

Samuel Anoints Saul as the First King



Overview

Materials You'll Need

- large popsicle sticks
- colored construction paper
- scissors
- glue
- markers



Scriptures

1 Sam 8-12

Bible Truth Objective(s)

We are God's chosen people

Behavioral Objective(s)

To recognize we are special children of God

Memory Verse

"I chose you out of the world." (Jn 15:19)



Bible Knowledge

Samuel

Samuel was dedicated to the Lord before his birth (1 Sam 1:1). When he was old enough, he was brought to the tabernacle and raised by Eli, the priest. He was taught the words of God and spent his early years serving the Lord. The Bible records that he "grew in stature, and in favor both with the Lord and men" (1 Sam 2:26). After the death of Eli and his sons, Israel experienced many years of oppression from the Philistines. This was the time Samuel emerged as the judge of the Israelites. Eventually, he led the people to victory over the Philistines at Mizpah and drove them away from Israel's territory. After this, the Israelites were able to live mostly in peace.

When Samuel was old, he allowed his sons to judge over Israel (1 Sam 8:1-2). However, his sons did not walk in the ways of the Lord. This is when the Israelites asked for a king to rule over them. Instead of being God's special people, the Israelites wanted to be the same as all the other nations and have an earthly king fight their battles (1 Sam 8:19). They

rejected God as their king and wanted someone else. The Bible records that Samuel was displeased upon hearing their request. But as always, he prayed to God and asked for guidance. God told him to first warn the Israelites of the consequences of asking for a king (1 Sam 8:10-18). When the people did not heed the words of Samuel, he prayed to God once more, and God told him to do as they asked.

Saul

Saul was the first king of Israel. He was the son of Kish, a man from the tribe of Benjamin. He is described as tall and handsome (1 Sam 9:1-2, 21). He was first secretly anointed by Samuel (1 Sam 10:1) and then later selected publicly by lot (1 Sam 10:17-24). Saul began his reign well and proved himself to be a fit leader by delivering the city of Jabesh Gilead and giving God the credit (1 Sam 11). But later, Saul allowed jealousy and mistrust to rule over his heart and made many errors in judgment. Eventually, he failed to trust God altogether and disobeyed God's commands. In the end, Saul and his sons were killed by the hands of the Philistines (1 Sam 31).



Understanding Your Students

In today's lesson the first king of Israel, Saul, is chosen. We can be sure that the children will love hearing about him because they are fascinated by fairy tales about kings and queens, princes and princesses. This is because it is a completely different world to them. In all these children's stories, people are dressed up in fancy clothes, there are many parties to attend, and kings and queens can give out commands.

When Saul was picked to be the king in front of all the people, there may not have been a big feast. But there was certainly a lot of commotion and cause for celebration. The people shouted, "Long live the king!" It would have been a joyous occasion for Saul and the people. However, this was not a fairy tale. The

focus of this lesson is not that a king was picked and how happy everyone was. Actually, God was sad that the people wanted someone else to lead them. Therefore, it is important to turn the focus of the lesson to the simple fact that God chose Saul because he was the right person for the job at that time. Even though the people really wanted a king, they were not allowed to just select any one they wanted. They still needed to trust and obey God. God always has His plans for everything, and His way is the best way.

We can teach the students about obedience to God's will in many of the Bible stories. This is a constant theme. As they see how God is in control of everything, they will begin to naturally turn to Him for all things, big and small. They can pray to Him before a rehearsal, when someone is sick, or if they just want to share some news with Him. This is a great way to build up a solid foundation for their faith.



Vocabulary

Nations

countries and lands

Reject

when we reject something, it means we don't want it

Anoint

to pour oil on someone's head; it is a special way to show that person that God has given him an important job



Before You Teach

In 1 Samuel 8:19, the Israelites said to Samuel, "We will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles."

Although we cannot place our human emotions onto God, God must have felt something similar to being heart-broken upon hearing these words. Why? It was not wrong to have a king lead the people. In fact, it was a part of God's plan (Gen 49:10; Num 24:17; Deut 17:14-20). It was the way the Israelites asked and their motive for wanting a king that displeased God. They wanted a king because they wanted to be like the other nations. They also wanted a king to lead them into battle. In essence, they were replacing God with an earthly leader. That is why God said to Samuel, "They have not

rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them" (1 Sam 8:7).

