


the
Jesus 
Storybook
Bible
Curriculum

The teeny, weenie . . . true king

Samuel anoints David, from 1 Samuel 16

☉ Please see the curriculum Introduction .pdf for more guidance on praying with your group and on Scripture memory.

☉ The total allotted time per lesson is 45 minutes. This is the minimum amount of time it would take to complete the whole lesson. The time can easily be extended to increase the lesson to as much as 1.5 hours. If you have more than the allocated 45 minutes, please use the extra time to extend the time for activities, to learn the memory verse, and to pray.

☉ The “Notes for Teachers on the Text” section is intended as explanation of the Bible text and advance preparation for you only; it is not expressed in terms or language the children could understand.

The Jesus Storybook Bible Curriculum
By Sally Lloyd-Jones and Sam Shammas

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Recap of the Previous Story

3 min. 

☉ Welcome the children and ask them to sit in a circle.

☉ Briefly recap the main points of the previous stories: “We’ve been learning about how God rescued his people and gave them the Ten Commandments. Last time we read that after 40 years of walking in the desert, God’s people entered their new home, the home God had promised them. We also memorized the first commandment.”

☉ Ask them to recite together the verse they learned at home about the story. “Exodus 20:3 — ‘You shall have no other gods before me.’”

☉ To lead into the theme of today’s story, go to the center of the circle, put a crown on your head, and ask: “What do you think we are going to be talking about today? Yes, kings. In our story today from the book of 1 Samuel, we are going to meet two kings.”

Activity Introducing the Story

10 min. 

Aim: To expend energy and learn about kingship.

Materials: A crown (this can be made out of paper).

1. Say: “We’re going to play a game called ‘The King Says.’ When this crown is on my head, I am a king and you must do what I say. But when I remove the crown, then you do not have to obey my commands. If I say, ‘The king says stop!’ and I have the crown on my head, you should all stop. But if I do not have the crown on my head, then you should keep walking. Only obey my commands when I am a king. Watch closely for the crown. Ready? Everyone stand up and walk around the room.”

2. Call out commands (e.g., skip; freeze; wave your hands in the air; jump up and down five times; dance; touch your nose; etc.), prefacing each one with the words, “The king says . . .” Periodically call out a command, having removed the crown from your head. Comment on how the children respond (e.g., “Oh dear, about half of you obeyed that command, but I did not have the crown on my head, so I was not a king. Let’s try again. Everyone ready?”).

3. Toward the end of the allocated time, ask the children to sit back down in the circle. Pointing to the crown on your head, say: “This is not a real crown and I am not a real king. What does a real king look like?”

4. Prompt until you get answers like: “strong,” “handsome,” “old,” etc.

5. Put the crown in the center of the circle. Say: “In our story today, we are going to meet two kings. But many people did not know one of them was a king because he did not look like a king at all. Let’s meet our two kings.”

Join the children in the circle and announce the title of the story. Read aloud pages 116–121 from *The Jesus Storybook Bible* or listen to CD1 track 14.

Notes for Teachers on the Text

The moral of this story seems obvious: “You can’t judge a book by its cover.” After all, 1 Samuel 16:7 says, “The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.” It’s true; you can’t judge a book by its cover. But that is not primarily what this story is about.

You can either read the Bible as if it’s nothing but examples and things that you have to do, or you can read the Bible as if it’s primarily about what God has done. In other words, you can either read the Bible as if it primarily about you, or you can read it as if it’s primarily about God.

This story is about the search for a true king. It starts with Hannah at the beginning of the first book of Samuel; she has a vision and sings a song of a true king. When she describes a true king, she depicts him as one who lives to serve, who does not accumulate power but distributes power: “He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes and has them inherit a throne of honor” (1 Samuel 2:8). She describes a king with the heart of God.

In this story, Saul has turned out not to be that king. Saul has turned out to be a king just like all the other kings of the world. So God sends Samuel to the house of Jesse to anoint a new king.

The first of Jesse’s sons whom Samuel sees is very tall and powerful, and so Samuel assumes that he must be the new king. He makes that mistake again and again. Jesse makes the same mistake; he doesn’t even think to ask David to appear at first because he is so small and inconsequential. But David is the one who is anointed king.

If you do not put this story into the context of the whole Bible, or even into the context of the rest of the David narrative, it is possible to think that because of what God says in 1 Samuel 16:7 (“the LORD looks at the heart”) that God chose David because he had an intrinsically good heart and the rest of the brothers had bad hearts. You could conclude that God was looking for someone who is really good—a person with great character—and that is who he is going to make king.

But when you read the rest of the life of David, it becomes blatantly obvious that his record is not that much better than Saul’s. So there is no way David has an intrinsically good heart. But he does have a heart that hungers and thirsts after God, and that is what makes him a “man after [God’s] own heart” (Acts 13:22).

