

Lesson 75

Israel's First King

God chose Saul to be Israel's first king, but Saul disobeyed the Lord.

Studying God's Word

Don't forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.

Introduction

Slide #3

Refer to Lesson 74 Theme Poster. In the last lesson, we were introduced to Samuel, who went to live at the tabernacle when he was a young boy.

What was the name of the priest whom Samuel helped at the tabernacle? Eli.

Yes, Eli was the high priest, and it was his job to lead the Israelites in worshipping the Lord. But Eli failed to stop his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, from doing wicked things.

What was Samuel doing when God first spoke to him? Sleeping.

Samuel was sleeping when he heard his name called. He kept running to Eli, thinking he had called him. After the third time, Eli figured out it was God calling Samuel. God gave Samuel a serious

message of judgment: Israel and Eli's family would be judged for their sin.

This message was fulfilled when the Israelites lost a battle against the Philistines. Many soldiers were killed, and the ark of the covenant was captured. Eli's sons also died in the battle, and when Eli heard the news, he fell and died. Everything happened just as God said.

Samuel continued to listen to God as he grew up. He became a prophet, a priest, and a judge. God gave him victory over the Philistines and helped him in all he did.

In today's lesson, we'll see how some important decisions changed the course of Israel's history! Often when we make a choice about something, we don't know how that decision will affect the future. Some choices are small, like choosing what to order at a restaurant. But even choices that seem "small" can have consequences. For example, if you order a triple-scoop, hot fudge, double-decker brownie sundae—and eat it all—you could end up with a bad stomachache.

Sometimes we make choices while under pressure. People might be pestering us saying, "Hurry up, I need to know now!" Or maybe we get impatient and don't want to wait for God to guide us, or we think we have a better idea. When we make choices

in these kinds of situations, they often are poor choices with bad consequences.

Have the two boxes with “prizes” in them ready for the “This or That” game.

We’re going to play a game today to help us better understand this. I need a volunteer. Choose a volunteer to stand beside you at the front of the room. Bring out the two boxes labeled “This” and “That.” This game is called “This or That.” You will have to choose this box or that box. In one box, there is something good that you and the class could share. But in the other box is something that I promise you will not like. Since the whole class will share the prize with you, they will help you decide by shouting out which box they think you should choose. You have 30 seconds to decide, and your time starts now! Set the timer or start the stopwatch. Encourage the class to shout out which box they want. When time is up, allow the volunteer to open the box he chose and share the contents with the class—good or bad. Was it hard to decide which box you should choose? What made it difficult/easy? Allow volunteer to answer. Does anyone have other examples of choices you make every day? Or maybe one big choice or decision that was hard to make? Allow discussion or share a personal example.

We face choices every day. Most are pretty easy to make, but some can be difficult. Some choices like whether to sin or to do what's right are especially important because they will have a big impact on our lives. We may make a lot of good decisions, but one or two bad ones can ruin everything. Today, we're going to look at some choices that had some terrible consequences.

Israel's Choice

God had chosen Samuel to lead Israel as the last judge. During Samuel's lifetime, Israel had a time of peace and godliness. Many people turned back to the Lord and stopped worshipping idols. When Samuel got older, he appointed his sons to judge Israel. But his sons were not like him. They were greedy and dishonest. The Israelites didn't want them to lead after Samuel. So, the people came to Samuel with a new idea. They were tired of having judges. They wanted to be like all the other nations around them; they wanted a king!

1 Samuel 8:6–7

Slide #4

Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. Let's read what happened next. Turn to 1 Samuel 8. Who will read verses 6 and 7? Assign a reader.

How did Samuel feel about the people's request for a king? He was displeased.

Yes. Samuel was unhappy with the people's request.

What was the first thing Samuel did after he heard it? He prayed to the Lord.

What did the Lord tell Samuel to do? Obey the voice of the people.

Who did the Lord say the people were rejecting when they asked for a king: Samuel or God? God.

God knew that the people were rejecting him as their king. After all God had done for the Israelites—freeing them from slavery in Egypt and giving them the land of Canaan—they still wanted to be like the nations around them. They wanted a man to be their king.

Were the Israelites making a good choice here when they asked for a king? Allow discussion.

The Israelites' choice was not good. They were being impatient and unwise, wanting to do things their own way instead of trusting God. They were rejecting the Creator God as their king, and their choice would have consequences.

