comes back and asks what happened and why you did not obey. You answer by saying, ‘But look at this beautiful painting that I took all of this time to make for you?’ What do you think her response would be to that? ‘That is a lovely painting, but it was more important that you obeyed what I said than to paint me a picture.’”
- Continue: “That is exactly what God is saying through Samuel to Saul—‘I am more pleased with your obedience than you giving me things.’”
- Say: “That is actually the end of the story. Let’s dig into our Bibles today and find out the rest.”

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

- Tell the Bible Story in your own words. A script has been provided for your reference.
- Ask: “How did Saul disobey God? He gave the offering to God instead of waiting on Samuel and he took animals from the Amalekites instead of destroying everything as God commanded.”
- Introduce the Connection Statement.
- Say: “These things, in and of themselves, were not bad actions. Giving an offering and keeping animals did not seem like bad choices except that God had given clear instructions in both situations and Saul ignored

TOOLS:

Bibles; camouflage clothing and/or canteen; Family Cards; “Text Truth Strips,” “Connection Statements,” and “1 Samuel 15:22” (Poster Pack); Explore the Bible on Location video

them. That is sin. It is easy to talk ourselves into disobeying when the actions do not seem bad, just like the example of painting a picture for your teacher when she told you to clean up. Painting a picture for your teacher is a very nice thing to do; but when you know that you are supposed to be cleaning up and you paint instead, then it becomes disobedience. There is not a good excuse for disobedience, especially when you disobey God's direct instructions."

- Ask: "How do you think it makes your parents or teachers feel when you disobey? Sad. Our lesson said that God was sad and Samuel was sad that Saul disobeyed. It makes God sad when we disobey because the sin of disobedience causes a change in our relationship with him."
- Introduce: "Our Text Truth says: **Sin separates us from God and the good He had planned for us.** That separation caused by sin changes the way we interact with God until we confess it and repent or turn away from being disobedient. Let's say our Text Truth again."
- Continue: "Did you know that the best way to show someone you love them is to obey? This is true with your parents, teachers, and God. They can see your love in your obedient actions."

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the "Session 6" video. Ask: "Why was Saul rejected as king? Is obeying God most of the way, the same as obeying God fully? Which one is actual obedience?"

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE

- Display "1 Samuel 15:22."
- Say: "Let's say our Family Memory Verse together. (*Repeat a few times.*)"
- Cover the verse and ask for different groups to stand and say the verse together (*everyone wearing red, girls, boys, everyone wearing sandals, and so on.*)"
- Remind the kids to talk about their Family Memory Verse with their family.

PRAYER

- Lead kids to get into a circle and hold hands for prayer.
- Say: "Let's pray today that God will help us to obey and not make choices that cause us to sin."
- Ask a leader to pray for the class.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and help boys and girls locate today's pages, "Saul Rejected as King."
- Guide kids to open their Bibles to 1 Samuel and complete "Saul and Samuel." After a couple of minutes, invite kids to share what they have learned about Samuel and Saul.
- Ask kids to respond to each situation in "Loyal to God." Allow kids to discuss their thoughts about each situation.
- Select a kid to read aloud the information about the Judean soldier. Invite another kid to read about the pass at Micmash.
- Invite kids to think about today's Bible story by responding to "Apply It."

TECH CONNECT (OPT.)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.
- You may also listen to the "Word to Know" pronunciation on the app. Encourage everyone to try to say the word together.

PRAYER TIME

- Ask kids to share times they are tempted to sin and disobey. Pray specifically for them in these areas.

EXPLORATION APPLICATION (15 MINUTES)

Choose one or more of the following activities to complete as time allows.



FLYING DISC REVIEW



Tools: flying disc; laundry baskets; 10-, 25-, 50-point signs; "Review Questions" (enhanced CD); tape

- ☐ Prior to class, make and attach 10-, 25-, and 50-point signs to 3 laundry baskets. Place the laundry baskets in a vertical line with some space in between.
- Depending on your group size, either play as individuals or divide up into teams. Ask the first player a review question, and if they answer correctly, give them a chance to throw the flying disc to the baskets. Record the points they received for their score or team score. Play until every player gets at least one opportunity to play. The player or team with the most points wins. *(Consider using review questions from previous lessons if you have a large group.)*
- Say: "It takes some skill to get that flying disc into the basket you want! I hope that you are able to remember our Bible story, Text Truth, and Family Memory Verse after that fun review game. Who can say our Text Truth? **Sin separates us from God and the good He had planned for us.**"

CHOPSTICKS CHALLENGE

Tools: chopsticks, index cards, marker

- ☐ Gather enough chopsticks to have one pair for each team (the amount of teams depends on the size of your group). Write each word from the Family Memory Verse on a separate index card. Create a set of index cards for each team.
- Place the sets of index cards on chairs or a table at one end of the room. Line the teams up at the other end of the room. Explain that when you give the signal, the first player from each team will run to their set of cards and pick up one card with the chopsticks and run back to their team, holding the card in the chopstick. The first team to get all of the cards back to their side and arrange the Family Memory Verse in the correct order is the winner.
- Say: "Our Family Memory Verse today reminds us that the best way to show God that we love Him is to obey Him. Let's all say it together."
- Ask: "What are some ways that we can obey God everyday?" *(Allow for responses and offer suggestions.)*
- Review the Text Truth: **Sin separates us from God and the good He had planned for us.**

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT



Tools: video recorders (opt.), microphone prop, paper, pens, "The Gospel" (enhanced CD)

- Say: "Let's read our Text Truth again: **Sin separates us from God and the good He had planned for us.** This is such an important message that everyone needs to hear."
- Continue: "Hollywood creates Public Service Announcements (PSA) with celebrities when they feel there is an important message that everyone needs to hear. They have them for many different topics: bullying, drinking and driving, smoking, eating right, and many more. Those are all important messages, but as Christians we have the most important message that can be the difference in eternal life or death for someone! We are going to create PSA's for our Text Truth and present them to the group."
- Divide the group into teams to create their PSA's. Give each team paper and pens to jot down notes and a script. Also provide them with a pretend microphone. Once the teams are done preparing their PSA, have them perform them for the group.
- Option: Record the PSA's and watch as a class.



Session 7



DAVID WAS ANOINTED

1 Samuel 16:4-13

We first met Saul as a young man who was sent out by his father to look for lost donkeys. The ceremony in which Saul was publicly hailed as king seems to have taken place not too long after that. At that time, Saul was still fairly young. However, one of his first acts as king was to lead Israel in a war against Nahash the Ammonite, and that was not the work of a boy. We can guess that Saul was about 25 or 30 at his coronation.

First Samuel 14 takes place at a time much later than Saul's coronation. In chapter 14, his son, Jonathan, is old enough to serve in the army and to attack a Philistine garrison single-handedly. Assuming that Jonathan was at most a small boy when Saul was inaugurated, it is possible that at least 15 years elapsed between chapter 10 and chapter 14. By the time David is anointed in chapter 16, more time had passed.

This is important because Scripture shows that a major change had come about in Saul's life in the intervening years. When first told that he would become king, Saul protested that he was unworthy (*1 Sam. 9:21*). When Saul's supporters wanted to kill some men who had opposed his choice as king, he spared his opponents. But years of ruling had turned Saul into a different man. He became so entrenched in his position that Samuel feared that Saul would kill him in order to hold on to his throne.

This story begins in a politically tense situation. The once humble Saul was now determined to hold on to power, and he knew that Samuel no longer supported him. God had commissioned Samuel to anoint a new king. Samuel, being as fallible as any other man, needed God's guidance in making his choice of whom to anoint. God knows our hearts and He wants us to seek Him. When Saul was rejected, Samuel went in search of a new king—a king after God's heart.

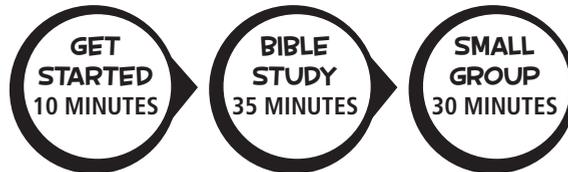
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 16:4-13

CONNECTION PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: 1 Samuel 16:7

TEXT TRUTH: God knows our hearts and He wants us to seek Him.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Now Hiring:** *scrap paper, construction paper, markers, pencils*

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In:** *Family Cards*
- Examine the Text:** *Bibles, "Text Truth Strips" (Poster Pack)*
- Tell the Bible Story:** *Bibles, "Text Truth Strips" and "Connection Statements" (Poster Pack)*

- Video:** *Explore the Bible on Location video*

- Family Memory Verse:** *"1 Samuel 16:7" (Poster Pack), 2 mirrors, dry erase marker*

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide:** *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens, "Samuel, Saul, David" (Poster Pack)*

- Move:** *Bible Story scripts, bag*

- Explore:** *various objects, paper lunch bags, stapler, timer*

- Drama:** *"Interview Question Sheet" (enhanced CD), pens*

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SAMUEL ANOINTED DAVID

CONNECTION PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

One day, God told Samuel to go see Jesse from the town of Bethlehem. Jesse had many sons and one of them would be the next king of Israel.

Samuel traveled to Bethlehem and met Jesse and his sons. The oldest son was named Eliab. Samuel thought, “He must be the one God has chosen to be king.”

The Lord told Samuel, “Do not look at his outward appearance. He is not the one I have chosen. People can only see what is visible, but the Lord sees the heart of everyone.”

So Jesse called his next son, Abinadab, but God had not chosen Abinadab. Then Jesse introduced Shammah to Samuel, but God had not chosen Shammah either. Jesse called seven of his sons to meet Samuel, but none of the sons was the one that God had chosen.

“Are these all of your sons?” Samuel asked Jesse.

Jesse answered, “My youngest son is watching the sheep.”

Samuel told Jesse to send someone to get his son. David appeared and God told Samuel that David was the one. Samuel anointed David. God’s Spirit was with David from that day on. David would be the next king of Israel.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

The Book of 1 Samuel tells the story of three powerful leaders in Israel: Samuel, Saul, and David. Through each man and his leadership of Israel, the need for a perfect leader is evident. God’s people hoped for a day when a Messiah—the one true King—would rescue them. When Jesus came, He fulfilled God’s promise that a perfect Prophet, Priest, and King would rule over His people.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

God chose David to be the next king because David loved God.

KEY CONNECTIONS TO 1 SAMUEL

CORE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 16:4-13

- God sees our hearts.
- David loved God.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

scrap paper, construction paper, markers, pencils

OPTION:

If you have a large group, consider dividing up into teams and using poster board.

NOW HIRING

- Ask: “Can anyone tell me how the story ended last week? Samuel told Saul that God had rejected him as king.”
- Say: “Today we will be talking about the new king that God chose. Let’s imagine that you were in charge of selecting the next king and placed an ad in the *Israelite Gazette*. The title would be: ‘Now Hiring: King of Israel!!!’ Think about what qualities and abilities a king should have and list those on a scrap piece of paper (*age, appearance, behavior, talents*). Then take a piece of construction paper and some markers and write your advertisement.”
- Lead kids to share their advertisements with the class.
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Ask: “Can anyone tell me how the story ended last week? Samuel told Saul that God had rejected him as king.”
- Say: “This week we will be talking about the new king that God chose for His people. Our process of electing* a new leader today is very different from Samuel’s day. Instead of voting and having an inauguration where the leader is sworn into office, Samuel communicated God’s choice to the people by anointing him.”
- Pass out the Family Cards.
- Continue: “This is the type of horn that David would have used to anoint Saul and David with oil. Let’s find out more about what led up to this special time for David and the people.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Ask for a volunteer to read 1 Samuel 16:4-9 or divide it up between several kids.
- Ask: “What has happened in this story so far? Samuel planned to anoint the next king and was looking at Jesse’s sons. None of them were the one God had chosen.”
- Say: “Samuel thought the first one of Jesse’s sons that he encountered, Eliab, was surely the one that God had chosen for the next king. God told Samuel to not pay attention to stature or appearance. He does not look at the outward appearance, but instead He looks at the heart. Our Text Truth today says **God knows our hearts and He wants us to seek Him**. God was looking for someone that already had a heart seeking Him. Say that Text Truth with me.”

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

- Say: “Let’s pick up where we left off in the story.”
- Tell the Bible Story in your own words. A script has been provided for your reference. Consider acting it out as you tell it—emphasizing each time Samuel responded “not the one” to Jesse’s sons.
- Ask: “What was David doing while Samuel was considering his brothers as the next king?” (*Tending the sheep.*)
- Say: “No one probably thought that their next king would be found taking care of sheep. Although David was described as handsome, he was not as impressive as Jesse’s other sons.”
- Ask: “What did we just read that God looks at in us? (*Our hearts.*) God saw David’s heart and knew that he was the one to lead His people.” Introduce the Connection Statement.
- Continue: “Let’s say our Text Truth again: **God knows our hearts and He wants us to seek Him**. You may feel like everyone else judges you for how you look, where you live, how well you play a sport, or the grades you get. Yet the most important person of all, the God who created

TOOLS:

Bibles; Family Cards; “Text Truth Strips,” “Connection Statements,” and “1 Samuel 16:7” (Poster Pack); Explore the Bible on Location video; 2 mirrors; dry erase marker

- Prior to class, gather two hand mirrors. Leave one mirror as it is. Use a dry erase marker to write on the other mirror. Divide it into sections with squiggly lines and write the following in the sections: *Love for my family, Jealousy, Love for God, Anger, Love for the Hurting, Selfish, Desire to Know God More.*

*Tip: Adjust this dialogue to reflect your country’s political system.

everything, looks past all of that and looks at the inside. He wants your heart to seek Him.”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 7” video. Inquire: “Name one thing you learned about sheep or being a shepherd. Was being a shepherd a glamorous or cool job? What skills do you think David learned that would help him as king? Why did God choose David?”

