

Intermediate Level, Block 6, Week 1 **Samuel—A Man according to God**

Point to Emphasize: We can choose to follow good leaders even when others do not.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 1:21—3:21

Memory Verse: Remember the ones leading you, who have spoken to you the word of God; and considering the issue of their manner of life, imitate their faith. (Hebrews 13:7)

Story Sample

This week we want to learn from a person named Samuel. Samuel was very special, because he was chosen by God and grew up to be a man that cared for what God wanted. His mother, Hannah, asked God to give her a son, and she promised God that she would give her son back to Him. God answered her prayer! God gave her a son whom she named Samuel. When Samuel was little, Hannah brought him to live in the temple with Eli the priest, just as she had promised to God. God had chosen Samuel, but Samuel still needed to grow up and learn many lessons in order to become someone who would know God's heart and would be useful to God. For Samuel to become a priest and judge, he had to learn many things. For us to do anything, like ride a bike or play the violin, we need to learn first, don't we?

While Samuel was growing up in the temple, Eli trained him to do many practical tasks in the temple, such as cleaning the temple, taking care of the furnishings, and handling the sacrifices. Samuel learned all these things well. Now Eli had two sons who also lived in the temple. Samuel noticed that these two sons were not very good people and that they did not do the right things. Eli's two sons did not listen to Eli and they made God unhappy. But Samuel knew not to follow their example because even as a young boy, Samuel learned from Eli to do one very important thing—to listen to God's calling. His learning taught him to listen and follow God's speaking his whole life. That meant, when he observed many things that went on, both positive and negative things, he knew what things pleased God and what things didn't. He learned to set his heart to follow God.

At school, some children are older than us, and others are younger than us. We will see many around us who are proper and whom we can look up to. But we will also see many who may not do and say the right things. Who do you think we should follow and imitate?

One time when I was in elementary school, our teacher had to step out of the classroom for something very important. She asked us to do our work quietly and not play around while we waited for her to come back. She asked the class president, a responsible boy, to be the leader and make sure everyone behaved. But as soon as she stepped out of the classroom, some of the boys started talking loudly, getting out of their seats, and fooling around. The class president reminded them of what the teacher had told us. Some of the boys listened and went back to their seats, but some others made faces at him and just kept being silly. I was watching all this and realized that I didn't want to be like those boys who were not doing the proper things. Even though they didn't follow the leader, I knew we needed to do what was right. Some of the girls tried to help the leader by doing what we were supposed to do and even asking the rowdy boys who were close-by to go back to their seats and to listen to him. *[Storyteller, insert your own example of doing the right thing by following the right person even when others don't.]*

So, even though Samuel must have seen many things that were not good, he learned what things made God happy and what things made Him unhappy. Even as a boy he learned not to follow

the wrong behavior that was around him. At a young age he was one who cared for what God wanted. Then as an adult God was able to use him for some very important things, like we will see in the next few weeks.

We always see and hear things that are going on around us whether good or bad. But who will we choose to follow? Like Samuel, we should know what's right and what's wrong and only pick up the good things. We can learn from Samuel's story and also learn the lessons to know what things we should imitate and follow and what things we should not. Who can tell us someone in their class at school who sets a good example that should be followed? Let's all be like Samuel this week. If we know we should not do something that others are doing, let's not do it. And if there is something good we know that we should do, then we should do it.

Intermediate Level, Block 6, Week 2 **The Children of Israel Wanting a King**

Point to Emphasize: We shouldn't insist on our own way when our parents know what is best for us.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 8—11

Memory Verse: ...He came to know that God the Most High is the Ruler over the kingdom of men and sets over it whomever He wills. (Daniel 5:21c)

Story Sample

Last week, we talked about Samuel and how he was a man who cared for what God wanted. But what about the other children of Israel? They were God's people. At one point they had been happy to be in Canaan, which was God's promised land. They were happy to be different from other nations. They were willing to know God's Word and to keep His law. God was with them, and the other nations feared them because they knew God was with them. They were God's kingdom. All the other nations around them were not like them.

