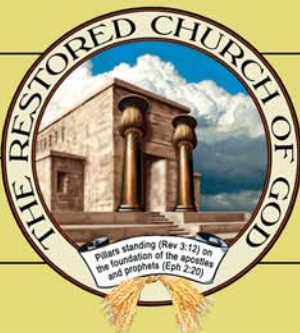


THE RESTORED CHURCH OF GOD

CHILDREN'S BIBLE LESSONS



Samuel, David and King Saul



LEVEL 5 LESSON 2

Samuel, David and King Saul

In Lesson One, David recalled the many stories his father taught him about God, the Creation, the Flood, Nimrod and the tower of Babel, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

All of this played an important role in the birth of what would later become the nation of Israel.

Moses

The children of Jacob (later named Israel) moved to Egypt. Jacob's descendants grew to become a large nation. Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt, was intimidated by these Israelites and enslaved them.

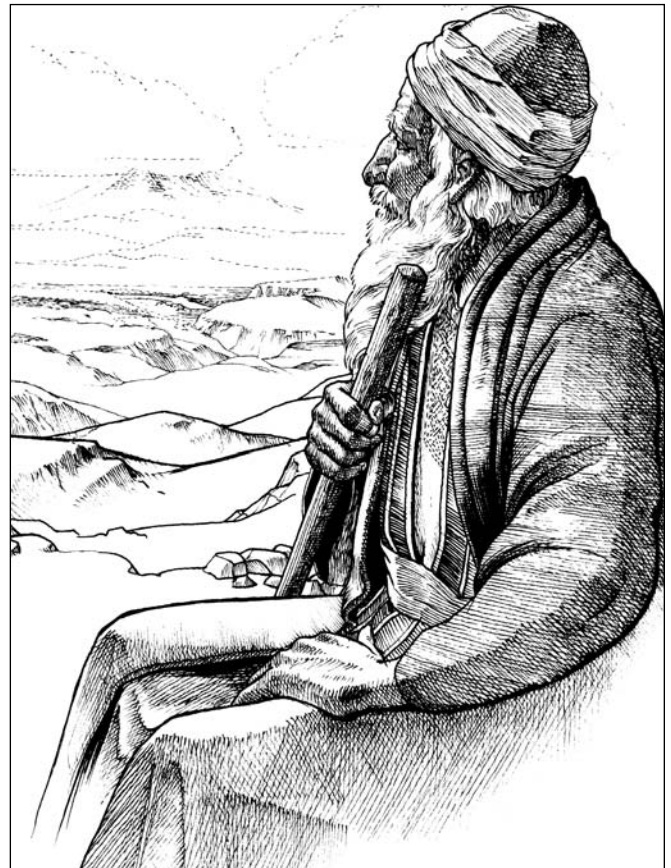
For 150 years, the Israelites were enslaved by the Egyptians. Yet the Israelites were God's chosen people, and He had a plan for them.

God worked with a man named Moses and his brother Aaron. Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh, demanding that God's people be freed. But Pharaoh would not listen.

After ten mighty plagues from God, Pharaoh finally let the Israelites go.

God was going to bring His people to the Promised Land, where they would become a great nation. Moses led the Israelites through the wilderness for 40 years.

Moses himself was not allowed to enter the Promised Land. Joshua, the new leader of Israel, would take them over the Jordan River and into the Promised Land.



ABOUT OUR COVER:

The prophet Samuel anointed Saul as Israel's first king.

Illustrations by Paula Rondeau

Turn to Deuteronomy 8:3-9 to see why Israel journeyed in the wilderness for 40 years: “So He _____, and fed you with _____ which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that _____; but man lives by _____ that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD. Your _____ did not wear out on you, nor did your _____ these forty years. You should know in your heart that as _____, so the LORD your _____. ‘Therefore you shall keep the _____ of the LORD your God, to _____ and to fear Him. For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, that flow out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing; a land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper.’”

