

Solomon Disobeys God

(1 Kings 11:1-13, 28-40)

Introduction

What's something special you like to play with or are glad you have? (Soccer balls, books, video games, etc.) What are some things kids may think are more important than God? (Money, clothes, cool toys.) [Teacher, list their answers on the board to use later in the lesson.]

We all love different things. But God deserves our love more than anything! Do you know anyone who shows that God is most important to him or her? What does that person do that shows you God is important to them?

In our lesson today we'll hear about a king who had to choose who he was going to love the most.

Opening Prayer

Father, thank You for these things that we enjoy and find important to us. Help us to show that You are important to us when we play with our friends. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

You shall have no other gods before me. (Exodus 20:3 NKJ)

God gave 10 important rules to His people. This verse is the first Commandment.

Lesson

We've been learning about the kings of Israel. The first king was Saul, the second king was David, and then David's son, Solomon, came to power.

Saul started out as a good king. But after a while he became full of pride. He got to a point where he wasn't interested in obeying God. He wanted to do everything his own way instead of God's way. Then he became so jealous of David's popularity with the people that he wanted to kill him. After years of running for his life, David finally came into power after the Philistines killed Saul.

David was a good king and he lived a long life. The Bible refers to David as "a man after God's own heart." Before he passed away, he appointed his son, Solomon, to become the third king.

When Solomon came into power, he asked God for wisdom to rule the people well. God was so pleased with Solomon's request for wisdom that He gave him riches, power, and a long life, too.

God honored King Solomon; he had everything a person could want. He was famous for his great wealth and he was the wisest man who ever lived. He had it all! But, sadly, King Solomon had one major weakness which led him away from God.

King Solomon had a weakness for women. He had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines. Many of these women were from nations where people worshiped idols—wooden or stone statues of false gods. The Lord had clearly instructed the children of Israel not to marry anyone from those nations because He knew that if a man married a foreign woman—one that worshiped false gods—he would be tempted to start worshiping her gods. Yet Solomon did it anyway. Why did Solomon marry so many foreign women? He did it to make friends with the other nations around him; they were political marriages to strengthen his foreign alliances.

1Kings 3:1 [Teacher, read...]

Solomon made an alliance with Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and married one of his daughters. He brought her to live in the City of David until he could finish building his palace and the Temple of the LORD and the wall around the city.

Solomon's first wife was an Egyptian princess. And, there was one big problem: Egyptian people didn't worship the true God; they worshiped idols and Solomon allowed her to keep her idols.

God had given Solomon wisdom, but once Solomon had made this foolish mistake, he acted foolishly again and again. Soon he married another princess. And then he married again and again and again!

1 Kings 11:1-2

Now King Solomon loved many foreign women. Besides Pharaoh's daughter, he married women from Moab, Ammon, Edom, Sidon, and from among the Hittites. The LORD had clearly instructed the people of Israel, "You must not marry them, because they will turn your hearts to their gods." Yet Solomon insisted on loving them anyway.

All these foreign wives brought their own idols of false gods with them from their countries! Soon there were lots and lots of false gods being worshiped in Solomon's kingdom! He even built some temples for his foreign wives to use for worshiping their false gods.

And, sure enough, these women encouraged Solomon to worship along with them and he turned his heart away from the true and living God. Solomon, the wisest man in the world, started to listen to his wives! He began to think that maybe, just maybe, these idols really had some power of their own! Pretty soon, Solomon himself was praying to the false gods that his wives worshiped.

Solomon did what was clearly wrong and refused to follow the Lord as his father David did. God was very angry with Solomon about this. Even though God appeared to him twice to warn him specifically against worshiping others gods, Solomon didn't listen and now he was no longer interested in the Lord God of Israel.

1 Kings 11:11

So now the LORD said to him, "Since you have not kept my covenant and have disobeyed my decrees, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your servants."

How Sad! Since Solomon did not obey the Lord, God took the kingdom away from him and gave it to one of his servants.

Solomon wasn't happy about that! And which of his servants would become the king? Solomon didn't find out right away.

But one day, that servant found out! Solomon's servant, Jeroboam, was walking through the country. A prophet, a man who gave messages from God, met him. The prophet stopped. He took off his beautiful, brand-new robe and tore it into 12 pieces! [Teacher, tear a piece of fabric into pieces for a dramatic effect.] One piece for each of the 12 tribes of Israel.

1 Kings 11:31

Then he said to Jeroboam, "Take ten of these pieces, for this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'I am about to tear the kingdom from the hand of Solomon, and I will give ten of the tribes to you!'"

The prophet gave Jeroboam 10 of the pieces and told him that after Solomon dies, he will be king over 10 tribes of Israel. (The other 2 tribes would be ruled by Solomon's son for the sake of his father, David. Remember that God promised to bring Jesus through the family line of David. So, God couldn't completely wipe out Solomon's line.)

How could a king so blessed by God fail to obey the One who had lavished such love on him?

All this happened because Solomon allowed his wives to worship their own gods when they came to live in his palace. As time wore on, Solomon's heart was no longer fully devoted to God. The next thing that happened was that he began to worship the idols along with his wives.

What about you? Is your heart fully devoted to God? Do you ever choose to let someone or something become more important to you than your love for God? [Teacher, refer to the things listed on the board.]

How can you show others that God is more important to you than anything else? (Being thoughtful, helping others, obey God's rules.)

