

Investigating God's Word...

YEAR FOUR

1 Samuel 16-31

Sunday School Curriculum

Fall Quarter

Lesson Sequence

Fall Quarter

The **Lesson Sequence** gives the teacher an overview of the entire quarter.

The central goal of the ***Investigating God's Word...*** curriculum is to enable children the opportunity to read and study the entire Bible—from Genesis to Revelation—by the time they “graduate” from 6th grade.

Week One	I Samuel 16
Week Two	I Samuel 17
Week Three	I Samuel 18
Week Four	I Samuel 19
Week Five	I Samuel 20
Week Six	I Samuel 21:1-22:5
Week Seven	I Samuel 22:6-23:13
Week Eight	I Samuel 23:14-24:22
Week Nine	I Samuel 25
Week Ten	I Samuel 26:1-28:2
Week Eleven	I Samuel 28:3-29:11
Week Twelve	I Samuel 30
Week Thirteen	I Samuel 31, Review

Winter Quarter: II Samuel 1-12,
I Chronicles 1-20



Suggested Schedule

Welcome <i>Psalms 9:1-2</i>	2-3 min.
Drill Time <i>Days of Creation</i>	5 min.
W.O.W! <i>Anoint</i>	5 min.
Historical Context <i>Timeline</i>	2-3 min.
Bible Investigation <i>I Samuel 16</i>	20-30 min.
Lesson-At-Home <i>I Samuel 16:7b</i>	2-3 min.

Lesson One

I Samuel 16

Overview

As we investigate the second half of the Book of I Samuel this quarter, we begin with the rejection of Saul as king of Israel. Samuel is commanded by the LORD to anoint a new king, one that He alone has selected for His people. Samuel, like most human beings, looks at the outward appearance of one of Jesse's sons and assumes that he would make a great king. In the key verse of this lesson, the LORD informs Samuel that He has a different standard—the heart is more important than external appearances.

After David the shepherd boy is anointed, we read of the remarkable shift of God's Spirit away from Saul to David. Saul becomes a tormented and crazy king who, ironically, can only be calmed (at this point) by David's harp. The contrast between God's anointed man and one rejected by God could not be more stark.

As always, this story is about God. It is about His election of David. It is about His judgment of Saul. It is about His will for His people, Israel.

Preparation

Read and meditate on I Samuel 16 this week. It would also be worth your time to read I Samuel 15 to gain some context for this week's lesson.

Teaching Encouragement

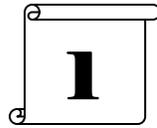
Who is the main character of *every* story in Scripture? God! Our reading of the Bible changes dramatically when we remember this simple truth. While it is often helpful for our children to learn from the examples of the human characters of Scripture, we first and foremost want them to gain a greater understanding of who God is and what He has done in human history. So every lesson you teach must begin with questions about what the text tells us about God. The human characters are real people who either obeyed or disobeyed God, but were always (like us) subject to His sovereign will. Enjoy reading these lessons to your students as you help them learn more and more about the main character of the universe—our great Father God!

The **Welcome** serves as both an opportunity to greet the children as well as an effort to help them get focused on God's Word.

Each week, you will begin with a passage out of the Psalms or Proverbs as an exhortation to study God's Word.

Drill Time gives the children the opportunity to recall and rehearse what they have been taught in the past—at home, school and/or church.

This element allows the **Investigating God's Word...** curriculum to cover much more Biblical "ground," since time is not expended repeating the same Bible stories over and over again from year to year.



Welcome

Greet the students. Welcome visitors. To prepare the students for class today, read Psalm 9:1-2.

¹ I will praise you, O LORD, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonders. ² I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.

Say: *As we gather to study God's Word today, remember that one reason we do this every week is so that we can tell others about God and all of His mighty wonders. Like the Psalmist, we should be so glad in the LORD that we share Him with others. **Read the verses again.***



Drill Time

Now, let's move on to DRILL TIME—our weekly opportunity to review what we have learned in the past. Are you ready?

Today's question: *Name the Days of Creation in order—what God created each day.*

Call on volunteers or select students to make attempts.

Answer:

Day 1	Day and Night.
Day 2	Sky (Firmament).
Day 3	Land and Seas, Plants.
Day 4	Sun, Moon, Stars.
Day 5	Fish, Birds.
Day 6	Animals, Humans.
Day 7	God Rested!

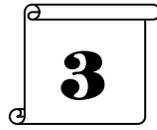
Say: *God made the world in six days. Who remembers what He said about His creation? He said that it was good! God created all things—it did not all happen by chance, as some would want us to believe. It should make you give praise to God every time you remember that He created all things, out of nothing, by the Word of His Power; and all very good!*

The **W.O.W!** is the **Word of the Week**.

This element is included to help the children build their theological and Biblical vocabularies. These words are vital to the Christian's understanding of God and His World.

Each week, the Bible Lesson will be placed in **historical context** by use of a timeline.