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE

- Display “1 Samuel 16:7” poster.
- Read the Family Memory Verse together.
- Say: “It can be hard for us to understand how God can ignore what others focus on so I have something to help us understand.”
- Hold up the plain mirror and ask what it is. Pass it around and instruct kids to look at themselves.
- Say: “This is what everyone else sees and judges.”
- Hold up special mirror. Pass it around and instruct kids to look at themselves.
- Say: “This is what God sees when He looks at you. He sees what is in your heart. Some of those things He sees are great and some are there because of sin. The great news is that God does not judge us based on our appearances or abilities. He looks at our heart and if we have a relationship with Him, then this is what He sees ... ”
- Take the special mirror and write *Jesus* across it.
- Continue: “When we have made a commitment to God by confessing our sins and repenting or turning away from them, then all God sees when He looks at us is His Son. Let’s say our Family Memory Verse together again.”

PRAYER

- Say: “Today’s lesson was about God choosing the next king for Israel, but we also talked about what God sees when He looks at us. What does He see when He looks at you. Does He see His Son? If you have any questions about this, please come and talk to me or another teacher today. We would LOVE to tell you more about how much God loves you!”
- Lead in prayer.
- Transition to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and help girls and boys locate the pages, “David Was Anointed.”
- Invite kids to look over the animals found in Bible lands. Ask kids to identify their favorite animal or to identify which animal they would like to own.
- Select a volunteer to read aloud the information about the role of a shepherd.
- Guide kids to open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 16 and complete the activity, “Find the Answers.” Review their responses and help them correct any incorrect answers.
- Invite kids to locate the “Word to Know” in their open Bibles.
- Choose a strong reader to share the information about today’s object, the horn of oil.
- Lead boys and girls to complete “Seeking God.”
- Display “Samuel, Saul, David.” Invite kids to read aloud facts about each of the men. Share that you will be learning more about Saul and David in the coming weeks.

TECH CONNECT (OPT.)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled “Explorer Plus” on the app.
- You may also listen to the “Word to Know” pronunciation on the app. Encourage everyone to try to say the word together.

PRAYER TIME

- Ask kids to think of friends that do not know Jesus. Lead in a time of silent prayer, encouraging them to pray for their friends.

TOOLS:

Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens, “Samuel, Saul, David” (Poster Pack)

EXPLORATION APPLICATION (15 MINUTES)

Choose one or more of the following activities to complete as time allows.



INSIDE OUT

Tools: various objects, paper lunch bags, stapler, timer

- Prior to class, gather several lunch-sized paper bags and objects to put inside each one. Examples of objects could include: keys, several straws, a plastic necklace, a toy, a calculator and other objects that could be easily felt from the outside of the bag but not easily identified. Place one object in each bag and staple the top. Place the bags in a row on a table. Cover the Family Memory Verse poster if it is displayed.

- Divide the class into teams and give each team a bag (or more if you have extras). Set a timer and instruct them to pass the bag around and feel it from the outside. When the timer goes off, each team is to place the bag back on the table. Take turns letting each team guess what was in their bag and opening it to reveal the truth.
- Say: "It was difficult to know what was in the bag without being able to reach inside and actually see the object. Yet we do the same to other people every day. We look at others and judge them based on what we see when what really makes a person is what is on the inside."
- Ask: "What was our Family Memory Verse today?" (Allow for answers and then ask everyone to repeat it together.)
- Continue: "This verse and our Text Truth show that God takes the time to look beyond what is on the outside and looks at what is most important, our heart. Let's say our Text Truth together."



FREEZE REVIEW

Tools: Bible Story scripts, bag

- Prior to class, print out or copy the Bible Story scripts from the last seven weeks. Cut the scripts into separate "scenes." Place the scenes in a bag to use in the review game.
- Say: "We are halfway through our study of the Book of 1 Samuel. This is a great time to think about all we have learned so far. We have covered some exciting stories and powerful truths. Let's play a game to help us remember the material from the last few weeks. In this bag I have scenes from the Bible stories that we heard the last seven weeks. You will draw a scene and when I say 'Go' you will begin acting it out. When I say 'Freeze' you must stop and then the rest of the group will try and guess the part of the story you are acting out. If no one can guess it correctly, I will say 'Go' and 'Freeze' again. Let's get started!"
- Continue playing until all of the scenes have been acted out and guessed. When you get to today's Bible story, pause and review the Text Truth: **God knows our hearts and He wants us to seek Him.**

INTERVIEWING YOU!

Tools: "Interview Question Sheet" (enhanced CD), pens

- Make copies of the "Interview Question Sheet."
- Say: "Let's say today's Family Memory Verse together. (Cover the poster prior to this activity.) If God thinks that what is on the inside is more important than the outside, then we should start looking at people differently. One way to do this is to truly get to know someone. Today we are going to pair up and interview each other. This will help us to get to know each other a little better!"
- Give out the "Interview Question Sheet" and pens. Pair students up and split up those that are already close friends.
- After the interviews are complete, let each student report her findings to the class.
- Review the Text Truth: **God knows our hearts and He wants us to seek Him.**





Session

8



DAVID FOUGHT GOLIATH

1 Samuel 17:32-37,42-50

In 1 Samuel 17, Saul had waged wars against Israel's enemies for many years, and his army had become quite formidable. Prior to this time, the Philistines had enjoyed military dominance in the region, but now the Israelites were an equal adversary. The two armies stood opposite each other in a stalemate, each looking for a weakness and neither willing to engage prematurely.

Because the two armies were in a standoff, the Philistines hoped to gain the advantage through single combat by a champion. In ancient literature, heroes such as Achilles, Hector, Aeneas, Ajax, and Odysseus did not march in ranks of battle lines, but engaged in one-on-one combat. The loss of a champion was devastating to his side. These literary tales likely reflect the reality of warfare waged by people around the Aegean Sea area in about 1000 B.C. The Philistines seem to have come from this area, and their military ethos was similar to what we see in these kings and warriors.

The Philistines had one particular warrior, Goliath, whom they considered unbeatable. To the average Israelite he would have seemed truly enormous, since Bible times people were generally shorter than people today. No single man in the Israelite army could match Goliath in height or strength, and thus the challenge he issued in Socoh went unanswered for days. Socoh was only about 12 miles west of Bethlehem, and it would have taken David at least a full day to get from his home to the Israelite camp.

We do not know how old David was at this time. Since he had already fought against lions and bears, he was almost certainly not a small boy. The standard age at which an Israelite man was eligible for military service was 20. David was near the upper limit of being considered a "youth" and not yet of military age. Nonetheless, God gave His people victory, and He used the young man to slay the giant and procure victory for Israel.

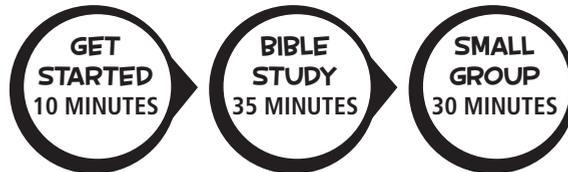
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 17:32-37,42-50

CONNECTION PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 17:1-50

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: 1 Samuel 17:46

TEXT TRUTH: Despite how it looks, God will provide His people with victory when they rely on Him.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Sword of the Lord:** 7 coffee cans, plastic knives (66), permanent marker, “Bible Books by Genre” (Poster Pack)

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In:** Family Cards
- Examine the Text:** Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack)
- Tell the Bible Story:** Bibles, Bible story props, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (Poster Pack)

- Video:** *Explore the Bible on Location* video

- Family Memory Verse:** “1 Samuel 17:46” (Poster Pack)

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide:** Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens, “How Heavy is That” (Poster Pack)
- Move:** paper plate, hook and loop fasteners, table tennis ball, masking tape

- Make:** 11-by-17-inch cardboard pieces, various colors of construction paper, hole punch, glue, ribbon, stickers, glitter, sequins, markers, patterned tape
- Review:** whiteboard and markers, “Review Questions” (enhanced CD), coin

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

GOLIATH WAS DEFEATED

CONNECTION PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 17:1-50

The Philistine army and the Israelite army gathered to fight. The Philistines stood on one hill and the Israelites stood on another. A deep valley was between the two hills.

A man named Goliath was on the Philistine's side. He was nine feet, nine inches tall! He wore a huge set of armor with a sword and a spear. The tip of his spear weighed 15 pounds! Goliath shouted at the Israelites. "Why don't you line up to fight? Send one of your men to fight me. Whoever wins will win the battle."

King Saul and his entire army were terrified of Goliath. Every morning and every night for 40 days, Goliath would shout for an Israelite to come fight him.

David had three brothers who were soldiers for Israel. One day, David's father Jesse sent David to take some food to his brothers and check on them.

David traveled to the camp of the Israelite army. As David arrived, Goliath came out and began to shout at the Israelites. David heard Goliath. Once again, all of the Israelite soldiers refused to fight Goliath because they were terrified.

David asked about the reward that was offered for the Israelite who defeated Goliath. Then he told King Saul, "I will go fight!"

Saul was worried that David was too young. David wasn't a warrior like Goliath. David told Saul that God had helped him protect his sheep from lions and bears. Goliath did not love God. David said that God would protect him from Goliath. Saul wanted David to wear his armor, but it was too big for David. David took his staff, five smooth stones from the wadi, and his slingshot.

Goliath saw David approaching. He taunted David and insulted him.

David said, "You have a dagger, a spear, and a sword. But I come against you in the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel's armies. You have insulted Him. Today, the Lord will hand you to me. Then everyone in the world will know that Israel has a God. The battle is God's and He will give you to us."

Goliath started to move to attack David. David ran toward Goliath. He took a stone from his bag, put it in the slingshot, and slung it. The stone hit Goliath in the forehead and Goliath fell down. David defeated Goliath!

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

The Book of 1 Samuel tells the story of three powerful leaders in Israel: Samuel, Saul, and David. Through each man and his leadership of Israel, the need for a perfect leader is evident. God's people hoped for a day when a Messiah—the one true King—would rescue them. When Jesus came, He fulfilled God's promise that a perfect Prophet, Priest, and King would rule over His people.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

God used David to give His people a victory.



KEY CONNECTIONS TO 1 SAMUEL

CORE PASSAGE:

1 Samuel 17:32-37,42-50

- God gave David the victory.
- God will defend His name.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

7 coffee cans, plastic knives (66), permanent marker, “Bible Books by Genre” (Poster Pack)

- Prior to class, use a permanent marker to write the names of the books of the Bible on plastic knives. Mix up the order of the knives and place them in a coffee can labeled Sword of the Spirit. Have six coffee cans lined up on a table with the following genre names written on them: *Law, History, Wisdom and Poetry, Prophecy, Gospels,* and *Letters*. Cover or remove the “Bible Books” poster if you have one displayed.

OPTION:

If your kids are still learning the genres, consider displaying the “Bible Books by Genre” poster during the entire activity.

SWORD OF THE LORD

- Say: “Today we are going to review the different kinds of books that make up the Bible. In Ephesians 6, the Bible is referred to as the sword of the Spirit. For the Bible to be our sword of the Spirit, we must know it. One way we can get to know it better is to learn how it is arranged. Today you are going to draw a ‘sword’ and try to place it in the can that is labeled with the right genre or type of book.”
- Have kids line up and take turns drawing a sword and walking to the table to put it in the correct container. After all of the swords have been placed in containers, check them and remove any that are incorrect. Let kids take another turn putting those in the right container. Allow kids to check their work using the “Bible Books by Genre” poster.
- After the game is over, form two groups and let them work on putting the swords in the correct order, one group organizing the Old Testament and one group organizing the New Testament.
- Transition to Bible Study.