God told Samuel to give the people a king, but he also told him to warn them about

what their kings would do. Samuel told them their kings would take young men and women for his service to fight in the army and work in the fields. They would make the people pay taxes on their crops and animals, and they would take the best land, animals, and servants for themselves. When their kings did these things and the people cried out for God's help, God said he would not answer.

How many of you think having a king sounds like a good idea? Allow discussion.

The Israelites wouldn't listen to Samuel's warning; they wanted a human king to rule them and lead them into battle just like the other nations. The Israelites wanted to be like everyone else even though they were God's chosen people.

Let's find out who God chose to be Israel's first king.

1 Samuel 10:20–24

Slide #5

Slide #6

Slide #7

Turn to 1 Samuel 10:20. Follow along as I read verses 20–24. Read the verses.

Samuel gathered all the Israelites together so God could show him which tribe the king would come from.

Who was chosen to be the first king of Israel? Look in verse 21. Saul the son of Kish.

What tribe was Saul from? The tribe of Benjamin.

Where was Saul when he was chosen? Hiding among the baggage.

How is Saul described in verse 23? Taller than any of the people.

Look in verse 24. Who chose Saul to be king? The Lord.

We learn a bit about Saul from these verses. He was a tall man from the tribe of Benjamin. He must have been overwhelmed or humbled at being chosen king since he was hiding near the baggage.

Slide #8

Slide #9

What did the people shout when Saul was brought before them? Long live the king!

Pass out the Class Notes.

Let's start the Class Notes. You will choose an answer from the word bank and write it in the crossword puzzle. Who will read #1 and give the answer? Choose a reader. God. Have students complete #1.

Who will read #2 about what Samuel told the people? Choose a reader. Warned. Have students complete #2.

And #3? Who did the Israelites want to be like? Choose a reader. Nations. Have students complete #3.

So, who was Israel's first king? That's #4.
Choose a reader. Saul. Have students
complete #4.

Saul's Choices

Saul was given a special privilege and a big responsibility when he was made king. Things started out pretty well. Samuel helped Saul and prayed for him to follow God and make good choices. God sent his Spirit to help Saul and gave him victory over his enemies. But Saul soon began to make unwise choices that were not pleasing to the Lord.

1 Samuel 13:5–12

Slide #10

Slide #11

Slide #12

Slide #13

Slide #14

Turn to 1 Samuel 13:5. Follow along while I read verses 5–12. Read the passage.

What enemy gathered against Saul and the Israelites in verse 5? Philistines.

How large was the Philistine army? 30,000 chariots, 6,000 horsemen, troops like the sand on the seashore.

Yikes! The Philistines had fought against the Israelites for years. They were fierce

warriors who had chariots and better weapons than the Israelites.

What did the Israelites do when they saw this army? They hid in caves, holes, rocks, tombs, and cisterns.

The Israelites were terrified of the Philistine army! They were hiding wherever they could! Some even crossed the Jordan River to get away from the upcoming battle. The men who stayed with Saul were so scared, they were trembling.

King Saul knew that they were in trouble. But he was waiting for someone to come to meet him at Gilgal. Who was it? Look in verse 8. Samuel.

How long had he already waited? Seven days.

Look at verse 9. What did King Saul do when he saw that his men were scattering from him? He offered the burnt offering. Who came right after Saul made the offering? Samuel.

Was Samuel okay with Saul making the offering? No!

Slide #15

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. Saul wanted to offer a sacrifice so God would bless and protect him and the men going to battle. But according to God's laws, only a priest—like Samuel—could offer a sacrifice. Saul should have waited for Samuel to do it.

Instead, he made a bad choice and disobeyed God's commands.

Let's look at another choice Saul made. Turn in your Bibles to 1 Samuel 15:7. In this account, Saul was headed for another battle. This time, the Israelites were attacking the Amalekites. Samuel told Saul that God wanted them to completely destroy the Amalekites. He wanted everyone and everything gone! So, Saul gathered the Israelites and led the attack.

1 Samuel 15:7–9

Slide #16

Slide #17

Who will read 1 Samuel 15:7–9? Assign readers.

Saul attacked the Amalekites as God told him to. But did Saul obey completely? No. What did Saul and the people keep alive? Look in verse 9. Agag the king of the Amalekites and the best of the animals (sheep, oxen, calves, lambs, and all that was good).

Saul and the Israelites destroyed everything that they thought was worthless, but they kept everything they thought was good.