Israel entered into the Promised Land and, during the period of the judges, they fell into a pattern. Israel forgot the great power that God had shown them, and they disobeyed His commands because they allowed their carnal nature to get the best of them. When this happened, God removed their material blessings, and the people complained to their leader. Things eventually got so bad that the Israelites cried out to God for help. God helped them and then, for a time, they obeyed God. However, they eventually fell back into

disobedience, and the pattern continued. The same thing happened when they were wandering in the desert before entering the Promised Land.

Samuel

As mentioned in the Lesson One, Samuel was a servant and prophet of God. He was the last judge before the nation of Israel rejected God, and decided they wanted a king instead.

Before Samuel was born, his mother, Hannah, was unable to have children. She promised God that if He would bless her with a child, she would dedicate the child to God’s service.

God gave Hannah a child, and she called him Samuel, saying, “Because I have asked him of the Eternal.” In Hebrew, the name *Samuel* means “heard of God.”

Hannah brought baby Samuel to Eli the high priest. Hannah said to him, “My lord, I am the woman that stood by you here, praying to the Eternal. I asked God to bless me to give birth to a baby boy.” Pointing to Samuel, she said, “This is the child I prayed for. In return, I have lent my only son to the Eternal; as long as Samuel lives, he shall serve God and do His work at the holy tabernacle.”

Under Eli’s fatherly direction, young Samuel spent his childhood learning how to carefully serve God. As Samuel grew to adulthood, God was with him, speaking to him often.

Eventually, all of Israel came to recognize that God had made Samuel His prophet. Every time Samuel said something would

happen, it came true. And he continued to reveal God's will to all Israel.

The Philistines and the Ark

Because Israel had long ago failed to get rid of Canaan's inhabitants, God allowed them to be vexed by their enemies. This is why Israel suffered from constant oppression by the Philistines.

Finally, Israel had had enough. They decided to meet their longtime enemy in battle.

When the two forces advanced onto the battlefield, the Philistines defeated the Israelites, killing about 4,000 soldiers. Clearly, God was not with Israel, else He would have given them the victory.

Seeing the bloodied survivors return to camp, the elders of Israel said among themselves, "Why has the Eternal struck us down before these Philistines? What have we done to deserve this?"

One leader came up with a plan: "What if we go to Shiloh and bring back the Ark of the Covenant? With it by our side, we're guaranteed to be victorious over our enemy!"

Israel was copying the surrounding pagan nations, who always brought their false gods and good luck charms into battle with them. Instead of sincerely seeking God's will, the Israelites decided to take matters into their own hands.

When the Ark of the Covenant reached the camp, the whole army of Israel shouted for joy—so much that the earth rang! However, Israel should have humbled themselves and sought God's guidance,

instead of allowing themselves to be full of pride. Though they knew that the Ark symbolized God's power and presence, they foolishly confused the Ark with God's actual presence. In bringing the Ark into battle, Israel was trying to force God to do their bidding. But God is not a magical "genie" who does whatever people demand of Him.

When the battle came, the Philistines fought as though they had nothing to lose. And, despite having the Ark of the Covenant beside them, Israel was defeated!

God allowed His Ark to be captured to teach Israel that they could not force their will on Him.

When Eli heard of Israel's defeat, he fell backward off his seat, and broke his neck. He lived to be 98 years old, and had been a judge over Israel, as well as a priest, for 40 years.

Like the Israelites, the Philistines believed that possessing the Ark meant that they could control God. The Philistines brought the Ark to the pagan temple of Dagon, the chief of their false gods, and set it before the idol, which was the image of a half man-half fish.

Early the next morning, the people were surprised to discover that Dagon's idol had fallen upon its face, bowing on the ground before the Ark of God! The Eternal showed that He was superior to the Philistines' false god.

Shocked and embarrassed, the people rushed to set Dagon's idol back in its place.

The next morning, the same thing happened again: The idol of Dagon had fallen upon its face before God's Ark. This time, the idol's head and palms were cut off; the

only thing left was the idol's stump! God wanted the Philistines to realize that their false god was powerless before His might.

Next, God struck the people of Ashdod with a horrible, painful sickness—tumors. Carried by diseased rats, God's plague quickly spread throughout the city, and even to many other Philistine towns and villages.