But as time went on, things changed among the children of Israel. They turned their hearts away from God and began to serve and worship other gods, the idols of other nations. Yet, there was a man among them, Samuel, who followed God. He kept God's Word, and he went among the children of Israel speaking God's Word to them. All the people respected Samuel, and even feared him, because they knew God was with him. No matter what Samuel did or said, however, not many of the people turned back to God.

The children of Israel were very unhappy about being different from the other nations. All the nations around them had kings. They wanted a king also, a man they could see, just like the other nations. They did not want God to rule them. So they went to Samuel, the man of God, and demanded a king. Samuel was displeased about this. He did not want to appoint a king for them. He knew that they were God's people and that only God should be their king. But the people begged for a king. Samuel tried hard to talk them out of it. He told them how awful it would be to have a king over them like the other nations. He told them that they would have to pay taxes to that man, go to battle to win his wars, and also give him part of the crops from their land and of the cattle from their flocks. A king would demand so much from them!

But the children of Israel rejected God as their real King and insisted on having a man as their king. God was very displeased with this. Nevertheless, He eventually instructed Samuel to anoint a king for them. The new king was named Saul. Saul was a man everyone would admire. He was a strong fighter and was wealthy. He was strikingly handsome, and he was nearly a foot taller than everyone else. There was none like him. This is the one God anointed as ruler over His people. When he was presented to the people, they cheered with joy. Now they would be like all the other nations! They were so proud to have someone like Saul to look up to.

When I was growing up, I was exactly like the children of Israel. Once, I wanted to listen to one song that ALL the children in my class were listening to. I kept asking, insisting that my parents let me listen to it. My parents knew better than me. They knew that song was not good. But you know, after a while they gave into me. They sat with me and played the song for me. After I listened to the song, it got stuck in my head, and I even had nightmares about it. I later told my parents that I was going to listen to them and not insist on asking to do what others were doing. My parents really had known what was best for me. I just thought that because "everyone else"

was doing it, I should do it too. *[Storyteller, give an example of when you were young, insisting on having what "all the other children had" even though your parents knew what was best for you.]*

The children of Israel insisted on what they wanted but Samuel knew what was best for them. In the same way, you might insist on what you want but your parents know what is best for you. I hope you will be encouraged to accept what your parents tell you instead of insisting on having or doing what "everyone else" seems to do. Our parents really are trying to take the best care of us as we are growing up.

Intermediate Level, Block 6, Week 3 Saul—Being Disobedient to God

Point to Emphasize: We need to be obedient at all times.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 8—15

Memory Verse: Children, **obey** your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing in the Lord.
(Colossians 3:20)

Story Sample

The children of Israel now had a king just like they wanted. His name was Saul. When he was presented to the people, they cheered with joy. Now they were no different from the other nations.

Do you think Saul was a good king? Well, let's see what he was like as king. While he reigned as king, Saul was a mighty warrior. He and his son Jonathan fought well in battle for the children of Israel. BUT during this time he did not keep God's commandments. In one battle against the Amalekites, Jehovah told Saul to utterly destroy them and all that they had. Saul was not to save any living thing. God wanted this enemy to be thoroughly destroyed. So Saul with 210,000 men struck the Amalekites. But instead of destroying everything, Saul disobeyed God and captured their king, Agag, and kept all the best sheep and cattle for himself. He won the battle and defeated the children of Israel's enemy BUT he disobeyed Jehovah, his God. When Samuel heard about this and asked Saul why he had disobeyed Jehovah, Saul denied it. He said that those sheep and oxen were only kept as sacrifices to Jehovah. Saul had disobeyed and then he lied about it. He had saved all the best cattle for himself. Then Samuel told him that with Jehovah it is better to obey than to sacrifice. He also told him he had rejected the Word of Jehovah and so Jehovah had rejected him.