Did Saul make a good choice? Why or why not? Allow discussion.

Saul made another bad choice. He directly disobeyed God's command to completely destroy the Amalekites and everything they owned. Instead of trusting and obeying the Lord, Saul trusted himself and his own ideas.

When Samuel asked Saul about his disobedience, Saul tried to make his choice sound better by saying he planned to use the animals as offerings to God. But Saul didn't repent or take responsibility for his actions.

1 Samuel 15:22

Slide #18

Then Samuel told Saul what God wanted him to do. Listen for what pleases God as I read 1 Samuel 15:22. Read the verse.

Which pleases God more? Obeying partway (so he could use the animals for offerings and sacrifices) or listening and obeying the Lord completely? Listening and obeying completely.

Slide #19

Slide #20

Let's go back to our crossword on the Class Notes. Who will read #5? What did Saul do before the battle against the Philistines? Choose a reader. Offering. Have students complete #5.

Who was supposed to offer the sacrifice? That's #6. Choose a reader. Priests. Have

students complete #6.

Who will read #7 about Saul's next bad choice? Choose a reader. King. Have students complete #7

That's right. He let Agag, king of the Amalekites, live, along with all the best animals.

What did Samuel tell Saul for #8? Choose a reader. Obedience. Have students complete #8.

Saul's Consequences

God put Saul in several situations to test whether he would be obedient or not. Samuel had made it clear that Saul **MUST** obey God completely. And, as we already saw, Saul failed the tests and disobeyed. Any disobedience to God is sin—even when we think our way is a really great idea. Saul's life changed because he trusted his own wisdom instead of God's wisdom. Saul's choices would have consequences—and they wouldn't be good!

Samuel explained to Saul that since he had failed to keep the command of the Lord, his kingdom would not continue. God would choose someone else to be king—a man after God's own heart. Not only this, but Saul would never see Samuel again. Saul lost a good friend and counselor. But even worse than that—Saul lost the Spirit of the Lord, which was working in his

life to do great things! All these gifts were taken from Saul, and he was left with a harmful spirit that troubled him.

Wow! Did you know how important obedience is to God? God would rather we obey him than try to please him our own way. God demanded complete obedience from Saul, and he expects the same from us.

Slide #21

Let's finish our Class Notes. Who will read #9 about what God took away from Saul? Choose a reader. Kingdom. Have students complete #9.

Who will read #10? Choose a reader. Spirit. Have students complete #10.

Application

Refer to the Exodus to Malachi Timeline. The Israelites rejected God as their king and asked for a human king instead. God warned them that things would not go well for them under their human kings. Yet they ignored God's warning and demanded a king. God gave the people what they wanted and chose Saul to be the first king of Israel. This happened in 1095 BC and ended the time of the judges.

Slide #22

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. Saul disobeyed God when he took matters into his

own hands and made bad choices. Because of his disobedience, he would lose his kingdom; he lost his friend and advisor, Samuel; and he lost the Spirit of the Lord.

We might think that what Saul did doesn't make much difference to us today since it all happened a long time ago. But think about it.

Refer to the Attributes of God Poster. What does it mean that God is immutable? Choose a student to read the definition. Immutable: will never change.

God is the very same God today as he was in Saul's time. He will never change. He has given us his commands in the Bible, and we must obey them, too!

Jesus explained obedience very simply in John 14:15. He said, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." If our hearts really love God, we will keep his commandments. We won't do a perfect job because we are sinners, but our lives should be different because we love God and want to obey him. As we get to know God better, we will love him more, and he will give us the ability to obey and make good choices that will please him.

Lesson Review

We encourage you to play a lesson review game.

Bible Baseball

Students will answer questions and run the bases!

Materials

Review Questions (included in lesson)

Three chairs set out for bases

Optional: gift wrap tube and a large balloon

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Set out chairs as bases. Have the students line up by the home base area facing you (at the pitcher's mound). Each student up to "bat" will have a chance to answer a review question. If he can answer it correctly, let him run the bases. If he can't answer correctly, give the answer and ask him to go to the end of the line and try again.

You may want the students to sit on the chair at each base while they wait to run to the next base or have them run all the way around and return to the line. Repeat the questions until all the students have run around the bases.

For some added fun, you can use a gift wrap tube as a bat and toss a large balloon for students to hit after they answer each question.

Box Toss

Students will answer review questions then toss the beanbag at the holes in the box to gain points for their team.

