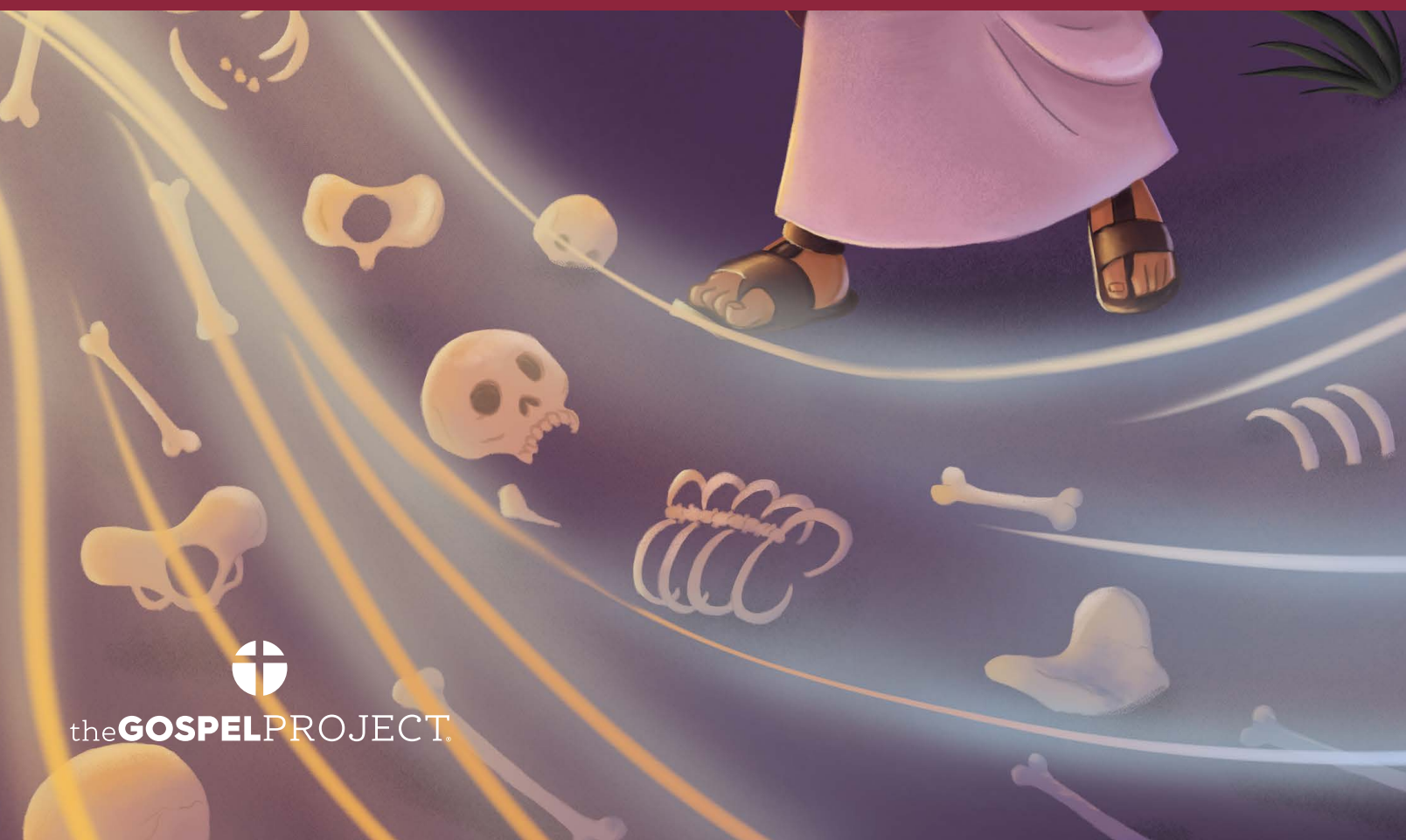


05

DIVISION AND DEFIANCE



YOUNGER KIDS **LEADER GUIDE**



the **GOSPEL**PROJECT.



**THE GOSPEL PROJECT FOR KIDS:
YOUNGER KIDS LEADER GUIDE**
VOLUME 5 • DIVISION AND DEFIANCE

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We believe that the Bible has God for its author; salvation for its end; and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter and that all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. To review Lifeway's doctrinal guideline, please visit www.lifeway.com/doctrinalguideline. Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the Christian Standard Bible®, Copyright 2017 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission.

TABLE OF CONTENTS



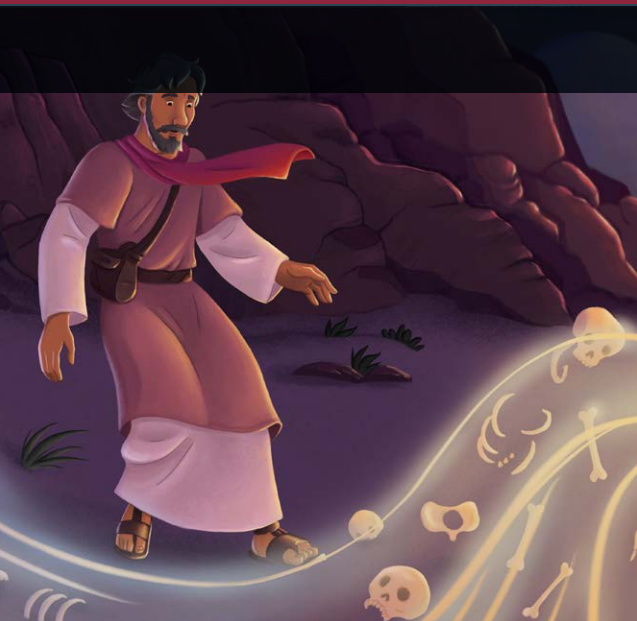
Unit 13: A Troubled Kingdom

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Session 1: The Kingdom Divided (<i>1 Kings 11–13</i>) | 6 |
| Session 2: Israel's Evil Kings (<i>1 Kings 14–15; 2 Chronicles 12–13</i>) | 16 |
| Session 3: Elijah Confronted Ahab (<i>1 Kings 18–19</i>) | 26 |
| Session 4: The Reign of Ahab (<i>1 Kings 20–22; 2 Kings 1</i>) | 36 |



Unit 14: The Northern Kingdom

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Session 1: Elisha the Prophet (<i>2 Kings 2; 4–5</i>) | 46 |
| Session 2: Jonah, Prophet to Nineveh (<i>Jonah</i>) | 56 |
| Session 3: Hosea, Prophet to Israel (<i>Hosea</i>) | 66 |
| Session 4: The Northern Kingdom Was Destroyed (<i>2 Kings 17</i>) | 76 |



Unit 15: The Southern Kingdom

| | |
|---|------------|
| Session 1: Judah's Good Kings (<i>2 Kings 18–19; 2 Chronicles 14–24</i>) | 86 |
| Session 2: Prophets to Judah (<i>Micah; Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah</i>) | 96 |
| Session 3: God Promised a New Covenant (<i>Jeremiah 17; 31</i>) | 106 |
| Session 4: Judah Was Taken Captive (<i>2 Chronicles 36</i>) | 116 |
| Session 5: Ezekiel Gave Hope (<i>Ezekiel 37</i>) | 126 |

The Gospel Project for Kids provides bonus Christmas and Easter sessions. These sessions can be accessed through Ministry Grid or gospelproject.com/additionalresources.



SESSION AT A GLANCE



PREPARE

- **Read the Leader Bible Study and Bible story**, including the Christ Connection. For additional help for preparing, visit www.gospelproject.com.
- **Familiarize yourself with the session content**, noting which activity options will work best in your context.
- **Gather and prepare session supplies**, including posters, videos, and activity printables as needed.
- **Contact families and pray for your kids** during the week.



WELCOME

- **Greet kids** as they arrive, **build relationships**, and **help new kids** connect to the group.
- Guide kids to complete the **Activity Page**, and choose one of the **Session Starter Activities** to introduce this week's story.



LEARN

- **Help kids understand the Bible story** and how it relates to God's big story of Scripture. During this portion of the session, focus on what the kids should believe—what God wants our kids to know about the Bible story, Big Picture Question and Answer, and Key Passage.



LOVE

- **Help kids respond appropriately to the Bible story** by growing in their love for God and considering how to apply it to their own lives. During this portion of the session, focus on what the kids should feel—how God wants our kids to respond based on what they believe.



LIVE

- **Help kids find ways to live on mission** and make much of God in response to the Bible story. During this portion of the session, focus on what the kids should do—how God wants our kids to be different based on what they know about God and their growing love for Him.

NOTABLE FEATURES

Suggested Times

Each session is designed to be completed in 60–75 minutes but can be shortened or lengthened as needed.

Story Points

Each session will include a story point for preschoolers and kids that reinforces a key emphasis from the Bible story. Story points will provide a simple, memorable truth for preschoolers and kids to take away from teaching time.

Missions

The missions content is designed to help kids understand God’s ongoing mission to rescue sinners around the world. This content can be customized or replaced with your church’s own missions efforts if desired.

Big Picture Questions and Answers

Big picture questions and answers are designed to help preschoolers and kids learn important doctrines of the Christian faith. Each unit contains a big picture question and answer to help kids understand theological concepts organized around six overarching categories: God, people, Jesus, the Bible, the church, and the Christian life.

Make It Fit

Each session provides flexibility for customization based on the needs and structure of your kids ministry. The Learn portion contains most, or all, of the videos and music, making it ideal for a large group gathering with the Welcome, Love, and Live portions working well for small groups. Alternatively, the entire session can be completed in small groups or as one large group.

QUICK REFERENCE

Here is where you will be able to find all of the resources you will need:

| | Additional Resources | Ministry Starter Kit | | | Digital Subscription |
|---------------------|--|----------------------|------------|----------|----------------------|
| | GospelProject.com | DVD | Files Disc | Music CD | |
| Activity Printables | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Posters | | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Videos | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Music | | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Activity Pages | Purchase at www.gospelproject.com | | | | ✓ |
| Big Picture Cards | Purchase at www.gospelproject.com | | | | ✓ |



VOLUME 5 - DIVISION AND DEFIANCE

The story of the divided kingdom reveals the many warnings God’s people received—warnings to seek repentance from their sinful, idolatrous ways and turn to God. Because God is holy, good, and loving, He promised a new covenant for His people: one forever written on their hearts.

UNIT 13: A TROUBLED KINGDOM

Solomon’s unfaithfulness to God led to a divided and troubled kingdom. Rather than seek the Lord wholeheartedly, the people of Israel and Judah turned to worship worthless idols. Yet, God did not forsake His people. Through the prophet Elijah, God demonstrated His presence, power, and preeminence as the one true God.

How many gods are there? There is one true God who alone deserves worship.

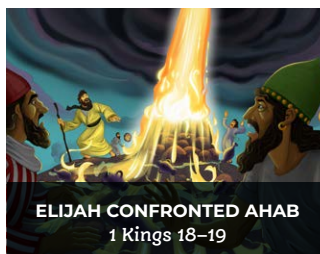
SESSION 1



SESSION 2



SESSION 3



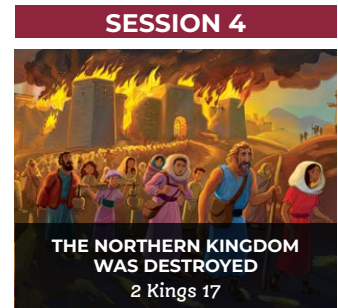
SESSION 4



UNIT 14: THE NORTHERN KINGDOM

Although the Northern Kingdom continued to worship idols, God provided prophets to warn His people—and even foreign nations—to turn away from their sin. While Nineveh repented and was spared God’s judgment, the nation of Israel refused to worship God alone. As a result, God judged Israel’s idolatrous sin by allowing the nation of Assyria to destroy the Northern Kingdom.

