

ISRAEL HAS A KING

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

LOVE OBEY SERVE FEAR OBEDIENCE SERVICE RELATIONSHIP RESPECT

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

1 Samuel, chapters 8-12.

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To learn the four elements that are necessary to maintain a good relationship with God.

MEMORY VERSE

“And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul” (Deuteronomy 10:12, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

The most important decision in the lives of people is to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. However, the Christian life does not end with the forgiveness of sins; it is a continuous relationship that needs to be enriched and strengthened.

The Bible tells us clearly, what God expects from his children: respect, love, obedience and service. These requirements were established for the people of Israel, but they are still valid for us. When the Christian fails in an area of their life, it is easy to see a change in his or her relationship with God.

Preadolescents learn easily through the experiences of other people. Therefore, through the stories of these biblical characters, talk to them about the importance of obeying, loving, respecting and serving God. Since these men also failed, teach the class to recognize their mistakes and decide how they will avoid falling into sin so as not to ruin their relationship with God.

BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

Read 1 Samuel, chapters 8-12. For more than 400 years, Israel was special among the nations for being a theocratic people. That is, their government was ruled by absolute divine authority. God chose men and women to be judges, a function that included military leadership, as well as legal and moral authority. The judges were the representatives of God, but he was the King of Israel. This ended in the time of Samuel, about a thousand years before Christ.

In the Hebrew manuscripts, 1 and 2 Samuel was a single book, like 1 and 2 Kings, and 1 and 2 Chronicles. These books together document the beginning and fall of the monarchy in Israel. The first seven chapters of 1 Samuel narrate the transition between the era of judges and the monarchy.

Samuel was the last judge of Israel, and the one who anointed the first two kings. Therefore, it was an important link between the two periods. He warned the people about the consequences of asking for a king; but guided by God, he listened to the request of the people and helped to establish the monarchy.

The leaders of Israel gave Samuel three reasons why they wanted a king: (1) Samuel was an old man and his children were corrupt. (2) They thought that appointing a king would avoid future military problems - it is more than evident that they had forgotten the miraculous victories under the leadership of judges like Deborah and Gideon. Finally, (3) they wanted to be like other nations (8:5). God told Samuel that the people were not rejecting him, but rejecting God himself as their king.

God would not allow them to be like the other nations because Israel was the people of his covenant. Not even the king would have absolute authority in Israel; his powers were strictly limited (see Deuteronomy 17:14-20). The monarchy in Israel would be theocratic, that is, the power of the king would be under the direction and control of God.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Welcome your students, and tell them that in this unit they will study the life of the first kings of Israel. Remind them that those who have a Bible should bring it and arrive on time to participate in the learning activities. Start the class with prayer. Then ask a volunteer to help you distribute any students' resources for today's session.

Kings

For this activity, you will need cardboard, colored pens or markers, glue and visual illustrations of crowns, thrones, scepters, palaces, kings, etc.

Put the materials on a table for your students to make a mural about kings. As you work, ask them to name some characteristics and functions of kings.

After placing the finished mural on the wall, tell them that during this unit they will study the history of three important kings of Israel.

TEACH THE LESSON

Read the biblical study from 1 Samuel, chapters 8-12 in advance, noting the important facts. Summarize the story in your own words. Also, be ready to explain to the group the form of government that the Israelites had before becoming a monarchy. It was a theocracy led by judges. *A Dictionary of the Bible & Christian Doctrine in Everyday English* (Eby, Lyons & Truesdale) says: "The leaders of Israel were called judges after Joshua. The need for judges ended when Saul became king. God chose them to lead Israel in difficult times. They did not judge in the sense of settling differences among people. They helped free the Israelites from their enemies. They also turned the Israelites back to God."

Take time to examine the biblical passage with the group. Then have several of them say portions of it in their own words. Explain the difficult concepts, emphasizing that the Israelites, wanting to be like the other nations, despised the authority of God and preferred to be ruled by a human being (king) like them.

CONNECT THE LESSON

Attitudes

Have the class look at Student Activity Sheet 349-A. Ask the boys to answer the questions that correspond to the attitude of Israel, while the girls look at the biblical passages that relate to the attitude of Saul. Then, both groups should compare their results, and verify that they agree with what was studied in the biblical story.

How to start?

On Student Activity Sheet #349-B, they will find the steps to begin a relationship of love and friendship with God. Ask if any of them wants to know God more and live according to his commandments. If so, lead them in a prayer. Then, explain the importance of prayer and the study of the Word of God to get closer to the Lord and have a more intimate relationship with him.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

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Form a circle with the children and teach them to follow a rhythmic pattern; for example: a foot stomp and a clap. Practice a few times until they feel familiar with the rhythm. "And now, (stomp) Israel, (clap) what does (stomp) the Lord (clap)..."

WRAP-UP

Pray

Intercede for prayer for the group's requests.

Encourage

Encourage your students to respect, obey, love and serve God every day. Ask for an example of how we can show respect to God. Next, ask for an example of showing obedience to God. Then, ask for an example showing love to God. Finally, ask for an example of how we can serve God.

Invite

Sing some praises and remind them that their attendance is very important. Share something interesting about the next session. Encourage them to attend and to bring friends.