

Bible Stories for Adults

Israel's First King

1 Samuel 8 - 11

Opening

Gathering: Share how you have seen evidence of God's calling and His Spirit at work in and through the life of a fellow believer.

Today's Focus: God has called each of us into His ministry. He promises to work through us, despite our reluctance and feelings of inadequacy. We are to answer His call and allow Him to work through us.

Key Verses: *Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"* Isaiah 6:8

Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it." Isaiah 30:21

Opening Prayer

Lesson

The Lost Ark (1 Samuel 4-5)

What major loss did Israel experience at Ebenezer?

1 Samuel 4:10-11 = Major defeat by Philistines, ark taken, High Priest Eli's sons died

How did the Israelites respond to this loss?

1 Samuel 4:22 = They were dejected with the loss of the ark - Felt God had left them

What happened when the Philistines put the ark beside their god Dagon in Ashdod?

1 Samuel 5:4, 6 = Dagon fell facedown to the ark; Plague of tumors & rats

The Ark Returns (1 Samuel 6)

What did the Philistines do after the ark also caused tumors in Gath and Ekron?

1 Samuel 5:11 = Returned the ark to Israel with guilt offerings of gold tumors & rats

How did the Israelites in Beth Shemesh respond to the return of the ark?

1 Samuel 6:14 = They used the cart & cows to sacrifice to God

Why did the men of Beth Shemesh send the ark to Kiriath Jearim?

1 Samuel 6:19-21 = 70 died from looking into the ark

Samuel the Judge (1 Samuel 7)

What did Samuel tell the people to do to be delivered from the Philistines?

1 Samuel 7:2-4 = Get rid of idols and worship God alone

How did God then deliver His people? = Kept praying when Philistines threatened

1 Samuel 7:5, 7-8, 10 = Samuel & people sacrificed at Mizpah, Philistines attacked, Israel won

Did Israel have peace under Samuel as they had under other judges?

1 Samuel 7:13-14 = Regained towns, Philistines subdued, peace with Amorites

How long did Samuel serve as judge and from where?

1 Samuel 7:15-17 = All his life, based in Ramah, made annual circuit

Bible Stories for Adults

Israel's First King

Page 2

Who Picks the Judge? (1 Samuel 8:1-3)

How did Samuel try to continue his leadership even beyond death?

1 Samuel 8:1 = He appointed his sons as judges

How had judges been appointed for Israel?

Judges 2:16 = God raised them up, not appointed by men nor inheritance

What had been the opinion about rulers during the time of the judges?

Judges 8:22-23 = The Lord is our king

What happened when one of Gideon's sons set himself up as king?

Judges 9:22-23 (1-57) = Abimelech & people turned against each other

What kind of judges were Samuel's sons?

1 Samuel 8:3 = Not like Samuel, Were dishonest, took bribes, perverted justice

Israel Asks for a King (1 Samuel 8:4-20)

What did Israel ask of Samuel?

1 Samuel 8:4-5 = Appoint a king to lead us

How did Samuel respond to the thought that his sons weren't fit as judges?

1 Samuel 8:6 = He was displeased, prayed to God

How did God respond to Samuel's feelings of rejection?

1 Samuel 8:7-9 = They're not rejecting you, they're rejecting me as usual

How did Samuel try to change the people's minds about wanting a king?

1 Samuel 8:10-18 = He warned Israel how a king would tax and burden them

Why did Israel really want a king?

1 Samuel 8:19-20 = With a king we'll be like the other nations

God's View of a King (1 Samuel 8:21-22)

Did God oppose appointing a king?

1 Samuel 8:21-22 = *Listen to them & give them a king*

Is God against government?

Romans 13:1-7 = Authorities established by God, rulers are God's servants

As a Roman citizen, Paul might be more accepting of Roman rule. What did Peter say?

1 Peter 2:13-14 = Submit yourselves to the authorities instituted by God

So how should we respond when we disagree with those in authority?

1 Timothy 2:1-3 = Pray for your rulers, Ask God for peace, Thank God for them

A King Who Can't Find His Donkeys (1 Samuel 9)

What do we first learn about Saul?

1 Samuel 9:1a, 2 = From tribe of Benjamin, well-to-do family, Impressive, big & tall

Why did Saul go wandering through the tribal areas of Ephraim and Benjamin?

1 Samuel 9:3-4 = Looking for his father's donkeys

What idea of last hope did Saul's servant suggest?

1 Samuel 9:6 (5-9) = Let's go to the man of God and ask where the donkeys are

Did Saul agree with this idea? Who was the man of God?

1 Samuel 9:10, 14 (10-14) = Yes. Samuel.

Bible Stories for Adults

Israel's First King

Page 3

The Least Becomes Greatest (1 Samuel 9:15-27)

How was Saul unknowingly fulfilling a prophesy to Samuel?

1 Samuel 9:15-17 = God told Samuel He would send His choice for king

How did Samuel answer Saul's questions even before they were asked?

1 Samuel 9:18-20 = Donkeys found. You have been chosen for something great

How did Saul respond to the idea that he was chosen for something special?