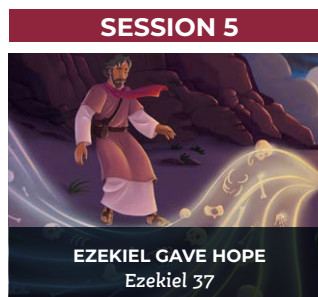
Why do Christians continue to sin? Christians continue to sin because we still have a sin nature, but when Jesus returns, He will make us sinless like Him.



UNIT 15: THE SOUTHERN KINGDOM

The Southern Kingdom of Judah experienced the reign of both good and evil kings. Yet, the people’s allegiance was divided between the worship of God and the idols of foreign nations. God sent prophets to warn the people to turn back to Him, but they did not listen. God disciplined His people by sending them into captivity in Babylon but promised they would one day return home.

What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving.



UNIT 13 | SESSION 1

THE KINGDOM DIVIDED

1 KINGS 11-13



KEY PASSAGE: 1 Kings 8:60

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How many gods are there? There is one true God who alone deserves worship.

CHRIST CONNECTION: Rehoboam rejected good advice, and his foolish pride led to a divided kingdom. Jesus, the truly wise King, unites all who trust in Him and brings them into His kingdom forever.

STORY POINT: Rehoboam's foolish sin divided the kingdom.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

While King Solomon was known for his wisdom, he did not leave his kingdom better than he found it, for “when he was old, his heart turned to other gods” (1 Kings 11:4). In fact, the kingdom would now be divided because of his unfaithfulness to God. After Solomon died, his son Rehoboam became king and was confronted with a request from the people: to lighten their labor. Rehoboam sought wise counsel from those who served with his father and asked a group of peers for advice.

King Rehoboam sought wise counsel but then chose to ignore it. The elders that served with his father advised him to be a servant to the people and speak kindly to them. Surely this approach would have reestablished trust. However, Rehoboam disregarded the elders’ input and chose to listen to a young group of friends instead. Their suggestion was to tell the people that he is even more powerful than Solomon and will make their lives more difficult.

This oppression of course is not well received, and the people rebelled against Rehoboam. Rehoboam’s selfish pride resulted in the rest of Israel seeking Jeroboam as their king, and the kingdom was divided just as God said. Rehoboam sought to be served instead of choosing to serve the people.

Service is true leadership. Jesus willingly chose to serve us while we were still far from Him. As Romans 5:8 tells us, “while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Have you ever completely disregarded sound wisdom or godly advice? Who we listen to matters. As you prepare to teach, pray for God to help you listen to the wise counsel of His Holy Spirit. Remind kids that we can choose to follow God’s ways through faith in Jesus. Pray for boys and girls to know the one true God, and to look to Christ as the ultimate example of true, selfless leadership.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- "Divided" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- cups, 25–30
- balls, 1-3 per kid



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- "Divided Kingdom" printable, 1 per kid
- metal brads, 1 per kid

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- red cardstock papers, 1 per kid
- plastic baggies, 1 per kid

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible story coloring page



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video
- Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- "The Kingdom Divided" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- "Unit 13, Session 1" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- "Send Columbus" missions video

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "There Is No Other (1 Kings 8:60)" song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- world map



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “ Who do you know that would make a good king? Why? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Divided” activity page.

| **SAY** “ Through today’s Bible story, we will learn how Solomon’s unfaithfulness to God and Rehoboam’s foolish sin led to the kingdom being divided. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: STOP THE DIVIDE

Before the session, create a line of cups across one end of the room. Form the kids into two groups. Assign one group to be the “dividers.” Assign the other group the role of “defenders.” Start the game with the “dividers” at one end of the room, and the “defenders” in front of the cups. At your start the “dividers” will take turns rolling balls, trying to knock down the cups, while the “defenders” try to stop the balls from knocking over the cups. Play as time allows. Then switch groups.

| **SAY** “ When a cup was knocked over, the line of cups became divided. Today, we will learn how the kingdom of God’s people became divided. We’ll see how **REHOBAM’S FOOLISH SIN DIVIDED THE KINGDOM.** ”

OPTION 2: BE A SERVANT



Invite kids to think about what it means to be someone who serves others. Encourage kids to think about examples in the Bible or people they know who serve others in love. Then challenge kids to act out serving scenarios. Consider starting with the examples below. Then create more of your own.

- Setting the table
- Writing a note of encouragement
- Making someone a meal
- Bringing in the trash can
- Giving away toys

Invite volunteers to act out a scenario, while the other kids try to guess the action. Repeat, as time allows.

| **SAY** “ In our Bible story, we will see how a king named Rehoboam was given advice to be a servant leader to the people. However, Rehoboam didn’t want to serve others; he wanted people to serve him. We’ll learn how Jesus is the perfect servant King who gave His life to save us from sin. ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Welcome, kids! My name is [your name], and I’m so glad you’re here! When we meet together, we learn true stories from the Bible about God. Did you bring your Bible today? If so, will you take it out? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one. Invite kids to turn to 1 Kings.]

Do you remember King David and his son Solomon? After Solomon became king, he built the temple and worshiped God. But when he grew old, he started to turn away from following God with all his heart. Because of this, God said that one day, the kingdom would be divided. Today, we will see how God’s words came true. After Solomon died, his son Rehoboam became king. Through our story, we’ll learn how **REHOBOAM’S FOOLISH SIN DIVIDED THE KINGDOM**. [Display the Story Point Poster.] Let’s pray and prepare our hearts to hear God’s Word: ‘Dear God, we can always trust You and Your Word. Help us have hearts that hear Your Word and obey it. In Jesus’ name, amen.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “ As we study the Bible, we learn big truths about God, people, and the world. Our big picture questions and answers help us learn these truths. Our big picture question is, **How many gods are there?** The answer is, **There is one true God who alone deserves worship.** Let’s say the answer again: **There is one true God who alone deserves worship.**

In our story today, we will see that King Rehoboam refused to serve the people he ruled and expected them to serve him instead. Jesus is the only perfect King. He came to serve people by laying down His life for our sins. He alone is the one true God who deserves our worship. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ God’s people, the Israelites, wanted a king. So, God appointed kings to rule over His people. We’ve learned about King Saul, King David, and King Solomon. King David followed God and ruled over God’s people. David’s son, Solomon, followed God at the beginning of his reign, but he eventually turned away from following God with all his heart. Today, we will see how Rehoboam, King Solomon’s son, sinned and how his sin led to the division of the kingdom. ”



LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to 1 Kings 11–13. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “The Kingdom Divided.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

THE KINGDOM DIVIDED

“Solomon, the King of Israel, started out following God wholeheartedly, but later his heart was turned away from God. He was unfaithful to God by worshipping idols. The Lord was angry with him and said, “Since you have not kept my covenant and laws, I will tear your kingdom in two. One tribe will be given to your son, and the rest of Israel will follow another king.” Later, a servant of King Solomon named Jeroboam was walking down the road when a prophet of the Lord met him. The prophet told Jeroboam that he would be the new king. Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam, but he fled to Egypt, where he remained until Solomon’s death.

After Solomon died, his son Rehoboam (ree huh BOH uhm) became the new king. Jeroboam (jer uh BOH uhm) and the people of Israel came to Rehoboam and said, “Your father Solomon was a very harsh king. We are willing to follow you as our king, if you will be less harsh with us.”

Rehoboam replied, “Come back in three days, and I will give you an answer to your request.” Then Rehoboam brought together the elders who had served his father Solomon. The elders gave Rehoboam very good advice: “Be a servant to the people, and speak kind words to them, and they will be your servants forever.”

Rehoboam did not like what the elders said and rejected their advice. He asked some young men he had grown up with what he should do. These young men said, “Show the people you are in charge! Tell them you are far more powerful than your father Solomon, and their lives will be much harder under your rule.”

When three days had passed, Jeroboam and all the people returned to Rehoboam to hear his reply. He told them, “My father made your work difficult, but I will make your work even more difficult. My father disciplined you; I will discipline you even further.”

When the people heard Rehoboam’s reply, they rebelled against him. All the tribes of Israel, except for the tribe of Judah, came together and made Jeroboam their king. Because of Rehoboam’s foolish and prideful sin, the people of God were now divided into two nations. King Rehoboam was king over Judah, and King Jeroboam was king over Israel.

Christ Connection: Rehoboam rejected good advice, and his foolish pride led to a divided kingdom. Jesus, the truly wise King, unites all who trust in Him and brings them into His kingdom forever. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Active listening: Invite kids to say “boo” when they hear bad advice or when they hear how people sinned.

Display a map: Display the Old Testament Kingdoms Map and point to the Northern and Southern Kingdoms.



2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Rehoboam became king after his father Solomon. Why did the people not trust Rehoboam? [Allow responses.] Rehoboam’s father, King Solomon, ordered the people to do hard work and didn’t always treat the people kindly. The people were concerned that Rehoboam may be like his father. They asked Rehoboam to lighten their work.

What two groups of people gave Rehoboam advice? [Allow responses.] First, the elders or older leaders told Solomon to be a servant-king. They encouraged him to be a king who would care for the people and speak kindly to them. But Rehoboam didn’t listen to them. Next, Rehoboam’s friends gave him advice. They told Rehoboam to make the people work even harder. They encouraged Rehoboam to use his power for his own pride.

What happened because of Rehoboam’s sin? [Allow responses.] All the tribes of Israel, except the tribe of Judah, rebelled against Rehoboam and made Jeroboam their king. **REHOBAM’S FOOLISH SIN DIVIDED THE KINGDOM.** The Northern Kingdom was known as Israel, and the Southern Kingdom was known as Judah.

Rehoboam rejected good advice, and his foolish pride led to a divided kingdom. Jesus, the truly wise King, unites all who trust in Him and brings them into His kingdom forever. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ Rehoboam was a foolish and selfish king. But King Jesus is the wise and serving King. Jesus laid down His life to save people from sin. When we trust in Jesus, we will be with Him forever. Do you have questions about what it means to follow Jesus as your Savior and Lord? ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 13, Session 1” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. If God knows what we are going to do, why does He give us a choice?
2. How does God help us make wise choices that honor Him?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

SAY “ Columbus, Ohio, is in the Midwest region of the United States and is home to many college students. But Columbus is also home to many people who have moved there from around the world. Many people who live in Columbus need to hear the good news about Jesus. Only 1 out of 10 people in Columbus are believers. ”

Play the video. Tell kids that the number of churches in Columbus, Ohio, has grown in recent years, but more churches are needed to help share the gospel. Pray for the missionaries working in Columbus, Ohio. Pray for more churches to partner with Columbus’ local churches.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 MINUTES)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud 1 Kings 8:60 together.

| **SAY** “ There is no one like our God! He is our perfect King who rules over the whole world. ”

Provide each kid with a Bible and invite them to find 1 Kings 8:60. Read the key passage aloud together. Then point to a world map and discuss how God created the world and made people to know He is the one true God.

Lead kids to sing “There Is No Other (1 Kings 8:60).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

| **SAY** “ Thank You, Lord, for being the perfect King who loves and cares for us. Help us serve You and others as we follow Your Son, Jesus. In Jesus’ name, amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to 1 Kings 12. Explain that the books of 1 and 2 Kings record the reigns of the kings of Israel following King Saul and King David.

Consider pointing out the Northern (E5) and Southern (I4) Kingdoms on the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud 1 Kings 12:8 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verse aloud.

SAY “Rehoboam had received good advice from the elders, but he did not listen to them. Rehoboam wanted to make himself great rather than be a king who took care of his people. Thankfully, Jesus is a good and wise King who always takes care of His people. He came to earth to serve others, most importantly by dying on the cross for people’s sin.”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “Who are wise people we can listen to? Why is the Bible a source of wisdom for us?”

Discuss how God places wise adults in our lives to help us follow God and His ways. Tell kids that pastors share the truth of God’s Word. Parents, teachers, and coaches can give us good advice on how to make wise decisions. Remind kids that the Bible is the Word of God and helps us follow Jesus, the truly wise King.

SAY “What can we do if we make a foolish mistake like Rehoboam?”

