

Story Time - Read the story to the children
Lesson 75: SAUL IS MADE KING OF ISRAEL
I SAMUEL 9:1 THROUGH 12:25

(NOTE: This is a long story - you may want to stop halfway through and discuss some of the questions from the children's worksheet before continuing the story and have some snacks during story time)

Kish was a wealthy man who belonged to the tribe of Benjamin. Kish had a son named Saul, a specially good-looking young man; there was no one better-looking among the children of Israel: he was taller by a head than any other of the people. Kish owned some donkeys, but they had run off. So he told Saul, "Take one of the servants and go look for the donkeys." Saul and the servant went through the hill country of Ephraim and the territory of Shalishah, but they could not find the donkeys. Then they went through the territories of Shaalim and Benjamin, but still there was no sign of the donkeys. Finally they came to the territory where the clan of Zuph lived. "Let's go back home," Saul told his servant. "If we don't go back soon, my father will stop worrying about the donkeys and start worrying about us!" "Wait!" the servant answered. "There's a man of God who lives in a town near here. He's amazing! Everything he says comes true. Let's talk to him. Maybe he can tell us where to look." Saul said, "How can we talk to the prophet when I don't have anything to give him? We don't even have any bread left in our sacks. What can we give him?" "I have a small piece of silver," the servant answered. "We can give him that, and then he will tell us where to look for the donkeys." "Great!" Saul replied. "Let's go to the man who can see visions!" He said this because in those days God would answer questions by giving visions to prophets. Saul and his servant went to the town where the prophet lived. As they were going up the hill to the town, they met some young women coming out to get water, and the two men said to them, "We're looking for the man who can see visions. Is he in town?" "Yes, he is," they replied. "He's in town today because there's going to be a sacrifice and a sacred meal at the place of worship. In fact, he's just ahead of you. Hurry and you should find him right inside the town gate. He's on his way out to the place of worship to eat with the invited guests. They can't start eating until he blesses the sacrifice. If you go now, you should find him." They went to the town, and just as they were going through the gate, Samuel was coming out on his way to the place of worship. The day before Saul came, the LORD had told

Samuel, "I've seen how my people are suffering, and I've heard their call for help. About this time tomorrow I'll send you a man from the tribe of Benjamin, who will rescue my people from the Philistines. I want you to pour olive oil on his head to show that he will be their leader." Samuel looked at Saul, and the LORD told Samuel, "This is the man I told you about. He's the one who will rule Israel." Saul went over to Samuel in the gateway and said, "A man who can see visions lives here in town. Could you tell me the way to his house?" "I am the one who sees visions!" Samuel answered. "Go on up to the place of worship. You will eat with me today, and in the morning I'll answer your questions. Don't worry about your donkeys that ran off three days ago. They've already been found. Everything of value in Israel now belongs to you and your family." "Why are you telling me this?" Saul asked. "I'm from Benjamin, the smallest tribe in Israel, and my clan is the least important in the tribe." Samuel took Saul and his servant into the dining room at the place of worship. About thirty people were there for the dinner, but Samuel gave Saul and his servant the places of honor. Then Samuel told the cook, "I gave you the best piece of meat and told you to set it aside. Bring it here now." The cook brought the meat over and set it down in front of Saul. "This is for you," Samuel told him. "Go ahead and eat it. I had this piece saved especially for you, and I invited these guests to eat with you." After Saul and Samuel had finished eating, they went down from the place of worship and back into town. A bed was set up for Saul on the flat roof of Samuel's house, and Saul slept there. About sunrise the next morning, Samuel called up to Saul on the roof, "Time to get up! I'll help you get started on your way." Saul got up. He and Samuel left together and had almost reached the edge of town when Samuel stopped and said, "Have your servant go on. Stay here with me for a few minutes, and I'll tell you what God has told me." After the servant had gone, Samuel took a small jar of olive oil and poured it on Saul's head. Then he kissed Saul on the cheek and told him: The LORD has chosen you to be the leader and ruler of his people. When you leave me today, you'll meet two men near Rachel's tomb at Zelzah in the territory of Benjamin. They'll tell you, "The donkeys you've been looking for have been found. Your father has forgotten about them, and now he's worrying about you! He's wondering how he can find you." Go on from there until you reach the big oak tree at Tabor, where you'll meet three men on their way to worship God at Bethel. One of them will be leading three young goats, another will be carrying three round loaves of bread, and the last one will be carrying a clay jar of wine. After they greet you,