I will ask you something, but I don't want you to answer out loud. Have you ever disobeyed your parents and then lied about it? One day I was with my dad in the candy store. I was wearing overalls. Those pants had a lot of pockets. When my dad was not looking I put candies in my pockets. That was NOT RIGHT. My dad looked at me and asked me, "Why are your pockets so big?" I said, "Hmm... I have my hands in my pockets." My dad, who was very playful, started doing his favorite thing. He grabbed me, held me up in the air and started spinning me around. Oh, Oh!! You guessed it right! The candies that once filled my pockets were flying out everywhere. I was so embarrassed. I will never forget the sadness on my dad's face. I felt terrible. In our family, with each act of disobedience, there was always a consequence. So my dad asked me to go around the store, pick up every candy that had fallen from my pockets, and give them back to the store manager along with a heartfelt apology. *[Give an example of when you disobeyed your parents and then lied about it. How did you feel when they caught you in the lie?]*

So even though Saul was a mighty warrior and fought for Israel, he did not keep God's Word. He disobeyed God and then lied about disobeying. God was not pleased with this. Then Samuel came to him he did not confess and repent that he had disobeyed God's Word. Saul lied, trying to cover up what he did. Saul was caught, but he still did not confess and repent for not doing as God had commanded. What was the consequence for Saul's disobeying God? God rejected Saul and took the kingship away from him.

I'm sure that by now you have found that obeying can sometimes be hard. You might have been in the same situation like Saul, and after you disobeyed, you tried to cover it up with a lie. Saul disobedience and lying should serve as a warning to us. I really want to encourage you to obey

the authority figures around you and to ultimately obey God. Let's obey God and the older ones around us! And remember our verse today, it says that the Lord is pleased when we obey our parents. That is such a happy thought. I hope this week that verse will come back to you. And while it may not be so easy to always obey, you can know that it really makes the Lord happy when you do.

Intermediate Level, Block 6, Week 4 **God's Selection of David**

Point to Emphasize: We can learn to look at people's heart and not just see the outward things.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 16

Memory Verse: ...For it is not how man sees that matters; for man looks on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looks on the heart. (1 Samuel 16:7b)

Story Sample

God sent Samuel, the man of God, to find a man among the children of Israel who, as king, would not disobey Him as Saul had done. God sent Samuel to find one who would obey Him and care for His kingdom. God sent Samuel to the house of Jesse in Bethlehem, for God had selected a king among his sons.

It seemed that all of Jesse's family was gathered together in their house. Jesse's oldest son came before Samuel first. Samuel saw him and thought, "Surely this is the one Jehovah will make king!" Samuel was impressed with how tall and strong the oldest son was. Because the son looked so impressive, Samuel was sure that this one must be Jehovah's choice! But actually, Samuel was very wrong! Jehovah told him not to mind man's appearance. And then He said, "Man looks on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looks on the heart." This means that human beings judge a person based on how the person looks on the outside, but God does not do that. God looks at who we are on the inside. That is what matters to Him!

A lot of times we are like Samuel, aren't we? We look at someone's clothes or hairstyle or backpack and decide if we like the person or not. But God doesn't look at the outward things like that. He doesn't look at people like that. He doesn't look at YOU like that. He is not looking at whether you are tall or short or rich or poor or cool or not. God cares about your heart! And because we have a heart that loves God, we can learn the same thing Samuel learned that day: we can learn to look at people's heart and not just see the outward things.

One time I met a very skinny, weak girl. She had stringy hair and wore clothes that were old and worn out. She and her mom came every week to volunteer at the place I worked. That little girl loved to help. She would do whatever jobs we asked her to do. Now, on the outside she did not look like a "cool kid." And maybe she would not be the first one the other children would pick to be on a kickball team, but whenever she came to my work, what I saw was her heart. She was happy to come with her mom, and she was very glad to help others. Now, what do you think that little girl is doing today? Well, she is in college now, and she is studying to be a nurse. Ever since she was a little girl, she had a heart that loved to help others, and nurses help a lot of people. So you still can see her heart today. *[Storyteller, insert your own story of looking at someone's "inside" more than their outward appearance.]*

After Jehovah told Samuel that He looked at the heart, the rest of Jesse's sons came. Seven sons passed before Samuel in total, but Samuel knew that each one was not the one Jehovah had chosen. After the seventh son, Samuel asked, "Are these all the sons you have?" Jesse said that he had one more, his youngest son, who was out taking care of the sheep. This eighth son was so young, about 15 years old, that he did the lowest family chores. While his older brothers did all the big, important things, he was always sent to look after the sheep. Wow, Jesse had not even thought to call him! He had not thought there was anything about his youngest that would interest Samuel, the man of God. But Samuel told Jesse to send for the youngest son.