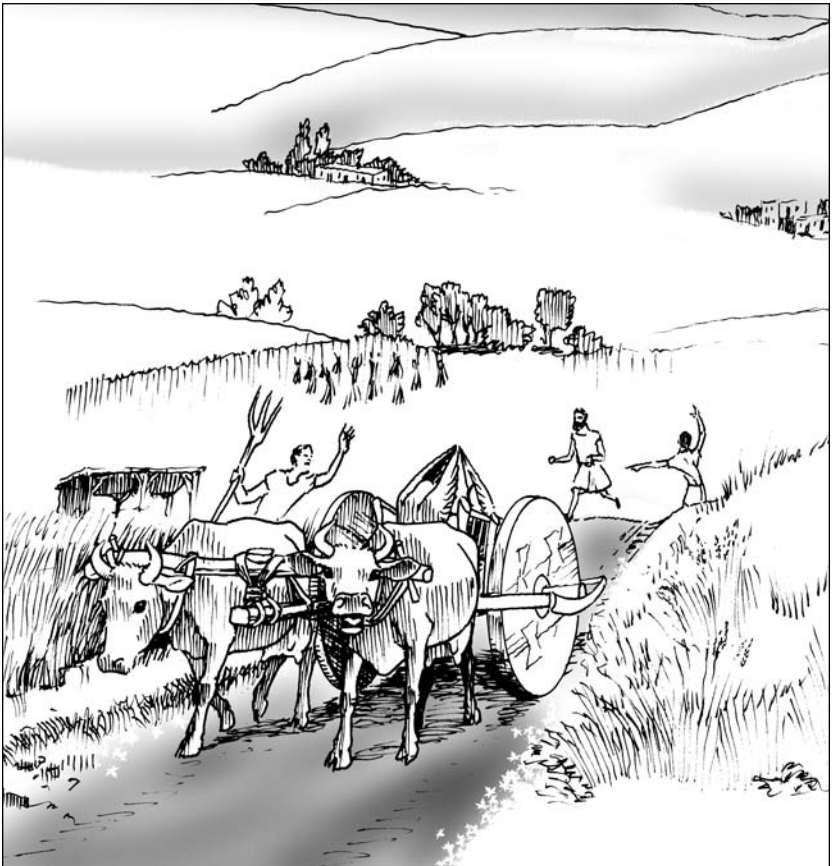
When the Philistines of Ashdod saw these things, they said, "The Ark of the God of Israel shall not stay with us, for His hand is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god."

The lords decided to move the Ark to the city of Gath. God struck down every man in Gath, both small and great, with the same horrible, painful plague of tumors that had spread throughout Ashdod.

The people of Gath sent the Ark to the city of Ekron. But when the ones living there saw that the Ark of the Covenant was being transferred to their city, they were upset. Finally, the Philistines gathered together and sent the Ark back to Israel. The Israelites celebrated as they offered burnt offerings and sacrifices to God.

In all, the Ark of the Covenant had been in the hands of the Philistines for only seven months—but to the Israelites, it seemed like years.

One day, inspired by God, Samuel addressed the people of Israel. Notice what he said in I Samuel 7:3: "Then Samuel



The Ark returns home after seven months in the hands of the Philistines.

spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, 'If _____ with all your hearts, then _____ the _____ and the Ashtoreths from among you, and prepare your hearts for the LORD, and _____; and He will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines.'"

Israel did as Samuel said. They put away the idols of Baalim and the Ashtoreths, the chief false gods of the Canaanites, and set their lives in order. Everyone began to serve God with all their heart.

Samuel judged the Israelites, giving them God's judgments and instructions, and listening to their grievances and cries

for justice. He devoted himself to teaching Israel how to get back to truly serving God.

Test Your Memory:

1) How long was Israel in the wilderness?

2) What was the cycle the Israelites fell into during the time of the judges? _____

3) Why did Israel bring the Ark to battle?

