

# A King for God's People



SAUL WAS YOUNG, HANDSOME, AND A HEAD AND SHOULDERS ABOVE THE REST.

Key Verse:

**“All the people... confirmed Saul as king in the presence of the Lord... and held a great celebration.”**

1 Samuel 11:15

Extra: List some of the abilities God has given you. Are you making the most of them?

Level 3 lesson 5

## Read 1 Samuel 8:6-19 and 1 Samuel 9

As we saw last month, Israel wanted a king to rule over them instead of trusting in God. Sometimes we're the same, aren't we? We trust in people more easily than God, even though God is wiser and more powerful than any person on earth!

Although the Lord had told the people that having a king would be a bad idea, He chose for them a man who should have been the perfect king. Let's take a look at some good qualities that Saul had.

He was respectful of and obedient to his parents: When Saul's father Kish told him that their donkeys had wandered off and that he should take a servant and go and look for them, Saul started out on the long, hard journey without complaining. Later, when Saul and his servant had been gone a long time, Saul was concerned that his father might be more upset about them than the donkeys, and decided to go back home.

He also respected the prophet Samuel: The Lord told Samuel that he was about to meet the man who would be Israel's king. When they did meet, Saul listened to Samuel and did everything he told him to.

Saul was also humble to start with: When Samuel told him that God had chosen him as

king, he said, "But I'm just a 'nobody' from the smallest tribe in Israel! Why are you saying these things to me?" And later, Saul hid himself when everyone started looking for their new king (while others might have wanted to be noticed by everyone).

To top everything off, Saul was tall and handsome: He really stood out from the crowd. If anyone was going to make a great leader of the people, Saul was just the guy to do it! But as we're going to see over the next few lessons, Saul did not live up to what he should have been. In fact, as good as this story starts out, Saul ends up as an example for us all of how NOT to live!

Saul had many natural abilities and opportunities from God to be all that he should be, but he didn't use them. Are you like that? If we don't use our abilities and take the opportunities the Lord gives us, we may as well not have been given them.

Draw your own picture of Saul below:

1. What are some words you would use to tell us about Saul?

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2. What do you think Saul thought after Samuel spoke to him?

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3. The Lord told Samuel he was going to meet the man who would be..... (fill in the vowels)

\_\_ SR \_\_ \_\_ L'S K \_\_ NG

# A Good Start

Key Verse:

**“This is love for God: to obey His commands.”**

1 John 5:3

Extra: The Bible says, “Remember your Creator when you are still young.” (Ecclesiastes 12:1). What ways can you make sure that your good start will keep going strong?

## Level 3 lesson 6

### Read 1 Samuel 11:1-15 and 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

No sooner had Saul been chosen as King of Israel, than an opportunity came for him to prove himself. And did he ever do that! What a great start for the first king of Israel! Here’s how it all started...

Nahash (who was one of the nearby Ammonites, the enemies of God’s people) tried to muscle in on Israel’s territory by attacking the city of Jabesh Gilead. Nahash gave them a week to find someone to rescue them, or he was going to take them over. Messengers went out from Jabesh Gilead throughout the land of Israel asking for help against Nahash.

When Saul got news of this he was furious, but not because he didn’t get things to go his way. He was angry that someone would dare threaten God’s people and show such disrespect for God! Do you get angry about the same things that make the Lord angry? Or do you just lose your temper when people do things that annoy you and put you out?

The Bible says that man’s anger does not achieve what God wants in our lives (James 1:20). But it’s different if we get angry over things that upset the Lord. This kind of anger is known as ‘righteous anger’ - the only kind of anger that is good. This ‘righteous anger’ shows that we put God and His holy standards first, and that we aren’t just thinking about ourselves. Saul was filled with righteous anger when he heard about Nahash threatening Jabesh Gilead. He wasted no time in getting a large group of



**SAUL WAS VERY ANGRY WHEN HE HEARD THE NEWS!**

men together, and sent a message to the people in Jabesh Gilead to tell them help was on its way.

Saul’s army marched until they reached the Ammonite’s camp. Then they attacked and defeated them in a great victory! Only a few Ammonites were able to escape from Saul’s army! Saul told the people that God had given them the victory (1 Samuel 11:13).

Then all the people gathered at Gilgal and had a huge party to celebrate that Saul had been made king. What a good start indeed! Saul put the Lord first, and the Lord gave him victory over his enemies. If only Saul had stayed on the right track and continued to put the Lord first!

We need to remember that after a good start we still need to run a good race, or else we’ll fizzle out. The Apostle Paul said about the Christian life, “Run in such a way as to get the prize” (1 Corinthians 9:24). In other words, “run like you want to win!” Saul started well, but didn’t run like he wanted to win.

1. Why was Saul so upset?

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2. The only good kind of anger

(unscramble the letters and write your answer below):

**REGNASUOETHGIR**

Clue: back to front

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3. How did Saul win the victory over his enemies?

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# Saul Fizzles Out

Key Verse:  
**“To obey is better than sacrifice.”**

1 Samuel 15:22b

Extra: In what areas of your life can you be more obedient to what the Lord wants you to do?

Level 3 lesson 7

## Read 1 Samuel 13: 1-14 and John 14: 15-24

If you went around telling people you were 15 feet tall, all it would take to prove you wrong would be a ruler or tape measure! According to the Bible, anyone that says they love the Lord can be proved right or wrong by this one thing: their obedience. You could stand up on a hill and yell that you love the Lord until your words carried all the way across the valley and echoed all the way back. But it wouldn't mean anything if you weren't obedient to what the Lord wanted you to do.

