



Date: _____
Series: Lookin' for a Leader
Summer Year 3, Lesson 7

King Saul Doesn't Wait on God

Take Home Point: *Wait on the Lord to help.

*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

Bible Event: 1 Samuel 13 and 14

Key Verse: Isaiah 40:31, "Yet, the strength of those who wait with hope in the LORD will be renewed."

We will help kids know:

- The Bible event of Saul not waiting for Samuel to offer a sacrifice before fighting the Philistines.
- We need to trust God to help instead of trying to fix our problems.




We will help kids feel:

- Confidence that if they wait on the Lord, he will deliver them.
- Patience as they learn to wait on the Lord to provide.

We will help kids do:

- Identify areas in their lives in which it is hard to be patient.
- Pray for patience and trust to depend on God to work in their lives.
- Trust Jesus for his forgiveness and patience over us.

THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

DESTINATION	PAGE #	DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY	SUPPLIES NEEDED
Small Group Warm-Up 	3	As the children tell about a time when it was hard to wait for an answer to a problem, they will try to hold onto an ice cube. As they tell their stories about times in which it was hard to be patient, they will find a similar struggle in patiently holding the ice cubes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ice cubes
Large Group 	5 9 11 13	Overview Carnival Game with Puppet Presentation: "The Great Meltdown" Interactive Bible Event: "King Saul Can't Wait!" Puppet Presentation: "The Great Meltdown" Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> bowl with a six to eight-inch diameter thin napkin or tissue (not a paper towel) tape or rubber band to attach napkin to bowl ice cube straw Gordy crown "spears" or "swords" (brooms with trash can lids can work) Philistines soldier costumes
Small Group Application 	6	As the children share about a time they had a problem God helped them fix, they can try to write their names on a poster board with a special "melting" marker. Remind the children they can wait on the Lord.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> poster board marker paint ice cube marker for each group. (To make a marker, freeze a Popsicle stick in a small container or ice cube tray that contains BioColor paint www.DiscountSchoolSupply.com (A drop of dish soap may be added to the tempera paint so that it will wash out if accidentally spilled on clothing or carpet.)

Small Group Warm-Up: 15 minutes



Purpose: *Get pointed in the right direction! Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.*

Gather your group and read the following story.

“The Best Soccer Team”

All throughout third grade, Anna and Cary were best friends. When they decided they would both play soccer, they looked forward to being on the same team. Anna just knew if they were on the same team, it would be the best soccer team ever! After all, Anna knew she and Cary were great soccer players.

When Anna signed up, she had her mom request that Cary and she would be on the same team. A week after sign-ups Anna received a letter. Eagerly she opened it to find out which team Cary and she would be on. The name of her team was the Gold Kickers and she thought, “I’ll bet we’ll even have cool gold uniforms.”

Quickly she phoned Cary. “Did you get your letter?” she asked. “Yes!” Cary answered excitedly.

Anna asked her, “Do you think we’ll have gold uniforms since we’re the Gold Kickers?”

“What do you mean Gold Kickers?” said Cary. “Our soccer team is The Strikers.”

“No, it’s not,” said Anna. “We’re the Gold Kickers!”

“Oh no,” said Cary, “We must be on different teams!”

“But I thought we signed up together,” said Anna.

After getting off the phone, Anna was quick to go to her mother. “Mom, you have to call the person who puts the soccer teams together and make them switch Cary to my team! We have to be on the same team. If we’re not together, it won’t be the best team.”

Anna’s mother thought for a moment. “Well, we did request that you be together. Sometimes when they divide teams, they divide players for different reasons. They chose to have you play on different teams. I think there can be some blessings in that.”

“Does that mean you won’t call?” asked Anna. “You have to make them change!”

“No, I won’t call. Just be patient. Maybe God has a special blessing for you to be on the Gold Kickers and for Cary to be on The Strikers.”

Anna stomped up the stairs. She thought, “This can’t be for the best.”

Soon she was on the phone talking to the person at the soccer club who put the teams together. Anna tried and tried but she could not convince that person to make a change.

Anna was sad all day long. Cary said to her, “Don’t worry. We can still be best friends at school, and we’ll meet new friends on our soccer teams.”

