

Choosing with God

Focus Scripture

1 Samuel 16:1–13

PURPOSE

To understand how God works with us as we choose.

Lesson Preparation

- Read 1 Samuel 16:1–13 and biblical background for March 22.
- Set up worship table with a purple cloth, bible, Lenten candle, offering basket and Unit 5 logo.
- Bring Bibles.
- Bring a variety of interesting pictures of people (cut from magazines, calendars or downloaded.)
- Set up "Timeline" clothesline from last week. Bring set of 5 flashcard teaching pictures "Samuel Remembers," clothespins, newsprint, and oil in a small bowl.
- Choose the option(s) you wish to use for Integrating the Theme and bring the necessary materials.
- Check the birthday list.
- Pray for members of your group and the choices they make every day.

1

Opening

Greet the class, acknowledge birthdays and receive the offering.



Today is the fourth Sunday of Lent. (*Have volunteer light Lenten candle.*) Let's take a moment to be quiet and think of one thing we can do better to live in God's Way this week.

Prayer Psalm:

Divide class into 2 groups. Have 1 group read Psalm 23 stopping at the end of each verse. Ask group 2 to say "Thank you God" at the end of each verse when the readers stop. (*Extinguish the candle.*)

2

Introducing the Theme

(*Spread out the collection of pictures you have brought.*) Ask everyone to choose one picture that they particularly like. Show the pictures to one another. Why did you choose the picture you did? Was it hard to choose? Do you find it easy or hard to make choices? Which kinds

of choices do you find hardest to make? Our bible story today talks about Samuel and an important choice he had to make.



3

Exploring the Theme

From the Wilderness to King Saul

Last week we heard about Moses and the people of Israel in the wilderness after their escape from Israel. (*Ask student to point out Moses section on the timeline.*) Today's story takes place in Canaan, the "Promised Land." We'll begin by seeing what happened between last week's story and today's. (*Hand out "Samuel Remembers" flashcard pictures.*) Ask students, when it is their turn, to hold up their picture for others to see and to read the story on the back of it. When the story

is finished, discuss the following questions:

- Why did the people want a king?
- Why didn't Samuel think this was a very good choice?
- What went wrong with their first king, Saul?

What kind of person do you think would be a good king? (*List on newsprint some of the ideal qualities this king should have. Add flashcard pictures in order between Moses and David on timeline clothesline.*)

A New King Is Chosen

Ask for volunteers to be a narrator, Samuel, God, the city leaders, Jesse, and David. Invite any other children to be Jesse’s sons. Double up parts if necessary to give the sense of Jesse’s many sons. During the reading, act out the anointing of David by having Samuel dip a finger in the oil and touch it to David’s forehead. Read **1 Samuel 16:1–13** in parts.

Why did Samuel think Eliab might be the new king? (He was tall and handsome and the oldest.) What do you think it means when God says, “People look at outward appearances but I look at the heart?” Do you think people judge others this way today? Why? How old do you think David was? (He was young – perhaps 12 or 13.) The Bible has many stories like this one of God’s call to children and youth. What do you think God calls young people your age to do today?

God Helps Us Make Choices

How did God help Samuel with the choice of a new

king? What are some of the important choices or decisions that people your age have to make today? If you asked God to help you with a decision, how do you think God might speak to you? (Through the advice offered by a parent, minister or special friend, through something you hear in church or church school, a voice inside you [conscience], etc.)

God Is with Us in Our Choices

Samuel felt that the people made a bad choice when they wanted a person to be king instead of letting God be their leader. Saul turned out to be a particularly bad king for them. Did God continue to help them, even though they made some bad choices? Do you think God can help us, even when we make bad decisions? In what ways? (e.g. helping us realize it was a bad choice, through friends and family who help us figure out what to do, gives us courage to say we were wrong, forgives us, etc.)

4

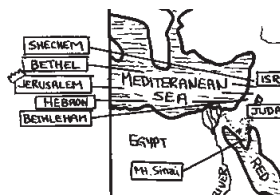
Integrating the Theme

Option A: Map the Story (See “Map the Story” resource sheet week 1.)

Materials: Bring map begun in week 1, construction paper, yarn

In advance: Cut the flashcard story picture #3 in half and bring the map of the 12 tribes to be mounted at the edge of the big map. Attach a piece of yarn from the picture to the area of the map that it represents (Canaan).

