Preschool–Grade 6

Samuel Anoints Saul

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: God guides our steps. He knows where we are going, even when we don't.
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, 5 small paper donkeys (or toy donkeys), 6 index cards, a marker, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: hide the donkeys around the room. Write the memory verse on the 6 cards (see part 4). Put a bookmark in your Bible at 1 Samuel 9.

1. Opening game: Lost Donkeys (5 minutes)

Say: "Some donkeys are lost in our room! Can you find them?" As kids look, help them: "Warmer... warmer... hot!" or "Colder... cold!" When all the donkeys are found, ask: *Was it easier to find them when someone helped you know which way to go?* Say: "Today a young man went looking for lost donkeys, and God was guiding his steps the whole time."

2. Bible story: The Lost Donkeys and the Vial of Oil (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to 1 Samuel 9, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

A man named **Kish** had a son named **Saul**. Saul was a fine young man, and he was tall. From his shoulders up, he was taller than all the people (1 Samuel 9:1–2)! One day Kish's **asses** were lost. Asses is the Bible's word for donkeys. Kish told Saul to take a servant with him and go look for the donkeys (9:3).

Saul and the servant looked and looked. They went through one land after another, but they did not find the donkeys (9:4). Saul said, "Come, and let us return" (9:5). He said his father might stop caring about the donkeys and worry about them instead. But the servant said, "there is in this city a man of God" (9:6). He said maybe this man could show them the way to go. In those days a man of God like that was called a **seer**, someone God showed things to (9:9).

Here is the amazing part. The day before, God had told the seer, **Samuel**, "To morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin" (9:16). God told Samuel to **anoint** him to be the leader of His people. When Samuel saw Saul, God said, "Behold the man whom I spake to thee of!" (9:17). That means, "This is the man I told you about!"

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The story continues: Saul asked Samuel where the seer's house was. Samuel said, "I am the seer." He told Saul not to worry about the donkeys: "they are found" (9:18–20). Then Samuel said that all the desire of Israel was on Saul. Saul asked why Samuel spoke so to him. He said, "Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel?" (9:21). Samuel gave Saul the best seat at a big meal, and he gave him a special piece of meat that had been kept just for him (9:22–24).

The next morning, Samuel walked Saul to the edge of the city. He sent the servant on ahead and told Saul to stand still (9:26–27). Then Samuel took a **vial of oil**, a little bottle of oil, and poured it on Saul's head, and kissed him. He said, "the LORD hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance" (10:1). That means God chose Saul to lead His people, Israel.

Later, Samuel called all the people together at a place called **Mizpeh** (10:17). God showed them He had chosen Saul. But when they looked for Saul, they couldn't find him (10:20–21)! God said, "he hath hid himself among the stuff," which means among the bags and bundles (10:22). They ran and brought him out. When Saul stood among the people, he was taller than everyone (10:23). Samuel said, "See ye him whom the LORD hath chosen?" And all the people shouted, "**God save the king**" (10:24)!

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. What was Saul looking for? *(His father's lost asses, the donkeys, 1 Samuel 9:3)*
2. Who told Samuel ahead of time that Saul was coming? *(The LORD, 9:15–16)*
3. What did Samuel tell Saul about the donkeys? *(They were found, 9:20)*
4. What did Samuel pour on Saul's head? *(A vial of oil, 10:1)*
5. Where was Saul hiding when the people looked for him? *(Among the stuff, 10:22)*
6. What did all the people shout? *("God save the king," 10:24)*

4. Memory verse: Pour It Out (5 minutes)

Tape the 6 cards up in order: *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.* 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, Israel. Read the verse together, and pretend to pour oil from a little bottle when you say "poured it upon his head." Take one card away and say it again. Keep taking cards away until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "Saul thought he was just looking for donkeys. But God was guiding his steps the whole time, right to Samuel. God guides our steps too. He knows us, and He loves us very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: '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 we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."
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: every morning, pray, "God, guide my steps today." At night, think of one way God helped you.

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Samuel anoints Saul word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/samuel-anoints-saul-word-search), crossword (vbshq.com/puzzles/samuel-anoints-saul-crossword), maze (vbshq.com/puzzles/samuel-anoints-saul-maze) or worksheet (vbshq.com/worksheets/samuel-anoints-saul-worksheet), the coloring page or craft (vbshq.com/bible-stories/samuel-anoints-saul), or **Hide Among the Stuff:** pile a few coats and bags in a corner. One child hides a paper donkey under the pile while the others close their eyes. The others take turns guessing which coat or bag it is under. Say: "The LORD knew just where Saul was hiding (10:22). God always knows where we are."

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that You guide our steps, even when we don't know where we are going. Help us follow You and listen to 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: the people asked Samuel for a king "like all the nations," and God said they had rejected Him from being their King (1 Samuel 8:5, 8:7; 10:19). God still gave them a king and chose Saul. Keep it simple: God is the best King.

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