

LESSON PLAN

For Lower Elementary Students & Classes

Classroom Greeting

Teachers should arrive 10 to 15 minutes before class to greet students and parents by name. Have the day's Bible Message written on the white board or on poster board that all the kids can see. Consider using a repeatable special greeting ("This is the day the Lord has made!") or handshake for your students.



Opening Prayer Song

Have kids gather on a rug or in a dedicated meeting space. Take a minute and have students greet each other by name. It helps build community after not seeing each other for a week. The opening prayer song should be sung every week with these young kids — repetition is good.

This is sung to the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star." Accompaniment music isn't needed.

*Heavenly Father, we love you,
thanks for everything you do.*

*Open our hearts and open our ears,
so we can learn from what we hear.*

*Thanks for hearing us when we pray,
and for loving us every day. Amen.*

Introduction to Today's Bible Message

Teacher's Script (student responses are in bold).

Today's Bible message is: Listen to God. Say that with me.

Listen to God! When we listen to God we get the best help. What should we do? **Listen to God.**

- Does God want you to hit people? No. **Listen to God.**
- Does God want you to say mean words to people? No. **Listen to God.**
- Does God want you to pray? Yes. **Listen to God.**
- Does God want you to come to Sunday School? Yes. **Listen to God.**

Sometimes God says "no" when we want him to say "yes." Even then we need to **listen to God**. Today's story is about King Saul and what happened when he didn't **listen to God**.

Read the Story while Showing the Pictures

Each Bible Story has been divided into four parts, each with an accompanying Poster Picture to be printed on letter-sized paper (or enlarged to ledger-sized paper if a bigger printer is available). The teacher should hold up or point to the relevant Poster Picture while reading the individual part of the story, asking questions while reading.

King Saul's Big Mistake

Based on 1 Samuel 28:3-19

King Saul was the first king that God chose for his people. He was a good king for a while. The prophet Samuel was his friend, but he died. After a while, Saul stopped listening to God. He became a bad king. *[Why did Saul become a bad king?]*

Picture 1

God was not happy that Saul stopped listening to him, so God decided that Saul would not be king anymore. *[Why was God unhappy?]* Saul still wanted to be king, so he didn't listen to God. One day, Saul's army needed to fight the Philistines. Saul was worried and prayed to God. There was no answer. *[Why didn't God answer?]*

Picture 2

Saul tried to talk to God again, but God would not listen. God had chosen David as the new king. *[Who was the new king?]* Then, Saul made a big mistake. He asked for help from a lady who didn't know God. Saul went to her dressed in old clothes so people wouldn't know who he was. *[Why did Saul dress in old clothes?]*

Picture 3

Saul asked the bad lady to make a dead person wake up. He wanted to talk to his friend, Samuel. *[Why did Saul wake Samuel up?]* God was not happy that Saul did this. Saul was doing what he wanted and not what God wanted.

Picture 4

The bad lady woke Samuel up and Saul talked to him, but Samuel was not happy. "Why did you wake me up?" he asked. *[Who woke Samuel up from being dead?]* "Saul," Samuel said, "You did not listen to God. He told you that you are not the king anymore. David is king. You will not win this battle." *[Why would they lose?]*

Bible Message

Do you remember today's Bible Message? **Listen to God!**

Optional Activities for Young Children

You can choose one or two of the optional activities, depending on how much time you have. Be sure to leave time to go over the Take-Home Page before students leave.

a. Fingerplay

A fingerplay is a story or rhyme with hand actions or movement that includes repeated lines to reinforce the story and/or the weekly Bible message. Repeated phrases are in bold.

*Today's repeat action is: **Listen to God, Saul** (point to ear and then heaven) and **You're not the king, Saul** (shake fingers "no-no")*

The King Who Stopped Listening to God

Saul was a king who stopped listening to God.

Listen to God, Saul.

God told Saul he wasn't king anymore.

You're not the king, Saul.

It was time for a battle, and Saul was afraid.

Listen to God, Saul.

Saul looked for help, but God did not hear.

You're not the king, Saul.

Saul went to a lady who didn't know God.

Listen to God, Saul.

Saul talked to Samuel, and Samuel was mad.

You're not the king, Saul.

You didn't listen to God when he said,

Listen to God, Saul.

The battle was over and Saul did not win.

You're not the king, Saul.

b. Then What Happened?

Then What Happened is a learning game that helps kids retell the story and remember it. The rule is that whoever is speaking can only say one sentence or one thing. The teacher reads the starting sentence and then chooses a student to continue the story. The story needs to be in the right order.

If the younger kids have trouble, cut a Take-Home Page apart and let them put the illustrations (no words) in order while they tell the story.

START: God told Saul he was not the king anymore. Then what happened?

c. Song

This simple camp song has motions and can be found online.

My God is So Big!

My God is so big (arms up high)

so strong (strong man arms)

and so mighty (strong man arms on waist)

there's nothing (shake finger)

my God cannot do. (clap, clap)

My God is so big (arms up high)

so strong (strong man arms)

and so mighty (strong man arms on waist)

there's nothing (shake finger)

my God cannot do. (clap, clap)

The mountains are his

(make mountain peaks with hands)

The rivers are his

(wave hands like flowing water)

The stars are his handiwork too

(hands flash stars in the sky)

My God is so big (arms up high)

so strong (strong man arms)

and so mighty (strong man arms on waist)

there's nothing (shake finger)

my God cannot do. (clap, clap)

d. Young Children's Craft

Listen to God Puzzle

- Picture (with dashed lines) copied onto cardstock
- Safety scissors
- Crayons or markers for coloring



Copy the craft template featuring the puzzle picture onto sturdy (but cut-able) cardstock. Help students cut the puzzle pieces apart following the dashed lines. Have kids put the puzzle together.

Crafts may best be left to the end of class if behavior is a challenge. See the craft summary list for a description of all the younger children's crafts in this unit.

Take-Home Page

Repetition is very important to learning. The Take-Home Page allows teachers to review the story at the end of class. Invite children to take a seat at a table, and give each a copy of the Take-Home Page. Use the following questions to guide discussion. If necessary, explain to kids about thought and dream bubbles.

Encourage children to use the Take-Home Page to tell the story to their family.

Have children point to Picture 1.

- Raise your hand if you can tell me something you see in this picture. Why do you think Saul is holding his crown and not wearing it?

Read the words under Picture 1.

- God decided Saul should not be king. Look at Saul's face. How do you think he's feeling?



Have children point to Picture 2.

- Raise your hand if you can tell me something you see in this picture. Who is in the picture?

Read the words under Picture 2.

- Who does it say Saul went to for help?
- Why does it say she is bad?



Have children point to Picture 3.

- Raise your hand if you can tell me who is in the picture.

Read the words under Picture 3.

- What did Saul ask the lady to do?
- Does Samuel look happy?



Have children point to Picture 4.

- Raise your hand if you can tell me something you see in the picture.

Read the words under Picture 4.

- Who is Samuel talking to?
- Why do you think Saul will not win the battle?



Have children point to the Bible Message at the top of the page.

Do you remember today's Bible Message? **Listen to God.**

Closing Prayer

End class with this closing prayer, repeated each week for memorization.

Thank you, Jesus, for teaching me.

Bless me, my friends, and my family.

*This week I ask you to keep me safe
and through the week to grow my faith.*

*Bring me back to learn again,
and fill my heart with love. Amen.*