Anna would not hear of it. Instead, she asked Cary for the name of her coach and his phone number. That night Anna called Cary’s coach and asked if Cary could be moved to the Gold Kickers. When the coach said, “That’s not a good idea,” Anna asked if she could be moved to The Strikers.

“I’m sorry,” said the coach, “We are already full. Just wait and see. Give your team a chance.”

The next day was Anna’s first practice with her new team. She told her mother she was not going. If she could not play on Cary’s team, she didn’t want to play at all.

Her mother replied, “If that is what you want to choose, you can. But I don’t think that is a good way to fix your problem. Have you prayed about this? Have you asked God to help you? What do you think he would want you to do?”

“How can God help with soccer?” Anna asked.

“If I were you,” said her mother, “I would pray about it and wait for the Lord to help.”

“I guess it couldn’t hurt,” said Anna. That night she prayed that God would help her get on the right team and that he would fix the whole mess.

The next day she decided to go to practice. Though she began practice with a frown on her face, Anna ended it with a big smile. You see, at practice she met some friends she knew from church. One of

her friend's dad was the coach, and he was a great coach. All of the girls had fun.

"Maybe this will be the best team," Anna thought to herself. "Maybe God wants me to be on the Gold Kickers while Cary is on The Strikers."

As the season went on, Cary's team won every game. Anna's team didn't do as well. But Anna still had a wonderful time and she made new friends. She even had a chance to talk to her new friends about going to church and getting to know Jesus.

Even though she did not win every game, at the end of the season Anna gave thanks to God. She said, "Thank you, God, for working it out so I could be on the best team for me. Help me to be patient and wait for your help when I have other problems. Amen."

Follow the story with this discussion.

Tell about a time when you had a problem and it was hard to wait for an answer or to wait for the problem to get fixed.

As children answer the question, pass an ice cube to them. Ask them to close the ice cube in their fists and keep their fists completely still. As they tell their stories about times in which it is hard to be patient, they will find a similar struggle in patiently holding the ice cubes. It is not comfortable either. Move through as many discussions as possible. Then prepare the children for large group with the following.

In today's Bible event, we will find that King Saul had a problem. He was not patient enough to wait on God to help him with a problem; he wanted to fix it all by himself. I wonder what happened to King Saul because of this. You can find out in our Bible event today. You can also find out how you can **wait on the Lord to help*.

Large Group: 20-30 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids observe what the Bible says. Present the Bible event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.*

Overview

Carnival Game with Puppet Presentation: "The Great Meltdown" – The carnival booth will be Gordy and Mr. King inviting contestants to guess how long it will take an ice cube to melt through a napkin. Mr. King will cheat and blow on it with a straw. This demonstrates lack of patience and taking things into one's own hands even if it is wrong to do so.

Interactive Bible Event: “King Saul Can’t Wait!” – A narration of the Bible events found in 1 Samuel 13 and 14. Saul offers the sacrifice in preparation for battle instead of waiting for Samuel to do it.

Puppet Presentation: “The Great Meltdown” Conclusion – Gordy learns that God will still help his people when they wait on him. God helps Saul’s son Jonathan defeat the Philistines.

Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible event in their lives. Use the questions to stimulate discussion but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.*

Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson.

Observation Questions: What happened?

Have kids refer to 1 Samuel 13-14 in their Bibles.

How big was Saul’s army? *(1 Samuel 13:2. 3,000 men.)*

Why did Saul’s soldiers start running away? *(1 Samuel 13:5-6. The Philistine army had 30,000 chariots and 6,000 horsemen.)*

How long was Saul supposed to wait for Samuel to arrive and seek what the Lord wanted him to do? *(1 Samuel 13:8. Seven days.)*

At the end of seven days, what did Saul do? *(1 Samuel 13:9. Performed the sacrifice himself.)*

When Samuel arrived, he said Saul had not obeyed God because he offered the sacrifice. What would happen to Saul’s kingdom because of this? *(1 Samuel 13:14. The kingdom would be given to another king who loved God with his whole heart.)*