Israel Demands a King

David remembered the day when Samuel came to his father's house to anoint the next king of Israel. He was even more shocked to hear that none of his older brothers was God's choice. In fact, David was anointed as the next king of Israel. From that day forward, his life would change, as he prepared for the special office of king over the nation of Israel.

But David knew that Israel did not always have a king...

Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. He was the leader chosen by God. Joel and Abiah, Samuel's sons, did not walk in their father's ways. Instead, they pursued money and took bribes.

The elders of Israel gathered at Ramah, and confronted Samuel. They said to him, "Samuel, you are old now, and your sons have refused to follow your righteous and

just example. Since we cannot get justice, make for us a king—one who will judge us like all the other nations around us!"

Israel wanted to be like everyone else. They did not want to stand out and be different from the rest of the world, those who reject God and His righteous ways. Israel was more concerned about following worldly people than in following God, their Deliverer and Protector.

Samuel was displeased by their demands, so he did what all servants of God do—he prayed. He wanted to know God's will in this matter.

The Eternal said to him in I Samuel 8:7-9, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have _____, but they have _____, that _____.

According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even to this day—with which they have forsaken Me and served other gods—so they are doing to you also. Now therefore, heed their voice. However, you shall solemnly _____, and show them the behavior of the king who will reign over them."

So Samuel spoke before Israel and gave the people the Eternal's message. He said, "Since you want a human king reigning over your lives like all the other nations, then here is what you can expect: Your king will take your sons and appoint some for his chariots, and some to be his horsemen; and others shall run before his chariots. Your king will appoint for himself captains over thousands and over fifties, and will set them to plant his fields, and to reap his harvest,

and to make his instruments of war and chariots. Your king will take your daughters to be his personal cooks and bakers. And he will take your fields, your vineyards, and your crops of olive trees—even the best of them—and give them to his servants. And your king will take one tenth of your crops and vineyards, and give them to his officers and servants. He will take your servants, both men and women, and your healthiest, strongest young men, and your donkeys, and put them to do his work. He will take one tenth of your sheep, and you shall be his servants.

“And in that day when you cry out to God because of the burdens and demands of your king—whom you have chosen—the Eternal will not hear you.”

This should have sobered the Israelites. But, despite Samuel’s strong warning, the people refused to listen.

Blinded by their desire to be just like all the other nations, Israel wanted to rely on a human king to protect and lead them. They no longer wanted God as their divine King. How foolish!

When Samuel told God what the people had said, the Eternal replied, “Listen to their voice, Samuel, and make a king for them.”

Samuel obeyed God’s command. He went back to the Israelites and said, “You wanted a king—and so you shall have what you desire!”

Saul

There once was a man of wealth and influence named Kish, who was from the tribe of Benjamin. Kish had a young son named

Saul, who was more handsome than any other man in Israel. Also, this young man was so tall that he seemed to tower over everyone in the land.

God had told Samuel, “Tomorrow about this time, I will send you a man from the tribe of Benjamin. You shall anoint—set apart—this man to be commander and ruler over My people Israel. I will use him to save My people from the hand of the Philistines, for I have looked upon My people, and have heard their cry for help.”

When Samuel saw Saul, the Eternal said to him, “This is the man of whom I spoke! He is the one who shall reign over My people.”



Samuel understood why God would do this: Saul had the right attitude—humble, teachable. He did not think that he was more important than others.

Samuel took a vial of olive oil, poured it upon Saul’s head, and kissed the young man on the cheek. The prophet said, “The Eternal God has anointed you to be the commander over His inheritance, Israel.”

(The Hebrew root word for *Saul* means “asked of God.” From his physical appear-

ance, Saul was the kind of king Israel had asked for—tall, handsome and impressive. But more importantly, Saul was the kind of man God was looking for to be king—humble and not self-important.)

The people of Israel, represented by their tribal elders and clan leaders, obeyed Samuel’s instruction to assemble before God at Mizpeh. When everyone had arrived, Samuel addressed the assembly, delivering the words of the Eternal God of Israel:

“Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all kingdoms and from those who oppressed you.’ But you have today rejected your God, who Himself saved you from all your adversities and your tribulations; and you have said to Him, ‘No, set a king over us!’ Now therefore, present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes and by your clans” (1 Samuel 10:18-19).