The Israelites were a separate people. They were not supposed to be the same as other nations. Yet, that was what they were asking for. They could not have possibly forgotten all the great things God had done for them in battle. But they wanted to put their trust in a human being instead. We can see how the Israelites, again and again, rejected God's guidance.

What about us? Have we been rejecting Him without even realizing it? When we encounter a problem, do we use our own methods to resolve it or do we put it into our prayer? When we are celebrating, do we share our happiness with God? Whether we have ups or downs, do we turn to the world first for answers or do we look to God as our friend and guide? God is our constant companion and He wants to be by our side, leading us each step of the way. Let us remember to let Him reign.



Bible Story

Samuel Grows Old

In the last lesson, we learned about Samuel. Samuel grew up in the temple with Eli the priest. He lived there because his mother made a promise to God that Samuel would serve God all his life. One time, God spoke to Samuel when he was getting ready to go to sleep. At first, Samuel thought Eli was talking to him. But after three times, Eli knew that it was God's voice. God was trying to tell Samuel some important things. When Samuel told God he was listening, God told him many things that would happen in the future. God told Samuel these things because He knew Samuel would be a good helper and judge. A long time ago the people of Israel had judges to lead them. Judges were people who listened to God and helped the Israelites. Judges also told the people if they were doing something wrong and showed them what God wanted them to do.

After Samuel grew up, he became a judge. He was a good judge and listened to God. He led the Israelites for many years, and the people lived in peace. When Samuel became old he let his two sons, Joel and Abijah, lead Israel. But Joel and Abijah did not do what God wanted them to do. Instead they did wrong things including taking money from other people.

The People Want a King

The people of Israel were very unhappy about Samuel's sons. They looked at the other nations around them. They saw that the other countries had kings to lead them, not judges. The people began to think, "Wouldn't it be great to have a king? Then we would be like other people."

So the Israelites went to Samuel and said, "Please find us a king. We want to be like the other people."

When Samuel heard this, he was not happy. He knew that God would not like what the people were asking for. This is because the Israelites were the special people of God. They were different. God was their leader. No other country had God as their leader. They were not supposed to be like other people. Samuel went to God to find out what he should do.

God said to him, "It's not you they have rejected, but Me." This meant that God knew His people did not want Him to lead them. God is the best leader but the people wanted a man to lead them instead. Samuel went back to the Israelites to try and change their minds.

"Having a king will not be good because he will take things from you and make you work for him," explained Samuel. However, the people did not listen and insisted on having a king. Samuel prayed to God again and told Him what the people wanted. In the end, God allowed them to have a king. But who would be the first king? God had a special person in mind for the important job. His name was Saul. He was a handsome and strong young man. The Bible also says that Saul was the tallest of all the people.

Samuel Anoints Saul

One day, Saul's father lost his donkeys, and he sent Saul and a servant to find them. Saul obeyed and traveled far to find the donkeys. However, they couldn't find them even after looking for a long time. Then Saul's servant had an idea. He told Saul that he knew a man of God who knew many things. Maybe he could help them find the donkeys. So Saul and his servant went to look for this man of God. Who do you think this man of God was? That's right, it was Samuel.

A very special thing happened the day before Saul met Samuel. God had already told Samuel He was going to send a man to him who was going to be the king over Israel. This man was Saul. God told Samuel that he must anoint Saul. To anoint someone means to pour oil over the person's head. By doing this, it means this person has a special job to do.

When Saul and his servant finally found Samuel, God said to Samuel again that Saul was the one He had chosen to be king. Samuel knew that Saul was worried about the donkeys. So he told Saul not to worry about the animals because they had been found. Saul did not know this because he was so far away from home. But Saul was very glad that this man of God knew that the donkeys were safe. Samuel told Saul and his servant to stay one night. This is because the next day, Samuel wanted to tell Saul about the special job God had prepared for him.

Early the next morning, Samuel walked with Saul and his servant out of the city. As they walked, Samuel asked Saul's servant to walk ahead of them. Samuel did this because he wanted to tell Saul that God wanted him to be the king. After the servant walked ahead, Samuel told Saul all that God wanted him to know. Then Samuel took oil and poured it on Saul's head. This was a sign that God anointed Saul as king.

After this, Saul went home, and he told his family all about the donkeys and how he met Samuel. But he didn't tell anyone that Samuel had anointed him. Why don't you think Saul told anyone? (Let the children answer.) Maybe Saul was scared and did not really understand what a big job God had in mind for him.