Tell kids that foolish choices often come with consequences. However, God is always willing to forgive our foolish sin when we repent and ask Him for forgiveness. Discuss how God wants to help us make wise choices for His glory and our good. When we go to God and confess our sin and ask Him for wisdom, God will give us the wisdom we need.

SAY “Why is Jesus the truly wise King?”

Share how Jesus always did what was right and followed God’s commands perfectly. God has all wisdom, and when Jesus lived on earth, He always obeyed God. Jesus also taught people God’s words and what it looks like to live for Him. As King, Jesus rules with goodness, love, and justice. Jesus showed us that wisdom means laying aside your own interests for the good of others. Instead of being a King who asked people to serve Him, Jesus was willing to lay down His life to serve others. He showed us what it means to trust God in every area and turn away from the temptations of this world.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: DIVIDED KINGDOM

Print copies of the “Divided Kingdom” printable for each kid. Invite kids to color the crown halves and the two kings. Then guide kids to cut out the crown halves. Using a metal brad, secure the two crown halves through the circle at the bottom of the page with the kings. Encourage kids to take home their “divided kingdom” and use it to retell the Bible story to their families or friends.

SAY “ **REHOBOAM’S FOOLISH SIN DIVIDED THE KINGDOM.** Because of this, God’s people would be separated into the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Sin divides people. And sin separates us from God. But God loves us and sent His Son, Jesus, to bring us back to God. When we trust in Jesus, we are united to God forever. ”

OPTION 2: A DIVIDED HEART



Provide each kid with a piece of red cardstock. Direct each child to draw a large heart on his or her paper. Then lead kids to write the story point, **REHOBOAM’S FOOLISH SIN DIVIDED THE KINGDOM**, on their hearts. Tell kids to cut their papers into 10 puzzle pieces. Then invite kids to swap puzzles with someone and put the hearts back together. Repeat as time allows. Provide kids with plastic baggies to take their puzzles home.

SAY “ We learned that God first said He would divide the kingdom because Solomon’s heart did not fully follow God. Solomon had a divided heart and began to follow the idols of his wives. When we follow other things before God, our hearts are divided too. Sin separates us from God. But God made the way for our hearts to be forgiven and have the desire to follow Him with all of our hearts. When we trust in Jesus, we are brought back to God and the Holy Spirit gives us the power to love Him above everything else. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.

ISRAEL'S EVIL KINGS

1 KINGS 14-15; 2 CHRONICLES 12-13



KEY PASSAGE: 1 Kings 8:60

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How many gods are there? There is one true God who alone deserves worship.

CHRIST CONNECTION: The first kings of Israel led the people to disobey God and to worship idols. Israel's kings suffered the consequences of their sin. We all sin when we disobey God and worship other things. Jesus died and rose again to pay for our sin and bring us back to God.

STORY POINT: Israel's kings did evil in God's sight and worshiped idols.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

When we hear the word idolatry, we might think about the golden calf in Exodus 32. While today's story includes King Jeroboam crafting two physical golden calves, it points to the invisible idolatry of the heart. What is idolatry? Idolatry is a sin in which we love and value something else above God.

Rehoboam had been cruel to God's people, and because of his harsh treatment, ten tribes rejected him as king and sought out Jeroboam to be king of Israel. Rehoboam's domain in Judah was smaller but held an important status because it was the location of the temple.

Jeroboam feared the people would eventually abandon him and return to Jerusalem to worship at the temple. Taking matters into his own hands, Jeroboam led the people to break the law of Moses and worship two golden calves. God was angry with Jeroboam and sent the prophet Ahijah to tell Jeroboam that he had behaved wickedly, that God was going to bring disaster upon his house, and that there would be a new king over Israel.

After Jeroboam, Israel had other evil kings—Nadab and Baasha. Like Jeroboam, they led Israel to turn away from God and worship idols. All three of these kings were eventually judged for their sin.

The first three kings of Israel led the people to disobey God. We all sin by disobeying God. Like Israel's kings, we may turn to other things above the Lord. Is there anything that has become an idol in your heart? As you prepare this week, remember the gift of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection that paid the price of our sin. Likewise, remind kids that Jesus died and rose again to pay for our sinful idolatry and bring us back to God. Pray for boys and girls to grasp the weight of our sinful choices to worship other things and the depth of Christ's love to provide salvation.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- "Where Does It Lead?" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- index cards
- dry erase board and marker

Session Starter (Option 2)

- "Golden Calf Puzzle" printable



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- painter's tape
- cardstock pieces, 10

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- painter's tape
- inflated balloon
- timer

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible story coloring page



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video
- Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- "Israel's Evil Kings" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- "Unit 13, Session 2" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- "Aaron Taylor and Ohio Map Photos" printable

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "There Is No Other (1 Kings 8:60)" song
- worship song of your choice (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “What should we do if someone asks us to do something wrong? Why?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Where Does It Lead?” activity page.

| **SAY** “Through today’s story, we will learn that **ISRAEL’S KINGS DID EVIL IN GOD’S SIGHT AND WORSHIPED IDOLS**. These evil kings led the people to disobey God’s command to worship Him alone. We all disobey God when we sin, but God sent Jesus to save us from sin.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: GOD OR IDOL?

Before this activity, use index cards to write out some characteristics of God such as *living, hears us when we pray, answers prayer, speaks to us, saves people from sin, etc.* Then, write some characteristics of idols such as: *not alive, does not hear, does not answer prayers, silent, etc.* On dry erase board, create two columns and label one God and the other Idol. Gather kids in one large group. Choose an index card from the stack and read it aloud. Invite a volunteer to tape the card under the correct heading on the dry erase board. Continue until all the cards have been placed under the correct headings. Then, review how God is the one true God.

| **SAY** “In today’s story, we will learn that **ISRAEL’S KINGS DID EVIL IN GOD’S SIGHT AND WORSHIPED IDOLS**. The evil kings led God’s people to disobey His command to worship Him alone. God is the only true God who loves us, hears us, answers us, and saves us from sin.”

OPTION 2: GOLDEN CALF PUZZLE



Print a copy of the “Golden Calf Puzzle” printable. Prior to the session, cut out each piece and hide the pieces around the room. Invite kids to work together to find the pieces. Then challenge kids to place all the pieces together to complete the puzzle.

| **SAY** “Today, we will learn how King Jeroboam crafted two golden calves and told the people to worship them. But only God is worthy of worship. He has always existed and will exist forever as the God of the universe. When people worship created things instead of the Creator God, that is called idolatry. Idolatry is a sin because **there is one true God who alone deserves worship.**”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Welcome, kids! My name is [your name], and I’m happy to see you. Today, we will be hearing a Bible story from the Old Testament book of 1 Kings. If you have a Bible with you, will you take it out? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.]

The Bible teaches us how God’s people were divided into two kingdoms because of Solomon’s unfaithfulness to God and Rehoboam’s foolish sin. Today, we will learn more about the kings of Israel. We’ll see that **ISRAEL’S KINGS DID EVIL IN GOD’S SIGHT AND WORSHIPED IDOLS**. [Display the Story Point Poster.] Let’s go to God in prayer: ‘Dear God, thank You for helping us understand that You alone are to be worshiped because You are the One true God. Help us have hearts that desire to follow You and turn away from idols. In Jesus’ name, amen.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “ Our big picture question is, **How many gods are there?** What is the answer? [Allow responses.] The answer is, **There is one true God who alone deserves worship.**

God made everything, and everything exists for Him. We were made to love God and worship Him. God is good, loving, and holy. Only He deserves our worship. Today, we will see how Israel’s evil kings worshiped false gods instead of the one true God. Our story can help us remember that only God is worthy of worship. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ King Solomon was the last king before the kingdom of God’s people was divided. Solomon began following the Lord faithfully, but he eventually allowed his heart to worship idols. After Solomon died, his son, Rehoboam, became king. Last week, we learned that Rehoboam’s foolish sin divided the kingdom. Today, we will learn about Israel’s first three kings and how **ISRAEL’S KINGS DID EVIL IN GOD’S SIGHT AND WORSHIPED IDOLS**. ”



LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to 1 Kings 14–15; 2 Chronicles 12–13. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Israel’s Evil Kings.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

ISRAEL’S EVIL KINGS

“ When God’s people split into two separate kingdoms, King Jeroboam became king over Israel in the north. Unlike King David, **Jeroboam did not keep God’s commands and follow Him with all his heart**, doing what is right. **Jeroboam acted wickedly and made false gods for the people to worship.**

God was angry with Jeroboam. He sent the prophet Ahijah to tell him: “You have behaved wickedly, and **I am going to bring disaster on you. There will be a new king over Israel.** The new king will completely destroy the house of Jeroboam.”

Then the kingdom of Israel went to war with the kingdom of Judah. The king of Judah said to the people of Israel, “You have left the LORD your God! **You worship golden calves**, and you banished the priests of the LORD and made new priests. **But we continue to worship God.** We make offerings to Him every morning and every evening. **We are obeying the commandments of the LORD, but you are not. Do not fight against us, because you will not win!**”

God was with the people of Judah because of a promise He had made to King David, and they defeated Jeroboam and the army of Israel. Then the Lord struck Jeroboam, and he died.

After Jeroboam died, his son Nadab became king of Israel. Unfortunately, Nadab was just as evil as his father. Another man named Baasha (BAY uh shuh) attacked and killed Nadab and all his family, just as God said through the prophet Ahijah. Baasha became the new king of Israel. Baasha followed the same pattern as the evil kings who came before him, leading the people away from God to worship idols.

Christ Connection: The first kings of Israel led the people to disobey God and to worship idols. Israel’s kings suffered the consequences of their sin. We all sin when we disobey God and worship other things. Jesus died and rose again to pay for our sin and bring us back to God. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Use movement: Move about the room as you tell the story, emphasizing how the kings of Israel did not follow God.

Create two groups: Form two groups and lead each group to sit on opposite sides of the room, mirroring Israel and Judah.



2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ The first king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel was Jeroboam. Even though God had shown kindness to Jeroboam and allowed him to become king, Jeroboam turned away from God. How did Jeroboam sin against God? [Allow responses.] Jeroboam made two golden calves for the people to worship. He lied and said the golden calves had rescued God’s people from Egypt. But God had rescued His people from Egypt. Jeroboam lied and led the people to worship idols instead of the one true God. Jeroboam was more concerned with remaining king than following God. Because of Jeroboam’s sin, God said he would not remain king.

Who were the other two kings of Israel we learned about? [Allow responses.] Nadab and Baasha became king after Jeroboam. But they followed in Jeroboam’s wicked ways. **ISRAEL’S KINGS DID EVIL IN GOD’S SIGHT AND WORSHIPED IDOLS.** The first kings of Israel led the people to disobey God. Israel’s kings suffered the consequences of their sin. We all sin when we disobey God and worship other things. Jesus died and rose again to pay for our sin and bring us back to God. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ The Bible tells us that we have all sinned and are separated from God because of our sin. Jesus died and rose again so we can be saved from our sin. When we trust in Jesus, God washes away our sin and makes us right with Him. Have you trusted in Jesus? ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 13, Session 2” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. If you have a friend who follows a different religion and thinks many gods exist, is it wrong to tell her about God?
2. Why is telling others about Jesus the best news they could hear?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display the “Aaron Taylor and Ohio Map Photos” printable. Point to Ohio on the map. Tell kids that Aaron Taylor is the church planter and teaching pastor of Living Hope Church in Columbus, Ohio. The church, started in 2018, has been sharing the good news about Jesus with people in the area. Aaron and his church began two local nonprofits and a new ministry center called the Finding Hope Center.

SAY “ The center is a place where families who need help can receive household items like mattresses, bedding, and furniture. The center often helps single moms, immigrants, refugees, and others at no cost. They want to be a place for families to receive needed materials while also providing hope as they tell them about Jesus. Over time, the Finding Hope Center has been able to partner with other organizations like Send Relief to expand their reach and meet the needs of



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

| families in their community. ”

Pray for Aaron and his wife, Elizabeth, and their two daughters as they serve at Living Hope Church. Pray for the ministries of Living Hope Church and the Finding Hope Center.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud 1 Kings 8:60 together.

| **SAY** “ Nothing compares to God. He is the only true God who rules over all. ”

Gather kids together and direct them to form a large circle. Say the first word of the key passage. Then move around the circle, clockwise, challenging the next kid to say the next word of the key passage. Continue around the circle until the entire key passage has been said.

