

UNIT 10 | SESSION 2

SAUL RESCUED ISRAEL

1 SAMUEL 11-13



CHRIST CONNECTION: Saul was a good king sometimes, but he disobeyed God. Jesus always obeyed God. Jesus saves us from our greatest enemies—sin and death. He gives us life with God forever.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who is our King? Jesus is our King.

KEY PASSAGE: The LORD rules over everything. Psalm 103:19

STORY POINT: Saul was a great warrior but chose to disobey God.



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

The beginning of Saul's reign as king over Israel brought great promise. He was a fierce warrior, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, King Saul was moved to defeat the Ammonite army. However, Saul's foolish choice revealed that Saul was not the king the people needed. We see Samuel's warnings come true: an earthly king could never fulfill the role of the eternal God.

What did Saul's disobedience reveal about his view of God? How do we see the need for Jesus in this passage?

Saul's willingness to defend the people of Jabesh and secure a victory over the Ammonites only served to encourage the people's hope in him as their king. All the people went to Gilgal, where they made Saul their king.

After Saul's victory over the Ammonites, Samuel gathered the people of Israel gathered for a final public speech. Samuel acknowledged the callousness of the people's hearts after the threats of Nahash, going so far as to call their actions evil in the sight of God (1 Samuel 12:17). Samuel reminded the people to continue walking in obedience if they wanted God's protection; however, Samuel also added the warning that if they disobeyed God or turned away from God, both they and their new king would be swept away.

A wise proverb reminds us, "Pride comes before destruction, and an arrogant spirit before a fall" (Proverbs 16:18), and Saul's pride led him to a foolish choice. Saul sinned against God by offering a burnt sacrifice of his own accord, rather than waiting for Samuel to perform this duty as priest. Saul did not honor God as holy and ultimately revealed that his heart was not after the things of the Lord but his own selfish desires as king.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet preschoolers and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers the story of the gospel



LOVE

Lead preschoolers to love the God of the gospel

30–40 MINUTES



LIVE

Lead preschoolers to live the mission of the gospel



BONUS

60–65 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers for an additional hour



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a supply of the following items available during all teaching sessions: Allergy Alert, Bibles, washable markers, crayons, scissors (adult use), blunt-tipped scissors, construction paper, copy paper, glue sticks, glue, tape, baby dolls, blocks, play dough, and a beanbag.



WELCOME

Follow the path

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ painter's tape



LEARN

Tell the Bible story

- ☐ "Saul Rescued Israel" video (optional)

Learn and practice the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker



LOVE

Make play dough faces

- ☐ craft sticks

Explore a messaging center

- ☐ toy keyboards
- ☐ toy phones
- ☐ envelopes



LIVE

Create a foil collage

- ☐ aluminum foil
- ☐ tissue paper
- ☐ sequins
- ☐ water
- ☐ paintbrushes, 1 per child
- ☐ art smocks
- ☐ "Key Passage Phrase Labels" printable

Missions activity

- ☐ "Temples of Thailand, Part 2" missions video

Snack and transition

- ☐ hand sanitizer (optional)
- ☐ "Cross Out Wrong Choices" activity page, 1 per child
- ☐ Big Picture Cards for Families



BONUS

Say the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker

Clean the room

- ☐ spray bottles
- ☐ rags
- ☐ toy brooms
- ☐ toy dustpans
- ☐ wet wipes

Decorate envelopes

- ☐ envelopes
- ☐ assorted stickers
- ☐ stamp pads
- ☐ stamps



WELCOME Preschoolers

Provide as many learning activities as possible from the Love and Live sections to give preschoolers choices to learn. Incorporate the Bible story, the Christ Connection, and key passage phrase in your conversations as the preschoolers engage in learning activities throughout the session.

Use the following activity to greet children as they enter the room. Talk about the big picture question and answer. After each child completes the welcome activity, encourage him to participate in the activities provided from the Love and Live sections of the leader guide.