Genres

Law: OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy

History: OLD TESTAMENT

Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther

History: NEW TESTAMENT

Acts

Wisdom and Poetry: OLD TESTAMENT

Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs

Prophecy: OLD TESTAMENT

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

Prophecy: NEW TESTAMENT

Revelation

Gospels: NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

Letters: NEW TESTAMENT

Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Greet kids warmly and excitedly as they take their seats.
- Ask: “Was that a good game to refresh your memory about the books of the Bible?” (*Allow for answers.*)
- Say: “There are many things and people in life that will try and tempt you to make bad decisions, to sin. The Bible or the sword of the Spirit is our defense against those temptations. Jesus used Scripture every time He was tempted by Satan. We need to be so familiar with the Bible that it is our first thought when we face temptation.”
- Continue: “In our story today, David is confronted by someone who had a real sword, threatening to kill him. But David knew that His God could conquer any sword, spear, or dagger and the giant, Goliath.”
- Pass out Family Cards.
- Say: “When David faced Goliath, he only had a slingshot like this and 5 stones! That does not seem like much of a weapon when facing a 9-foot giant covered in armor. David knew that His God is stronger and bigger than any giant or weapon. The same is true for us—our God is stronger and bigger than any temptation or fear that we face.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Ask for a volunteer to read 1 Samuel 17:32-33 and 17:42.
- Ask: “What did Saul and Goliath both say about David?” (*That he was too young.*)
- Say: “The difference in Saul and Goliath’s response about David was their perspective. Saul did not think David should be the one to fight Goliath, because he would be killed and they would lose their battle with the Philistines. Goliath saw David and looked down on him because of his age and size, but rejoiced in that because he thought it would be easy to win the battle.”
- Connect: “Turn in your Bible to 1 Timothy 4:12 and read with me.”
- Ask: “What did Paul tell Timothy about being young? Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young.”
- Say: “Sometimes it may seem that others do not think you are able to do anything for God’s kingdom because of your age. Either they have the perspective of Saul and think you are not up to the task, or they have the perspective of Goliath and rejoice, thinking that your age will keep you from succeeding. God, speaking through Paul, said that this is not true—that you should not let others look down on you, but instead set an example.”
- Ask: “What ways did Paul say you should set an example? Speech, conduct (*actions*), love, faith and purity.”
- Say: “It may look impossible, but there are ways that you can impact God’s kingdom right now, starting with the ways Paul listed.”
- Introduce: “Our Text Truth today says: **Despite how it looks, God will**

TOOLS:

Bibles; Family Cards; “Text Truth Strips,” “Connection Statements,” and “1 Samuel 17:46” (Poster Pack); Bible story props; Explore the Bible on Location video

provide His people with victory when they rely on Him. Let's say that together."

OPTION:

To illustrate Goliath's size, consider using tape to mark off 9'9" on the floor. Have kids lay down and mark their height compared to Goliath's.

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

- Tell the story in your own words. A script has been provided for your reference.
- This is an excellent story to act out. Consider forming two groups, one group being the Philistines and one the Israelites. Select kids to play the roles of Goliath, Saul, David, and David's brothers. If you have props available, use a set of armor, sling, basket with bread and fruit in it (*lunch for David's brothers*), and stool (*for Goliath to sit on*). Do not include the stones. Narrate the story as the kids act it out.
- Ask: "Whom did God use to bring victory for His name?" (*David*)
- Relate: "I imagine that the Israelites, especially Saul and David's family, were very nervous as young David set out to battle Goliath. It probably seemed like a huge mistake and impossible task." Introduce the Connection Statement.
- Continue: "We know that nothing is impossible with God and that He does not make mistakes. David knew this too."
- Say: "Let's say our Text Truth again: **Despite how it looks, God will provide His people with victory when they rely on Him.**"

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the "Session 8" video. Ask: "What did David have that Goliath didn't have? How did God help David?"

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE

- Display "1 Samuel 17:46."
- Say: "We said in the Bible story today that God will defend His name. He does this in various ways and through different people. In today's story, God defended His name through David. Can you think of other Old Testament stories when God defends His name, and who He used to do it?" (*Examples: Noah, Moses, Joshua, Shadrach/Meshach/Abednego, Daniel, Esther, Job, and Nehemiah*)
- Say the verse together again.

PRAYER

- Ask a leader to pray for kids to have the desire to know God's Word and to rely on Him.
- Transition to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and help kids locate the pages for today, “David Fought Goliath.”
- Ask a volunteer to read the information about the slingshot and stones.
- Lead kids to look at the location of the Bible story in the “Valley of Elah” picture.
- Invite kids to check out the comparisons to Goliath’s height. Select a kid to read about the ostrakon.
- Display the “How Heavy is That” poster. Ask a volunteer to read aloud 1 Samuel 17:4-7. Invite kids to check out the comparisons of objects they have seen and maybe held to the weight of Goliath’s spear tip and armor.
- Guide kids to complete the activity, “Who Said It?” (*Answers: Eliab, David, Saul, David, Saul, Goliath, Jesse, David*)
- Help kids locate today’s “Word to Know” in their own Bibles. Then direct them to keep their Bibles open so they can complete the activity “Words for Victory.” If they struggle, suggest various problems kids their age face that the Scriptures could help them with.

TECH CONNECT (OPT.)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled “Explorer Plus” on the app.
- You may also listen to the “Word to Know” pronunciation on the app. Encourage everyone to try to say the word together.

PRAYER TIME

- Ask kids to pray sentence prayers praising God’s name. Leaders may begin the prayer to give an example.

TOOLS:

Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens, “How Heavy is That” (Poster Pack)

EXPLORATION APPLICATION (15 MINUTES)

Choose one or more of the following activities to complete as time allows.

THROWING STONES



Tools: paper plate, hook and loop fasteners, table tennis ball, masking tape

- Put a strip of hook and loop tape at the top of a paper plate and mount it with masking tape on the wall 9' 9" high or to the top of your ceiling if it is not that tall. Put the other side of the hook and loop fastener on a table tennis ball. Use tape to mark a line on the floor for kids to stand on when throwing the table tennis ball.
- Number kids into teams (*the number of teams depends on the size of your group*). Mix up the teams and form a single line.
- Say: "Today we are going to see what it felt like to fight a giant! The plate represents Goliath and the table tennis ball represents the stone in David's sling. Everyone is going to line up behind the mark on the floor and, when it is your turn, say 'The battle is the Lord's' and throw the ball at 'Goliath.' Each person who gets the ball to 'strike Goliath' gets 50 points. The team with the most points at the end is the winner."
- Review the Text Truth as kids play: **Despite how it looks, God will provide His people with victory when they rely on Him.**

BANNER PRAISE



Tools: 11-by-17-inch cardboard pieces, various colors of construction paper, hole punch, glue, ribbon, stickers, glitter, sequins, markers, patterned tape

- Gather supplies and make a sample banner.
- Use construction paper to cover the front of a cardboard piece. (*Kids can cut out paper to cover different sections or use the same color to cover it all.*) Guide kids to write either *The Battle is the Lord's*, the Family Memory Verse, the Text Truth, *1 Timothy 4:12*, or *Yahweh*. Decorate and use the hole punch to put holes in the two top corners of the cardboard. Thread ribbon through holes and tie for hanging. Relate how banners can be used to prompt us to worship God. Display the banners in the room for the rest of the study in 1 Samuel.
- Say: "We can worship God anywhere we are and at any time. These banners help to remind us of different ways we can worship and praise God. Let's say our Text Truth together and remember that when we worship God, we will rely on Him to provide for us."
- Review the Text Truth: **Despite how it looks, God will provide His people with victory when they rely on Him.**

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW, TIC-TAC-TOE



Tools: whiteboard and markers, "Review Questions" (enhanced CD), coin

- Divide the group into Team X and Team O. Draw a tic-tac-toe game on the whiteboard. Flip a coin to see which team will go first.
- Say: "We are going to play a game to see how much you remember about today's lesson. I will start by asking one person on the first team a review question. If the answer given is correct, they may write an X or O on the board. If they answer incorrectly, the other team may try to answer. If they answer correctly, they may write their game piece on the board."
- Continue playing until 3 X's or 3 O's are in a line. Repeat if time permits.
- Review the Text Truth after each game: **Despite how it looks, God will provide His people with victory when they rely on Him.**

DAVID'S SUCCESS

1 Samuel 18:1-5; 20:35-42

First Samuel 18–20 covers the period during which David served in the military of Saul. It begins in the aftermath of the slaying of Goliath and ends with David's flight from Saul. The narrator does not give a full account of this period. Virtually nothing about David's military campaigns is known beyond the fact that he was very successful, especially in the matter of killing enough Philistines to win the hand of Saul's daughter. This is a significant omission because, if we had been there with David's troops, we would have said that in his day-to-day life, David's military duties were his major concern, and they certainly occupied the majority of his time.

However, the most important thing is not to chronicle David's routine activities, but to track the relationship between him and the household of Saul. Four people are important in the account. David is the central figure. Saul knew he was destined to lose the kingdom and could easily see that David would take his place. Saul gave way to his hatred and plans of murder. Michal, daughter of Saul, married David but David never fully sided with her against her father—a fact which would seriously complicate their relationship. Jonathan, the son of Saul and the crown prince, saw greatness in David, loved him, and fully accepted that David would one day be king. The story is beautiful, as Jonathan is a profound example of unselfish regard for a friend. It is also tragic. Jonathan would have been a great lieutenant to David, and that was his ambition. But his loyal character also required that he serve his father faithfully. He died with Saul in a desperate battle against the Philistines before David could claim the throne. However, the relationship between Jonathan and David exemplified brotherly love and sacrificial service—the ultimate traits of Christian friendship.



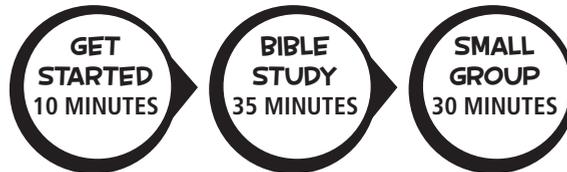
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 18:1-5; 20:35-42

CONNECTION PASSAGES: 1 Samuel 19:1-12; 20:1-42

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: 1 Samuel 18:3

TEXT TRUTH: Godly friendship seeks God's will above personal gain.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Musical Hoops:** 6 large plastic hoops, laminated numbers 1-6, numbered cube, music, "1 Samuel" (*Books of the Bible Posters*)

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In:** *Family Cards*
- Examine the Text:** *Bibles*
- Tell the Bible Story:** *Bibles, "Text Truth Strips" and "Connection Statements" (Poster Pack)*

- Video:** *Explore the Bible on Location video*

- Family Memory Verse:** "1 Samuel 18:3" (*Poster Pack*)

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide:** *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Move:** "Allergy Alert" (*enhanced CD*), balloon or ball, tape, bucket

- Make:** *braiding cord cut into strips (2 per kid), buttons (1 per kid), "Bracelet Instructions" (enhanced CD)*

- Examine:** *construction paper, pens, markers*

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Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle.

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JONATHAN PROTECTED DAVID

CONNECTION PASSAGES: 1 Samuel 19:1-12; 20:1-42

King Saul was jealous of David. Saul wanted to kill David. He ordered his son Jonathan and all of his servants to kill David. But Jonathan and David were friends. So Jonathan warned David of Saul's plan. "My father wants to kill you. Be careful and hide in a secret place. I will talk to my father about you and tell you what he says."

Jonathan told his father good things about David. Jonathan told his father that he shouldn't sin by killing David. David had been a good helper to Saul.

Saul listened to Jonathan and decided not to kill David. Jonathan shared the good news with David, but the good news didn't last long.

One evening, as David played his lyre for Saul, Saul tried to kill David with a spear. David escaped.

David met Jonathan and asked, "What did I do? Why does your father want to hurt me?"

Jonathan came up with a plan to find out if Saul really wanted to kill David. Jonathan and David agreed to always be friends and to take care of each other's families. Then Jonathan and David decided on a secret way to communicate using arrows.

Jonathan went to dinner with his dad. David's place at the dinner was empty, but Saul did not say anything about it. The next day, at dinner, David's place at the table was still empty and Saul asked Jonathan about it. Saul became angry and yelled at Jonathan. Jonathan defended David but Saul threw his spear at Jonathan. Jonathan knew then that his father was determined to kill David. He was very sad about his dad's choices.

The next morning, Jonathan went to the field he and David had agreed to meet at. Jonathan shot his arrows and sent his servant to find them. "The arrow is beyond you," Jonathan called to his servant. This was the secret code that told David that Saul would not stop trying to kill him. David was not safe. Jonathan sent his servant back to the city.

David came out of his hiding place. Jonathan promised to always be David's friend. Then David left, and Jonathan went back to the city.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

The Book of 1 Samuel tells the story of three powerful leaders in Israel: Samuel, Saul, and David. Through each man and his leadership of Israel, the need for a perfect leader is evident. God's people hoped for a day when a Messiah—the one true King—would rescue them. When Jesus came, He fulfilled God's promise that a perfect Prophet, Priest, and King would rule over His people.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

Jonathan understood that God picked David to be the next king. He helped protect David from King Saul's sinful plans.



KEY CONNECTIONS TO 1 SAMUEL

CORE PASSAGE:

1 Samuel 18:1-5; 20:35-42

- Jonathan was a faithful friend to David.
- Saul was continuing to spiral out of control into sin.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

6 large plastic hoops, laminated numbers 1-6, numbered cube, music, “1 Samuel” (Books of the Bible Posters)

- Print the numbers 1-6 on paper and laminate.

OPTION:

If the number of kids in your group is too large to use large plastic hoops, play with chairs.

