

Saul

1 Samuel 8 - 15



The Story

God was ruling Israel through the prophet Samuel and his sons. Since Samuel's sons did not fear God and the Children of Israel wanted to be like other nations, the elders asked for a king. Samuel was not pleased about this, but he asked God what to do.

God told Samuel, "It is not you they have rejected as their king, but me. Give them a king, but tell them all that a king will make them do."

Samuel told the people what God said. He warned them that the king will take their children and servants to serve him and the king will take much of their money and property for himself. The people still wanted a king.

Saul was chosen by God to be king. He was from the family of Benjamin. He was taller and handsomer than anyone else. Samuel wrote down some rules, but Saul was the ruler now. At first Saul was a faithful king and obeyed God's Word, but later he trusted himself and did not love God.

There were a lot of wars between God's people and the enemies when Saul was ruler. If the people trusted and obeyed God, the wars would be won by God's people. If they did not follow God the enemies would win. Then Samuel would pray for the people.

One time Saul was waiting for Samuel to come and offer a sacrifice.

When Samuel didn't come Saul offered the sacrifice. This was against God's commands. Saul disobeyed and because of that the kingdom would not stay with Saul's family.

Saul had a son, Jonathan, who was a good warrior.

Once Saul made a bad rule for the soldiers not to eat food all day. The men became very weak and could not fight very well.

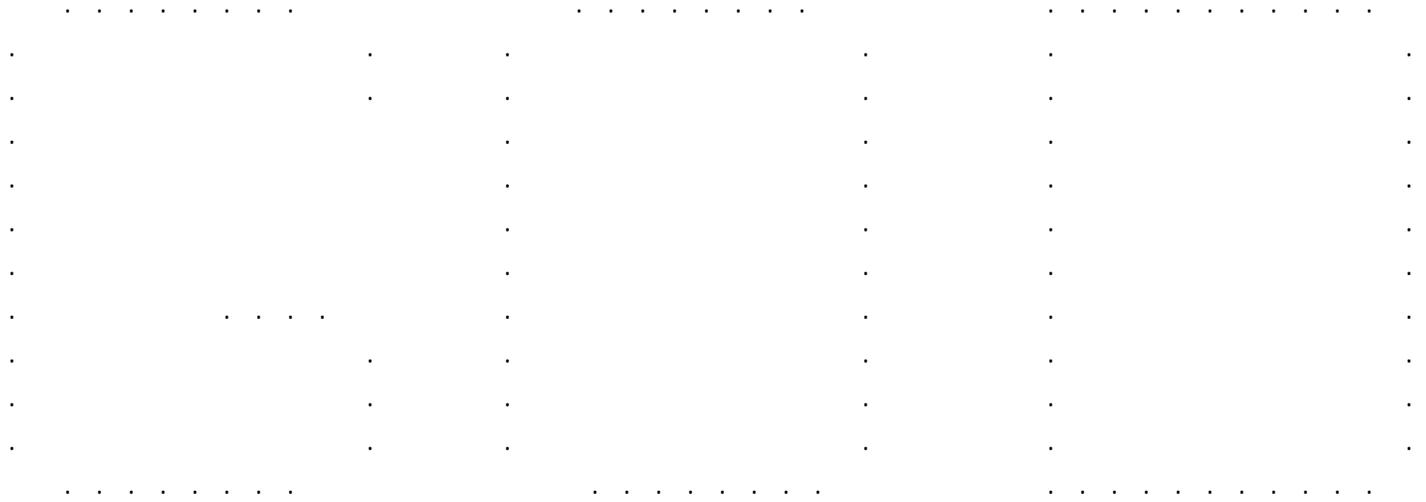
Once God helped Saul and his army win a battle with the Amelekites. God told the people to destroy all the enemies and their animals. Saul and his men disobeyed God and kept alive some of the best animals and the enemy king. Samuel told Saul that he had sinned against God. Saul said, I kept the animals to sacrifice to God.

Samuel said, "It is better to obey than sacrifice. God has rejected you as king."

