

The Case of the Missing Donkeys

1 Samuel 9



Story-telling Tips

Ahead of time:

1. Read the Bible verses and story. Pray!
2. Choose story action cues and/or prepare storyboard figures, if using. (Included in Visual Aids book)
3. Practice telling story with the storyboard pictures, timing your presentation. Shorten, if necessary.

During your presentation:

1. Maintain as much eye contact as possible as you tell the story.
2. Put up storyboard figures/add story action cues as you tell the story. Allow the children to help you put them on the board, if desired.
3. Include the children in your story with a few questions about what they think will happen or words/concepts that might be new to them.

INTRODUCTION/ LISTENING ASSIGNMENTS

"Our story is called: The Case of the Missing Donkeys. Here is your listening assignment." Read from Detective Dan's Listening Assignment signs, but questions are summarized below:

Detective Dan's Lesson #1 Listening Assignment:

I need to find out:

1. Who lost their donkeys?
2. What good, big plan did the LORD use the lost donkeys to bring about?

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:

Our Bible Verse is Daniel 2:20, ESV

"Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might."

I need to find out:

1. What stranger did the LORD tell Samuel to prepare for?
2. Why did Samuel trust the LORD to know when this stranger would come?

Detective Dan's Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

I found six clues, but only 4 of them are in the story.

They are: an ice cream cone, a jar of oil, a man named Kish, a piano, a crown, and good food.

Hold each of them up for the children to see as you identify them.

I need to figure out:

1. Which four belong in the story and which two don't?
2. Who praised God for being so wise and able to know everything?

Read the assignment questions, THEN SAY,

"Ok, Deep Down Detectives! Put on your best listening ears and see if you can hear the answers to Detective Dan's questions. When I finish telling the story, we will see if we can answer all the questions."

Read the Bible Truth story, answer questions, present the gospel and lead in prayer.

Answers to questions; the gospel; and, ACTS prayer are included with the story text.

The Case of the Lost Donkeys 1 Samuel 9

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics) Numbers correspond to storyboard pictures and placement upon the storyboard. Always feel free to use less pictures, if it's best for your kids. Simply black out the numbers next to pictures you do not plan to use. All pictures are found in the Visual Aids book. Put BG (background) pictures on storyboard ahead of time. SB pictures (listed below in story text) are added to board as you tell the story. These numbers are also found on the back of each picture.

Tip: Stack pictures in numerical before telling story for easy use. Use sticky-back velcro to attach pictures to storyboard felt. Use sticky-tac putty to stick a picture on top of another picture.

(SB1) Kish was a man with a problem. Some of his animals were missing. Animals that were worth a lot! It wasn't his chickens. It wasn't his sheep or goats. It was another kind of animal--the kind that he used to pull his wagon and ride on, like we would use a truck or car. Can you guess what kind of animals were missing?

Can you guess?

(SB2) It was his donkeys! Kish looked everywhere for them. (SB3) He looked all over his farm....but no donkeys. He looked in the stable (Remove BG 2 and BG 3 to reveal what's inside the stable)... but no donkeys. He looked in the fields...no donkeys. He looked faraway to the hills...but still no donkeys!

Kish's donkeys were lost, there was no doubt about that. And Kish just had to find them! So Kish made a plan. He would send his son, Saul to go look for them.

"(SB4) Saul, take one of the servants and go look for the donkeys," Kish told Saul.

Saul obeyed and soon he and the servant were on their way in search of the lost donkeys. Where could they be?

For three, long days Saul and the servant walked. They (SB5) climbed up hills and searched there...but there were no donkeys. They walked down (SB6) into valleys of green grass and searched there...but there were no donkeys. (SB7) They looked by sparkling streams of cool water, too--all the kinds of places donkeys like to go. But still there were no donkeys!

Where WERE those donkeys? Kish didn't know. Saul and the servant didn't know. Did anyone know? Yes, someone did know.

Who DID know? Can you guess?

That someone was (SB8) the LORD. He is the God who knows everything there is to know. And He knew exactly where those donkeys had gone off to.

And not only did the LORD know exactly where the donkeys were, He even planned something very good to happen to Saul as he looked for them. (SB9) The LORD had planned to use this little journey looking for donkeys to put Saul in just the right place, with just the right person to make Saul the first king of Israel. And the LORD was going to do all of this without Saul knowing even one little bit of His good, big plan!

Saul didn't know about God's plans, but (SB10) a man named Samuel did. Samuel was a prophet--a special messenger for the LORD. The LORD had told Samuel about Saul and His plans to make him king.

"(SB11) "Samuel, tomorrow the man I've chosen to be king over Israel is coming to Zuph. He will lead the people in fighting off their enemies, the Philistines. I want you to pour the special anointing oil on his head and make him king over Israel," the LORD told him.

This was big news! The LORD had chosen a man to lead the people against their enemies. And, this man was coming to Zuph to be anointed king...the very next day! A worship feast to the LORD was planned. Samuel and Saul would be there for it. Up in the hills, they would offer worship gifts to the LORD, and would honor Saul with a fine dinner. There was so much to do in so little time! There were guests to invite. There were worship gifts to buy. There was the table to set for the feast, and all of the good food to prepare.

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)

There was so much to do in so little time! (SB12) There were guests to invite. There were (SB13) worship gifts to buy. (SB14) There was the table to be set for the feast, and good food to prepare and cook.

By the end of the day, everything was ready. The (SB15) worship gifts were offered and (SB16) the guests gathered in the dining hall up at the worship place. Everyone was ready to eat the delicious food. It looked like it was time for the feast to begin, but it couldn't. Something--really, someONE was missing.

Can you guess who?

