



I Love You
Prayers



(Adoration)



I'm
Thankful
Prayers

(Thanksgiving)



I'm **SORRY**
Prayers



(Confession)

Please
Prayers



(Supplication)





K-1st Lesson

Introduction

Refer to the Exodus to Malachi Timeline. The Israelites were living in the promised land. But after Joshua died, they turned away from the Lord and ignored his commandments. Their sin began a cycle that kept repeating over and over for many years: 1) The Israelites sinned by worshipping false gods; 2) God became angry and sent enemies to punish them; 3) The Israelites cried out to God to forgive them; 4) God chose a judge to rescue them from their enemies; 5) The Israelites thanked God for saving them and giving them peace.

But it didn't end there. Whenever God gave the Israelites peace and safety, they would forget what God had done for them and turn back to worshipping idols. This started the whole cycle again!

God was merciful, though. He listened to the Israelites' prayers and helped them even when they kept on sinning. The judges God chose to help the people usually led them into battle against the enemy. That can be a scary job. In today's lesson, we'll see how God chose a leader who started out feeling afraid but learned to trust God even when he was outnumbered.

God Calls Gideon

The Israelites had sinned again by worshipping false gods and idols, so God brought enemies called the Midianites to punish them.

The Midianites were so powerful and there were so many of them that whenever they came, the Israelites had to run and hide in caves! The Midianites took everything—all the food in the fields and all the animals. The Israelites were left with nothing!

This kept happening for seven years. Finally, the Israelites cried out to the Lord for help. They had forgotten God, but now they were sorry for their sin.

Refer to the Lesson Flip Chart. So God chose a judge to help the Israelites. His name was Gideon. But he wasn't any superhero. Actually, the Bible tells us that Gideon was hiding from the enemy when the angel of the Lord came to him and said that he would be the one to lead the fight against the Midianites.

Gideon didn't think this was such a good idea, but the Lord promised to go with him. God was going to show Gideon how he would fight for Israel and bring victory, even when it seemed impossible.

God Reduces Gideon's Army

Place a large amount of small objects on a table or the floor where the students can easily see them. Attach a piece of tape next to the objects for a battle line. It wasn't long before the Midianites came with a huge army and camped in the land of Israel. Their army had 135,000 men—an enormous number of soldiers! They were a scary sight to the Israelites!

The Midianites probably thought they would just come and steal whatever they wanted, like usual. But this time would be different—they would be in for a big surprise because God was fighting for Israel!

Place a lesser amount of small objects on the other side of the tape. Israelite men came from all over to join Gideon in the fight—32,000 in all! But there were still a lot more Midianites.

- Refer to the objects. How do you think Gideon felt when he looked at how many soldiers he had and how many the Midianites had? Allow answers.

Gideon began to wonder if he really was supposed to lead this battle. But God helped Gideon trust that he was with him. Finally, Gideon set out for battle with his 32,000 men.

Gideon and his army were ready to go out and fight. But the Lord had a different plan in mind. He stopped Gideon and gave him some instructions—God was about to make his army even smaller!

Judges 7:2-3

Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. Let's find out why from the book of Judges. Have the student bring up the Bible and open it to the sticky note. Read Judges 7:2-3.

- Why did God want to make Gideon's army smaller? What would the people of Israel say if they won the battle now? My own hand has what? Saved me.

Yes. They would boast that they saved themselves without God's help. God did not want them to think they were the heroes and didn't need to trust in him. God wanted the credit for the victory.

- What did God tell Gideon to proclaim to the people? Whoever was fearful and trembling could do what? Go home.

Take away about two-thirds of the objects from the Israelites' side. So, a bunch of men left and went back home. Oh no! Now Gideon's army was even smaller. Yikes! There were only 10,000 men left to fight against 135,000.

Judges 7:4

So, were they ready to go to battle now? Let's find out in Judges 7:4. Read the verse.

- What did God say to Gideon about the army? The people are still too many.

What?! God said the army was still too large, and he was going to make it even smaller! God told Gideon to take his army down to the water where God would test them by how they drank their water. Those who drank from their hands and lapped the water up like a dog were chosen to go with Gideon into battle. The rest had to go home.

Remove half of the objects left on the Israelites' side. Now there were only 300 men left! But God still said he would help them win and give them victory over the Midianites. With such a small army, the Israelites would know the victory wasn't because of anything they did. They would know the victory would be all because of God!

God Gives the Victory

Refer to the objects. So, what will happen in this battle? How can 300 Israelites win against

135,000 Midianites? Gideon gathered his 300 men and told them the plan.

Judges 7:16

Gideon divided his men into three groups. Listen to Judges 7:16 to find out what he gave his army to use for the battle. Read the verse.

- What three things did Gideon give his men for the battle? Trumpets, empty jars, and torches.

Refer to the Flip Chart. Those seem like strange things to take to a battle! But the men took the trumpets and hid their torches inside the jars (so the light from the fire couldn't be seen) and followed Gideon.

Divide the Israelites' objects into three groups and move them out around the Midianites' objects. In the dark of night, Gideon and his men spread out around the enemy camp. When they were all in place, Gideon blew his trumpet and smashed the jar holding his torch, letting the light shine brightly into the night. That was the signal, and everyone else smashed their jars and blew their trumpets! Suddenly, the Midianites were surrounded by torches and the loud sound of trumpets. Then they heard the Israelites give a great shout, "For the Lord and for Gideon!"

The Midianites cried out, "We're surrounded! Let's get out of here!" And they started to run. But God made them panic, and they began fighting and killing each other. When they tried to get away from there, Gideon and his men chased them. Soon the Midianites were defeated!

What a battle! God wanted the glory for this victory, and he would get it! No one could say that 300 men with trumpets, jars, and torches could beat such a huge army on their own. This was a great miracle showing God's power to save his people.

It's true that Gideon was hiding from the Midianites when God came and told him to lead; he was afraid at first. But Gideon and his men were obedient to follow God's instructions, even when they didn't seem to make any sense. And God was faithful to protect them and help them win just as he said he would, even when they were outnumbered. After this battle, Gideon became a brave and mighty man and led Israel as a judge for 40 years!

God Won the Battle for Gideon





K-1st Lesson

Introduction

We're going to talk about strength in today's lesson, so let's start with a strength-testing competition! I need two volunteers to start. Choose two students to come up front. If you have a large class, you may choose more volunteers. If there's time, you may want to do several rounds.

Okay! I'm going to give each of you a book to hold. Then I'll add another book. I'll keep adding books until you say, "No more!" Ready? Have volunteers hold out their hands in front of them. Start stacking one book at a time onto each student's hands until they cannot hold any more.

- Great job! How many books did you each hold? Count how many books each volunteer was able to hold before they said, "No more!"

We tested your strength today because we're going to talk about someone in the Bible who was given supernatural strength from God. But first, let's see what we remember from the last lesson.

Refer to the Exodus to Malachi Timeline. So far in the book of Judges, we've seen how God sent enemies against the Israelites to punish them for worshipping false gods. But whenever they cried out to God for help, he would choose a judge to rescue them.

- Refer to Lesson 71 Flip Chart. Who did God choose to lead the fight against the Midianites? What was his name? *Gideon*.

Gideon started out with a pretty big army, but God made it smaller and smaller because he didn't want the people to think they won by themselves. One night, Gideon and his men surrounded the Midianite camp. They smashed their jars, raised their torches, and blew their trumpets. With God's help, the

Midianites were defeated! This was a victory that could only happen through God's power!

Samson's Strength

Today's lesson starts at a time when the Israelites had forgotten God again and were worshipping false gods and idols. Once again, God sent enemies to rule over the Israelites to punish them for their sin. The Israelites were miserable—who would rescue them from the evil Philistines?

One day the angel of the Lord appeared to the wife of a man named Manoah and promised that God would give her a son. This was exciting news since she didn't have any children! God told her that her son would help save Israel from the Philistines. Since God would set him apart for this special purpose, there were certain rules her son should follow: he should never drink wine and should never cut his hair. Soon, Manoah and his wife had a son, and they named him Samson.

God blessed Samson with great strength as he grew into a man. One day when Samson was traveling along a road, something jumped out of the bushes to attack him!

Judges 14:5-6

- Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. Let's look in the book of Judges to find out what Samson did. Who has the Bible? Have the student bring up the Bible and open it to the sticky note. Read Judges 14:5-6 starting halfway through verse 5 with "And behold, a young lion came toward him roaring."

- Refer to the Lesson Flip Chart. What attacked Samson on the road? *A young lion.*

- And what did Samson do to the lion? *Tore it to pieces with his bare hands.*

Wow! This is amazing! Samson had no weapon or anything to fight the lion with except his bare hands.