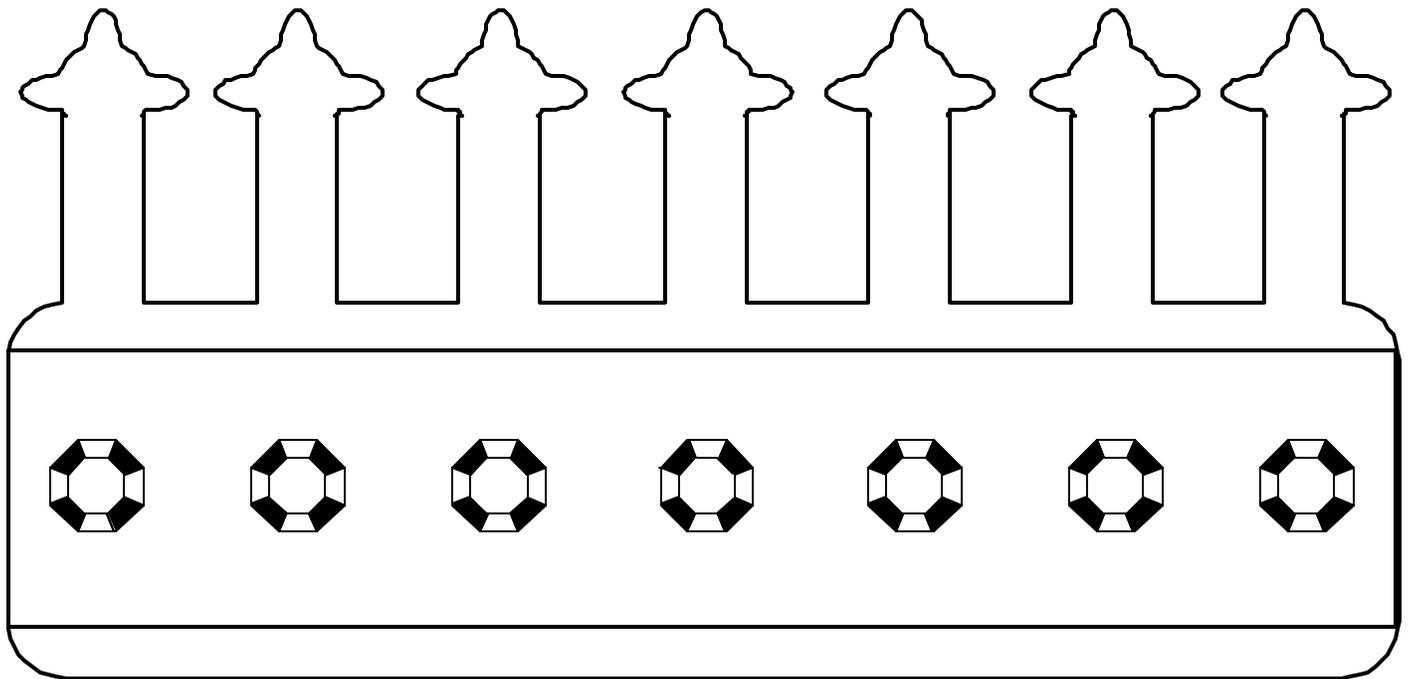
Samuel then left Saul and never went to see him again. God was sad that He had made Saul king over Israel.

God gave His people a king when they asked, but Saul did not stay a faithful king.

Activity One - Trace the dots to see who was the first ruler of Israel.



Activity Two - Decorate the crown that Saul could have worn.



God wants us to remain faithful to Him and His Word.

Activity Three - Circle Yes or No.

- | | | | |
|----|---|-----|----|
| 1. | Did Saul always obey God? | Yes | No |
| 2. | Do we always obey God? | Yes | No |
| 3. | When we disobey should we say we are sorry? | Yes | No |

Passages

1 John 5:3 - For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.

Proverbs 3:5 - Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding.

