



# MOSAIC Gospel Project

## Volume 4, Unit 10, Lesson 3: Israel's First King

**Bible Passage:** 1 Samuel 8-15

### Personal Preparation

Today'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 alone.

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. They pointed out that all the other nations around them had kings. 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.

As you teach, guide the individuals to understand that Saul was not the king the people needed. All earthly kings are imperfect. But we can see how those kings point us to the perfect king, Jesus, who followed his Father's instructions without fail. Thank God for sending us the king we needed—a king who loved us enough to give his life for our salvation.

### Memory Verse

Begin the lesson by sharing the memory verse. This is the last week with this memory verse.

#### Jeremiah 10:6

*"Lord, there is no one like you! For you are great, and your name is full of power."*

### Points of Emphasis

1. God's people wanted a king like the nations around them.
2. God is greater than everything and everyone.

### Activity #1

Lead the group to begin filling out the activity sheet. Feel free to let them continue as you teach the lesson.

### Video

**Two weeks ago, we learned about a woman named Hannah. God gave her a son, then God called Hannah's son to share God's plan. Under Eli and his sons, the people did not listen to God. They were often attacked by the Philistines. The Philistines even captured the ark of God! But God showed the Philistines that he is the one true God. Over the next 20 years, Samuel led the people to**

love God and obey him. Our story picks up during this time.

Play the video for the lesson titled “Israel’s First King.”

## Bible Lesson

God’s people wanted a king like the nations around them. God was supposed to be their king, but they did not want God as their king. The problem was more than just the people wanting a king—the kind of king they wanted was not pleasing to God. They did not ask for a king who would help them be holy or who would love and obey God. They wanted a king like the nations around them—nations that did not worship the one true God.

God chose to give them what they wanted, a human king. God chose a man named Saul. Sadly, Saul did not obey God. He offered sacrifices that only a priest should have offered, and when Saul chose to disobey God, he tried to make excuses for his disobedience.

One of my favorite passages comes from this story. Saul said that he only disobeyed God so that he might offer God more sacrifices. Samuel responded by explaining that God prefers obedience over sacrifices. Saul was the first king of Israel, but he was not a very good king. The people needed a better king. After rejecting Saul, God chose a better king for the people. But more than that, God had in his perfect plan a perfect king who would come to them—Jesus!

## Activity #2

Guide the group to complete the activity sheet. Review the memory verse with the group. Let them practice what they have learned, and help them continue to commit it to memory. Encourage them to write the verse using the Velcro pictures. This is the last lesson with this memory verse.

## Christ Connection

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.

Play the Gospel Presentation video. Discuss the Gospel with the individuals, and answer any questions they might have. Help them think through what the Gospel could mean for their lives.

## Review Questions

*(Optional: Play the Questions from Kids (QFK) video to continue the discussion on Israel’s first king, Saul. Today’s episode asks if we have to listen to earthly leaders since Jesus is our true king.)*

Group A

Early Learner

Encourage the individuals to point to the pictures provided or to draw in order to answer these questions.

1. **Point to who God chose to be the king of Israel.** Saul
2. **Did Saul obey God?** No
3. **Did God want obedience or sacrifices from Saul?** Obedience
4. **Point to who decided to choose a better king instead of Saul.** God

Group B

1. **Where was Saul when it was time to introduce him as king?** He was hiding among supplies.
2. **Why did Saul offer a sacrifice before battle?** Saul’s troops were afraid, and Samuel arrived later than Saul expected him to.
3. **What did Samuel say about sacrifices and obedience?** Obedience is better than sacrifices.
4. **Why do you think God allowed Saul to be king if he knew Saul would disobey?**

Guide the individuals to talk about God's power to use difficult circumstances for his glory and our good. Discuss what God might have been teaching the people of Israel through Saul's kingship. Point them to Jesus' crucifixion, where we see God use the evil actions of people to bring about good.

5. **What are some ways people reject Jesus as king today?** Guide the individuals to honestly discuss ways people might trust in or be led by things other than Jesus. Remind them that the Holy Spirit helps us love and obey Jesus.
6. **What are some ways Jesus proves he is the perfect king?** Guide the individuals to think about what Jesus did for us. Remind them that he chose to die even though we were sinners and enemies of God (Romans 5:6-10). Discuss Jesus' place of honor and glory with God the Father, and point the individuals to the hope we have for the future, when Jesus will return to reign over everything.

#### Group C

1. **Why didn't God want his people to have an earthly king?** The people had rejected God and wanted to be like the nations around them, but God had chosen his people to be holy. His plan for them was better—to give them a heavenly king to lead them perfectly.
2. **Why do you think people live for things other than Jesus?** People might live for power, success, comfort, or recognition. Until a person knows Jesus, other things might seem better. We can point people to Jesus—our greatest treasure—for true life and joy.
3. **How should believers be different than others around them?** God calls his people to be holy like he is holy. The word holy means "set apart." People living with Jesus as king belong to a kingdom that doesn't make sense to the world.

#### Group D

##### Advanced Learner

1. **What does this story teach us about God?** 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 wanted the Israelites to be different. They were his chosen people. They were to worship only him and follow his commands. God also wanted the Israelites to have a leader who loved him.
2. **Why did God reject Saul as king?** Saul disobeyed God. Instead of trusting God, Saul offered a sacrifice. When God commanded Saul to destroy everything in a battle, Saul only destroyed the things that weren't valuable. Saul sinned. He decided his plan was better than God's plan.
3. **Do we need to listen to earthly leaders? Why or why not?**
4. **How do you feel knowing that God has put earthly leaders in their positions?**

#### Prayer

**Father, you are great and powerful. No one can stand before you except by your grace, mercy, and love. You sent Jesus to save us even though we did not deserve salvation. You are good and loving. We worship you. Help us to live for you. Amen.**