FOLLOW THE PATH

Use painter's tape to outline a path from the doorway into the room. Create a different path from the one used in the previous session. Weave a longer path around furniture in the room ending at a Bible. Place a copy of the Bible Story Picture Poster in the Bible. Post the Big Picture Question Poster near the entrance to the room. Greet preschoolers as they enter the room and point out the Big Picture Question Poster. Invite preschoolers to take giant steps along the path to the Bible to see who Israel wanted to be their king. Meet the preschooler at the end of the path and encourage him to open the Bible to reveal the Bible Story Picture Poster and the answer to the question.

SAY 🗨️ Welcome to church today! Our big picture question asks, **Who is our King? Jesus is our King.** The path ends at the Bible, where we learn that **SAUL WAS A GREAT WARRIOR BUT CHOSE TO DISOBEY GOD.** 📖





LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 SEND A MESSAGE

Before the session, write the key passage phrase on a piece of paper. Fold the paper and place it in an envelope so that it looks like a message written to the class. Invite preschoolers to pass the envelope around the group time circle. Open and read the message when it comes back to you.

SAY “We send messages when we need to tell someone something or we need help. The people of Jabesh-gilead were in danger. They sent messages asking for help. Saul heard the message and wanted to help.”

2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to 1 Samuel 11–13. Tell the Bible story using the following summary. You may choose to review the Bible story by showing the video.

SAUL RESCUED ISRAEL

SAY “A man named Nahash was the leader of an enemy army. Nahash and his soldiers wanted to take over a city in Israel called Jabesh-gilead.

The people in Jabesh-gilead were in danger! They sent messages out: “Help us!” they said. Saul heard the message and wanted to help. Saul gathered a big army. They went and fought Nahash and his soldiers. Saul’s army won! Everyone was happy that Saul was their king.

Samuel wanted to talk to God’s people one last time. He said, “If you listen to God and do what is right, everything will be OK. But if you don’t, bad things will happen.”

One day, enemies called the Philistines wanted to fight Israel. Saul tried to wait for Samuel to come to make an offering to God, but Saul got scared. Saul made an offering to God even though he wasn’t supposed to.

When Samuel came, he asked Saul why he did that. Saul acted like he tried to do the right thing, but he did the wrong thing. Samuel said, “You made the wrong choice. God wants someone who will listen to him. Now, He’s chosen someone else to be king.”

Christ Connection: Saul was a good king sometimes, but he disobeyed God. Jesus always obeyed God. Jesus saves us from our greatest enemies—sin and death. He gives us life with God forever.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

3 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

Before the session, write review questions on strips of paper and place them in envelopes. Example questions: What did the message say? (Help us!) Did Saul help the people of Jabesh-gilead? (Yes.) Saul made an offering to God. Was he supposed to make this offering? (No.) Invite a preschooler to choose an envelope. Read the question aloud and answer it together as a group.

SAY “**SAUL WAS A GREAT WARRIOR BUT CHOSE TO DISOBEY GOD.** He made an offering to God even though he wasn’t supposed to. Samuel told Saul that God had chosen someone else to be king.”

4 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of “Mary Had a Little Lamb”:

The LORD rules over everything, everything, everything.

The LORD rules over everything.

Psalm 103:19

5 LEARN AND PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at Psalm 103:19. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Encourage preschoolers to say the key passage phrase with you several times very slowly.

SAY “**SAUL WAS A GREAT WARRIOR BUT CHOSE TO DISOBEY GOD.** The LORD is the ruler over everything. The key passage phrase says, ‘The LORD rules over everything. Psalm 103:19.’ Our big picture question asks, **Who is our King? Jesus is our King.**”

6 PRAY

Pray, asking God to help us grow in our obedience to Him.

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE

THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God because of what we learned

1 PLAY A LISTENING GAME



Choose one preschooler to be the listener. Invite him to turn his back to you and the other preschoolers. Encourage a different preschooler to be the speaker. Invite him to say a short phrase such as “Jesus loves you” or “The Lord rules over everything.” Instruct the listener to turn back around and guess who was speaking. Repeat the game several times, changing roles so that each child has a turn to be the listener and the speaker.