Hymn - TLH #295 v. 5, 6

The Law is good; but since the Fall,
Its holiness condemns us all;
It dooms us for our sin to die
And has no power to justify.

To Jesus we for refuge flee,
Who from the curse has set us free,
And humbly worship at His throne,
Saved by His grace through faith
alone. Amen.

Prayer

Dear Father in Heaven,
Thank You for sending Jesus. We sin every day and would go to hell if Jesus had not come and kept Your laws perfectly. Help us to be sorry for our sins and to trust in the forgiveness which Jesus has earned for us. We ask this in Jesus' saving name. Amen.

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There were a lot of wars between God's people and the enemies when Saul was ruler. If the people trusted and obeyed God, the wars would be won by God's people. If they did not follow God, the enemies would win. Then Samuel would pray for the people.

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not stay with Saul's family.

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Once God helped Saul and his army win a battle with the Amelekites. God told the people to destroy all the enemies and their animals. Saul and his men disobeyed God and kept alive some of the best animals and the enemy king, Agag. Samuel told Saul that he had sinned against God. Saul said, I kept the animals to sacrifice to God.

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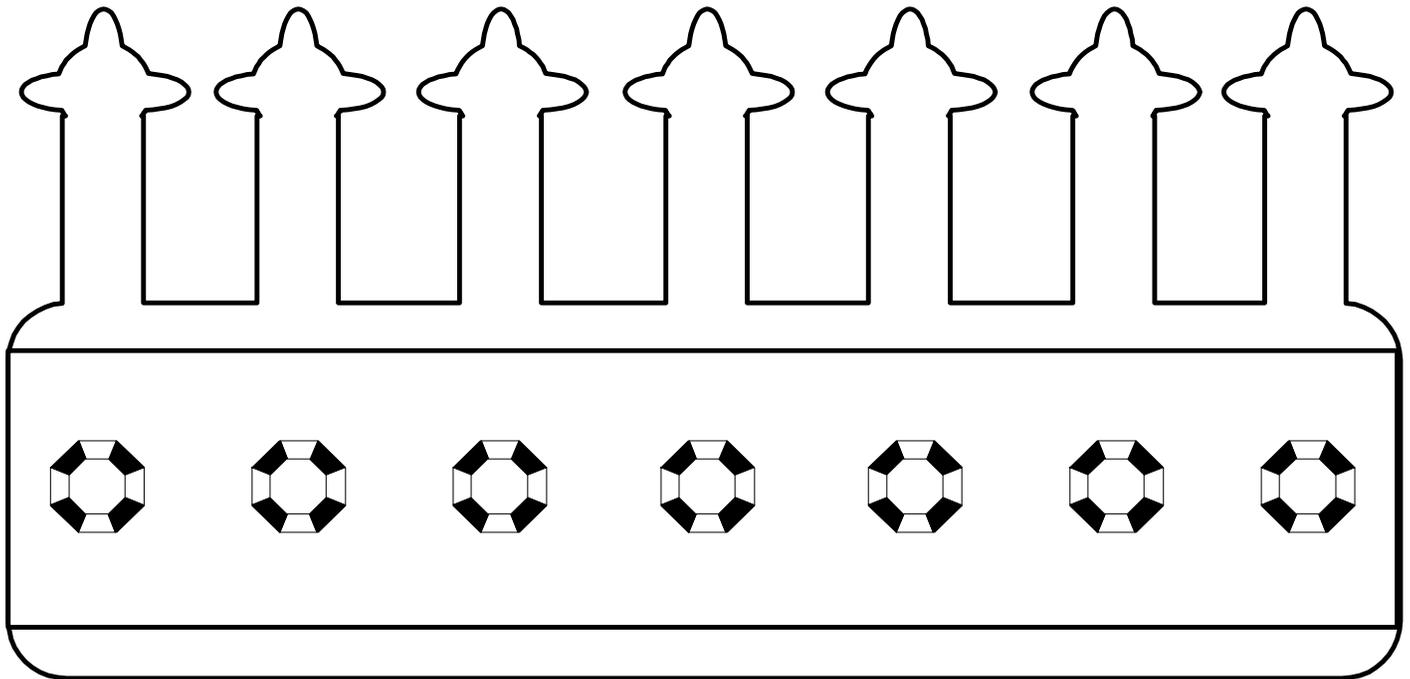
God gave His people a king when they asked, but Saul did not stay a faithful king.

