



Unit 10 | Session 1

ISRAEL DEMANDED A KING

1 Samuel 8-10

Samuel was a judge over Israel. When he was old, Samuel chose his sons—Joel and Abijah—to be judges. There was a problem, though. Joel and Abijah were not good judges like their father. Joel and Abijah were unfair and dishonest.

The leaders of Israel went to Samuel. “You were a good judge,” they said, “but your sons have not followed your example. We don’t want them to lead us; we want a king like the nations around us!”

Samuel wasn’t sure how to respond, so he prayed to God.

God said, “Samuel, they are not rejecting you; they are rejecting Me as King. Give them what they want, but make sure you warn them what it will be like to have an earthly king.”

Samuel explained to the Israelites what rights an earthly king would have. A king could make their sons serve in the army, he could make their daughters work for him, or he could take away their fields and servants. Samuel warned that the people would regret asking for a king, but the Israelites didn’t care.

“Give us a king!” they said. So God told Samuel to give the people what they wanted. Then Samuel told the leaders of Israel to go

back to their cities and wait for a king.

One day, a man named Saul came to Samuel. Saul was tall and handsome. He was looking for his father’s missing donkeys. Samuel invited Saul to have dinner with him. He told Saul that his family would be important to everyone in Israel.

Saul didn’t understand. He wasn’t from a big family; his tribe—the tribe of Benjamin—was the smallest tribe in Israel. Still, Samuel gave Saul the best spot at his dinner table. The next morning, Samuel poured oil on Saul’s head.

“You will be king!” Samuel said. Samuel gave Saul some instructions and sent him home to wait for the right time to start ruling over the Israelites. The Spirit of God was with Saul.

Christ Connection: God intended for a heavenly King to rule over Israel, but the Israelites did not trust God’s plan. They wanted a king like the nations around them. God had a better plan: to eventually send His Son, Jesus, to be the perfect King forever.



1 WELCOME TIME

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

- **Have you ever demanded something? What was it?**
- **Why did you want it so bad? Did you get what you wanted?**

2 SESSION STARTER

OPTION 1: TRUST THE GUIDE

Before the session, put down tape on the floor as the boundaries of the obstacle course. Place several items like pool noodles, cones, etc. in the middle of the obstacle course. Pick a child to go through the obstacle course and another child to be their guide. Explain to the child going through the obstacle course that he must trust the voice of the other child to guide him through the obstacle course. Place the blindfold on the first child and let the guide begin.

SAY “ Was crossing the obstacle course easy or hard? The obstacle course looked hard, but you needed to trust your guide to make it through. In our story today, the Israelites didn’t trust God to guide them. Let’s hear more about the story! ”

OPTION 2: PERFECT KING



Choose a volunteer and give him 30 seconds to draw a king on the board. Once finished, ask the kids to give characteristics of a perfect king. The volunteer will write these characteristics around the king on the board. Once the kids have described a perfect king, compare this king to the King God wanted for Israel, King Jesus. Allow another volunteer to write “King Jesus” on the whiteboard and ask kids to describe the characteristics of Jesus.

SAY “ While the king you described might be a good king, no earthly king could be perfect. The desire Israel had for a king would never be filled apart from Jesus. We’ll hear more about that in today’s story! ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

The Bible tells us what is true about God and about ourselves. All of the stories in the Bible fit together to tell us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Today we are going to hear about a time when Israel demanded a king. Whether this is your first time or your tenth time hearing this story, there is always something new to learn in God's Word.

Read from 1 Samuel 8-10.

•What does this story teach us about God?

God was the perfect King for His people. God protected Israel from Pharaoh's army at the Red Sea. God had provided water, manna, and quail for Israel in the wilderness. God had parted the Jordan River. God's people did not even realize that God was everything they were wanting in an earthly king.

•Why could no earthly king compare to Jesus?

God knew that no earthly king could ever compare to Jesus, the perfect King God planned to send, not just for Israel, but for all people. **Because of who Jesus is, and what He did on the cross, no king can compare to Jesus.** The Bible says that everybody, even earthly kings, will one day bow to King Jesus. (See Phil. 2:10.)

Form groups of two or three and practice retelling the Bible story in your own words. Think of someone you could share the story with this week.

CHRIST CONNECTION

God intended for a heavenly King to rule over Israel, but the Israelites did not trust God's plan. They wanted a king like the nations around them. God had a better plan: to eventually send His Son, Jesus, to be the perfect King forever.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 MISSIONS MOMENT

Remind kids that the Israelites moved into a land where other people were already living. Explain that long before America was founded as a country, people lived in the land. These groups and their descendants are the Native Americans. In the 1700s, God called a man named David Brainerd to be a missionary to Native Americans. David decided to learn the language of one of the Native American tribes so that he could tell them about Jesus. Share that because of David's work, many Native Americans trusted in Jesus and more missionaries were inspired to keep reaching out to the tribes. Ask a volunteer to pray that Native Americans today would hear and believe the gospel and trust in Jesus.