The People Find Out Saul Is the King

After Samuel anointed Saul, Samuel gathered all the people of Israel together. He told them that since they did not want God as their king, God had anointed a king to lead them. His name was Saul. The people were excited and wanted to know what this new king looked like, but they couldn't find him. This was because when Saul heard the news, he was a little scared about becoming a king. He found a place to hide so that the Israelites couldn't find him.

But God knew where he was hiding and told the people. The people ran to find him and brought him in front of all the Israelites. When Saul walked in front of the people, he was taller than all of them. The people were happy because now they had a king to rule them. They even shouted, "Long live the king!"

We Are Still God's Special People

Even though God was not happy that the Israelites wanted a king, God still chose a king for them. He could not just let the people pick whoever they wanted. This is because God has His plans and we have to obey His plans. God chose Saul as the king over the Israelites because Saul was special to God. God knew he would be able to do the job. And even though the people had a king, they were still God's special people. That would never change.

We are also very special to God. Do you know why? (Let the children answer.) We are special because we have been chosen by God to be His children. We are called His children after we are baptized. (Recall the meaning of baptism. Ask the children what baptism means to them.) Isn't it great to be able to come to church on Saturdays and worship God and pray to Him? He has chosen us because He loves us.



Check For Understanding

1. **Who took over Samuel's job as the judge of the people after he grew old?** (Samuel's sons, Joel and Abijah.)
2. **Did Samuel's sons do what was right in God's eyes?** (No.)
3. **Instead of God as their leader, what did the people of Israel want?** (They wanted a king, just like the other nations.)
4. **Why did the people want a king?** (They saw that other countries had kings and they thought a king could help them in battle.)
5. **What did Saul's father tell Saul to go look**

for? (The lost donkeys.)

6. **What do you do when you anoint someone?** (You pour oil on his head.)
7. **Why did Samuel anoint Saul?** (It meant that Saul would be king.)
8. **What was Saul doing when Samuel announced him as king?** (Saul was hiding because he was afraid.)
9. **Even though God had found a king for the people, He was sad about it. Why?** (The Israelites were God's special people. He was their leader and God. But now, the people wanted a person to be their leader instead.)
10. **We will always be God's special people. Why?** (Allow students to answer.)



Life Application Story

God's Very Special People

The kindergarten class was doing a special project today. They were going to decorate their classroom. Everybody was going to make something to put up on the wall. All the children thought very hard about what they had learned during their lessons and began to draw and cut.

Susie cut out many paper hearts. There were hearts of all colors and sizes.

Mrs. Hayes, who was the teacher that day, asked Susie, "Why did you decide to draw hearts?"

Susie replied with a big smile, "The hearts are to show how much I love Jesus and how much Jesus loves me."

"That's very true, Susie. Jesus loves you very much because you're special," said Mrs. Hayes. Then she said to the class, "Jesus loves every single one of you because you are all special to Him. He has chosen all of you to be His own special people, just like the Israelites we talked about."

Juan was busy cutting out the letters J-E-S-U-S.

Mrs. Hayes asked Juan, "Why did you decide to cut out the name of God to put on the wall?"

"This is to remind us that Jesus is always here," Juan said.

"Very good, Juan," said Mrs. Hayes. "No matter what happens, remember that Jesus is always with you because you are very special to Him. When you're sad or happy, worried or scared, remember He is always here to look after you because you're special to Him."

Rachel, who was the youngest in the class, drew many flowers and colored them in. Then she cut them out with the help of Mrs. Hayes.

"Can you tell me why you made the flowers, Rachel?" Mrs. Hayes asked.

"I made flowers because God makes all the flowers and trees," Rachel said.

"Good thinking, Rachel. God is a wonderful Creator. He created everyone here and made everyone special in their own way," Mrs. Hayes said.

John was quietly sitting at his desk and was cutting out something from a white sheet of paper.

Mrs. Hayes looked over John's shoulder to see what he was cutting out.

"John, what are you making?" Mrs. Hayes

asked.

John said, "I'm cutting out a dove."

"That is an interesting choice," said Mrs. Hayes.

"Well, my mom told me that the dove is a special bird in the Bible," John said.