Activity One - Take turns telling about the people in the WORD BOX. Then find their names in the WORD SEARCH.

WORD BOX
Samuel
Saul
Jonathan
Israel
God
enemies
Agag

A G A G N S I G S
E N E M I E S W A
Y S B S U K R D M
J O N A T H A N U
C A I U C I E M E
G O D L X A L U L

Activity Two - Decorate the crown that Saul could have worn.



God wants us to remain faithful to Him and His Word.

Activity Three - Circle the letter of the correct answer to the question.

1. Who was Saul? (A) king (B) prophet (C) David's son
2. Who was Jonathan? (A) an enemy (B) Saul's son (C) king
3. What took place during Saul's reign? (A) peace (B) fighting in wars (C) the temple was built
4. How many Amelekites were Saul and his army to destroy? (A) some of them (B) none of them (C) all of them
5. Who was saved of the Amelekites? (A) Saul (B) Agag (C) Jonathan
6. What did Samuel say is better than to sacrifice? (A) to obey (B) to pray (C) to love

Passages

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The children of Israel had been ruled by God through prophets. Now they wanted a king to rule over them.

What are some demands a king will make?

Today we will read about Israel's first king. Let's see what problems Israel now has.

Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, Please send Your Holy Spirit into my heart through Your Word which we are about to study. Help me to learn about Saul, the first king of Israel. Please be with our leaders - pastors, teachers, government, police, and others - so that they are good leaders. In Jesus' name. Amen.



Saul

Samuel, the prophet of God, was old. His sons were prophets over Israel, but they were not God-fearing like their father. Because of this the elders of Israel asked for a king. They also wanted to be like other nations who were ruled by a king.

Samuel didn't like the idea, but he prayed about it. God told him, "It is not you they have rejected as their leader, but Me. Listen to what they want, but warn them and let them know what the king who will reign over them will do.

Samuel warned the people, "This will be the behavior of the king who will reign over you: He will take your sons and put them in his army or he will set some to plow his ground. He will take your daughters to be perfumers, cooks, and bakers. He will take the best of your fields,

your vineyards, and your olive groves. He will take a tenth of your grain and he will take your servants and animals."

The people still wanted a king.

God chose Saul from the tribe of Benjamin. His father's name was Kish. One day when some of their donkeys were lost Saul and his servant went to look for them. When they couldn't find them they went to ask the prophet Samuel for help. Samuel told them the good news that the donkeys had already been found, but he had something even greater to tell Saul. God had chosen Saul to be the first king of Israel. As God had instructed him, Samuel anointed Saul as king. He told Saul and his servant they would meet some men who would give them bread. Samuel also told Saul the spirit of the LORD would be with



him. Saul was to meet him again in several days to sacrifice to the LORD.

Things happened just as Samuel said they would. Samuel called the people together at Mizpah to tell them what God said.

“I am the God who brought you out of Egypt, but today you have rejected Me by asking for a king.”

So God chose Saul for a king. When Samuel first made the announcement about the new king, Saul hid himself. When he was found, the people cried out, “Long live the king!” When he stood among the people Saul was taller than anyone else.

Samuel set down some rules, wrote them down and sent the people home.

There was much fighting during Saul’s reign, but at first the Lord was with him, and the people rejoiced greatly.

Samuel again reviewed with the people how God had helped them in the past and how He had been with the leaders like Moses and Jacob. However, when the people disobeyed God, things did not go well. That is also how it would be with a king as leader. Obey and all is well. Disobey and the hand of the Lord would be against them.

To show them what he said was true he called for thunder and rain. The thunder and rain came and the people feared the Lord and Samuel. Samuel prayed for the people and told them to serve the Lord with all their heart.