Even though Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived, he did not always choose to do what was wise. We each have a choice to do what is wise. We can make a wise choice to honor God.

We honor God by showing Him, and everyone around us, that He is most important to us by the things we think, say, and do. Do your friends know that you love God with all of your heart, mind and soul? What are some ways you can show that God is more important than anything else? (Show God's love to our friends. Help others.)

Our Memory Verse this week tells us that God should be most important in our lives. God longs for us to worship Him and Him, alone.

Closing Prayer

Father, we want everyone around us to know that we put You first in our lives. I pray that You will be honored and glorified in everything that we think, or say, or do. Guard our hearts from seeking after idols in our lives. And help us to never misrepresent You to anyone You bring into our lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

There's Only One True God

In this craft project, kids celebrate ways to describe our one true God.

MATERIALS:

Markers, index cards, Bible, and large sheets of newsprint or butcher paper.

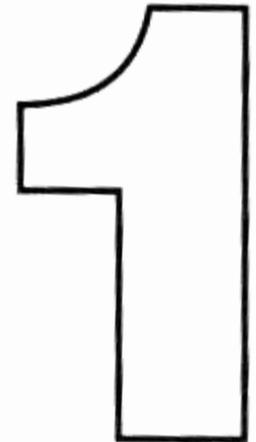
PREPARATION:

On separate index cards, write the following Scripture references:

Psalm 23:1	Psalm 43:2	1 Timothy 6:15
Psalm 28:1	Isaiah 1:24	James 1:17
Psalm 42:11	John 6:45	Revelation 1:8
Revelation 15:3		

Say: King Solomon of Israel was famous for his wisdom. But as he grew older and richer, Solomon did some things that weren't wise at all. In our Bible Lesson today, what did Solomon do wrong? The Bible teaches us that there is only one God and that we are to worship only Him. Let's make a special banner to remind us how wonderful our one true God is.

On the newsprint, instruct kids to title their banner, "The Only 1," making the "1" a large outline that fills most of the paper. Have children look up the scripture passages. Have kids work together to fill in the hollow "1" with words from the passages that describe God. Kids might write words such as "Shepherd," "Rock," "Savior." As kids work, you might want to play songs such as "Great Is the Lord" and "We Will Glorify." Then have kids display the banner in the room as a reminder that our God is the one true God.



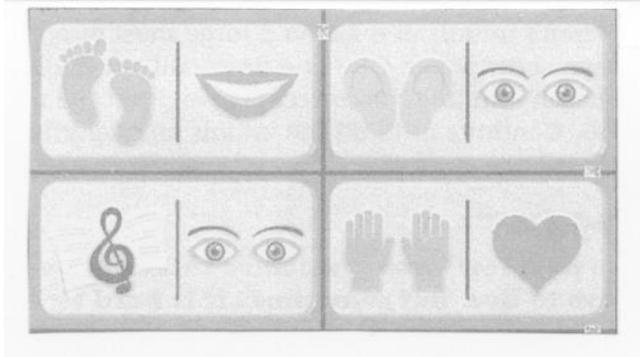
Game Center

Mouth, Eyes, Ears, Hands and Feet

Our memory verse tells us that God should be most important in our lives. Use this game to reinforce how we can show that God is most important in our lives.

PREPARATION:

Make cards with pictures of a mouth, eyes, ears, hands, and feet.



Hold the cards in your hand with the blank side facing the children. Have a volunteer pick a card and then ask that child a question that corresponds to the picture using the questions below as a guide:

- How can you use your **mouth** to show that God is most important in your life? (Sing songs or tell others about how great God is. Pray to God. Never tell lies or dirty jokes.)
 - How can you use your **eyes** to show that God is most important to you? (Read the Bible; be careful what you watch on TV or at the movies. Be careful about what you read.)
 - How can you use your **ears** to show that God is most important to you? (Listen to others tell about God. Be careful what music you listen to. Be careful about listening to your friend's jokes at school. Never let someone gossip to you about someone else.)
 - How can you use your **hands** and **feet** to show that God is most important to you? (Do kind things to help other people.)
- Or, use the following questions in another game of your choice:
- Solomon made lots of trouble for himself when he didn't make God most important in his life. What do you think made him decide to worship false gods? (His wives led him away from God.)
 - Which one of the Ten Commandments did Solomon disobey? (*You shall have no others gods before me.* Exodus 20:3)
 - How do you think Solomon felt after he heard that his kingdom was going to be divided? (He wasn't happy.)
 - What are some things kids may think are more important than God? (Having lots of money, clothes, and cool toys. Being popular.)
 - How can someone your age show that God is more important than anything else? (Pray to God. Read the Bible. Obey His rules in the Bible. Become a member of God's family. Be kind to others and show God's love to our friends. Help people. Memorize verses from the Bible.)
 - God is very wise! He wants to help us to make wise choices each day. What wise choice have we talked about today? (Making God first in our lives.)
 - How can you show that God is important to you when you are out on the playground? (Help other kids learn how to play a new game. Play fair.)

8. Why did Solomon have so many foreign wives? (He married for political reasons to strengthen his foreign alliances.)
9. Did God encourage the Children of Israel to marry foreign women? Why or why not? (He said, "*Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods.*")
10. Solomon's first wife was an Egyptian princess. Why was that a problem? (She worshipped idols.)
11. Why did Solomon build temples for his foreign wives? (To use for worshipping their false gods.)
12. What did God do to punish Solomon? (He tore the kings away from Solomon.)

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