



# A Shepherd Boy Grows Up to Be King

**Goal:** To recognize gifts of leadership.

## RECOGNIZING GOD’S GRACE . . .

### . . . In 2 Samuel 5:1–5; 7:18–29

After Saul’s death, Israel’s leaders said to David: “Even when Saul was king, you led our nation in battle. And the LORD promised that someday you would rule Israel and take care of us like a shepherd” (5:2). Then, “the leaders poured olive oil on David’s head to show that he was now the king of Israel” (v. 3). The shepherd boy had become the king of the nation.

In his prayer to God, David acknowledged that he and his family didn’t deserve what God had done for them (7:18–19). David affirmed, “I am your servant” (v. 20). He praised God’s greatness: “LORD All-Powerful, you are greater than all others. No one is like you, and you alone are God” (v. 22). He knew, “You have chosen Israel to be your people forever, and you have become their God” (v. 24). The world will acknowledge that “the LORD God All-Powerful rules Israel, and David’s descendants are his chosen kings” (v. 26).

This is how David approached his kingship. He praised God and what God had done, seeking to be God’s servant. His kingship was to be in God’s service. David knew he had received God’s grace. He responded in obedience and gratitude!

### . . . In Your Children’s Experiences

David’s understanding of the kind of king he was to be for God’s people provides a good introduction to the concept of leadership and the kind of leaders God needs. Younger and older elementary-age children will be able to name qualities they have seen in leaders, both wise and foolish. Children of all ages may have experienced what it means to be a leader, sharing about a time when they were asked to do something: at school, at home, or another setting like sports, scouts, or music.

Helping them make the connection between the biblical story and their own observations or experiences with leadership will remind them that God still calls us today to be wise and faithful leaders in the world.

### . . . In Your Relationships with the Children

As you prepare to teach this story about David, think about the children in your group. What qualities or gifts do you see in each one? One of the things in the story to point out to the children is David’s awareness that he knew God had blessed his life. David knew that God’s grace and presence surrounded him as he led God’s people as king. As the children leave this session, gather them in a circle and give each one a blessing, naming a particular gift of leadership you see in this child.

*O God, I pray for world leaders who seek justice and cultivate peace.  
Give me and my children a vision of a world at peace. Amen.*

## Supplies

**Music & Melodies**  
(MM) 2022–2023

**Stories, Colors & More**  
(SCM) i–iv, 9, 9a, 15, 19

basic supplies  
(see p. vii)

story audio (see p. vii)

green cloth

candle

biblical costumes, such  
as robes and tunics  
(optional)

## Responding

### Claiming

three cardboard boxes

### Celebrating

crowns from  
“Welcoming and  
Preparing”

### Praying

copies of **Grace Notes**  
(GN) 1

### Offering

GN 1

### Extra

copies of GN 2

## GATHERING IN GOD’S GRACE

Post **SCM i–ii**, “Your Visual Schedule,” to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii–iv** for the key to icons (for example,      ) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

“Claiming God’s Grace” requires more prep.

### Welcoming and Preparing

Play “Every Time I Feel the Spirit”—**MM 13**—as children arrive. Welcome each child with “Grace and peace be with you, (Name).” Prompt the children to respond, “And also with you.”

Invite the children to help prepare the setting as they arrive. Create a worship area with a green cloth, a candle, and a Bible.

Ask a few children to help prepare any “Responding in Gratitude” activities you may be doing today. Suggest that one or two prepare to lead today’s singing. Today’s Scripture passage is lengthy. Decide if you will have volunteers read it or use **SCM 9**. Ask for several volunteers to practice the reading.

Ask the children to make crowns. Have them fold construction paper in the center along its length, then cut along the fold. Staple the two halves together to create a long strip. Let children decorate their crowns. Once decorated, place the crown on each child’s head and staple into a circle sized to fit.

### Singing

Gather the group together in the worship space. Play “Bim Bam”—**MM 3**; **SCM 15**—and invite the children to dance along as they sing. Set the crowns aside for use in “Celebrating God’s Grace.”

### Praying

Turn on the candle. Invite children to close their eyes and breathe deeply.