Lead kids to sing “There Is No Other (1 Kings 8:60).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

| **SAY** “ Thank You, Lord, for providing Jesus as our Savior to bring us back to You. Help us obey Your commands and encourage others to do the same. In Jesus’ name, amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to 2 Chronicles 13. Remind kids that the Bible was written by many different people over thousands of years. Share how the Holy Spirit inspired each author to write God's words and that we can always trust the Bible.

Consider pointing out the location of Jerusalem (H5), where the temple was located, on the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud 2 Chronicles 13:8 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verse aloud.

SAY “ Jeroboam was afraid the people would return to Judah because God’s temple was in Jerusalem. Jeroboam didn’t care if God was worshiped; he cared whether or not he would remain king of Israel. His heart did not love God or understand that God is worthy of all worship.

When we love things more than God or put things above God, we create idols in our hearts. However, we can repent and turn away from idols and worship the one true God. Jesus changes people’s hearts to love God more than anything else. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ How did the kings of Israel lead the people away from God? ”

Remind kids that **ISRAEL’S KINGS DID EVIL IN GOD’S SIGHT AND WORSHIPED IDOLS**. The kings’ hearts were not concerned with worshiping God. Rather, they cared most about their power and status as king. We can be tempted to put ourselves first and make an idol out of our desires. Encourage kids to remember that God alone deserves all worship.

SAY “ What do we do when we recognize an idol in our lives? ”

Tell kids that being able to recognize sin is a grace of God because we see our need to repent of the sin. Share how we can pray to God, repent of our sin, and ask God to forgive us. Then we can take steps to remove that idol from our lives or ask God to help us turn away from idols when we are tempted to turn to them. We can also ask a friend or an adult to pray for us and remind us of God’s truth in the Bible.

SAY “ What might you be tempted to turn to above God? ”

Answers will vary. Discuss how we are all tempted to turn to other things for comfort, peace, help, or joy. Tell kids that only God can truly be everything we need. Discuss how everything in this world will fail us because it doesn’t last, can’t save, and was never meant to bring us everlasting joy. Remind kids to seek God first in everything because He is the only God who saves and gives eternal life through His Son, Jesus.





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: BOOKS OF THE BIBLE HOPSCOTCH

Before this activity, create a hopscotch board using painter's tape. Write the names of 10 Bible books, in order, on individual pieces of cardstock and tape the cardstock to the hopscotch board. Direct kids to line up and challenge them to take turns hopping down the board. Encourage kids to shout out the names of the books of the Bible they land on. For an added challenge, play using traditional hopscotch rules and a flat stone or bottle top. Allow enough time for each kid to complete the game at least once.

SAY “ The Bible is God’s Word to us. As we study the Bible, we grow in our knowledge of God. The more we know God and His Son, Jesus, the better we become at recognizing sin in our lives. Thankfully, God made the way for our sin to be forgiven: by faith in Jesus. ”

OPTION 2: KEEP IT AWAY



Place a line of painter's tape across the room, dividing the room in half. Form kids into two groups and assign each group one half of the room. Inflate a balloon and direct groups to hit the balloon back and forth to one another. Assign each group five points. Set a 30 seconds timer, but don't tell kids how much time they have. Whichever team has the balloon on their side when the timer goes off will lose a point. Play as time allows, adjusting the timer each time. The team with the most points left wins.

SAY “ In 1 John 5:21, we learn that we are to guard ourselves from idols. This means we want to keep away from idols. Just as you didn't want to be the team with the balloon, we want to be children of God who turn away from worshipping idols. **ISRAEL'S KINGS DID EVIL IN GOD'S SIGHT AND WORSHIPED IDOLS,** but through faith in Jesus, we can receive hearts that love and worship God. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.

UNIT 13 | SESSION 3

ELIJAH CONFRONTED AHAB

1 KINGS 18-19



KEY PASSAGE: 1 Kings 8:60

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How many gods are there? There is one true God who alone deserves worship.

CHRIST CONNECTION: God sent fire down from heaven to prove that He alone is Lord. God sent the Holy Spirit like flames of fire on Jesus' disciples to empower them to tell others that Jesus is God's Son who saves people from sin.

STORY POINT: God proved He is the one true God by answering Elijah's prayers.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

What is the boldest request you've ever made to the Lord? Have you ever experienced God answer your prayers in a uniquely powerful way? In this week's Bible story, we see how God answered Elijah's prayers.

King Ahab led the people to worship Baal. The prophet Elijah condemned Ahab for leading the people astray and instructed him to gather all the people and prophets of Baal for an epic showdown. The test was simple: both Elijah and the prophets of Baal would offer sacrifices to see if Baal would respond or if God would respond.

The prophets of Baal cried out, danced, and prayed all day with no response or hint of fire on their altar. When Elijah's turn came, he prepared the bull on the altar but took his trust in the Lord a step further by asking for water to be poured on top, saturating it completely. Elijah prayed, "LORD, let it be known that you are God in Israel, and I am your servant. Answer so that this people will know that you, the LORD, are God."

Immediately, fire fell from heaven and completely consumed the offering along with the wood, the stones, and even the water! After the showdown at the altar, Jezebel sought to kill Elijah, and Elijah fled. This time, Elijah's prayer was one of weariness and desperation. Again, God proved faithful to Elijah and answered his prayer. The Lord spoke to Elijah in a whisper and encouraged him, reminding him that the Lord would save those who remained faithful to Him.

The people of Israel knew that the Lord is the one true God when He answered Elijah's prayer and sent fire down from heaven. In the same way, people would know that Jesus is God's Son when the Holy Spirit came down like a dove when Jesus was baptized. Jesus is the Son of God and gave His life up for us.

Remember that God hears and answers the prayers of those who belong to Him. Thank the Lord for His faithfulness to listen and respond to our prayers. Remind boys and girls that through Jesus, we can boldly take our requests to God!



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10-15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25-30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- "Crack the Code" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- tissue boxes, 20



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video
- Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- "Elijah Confronted Ahab" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- bucket, wood, water (optional)

Questions from Kids

- "Unit 13, Session 3" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- "Surh Family Photo" printable

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "There Is No Other (1 Kings 8:60)" song
- worship song of your choice (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- plastic tablecloths, 1 per table
- bowls of red, orange, and yellow washable paint
- toothpicks, 3-4 per kid
- pipettes, 1 per kid
- cardstock, 1 per kid

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible story coloring page



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “ Do you think God hears us when we pray to Him? Why? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Crack the Code” activity page.

| **SAY** “ Today, we will see how **GOD PROVED HE IS THE ONE TRUE GOD BY ANSWERING ELIJAH’S PRAYERS.** ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: BUILD IT

Form kids into two groups and direct them to line up. Place 10 tissue boxes across the room from each team. Challenge teams to build a tall tower using all the boxes provided without the tower falling over. When you say “Go,” challenge the first kid from each team to place a box on the floor, race back to her group, and tag the second kid in line. Each kid may only stack one box per turn. The first team to successfully use all their team’s boxes to build a tower, without it falling over, wins.

| **SAY** “ Today, we will see how Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal to see if their god would answer them. Elijah and the prophets of Baal both built an altar to make a sacrifice. Let’s see how our Bible story reminds us that God is the only true God. ”

OPTION 2: NO ONE ANSWER



Challenge kids to respond to questions when you start the question with the word, “Now.” Tell kids if the question does not start with the word “now,” they should remain silent. If kids answer when they should not, they are out. Consider asking the following questions, or create your own:

- “Now, what is the name of our planet?” (Earth)
- “Now, what color do you get by mixing blue and yellow?” (green)
- “What does a dog say?” (kids don’t answer)
- “Now, who deserves all our worship?” (God)
- Where do sharks live? (kids don’t answer)

| **SAY** “ Great job, everyone! You either answered me or didn’t answer based on what you heard. In our Bible story, we will see how the false prophets cried out to their false god, but he didn’t answer. However, we’ll learn that **GOD PROVED HE IS THE ONE TRUE GOD BY ANSWERING ELIJAH’S PRAYERS.** ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Hi, kids! My name is [your name], and I am so happy you’re here. Today, we will hear about an epic showdown that occurred between a true prophet of God and the false prophets of an idol. If you have a Bible with you, will you take it out? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one and invite kids to turn to 1 Kings.]

We have been learning that God is the only true God, and He alone is to be worshiped. In today’s story, we will see how an evil king named Ahab led God’s people to worship false gods. But **GOD PROVED THAT HE IS THE ONE TRUE GOD BY ANSWERING ELIJAH’S PRAYERS.** [Display the Story Point Poster.] Let’s pray: ‘Dear God, You are greater than anyone and everything. You alone are the one true God. Help us have hearts that trust in You. In Jesus’ name, amen.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “ Who can tell me the big picture question? [Allow responses.] Our big picture question is, **How many gods are there?** Do you remember the answer? [Allow responses.] The answer is, **There is one true God who alone deserves worship.**

Today, we will see how a king of Israel named Ahab led the people to worship idols. Just like Jeroboam built the golden calves and told the people to worship them, King Ahab told the people to worship a false god named Baal. Over and over again, the Bible reminds us what is true: God alone is the one true God. In our story, we’ll see how God helped His people see that He alone is God through His power and by answering Elijah’s prayer. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ The kingdom of God’s people was divided in two. The Northern Kingdom was called Israel, and the Southern Kingdom was called Judah. [Point to these kingdoms on the Old Testament Kingdoms Map.] Last week, we learned that the kings of Israel did evil in God’s sight and led God’s people to worship idols. Throughout all this, God never left His people. In fact, God sent prophets to remind His people what was true and to tell them to turn away from sin. Today, we will see how God answered the prophet Elijah’s prayers and proved that He alone is the one true God. ”



LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to 1 Kings 18–19. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Elijah Confronted Ahab.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

ELIJAH CONFRONTED AHAB

“After King Baasha, Israel had many wicked kings. One of those evil kings was Ahab. He killed the prophets of God and led the people to worship a false god named Baal. The word of the Lord came to the prophet Elijah and said, “Go and present yourself to Ahab.”

The prophet Elijah came to Ahab and said, “You have ruined Israel because you have abandoned the LORD’s commands and followed Baal instead. Gather the entire nation, and bring the prophets of Baal, too.”

Once everyone had gathered, Elijah said, “How long will you go between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him. But if Baal is God, follow him. Bring two bulls—one for me, and one for the prophets of Baal. We will each prepare them on an altar as a burnt sacrifice. Prophets of Baal, you will call on your god, and I will call on the name of the LORD. The God that answers with fire is the one true God.”

The prophets of Baal cried out to their false god from morning until noon, **but nothing happened.** Elijah made fun of them, saying, “Maybe your god is taking a walk, or maybe he is sleeping!” They danced and shouted all day, but there was no sound; no one answered; no one paid attention.

Then it was Elijah’s turn. He repaired the altar of the Lord that had been torn down. **He then prepared the bull on the altar and asked that water be poured on top.** So much water was poured that it gathered in a trench around the altar. **Elijah prayed to God: “LORD, today, let it be known that you are God in Israel, and I am your servant. Answer so that this people will know that you, the LORD, are God and you have turned their hearts back.”**

Then the Lord’s fire fell. It completely consumed the burnt offering, the wood and stones of the altar, and even the water gathered in the trench. **The people were amazed, falling facedown and saying, “The LORD, he is God!”**

Ahab told his wicked wife, Jezebel, everything that had happened. Jezebel sent word to Elijah saying she was going to kill him. Elijah ran for his life. When he was far enough away, he prayed and said, “LORD, I have had enough. I’m no better than the prophets before me.”