Saul was ruling and taking men to fight the Philistine enemies. He was in Gilgal one day, waiting for Samuel to come and offer a sacrifice. When Samuel didn’t come, Saul became impatient and offered the sacrifice himself. Because Saul

disobeyed God’s law in doing this, the kingdom of Israel would be taken from Saul’s family.

Jonathan, Saul’s son, went to fight the Philistines, but didn’t tell his father. The Philistines became afraid when they witnessed Jonathan’s bravery. Saul gave an unwise command to his men. He told them not to eat at all that day. Jonathan did not hear this command and ate some honey he found. The other men were very hungry and weak, but Jonathan was refreshed. He told them that more Philistines would have been killed that day if the men had eaten.

When Saul heard that Jonathan had disobeyed his command he would have killed his son, but the other soldiers pleaded for him and Jonathan was spared.

One time Saul was at war with the Amalekites. God told Saul to destroy all the people and animals. Saul and his army killed many of the people and animals, but spared the life of King Agag and some of the best sheep and oxen. Samuel came to Saul and asked him why he had disobeyed God. At first Saul lied and told Samuel he had done what the LORD said.

Then Saul said, “We kept the animals to sacrifice to God.”

Samuel said, “Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice.” Samuel then killed the enemy king, Agag.

Samuel left Saul and mourned for him because of Saul’s unbelief. Samuel never again went to see King Saul. The LORD regretted that He had made Saul king over Israel.

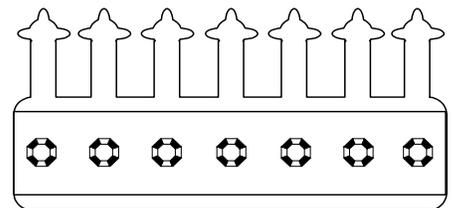
Outer Aim - God gave His people a king when they asked, but Saul did not stay a faithful king.

What The Story Tells Us - Fill in the blanks with the correct word from the WORD BOX.

You will use some words more than once.

Saul	Agag	fighting	Jonathan	king	rejected
donkeys	obey	LORD	offering	sacrifice	animals

1. Israel asked for a _____.
2. The people _____ God in asking for a different ruler.
3. _____ was chosen as king.
4. _____ and his servant looked for some lost _____.
5. There was much _____ during Saul's rule.
6. The _____ was with Saul at first.
7. Then Saul disobeyed by _____ a _____ instead of waiting for Samuel.
8. _____, Saul's son, ate honey and was nearly put to death for that.
9. Saul and the army again disobeyed God by not destroying all of the Amalekites, saving _____ and some of the best _____.
10. To _____ is better than sacrifice.



Inner Aim - God wants us to remain faithful to Him and His Word.

What God Tells Us - God wants us to remember His chosen leaders in our prayers asking God to guide them. **CROSSWORD PUZZLE** - Fill in the crossword puzzle using words from the Word Box.

