

LESSON 1

THE RISE AND FALL OF SAUL

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Is in Charge

SCRIPTURE: 1 Samuel 8–10; 13; 15

GOD'S BIG STORY: Instead of trusting God to be in charge, the Israelites ask for a king. God grants their request, and Saul becomes king. When Saul's heart turns away from God, God removes the kingdom from him.

WORD OF WONDER: Be still, and know that I am God. —Psalm 46:10a

Activity: Copycats

Activity: Wonder Truth Crowns

Worship

God's Big Story

Snack

Word of Wonder

Prayer and Blessing Activity:

Follow the Leader

Activity: Copycats

Greet the kids warmly and welcome them to church.

Welcome! Let's play a fun game called Copycats. Whatever I do, you do your best to copy me. If I dance, you dance! If I make a silly face, you make a silly face. If I stomp around the room, you stomp around the room.

You can do the following actions for the kids to copy or create your own:

- Do a crazy dance.
- March around the room.
- Make a silly face.
- Jump up and down.
- Give someone a high-five.
- Tiptoe around the room.
- Walk in place.
- Stomp your feet.
- Shake your head.
- Touch your toes.

Make It Inclusive: If you have kids with mobility issues, create actions that will allow them to participate.

Great job, copycats! In today's story, we're going to meet some people who thought they needed a leader to follow. They didn't trust that God was in charge. Today we'll see that God always knows what's best for us because God is in charge.

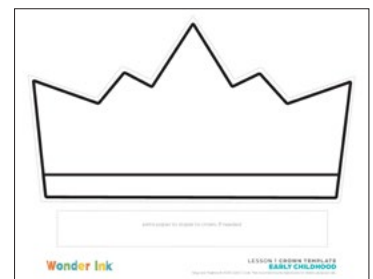
Activity: Wonder Truth Crowns

SUPPLIES: cardstock, scissors (prep only), coloring utensils, stapler (leader only), stickers (optional)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: [Crown Template \(1 per kid\)](#)

Ahead of time, print the Crown Template onto cardstock for each kid. Cut out the crowns and set out coloring utensils. You may also want to set out stickers.

In God's big story today, we're going to see how God's people wanted a king to rule over them. They didn't trust God to lead them. But God loved them and showed them His plan. Let's get ready to see how God is in charge.



Give each kid a crown and encourage them to color the crowns. Then staple each crown together to fit kids' heads.

Leader Tip: Kids will love to wear their crowns throughout the lesson!

In today's story, we'll hear how God's people asked God for a king to lead them. But they needed to remember that God is the best leader. God is in charge of everything, and He is a great leader. Our Wonder Truth today is: **GOD IS IN CHARGE.**

Encourage the kids to do the following motions while you repeat the Wonder Truth. Older toddlers can say the words with you as they do the motions.

GOD IS—Point up.

IN CHARGE—Hands on hips.

Worship

Today we'll learn about how God is in charge. Let's sing and praise God to thank Him for how He is the best leader.

Play songs from the Little Learners Playlist and encourage the kids to sing and dance as they praise God.

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, toy crown

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Bible Story Picture (1/SG)

Our God's big story today is a great story from the Bible about a person named Saul. Encourage the kids to say, "Saul." **Let's find out from the Bible what happened to Saul!**

Show the kids the God's Big Story Video, read the story from the Bible, or use the script provided. You can also print the Bible Story Picture to give the kids a visual depiction as you tell the story.

As you tell the story, invite the kids to copy your reactions.

God had led the Israelites through the wilderness and into the promised land, where they lived. He had raised up judges to lead them, but the people thought they needed a king. Shake your head "no." Allow the kids time to copy your actions. **Other nations had kings, but the Israelites forgot they already had a king in charge of them.** Say, "God" and point up. Allow the kids time to copy your actions. **But the Israelites didn't trust God and wanted to do things their way.** Shake your head "no." Allow the kids time to copy your actions.

The Israelites asked for a king to lead them. Samuel talked to God, and God gave the people what they wanted, even though God knew it wouldn't go well. Shake your head "no." Allow the kids time to copy your actions. **Samuel warned the people, but the Israelites didn't care!** Cross your arms across your chest. Allow the kids time to copy your actions. **God gave the people a king and his name was Saul.** Put the crown on your head and encourage the kids to put on a pretend crown. **Saul was a good king for a while.** Clap and cheer. Allow the kids time to copy your actions.

But Saul started to disobey God and make his own rules. Shake your head "no." Allow the kids time to copy your actions. **That made God upset. Saul disobeyed God. Then God made someone else king. God knows what is best, and we can trust Him to lead us. God is in charge.** Point up, clap your hands, and cheer. Allow the kids time to copy your actions.

Snack

Instruct kids to sit in the floor. Pass out snacks and say a prayer together.

Invite kids to repeat after you:

Dear God. kids repeat

You know me, love me, and lead me too. kids repeat

Please help me follow You. kids repeat

Thank you for snacks so yummy. kids repeat

That fill my happy tummy! kids repeat

Amen

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bible

WORD OF WONDER

Be still, and know that I am God.

—Psalm 46:10a

Our Word of Wonder for the Kings and Prophets series is from Psalm 46:10a. Let's practice saying the Word of Wonder together.

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

- **BE STILL,**—Open your palms, facing down. Move your palms downward at the same time.
- **AND KNOW**—Point to your head.
- **THAT I AM GOD.**—Point up.
- **PSALM 46:10a**—Hold your hands open in front of you, as if opening a book.

Prayer and Blessing

Let's talk to God.

God, thank You for knowing us best. Help us remember to trust You to lead and guide us. I'm so glad You're in charge of us! In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: May you know that God loves you, knows you, and will always be with you. He's the one who knows what is best for you and is always there to guide you. May you trust Him as He leads the way.

Activity: Follow the Leader

SUPPLIES: toy crown, wet wipes

Today we learned that God is in charge. God's people wanted a king, and God gave them a king to lead them. But King Saul stopped following God, and he didn't get to keep being the king. God is the best leader. We can trust Him and follow Him. Let's play a game where you follow the king and say the Wonder Truth: **GOD IS IN CHARGE.**

Put on the crown and invite the kids to follow you as you march around the room. Stop periodically and invite the kids to say the Wonder Truth with you: God is in charge! Then continue marching around the room. Clean the crown with wet wipes and let the kids take turns wearing the crown and leading the others around the room.