The next day, the Lord spoke to Elijah. He told Elijah to go out to a mountain. A great wind passed by. Then an earthquake. Then fire. But the Lord was not in any

STORYTELLING TIPS

Use props: Place wood in a bucket and pour water over it.

Use dramatic effect: Vary your volume and tone of voice to create dramatic effect while telling the story.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

of these. Then **there was a soft whisper. In that whisper, God said, “What are you doing here, Elijah? Go and anoint a new king over Israel. I will preserve for myself people who still worship me and who have not bowed down to Baal. Go and anoint a new king and follow me.”** **Elijah obeyed God.**

Christ Connection: God sent fire down from heaven to prove that He alone is Lord. God sent the Holy Spirit like flames of fire on Jesus’ disciples to empower them to tell others that Jesus is God’s Son who saves people from sin. ”

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Israel had wicked kings who turned the people away from the Lord. Today, we learned that Ahab led the people to worship a false god named Baal. But God loved His people and wanted them to remember that He is the one true God. Who did God send to His people to speak His words? **[Allow responses.]** God sent the prophet Elijah to the people of Israel. Elijah told the people they had abandoned the Lord. Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal to see if their god would answer them.

What happened when the false prophets called out to Baal? **[Allow responses.]** No one answered! There was complete silence. Baal was no god. He was just something the people created to worship. Idols are not alive. They cannot hear or speak. Idols cannot save people from their sin.

Then Elijah repaired the altar of the Lord. After, Elijah placed a bull on the altar, he covered the altar with water, until everything was soaked. Then Elijah prayed to God, and the Lord’s fire fell and burned up everything on the altar. What did the people say in response? **[Allow responses.]** The people said that the Lord is God. **GOD PROVED HE IS THE ONE TRUE GOD BY ANSWERING ELIJAH’S PRAYERS.** ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ God proved He is the one true God. When Jesus was on earth, He performed miracles and spoke truth that proved He is God. After Jesus went back to heaven, God sent the Holy Spirit like flames of fire on Jesus’ disciples to empower them to tell others that Jesus is God’s Son who saves people from sin. When we place our faith in Jesus, we are declaring that He is God and only He can save us from sin. ”

(Tip: Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 13, Session 3” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Why doesn’t God always answer our prayers?
2. Why can we still trust God even when He doesn’t answer our prayers how we hope?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Remind kids that Columbus, Ohio, is home to many people who do not know Jesus. Tell kids that Columbus is also home to nearly 70,000 Somali immigrants and refugees. Display the



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

“Surh Family Photo” printable as you tell kids about their work as church planters.

SAY “ In 2019, Isaac and Hannah Surh, with the support of two other couples, started a new church in the Columbus area. They met weekly to pray and determine God’s will for the new church. They named the church Chroma because it means ‘the intensity of color as it is illuminated by a light source.’ They thought the name showed how important it is for people to show the light of Jesus and share the good news about Him with others. Chroma Church desires that people from all different cultures and backgrounds will trust in Jesus to save them from sin. ”

Pray for Isaac and Hannah and Chroma Church as they help people in Columbus learn about the one true God and His Son, Jesus.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud 1 Kings 8:60 together.

SAY “ Let’s praise the one true God as we continue to learn our key passage. ”

Direct kids to listen closely as you read parts of the key passage. Read the first few words of the key passage aloud, leaving out one word. Challenge kids to shout out the missing word. Continue reading the verse and leaving out words until you have read the entire verse.

Lead kids to sing “There Is No Other (1 Kings 8:60).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Thank You, Lord, for being the one true God who hears us when we call and responds to our prayers. Help us live in ways that bring You honor and glory. In Jesus’ name, amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to 1 Kings 19. Explain that the Bible is divided into sections within the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament is divided into books of the Law, History, Poetry, Minor Prophets, and Major Prophets. Tell kids that 1 Kings is in the History division.

Consider pointing out the location of Mount Carmel (D4) on the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud 1 Kings 19:18 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verse aloud.

SAY “ After God answered Elijah’s prayers at Mount Carmel, proving He is the one true God, Jezebel wanted to kill Elijah. So, Elijah ran away. But God spoke with Elijah, reminding Elijah that He would be faithful to the people who still followed Him. The Lord encouraged Elijah to continue acting as His prophet. God protected Elijah from Jezebel and Ahab. God is the one true God who is greater than the earthly kings or queens. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ How can we know God will hear us when we pray? ”

Tell kids that the Bible teaches us that God hears us when we pray. He is alive and active, so not only does He hear us when we pray, but He also responds and acts. God always answers our prayers, but not always in the way we think or even the way we want. He knows what is best, so He will answer prayers in a way that brings Him glory and is for our good.

SAY “ Elijah was bold and reminded the people that there is only one true God. How can we tell others about the one true God? ”

Answers will vary. Remind kids that God wants believers to tell others about Him and His Son, Jesus. Discuss how we can share stories from the Bible with others. We can tell people how God has answered our prayers. We can share the gospel. And we can help others understand that God alone is worthy of worship.

SAY “ Elijah stood up for what was right, and Jezebel wanted to hurt him. How did God encourage Elijah? ”

Discuss how God came near to Elijah and reminded Elijah of His faithfulness. God promised to save those who did not bow down to Baal. When we face rejection from others for following Jesus, we can trust that God will be faithful to us. God will be with us, and through His Spirit and the Bible, we can find encouragement. God also provides us with other believers who can pray for us and encourage us to keep following God no matter what.





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: FIERY PAINTINGS

Cover tables with plastic tablecloths. Place pencils, crayons, and bowls of red, orange, and yellow washable paint at each table. Distribute a sheet of cardstock to each kid. Direct kids to draw the prophet Elijah on one side of the paper. Next to Elijah, lead kids to glue several toothpicks to their papers to create an “altar.” Lastly, direct kids to use the pipettes to suck up a small amount of washable paint. Assist kids in gently squirting the paint on the altar to create the “fire that fell from heaven.” Allow paintings to dry.

SAY “ Today, we learned how **GOD PROVED HE IS THE ONE TRUE GOD BY ANSWERING ELIJAH’S PRAYERS.** When Elijah prayed, God responded by sending fire from heaven. Then the people responded by saying God is the one true God. God alone is worthy of our worship and praise. ”

OPTION 2: PICTURE IT



Form kids into two teams. Decide which team will go first and invite a kid from that team to draw an image from the Bible story such as Elijah, fire, altar, idol, Jezebel, Mount Carmel, etc. As the kid draws the item, kids on his team will guess what is being drawn. Allow 30 seconds for kids to draw. Award a point if the team guesses correctly. Repeat, allowing the other team a turn to draw. Play as time allows and announce the team with the most points as the winner.


SAY “ Our Bible story is a great reminder that no matter what, God is God. He hears our prayers, saves His people, is all-powerful, is faithful to His people, and encourages His people to continue following Him. **There is one true God who alone deserves worship.** ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.



UNIT 13 | SESSION 4

THE REIGN OF AHAB

1 KINGS 20-22; 2 KINGS 1

KEY PASSAGE: 1 Kings 8:60

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How many gods are there? There is one true God who alone deserves worship.

CHRIST CONNECTION: Ahab was a disobedient, greedy, and stubborn king who refused to lead Israel in the ways of the Lord. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, always obeyed God and laid down His life for us. Anyone who follows Him will dwell with God forever.

STORY POINT: Ahab was an evil king, and God brought judgment on him.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

Have you ever heard the expression “you reap what you sow”? Perhaps you feel the burn of those words as you think of times you made a hasty decision or took matters into your own hands, only to later watch things fall apart. In today’s text, Ahab made a series of poor choices which ultimately led to his demise.

First, the Lord gave King Ahab victory over the Arameans—not once, but twice—to remind Ahab that He is the Lord. When Israel won the second battle, they captured Ben-hadad, but Ahab disobeyed God and agreed to a treaty, releasing Ben-hadad.

Second, a man named Naboth owned a vineyard that caught Ahab’s interest. In his greed, Ahab and his wife Jezebel developed a wicked scheme to take Naboth’s vineyard. Their deception turned murderous when hired men lied about Naboth, saying he had cursed God and the king. Naboth was falsely convicted and sentenced to death.

A few years later, Ahab wanted to go to war against the Arameans once again. Ahab’s false prophets supported his decision, but Micaiah, a prophet of the true God, advised against it, since going to war against Aram would fail. Once again, Ahab acted stubbornly and went to war anyway. During the battle, he was struck by an arrow and died.

While God showed Ahab patience and gave him many warnings, Ahab ultimately refused to repent. Like Ahab, we can be greedy and stubborn. In our sin, we rebel against God and act according to our flesh. The Bible tells us that the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus (Romans 6:23). Jesus lived a perfect life and died in the place of sinners so that we might be forgiven and be made right with God.

Encourage boys and girls to see that because Christ laid down His life for us, we can escape the punishment we deserve because of our sin. Teach kids that when we believe in Jesus and repent of sin, Christ removes our unrighteousness and changes our hearts so that we desire to follow God and His ways.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- "Before and After" activity page

Session Starter (Option 2)

- vacuum-sealed jar
- nail hammered in a piece of wood
- magnets, 2



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- dice

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible story coloring page



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video
- Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- "The Reign of Ahab" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- "Unit 13, Session 4" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- "Surh Family Photo" printable

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "There Is No Other (1 Kings 8:60)" song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- ball



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “What does it mean to be stubborn or greedy? Do you think these would be good traits for a king to have? Why not?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Before and After” activity page.

SAY “Today, we will learn more about King Ahab. **AHAB WAS AN EVIL KING, AND GOD BROUGHT JUDGMENT ON HIM.**”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: STUBBORN

Form kids in a circle and pass around a vacuum-sealed jar. Invite kids to try to open the jar. Be sure the jar is tight enough that it cannot easily be opened. Then pass around a nail hammered almost completely into a piece of wood. Challenge kids to try to remove the nail. Again, the nail should not be able to be removed. Finally, pass around two magnets and challenge kids to get the repelling sides to join together.

SAY “No matter how hard we tried, we couldn’t get these items to do what we wanted them to do. Using only our strength or bare hands, the jar wouldn’t open, the nail wouldn’t become unstuck, and the repelling magnets couldn’t be joined together. This reminds me of what it means to be stubborn. A stubborn person will do what he or she wants, even when someone tries to give good advice. Today, we will see how King Ahab was stubborn and set in his evil ways. He refused to listen to God and turn away from sin.”

OPTION 2: LISTEN CLOSELY



Form kids into a large circle. Tell kids that they will share their favorite food. Explain that kids will also need to remember the favorite food of everyone who was before them. For example, a kid may say, “My favorite food is pizza.” Then the next kid would say, “[Kid’s name] favorite food is pizza. My favorite food is watermelon.” Once everyone has spoken, challenge the kid who went first to say everyone’s favorite food. Play as time allows, switching up the topics each round.

SAY “You all did a great job listening to each other describe your favorite foods. In our Bible story, we will learn how King Ahab refused to listen to the Lord and obey Him. In fact, when God’s prophets would speak God’s words to Ahab, he would ignore them and go his own way. We’ll see that **AHAB WAS AN EVIL KING, AND GOD BROUGHT JUDGMENT ON HIM.**”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Hi, kids! My name is [your name], and I’m glad you’re here. As we gather together, we hear true stories from the Bible so we can know God and His Son, Jesus. If you have a Bible with you, will you take it out? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.]