Offer this prayer, inviting the children to repeat each line after you:

God, thank you for your love. /  
Thank you for listening to our prayers. /  
Show us how to be leaders, /  
loving and serving others. /  
Amen. /

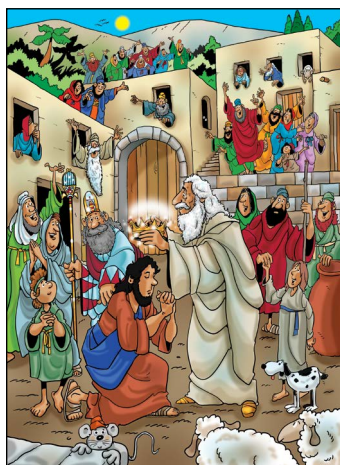


### Preparing to Hear the Story

C L

Invite the children to tell what they know about David. Use the cards from **SCM 9a** to help sequence some events in David's life. Explain that the story they are about to hear takes place after David defeated Goliath, but before he became king of Israel.

- L** *Children who struggle with attention may have difficulty during story time. To help with focus and comprehension, suggest listening prompts, engage them with movement, or provide a specific item within the story picture to find.*



### Hearing the Story

C L

Have a child open the Bible to 2 Samuel 5. Comment that this story stretches over several chapters. Ask for several volunteers to read 2 Samuel 5:1–5 and 7:18–29 or **SCM 9**. Conclude the reading by saying, “Word of wisdom, Word of grace,” and prompt the children to say, “Thanks be to God.” Place the open Bible in the worship area.

Read the story again using **SCM 9** or listen to the story audio, asking the children to listen carefully when David praises God. After the story, invite the children to create motions to use during David's prayer of praise as you read it again.

### Reflecting on God's Grace

C

Encourage children to recall times when David remembered and recognized God's Spirit with him. Let the children select one or more cards used in “Preparing to Hear the Story.” Invite the children to act out the times David felt God's presence. Refer to **SCM 9** as needed. Provide biblical costumes if your children enjoy dressing up.

### Singing

Play and sing together “Every Time I Feel the Spirit”—**MM 13**; **SCM 19**—remembering the times David prayed to and praised God. Turn off the candle.



## RESPONDING IN GRATITUDE

Select activities appropriate for your group and for the time available.



### Claiming God's Grace

MS LG

Stack three large cardboard boxes to make a “faithful leader.” Invite the children to form three groups. The first group will draw a simple head and shoulders on the top box. On the middle box, the second group will draw a simple chest and arms. And on the bottom box, the third group will draw legs and feet. When they have completed the parts, invite them to restack the boxes to make their leader. (It does not matter if the lines match up.)

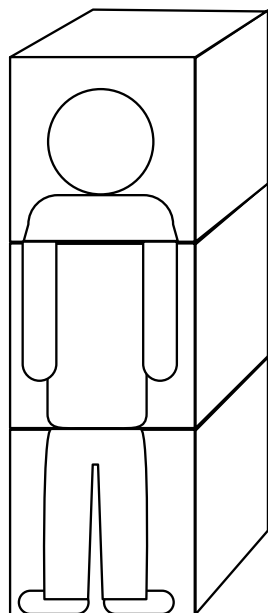
Create a sign by writing the words “Leadership Skills” on a piece of construction paper. Attach the sign to one side of the stack.

Invite the children to identify ways David was a good leader.

Encourage the children to write or draw each skill on a part of the body or another side of the box that represents the skill. (Example: “looks after his people” near the eyes or “praying” near the mouth or heart.)

Then, engage the children in identifying ways they can be good leaders in their church or community. Have them add these to the faithful leader. Wonder together what role prayer might play in good leadership.

Plan with the children ways they can begin to use their leadership skills either in the group or in the larger church setting. Talk with the appropriate persons in the church for such opportunities for the children.



If boxes are not available, trace a child on a large piece of mural paper.

### Celebrating God's Grace

M

Invite the children to put on the crowns they created in “Welcoming and Preparing” and make a circle. Sing the song “I Am Called to Serve” (below) to the tune of “The Farmer in the Dell.” Read the verses a couple of times for the children to learn the words. Encourage the children to sing and dance to the song.