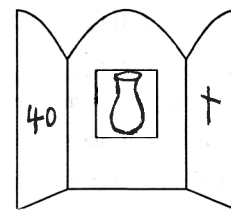
In King David’s time, the 12 tribes of Canaan became one united country called Israel. Make an “Israel” label and attach it to the large map by Canaan. David’s home town was Bethlehem. Mark it with a label card and yarn (right below Jerusalem, very close to it). When David became king he made Jerusalem the capital city, built a palace there and began plans for a wonderful temple in which to worship God. His son Solomon was the one who had the temple built. On the edge of the map, locate the card naming the city of Jerusalem. Above the name card add a construction paper crown.



Option B: Lenten Triptych

Materials: coloured construction paper, quarter sheets of white paper, glitter, oil

For this week, invite participants to make an insert symbol of a jar of oil. On a quarter sheet of letter-sized paper, glue on a piece of construction paper cut in the shape of a jar. Decorate the jar if you wish, with coloured markers or glitter. During their prayer and reflection this week, invite them to think of how God continues to help us even when we’ve made bad decisions, and about David’s anointing.

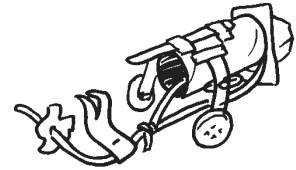


Option C: Sculptures

Materials: a variety of clean, dry, recycled materials to “build” with (such as egg cartons, boxes of different shapes and sizes, disposable meat trays, plastic bottles or containers, cardboard rolls, foil, coffee cans, pop sticks, etc.), glue gun or epoxy glue, heavy tape such as duct tape, acrylic paint, newspapers

Ask everyone to choose 3 items from the supplies of recycled materials that you have brought. When everyone has chosen, assign them to work in groups of 3-4. In the group, they are to create a sculpture using all the materials chosen by their group. Pieces can be fastened together with glue or heavy tape. Paint the sculptures a solid colour when completed.

Was it hard to work with materials that had already been chosen before you knew the task? How did you as a group decide what to do? Are you pleased with your choices? How does God work with the choices we make (even the bad choices) to help good things happen?



5

Closing

Invite everyone to think of a choice they made recently, or one they need to make.

Prayer: Loving God, help us to make good choices. Help us listen to you the way Samuel listened. And remind us that, even when we make bad decisions, you are still with us. Amen.

(To be glued on the back of coloured teaching pictures.)

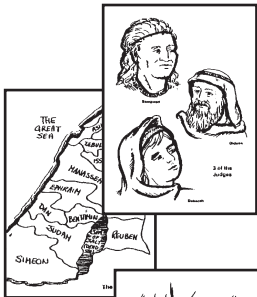
“Samuel Remembers”



1. This is a picture of Moses. My name is Samuel. I am also an old man and I remember so much about my people. As a child, my mother used to tell me stories... stories about God’s promise to make us a great nation. She told me all about how Moses led the people through the wilderness. It took 40 years of desert living before they were ready to enter the promised land. God told Moses to go up into the mountains and look out over the land God was going to give to the Israelites. God told Moses he would not enter the promised land. So Moses asked God to name the person who would become the leader in Moses’ place. God told Moses to place his hands on Joshua’s head and tell the people that Joshua would be the new leader. (*Numbers 27:12-23, Deut. 31:1-8*)



2. Then Joshua led the people across the Jordan River into the promised land. When the people were camped out on the river bank wondering how they would ever get across, God told them to be ready. The waters of the Jordan became stopped near the city of Adam and no water flowed down into the Dead Sea. The people were able to cross on dry land, led by the priests who carried the Ark of the Covenant. In the Ark lay the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments. (*Joshua chapter 3*)



3. In this new land, there were many battles at first. The twelve tribes lived in different parts of the land, and sometimes fought together against their enemies. During this time the people were led by people known as Judges. Gideon, Deborah and Samson are 3 of the best known Judges. They were brave in battle and wise in judgment. (*Book of Judges*)



4. By the time I was born, the Israelites were very prosperous, and didn’t listen much to God’s voice. But I heard God calling to me, when I was a child living with the old priest Eli in the temple. “Samuel, Samuel,” God called. I learned to listen to God’s voice, and God helped me all my life. I too became a Judge like the others before me. (*1 Samuel chapter 3*)



5. As I grew older, our nation became more and more powerful. The people wanted a king, so they could be like all the other nations. I knew this would only cause problems. God should be our only ruler. But the people begged and begged. So God told me to give the people what they wanted. God told me to anoint a man named Saul as the king of Israel. The people shouted, “Long live the king!” (*1 Samuel 8-10*)

At first Saul was a good king and helped protect the people. But then he started caring more about what people thought than about God’s Way. He became very proud and built a large monument to himself. When I saw this happening I was very sad. What I thought would happen had come true. What will the people do now?