Last week, we saw how King Ahab and his wife Jezebel led the people to worship false gods. In today’s story, we’ll learn how King Ahab continued to disobey God and act wickedly. **AHAB WAS AN EVIL KING, AND GOD BROUGHT JUDGMENT ON HIM.** [Display the Story Point Poster.] Let’s pray: ‘Dear God, You are worthy of our obedience. We can trust You because You always do what is right and good. Help us see that Jesus is the perfect King. In Jesus’ name, amen.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “ Let’s say our big picture question together: **How many gods are there?** What is the answer? [Allow responses.] The answer is, **There is one true God who alone deserves worship.** Let’s say the answer again: **There is one true God who alone deserves worship.**

We’ve learned how the kings of Israel led the people to worship idols like the nations around them. But God called His people to be different than the surrounding nations. God told His people to worship Him because He is the one true God. God wanted the people of Israel to show the other nations what He is like and live in ways that would bring Him glory. In our story, we will learn how Ahab and Israel’s enemies faced God’s judgment because they did not worship Him as the one true God. But even when Israel was disobedient, God remained faithful to them and worked in ways to show that He alone is God. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ We’ve seen how Israel had wicked kings—Jeroboam, Nadab, and Baasha—who led the people to worship idols. Later, King Ahab became king over the kingdom of Israel. Ahab was even more wicked, leading the people to turn away from God and follow Baal, a false god. But God was faithful to His people, wanting them to see that He alone is God. So, the Lord sent the prophet Elijah to confront Ahab and the prophets of Baal. Through Elijah’s prayer, God sent fire from heaven, proving He is the one true God. Today, we will see how the wicked ways of Ahab were coming to an end as God would bring judgment on him. ”



LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to 1 Kings 20:1-34; 21:1-16; 22:1-40; 2 Kings 1:1. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “The Reign of Ahab.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

THE REIGN OF AHAB

“ King Ahab was at war with King Ben-hadad of Aram, a nation to the northeast of Israel. **A prophet of the Lord came to Ahab and said, “This is what the LORD says, ‘Do you see Ben-hadad’s huge army? Watch this: I am handing it over to you today so that you may know I am the LORD.’” Ahab led the men to battle. Israel won, but Ben-hadad escaped.**

Ben-hadad’s servants told him that Israel had only won because they had fought in the hills. They believed that if they went to war with Israel in the plains, that they would be able to defeat them. **The prophet of God came to Ahab again and said, “Because the Arameans have said that the LORD can’t win unless the battle is in the mountains, I will hand their huge army over to you. You will win, and you will know that I am the LORD.”** The Israelites camped in front of them like two little flocks of goats, while the Arameans filled the landscape. **Israel won the battle, and they captured Ben-hadad.**

Ben-hadad offered to make a deal in exchange for his life. Ahab knew he was supposed to defeat the Arameans, but he disobeyed. **He agreed to receive the land the Arameans took from Israel in exchange for Ben-hadad’s release.**

Sometime later, Ahab decided he wanted a vineyard that belonged to a man named Naboth. Naboth refused to sell this land, and Ahab was mad, because he was greedy and wanted that land. **Ahab’s wife, Jezebel, said to him, “Now, exercise your royal power over Israel. For I will give you the vineyard of Naboth.” Then Jezebel hired men to lie about Naboth. They said that Naboth had cursed God and the king, a crime punishable by death. Naboth was killed, and Ahab took his vineyard.**

A few years later, Ahab wanted to go to war against the Arameans again because they still had some of Israel’s land. He asked his false prophets, and they all agreed it was a good idea. But **the prophet of the true God, Micaiah, told Ahab the truth. Going to war against Aram would fail, and the king would die. Micaiah said, “I saw all of Israel alone scattered on the hills like sheep without a shepherd. And the LORD said, ‘They have no one to lead them.’”** King Ahab was stubborn and **decided to go to war anyway. He was struck by an arrow during the battle, and he died,** just as the prophet of the Lord said.

Christ Connection: Ahab was a disobedient, greedy, and stubborn king who refused to lead Israel in the ways of the Lord. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, always obeyed God

STORYTELLING TIPS

Use props: Display a plastic sword when you share how Israel went to battle. Hold up grapes when you share about Naboth’s vineyard.

Remind kids: Remind kids that, unlike King Ahab, Jesus is the Good Shepherd. Share how Jesus takes care of His followers and willingly laid down His life to save people from sin.



| and laid down His life for us. Anyone who follows Him will dwell with God forever. ” |

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Even though Ahab was a bad king, God gave him victory in battle against some of his enemies. God allowed King Ahab and Israel to conquer Ben-hadad’s army so that people would know that God is the one true God. Yet, even after this victory, Ahab did not follow God or listen to Him. Instead, we learned how Ahab was stubborn, greedy, and evil. How did we see that Ahab was stubborn? [Allow responses.] Ahab refused to follow God’s commands. He released Ben-hadad when he was not supposed to. We also saw how Ahab refused to listen to the prophet Micaiah, who told him not to go to war with Aram. But again, Ahab did not listen.

How did we see that Ahab was greedy? [Allow responses.] Even though Ahab was king and had so much, he still wanted more. He and his wife, Jezebel, made up lies about Naboth so they could take his vineyard. God told Ahab that he had done what was evil in His sight and that Ahab would be punished for his evil deeds. But Ahab did not take God’s warning seriously.

AHAB WAS AN EVIL KING, AND GOD BROUGHT JUDGMENT ON HIM. Eventually, King Ahab died in the battle against Aram, just as God said. Ahab refused to lead Israel in the ways of the Lord. But Jesus is the perfect King. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, always obeyed God and laid down His life for us. Anyone who follows Him will dwell with God forever. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ We can be stubborn, greedy, and disobedient because we are all sinners. God sent Jesus to be our good Shepherd and follow Him. When we trust in Jesus, we turn away from our sinful ways. Jesus saves those who trust in Him from the punishment of sin. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 13, Session 4” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Why is death a consequence for sin, even though we were not the ones who sinned in the first place?
2. Why did Jesus take the punishment we deserve for our sin?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display the “Surh Family Photo.” Remind kids that the Surh family started a church in Columbus, Ohio, called Chroma Church. Tell kids that the church desires to reach the nations by ministering to the many different people groups living in the Columbus area. They want their church to be diverse, just like heaven will be with people from all nations.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

SAY “ Chroma Church is under the leadership of Pastor Isaac Surh. The church is passionate about diversity and justice. They want to help people who are not treated fairly or who are in need. Chroma Church hopes to share the gospel with many people in Columbus, including the Somali people. More than 500 independent Somali businesses are part of the diverse local culture in the Columbus area, including retail shops, restaurants, and specialized trades. ”

Pray that God will use Chroma Church to be a light in the darkness and be able to offer help to people who are experiencing injustice, poverty, and those being treated badly in other ways. Pray for Chroma to be a church for people of many different ethnicities.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud 1 Kings 8:60 together.

SAY “ King Ahab refused to recognize God as the one true God. Eventually, he faced judgment for his sin. Yet, God sent Jesus—the perfect image of the one true God—to save us from sin and sin’s judgment. When we trust in Jesus, we can rightly worship God as the one true God. ”

Form kids in a circle and give a ball to one kid in the circle. Challenge the kid with the ball to say the first word of the key passage, then toss the ball to another kid in the circle. Continue until kids have said the entire key passage, including the reference. Repeat as time allows.

Lead kids to sing “There Is No Other (1 Kings 8:60).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Thank You, Lord, for sending Jesus to be the perfect sacrifice for our sins. Thank You that we can be saved and forgiven of sin through faith in Jesus. In Jesus’ name, amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to 1 Kings 22. Review the divisions of the Old Testament books: Law, History, Poetry, Minor Prophets, and Major Prophets. Remind kids that 1 Kings is in the History division.

Consider pointing out the location of Aram (B9) on the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud 1 Kings 22:17 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verse aloud.

SAY “ The prophet Micaiah said that Israel had no one to lead them. Ahab was wicked and did not listen to the Lord. Ahab was stubborn and set against God’s ways. But God’s ways are always what is best. God loves His people and always does what is right.

When Jesus came to earth, He also said people were like sheep without a shepherd (Matthew 9:36). Jesus saw how people were lost in their sin. Jesus came to rescue people and show them that He is the Good Shepherd who had come to lay down His life to save them from sin. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ Why should we obey God and His Word? ”

Remind kids that God’s words are always true and right. Tell kids that the Bible is God’s Word to us and leads us away from sin and toward God’s Son, Jesus. Explain how we need the Word of God to help us recognize our sin and repent of it. Share how God’s words will always happen just as He says because God never lies. Through faith in Jesus, we can obey God and live in ways that please Him.

SAY “ Have you ever acted stubborn or greedy? When? ”

Answers will vary. Discuss how we can all act stubborn or greedy because we all sin. Tell kids that when we disobey our parents, do what is wrong, or ignore God’s words, we act stubbornly. When we take more than we need or have been given, or when we have a selfish desire for what others have, we show greed. Tell kids that those who trust in Jesus recognize how much God loves them and has given them. Believers desire to live in ways that show obedience to God and generosity to others.

SAY “ Ahab faced God’s judgment because of his sin. How can we be saved from God’s judgment for our sin? ”

Remind kids that all sin deserves God’s judgment because He is holy. Tell kids that only those who trust in Jesus will be saved from God’s judgment. Share how we can confess our sin, repent of our sin, and follow Jesus. Emphasize how the Holy Spirit works in the hearts of believers to convict them of sin and help them obey God.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: BIBLE ROLL

Before this activity, make a list of tasks for kids to complete when each number of the dice is rolled. For example, 1: Name a person in the Bible. 2: Name a book found in the Old Testament. 3: Name a book found in the New Testament. 4: Name a division of the Old Testament. 5: Find [book's name] in the Bible. 6: Name or describe a story found in the Bible. Invite kids to each take a turn rolling the dice and answering the corresponding question. If a kid does not know the answer, help her answer and invite her to roll again. Continue until each kid has had at least one turn. For larger groups, consider forming kids into multiple smaller groups.

SAY “ God’s prophets spoke God’s words to King Ahab, but he didn’t always listen. God has spoken to us through His Son, Jesus, and the Bible. Jesus called people to repent and turn to God. When we read our Bible, we learn that when we repent and trust in Jesus, we will be saved from the punishment for sin. God is good to give us His Word and show us the way to be saved. ”

OPTION 2: WHO IS IT?



Play a review game by reading aloud descriptions or actions of the different people from the Bible story. Form kids into two teams and challenge each team to work together to determine who you are referring to. If the team gets it right, award a point. The team with the most points wins. Consider starting with the examples below. Then create more of your own.

- He refused to sell his vineyard.
- She was the wife of Ahab.
- He told Ahab not to go to war with Aram.
- He made a deal with Ahab in exchange for his release.
- He took Naboth’s vineyard.
- She hired men to lie about Naboth.

SAY “ Today, we learned that **AHAB WAS AN EVIL KING, AND GOD BROUGHT JUDGMENT ON HIM.** We all deserve to die for our sin, just as Ahab did, but God sent Jesus to pay for our sins. When we trust in Jesus, we will be saved from the punishment we deserve. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.

ELISHA THE PROPHET

2 KINGS 2; 4-5



KEY PASSAGE: Deuteronomy 13:4

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why do Christians continue to sin? Christians continue to sin because we still have a sin nature, but when Jesus returns, He will make us sinless like Him.

CHRIST CONNECTION: Elisha spoke the truth of God and performed miracles. Jesus taught with the authority of God and performed miracles as well. Elisha was a prophet, but Jesus is the Son of God, our Savior.

STORY POINT: God spoke through the prophet Elisha and gave him power to perform miracles.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

As Elijah's time on earth was coming to an end, God appointed Elisha as a new prophet to His people. Elisha asked Elijah if he could inherit a double portion of his spirit. To this Elijah replied, "If you see me being taken from you, you will have it." Elisha looked on as Elijah was taken up to heaven, and by God's grace, Elisha received his request.

How did Elisha's ministry point others to the one true God? Through miracles, God displayed His power through Elisha, confirming that he was a prophet. God also revealed his wisdom and truth by speaking through Elisha.

Through the many miracles Elisha performed, we not only see the power of God over His creation, but also His care and provision for people. From making bad water drinkable to healing Naaman—a commander from an enemy army—Elisha's miracles pointed people to recognize the one true God. Only the Lord could raise a dead boy to life and miraculously meet the needs of the widow who was in debt. God's spirit was on Elisha, empowering him to be a light to the people of Israel.