MUSICAL HOOPS

- Gather 6 large plastic hoops and place in a circle. Put a number in the middle of each hoop. Play music or have kids sing songs as you play.
- Say: “Today we are going to play Musical Hoops. I will need 6 players at a time. When the music starts, step inside the hoops until the music stops. Then I will roll the cube, and whoever is standing on the number that matches the number on the cube must state something they remember from our study of 1 Samuel. That person will then step out of the circle and a new player will be added.”
- Repeat until everyone has a chance to play.
- Review the “1 Samuel” poster as time allows.
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Say: “Friendships are such an important part of our lives! We all want to have and spend time with friends. Think about some different qualities that you think are important to look for in a friend.”
- Allow different kids to share an important quality.
- Say: “Those were some excellent qualities that you shared. Our object today illustrates two important qualities of a friendship shared by the main people in our Bible story.”
- Pass out Family Cards.
- Share: “Arrows may seem like a strange symbol of friendship, but Jonathan, Saul’s son, used arrows as a sign to David that he was in danger. These arrows were a symbol of love and protection. We all want friends that love us and would protect us if we were in danger.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Say: “When you are reading a book, do you sometimes skip ahead and read the ending first? I have done that before! Sometimes you just cannot wait to find out what is going to happen. We are going to do that today. We will start at the beginning and then skip to the end. Later we will fill in what happened in the middle. Let’s begin by reading 1 Samuel 18:1-5.” *(Read or have a volunteer read this section.)*
- Ask: “Who are the main people in this story? *(David, Jonathan, and Saul)* What is the relationship between these three people?” *(Jonathan is Saul’s son, and Jonathan and David are best friends.)*
- Connect: “We read that Jonathan made a covenant or an agreement with David, making their commitment to be good friends official because he loved him just as much as he loved himself. He also gave him gifts. What were they? *(His military clothes/weapons.)* This showed that Jonathan thought more of his friendship with David than all of his military accomplishments. This would be like you giving your best friend your uniform from a sport you play and all of your trophies. That is a good friend!”
- Say: “Now let’s skip ahead to the end of the story where we find that Jonathan and David have been separated. Turn to 1 Samuel 20:35-42.” *(Ask for another volunteer to read or read it yourself.)*
- Say: “We find David and Jonathan meeting, this time not in the king’s palace, but instead in a field. This meeting was planned and the events that occurred were part of an understanding between David and Jonathan. What happened with the young man and the arrows?” *(Allow kids to explain this part of the story.)*
- Say: “We are like the young man in the story, because we do not know the agreement between David and Jonathan. We obviously do not have the full picture of what is going on here, just like when you skip to the end of a book. Let’s get into our Bibles and read the middle of our story.”

TOOLS:

Bibles; Family Cards; “Text Truth Strips,” “Connection Statements,” and “1 Samuel 18:3” (Poster Pack); Explore the Bible on Location video

OPTION:

Tell the Bible Story using the script provided as a guide.

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

- Divide up the text (*1 Samuel 19:1-12; 20:1-42*) and form groups, assigning each group a portion of text. Ask them to read their portion and discuss it. Then have each group, in order, summarize their part and tell it to the rest of the group.
- Say: “You all did a great job reading, understanding, and explaining the Bible story! This situation probably seems unbelievable to us—David’s best friend’s dad is king and wants to kill him, and Jonathan is loyal to David and helps him escape. Our Text Truth explains why this friendship was so special: **Godly friendship seeks God’s will above personal gain.**”
- Introduce the Connection Statement.
- Continue: “That is an amazing story of friendship. At the end of the story, David and Jonathan had to say goodbye to each other and it says they cried, David crying more. Why do you think David cried more? He knew what it could cost his friend to be loyal to him and he would now be on his own without Jonathan. David had already left his father and brothers to live with Saul, and now he must leave a second home. I cannot wait until next week to pick up where today’s story ended!”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 9” video. Ask: “What did you learn about archery? Who was an archer in our Bible story? What kind of friend was Jonathan?”

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE

- Display “1 Samuel 18:3” poster.
- Say the verse together and use actions to help kids commit it to memory. (*Sign language motion for J and D or draw out with fingers, pretend to shake hands for covenant, and pat heart for love.*)

PRAYER

- Say: “Let’s pray that we will make good friends and be a good friend.”
- Ask for a volunteer to pray.
- Lead girls and boys to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and direct kids to find today's pages, "David's Success."
- Lead kids to complete the "Word Search." Ask kids to share one sentence about each word in the puzzle.
- Select a strong reader to read about today's object, the arrowheads.
- Invite a few kids to take turns reading about the moon phases. Lead kids to open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 20:5-7 to remind kids how this connects to today's Bible story.
- Help kids locate today's "Word to Know" in their own Bibles.
- Allow kids time to think through and apply today's Bible truths as they complete "Think About It."

TECH CONNECT (OPT.)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.
- You may also listen to the "Word to Know" pronunciation on the app. Encourage everyone to try to say the word together.

PRAYER TIME

- Split small groups into pairs. Ask them to share a friend's name to pray for, and then pray for each other's friend.

EXPLORATION APPLICATION (15 MINUTES)

Choose one or more of the following activities to complete as time allows.

BALLOON TO BUCKET RACE



Tools: "Allergy Alert" (enhanced CD), balloon or ball, tape, bucket

- Mark a course on the floor using tape (include some twists). Form pairs. Line pairs up at one end of the room and place the bucket at the other end of the room.
- Say: "We are going to learn how important it is to work together to accomplish something. This game will require that you use teamwork to complete the task. When I give the signal, the first pair will put the balloon between your backs and follow the course to the bucket, lowering the balloon into the bucket." (Depending on the size of your group and the time limit, you can have pairs start over if they drop the balloon or start again where they are.)
- Say: "Let's say today's Text Truth again. We need to be that kind of friend to others, more concerned about God's will than ourselves. In this game, you could have stubbornly insisted to do things your own way, but you probably would not have done very well. It is much better to work together for the same goal, glorifying God!"

FRIENDSHIP BRACELETS



Tools: braiding cord cut into strips (2 per kid), buttons (1 per kid), "Bracelet Instructions" (enhanced CD)

- Prior to class, study the CD item and practice making a bracelet. Consider printing copies for kids to reference as they work.

- Say: "We learned today about the importance of godly friendships. Sometimes it is easy to think more about our needs and what we want in a friendship. This leads us to use other people and to not seek God's will in our friendships. Let's make something today that will help us remember to be a good friend."
- Instruct kids to select 2 braiding cord strips and 1 button. Then show them how to thread their button with a loop at the bottom two holes of the button. Then pull loop out slightly and insert cord through it pulling it tight. Repeat on the other side, then put the bracelet on their wrist and tie cord ends together or make a slip knot.
- Say: "Instead of giving our friendship bracelets away, let's wear them to remind us of today's Text Truth: **Godly friendship seeks God's will above personal gain.**"

WANTED: GOOD FRIEND



Tools: construction paper, pens, markers

- Say: "It is a good idea to think about what makes a good friend. We have already talked about that this morning, and you all listed some great qualities. It is also important to make sure that we are being a good friend."
- Instruct kids to write today's Family Memory Verse on their construction paper, and then list qualities that they want in a friend. They can write them as a list, or be creative in their placement. Encourage kids to hang these in their lockers at school as a reminder of what they should be looking for in their friendships.
- Review today's Text Truth: **Godly friendship seeks God's will above personal gain.**
- Ask kids: "When is it hard to be a good friend? How can you help each other be a godly friend?" Consider writing down kids responses and posting them in the room as a reminder in the weeks to come. Mention that one of the best ways to help each other to be a godly friend is to pray for each other.



Session 10



GOD PROTECTED DAVID FROM SAUL

1 Samuel 22:6-17

First Samuel 21–23 continues the story of Saul’s relentless pursuit of David. This had tragic consequences for Israel and ultimately for Saul himself. Samuel had told Saul that God had rejected him and he would have no dynasty to follow him. Saul should have known that David would not seek to eliminate Saul or his family. He was never hostile. But Saul could not stand the thought of losing his crown.

David traveled extensively during his flight from Saul, and he led his soldiers west to the Philistine city of Gath and its king, Achish. Perhaps David thought that since Saul was now his enemy, the Philistines would aid him. He was nearly captured and killed, and only escaped by feigning madness. Leaving Gath, David went east to Adullam, southwest of Bethlehem, and to the other side of the Dead Sea. He and his troops took refuge, probably located at Masada, on the west side of the Dead Sea. From here, he made his way to Keilah, and delivered Keilah from the Philistines. But Saul planned to trap David inside Keilah’s walls. David escaped before Saul arrived and eventually took refuge at En-gedi, a beautiful oasis on the western shore of the Dead Sea.

This must have been an extremely demanding time for David. He was constantly on the run, and the hill country he had to traverse was harsh, rugged, and barren. What appears on the map to have been a distance of only a few miles actually included a very circuitous route involving constant movement around countless hills of bare stone. In addition, David had to train and maintain the morale of his small army, who were far from being the ideal recruits. This experience honed David’s leadership skills. God protected David. God had a plan and purpose for the soon-to-be king. We, too, can know that God protects and prepares us for His plan and His purpose.

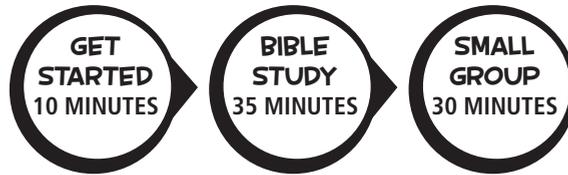
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 22:6-17

CONNECTION PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 24:1-22

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 31:7

TEXT TRUTH: When we sin, we hurt ourselves and others.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Safe Zone:** *props for a cave setting (optional)*

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In:** *Family Cards*
- Examine the Text:** *Bibles, "Text Truth Strips" and "Connection Statement" (Poster Pack)*
- Tell the Bible Story:** *Bibles, "Text Truth Strips" (Poster Pack)*
- Video:** *Explore the Bible on Location video*

- Family Memory Verse:** *"Psalm 31:7" (Poster Pack), worship song*

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide:** *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Move:** *10 plastic 2-liter bottles, plastic ball, "Review Questions" (enhanced CD)*

- Make:** *4-6" plastic rectangles from plastic jugs, hole punch, permanent markers (various colors), droppers, 99% rubbing alcohol, ribbon or cord, spray acrylic sealer, "Allergy Alert" (enhanced CD)*
- Explore:** *baby food jars, vinegar, baking soda, ½ teaspoon measuring spoon, small adhesive labels, water, pitcher, "Allergy Alert" (enhanced CD), plastic tablecloths or trays*

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

DAVID WAS PROTECTED

CONNECTION PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 24:1-22

King Saul heard that David was hiding in the wilderness of En-gedi. Saul took 3,000 men and went to search for David. Saul walked into one of the caves in the area. David and his men were hiding deep inside the cave. David's men told him, "Today must be the day that God told you about when He said that He will give your enemy to you."

David arose and quietly cut a corner from Saul's robe. But then David felt guilty. He told his men, "I should not harm the Lord's anointed."

David persuaded his men that they should not attack Saul.

Saul left the cave, not knowing how close he was to David.

Then David left the cave. He called out to Saul. Saul turned around and David bowed down to show respect to Saul. David asked Saul, "Why do you believe those who tell you that I want to hurt you? In the cave, I could have killed you, but I didn't. You are God's anointed king. I will not harm you. See, I cut the corner of your robe, but I did not kill you or hurt you."

When David finished speaking, Saul asked, "Is this David?" Saul wept and told David, "You are more righteous than I am. You have repaid me with good while I have repaid you with evil. What kind of man lets his enemy go away? The Lord will reward you for what you have done. I know that you will be the king of Israel. Promise that you will not hurt my family." David promised this to Saul and Saul went home.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

The Book of 1 Samuel tells the story of three powerful leaders in Israel: Samuel, Saul, and David. Through each man and his leadership of Israel, the need for a perfect leader is evident. God's people hoped for a day when a Messiah—the one true King—would rescue them. When Jesus came, He fulfilled God's promise that a perfect Prophet, Priest, and King would rule over His people.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

Saul could not stop God's plan to make David the next king of Israel.

KEY CONNECTIONS TO 1 SAMUEL

CORE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 22:6-17

- David chose to honor God by not hurting Saul.
- David knew that revenge was not the right choice.
- God continued to protect David from King Saul.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

props for a cave setting (optional)

- Option: make one side of the room look like a cave with props, a tent or a sign.

SAFE ZONE

- Designate one side of the room as the “safe zone.” Have kids line up on the other side of the room. Pick two of them to be taggers and position them between the kids and the safe zone. Instruct kids that when you give the signal they are to try and run to the safe zone. If any of them gets tagged, then they are now a tagger too.
- They can get another chance to make it to the safe zone by saying one of the Family Memory Verses or Text Truths from previous weeks. If they can say one, then they can go back to the starting point for a second chance. Give the signal again for them to get a second chance. This time it is harder though, because there are more possible taggers to bypass.
- Play again with variations such as blindfolding the taggers, making the players walk backwards, having everyone crawl, and so on.
- Say: “Whew! That was fun! I am tired just watching you all try to avoid being caught by a tagger! In today’s story we are going to hear about a time when David was on the run and searching for a safe place from Saul. He had to hide out in places like caves. I imagine David became quite weary of being on the run and scared.”
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Have kids go to someone they haven't talked to yet today and ask them about the best part of their week. Then invite everyone to have a seat and encourage them to take the time each week to talk to visitors or those with whom they do not usually get to have conversations.
- Ask: "Have you ever played a really exciting game of hide and seek and found the perfect hiding place? Then the one seeking you gets so close that you could reach out and touch him. How do you feel in that moment?" (*Allow for responses*)
- Pass out Family Cards.
- Say: "Today our Bible story takes place in the caves of En-gedi. David was on the run, trying to escape Saul, and he hid in these caves. At one point, Saul was close enough for David to touch. How do you think David felt in that moment? (*Allow for responses.*) David was not just afraid of being tagged or found, he was afraid of being killed."

