

A Rejected King

1 Samuel 15:1-35

Big Idea : Saul's failure to completely obey God's commands was a rejection of God and so God rejected him as king.

Aim : To teach that ongoing and deliberate disobedience will be judged by God.

The Story So Far

Week 1:

- Israel rejected God as their king and demanded a human king so they could be like the other nations.
- Samuel warned them what a human king would do, but they insisted so he agreed to anoint a king.

Week 2:

- Samuel anointed Saul as God's chosen king of Israel.
- Saul was reluctant to be king and not everyone accepted him.

Week 3:

- Saul proved himself to be an impatient and impulsive leader with little regard for the word of the Lord.
- Saul made a rash vow and was willing to kill his own son because of it, but his men would not let him do this.

was to totally destroy the Amalekites, including all their livestock. The warning given to the Kenites shows that God was not on a murderous rampage; he was carrying out a specific judgement on the Amalekites for attacking his people when they came out of Egypt (cf. Exodus 17:8-16). The Amalekites were wicked people who had rejected God and taken advantage of his people when they were weak and weary (15:18).

15:4-9 Saul and his army only obeyed God's instructions in part. When he was confronted by Samuel it's clear that Saul allowed his greedy men to take the best of the livestock because he was afraid of them and wanted them to think well of him (15:24, 30).

15:10-12 The Lord described Saul's partial obedience as a total rejection of God. God's grief over making Saul king is not because he was unable to foresee Saul's downfall or that he had changed his mind (cf 15:29). Instead it shows that Saul had fallen short of all that a king was meant to be.

Saul's heart is exposed in the self-glorifying monument he set up. There's no doubt about who he attributed his success to!

15:13-26 Saul's lack of remorse over his disobedience and his attempts to justify his actions highlight the fact that he was unsuitable as Israel's king. He even attempted a religious cover-up by claiming that the livestock was intended for sacrifice. He was more concerned about outward appearances than wholehearted obedience. It was because of this rejection of the word of the Lord, spoken by his prophet Samuel, that God rejected Saul as king. To reject the word of the Lord is to reject the Lord himself.



Leader's Study Notes

Read 1 Samuel 15:1-35 noting how Saul responded when Samuel confronted him with his disobedience.

Use the following notes to help you think about the passage in more detail.

This chapter, and those that follow, form the backdrop to David's rise as Israel's second king. They describe the final act in Saul's ongoing failure to carefully keep all that the Lord commanded him to do. When Saul was confronted by his sin his real motives were revealed.

15:1-3 Samuel reminded Saul that although he was king, he had been anointed by Samuel and was to remain subject to the Lord's word spoken by his prophet. God gave specific instructions to Saul that he

15:27-35 Samuel confirmed that God had given his kingdom to someone else (cf. 13:14). The Lord would not change his mind despite Saul's desperate pleas. Saul was more concerned about his reputation among the people. Samuel carried out God's instructions to Saul by killing the Amalekite king.

When confronted by his sin Saul seems at first to be blind to it, but then tried to justify his actions, even giving them the appearance of religious devotion. He eventually confessed and repented, but it was obvious he could never be the king that Israel needed. Saul, like all of us, was a fickle sinner blind to his own shortcomings. He was more concerned about his reputation amongst people than his relationship with God. It is because of this that he never wholeheartedly and completely obeyed God's commands.

Reflect

- Think of a time when you were confronted with a particular sin. How did you respond? Did you accept responsibility or did you try to justify yourself?
- What can we learn from Saul about how not to respond to our sin? In what ways might your attitude need to change with regard to your sin and God's word?
- Thank God that he has dealt with your sin in Jesus. Ask him to help you cultivate a godly distrust of your own righteousness and a firm trust in the grace he has given you in Christ.

Games and activities- **Pick and Choose**

- You will need 2 participants for this activity
 - Using the following challenges explain to the children that they need to complete at least 5 out of the 10 challenges
 - Each time they will have the choice of saying 'no' to a challenge which will force the other child to do the challenge instead, but they can only say 'no' three times
 - If one child says 'no' to a challenge the other child must complete it
1. eat a biscuit and whistle
 2. do ten press-ups
 3. hop on on one foot
 4. sing happy birthday
 5. recite incey whincey spider
 6. Open a bag of chips using your feet
 7. Recite Ps119:11
 8. Get one family member to laugh by saying 'honey if you love me please smile'
 9. Do an impersonation of your dad
 10. Share a story when you told a lie to get out of trouble

Discuss

Why did they say 'no' to certain challenges?