Can anyone guess what Jesse's youngest son was named? That's right! David! David was the youngest of these eight brothers, and when he came before Samuel, Jehovah said, "Arise; anoint him, for this is he." This is how the youngest son of Jesse was selected to be Israel's next king.

Although David's family did not think he was able to do much, David was the one chosen by God among the children of Israel! From this we see that God didn't care for David's outward appearance. He did not care that David was the youngest one and the one doing the lowest chores. God knew his heart and selected him to be king over Israel.

It is so important while we are at this age, to begin to choose friends who have good hearts. We can learn to look at people's heart and not just see the outward things about them.

Intermediate Level, Block 6, Week 5 David—Entering into Saul’s Service

Point to Emphasize: What we learn growing up will result in how we will carry out our life as adults.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 16:12-23

Memory Verse: Train up a child according to the way he should go; / Even when he is old, he will not depart from it. (Proverbs 22:6)

Story Sample

Last week we found out that David was anointed by Samuel to be king. What do you think he should do now? Saul was still ruling as king over the children of Israel. Should David go to the king and demand that Saul leave the throne? Should he go to the people of Israel and stir them up against King Saul? Well, David did not do either. He figured that since God had selected him to be king, God would be the one to bring him to the throne. So David kept tending his father’s flock. He did not do anything to change his situation. He did not try to work out how he was going to be king. He depended on God to do something to bring him into the kingship.

Let me give you an example. Let’s say that you know that when you grow up you will take over your dad’s big company. But now, you are still 9 or 10 and living at home. You still need to take out the trash, clean up your room, play with your younger brother or sister and obey your folks. David was about fifteen years old when he found out that he would be king. But he still needed to stay at home, look after the sheep and take care of off the menial tasks (like take out the trash) he was expected to do. And we might scratch our heads and asked, “Why did David still have to live like this?” Well, David was really doing something that would be so important when he later began to rule over the children of Israel. He was learning to be humble. He was learning that he was like everyone else and needed to learn to take care of so many things. He was learning that he needed to take care of others. He was learning not to be so proud of himself. He was learning not to be careless. We, like David, also can learn these things as we are growing up doing all the things we need to do in our family and for school.

Now, David was very skillful at playing the lyre. [*Storyteller, show picture of lyre.*] How did he become skilled at playing a lyre? To play in a skilled way is different from a beginner player who is just learning. Is there anyone here who plays an instrument in a skilled way? [*Pick an older one.*] Tell us how you are becoming skilled at playing the ____ [*piano, guitar, etc.*] To be skilled we must take lessons, and then we have to practice every day. David was taught to play the lyre, and then he practiced while tending the flock. Did you know that large herds of animals like sheep or cows are calmed down by gentle music or singing? Well, they are. David must have done a lot of practicing.

Because David could play the lyre so well, Saul sent a messenger to Jesse and said, “Send me David your son, who is among the sheep.” So David came to Saul and entered into his service. He became one who served the king. He stood before the king and whenever Saul wanted, David took his lyre and played it, and Saul was refreshed.

Because David’s playing helped him so much, the king loved David and made him his armor bearer. An armor bearer carried all the equipment the king would need to use during the battle. This was a very dangerous job!

Now when the king's army went out to battle, David went along to keep the king's extra armor, the spears and swords, that he would use during battle. And don't think that David stayed behind in the tent. NO! He was there in the midst of the battle alongside the king. So maybe you thought that David was a little soft, maybe weak, since he played the lyre so well. But you were wrong! To stand there in battle, loaded down with the spears and swords that the king would use, meant that you were as brave as the king.