they'll give you two loaves of bread. Next, go to Gibeah, where the Philistines have an army camp. As you're going into the town, you'll meet a group of prophets coming down from the place of worship. They'll be going along prophesying while others are walking in front of them, playing small harps, small drums, and flutes. The Spirit of the LORD will suddenly take control of you. You'll become a different person and start prophesying right along with them. After these things happen, do whatever you think is right! God will help you. Then you should go to Gilgal. I'll come a little later, so wait for me. It may even take a week for me to get there, but when I come, I'll offer sacrifices and offerings to the LORD. I'll also tell you what to do next. As Saul turned around to leave Samuel, God made Saul feel like a different person. That same day, everything happened just as Samuel had said. When Saul arrived at Gibeah, a group of prophets met him. The Spirit of God suddenly took control of him, and right there in the middle of the group he began prophesying. Some people who had known Saul for a long time saw that he was speaking and behaving like a prophet. They said to each other, "What's happened? How can Saul be a prophet?" "Why not?" one of them answered. "Saul has as much right to be a prophet as anyone else!" That's why everyone started saying, "How can Saul be a prophet?" After Saul stopped prophesying, he went to the place of worship. Later, Saul's uncle asked him, "Where have you been?" Saul answered, "Looking for the donkeys. We couldn't find them, so we went to talk with Samuel." "And what did he tell you?" Saul's uncle asked. Saul answered, "He told us the donkeys had been found." But Saul didn't mention that Samuel had chosen him to be king. Samuel sent messengers to tell the Israelites to come to Mizpah and meet with the LORD. When everyone had arrived, Samuel said: The LORD God of Israel told me to remind you that he had rescued you from the Egyptians and from the other nations that abused you. God has rescued you from your troubles and hard times. But you have rejected your God and have asked for a king. Now each tribe and clan must come near the place of worship so the LORD can choose a king. Samuel brought each tribe, one after the other, to the altar, and the LORD chose the Benjamin tribe. Next, Samuel brought each clan of Benjamin there, and the LORD chose the Matri clan. Finally, Saul the son of Kish was chosen. But when they looked for him, he was nowhere to be found. The people prayed, "Our LORD, is Saul here?" "Yes," the LORD answered, "he is hiding behind the baggage." The people ran and got Saul and brought him into the middle of the crowd. He was more than a head taller than anyone else. "Look

closely at the man the LORD has chosen!" Samuel told the crowd. "There is no one like him!" The crowd shouted, "Long live the king!" Samuel explained the rights and duties of a king and wrote them all in a book. He put the book in a temple building at one of the places where the LORD was worshiped. Then Samuel sent everyone home.

7 & 8 YEAR-OLDS: NOW IS A GOOD TIME TO GO OVER QUESTIONS 1-8 ON THEIR WORKSHEETS.

5 & 6 YEAR-OLDS: NOW IS A GOOD TIME TO GO OVER ALL THE TRUE OR FALSE QUESTIONS 1-6 AND ANSWER THE NEXT QUESTIONS 1-2 IN THEIR WORKSHEETS.

God had encouraged some young men to become followers of Saul, and when he returned to his hometown of Gibeah, they went with him. But some worthless fools said, "How can someone like Saul rescue us from our enemies?" They did not want Saul to be their king, and so they didn't bring him any gifts. But Saul kept calm about it.

About this time, King Nahash of Ammon came with his army and surrounded the town of Jabesh in Gilead. The people who lived there told King Nahash, "If you will sign a peace treaty with us, YOU can be our ruler, and we will pay taxes to you." Nahash answered, "Sure, I'll sign a treaty! But not before I insult Israel by poking out the right eye of every man who lives in Jabesh." The town leaders said, "Give us seven days so we can send messengers everywhere in Israel to ask for help. If no one comes here to save us, we will surrender to you." Some of the messengers went to Gibeah, Saul's hometown. They told what was happening at Jabesh, and everyone in Gibeah started crying. Just then, Saul came in from the fields, walking behind his oxen. "Why is everyone crying?" Saul asked. They told him what the men from Jabesh had said. Then the Spirit of God suddenly took control of Saul and made him furious. Saul killed two of his oxen, cut them up in pieces, and gave the pieces to the messengers. He told them to show the pieces to everyone in Israel and say, "Saul and Samuel are getting an army together. Come and join them. If you don't, this is what will happen to all your oxen!" The LORD made the people of Israel terribly afraid. So all the men came

together at Bezek to help Saul and Samuel. Saul had them organized and counted. There were three hundred thousand men from Israel and thirty thousand men from Judah. Saul and his officers sent the messengers back to Jabesh with this promise: "We will rescue you tomorrow afternoon." The messengers went back to the people at Jabesh and told them that they were going to be rescued. Everyone was encouraged! So they told the Ammonites, "We will surrender to you tomorrow, and then you can do whatever you want to." The next day, Saul divided his army into three groups and attacked before daylight. They started killing Ammonites and kept it up until afternoon. A few Ammonites managed to escape, but they were scattered far from each other. The Israelite soldiers went to Samuel and demanded, "Where are the men who said they didn't want Saul to be king? Bring them to us, and we will put them to death!" "No you won't!" Saul told them. "The LORD rescued Israel today, and no one will be put to death." "Come on!" Samuel said. "Let's go to Gilgal and make an agreement that Saul will continue to be our king." Everyone went to the place of worship at Gilgal, where they agreed that Saul would be their king. Saul and the people sacrificed animals to ask for the LORD's blessing, and they had a big celebration.