- What gave Samson the power to defeat the lion? What rushed upon him? *The Spirit of the Lord.*

God sent his Spirit to give Samson the strength to save himself from this dangerous lion.

Samson's Downfall

Refer to the Lesson Flip Chart. God chose Samson to be a judge who would help Israel by fighting against the Philistines with the great strength God gave him. But Samson had a weakness; he fell in love with an ungodly woman named Delilah. Instead of choosing a woman who worshipped the one true God, Samson

wanted to be with Delilah, who worshipped false gods.

When the Philistines found out Samson loved Delilah, they came to her and said, "We will pay you lots of money if you find out the secret of Samson's strength."

- What was the secret of Samson's strength? Who made him strong? *God.*

Delilah liked the idea of getting lots of money. She asked Samson to tell her where his strength came from. Samson said, "If someone tied fresh bowstrings (cords) around me, I would become weak."

So Delilah tied bowstrings around Samson. Then she shouted, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!"

- How many of you think Samson got caught? *Show of hands.*

Well, Samson got up and snapped those bowstrings right off. That wasn't the secret of his strength.

Delilah asked two more times for Samson's secret, and each time Samson lied. Delilah was getting upset. She wanted the money that was promised to her. "Samson," she whined, "how can you say you love me, and then lie to me about the secret of your strength. Please tell me the truth."

Delilah pestered Samson day after day to tell her his secret. Finally, one day Samson gave in and said, "Because I am set apart to God, I have never cut my hair. But if my head were shaved, my strength would leave me."

This time, Delilah knew Samson was telling her the truth. She quickly called for the Philistines saying, "Hurry, bring my money. He's told me the secret of his strength. I know it will work this time."

Judges 16:19-20

Uh-oh! Is this going to get Samson into trouble? Let's find out what happened next. Listen as I read Judges 16:19-20. Read the verses.

- While Samson was sleeping, Delilah called a man to come in. What did that man do? *Shaved Samson's head.*

- After Samson's hair was cut, Delilah woke him up. What was Samson thinking he would do this time? *He thought he'd break free as he'd done before.*

- Did Samson know that God wasn't with him when the Philistines attacked this time? *No.*

Samson was given power from God to fight the Philistines, so his strength didn't come from his

long hair. But, God had set Samson apart for a special purpose, and Samson's long hair was a sign of his special relationship with God. Samson let Delilah become more important to him than loving and obeying God, so God left him.

Samson's Last Feat

The Philistines captured Samson. They blinded his eyes and bound him in chains, and he was taken to prison. It sure seemed like it was all over for Samson. Now he was blind and suffering in prison. How could he help rescue the Israelites now?

Well, as we've seen many times before, God was still in control because he is sovereign—and he wasn't done with Samson yet. There came a time when many Philistines gathered at a feast to worship their false god. They called for Samson to come up from the prison so they could make fun of him. Because Samson was blind now, he asked the boy who guided him to lead him between the two tall pillars that held up the building they were in.

- What do you think Samson was going to do with those pillars? Any guesses? *Allow guesses.*

Judges 16:28-30

Let's find out. Listen to Judges 16:28-30. Read the verses.

- What did Samson pray for? *He prayed for God to remember him and give him strength one more time.*

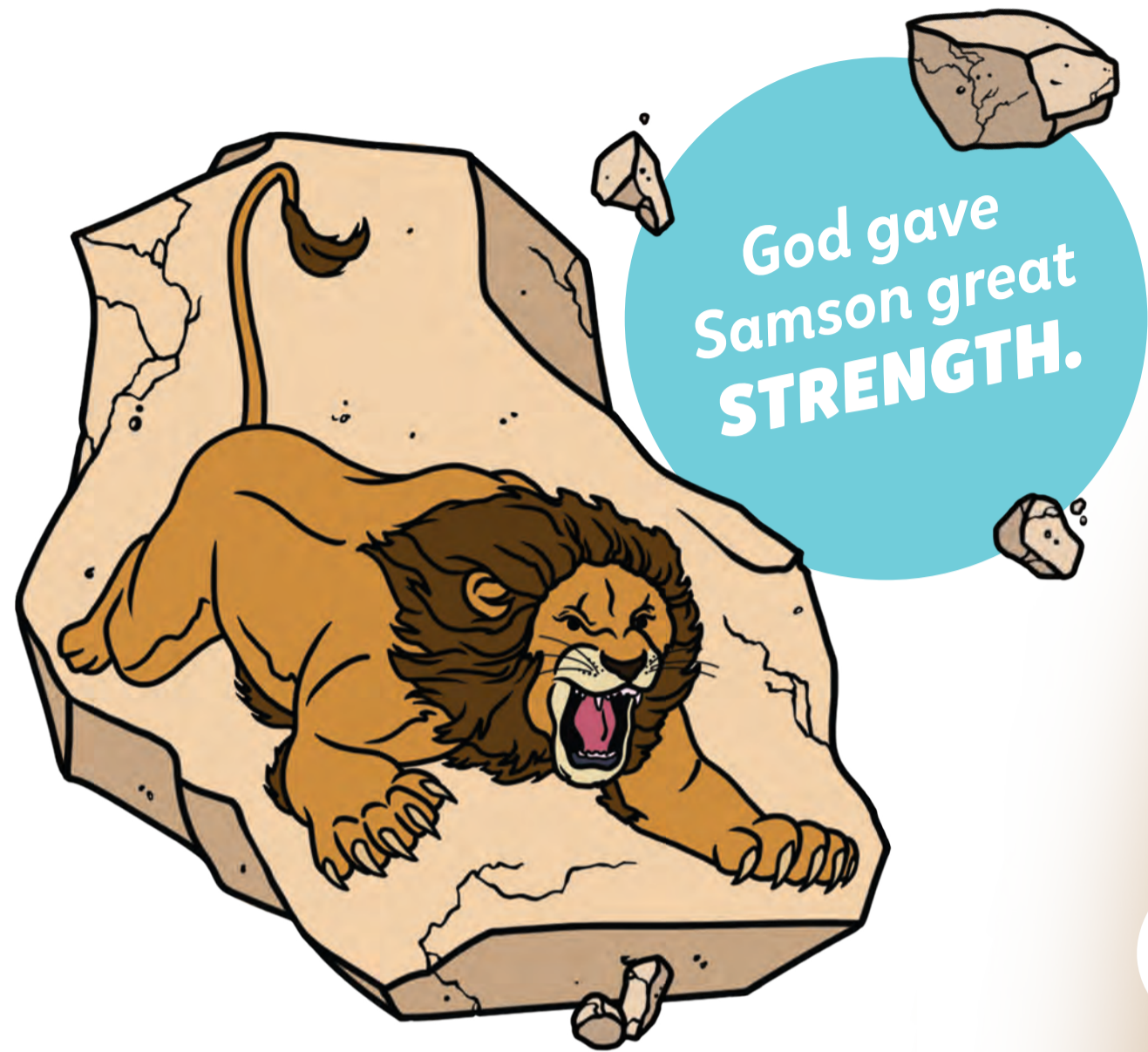
Samson cried out to God for help and strength. And God answered!

- What did Samson do with the last bit of strength God gave him? *He pushed the two middle pillars supporting the house.*

- What happened to the house they were in? *It collapsed, killing Samson along with all the Philistines.*

Refer to the Flip Chart. God helped Samson fight against the wicked Philistines one last time. He gave Samson the strength to knock down two enormous pillars and make the whole building fall down. Thousands of Philistines died there that day, and so did Samson.

Samson's life was different from other judges because God gave him special strength to fight the evil Philistines alone—the other Israelites didn't join him to fight. But Samson sinned by letting Delilah become more important to him than loving and obeying God. However, when Samson knew he was wrong and cried out to God, God heard his prayer and answered him one last time.



God gave
Samson great
STRENGTH.



Samson told
DELILAH
his secret.

Lord, give me
STRENGTH!





K-1st Lesson

Introduction

Refer to the Lesson 72 Flip Chart. Last time we learned about a man named Samson, who was set apart by God to help rescue the Israelites from the Philistines. God gave Samson great strength. He was able to do many mighty things. But he sinned by letting a woman named Delilah become more important to him than God.

When Samson told Delilah the secret of his strength, she had someone shave Samson's hair off. Then God took Samson's strength away. Samson was captured, blinded, and put in prison.

Later when Samson was brought before a large crowd of Philistines, he prayed for strength one more time. God answered his prayer, and Samson pushed down the pillars that held up the building they were in, killing thousands of Philistines!