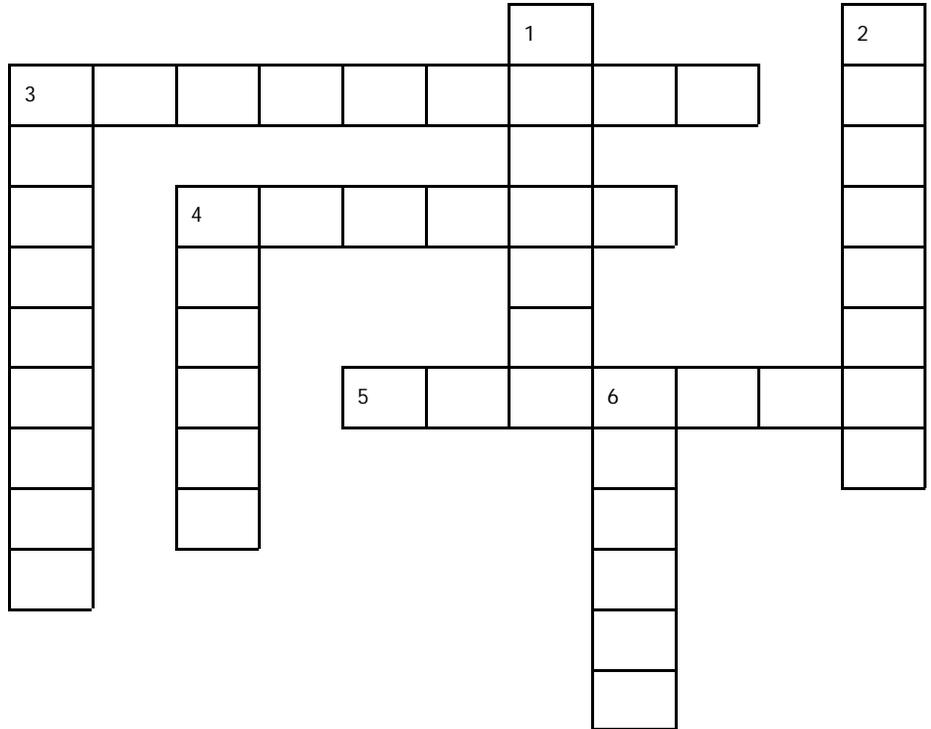
SOME OF GOD'S REPRESENTATIVES			
PASTOR	CONGRESS	PRESIDENT	PRINCIPAL
ELDERS	PARENTS	POLICE	TEACHER

ACROSS

- 3. ____ :the leader of the U.S.A.
- 4. ____ :the safety leader in the community.
- 5. ____ :the leaders of the children in a family.

DOWN

- 1. ____ :the leader in the classroom
- 2. ____ :the group of leaders in Washington, DC.
- 3. ____ :the leader of the whole school.
- 4. ____ :the spiritual leader of the church.
- 6. ____ :people older than me.



Your Turn - Read the following passage.

Acts 5:29 - We ought to obey God rather than men.

Give an example of when you may have to obey God and His Word rather than one of God's representatives.

Passages

1 John 5:3 - For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.

Proverbs 3:5 - Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding.

Hymn - TLH #295 v. 1, 5, 6

The Law of God is good and wise
And sets His will before our eyes,
Shows us the way of righteousness,
And dooms to death when we
transgress.

The Law is good; but since the Fall,
Its holiness condemns us all;
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The people still wanted a king. God chose Saul from the tribe of Benjamin, Kish was his father.

Some donkeys were lost so Saul and his servant went to find them. They didn't find the donkeys but traveled to ask the prophet Samuel. Samuel told them the donkeys were found. He also told Saul that Saul was the man God chose for a king. Samuel anointed Saul as king. Then Samuel said that when they left they would meet some men who would give them bread and the spirit of the Lord would be with Saul. Saul was then to meet Samuel in Gilgal in several days to sacrifice to the Lord.

Things happened just as Samuel said it would. Samuel called the people together at Mizpah to tell them what God said. "I am the God who brought you out of Egypt, but today you have rejected Me by asking for a king."

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Jonathan, Saul's son, went to fight the Philistines, but didn't tell his dad. The Philistines were afraid because of Jonathan.

Saul gave an unwise command to his men. He told them not to eat at all that day. Jonathan did not hear this command and ate some honey he came across. The other men were very hungry and weak, but Jonathan was refreshed. He said that more Philistines would have been killed that day if the men had eaten.

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army killed many of the people and animals, but spared the life of King Agag and some of the best sheep and oxen.

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Outer Aim - God gave His people a king when they asked, but Saul did not stay a faithful king.

What The Story Tells Us - Fill in the blanks with the correct word then find the answer in the WORD SEARCH. (Words go forward, down and diagonal. One word is backwards in the puzzle.)

- _____ was God's prophet in this lesson.
- Israel asked for a _____.
- God told Samuel, "It is not you they have _____ as their king, but Me."
- _____ was chosen as the first king of _____.
- _____ was his son. This son fought against the _____.
- This son ate _____ and disobeyed a law Saul had made.

