
Forward

This book contains lessons from the lives of some of God's prophets taken from the books of 1st and 2nd Kings, Isaiah, Jonah and Daniel. Through these wonderful stories of these men of God, your students will learn that God is the great provider, that He is awesome in holiness, and that He is dependable in every situation. Join your pupils as they discover that ours is the only true God, worthy of all our worship and devotion.

I have designed these lessons to enable you to teach the Bible expositionally. The idea is to have the kids read the passages in their own Bibles and the teacher explain the scriptures and give good practical applications that are age-appropriate. My goal is to ensure that children learn that God's Word is exciting and meaningful and that teachers teach sound doctrine!

Even though I've scripted the lessons, I don't expect teachers to read my lesson materials verbatim to the children as they teach. My lessons are meant to provide the details you need to get background information and some suggestions for child-oriented personal application. Once you know and understand the Bible lessons for yourself, you'll be ready to teach your class.

The two-column layout of this book is designed so that you can copy and cut the pages in half to fit into your Bible. When the children observe that you are teaching right out of the Bible, rather than from a curriculum book, it validates God's Word and gives your teaching more authority.

You will discover that there is not always a Craft or Game idea suggested in each lesson. When I've had a good idea that really seems to support the lesson objectives, I've included it. But I have another handbook called *Tips and Tricks — Making Children's Bible Lessons Come to Life* that gives lots of suggestions for activities that will help reinforce your lesson and teach the memory verse. (This is

available from my website:

<https://www.freechildrensministrylessons.com/>

Use the Teaching Schedule to help you organize your teaching rotation.

I pray that you will use these lessons for God's glory by teaching the Bible as an entire plan by a systematic and connected study of the Word.

Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. (Mark 10:14)

Sheila Scroggins

Sheila has had over 35 years' experience in teaching children and has several other lesson series available. You may contact her by eMail at: ccuv-ChildrensMinistry@usa.net for more information.

Table of Contents

Lesson 1: God Provides for Elijah -----	1
Lesson 2: Elijah and the Contest with Baal -----	7
Lesson 3: Elijah and Naboth's Vineyard -----	13
Lesson 4: Elijah Goes to Heaven-----	19
Lesson 5: Elisha Helps a Widow's Family-----	25
Lesson 6: Elisha Raises a Dead Boy-----	31
Lesson 7: A Slave Girl Cares for Naaman-----	35
Lesson 8: Elisha Cares About His Enemies -----	41
Lesson 9: Isaiah's Call to Service -----	47
Lesson 10: Daniel Takes a Stand -----	53
Lesson 11: Three Men in a Furnace -----	61
Lesson 12: Handwriting on the Wall -----	67
Lesson 13: In the Lions' Den -----	73
Lesson 14: Jonah Runs from God-----	79

Teaching Schedule

Date	Teacher	Lesson	Memory Verse
		God Provides for Elijah (1 Kings 16:29 – 17:16)	<i>My God shall supply all your need according to His riches and glory by Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:19)</i>
		Elijah and the Contest with Baal (1 Kings 18)	<i>... the Lord Himself is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other. (Deuteronomy 4:39)</i>
		Elijah and Naboth's Vineyard (1 Kings 21:1-29)	<i>Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." (Hebrews 13:5)</i>
		Elijah Goes to Heaven (1 Kings 19: 2 Kings 2:1-15)	<i>But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. (Acts 1:8)</i>
		Elisha Helps a Widow's Family (2 Kings 4:1-7)	<i>Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think. (Ephesians 3:20)</i>
		Elisha Raises a Dead Boy (2 Kings 4:8-37)	<i>Remember that the LORD your God is the only God and that he is faithful. (Deuteronomy 7:9a)</i>
		A Slave Girl Cares for Naaman (2 Kings 5:1-19)	<i>For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)</i>
		Elisha Cares About His Enemies (2 Kings 6:8-23)	<i>...love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. (Luke 6:27-28)</i>
		Isaiah's Call to Service (Isaiah 6:1-8)	<i>Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. (Isaiah 1:18)</i>
		Jonah Runs from God (Jonah 1 – 3)	<i>It is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. (Philippians 2:13)</i>
		Daniel Takes a Stand (Daniel 1)	<i>The LORD says: '...those who honor Me, I will honor.' (1 Samuel 2:30)</i>

Date	Teacher	Lesson	Memory Verse
		Three Men in a Furnace (Daniel 3)	<i>We must obey God rather than men! (Acts 5:29)</i>
		Handwriting on the Wall (Daniel 5)	Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it. (James 4:17 NLT)
		In the Lions' Den (Daniel 6)	<i>Stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord...</i> (1 Corinthians 15:58a NIV)

God Provides for Elijah

(1 Kings 16:29 — 17:16)

Introduction

How many of you have a pet? [Teacher, let the children talk about their pets.] Have you trained your pet to do any tricks? Many animals can be trained to do tricks. Lions can be trained to jump through rings of fire. Whales can be trained to play catch. Bears can ride bikes!

What would you think if your pet talked? Maybe he would say, “Good morning. How are you today?” You’d be amazed because that is something animals don’t usually do! What would you think if your pet went to the grocery store and brought home meat and bread? Again, you’d be amazed because that is something animals can’t do.

Today we’ll find out about some amazing miracles that some birds did that showed God’s awesome power to meet our needs.

Opening Prayer

Father, thank You that nothing is too hard for You. There is no limit to the ways that You can provide for our needs. Teach us this morning to always trust that You will love and care for us, even when the situation looks hopeless to us. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

My God shall supply all your need according to His riches and glory by Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:19)

Lesson

Solomon, the third king over the children of Israel, was the wisest man in the world. But he turned his love away from God and began to pray to the false gods that his wives worshiped. Solomon did what was clearly wrong and refused to follow the Lord.

How sad! The Lord was angry with Solomon and sent a prophet to

him. A prophet is a man who gives messages to people from God. The prophet took off his beautiful, brand-new robe and tore it into 12 pieces and said, “Since you have not stayed faithful to God, He will tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your servants.”

So, the children of Israel were divided into two parts. There was the Northern part where 10 of the families lived and the Southern part where the other 2 families lived. The Northern part continued to call themselves, Israel; but the Southern part called themselves, Judah.

After Solomon there were many kings that ruled. Today we will learn about Ahab. He was a very wicked king who did not honor or obey God. Of all the kings of Israel (the Northern 10 families), he was the worst. He did more to anger God than any of the other kings before him.

He married a foreign princess named Jezebel and she got Ahab to build temples for the worship of her false god, Baal.

1 Kings 16:32-33

First Ahab built a temple and an altar for Baal in Samaria. (33) Then he set up an Asherah pole. He did more to provoke the anger of the LORD, the God of Israel, than any of the other kings of Israel before him.

Ahab wanted to please his princess, Jezebel. So he built a temple for Baal. Jezebel wanted to get rid of the worship of Israel’s God so she decided put to death all the prophets of God she could lay her hands on.

But God was still in charge. Because King Ahab was leading the people away from worshiping God, God called Elijah to be a prophet, a messenger, to warn King Ahab and try to save the people of Israel.

One day God sent Elijah to Ahab’s palace. When he arrived at the city, he walked straight into the hall where the king was sitting.

This took a lot of courage. Did you know that you could not come into the presence of a king if you were not invited? Elijah could have been killed for visiting the king. He might have felt scared, but he knew he had a message from God that he had to tell King Ahab.

1 Kings 17:1 [Teacher, read....]

Now Elijah, who was from Tishbe in Gilead, told King Ahab, "As surely as the LORD, the God of Israel, lives—the God I serve—there will be no dew or rain during the next few years until I give the word!"

Those who worshiped Baal believed he was the god who brought the rains that were so important to the people for raising crops. So, when Elijah walked into the presence of this Baal-worshiping king and told him there would be no rain for several years, Ahab was shocked.

When there is no rain, they call it a drought. It was a very serious thing in those days. A drought causes a famine, a time when there isn't enough food to eat. They didn't have faucets to turn hoses on to water with. The crops would not grow without rain; because people wouldn't have enough water to drink or food to eat many would die.

The shortage of food and water would affect Elijah, too. So God told Elijah to get out of town.

1 Kings 17:2-5

Then the LORD said to Elijah, (3) "Go to the east and hide by Kerith Brook, near where it enters the Jordan River. (4) Drink from the brook and eat what the ravens bring you, for I have commanded them to bring you food." (5) So Elijah did as the LORD told him and camped beside Kerith Brook, east of the Jordan.

Elijah needed protection and food and God provided both for Elijah in a miraculous way. He told Elijah to hide from Ahab and Jezebel by the brook called Cherith. It was a lonely place out in the wilderness but Elijah knew that God was with him.

The brook provided Elijah with water, and ravens came carrying bread and meat in their beaks.

1 Kings 17:6

The ravens brought him bread and meat each morning and evening, and he drank from the brook.

God is a great provider who can meet your needs. What are some needs that you or I might have? (Food, clothing, a place to live.)

When you have a need, what do you do? Do you worry? Do you look to others, such as your parents or friends to meet your needs? Maybe you try to meet your own needs.

Remember that God wants you to look to Him first to provide for your needs. He is your Heavenly Father who knows and cares for you more than anyone else could. He longs for you to call upon Him in your times of need.

Elijah had some very important needs, but he knew that God would provide. And God miraculously fed Elijah by sending ravens with meat and bread! And I'm sure Elijah was very thankful for God's provision.

Then God allowed the brook Cherith to dry up.

1 Kings 17:7

But after a while the brook dried up, for there was no rainfall anywhere in the land.

Would Elijah start to doubt God's love and care for him?

Then the Lord told him to go to a place called Zarephath where a widow lady would provide for him. (A widow is a woman whose husband has died.)

1 Kings 17:10-11

So he went to Zarephath. As he arrived at the gates of the village, he saw a widow gathering sticks, and he asked her, "Would you please bring me a little water in a cup?" (11) As she was going to get it, he called to her, "Bring me a bite of bread, too."

This woman must have thought Elijah was crazy. Didn't he know there was a drought going on?

1 Kings 17:12

But she said, "I swear by the LORD your God that I don't have a single piece of bread in the house. And I have only a handful of flour left in the jar and a little cooking oil in the bottom of the jug. I was just gathering a few sticks to cook this last meal, and then my son and I will die."

And then Elijah tells her not to worry.

1 Kings 17:13-14

But Elijah said to her, “Don’t be afraid! Go ahead and do just what you’ve said, but make a little bread for me first. Then use what’s left to prepare a meal for yourself and your son. (14) For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: There will always be flour and olive oil left in your containers until the time when the LORD sends rain and the crops grow again!”

It may sound selfish of Elijah to ask the woman for food and water in a time of drought. Here she was at the point of starvation. But He knew that if she was willing to give the bread to him first, God would bless her in many other ways. This was a test of faith for this woman. But Elijah assured her that God would provide.

God can provide for all your needs, too. There is no need too great or too hard for God to supply. God has all power, all wisdom, and He loves you! He is well able to supply all your needs. God does not promise to supply everything we want. But our needs will never go unmet if we trust in God. Sometimes God doesn’t give us what we ask for because he wants our faith to grow. Perhaps he wants us to learn how to have patience. He loves you and will always do what is best for you. When you have a need, talk to God about it; and then trust that He will give you what is best.

Elijah didn’t know how God would feed him and the widow and her son, but he trusted God’s promise to provide.

And as the widow obeyed Elijah, God miraculously provided for all their needs.

1 Kings 17:15-16

So she did as Elijah said, and she and Elijah and her family continued to eat for many days. (16) There was always enough flour and olive oil left in the containers, just as the LORD had promised through Elijah.

God’s provision of flour and oil never failed during the drought. And He will never fail to provide for you, too.

God cared for Elijah and protected him from King Ahab. God had promised to provide what Elijah needed, and God always keeps His promise!

We can trust God, too. He gives us people to care for us and He will help us know what to do. God promises to hear and answer our prayers.

[Teacher, ask for prayer requests....]

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You that You have promised to meet our every need. Help us to trust You and never doubt that You will always love and care for us. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Raven Clothespins



MATERIALS:

For each child, provide the following:

- One spring-type clothespin.
- Copy of raven on card stock or traced onto black construction

paper.

- Assorted feathers, scissors, glue, and magnet strips.
- Optional: stick-on wiggly eyes.

PROCEDURE:

1. Help children cut out and glue the raven to the clothespin so that the snap opening will serve as the raven's mouth. Allow students to decorate their ravens with feathers. Attach a magnet strip to the bottom side of each clothespin.
2. On a piece of paper shaped like a loaf of bread have the children write out this week's Bible memory verse and insert it into the bird's "beak". Explain that the word of God is spiritual food for us. God has provided His word to us so that we can grow in Him.

Game Center

Cooking Option

We're going to make some bread like the widow might have made for Elijah and her family. Students wash hands and then prepare the recipe.

MATERIALS:

- Ingredients for the recipe below
- Cooking utensils, hot plate or electric frying pan
- Napkins

PROCEDURE:

Recipe:

- 1 ½ cups flour
- 3 Tablespoons oil
- Dash of salt
- 3 Tablespoons honey
- 3 Tablespoons water

Stir ingredients together. Roll dough into small balls and flatten like tortillas, approximately 3 inches in diameter. Pour a small amount of oil in the pan to prevent sticking. Cook bread over medium heat, turning to brown both sides. Each student tastes the bread when it has cooled. As students wait for their bread to cook, engage them in conversation using some of the Review Questions below.

Pick a Word

Write key words from the lesson on a piece of construction paper shaped like a loaf of bread and put them into a basket. Let each child pick a word and tell the class the significance of that word in today’s lesson. Use words such as Prophet, Ahab, Jezebel, Baal, Elijah, Rain, Drought, Water, Ravens, Bread, Meat, Widow, Flour, and Oil.

Choose Your Way

On pieces of construction paper, make game squares using the words under each of the following categories, putting each word on a separate paper:

People	Places	Objects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baby • Boy • Dad • Girl • Mom • Pastor • Teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom • Home • Park • School hallway • Soccer field • Store • Play yard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CD • Milkshake • Necklace • Phone • Soccer ball • Sock • TV

1. Lay the game squares on the floor, placing each word in a category in its own row: a row of people, a row of places, and a row of objects.

2. Volunteer walks or hops across the papers, stepping on one paper from each category. Then using the words he stepped on, the student suggests a situation in which the person might need God’s love and protection. For example, if the child stepped on “Boy,” “Park,” and “Ball” he might say, “A boy at the park kicks a soccer ball and it hits an old man.”
3. Have the class discuss what that person could do, how they might feel in that situation, and how they would want God to help them.

Or, use the following questions in another game of your choice:

1. How did God protect Elijah after he went to see King Ahab? (He told Elijah to hide from Ahab and Jezebel by the brook called Cherith.)
2. Why was Elijah feeling discouraged, afraid and all alone? (Jezebel wanted to kill him, and he thought there was no one else who believed in the true God.)
3. What did the ravens do in our lesson this morning? (They brought meat and bread to Elijah.)
4. How were the ravens able to bring bread and meat to Elijah both morning and evening? (God told them what to do.)
5. How did God show His power to Elijah in today’s lesson? (God sent ravens to feed Elijah.)
6. What did Elijah learn about God in our lesson today? (He learned that God always cares for him and protects him.)
7. How did God show His power to help Elijah when Elijah ran out of water? (God told Elijah to go and stay with the widow.)
8. God showed His power to Elijah and a widow by keeping them supplied with flour and oil. Why were the flour and oil important? (The flour and oil are mixed together to make bread.)
9. How did God provide for Elijah and the widow’s needs? (He kept the widow’s flour and oil from being used up.)

10. How did Elijah show he depended on and trusted in God? (He obeyed.)
11. How did the widow show that she believed what Elijah told her about God? (She did what Elijah asked.)
12. How has God helped people you know? (answers will vary.)
13. What are some ways God shows His care for you? (Helped me get better when I was sick. Helped me at school during a test.)
14. What are some reasons we have to thank God for His loving care?
15. What are some things that help you know God takes care of His children? (Stories the Bible tells us about what God did for people; things God has done for you; God's promises in His Word.)

[For more expositional lessons for children, visit
<https://www.FreeChildrensMinistryLessons.com>]

Elijah and the Contest with Baal

(1 Kings 18:1, 2, 17--46)

Introduction

[Teacher, place the following items in a bag: a picture of a television; a picture of a famous singer, actor, or sports hero; a sports item such as a baseball. Have the children try to guess the items by giving them some hints.] Some people think these things are more important than God; boys and girls often spend time on these things and then say they don't have time to read their Bibles; some children do these things rather than going to church or Sunday school. [Reveal the items in the bag.]

The first Commandment is, "You shall have no other gods before Me" (Exodus 20:3). In today's lesson we will learn that the people of Israel forgot how important it is to keep God first in their lives.

Opening Prayer

Father, You are the only true God. You alone are worthy of our worship. Help us to beware of the "idols" we put into our lives. Teach us this morning how important it is for us to always put You first in our lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

...the Lord Himself is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other. (Deuteronomy 4:39)

Lesson

God's people were in serious trouble! King Ahab had led them to worship idols, wooden or stone statues of false gods. This made God angry with the people so He made the rain stop for three and a half years. The streams dried up. The plants died. Everyone was hungry and thirsty. Finally, God spoke to Elijah and told him to go to King Ahab with a message.

1 Kings 18:1

Later on, in the third year of the drought, the LORD said to Elijah, "Go and present yourself to King Ahab. Tell him that I will soon send rain!"

King Ahab blamed Elijah for the drought and the famine and had been looking for him for 3 ½ years; Ahab wanted to kill Elijah. So, Elijah probably wasn't very excited about God telling him to go see Ahab!

1 Kings 18:17

When Ahab saw him, he exclaimed, "So, is it really you, you troublemaker of Israel?"

Elijah reminded him that God had brought this disaster on the land because Ahab had led the people into idol worship.

1 Kings 18:18

"I have made no trouble for Israel," Elijah replied. "You and your family are the troublemakers, for you have refused to obey the commands of the LORD and have worshiped the images of Baal instead."

Then Elijah challenged Ahab to a contest to see whose god was the most powerful. Have any of you entered a contest before?

1 Kings 18:19

Now summon all Israel to join me at Mount Carmel, along with the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah who are supported by Jezebel."

King Ahab called everyone together as Elijah had ordered. What a gathering that must have been. Thousands of men, women, and children crowded together on Mount Carmel. As the people gathered, Elijah sternly told them to decide between God and Baal.

1 Kings 18:20-21

So Ahab summoned all the people of Israel and the prophets to Mount Carmel. (21) Then Elijah stood in front of them and said, "How much longer will you waver, hobbling between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him! But if Baal is God, then follow him!" But the people were completely silent.

The people of Israel had combined the worship of Baal with the worship of the true and living God. But God had clearly taught them that they were to worship Him and Him alone.

Some Christians today want to worship God, yet they continue to give other things first place in their lives. Often the things that take that special place in our hearts and lives are not sinful. They could be clothes, toys, sports, television – things that are not wrong, but they can become “idols” in our lives if we allow them to become more important to us than God is. Whatever you are spending most of your time on tells others what’s most important to you. It is important NOT to allow anything to take God’s place in your life.

King Ahab and the Israelites had sinned by trying to serve both the true and living God *and* Baal. Now Elijah told them they would have to choose. Elijah told them they need to make up their minds, *“How long will you try to serve both Baal and the Lord? If the Lord is God, follow Him! But if Baal is God then follow him!”*

1 Kings 18:22-24

Then Elijah said to them, “I am the only prophet of the LORD who is left, but Baal has 450 prophets. (23) Now bring two bulls. The prophets of Baal may choose whichever one they wish and cut it into pieces and lay it on the wood of their altar, but without setting fire to it. I will prepare the other bull and lay it on the wood on the altar, but not set fire to it. (24) Then call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the LORD. The god who answers by setting fire to the wood is the true God!” And all the people agreed.

The people shouted their agreement to this contest. The people thought that the prophets of Baal would surely win. After all, there were 450 of them. But Elijah had something that the prophets of Baal didn’t have. Elijah had God, and God wanted to show His power.

So they prepared to sacrifice a young bull on an altar.

1 Kings 18:26

So they prepared one of the bulls and placed it on the altar. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning until noontime, shouting, “O

Baal, answer us!” But there was no reply of any kind. Then they danced, hobbling around the altar they had made.

They called upon their god. They pleaded with him to send fire. But there was no reply. Hour after hour they danced in circles under the hot sun.

About noon Elijah began to tease them.

1 Kings 18:27

About noontime Elijah began mocking them. “You’ll have to shout louder,” he scoffed, “for surely he is a god! Perhaps he is daydreaming, or is relieving himself. Or maybe he is away on a trip, or is asleep and needs to be wakened!”

Furiously the prophets of Baal continued their cries. They grew desperate and leaped about yelling, *“Send down fire!”* But no fire came.

Baal could not answer because he was a false god. Only God, the Creator, who lives in heaven can hear and answer prayer (Jeremiah 33:3). This living and true God loves you and wants you to call on Him to save you (Romans 10:13). If you call on the Lord Jesus to save you, He will give you eternal life. A false god or idol can never give eternal life. Baal was a false god who could not hear the prophets as they called out at their altar.

Then Elijah prepared his sacrifice.

1 Kings 18:30

Then Elijah called to the people, “Come over here!” They all crowded around him as he repaired the altar of the LORD that had been torn down.

Then Elijah dug a trench about three feet wide around the altar. He piled wood upon the altar and laid the bull on the wood. He then filled four barrels with water and poured the water over the bull and the wood. He wanted to make sure that it was impossible for a man to light the fire.

