

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 this lesson, we were introduced to Samuel. Samuel went to live at the tabernacle with Eli when he was a young boy. Eli was the high priest, and it was his job to lead the Israelites in worshipping the Lord. But Eli failed to restrain his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas. They were wicked, greedy, and selfish.

When God first called Samuel, what was Samuel doing? Sleeping.

Samuel was sleeping when he heard his name called. He kept running to Eli because he thought Eli was calling him. After the third time, Eli figured out it was God calling Samuel, and he told Samuel what to say if he heard his name again. God did call Samuel in a dream, and he gave him a serious message of judgment. The Israelites would be judged for their idolatry, and Eli's family would be judged for their wickedness.

Samuel obediently delivered the message God had given. This message was fulfilled when the Israelites lost a battle against the Philistines. About 30,000 soldiers were killed, and the ark of the covenant was captured. Hophni and Phinehas also died in the battle. When Eli heard the news, he fell and broke his neck. Everything God said happened.

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.

Slide #4

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. In today's lesson, we'll see how some important choices changed the course of Israel's history! Often when we make a choice about something, we don't know how that choice 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, what you order at a restaurant could lead to a stomachache later, depending on what and how much you ate.

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 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 you will not like. Since the whole class will share the good 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 like these every day. But choosing whether to sin or to do what's right will have a big impact on our lives. We may make a lot of right choices, but one or two bad ones can ruin everything. Sadly, we'll learn about a man whose choices had some terrible consequences.

Israel's Choice

Pass out the Class Notes.

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 returned 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; they wanted a king!

1 Samuel 8:6–7
Slide #5

Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. Let's read what happened next. Turn to 1 Samuel 8.

1 Samuel is after the books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth.

Who will read 1 Samuel 8:6–7? Assign a reader.

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

Yes. Displeased means unhappy. Samuel didn't like the people's request. What was the first thing Samuel did after he heard it? He prayed to the Lord.

What did the Lord say to Samuel? 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 here was not good. They were rejecting the Creator God as their king. And their choice would have consequences.

God told Samuel to obey the people and give them a king, but he also told Samuel to warn them about what their kings would do. Samuel said that their kings would take young men and women for his service to fight in the army and work in the fields. They would demand taxes on the people's crops and animals and take their best animals and servants. When their king did these things and the people cried out for deliverance, God said he would not answer.

1 Samuel 8:19–20

Slide #6

Will the people listen to Samuel's warnings about having a human king? Who will read 1 Samuel 8:19–20? Assign a reader.

Did the people listen and change their minds? No, they refused to obey the voice of Samuel.

Who did they want to be like? All the nations.

What did they want their king to do? Judge them and go before them into battle.

The Israelites made their choice—they wanted a human king to rule them and lead them into battle. They wanted to be like everyone else even though they were God's chosen people. God warned them what their kings would do, but the people insisted on having a king.

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

1 Samuel 10:20–24

Slide #7

Slide #8

Slide #9

Turn to 1 Samuel 10:20. Who will read verses 20–24? Assign readers.

So, Samuel gathered all the Israelites together and had the tribes come near one at a time so God could reveal 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? 1 Samuel 10:21. 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.

Who chose Saul to be king? 1 Samuel 10:24. The Lord.

We learn a lot about Saul from this passage. He was from the tribe of Benjamin. He was probably overwhelmed or humbled at being chosen king since he was hiding among the baggage. And he was tall.

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

Slide #10

Slide #11

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.

Rejected. 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 responsibility when he was made king. Samuel helped him and prayed for him to make good choices and follow God. God sent his Spirit to help Saul. God gave Saul victory over his enemies, like when Saul gathered the Israelites and rescued the city of Jabesh-gilead from the Ammonites.

1 Samuel 13:5-12

Slide #12

Slide #13

Slide #14

Slide #15Slide #16

Now, let's look at some choices Saul made as king. 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.

The Philistines had a history of fighting against the Israelites. They were fierce warriors with chariots and better weapons than the Israelites had.