Samuel had all the tribes of Israel come to the altar, one after the other. From among them, God chose the tribe of Benjamin. Next, all the clans of Benjamin came to the altar. From out of these, God chose the clan of Matri. From this clan, God chose the family of Kish. And from Kish’s family, the Eternal chose Saul.

When God’s choice was finally known, the people immediately looked for their new king—but Saul could not be found! Overwhelmed by the weight of instant fame, Saul hid himself. He did not like being the center of attention.

So the Israelites prayerfully turned to God to find out where Saul was.

God answered, “Your new king is hiding behind the military supplies.”

The people rushed over to the stockpile of military supplies and pulled him out of his hiding place. The moment he stood up, the people were in awe: Saul was a head taller than everyone else in the crowd!

Then Samuel said to all the people, “Do you see the man whom the Eternal has chosen—that there is no one like him among all Israel?”

Saul wanted so desperately to hide, for everyone’s eyes were upon him, impressed by his towering height and good looks.

Suddenly, everyone cheered, “Long live the king!”

During the first two years of King Saul’s reign over Israel, there was peace. Sadly, however, something tragic happened to Saul: The humility he had been known for became replaced by pride and self-importance. King Saul was headed down a dangerous—and ultimately deadly—path.

When tested, Saul gave way to impatience and human reasoning. In one event, Saul took upon himself the sacred duties of a priest, which God did not give him the authority to do. Saul had forgotten that the kings of Israel were not to set themselves above God’s Law. But, with his mind full of fear, vanity and self-importance, Saul deceived himself into believing that he could break God’s commands and somehow make everything turn out for the best.

“That was foolish, Saul!” Samuel said. “You did not obey the Eternal your God.” God expects His leaders to fear and obey Him, even in the smallest matters. If they

do, God then knows that He can trust them with larger responsibilities.

The prophet said, “If you had kept God’s commandment, your dynasty would have been established. Someone from your family line would always have been king of Israel. But no, you chose to disobey. Therefore, the Eternal will not choose anyone from your family or descendants to be king. Instead, God has sought for Himself a man after His own heart. This man will be the next leader of His people.”

Saul’s sin of disobedience affected him and his descendants. This account is an example of how one man’s sin affects not just the sinner, but also the lives of future generations.

Test Your Memory:

1) Why did Israel want a king? _____

2) Why was Saul picked as king? _____

3) What dangerous attitudes developed in Saul? _____

David and Goliath

As David walked to where the army of Israel was encamped, including three of his brothers, all of these stories were in his mind.

His job was to bring supplies from his father Jesse. But the word was out about a Philistine man named Goliath. Towering at more than nine feet tall, Goliath wore a

bronze helmet, and bronze armor—plates of brass overlapping like scales on a fish—to protect his chest and legs. The chest armor alone weighed about 125 pounds! He carried a bronze sword strapped on his back. He also had a spear so big that the iron spearhead alone weighed more than fifteen pounds. Whenever he went out to do battle, Goliath always had a soldier walk before him to carry his shield. To all who saw him, this Philistine giant seemed invincible—and he was Israel’s worst nightmare.

David had heard that Goliath marched out onto the battlefield and shouted to the army of Israel: “Why are you lining up for battle? I’m the best soldier in my army, and all of you are in Saul’s army. Choose your best soldier, and let him come out to fight me! If he can slay me, our people will be your slaves. But if I slay him, your people will be our slaves. I challenge the whole army of Israel! Choose someone to fight me!”

For 40 days, Goliath came out every morning and every evening, challenging the Israelites to send out a champion.

David reached Israel’s camp just as the soldiers were taking their places and shouting the battle cry. The armies of Israel and the Philistines lined up on opposite sides of the valley, facing each other. Leaving his things with the man in charge of supplies, David ran up to the battle line to ask his brothers if they were well.

While David was talking with them, Goliath marched out onto the battlefield and started boasting as usual. David could hardly believe what he was hearing.