Refer to the Exodus to Malachi Timeline. Today we're going to look at a book of the Bible called Ruth. The family we're going to read about lived during the same time as the judges. NOTE: According to the timeline, the lessons may seem out of order. We chose to cover Gideon and Samson first since they are both in the book of Judges. Ruth and Samuel were contemporaries but are found in different books.

We'll start today's lesson with a few words you'll need to know.

- When a woman marries a man, what does she call her husband's mother? *Mother-in-law.*

Show Family Picture #1. A mother-in-law is the mother of someone's husband or wife.

- And what does the husband's mother call the wife of her son? *Daughter-in-law.*

Show Family Picture #2. The wife is now a daughter because she has married into the family.

- Last question: what is the word used for a woman whose husband has died? *Widow.*

Show Family Picture #3. A widow is a woman whose husband has died.

So, you've probably guessed that we're going to talk about a widow and a daughter-in-law today.

Ruth Stays with Naomi

This true account begins when there was a famine in Israel. Remember, a famine is when there's not enough food for everyone. A man named Elimelech moved his family to the country of Moab where there was more food. Elimelech lived in Moab with his wife, Naomi, and two sons, Mahlon and Chilion. Life seemed to go pretty well for them in Moab—they had food and a place to live.

Refer to the Family Picture #3. But things started going bad when Elimelech died, leaving Naomi to live as a widow.

Refer to Family Picture #1. Later, Naomi's sons got married. Chilion married Orpah, and Mahlon married Ruth.

Refer to Family Picture #2. Then some years later, both of Naomi's sons died. Now Naomi was left alone with her two daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth.

Refer to Family Picture #3. This was a sad and scary time for these three women. They were all widows now. It would be very difficult to survive without their husbands. In those days, women couldn't go out and get a job to earn money for food and clothes like they can now.

- How many of you have moms that go out to a job every day? *Show of hands.*

It's much easier now for women to get jobs, but it was very hard for Naomi and Ruth and Orpah.

One day, Naomi heard that the famine in Israel was over. So she decided to move back to her hometown of Bethlehem. She told Ruth and Orpah to go back to their families where they would be cared for. Orpah decided to go back to her own mother, but Ruth loved Naomi so much that she did not want to leave her alone.

Ruth 1:16–17

Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. We're going to find out what Ruth did. We'll look in the book of

Ruth in the Bible. *Have the student bring up the Bible and open it to the sticky note. Read the verses.*

- Where did Ruth say she would go? *Wherever Naomi went.*

Ruth promised to go with Naomi. Ruth also loved the one true God—the same God Naomi worshipped.

- How long did Ruth say she would stay with her mother-in-law? *Until they died.*

Refer to the Lesson Flip Chart. Together they traveled back to Bethlehem. But these two women were in big trouble! They were poor and hungry and had no money. Ruth decided to go and pick up grain that was left after the workers finished in the fields. Back then, that was how poor people could get food; the field workers were supposed to leave some grain so that poor people could collect it.

- How many of you believe God was in control and had a plan to help them? *Show of hands.*

Refer to the Flip Chart. Just as God planned it, Ruth ended up working in the field owned by a man named Boaz. He noticed Ruth picking up grain and told his servants to leave more grain for her so she would have plenty. Then Boaz spoke to Ruth and told her, "Don't go to anyone else's fields. Stay here in my fields to collect food so my workers can protect you and share their water with you."

Ruth was surprised and asked, "Why would someone like you show me such kindness, especially since I'm from a different country?"

"Well," Boaz replied, "because I have heard about all that you've done to help Naomi." Then he prayed a blessing on Ruth, asking the Lord to protect her and reward her.

Hey! Things are looking up, aren't they? Do you see how God sovereignly brought Boaz and Ruth together?

- Who remembers what sovereign means? *God is in complete control of everything.*

Boaz Redeems Ruth and Naomi

It turned out that Boaz was a relative of Naomi's husband. Back in those days when a man died, the closest relative was supposed to make sure the widow was cared for. This relative was called a redeemer. Say that with me: redeemer.

A redeemer is someone who buys something back or saves someone from distress. Naomi and Ruth were in distress, which means big trouble. They were widows, so they had no husbands to protect them or provide for them! They needed help. But they had no way of paying anyone to help them.

Since Boaz was a close relative, he knew he could do something to help them. First, Boaz redeemed the land that had belonged to Naomi's husband. She couldn't take care of it herself, so he bought it to help provide for Naomi.

Ruth 4:13–14

But what about Ruth? Let's find out what happened to her. Listen carefully as I read Ruth 4:13–14. *Read the verses.*

- Refer to the Lesson Flip Chart. What did Ruth become? *Boaz's wife.*

- Right. Ruth and Boaz got married, and God soon blessed them by giving them a child. Was it a boy or a girl? *A boy.*

- The women of Bethlehem praised the Lord and said Naomi was not left without a what? *A redeemer.*

- Who was Naomi and Ruth's redeemer? *Boaz.*

Naomi was no longer afraid and alone. She had her daughter-in-law, Ruth, her relative Boaz—and she would be the baby's grandmother!

Jesus Redeems Sinners

We learned that Boaz was a redeemer. He bought Naomi's land and provided for her and Ruth. This was the custom in those days. The closest relative would rescue, or redeem, his family members from distress and trouble even though they had nothing to offer him to pay him back for his help.

Refer to the Lesson Flip Chart. Did you know that Boaz is like a picture of Jesus? Jesus is a redeemer, too! He redeems sinners! We are all sinners and deserve to be punished. We have nothing to offer Jesus. But Jesus bought us back from sin. He paid the price when he died on the cross. He took the punishment for sin that we deserve and promises eternal life in heaven to all who trust in him. Isn't that wonderful news? Jesus is our Redeemer!

1

Naomi and Ruth were in trouble.



2

Ruth got food from Boaz's fields.

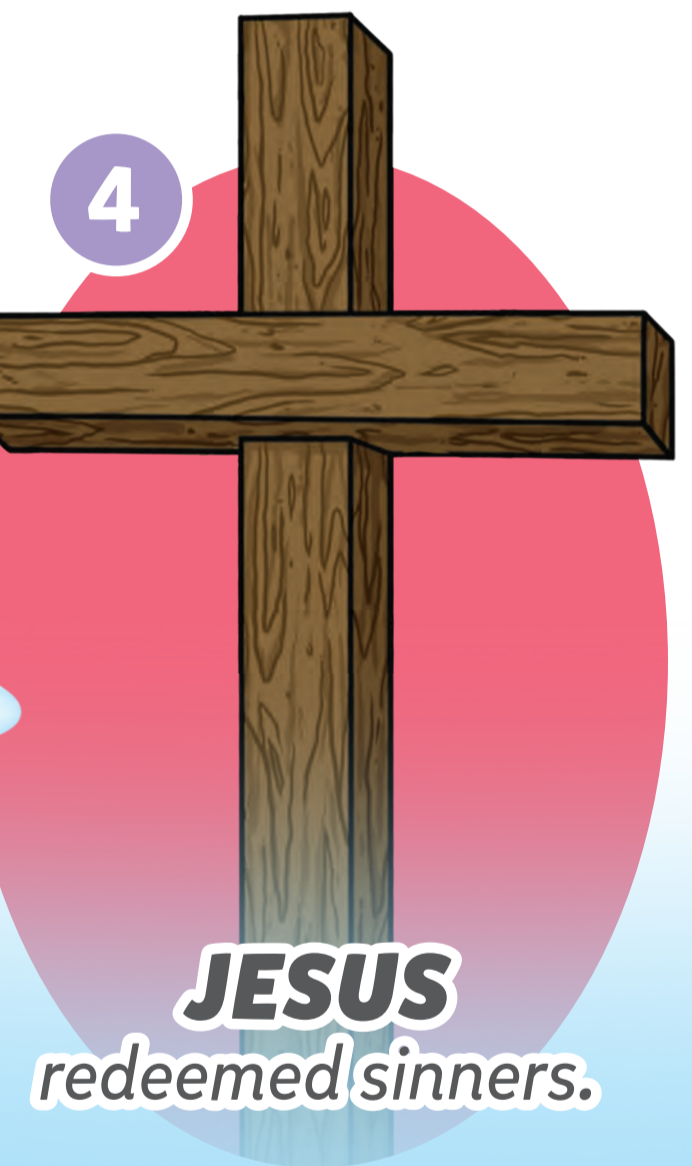


3

Boaz redeemed Ruth and Naomi.