It is essential that the children learn how the story of redemptive history fits together. Bible stories must not be viewed as detached scenes—they are to be shown as a part of a much bigger picture. The timeline is a useful tool toward that end.



W.O.W!

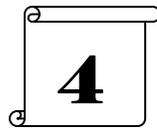
Our *W.O.W!* (Word of the Week) this week is **ANOINT**. **Write the word on the board.** Has anyone heard this word before? We first see this word in the Bible in Exodus 28, where the LORD instructs Moses to **ANOINT** Aaron and his sons as priests. Priests, prophets and kings were **ANOINTED** in Biblical times.

To **ANOINT** someone literally means “to rub or smear with oil.” We get our word oint-ment from the same root word. So to **ANOINT** someone, you often put oil on his head.

But what did it mean that someone was **ANOINTED**? Well, it meant that they were “set apart” for a special job for the LORD. A person who was **ANOINTED** had special authorization for a particular task. A priest was **ANOINTED** to minister before the LORD. A king was **ANOINTED** to rule over the people.

And, guess what? Jesus Christ is called “The **ANOINTED** One.” What special job was He set apart to do? [To die for our sins.]

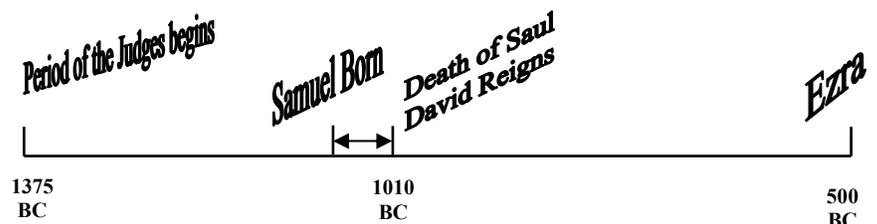
Look for our *W.O.W!* in our lesson today.



Historical Context

As you begin studying the second half of I Samuel, draw this **timeline on the board** to help the students put the lesson in **historical context**.

When events in I Samuel took place





Bible Investigation

The **Bible Investigation** time is the heart and soul of the lesson. It plunges the student directly into God's Word, not simply a paraphrase of a Bible story.

All Scripture text included in the curriculum is from the New International Version (NIV).

The Bible reading is taken in short sections, separated by times of **discussion**, **questions**, and **application points**.

This format allows ample opportunities to stop, think about and discuss what is being read.

Have the students turn in their Bibles to I Samuel 16.

Introduction: *This quarter, we will investigate the second half of the Book of I Samuel. I Samuel tells the story of Israel's transition from the judges to being ruled by kings. Samuel, Israel's last judge, is prominent in this Bible book, as we would guess. Who remembers the name of the first king of Israel that Samuel ANOINTED? [Saul.] We now pick up our story towards the end of King Saul's reign over Israel.*

Read I Samuel 16:1.

¹The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king."

Discussion: *Who remembers why Saul was rejected by God as king over Israel? [Because he turned from the LORD and disobeyed his commands (I Samuel 15:10).] Now Samuel is responsible to put the new king in place. Why do you think he had to fill his horn with oil? [To anoint a new king.]*

Let's read on. Read verses 2-3.

²But Samuel said, "How can I go? Saul will hear about it and kill me." The LORD said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' ³Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me the one I indicate."

Questions: *Why was Samuel afraid? [He thought Saul would kill him.] Why would Saul want to kill Samuel? [Because Saul wasn't ready to give up the throne to another king!] The LORD found a way to protect Samuel. Did you hear our Word of the Week?*

Let's continue. Read verses 4-5.

⁴Samuel did what the LORD said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, "Do you come in peace?" ⁵Samuel replied, "Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

This grey sidebar found on all pages is for the teacher to write notes as he or she prepares the lesson.

Other teaching tips or important exegetical information may also appear on the sidebar.

Discussion: *It may seem sort of strange to you that the people were afraid when Samuel came to town. Just remember that Samuel was a judge and a prophet, so he often went to cities to tell people that they were in trouble with the LORD! Not this time though—Samuel was on a mission that involved Jesse and his sons.*

Let's keep investigating. Read verses 6-7.

⁶When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, “Surely the LORD’s anointed stands here before the LORD.” ⁷But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”

Discussion: *One of Jesse’s sons, Eliab, jumped right out to Samuel because he was tall and good looking. Surely, this young man looked like the future king! What was the LORD’s response to Samuel? [This man might look good on the outside, but God looks at the heart.]*

Application: *This is such an important truth to learn, boys and girls. We most often judge people by the way they look. The good looking people are often thought of as leaders just because they look the part! But God has a much different standard for leadership: He looks at our hearts! He desires leaders who have pure hearts, hearts that desire to follow God’s ways. Does that describe you? Are you a child after God’s own heart? What’s inside is much more important than what’s on the outside.*

Let’s see what happens next. Read verses 8-11.

⁸Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, “The LORD has not chosen this one either.” ⁹Jesse then had Shammah pass by, but Samuel said, “Nor has the LORD chosen this one.” ¹⁰Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, “The LORD has not chosen these.” ¹¹So he asked Jesse, “Are these all the sons you have?” “There is still the youngest,” Jesse answered, “but he is tending the sheep.” Samuel said, “Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives.”