1 Kings 18:35

and the water ran around the altar and even filled the trench.

Then, Elijah prayed and asked God to show the people that He was the true God.

1 Kings 18:36-37

At the usual time for offering the evening sacrifice, Elijah the prophet walked up to the altar and prayed, "O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, prove today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant. Prove that I have done all this at your command. (37) O LORD, answer me! Answer me so these people will know that you, O LORD, are God and that you have brought them back to yourself."

Elijah didn't have to shout and dance to make God hear him. He simply and quietly prayed, "Oh Lord, show us that You are God. Hear me and send fire so these people will know that You are God."

And suddenly there was a mighty flash of flame from heaven. With a huge roar, a great fire burned up the sacrifice, all the dripping wet wood, the altar and even the water in the trench. Nothing remained!

1 Kings 18:38

Immediately the fire of the LORD flashed down from heaven and burned up the young bull, the wood, the stones, and the dust. It even licked up all the water in the trench!

The people were amazed. In a spectacular way God had proven that He, alone, is the true God.

God is the only one that is worthy of our worship. Yet it is easy to allow other things to become more important to us than He is. If you notice that you are spending more time with your friends or watching TV than you are with God, then, watch out! You've got an idol! If you make God first place in your life, He will bless you and meet your needs. God longed for the children of Israel to give Him all their worship. By sending fire from heaven, He showed them in a miraculous way that He is God.

1 Kings 18:39

And when all the people saw it, they fell face down on the ground and cried out, "The LORD—he is God! Yes, the LORD is God!"

Elijah told them to round up all the false prophets of Baal and he put them all to death! And shortly after that God brought the rains. The three and a half years of drought was over, now that the people turned their hearts back to God.

Although the prophets of Baal raged all afternoon, no one answered them. Their god was silent because it was not real. The gods we may be tempted to follow are not idols of wood or stone, but they are just as false and dangerous because they cause us to depend on something other than God. Beauty, popularity, riches, or having lots of material things can become our gods if we spend most of our time chasing after them. But when we reach times of trouble, if we called out to these so-called gods, there will only be silence. They can offer us no true answers to our problems, no direction in life, and no wisdom to know what to do.

God honored Elijah for honoring His name when no one else would. And, God blessed the people when they turned their love back to Him. God will bless us too when we love the Lord our God with all of our hearts and make him first in our lives.

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for being our great and wonderful God. Help us to watch out for the idols that we are so prone to put into our lives. Help us to notice when we are spending more time talking with our friends than we do with You. Help us to notice when we spend more time watching TV than we do reading Your word. Show us when we make anything or anyone more important to us than You. Then help us to turn our heart back again to You, our one and only true God, the maker of heaven and earth. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Game Center

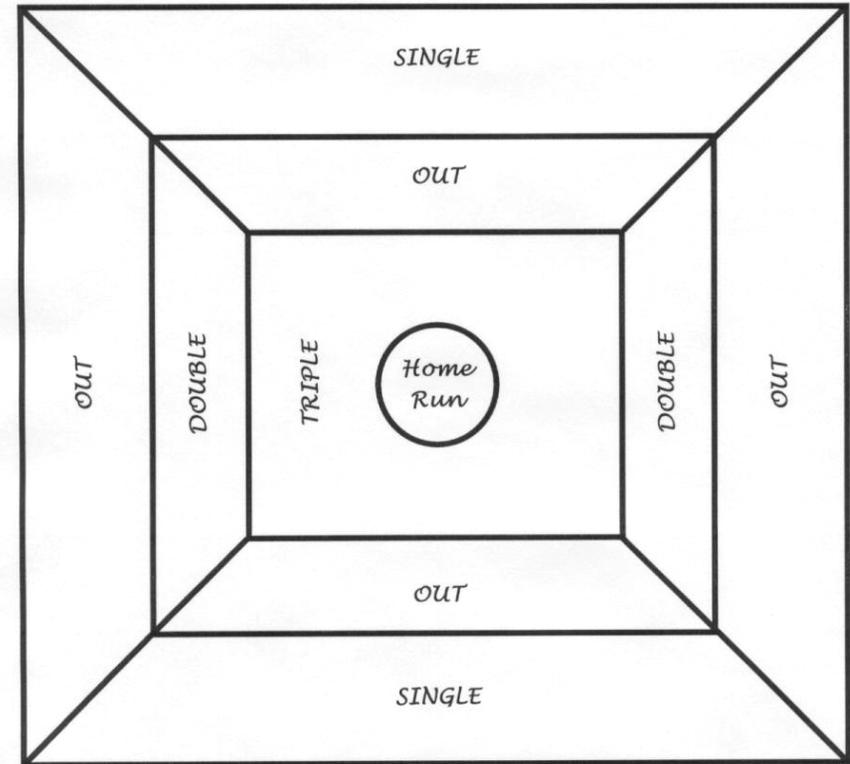
Bible Baseball

PREPARATION:

1. Draw and label a target on a large sheet of paper (see sketch). Make sure it is large enough for students to hit easily.
2. Mark a baseball diamond in the room: Home Plate, First Base, Second Base, and Third Base.

PROCEDURE:

1. Divide class into two teams.
2. First child "up" answers a Review Question and then throws a coin or a bean bag onto the target.
3. If the child gets an "out" he goes to the end of the line, otherwise the child moves around to the appropriate place: first base for a single, second base for a double, third base for a triple, all the way around and back to home plate for a home run.
4. If a student missed the target completely, he or she may have another chance to throw.
5. After a team has three outs, the other team is "up to bat."



Or, use the following questions in another game of your choice:

1. What is the name of the prophet that took messages to King Ahab? (Elijah)
2. Why did God stop the rain in the land of Israel for 3 ½ years? (King Ahab had led the people into idol worship.)
3. What contest did Elijah challenge Ahab to? (To see whose god was the most powerful.)
4. How is God different from Baal? (God has power and answers prayer; Baal does not. God is real; Baal is not.)

5. How did Elijah show that he believed in the one true God? (He obeyed God.)
6. How would the people know who the true God was? What did they ask their gods to send down from heaven to prove his power? (Fire.)
7. What did Elijah do to make sure that no human being could set his altar on fire? (He drenched it in water.)
8. What did the false prophets of Baal do to get their god to send fire down from heaven? (They shouted and danced, leaped and yelled.)
9. What did Elijah do to get God to send fire down from heaven? (He simply and quietly prayed.)
10. How did God answer Elijah's prayer? (He immediately sent fire that burned up the offering and altar and the water in the trench round the altar.)
11. Why didn't Baal send fire? (He was silent because it was not real.)
12. What did the people do when they saw the fire of God burn up Elijah's sacrifice? (They fell down with their faces to the ground and cried, "*The Lord is God! The Lord is God!*")
13. How did God show His power to Elijah and the people at Mt. Carmel? (He sent fire from Heaven and burned up Elijah's sacrifice.)
14. What are some idols that you and I are prone to make in our lives? (TV, toys, beauty, lots of friends or things...)
15. How can you tell if something is beginning to become an idol in our life? (We are spending more time with that "thing" than we are with God.)
16. What is the first Commandment? ("*You shall have no other gods before Me.*" Exodus 20:3)

Additional game questions

17. If you had to tell someone who God is, what would you say? How would you describe Him? (He's the creator of the universe; He's all powerful; nothing is too hard for him.)
18. What does our Memory verse tell us we should take to heart? (That the Lord is the only God in heaven and earth.)
19. What are some things you believe about God? (He is loving; He provides for us; He's all knowing...)
20. Why do you want others to know what you believe about God?
21. What are some things you can do to show what you believe about God? (Obey His commands. Tell others about God. Be kind to others.)
22. If you show people that you believe in God, what might happen as a result? (They might come to ask Jesus to be their Savior, too.)
23. Why is it important to show that we believe in God and what He has done for us? (He's done so much for us; He deserves it.)
24. When have you seen someone show that he or she believes in God? What happened?
25. How can you show that you believe in God at school? At home? With your friends? (Obey parents and teachers. Help and be kind to friends. Spend time taking to God and learning about Him.)
26. When are sometimes it is hard to let others know what you believe about God?
27. Why do you think people are sometimes afraid to show that they believe in God? What is hard about letting other people know what you believe in?
28. Our actions and attitudes can show we believe that the Lord is the only true God. How do people who believe in God act differently from people who do not believe in Him? Why?

Elijah and Naboth's Vineyard

(1 Kings 21:1-29)

Introduction

Have you ever wanted something that belonged to someone else? Perhaps a bike or some designer clothes? Have you ever begged your parents for it? "Please, please, can't I have it? Everyone else has one. I'll be the only one in the whole school that doesn't have one."

Did you know when you desire something that someone else has, that's called "coveting" and God told us in the Ten Commandments that we are not to covet anything that belongs to someone else?

Today in our lesson we're going to learn about a king who coveted something that belonged to his neighbor.

Opening Prayer

Father, we have all experienced times when we have seen and wanted things that other people have. Lord, teach us what we should do when those feelings of covetousness come over us. We want our lives to be well-pleasing to You in everything that we think, say, and do. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." (Hebrews 13:5)

Lesson

If you were a king, think of all you'd own. Think of all the power you would have. Why, you could have anything you could ever want or need.

We've been learning about King Ahab the past few weeks. He was one of the richest kings in the world of his time who had everything you'd ever want if you'd lived back then – fancy speedy chariots and lots of servants. But near his palace, was something he wanted very, very much, but it belonged to someone else.

Large, luscious grapes hung on the vines of the vineyard near Ahab's palace. This vineyard belonged to Naboth, Ahab's next-door neighbor.

One day the king talked to Naboth about selling this land to him for a garden because it was so convenient to the palace. Ahab offered Naboth cash for it, or, he said he would even trade Naboth another piece of land for this vineyard.

1 Kings 21:1-2

Now there was a man named Naboth, from Jezreel, who owned a vineyard in Jezreel beside the palace of King Ahab of Samaria. (2) One day Ahab said to Naboth, "Since your vineyard is so convenient to my palace, I would like to buy it to use as a vegetable garden. I will give you a better vineyard in exchange, or if you prefer, I will pay you for it."

Ahab coveted Naboth's vineyard. But, Naboth refused to give his land to the king.

1 Kings 21:3

But Naboth replied, "The LORD forbid that I should give you the inheritance that was passed down by my ancestors."

According to the law that God gave Moses and the children of Israel, the land owned by each family was to remain in that family. Naboth had gotten this land from his father and he wanted to pass it on to his own sons. So, Ahab was asking Naboth to do something that was illegal. And Naboth's refusal to sell him the land made Ahab very unhappy.

1 Kings 21:4

So Ahab went home angry and sullen because of Naboth's answer. The king went to bed with his face to the wall and refused to eat!

Ahab pouted. He couldn't have what he wanted. Have you ever acted like that when you couldn't have what you wanted? God says that it is sinful when you act like that. Do you know what God says about sin? The Bible tells us in Ezekiel 18:4 that "the soul that sins shall surely die." But Ahab didn't think it made any difference how he acted. He thought he could get away with anything.

Greedy Ahab had plenty of land already, but he wanted Naboth's, too. And he refused to be content without it. As a child of God, are you content? Are you satisfied with the things you have or do you want some of the things your friends have?

Have you ever spent time day dreaming about the things you don't have, imagining in your mind what it would be like to have it? Then, watch out! You are coveting in your heart.

Here's how coveting starts:

- First, you start to believe that you deserve that thing you desire so much.
- Then, you start to think that it's not fair that you don't have it.
- Third, you think you'll never be happy until you get it. Before you know it, you want it so badly that you would do whatever it takes to get it.

People have different ways of trying to get what they want.

- Some kids whine – "My sister always gets what she wants. I never get what I want."
- Some kids throw temper tantrums.
- Some people even go so far as to steal that thing they want so much.

God wants us to be satisfied with what we have. (Review the Memory Verse.) Don't be constantly wanting things that you can't or shouldn't have. Be content with what God has given you.

If King Ahab had been content with what God had given him, he wouldn't have pouted when he couldn't get Naboth's vineyard.

Ahab's wife, Jezebel, found her husband pouting.

1 Kings 21:5

"What's the matter?" his wife Jezebel asked him. "What's made you so upset that you're not eating?"

When the king explained to her that it was because Naboth wouldn't sell him that beautiful vineyard, Jezebel wanted to cheer Ahab by getting him Naboth's vineyard. So, she came up with a plan to get it for him.

1 Kings 21:8-10

So, she wrote letters in Ahab's name, sealed them with his seal, and sent them to the elders and other leaders of the town where Naboth lived. In her letters she commanded: "Call the citizens together for a time of fasting, and give Naboth a place of honor. And then seat two scoundrels across from him who will accuse him of cursing God and the king. Then take him out and stone him to death."

Jezebel arranged to have Naboth falsely accused of cursing God and the king. The penalty for cursing the king was death.

So, the men of his city followed the queen's instructions. They called the meeting and put Naboth on trial. Then two scoundrels accused him of cursing God and the king. Then he was dragged outside the city and stoned to death.

Naboth could have disobeyed God and sold Ahab the vineyard he wanted so badly, but he didn't. How sad, he died and he didn't do anything wrong. Who does that remind you of?

God, the Son, the Lord Jesus, died for all the sins of the world and He never, ever sinned. He died for something He didn't do – Jesus died for what you and I did! He took our punishment for sin, the wrong things you and I think, say and do. Jesus didn't have to die for you.

And Naboth didn't have to die either, but he was obedient to God and is now in heaven.

When King Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he took over the vineyard. Ahab and Jezebel thought they got away with it.

1 Kings 21:16

So Ahab immediately went down to the vineyard of Naboth to claim it

God wanted Ahab to know that what he and Jezebel had done was wrong. So, he sent Elijah the prophet with another message.

1 Kings 21:17-18

But the LORD said to Elijah, "Go down to meet King Ahab of Israel, who rules in Samaria. He will be at Naboth's vineyard in Jezreel, claiming it for himself."

God saw Ahab in Naboth's vineyard! God knew all the time exactly what was happening. Nothing is a surprise to Him. God is everywhere and knows everything that is happening. He sees everything that goes on. He is all-knowing! He saw what Ahab and Jezebel did to poor Naboth! And, God knows all that goes on in your heart and mind, too. He knows everything you do, even when you are naughty.

Ahab thought he could do anything he wanted and no one would know what happened. What began with an attitude of discontentment, led to the cruel murder of an innocent man.

When you want something that you can't or shouldn't have, how can you keep from letting that *want* control your actions?

- First, when your *mind* begins to imagine what it would be like to have whatever you are desiring, think about all the things you already have and thank God for them (Ephesians 5:20).
- Second, when your *heart* begins to believe Satan's lies (that is, you start to say to yourself, "I deserve it; it's not fair I don't have it; I can't be happy until I get it; I can't live without it), then remember our Memory Verse for this week; say it to yourself.

- Third, show kindness to those who have what you want: say, for instance, "That's a really neat bike. You made a good choice." Or, "I hope you enjoy your computer and learn a lot as you use it."

Where does contentment come from? From inside you – from knowing God is with you and from believing His promise to give you all you need. If you are God's child, be content with what God has given you. Ahab's refusal to be content had led him and Jezebel to murder. So, God sent Elijah with a message from him.

1 Kings 21:20

So, my enemy, you have found me!" Ahab exclaimed to Elijah. "Yes," Elijah answered, "I have come because you have sold yourself to what is evil in the LORD's sight."

Then Elijah tells Ahab that he had come to place God's curse upon him. He told him that the Lord was going to bring great harm to him.

1 Kings 21:21

So now the LORD says, 'I will bring disaster on you and consume you. I will destroy every one of your male descendants, slave and free alike, anywhere in Israel!'

1 Kings 21:25

(No one else so completely sold himself to what was evil in the LORD's sight as Ahab did under the influence of his wife Jezebel.)

You need to be content with what you have, not greedy like King Ahab was. Here he was, the king; he had everything, yet he wanted that vineyard.

If you and I are not content with what we have; if we see things that other people have and want them for ourselves, it may lead us to do things that displease God, just like Ahab did. When those feelings of covetousness come over us, we need to stop and thank God for what we already have. Instead of envying other people for what they have,

instead of hating others for having things you want, show kindness to them; be happy for them.

If you haven't yet believed in the Lord Jesus as your Savior, you don't have the Holy Spirit living in you to help you be content. If you want to ask Jesus to be your Lord, come talk to me privately after class.

Let's pray and ask God to help us be content with the things He has given us.

Closing Prayer

Father, discontentment is a sin. It's like saying that what You have given us isn't good enough. Forgive us for coveting things that other people have and help us to be content. Thank You for all the wonderful things that you have given us. Help us to always have a thankful and contented heart. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

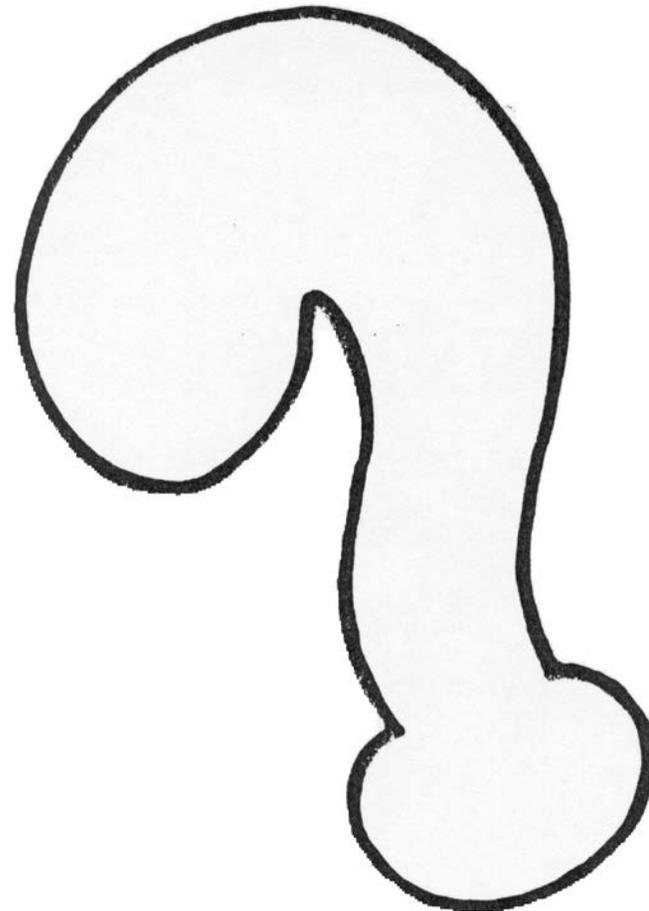
Learning Activities

Craft Corner

On a piece of construction paper, write today's Memory Verse. Have children use magazine pictures to make a collage of the things for which they are thankful. (Or, use the pattern provided at the end of this lesson.)

Game Center

Question Marks — Make a large question mark pattern using the sketch provided. Cut out a question mark shape for each question. For a correctly answered review question, the child may choose a question mark. On the back of the question mark, have written "Zonk," "Sorry," "Try again," "Winner," or "Bull's Eye." Award a small prize or candy for "Winner" and a larger one for "Bull's Eye." Or, you could have point values on the backs of the question marks.



Or, Use the following questions in a game of your choice:

1. What did King Ahab covet? (His neighbor's vineyard.)
2. What was it about this vineyard that King Ahab liked so much? (It had large luscious grapes hanging on the vines and it was conveniently located right near his palace.)

3. What did Ahab offer Naboth for his vineyard? (Cash or a trade for some other land.)
4. Why didn't Naboth want to sell King Ahab his vineyard? (Moses had passed a law that said land had to stay within a family. So, it was against the law to sell it to Ahab. And since Naboth had gotten the land from his father, he wanted to pass it on to his sons.)
5. How did Ahab act when Naboth told him he wouldn't sell his land? (He pouted because he couldn't have what he wanted.)
6. Have you ever pouted when you couldn't get your way?
7. Do you know what God says about sin? (The Bible tells us in Ezekiel 18:4 that "the soul that sins shall surely die.")
8. Are you satisfied with the things you have or do you want some of the things your friends have? Be honest!
9. How does coveting start? (First, you spend time day dreaming about the things you don't have, imagining in your mind what it would be like to have it.)
10. What happens if you allow your thoughts to continue to desire the things you don't have? (You think you'll never be happy until you get it and before you know it, you want it so badly that you would do whatever it takes to get it.)
11. What are some ways people manipulate others to get their way? (Whine, temper tantrums, stealing.)
12. What does God want you to be with the things that you already have? (Content!)
13. What did Jezebel do to get that vineyard for her husband? (She arranged to have Naboth falsely accused of cursing God and the king. The penalty for cursing the king was death.)
14. Naboth died and he didn't do anything wrong. Who does that remind you of? (Jesus)
15. How could have Naboth saved his life? (He could have disobeyed God and sold Ahab the vineyard he wanted so badly.)
16. When you begin to covet, what should you do? (Think about all the things you already have and thank God for them.)
17. Where does contentment come from? (From inside you – from knowing God is with you and from believing His promise to give you all you need.)
18. What should you do instead of envying other people for what they have? (Show kindness to them; be happy for them.)

[For more expositional lessons for children, visit <https://www.FreeChildrensMinistryLessons.com>]

Elijah Goes to Heaven

(1 Kings 19:19; 2 Kings 2:1-15)

Introduction

What kinds of things do you need power and strength for? (Hitting a baseball, opening jar lids.) What makes you strong? (Exercising and eating food that is good for you.) Where do you get Spiritual strength from? (God!)