Jonathan, on the other hand, waited on God. When he went to fight the Philistines, what sign did God give to show Jonathan that he would hand over the Philistines in defeat? *(1 Samuel 14:10. If the Philistines said to him, “Come up here.”)*

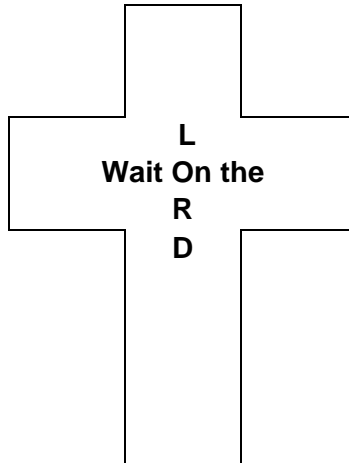
Jonathan and his armbearer, with the help of God, defeated how many Philistines? *(1 Samuel 14:1. About twenty men.)*

Application Questions: What does this mean to me?

Sometimes it takes time to see how God helps us. Instead of waiting, we get so worried that we want to fix everything ourselves and not pray to God. Can someone share a time they had a problem that God helped fix? *(You should also be ready to share such an experience.)*

Application Activity:

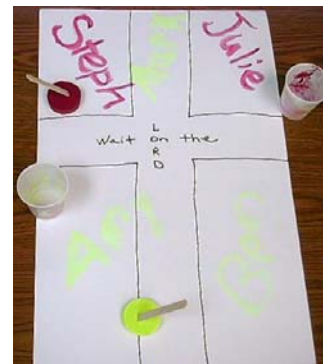
While the kids are sharing, use a marker to draw the design on a poster board. The design reads, "Wait On the Lord." "Wait On the" are placed horizontally. "LORD" vertically intersects the phrase.



After the cross is drawn, have children write their names anywhere on the poster board using a special marker after they talk about a time they have waited on the Lord (or trusted him). The marker will be a tempera paint ice cube. The ice cube melts as it is used to write across the poster board.

Kids could also talk about a possible time in the future when they will possibly need to be ready to wait and trust in God.

As children write their names, remind them that they can wait on the Lord. The Lord will renew their strength. Read Isaiah 40:31,



“...the strength of those who wait with hope in the LORD will be renewed.”

Jesus is patient with us, just like he was with Saul and Jonathan. Jesus gave his life for our sins. God does forgive us when we try and take things into our own hand. He will lead us when we wait on him. Today we have learned that it is best to **wait on the Lord to help.*

Closing Prayer:

Encourage kids to pray for specific ways they need to patiently wait for the Lord and expect his help.

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Large Group Presentation

The Great Meltdown

Carnival Game with Puppet Presentation

Today's carnival game will demonstrate patience (or a lack thereof). Children will guess how long it takes an ice cube to melt through a tissue or thin napkin (*not* a paper towel). The catch to the carnival game will be that as two contestants guess how long it will take for the ice cube to drop; the large group presenter will guess a shorter time and blow firmly on the ice cube through a straw. As that time approaches, his blowing will cause the ice cube to quickly melt through the tissue. For added effect, play or hum a circus or carnival tune during the contest.

Unfold a napkin and tape it tightly across the top of a six-to-eight inch bowl like a drum. (*A rubber band would also work in securing the napkin.*)

Place an ice cube on the napkin and test how long it takes the ice cube to drop. The ice cube should drop within 15 to 30 seconds. (If you would like the ice cube to drop later, use a thin tissue instead of a napkin. If you would like it to drop sooner, make sure the ice cube is very wet.)



The large group presenter can somewhat control when the ice cube drops at the needed time by using a straw to blow on the ice cube until it goes through the paper.

The kids will cry foul, but this is part of the lesson as the large group presenter demonstrates a lack of patience and takes matters into his own hands.

The teaching point of the carnival game is that we often become impatient with life. We want to take things into our own hands. The carnival host (*large group presenter*) becomes impatient, takes matters into his own hands, and cheats.

Mr. King: Boys and girls, step right up for The Great Meltdown. I need two volunteers from the audience.

(A boy and a girl are invited forward.)

Gordy: Hi, kids! Thanks for coming up so we can melt you down. Okay, where did I put that torch?