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Lead everyone to open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 22:6-17. Remind kids of how to use the table of contents page in the Bible to locate Bible books.
- Say: "Before we get to David and Saul in the caves of En-gedi, let's go back to when Saul was at home and find out what made him so angry at David that he wanted to kill him."
- Ask for volunteers to read sections of the passage.
- Say: "We find at this point in the story that Saul is making more bad choices and living in anger instead of trusting God. His anger is causing him to hurt others."
- Introduce the Connection Statement. Say: "Saul did not accept this truth. Can we stop God's plan? No! Let's see what happened next."
- Ask: "Who was Saul angry at and why?" (*Ahimelech, because he believed that he and David conspired against him, and that he gave David food and the sword of Goliath.*)
- Continue: "Even though David had been gone and everyone knew Saul's hatred for him, David was still popular among the priests and servants. This makes Saul furious. Ahimelech denied having done what Doeg the Edomite reported to Saul that he did. Saul was so mad at this point that he did not care to get the truth, and instead he ordered the guard to kill the priests."
- Ask: "What did the guard and servants do? They refused to kill the priests."
- Discuss: "Our Text Truth today says **When we sin, we hurt ourselves and others**. Saul must have been miserable being so angry all of the time. This sin hurt Saul and caused him to hurt other people too. What are some other ways that we sin, hurting ourselves and others?" (*Allow for answers.*)

TOOLS:

Bibles; Family Cards; "Text Truth Strips," "Connection Statements," and "Psalm 31:7" (Poster Pack); Explore the Bible on Location video; worship song

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

- Say: “David’s future is not looking good! Saul is angrier than ever and looking for David. If David had a Text Truth hanging on the wall of the cave he was hiding in, I think he would have chosen the one from two weeks ago. Does anyone remember that Text Truth? **Despite how it looks, God will provide His people with victory when they rely on Him.** I am sure by now David had been in enough scary situations that He knew God as the Great Provider. Let’s find out what happened to Saul and David at En-gedi.”
- Tell the Bible Story in your own words. A script has been provided for your reference. *(If you created a cave for the opening game, use it while telling the story.)*
- Ask: “How did David honor God in this story? By not hurting Saul. Why didn’t David kill Saul while he had the chance? He felt guilty and knew that revenge was not the right choice. What was Saul’s reaction? He was sorry for how he had treated David and affirmed him as the future king.”
- Connect: “God continued to protect David from King Saul. The same God that cared for and protected David, cares for and protects us too! That is a wonderful truth to know. It is sad, though, that it took hurting so many people and living in anger for so long before Saul could accept God’s plan. Sin is a time waster! It wastes your time and others’ time. Let’s say our Text Truth again: **When we sin, we hurt ourselves and others.**”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 10” video. Ask: “Can you imagine living in the wilderness day after day? Who protected David?”

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE

- Display “Psalm 31:7.”
- Say: “This verse reminds us that even when we are facing hard times, we can rejoice! Why is that true?” *(Allow for answers.)*
- Say the verse together several times and sing a song about God’s love or praising Him.

PRAYER

- Lead a prayer, asking for God to give the kids strength like David to trust Him in all areas of life.
- Transition to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and guide boys and girls to find the pages, “God Protected David from Saul.”
- Direct everyone’s attention to the picture of En-ge-di and share the information about the special area.
- Invite kids to take turns reading about other “Famous Caves.”
- Select another volunteer to read about the goats in the mountain areas.
- Guide kids to open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 24:2. Ask: “Who was there in today’s Bible story? Was it just Saul and David?”
- Continue: “No. Saul’s choice to try to kill David affected a lot of people. Remember our Text Truth: **When we sin, we hurt ourselves and others.**” Invite kids to answer the prompt in “Think It Through.” Allow kids to share their thoughts, if they would like to. Affirm kids for their willingness to share.
- Help everyone locate the “Word to Know” in his Bible. If time allows, invite kids to take turns trying to pronounce the word.

TECH CONNECT (OPT.)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled “Explorer Plus” on the app.
- You may also listen to the “Word to Know” pronunciation on the app. Encourage everyone to try to say the word together.

PRAYER TIME

- Talk about the examples the kids gave earlier of how sinning hurts themselves and others. Lead them in a prayer, asking God to help them to resist sin and trust Him.



SAUL'S ROBE BOOKMARK

Tools: 4-6" plastic rectangles from plastic jugs, hole punch, permanent markers (various colors), droppers, 99% rubbing alcohol, ribbon or cord, spray acrylic sealer, "Allergy Alert" (enhanced CD)

□ Prior to class, cut out plastic rectangles, 4-6" in length, from plastic jugs. Punch holes in the top.

- Say: "Today we are going to make a colorful bookmark to remind us about David cutting a portion of Saul's robe and using it to make peace with Saul instead of killing him."
- Instruct kids to slide a ribbon or cord through the hole in their bookmark and tie it. Guide kids to print the Text Truth on the back. Then let them use permanent markers to color their bookmarks. Encourage them to be creative and make designs using many colors. Then show them how to use a dropper to drop tiny bits of alcohol on the bookmark. Warn them not to drop too much at once, but to use a little and watch it spread the colors. Let the bookmarks sit. Do not tilt or pick them up until dry; this will not take long. Then have a teacher spray the bookmarks with a spray acrylic sealer in a separate area. Allow to dry completely before picking up.
- Say: "Whenever you are tempted to get angry or sin in another way, look at this bookmark and remember what David did and our Text Truth."
- Ask: "Who can help us when we are angry? (God) We can pray, read the Bible, talk to another Christian. All of these are ways that God can help us when we are angry."

EXPLORATION APPLICATION (15 MINUTES)

Choose one or more of the following activities to complete as time allows.



BOWLING REVIEW

Tools: 10 plastic 2-liter bottles, plastic ball, "Review Questions" (enhanced CD)

- Set up the 2-liter bottles like bowling pins. Form two teams. Let the teams take turns answering review questions, and if they answer correctly, they get to take a turn bowling. Reset pins and repeat with the other team. The team that has the most points (based on number of pins knocked down) wins.
- Option: Set up bowling lanes with several games going simultaneously if you have a large group.
- Say: "When your bowling ball hit a pin, it usually did not just stop with knocking down that one pin. It usually knocked down several pins, sometimes all ten of them. This is what happens when we sin. It does not stop at hurting us; it hurts others too. Let's say our Text Truth again."

OBJECT LESSON ON ANGER

Tools: baby food jars, vinegar, baking soda, ½ teaspoon measuring spoon, small adhesive labels, water, pitcher, "Allergy Alert" (enhanced CD), plastic tablecloths or trays



□ Prior to class, make a mix of vinegar and water in a pitcher and put labels on baby food jars. Prepare the area for this object lesson by covering the surface or providing trays if it cannot be easily wiped off afterwards. You could also do this activity outside.

- Pair kids and give each pair two baby food jars and a measuring spoon. Kids should write *David* on one jar and *Saul* on the other. Fill David's jar halfway with the vinegar/water mixture and Saul's with just vinegar. Instruct kids to put ½ teaspoon of baking soda into David's jar and watch it fizzle. Then direct them to put 1 teaspoon of baking soda in Saul's jar and watch the mixture explode and run over.
- Say: "This experiment showed us exactly what took place in our story. Saul's jar shows us what happens when we allow ourselves to fuel our anger, getting more and more upset until we explode. David's jar shows us what happens when we quit allowing the anger to grow inside us and we turn the other cheek when faced with our enemy."
- Ask kids to say today's Text Truth and reinforce that sin not only effects us, but it spills over and hurts others.



Session

11



ESTHER INTERCEDED FOR HER PEOPLE

Esther 3:7–7:8; 8:3-17

The Book of 1 Samuel offers a glimpse at the first kings of Israel and the battles and conflicts that surrounded the establishment of the monarchy. However, 1 Samuel also offers various episodes when an effort for peace surpassed the need for conflict. Likewise, the Book of Esther presents a beautiful story of a woman who bravely risked her life in an effort for peace and an attempt to save her people from imminent death.

The Book of Esther is set in the Persian Empire. After Cyrus II (*Cyrus the Great*) captured Babylon in 539 B.C., he allowed all peoples to return to their homelands and rebuild their temples. However, some Jews remained in Babylon and Persia. Around 485 B.C., Xerxes I (*Ahasuerus*) ruled the Persian Empire and he married Esther, a Jew. Xerxes I was known as a great warrior. As a part of the Achaemenid Dynasty, he ruled Persia during the height of its empire from the cities of Persepolis and Susa.

At Susa, Esther, the new queen of Persia, received word that her people, the Jews, were in danger. She decided to approach the king and plea for her people. But approaching the king without an invitation could have meant Esther's death if he did not accept her unsolicited presence (*Xerxes had already dismissed one queen for not succumbing to his wishes*). Esther's approach was terrifying, but the king allowed her presence. Because of her bravery, she was able to expose the plot and rescue her people.

In the story of Esther, Scripture reveals a struggle for peace and the manifestation of bravery by a woman who trusted in God to guide her path. Christians today know that our steps are established by God. Because we have comfort in the Holy Spirit's guidance, we can be brave in dire moments, knowing that perhaps, like Esther, we were made for "such a time as this."

SESSION FOCUS

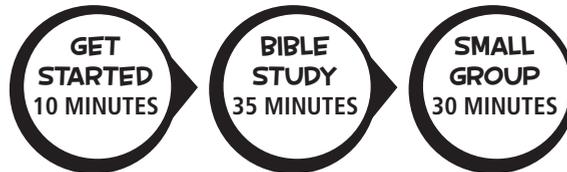
CORE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 25:14-17,32-38*

CONNECTION PASSAGES: Esther 3:7-7:8; 8:3-17

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: 1 Samuel 25:32-33

ADDITIONAL MEMORY VERSE: Romans 14:19

TEXT TRUTH: God protects His people and His name.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- God As Protector: *none*

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In: *Family Cards*
- Examine the Text: *Bibles, "Text Truth Strips" (Poster Pack)*
- Tell the Bible Story: *Bibles, "Text Truth Strips" and "Connection Statements" (Poster Pack), copy of the Bible Story script*

- Video: *Explore the Bible on Location video*

- Memory Verse: *"Romans 14:19" (Poster Pack)*

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide: *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Move: *2 sleeping bags, masking tape, "Review Questions" (enhanced CD)*

- Make: *thick, quart-sized ziplock bags; 1 cup and ¼ cup measuring cups; sugar; scented dish soap, "Allergy Alert" (enhanced CD)*

- Examine: *whiteboard and marker*

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**This session will focus on the Connection Passage.*

ESTHER ASKED FOR PEACE

CONNECTION PASSAGES: Esther 3:7–7:8; 8:3-17

King Ahasuerus ruled the Persian Empire. He had chosen Esther to be his queen. One of the king’s leaders was a man named Haman. Haman was an evil man. Haman decided that he wanted to get rid of all of the Jewish people in the empire. So he made a plan and he convinced the king to make his plan a law. Soon, all of the Jewish people in the land were to be killed.

Now Queen Esther’s relative, Mordecai, heard about the new law and he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth. Esther heard about Mordecai’s actions and she was worried. Mordecai sent a message to Esther. He told her about the new law. Esther was also Jewish, but the king did not know that. Mordecai begged Esther to go and see the king and try to save her people. Mordecai even told Esther that this might be the reason she had been picked to be queen—so she could save her people.

Esther knew that it was against the law to go see the king if he hadn’t asked for you to come. But she knew that she had to go see him anyway. Esther, Mordecai, and all the Jewish people in the city fasted for three days.

Then Esther put on her royal clothes and she went to see the king. The king saw Esther and he agreed that she could come see him. He held out his scepter to Esther. Esther invited the king to a special banquet. She also invited Haman to the banquet. The king and Haman went to the banquet. At the banquet, the king asked Esther to tell him what she wanted. He promised to give her anything, even half of the kingdom. Esther asked the king and Haman to come to another banquet.

Haman was very happy. The queen had invited him to a special banquet. The king had given him a special job in the kingdom. And his plan to get rid of Mordecai and the Jewish people was going to happen soon.

The king and Haman again went to a special feast prepared by Queen Esther. The king again told Esther, “Whatever you ask will be given to you.”

This time Esther said, “If the king is pleased, spare my life and the lives of my people. We have been sold out to destruction and death.”

“Who is the one who created this plan?” the king asked.

“Haman.” Queen Esther answered.

The king was very angry. Haman was killed instead of the Jewish people. The king wrote a new law that would help the Jewish people protect themselves against the people who tried to kill them. Esther had interceded for and saved her people.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

The Book of 1 Samuel tells the story of three powerful leaders in Israel: Samuel, Saul, and David. Through each man and his leadership of Israel, the need for a perfect leader is evident. God’s people hoped for a day when a Messiah—the one true King—would rescue them. When Jesus came, He fulfilled God’s promise that a perfect Prophet, Priest, and King would rule over His people.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

Esther’s courageous actions helped rescue God’s people.