Why did they choose to do some of them?

In today's true story from the Bible Saul was given instructions from God, but he only chose to obey some of them and Samuel had to complete the task for him.

Excuses, Excuses!

Crimes

- 1.eaten the last biscuit
- 2.put a frog in the classroom
- 3.smashed a vase
- 4.Cheated on a test
- 5.Punched a sibling
- 6.Snuck onto a device
- 7.Didn't obey mom or dad
- 8.Called someone a nasty name
- 9.Pushed in front of the line
- 10.Eaten chocolate from the cupboard without asking

Print page 57 onto paper and cut roughly around the crowns.

The children sit in a circle on the floor

You will need two kings from a deck of playing cards and enough numbered cards to make up the total number of participants

Be sure to remove any other picture cards from the deck.

At the start of each round read out one of the crimes from your list.

Shuffle the cards and deal out one card facedown to each participant.

When you count to three the participants turn over their cards.

The two participants with the king cards must come up with a reason for committing that crime.

You select the excuse you think is best by giving that child one crown.

Play several rounds of the game in this way and then count up the crowns.

The child with the most crowns loses (don't reveal this until the end)!

Remind the children that in today's true story from the Bible Saul disobeyed Samuel's instructions from God. He made lots of excuses, but none of them were very good! This wasn't the first time Saul had ignored God's word and so God rejected Saul as king.



Activity

For 3-7s – choose either Activity A (page 58) or Activity B (page 59).

Activity A – Print page 58 onto paper for each child.

Before the lesson cut the page as marked.

The children colour in the pictures. Help them to glue the picture of Saul over the cattle and sheep as marked. Show them how to fold the picture of Saul to the left to reveal the sheep and cattle.

Remind them that Saul did not fully obey God's command to destroy everything belonging to the Amalekites. Because Saul rejected God's word, God rejected him as king.

Activity B – Print page 59 onto paper (one copy for every child).

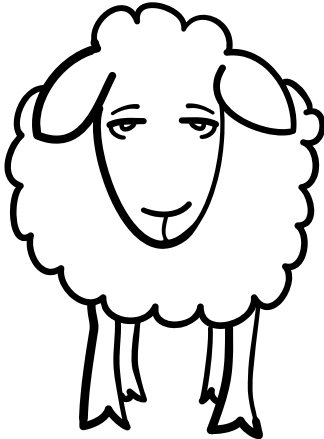
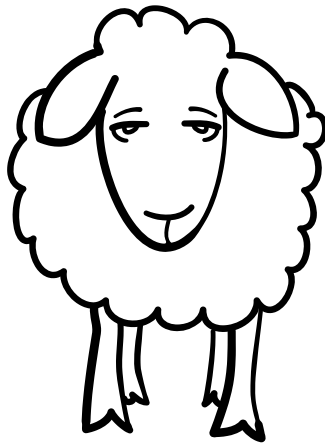
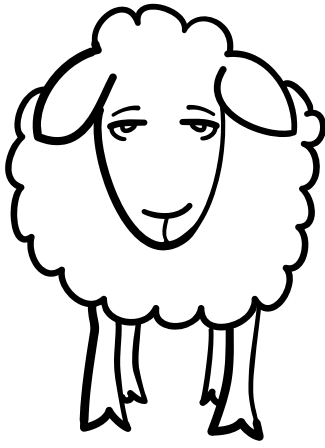
Before the lesson cut the page as marked to produce a strip of paper with a crown and two ears. Use a craft blade to cut the four vertical slits above Saul's head.

The children colour in the pictures. Help them to weave the strip through the slits starting from the underside of the page on the right side and alternating in and out towards the left.

Help the children to tape a toothpick with the sharp ends cut off to the back of the strip near the ear with the cross through it. This will prevent the strip being pulled all the way out.

Show the children how to pull the ear without the cross over it to move the strip from left to right. This will make the ear with the cross through it appear and the crown disappear.

Remind them that Saul did not listen to God or fully obey his command to destroy everything belonging to the Amalekites. Because Saul rejected God's word, God rejected him as king.



