

Youth Teaching Resources

March 22, 2020



Lent / Easter / Pentecost—All Things New

Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7 —“A New Choice”

Genesis 12:1-4a—“A New Start”

Psalm 95—“A New Song”

1 Samuel 16:1-13—“A New King”

Ezekiel 37:1-14—“A New Life”

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Find links and videos related to this lesson.

A New King

1 Samuel 16:1-13

YOUTH Teaching Guide

by Jeremy Colliver

This youth teaching outline is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartledge, printed in *Baptists Today*. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Baptists Today* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Baptists Today* so they can prepare before the lesson.

PARENT PREP

One of my greatest joys in life is watching my children “walk the aisle” and go tell their pastor that they want to follow in the way of Jesus. You always wonder if what you are doing as a parent has some influence in the life of your student. When our children both made this profession of faith, I had the overwhelming feeling that we had done something right; even if it was introducing them to a faith community that could help them when we couldn’t. From there, it has become even harder as they have had to continue to choose to walk in the way of Jesus; for them to continue to choose Jesus as their king. Many times when I have seen them begin to walk away, I notice that what they are choosing is more of a reflection of what I am doing.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Fellowship

Begin your session by showing the clip “The One True King” from *Aquaman*. If you are unable to show the clip, summarize it to the best of your ability, and then facilitate a discussion using questions like the following:

- 1) Why does he believe he is not the king? Why does he believe he is the king?
- 2) How does he become the one true king?
- 3) What happens once he is “crowned” king?
- 4) Have you ever been chosen for something? Have you ever had to choose someone?
- 5) How does your faith influence how you choose people to follow?

Information

Transition to the next section of the session by reading 1 Samuel 16.1-13. Allow the students to ask any initial questions they have about the text. As you answer their questions, you may want to provide some of the information found in Tony's commentary to answer their questions. When the students have had an opportunity to share their initial thoughts, continue the discussion by facilitating a discussion using questions like the following:

- 1) Why did Samuel not want the job that God had chosen him for?
- 2) Why were the town elders leery of Samuel?
- 3) What did God tell Samuel to look for, and not look for, when finding a king?
- 4) How does Samuel choose David?
- 5) What was it about David that made him "a man after God's own heart"?

If you group would like to dig deeper in their discussion, share some of the insights that Tony provides in the "Digging Deeper" portion of his commentary. You may want to use some questions like the following to facilitate your discussion:

- 1) Why was Samuel afraid?
- 2) How could appearances have confused Samuel when choosing a king?
- 3) Why would David being the 8th son put him out of contention to become king?

You may also want your group to discuss "The Hardest Question" if they would like to continue their discussion on this passage. Tony poses the following question to consider as "The Hardest Question": How did David inquire of Go?

Transformation

During this season of Lent each session will conclude with a spiritual discipline that the students can use throughout the week. This week, lead your students through the spiritual discipline of *Praying the Jesus Prayer*. If you have not led a group through this spiritual practice, familiarize yourself with the practice before leading the group. Once you have led the group through practice, allow the students time to share with the larger group what they experience.

Close with a prayer thanking God for choosing us when no one else would have chosen us.

Digging Deeper

by Tony Cartledge

Digging Deeper is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartledge, printed in *Nurturing Faith Journal*. Watch for the “shovel” icon in the THE BIBLE LESSON, and then reference that item in this Digging Deeper resource. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Nurturing Faith Journal* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Nurturing Faith Journal* so they can prepare before the lesson.

Samuel’s fear—Samuel’s concerns about going to Bethlehem were well grounded. His home in Ramah was less than a day’s walk to the north, but Bethlehem was in the tribal land of Judah, the southernmost tribe and apparently not overly supportive of Saul.

Saul had fallen victim to mental illness, exhibiting symptoms of a bipolar or manic-depressive disorder. The narrator attributed his condition to an evil spirit, the ancients’ standard way of explaining emotional or mental illnesses (1 Sam. 16:14).

Samuel had recently derided Saul in public, declaring that God would give the kingdom to “a neighbor who is better than you” (1 Sam. 15:28). Samuel feared that this would make Saul even more paranoid: if word got out that he had traveled to Bethlehem to meet with the elders there, Saul might think he was fomenting rebellion among the southerners and arrange to have him killed.

On the other hand, the Bethlehemite elders were not happy to see Samuel, either. They may have thought that Samuel was on a mission from Saul, sent to spy out any disloyalty or to pronounce some doom on the town. Thus, when Samuel arrived, they came out “trembling” and asked “Do you come peaceably?”