Then, when the battle was over at the end of the day, did David get a few days off? No, the army was camped for battle. They might be in battle for weeks and months, and there were thousands of men. The camp was a huge array of tents. How would the tents be put up? Who would be in which tent? How would they all be fed? There was a lot to take care of. If you did not have bright capable men running the camp, it could be chaos. There were no cell phones, so you could not instantly dial a number and find out where your best warriors were. There was a lot of planning and detailed work needed to set up a battle camp. David was chosen to care for these things.

[Storyteller, give an example about how you were given some responsibility as a child and how important it was for you to do the job well. Then relate how doing that as a child has made you responsible for many things now as an adult—at your job, or taking care of your family, household, etc. Have the children help to make a list of activities they can learn now that will impact who they will be in the future (i.e. learning an instrument, learning to sew, learning to cook, learning to be organized, learning to bake...)]

In his younger years, David tended sheep. Now as a young man, he tends the army of the king! In the same way, as you are growing you should learn to always do your best and put the best effort in everything you do, whether it is learning to play an instrument, studying for a spelling test, making your bed, taking out the trash, or even doing homework. This will give you the best training to help you in the future. Doing your best now in what you are asked to do will help you to be useful in the future.

Intermediate Level, Block 6, Week 6 **David—Defeating Goliath**

Point to Emphasize: We can be those who stand for God's people, trusting that God will be with us.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 17

Memory Verse: ...Jehovah, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine. (1 Samuel 17:37a)

Story Sample

Today we have a story about being brave and trusting in God—and this story takes place on a battlefield! This is the story of a battle between Israel and their enemy, the Philistines. While Saul was king and David was still young, the armies of the Philistines set themselves to fight against Israel. They assembled on a mountain on one side of the valley, and King Saul set up his armies on a mountain on the other side.

The two armies were facing each other, ready for a fight, when the Philistine champion came forward. His name was Goliath, and he was HUGE. He was more than nine feet tall, and he had impressive armor and carried a giant shield. He came forward and challenged Israel, saying that he would fight any man they chose to send out. "If he is able to fight with me and strike me down," Goliath said, "we will be your servants; but if I prevail against him and strike him down, you will be our servants and serve us."

Oh, when King Saul and his army heard this, they were so afraid. No one wanted to fight this giant warrior! No one accepted the challenge. So Goliath kept challenging them. For forty days, he made the same offer.

Now, among the people in King Saul's army were three of David's brothers. They were at the battlefield, and so their father decided to send David to see how they were doing. When David got to the battlefield, he was just in time to hear Goliath make his daily challenge. The Israelites told David what had been going on, and David got very bothered. "Who is this Philistine that he should defy the ranks of the living God?" he asked. He did not like that someone was mocking the people of God.

But David's older brother heard David, and he got angry. He made fun of David and said he should have stayed back to take care of the sheep. But David answered and told him that there was a reason he had come. David realized that he had been sent there by God to defeat Goliath.

This reminds me of a school day when during recess, I walked into a group of my classmates. I realized one of them was making fun of a girl who instead of saying "Hi," she said "Amen" to them. They were mocking her for being a Christian. Immediately, I knew I had a choice to make. Would I just let them mock the girl or would I stand for God's people? I decided to stand for her. I knew God would be with me. And so it was. I was able to show the other classmates that they should not make fun of anyone, and even more, I was able to show them that I was a person who would stand for God and for God's people. *[Storyteller, insert your own story of having to do the right thing or speak up in a bold way against someone, knowing that the Lord was with you.]*

Well, King Saul heard what David had said, and David was brought to see him. David told the king that he would go and fight Goliath, but Saul wasn't convinced that David could do it. David was a young man, after all, and Goliath had been a warrior for a long time. But David was confident. He

had fought with the lion and bear that threatened his sheep, and he had defeated them. He knew that God had helped him then, and he knew that God would help him now. David said, "Jehovah, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine."