KEY CONNECTIONS TO 1 SAMUEL

CORE PASSAGE:

1 Samuel 25:14-17,32-38*

- God used Esther to save her people.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

none

GOD AS PROTECTOR

- Ask: “Who are some people in your lives that protect you? (*Mom, Dad, teachers, principal, guidance counselor, policeman, fireman, doctor, and nurses.*)”
- Connect: “It is comforting to know that we have SO many people in our lives to watch out for and protect us. Did you know that even if none of these people are near you, you still have a protector? In fact, He is the greatest protector you could ever have.”
- Ask: “Who am I talking about?” (*God!*)
- Share a situation in which God protected you. Then ask the kids to share about a time when God protected them.
- Say: “It is so wonderful to know that God is able to see all of our needs and protect each one of us! Today we are going to talk about how God protected His people in different situations.”
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Allow kids to jump up and down, lift their hands, turn around, and sit down to get some energy out.
- Say: “What are some gatherings that your family has every year to celebrate events or people? (*Allow for responses.*) That’s right! We gather for holidays like Thanksgiving, Easter, and Christmas to celebrate with our families, and on birthdays too. We do this together as family and friends to remember what happened on these dates.”
- Pass out Family Cards.
- Connect: “In today’s Bible story, we will learn about Esther and how she helped save her people. This was such a big event that the Jews still celebrate it every year during Purim. Today’s objects on our Family Cards are used during Purim to help the people remember Esther’s story.”
- Use the card to describe the objects.

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Lead boys and girls to open their Bibles. Select volunteers to read each of the verses and summarize what the verses said using the prompts below.
- Esther 2:5-6: A Jewish man lived in Susa. His name was Mordecai.
- Esther 2:7-8: Mordecai had adopted his relative Esther. Esther was very beautiful. And she was sent to the palace to be considered for the new queen.
- Esther 2:10: Esther did not tell anyone that she was Jewish.
- Esther 2:17: Esther became the new queen!
- Esther 2:20: Esther still did not tell anyone she was Jewish.
- Esther 3:1-2: Haman was an important man in the kingdom. Mordecai would not bow down before Haman.
- Esther 3:5-6: Haman was very angry at Mordecai and decided to destroy Mordecai and all of the Jewish people.
- Conclude: “Today’s Text Truth says: **God protects His people and His name.** And what is really cool about that is He often uses us to protect others and His name. We are going to study more of the Book of Esther to discover how God protected His people.”

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

- Say: “Today, instead of me telling the story, you are going to tell it! This is a great story with lots of excitement.”
- Form groups and give each group a portion of the Bible Story script.
- Instruct: “Each group has part of today’s story. I want you to read it as a group and then figure out a way to tell it to the class. Either act it out, report on it as a news story, give an eye witness account, or do a dramatic reading. Then we will line up in order and tell the story. “
- Allow time for them to work and present.
- Ask: “What was your favorite part of today’s story?” (*Allow for answers.*)

TOOLS:

- Bibles; Family Cards; “Text Truth Strips,” “Connection Statements,” and “Romans 14:19” (Poster Pack); copy of Bible Story script; Explore the Bible on Location video
- Cut the script of the Bible Story into separate segments and number them in order.

- Say: “What is so awesome about this story is that this situation did not catch God off guard. He knew what Esther and the Jewish people were facing. God gave Esther the strength and wisdom to save her people.”
- Introduce the Connection Statement. Continue: “Let’s say our Text Truth again: **God protects His people and His name.**”
- Connect: “There are times in life when God will use us to sway someone else’s actions for good. Maybe you have a friend that is having a bad day and another friend comes up and starts picking on him or her. Normally this kind of good natured kidding wouldn’t bother them, but you know that today it could really set them off. What could you do to intervene and protect both of your friends?” (*Allow for response.*)
- Say: “We may not have the opportunity like Esther to save someone’s life, but we can be sensitive to God’s leading and follow as He guides us to speak up, comfort, or plead with others. When we do this, we are bringing glory to God!”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 11” video. Ask: “What did Terra learn about superheroes? Who is your favorite Bible-times hero? How do the Jewish people remember Esther’s story?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display “Romans 14:19.”
- Read the Memory Verse together.
- Say: “Because our world is broken by sin, peace does not naturally occur. As followers of Jesus, we have to seek peace. We have to work to create peace with each other.”
- Say the memory verse, covering up a portion of the verse each time until the entire verse is covered.

PRAYER

- Lead in a prayer for God to protect these kids and use them to make His name great.
- Transition to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and help kids locate today's pages, "Esther Interceded for Her People."
- Select kids to share about the items used in the Purim celebration.
- Direct kids to look at the information about the palace at Susa. Tell kids that at the time of Esther's story, the Persian Empire was large and powerful.
- Invite kids to review the Bible story by completing the "Crossword." Allow kids to check their Bibles (*Esther 3:7-7:8; 8:3-17*) for help.
- Lead everyone to keep her Bible open and to find today's "Word to Know."
- Conclude by allowing kids to discuss the "Peace" situations. Lead kids to record their thoughts in the space provided.

TECH CONNECT (OPT.)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.
- You may also listen to the "Word to Know" pronunciation on the app. Encourage everyone to try to say the word together.

PRAYER TIME

- Ask for prayer requests and then write them down on paper. Cut up the list and pass the requests out to kids who volunteer. Ask them to pray for the request and then take it home and pray about it this week.

EXPLORATION APPLICATION (15 MINUTES)

Choose one or more of the following activities to complete as time allows.



SLEEPWALKING

Tools: 2 sleeping bags, masking tape, "Review Questions" (enhanced CD)

- Put a strip of masking tape on the floor, designating where the players should begin and end. Ask another teacher to stand at the front of the class with you and ask review questions. Form two teams. Give each team a sleeping bag and have them stand behind the line. The first person should stand inside the sleeping bag.
- Instruct: "When I give the signal, the first person from each team will begin walking, jumping, or sliding towards me. Once you make it to the line on the floor, then stop and answer a review question from today's lesson. If you answer correctly, you may get out of the sleeping bag, go back to the team, and send the next player. If you do not answer correctly, you get to try another question. The first team who has all of the players answer a question correctly and has all the players behind the starting line is the winner."
- Review the Text Truth: **God protects His people and His name.**



ESTHER'S BEAUTY TREATMENTS

Tools: thick, quart-sized ziplock bags; 1 cup and ¼ cup measuring cups; sugar; scented dish soap; "Allergy Alert" (enhanced CD)

- Share: "The Book of Esther records that all of the candidates to be queen spent a whole year having special beauty treatments before they met the king."
- Say: "We learned that Esther was brave when she sought peace for her people. We are going to make our own homemade beauty treatment to remind us of Esther and our Text Truth: **God protects His people and His name.**"
- Assist each kid in measuring 1 cup of sugar into her ziplock bag. Next add ¼ cup of dish soap. Help kids gently shake and mash their mixture until it is combined. Explain that this sugar scrub can be used to wash your hands.
- Encourage kids to find someone to give their sugar scrub to. As they give it away, tell kids to share about Esther and the Text Truth.

SILLY TASK CHALLENGE

Tools: whiteboard and marker



- Form teams. Explain that for every task a team completes (*as a whole*), they will earn one letter of the word *peace*. The first team to earn all the letters of the word wins the game.
- Sample Silly Tasks:
 - 1) Sing the alphabet.
 - 2) Smile for 30 seconds.
 - 3) Give 5 high fives.
 - 4) Hop while saying the memory verse.
 - 5) Pretend to eat an ice cream cone.
 - 6) Pretend to make a pizza.
 - 7) Pretend to surf.
 - 8) Laugh for 20 seconds.
 - 9) Pretend to jump rope.
 - 10) Create a cheer.
- Ask: "What did we learn about peace in today's Bible story? How can you seek peace? What does Romans 14:19 say about peace? What is our Text Truth: **God protects His people and His name.**"
- You may play more rounds with other words from the Bible story: *rescue, Esther, feast*, and so on.



Session 12

DAVID SPARED SAUL'S LIFE



1 Samuel 26:7-12,21-25

David and his men were “on the hill of Hachilah opposite Jeshimon.” While we don’t precisely know where these places were, they were probably on the east side of the Judean wilderness, just west of the Dead Sea. David spent a good deal of time here at the “stronghold,” which was apparently at Masada. The local inhabitants, the Ziphites, informed Saul that David was nearby. We don’t know why the Ziphites were partisans of Saul, or if all of them were. We can be sure that the political turmoil, with its factions and frequent shifts of allegiance, was far more complex than the Bible tells us.

David heard that Saul was coming with an army to look for him. David sent out scouts on a reconnaissance mission, and they located Saul’s troops as they moved south. Rather than take his forces and flee the area, David moved to intercept Saul. David’s purpose at this point is unclear; he may have been planning on setting up an ambush. It is unlikely that he was going there to negotiate. Rivals would typically negotiate by sending a few representatives to a neutral place, not by bringing their two armies into a face-to-face confrontation.

Saul’s forces, at 3,000 men, were several times larger than David’s, but David’s men knew the terrain well and had the advantage of surprise. David’s army actually came upon Saul’s temporary camp bedded down for the night. If David had been considering a surprise attack, this was as good a setup as he could have hoped for. But if that was his intent, he hesitated, probably because he did not want to shed Israelite blood, and because he did not want to attack “the Lord’s anointed.” David realized that honoring God was more important than seeking revenge. By David’s example, we can know that we are called to love everyone—even those who mistreat us—showing that all people are important to God.

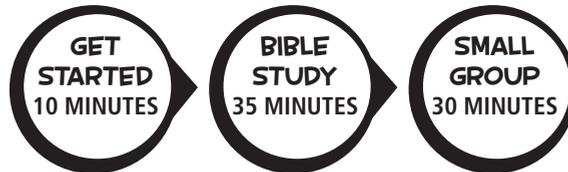
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 26:7-12,21-25

CONNECTION PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 26:1-25

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: Romans 12:17

TEXT TRUTH: To obey God, we must love others, even when they mistreat us.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Spy in the Camp: “1 Samuel” (Books of the Bible Posters)

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In: *Family Cards*
- Examine the Text: *Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Romans 12:17” (Poster Pack)*
- Tell the Bible Story: *Bibles; “Text Truth Strips,” “Connection Statements,” and “David’s Flight from Saul” (Poster Pack); paper; pencils*

- Video: *Explore the Bible on Location video*

- Family Memory Verse: “Romans 12:17” (*Poster Pack*)

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide: *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Move: *craft sticks (various colors), “Review Questions” (enhanced CD), bucket, marker*

- Make: *large craft sticks (5 per kid), highlighters (various colors), masking tape, fine tip permanent markers, twine, magnets, “Romans 12:17” (Poster Pack)*

- Examine: “Advice or Truth?” (*enhanced CD*), pencils, Bibles

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the *Digital Video Bundle*. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the *Music and Print Extras Bundle*. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

DAVID RESISTED SIN

CONNECTION PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 26:1-25

King Saul again tried to find David to kill him. Saul took 3,000 soldiers and went to the wilderness of Ziph. Saul and his soldiers set up their camp on the hill of Hachilah.

When David saw that Saul had come to the wilderness, he sent out spies. David got up and went to Saul's camp. David could see Saul's bed and the commander of the army's bed.

Then David asked one of his men to go with him into Saul's camp. At night, David and Abishai [uh BISH ay igh] saw that Saul was sleeping and his spear was in the ground next to him. Abishai told David, "God has given your enemy to you. Let me kill him for you." But David stopped Abishai. "He is the Lord's anointed. I will not kill him. Instead, I will take his spear and his water jug. Let's go."

When David was safely away from Saul's camp, he called over to Saul's camp. He asked them where the king's spear and water jug were.

Saul recognized David's voice. Again David asked Saul why Saul was trying to hurt David. Saul said, "I have sinned. I was foolish and made a great mistake."

David sent one of his men to take the spear back to Saul.

David told Saul, "The Lord rewards every man for his righteousness and faithfulness. The Lord gave you into my hand but I would not hurt the Lord's anointed. Your life was precious to me. May my life be precious to God and may He deliver me from trouble."

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

The Book of 1 Samuel tells the story of three powerful leaders in Israel: Samuel, Saul, and David. Through each man and his leadership of Israel, the need for a perfect leader is evident. God's people hoped for a day when a Messiah—the one true King—would rescue them. When Jesus came, He fulfilled God's promise that a perfect Prophet, Priest, and King would rule over His people.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

David knew that honoring God was more important than seeking revenge.

KEY CONNECTIONS TO 1 SAMUEL

CORE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 26:7-12,21-25

- David chose to honor God by not hurting Saul.
- David knew that revenge was not the right choice.
- God continued to protect David from King Saul.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

“1 Samuel” (Books of the Bible Posters)

SPY IN THE CAMP

- Have kids stand in rows as “the camp.” Choose one kid to be the spy and take him out of the room while giving instructions to the rest of the camp. Choose another kid to be the “director” of the camp and instruct him or her to stand where they are and direct the camp by making motions (*clapping hands, marching, waving arms, jumping, swaying, and so on*) but without saying anything. The camp follows the director without looking directly at him.
- While explaining the game to the class, have another teacher explain it to the spy. The spy then comes into the camp and tries to figure out who the director is by walking around and observing. The spy gets three guesses before the director’s identity is revealed. Repeat with a different director and spy.
- Say: “This was a fun way to experience being a spy in a camp, but in our story today we will encounter real spies that were sent to find out where the danger was for David and his men. Before we get into today’s lesson, let’s review the 5 Ws of 1 Samuel.” (*Refer to “1 Samuel” poster.*)
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Say: “We have all enjoyed playing the game I SPY and trying to figure out what the other person chose as their object. In today’s story, David has to send out spies to find Saul and then David retrieved a couple of objects that he saw.”
- Give out Family Cards.
- Say: “When David sneaked up on Saul this time, he took his water jug and spear instead of harming him. Let’s find out why David took these items and spared Saul’s life again, and then you can use the cards to tell your family all about this exciting story.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Lead kids to open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 26.
- Ask: “Have you ever been mistreated? (*Allow for responses.*) How did you want to respond to the person who mistreated you? (*Allow for answers.*) Sometimes we want to retaliate or mistreat them in the same way. Our Family Memory Verse tells us how we should respond when we are hurt.”
- Ask someone to read the “Romans 12:17” poster.
- Say: “Now let’s read about a situation in which David could choose to repay evil with evil or do what was honorable.”
- Ask another leader to read 1 Samuel 26:6-8.
- Continue: “David has the perfect opportunity to eliminate Saul as his enemy forever and take the throne. Saul is right within his reach and one of David’s men has offered to kill him with his own spear. David had a big decision to make. Our Text Truth reveals what our response must be when we have been mistreated: **To obey God, we must love others, even when they mistreat us.** Let’s finish this story and see how David responded.”