Samuel told the Israelites: I have given you a king, just as you asked. You have seen how I have led you ever since I was a young man. I'm already old. My hair is gray, and my own sons are all grown up. Now you must see how well your king will lead you. Let me ask this. Have I ever taken anyone's ox or donkey or forced you to give me anything? Have I ever hurt anyone or taken a bribe to give an unfair decision? Answer me so the LORD and his chosen king can hear you. And if I have done any of these things, I will give it all back. "No," the Israelites answered. "You've never cheated us in any way!" Samuel said, "The LORD and his chosen king are witnesses to what you have said." "That's true," they replied. Then Samuel told them: The LORD brought your ancestors out of Egypt and chose Moses and Aaron to be your leaders. Now the LORD will be your judge. So stand here and listen, while I remind you how often the LORD has saved you and your ancestors from your enemies. After Jacob went to Egypt, your ancestors cried out to the LORD for help, and he sent Moses and Aaron. They led your ancestors out of Egypt and had them settle in this land. But your ancestors forgot the LORD, so he let them be defeated by the Philistines, the king of Moab, and Sisera, the commander of Hazor's army. Again your ancestors cried out to the LORD for help. They said, "We have sinned! We

stopped worshiping you, our LORD, and started worshiping Baal and Astarte. But now, if you rescue us from our enemies, we will worship you." So the LORD sent Gideon, Bedan, Jephthah, and Samuel to rescue you from your enemies, and you didn't have to worry about being attacked. Then you saw that King Nahash of Ammon was going to attack you. And even though the LORD your God is your king, you all told me, "This time it's different. We want a king to rule us!" You asked for a king, and you chose one. Now he stands here where all of you can see him. But it was really the LORD who made him your king. If you and your king want to be followers of the LORD, you must worship him and do what he says. Don't be stubborn! If you're stubborn and refuse to obey the LORD, he will turn against you and your king. Just stand here and watch the LORD show his mighty power. Isn't this the dry season? I'm going to ask the LORD to send a thunderstorm. When you see it, you will realize how wrong you were to ask for a king. Samuel prayed, and that same day the LORD sent a thunderstorm. Everyone was afraid of the LORD and of Samuel. They told Samuel, "Please, pray to the LORD your God for us! We don't want to die. We have sinned many times in the past, and we were very wrong to ask for a king." Samuel answered: Even though what you did was wrong, you don't need to be afraid. But you must always follow the LORD and worship him with all your heart. Don't worship idols! They don't have any power, and they can't help you or save you when you're in trouble. But the LORD has chosen you to be his own people. He will always take care of you so that everyone will know how great he is. I would be disobeying the LORD if I stopped praying for you! I will always teach you how to live right. You also must obey the LORD--you must worship him with all your heart and remember the great things he has done for you. But if you and your king do evil, the LORD will wipe you out.

75. SAUL IS MADE KING OF ISRAEL

(I SAMUEL 9:1 THROUGH 12:25)



“ And he had a son whose name was Saul, a specially good-looking young man; there was no one better-looking among the children of Israel: he was taller by a head than any other of the people.”

I SAMUEL 9:2

75. SAUL IS MADE KING OF ISRAEL

(1 SAMUEL 9:1 THROUGH 12:25)

MEMORY VERSE:

"Only fear the LORD, and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you." **1 SAMUEL 12:24**

TRUE OR FALSE

1. Kish had a son named Saul, who was a very good-looking young man, but he was smaller than the other people of Israel. TRUE or FALSE
2. When Samuel saw Saul, the LORD told him, "This is the man I told you about. He is the one who will rule Israel." TRUE or FALSE
3. Saul told Samuel, "I'm from Benjamin, the greatest tribe in Israel, and my clan is the most important in the tribe." TRUE or FALSE
4. Samuel took a small jar of olive oil and poured it on Saul's head. TRUE or FALSE
5. Samuel called all the people together at Mizpah and reminded them that the LORD had rescued them all from the Egyptians. TRUE or FALSE
6. Samuel told the people "You have rejected your God and have asked for a princess." TRUE or FALSE

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

1. What happened when Samuel brought all the tribes and clans together to choose a new king – who did the LORD choose? Was it Saul?
2. When Samuel told the people that the LORD chose Saul, were they happy?
3. What did King Nahash want to do to the right eye of everyone in Jabesh? Did he say he wanted to poke out their right eye? Ewww!
4. When Saul heard about what King Nahash wanted to do to the people of Jabesh, did he get mad? What did he do to get the other Israelites to help him and Samuel? Did he kill the oxen and chop them up? Did he tell the Israelites that this would happen to all their oxen if they didn't help him and Samuel?
5. When Saul and Samuel and the Israelites went to go fight the Ammonites, did they win? Did the LORD help them win? Of course!
6. Samuel told the people how the LORD rescued them time after time, and then he told them that they asked for a king, which was wrong. Who was supposed to be their real king? Was it the LORD?
7. What sign did the LORD help Samuel perform to show the people they were wrong? Was it a thunderstorm? Did one happen?
8. Were the people afraid of the LORD and of Samuel after they saw the thunderstorm? What did Samuel tell them? Was it to obey the LORD and worship Him, then they didn't need to be afraid?



Lesson 75 Optional Craft

The Helper

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

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

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

PRAYER

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

Dove Template
Lesson #75