"That's right," Mrs. Hayes said. "In the Bible, the dove represents the Holy Spirit. God promised to give us the Holy Spirit. All we have to do is ask. The Holy Spirit is a guarantee for us to go to heaven."

When the children heard this, they decided to cut out doves too. They wanted to do it because the doves reminded them of how special they were to God. After all the drawings were colored and cut out, Mrs. Hayes posted them on the board.

When it was time to pray, Mrs. Hayes asked the children what they would like to pray for.

"I'd like to pray for my mom because she's a bit sick," said Susie.

Juan showed his scratched knee to the class. "I'd like to pray for my knee because I hurt it at school."

"Can we pray to God to help me find my rabbit?" Rachel asked. Rachel had lost her favorite stuffed toy that morning.

"Of course," said Mrs. Hayes.

When it was John's turn he said, "I don't know what to pray for."

"Well, why don't we pray for the Holy Spirit, just like the dove you cut out?" suggested Mrs. Hayes.

The others agreed that this was very important. So everyone also prayed for the Holy Spirit. Mrs. Hayes then told everyone to close their eyes.

"Remember to pray for your friends and to also remember how special you are to God," said Mrs. Hayes. They all began their prayer with, "In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ we pray. Hallelujah!"

The kindergarten class concentrated and prayed really hard for the Holy Spirit that day. They knew that God would give all of them the Holy Spirit when He thought it was the right time. The children all remembered in their prayers that God had chosen each and every one of them to be His very special people.

Questions to Think About

1. What did the students draw that showed they were God's special people? (Hearts, the word

"Jesus," flowers, and doves.)

2. **What is so special about a dove?** (In the Bible, the dove represents the Holy Spirit. Having the Holy Spirit is a guarantee that we can go to



Activity 1

All About Saul

Help the students fill in the blanks with words from the word bank. Talk about each picture as the students are writing the words to help review the story.

1. Saul went to look for his _____ (donkeys).
2. Saul was _____ (tall).
3. Saul was _____ (anointed) by Samuel.
4. Saul became the first _____ (king) of Israel.



Activity 2

How Are We Special to God?

Look at each picture. How do they tell us that we are special to God? Discuss each one and how they make us special.

1. Did you know God knows how much hair we have?
2. Did you know God knew us even before we were born?
3. Did you know we all have different fingerprints?
4. Did you know everyone look different? That's how God made us.



Activity 3

"God Picked Me" Flowers

Materials:

1. large popsicle sticks
2. colored construction paper
3. markers
4. glue
5. scissors

Directions:

1. Give each student a popsicle stick. This will be the stem of the flower.

heaven.)

3. **How do we know that we are God's special people?** (Allow students to share.)

2. Help the students trace a flower pattern onto a piece of colored construction paper. (Teacher will need to prepare several flower patterns before class for students to trace. Make sure they are the right size for the stick. Use cardboard so that the students can use the pattern over and over. This is good practice for their motor skills.)
3. Cut out a circle of a different color to be used for the center of the flower.
4. On the circle, help the students write the words "God picked me!"
5. Help the students glue the circle onto the flower.
6. Glue the flower to the top of the stick. Students may also wish to cut out petals for the flower.
7. Remind the students as they complete this activity that God picked them because they are special.

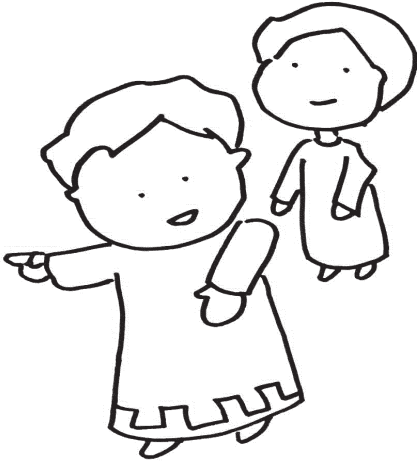


Activity 3:1

All About Saul

Fill in the blanks with the words from the word bank.

1. Saul went to look for his _____.



2. Saul was _____.



3. Saul was _____ by Samuel.



4. Saul became the first _____ of Israel.



WORD BANK
tall
anointed
king
donkeys

Activity 3:2

How Are We Special to God?

Look at each picture.
How do they tell us that we are special to God?



Did you know God knows how much hair we have?



Did you know God knew us even before we were born?



Did you know we all have different fingerprints?



Did you know everyone looks different?
That's how God made us.