4



JESUS
redeemed sinners.



K-1st Lesson

Introduction

Okay! Let's start with a quick review of what we've been learning.

Refer to Lesson 73 Flip Chart. In our last lesson, we learned about Ruth, who lived during the time of the judges. Ruth and her mother-in-law, Naomi, were in trouble because they had no husbands to care for them. They were poor and needed food. But God is sovereign; he's in control of everything. God arranged for Ruth to work in Boaz's field. Boaz was their redeemer. He was able to buy Naomi's land, marry Ruth, and take care of both women.

In our lesson today, we'll hear about a young man who heard someone calling his name. But it turned out not to be who he thought it was. We're going to play a quick game to get us started. I need a volunteer. Who thinks they can guess who is calling their name without seeing who it is? Choose a volunteer to come to the front. Put a blindfold on him and have him sit in a chair facing the wall.

Now I will point to someone, and all you have to do is say (volunteer's) name three times, but

don't say anything else. We all have to be very quiet so he can figure out who is calling him. Ready? Point to a student to call out the name of the blindfolded volunteer three times. Remove the blindfold and ask the volunteer to guess who it was. Then reveal the person who did the calling.

It can be hard to tell who is speaking when we can't see them. Let's find out what the young man in our lesson did when he heard someone calling his name in the middle of the night.

Samuel's Birth

Refer to the Exodus to Malachi Timeline. Our lesson begins near the end of the time of the judges, about 300 years after God helped Joshua and the Israelites get the promised land.

- Refer to Lessons 71 and 72 Flip Charts. We talked about two of the judges already who helped fight enemies. Do you remember who they were? Gideon and Samson.

Right. The judge who was leading Israel at this time was a priest named Eli. He served in the tabernacle of the Lord in a town called Shiloh. This was the place where people came to worship the God of Israel. They came to offer sacrifices to God and to celebrate feasts every year.

At one of these feasts, Eli, the priest, saw a woman who was praying. Her name was Hannah. She was deeply troubled and sad because she had no children and wanted a son very badly. She cried and promised the Lord that if he gave her a son, she would give him back to God to be his servant. God answered Hannah's prayer and gave her a son. Hannah named him Samuel.

When Samuel was still a young boy, Hannah kept her promise to give her son back to the Lord. She brought Samuel to the tabernacle and left him with Eli so he could stay and serve God as Eli's helper.

It must have been hard for Hannah to give up her son like that. But she visited every year and brought him new clothes, and God also blessed Hannah with other sons and daughters.

Eli, the priest, was glad to have Samuel there because he was a great help. But Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were not helpful at all; they were wicked men. As priests, they were supposed to love and serve God, but they were greedy and selfish. They stole offerings that were supposed to be for God! God was not pleased with Hophni and Phinehas, and neither was their father, Eli.

Eli knew his sons were doing evil things and leading the people into sin. Eli tried to tell them to stop sinning, or God would have to punish them. But Hophni and Phinehas would not listen to their father's warning.

Samuel, however, was obedient. God knew he would make Samuel a judge, a priest, and a prophet someday. Let's see how it all began.

Samuel's Calling

God first spoke to Samuel when he was a young man, probably a young teenager. He was still living with Eli and serving in the tabernacle. Let's find out how the Lord got his attention.

- Who has the Bible? Will you please bring it up? Have the student bring up the Bible and open it to the sticky note.

Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. We will be acting out what happened in 1 Samuel chapter 3. I need two volunteers for a skit. Choose students to be Eli and Samuel. Set up the scene as directed.

God Calls Samuel Skit (Based on 1 Samuel 3:1-18)

As you read the skit, have an assistant direct the students as they repeat their lines and act out their roles. When finished with the skit, continue the lesson.

God's Judgment

So, Samuel received his first message from the Lord, and Eli believed it. But how would this punishment, or judgment, come on Israel and Eli's family?

The Bible tells us the Israelites were fighting against the Philistines. The Israelites asked Eli's sons to take the ark of the covenant into battle. They wanted to use it like a good luck charm, hoping it would help them win. But that wasn't God's plan. The Israelites lost the battle—30,000 soldiers died, Hophni and Phineas were killed, and the Philistines stole the ark of the covenant.

God judged the people of Israel for their sin, letting them lose against the Philistines. God also judged Eli's sons, who were doing wicked things and leading the people into sin. After the battle, Eli heard that his sons had been killed and the ark was captured. He was so shocked at the news that he fell over and died!

God's message to Samuel happened like he said it would. People now knew that Samuel was God's new prophet. Samuel was chosen by God to be not only a prophet, but also a priest and the last judge of Israel. He was the only man to be all three—prophet, priest, and judge.



1

God gave
Hannah
a son.



2

Hannah gave
Samuel back
to God.



3

Speak, Lord,
for your servant
hears.



K-1st Lesson

Introduction

Refer to Lesson 74 Flip Chart. In our last lesson, we were introduced to Samuel, who went to live at the tabernacle when he was a young boy.

- ? What was the name of the priest Samuel helped at the tabernacle? *Eli.*

Yes, it was Eli's job to lead the Israelites in worshipping the Lord. But Eli's two sons did wicked things.

- ? What was Samuel doing when God first spoke to him? *Sleeping.*
- ? What did Samuel do three times when he heard God call his name? *Ran to Eli's room, thinking it was Eli calling him.*

After the third time, Eli figured out it was God calling Samuel, and he told Samuel what to say if he heard his name again. God gave Samuel a serious message to tell Eli. He said Israel and Eli's family would be judged for their sin. Everything happened just as God said.

Samuel continued to listen to God as he grew up. He became a prophet, a priest, and a judge, and God helped him in all he did.

In today's lesson, we'll be talking about making good choices and bad choices. But first, we're going to practice making choices. I'm going to show you some pictures, and you have to tell me which choice you would make and why you'd choose it. *Show each Choice Picture one at a time and read it aloud. Call on students to decide which choice they would make and discuss why it would be a good choice or not.*

We may make a lot of good choices, but one or two bad ones can ruin everything. Bad

choices come with consequences. That's when something bad happens because of a poor choice we made. Today, we're going to look at how an important person made some choices that had terrible consequences.

Israel Chooses a King

Samuel was leading Israel as a judge. But when he got older, the Israelites decided they didn't want any more judges to lead them after Samuel. They came to him and said, "We want a king so we can be like all the other nations!"

They didn't want God to be king over them anymore. They wanted a man to be their king instead of God. This idea displeased Samuel, so he prayed, and God told him to do what the people wanted.

- ? Were the Israelites making a good choice when they asked for a king instead of God? *Allow discussion.*

The Israelites' choice was not good. They were being impatient and unwise, wanting to do things their own way instead of trusting God. And their choice would have consequences.

Samuel warned the people that their kings would make them pay taxes and take the best land, animals, and servants for themselves. But the Israelites wouldn't listen to Samuel's warning; they still wanted a human king to rule them and lead them into battle. They thought since everyone else in the countries around them had kings, why shouldn't they have a king, too?

But God was still in control, and he chose a tall man named Saul from the tribe of Benjamin to be Israel's first king.

Saul Offers a Sacrifice

Saul was given a big responsibility when he was made king. Things started out pretty well. Samuel helped Saul and prayed for him to follow God and make good choices. God sent his Spirit to help Saul and gave him victory over his enemies. But Saul soon began to make unwise choices that were not pleasing to God.

Remember the Philistines? They hated the Israelites and had fought against them for years. This time they gathered against Saul

and the Israelites with a huge army of 30,000 chariots and 6,000 men on horses and so many soldiers—it was like trying to count sand on the seashore! Have you ever been to a sandy beach? There's A LOT of sand there.

The Israelites were terrified of the Philistine army! They were hiding wherever they could—in caves, in holes, behind rocks! The men who stayed with Saul were so scared, they were shaking and trembling.

What would Saul do? He was the king, the commander of his army. How could he fight the enemy when his men were running away to hide?

1 Samuel 13:8–10

Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. We'll look in 1 Samuel chapter 13 to see what Saul did. *Have the student bring up the Bible and open it to the sticky note. Read the verses.*

- ? King Saul knew they were in trouble. But he was waiting for someone to come meet him. Who was it? *Samuel.*
- ? How long did Saul wait? *Seven days.*
- ? Refer to the Lesson Flip Chart. What did King Saul do when he saw that his men were scattering from him? *He offered the burnt offering.*
- ? Who came right after Saul made the offering? *Samuel.*

Saul wanted to offer a sacrifice to God so he would bless and protect him and the men going to battle. But only a priest like Samuel was supposed to offer sacrifices. Saul should have waited for Samuel to do it. Instead, he got impatient and did it himself and disobeyed God's commands.