Sheep



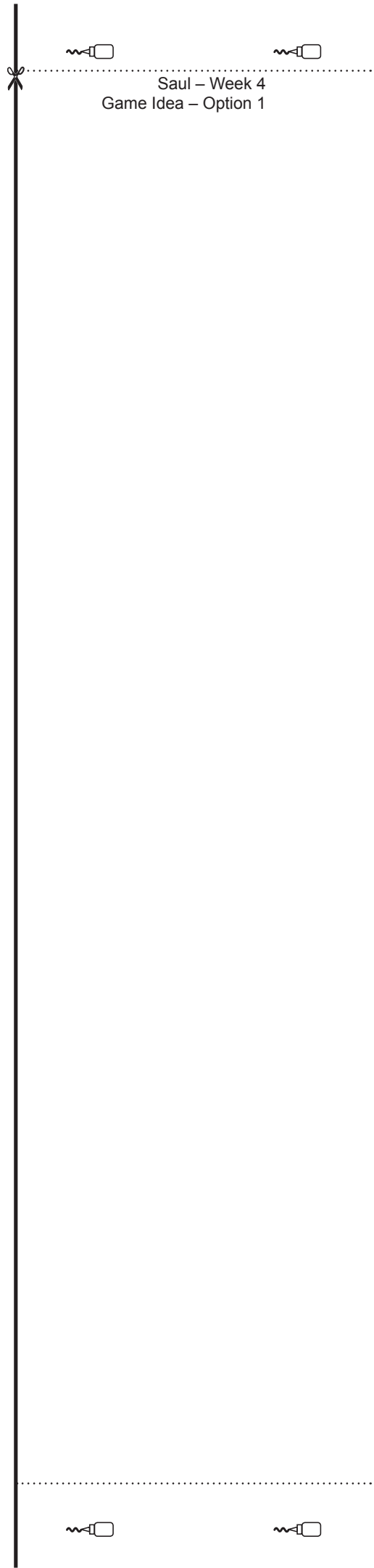
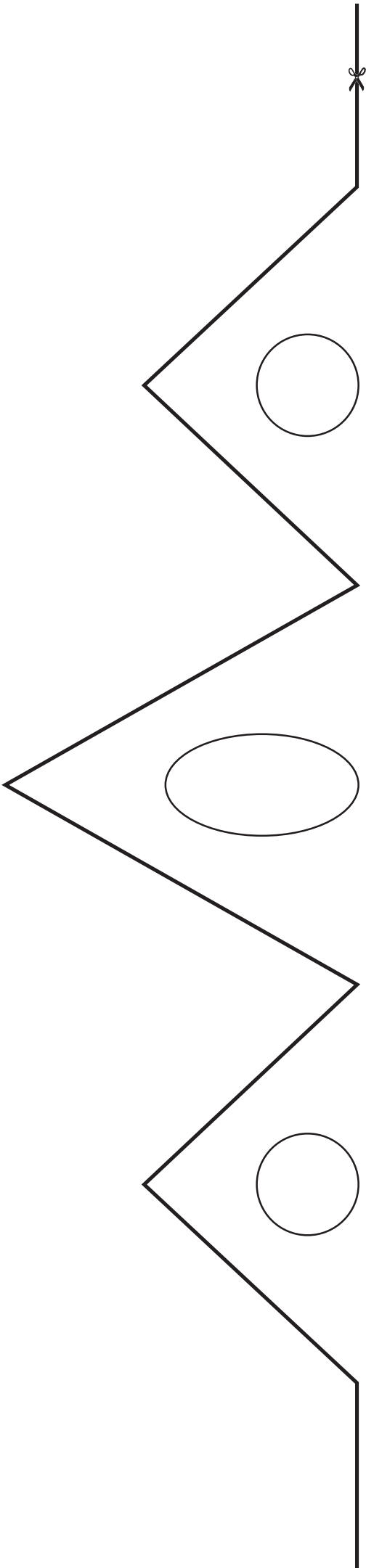
Saul pleading with Samuel