When Saul heard that, he said, "Go, and may Jehovah be with you." He gave David his armor, but David wasn't used to wearing it, so he took it off. His trust was not in the armor, anyway. It was in God. Instead of heavy armor and a sword, David took five smooth stones from the brook and put them into the shepherd's bag that he had, that is, in his pouch; and his sling was in his hand. Then he drew near to the Philistine.

When Goliath saw David coming, he was scornful. He mocked David and Israel again, but David was not afraid. Goliath came forward, and David rushed forward to meet him. David took a stone from his bag, put it in his sling, slung the stone into the air, and---BAM! The stone hit Goliath's forehead, and he fell on his face to the ground! Young David and his little stone had defeated the giant enemy of Israel!

When the Philistines realized their champion was dead, they ran away in fear. God had saved Israel from its enemy again! He had used someone young who trusted in Him, and He gave him the victory. If you find yourself in a similar situation or when you notice someone is mocking God's people, remember David's story and be like him—be one who stands for God's people and trust that God will be with you.

Intermediate Level, Block 6, Week 7 Saul's Envy

Point to Emphasize: We should be happy with others' success rather than being jealous.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 18

Memory Verse: Let us not become vainglorious, provoking one another, envying one another.
(Galatians 5:26) *[Please explain to the children what vainglorious means.]*

Story Sample

When Saul was made king, he behaved himself quite well. He took care of the nation of Israel by warring against their enemies. Saul was certainly qualified and capable to rule Israel. At first, he appeared to be for God's kingdom. He won a mighty victory over the Ammonites when they threatened Israel. This victory uplifted him in the eyes of the people. Then he fought the Philistines, and these two victories gave Saul the way to make a name for himself. He became known as a leader and valiant warrior among the people. Sometimes people who have become leaders and are very good at something often become proud. When someone else comes along who can do as well or better, they react jealously.

When I was young, we had spelling bees every year. I was a good speller, so every year I would win for my grade level. All the children in my class expected me to win every year. But when I got to the fifth grade, someone new moved to my school who was an even better speller than me, and he won that year. I was so upset that I couldn't even congratulate him. I was jealous and envied him for the award he got. *[Storyteller, give an example of when you were jealous of someone.]*

Saul was like this. He had started out as a good leader to his people, but when David performed better than him, he became jealous. At first, as a young man, David was just tending sheep and playing the lyre. David didn't seem to be much of a threat to a king like Saul. But, as David went on every mission that Saul sent him, he started to do well and show how he was even better than Saul. The day that David came back from striking Goliath, the women came out of the towns of Israel singing and dancing to meet Saul the king. And when the women were singing they said "Saul has struck down his thousands; / But David, his ten thousands". Do you think this made Saul happy or envious? Instead of congratulating David, Saul became very angry and jealous of all the attention David was getting. Instead of caring for what was best for the people, Saul only cared about what was best for him! He wanted to get all the attention and looked at David as his competition, even his enemy.

Some say that playing sports teaches us teamwork. When you are playing kickball and someone on your team kicks and is able to run the bases, what is your reaction? Are you really thrilled for them, or is there something small inside that says, "I wish that were me instead." If we are really a team, then it should not matter to us who scores the points. But many times we have to admit that we are envious, wishing it had been us instead. *[Storyteller, insert your personal experience or age appropriate example.]*

This is how Saul was. He and David were really on the same side, but he was envious! He did not want David to be better than him. Saul became so jealous that sometimes he treated David as an enemy. Instead of being thankful to have someone as good as David with him, King Saul was jealous. Does that sound like the behavior of a king appointed by God?

This week if we feel that twinge of jealousy towards someone, I hope we will remember this story of Saul and change our attitude to appreciate what others can do.

Intermediate Level, Block 6, Week 8 David—Talking to God

Point to Emphasize: We should always talk to God.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 30

Memory Verse: ...Jehovah hears when I call out to Him. (Psalm 4:3b)

Story Sample

Because of Saul's envy, David had to flee and live in a cave in the wilderness. But God took care of him by having him go to King Achish, a Philistine king. While David and his men were with this king, they and their families were taken care of. They had earned the trust of this king and were even given a city, Ziklag, where they could all live together. It was much better than living in a cave in the wilderness, and King Saul was also not able to pursue David there.