1 Samuel 9:21 = I'm just a nobody, the least of the least

How many people were present when Samuel anointed Saul as king the next day?

1 Samuel 9:27-10:1 (9:22-10:1) = Only Saul and Samuel

Signs For the Anointed (1 Samuel 10:1-16)

How would Saul know that he really was the Lord's anointed leader?

1 Samuel 10:2 = Two men at Zelzah will say donkeys are found and dad is worried

1 Samuel 10:3-4 = Three men going to Bethel will give bread at the great tree of Tabor

1 Samuel 10:5-6 = Will meet & join prophets at Gibeah

What was Saul to do when these signs were fulfilled?

1 Samuel 10:7-8 = Whatever God leads him to do; Wait for Samuel seven days at Gilgal

Did these signs occur?

1 Samuel 10:9-10 = Just as Samuel had said

What did those who knew Saul think when they saw him with the prophets?

1 Samuel 10:11 (11-13) = *Is Saul also among the prophets?*

Did Saul tell others what had happened?

1 Samuel 10:14-16 = No

Saul Made King (1 Samuel 10:17-23)

Why did Samuel gather the people of Israel at Mizpah? = Mizpah was national meeting place

1 Samuel 10:17-19 = God will choose a king as they had requested

How did Samuel show that this king was chosen by God?

1 Samuel 10:20-21 = They drew lots for tribe, clan, family & man

How eager was Saul to be presented as the first king of Israel?

1 Samuel 10:22-23 = He hid among the baggage and had to be brought out

Inadequate Leaders (2 Corinthians 12:9)

Was this feeling of inadequacy rare for those chosen by God?

Exodus 3:11 (13; 4:1, 10, 13) = Moses gave 5 excuses why he wasn't the right one

Judges 6:15 (17, 36-40) = Gideon said he was nobody & asked for signs

Jeremiah 1:6 = Jeremiah said he was only a child, couldn't speak

Luke 5:8 = Peter told Jesus to *go away, I am a sinful man*

Ephesians 3:8 = Paul said he was less than the least of all God's people

How were these inadequate men able to become great leaders of God's people?

Exodus 4:11-12 = God was with them and told them what to do, they let God work through them

What should we remember when we feel inadequate to share our faith with others?

1 Corinthians 2:13 = We don't come up with the words, God tells us what to say

What should we remember when we feel inadequate to do the work God has for us?

2 Corinthians 12:9 = *My grace is sufficient for you, my power is made perfect in weakness.*

Bible Stories for Adults

Israel's First King

Page 4

Response to the King (1 Samuel 10:24-27)

- Did the people accept their new king? = Some troublemakers opposed him
1 Samuel 10:24, 27 = They shouted, *Long live the king!*
What did Saul do after this momentous historic event?
1 Samuel 10:25-26 = He went home

Saul Begins to Act Like a King (1 Samuel 11:1-8)

- What provided the occasion for Saul to begin acting as king?
1 Samuel 11:1-3 = Ammonites besieged Jabesh Gilead
How did Saul learn of this attack? = Had not taken kingship seriously
1 Samuel 11:4-5 = Heard from messengers after coming in from working in fields
How did Saul react to this news?
1 Samuel 11:6-8 = Cut apart oxen & sent through Israel to raise 330,000 soldiers

Saul Confirmed as King (1 Samuel 11:11-15)

- What did Saul do with the army God brought to him?
1 Samuel 11:11 (9-11) = Slaughtered the Ammonites
Now that Saul had proven his leadership, how did he handle those who had opposed him?
1 Samuel 11:12-13 = He forgave them, gave credit for victory to God
How did Israel celebrate their victory? = Joshua set up stones in Gilgal after crossing Jordan (Joshua 4)
1 Samuel 11:14-15 = They went to Gilgal & confirmed Saul as king
How old was Saul when he became king?
1 Samuel 13:1 = 30 years old

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. When has it felt that God had left me? Who had left? Was God really gone?
(1 Samuel 4:22; 7:2-6; Psalm 139:7-10; Jeremiah 3:12-15; Joel 2:12-14; Malachi 3:6-12)
2. When have I been focused on one task and found myself called by God to a larger task?
(1 Samuel 9:18-10:1, 20-24; Mathew 4:18-22; Acts 9:1-19; Ephesians 4:4-16)
3. When have I felt overwhelmed with my inadequacies to fulfill God's calling?
(1 Samuel 9:20-21; Luke 18:27; Romans 8:26; 1 Corinthians 1:7-9; Philippians 4:13)
4. Have I heard God's call, but procrastinated in following it?
(1 Samuel 10:26; 11:5; Esther 4:14; Ecc 5:4-5; Luke 12:16-21; 2 Timothy 4:2; James 4:13-17)
5. How does it feel when others confirm my calling?
Do I confirm the callings of others when I see the Spirit clearly working in and through them?
(1 Samuel 11:14-15; Ephesians 2:10; 1 Thessalonians 5:11-14; 1 Timothy 4:14)