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 people who stayed with Saul were fearful and trembling.

King Saul knew they were in trouble. He was waiting for someone to come to him at Gilgal. Who was it? 1 Samuel 13:8. Samuel. How long had he already waited? Seven days.

What did King Saul do when he saw the people were scattering from him? 1 Samuel 13:9. He offered the burnt offering.

Who came right after Saul made the offering? Samuel.

What was wrong with King Saul offering the burnt offering? Allow discussion.

Saul wanted to offer a sacrifice so God would bless and protect him and the people in the battle. But according to God's laws, only a priest, like Samuel, could make the sacrifice. Saul should have waited for Samuel, who was chosen by God to be a priest and a prophet. Saul disobeyed God's commands about who should lead the people in worship.

Uh oh! It seems like Saul wasn't making very good choices. Turn in your Bibles to 1 Samuel 15:7 and let's look at another example. In this account, Saul was headed for another battle. This time, the Israelites were attacking the Amalekites. Samuel told Saul that God wanted the Amalekites completely destroyed. He wanted everyone and everything gone! So, Saul gathered the Israelites and led the attack.

1 Samuel 15:7-9

Slide #17

Slide #18

Who will read 1 Samuel 15:7-9? Assign a reader.

Saul attacked the Amalekites as God told him to. Saul was also told not to keep anyone or anything alive. Did Saul do that? 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 considered worthless, but they kept everything good alive.

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

Saul made another poor choice after his battle against the Amalekites. He directly disobeyed God's command to completely destroy the Amalekites and everything they owned. Saul trusted himself and his own wisdom instead of trusting the Lord.

First, he made the sacrifice himself to God for protection even though he knew that only Samuel was allowed to do that. Then, he spared Agag and kept all the best animals even though God said to destroy them all. When Samuel confronted Saul for his disobedience, Saul blamed the people and tried to justify his choice by saying that he planned to use the animals to sacrifice to God. He didn't repent.

1 Samuel 15:22

Slide #19

Samuel told Saul what God wanted him to do. Who will read 1 Samuel 15:22? Assign a reader.

Based on this verse, which pleases the Lord more? Burnt offerings and sacrifices or obeying the voice of the Lord? Obeying the Lord.

Slide #20

Slide #21

Let's go back to our crossword. Who will read #5? Choose a reader. Hid. Have students complete #5.

And #6, what did Saul do before the battle against the Philistines? Choose a reader. Offering. Have students complete #6.

Who was supposed to offer the sacrifice? That's #7. Choose a reader. Samuel. Have students complete #7.

Who will read #8 about Saul's next bad choice? Choose a reader. King. Have students complete #8.

What did Samuel tell Saul for #9? Choose a reader. Obey. Have students complete #9.

Saul's Consequences

God put Saul in several situations to test whether he would be obedient. And, as we already saw, Saul failed the tests and disobeyed. Any disobedience to God is sin, and God must

judge all sin. Saul's choices would have consequences—and they wouldn't be good!

1 Samuel 13:13–14

Slide #22

Slide #23

Let's see what Saul's disobedience brought to his life. We are going to read 1 Samuel 13:13–14. Assign a reader.

What did Samuel call Saul because of his sin? Foolish.

What did Saul fail to keep? The command of the Lord.

And what would happen to Saul's kingdom? It would not continue.

Yes, God would look for someone else to be king. What type of man would God now look for? A man after God's own heart.

This man after God's own heart would be the new king. He would lead God's people in place of Saul because Saul had disobeyed.

1 Samuel 15:26

Slide #24

Turn to 1 Samuel 15:26. Someone read that for us. Assign a reader.

What did Saul reject? The word of the Lord. And what did the Lord reject? Saul from being king.

1 Samuel 15:35

Slide #25

Not only that, Saul lost a good friend and counselor. Who will read 1 Samuel 15:35?

Assign a reader.

Who would never see Saul again? Samuel.

1 Samuel 16:14

Slide #26

Now turn to 1 Samuel 16:14. Who will read that? Assign a reader.