Today we are going to learn how important it is for us to have the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Opening Prayer

Father, we want to be faithful to You. But sometimes it's hard. The things of the world tug and pull at us. We are tempted to do things that we shouldn't. We need the power of the Holy Spirit, so desperately. Your way is so much better than the way of the world. Teach us this morning how to hold on to You no matter what happens to us in life. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you.
(Acts 1:8)*

Lesson

Reviewing the last few lessons...

Over the past three weeks, we have been learning about the prophet, Elijah. Because King Ahab and Queen Jezebel were wicked and worshipped idols instead of the only true God, God sent Elijah to bring messages of warning to them.

God Provides for Elijah

First, Elijah told Ahab and Jezebel that because of their wickedness, God was going to bring a drought and a famine to the land. And God kept His promise and many people died. Jezebel wanted to kill Elijah for bringing God's judgment against them. But God cared for Elijah in a miraculous way. God led him to a hiding place right next to a stream of water and then God sent ravens to carry bread to him morning and evening. So Elijah had plenty to eat and drink while the rest of the world around him was experiencing the drought.

Then, after a couple of years, the stream dried up, but God didn't forget about Elijah. He led Elijah to a widow's house. When he arrived, the widow was just about to make her last bit of flour and oil into a loaf of bread. She expected to die shortly after that. But God miraculously provided flour and oil for over a year. Her jars of oil and flour never emptied!

We learned that God promises to supply all our need!

Elijah and the Contest with Baal

To prove to evil Ahab that only the Lord is God, Elijah challenged the false prophets of Baal to a contest. He told them to set up an altar with a sacrifice on it. And he did the same. Then he told the false prophets to call upon Baal to light the fire. They danced furiously all night long, but Baal never sent down fire. Do you know why? (Because Baal is not God!) Then Elijah called upon God.

1 Kings 18:38-39

Immediately the fire of the LORD flashed down from heaven and burned up the young bull, the wood, the stones, and the dust. It even licked up all the water in the trench! (39) And when all the people saw it, they fell face down on the ground and cried out, "The LORD—he is God! Yes, the LORD is God!"

We learned that Lord is God and there is no other.

Elijah and Naboth's Vineyard

Last week we learned that King Ahab coveted Naboth's vineyard because it was near the palace. When Naboth would not sell it to him, Queen Jezebel came up with a plan to kill Naboth so they could just take the land.

Ahab thought he could do anything he wanted and no one would know what happened. What began with an attitude of discontentment, led to the cruel murder of an innocent man.

So, God sent Elijah to tell King Ahab that the Lord was going to bring great harm to him.

We learned that God wants us to be content with what we have.

Going on with the story...

Now it is time for Elijah's life on earth to be over. But before he went up to heaven, God wanted him to pass his job onto another man.

God told Elijah to go find a man named Elisha and choose him to take his place as God's prophet. Elijah found Elisha working in his field because Elisha was a farmer.

1 Kings 19:19

So Elijah went and found Elisha son of Shaphat plowing a field. There were twelve teams of oxen in the field, and Elisha was plowing with the twelfth team. Elijah went over to him and threw his cloak across his shoulders and then walked away.

The cloak that Elijah was wearing was a symbol of God's power. Elisha recognized that when Elijah threw his cloak around him, it was an invitation to follow Elijah. So, Elisha left his old life as a farmer and became Elijah's assistant. During the next few years Elijah taught Elisha everything he knew about being a true prophet of God.

Finally, Elisha was ready to take over Elijah's job and it was time for God to take Elijah to heaven.

2 Kings 2:1

When the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were traveling from Gilgal.

The two men came to the edge of the Jordan River. And, when they got there, an amazing thing happened.

2 Kings 2:8

Then Elijah folded his cloak together and struck the water with it. The river divided, and the two of them went across on dry ground!

Miraculously, the Jordan divided and the riverbed dried up so they could walk across. When had God performed a miracle like that before? (The Red Sea and the Jordan River.) Do you wonder what went through Elisha's mind when that happened? He had to be thinking that the God he was serving was the same God who delivered Israel into the Promised Land. God does not change; He is all powerful and rules over all creation!

Before God took Elijah up to heaven, he asked Elisha, "What do you want me to do for you before I'm taken away?" So, Elisha had one last request.

If you had a very special person in your life and he told you this would be his last day on earth, and you could ask him for anything, what would you ask for? [Teacher, let the children respond.]

2 Kings 2:9

When they came to the other side, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me what I can do for you before I am taken away." And Elisha replied, "Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit and become your successor."

Elisha didn't ask for popularity or for riches. He asked for a double portion of God's power. He wanted to carry on the work that Elijah had taught him to do for God. He didn't ask for material possessions, he simply wanted to be used by God for His kingdom. He knew he would need God's power to continue Elijah's work.

2 Kings 2:10

“You have asked a difficult thing,” Elijah replied. “If you see me when I am taken from you, then you will get your request. But if not, then you won’t.”

This was a big request. But Elijah tells Elisha, “If you see me when I’m taken from you, you will get your request.”

2 Kings 2:11

As they were walking along and talking, suddenly a chariot of fire appeared, drawn by horses of fire. It drove between the two men, separating them, and Elijah was carried by a whirlwind into heaven.

God came for Elijah suddenly and carried him up to heaven in a tornado. It was not something Elijah did in his own strength; God did it!

Do you think that Elisha kept his eyes wide opened to watch what was happening, or not?

2 Kings 2:12

Elisha saw it and cried out, “My father! My father! I see the chariots and charioteers of Israel!” And as they disappeared from sight, Elisha tore his clothes in distress.

Do you think that Elisha got that double portion of power he asked for? How would Elisha know if God granted his request?

2 Kings 2:13-14

Elisha picked up Elijah’s cloak, which had fallen when he was taken up. Then Elisha returned to the bank of the Jordan River. (14) He struck the water with Elijah’s cloak and cried out, “Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah?” Then the river divided, and Elisha went across.

So it was proven! Elisha *did* have the power!

God was faithful! God had given Elisha power just as He had asked for. Elisha started his work as God’s prophet with great joy and confidence. He had seen for himself that God is powerful.

God is faithful to us and wants to give us the same power that He gave Elisha.

Who else was taken up to heaven in a miraculous way? (Jesus!)

Before Jesus went up to heaven in the clouds, he promised to send us the Holy Spirit. He knew that we would need the power of the Holy Spirit to live a life that is pleasing to God, just like Elisha needed the power of God to carry on the work of Elijah, the prophet.

God has important work for you to do for Him, but you must do it by the power of the Holy Spirit. What do you think we need God’s power for? [Teacher, let the children respond.] (The Spirit gives us comfort, guides us into all truth, reminds us of God’s word, gives us the right words to say to others, and fills us with the power to say, “No!” to sin. The power from the Holy Spirit also gives us the courage, boldness, confidence, insight, ability, and authority that we need to be powerful witnesses for God.) [Teacher, review Memory Verse.]

Who else will be taken up to heaven in a miraculous way? (All true believers who are alive at the end of time!)

1 Corinthians 15:51-52

But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! (52) It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed.

What this is talking about is at the end of time, all the true believers in Jesus who are still alive, will be taken up into heaven suddenly, just like Elijah and just like Jesus.

If you are not a true believer in Jesus at the end of time, you will be left behind. Are you a true believer in Jesus? Do you really believe that when Jesus was crucified that He took the punishment that you deserve for your sins? Do you trust in what He did for you on the

cross? Jesus could come back for us at any time. It says He will come "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." Every day we should get up asking "Lord Jesus, will I see you today?"

1 Thessalonians 4:17

Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever.

Are you ready? He could come at any time!

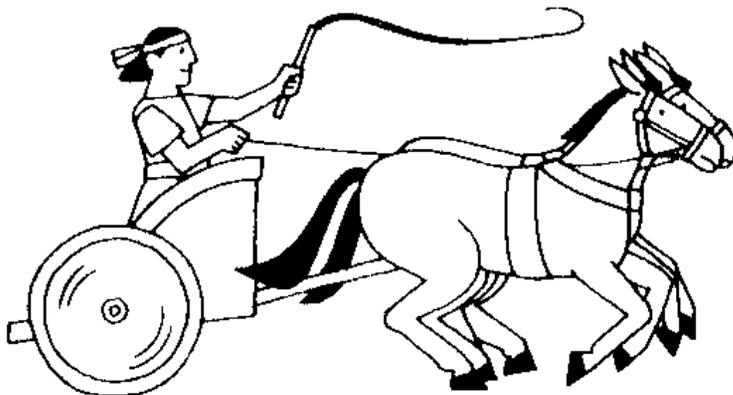
Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for being a faithful and loving God. We do love You and want our lives to please You in every way. We ask that You give us the power of the Holy Spirit so that we might be able to say, "No!" to sin and "Yes!" to whatever You call us to do. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Enlarge and copy the follow graphic onto yellow construction paper. Have the children cut "flames" out of red and orange construction paper to glue on to their chariots and horses.



Game Center

Bible Story Review Activity

Have a volunteer stand with his/her back to the other students. Volunteer tosses a bean bag or nerf ball over his shoulder. Student who catches it must answer one of the review questions, then becomes "It."

Or, use the following questions in another game of your choice:

1. What was the name of the evil King and Queen that Elijah had to bring God's word to? (Ahab and Jezebel)
2. Why did Jezebel want to kill Elijah? (Because she thought he brought the drought upon the country and also because he killed all the prophets of Baal.)
3. How did God take care of Elijah during the drought? (He led him to a hiding place right next to a stream of water and sent ravens to carry bread to him morning and evening.)
4. Tell about the contest Elijah challenged Ahab to.
5. Why didn't Baal send fire down on their altar? (He's not a real god!)
6. Who did Elijah find to take his place as the prophet of God? (Elisha)
7. What was Elisha doing when Elijah found him? (He was plowing a field; he was a farmer.)
8. How did Elijah "invite" Elisha to come follow him and become his assistant? (Elijah threw his cloak on him.)
9. Before Elijah went up to heaven what amazing thing happened at the Jordan River? (Elijah took his cloak, rolled it up, and struck the water with it. The waters divided and the river bed dried up.)
10. What was Elisha's last request of Elijah? (A double portion of power.)

11. Why did Elisha need God's power? (To continue the work Elijah had trained him to do for God.)
12. Tell how Elijah went up to heaven. (A chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire and then Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.)
13. How did Elisha know if God had given him the power he asked for? (He also took up the cloak of Elijah and struck the water with it. And the water divided and Elisha was able to cross over on dry land.)
14. Who else was taken up into heaven in a miraculous way? (Jesus!)
15. What did Jesus promise to send to us once he returned to the Father? (The Holy Spirit)
16. What do we need God's power for? (The Spirit gives us comfort, guides us into all truth, reminds us of God's word, gives us the right words to say to others, and fills us with the power to say, "No!" to sin. The power from the Holy Spirit also gives us the courage, boldness, confidence, insight, ability, and authority that we need to be powerful witnesses for God.)
17. Who else besides Elijah and Jesus will be taken up into heaven in a miraculous way? (Those of us who are alive at the end of time.)
18. How do you know if you'll be taken up into heaven when the rapture happens? (If you are a true believer in what Jesus did on the cross.)

[For more expositional lessons for children, visit
<https://www.FreeChildrensMinistryLessons.com>]

Elisha Helps a Widow's Family

(2 Kings 4:1-7)

Introduction

Who is the one that takes care of you? Who is the #1 person that makes sure you have food to eat, a place to sleep, takes care of you when you're sick? [Teacher, lead the children in a discussion about their primary care giver and what they do to provide for them.] What would you do if your [primary caregiver] was to get sick, or have an accident, lose his job, or even die? How would you feel? You might be afraid or hopeless. You would probably wonder who would take care of you now.

The family in our Bible story must have experienced these same feelings.

Opening Prayer

Father, thank You for giving us our families that love and care for us. They feed us and clothe us and give us a nice warm bed to sleep in. We don't want to take them for granted; we know they are a gift to us from You. Bless them now and give us hearts of appreciation for all that You do for us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think. (Ephesians 3:20)

Lesson

We spent four weeks learning about Elijah, but after God took him to heaven, Elisha became God's prophet. It was his job to tell people God's messages and to love and care for God's people.

One day, a woman came to see Elisha. She was very upset.

2 Kings 4:1

One day the widow of a member of the group of prophets came to Elisha and cried out, "My husband who served you is dead, and you know how he feared the LORD. But now a creditor has come, threatening to take my two sons as slaves."

This woman's husband had died owing a lot of money. And the man he owed the money to wanted to be paid. But this woman had no money. What was she to do?

In those days poor people were allowed to pay their debts by selling their children as slaves. This poor woman not only lost her husband, but now she was about to lose her two sons, too. She was probably worried about how she would even survive without someone to take care of her. She must have felt hopeless.

Have you ever felt hopeless? Maybe you were riding your bike all alone and then you crashed and got hurt. Or have you ever gotten lost? That is scary, isn't it. I remember a time I came home from school and my mother wasn't there and I was locked out of the house. I was frantic with fear!

Well, this woman was in an awful and scary situation. She just lost her husband and now she was about to lose her two sons. This woman had two great needs: **peace** on the inside and a **plan** to know what to do. [Teacher, write those words on the board.]

So, she went to Elisha for advice and comfort because he was a man of God. Turning to God for help is a wise thing. You can trust your Heavenly Father to supply all you need in hard times.

2 Kings 4:2

"What can I do to help you?" Elisha asked. "Tell me, what do you have in the house?" "Nothing at all, except a flask of olive oil," she replied

Elisha kindly showed God's love to this woman. He asked her, "How may I help you." He wanted to help her, but she didn't have much! All she had was a little oil.

Olive oil was very important to people's survival in those days. They used it for lighting their lamps and for cooking and heating.

Well, Elisha and the widow couldn't do much with just a little oil, but God could! So Elisha told the widow what to do. Having a **plan** gives you **peace** on the inside!

2 Kings 4:3-4

And Elisha said, "Borrow as many empty jars as you can from your friends and neighbors. (4) Then go into your house with your sons and shut the door behind you. Pour olive oil from your flask into the jars, setting each one aside when it is filled."

God loved the widow and her sons very much! He knew about their needs and cared what would happen to them. God loves you very much, too, and wants to supply your needs, as well. But you must be willing to trust Him and obey Him, just like this widow did.

Elisha's plan might have seemed odd to this woman. She was told to go to all her neighbors and borrow all the pots and pans and bottles and jars they would lend to her. Her neighbors must have thought she was crazy, but she did it anyway because she trusted God.

2 Kings 4:5

So she did as she was told. Her sons kept bringing jars to her, and she filled one after another.

The widow obeyed Elisha's command. She trusted God and expected Him to supply her needs. And, as she trusted and obeyed God, she was filled with **peace**.

The boys brought every kind of container the neighbor's would give them—big jars, small jars, pots and pans, cups and bottles. When the boys brought her the first jar, she filled it with olive oil from her jar—the jar that had been almost empty the last time she looked. But she was able to fill that jar right to the top! Amazing! The boys brought her a second container. Again, she filled it with oil from her jar. When they brought her a third jar, there was plenty of oil to fill it, too.

God caused the oil to continue to flow until all the jars were full.

What would you have thought if you'd been there?

It may have seemed like a difficult or even silly thing to do, but the widow was depending on God to cause the small amount of oil she had to fill up all those containers.

2 Kings 4:6

Soon every container was full to the brim! "Bring me another jar," she said to one of her sons. "There aren't any more!" he told her. And then the olive oil stopped flowing.

When they had filled every available jar with oil, the oil stopped flowing.

2 Kings 4:7

When she told the man of God what had happened, he said to her, "Now sell the olive oil and pay your debts, and you and your sons can live on what is left over."

Elisha told the woman to sell the oil and pay the money she owed and use the rest of it to take care of herself and her sons.

If you find yourself in a place of great need, remember that God can supply what you need, when you need it. And as you trust and obey Him, he will give you **peace** on the inside and show you His **plan** for your life.

Spiritual Lesson for us...

Oil in scripture is a picture of the power of the Holy Spirit. God fills you with His power just like He filled that woman's jars with oil. But notice that the oil stopped flowing when there were no more jars to fill. The number of jars the woman's sons brought showed how much faith they had. They must have had great faith because they brought every jar they could get their hands on.

God's provision is as large as our faith and obedience. Be sure that you don't limit God's blessing by doubting His ability to supply all your needs.

Ephesians 3:20

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.

Closing Prayer

Father, we want to be filled with your Holy Spirit. Please guard our hearts from becoming hard and cold towards You. We want to be open and available for You to flow into our lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Oil Painting

Materials:

White paper, black permanent markers, crayons, newspaper, baby or cooking oil, pie tins or jar lids, cotton balls.

Preparation:

- Cover the tables with newsprint
- Pour small amount of oil into pie tins or jar lids

Procedure:

1. Using black permanent markers, write "God Supplies Our Needs" in big out-lined letters. Or use the pattern on the last page.

God Supplies

Our Needs

2. Using bright-colored crayons, color in the spaces (some spaces may be left white.)
3. Place papers face down on the newspaper and use cotton balls to rub oil over the back of the picture. Let the papers absorb oil for a few minutes; then students hold papers up to the light to see how the scenes have become transparent.

Note: don't use construction paper for this project, it absorbs too much oil. Use plain white copy paper.

Alternate Craft Idea: Bible Verse Jar

Materials: String or yarn, fine-tipped markers, glue, sequins.

Directions:

1. Enlarge the oil jar pattern.
2. Copy pattern on heavy paper.
3. Use markers to color the jar.
4. Cut yarn into two pieces to glue on the lines at the top and bottom of the jar.
5. Glue sequins on the circles.



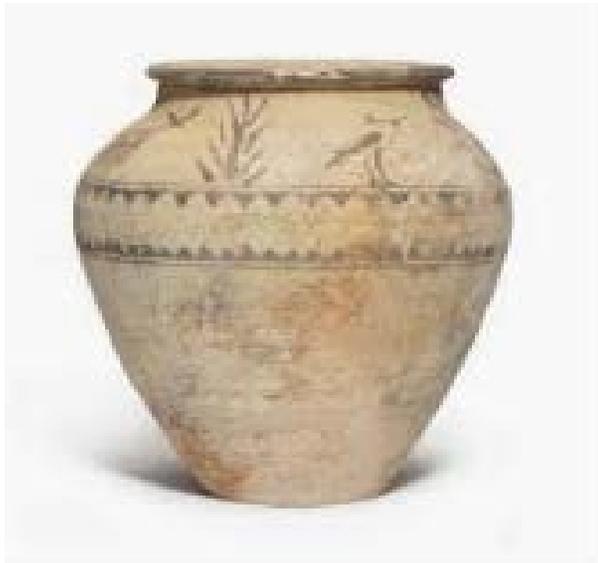
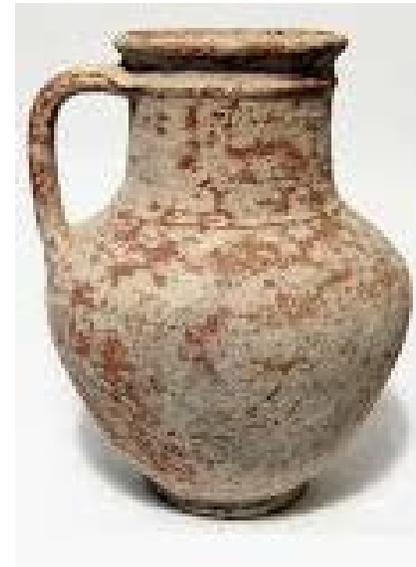
Game Center

Make game cards using pictures of different kinds of pots or jars on the front. Write a number of points on the back of each. Use Velcro 'dots' to secure them to a felt board. Divide children into teams. For each correctly answered question, allow a child to choose a game card to discover the points they won for their team.

Or, use the following questions in a game of your choice:

1. Why did the widow feel scared and hopeless? (Her husband had died. She didn't have any way of getting money.)
2. Why were her sons going to be sold into slavery? (In those days poor people were allowed to pay their debts by selling their children as slaves.)
3. What were this woman's two great needs? (**Peace** on the inside and a **plan** to know what to do.)
4. When is a time a (mom) might feel like she has no one to help her?
5. Who are some people who might not have anyone to help them? (Homeless, single moms)
6. What did God give to the widow and her sons? (Oil)
7. Why was oil important to people in those days? (Olive oil was very important to people's survival. They used it for lighting their lamps and for cooking and heating.)
8. How can we receive more of God's power to care of others? (Pray and ask God for help to know right ways to help people who have no one to help them. Pray and ask God to help us notice people who need help. Read the Bible to find ways God tells us to help others.)
9. What is the name of the book which tells about Elisha and the widow and all the oil God provided? (2 Kings.)

10. What stopped the oil from flowing out of the woman's jar? (No more containers were available.)
11. What did she do with all that oil? (She sold the oil and paid the money she owed and then used the rest to live on.)
12. What do you get on the inside when you trust and obey God? (**Peace.**)
13. What is oil a picture of? (The power of the Holy Spirit.)
14. The oil stopped flowing when there were no more jars to fill. What spiritual lesson does that teach us? (That we need to be open and available for God to flow into our lives.)
15. What do we need to do to be open and available for God to flow into our lives? (Trust and obey Him; don't doubt his ability to supply all our needs.)



God Supplies
Our Needs

Elisha Raises a Dead Boy to Life

(2 Kings 4:8-37)

Introduction

Have you ever made a promise you knew you couldn't keep? ("If you buy me this, I'll never ask for another thing the rest of my life, I promise!") It's easy to make promises, and it's easy to break them. God gives you and me lots of promises in His Word, the Bible. Although some may seem impossible for Him to keep, God is faithful; He will always keep His promises.

One day a promise was made to a woman in the Bible that seemed totally impossible for God to keep. God's Word doesn't tell us her name – only that she lived in the town of Shunem.