But Israel's other enemy, the Amalekites, were not letting up. One time, while David was gone from Ziklag, they took advantage of David's absence and raided the city. They burned it with fire, captured all the inhabitants, and carried them off. By the time David and his men returned to the city, they found it burned and empty. Where homes had been, now only heaps of burned rubble and ashes remained. The returning men wept and wailed—no families, no homes—nothing was left of the ones they loved.

The men were bitter with sorrow and were so distressed. They blamed David for having caused them to leave their families without protection. They were so angry that they even talked of hurting him. In such a situation it would be easy to be hard-hearted (indifferent, cold, uncaring, unkind, unforgiving) like David's men. People can easily react in hardness when they are upset. But we should not have a hard heart.

What was David going to do? In the face of this crushing loss of family and belongings and with all the people turning against him, David strengthened himself in Jehovah his God. David asked Jehovah what he should do.

One time a family lost their little dog. They were packing the car, getting ready to go on a vacation, and with the door being opened so much, the little dog got out. When they discovered that the dog was gone everyone was so upset. What could they do? One of the daughters (8-9 years old), in tears, told her mommy, "Mommy, we need to pray to God to return our doggie." And that is what they did. They asked God to help find the dog. *[Storyteller, the children may ask if they found the dog. If they do, tell them that yes, the dog was found. But the point is to talk to God, not what the results might be.]*

This is the same kind of heart that David had. His response was to talk to Jehovah. God took care of him and his men. Jehovah promised David that he will win over his enemies, and David was able to overtake the Amalekites and take back everything they took from them—nothing was left or missing. Everything was arranged by God for this to happen. The most important part is that David talked to God in his difficult situation.

[Wrap up this story by letting the children bring up situations where their heart is hardened when things don't go their way and what their responses are....or could be.]

God always hears us and listens to us. Whether we are happy or sad, we should always talk to God. Sometimes He may not answer the way we want, but He always knows what's best for us. He always takes care of us!

Intermediate Level, Block 6, Week 9 **David—Honoring and Respecting Saul**

Point to Emphasize: We should show honor and respect all authority, even when they make mistakes or mistreat us.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 31; 2 Samuel 1

Memory Verse: Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king. (1 Peter 2:17)

Story Sample

David knew God had anointed him and that he would be the next king. However, David did not become king right away. David had to wait for about 15 more years. The king during that time was Saul. Remember how Saul became envious of David? He tried to have him killed many times, but David never retaliated *[to do something unpleasant to someone because the person has done something unpleasant to you.]* He did not even defend himself. Rather, he escaped to a cave and later fled to a different city. Why did David do this? David was very clear that Saul, at the time, was the king established by God. As such, Saul was God's deputy authority, that is, God's representative during those days among God's people. In David's eyes, Saul represented God. Thus David feared and honored Saul in the same way he would fear and honor God. David set up a good order and pattern showing us how to honor and respect the ones above us!

Now, we all know we need to respect and honor all the ones above us (like our parents, our teachers, the principal, the police, and the librarian) because they have been placed by God. I know that all of you do just that, right? They are our leaders and we believe they should all behave their best and always do the right thing. However, let me ask you a question. What happens if the person that is above us makes a mistake? What if they mistreat you or are not being a good leader? Would you still honor and respect them? Think about it!

When I was in fourth grade, the teacher left the room. While she was gone, everyone started a paper airplane fight. The room was a mess; there were paper everywhere! When my teacher came back in, she was so angry! She wanted to blame everyone, but chose me to be the one to blame, because I was the last to stop laughing. Now, I hadn't even thrown an airplane, but it did look awfully funny—all those papers everywhere, and my teacher so flustered— so I laughed. I knew I was being treated unfairly, but I also knew she was the teacher and I should respect her, so I willingly stayed in during recess to clean up the mess. *[Storyteller, insert your own personal story of respecting someone in authority, even when you were not treated fairly.]*

Saul, the king, the leader, made many mistakes and disobeyed God. Towards the end of his life, he had a sad ending. The Philistines had been warring against Saul's army for a long time. The Philistines were battling with spears, swords and arrows. They were charging with chariots and horsemen. The noise of the battle was so loud! It was chaos! The Philistines chased Saul and his sons. They struck down Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchi-Shua, Saul's sons. Eventually, even Saul died.