Mr. King: Now, Gordy, don't tease them. This game is called The Great Meltdown. Here's the contest...

Gordy: Yes! How long will it take these kids to melt down?

Mr. King: Cool it, Gordy.

Gordy: If we cover them in ice!

Mr. King: Kids, you know Gordy is kidding. Today's carnival game does involve ice. What I have here is a tissue stretched tightly over a bowl. How long do you think it will take this ice cube to melt through when we place it on the tissue?

Gordy: I know! I know!

Mr. King: Gordy, you can't guess.

Gordy: I can't?

Mr. King: No, your job is to help keep time. These kids will guess. In fact, I am going to guess, too. So, will you guess 20 seconds, 25 seconds, or 30 seconds? *(After each child makes a guess, Mr. King guesses 10 seconds.)*

Now I as I place the ice cube on the tissue, you may begin your counting.

Gordy: Boys and girls, help me count together. Are you ready? One, two, three, four...

(Mr. King blows the ice cube through.)

Gordy: Hey! That's cheating!

Mr. King: I'm sorry I couldn't help myself. I just ran out of patience, and I wanted to win.

Gordy: But that's not the way to go about it. That's not winning at all.

Mr. King: You're right, Gordy. I did this to show you what it's like to run out of patience. It is very much like what King Saul did. He ran out of patience, too. He didn't wait for the Lord to help him, and he took matters into his own hands. He didn't trust the Lord.

Gordy: Oh! Not cool!

Mr. King: We have an important truth to learn today. To trust God means to do it his way. Sometimes that means being patient. We need to **wait on the Lord to help.*

Gordy: I suppose you want us to wait now for you to tell us the Bible event?

Mr. King: **Actually, I do. But just wait long enough for me to get some volunteers who will help me tell the event.** (Choose volunteers as follows. *It would be helpful to have an adult assistant to help with volunteer costumes, volunteer actions, and the addition/removal of volunteers during the Bible Event.*) **I will need one person for King Saul and one person as the prophet Samuel. Then I need two groups of four soldiers each. One will be Israelites and the other, Philistines. Now we are ready.**

King Saul Can't Wait

Interactive Bible Event

Mr. King: **As you remember from last week, the people of Israel wanted a king so they could become like other nations. They thought a king would make them strong in battle and take care of their problems with the Philistines. Now they had King Saul.** (Take the volunteer on the stage and place a crown on his head.)

King Saul began to build an army of 3,000 soldiers. (Take a group of children up to the stage and have them pose as soldiers. The group could contain three to twelve children. They could be given any props that remind people of spears, swords or shields; such as brooms and trash can lids.)

The Philistines were causing much trouble in Israel. Just because Israel had a king now did not mean the Philistines were afraid. Instead, they wanted to fight the Israelites even more. Throughout the land they had forts and strongholds. (Take another group of kids to the opposite end of the stage. Costume them as Philistines. Be imaginative.)

The Philistines had a large army of chariots and horsemen. (Have kids pantomime riding chariots and horses.) **They came to fight King Saul.**

By now the Israelites realized that having a king did not help keep their enemies away. What was worse, the Philistines had taken the Israelites' swords and spears and did not allow them to have metal workers who could make new weapons. The people of Israel were unprepared for war, and the Philistines were coming upon them.

King Saul was worried. (Saul actor looks worried.) **He was really worried.** (Saul looks really worried.) **To all the lands he sent messengers who blew trumpets.** (Make trumpet sounds.) **They announced, "Everybody come to fight! King Saul is leading us**

against the Philistines. The Philistines are marching against us at Gilgal.”

Samuel heard about the trouble and sent word to Saul that he would come to Gilgal in seven days. He would then offer sacrifices to God and pray for the king and the people. God would show Samuel what they should do.

Everyone soon gathered at Gilgal. (Move the king and his men to a new place on the stage. Call this place Gilgal.) They waited there for seven days. Count with me... One... two... three... wait a minute!

With each passing day, the Philistines grew stronger. (Add more Philistines.) As the Philistines grew stronger, the Israelites became more afraid. (Remove more Israelites.) They became so frightened that they hid in caves, thickets, and deep holes between rocks. Some even left the country and crossed the Jordan River.