- ? Did Saul make a good choice or a bad choice? *A bad choice.*

Saul Disobeys God's Command

Let's look at another choice Saul made. We'll read from 1 Samuel 15 when Saul was headed for another battle. This time, the Israelites were attacking the Amalekites. Samuel told Saul that God wanted them to completely destroy the Amalekites. He wanted everyone

and everything gone! So, Saul gathered the Israelites and led the attack.

1 Samuel 15:7–9

Listen carefully so you can tell me what Saul did. *Read the verses.*

Saul attacked the Amalekites as God told him to. That was a good choice.

- ? Refer to the Flip Chart. But did Saul obey completely? Who did Saul keep alive? *Agag, the king of the enemy Amalekites.*
- ? Did Saul obey God's command to destroy everyone? *No.*
- ? What else did the people keep alive? *The best of the animals (sheep, oxen, calves, lambs, and all that was good).*

Saul and the Israelites destroyed everything THEY thought was worthless, but they kept everything THEY thought was good.

Uh-oh! Saul made another bad choice, didn't he? He disobeyed God's command to completely destroy the Amalekites and everything they owned. Instead of trusting and obeying the Lord, Saul trusted himself and what he thought was right.

When Samuel asked Saul why he disobeyed, Saul tried to make his bad choice sound better by saying that he planned to use the animals as offerings to God. But that wasn't what God had said to do. Samuel told Saul that it's better to obey completely than to do things your own way—even when we think our way is a really great idea.

Saul's bad choices had consequences. Now God would take the kingdom away from Saul and choose someone else to be king. Not only that, but Saul would never see Samuel again, so he'd be losing a great friend. But even worse—Saul lost the Spirit of the Lord, which had been working in his life helping him do great things! All these gifts were taken from Saul, and he was left with a harmful spirit that troubled him.

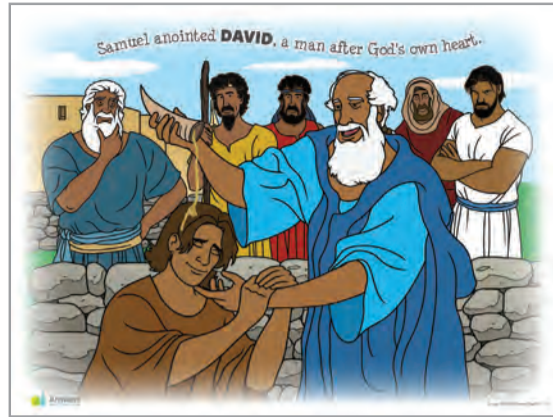
Wow! Did you know how important obedience is to God? God would rather we obey him than try to please him our own way. God wanted Saul to obey completely, and he expects the same from us.

Saul did **NOT**
wait for Samuel.



Saul kept the king and
the animals alive.





K-1st Lesson

Introduction

Refer to the Exodus to Malachi Timeline. Let's review where we are in our timeline. Samuel was God's prophet, a priest, and a judge. But the Israelites didn't want to be ruled by judges or by God anymore. They wanted a human king.

- ? What was the name of the first king God chose? *Saul.*

Refer to Lesson 75 Flip Chart. Yes, God chose Saul to be Israel's first king. But Saul's heart was not right, and he disobeyed God. He offered a sacrifice that only Samuel was supposed to do. Then when God said to completely destroy their enemies, the Amalekites, Saul kept the king and the best animals alive.

Saul made some bad choices and disobeyed God. Now there would be consequences for his sin. Saul lost the kingdom and his friendship with Samuel. Then the Spirit of the Lord left Saul, and a harmful spirit was sent to trouble him.

God told Saul that his kingdom would be taken away. But who would take Saul's place as king? Today, we'll find out who God chose to be the next king of Israel. Before we do that, I need a volunteer to help me. *Choose a volunteer.*

Bake and frost two heart-shaped cookies before class. Add extra salt to the frosting on one cookie (either mixed into frosting or sprinkled on top) and decorate it to look nicer than the other cookie. Make the other cookie with the unsalted frosting look messy with no decorations.

I have two cookies here for you to sample. *Show class the two cookies.*

- ? Which cookie looks yummier? *The nicely decorated cookie.*

Take a bite of this cookie. *Have volunteer take a bite of nicely decorated (but salty!) cookie.*

- ? How did it taste? *Allow volunteer to describe the taste.*

Now, take a bite of this cookie. *Have volunteer sample the poorly decorated (but tasty!) cookie.*

- ? How did this one taste? Better than the other one? *Allow answer.*

Refer to the cookies. One cookie looked really nice on the outside; its frosting and decorations were perfect. But it didn't taste good! It was too salty. But the other cookie that didn't look as good tasted better! *Have volunteer return to his seat.*

- ? What do you think I wanted you to learn from the two cookies? How do we usually decide whether something is good or bad? What do we look at? *Allow discussion. How it looks on the outside.*

We look at the outward appearance. We look at food, toys, books, and other things and decide if they are yummy or gross, good or bad, pretty or ugly, exciting or boring. Sometimes we are right, but many times, what we think about something just by looking at it is wrong.

You know, we also do this with people. We may not want to be near a person who looks poor or dirty, but we might try to be near people who seem really smart or dress in fancy clothes.

In our lesson today, we'll see that God's prophet, Samuel, did the same thing! He looked at the outward appearance of a man and thought he would be a good king because he looked good on the outside. But God had to remind Samuel that he looks at what a person is like on the inside—the heart.

Samuel Chooses Eliab

Samuel was sad that King Saul was not following and trusting God anymore. But the Lord told Samuel to quit feeling sorry about Saul and go see a man named Jesse who lived in Bethlehem. Jesse had eight sons, and God had chosen one of them to be the next king.

Refer to Lesson 73 Flip Chart. Remember Ruth from a few lessons ago? She left her country

and family to go to Bethlehem with her mother-in-law, Naomi.

- ? Who did Ruth end up marrying? *Boaz.*

Right! Ruth and Boaz had a son named Obed, and Obed's son was Jesse. So, Jesse was Ruth and Boaz's grandson! And that's who Samuel was going to see.

When Samuel arrived in Bethlehem, he invited Jesse and his sons to join him for a sacrifice. When Jesse and his sons got there, Samuel wondered which one of these fine-looking young men would be the next king.

- ? Refer to the Lesson Flip Chart. Eliab was the oldest son. How many of you think Eliab would be the king? *Show of hands.*

1 Samuel 16:7

- ? Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. Let's find out if you're right. Who has the Bible? We'll read from 1 Samuel again today. *Have the student bring up the Bible and open it to the sticky note. Read the verse.*

Samuel saw right away that Eliab was tall and strong. "This must be the one!" Samuel thought.

- ? But was Eliab the one God had chosen to be king? What did God mean when he said, "I have rejected him"? *God did not choose Eliab.*
- ? The Lord explained to Samuel that he did not see people the same way a man would. What did God say man looks at? *Outward appearance.*
- ? That's right! Samuel could only see what Eliab looked like on the outside. But what does the Lord look at? *The heart.*

God looked deeper than the outward appearance of Eliab. He didn't care about what Eliab looked like on the outside. He looked into Eliab's heart to see if he loved the Lord and wanted to obey him. But God said Eliab would not be the next king.

God Chooses David

One by one, Jesse's sons walked by Samuel. "Oh, maybe it's this one," Samuel thought as each son passed before him. But God said, "No" to all seven of them! Hmm. Samuel knew he was in the right place, but so far, God had not told him to anoint any of these men as the new king.

1 Samuel 16:11-12

So now what? Let's keep reading and find out who God chose! *Read 1 Samuel 16:11-12.*

- ? What did Samuel ask Jesse? *Are all your sons here?*
- ? Which of Jesse's sons had not come? *The youngest son.*
- ? What was the youngest son doing? *Keeping the sheep.*
- ? What did Samuel tell Jesse to do? *Send someone to get him.*
- ? What did this son look like? *Ruddy, beautiful eyes, and handsome.*

Ruddy means healthy-looking, kind of like when your cheeks are rosy after you've been outside on a chilly day.

- ? Was this son the one God chose to be the next king? *Yes!*

This young man's name was David. He was the youngest of Jesse's sons—probably only about 15 years old. He was the one God had chosen to be the next king.

Refer to the Flip Chart. Samuel poured oil on David's head to anoint him as the next king of Israel.