SAY You had to be a good listener to know who was speaking. Samuel talked to God’s people. He told them, ‘If you listen to God and do what is right, everything will be OK. But if you don’t, bad things will happen.’ Saul made an offering to God even though he wasn’t supposed to. Saul was fearful and impatient. God wants us to obey even when we are scared. Samuel told Saul that he had made the wrong choice. Samuel also told Saul, ‘God wants someone who will listen to Him. Now, He’s chosen someone else to be king.’

2 MAKE PLAY DOUGH FACES

Place play dough and craft sticks on a table for preschoolers to explore. Invite children to flatten the play dough and make faces using the craft sticks to carve facial features such as a nose, a mouth, and eyes. Demonstrate how to draw different expressions in the play dough. Roll the play dough into a snake shape and invite younger preschoolers to create play dough faces by forming the snake into a mouth that is smiling (happy), frowning (sad), or surprised (scared). Tell parts of the Bible story and encourage preschoolers to make the appropriate faces with the play dough.

SAY I am going to tell part of the Bible story. I want you to make a face with the play dough that matches the story. The people of Jabesh-gilead were in danger. They sent a message saying, ‘Help us!’ (scared). Saul wanted to help. He sent out his army, and they won (happy). Everyone was happy Saul was their king (happy). Saul made an offering to God even though he was not supposed to (sad). Samuel told Saul that God had chosen someone else to be king because Saul made the wrong choice (sad). **SAUL WAS A GREAT WARRIOR BUT CHOSE TO DISOBEY GOD.**

3 EXPLORE A MESSAGING CENTER

Place keyboards, phones, paper, crayons, and envelopes on a table for children to explore. Invite preschoolers to pretend to send messages to one another or to other friends and family members.

SAY We send messages to friends and family members over the phone, in a letter, or on the computer. The people in Jabesh-gilead sent a message saying, ‘Help us!’ They were in danger. Saul heard the message and wanted to help. Saul gathered a big army and won. Later Saul made some wrong choices, and God chose someone else to be king. **SAUL WAS A GREAT WARRIOR BUT CHOSE TO DISOBEY GOD.** Jesus always obeyed God. When we believe in Jesus, He forgives us of our sin so we can have life with God forever.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

1 CREATE A FOIL COLLAGE

Cut foil into approximately 9-by-12-inch pieces. Place foil pieces, tissue paper squares, sequins, watered-down glue, and paintbrushes on a table. Assist preschoolers with placing a smock over their clothing. Encourage children to paint the foil with glue and then create a collage with the tissue paper and sequins. Use the “Key Passage Phrase Label” printable to add one label to each child’s creation.

SAY “ I love the collage you made! The foil and sequins shine like a royal crown that a ruler would wear. Our key passage phrase says, ‘The LORD rules over everything.’ **SAUL WAS A GREAT WARRIOR BUT CHOSE TO DISOBEY GOD. Who is our King? Jesus is our King.** Jesus is our good and kind King. He rules over everything. ”

2 MISSIONS ACTIVITY



Remind preschoolers that the good news about Jesus is too good to keep to ourselves! God wants us to tell others about Jesus. A follower of Jesus who is sent to tell others about Jesus is called a missionary. Explain that missionaries have been in Thailand for many years, but still, few people know about Jesus. Show the “Temples of Thailand, Part 2” missions video. Pray for the missionaries in Thailand and the Thai Christians as they help others in their country know about the one true God and His Son, Jesus.

SAY “ It is often difficult for people in Thailand to become believers in Jesus because they do not want to upset their family. Many of the people have never heard about God and His Son, Jesus. ”

3 SNACK AND TRANSITION



Post an Allergy Alert. Serve the snack. As children eat, review and talk about the Bible story. When children finish their snack, lead them to complete the activity page. As they work, continue talking about the Bible story and emphasize the Christ Connection.

SAY “ Saul was a good king sometimes, but he disobeyed God. Jesus always obeyed God. Jesus saves us from our greatest enemies—sin and death. He gives us life with God forever. ”

Remember to communicate helpful information to the bonus teaching hour leaders. If parents are picking up children at this time, tell them something their child did well during the session. Distribute Big Picture Cards for Families. Encourage parents to engage with the family discussion starters and family activities during the week.