It was Saul. the special guest, himself! After all, no one had told HIM about the worship feast. No one had told HIM he was going to be anointed king of Israel! He was just out looking for lost donkeys. The whole thing seemed rather silly to think that Saul would show up at the party that night, don't you think?

I guess it WOULD be silly, but for one thing: this was the LORD's plan and He is the God who knows everything there is to know. If He said that Saul would be there, then Saul would be there. Samuel had no doubts about that!

(SB17) And sure enough, just as Samuel was on his way up to join the guests at the feast, who should be looking for him at the city gates? You guessed it! Saul and his servant! "This is the man I told you about," the LORD told Samuel. "The man I've chosen to be king."

Saul went up to Samuel and said, "My servant says you are a great man of God and God tells you things. Can you tell me where my father's donkeys are?"

"Don't worry about your father's donkeys," Samuel told Saul. "(SB18) They've been found. They are back at home. Go with me to the worship feast up in the hills. Sit at the most important place. Eat the best food. I've been waiting for you to come," Samuel said.

Saul didn't understand why Samuel had been waiting for him, but he didn't complain. (SB19) He went with Saul up to the worship place and took the place of honor next to Samuel. He enjoyed the good food and the worship feast. And what a feast it was! Why, Samuel had even saved the very best piece of meat for HIM! Yum!

(SB20) After dinner, Samuel took Saul and his servant to his house for the night. He made them a bed on the roof, and there they slept out under the stars.

At sunrise, Samuel woke Saul and his servant. "Get up so I may send you on your way," Samuel told them. Samuel walked with them out of town. "Send your servant on ahead, Saul. I have something important from God to tell you alone," Samuel said. Saul and his servant obeyed.

(SB21) When the servant had passed ahead of them, (SB22) Samuel took out his jar of special oil and poured it on Saul's head. He kissed Saul, then said, "I have poured this oil on your head as a sign that you are to be king of Israel. The LORD has chosen you of all men. You will rule over them and you will rescue them from the enemies who live in the lands around them. In a few days, we will tell all the people. But for now keep this a secret."

(SB23) What a lot Saul had to think about as he went home with his servant! The LORD had planned to use those lost donkeys to make him king over Israel! And, the LORD had told Samuel what he would do and where he would go, even before he did it!

How could the LORD do this? Because He is the God who knows everything there is to know! He is like no one else. How amazing is the LORD!

Cracking the Case: (story wrap-up for Listening Assignments)

It's time to see how we did with our Listening Assignment.

Detective Dan's Lesson 1 Listening Assignment:

- 1. Who lost their donkeys?** Kish did.
- 2. What good, big plan did the LORD use the lost donkeys to bring about?** His plan to make Saul king over the people.

For You and Me:

The LORD still knows everything there is to know and He still weaves His good plans into everything that happens to us and to this world. We can always trust the promises that He gives us in His Word, the Bible. We can always trust Him to carry out His good plans.

Detective Dan's Lesson 2 Listening Assignment:

Our Bible Verse is Daniel 2:20, ESV:

"Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might."

- 1. What stranger did the LORD tell Samuel to prepare for?** Saul.
- 2. Why did Samuel trust the LORD to know when this stranger would come?** Samuel knew that the LORD was the God who knows everything there is to know. All wisdom (and power) are His. Samuel knew that if the LORD planned for Saul to come, then Saul would most definitely come. And so he did!

For You and Me:

The LORD still knows everything there is to know and He still weaves His good plans into everything that happens to us and to this world. We can always trust the promises that He gives us in His Word, the Bible. We can always trust Him to carry out His good plans, even when we don't understand how and when He will carry them out.

Detective Dan's Lesson 3 Listening Assignment:

Our six clues were: an ice cream cone, a jar of oil, a man named Kish, a piano, a crown, and good food.

- 1. Which four belong in our story?** The jar of oil, the man named Kish, the crown and the good food .
- 2. Who praised God for being so wise and able to know everything?** Samuel and Saul did.

For You and Me:

The LORD still knows everything there is to know and He still weaves His good plans into everything that happens to us and to this world. We can always trust the promises that He gives us in His Word, the Bible. We can always trust Him to carry out His good plans, even

when we don't understand how and when He will carry them out. How much more than us He knows! How wise He is!

The Gospel (story wrap-up if NOT using Listening Assignments)

Our Bible Truth is:

Can Anybody Tell Me What the LORD Is Like? He's Not Like Anyone Else... He Knows Everything There Is to Know!

Sometimes it is scary to know that God knows everything about us. We can hide some of the bad things we think or say or do from others, but we can't hide anything from God. We know that He hates sin and He will punish sin. We know that we all choose to do things our own way, not God's good way.

Isn't God so kind to us, though? He knows every bad thing about us, yet He promises to forgive every single one of them, when we repent of our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. And if we do, He will not ONLY forgive our sins, but He will give us a new heart to know and love Him. We will get to have special closeness in our hearts with Him for the rest of our lives. Then, one day when we die, we will go to live with Him and enjoy Him forever-- as happy as anyone can ever be! How amazing is the LORD! How good and loving He is to us! There is no one like Him! *Close in prayer.*

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** We praise You, God. You know everything there is to know. There is nothing anyone can hide from You. There is nothing You need to learn. You know it already. There is no one like You!
- C** God, You know everything we think, say and do. You know that we have all chosen to disobey You. Please forgive our sins. We need a Savior!
- T** Thank You for using everything You know for Your good plans. Thank You that we can trust You to take care of us and always do what's best.
- S** Work in our hearts, God. Help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to trust You even more. Help us to be happy with what Your plans since You know everything and always do what's best. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Go to Lesson Plan, p.9 for the script to the rest of the lesson.