- ? Do you think David's family was surprised? *Yes.*
- His family probably was surprised that God chose David. Usually the oldest son was chosen to lead back then, but here God chose the youngest son to lead the whole nation of Israel as their king!
- ? Did God choose David because he was ruddy and handsome on the outside? *No!*

No, it didn't matter what David looked like on the outside. The Bible tells us that God wanted a king who was a man after God's own heart. The word "heart" here means the part of a person deep down inside that controls how he feels, what he thinks, what he wants, and the choices he makes. The man God chose as the next king would want the same things that God does. He had a heart that would try to do whatever God wanted. And God knew that man was David.

Samuel anointed **DAVID**, a man after God's own heart.





K-1st Lesson

Introduction

In our last lesson, God told the prophet Samuel to go to the town of Bethlehem and see a man named Jesse. This man had eight sons, and God had chosen one of them to be the next king of Israel.

- ? Samuel saw Eliab, the oldest son, first and thought he would be the king. Why did he think that? *Eliab was tall and strong.*
- ? Samuel was looking at the outward appearance. He thought Eliab looked good on the outside. But what did God say he looked at? *The inside, the heart.*

Seven of Jesse's sons walked by Samuel, but God said no to all of them. Finally, Jesse sent for his youngest son, and God told Samuel that he would be the new king.

- ? What was the name of this son? *David.*

Right! David had a heart after God's. He loved God and wanted the same things God wanted. So God chose David to be the next king of Israel.

David Serves the King

God let Saul be the king for a while longer, so David didn't become king right away. But his life began to change.

Refer to Lesson 75 Flip Chart. Do you remember how Saul sinned against God? His bad choices led to terrible consequences. God took the kingdom away from him. But even worse than that, God took his Spirit away from Saul and sent a harmful spirit that troubled him.

Saul's servants noticed that he was troubled, so they told him, "There is a young man who could come and play music for you to help you feel better. He is also brave and courageous, and the Lord is with him."

Show Illustration #1. In this picture, we see a person playing a lyre. It looks a lot like a small

harp. King Saul's servants said that the young man they were talking about knew how to play a lyre very well.

- ? Saul listened to his servants and sent for the young man. Any guesses who he was? *Allow guesses.*

1 Samuel 16:19

Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. Let's find out! 1 Samuel chapter 16 tells us who came to play the lyre for the king. Have the student bring up the Bible and open it to the sticky note. Read the verse.

It was David, Jesse's youngest son! Now David would work for King Saul, playing music for him. But he traveled back and forth from King Saul's house to his father's house so he could still watch the sheep for his father.

Taking care of the sheep was important. Although David was a young man, about 17 years old now, he could take good care of his father's flock. Whenever bears or lions tried to come and take a sheep or a lamb, God helped David fight them and win!

Show Illustration #2. One of the ways David protected the flock was by using a sling. He would put a stone in the sling and throw it at the animal that was trying to take one of his sheep. The stone would fly through the air—super fast—and strike the animal down!

Show Illustration #3. This kind of sling was different than the slingshot toys you might see today.

We don't have a sling like David's, but let's pretend this target on the wall is a lion, and we have to throw these beanbags at it to make it go away. Let's see how well we can hit the target. Tape the Target Sheets together and attach the finished poster to the wall. Choose several volunteers or the whole class to line up a few feet from the target. Allow each student to throw one beanbag at the target. Keep track of whose beanbag comes the closest to the bullseye in the middle.

You all did a great job! Let's go back to our lesson now and find out how David used his sling later when the enemy came to fight.

David Fights the Giant

It wasn't long before a battle broke out between Israel and their enemies, the evil Philistines. King Saul led the army of Israel and camped on a hill. And right across the valley on another hill was the Philistine army.

Three of David's older brothers joined King Saul's army and went to battle. So David's father sent him to the camp to take food and supplies and see how his brothers were doing. While David was there, he heard someone shouting. David went out to see who it was.

1 Samuel 17:4, 17:24

Let's find out who David saw in 1 Samuel chapter 17. Read verses 4 and 24.

- ? Who was shouting? What was his name? *1 Samuel 17:4. Goliath of Gath.*

This guy was a giant! He was nearly 10 feet tall! That's taller than your dad. If Goliath came into our room, he would have to bend over just to get through the door!

- ? What did the Israelites think of Goliath? *1 Samuel 17:24. They were afraid and fled.*

That's right! The Israelites were afraid of Goliath. He was the champion of the Philistine army, and the Israelite soldiers all ran away from him.

Refer to the Lesson Flip Chart. Goliath was tall and strong and wore heavy armor from his head down to his legs! He carried a throwing spear, called a javelin, on his back—plus he had another huge spear and a sharp sword.

Goliath came out and shouted at the Israelite army, "I dare you to send someone out to fight me!" He wanted a one-on-one fight between himself and a brave Israelite soldier. The army of the loser would become the slaves of the army of the winner. Goliath was sure he would win.

By daring the Israelites to fight, Goliath was making fun of them and of God. Goliath wanted to see if the Israelites really believed that their God was more powerful than he was. But the Israelites were too scared to fight Goliath! He was so big and strong. Even his weapons were much bigger and better than theirs!

David heard Goliath and knew he was mocking God. David knew someone had to stop Goliath. It wasn't long before David stood in front of King Saul and said, "I will go and fight this Philistine."

At first Saul thought David was too young to fight someone like Goliath. But David told Saul how God always helped him protect his sheep from lions and bears. And he believed God would help him strike down the giant, too. Saul finally said David could go and gave him armor and weapons to take with him. But David wasn't used to those, so he decided to take something else.

- ? What do you think he took with him? *Allow guesses.*

1 Samuel 17:40

Let's read about what David took into battle with him. Read the verse.

- ? What weapons did David choose to take to fight Goliath? *Staff, five smooth stones, and his sling.*

Refer to the Flip Chart. Right! David took the weapons he always used as a shepherd. He knew how to use them very well. David walked bravely toward Goliath. He stopped and bent down at the stream and picked out five stones to use in his sling.

The giant man cursed and shouted at David when he saw him coming with just his shepherd's staff and sling. Compared to Goliath and his strong, shiny armor and weapons, David looked like he didn't have a chance!

But David knew who would win this fight. He was trusting God to win. "The battle is the Lord's," David shouted at Goliath, "and he will give you into our hand!"

- ? Who thinks Goliath the Philistine will win? *Show of hands.*
- ? Who thinks David will win? *Show of hands.*

1 Samuel 17:48-49

The battle had begun. Listen to this. Read the verses.

- ? Refer to the Flip Chart. Who won the fight? *David. Yes, David won! Hooray! Have students shout "hooray" with you.*
- ? How many stones did it take for David to knock down Goliath? *Just one.*

Refer to Illustration #3. Remember, David was very good with a sling. Back in Bible times, slings were important weapons, not just toys like we have today. A stone from a sling could fly at 60 miles per hour! That's fast—like a car driving on a freeway.

- ? Where did David's stone hit the giant? *In the forehead.*

A perfect shot! David was good with a sling, but he knew it was God who made the stone hit just right. When the Philistine army saw that their champion giant was dead, they all started to run away. King Saul led his army after them, and God helped them win the battle that day.

David
TRUSTED
GOD
to win the fight.





K-1st Lesson

Introduction

Refer to Lesson 77 Flip Chart. In our last lesson, war broke out between the Israelites and the Philistines.

- ? Who was the Philistine champion that dared the Israelites to send someone to fight him? *Goliath.*
- ? Who gave David courage to fight the giant Goliath? *God.*

David trusted that the battle was the Lord's, and God would help him win.

- ? How did David defeat Goliath? *He used his sling, and the stone hit Goliath in the forehead.*

All it took was one stone from David's sling, and the giant fell down. Then the Israelites chased the Philistines back to their cities.

In today's lesson, we'll be talking more about David and someone who became a great friend to him. The Bible has a lot to say about friendship and choosing friends. We're going to play a game of Friendly Four Corners to learn more about our friends in this class! Follow the instructions for the game then continue the lesson.

Jonathan and David's Friendship

Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. Let's find out about the friendship in today's lesson from 1 Samuel chapter 18. Have the student bring up the Bible and open it to the sticky note.

1 Samuel 18:3-4

Listen so you can find out who these two friends were. Read the verses.

- ? What was the name of David's new friend? *Jonathan.*

- ? Does anyone want to guess who Jonathan's father was? *Allow guesses.*

Jonathan was King Saul's son, the prince! And he was a brave warrior, like David.

- ? What do you think it means when it says that Jonathan loved David as his own soul? *Allow answers.*

Jonathan's love for David was not the romantic kind of love. This love was based on being loyal, trustworthy, and devoted like a best friend; they could count on each other.