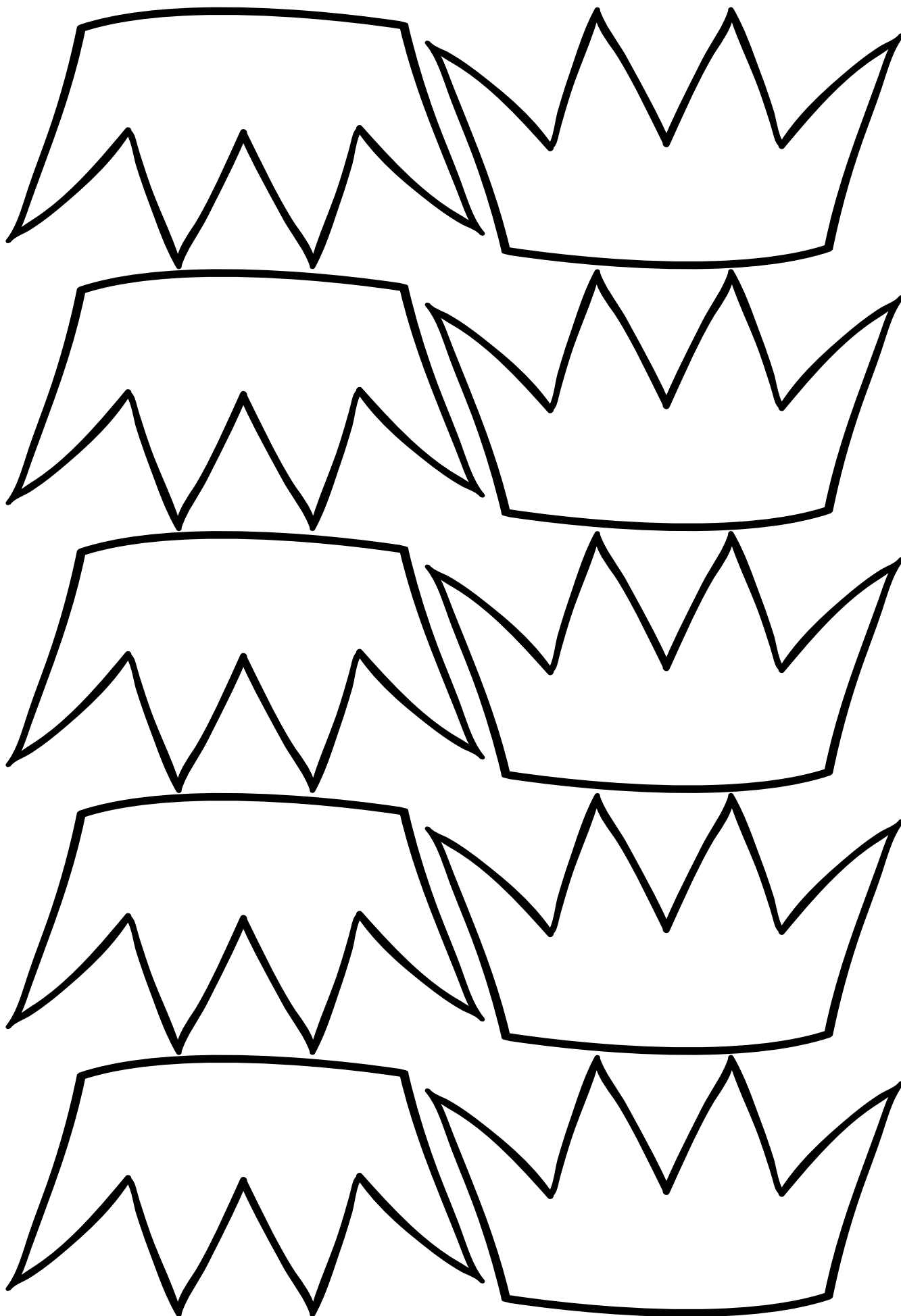


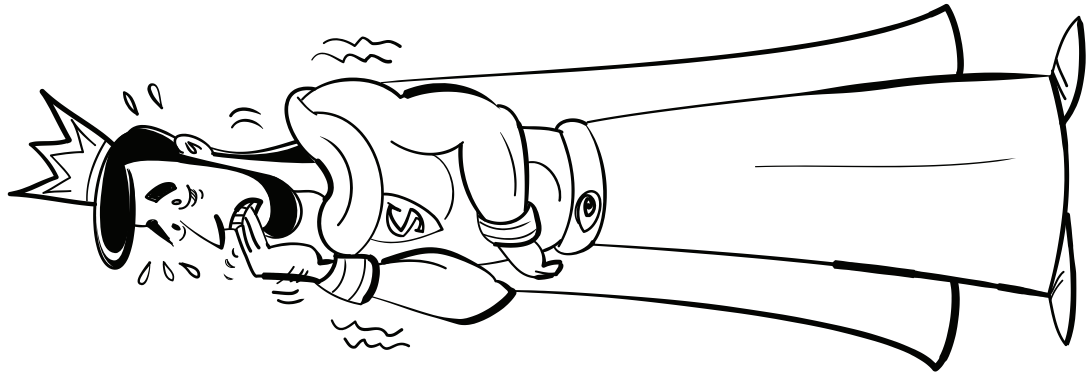
Samuel killed King Agag



King Agag





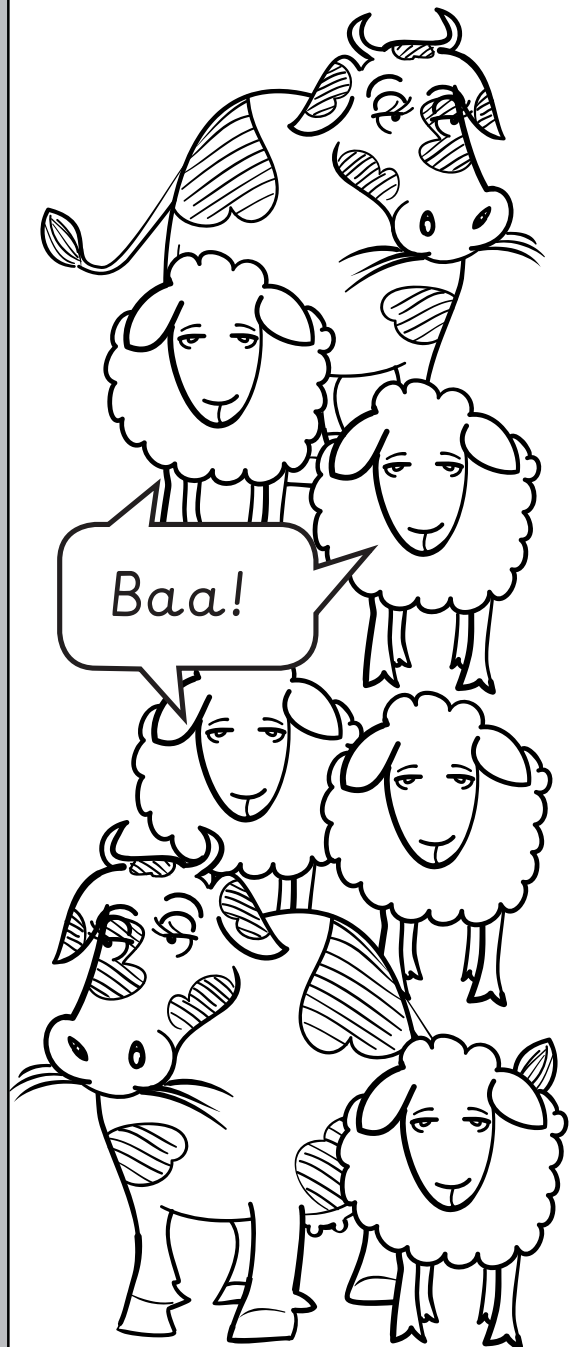


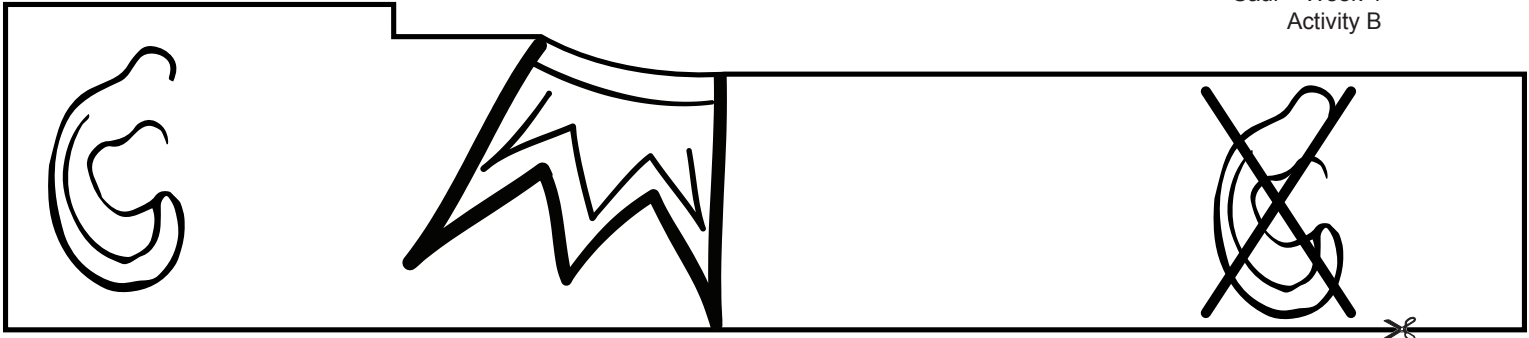
Saul did not fully obey
God's command.



Because you
have rejected
the word of
the Lord, he
has rejected
you as king.

| Samuel 15





Saul did not fully
obey God's command.
1 Samuel 15