Materials

Review Questions (included in lesson)
Medium-sized cardboard box
Scissors or knife
Four beanbags
Masking tape

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Use scissors or a knife to cut two or three holes in the bottom of the box. Make sure they are large enough for a beanbag to easily pass through. Label each hole with a point number: 5, 10, and 15. Use masking tape to make a tossing line several feet away from the box.

Divide the class into teams. Have the teams line up behind the line across from the box. Give each team two beanbags. Alternate asking each team a review question. Students who answer correctly will toss the beanbags at the target holes in the box to earn points for their team. If they answer incorrectly, they may toss the beanbags for fun without the points counting. Students will go to the end of the line after

tossing the beanbags. Keep score for both teams. Continue play until all questions have been answered correctly and students have all had a chance to toss the beanbags.

Draw Dice

Teams will answer questions and complete a simple drawing to win. Who will finish their drawing first?

Materials

- Review Questions (included in lesson)
- One drawing area for each team (paper, white board, etc.)
- Pencils or white board markers
- One die

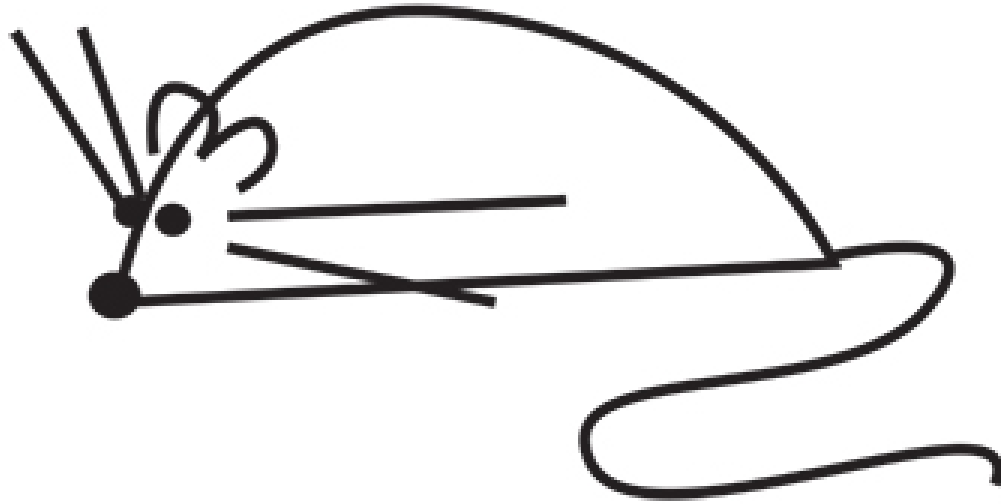
Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Divide the class into two teams. Give each team a sheet of paper and a pencil, or divide the white board in half. Draw a mouse on the board as an example.

Ask the first team a question from the lesson. If they answer correctly, have them roll the die.

To begin drawing their mouse, each team must wait until they get a six. They will then draw the mouse's body on their paper or the board. After

they have drawn the body, as they give correct answers to the questions, they can continue to draw the other parts of the mouse according to the numbers they roll.



They can draw according to the numbers below:

6 = body

5 = nose

4 = whiskers

3 = eyes

2 = ears

1 = tail

Continue giving each team a turn to answer a question and roll the die. Repeat the questions as necessary. The first team to finish their mouse wins.

You may choose to draw a simple object from the lesson, such as a crown, an open Bible, a fish, etc. Be sure to assign numbers (as above) to each part of the object to be drawn before the game begins.

Four in a Row

Students will answer questions and add a marker for their team onto the grid. Which team will be the first to get four in a row?

Materials

- Review Questions (included in lesson)
- Masking tape
- Red and black paper circles or other markers for each team

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Use masking tape to make a 16-section grid on the floor. The grid should be four sections wide by four sections long. Each section should be equal in size. Use eight red circles and eight black circles cut from construction paper or other markers for the two teams.

Divide the students into two teams. Give each team eight markers. They will take turns answering the questions. If they answer correctly, they can put a marker in a square on

the grid. The first team to get four markers in a row wins the game.

Goofy Golf

Hit the sock with the noodle? Teams must work together to answer the questions and putt to get a hole-in-one in this crazy golf game!

Materials

- Review Questions (included in lesson)
- Swimming noodles or rolled up newspapers
- Rolled up socks
- Masking tape
- Ten sheets of paper
- Markers

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Use the markers to number sheets of paper 1–10 (use more or less depending on class size and time). Tape down the sheets of paper around the room in a random pattern to form a golf course. You may want to add chairs as obstacles in the path.