And, like David, we will never develop kingliness without knowing the true King.

David’s kingship points to Jesus’ kingship. Like David, Jesus was a child from Bethlehem who was not the world’s choice. When you read the Gospels, it is clear that no one believed that Jesus could be the Messiah. He wasn’t beautiful, or political, or military, or rich. Jesus on the cross was not just forgotten by his Father but forsaken by his Father. Jesus does exactly what Hannah prophesied a true king would do: he came to serve and to lift the needy so that they might inherit a throne of honor. Jesus is the true King on earth who reflects the heart of God. The search for a true king ends with Jesus.

Understanding the Story

15 min. 

Aim: To understand that Jesus is the true King.

Materials: 2 large poster-size papers – on top of one paper write the words “WANTED: New King,” on the other write “DAVID: The King God Chose”; child-safe glue; decorating items, e.g., stickers, pieces of colored paper, tin foil, etc.; crayons; copies of the handout (the last page of this document).

1. At the end of the story, say: “At the start of our story, the people ask for a king. Here is a poster they could have used to find their king; it says, ‘Wanted: New King.’ At the end of our story, God has given them a king called David. Here is a poster that David might have used to show all his kingly qualities; it says, ‘David: The King God Chose.’ Half of you are going to draw one poster and the other half will draw the other.”
2. Divide the group in two. Group 1 (and their teacher) will work on the WANTED poster. Group 2 (and their teacher) will work on the DAVID poster. Give each group (and their teacher) a poster, some crayons, and decorating items. The paper should be large enough to allow everyone in the group to draw on it at the same time.

GROUP 1 – WANTED POSTER	GROUP 2 – DAVID POSTER
<p>Say: “Remember what the story said about the sort of king the people wanted? Let me read it again. ‘In those days if you were going to be the king, you had to look like a king, which meant you had to be the tallest or the strongest. (So you could carry the longest swords and biggest armor.)’”</p>	<p>Say: “Remember what it said in the story about David? Let me read it again. ‘There’s the youngest one ... he’s only teeny ...’ ‘He has a heart like mine,’ God said. ‘It is full of love.’”</p>
<p>Ask: “What shall we write down on this poster so that people would get a king like that?” Write the words “must be” on the paper and prompt the group until you have written words like “tall,” “strong,” etc.</p>	<p>Ask: “What shall we write down on this poster about what David looked like?” Prompt the group until you have written words like “small,” “young,” etc.</p>
<p>Ask: “What sort of things should the king have with him?” Write the words “must have” on the paper and prompt the group until you have written words like “sword,” “armor,” “prizes from winning battles,” etc.</p>	<p>Ask: “What about David’s heart? What was that like?” Draw a large heart and prompt the group until you have written the words “has a heart like God’s heart” inside the heart.</p>
<p>Ask each child to pick one of the things you have mentioned and to draw it on the area of the poster nearest to them.</p>	<p>Ask each child to draw a heart on the area of the poster nearest to them and to decorate it.</p>
<p>If they are able, ask the children to draw a picture of the king they have described.</p>	<p>If they are able, ask the children to draw the “teeny” David.</p>
<p>As you do this, you may want to comment that all these things are about what someone looks like on the outside. You may want to ask the group why these things might not be important to God.</p>	<p>As you do this, you may want to ask the group what Samuel must have thought when he first saw David. Did Samuel think David would be king?</p>

3. Toward the end of the allocated time, ask the groups to help you put away the decorating items and sit back down in the circle. Display the two posters at the center of the circle. Ask the children to look at and compare the two posters. Prompt them with questions; e.g., “Can you see any differences?” “If you look at the poster of David, does he look like a king?” etc.

4. After getting some appropriate responses, say: “The people wanted a king who looked like a king. But all they were looking at was the outside. Remember what God said to Samuel in the story: ‘You’re thinking about what a king looks like on the outside, but I am looking at his heart, what he’s like on the inside.’ God wanted a true king, a king with a heart like God’s.”

5. Give each child a copy of the handout and a crayon. Ask them to look at the picture of the crown and then ask: “What sort of king did God want? What sort of a heart did God want the king to have? Unravel the letters inside the crown to get an answer.”

6. Give them 1 minute; then ask one child and then the entire group to read the answer aloud.

For larger groups: You may want to divide up the group further and make multiples of each poster.

Drawing the Story to a Close

1 min. 

Say: “The people wanted a king that looked like a king. But God wanted a true king, a king with a heart like God’s. At the end of the story we find out why. God was getting his people ready for an even greater King who was coming. Who is that King? Yes, it is Jesus.”

Ask: “What was the name of the town Jesus came from? Yes, Bethlehem. What was the name of the town David came from? Correct, both David and Jesus came from Bethlehem. What else is the same about Jesus and David?” Prompt them to refer to the DAVID poster and, among others, get answers like: “No one thought Jesus would be King,” “Jesus had a heart like God’s heart,” etc.