David asked some soldiers standing nearby, “What will a man get for killing this

Philistine and stopping him from insulting our people? Who does that worthless Philistine think he is? He's defying the army of the living God!"

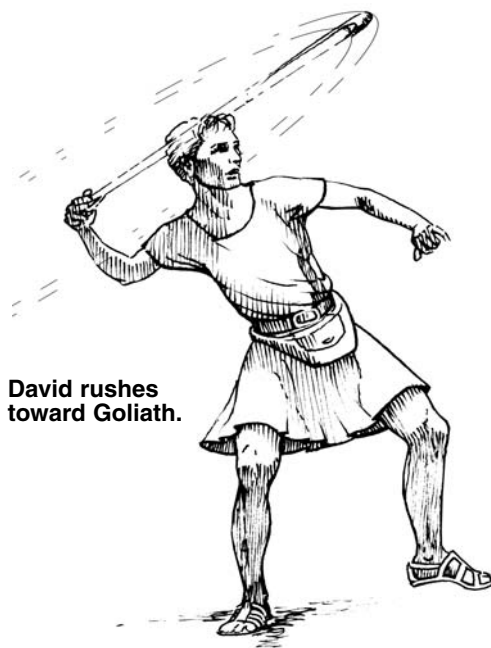
The soldiers told him, "King Saul is offering a big reward to the man who kills Goliath. That man will even get to marry the king's daughter, and no one in his family will ever have to pay taxes again."

Eliab, David's oldest brother, heard him talking with the soldiers—and he was angry with him. He said, "What are you doing here? Who's taking care of our little flock of sheep out in the wilderness? You're nothing but a spoiled brat! You came here just to watch the fighting, didn't you?"

"What have I done?" David said. "Can't I even ask a question?"

Some soldiers overheard David talking, so they told Saul, who sent for the lad.

"My lord," David said to him, "this Philistine shouldn't be allowed to turn us into cowards. I will go out and fight him myself!"



David rushes toward Goliath.

"You don't have a prayer against him, son," Saul replied. "You're just a lad, while Goliath has been a professional soldier all his life."

But David said, "My lord, I am a shepherd of my father's sheep. When one of them is dragged off by a lion or a bear, I go after it and beat the wild animal until it lets the sheep go. If the wild animal turns and attacks me, I grab it by the neck and kill it. Sir, I have killed lions and bears that way, and I can certainly kill this worthless Philistine, too. Besides, he should not have defied the army of the living God!"

Like Jonathan (I Samuel 41:6), David had the kind of faith to take on the impossible. "The Eternal has rescued me from the claws of lions and bears, and He will keep me safe from the hands of this Philistine."

"All right then," Saul said, "go ahead and fight him. And may the Eternal be with you!"

Saul put his own military garments and armor on David, and gave him a bronze helmet to wear. David was unable to move in the armor.

So David took off Saul's armor and picked up his shepherd's rod, a 30-inch long wooden rod with a knob at one end. He then went to a stream and picked up five round smooth rocks, a little larger than baseballs. In the hands of an expert, these rocks can be hurled at close to 100 miles per hour! David put them in his leather bag, then, with his sling in his hand, he went straight toward Goliath.

Because he had been faithfully obeying God, David knew that the Eternal would not abandon him.

Goliath was surprised to see a champion from Israel coming out to fight. But when the nine-foot-tall giant saw that David was only a boy, he insulted him.

“What do you think I am—a dog?” Goliath asked. “Is that why you’ve come after me with a stick? Come on, then, boy! When I’m finished with you, I’ll feed what’s left of your body to the birds and wild animals!”

Boldly, David answered, “You come to me with a _____, with a _____, and with a _____.

But I come to you in the _____, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the LORD will _____ you into _____, and I will strike you and take your

head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that _____ may know that there is a _____. Then all this assembly shall know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD’s, and He will give you into our hands”(1 Samuel 17:45-47).

David saw the “big picture”: The Philistines were not fighting just against Israel. They were actually fighting against the Supreme God of the universe—a fight they could never win! David’s confidence was in the Eternal—not in his own human abilities.