Divide the class into teams. Give each team a rolled up sock and a swimming noodle. Ask the first student a review question from the lesson. If he answers correctly, allow him to use the noodle to drive the rolled up sock toward the

first sheet of paper labeled #1. Continue with the next team. Take turns allowing team members to answer questions and continue putting the socks along the course to each hole, continuing from where the last teammate left off. The sock must touch or roll over the sheet of paper to consider it in the hole. The first team to reach the tenth hole wins.

Pick a Point

Answer the questions correctly to earn the right to pick a point.

Materials

Review Questions (included in lesson)
Small paper strips
Cup or basket

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Write various numbers in increments of 5 or 10 on strips of paper to use as point cards. Put the point cards into the cup or basket. Divide students into teams of 4–5 students each. Have each team take turns answering a review question. After each correct answer, let a member of the team draw a point card from the cup.

The number of points on the cards will vary, so the score will have nothing to do with how skilled one team might be. Keep track of each team's points. If time allows, repeat the questions!

Racetrack

Who will reach the checkered flag first? Teams will race to the finish by answering review questions.

Materials

Review Questions (included in lesson)
White board or chalkboard
Markers/chalk
Optional: paper cutouts for each team (cars, animals, circles, etc.), tape/poster putty

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Draw a racetrack on the board. It may be as simple as a straight horizontal path or a curvy circle. Label "Start" and "Finish" (with a checkered flag) at either end of the track. Add numbers along the track (e.g., 1–10) at equal intervals between Start and Finish. The numbers will be used as placement points for the racers as they progress along the track.

Divide the class into teams. You may draw a different symbol (e.g., stick figure, circle, X or O) to represent each team at the Start, or use paper cutouts as team markers and stick them to the board with tape/poster putty.

Ask the first team a review question. If they answer correctly, move their marker or redraw their symbol along the track at #1. If they answer incorrectly, give the next team a chance to answer and move to the first number. If they do not know, give the answer and ask that question again later. Continue to alternate asking review questions and moving teams' markers along the racetrack according to the numbers along the track. The first team to reach the Finish wins!

Toss for It

How many points? Toss for it! Students answer the questions and toss the beanbag to earn points for their team.

Materials

- Review Questions (included in lesson)
- A deck of numbered cards, or numbers and "wild" written on index cards
- One beanbag
- Masking tape
- Two baskets or containers for cards

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Place several rows of numbered cards facedown with a few inches between them to form a grid pattern (make sure to put several wild cards or Jokers down, too). Use the masking tape to make a tossing line several feet from the cards.

Divide students into teams and have them line up behind the tossing line. Ask the first student a review question. If he gives the correct answer, have him toss the beanbag onto a card. Turn the card over to reveal the points he receives for his team. Face cards or word cards are 10 points each. Wild or Jokers are also 10—plus another turn. All other cards are face value.

Have the student pick up his card and put it in the team's basket to be counted at the end of the game. Next team's turn. If a student gives an incorrect answer, he should go to the end of the line. Give the answer and repeat that question later. Continue taking turns until all the questions have been answered. Add more cards to the grid if necessary.

Limited License to Reproduce

A limited, non-exclusive, non-transferable, nonsublicensable license is hereby granted to a single local church or organization to print copies of the PDF materials in the Teacher Digital Resources if 1) you are the original purchaser; 2) you are using the copies for noncommercial purposes (such as for teaching in class) exclusively within your single local church or organization (multi-campus churches, and national/regional denominations are not covered under this license); and 3) you follow the instructions provided in the curriculum pertaining to the printable materials.

This license is for the specific purchaser of the product and does not include affiliated groups or organizations, or other churches or groups in the same denomination as the purchaser, not identified as the actual purchaser. There is no limit to the number of printed copies for use within the single local church or organization which is the actual purchaser. None of the material in this curriculum may be reproduced for any commercial promotion, advertising, or sale of a product or service, or to share with any other persons, churches, groups, or organizations.

The media (audio/video) portions are copyrighted and duplication is prohibited. This license is for materials in the Teacher Digital

Resources only and does NOT include reproduction rights for pre-printed teacher books, student guides, student take home sheets, or posters, except on an emergency basis when purchased quantities are not sufficient for a given week.

Bible Version

Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.