The small artifice of claiming he had come to offer a sacrifice provided Samuel with an inarguable rationale for his travel to Bethlehem: God had sent him to offer a sacrifice, and he had a heifer in tow to prove it.

Appearances—Samuel should have known that looks can be deceiving. Saul was such an unlikely choice when chosen by lot that he was not even present, but hiding among the people’s baggage. After being persuaded to come out, “When he took his stand among the people, he was head and shoulders taller than any of them.” Even Samuel appeared to have been initially impressed, and declared to the assembly: “Do you see the one whom the LORD has chosen? There is no one like him among all the people” (1 Sam. 10:23-24).

Saul must have been as handsome as he was tall, but those attributes were no guarantee of success.

The eighth son—In biblical thought, the number seven sometimes indicates completeness or something special. Beyond the Bible, superstition has sometimes led people to believe that someone who was a seventh son—or even more so if the seventh son of a seventh son—might have special powers.

As the *eighth* son, David may have been considered as one beyond the bounds of the seven, a visionary who could see beyond the limited horizons of ordinary people.

Digging Deeper *continued*

God's own heart—In 2002, Mark George published an academic article on the subject of how David was a man after God's own heart. In *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* ("Yhwh's Own Heart," *CBQ* 64:2002, pp. 442-459), George argued that the primary purpose of 1 Samuel 16–2 Samuel 5—usually called the "History of David's Rise"—was not to provide a political justification for David to replace Saul as king, as typically argued, but to demonstrate in word and deed just what was so special about David's heart that God was inspired to choose him.

George concluded that two primary characteristics of David's heart set him apart:

First, he pointed to the many instances in which David inquired of God before making a decision, which suggests an active prayer life and an ongoing dialogue between David and God.

Second, he noted that while Saul's relationship with God seemed to focus on carrying out cultic observances, David's relationship with God was made evident not only through inquiring of God, but through declaring his trust in Yahweh (p. 453).

The Hardest Question

by Tony Cartledge

The Hardest Question is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartledge, printed in *Nurturing Faith Journal*. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Nurturing Faith Journal* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Nurturing Faith Journal* so they can prepare before the lesson.

How did David “inquire of God”?

The biblical narrators insist that David habitually “inquired of God” when making major decisions. In 1 Sam. 22:10, David asked the priest Ahimelech to inquire of the LORD for him regarding his next move in fleeing Saul. When Saul heard about it and accused the priest of treason for inquiring of God in David’s behalf, Ahimelech described David as a faithful servant of the king, and added “Is today the first time that I have inquired of God for him? By no means!” (1 Sam. 22:15).

Saul ordered that all the priests be killed, but Ahimelech’s son Abiathar escaped and joined David’s band of refugees from Saul’s wrath. In that capacity, he served as an intermediary to inquire of God for David. He inquired of the LORD regarding whether to attack the Philistines that threatened the city of Keilah (1 Sam. 23:2, 4). When Amalekites burned David’s adopted city of Ziklag and took the women and children hostage, David inquired of the LORD before pursuing them (1 Sam. 30:8).

After Saul’s death, David inquired of the LORD whether he should go up to one of the cities of Judah, presumably to offer himself as a new king, and again to determine which city (2 Sam. 2:1).

After becoming king, David continued to seek God’s guidance in military matters. Both 2 Sam. 5:19, 23-24 and 1 Chronicles 14:9, 13 describes instances in which David “inquired of the LORD” regarding the advisability of engaging the Philistines in battle, and was given a positive response.

In a time of famine, David inquired of the LORD to determine the cause of the famine and what could be done about it (2 Sam. 21:1).

But how did one go about “inquiring of the LORD” in this fashion, and why were priests involved? One could simply pray, or offer sacrifices and hope God might speak in a dream, but the more common practice was to have the priest use the Urim and the Thummim as a means of determining God’s will.

The Urim and Thummim were sacred lots, apparently made of stone, bone, or clay. They would have been identical in shape and size but of different colors or designs, and kept in a pouch in the high priest’s breastplate (Exod. 28:30). A good guess is that it worked like this: the priest would hold the pouch in his hand while asking God for one of two possible answers, with Urim representing one and Thummim the other. He would then put his thumb over one of the objects and cast the other into his lap. Whichever lot emerged was thought to be God’s answer.

The Hardest Question *continued*

Examples of when the Urim and Thummim were specifically mentioned in such decision making include Samuel's choice of Saul in 1 Sam. 10:17-24 and Saul's effort to determine who had broken his oath in 1 Sam. 14:36-46.

David's frequent decisions to "inquire of the LORD," at least prior to his downfall in 2 Samuel 11, indicated his desire to follow God's will and not just his own.