- ? How many of you have a best friend that you can trust and count on? *Show of hands.*

- ? What did Jonathan give David? *His robe, armor, sword, bow, and belt.*

These gifts were very special. Jonathan was a prince of Israel. By giving his royal robe and weapons to David, he was showing that he knew David would be the next king instead of him. It seems that he understood that God chose David to be king, and he was okay with that. Wow! That's a great friend!

Saul's Jealousy

Things looked like they were going well for David. He was a hero for killing Goliath, he was best friends with Prince Jonathan, and he fought well in all the battles against the enemies. The women of Israel even sang songs about how great a hero David was! But, King Saul became angry and jealous! Uh-oh! That meant trouble.

1 Samuel 18:10-11

Let's read what happened next in 1 Samuel 18. Read the verses.

- ? Refer to the Lesson Flip Chart. What was wrong with King Saul? What rushed upon him? *A harmful spirit from God.*

- ? What was David doing? *Playing the lyre.*

- ? What did Saul have in his hand? *His spear.*

Normally, when David played the lyre (an instrument like a small harp), it would calm Saul when the harmful spirit troubled him. But on this day, Saul was too angry and jealous.

- ? What did Saul do with his spear? *He hurled it at David.*

Saul tried two times to kill David with the spear! But David dodged the spear and got away. Soon Saul became afraid when he realized that God was helping David and protecting him.

Saul decided to send David away. So he made David the commander over a thousand soldiers. The Lord helped David to do a great job, and the people loved David, which made Saul more jealous and fearful.

Finally, Saul had enough, so he figured out another plan to get rid of David. This time he commanded his servants and his son Jonathan to kill David.

Jonathan spoke to his father and reminded him that David had done nothing wrong and that Saul would be sinning if he killed David. It was probably hard for Jonathan to tell his father he was wrong. But he cared enough about his friend David to help by talking to his father. Saul listened to Jonathan and allowed David to come back to his house.

Refer to the Flip Chart. But it wasn't long before Saul threw his spear at David again! David dodged and ran, and the spear hit the wall. Then Saul sent messengers to get David so he could kill him. But David's wife helped him escape out a window.

Jonathan's Warning

Poor David feared for his life! He kept running from Saul, and finally met up with Jonathan again. Together they came up with a plan to find out for sure what Saul was up to. Instead of coming to a special meal, David would hide out in a field. Jonathan would go to the meal. If Saul didn't mind that David was gone, they would know he was safe. But if Saul became angry, they would know that he did want to kill David. This was a life-and-death situation. Both friends were worried about each other's safety.

- ? The first night that David missed the special dinner, Saul didn't say anything. Hmm. How many of you think David was safe now? *Show of hands.*

On the second night at dinner, Saul noticed that David still was not there. He got angry at Jonathan and said rude, mean things to him!

Guess what Saul did next—he grabbed his spear and threw it at Jonathan!

Wow! Saul had thrown a spear at least three times at David, and now he threw one at his own son! Jonathan left the table feeling angry and sad that his father was acting so terribly.

Refer to the Flip Chart. Remember that David was hiding in the field, waiting to hear from Jonathan. Because Saul's servants were all around, Jonathan had to warn David secretly. If he got caught talking to David, he would be in deep trouble. So he set up a special way to give David a message. In the morning, Jonathan went out to the field with a young boy. He took his bow and arrows so it would look like he was going to practice shooting.

1 Samuel 20:36-38

Let's see how Jonathan warned David. Read verse 36.

- ? What did Jonathan tell the boy to do? What was his job? *To run and find the arrows he shot.*

Refer to the Flip Chart. David and Jonathan had worked out two messages when Jonathan shot his arrows. One would be the signal that it was safe, and the other would be a warning. So, whatever Jonathan called out to the boy chasing arrows was actually a message for David!

Listen to the message Jonathan gave to David. Read verses 37-38.

- ? What did Jonathan say to the boy? *Is not the arrow beyond you? Hurry! Be quick! Do not stay!*
- ? What message do you think Jonathan was giving David: was he safe or in danger? *In danger.*

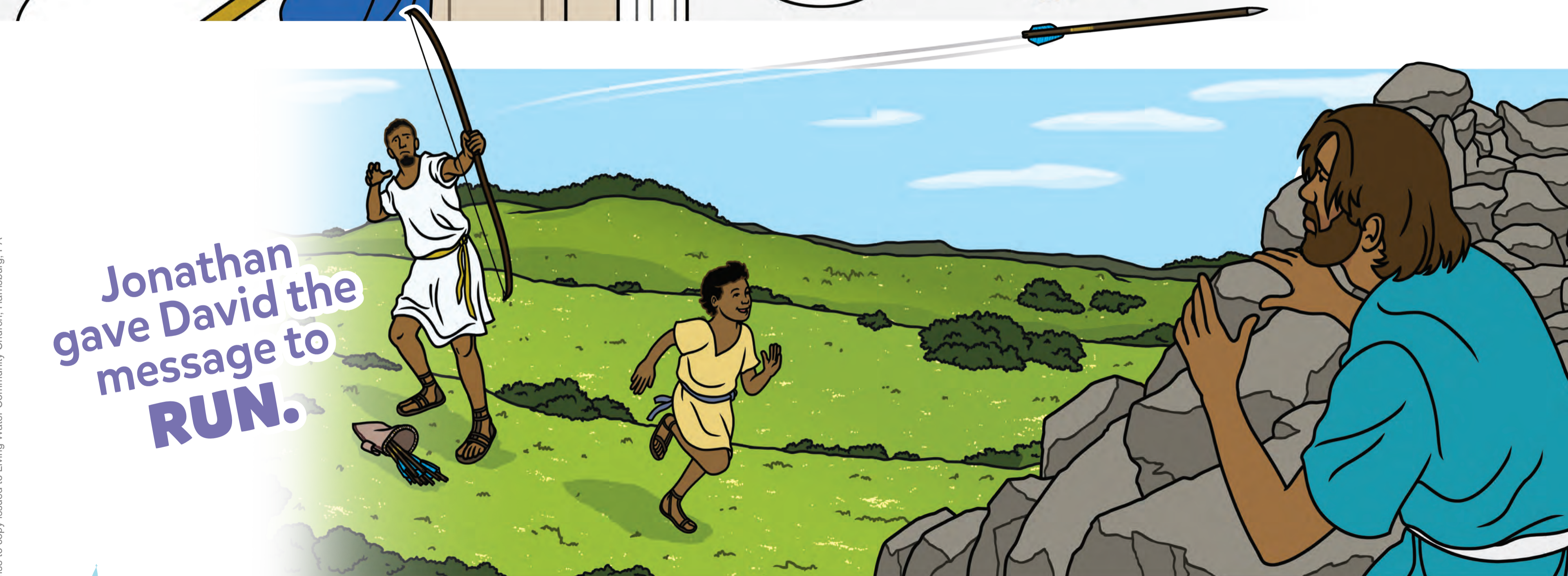
Yes. Jonathan warned David that Saul was still angry, and he would have to run for his life.

Jonathan sent the boy back home. Then David came out from his hiding spot to say goodbye to Jonathan. They didn't know if they'd ever see each other again. David and Jonathan were grown men, but because they were such close friends, they cried as they said goodbye to each other—maybe forever.

Jonathan went home, but David had to run away from there. In our next lesson, we'll follow David as he gets chased by King Saul.



Saul was
JEALOUS
of David.



Jonathan
gave David the
message to
RUN.



K-1st Lesson

Introduction

Refer to Lesson 78 Flip Chart. In our last lesson, we saw a great friendship between David and Jonathan.

? Who was Jonathan's father? *King Saul.*

Both friends loved and trusted God. They were good friends and knew they could count on each other. God used their friendship to protect David from King Saul, who was very jealous of David.

? What did Jonathan do to warn David that his father wanted to kill him? *Pretended to practice shooting arrows in the field where David was hiding. His instructions to the boy gathering the arrows were really messages for David.*

The two friends were very sad when David had to leave in such a hurry. Today, we'll start by talking about some of the places David ran to as he tried to hide from King Saul.

David Flees from Saul

David ran for his life while Saul chased him every step of the way. First, he ran to a city where many priests lived. The high priest gave David some bread and the sword that had belonged to the giant, Goliath. But David couldn't stay there; he had to keep running.