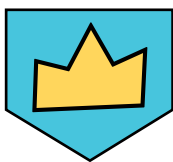
3 PRAY

Father, You are good and gracious. You love us and provide for us. You know what is best for us, even when we don't. Guide us through Your Word to trust You and Your plan for us. Thank You for Your incredible love for us through Jesus. Amen.

THE GOSPEL

GOD'S PLAN FOR ME

The gospel is the good news, the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use Scripture and the guide provided below to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.



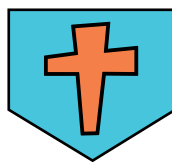
GOD RULES.

Ask: "Who is in charge at home?" Explain that because God created everything, He is in charge of everything. Read Revelation 4:11.



WE SINNED.

Ask: "Have you ever done something wrong?" Tell kids that everyone sins, or disobeys God. Our sin separates us from God. Read Romans 3:23.



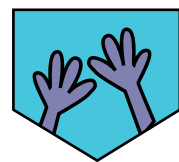
GOD PROVIDED.

Explain that God is holy and must punish sin. God sent His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment we deserve. Read John 3:16.



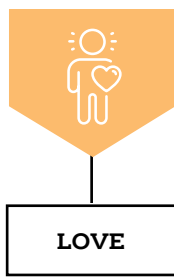
JESUS GIVES.

Ask: "What is the best gift you've ever received?" Say that Jesus took our punishment for sin by giving His life, and He gives us His righteousness. God sees us as if we lived the perfect life Jesus lived. This is the best gift ever! Read 2 Corinthians 5:21.



WE RESPOND.

Explain that everyone has a choice to make. Ask: "Will you trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord? You can turn from self and sin and turn to Jesus." Read Romans 10:9-10.



THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

1 THINK ABOUT THE STORY

- What should you do if a friend tries to get you to do the wrong thing?
- How can remembering Jesus help you do what is right?

2 GROUP DISCUSSION

Distribute Bibles. Guide preteens to open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 8. Choose a volunteer to read aloud 1 Samuel 8:5-8. Remind preteens that God knew an earthly king was not best for His people, but He gave them what they wanted, an earthly king. One day, God would send His perfect Son, Jesus, to be the one true King.

Choose another volunteer to read aloud 1 Samuel 8:5-8 again. Then lead the group to discuss the following questions.

1. Why did the Israelites want their own king?

Help kids understand that God's people had lost sight of God as their provider, leader, and King. They wanted to be like the other nations and have an earthly king.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Sam. 8:20-21.)

2. The Israelites had forgotten God's faithfulness. Are we guilty of not trusting God's plan? Why?

Help kids understand that because of our sin, we all struggle at times to trust God's plan. We like to lean on our own understanding. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Deut. 1:31-32.)

3. What is one way we can trust God with for our lives?

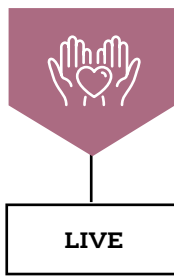
We can put our trust in God and His Word that shows us how He proved His love for us through sending Jesus to die on the cross for our sin. We can trust in Jesus as our Lord and Savior and believe.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read John 3:16.)

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

Why does sin separate us from God?

Because God is holy, sin has broken our relationship with God.



THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

1 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY

Instruct kids to open their Bibles to Isaiah 6:5. Lead them in reading the key passage aloud together. Before the session, write the words of the key passage on index cards. Hide the index cards around the room. Tell the kids they're going on a scavenger hunt and they must find each index card and place them in order on a table or floor.

Tell kids that the prophet Isaiah knew his sin separated him from his holy God. Because of our sinful actions, attitudes, words, and thoughts, we too are separated from God. The good news is that God's plan to send Jesus gives us the opportunity to be forgiven and saved from our sin. The sin that separates us from God is paid for and forgiven when we believe.

2 PRAY

Invite volunteers to share prayer requests. Then pray, praising God for His goodness, thanking Him for His perfect plan, and asking Him to help us trust His plan for our lives.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

Present scenarios giving kids the opportunity to decide between what they want and what is best. Examples: Cookies vs. vegetables; Staying up late vs. going to bed on time; Doing homework early vs. waiting until the last minute to get it done; Watching a movie they're not allowed to watch vs. turning off the movie; Cleaning your room when asked vs. deciding to watch TV instead; Keeping money you found on the floor at a store vs. turning in the money to an employee at the store.

Point out that because of our sin, we are all wired with the desire to choose our own way instead of what is best— God's way. This was true of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, it was true of God's people wanting a king in our story today, and it true of us also. Sometimes what is best for us isn't what we think it is. God knows what is best for us and we can trust that what Him always.