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

- Say: “We are going to stay in 1 Samuel 26 for the rest of the Bible story.”
- Tell the Bible Story in your own words. A script has been provided for your reference.
- Consider passing a piece of paper around as you tell the story and let kids draw a portion of the story and then give it to the next person to draw more of the story each time you say “pass.” Place the sheet on a clipboard if you are not seated at tables. Have extra sheets available if needed.
- Show the finished drawing(s) to the class and ask them to tell you what was happening in each section.
- Ask: “Can someone tell me today’s Text Truth? **To obey God, we must love others, even when they mistreat us.** What did David do after being repeatedly mistreated by Saul? He chose to honor God by not hurting Saul. Why did David do this? He knew revenge was not the right choice; David knew that God was protecting him.” Introduce the

TOOLS:

Bibles; Family Cards; “Text Truth Strips,” “Connection Statements,” “David’s Flight from Saul,” and “Romans 12:17” (Poster Pack); paper; pencils; Explore the Bible on Location video

Connection Statement. Guide boys and girls to read it aloud.

- Say: “It is very difficult to make peace instead of getting revenge when someone has wronged us. When we make peace, though, we know that we are right with God and that is greater than revenge.”
- Display the “David’s Flight from Saul” poster. Invite kids to consider how long and how far David traveled to escape King Saul.
- Continue: “Saul was trying to kill David even though David did nothing wrong. David could have killed Saul on at least two occasions, but instead spared his life. Jesus, who never sinned at all, was killed and His response was to show love. If Jesus can show us love, even after all the sins we commit, then we can show love to those who wrong us.”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 12” video. Ask: “Would you get tired of hiding all of the time? Being away from your family? What did Abishai tell David to do? What did David do? Why?”

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE

- Display “Romans 12:17.”
- Say: “We already read our Family Memory Verse during our study today. Let’s say it again.”
- Continue: “This is a great verse to memorize so that when we are tempted to get revenge, we will remember God’s Word and that we should try to do what is honorable. Share this verse with your family and tell them today’s Bible story.”

PRAYER

- Lead kids to pray the Family Memory Verse back to God.
- Transition to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and help kids turn to today's pages, "David Spared Saul's Life."
- Guide kids to open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 26. Help kids complete the activity, "Order Up!" (*Answers: 3, 5, 8, 1, 7, 6, 4, 2*)
- Invite a volunteer to read about David's kindness to others under the exit sign. Lead boys and girls to locate 2 Samuel 9:6-7 to find the answer.
- Select another kid to read aloud about today's objects, the spear and jug.
- Choose a few kids to each read one statement about the javelins.
- Remind kids of today's Text Truth.
- Help kids think of ways they can live out this week's Text Truth as they respond to the prompt in "Obeying by Love."

TECH CONNECT (OPT.)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.
- You may also listen to the "Word to Know" pronunciation on the app. Encourage everyone to try to say the word together.

PRAYER TIME

- Ask for volunteers to share praises about a time they were able to do what was honorable instead of repaying evil for evil. Lead them in a prayer, asking God to help them to treat others the way He would have us treat them.

EXPLORATION APPLICATION (15 MINUTES)

Choose one or more of the following activities to complete as time allows.

SEIZE THE SWORD

Tools: craft sticks (various colors), "Review Questions" (enhanced CD), bucket, marker

- Prior to class, write point amounts on sticks. Use different amounts on different colors. Place sticks in a bucket.
- Form two teams. Stand at the front of the room between the two teams. Have the "swords" in a bucket in front of you.
- Say: "I will ask a review question and one person from each team will be at the front of the line to answer. The first one to reach me, grab a sword, and answer correctly gets to keep their sword and the number of points written on it. The team with the most points at the end wins!"
- Play the game. Say: "That was a fun way to review what we learned today. Let's say our Text Truth again together! **To obey God, we must love others, even when they mistreat us.**"
- Ask: "How can you obey this truth this week?"



PALLET ART

Tools: large craft sticks (5 per kid), highlighters (various colors), masking tape, fine tip permanent markers, twine, magnets, "Romans 12:17" (Poster Pack)

- Say: "Let's say our Family Memory Verse all together again. We are going to make some pallet art that will help us remember how we are to respond when we are mistreated. You can hang these in your room, your locker, or anywhere that you will see on a daily basis."
- Give each child 5 large craft sticks and instruct them to color the sticks with highlighters (make sure you have colors boys would like to use).
- Then let them use the permanent markers to write the Family Memory Verse on the sticks (3-5 words per stick).
- Lay the sticks in a vertical line so that you can read the verse. Then turn all of the sticks over and cover the back in masking tape to bind them together.
- Allow kids to choose whether they want to use twine to make a loop at the top for hanging or use magnets.
- Review the Text Truth: **To obey God, we must love others, even when they mistreat us.**



ADVICE OR TRUTH?

Tools: "Advice or Truth?" (enhanced CD), pencils, Bibles

- Say: "School and books teach us a lot of important things. Some of the things we learn may get mixed up with what we learn from the Bible. It can be confusing to know what is just a neat piece of advice and what is truth from God's Word. We need to know the difference because God's Word gives us power to overcome temptation and encourages us to pursue God. Take a few minutes to read the statements on your sheet and write either *A* (advice) or *T* (truth) by each one."
- Allow time for kids to complete the sheet.
- Say: "Okay, let's find out how much we know about God's Word."
- Read each statement and have kids call out "Advice" or "Truth." Then tell them the correct answer. Have them mark the right answer on their sheet.
- Say: "It is so important for us to know God's Word. The Family Memory Verses that we learn each week are a great way to do that! Let's say today's verse again."





DAVID DEFEATED THE AMALEKITES

1 Samuel 30:6-8,18-25

David and his men eventually wearied of running, hiding and struggling to survive in the harsh environment of the Judean wilderness, and they finally decided to seek refuge among the Philistines. In 1 Samuel 27, David arrived with an army. He had been estranged from Saul for so long that King Achish of Gath apparently decided that he could now regard David as an ally. Achish gave David the town of Ziklag for David and his people.

While living there, David played a dangerous game. He raided local peoples, plundered them, and killed everyone he raided. David kept the plunder for himself. David slaughtered everyone in order to cover up the truth. He told the Philistines that he was raiding Judah and not these other peoples. David wanted to be sure that no one survived from the plundered villages to tell King Achish the truth. Much of what David did at this time was morally dubious.

After some time, the Philistines and the Israelites prepared for a major battle at Mount Gilboa, far from Ziklag. David marched out with the Philistine army, but before arriving at Gilboa, he and his men were dismissed because the Philistine lords did not trust him.

David and company made the long trek back south to Ziklag, which was in Philistine territory. There, they found that they had been away too long. In David's absence, the Amalekites had turned the tables on him and had raided his village. As David's men considered turning on him, he humbled himself and asked God for help and guidance. From this request, God answered and awarded victory to David and his men, illustrating one of the great themes of the Bible: God is our strength.

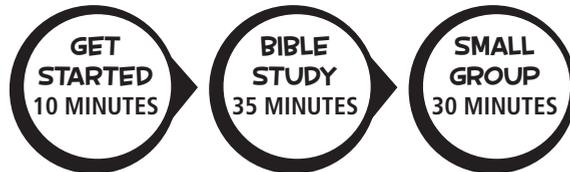
SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 30:6-8,18-25

CONNECTION PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 30:1-25

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE: 1 Samuel 30:6

TEXT TRUTH: God is our strength.



GET STARTED TOOLS

- Who Am I?: “Allergy Alert” (enhanced CD), bell, candy or treat

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

- Jumping In: Family Cards
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Connection Statements” (Poster Pack)
- Tell the Bible Story: Bibles

- Video: *Explore the Bible on Location* video

- Family Memory Verse: “1 Samuel 30:6” (Poster Pack)

- Prayer: whiteboard and marker

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

- Explorer Guide: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens
- Move: ties or strips of cloth, “Review Questions” (enhanced CD), bag

- Make: scrapbook paper, index cards, scissors, markers, glue sticks, hole punch, small metal binder rings, “Family Bible Verses” (Poster Pack)
- Examine: canned goods (2 per person), timer

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DAVID RESCUED HIS FAMILY

CONNECTION PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 30:1-25

David and his men had been to see the Philistines. They returned to Ziklag and discovered that the Amalekites had raided Ziklag. The Amalekites captured all of the people and carried them away. David and his men saw that their families had been kidnapped. They wept until they had no more energy to cry.

David was greatly upset, and the people blamed David for what had happened. But David found strength from God.

David asked God, “Should I pursue them?” God told David “Pursue and you will rescue the people.”

David and 600 men traveled after the Amalekites. When they stopped at the wadi Besor, 400 of the men continued on the pursuit. The 200 men, who were too exhausted to continue with David, stayed behind.

David and his men found an Egyptian and they fed him and gave him water to drink. He had been with the Amalekites, but they had left him behind. The man agreed to take David’s men to the group of Amalekites.

When David defeated the Amalekites, he got back everything the raiders had taken. The families were rescued. David’s family was rescued. David made a rule that the soldiers who fought and the soldiers who guarded the supplies all had to share the things they had captured from the Amalekites.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

The Book of 1 Samuel tells the story of three powerful leaders in Israel: Samuel, Saul, and David. Through each man and his leadership of Israel, the need for a perfect leader is evident. God’s people hoped for a day when a Messiah—the one true King—would rescue them. When Jesus came, He fulfilled God’s promise that a perfect Prophet, Priest, and King would rule over His people.

CONNECTION STATEMENT:

David asked God for guidance.

KEY CONNECTIONS TO 1 SAMUEL

CORE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 30:6-8,18-25

- David trusted God even when everyone was mad at David.
- David prayed and asked God what to do.
- God answered David’s prayer and helped David rescue his family.
- David was a wise and fair leader.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

“Allergy Alert” (enhanced CD), bell, candy or treat

- Prior to class, gather or mark the pages of each week’s Bible Story script. Use these as a reference for describing different people from the stories. Also, get candy or treats for prizes and display the “Allergy Alert” sign.

WHO AM I?

- Stand in front of group and place a bell in front of you on a table.
- Say: “We’ve met an interesting group of people in the last 12 weeks as we have studied the Book of 1 Samuel. Let’s play a game of Who Am I? to see if we remember the key facts about these people. I am going to read a few facts about a person, and the first person to ring this bell and say the correct answer will win a prize. The rules are that you cannot begin to move until I’ve read everything about the person, and if you get a right answer, you must sit and wait for everyone to have a turn before guessing again.”
- Play game.
- Ask: “Who was your favorite person in this study and why? (*Allow for responses.*) And who was your least favorite and why?” (*Allow for answers. Share your answers too.*)
- Transition to Bible Study.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMPING IN

- Lead kids in a cheer before getting started—Teacher: “I love Jesus; yes I do! I love Jesus; how ‘bout you?” Kids: “We love Jesus; yes we do! We love Jesus how ‘bout you?” Repeat louder, softer, and loud again.
- Say: “Well, that is one way to get awake before our Bible story; plus there is no better way to start than to tell Jesus we love Him!”
- Give out Family Cards.
- Introduce: “Today, part of our lesson takes place at today’s object, the Wadi Besor. David and his men camped there. Later, some of his men stayed there and some went into battle. After the battle, David brought back their winnings from the enemies and gave instructions about who would share in the victory. We will find out about all of the events leading up to the battle and what happened afterward.”
- Encourage: “Take this card home and add it to all of your Family Cards from 1 Samuel. You can review the stories and objects with your family!”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Help kids open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 30:6-8 and ask for a volunteer to read the three verses.
- Ask: “Why did it say that David was in a difficult position? Because everyone was mad at him over the loss of their families and wanted to stone him.”
- Say: “A few verses before this, David and his men came to Ziklag and discovered that it had been destroyed, burned down, and all of their families, including David’s, had been taken by the Amalekites. The people were angry at David that this happened. David was in mourning about his family, but he had to find out what the Lord wanted him to do next.”
- Introduce the Connection Statement.
- Ask: “What did the Lord tell David to do? (*Go after the Amalekites, overtake them, and rescue the people.*)”
- Continue: “Once again, David is facing a battle. This time he had to be even more afraid, because the people were angry at him. But David trusted God even when everyone was mad at him. It is hard to make decisions like this when people support you, but I imagine that it was a very difficult decision for David, knowing that the people wanted to hurt him. He trusted the Lord’s guidance and prepared for battle, believing what today’s Text Truth says: **God is our strength.**”
- Say: “Let’s find out what happened with David and the Amalekites and, as I tell the story, be thinking about everything you would be feeling if you were David.”

