Preschool–Grade 6

Samuel Anoints Saul

Sunday School Lesson for 3rd to 5th Grade, 45–60 minutes

Main point: God guides our steps, even through ordinary days and lost things, and He chooses whom He will use.
Bible passage: 1 Samuel 9:1–10:1 and 10:17–24. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not because the LORD hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?" *1 Samuel 10:1 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each child (or one for every two children), paper and a pencil for each child, a whiteboard or large paper, a marker, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the board. Clear a path across the room and set a few chairs in it as obstacles.

1. Opening game: Follow My Voice (5–10 minutes)

One child closes their eyes at one end of the room. A partner guides them around the chairs to the other end, using only their voice: "Two steps forward. Turn left. Stop!" Take turns. Ask: *How did it feel to walk when you couldn't see where you were going? What made it work?* Say: "Today a young man went looking for lost donkeys. He couldn't see where his path was going, but God could."

2. Bible story: Lost Donkeys, a Found King (15 minutes)

Kids open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 9. When you reach a **Look up** line, a child finds the verse and reads it out loud. Tell the rest in your own words.

The search. Look up 1 Samuel 9:2. Saul, the son of **Kish** from the tribe of Benjamin, was "a choice young man, and a goodly," and taller than anyone from his shoulders up. **Goodly** means fine and handsome. His father's **asses** (donkeys) were lost, and Kish sent Saul and a servant to look for them (9:3). They passed through mount Ephraim, the land of Shalisha, the land of Shalim and the land of the Benjamites, but they found them not (9:4). In the land of Zuph, Saul wanted to go home before his father began to worry about them instead of the donkeys (9:5).

The seer. The servant said a man of God lived in the city, and "all that he saith cometh surely to pass" (9:6). Saul worried they had no gift to bring, but the servant had the fourth part of a **shekel** of silver, a small piece of money (9:7–8). **Look up 1 Samuel 9:9.** A prophet used to be called a **seer**. Young maidens going out to draw water told them the seer had just come to the city (9:11–13).

God had already spoken. Look up 1 Samuel 9:16. The day before, the LORD told Samuel He would send a man out of the land of Benjamin, and Samuel would **anoint** him to be **captain** (leader) over Israel to save them from the Philistines (9:15–16). When Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said, "Behold the man whom I spake to thee of!" (9:17).

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The best seat. Samuel said, "I am the seer," and told Saul the asses lost three days ago were found (9:19–20). **Look up 1 Samuel 9:21.** Saul said he was a Benjamite, "of the smallest of the tribes of Israel," and his family "the least of all." Samuel brought Saul and his servant into the **parlour** (a dining room), sat them in the chiefest place among about thirty guests, and gave Saul the shoulder that had been kept for him (9:22–24).

The vial of oil. Early the next morning, as they went down to the end of the city, Samuel had the servant pass on ahead and told Saul to "stand thou still a while, that I may shew thee the word of God" (9:26–27). **Look up 1 Samuel 10:1.** Samuel took a **vial** (a little bottle) of oil, poured it upon Saul's head, kissed him, and told him the LORD had anointed him to be captain over His **inheritance**, God's own people.

Hid among the stuff. Later Samuel called the people together unto the LORD at **Mizpeh** (10:17). He reminded them that God had brought them out of Egypt, and that by asking for a king they had rejected God, who saved them (10:18–19). The tribe of Benjamin was taken, then the family of Matri, then Saul the son of Kish. But when they looked for him, he could not be found (10:20–21)! **Look up 1 Samuel 10:22.** The LORD said, "he hath hid himself among the stuff," the baggage. They ran and fetched him, and he was taller than anyone from his shoulders up (10:23). **Look up 1 Samuel 10:24.** All the people shouted, "God save the king."

3. Questions to ask (10 minutes)

Thinking questions (no single right answer; let kids talk)

1. Saul thought he was only looking for donkeys, but God had told Samuel he was coming (9:15–16). How can God use an ordinary day in your life?
2. Saul's search went wrong again and again (9:4). Can God use the times when things don't go our way? How?
3. Saul said he was from the smallest tribe and the least family (9:21). Why do you think God chose him anyway?
4. Saul hid among the stuff (10:22). Why do you think he hid? (The Bible doesn't say, so think it through.)
5. Where do you need God to guide your steps this week?

Recall questions

1. What was the name of Saul's father? *(Kish, 1 Samuel 9:1)*
2. What was a prophet called in those days? *(A seer, 9:9)*
3. What did Samuel pour on Saul's head? *(A vial of oil, 10:1)*

4. Memory verse: Erase a Word (5 minutes)

Explain the old words: a **vial** is a little bottle, **anointed** means poured oil on him to show God chose him, a **captain** is a leader, and **his inheritance** means God's own people. Read the verse on the board together. Erase two words and read it again. Keep erasing two words at a time until the board is empty and the class can say it alone. Then kids say it to a partner.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "God guided Saul's steps right to Samuel, and He guides our steps too. The most important place God wants to lead us is to Jesus. God loves you. The Bible says: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means all of us have done wrong, and none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, which means God came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3–4). How do we obey the gospel? 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means to turn away from sin; our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are **buried with Jesus in baptism**, all the way under the water, in Jesus' name. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we come up to live a new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives the words (Acts 2:4). The Bible calls this being born again (John 3:5)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: each morning, ask God to guide your steps. Watch for one way He does.

6. Activity: Bible Look-Up Race (10–15 minutes)

Kids work in pairs with one Bible. Read a reference and a question. The first pair to find the verse and read the answer out loud wins the point.

1. 1 Samuel 9:1: What was Kish called? *(A mighty man of power)*
2. 1 Samuel 9:8: How much silver did the servant have? *(The fourth part of a shekel)*
3. 1 Samuel 9:11: Who did they meet going out to draw water? *(Young maidens)*
4. 1 Samuel 9:20: How long had the asses been lost? *(Three days)*
5. 1 Samuel 9:22: About how many people were at the meal? *(About thirty)*
6. 1 Samuel 9:25: Where did Samuel talk with Saul? *(Upon the top of the house)*
7. 1 Samuel 10:17: Where did Samuel call the people together? *(To Mizpeh)*
8. 1 Samuel 10:21: Which family of Benjamin was taken? *(The family of Matri)*

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that You guide our steps, even on ordinary days and when things go wrong. Help us stay humble and follow You. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks why Israel wanted a king, or what happened to Saul later: the people wanted a king "like all the nations" (1 Samuel 8:5), and God said they had rejected Him (8:7; 10:19). Later chapters tell that Saul did not keep obeying God. This lesson stays with how God chose him.

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