Opening Prayer

Father, thank You for being a faithful God who never breaks His promises. I pray that you will inspire us with the desire to be faithful, too. Please Lord, teach us to be honest and thoughtful in everything that we do. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

Remember that the LORD your God is the only God and that he is faithful. (Deuteronomy 7:9a)

Lesson

We have been learning about the prophets of God. Last week we learned that God used Elisha to miraculously provide for a poor widow. This week we will learn that God uses Elisha to miraculously raise a rich woman's promised son back to life.

2 Kings 4:8

One day Elisha went to the town of Shunem. A wealthy woman lived there, and she urged him to come to her home for a meal. After that, whenever he passed that way, he would stop there for something to eat.

Elisha often visited a town called Shunem. A woman who lived there invited Elisha and his servant, Gehazi, to eat dinner with her and her husband whenever Elisha traveled through Shunem.

One day the woman shared an idea with her husband.

2 Kings 4:9-10

She said to her husband, "I am sure this man who stops in from time to time is a holy man of God. (10) Let's build a small room for him on the roof and furnish it with a bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp. Then he will have a place to stay whenever he comes by."

This Shunammite woman was so fond of Elisha that she and her husband decided to build a guest room for him and furnish it with a bed, a table, a chair and a lamp. They wanted to show Elisha kindness and hospitality.

2 Kings 4:11-12

One day Elisha returned to Shunem, and he went up to this upper room to rest. (12) He said to his servant Gehazi, "Tell the woman from Shunem I want to speak to her." When she appeared,

The next time Elisha arrived, the lady showed him his new room. Elisha was so thankful for her kindness, he asked the lady what he could do for her.

2 Kings 4:13

Elisha said to Gehazi, "Tell her, 'We appreciate the kind concern you have shown us. What can we do for you? Can we put in a good word for you to the king or to the commander of the army?'" "No," she replied, "my family takes good care of me."

Elisha wanted to return kindness to the woman, but she told him that she was happy with what she had and didn't need anything else.

2 Kings 4:14

Later Elisha asked Gehazi, "What can we do for her?" Gehazi replied, "She doesn't have a son, and her husband is an old man."

Even though she told Elisha that she didn't need anything, he still wanted to do something for her.

When Gehazi told Elisha that the woman was childless, it gave him an idea of how to bless her.

2 Kings 4:15-16

“Call her back again,” Elisha told him. When the woman returned, Elisha said to her as she stood in the doorway, (16) “Next year at this time you will be holding a son in your arms!” “No, my lord!” she cried. “O man of God, don’t deceive me and get my hopes up like that.”

The prophet promised the birth of a son. The Shunammite woman and her husband were old; they had given up all hope of ever having children. This news was too good to be true! Children are a gift from God. She said to Elisha, *“Don’t be kidding me about this!”*

2 Kings 4:17

But sure enough, the woman soon became pregnant. And at that time the following year she had a son, just as Elisha had said.

Just as Elisha promised, the Lord gave her a son as a special gift. Can you imagine how very happy this made the woman? God had promised her a son and He was faithful to keep that promise.

But that’s not the end of the story. The baby grew into a boy. Then, one morning something terrible happened to this little boy.

2 Kings 4:18-19

One day when her child was older, he went out to help his father, who was working with the harvesters. (19) Suddenly he cried out, “My head hurts! My head hurts!” His father said to one of the servants, “Carry him home to his mother.”

Quickly a servant carried the boy back to the house.

2 Kings 4:20

So the servant took him home, and his mother held him on her lap. But around noontime he died.

The woman held her son on her lap. But about noontime, the boy died. How sad, her promised son was dead.

What went wrong? Had God broken His promise? When something bad happens that you don’t understand, is God still in control? [Teacher, discuss hard situations the children are facing at home, school, and so on.]

Even in these hard situations, God is faithful, He always keeps His promises. God has promised to love us with an everlasting love (Jeremiah 31:3) and that He will never leave us (Hebrews 13:5).

God loves you and is always with you, no matter what happens. Hebrews 13:6 says, “The Lord is my helper.” He will help you through the hard times. He promises that “all things work together for good” (Romans 8:28). Somehow, some way, He will cause good to come out of the worst situation.

Do you think the Shunammite woman wondered what good would come out of this situation as she held her dead son in her arms? Did she lose hope?

2 Kings 4:21-22

She carried him up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, then shut the door and left him there. She sent a message to her husband: “Send one of the servants and a donkey so that I can hurry to the man of God and come right back.”

She carried the boy upstairs to Elisha’s room, laid him on the bed and decided to get on her fastest donkey and go find Elisha. She hadn’t lost hope; she trusted that God had a plan.

2 Kings 4:24

So she saddled the donkey and said to the servant, “Hurry! Don’t slow down unless I tell you to.”

She wanted to get there as fast as she could.

When the mother arrived, she told Elisha all that had happened, and about the cold little form that lay on his bed.

2 Kings 4:29

Then Elisha said to Gehazi, “Get ready to travel; take my staff and go! Don’t talk to anyone along the way. Go quickly and lay the staff on the child’s face.”

Elisha told his servant to run as fast as he could to the dead boy and not to get distracted by anyone along the way. Then he tells him to do a strange thing: lay his staff across the boy’s face.

2 Kings 4:31

Gehazi hurried on ahead and laid the staff on the child’s face, but nothing happened. There was no sign of life. He returned to meet Elisha and told him, “The child is still dead.”

As soon as Elisha got to the house he went upstairs. He entered his room, shut the door and prayed.

2 Kings 4:32-33

When Elisha arrived, the child was indeed dead, lying there on the prophet’s bed. (33) He went in alone and shut the door behind him and prayed to the LORD.

He knew that only God had the power to bring this promised son back to life, and he believed that God would.

Hard things will happen in your life that you won’t understand. But God is faithful—that means He will always do what He has promised. You can depend on Him no matter what. He is in control of every situation. Sometimes things don’t always turn out the way you want or expect. But you can still thank God that He loves you and that He is with you and will help you. You can trust that He has the power to cause good to come out of bad situations.

As Elisha stood by the bedside of the dead little boy, he believed God’s power could bring this boy back to life.

2 Kings 4:34

Then he lay down on the child’s body, placing his mouth on the child’s mouth, his eyes on the child’s eyes, and his hands on the child’s hands. And as he stretched out on him, the child’s body began to grow warm again!

The body of the boy began to grow warm. But, there was still no sign of life.

2 Kings 4:35

Elisha got up, walked back and forth across the room once, and then stretched himself out again on the child. This time the boy sneezed seven times and opened his eyes!

Elisha stretched himself again upon the child. Suddenly the boy awoke, sneezed seven times and opened his eyes.

2 Kings 4:36-37

Then Elisha summoned Gehazi. “Call the child’s mother!” he said. And when she came in, Elisha said, “Here, take your son!” (37) She fell at his feet and bowed before him, overwhelmed with gratitude. Then she took her son in her arms and carried him downstairs.

Elisha, by God’s power, brought this little boy back to life! Her promised son was alive! What other promised Son did God bring back to life? (Jesus!)

The Shunammite woman had trusted God even in this hard situation. When you are having a hard time at home or school, you can trust that God will cause good to come out of what seems like a bad situation. God is faithful.

The woman fell at Elisha’s feet and bowed to the ground to show her gratefulness to God. Then she picked up her son. God had given him to her once and now He had given the son back to the mother a second time. God is a faithful God! He always keeps His promises.

Closing Prayer

Father, we want to thank You for always being there for us when we go through difficult situations. Teach us to trust that You can turn the bad things in our lives into blessings. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Game Center

Toss for it

Students toss a beanbag to earn points for correctly answered review questions.

Place several rows of numbered cards face down with a few inches between them to form a grid pattern. (Make sure to put several wild cards or Jokers down, too!) Use masking tape to make a tossing line several feet from the cards.

For a correctly answered review question, a player tosses the beanbag onto a card, reveal the points he received for his team.

- Numbered cards = 50 points
- Face cards = 100 points
- Aces = 200 points
- Jokers = 0 points (or, 150, if you prefer!)

If the child answers incorrectly, give the other team a chance to answer that question. If neither team knows, give the answer and ask that question again later. Have student pick up the card and put it in the team's basket to be counted at the end of the game.

Or, use the following questions in a game of your choice:

1. What was the name of the town where the woman lived that Elisha often visited? (Shunem.)
2. What did the woman and her husband do to show God's love to Elisha? (They built him and his servant a guest room and invited him to stay with them.)
3. What did Elisha do to show God's love to the Shunammite family? (He thanked them and asked God to give them a son.)

4. In what ways can we show God's love to each other? (Pray for each other. Help each other. Think about other's feelings. Do what someone else wants. Give up something you care about to help someone else. Be kind.)
5. What terrible thing happened to the little boy? (He died.)
6. Does God ever break a promise? (No!)
7. What are some of the promises of God? (He will love us with an everlasting love (Jeremiah 31:3); He will never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5); that He'll be our helper (Hebrews 13:6); all things work together for good (Romans 8:28))
8. What did the woman do with the body of her son after he died? (She carried him up to Elisha's room and laid him on the bed.)
9. After she laid the boy on Elisha's bed, what did the woman do? (She saddled up her fastest donkey and went to find Elisha.)
10. What did Elisha tell his servant to do? (Run as fast as he could to the dead boy and lay his staff on the face of the child.)
11. What did Elisha do when he got to the house? (He entered the room, shut the door and prayed.)
12. After he prayed, what did Elisha do to bring warmth back to the boy's body? (He lay on the child and put his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands. He stretched himself out on the child.)
13. What did the boy do just before he woke up? (He sneezed seven times.)
14. What is today's memory verse? (Remember that the LORD your God is the only God and that he is faithful. (Deuteronomy 7:9a))
15. What two gifts were given in today's lesson? (The Shunammite woman built a room for Elisha; God gave the woman a son.)

[For more expositional lessons for children, visit <https://www.FreeChildrensMinistryLessons.com>]

A Slave Girl Cares for Naaman

(2 Kings 5:1-16)

Introduction

[Teacher, bring a variety of spot removers to class: a bar of soap, laundry spot remover, carpet spot remover, glass cleaner, etc.] Have you seen your mom use one of these to clean spots in your house? [Hold up the glass cleaner and ask the children if they know what it is used for. Then use it to clean a window or mirror. Hold up the bar of soap and ask what it cleans, and so forth.]

All of these spot removers remove spots. The man in our Bible story today had a spot he wanted to remove. But it was a spot that none of these spot removers could clean. It was a spot that only God could clean. He had a spot of leprosy. Leprosy is a skin disease. In Bible times, leprosy couldn't be cured by men. Only God could cure leprosy.

Opening Prayer

Father, we are each born with a spot that we can't get out by ourselves. Teach us this morning how we can make our lives clean and right for You. We pray that You will fill us with the Holy Spirit who will give us the power we need to live our lives in a way that is pleasing to You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

Lesson

A man named Naaman lived in Aram (present day Syria), a country just north of Israel. Naaman was a general in the Aramean army. In fact, he was the army's highest-ranking officer. He was a man of high social standing and importance to the king of Aram.

He was a brave leader and a famous war hero, but he had a big problem.

2 Kings 5:1

The king of Aram had great admiration for Naaman, the commander of his army, because through him the LORD had given Aram great victories. But though Naaman was a mighty warrior, he suffered from leprosy.

Leprosy is a skin disease that damages nerves and skin. It causes sores and terrible deformities. Today leprosy can be treated with medicine. But in Bible times, there was no cure for leprosy. People were terrified to go near anyone who had this disease because they were afraid they would get sick, too. It was contagious. So, when people got leprosy back in those days they were forced to go live in a place separate from the rest of the people. They called those places leper colonies. Once you were sent to this place you could never come back to live with the rest of the people again.

When Naaman found out he had leprosy, how do you think he felt? In spite of his high position and riches, he was in a seemingly hopeless situation.

What a terrible problem! But there is something much worse than leprosy. It is sin. You and I have sinned. In many ways sin is like leprosy. Each person born into this world has sin on the inside. That includes you and me. You were born wanting to do things your own way instead of God's way. What are some things you do your own way instead of doing what is right? [Teacher, let the children respond.] Yes, sin is anything that displeases God. Sin separates us from a holy God. (Isaiah 59:2). God must punish sin. That punishment is to be separated from Him forever. How awful! Sin is a terrible problem. It is even worse than leprosy. But God had a plan to save Naaman just as He has a plan to save you.

2 Kings 5:2

At this time Aramean raiders had invaded the land of Israel, and among their captives was a young girl who had been given to Naaman's wife as a maid.

Although the Arameans were officially at peace with Israel in those days, border raids were common. But one day, enemy soldiers did attack an Israelite town and captured a young Israelite girl, and took her away to be a slave. This Jewish girl worked for Naaman's wife.

The Israelite slave girl was sad that Naaman had this terrible disease. And she knew of a man who could help. That man was God's prophet, Elisha.

2 Kings 5:3

One day the girl said to her mistress, "I wish my master would go to see the prophet in Samaria. He would heal him of his leprosy."

This young girl could have chosen to be bitterly angry at those who had kidnapped her from her family and made her a slave. But instead, she chose to care about them. When she found out that her master had leprosy, she could have said, "Good! He deserves it." But instead, she had compassion on him.

This little girl knew that God is all-powerful. She knew that God is the great, powerful God who made the birds that sing and the beautiful flowers and trees. She knew that this powerful God also really loved Naaman and cared about what happened to him. So, she told Naaman the good news.

2 Kings 5:4

So Naaman told the king what the young girl from Israel had said.

Naaman told his king what the little girl had said.

2 Kings 5:5

"Go and visit the prophet," the king of Aram told him. "I will send a letter of introduction for you to take to the king of Israel." So Naaman started out, carrying as gifts 750 pounds of silver, 150 pounds of gold, and ten sets of clothing.

The Aramean King wrote a letter of recommendation to the king of Israel to introduce him to Naaman and explain the situation.

Naaman hurried home and packed for his trip. He loaded his chariots with gold and silver and beautiful clothing and then he started off for Israel.

Naaman took gifts of money and clothing to pay for the cure of his skin disease—leprosy. Naaman didn't know he could not buy the power to cure leprosy. Only the power of God could heal Naaman.

And that is a free gift from God.

Naaman drove his chariots filled with the gifts to Elisha's house and he waited for Elisha to come outside and make him well.

2 Kings 5:9

So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and waited at the door of Elisha's house.

But Elisha didn't come outside; he sent a messenger to talk to Naaman.

2 Kings 5:10

But Elisha sent a messenger out to him with this message: "Go and wash yourself seven times in the Jordan River. Then your skin will be restored, and you will be healed of your leprosy."

When Naaman heard these instructions, he was furious! He had come to Elisha's house expecting something wonderful and exciting to happen. But Elisha didn't seem to notice the splendid horses and chariots that arrived outside his door. He just sent out his servant with a message. This was insulting to Naaman; he was a big important man where he had come from. And, what crazy instructions! "Go wash in the Jordan seven times." That sounded ridiculous to Naaman.

2 Kings 5:11

But Naaman became angry and stalked away. "I thought he would certainly come out to meet me!" he said. "I expected him to wave his hand over the leprosy and call on the name of the LORD his God and heal me!"

There was only one way Naaman could be healed, or cleansed, from leprosy. And God has only one way for you to be cleansed of your sin. That way is through His perfect Son, the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus took the punishment for your sin when He died on the cross. As He hung there on the cross, God placed on Him all the wrong things you have done. The Lord Jesus willingly suffered so you wouldn't have to. He gave His blood so your sins could be forgiven—so you could be made clean. The Bible says that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. That no one comes to the Father except by Him. (John 14:6)

There is only one way for you to be cleansed from your sin and that's by believing in what Jesus did for you on the cross.

And there was only one way for Naaman to be cleansed from his leprosy. But, his pride was injured! Naaman thought Elisha's instructions were foolish and he refused to follow them.

2 Kings 5:12

Aren't the rivers of Damascus, the Abana and the Pharpar, better than any of the rivers of Israel? Why shouldn't I wash in them and be healed?" So Naaman turned and went away in a rage.

"Bathe in that muddy, smelly water?" shouted Naaman, "Never! We have much cleaner rivers in Damascus." And he marched off in a rage.

Sometimes God will ask you to do things that seem silly or hard. He might have you go up to a total stranger and tell them about what Jesus did for them on the cross. Or, he might have you say, "I'm sorry" to someone you've hurt. Remember, God's way is always best; God's way brings healing and life.

2 Kings 5:13

But his officers tried to reason with him and said, "Sir, if the prophet had told you to do something very difficult, wouldn't you have done it? So you should certainly obey him when he says simply, 'Go and wash and be cured!'"

Naaman's servants saw that their master's pride had been insulted, but they also knew that if Naaman did not do as the prophet said, he might never be well again. So they tried to reason with him. They said, "If the prophet had asked you to do something hard, wouldn't you have done it? You should certainly obey him when he asks you to do an easy thing." His servants must have loved him very much; they encouraged him to make the right choice.

2 Kings 5:14

So Naaman went down to the Jordan River and dipped himself seven times, as the man of God had instructed him. And his skin became as healthy as the skin of a young child, and he was healed!

So Naaman humbled himself and followed the instructions of God's prophet. Naaman went to the River Jordan. While the servants watched, he walked down into the water. Naaman dipped under the water one time. The leprosy was still there. Down he went the second time. Still nothing happened. He went under the water the third time, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth. The ugly sores were still on his body. I bet he was just about to give up, wouldn't you?

But when he went under the water again and came up the seventh time, the leprosy was gone! Naaman was healed!

He was so excited, he hurried back to Elisha's house.

2 Kings 5:15

Then Naaman and his entire party went back to find the man of God. They stood before him, and Naaman said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. So please accept a gift from your servant."

Naaman wanted to show Elisha how much he appreciated what he had done for him.

2 Kings 5:16

But Elisha replied, "As surely as the LORD lives, whom I serve, I will not accept any gifts." And though Naaman urged him to take the gift, Elisha refused.

Elisha didn't want to take any credit for this miraculous healing. He knew it wasn't by his power that Naaman was healed. It was because Naaman finally humbled himself and trusted in God's way that he was cleansed from his leprosy. In the same way, you can be made clean from your sin by trusting in God's way of forgiveness and everlasting life.

John 3:16

For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.

Because Naaman trusted God's way, he didn't have to be sent away to live in the leper colony. By believing in God's way to have

everlasting life, you no longer have to face being separated from Him because of your sin. Do you believe the Lord Jesus died to cleanse you from your sin and to save you from the punishment of being separated from Him forever? Your faith in Jesus is God's spot remover.

Naaman promised to always worship the one true God. How glad Naaman was that he finally did what he was told even though it seemed silly! How glad Naaman was that Elisha and the slave girl cared for him and helped him!

Closing Prayer

Father, You show us Your power in many ways. We know that You are strong enough to take care of us. You are amazing! You are the great Physician. You are the only One who can heal us of our greatest sickness—sin. Thank You that You have made a way for us to be cleansed from our sin. We look forward to that day that we will be with You in heaven and can see You face-to-face. In Jesus' name, Amen.

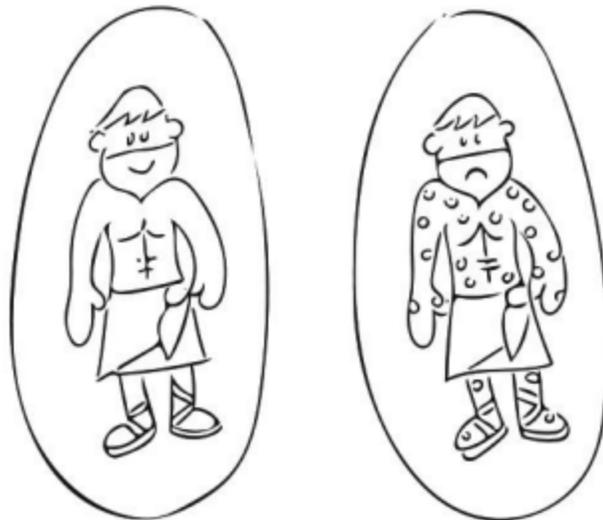
Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Naaman Cup Craft

Materials for each child:

- 5 oz. Dixy cup.
- Craft (or popsicle) stick.
- A Set of Naaman templates to cut out.



Procedure for each child:

1. Cut out the two Naaman characters – one “well” and one “unwell”.
2. Color both Naaman characters.
3. Stick the Naaman characters back-to-back on the craft stick.
4. Poke the stick through a slit cut in the bottom of the cup. [Teacher, pre cut the slit in the cup before class!]
5. Retell the story using the cup.



Game Center

Pass High, Pass Low

Materials: Two empty cardboard tubes.

Preparation: Draw a star on one of the two paper tubes.

Students stand in a circle and pass paper tubes in opposite directions around the circle according to your directions. When you say “Pass high,” students pass tubes over their heads. When you say “Pass low,” students squat down and pass tubes by sliding tubes along the floor. When you say “Pass behind,” students pass tubes behind their backs.

Students continue passing until you say, “Pass no more.” The student holding the tube with the star answers one of the Review Questions.

[Teacher, switch directions often and quickly to keep student's interest level high. And keep the game fun by participating in and enjoying the game yourself.]