I am called to serve (*circle right*)  
I am called to serve (*circle right*)  
Just like David as a king (*circle left*)  
I am called to serve (*circle right*)

I will lead with grace (*circle right*)  
I will lead with grace (*circle right*)  
God wants me to serve with love (*circle left*)  
I will lead with grace (*circle right*)



LD VI

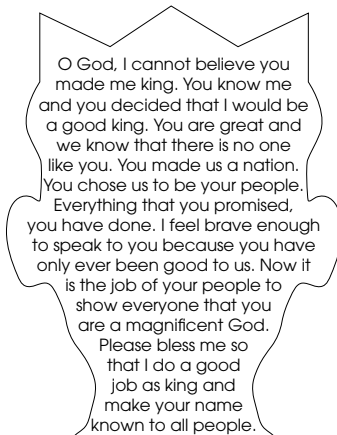
## Praying God's Grace

Remind the children that David had to do a lot of brave things during his life and that he learned to trust God to help him during those times. Ask a volunteer to read the prayer from **GN 1**.

Remind the children that David prayed to God for help because he knew being king was a big job for him. Lead a discussion of some of the big things the children have to accomplish as they grow up, such as finishing each grade, making decisions about who will be their friends, making healthy choices, and so forth.

Tell the children that all of that is part of “the big picture of one’s life.” Hold up a copy of **GN 1** and step back a bit. See if the children can imagine the shape of King David’s head formed by the poem (see sidebar).

Wonder together about prayer and the ways and places we talk with God, such as kneeling by our beds, sitting in church, and walking in the woods. Pass out paper and ask children to draw a picture of themselves in prayer. When they are done, ask them to write or draw one job they would like to do better to serve God.



**LD** *Looking up Bible passages can be difficult for readers and non-readers alike. Help children understand the two parts of the Bible: Old Testament and New Testament, where the Gospels are found. Older children often enjoy helping younger children.*

## Offering God's Grace

LD

Invite the children to think about David’s prayer; see **GN 1**. Engage them in a discussion of how we show our appreciation to other people and to God. The prayer in today’s story is one of the ways David praised God.

Tell the children that David wrote other prayers. Some of those prayers are in the book of Psalms.

Give Bibles to the children. Help them find the book of Psalms by opening the Bible to the middle. Encourage them to look at the headings for several psalms, especially noting psalms of thanksgiving, such as Psalm 34, 100, 107, and 118.

Have the children find Psalm 136. Read verses 1–9 responsively. Have the children respond with the latter part of each verse, “For his steadfast love endures forever,” as you read the first part of each verse.

Ask the children if there are things David has left out of his prayer that they would like to include. Encourage them to name anything they would add. List these on newsprint. As the children name the items, everyone else responds, “For his steadfast love endures forever.”

Take the completed prayer of thanksgiving to the pastor or worship ministry team and ask if it can be included in a worship service.



Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so you can send the Grace Sightings link, or invite them to visit [www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads](http://www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads). Remind the parents and caregivers about the story audio (see p. vii).

### Extra Activity

Give each child a copy of **GN 2**. Invite the children to look at the picture as a whole. Encourage them to tell what they think is happening in this picture. Then give them time to search for and color the seven crowns that are hidden in the picture (not the one being placed on David's head). Invite them to color the whole picture.

## LOVING AND SERVING GOD

LG

Invite the children to gather, and lead them in cleaning up the worship space.

Explain that sometimes we can pray without saying a word; our deep thoughts can be prayers or movement can be a prayer. Invite children to offer their prayers for God's help from "Praying God's Grace" by placing their drawings on the worship table. Offer a simple closing, such as, "Receive our prayers. Amen."

Send the children with the blessing:

Go in peace to serve with grace and love wherever you can.  
And know that the grace of God goes with you. Amen.

O God, I cannot believe you made me king. You know me and you decided that I would be a good king. You are great and we know that there is no one like you. You made us a nation. You chose us to be your people.

Everything that you promised, you have done. I feel brave enough to speak to you because you have only ever been good to us. Now it is the job of your people to show everyone that you are a magnificent God.

Please bless me so that I do a good job as king and make your name known to all people.