David and his men were not in this battle. They were fighting somewhere else when all this was happening. But when David returned to Ziklag, a man from the battle went to find David to tell him Saul had died and brought him Saul's crown. This man thought that David would be so happy to hear that Saul had been killed and that he could now be king.

But what do you think David's reaction was? [*Let the children talk about it.*] Instead of being glad to hear that Saul was dead, David was so sad! When he heard that Saul and Jonathan were dead, he was greatly grieved. He ripped up his clothes and mourned and wept and fasted until evening. David sang a dirge, that is, a mournful song over Saul and his sons and he asked the children of the tribe of Judah to learn the song as well. In this song, David honored Saul and Jonathan saying nothing but good things about them. David sang, "Saul and Jonathan were beloved and pleasant in their lives..." Even with Saul dead, he still honored the king!

Do you think most people would respond like David? David was such a man that even though Saul, the person in authority, mistreated him, he was not glad that he was dead but rather he showed respect to Saul and honored him. Oh, this might be hard for us to do, but we should all do like David did. Let's honor those who are in charge of us!

Intermediate Level, Block 6, Week 10

David—Becoming King

Point to Emphasize: God keeps His promises.

Reference Reading: 2 Samuel 2:1-11; 5:1-5

Memory Verse: For as many promises of God as there are, in Him is the Yes...
(2 Corinthians 1:20a)

Story Sample

David really mourned the death of King Saul and his son Jonathan. After all, Saul had been the king, the one God had anointed to be over all His people Israel. And Jonathan? Don't you remember how they had been such friends when they were young? Yes, David was truly saddened by the death of these two.

But eventually, the time to mourn came to an end. What would David do next? Remember, a long time ago Samuel had told him that he would be king. So, what do you think he did first? Did he step up and demand that he be king? No! The first thing David did was to pray! He had a conversation with God about what to do next.

I always like to talk to God about what I am about to do, whether it is a big thing like where we should move, or a small thing, like what I should wear. It's good to talk to God!

In this conversation with God, David asked Him where he should go, and God answered him. So, he went to Hebron. He brought his whole family, all his men who were with him, and all their families too. And they lived in the cities of Hebron. And the men of Judah came and anointed him to be king over the house of Judah.

Now, did this mean he was king over all of Israel? No! He was only king over one of the tribes. There were twelve tribes of Israel. So he was only king over one—the house of Judah. What about the rest of Israel? David was still going to have to wait a long time for God's promise to be king over all of Israel to be fulfilled.

Have any of you ever had your parents make a promise to you, and then it seemed as if they were never going to keep that promise? Maybe they promised that they would take you to get a new pair of shoes, and you thought that meant RIGHT NOW. But first they had to clean the house, get the groceries, pick up the dry cleaning, and so on. Then, to make it worse, your aunt and uncle showed up for a visit, and then the whole day was gone. Didn't you go crazy waiting? Didn't you think maybe you would NEVER get your new shoes? It seemed to take FOREVER for the time to finally come. But eventually, your parents kept their promise, and bought you your new shoes. *[Storyteller, feel free to use your own example.]*

Well, David had to wait a lot longer than that! It had been YEARS since he had been told he would be king. But he never doubted God. He always knew that he would one day be king of all of Israel.

For seven and half years, David reigned over Judah, only one tribe of Israel. During those years everything that David did pleased the people of Israel. So eventually all the tribes of Israel came to David in Hebron, offering themselves to David. So David was FINALLY made king over all of Israel! After all these years, he was now king. He had received the promise from God when he was a youth, and now at thirty-seven years old, he was finally king over Israel and Judah. And he would be king for the next thirty-three years. In total, David was king for forty years. God kept His promise to David!