Or, use the following review questions in another game of your choice:

1. Who was Naaman? (He was a general in the Aramean army.)
2. Naaman was a brave leader and a famous war hero, but he had a big problem. What was that? (He had leprosy.)
3. What is leprosy? (A skin disease that damages nerves and skin. It causes sores and terrible deformities.)
4. Why were people terrified to go near anyone who had leprosy? (Because it was contagious and there was no cure for it.)
5. Because it was contagious, where were people forced to live? (In a place that was separate from the rest of the people.)
6. How is leprosy like sin? (If you don't get cleansed from it you will have to live a separated life.)
7. How might the slave girl have felt when she was captured as a slave by Naaman's army? (She could have been bitter and angry.)
8. Despite the slave girl's feelings, what did she do to help Naaman? (She told Naaman about God's prophet, Elisha, and how he could help.)
9. Why do you think the girl helped Naaman? (She knew God is all-powerful and loving.)
10. When Naaman told his king what the little girl said, what did he do? (He wrote a letter of recommendation to the king of Israel.)
11. What did Naaman pack for his trip? (He loaded his chariots with gold and silver and beautiful clothing.)
12. What happened when Naaman got to Elisha's house? (Elisha didn't come out to greet Naaman; he sent his servant out.)
13. What instructions did Elisha's servant give Naaman? (Go wash in the Jordan seven times.)
14. What did Naaman think when Elisha told him to wash in the Jordan River? (He was angry and wouldn't do it.)
15. How did Naaman's servants show that they loved him? (They helped him change his mind and do what he was told.)
16. What is the only way for you to be cleansed from your sin? (Believe that what Jesus did for you on the cross took the punishment that you deserve.)
17. What did Naaman think about God after he was cured of leprosy? (God's power showed Naaman that He is God. He said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel.")
18. How did God show Naaman He is powerful? (He healed Naaman of his leprosy.)

[For more expositional lessons for children, visit <https://www.FreeChildrensMinistryLessons.com>]

Elisha Cares About His Enemies

(2 Kings 6:8-23)

Introduction

Has anyone ever

- Been mean to you?
- Called you a name?
- Made fun of you or teased you?
- Left you out of a game?

How did you react? Typically, if someone calls us a name, we call them a name back! Or, if someone sticks their tongue out or makes a face at us, we want to strike back and get even with them!

How do you think God wants us to react?

Our Memory Verse for today tells us how God wants us to treat people who are mean to us. He wants us to show people His kind of love, even when they don't deserve it! He wants us to be kind to people who are mean to us. He wants us to forgive people when they call us names or make fun of us or tease us. He does not want us to lash out and say or do anything that is ungodly.

Today during our class, be thinking about how you should respond to people who are mean to you. Be thinking about how God wants us to treat those who are unkind to us.

Opening Prayer

Father, help us to learn how to have self-control so that we might not sin against You. Help us to always treat everyone with love and respect because that is just how You have treated us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

...love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. (Luke 6:27-28)

Lesson

When Elisha was God's prophet in the land of Israel, the king of Aram (present day Syria) was planning to attack Israel. Now when a king is going to fight a battle, he usually doesn't tell his enemies what his plans are—he wants to sneak up and surprise them with an attack! The king only tells his plans to men he can trust, and this is just what the king of Aram did. He called his most trusted officers together and made his plans.

2 Kings 6:8

When the king of Aram was at war with Israel, he would confer with his officers and say, "We will mobilize our forces at such and such a place."

But, when the Aramean army got to the place where the king sent them, there were no Israelite soldiers there for them to attack!

Somehow, God was making it possible for His prophet Elisha to tell the secret plans of the king of Aram to the king of Israel!

2 Kings 6:9-10

But immediately Elisha, the man of God, would warn the king of Israel, "Do not go near that place, for the Arameans are planning to mobilize their troops there." (10) So the king of Israel would send word to the place indicated by the man of God. Time and again Elisha warned the king, so that he would be on the alert there.

This was great for the Israelites but not so good for the king of Aram. And this happened again and again—and again!

2 Kings 6:11

The king of Aram became very upset over this. He called his officers together and demanded, "Which of you is the traitor? Who has been informing the king of Israel of my plans?"

The king of Aram was very angry. He called his officers together; he wanted to know which one of his men was the traitor.

2 Kings 6:12

"It's not us, my lord the king," one of the officers replied. "Elisha, the prophet in Israel, tells the king of Israel even the words you speak in the privacy of your bedroom!"

This made the king of Aram angry; he wanted to kill Elisha.

2 Kings 6:13

“Go and find out where he is,” the king commanded, “so I can send troops to seize him.” And the report came back: “Elisha is at Dothan.”

So the king of Aram sent a powerful army of soldiers, horses and chariots to surround Dothan, the city where Elisha was staying.

2 Kings 6:14

So one night the king of Aram sent a great army with many chariots and horses to surround the city.

The next morning, Elisha’s servant got up early and went outside. What he saw there frightened him!

2 Kings 6:15

When the servant of the man of God got up early the next morning and went outside, there were troops, horses, and chariots everywhere. “Oh, sir, what will we do now?” the young man cried to Elisha.

Elisha’s servant saw the dreaded Aramean army and he asked Elisha what to do.

2 Kings 6:16

“Don’t be afraid!” Elisha told him. “For there are more on our side than on theirs!”

Elisha told him not to worry because their army was bigger than the Aramean army.

His servant must have wondered. *Our army? What army?*

2 Kings 6:17

*Then **Elisha prayed**, “O LORD, **open his eyes and let him see!**” The LORD opened the young man’s eyes, and when he looked up, he saw that the hillside around Elisha was filled with horses and chariots of fire.*

Suddenly his servant saw that the hills around them were filled with another kind of army—one with horses and chariots of fire! Now he knew that God’s army was right there with them!

Elisha and his servant watched as the Aramean soldiers came into the city toward their house. Elisha knew what to do next—he prayed.

2 Kings 6:18

*As the Aramean army advanced toward him, **Elisha prayed**, “O LORD, please **make them blind.**” So the LORD struck them with blindness as Elisha had asked.*

God answered Elisha’s prayer and struck the Aramean army blind! He watched as the now-blind soldiers stumbled and fumbled and bumbled around. They were completely helpless and didn’t know which way to go!

2 Kings 6:19

Then Elisha went out and told them, “You have come the wrong way! This isn’t the right city! Follow me, and I will take you to the man you are looking for.” And he led them to the city of Samaria.

Elisha walked up to the blind Aramean soldiers and told them to follow him.

So, the Aramean soldiers followed Elisha. They blindly marched on and on and on, trusting Elisha to lead them. Finally, they came to Samaria, the city where the king of Israel lived.

2 Kings 6:20

*As soon as they had entered Samaria, **Elisha prayed**, “O LORD, now **open their eyes and let them see.**” So the LORD opened their eyes, and they discovered that they were in the middle of Samaria.*

As soon as all the enemy soldiers were inside the city, Elisha prayed and asked God to let the Aramean soldiers see again. Imagine the surprise of the Aramean soldiers when they saw where they were and who had been leading them!

Meanwhile the king of Israel saw all these Aramean soldiers marching into town.

2 Kings 6:21

When the king of Israel saw them, he shouted to Elisha, “My father, should I kill them? Should I kill them?”

When the king of Israel saw the Aramean soldiers, he shouted to Elisha, “Should I kill these enemy soldiers that you have brought me?”

But Elisha told him not to kill them. He told them to do something very unexpected.

2 Kings 6:22

“Of course not!” Elisha replied. “Do we kill prisoners of war? Give them food and drink and send them home again to their master.”

Elisha recommended that the king bless them with a feast and a celebration.

2 Kings 6:23

So the king made a great feast for them and then sent them home to their master. After that, the Aramean raiders stayed away from the land of Israel.

The king of Israel must have thought this was a strange way to treat their enemies. If you were the king of Israel, what would you have wanted to do to an army who was always trying to attack you?

It probably wasn't easy, but the king had his servants prepare a huge feast for the enemy soldiers. And when the Aramean soldiers had eaten and drunk all they wanted, Elisha and the king of Israel allowed them to go home as free men! Because of Elisha's kindness to the very army who had wanted to capture him, the Arameans stopped attacking Israel. Elisha's kind actions were unexpected, and they had some very unexpected results!

God wants us to show His kind of love to everyone, even people who don't deserve it. What are some ways you could be kind to people who are mean to you? (Pray for people who call us names and tease us. Walk away from an argument. Pick them for a team at recess. Share a treat from your lunch. Sit by them on the bus if they have no friends. Be patient with brothers and sisters.)

God knows it won't be easy. But remember that God showed His love for us by sending His Son, Jesus, to die for everyone, even people who sin and say bad things about Him or who treat Jesus like their enemy.

Closing Prayer

Father, when someone treats me unfairly, or is unkind to me, I pray that You will fill me with the power of the Holy Spirit so that I might hold my anger; so that I might not lash out and say or do anything that would displease You. Please give me the power to love my enemies. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Foil Etching

Materials: heavy aluminum foil, ruler, scissors, cardboard, craft knife, crayons, pencils, tape.

Preparation: Cut aluminum foil into squares at least 8" x 8" in size, one square for each student. Cut squares of cardboard a bit smaller than the foil. Make a foil etching following the directions below.

Procedure:

1. Have each student color heavily over a square of foil, making patterns and using as many different colors as desired. Dark-colored crayons work best. Encourage the students to color carefully so that they do not tear the aluminum foil. Bring some extra foil to class in case of tears.
2. When the student finishes coloring, have them use a pencil to write a phrase from Luke 6:27-28 on the colored foil, such as, "Do good to those who hate you." Or, optionally, they can draw a picture of something which reminds them to care for others they dislike or who may dislike them. The pencil will take away the color, leaving a silver message or pictures. Make sure they use a rounded (rather than newly sharpened) pencil and work on a hard tabletop to make the message appear most clearly.

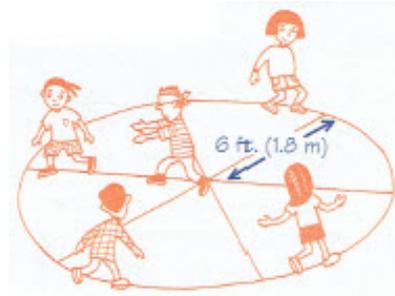
- When the student finishes writing or drawing, have them lay the foil square over the cardboard square and mount it by taping the edges of the foil to the back of the cardboard.

Game Center

Tag and Talk

Preparation:

Make a circle 10 to 15 feet wide. Make three lines across the center to divide the circle into 6 equal sections.



Procedure:

Play a game of tag in which "It" is blindfolded. Lead "It" to the center of the circle. Students stand around the circle on the lines. On "Go," students begin walking quickly along the lines in any direction they want, trying to stay away from "It". But they must stay on the lines. "It" may walk anywhere to tag a student. (If no one is tagged within one minute, add the rule that the students must freeze in one place.) When "It" tags someone, that student tells a way in which God wants us to care for people who are mean to us and then becomes "It".

(If a child needs help in thinking of answers, ask Questions 13-16.)

Penny Toss

Divide class into teams of 4. Give each team a penny. Volunteer in each team flips coin at your signal. Volunteer whose coin lands on *Heads* answers one of the review questions. [Optional: child with correct answers gets to draw a card with point values for his team or use a spinner.]

Or, use the following questions in a game of your choice:

- When the Aramean army attacked Israel, why were there no Israelites there? (God had told Elisha the Aramean's secret plans.)

- When the king of Aram found out that Elisha was telling his secret plans to the king of Israel, what did he do? (He wanted to kill Elisha so he sent a powerful army to surround Dothan, the city where Elisha was staying.)
- What did Elisha's servant see that frightened him so much? (The morning after the Aramean soldiers surround the city, Elisha's servant got up early and went outside and saw the dreaded Aramean army.)
- How did Elisha comfort his servant? (Elisha told him not to worry because their army was bigger than the Aramean army.)
- What did Elisha ask God to show his servant? (The heavenly army.)
- What did Elisha ask the Lord to do to his enemies? (Strike them blind.)
- How did Elisha care for his enemies? (He led them when they couldn't see where to go. He kept the king from killing them.)
- What did Elisha tell the king of Israel to do to the enemy soldiers? (Give them a feast.)
- In our lesson today, what did Elisha do that was surprising? (Told the king of Israel where the Aramean army was going to attack. Told the king of Israel to feed his enemies a big feast and let them go.)
- Who couldn't see in our story today? (Elisha's servant when he couldn't see God's army. The Aramean army when Elisha led them to the king of Israel.)
- How do kids your age usually treat people who are mean to them?
- How does Jesus command us to treat people who are mean to us? (See Luke 6:27-28)
- In what way does Luke 6:27-28 tell us to care for people we dislike or who may dislike us?

14. What are some ways you can do good to people who dislike you at school? At home? In your neighborhood? (Pray for people who dislike you. Pick them for a team at recess. Share a treat from your lunch. Sit by them on the bus if they have no friends. Be patient with brothers and sisters.)
15. What could you do to follow Luke 6:27-28 when you feel mad at a brother or sister? When you feel left out by kids at school? When someone makes fun of you, or calls you a name, or teases you, or picks a fight with you?
16. How might it surprise other kids if you did what Luke 6:27-28 tells you to do? How would that help them learn about God?

[For more expositional lessons for children, visit
<https://www.FreeChildrensMinistryLessons.com>]

Isaiah's Call to Service

(Isaiah 6:1-8)

Introduction

How do you think you would act if you actually found yourself standing before God's throne in Heaven? [Teacher, let the children respond.]

The Bible teaches that God is perfectly pure and sinless in every way and that His glory is magnificent. Listen to this description of God's throne from the book of Revelation:

Revelation 4:1-3

Then as I looked, I saw a door standing open in heaven, and [a] . . . voice . . . spoke to me like a trumpet blast. The voice said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after this." (2) And instantly I was in the Spirit, and I saw a throne in heaven and someone sitting on it. (3) The one sitting on the throne was as brilliant as gemstones—like jasper and carnelian. And the glow of an emerald circled his throne like a rainbow.

Today we're going to learn about a man who had an awesome experience one day that transformed his life—he found himself in the very presence of God!

Opening Prayer

Father, we can't imagine how grand and beautiful heaven is. We know it's going to be awesome, but our minds can't even think of how spectacular it is. We look forward to that day that we will be standing face-to-face with you. Until then, we want our lives to bring Your name glory. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. (Isaiah 1:18)

Lesson

We have been studying about the Prophets. What's a prophet? (A messenger of God.) Today we will learn about Isaiah. Isaiah is the

most important of all the prophets because he had some of the most important messages to tell people. For example, Isaiah is the one who told people that Jesus would be born of a virgin and that Jesus would be killed by crucifixion.

Isaiah was born into a wealthy family. He lived during the time of the Kings. In fact, he was related to royalty and received the finest education available. He spent his early years as an official of King Uzziah of Judah.

King Uzziah was a great king who had brought much honor to the nation. The children of Israel prospered greatly during Uzziah's 52-year reign (2 Chronicles 26:1-15), yet the people went away from God into idol worship (2 Kings 15:4) and other sins. And, because of the people's prideful disobedience, Uzziah himself was struck with leprosy and banished as unclean until the day of his death (2 Chronicles 26:16-20).

In the year that King Uzziah died Isaiah received his calling to be God's prophet. He had an incredible vision of God in the heavenly temple.

[Teacher, read the following passage from the Living Bible:]

Isaiah 6:1-4

It was in the year King Uzziah died that I saw the Lord. He was sitting on a lofty throne, and the train of his robe filled the Temple. (2) Attending him were mighty seraphim, each having six wings. With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. (3) They were calling out to each other, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Heaven's Armies! The whole earth is filled with his glory!" (4) Their voices shook the Temple to its foundations, and the entire building was filled with smoke.

Let's look at this passage now, verse by verse.

Isaiah 6:1

It was in the year King Uzziah died that I saw the Lord. He was sitting on a lofty throne, and the train of his robe filled the Temple.

Isaiah had this marvelous vision of God sitting on his throne in the year that King Uzziah died. An earthly king had died, but Isaiah now saw the everlasting King on His throne in Heaven. This was none other than the Lord Jesus Christ revealing Himself as the true King of Israel.

[Teacher, this is a theophany—a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus.]

Isaiah actually experienced a vision of the Lord Jesus Christ. A vision is like a dream, only it's while you are awake. God gives you a supernatural experience of seeing into the heavenly realm. Isaiah was actually seeing Jesus sitting on His throne in heaven. Now keep in mind that Isaiah lived many years before Jesus came to earth as a baby. How could Isaiah actually be seeing Jesus? (The Lord Jesus is God the Son. He has always existed in heaven.) There are several times in Old Testament times when Jesus appears to certain people for special reasons.

Years after Isaiah had this vision, the Lord Jesus came to earth to be born. He grew to be a Man who lived a perfect life; then He was put to death on a cross because of your sin and mine. He is in heaven now, preparing a place for those who believe in Him as their Savior. Jesus is the true King, as Isaiah saw Him on His throne in this special vision from God.

Isaiah 6:2

Attending him were mighty seraphim, each having six wings. With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew.

Seraphim are heavenly angels. This must have been amazing to see!

Isaiah 6:3-4

They were calling out to each other, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Heaven's Armies! The whole earth is filled with his glory!" (4) Their voices shook the Temple to its foundations, and the entire building was filled with smoke.

These beautiful angels were flying around proclaiming God's holiness and glory. As they cried out, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts" there was a great earth quake and the temple was filled with smoke – this just showed the glory and power of God. (The smoke was probably the cloud of glory surrounding His presence.)

As Isaiah saw the angels cover their faces in reverence and humility, he must have been deeply moved with a sense of God's holiness. He

must have felt humbled to think that he would be permitted to observe such a vision. If you were Isaiah and had seen this vision, what would you be thinking? [Teacher, let the children share.]

Perhaps you would think about how unworthy you are to be in God's presence. That's what Isaiah thought!

Isaiah 6:5

Then I said, "It's all over! I am doomed, for I am a sinful man. I have filthy lips, and I live among a people with filthy lips. Yet I have seen the King, the LORD of Heaven's Armies."

When Isaiah looked upon the Lord of heaven, Isaiah said, "My doom is sealed, for I am a foul-mouthed sinner, a member of a sinful, foul-mouthed race..." Though Isaiah knew God, he realized, perhaps in a new way, how holy God is and how very sinful he was. Seeing his sinfulness, he confessed it to God.

When we compare ourselves with other people, we become proud. We have a tendency to think more highly of ourselves. You might think, "I'm not as bad as that other person." But when we honestly compare ourselves with God we are humbled.

When Isaiah saw the Lord he said "Woe is me," not "Woe is my neighbor," not "Woe is somebody else," but "Woe is me!" When he compared himself with the Lord, he realized his own inadequacy. Isaiah knew he was a sinful man. God was pleased when Isaiah humbled himself and confessed his sin.

Why do you think that Isaiah might have said, "I'm a man of unclean lips"? What sort of sins do you and I commit with our lips? (Cursing, telling dirty jokes, lying, gossiping, complaining, criticizing, backbiting, singing wrong music, etc.)

When he confessed his sin to God, an amazing thing happened...

Isaiah 6:6-7

Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal he had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. (7) He touched my lips with it and said, "See, this coal has touched your lips. Now your guilt is removed, and your sins are forgiven."

Only God could make Isaiah's life clean for service. In the temple, they kept fires going all the time. God sent one of His angels down who picked up a live, burning coal and touched Isaiah's lips with it. The angel said, "Now you are pronounced 'Not guilty' because this coal has touched your lips. Your sins are all forgiven." Now he was ready for service. God cleansed his lips.

Notice that Isaiah first saw the Lord, then he humbled himself before God, confessed his sin and then God cleansed him and he was now ready to serve.

Isaiah 6:8

Then I heard the Lord asking, "Whom should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?" I said, "Here I am. Send me."

Isaiah heard the Lord asking, "Who will go for Us?"

God wants us to go and do His will, to serve Him and tell others of Him. What he seeks is one who is willing and ready to go. Now that he was made clean, Isaiah waved his hand and said "here! Why not use me?"

Isaiah didn't even know where God would send him! He just knew that he wanted to serve God with his whole life. God is looking for servants with clean hearts who willingly offer themselves to Him—without having to know what He has planned for them.

When Isaiah saw in an unforgettable way how holy God is, he confessed his sin and God cleansed his life for serve. When you have confessed your sin to God and have allowed Him to cleanse you, you will be ready to serve Him in whatever way He desires.

Isaiah saw a wonderful vision of God! It had not been like any dream which a person has when he is sleeping. The vision which Isaiah saw was truly Jesus. The voice he heard speaking was really Jesus' voice. When Isaiah confessed his sin, he was truly talking with Jesus.

After Isaiah was cleansed from his sin, he had a job to do for Jesus. You and I have not been able to see Jesus with our own eyes like Isaiah did. Someday we will. Until we see Him, however, we can talk to Him. Just as Isaiah talked with Jesus, so we can talk with Him, too.

We can tell Jesus about our sins and get forgiveness for them, just as Isaiah did.

Then what do you think Jesus wants us to do? Just as He told Isaiah to go with His message, so Jesus wants us to go with His message. What do you think Jesus' message is? Jesus' message is there is forgiveness with Him; you can trust in what He did on the cross.

God wants you to be a prophet, just like Isaiah was. Go out and tell people about what Jesus came to earth to do for you and for me.

Closing Prayer

Father, we want to be acceptable in Your eyes. Forgive us of our sins and purify our hearts. "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer." In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

White as Snow

This experiment teaches us how completely God forgives our sin through Jesus' death on the cross.

Materials:

- Red and white construction paper
- Clear glass of water
- Food coloring
- Chlorine bleach
- Pencils

Preparation:

Using spray adhesive, laminate a piece of red construction paper to a piece of white construction paper. Cut out large cross shapes, one for each child that are red on one side and white on the other. (Make them large enough for them to write on.)