? He finally went to the Philistine city of Gath. Do you remember who the Philistines were? Were they friends or enemies? *Enemies.*

? Refer to Lesson 77 Flip Chart. Goliath was a Philistine. And who killed Goliath? *David.*

Right! So these guys hated David and the Israelites. But David wanted someplace to hide, and Saul couldn't follow him into the enemy's city. David was safe at last—or was he? There was one problem. The servants of the Philistine king knew who David was—the Israelite commander who had killed thousands of Philistines!

? Uh-oh! Do you think this was a good place for David to hide? *No.*

David was afraid for his life! He had to think of something—quick—so they would send him away without hurting him!

1 Samuel 21:12–13

Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. We'll read from 1 Samuel 21 to find out what David did so the Philistines wouldn't kill him. Have the student bring up the Bible and open it to the sticky note. Read the verses.

David pretended to be a crazy person! He scratched at the gate and drooled on his beard. The king saw how David was acting and thought he was crazy and made him leave. Whew! That was close.

David escaped and ran to a cave. While he was hiding there, a group of about 400 men came to join up with him. David was now commander of these men, and they stayed with him and helped him.

With God's help, David and his men kept ahead of Saul. David still helped others even while he was being chased by Saul. He and his men saved a city called Keilah from the Philistines. But Saul found out that David was in Keilah. "Ah ha!" he thought, "David is trapped inside the city. Now I've got him. We'll finally capture David." But God warned David that Saul was coming, so he and his men got away.

Refer to the top of the Lesson Flip Chart. One time, Saul almost caught up to David again. While Saul was on one side of a mountain, David and his men were hurrying to get away on the other side of the mountain. Just as Saul's men were

closing in, a messenger came. "My king," he said, "hurry and come, for the Philistines have attacked the land." So Saul and his men left the mountain, and David was safe—for now.

David Spares Saul in the Cave

It wasn't long before Saul went after David again. One day, while David and his men were hiding in the back of a big cave, Saul came in—but he didn't know David and his men were there!

1 Samuel 24:4

Let's see what David's men wanted him to do. Listen to 1 Samuel 24:4. Read the verse.

David's men told him that this was God giving David a chance to kill Saul. This was David's chance to get Saul back once and for all.

? Did David kill Saul? *No.*

? What did David do instead? *Cut off a corner of Saul's robe.*

David understood that God had made Saul king and that he would be the next king. He knew God's timing was perfect, and he was willing to wait for God. He knew God would not be pleased with him if he took revenge on Saul for all he had done.

? What is revenge? Does anyone know? *Allow answers.*

Revenge is when you try to get back at someone or make them pay for doing something mean to you.

? How about mercy? Does anyone know what that means? *Allow answers.*

Mercy is when you forgive others and don't punish them for something—even when they deserve it.

After Saul left the cave, David came out and called to him. He showed Saul the piece of robe he had cut off to prove he had been close enough to kill him in the cave—but didn't.

Saul understood that David showed mercy to him. David did not hurt Saul when he could

have taken revenge. Saul finally went home, but David and his men stayed there in the wilderness.

David Spares Saul in the Camp

Sometime later, some people came and said to King Saul, "Did you know that David is hiding out in our area?"

Once again, Saul decided to go and hunt David down. He and his army commander, Abner, gathered 3,000 men of Israel, and they came and camped on a hill. David's spies saw them and told David that Saul was camped nearby.

Sleeping Saul Skit (1 Samuel 26)

We'll act out what happened next. Read the *Sleeping Saul Skit*. Have an assistant guide the students as they repeat their lines and act out their roles. When finished, continue with the lesson.

? Who sneaked into Saul's camp? *David and Abishai.*

Refer to the Flip Chart. David and Abishai were able to creep into Saul's camp and get right next to Saul without anyone waking up!

? What did David say when Abishai wanted to kill Saul with his own spear? *David told him no.*

? What two things did they take to prove they had been in Saul's camp, close enough to kill Saul? *Spear and jar of water.*

Right. The men took the spear and jar and left the camp. David went up on a hill across from Saul's camp and called out to them.

? What did Saul think when he saw that his spear and jar were taken by David? What did that prove? *He realized that David had spared his life again.*

This was the second time David spared Saul's life when he could have killed him. David showed mercy again, even though Saul continued to break his promises and hunt David. But David believed it was more important to obey God and trust him instead of taking revenge on Saul.



David showed
MERCY
instead of
taking revenge.

If we



say

we have



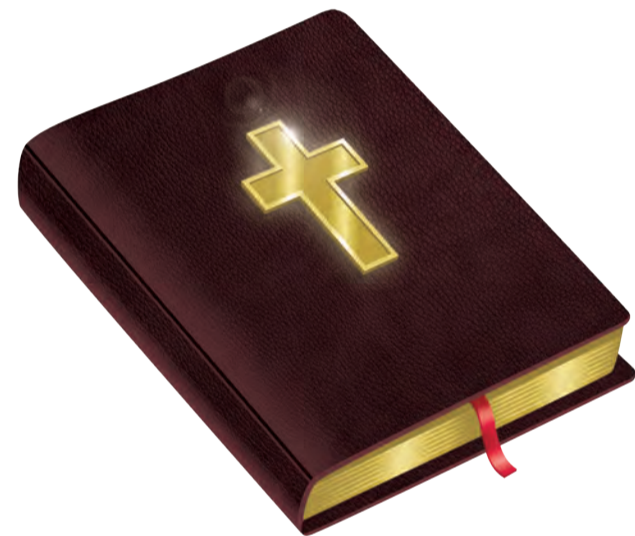
no sin

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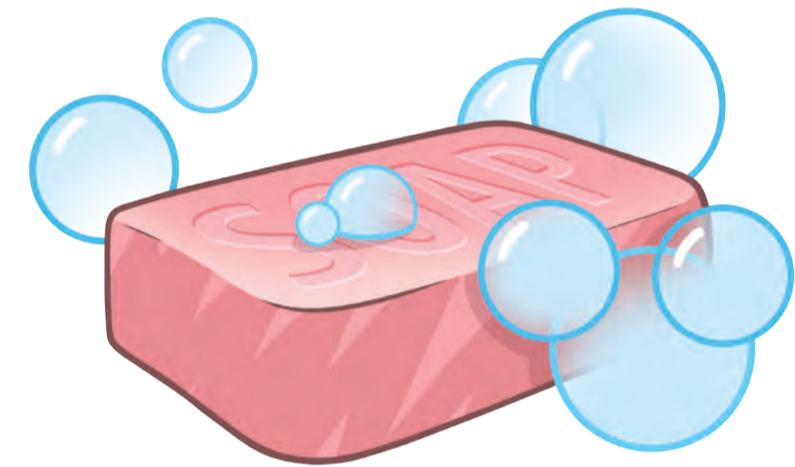
forgive

us our

SINS

and

2



cleanse

us from all



unrighteousness



1:8-9



1 John 1:8–9

If we say we have no sin,
If we say we have no sin,
we deceive ourselves,
we deceive ourselves,
and the truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins,
If we confess our sins,
he is faithful and just
to forgive us our sins
(repeat)

and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
(to cleanse us, to cleanse us, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah!)
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
(to cleanse us, to cleanse us, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah!)

If we confess our sins,
If we confess our sins,
he is faithful and just
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If we confess our sins,
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1 John, 1 John, 1 John 1:8–9

God Looks at the Inside

For the Lord does not see
Like you and I see.
The Lord does not see
Like you and me.

We look at the outside—
“He’s tall and strong!”
God looks at the inside—
He knows what’s wrong.
We look at the outside—
“She’s pretty and smart!”
God looks at the inside—
He sees our heart.

Don’t be fooled by what’s on the outside.
Don’t be fooled by only what you see.
God says what’s important’s on the inside,
That’s why I need him inside of me.

We look at the outside—
“He’s big! She’s fast!”
God looks at the inside—
Says, “the first will be last.”
We look at the outside—
“They’re rich! They’re smart!”
God looks at the inside—
He sees our heart.

Don’t be fooled by what’s on the outside.
Don’t be fooled by only what you see.
God says what’s important’s on the inside,
That’s why I need him inside of me.
(repeat)

God looks at the inside—
He sees our heart.

Clean My Heart

In my heart, what does God see?
Is it him I want to please?
Does my heart need help, O Lord?
Clean out sin and make it yours!

Yes, I need Jesus!
Yes, I need Jesus!
Yes, I need Jesus!
Please, clean my heart today!

In my heart, what does God see?
Is it him I want to please?
Does my heart need help, O Lord?
Clean out sin and make it yours!

Yes, I need Jesus!
Yes, I need Jesus!
Yes, I need Jesus!
Please, clean my heart today!
Please, clean my heart today!

