

Lower Elementary

Saul Becomes King

Checklist

paper plates

gemstone stickers or beads

Introduction:

Show children a fancy wrapped gift box with a rock or dirt on the inside, and a wrinkled brown paper bag with a small toy inside.

Ask which one looks nicer. Which one would you expect to be given as a present.

Open up each one. The fancier box looks nice on the outside, but looks can be deceiving. The ugly bag is the one that has the nice gift.

Sometimes a person's heart can be like this. A kind heart might be wrapped up in a plain-looking outside, and a cruel heart might be wrapped in a beautiful outside.

After Saul became king, he led the Israelite army, protecting God's people from their hostile neighbors. But soon the power went to his head. Saul grew proud of his achievements. He wanted to lead in his own way. One time, God gave Saul very specific instructions through Samuel. Saul completely ignored them.

"Saul has stopped obeying Me," the Lord told Samuel. "I'm sorry that I made him king."

This made Samuel angry, and he cried to God in prayer all night long.



First thing the next morning, Samuel went out to find Saul and speak with him. But when he asked where he was, he was told Saul was busy building a monument to remind everyone of how strong and successful he was. Samuel shook his head in sadness, knowing that Saul's heart was focused on himself rather than God. When Samuel caught up to Saul he reminded him of God's instruction not to take anything from the city he conquered. "I didn't!" Saul protested. "Then what is that sound I hear?" Samuel asked.



“Oh!” Saul froze, caught in his lie. “Well, I did just take some sheep and cattle...I didn’t think that would count. I was going to give them back to God.”

“What do you think God cares about more?” Samuel asked.

“Gifts, or obedience?”

Saul stood there silently, embarrassed, but still defensive.

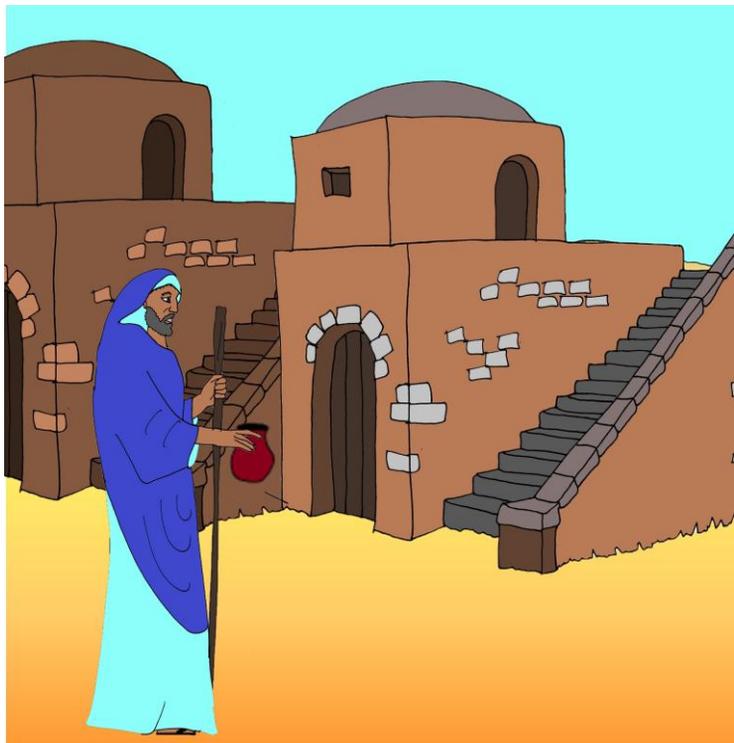
“Your pride and rebellious attitude are just as bad as bowing down to statues and praying to them. God will not allow you to be king when your heart doesn’t truly belong to Him.”



The two men walked their separate ways. They would never see each other again. Samuel always felt sad about what happened with Saul, but he followed God's instructions.

One day, God told Samuel it was time to anoint the next king.

"Go to the small town of Bethlehem," the Lord told him. "Find a man named Jesse. One of his sons will be the future king."



At Jesse's house, Samuel's eyes immediately were drawn to the oldest son, Eliab. He was strong and tall and looked like a crown would fit well on his handsome face.

"Don't choose a king based on looks," God whispered to Samuel. "People care about what others are like on the outside. But I care about what people are like on the inside." One by one, Jesse introduced each of his sons to Samuel, from the oldest, down to the youngest. The Lord told Samuel each time it was not the one.

"Don't you have any other sons?" Samuel asked.

"Oh...just my youngest son, David," Jesse replied. "But he's outside with the sheep.

"Get him!" Samuel insisted.



When David came in, Samuel saw that he was just a boy, but he had a sparkle in his eyes and looked healthy from all his time outdoors.

“Him!” God whispered to Samuel. “He’s the one I’ve chosen.”

So Samuel took the olive oil he had brought in a jar and poured it onto David’s head, in front of his father and brothers who watched in awe.

God’s Spirit came onto David at that moment and guided him for the rest of his life.

Samuel went home, not knowing when God would have David take over as king, but understanding that when God looked at David and Saul, He saw straight through to their hearts.



Closing Discussion:



Who was the real king of Israel?

How was God different from the kings of the other countries?

Who was God's prophet?

Why did David get ignored at first?

What does God care about in a person? Their looks, or their heart?

What did Samuel do to show that David would be the next king?

What is this called?/What happens when someone is anointed?

Who was the greater king that was coming?

Craft:

Streamer crown and heart

Closing Activity:

Act out Samuel anointing David with perfume bottle. Pour a tiny bit of oil for children to touch and smell (and put on their heads, if they like).

David Anointed



Name: _____



“People judge others by what they look like, but I judge people by what is in their hearts.”

1 Samuel 16:7b

- ❖ Materials: colored tissue paper
- ❖ Children fold paper in half
- ❖ Children cut along lines
- ❖ Children open page and glue tissue paper to back



When choosing a



God looks at the