Procedure:

[Give each student a cross shape and a pencil.] The Bible talks a lot about sin. Sin is doing something wrong – something that hurts someone or is against God's rules. How many of you have ever committed a sin? The Bible says that every person on earth has sinned. (Romans 3:23) Sin makes our lives dirty and unholy. Sin keeps us from knowing God because He cannot be near sin. He is holy and pure, just like this glass of clear water.

This glass is like our lives. Look what happens when we sin. [Put one drop of food coloring into the water. Let it naturally swirl around.] This drop of color represents a sin, such as telling a lie. One lie doesn't seem too bad when we tell it, but see how it makes our lives look. [Hold up the food coloring bottle.]

Now as you name a sin, you write that sin on the red side of your cross and I'll put another drop of food coloring in the glass. What sin shall we call the next drop of color? (Stealing, swearing, disobeying parents, hitting someone, being grouchy, and cheating.) Let's say that our next drop represents cheating. [Add another drop to the water. Repeat the question adding drops of different colored food coloring to the water for each sin.]

Look how dirty the water is now. That's a lot of sin in our lives. It looks like this water will never be clean and clear again!

But God has the answer to sin. He sent Jesus to the earth to be born as a baby. As Jesus grew up, he didn't ever sin. He didn't cheat or lie or steal or get grouchy. He is the only person who ever lived who never committed a sin!

Then He died on the cross to pay for our sins. We can't pay for our sins because we are already sinners. Only Jesus could pay for our sins because He didn't have any sins of His own to pay for. After Jesus died and was in a grave for three days, He rose again. Now He is living in Heaven. That's why Jesus has power over sin. (1 Corinthians 15:57).

When we ask God to forgive our sins because we believe that Jesus paid for them on the cross, God forgives our sins completely.

He makes our lives clean and pure again. He lets us become one of His children.

Jesus has power to take away our sins. That is like this special solution. [Pour the bleach into the colored water.]

Now let's see what happens to the color in the glass. This is like when you ask Jesus into your heart. When you ask Jesus to forgive you for breaking God's rules He makes your heart clean on the inside.

Look at our glass of water. It's clear and clean again. That's what God sees when He looks at a Christian's life. He doesn't see any sin. The sin has been washed away by the blood of Jesus. Just like the white side of your cross. There's no sin on that side, is there?

If you have never asked Jesus to be your Savior and to forgive your sins, please see me after class. I'd like to show you how your life can be as clean as this water.

Game Center

Use the following review questions in a game of your choice:

1. How would you act if you actually found yourself standing before God's throne in Heaven?
2. What incredible thing happened to Isaiah the year that King Uzziah died? (He had a vision of God in the heavenly temple.)
3. How is it that Isaiah saw Jesus sitting on the throne in Heaven, if he hadn't been born yet? (He is God and has always existed.)
4. What did the angels do with their wings? Look in verse 2. (With 2 he covered his face, with 2 he covered his feet, and with 2 he flew.)
5. What did the angels cry out as they flew around? (Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts.)
6. What did the door posts do? Look at verse 4. (They shook.)

7. What was the house filled with? And what did that represent? (Smoke; the Shekinah glory of God.)
8. What did Isaiah say to God when he saw this vision? See verse 5. (Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips...)
9. Why do you think that Isaiah might have said, "I'm a man of unclean lips"?
10. What sort of sins do you and I commit with our lips? (Cursing, telling dirty jokes, lying, gossiping, complaining, criticizing, backbiting, singing wrong music, etc.)
11. What did the angel do to Isaiah's lips? (He took a live burning coal and touched Isaiah's lips with it to purge him of his sin.)
12. First Isaiah saw the Lord, then he humbled himself before God, confessed his sin and then God cleansed him and he was now ready to serve God. What must you do to be a servant of God? (Confess your sins and allow Him to cleanse you. Then be willing and ready to go and do whatever He asks you to do.)
13. God wants you to be a messenger, just like Isaiah. What message does He want you to tell people? (That there is forgiveness with Him.)

[For more expositional lessons for children, visit
<https://www.FreeChildrensMinistryLessons.com>]

Daniel Takes a Stand

(Daniel 1)

Introduction

Have your friends that ever tempted you to be naughty? (Play around and not listen to coaches or teachers?) Have you ever been in a situation where you knew something was wrong to do, but you felt like your friends wouldn't like you if you didn't go along with them? (Watch a show or play a video game your parents told you not to?)

God wants you to make right choices in life. Our lesson this morning is about how God helped four boys who lived many years ago live their lives in the ways of the Lord.

Opening Prayer

Father, we love You and want to please You in everything that we do in life. Please teach us this morning how important it is for us to make good choices in our lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

The LORD says: '...those who honor Me, I will honor.' (1 Samuel 2:30)

Lesson

In Israel, there once were four boys who were probably about 14 years old. Their names were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. They lived many years after King David ruled Israel; 500 years before Jesus.

Because the Israelites did not remain faithful to God, God allowed them to be captured by the Babylonians.

Sometimes, God allows trials into our lives to catch our attention and hopefully turn us back to following His ways.

The armies of Babylon attacked the children of Israel where the boys lived and destroyed Jerusalem and took many of the people captive,

including these four boys. They were forced to march all the way to Babylon, 900 miles away where they were put into slavery.

Upon arriving in Babylon, King Nebuchadnezzar gave orders to his chief official to choose the best young men from the captives.

Daniel 1:4

"Select only strong, healthy, and good-looking young men," he said. "Make sure they are well versed in every branch of learning, are gifted with knowledge and good judgment, and are suited to serve in the royal palace. Train these young men in the language and literature of Babylon."

Nebuchadnezzar knew he needed clever men to help him rule the Israelite people. They were to be taught the language and knowledge of Babylon. They would be given a three-year course studying philosophy, literature, and astronomy. At the end of their course, they would be ready to enter the King's service as advisors.

Among those chosen were Daniel and his three friends. Now, these boys may have been excited to be chosen; that meant they would not be treated like slaves like all the rest of the people taken to Babylon from Israel. But along with this privilege came problems – they were to be fed from the king's table.

Daniel 1:5

The king assigned them a daily ration of food and wine from his own kitchens. They were to be trained for three years, and then they would enter the royal service.

When Daniel and his three friends came into the dining room for their first meal, they realized that the food being served was strictly against God's laws. Certain meat, such as pork, is forbidden by the Jewish law. And, there are many special instructions in the Old Testament regarding how to fix food the proper way. The food offered to them had not been prepared according to those laws and therefore would not be right for them to eat.

Also, before eating, the king usually offered his food to the false gods as part of worshiping the idols of the Babylonian people. Eating *that* food would be just like worshiping the idols—not honoring God.

Daniel might have been thinking, “If we obey the king and eat the food, we will disobey God. But if we don’t eat the food, we will disobey the king and he may have us killed.” This was a tough decision for Daniel to make. It would have been easy for Daniel and his friends just to go ahead and eat the king’s food. They might have thought, “No one will ever know. Our parents are not here and besides, that law is so old-fashioned...”

Daniel and his friends decided that no matter what happened they would obey God. They knew they must do what is right. God gave Daniel and his friends courage to obey God’s rules.

Daniel 1:8

But Daniel was determined not to defile himself by eating the food and wine given to them by the king. He asked the chief of staff for permission not to eat these unacceptable foods.

The word “defile” means to make dirty or impure.

Daniel chose not to eat that which he knew would displease God.

God wants you to keep your life clean from things which will harm your body. Can you think of ways your body can be harmed or mistreated? (e.g., drugs, alcohol, cigarettes.)

You must make a promise to yourself and to God that you will always do what is right and not to give into pressures around you.

It must have been hard for Daniel to keep this promise with the others eating all that fine-looking food. But to eat it would be wrong.

It’s easier to resist temptation if you have thought through your principles well before the temptation arrives. Daniel and his friends made their decision to be faithful to the laws of God long before they were faced with the king’s delicacies, so they did not hesitate to stick with their beliefs.

We get into trouble if we have not previously decided where to draw the line. Before such situations arise, decide on your commitments, then when temptation comes, you will be ready to say, “No!”

Daniel 1:9

Now God had given the chief of staff both respect and affection for Daniel.

God blesses those who honor Him. And, He will bless you, too, if you make a commitment to always do what is pleasing to God, no matter what others may think or say about you.

Daniel was determined to obey God. And God gave him an idea. Daniel asked if it would be all right if they had just vegetables and good plain water to drink. He suggested they be put on a 10-day test to see if they stayed strong and healthy.

Daniel 1:12-14

“Please test us for ten days on a diet of vegetables and water,” Daniel said. (13) “At the end of the ten days, see how we look compared to the other young men who are eating the king’s food. Then make your decision in light of what you see.” (14) The attendant agreed to Daniel’s suggestion and tested them for ten days.

The guard agreed to try the experiment. For ten days, Daniel and the other boys ate nothing but vegetables and drank only water.

Daniel 1:15-16

At the end of the ten days, Daniel and his three friends looked healthier and better nourished than the young men who had been eating the food assigned by the king. (16) So after that, the attendant fed them only vegetables instead of the food and wine provided for the others.

At the end of the 10-day test they looked fit and were allowed to continue their vegetarian diet for the next three years. God honored the boys for honoring Him.

Then, God gave them knowledge, skill in learning, and wisdom.

Daniel 1:17

God gave these four young men an unusual aptitude for understanding every aspect of literature and wisdom. And God gave Daniel the special ability to interpret the meanings of visions and dreams.

God gave these four young men more wisdom than the king's own advisors.

Daniel 1:20

Whenever the king consulted them in any matter requiring wisdom and balanced judgment, he found them ten times more capable than any of the magicians and enchanters in his entire kingdom.

Daniel and his friends had made the right choice. God gave them the courage they needed to obey Him. God will give you the strength to make the right choices if you make a decision in your heart to please God in all that you think, all that you say, and all that you do. God will help you say "No" to sin and He'll help you choose what is right.

Sometimes we may feel afraid or worried about many different things. We might worry about what will happen if we don't do what our friends want. God understands our feelings and He promises to give us courage to obey Him, no matter what situation we are in.

Closing Prayer

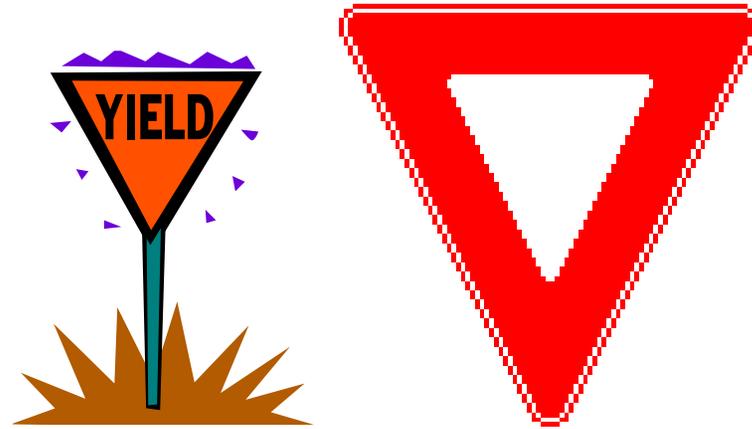
Father, help us to follow Daniel's example. We want to make a choice to do what is pleasing to You at all times. Please give us the courage we need to obey You no matter what situation we find ourselves in. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Yield Sign

Have the children draw a "yield" sign, and then place a line through it. This sign means do not yield or give in. Have them put the drawing in a place they will see each morning to remind them not to give in to others who want them to do things that will harm their bodies.



Scratch and Sniff Pictures

Materials: One package each of orange, cherry, strawberry and grape Kool-aid. One copy of the fruit pattern for each child. (copied on card stock.)

Procedure: Before class place the Kool-aid in separate containers and label them. Add water to powdered Kool-aid to make paint. Have the children paint with the appropriate Kool-aid flavor to make fruits that actually smell like the picture they are painting. When the pictures are dry, show them how to scratch them with their fingernails to smell the fruit.

Note: Kool-Aid stains so make sure you cover up the children well. Let only a few of them paint at one time.

Game Center

Timeline Relay

Preparation:

Print these points from the Bible story on pieces of paper. Make a set for each team.

- King Nebuchadnezzar took young men from Israel to Babylon.
- The king ordered that the young men learn the language and literature of Babylon.
- The king provided royal food and wine for the young men to eat.
- Daniel knew that the king's food was not food God wanted him to eat.
- Daniel asked the official for other food to eat.
- The official was worried that Daniel and his friends would look thinner than the other men.
- Daniel asked for a test for 10 days. He and his friends would eat vegetables and drink water.
- The official agreed to give Daniel and his friends only vegetables and water for 10 days.
- After 10 days, Daniel and his friends looked healthier and better than the other men.
- The official gave Daniel and his friends only vegetables and water for the rest of the time.
- God helped Daniel and his friends understand and learn.

Play:

Group the kids into teams. Tell kids they will work with their team to put the story statements in order. Mix the statements of each team. Give a statement to the first player of each team. On your signal, the first players run to the opposite wall to tape up their statements. They return and tag the next player. Those players get a statement, run to the wall, and tape the statement in the appropriate place (before or after the first statement). Subsequent players can rearrange the

statements as they place theirs in the appropriate places. After a team has all statements on the wall, quickly review them. If something is incorrect, a player can run down and rearrange the statements. Continue until one team has all the statements in correct order. Talk about the story and the Life Point.

The Choosing Game

Have kids sit on chairs in a circle. Read each of the following statements one at a time. For each statement, have kids follow the instructions it gives or stay put. Kids will end up sitting on top of each other in the circle.

Move one chair to the right if...

1. you like math better than English.
2. you'd rather talk to your mother than your father about a problem.
3. you prefer to wear red T-shirts instead of blue T-shirts.
4. you like redheads better than blondes.
5. you'd rather go to the beach than the mountains.
6. you'd rather go to the movies than skating.
7. you like Pepsi better than Coca-Cola.
8. you prefer hamburgers to pizza.
9. you like pepperoni pizza more than cheese pizza.
10. you like chocolate ice cream better than vanilla ice cream.
11. you'd rather play baseball than basketball.
12. you'd rather watch sports than play sports.
13. you like comedy TV shows better than action TV shows.
14. you'd rather stay up late than get up early.
15. you like cats more than dogs.
16. you'd rather learn to play a musical instrument than listen to somebody else play.
17. you'd rather your friend tell you the truth than protect your feelings.
18. you like advice from friends more than from your parents.
19. you'd rather spend time with your brother or sister than your friends.

20. you trust your grandparents more than your teachers.

In this game, every time you made a choice, it caused you to either move or stay where you were. It's like that in real life, too. The choices you make determine where you'll be and the kind of life you'll live. Now, let's look at real-life situations and practice our decision-making skills.

Situation Cards

Discuss the following situations:

1. Amy and Julie have been best friends for years. Amy is also friends with Karen. As Amy's birthday party approaches, Julie insists that Karen can't be invited. She says that if Amy invites Karen, she won't come to the party. Amy decides to go along with Julie and leave Karen out.
2. Danny goes camping with Steve and his father. Steve's father leaves the boys at the campsite to go fishing downstream. A young man comes up and says he's hungry and asks the boys for something to eat. Danny says "sure" and asks the fellow to join them.
3. Denise hasn't missed a single meeting of her church group. The group is preparing for a special program they'll present soon to the congregation. Denise is excited about playing one of the main parts. Then, Mitch, who she really likes, calls and asks her to go with him and his parents to the movies. It'll mean missing practice. She decides to go with Mitch to the movies.

[Teacher, ask the students if the person in the situation made a good or bad decision. Then have the students work together to come up with an alternative solution for each situation. Commend the students in their decision-making skills.] As you can tell, even right decisions don't fully solve problems. That's why you need to think and pray about the decisions you make, so you'll know you're doing what's best in every situation.

Or, use the following questions in a review game of your choice:

1. Why did the people of Israel go to Babylon? (Because they did not remain faithful to God and God allowed them to be captured by the Babylonians.)
2. Why does God sometimes allow trials in our lives? (To catch our attention and hopefully turn us back to following His ways.)
3. What orders did King Nebuchadnezzar give to his chief official? (To select some of the Israelites to serve in his palace.)
4. What were some of the special privileges given to those selected to serve in the king's palace? (They were to be taught the language and other courses of study as well as given special food to eat from the king's table.)
5. Why might Daniel and his friends be pleased about being selected? (They wouldn't be treated as slaves.)
6. When do you think Daniel and his friends might have been afraid? (When Daniel and his three friends came into the dining room for their first meal they realized that the food being served wasn't "kosher." This would displease God.)
7. What did Daniel do that showed courage? (He chose NOT to eat the food that displeased God.)
8. Why was this a tough decision for Daniel to make? (He could have been killed.)
9. What are some ways your body can be harmed or mistreated? (Drugs, smoking, drinking.)
10. What is a good thing to do to make it easier to resist temptation? (Make a decision before you get into trouble that you will always choose to please God, no matter what!)
11. Rather than just refusing to eat the king's food, what did Daniel do? (He suggested that they have a 10-day test of eating only vegetables and water to see if they stay strong and healthy.)

12. How did God honor Daniel's commitment to Him? (He gave Daniel favor with the King and also gave him wisdom.)
13. What do you think it means to be courageous? (Be brave and do what is right even when you are scared.)
14. What are some things that courageous people do?
15. What might he have done instead? (He could have eaten the forbidden food.)
16. When are times kids your age need courage to do what is right? (When friends are doing wrong things. When they are alone.)
17. When have you needed courage to obey God? What happened? How did God help you?
18. When are some times that it is hard to obey God? Why?

[For more expositional lessons for children, visit
<https://www.FreeChildrensMinistryLessons.com>]

Three Men in a Furnace

(Daniel 3)

Introduction

What would you do if an adult told you to do something you know you are not allowed to do? Would you have the courage to do what is right even when everyone else was doing wrong?

Three young men in the Bible were challenged by a king to go against what God had said – or die. What would they do? It all started when the king built a statue as tall as a building.

Opening Prayer

Father, strengthen our faith in You this morning as we learn of Your power and might. Use this Bible lesson to encourage us to stand firm in our belief in You, so that we'll do what is right even when others are disobeying You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

We must obey God rather than men! (Acts 5:29)

Lesson

Last week we learned that because of the unfaithfulness of the children of Israel, God allowed the Babylonians to invade Israel, capture the people, and march them 900 miles away to Babylon into slavery.

We learned that Daniel and his three friends were chosen to become part of King Nebuchadnezzar's special advisors. They were taken into the palace and trained in the language and customs of this new land.

Nebuchadnezzar grew in power. Year after year he added new countries to his kingdom. In every land he was greatly feared. But he became proud of his success.

One day, King Nebuchadnezzar decided to build a statue. This statue wasn't just a small, plain, ordinary statue. It was to be one of the largest statues ever built—nine feet wide and ninety feet high—and it was to be made from gold!

When the statue was finished, the king called all the important people from the countries he had conquered to come to Babylon and admire it.

Daniel 3:2

Then he sent messages to the high officers, officials, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates, and all the provincial officials to come to the dedication of the statue he had set up.

What a sight it must have been, thousands of people filling the area. Daniel's three friends Shadrach (SHAD-rak), Meshach (MEE-shak) and Abed-Nego (uh-BED-nee-go) were part of the crowd.

Then, one of the king's messengers stood up and spoke to the crowd.

Daniel 3:4-6

Then a herald shouted out, "People of all races and nations and languages, listen to the king's command! (5) When you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes, and other musical instruments, bow to the ground to worship King Nebuchadnezzar's gold statue. (6) Anyone who refuses to obey will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace."

The people were commanded to fall down and worship the king's golden statue as soon as they heard the sound of music. And anyone who dared to disobey this command would be immediately thrown into a blazing fiery furnace.

I'm sure that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego could hardly believe their ears! Bow down and worship a statue of gold?

They were in a tough situation. They knew the first two of God's Ten Commandments:

Exodus 20:3-5 [Teacher, read...]

“You must not have any other god but me. (4) “You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. (5) You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God...”

If they obeyed the king and worshiped the statue, they would be disobeying God. But if they did not worship the statue, they would be thrown in the fire.

How do you think Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego felt about the king's orders? What do you think they did?

Soon it was time...

Daniel 3:7

So at the sound of the musical instruments, all the people, whatever their race or nation or language, bowed to the ground and worshiped the gold statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

As the trumpets blew and the music began, everyone bowed to the ground, that is, almost everyone...

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego stood straight and tall. They knew the one true God who made heaven and earth, the One who made you and me. They knew and worshiped Him alone and could never bow to this statue. They would be true to God and His commandments.

It didn't take long for the news to reach King Nebuchadnezzar. When the king heard that the men had not bowed to his statue, he flew into a rage!

Daniel 3:13-14

Then Nebuchadnezzar flew into a rage and ordered that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought before him. When they were brought in, (14) Nebuchadnezzar said to them, “Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you refuse to serve my gods or to worship the gold statue I have set up?”

Then Nebuchadnezzar gave them a second chance.

Daniel 3:15

I will give you one more chance to bow down and worship the statue I have made when you hear the sound of the musical instruments. But if you refuse, you will be thrown immediately into the blazing furnace. And then what god will be able to rescue you from my power?”

Nebuchadnezzar challenged their belief in the power of God. What courage it would take to stand for God in this desperate situation!

Standing for God is often hard. Has your belief in God ever been challenged? Has anyone ever tried to pressure you into believing something about God that isn't true? [Teacher, let the children respond.] Maybe your teachers at school have tried to tell you that God didn't create the universe in six days. Have they tried to tell you that everything just evolved out of nothing?

As a Christian, you need to let God give you courage to stand for Him. That means speaking up for what God's Word teaches. You need to be ready... some may laugh at you or argue or even refuse to be your friends. But God promises that if we stand strong in our faith in Him, He will stand with us and give us courage. He will reward our faith. (Matthew 5:11-12).