Elijah and Elisha were both special prophets, performing miracles and being messengers of God's truth. But there is One greater than Elisha and Elijah. Jesus not only performed miracles and taught with authority; He is also the true Light of the world who saves people from sin. Help boys and girls understand that when we follow Jesus, we receive the Holy Spirit who empowers us to be more like Jesus and shine like lights in the world, proclaiming to all that He is the one true God.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- "Cross It Out" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- food color
- cup of water, 1 per group
- baby oil in a cup, 1 per group
- pipette, 1 per group



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video
- Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- "Elisha the Prophet" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- "Unit 14, Session 1" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- "Missions in Iran" missions video

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "Faithful to Him (Deuteronomy 13:4)" song
- worship song of your choice (optional)



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- loaf of bread
- pitcher of water
- plastic cups, 1 per kid

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible story coloring page



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “ Who is someone you would like to be like? Why? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Cross It Out” activity page.

| **SAY** “ Today, we will learn about another prophet from the Old Testament named Elisha. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: OIL AND WATER

Form kids into groups of three or four. Provide each group with the supplies. Invite a kid from each group to add a few drops of the food color to their cup of water. Consider allowing each group to have a different food color so groups can add different colors to the baby oil. Invite kids to use the pipette to take turns gently adding a drop at a time of the colorful water into the cup of baby oil. Observe as the water droplets fall through the oil to the bottom of the cup. Allow kids to use the colorful water of other groups to add more droplets to the oil. Dispose of the liquids in a sink. Throw everything else in the trash.

| **SAY** “ Oil and water may not seem that special, but long ago they were valuable supplies. Today, we will see how the prophet Elisha performed miracles to make water usable and how he produced more oil. **GOD SPOKE THROUGH THE PROPHET ELISHA AND GAVE HIM POWER TO PERFORM MIRACLES.** ”

OPTION 2: DO WHAT I SAY



Lead the kids to line up shoulder to shoulder. Tell kids that you are going to whisper an action to the kid at the front of the line, and that kid will act out what you say. Then that kid will tell the next kid in line the same movement and add a new movement to be done as well. For example, if you said, “Pat your belly.” The kid would pat his belly. Then he would tell the kids next to him, “Pat your belly and then touch your toes.” The next kid would perform the actions and add another to be passed down the line. Continue down the line of kids, adding a new movement with each kid.

| **SAY** “ Each motion was passed down the line until the last kid had to perform the greatest number of actions. Today, we will see how the prophet Elisha wanted to receive twice as much of Elijah’s spirit. Just as you closely followed the actions of who came before you, Elisha also followed closely in the footsteps of Elijah and wanted to be a prophet like him. Let’s hear our story to learn more about the prophet Elisha. ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Hi, kids! My name is [your name], and I’m glad you’re here to learn more about our great God. If you have a Bible with you, will you hold it up? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Today, we will be in the book of 2 Kings. [Assist kids in finding 2 Kings.]

We’ve learned about some of the prophets in the Old Testament. A prophet was someone who spoke God’s words to the people. Last week, we learned how the prophet Micaiah spoke to King Ahab and warned him what would happen if he fought against Aram. We’ve also learned how the prophet Elijah confronted the prophets of Baal. Today, we’ll learn that Elijah’s time on earth was coming to an end, and God called a new prophet named Elisha. **GOD SPOKE THROUGH THE PROPHET ELISHA AND GAVE HIM POWER TO PERFORM MIRACLES.** [Display the Story Point Poster.] Let’s pray and ask God to help us receive His truth: ‘Dear God, thank You for Your faithfulness to Your people. Please help us have hearts that trust in You and Your Son, Jesus. In Jesus’ name, amen.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “ We have a new big picture question to learn: **Why do Christians continue to sin?** What do you think the answer is? [Allow responses.] The answer we’ll learn is, **Christians continue to sin because we still have a sin nature, but when Jesus returns, He will make us sinless like Him.** Let’s say this together and break the answer into four parts: **Christians continue to sin** [Invite kids to repeat] **because we still have a sin nature** [Invite kids to repeat], **but when Jesus returns** [Invite kids to repeat], **He will make us sinless like Him** [Invite kids to repeat]. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ After the kingdom was divided, evil kings ruled in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. We’ve learned how Jeroboam, Nadab, Baasha, and Ahab led the people to worship idols. But God was faithful to His people, and sent them prophets to tell them to turn away from their sin. One of those prophets was Elijah. Through Elijah’s prayer, God showed the people that He is the one true God by sending down fire from heaven. Today, we will learn about another prophet, Elisha, whom God called to speak His words and perform miracles. ”



LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to 2 Kings 2:1-22; 4:1-37; 5:1-15. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Elisha the Prophet.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

ELISHA THE PROPHET

“Elijah was a powerful prophet to Israel, but **God had a plan for another man to be a prophet after Elijah. That man’s name was Elisha** (ih LIGH shuh). Elijah went on a journey, and Elisha refused to leave his side. When they came to the Jordan River, Elijah rolled up his robe and struck the water. The river parted, and they crossed on dry ground.

Elisha asked Elijah if he could receive twice as much of Elijah’s spirit. Elijah replied, “if you see me taken away from you, then you will have it.” As they continued walking, **a chariot of fire with horses of fire separated the two men, and Elijah was taken up into heaven in the whirlwind.**

Elisha picked up the robe Elijah left behind and walked back to the Jordan River. He struck the water, and it parted. Elisha crossed over. Everyone who saw it said that the spirit of Elijah had rested on Elisha. From that moment on, Elisha performed many miracles.

In the city of Jericho, the water was not good to drink or water plants. Elisha asked for a bowl of salt and threw some into the spring. The water was healed!

Another day, a widow cried out to Elisha, saying “My husband has died, and now I don’t have enough money to pay the people I owe. I will lose everything if I can’t pay them.” Elisha told her to borrow lots of empty containers from all her neighbors and pour into them a small jar of oil she had. The oil kept pouring out until all the containers were filled. She could sell the oil and pay back her debts.

When Elisha would pass through the town of Shunem, a woman who lived there would invite him to eat some food and rest. One day, as he was heading toward her town, the woman rushed out to him to tell him that her only son had died. When Elisha arrived at the house, he prayed and laid down on top of the boy’s body. Then Elisha got up and bent over the boy. The boy sneezed seven times and opened his eyes!

On another occasion, a commander of the Aramean army, Naaman, had a skin disease. He heard from a servant girl that there was a prophet in Samaria who could heal him. He sent word to Elisha, who replied with these instructions: “Go wash seven times in the Jordan River and your skin will be clean.” Naaman followed these instructions, and his skin was clear of the disease. Naaman said, “I know there’s no God in the whole world except in Israel.”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Active listening: Invite kids to raise their hands in praise when they hear how Elisha performed a miracle.

Use movement: Act out the story using movement.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Elisha performed all these miracles and more as the prophet of God!

Christ Connection: Elisha spoke the truth of God and performed miracles. Jesus taught with the authority of God and performed miracles as well. Elisha was a prophet, but Jesus is the Son of God, our Savior. ”

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Elisha was a faithful prophet to God. He spoke God’s words and reminded the people that God is one true God. But Elijah’s time on earth was coming to an end. So, God prepared Elisha to follow after Elijah as a prophet. What did Elisha ask Elijah for? **[Allow responses.]** Elisha wanted twice as much of Elijah’s spirit. Elisha recognized God’s power in Elijah, and Elisha wanted to be a great prophet like Elijah. If Elisha saw Elijah taken away, then Elisha would receive his request.

Did Elisha see Elijah taken away? **[Allow responses.]** Yes, Elisha saw Elijah being taken up to be with God. Then Elisha picked up Elijah’s robe, struck the water of the Jordan River, and the water parted. Elijah’s spirit was now with Elisha.

Elisha performed many miracles as God’s prophet. What were some of the miracles he did? **[Allow responses.]** Elisha made bad water good, helped a woman multiply her oil supply, raised a dead boy to life, and healed Naaman’s skin disease. **GOD SPOKE THROUGH THE PROPHET ELISHA AND GAVE HIM POWER TO PERFORM MIRACLES.** Through Elisha, God showed that He cares for people of every nation and wants them to know He is the one true God.

Elisha reminds us of Jesus. Elisha spoke the truth of God and performed miracles. Jesus taught with the authority of God and performed miracles as well. Elisha was a prophet, but Jesus is the Son of God, our Savior. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ Elisha performed many miracles through God’s power. But Elisha was just a man. He couldn’t save people from sin. The greatest miracle ever is the miracle of salvation through faith in Jesus. Jesus died on the cross and was raised to life three days later, paying the penalty for our sin and giving us eternal life when we trust in Him. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 14, Session 1” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Are there still miracles occurring today? If so, what do they look like?
2. The Bible says that the same power used to raise Jesus from the dead lives in Christians. How can God’s power help you become more like Jesus?



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

SAY “ Dr. George and Joan [Jo-ann] Braswell served as missionaries in Iran from 1968 to 1974. Iran is a country in the Middle East. The main religion in Iran is Islam. George and Joan wanted the people of Iran to know the one true God and His Son, Jesus. Through his position as a professor, Dr. Braswell was able to tell his students about Jesus. ”

Play the missions video. Mention that Dr. Braswell said he first had an interest in teaching people from a different country and religion about Jesus while he was in college. Joan said she enjoyed meeting and getting to know people of different cultures while she spent a summer in Europe. Later, George and Joan strongly felt God calling them to be missionaries when they took a group of high school students to a conference about missions. Dr. Braswell had many opportunities to tell the students he taught about the one true God who sent His Son, Jesus, to save people from their sins. Pray more missionaries will go to Iran to tell others about Jesus.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Deuteronomy 13:4 together.

SAY “ We don’t always keep the commands of our key passage because we sin. But through faith in Jesus, we can receive power to obey God’s commands. One day, when Jesus returns, Christians will be sinless like Him. ”

Divide the key passage into three parts. Form kids into three groups and assign each group a part of the key passage to create motions for. Then invite each group to share the motions, inviting the other groups to join in.

Lead kids to sing “Faithful to Him (Deuteronomy 13:4).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Dear God, we praise You as the one true God. Even though we sin and disobey, thank You for making the way for our sin to be forgiven. Help us trust Jesus and follow Him. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to 2 Kings 5. Tell kids that 2 Kings is part of the History division of the Old Testament.

Consider pointing out the location of the Jordan River (F6), where Naaman washed seven times, on the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud 2 Kings 5:15 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verse aloud.

SAY “ After Naaman obeyed Elisha’s orders to go wash in the Jordan River seven times, he was healed. Naaman believed that the God of Israel is the one true God. Only God has the power to heal and give new life. Only God can wash away our sin, like He washed away Naaman’s sickness. When we trust in Jesus, He washes away our sin forever. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

| **SAY** “ Elisha didn’t have power apart from God. How can God’s power live in us? ”

Tell kids that it was God’s power that allowed Elisha to perform miracles. Share how we can have God’s power in our lives too through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Tell kids that the Holy Spirit gives believers power to turn away from sin and obey God. Explain that the Holy Spirit has power to transform Christians to be more like Jesus. Remind kids that one day followers of Jesus will be sinless like Him.

| **SAY** “ Elisha wanted to be like Elijah. Why do Christians want to be like Jesus? ”

Remind kids that when God first created people, He created them in His image. This means that we were created to be like Him and live in ways that show what He is like. Discuss how sin has broken that image, and we don’t always live in ways that show us what God is like. But when Jesus, the image of the invisible God, came to earth, He made the way for sinners to be made right with God and be able to rightly show what God is like. Jesus’ life shows us how we were created to be and how He gives us new life so we can be like Him.

| **SAY** “ Elijah didn’t die but was taken up to heaven. What happens to Christians when they die? ”

Explain that some people in the Bible, like Elijah and Enoch, didn’t experience death. God simply brought them to be with Him. However, this is not the case for most people. We face physical death because of sin. The good news is that those who have trusted in Jesus as their Savior and Lord will be with God after they die. The Bible tells us that we go to be with God in heaven. We don’t have to fear death because Jesus defeated death and made the way for us to live with God forever.