BONUS Teaching Hour Group Time

1 WALK LIKE ROYALTY

Invite preschoolers to walk like royalty to group time. Encourage children to hold their heads high and pretend like they are wearing a crown. Tell preschoolers that the people were happy. **SAUL WAS A GREAT WARRIOR BUT CHOSE TO DISOBEY GOD.** God then chose someone else to be the king.

2 TALK ABOUT THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to 1 Samuel 11–13. Use the summarized points below to talk about the Bible story.

SAUL RESCUED ISRAEL

- When Nahash and his enemy army wanted to attack a city in Israel, the people there called out for help.
- Saul came to help the people in the city. Saul's big army fought Nahash and won! Everyone was happy that Saul was king.
- Samuel told the people to obey God. But one day, King Saul disobeyed God. He made an offering he wasn't supposed to make instead of waiting for Samuel.
- Samuel asked, "Why did you do that?" Saul made excuses.
- Saul made a wrong choice. Samuel said God chose someone else to be the king.

3 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb":

The LORD rules over everything, everything, everything.
The LORD rules over everything.
Psalm 103:19

4 SAY THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at Psalm 103:19. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Invite preschoolers to say the key passage phrase several times very quickly. Tell children that Saul was a good king sometimes, but he disobeyed God. Saul could no longer be king after he disobeyed, but "The LORD rules over everything."

5 PRAY

Pray, asking God to help us do the right thing and obey Him.



BONUS Teaching Hour Activities

6 FOLLOW THE LEADER



Invite preschoolers to watch and follow you. If space is limited, do actions such as clapping, patting your head, wiggling your fingers, or making silly faces. If you have more room, consider actions such as hopping, tiptoeing, or dancing around the room. Play additional rounds of the game. Choose a preschooler to be the leader and encourage the other children to follow him.

SAY “ You did a great job following and obeying my directions. **SAUL WAS A GREAT WARRIOR BUT CHOSE TO DISOBEY GOD.** He made an offering to God even though he was not supposed to. Samuel told Saul that he had made a wrong choice, and that God had chosen someone else to be the king. God wanted someone who would listen to Him. Saul was a good king sometimes, but he disobeyed God. Jesus always obeyed God. Jesus saves us from our sin and gives us life with God forever. Our big picture question asks, **Who is our King? Jesus is our King.** ”

7 CLEAN THE ROOM

Place spray bottles, rags, small brooms, dust pans, and wipes out for preschoolers to explore. Invite children to be helpers and help clean up the room. Demonstrate how to use the supplies to dust the furniture and sweep the floor.

SAY “ Thank you for being such great helpers. We can all help to keep our room clean. In our Bible story today, Saul and his army were helpers. The people in Jabesh-gilead were in danger. They sent a message saying, ‘Help us!’ Saul heard the message and wanted to help. Saul and his army fought a battle and won. Everyone was happy that Saul was their king. **SAUL WAS A GREAT WARRIOR BUT CHOSE TO DISOBEY GOD.** ”

8 DECORATE ENVELOPES

Place envelopes, markers, stickers, stamps, and stamp pads on a table. Encourage preschoolers to use the stamps and stamp pads to decorate the envelopes. Demonstrate how to address the envelope to a friend or family member. Assist with writing names as needed.

SAY “ I like the envelopes you decorated. They are ready for you to write messages and send them to people you know. We send messages for many reasons. The people of Jabesh-gilead sent a message because soldiers were coming to take over their city. Saul heard the message and wanted to help. He gathered a big army. They went and fought and won the battle. Everyone was happy that Saul was their king. Later, Saul made some wrong choices, and God chose someone else to be king. **SAUL WAS A GREAT WARRIOR BUT CHOSE TO DISOBEY GOD.** Jesus always obeyed God. Jesus saves us from our greatest enemies—sin and death. He gives us life with God forever. ”

Release preschoolers to parents according to your church’s security procedure. Tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session.