7. Saul disobeyed God's law by burning a _____ instead of waiting for Samuel to do it.

8. One time Saul and the army were to destroy the enemies, the _____ and all their _____.

9. Instead they kept the best animals and spared the life of the enemy, King _____, whom Samuel later had to kill.

10. The LORD _____ that He had made Saul king over Israel.

Y	S	O	A	N	I	M	A	L	S	P	P
U	J	A	K	O	R	O	M	D	A	H	H
R	O	W	M	P	E	H	N	S	U	A	I
E	N	D	Y	U	J	G	V	O	L	I	L
G	A	M	A	L	E	K	I	T	E	S	I
R	T	G	H	W	C	L	I	A	V	R	S
E	H	P	A	S	T	F	Q	N	N	A	T
T	A	L	L	G	E	Y	S	M	G	E	I
T	N	K	N	I	D	E	A	C	I	L	N
E	K	A	B	K	H	H	O	N	E	Y	E
D	E	C	E	C	I	F	I	R	C	A	S

What God Tells Us - God wants us to remember His chosen representatives in our prayers asking God to guide them. Make a list of some of these leaders in your life. Then write a prayer about one of these representatives and take turns sharing your prayers.

LEADERS AT HOME

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LEADERS AT CHURCH &
SCHOOL

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LEADERS IN GOVERNMENT

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Prayer

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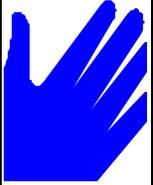
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Prayer

Dear heavenly Father, who clearly shows us what You wish for us to do and to avoid doing in Your Word, prevent us from following our own ways when they are contrary to what You expect of us. Give us the desire and the strength to follow where You lead us. When we fail to do as we should, lead us to ask Your forgiveness and comfort us with the assurance that our sins are forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.



STORY

Saul - 1 Samuel 8-15

TEACHER PRAYER

Dear God, my heavenly Father, who tells us, "Let him who has My word speak My word faithfully," guide and direct me as I teach this lesson to the children in my class so that I teach that which you would have them learn from it. Help me to impress upon them that Your will is to be done. But when they fail to do so, lead them to repent and to trust in the forgiveness which Jesus has earned for them and all people. We ask it in His saving name. Amen.

VOCABULARY

terebinth - a type of oak tree

ephod - a vest with an onyx stone on each shoulder, the names of six of the sons of Israel engraved on each.

OUTER AIM

The people of Israel demanded a king. God gave them Saul who started well, but later followed his own will and lost God's support.

INNER AIM

Unrepented disobedience to God can only result in disaster.

BACKGROUND

Rupprecht *Bible History References, Vol. 1, pp. 279-285*)

The people of Israel were not content to have God rule them through judges and prophets. They wanted a king to lead them. Samuel did not like this, but God told him to listen to them. God selected Saul to be the king. He was accepted by the people when he led them to victory over the Ammonites who were besieging Jabesh Gilead. Saul disobeyed God by offering a sacrifice which was unlawful for him to do. His excuse was that he had hoped to keep more of his soldiers from deserting. Because of this sin, the throne would not remain in his family.

God gave the Israelites victory over the Philistines. Saul's son, Jonathan, had eaten some honey during the battle. He did not know about Saul's foolish oath that no one should eat before evening. Saul's soldiers would not permit him to punish Jonathan. Saul was ordered by God to utterly destroy the Amalekites. He spared the king and some of the best animals. God rejected him as king.

Chapter 8

Because Samuel's sons were unworthy to succeed him as judges, the people asked him to give them a king. In doing so, they were rejecting God's direct leadership. God told Samuel to give them a king. Samuel explained to the people just what demands a king would make of them.

Chapter 9

Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin, was a tall, humble and handsome young man. He was sent to find some of his father's donkeys which had strayed. He learned that there was a man of God in town. He went to learn from him where the donkeys were. The man, Samuel, informed him that the donkeys had been found. He took Saul and his servant in to eat with him. The next morning Samuel went out of the city to send them on their way.