Goliath started forward, and David ran toward him, put a rock in his sling and swung the sling around by its straps. As he let go of one strap, the rock flew out and smashed Goliath on the forehead, cracking his skull. The Philistine giant fell facedown on the earth—Goliath was dead!

David rushed over, pulled out Goliath’s sword, and used it to cut off the giant’s head.

In the next Lesson, we will learn more about David and how he became king of Israel.



Goliath stands defiant.

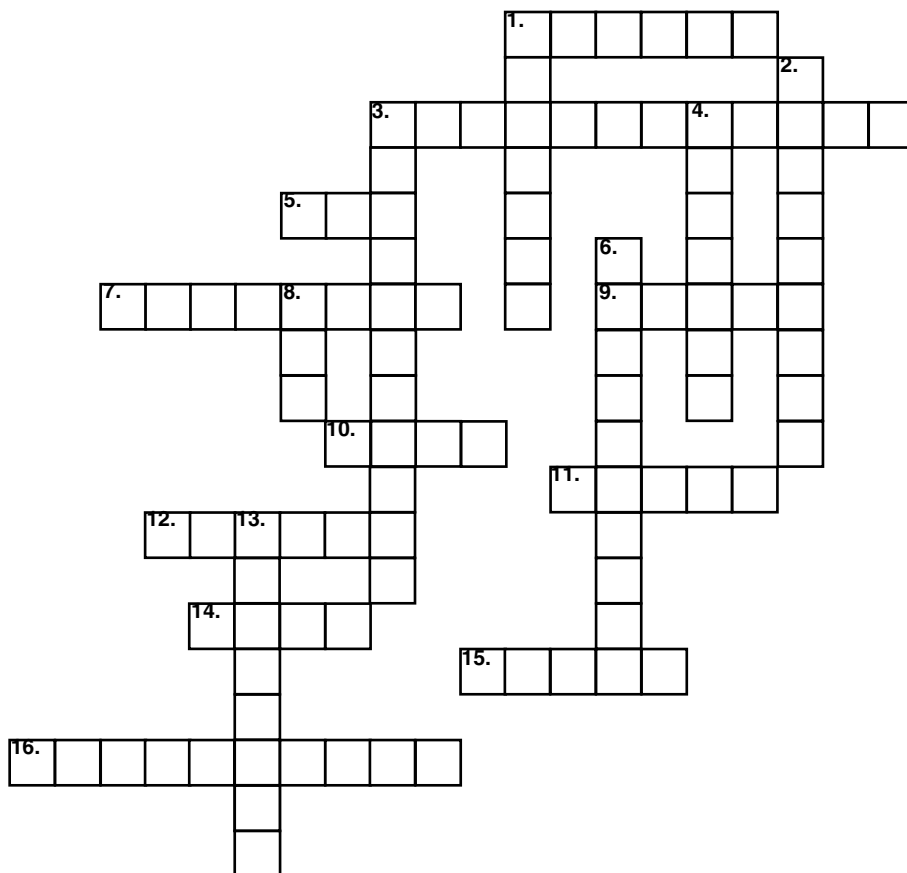
Test Your Memory:

1) How tall was Goliath? _____

2) David confronted Goliath with whose power? _____

BIBLE MEMORY: Deuteronomy 8:2
1 Samuel 8:6-7
1 Samuel 16:7

Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

1. The mother of Samuel.
3. God brought the Israelites to the _____.
5. The priest who taught Samuel.
7. The tribe of Saul.
9. What David used to kill Goliath.
10. The father of Saul.
11. The man who led the nation of Israel out of Egypt.
12. Goliath carried a _____ sword strapped on his back.
14. The type of leader the Israelites wanted.
15. The humility of Saul was replaced with _____.
16. In Hebrew, the name Samuel means _____.

DOWN

1. In the wilderness, God _____ Israel.
2. Samuel commanded Israel to put away their _____.
3. Longtime enemies of the Israelites.
4. Goliath was _____ the army of the living God!
6. The Hebrew meaning of Saul's name.
8. The _____ was stolen from Israel.
13. What Samuel used to anoint Saul.