The three young men could have said to themselves, “We wouldn't really be worshipping the image. Just bowing down once won't matter very much.” But they didn't. They remembered their God and responded very courageously.

Daniel 3:16-18

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you. (17) If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty. (18) But even if he doesn't, we want to make it clear to you, Your Majesty, that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up.”

These three young men did not know whether God would save them from death or *through* death, but they were depending on God to give them courage to stand for Him. They trusted in God so much that they were willing to disobey what the king was telling them to do!

When the three refused to bow down to the statue, the king ordered them to be bound with ropes and thrown into the furnace.

Daniel 3:19

Nebuchadnezzar was so furious with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that his face became distorted with rage. He commanded that the furnace be heated seven times hotter than usual.

Nebuchadnezzar was furious that these men disobeyed him and he ordered that the furnace be heated up seven times hotter! Then he ordered his soldiers to seize Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, bind them and throw them into the roaring flames.

Daniel 3:20-22

Then he ordered some of the strongest men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. (21) So they tied them up and threw them into the furnace, fully dressed in their pants, turbans, robes, and other garments. (22) And because the king, in his anger, had demanded such a hot fire in the furnace, the flames killed the soldiers as they threw the three men in.

The fire was so hot that the soldiers who threw the three men into the furnace died from just getting close to the flames.

Daniel 3:23

So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, securely tied, fell into the roaring flames.

The king and his officials watched to see what would happen. Suddenly the king's face changed from anger to fear. He jumped up in amazement.

Daniel 3:24

But suddenly, Nebuchadnezzar jumped up in amazement and exclaimed to his advisers, "Didn't we tie up three men and throw them into the furnace?" "Yes, Your Majesty, we certainly did," they replied."

King Nebuchadnezzar looked into the furnace and was amazed to see four men, not three, walking around in the fire.

Daniel 3:25

"Look!" Nebuchadnezzar shouted. "I see four men, unbound, walking around in the fire unharmed! And the fourth looks like a god!"

The king saw that the men were not burned and that the fourth man seemed to be a supernatural being. The fourth man may have been the Lord Jesus Himself or an angel of God sent to protect the young men.

God had protected them from harm. The Lord was with the three young men even in the flames of the furnace, and they were protected—much to the king's surprise!

Daniel 3:26

Then Nebuchadnezzar came as close as he could to the door of the flaming furnace and shouted: "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!" So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego stepped out of the fire.

The three friends walked out unharmed. The flames had not touched them. Their hair was not singed and their clothes were not scorched. They didn't even smell of smoke. Only the ropes that had tied them had been burned off.

Daniel 3:27

Then the high officers, officials, governors, and advisers crowded around them and saw that the fire had not touched them. Not a hair on their heads was singed, and their clothing was not scorched. They didn't even smell of smoke!

When the king saw that their bodies were completely untouched by the fire, he knew their God was the only true God and praised God.

Daniel 3:28

Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise to the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! He sent his angel to rescue his servants who trusted in him. They defied the king's command and were willing to die rather than serve or worship any god except their own God."

Because of the courageous stand of these three men, the king declared that everyone should honor the true God.

Daniel 3:29

Therefore, I make this decree: If any people, whatever their race or nation or language, speak a word against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, they will be torn limb from limb, and their houses will be turned into heaps of rubble. There is no other god who can rescue like this!"

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego not only knew that it was better to follow God rather than men, but they also had the courage to do it! As a result of their courage, the king believed in the one true God.

God honored the courage those three young men showed by standing firm for God. He will honor your courage, too.

You will probably never be asked to bow down to a large golden statue, but you may find yourself in a situation where you are tempted to disobey God. What are some situations you might feel tempted to go along with others in doing wrong things at school? Or, at home or in your neighborhood? How can you get the courage you need to obey God in these situations? (Pray and ask God for it. Choose to spend time with friends who want to obey God, Ask parents for help about what to do.)

Every day we make choices that show whether or not we want to obey God. It may not be easy. When you stand firm for God, not everyone will agree with you. Some will make fun of you or laugh at you. Some may call you names. But *some* will be encouraged to stand with you. Others will be impressed with your courage and will want to know more about God. Perhaps even those who make fun of you will change their minds about God when they see your faith. Remember, God is with you to help you speak up for Him. He will honor your faith just like he did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego.

Daniel 3:30

Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to even higher positions in the province of Babylon.

The king promoted the three young men to new positions of honor. God wants us to be faithful like these three, no matter where we are, or who we're with.

Closing Prayer

Father, please give us the courage to obey You, even when other people around us don't. We love You and want to show You our love by standing firm with You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Game Center

Use the following questions in a game of your choice:

1. Why were the children of Israel in Babylon? (Because of their unfaithfulness to God, He allowed the Babylonians to invade Israel, capture the people and take them into slavery.)
2. When King Nebuchadnezzar became so powerful and proud of his success, what did he do? (He built a huge gold statue.)
3. When were the people supposed to worship the golden statue? (When they heard the music play.)
4. What would happen to someone who did not worship the image? (They were killed in a fiery furnace.)
5. Why did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego have the courage to refuse to bow down to the statue? (They knew their God and His Word; they had faith that God could save them.)
6. What happened to the soldiers that threw Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego into the furnace? (They burned up.)
7. How many men were thrown into the furnace? (Three)

8. How many men did King Nebuchadnezzar see in the furnace?
(Four)
 9. Who was the fourth man in the furnace? (Jesus or an Angel of God.)
 10. Tell what happened after the king called the men out of the furnace.
 11. Who did the king praise after the three men came out completely unharmed? (The one and only true God.)
 12. What happened because of the courage of these three men?
(Many people believed in the only true God.)
 13. How did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego obey God rather than men? (They refused to bow down to the statue even though they knew they would be thrown into the fiery furnace.)
 14. How can you know if the things people are telling you to do are the things God wants you to do? (By reading the Bible and knowing what God says in it.)
 15. What does it mean to “*obey God rather than men*”? (To obey God’s commands, even when others are disobeying Him.)
- Tell me about a time someone your age needs God’s courage to stand firm in their faith at school? At home? In their neighborhood?

[For more expositional lessons for children, visit
<https://www.FreeChildrensMinistryLessons.com>]

Handwriting on the Wall

(Daniel 5)

Introduction

[Teacher, on one side of a card write the words “MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN,” and on the reverse side write, “SECRET MESSAGE.”] Have you ever heard someone brag about getting away with doing wrong? Perhaps you have done wrong and thought you got away with it.

The king in our Bible lesson today deliberately did wrong and thought he could get away with it, until God sent him a secret message! [Show “SECRET MESSAGE” side only.]

Opening Prayer

Father, we come before You with humble hearts and pray that we can learn how important it is to You that we keep our hearts and our minds pure. We want to honor You in everything that we think, and say, and do. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

*Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it.
(James 4:17 NLT)*

Lesson

The last few weeks we have learned about the prophet Daniel. What can you tell me about him? He was a man who obeyed God in difficult situations, didn’t he?

Daniel served King Nebuchadnezzar for many years. When Nebuchadnezzar died, his grandson, Belshazzar, became king of Babylon. Belshazzar did not believe in the true God, but instead he worshiped many idols. And instead of seeking God for wisdom, Belshazzar asked his magicians and astrologers for wisdom on what to do.

One night King Belshazzar invited 1,000 people to a banquet. Music and laughter filled the palace. There was much merry-making that night in Belshazzar’s banquet hall. The guests ate and drank.

Daniel 5:1

Many years later King Belshazzar gave a great feast for 1,000 of his nobles, and he drank wine with them.

In the middle of the banquet the king did something which displeased God very much.

Daniel 5:2

While Belshazzar was drinking the wine, he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver cups that his predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar, had taken from the Temple in Jerusalem. He wanted to drink from them with his nobles, his wives, and his concubines.

These goblets were big fancy cups which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the Temple in Jerusalem. They were holy to the children of Israel. They were to be used to worship the only true God. But Belshazzar used them to worship his false gods.

Daniel 5:4

While they drank from them they praised their idols made of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

King Belshazzar purposely made fun of the true God by using the special cups that were designed only for worship of Him. The king didn’t care that he was rebelling against God. He didn’t expect to be punished for his sin. But God always punishes sin. Sometimes even Christians think that they can sin and not be punished, but that is not true. God will not let you get away with sin.

When you became God’s child, He expects you to live your life in a way that pleases God. God promises to honor those who honor Him.

When you dishonor God by sinning against Him, He will discipline you. It is for your good—to help you to learn how to live a life that pleases Him and that will bring you blessing and joy. (Hebrews 12:5-11).

Sometimes God will discipline you immediately. Other times, He may wait awhile. But sooner or later you will be disciplined. It is very foolish

to think that you can sneak your sin past an all-knowing God. The Bible says, “Be sure your sin will find you out.” (Numbers 32:23b). Foolish King Belshazzar thought he could do as he pleased and nothing would happen to him.

As the king and his men partied and drank from the Temple vessels, suddenly, every voice was hushed and every hand that held a goblet of wine shook with fear. All eyes slowly turned toward a large wall where a hand was writing a message!

Daniel 5:5-6

Suddenly, they saw the fingers of a human hand writing on the plaster wall of the king’s palace, near the lampstand. The king himself saw the hand as it wrote, and his face turned pale with fright. His knees knocked together in fear and his legs gave way beneath him.

King Belshazzar stood up looking pale and frightened. He was so scared his knees were shaking! What could this writing mean? Where did the hand come from? What do the words mean?

King Belshazzar called for his wisemen! He offered them a reward if they could tell the meaning of this strange message.

Daniel 5:8

But when all the king’s wise men had come in, none of them could read the writing or tell him what it meant.

The king’s wise men were brought in, but they were baffled. Not one of them could read the message. Belshazzar was terrified.

Daniel 5:9

So the king grew even more alarmed, and his face turned pale. His nobles, too, were shaken.

Soon the queen mother heard about the strange message on the wall and rushed into the king’s banquet hall. She had an idea...

Daniel 5:10-11

But when the queen mother heard what was happening, she hurried to the banquet hall. She said to Belshazzar, “Long live the king! Don’t be so pale and frightened. (11) There is a man in your kingdom who has

within him the spirit of the holy gods. During Nebuchadnezzar’s reign, this man was found to have insight, understanding, and wisdom like that of the gods. Your predecessor, the king—your predecessor King Nebuchadnezzar—made him chief over all the magicians, enchanters, astrologers, and fortune-tellers of Babylon.

The queen mother (the king’s grandmother) remembered Daniel. She knew that he had great wisdom and the ability to interpret dreams and solve difficult problems.

Daniel 5:12

This man Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar, has exceptional ability and is filled with divine knowledge and understanding. He can interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve difficult problems. Call for Daniel, and he will tell you what the writing means.”

So, Daniel was brought in before the king. And the king asked him to tell him what the words meant.

Daniel, now an old man; he was over 80 years old. He realized the message on the wall was a message from God that could make the king very angry. But Daniel was not afraid to tell the king what it said. He knew that God was with him.

Daniel confronted the king about the seriousness of his sin. He reminded the king of how God had dealt with his grandfather’s sinful pride. (Refer to Daniel 4.)

Years earlier, when Nebuchadnezzar’s heart was full of pride, God removed him from his royal throne and struck him with a terrible madness. For seven years he roamed the fields, living like the animals until at last he knew that the Most High God rules the kingdoms of men. Then God restored Nebuchadnezzar to his throne, where he worshipped the one true God ever after.

Belshazzar heard the stories of what happened to his grandfather. He knew of God’s power and hatred of sin, and he should have known better than to defy God.

King Belshazzar was not a child of God, but he knew God is holy. He should have known better than to sin against the God of heaven.

He had taken the goblets and used them to drink wine in honor of his idols. He praised false gods of wood, silver and gold, but not the Lord God who gave him his kingdom and power—the God who gives both life and breath.

Daniel tells the king the meaning of the handwriting on the wall.
[Teacher, show the reverse side of the card used in the Pre-Session Warm Up.]

These are the words and their meanings (see verse 25-28):

“**MENE**” means “*numbered*.” Your days are numbered; you will soon die.

“**TEKEL**” means “*weighted*.” God has measured your life and you do not meet His standards.

“**PARSIN**” means “*divided*.” Your kingdom will be taken away from you and given to someone else.

Daniel 5:30

That very night Belshazzar, the Babylonian king, was killed.

That very night enemy soldiers came into the city. Belshazzar was killed and, as Daniel had said would happen, his kingdom was taken over by the Medes and the Persians.

[Note: Historical sources say that the Medes and Persians redirected the course of the river that ran through the city and entered under the city walls on the dry riverbed.]

Because Belshazzar purposely defied God, he lost his kingdom and his life.

If you are God’s child, you know that God is holy and must punish sin. So, you can be sure that God will not let you get away with sin.

Don’t be fooled into thinking that God won’t care if you sin “just a little,” or that, since He’s promised you everlasting life in heaven, you can live any way you want to. God is not mocked! (Gal 6:7) You will not get away with sin.

It is a serious thing to sin against God, thinking He will ignore your sin. As God’s child you need to be careful how you live (Hebrews 12:5-11). God will not let you get away with sin.

Sin brings all of us down. None of us have measured up to God’s standards. “*All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*” (Rom 3:23) If we continue to sin against God, we too face His punishment which is death. The bible says, “*For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*” (Romans 6:23)

This week when you are tempted to sin, read God’s Word, and ask Him to help you see what He wants you to do or not to do. Remember, when God shows you what is right to do, He expects you to do it. If you do get involved in sin, confess it to God right away, thank Him for His forgiveness and ask Him to help you to do what is right.

Closing Prayer

Father, forgive us our sins and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Set Your angels around us; guard us from the attacks of our enemy, Satan. Give us a desire in our hearts to honor You with everything that we think, everything that we say and everything that we do. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Sand Sayings

Materials: sand, several plastic containers, food coloring, newspapers, white construction paper, pencils, glue.

Preparation: Pour sand into several containers. Add food coloring to each container, a teaspoon full at a time, and mix. (Note: A large amount of food coloring will be needed to make bright colors.) Cover work area with newsprint.

Procedure:

1. Give each student a sheet of construction paper.
2. Each student writes the Memory Verse and draws designs for decoration with a pencil.
3. Student squeezes glue over letters and designs and then sprinkles colored sand over the glue.
4. Shake off excess sand.

Note: supply handy wipes for easy clean-up of student's hands.

Secret Messages

Have the children write or draw a "secret" message using white crayon on white construction paper. Then when they paint over it with a very diluted water color, their secret message will be revealed!

Or, use a Q-Tip to "write" a message on paper with whole milk. After it is dry it should be invisible. Using your iron and ironing board, iron the paper. As the dried milk heats, it will turn brown and the message will appear. Be sure and practice this.

Game Center**Go Fish**

Materials: Marker, paper, photocopier, scissors.

Preparation: Print the Memory verse on cards, a word or phrase per card. Photo copy a set for each student, plus several extra sets for the "draw" pile. Divide the children up into groups of four. Before play begins, review the Memory Verse and write it on the board.

Procedure:

1. Using a set of cards per child in the group, shuffle all cards together to mix them up.
2. Place cards in a stack face down in the middle.
3. Each student takes five cards.

4. Students look at their cards to see what words they need to complete the verse. First player asks any student for a card he or she needs. If student has the card, he or she gives the card to the player. If student does not have the card, student says, "Go Fish" and the first player chooses a card from the pile.
5. Play continues until one student has all the words of the verse and places the cards in order face up on the table or floor.

Or, as an alternative to playing the card game, you can throw all sets of the cards in the air and see who can find the full verse first.

Or, use the following review questions in a game of your choice:

1. What did King Belshazzar do that displeased God? (He used the sacred Temple vessels at his party.)
2. Where did Belshazzar get the sacred Temple vessels? (His grandfather, King Nebuchadnezzar, had taken them when the Babylonians invaded Judah.)
3. If you sin, how does God sometimes discipline you? What are some ways God punishes his people? (He might allow trouble to come into your life like an illness.)
4. What happened during the party that scared everyone? (They saw a hand writing a secret message on the wall.)
5. What happened to King Belshazzar when he saw the handwriting on the wall? (He went pale and his knees got weak and shaky.)
6. Who did King Belshazzar call first to tell him the meaning of the secret message? (His wise men.)
7. Who remembered that Daniel had the special spiritual gift of wisdom and understanding? (The Queen remembered Daniel.)
8. Why might Daniel have been afraid to tell the king the meaning of the message? (He realized the message on the wall was a message from God that could make the king very angry.)

9. Why is it that God must punish sin? (Because He is a holy God and cannot tolerate anything that is not holy in His presence.)
10. What can you do to avoid God's discipline in your life? (Stay away from sinful things, read your Bible, hang out with people that don't want to do naughty things.)
11. What can you do if you do sin? (Confess or agree with God about your sin and ask Him to help you do right.)
12. What was the meaning of the handwriting on the wall? (Your days are numbered; you have fallen short of God's standard and your kingdom will be taken away from you and given to the Medes and the Persians.)
13. Why did King Belshazzar lose his kingdom and his life? (Because he defied God.)

[For more expositional lessons for children, visit
<https://www.FreeChildrensMinistryLessons.com>]

In the Lions' Den

(Daniel 6)

Introduction

Have you ever needed courage to be faithful to God? When is it hard to obey God? When is it tempting to disobey Him? [Teacher, discuss things like when a friend asks you to lie about something or do something you know is wrong. Or, when you are home alone and are tempted to do something your parents told you not to do. Or, if you are in the lunch room at school and you know you should pray before you eat but you may feel self-conscience about it.]

God wants you to be faithful to Him; that is, to do what you know is the right thing to do—even when doing right might get you into trouble. If you honor God, He will honor and bless you.

Today we'll learn how Daniel determined in his heart to be faithful to God, no matter what happened. And God will give you the courage to be faithful to Him even when you are tempted to disobey Him.

Opening Prayer

Father, we want to learn how to be loyal to You, no matter what people say or do. Teach us this morning how important it is for us to remain faithful to You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

Stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord... (1 Corinthians 15:58a NIV)

Lesson

Daniel was over 80 years old. He had lived in Babylon since God's people had been brought there as captives by King Nebuchadnezzar when Daniel was about 14 years old. He'd been in captivity for sixty-six years. Darius was now the king of that land.

One day Darius chose one hundred twenty men to help him rule his kingdom. One of the men he chose was Daniel.

Daniel soon proved to be wiser, braver and more honest than all the other leaders.

Daniel 6:3

Daniel soon proved himself more capable than all the other administrators and high officers. Because of Daniel's great ability, the king made plans to place him over the entire empire.

The king liked Daniel so much, that he planned to make him the leader of the whole kingdom. And, that made some of the other leaders very jealous of Daniel. Jealousy is sin; it puts murder in your heart. They tried hard to catch him doing something wrong so they could report that to the king and get him in trouble.

Daniel 6:4

Then the other administrators and high officers began searching for some fault in the way Daniel was handling government affairs, but they couldn't find anything to criticize or condemn. He was faithful, always responsible, and completely trustworthy.

It was no use! They couldn't find anything Daniel did that was wrong. Daniel faithfully prayed to God three times every day. He always asked God to show him what to do each day.

So the leaders decided to trap him. They knew there was only one way they could trap him into doing something wrong...

Daniel 6:5

So they concluded, "Our only chance of finding grounds for accusing Daniel will be in connection with the rules of his religion."

Some of these men went to see King Darius to make a proposal.

Daniel 6:7-9

We are all in agreement—we administrators, officials, high officers, advisers, and governors—that the king should make a law that will be strictly enforced. Give orders that for the next thirty days any person who

prays to anyone, divine or human—except to you, Your Majesty—will be thrown into the den of lions. (8) And now, Your Majesty, issue and sign this law so it cannot be changed, an official law of the Medes and Persians that cannot be revoked.” (9) So King Darius signed the law.

Since the officers had said that *all* the leaders liked this law, King Darius probably figured Daniel approved of it, too. And since this law seemed like a good way to honor himself, King Darius wrote it and signed it, just as the leaders suggested he should do.

In those days a king often thought himself to be like a god. He would have been pleased to think of others bowing down only to him. Pride kept Darius from seeing the true reason for the decree. It led him to accept worship that belonged to God, and it put his friend, Daniel, in a difficult situation. The penalty for disobedience was death by being thrown into the lions' den.

When Daniel heard about the law, did he quit praying? No! Daniel would never disappoint God. He chose to keep praying as he always had—even though it could mean death. He trusted that God would help him to remain faithful to Him.

God will help you to be faithful to Him, too. Being faithful means standing firm in your heart and mind to please God, no matter what anyone else is doing or saying. Don't let anyone lead you off the track. Sometimes when you are faithful to God, others may not understand or may even make fun of you, but remember our memory verse this week. [Teacher, review the verse with class.]

Don't let others stop you from doing what is right. God will help you be faithful, just like He helped Daniel.

Now, some people in Daniel's place might have chosen to pray secretly, maybe in a closet where no one would see them. After all, God doesn't care where you are when you pray. And He can hear you when you pray silently because He knows every thought that you think. But, not Daniel! What do you think Daniel did when he heard about the new law? Lions or no lions, Daniel knew what he had to do. And, Daniel's enemies were ready and waiting outside Daniel's house. Would he open his shutters and pray, as he always did?

Daniel 6:10

But when Daniel learned that the law had been signed, he went home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs room, with its windows open toward Jerusalem. He prayed three times a day, just as he had always done, giving thanks to his God.