We can see this very clearly in Saul's life: after making such a good start as king, he started to go downhill. At first, Saul was respectful and obedient to the Lord, and to his elders. He was humble too, even though God had blessed him with many gifts and abilities. But you can see in our passage today how much he had changed.

Saul and his son Jonathan set out to attack the Philistines and Saul chose only a small group to do the fighting and sent the rest back to their homes. That's because he stopped realising how much he needed the Lord, and thought that he was strong enough and wise enough to defeat his enemies by himself. The humble young man we first read of had become **proud**.

Saul soon found out that acting so proudly was not the smartest thing he could have done. The Philistines had so many soldiers and chariots that the Israelites hid, afraid of fighting a losing battle! In order to get out of such a tight spot, Saul called for an animal and sacrificed it -



“SAUL - WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!?”

something that only a priest was allowed to do! He was trying to get God to help them, but breaking God's laws was not the way to do it! The obedient young man we first read of had become **disobedient**.

Then Samuel arrived and found Saul offering up the sacrifice. Because Samuel was a priest, Saul should have waited and let Samuel make the offering. Samuel was angry and hurt. Saul had shown God and His priest no respect in doing this. The respectful young man we first read of had become **disrespectful**.

“You have acted foolishly,” Samuel said, “You have disobeyed, and now God will not allow your family to rule. He has already chosen someone else to rule; a man after his own heart.” Saul tried to make out that he was trying to please the Lord, trying to serve Him faithfully. If someone had asked him, he would have claimed to love the Lord. But his disobedience showed that he didn't really love God as he said. Actions speak louder than words!

Fill in the missing letters to find out what the beginning of Saul's downfall was:

H			S						D
R									G
H					M				
H					N				
T					L				

1. What kind of person was God looking for to be King?

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\_\_\_\_\_

2. Give three words to describe Saul after he had been King for a while.

a. P \_\_\_\_\_

b. D \_\_\_\_\_

c. D \_\_\_\_\_

# Part time Obedience!

Key Verse:

**“I am grieved that I made Saul king, because he has turned away from Me and not carried out My instructions.”**

1 Samuel 15:11

Level 3 lesson 8

**Extra:**

Try to think of some excuses you have used to cover up for not doing the right thing. How can you stop doing this in future?

**Read 1 Samuel 15:1-26 and Deuteronomy 5:32- 6:3**

What’s the first thing we’re tempted to do when someone points out something wrong we’ve done? Cover it up, right? And the way we often do that, is by making out that what we’ve done isn’t as bad as it looks. We try and ‘dress it up’ a little: “I didn’t push my sister over; I was just ‘helping her along.’” “I wasn’t hitting my brother; he was coughing and I was just patting him on the back!” You know what I’m talking about! Saul was just the same in our passage. This is the way it all began:

Samuel passed on a message from the Lord to Saul, telling him to go and fight against the Amalekites, who were enemies of the true God. Samuel was clear about one thing: Saul and his army were not to keep anything that had belonged to the Amalekites. They were to burn and destroy everything that their enemies owned. Clear, simple instructions don’t you think? So what went wrong?

Saul obeyed God, got his army together, and set off to fight the Amalekites. The Israelites fought well and God gave them a wonderful victory! But then we read that Saul and his men kept some of the things that had belonged to the Amalekites. He only obeyed part of what the Lord wanted him to do, and so failed to do it all. Perhaps Saul thought that being a little bit obedient would be good enough.

I hope you aren’t like that - thinking that if God wants you to do something, only doing part



of it will be OK! Instead of being OK, what Saul did greatly displeased the Lord. He said to Samuel, “I am sorry that I have made Saul king, because he has not carried out all my instructions.” No; part-time obedience is NOT OK in God’s eyes!

Soon Samuel arrived and asked Saul, “What have you done? I can hear the sheep and the cattle that you took from the Amalekites. You were told to destroy everything!” Saul tried to ‘dress up’ what he’d done by saying, “But I saved these animals to make a sacrifice to the Lord!” So Samuel told Saul that obedience is more important than offering God sacrifices.

Too often we try and pretend that what we’ve done is for the benefit of someone else - even the Lord! But really, we’ve selfishly done something just because we wanted to. What a sad end to it all. Saul had stopped obeying the Lord, and so he was no longer going to be king. God would choose someone else to serve Him as king.

What is the only way to be happy in Jesus? Cross out letters that occur three or more times. Write the answer below.

T	H	R	C	U	G	S	H	T
G	I	A	I	N	P	D	G	H
C	O	P	B	C	E	P	Y	I

ANSWER: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1. Unscramble these words from the story.

a. MULEAS .....

b. LASU .....

c. LEKATAMEIS .....

2. Choose TRUE or FALSE. Circle your choice:

- a. Samuel told Saul to go and fight T / F
- b. Saul obeyed God completely T / F
- c. Part-time obedience is OK T / F
- d. Saul was told to destroy everything T / F
- e. Saul was a good king T / F

Please complete and return by post to

PSSM, 1-2A (G2) 93 Dominion Rd, Mt Eden, Auckland 1024 or scan & email to [info@biblediscovery.org.nz](mailto:info@biblediscovery.org.nz)