What left Saul? The Spirit of the Lord.

What came over Saul for the rest of his life?

A harmful spirit from the Lord.

Saul suffered many consequences because he would not trust God. He lost the kingdom, which would be given to a man after God's own heart; he lost his friend and advisor, Samuel; and he lost the Spirit of the Lord, which was working in his life to accomplish great things! These gifts were taken from Saul, and he was left with a harmful spirit that troubled him. Obedience is more important to God than sacrifice. He demanded obedience from Saul, and he requires the same from us.

Slide #27

Let's finish our Class Notes. Who will read #10 about what God took away from Saul?

Choose a reader. Kingdom. Have students complete #10.

God said that he would take away the kingdom and give it to a man after his own heart, someone who would love and obey him.

And #11? What else did Saul lose? Choose a reader. Advice. Have students complete #11.

Who will read #12? Choose a reader. Spirit. Have students complete #12.

Application

Refer to the Exodus to Malachi Timeline. The Israelites rejected God and his kingship and asked for a human king instead. God warned them that things would not be good for them under their human kings. Yet they demanded a king and ignored God. God agreed to give 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 #28

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. But Saul disobeyed God. He offered a sacrifice without waiting for Samuel. Then Saul saved the life of the king of the Amalekites and kept the good things after the battle when God had commanded that they destroy everything.

Because of Saul's disobedience, God would choose someone else to be king; Samuel left

Saul and never saw him again; and the Spirit of the Lord left Saul.

We might think that what Saul did doesn't make much difference to us today. It happened a long time ago. We don't hear God's voice calling us. And we certainly don't have our own prophet telling us what the Lord wants us to do, like Saul who didn't have the complete Bible. But, let's think for a minute. We are called to obey and trust God just like Saul was. God has given us his Word and his commands in the Bible, and we are called to live by them!

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.

He is the very same God today as he was in Saul's time. He will never change. He still demands obedience to his commands. He still must judge sin. And we will suffer the consequences of our choices just like Saul did.

Jesus explained obedience in the New Testament very simply. In John 14:15, Jesus said this: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." If our hearts love God—really love him—we will keep his commandments. We won't do a perfect job because we are sinners and only Jesus was perfect. But our lives will be different because we want to obey him. He will give

us the ability to obey and make choices that please him. As we know him better, we will love him more. And as we love him more, we will want to obey 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

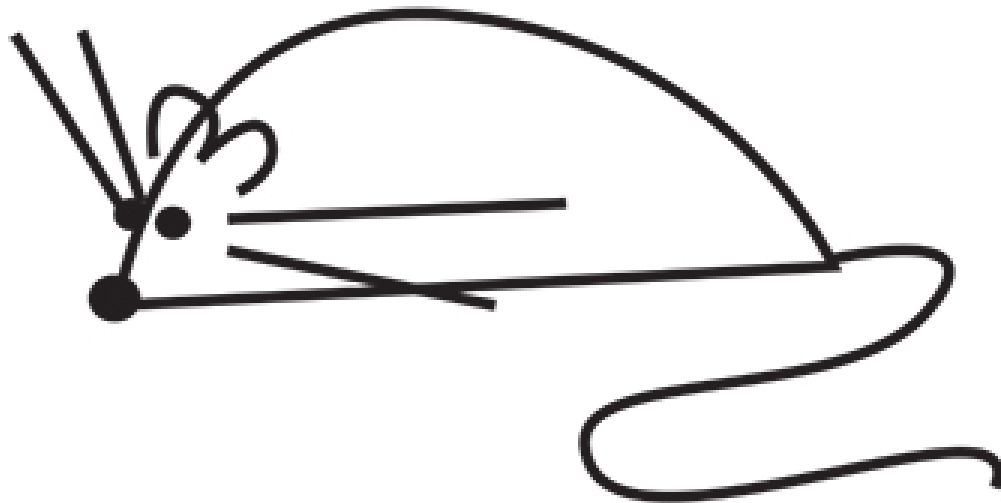
Instructions

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.

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