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FAMILY WORSHIP GUIDE

JULY 5, 2020

Key Passage:

“There is none like you, O LORD; you are great, and your name is great in might.” (Jeremiah 10:6)

Big Picture Question:

Is anything or anyone greater than God? No, God is greater than everything and everyone.

Lesson:

This week, we’re going to take a look back at the first half of the book of 1 Samuel.

In a country called Ephraim, there lived a man named Elkanah and his wife Hannah. Hannah was very sad because she did not have any children. She wanted to have a family so she prayed to the Lord. “Lord, if you give me a son, I will dedicate him to you. He will serve you all of his life,” she said.

A priest named Eli was watching her pray and said, “Go in peace. May God answer your prayers.” When the couple returned home, God did answer their prayers. Hannah gave birth to a son and named him Samuel, which means “requested from God.” When Samuel was no longer a baby, she returned to the tabernacle and left him with Eli to serve God. As Samuel grew older, he found favor with God and with men.

One night, God called Samuel three times but each time Samuel ran to Eli. “Here I am,” he said. Eli finally understood that it was God who was calling to Samuel and told him how to respond. The next time God called Samuel, he said, “Speak, for Your servant is listening.” As Samuel grew, God was with him. Everyone in Israel knew that Samuel was God’s messenger. God used Samuel to share His plan with the nation of Israel.

During this time, the people of Israel were in constant conflict with the Philistines. One day, the Israelites fought a battle against the Philistines, and God was allowing the Philistines to win. The Israelites were confused so they made a plan to take the ark of God, which was also called “the ark of the covenant,” to the battle. The ark was a beautiful box from the tabernacle that reminded God’s people that he was with them. The Israelites fought the battle, but the Philistines won again! Many Israelites died during the battle—including Eli’s two sons—and the Philistines captured the ark.

The Philistines took the ark of God to a temple where they worshiped a false god called Dagon (DAY gahn). They put the ark next to a statue of Dagon. The next morning, the Philistines went into the temple and saw that Dagon’s statue was facedown in front of the ark. They set the statue back up but the next day it was facedown again and its head and hands were broken off. As the ark was moved between different Philistine cities, God afflicted the people and made them sick. God was showing the Philistines that he was the one true God.

They didn’t want God to punish them anymore, so they decided to return the ark along with gifts of gold to show they were sorry for taking it. The people hitched two cows to a cart and put the ark on the cart. The cows moved the ark down the road until the ark of God was back with the Israelites, where it belonged.

Many years after the Philistines returned the ark of God to the Israelites, Samuel was serving as a judge over Israel. At this time, Israel had no king, but the people said, “We want a king like the nations around us.” God warned his people that earthly kings would not be perfect and would let them down but they didn’t care.

So God brought a man named Saul to Samuel. “You will be king!” Samuel said. The Israelites thought Saul would be a good king, but Saul did not honor or obey God. First, Saul sinned by burning offerings in Samuel’s absence. Later, when the Israelites defeated the Amalekites (uh-MAL-uh-kights), Saul did not follow God’s instructions to destroy everything.

Samuel confronted Saul and said, “Does God care more about obedience or sacrifices? You rejected His instruction, so God has rejected you as king. God has taken away your kingship today, and He will make someone else king.”

(Summary of the book 1 Samuel)

Christ Connection:

Remember that the stories in the Bible are meant to point us towards the much bigger story about Jesus.

Just like God sought out Samuel, our God also seeks after us. All we have to do is listen. Samuel used God’s words to tell the people what God is like. John 1:1 says that Jesus is the Word. Jesus—the Son of God—told the world about God’s plan and showed what God is like. God sent Jesus down to us to show us His power and love. There is no one like God.

The ark of God reminded the Israelites that God was with them. Many years later God gave His people something even better to remind them that He was with them. God sent His Son, Jesus. The Bible says that one of Jesus’ names is Immanuel, which means “God with us.”

God intended for a heavenly king to rule over Israel, but the Israelites did not trust God’s plan and wanted a king like the nations around them. By all appearances, Saul was a good king. He was handsome, taller than most people, and God had blessed him. But Saul failed to obey God. Saul was not the king the people needed because earthly kings are imperfect.

The Bible tells us that God had a plan to send his son, Jesus. Jesus is the perfect king who followed all of his Father’s instructions without fail. King Jesus trusted and obeyed God perfectly and died so sinners could be forgiven and accepted.

Questions for Discussion:

1. What was your favorite story from 1 Samuel and why? *Encourage everyone to share their favorite moment from today’s lesson.*
2. What do you think your favorite story can teach us about who Jesus is and what He’s done for us? *Use the Christ Connection section as a starting place and help your kids to connect their favorite story to the much bigger story of Christ.*
3. How does God show that he is greater than everything and everyone in these stories from 1 Samuel? *Use this time to review the Big Picture Question and help your kids by pointing out events like God answering Hannah’s prayer or what happened after the Philistines captured the ark.*

Suggested Activity:

Today, we’re going to make key verse memory cards. Help your kids write out each word or different phrases of the key verse (Jeremiah 10:6) on separate index cards. Make a set of cards for each of your kids. Mix them up and have your kids put them in the correct order. Try doing this multiple times with your kids and then see if they can say the verse from memory.

Our key verse comes from the book of Jeremiah. Jeremiah was a prophet and he wrote the words God told him to write. God wanted His people to remember that He is completely different from anyone or anything else. God is all-powerful and perfectly holy. Is anything or anyone greater than God? No, God is greater than everything and everyone.

Family Worship:

Listen to a song from the [CBC Kids Scripture Songs album](#) on Spotify or iTunes.

[“Waymaker”](#) by Bethel Music

[“Goodness of God”](#) by Bethel Music

You can also listen to the [“Cultivate Unity, Celebrate Diversity” playlist](#) created by Gardner on Spotify.