

This week’s Bible story picks up more than 20 years after the Philistines returned the ark of God to the Israelites. During that time, Israel began to seek God again, and Samuel led them to remove their foreign gods and worship God only.

Samuel had judged Israel throughout his lifetime, but he was getting old. So Samuel made his sons, Joel and Abijah, judges over Israel. But like many sons before them, Joel and Abijah did not follow the example of their father. They disobeyed God and caused problems for Israel. The elders of Israel spoke to Samuel about his sons and demanded a king. All the other nations around them had kings, they pointed out. Samuel knew their desire to imitate the nations around them was sinful, and he prayed to God.

“Give them what they want,” God said. “They have not rejected you; they have rejected Me as their King.” Samuel explained to the Israelites what rights a king would have over them; he warned them that when they regretted asking for a king—and they would regret it—God would not help them.

The people insisted on having a king, so God chose a man named Saul to be the king. By all appearances, Saul was a good king. He was handsome, taller than most people, and God had blessed him. But Saul failed to obey God. First, Saul sinned by burning offerings in Samuel’s absence. Later, when the Israelites defeated the Amalekites, Saul did not follow God’s instructions for destroying everything. The Lord regretted making Saul king.

Help your kids understand that Saul was not the king the people needed. **God intended for a heavenly king to rule over Israel, but the Israelites did not trust God’s plan and wanted a king like the nations around them. God gave them a king, but Saul did not obey God. God had a plan to send His Son, Jesus. King Jesus trusted and obeyed God perfectly and died so sinners could be forgiven and accepted.**

Check this session’s Activity Page and Big Picture Card as well as the Gospel Project for Kids Family App for ways to interact with the Bible content this week.

FAMILY STARTING POINTS

● **Babies and Toddlers**

○ God is greater than anything.

○ God’s people wanted a king to lead them.

○ Saul was the first king of Israel.

○ God sent Jesus to be our Savior and King.

● **Preschool**

○ Is anything greater than God? No, God is greater than everything.

○ God’s people wanted a king.

● **Kids**

○ Is anything or anyone greater than God? No, God is greater than everything and everyone.

○ God’s people wanted a king like the nations around them.

UNIT KEY PASSAGE

● **Jeremiah 10:6**