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

- Instruct kids to do the following while you tell the story: Cheer when you say “David,” boo when you say “Amalekites,” flex muscles to show God’s

TOOLS:

Bibles; Family Cards; “Text Truth Strips,” “Connection Statements,” and “1 Samuel 30:6” (Poster Pack); Explore the Bible on Location video; whiteboard; dry erase marker

strength when you say “God.”

- Tell the Bible Story in your own words. A script has been provided for your reference.
- Say: “David found victory in following the Lord once again. It probably felt like he was losing his way and losing the love of the people. It is easy to get discouraged when our eyes get to looking at our circumstances instead of God.”
- Explain: “Do any of you wear glasses or contacts? What do things look like when you aren’t wearing them? (*Fuzzy, hard to see details*) Then when you put on your glasses, everything becomes clear. You can see all of the details. This is what it is like when we look at our circumstances when trying to make decisions—things are fuzzy and hard to discern. Then when we get our eyes back on God, we can see clearly what we are supposed to do.”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 13” video. Ask: “What did you learn about sea turtles? Why do they need to be rescued sometimes? Who needed to be rescued in our Bible story? How were they rescued? Who helped David?”

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE

- Display “1 Samuel 30:6.”
- Say the verse together. Repeat with boys saying it and then the girls. Tell them to flex when they say “strength” or “encourage.” (*Choose the word found in the translation you use.*)
- Say: “Say the verse one more time, but instead of saying the name David, say your own name. God’s strength is not just for future kings, it is for all who have trusted in Him!”

PRAYER

- Have the kids list different characteristics of God (*our strength, help, Provider, Savior, Protector, Comforter, Friend, Father, Prince of Peace, and so on*). Write these on the whiteboard, then ask each kid to pray a prayer to God using one of the characteristics. *Dear God, thank you for being my*
_____.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute the Explorer Guides and help kids locate today's pages, "David Defeated the Amalekites."
- Ask a volunteer to read aloud the information about the Wadi Besor.
- Choose another leader to share the information about the ephod.
- Guide kids to follow the instructions to discover the "Hidden Message." (*Answer: David Found Strength in God.*) Help everyone locate 1 Samuel 30:6. Ask kids: "Why is this message important?"
- While Bibles are open, lead the girls and boys to locate today's "Word to Know" in their own Bibles.
- Guide kids to continue their exploration into God's Word by finding the Scripture references in "What the Bible Says." Assist kids as needed in locating the Scriptures and summarizing their main ideas.

TECH CONNECT (OPT.)

- Prior to class, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.
- You may also listen to the "Word to Know" pronunciation on the app. Encourage everyone to try to say the word together.

PRAYER TIME

- Have the kids spread out in the room and think about what areas they need to trust God in that they aren't currently. Pray to God, asking Him to guide them and be their source of strength.

EXPLORATION APPLICATION (15 MINUTES)

Choose one or more of the following activities to complete as time allows.



THREE-LEGGED REVIEW

Tools: ties or strips of cloth, "Review Questions" (enhanced CD), bag

- Prior to class, print out the review questions from each lesson, omitting the answers. Cut the questions apart and place in the bag.
- Form two teams. Then have each team form pairs. Give each pair a tie or strip of cloth to tie one of each of their legs together. Instruct the teams that, at your signal, a three-legged pair from each team will walk to you, and the first pair to reach you will draw a review question out of the bag. If they do not answer correctly, the other team may try. Repeat until everyone has played and all of the questions have been answered.
- Say: "Sometimes it is hard to rely on another person to help us get where we are going, we want to do it on our own. In the race today, you had to work together if you were going to win. We need to rely on God to give us the strength for life's race and work with our brothers and sisters in Christ to run the race!"
- Review Text Truth: **God is our strength.**



FAMILY MEMORY VERSE CARDS

Tools: scrapbook paper, index cards, scissors, markers, glue sticks, hole punch, small metal binder rings, "Family Memory Verses" (Poster Pack)

- Note: Remember to choose paper that is also boy-friendly.
- Say: "A great way to remember the verses that you learn in class is to keep a copy of them handy so that you can review them. We are going to make a set of Family Memory Verse cards today that you can keep in your backpack, on your nightstand, or in you desk."
- Have kids each take one index card and use it as a pattern to cut out 13 rectangles from the scrapbook paper. Then instruct them to write all 13 Family Memory Verses on the cards. (*Display the posters for reference.*) Punch a hole in the top left hand corner of each card and slide them on a metal binder ring.
- Say: "Let's review today's verse. Everyone say it together!"
- Review the Text Truth: **God is our strength.**

YOUR STRENGTH OR GOD'S STRENGTH

Tools: canned goods (2 per person), timer



- Give each person two canned goods and instruct them to hold their arms stretched out in front of them, holding the cans with their palms facing up. Set a timer and tell them to remain that way for as long as they can. Note the time when their arms start to fall. Now have them pair up and use only one set of cans. One person will hold the cans, while the other person holds their arms up from underneath. Set the time and note how long before anyone waivers.
- Ask: "Which way was easier? Why?"
- Say: "Just as it was easier to hold those cans when someone was lending you their strength, the same is true with God. On our own, we wavier, drop things, and fall. Our strength alone does not last very long. When we allow God to support us with His strength, then those weights in our lives do not seem so heavy. We are able to weather the storms of life and struggles because we have support from God. Let's say our Text Truth again! **God is our strength.** "

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Each of these terms will help you as you delve into teaching Explore the Bible: Kids.

- **CORE PASSAGE**

The focal passage for all age groups.

- **TEXT TRUTH**

The main point of the Core Passage to communicate to children.

- **CONNECTION PASSAGE**

Related Scripture and story that connects to the Text Truth and Core Passage.

- **CONNECTION STATEMENT**

A statement connecting the Core and Connection Passages.

- **CHRIST IN CONTEXT**

The message of Jesus in a particular Bible book.

- **GENRE**

A specific form or type of writing or literature. Each form has rules or basic features. In the Bible, there are six genres: Law, History, Poetry and Wisdom, Prophecy, Gospel, and Letters.

- **CONTEXT**

The words or environment around what you are studying that help you understand what it means. Examples of types of context: historical context, cultural context

- **ORIGINAL AUDIENCE**

The author of each Bible book wrote to a specific audience. The original audience is the first audience to receive the Bible book. All other readers, including today's readers, are not the original audience. The original audience is key to understanding the author's purpose for the Bible book or text.

- **CROSS-REFERENCING**

Examining a second (*third, fourth, and etc.*) biblical text to gain greater understanding of the first biblical text.

COMING NEXT QUARTER

FALL 2016

BOOK -The letters of Peter and Jude encourage believers to remain strong in the Word. God's Word is valuable and kids will learn through this study how to live godly lives and show honor to God.

DATE	CORE PASSAGE	CONNECTION PASSAGE	MEMORY VERSE
Sept. 4	1 Peter 1:3-9	John 20:19-31	1 Peter 1:8
Sept. 11	1 Peter 1:13-25	Deuteronomy 4-6	1 Peter 1:22
Sept. 18	1 Peter 2:1-10	Exodus 19:3-8; 29:45-46; 40:1-16	1 Peter 2:10
Sept. 25	1 Peter 2:11-20	Matthew 17:24-27; 22:15-22; Romans 13:1-7	1 Peter 2:12
Oct. 2	1 Peter 3:1-12	Genesis 42-45	1 Peter 3:8
Oct. 9	1 Peter 3:13-22	Acts 17:16-34	1 Peter 3:15
Oct. 16	1 Peter 4:1-11	John 13:1-20	1 Peter 4:9
Oct. 23	1 Peter 4:12-19	Acts 16:16-36	John 16:33
Oct. 30	1 Peter 5:1-11	Genesis 3	1 Peter 5:7
Nov. 6	2 Peter 1:3-11	Acts 26:12-25	2 Peter 1:3
Nov. 13	2 Peter 1:12-21	Luke 24:13-49	Hebrews 4:12
Nov. 20	2 Peter 2:1-3; Jude 16-25	2 Chronicles 34:14-28	Jude 1:21
Nov. 27	2 Peter 3:3-13, 17-18	Luke 12:35-40; Mark 13:32-37; Matthew 24:30-31,44	2 Peter 3:9

TOOLS FOR DIGGING DEEP!

OLDER KIDS TOOL KIT

The resources you need to lead one class:

- One Older Kids Leader Guide
- One Older Kids Explorer Guide
- One pack Older Kids Family Cards
- One Older Kids Poster Pack
- One Kids Enhanced CD
- One Kids DVD

OLDER KIDS LEADER GUIDE

Helps older kids connect the Bible to present day

- Leader-friendly session plans for small- and large-group learning
- Activities to encourage kids to dig, explore, and discover the Bible

OLDER KIDS EXPLORER GUIDE

Engage older kids Explorer Plus with a colorful, fact-filled magazine.

- Identifies each object that reminds kids of the Bible story and Text Truth
- Weekly pages with colorful illustrations, info-graphics, and photos
- Fun-to-do Bible-focused activities relate to the Bible content and application.
- Send home at the end of the quarter for kids to keep

OLDER KIDS POSTER PACK

Filled with leader-friendly resources that make teaching easy

- Christ in Context poster(s)
- Text Truth statements
- Family Memory Verse posters (*ESV, HCSB, KJV, NIV*)
- Additional visual aids and resources

OLDER KIDS FAMILY CARDS

- Equip parents with discussion questions that relate to each session.

KIDS ENHANCED CD

- Bible-related music
- Printable teacher tools and session helps

KIDS DVD

- Includes a video for each session to help kids connect the biblical text in the cultural and historical context of the session.

KIDS TOOL KIT WITH WORSHIP

- Second-hour option
- Kid-friendly worship experience that reinforces every weekly session



THE GOSPEL

GOD'S PLAN FOR ME

The word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation.



GOD RULES. The Bible tells us God created everything, including you and me, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to recite Genesis 1:1 from memory or read it from his Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 and Colossians 1:16-17.



WE SINNED. Since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God (Romans 3:23). The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death (Romans 6:23).



GOD PROVIDED. Read John 3:16 aloud. God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read Ephesians 2:8-9.



JESUS GIVES. Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



WE RESPOND. We can respond to Jesus. “The ABCs of Becoming a Christian” is a simple tool that helps us remember how to respond when prompted by the Holy Spirit to the gift Jesus offers.

ADMIT

Admit to God that you are a sinner. The first people God created chose to sin and disobey God. Ever since then, all people have chosen to sin and disobey (Romans 3:23). Tell God you messed up and you are sorry for doing your own thing and turning away from Him through your thoughts, words, and actions. Repent, turn away from your sin. (Acts 3:19; 1 John 1:9) *Repent* doesn't just mean turning from doing bad things to doing good things. It means turning from sin and even from your own good works and turning to Jesus, trusting only in Him to save you.

BELIEVE

Believe that Jesus is God's Son and receive God's gift of forgiveness from sin. You must believe that only Jesus can save you and you cannot save yourself from your sin problem—not even by praying to God, going to church, or reading your Bible. Your faith or your trust is only in Jesus and what He did for you through His life, death, and resurrection. (Acts 16:31; Acts 4:12; John 14:6; Ephesians 2:8-9)

CONFESS

Confess your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Tell God and tell others what you believe. If Jesus is your Savior, you are trusting only in Him to save you. Jesus is also Lord, which means He is in charge and calling the shots in your life. You can start following Him and doing what He says in the Bible. You are born again into a new life and look forward to being with God forever. (Romans 10:9-10,13)

EXPLORE THE BIBLE TOGETHER!



Who can resist the opportunity to sit down with your kids and dig into God's Word together? It's especially fun with a cool app that delivers 360-degree views of objects and exciting games. And when the app provides fresh content each quarter to reinforce what kids are learning and is absolutely FREE—well, it's pretty much a no-brainer.



FREE APP!

The *Explore the Bible Family App* is available for mobile devices and tablets. Download it today from the iTunes® App store or Google Play!



EXPLORE THE BIBLE

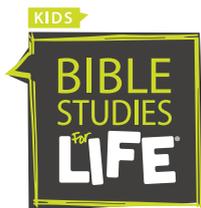
Book-by-book studies for groups of all ages.

Want to use Explore the Bible with other age groups?

Preview Explore the Bible for students and adults at LifeWay.com/ExploreTheBible

Now you can choose the Bible translation that appears in your study!

CHECK OUT THESE ADDITIONAL STUDY OPTIONS TO MEET ALL OF YOUR PROGRAMMING NEEDS THROUGHOUT THE WEEK:



BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE: KIDS

Combine creative teaching elements and hands-on learning to teach kids Bible truth and give them specific ways to apply it to their lives. Age-specific content is based on the Levels of Biblical Learning and packaged in a way that helps you disciple kids and strengthen families.

biblestudiesforlife.com



WORSHIP FOR LIFE: KIDS

Solid biblical teaching, engaging worship, group games, and take-home family resources—all wrapped in a fun, energetic experience that your kids will love! Use it as a stand-alone large group program or hand-in-hand with

Bible Studies For Life: Kids.

lifeway.com/worshipforlife



THE GOSPEL PROJECT FOR KIDS

The entire gospel story like kids have never seen it before! Each week, through videos, music, activities and more, kids connect biblical events to God's ultimate plan of redemption through Christ.

gospelproject.com/kids