Day four... five... six... More Philistines came! More Israelites left! (Add Philistines and remove more Israelites.) Finally, on day seven, Saul saw that his men were leaving because they were afraid. He thought he had a great problem and had to take everything into his own hands. He didn’t trust God to take care of his men or the battle. All Saul could think about was that Samuel had not come as he had promised. If Saul didn’t do something quickly, he would have no army left.

Saul thought to himself (Saul points finger to his head), “I can do the sacrifices. After all, I am the king even if I’m not the priest.” He took the sacrificial animals and began to burn them for God, even though he knew God had commanded that only priests and Levites should do this.

The sacrifice was still burning when Samuel arrived. (Bring Samuel actor on stage.) “Uh-oh,” said Saul as he saw Samuel.

“Why have you done this?” Samuel asked.

Saul explained, “Men were running away. We waited and waited, but you did not come as you promised. I had to do something! All of this time, the Philistines were gathering more and more in their army. I was afraid they would attack before we had asked the blessing of the Lord.”

Samuel said sadly (actor shaking his head), “You have been very foolish. You have not trusted in the Lord or waited on him. You have disobeyed the Lord by offering a sacrifice instead of waiting for me. If you had not done this, your family could have ruled Israel

throughout the years. Now your kingdom and your rule cannot last. The Lord is looking for a man who will follow him with all of his heart. This person will become king over the people instead of you.”

“But what shall we do?” asked Saul. Samuel did not answer. He just walked away.

When Saul counted his soldiers there were only 600 left. He marched them back to Gibeah, and the Philistines held their fort. And his soldiers didn’t even have swords or spears.

I wonder what will happen next to the Philistines and what will happen to Saul. Will God still help them? Will God give them a new king? Stay tuned until next week when we answer these and other questions. Now give our actors a round of applause. (Have volunteers return to their seats.)

The Great Meltdown

Puppet Presentation Conclusion

Gordy: Hold it, Mr. King. I don’t want to wait until next week to find out. It sounds like the Israelites didn’t have a chance!

Mr. King: Do you think they would have a chance if they trusted in God’s help and waited for him?

Gordy: Sure. But Saul blew it. What happened after that?

Mr. King: God still found a way to help his people. Saul had a son named Jonathan. Jonathan and his armor-bearer went up on the hill where some of the enemy was guarding the narrow mountain road. Jonathan didn’t know whether he should attack these guys or not. So, he waited on the Lord to tell him.

This was the sign the Lord would give him. When Jonathan showed himself to the enemies and if the Philistines hollered at him and said, “Come up here and we will teach you a lesson,” then that meant God was giving the enemies into their hands. Guess what happened?

Gordy: They hollered, “Come up here!”

Mr. King: Right. Then Jonathan and his helper went up the mountain and defeated 20 soldiers.

Gordy: Wow! A one man army, huh?

Mr. King: No. Jonathan knew it was the Lord doing it. It wasn't even Jonathan's plan; it was the Lord's. Then guess what?

Gordy: What?

Mr. King: The whole Philistine army became afraid. Panic spread...A panic that was sent by God. The soldiers all started running away and the Israelites won!

Gordy: Cool! I would sure like to see God do something like that today. I would love to beat 20 guys, and then win over a whole army!

Mr. King: God does something even greater today.

Gordy: What's that?

Mr. King: Don't you remember how God sent his Son Jesus? And do you trust Jesus as your Savior?

Gordy: Sure.

Mr. King: Then God gives you victory over something far greater than soldiers in an army. He gives you victory over Satan and the power of sin. God gives you forgiveness and power to live for him. That's really winning!

Gordy: Wow! That really is cool.

Mr. King: Sure it is. Now, Gordy, please close in prayer and we'll go back to our groups and learn how we can **wait on the Lord to help.*

Gordy: Dear God, sometimes we have a hard time being patient and waiting on you to work. But we do trust you. Help us to wait on you and especially to trust Jesus and know that, because of him, you have a great victory for all of us. In Jesus' name, Amen.