Discussion: *Isn’t that amazing? Seven sons of Jesse pass by Samuel, but the LORD had other plans. It seems as if Jesse didn’t think his youngest son was worthy of inspection since he was still tending to the sheep. Who was this young son of Jesse? Let’s see.*

Read verses 12-13.

¹²So he sent and had him brought in. He was ruddy, with a fine appearance and handsome features. Then the LORD said, “Rise and

Application Points are woven into the fabric of the discussion, rather than being left to the end of the lesson.

anoint him; he is the one.”¹³ So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came upon David in power. Samuel then went to Ramah.

Discussion: *So who is to be the new king of Israel? [David.] Yes, this young shepherd boy was not chosen because of his good looks, or his great authority, but because God had looked upon His heart! David must have had a heart for the LORD, right? After David was ANOINTED to be the next king, what happened? [The Holy Spirit came upon him with power.] God gave David His Spirit of power to enable him to be king.*

Our scene changes now, from David to King Saul.

Read verse 14.

¹⁴ Now the Spirit of the LORD had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD tormented him.

Discussion: *Did you catch the contrast? The Spirit of the Lord came upon David. The Spirit of the LORD left Saul. Wow! Now, all Saul was left with was an evil spirit tormenting him. His disobedience had cost him the throne, and the LORD left him too. How horrible!*

Let's continue. Read verses 15-16.

¹⁵ Saul's attendants said to him, "See, an evil spirit from God is tormenting you." ¹⁶ Let our lord command his servants here to search for someone who can play the harp. He will play when the evil spirit from God comes upon you, and you will feel better."

Discussion: *Now that's sort of interesting, isn't it? Saul was becoming a very angry, violent and crazy man. His servants thought that the music of the harp might settle him down. Music does have that effect, doesn't it? The right kind of soothing music can be very calming to the soul.*

Now, watch for a surprise. Read verses 17-19.

¹⁷ So Saul said to his attendants, "Find someone who plays well and bring him to me." ¹⁸ One of the servants answered, "I have seen a son of Jesse of Bethlehem who knows how to play the harp. He is a brave man and a warrior. He speaks well and is a fine-looking man. And the LORD is with him." ¹⁹ Then Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, "Send me your son David, who is with the sheep."

Discussion: *What an amazing coincidence! David had just been ANOINTED king of Israel—without Saul knowing it, of course—*

and now this same shepherd boy was being recommended to serve as the king's musician. Sort of funny, isn't it? By the way, there are absolutely no coincidences with the LORD, since He is in control of all things. The LORD is doing something here. I wonder what it is?

Let's read to the end of the chapter. Read verses 20-23.

²⁰ So Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread, a skin of wine and a young goat and sent them with his son David to Saul. ²¹ David came to Saul and entered his service. Saul liked him very much, and David became one of his armor-bearers. ²² Then Saul sent word to Jesse, saying, "Allow David to remain in my service, for I am pleased with him." ²³ Whenever the spirit from God came upon Saul, David would take his harp and play. Then relief would come to Saul; he would feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him.

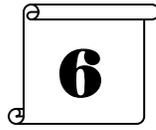
Discussion: *So we end our reading today with the new king-to-be in the service of the present king of Israel—and King Saul doesn't even know who David really is yet. Saul likes David; and David quickly shows that he can serve Saul when he gets into his really bad moods—caused by the evil spirit. David's music was very soothing, I'm sure.*

Application: *Don't miss that it was the LORD who was bringing this evil spirit upon Saul. God wasn't being mean to Saul. He was punishing Saul for leaving Him. You and I too put ourselves in a bad position with God when we move away from Him. He may bring tormenting things into our lives to drive us back to Himself! That's how much He loves His people.*

Conclusion: *So we begin this quarter with King Saul moving away from the LORD and young shepherd boy David beginning his service to the LORD. We will read much more about the relationship of Saul and David, seeing how their lives become polar opposites of one another. One king will keep on rejecting God, while the other one will begin to remind you of our king, King Jesus!*

We will pick up our reading here next time!

Answer any questions, if time allows.



Lesson-At-Home

The **Lesson-At-Home** section is the closing time each week. Bookmarks are given to the students that include the Scripture memory verse and a lesson review. The lesson review contains words and phrases that can spark memories as well as conversation with parents.

Distribute the “Lesson-At-Home” bookmarks. Read the Scripture Memory verse (I Samuel 16:7b) together.

I Samuel 16:7b (NIV)

“...The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”

Say: *This is the pivotal verse in all of I Samuel. Remember that what is most important to God is our hearts—not our outward appearances. We need God’s grace to change our hearts so that we will be people after God’s own heart.*

Review several times.

Direct the students’ attentions to the bottom half of the bookmark. It includes reminder points of today’s lesson that can be discussed with their parents and reviewed during the week.

Close in prayer and dismiss the students.