Daniel knew that disobeying the law meant he would be thrown into a lion's den. But, he walked up the stairs to his room, opened the window facing Jerusalem and prayed to God in the morning, at noon, and in the evening.

Daniel 6:11

Then the officials went together to Daniel's house and found him praying and asking for God's help.

Yes! Daniel's enemies saw him kneeling down, praying to God! So, they ran just as fast as they could—straight to King Darius.

Daniel 6:12

So they went straight to the king and reminded him about his law. “Did you not sign a law that for the next thirty days any person who prays to anyone, divine or human—except to you, Your Majesty—will be thrown into the den of lions?” “Yes,” the king replied, “that decision stands; it is an official law of the Medes and Persians that cannot be revoked.”

Everybody knew that once the king had made a law it could not be changed.

Daniel 6:13-14

Then they told the king, “That man Daniel, one of the captives from Judah, is ignoring you and your law. He still prays to his God three times a day.” (14) Hearing this, the king was deeply troubled, and he tried to think of a way to save Daniel. He spent the rest of the day looking for a way to get Daniel out of this predicament.

The king agreed to the law because those who wanted him to make it appealed to his pride. Pride is a treacherous thing. Now, King Darius

realized he had been tricked. He realized that the leaders had urged him to make this law so that Daniel would be killed! What a foolish law he had made! But not even he, the king, could change the law!

Daniel 6:15-16

In the evening the men went together to the king and said, "Your Majesty, you know that according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, no law that the king signs can be changed." (16) So at last the king gave orders for Daniel to be arrested and thrown into the den of lions. The king said to him, "May your God, whom you serve so faithfully, rescue you."

King Darius was very sad; he tried to find a way to change the law and rescue his friend, Daniel. But even the king had to obey his own law. With a heavy heart, he gave the order. And then he watched as Daniel was thrown into the den full of lions and a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den.

Darius could not help Daniel, but God could. God had helped Daniel be faithful; now God would help him face the fearful things others were doing in anger.

If you know the Lord Jesus as your Savior, God will help you stand firm and remain faithful to Him, no matter what others are doing or saying.

Daniel remained faithful to God even in this desperate situation. And, God honored Daniel's faithfulness, and protected him from the lions.

Daniel 6:19-20

Very early the next morning, the king got up and hurried out to the lions' den. (20) When he got there, he called out in anguish, "Daniel, servant of the living God! Was your God, whom you serve so faithfully, able to rescue you from the lions?"

Very early the next morning he hurried to the lion's den and called out for Daniel.

Daniel 6:21-22

Daniel answered, "Long live the king! (22) My God sent his angel to shut the lions' mouths so that they would not hurt me, for I have been found innocent in his sight. And I have not wronged you, Your Majesty."

The king was beside himself with joy. God had protected Daniel!

Daniel 6:23

The king was overjoyed and ordered that Daniel be lifted from the den. Not a scratch was found on him, for he had trusted in his God.

Once Daniel was safely out of the den, the king remembered the leaders who had tricked him into writing the law and commanded that those who had plotted to kill Daniel be thrown into the lions' den.

Daniel 6:24

Then the king gave orders to arrest the men who had maliciously accused Daniel. He had them thrown into the lions' den, along with their wives and children. The lions leaped on them and tore them apart before they even hit the floor of the den.

Then the king made a decree to all the people in the kingdom to respect and worship Daniel's God.

Daniel's life should be an example for us to follow. We need to be careful not to let anything keep us from living our lives to please God every day.

Sometimes you may find it hard to be faithful. Remember this week's memory verse and thank God for His help. Will you this week choose to stand firm and remain faithful to Him, no matter what others are doing or saying?

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You that You always hear us when we pray. Thank You for giving us the courage we need to obey You in all situations. Help us to stand firm and remain faithful to You, no matter what others are doing or saying. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Game Center

Human Spinner

Have students stand in a circle. Choose one child to be "It". "It" stands in the middle of the circle blindfolded. "It" spins around several times, stops and points straight out. Whoever "It" points to must answer a question and then gets to become the new "It."

Or, use the following questions in a game of your choice:

1. Why was King Darius going to put Daniel in charge over his entire kingdom? (Because Daniel was a great leader.)
2. What happened when King Darius wanted to make Daniel ruler over the whole kingdom? (Other men got jealous of him.)
3. What does jealousy do in people's hearts? (It puts murder in your heart.)
4. What did the jealous men do to try to get Daniel into trouble? (They talked King Darius into making a law that no one could pray to anybody or anything, beside King Darius.)
5. What made King Darius agree to signing this law? (His own pride.)
6. Did Daniel obey the new Law that forbid praying to anybody besides King Darius? (No!)
7. What did Daniel do that got him in trouble in today's lesson? (Prayed to God.)
8. What happened to Daniel when he refused to obey their evil law and continued to pray to God? (He was thrown into the lion's den.)
9. Disobeying the king meant certain death. What gave Daniel the courage to disobey King Darius? (His faith in God.)
10. When King Darius went to check on Daniel the next morning what did he find? (Daniel was alive!)
11. How did Daniel survive all night without getting eaten by the hungry lions? (God sent an angel to close the mouths of the lions.)
12. What happened to the evil men that tried to kill Daniel? (They were thrown into the lion's den.)
13. What are some situations in which kids your age need God's help and courage to obey Him? (When a friend asks you to lie about something or do something you know is wrong. Or, when you are home alone and are tempted to do something your parents told you not to do. Or, if you are in the lunch room at school and you know you should pray before you eat but you may feel self-conscience about it.)
14. What are some ways God helps us have courage to do what is right? (He gives us strength. He listens when we pray. He helps us calm down. He promises to never leave us. He protects us.)

[For more expositional lessons for children, visit <https://www.FreeChildrensMinistryLessons.com>]

Jonah Runs from God

(Jonah)

Introduction

[Teacher, plan to start your class with the following skit: Let a child sit with his Bible, having his devotional time. He reads Galatians 5:22 out loud and then says, as if to himself, “Love, joy, peace, longsuffering – uh oh, I think that means *patience*. No way! Sorry, God, I’m just not a patient person—forget that one. Kindness—well, okay, but only if I don’t have to be kind to my brother! Goodness, faithfulness, gentleness—no problem! Self-control—do I *have to*?” Teacher steps in and begins lesson...]

When it comes to obeying God, many of us act like [Jimmy], not wanting to do what God says. One of God’s prophets thought he could get away with disobeying God when God asked him to do something he didn’t want to do.

Opening Prayer

Father, teach us how important it is to You that we obey You in every way. Give us a desire in our heart to please You in everything we think, say, and do. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

*It is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.
(Philippians 2:13)*

Lesson

How many of you already know the story of Jonah the prophet? Have you ever read the story for yourself from God’s Word? That’s what we’re going to do today.

Jonah was a real person. He was born during the time of the book of 2 Kings. He was a prophet of God. Does anyone remember what a prophet is? (A messenger of God.)

God commanded him to warn the people of Nineveh that their city would be destroyed because of their great wickedness.

Jonah 1:1-2

The LORD gave this message to Jonah son of Amittai: (2) “Get up and go to the great city of Nineveh. Announce my judgment against it because I have seen how wicked its people are.”

The sin of the people of Nineveh was very great. God loved them and wanted to warn these people that they would be destroyed unless they chose to believe Him.

There is always a punishment for sin (Romans 6:23). You have sinned, too, and your sin must be punished. But thank God, He sent the Lord Jesus, His only Son, to take your punishment (2 Corinthians 5:21). But, to receive forgiveness from God, you must believe that Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead so that your sin can be forgiven. God wanted His prophet to warn the people of Nineveh that unless they chose to believe God, they would be destroyed because of their wickedness.

Jonah 1:3

But Jonah got up and went in the opposite direction to get away from the LORD. He went down to the port of Joppa, where he found a ship leaving for Tarshish. He bought a ticket and went on board, hoping to escape from the LORD by sailing to Tarshish.

Jonah ran away from God. Here he was one of God’s prophets. He loved God; that is he *thought* he loved God. But when he heard what God wanted him to do, he refused to obey.

The people of Nineveh were Israel’s greatest enemy. He must have thought, “Go to Nineveh? Everyone knows what a terrible place Nineveh is! The people are so wicked. They might hurt me. Maybe even kill me. No! That is the last place I want to go.”

He knew that if he went to Nineveh the people might be sorry for their wicked ways and ask God to forgive them. And, Jonah wanted God to destroy the people of Nineveh. Have you ever had someone be mean to you? Have you ever wanted something bad to happen to that person? This is NOT how God wants you to react to people. Satan was causing Jonah to think these thoughts.

Now Jonah had to choose to obey God or to disobey. Because Jonah did not have a right heart attitude, he refused to carry out God's command. He deliberately rebelled against God. God wants to give you the desire to obey Him. To obey means to do as you are told.

What are some things that God wants you to do that might seem hard or even impossible? (Say you're sorry to someone you've hurt; Obey parents and all those in authority, forgive people who hurt you.) You might not feel like doing what your parents ask. You might not understand why God wants you to love and forgive people that hurt you. But God wants you to obey Him anyway. Disobedience will make you feel sad and guilty inside, and sometimes it can bring real trouble into your life.

God sent Jonah to Nineveh with an important warning, but Jonah chose not to obey God. Instead he headed off in the opposite direction.

Jonah should have known that God would be with him and help him. But Jonah was too busy listening to Satan and soon he was not only afraid to go to Nineveh, he was afraid of God. That's why Jonah was running. He was trying to hide from God.

Jonah hurried down to the seaport of Joppa. When he saw a ship was about to sail for Tarshish, in the opposite direction of Nineveh, he paid his fare and went aboard.

Once onboard he headed to the bottom of the boat. No one would find him there, he thought. But God always knows where everyone is because God is All-Knowing; He knows everything.

As the boat sailed out to sea, God sent a storm.

Jonah 1:4

But the LORD hurled a powerful wind over the sea, causing a violent storm that threatened to break the ship apart.

A fierce wind whipped up the waves. The ship tossed and plunged in the storm. Everyone on board the ship was terrified. They were sure they would all be drowned. They all started calling out to their gods.

Jonah 1:5

Fearing for their lives, the desperate sailors shouted to their gods for help and threw the cargo overboard to lighten the ship. But all this time Jonah was sound asleep down in the hold.

All this time, Jonah lay down on the floor and went to sleep.

When the captain found Jonah sleeping in the bottom of the boat, he questioned him and begged him to pray to his God for help like everyone else.

Jonah 1:6

So the captain went down after him. "How can you sleep at a time like this?" he shouted. "Get up and pray to your god! Maybe he will pay attention to us and spare our lives."

Everyone was trying to figure out why this terrible storm had come upon them. They figured it had to be because someone on board had displeased his god.

Jonah 1:7

Then the crew cast lots to see which of them had offended the gods and caused the terrible storm. When they did this, the lots identified Jonah as the culprit.

Casting lots is like throwing dice or tossing a coin. When they found out it was because of Jonah's sin, they started asking him more questions.

Jonah 1:8-9

"Why has this awful storm come down on us?" they demanded. "Who are you? What is your line of work? What country are you from? What is your nationality?" (9) Jonah answered, "I am a Hebrew, and I worship the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the land."

Jonah 1:10-11

The sailors were terrified when they heard this, for he had already told them he was running away from the LORD. "Oh, why did you do it?" they groaned. (11) And since the storm was getting worse all the time, they asked him, "What should we do to you to stop this storm?"

Jonah told the sailors to throw him into the sea.

Jonah 1:12

“Throw me into the sea,” Jonah said, “and it will become calm again. I know that this terrible storm is all my fault.”

The men did not want to throw Jonah into the water. It seemed too cruel. So they rowed their hardest to bring the ship to land.

Jonah 1:13

Instead, the sailors rowed even harder to get the ship to the land. But the stormy sea was too violent for them, and they couldn't make it

It was no use. They were helpless against the forces of the storm. They finally had to take Jonah and toss him into the ocean.

Jonah 1:14-15

Then they cried out to the LORD, Jonah's God. “O LORD,” they pleaded, “don't make us die for this man's sin. And don't hold us responsible for his death. O LORD, you have sent this storm upon him for your own good reasons.” (15) Then the sailors picked Jonah up and threw him into the raging sea, and the storm stopped at once!

Almost immediately the wind stopped and the sea became calm. Down, down he sank. The water must have choked him and he probably wondered how long it would take before he died. Suddenly a great big fish swam up to him and swallowed him in one gulp.

Jonah found himself alive and terrified in the belly of a great fish.

Jonah 1:17

Now the LORD had arranged for a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was inside the fish for three days and three nights.

For three miserable, uncomfortable days Jonah was inside the fish. He had plenty of time to think how wrong he had been to disobey God.

If Jonah had obeyed God, even though he didn't understand why God was sending him to his enemies, Jonah would not have had to go through such a terrible experience. God wants to give you the desire

to obey Him. [Teacher, discuss why it is important to obey: rules are given for your good; those in authority often know things you don't know; God is pleased when you obey.]

If you know that God wants you to do something that will be hard for you to obey, you can ask Him to give you the “want to” to obey Him and then ask Him for the power to do it. (Philippians 2:13)

Jonah didn't even ask God to help him. He disobeyed God, and then he found himself in a very frightening situation.

For three days and three nights Jonah was inside the fish. He finally prayed to God. He knew that only God could deliver him from this impossible situation in the fish's belly. Terrified, Jonah prayed to the Lord from the belly of the fish.

Jonah 2:1

Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from inside the fish.

Jonah asked God for a second chance to be obedient. God is a God of second chances. He is loving and forgiving. He doesn't want anyone to die in their sins. He is patient. He wants everyone to come to Him and to receive forgiveness for their sins. (2 Peter 3:9)

But it took Jonah three agonizing days before he was ready to come to God. After three horrible days inside the fish, Jonah prayed to God and all at once, God commanded the fish to vomit Jonah up onto dry land!

Jonah 2:10

Then the LORD ordered the fish to spit Jonah out onto the beach.

God gave Jonah and the people of Nineveh a second chance. God told Jonah again to go to the people of Nineveh and warn them about His plan to destroy them if they didn't get right with Him.

Jonah 3:1-2

Then the LORD spoke to Jonah a second time: (2) “Get up and go to the great city of Nineveh, and deliver the message I have given you.”

Jonah had learned his lesson. This time he did not disobey. At last, Jonah went to Nineveh in obedience to God.

Jonah 3:3

This time Jonah obeyed the LORD's command and went to Nineveh, a city so large that it took three days to see it all.

Nineveh was such a large city, it took three days to walk across town.

To Jonah's surprise, when he preached God's warning to the people of Nineveh, they listened and believed.

Jonah 3:4-5

On the day Jonah entered the city, he shouted to the crowds: "Forty days from now Nineveh will be destroyed!" (5) The people of Nineveh believed God's message, and from the greatest to the least, they declared a fast and put on burlap to show their sorrow.

The people of Nineveh prayed for forgiveness. They turned away from their idols and began to worship God.

When God heard their prayers and saw how sorry they were, He forgave them and decided not to destroy Nineveh.

Jonah 3:10

When God saw what they had done and how they had put a stop to their evil ways, he changed his mind and did not carry out the destruction he had threatened.

Jonah finally obeyed God the second time he was told to go to Nineveh, but he had to go through a lot of difficulty because of his earlier disobedience. If you are a believer in the Lord Jesus, will you let God give you the desire to obey Him the first time?

Think of some area in your life where you have been disobedient to God. Maybe you've been impatient with your brother or sister. Maybe you've had trouble controlling your anger. Maybe you've had trouble obeying your parents, or forgiving someone that has been mean to you. Confess that sin to God and ask Him to give you the will and the power to do what you know you should do. He will fish you out of all your troubles just like he did Jonah!

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You that you are a God of second chances. Thank You that when we are disobedient that we can come to You and You will forgive us. We ask You to give us the desire in our hearts to obey You with a right heart attitude—with joy and gladness—knowing that it is pleasing to You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

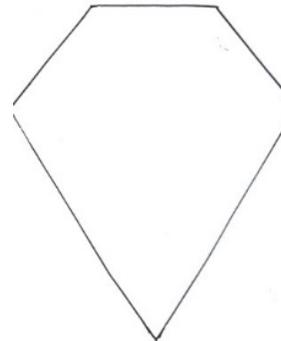
Jonah in the whale

Materials: Blue construction paper, markers

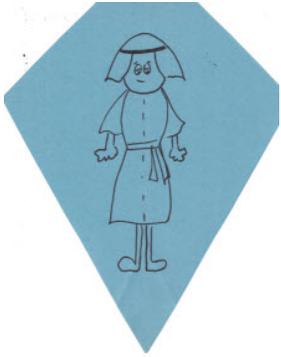
Procedure:

Don't show the children the final craft, lead them through these steps, one at a time, so they are delighted with the result:

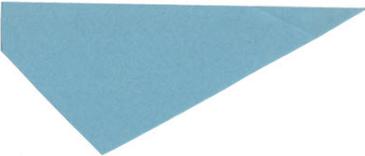
1. Cut a piece of blue construction paper to look like a diamond.



2. Draw Jonah to remind you that Jonah was a valuable prophet of God:



3. Fold the paper in half to remind you that Jonah hopped on a boat to try to hide from God. (Jonah is folded inside the fish.)



4. Fold the long-pointed end down to remind you that Jonah went overboard. (The point becomes the fish tail.)



5. Flip the paper over to see the fish that swallowed Jonah.



6. Draw a face and write a note to God on the fish's belly thanking Him for fishing you out of your troubles.

Jonah prayed to thank God for another chance to follow Him. God gave Jonah and the people of Nineveh a second chance. Think about all the second chances God gives you to obey Him.

Game Center

Charades or Pictionary

Preparation: Make cards with the following actions on them:

- Jonah running away from God
- A fish swallowing Jonah
- A fish spiting Jonah out
- Jonah getting thrown overboard
- Jonah praying in the belly of the fish
- Jonah taking a nap
- Jonah on a ship in the middle of a storm
- People throwing everything overboard
- Jonah telling God's message to the people of Nineveh
- Sailors trying to row ashore

Procedures: Divide the children into two teams. Alternate between teams. Have a member of a team draw a card and then either act out or draw that part of the story to see if they can get their team to guess what the card says. Give one minute to guess the topic. If Team A guesses correctly they get 1,000 points. If team A doesn't guess it, but Team B does, then Team B gets 500 points.

Hide or Seek?

Tell the children you are going to read some situations. They should listen to the situation and decide if the person in the situation is hiding from God or seeking God. If the person is hiding from God, they

should hold their hands over their face. If the person is seeking God, they should hold their hands up in praise to God.

1. Your friend lends you one of his toys. While you were playing with it, you accidentally broke it. You are afraid to tell him because you think he will get really mad at you. Instead of telling him, you hope that he will forget about it.
2. Your mom tells you that you can go next door to play with your friend but that you can only stay one hour. You are having so much fun, you decide to stay a little longer. When you do get home you sneak into the house and hope that your mom doesn't notice you are late.
3. A big kid is picking on a little kid on your bus. He is calling him names and making him feel bad. Instead of telling the big kid to stop, you pretend that you can't hear what the big kid is saying.
4. Your mom made a batch of cookies for the lady next door. She wants you to take them over to her because she doesn't have enough time. You don't like to be around this lady because she is always complaining about something and talking bad about your other neighbors. You decide to pray before you leave to ask God to help you say the right things to this neighbor when you go over.
5. Your dad told you not to practice hitting your baseball in the side yard, but you did it anyway. You accidentally hit the ball into a neighbor's flower pot and broke it. Instead of running away and pretending nothing happened, you go over to the neighbor and offer to buy her a new pot.

Or, use the following review questions in a game of your choice:

1. Jonah was a prophet of God. What is a prophet? (A messenger of God.)
2. Who did God want Jonah to give a message to? (The people of Nineveh.)
3. What was the message God wanted Jonah to tell the people of Nineveh? (Their city would be destroyed because of their great wickedness, unless they turned from their sinful ways.)
4. What did Jonah do when he heard what God wanted him to do? (He refused to obey and he ran away.)
5. Why did Jonah not want to obey God? (The people of Nineveh were Israel's greatest enemy; he wanted the people to be destroyed.)
6. Who was making Jonah want the people of Nineveh to be destroyed? (Satan)
7. What does obey mean? (To do what you're told to do.)
8. What are some hard things that God wants you to do? (Say, "I'm sorry." Obey parents. Forgive people who have been hurtful.)
9. Where did Jonah go when he ran away from God? (First he went to Joppa and got on a ship headed for Tarshish.)
10. What happened when they sailed off to sea? (God sent a storm.)
11. When the storm hit what did all the people do? (They called out to their gods and threw their cargo overboard.)
12. When the storm hit, where did Jonah go? (Down to the bottom of the ship.)
13. What did the captain do when he found Jonah sleeping in the bottom of the boat? (He questioned him and begged him to pray to his God for help.)

14. How did Jonah answer the sailors when they asked, "What shall we do to you that the sea may be calm for us." (Jonah told them to throw him overboard.)
15. How long was Jonah in the belly of the fish? (Three days.)
16. How long was Jesus in the tomb before he rose again? (3 days.)
17. What did Jonah finally do after three days in the belly of the fish? (He finally prayed to the Lord his God.)
18. After Jonah prayed, what did God make the fish do? (Swim close to land and vomit him onto dry land.)
19. What did the people of Nineveh do when they heard God's message that Jonah finally gave them? (They believed God, prayed for forgiveness and turned away from their idols and began to worship God.)
20. When God heard their prayers and saw how sorry they were, what did He do? (He forgave them and decided not to destroy Nineveh.)

[For more expositional lessons for children, visit <https://www.FreeChildrensMinistryLessons.com>]