Chapter 10

Samuel anointed Saul to be king. To prove that this was really so, Samuel told Saul exactly what would happen on his way home. Everything happened as Samuel had said. Saul was given a new heart, that of a king. The Holy Spirit came upon him and he prophesied. His uncle asked him what had happened. He told about the search for the donkeys, but not about Samuel. Samuel called the representatives of all the people to meet. Lots were cast and Saul was chosen. Samuel told them that Saul was their king. Not all were happy with the choice.

Chapter 11

The Ammonites besieged Jabesh-Gilead. The inhabitants learned that they could have peace only if they permitted their right eyes to be put out. They asked and received a week to make a decision. Messengers brought word to Saul. He summoned the men of Israel who, with God's help, destroyed the Ammonite army. Offerings were made to the Lord.

Chapter 12

Samuel gave an address at Saul's coronation in which he pointed out that he had served the Israelites well. They had sinned by rejecting God's rule and asking for a king. The people repented after God sent a very unusual storm during the harvest season. Samuel told them not to fear, but to serve the Lord with all their heart.

Chapter 13

Saul recruited an army. When his son Jonathan attacked a Philistine garrison, the enemy came in force. The Israelites waited for Samuel to come to offer a sacrifice. When Samuel hadn't arrived at the set time, Saul offered the sacrifice which was not lawful for him to do. Because of this, his family would not keep the throne. The Israelite army was poorly equipped because the Philistines did not permit blacksmiths among the Israelites.

Chapter 14

Jonathan and his armorbearer attacked an enemy garrison. This caused panic in the enemy camp. The noise attracted Saul's attention. The Israelites attacked and God gave them a great victory. The army of the Israelites was handicapped by hunger. Saul had foolishly taken an oath forbidding his men to eat until evening. Jonathan had not heard about the oath and had eaten some honey. When God did not answer Saul's request to pursue the enemy that night, he realized that someone had broken the oath. Lots were cast and it was learned that Jonathan had eaten some honey. The soldiers would not let Jonathan be killed for this. Saul had war with enemies on every side.

Chapter 15

The Lord sent Saul to destroy utterly the Amalekites who years earlier had attacked the Israelites on the way to the Promised Land. Saul was successful, but spared the king and the best of the cattle and sheep. The Lord sent Samuel to speak to Saul about his disobedience. Saul blamed the people for saving the animals for a sacrifice to God. Samuel told him that obedience was better than sacrifice. Saul was rejected by God as king. The Amalekite king was executed and Samuel went home, never to see Saul again.

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear heavenly Father, who clearly shows us what You wish for us to do and to avoid doing in Your Word, prevent us from following our own ways when they are contrary to what You expect of us. Give us the desire and the strength to follow where You lead us. When we fail to do as we should, lead us to ask Your forgiveness and comfort us with the assurance that our sins are forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

PRESENTATION

Dissatisfaction over the judges by whom God had ruled Israel led the people to demand a king like the nations around them. God gave them a king, Saul the son of Kish. He started well as a humble servant of God. But later he chose to ignore God's will and to do things his own way. When he failed to destroy the Amalekites completely, God rejected him as king.

APPLICATIONS

Though God chose Saul to be king and he started well, he was weak. He trusted in himself and lost God's help and finally his life and kingdom.

God's guidance is always good. He makes no mistakes. Human leaders are often wrong. We do well to follow God's will and not our own or that of others.

PASSAGES

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.

Lower

1 John 5:3 This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.

Middle any of the above and...

Prov. 3:5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding.

Upper any of the above and...

Jer. 17:5 Cursed is the man who trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm, and whose heart departs from the Lord.

Prov. 14:12 There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.

HYMN CHOICES

The Law of God Is Good and Wise - TLH #295

Speak, O Lord, Thy Servant Heareth - TLH #296

God Moves in a Mysterious Way TLH - #514

If Thou But Suffer God to Guide Thee - TLH #518

If God Himself Be for Me - TLH #528