Jesus in the Story

2 min. 

Ask: “What did we discover about Jesus from today’s story?”

Get a few children to share their answers aloud, commenting appropriately; then ask everyone to write an answer in the space on their handout.

Praying about the Story

5 min. 

Pray aloud, asking God to help you and the children to trust and believe in the true King — Jesus.

Ask the children to pray praises to God because Jesus is King.

A Verse from the Story to Learn at Home

2 min. 

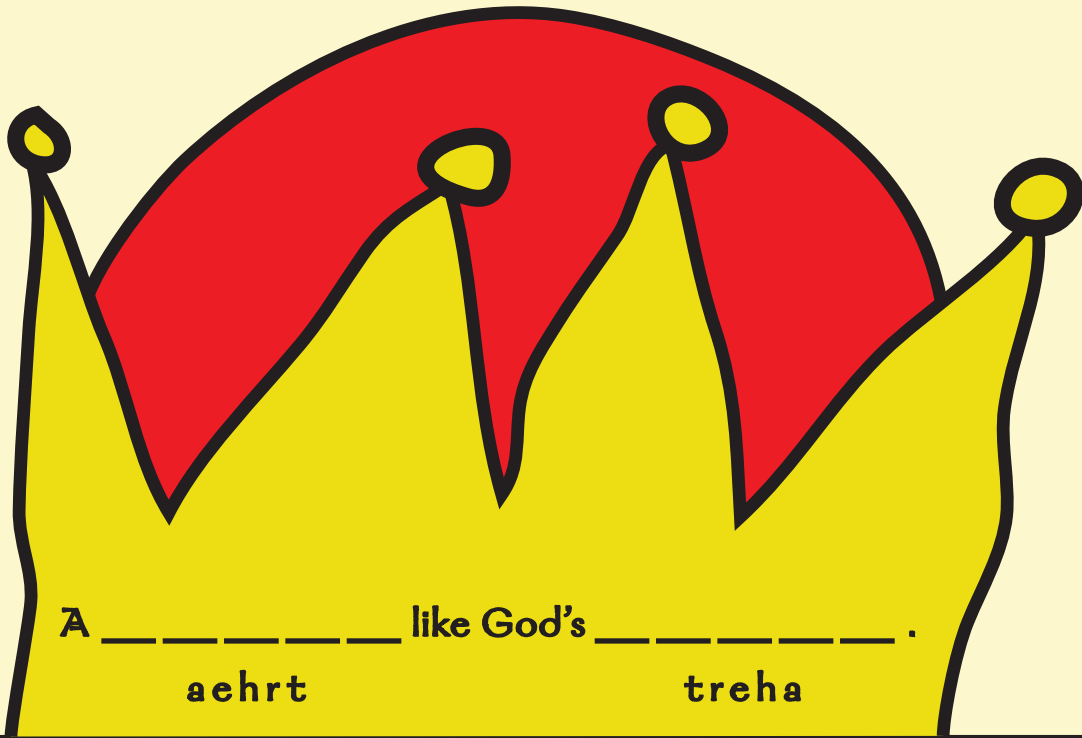
☉ Introduce the verse: “Did you know that King David wrote songs and poems and prayers to God, and they are in the Bible in a book called Psalms? The verse we are going to learn is from one of David’s psalms and it shows us David’s heart.”

☉ Announce the verse: “Your verse to learn at home is Psalm 16:8 — ‘I keep my eyes always on the LORD. I will not be shaken.’”

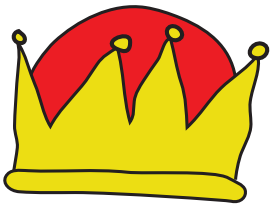
☉ Read the verse out loud together as a group.

☉ Remind the children to give the handout to their parents and to memorize the verse for next time.

For next time, ask the children if they would each bring in a cardboard box; e.g., a shoebox or tissue box.



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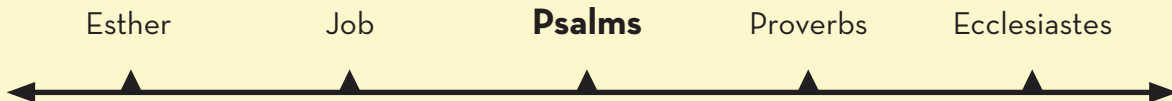


What did you discover about Jesus from this story?

Jesus

© A Verse from the Story to Learn at Home

I keep my eyes always on the LORD. I will not be shaken.
(Psalm 16:8)



Notes for parents: From the story we learned that God chose David to be king. God was getting his people ready for an even greater King – Jesus.

Please help your child to memorize the verse and the Scripture reference for next time. Please review with them the place of the book of Psalms, using the diagram above. For next time, if possible, please also give your child a cardboard box (e.g., a shoebox or tissue box) for the craft.