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: MORE THAN ENOUGH



Form kids into a circle and hold up a large loaf of bread, such as a French bread or sourdough bread. Pinch off a piece of the bread and pass the bread to the kid on your right. Instruct her to pinch off a piece of the bread as well. Continue passing around the bread until everyone has pinched off a piece. Then hold up the remaining bread. Repeat, but instead of using bread, provide each kid with a plastic cup and pour water from a pitcher into each kid's cup.

SAY “ In our story, we learned that Elisha performed a miracle to multiply the woman’s oil so she had enough to pay off her debts. When we passed around the water and the bread, there was more than enough for everyone. This reminds me of how Jesus has provided for us beyond what we need. Jesus died on the cross for our sin, paying our debt. The Bible says believers have been saved by grace through faith because when they trust in Jesus, they receive what they did not deserve. Jesus gave Himself so we could have forgiveness of sins and eternal life. ”

OPTION 2: POWERFUL WORDS



Form kids into five groups and provide each group with a Bible. Then assign each group one of the following Bible references: John 1:1-3; John 11:43-44; Mark 4:39; Matthew 9:2; Matthew 8:13. Write the following phrases on a dry erase board: Forgive Sins, Calm Storms, Raise the Dead, Create the World, Heal the Sick. Assist kids in finding their Bible reference. Then challenge kids to read the verse or find key words to match their verse with one of the phrases. Invite groups to share which phrase matches their Bible passage.

SAY “ Today, we learned that **GOD SPOKE THROUGH THE PROPHET ELISHA AND GAVE HIM POWER TO PERFORM MIRACLES.** God’s words hold power. When God said, ‘Let there be light,’ there was light. Jesus is God in the flesh. When Jesus was on earth, He showed that His words were the very words of God. His words hold power. Jesus calmed a storm, healed the sick, raised the dead to life, and forgave sin. The Bible, God’s Word, is used by God to help transform us to be more like Jesus. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.

JONAH, PROPHET TO NINEVEH

JONAH



KEY PASSAGE: Deuteronomy 13:4

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why do Christians continue to sin? Christians continue to sin because we still have a sin nature, but when Jesus returns, He will make us sinless like Him.

CHRIST CONNECTION: Jonah spent three days in a fish so that the people of Nineveh could hear God's message, turn from sin, and be saved. Jesus was in the tomb for three days so that we could hear and trust the gospel, turn from sin, and be saved.

STORY POINT: God sent Jonah to Nineveh to tell the people to turn from their sinful ways.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

Jonah was a prophet sent by God to confront the people of Nineveh regarding their sinful ways. Jonah, however, did not immediately obey God’s command. In fact, Jonah traveled in the opposite direction and boarded a boat to Tarshish. Have you ever been given clear directions from God, but ignored them out of fear or selfishness?

Because of Jonah’s disobedience, the Lord sent a powerful storm on the sea, and the men on the boat feared for their lives. Knowing the storm was due to his disobedience, Jonah asked his shipmates to throw him overboard. As they threw him into the sea, the storm ceased.

In His mercy, the Lord sent a great fish to swallow up Jonah, and for three days and nights, Jonah lay entombed in the belly of the fish. Then, upon the Lord’s command, the fish spit Jonah onto dry land. God again said to Jonah, “Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach the message that I tell you.” This time, Jonah obeyed.

Jonah walked about the great city proclaiming, “In forty days Nineveh will be demolished!” The people of Nineveh believed God’s message. In sackcloth and with fasting, the people repented and earnestly called out to God. Because of their repentance, God did not destroy Nineveh.

As we read further, we learn how Jonah grew angry over God’s mercy displayed toward Nineveh. The same storm-tossed man who had received mercy from the Lord would rather experience death than see his enemies live. Ironically, disobedient Jonah prayed for God’s grace in his own life, but desired for others to perish in their sin.

While Jonah did not care for the people of Nineveh, God did. The people believed Jonah’s message from God and were saved. Like the Ninevites, we cannot save ourselves. But God can. When we are confronted with our sin, we have a choice to ignore it or do as the Ninevites did and repent. God sent Jesus so we could repent of sin, trust in Him, and be saved.

This week, point boys and girls to the gift of Jesus. Thank God for Jesus’ death and resurrection and share how we too can believe, turn from our sin, and be saved. While we all are born far from God, Jesus bridges the gap. Just like God the Father, Jesus is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love (Jonah 4:2).



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- "Find the Way" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- blue plastic cups, 1 per kid
- pom-poms, 1 per pair
- cardstock



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- "Jonah Finger Puppets" printable, 1 per kid

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible story coloring page



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video
- Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- "Jonah, Prophet to Nineveh" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- props such as a plastic fish or a picture of a boat (optional)
- sound effects (optional)

Questions from Kids

- "Unit 14, Session 2" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- "George and Joan Braswell Photo" printable
- world map

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "Faithful to Him (Deuteronomy 13:4)" song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- dry erase board
- dry erase marker and eraser



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “Have you ever had to share a message with someone that you didn’t want to? Tell me about it. Did you end up sharing the message? Why?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Find the Way” activity page.

SAY “Today, we will learn how God sent the prophet Jonah to share a message with the people of Nineveh, but Jonah didn’t want to go.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: GULP!

Provide each kid with a blue plastic cup. Using cardstock, invite kids to cut out a fish’s tail fin that will fit at the bottom of their cup. Glue the fin to the bottom of the cup. Then distribute googly eyes and direct kids to glue the googly eyes toward the top of the cup to complete their “giant fish.”

Then form kids into pairs, standing 2 feet apart. Provide one kid from each pair with a pom-pom and challenge them to toss the pom-pom into the “fish’s mouth,” while their partner keeps the cup stationary in the air. If the pom-pom lands in the cup, invite the kids to say “Gulp!” Allow kids to each take turns tossing the pom-pom into their partner’s cup. Then challenge kids to stand 3 feet apart and repeat the game. Play as time allows.

SAY “Today, we will learn how God sent Jonah to Nineveh to tell the people to turn from their sinful ways. However, Jonah chose to disobey. As a consequence, Jonah was tossed into a stormy sea. But God was merciful and sent a great fish to swallow Jonah, saving him from drowning in the sea.”

OPTION 2: COMPASSION



Tell kids that compassion means to feel pity and sadness for others’ sufferings or situations and want to help them. Challenge kids to listen to each scenario and determine if it shows compassion. If it does, kids will run to the right side of the room. If it doesn’t, kids will run to the left side of the room. Consider using the following examples and create more of your own:

- A woman makes a meal for her sick neighbor.
- A man sees someone who is homeless and offers him a job.
- A kid skips someone in line.
- A girl makes fun of a classmate.
- A boy holds the door open for an elder lady who needs help.
- A kid refuses to share his toys.

SAY “Today, we will see how God had compassion on Jonah and the people of Nineveh. Even though Jonah and the Ninevites deserved death for their sin, God was compassionate to them. He took care of them and spared their lives.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Hi, kids! My name is [your name], and I’m excited to share a story from the Bible with you. Our story can be found in the book of Jonah, and through our story, we will learn how God is compassionate, caring, and patient. If you have a Bible with you, will you take it out? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one. Help kids find Jonah in their Bibles.]

Jonah was called by God to be a prophet to the people of Nineveh. **GOD SENT JONAH TO NINEVEH TO TELL THE PEOPLE TO TURN FROM THEIR SINFUL WAYS.** [Display the Story Point Poster.] Let’s pray and ask God to help us receive His truth: ‘Dear God, thank You for Your mercy and Your desire to save people from their sin. Please help us turn from sin and trust in Jesus. Amen.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “ Do you remember our big picture question? [Allow responses.] Our big picture question is, **Why do Christians continue to sin?** What is the answer? [Allow responses.] The answer is, **Christians continue to sin because we still have a sin nature, but when Jesus returns, He will make us sinless like Him.** Let’s say that together one more time: **Christians continue to sin because we still have a sin nature, but when Jesus returns, He will make us sinless like Him.**

In our story, we’ll see how Jonah sinned and was disobedient to God’s command. Only Jesus was perfectly sinless. All people sin, but Christians have the power to say ‘no’ to sin because they have the Holy Spirit living in them. The Holy Spirit gives believers new life and helps them follow God’s commands. Those who trust in Jesus will one day no longer struggle with sin. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ We’ve seen how the Northern Kingdom of Israel had evil kings—Jeroboam, Nadab, Baasha, and Ahab—who led the people to turn away from God. In His mercy, God sent prophets like Elijah and Elisha to remind the people to turn from sin and worship Him. The prophets spoke God’s words and performed miracles to show the people that God is the one true God. Today, we will learn how **GOD SENT JONAH TO NINEVEH TO TELL THE PEOPLE TO TURN FROM THEIR SINFUL WAYS.** ”



LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Jonah. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jonah, Prophet to Nineveh.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JONAH, PROPHET TO NINEVEH

“ God told Jonah to preach to the great city of Nineveh, because their sin against God was great. **Jonah** immediately got up to try to flee from the Lord’s presence. He **did not want to go to Nineveh, so he boarded a boat to Tarshish.**

The Lord sent a great storm on the sea. Jonah knew the storm was because of him and that if his shipmates would throw him overboard, the sea would calm down and they would live. **The sailors picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea, and the waves stilled, and the wind stopped.**

The Lord sent a large fish to swallow Jonah. Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. Jonah prayed and thanked God for sending the fish to save him. **Then the Lord commanded the fish to spit Jonah up on dry land. God said again to Jonah, “Get up! Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach the message that I tell you.” This time, Jonah obeyed.**

When Jonah got to Nineveh, he walked around the city and shouted, “In forty days, Nineveh will be destroyed!” The people of Nineveh believed what God said through Jonah. They fasted and dressed in sackcloth, from the rich to the poor. Even **the king fasted** and put on sackcloth, saying, **“Each of us must turn from our evil ways. Who knows? Maybe God will turn from his anger, and we will not die.”** God saw the actions of the Ninevites and **did not destroy them.**

This made Jonah very angry. He prayed to God and said, “God, this is why I ran away from Nineveh! I knew that you are gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.”

Jonah traveled outside the city and sat down to see if God would change his mind and destroy the city after all. **God caused a large plant to grow up to give him shade. Then God caused the plant to die, so that the sun beat down on Jonah’s head. Jonah was angry.**

God said, “You cared about the plant, which you did not plant or grow. Can’t I care about a city full of people who don’t know right from wrong?”

Christ Connection: Jonah spent three days in a fish so that the people of Nineveh could hear God’s message, turn from sin, and be saved. Jesus was in the tomb for three days so that we could hear and trust the gospel, turn from sin, and be saved. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Use props: Display a plastic fish or a picture of a boat to help keep kids’ attention as you tell the story.

Use sound effects: While teaching the first part of the story, play sound effects of waves, rain, or a storm.



2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “Jonah was disobedient and tried to run away from what God wanted him to do. What did God call Jonah to do? [Allow responses.] **GOD SENT JONAH TO NINEVEH TO TELL THE PEOPLE TO TURN FROM THEIR SINFUL WAYS.** Even though Jonah tried to run away, God’s plans cannot be stopped. While Jonah was on the ship, God sent a storm.

To stop the storm, the men on the ship threw Jonah overboard. How did God show compassion and mercy for Jonah? [Allow responses.] God sent a great fish to swallow Jonah. God saved Jonah’s life. While Jonah was in the belly of the fish, he prayed to God, thanking Him for showing him mercy and grace. Jonah did not deserve God’s mercy. In fact, no one deserves the mercy of God because we are all sinners.

Jonah eventually obeyed God and went to Nineveh. Jonah warned the people that God was going to destroy them because of their sin. What did the people of Nineveh do when they heard Jonah’s message? [Allow responses.] The Ninevites repented of their sin. They turned to God and called out to Him, hoping He would be merciful. God saw they turned from their evil ways, and He showed mercy.

But Jonah became angry that God did not destroy Nineveh. The Ninevites were Israel’s enemy, and Jonah wanted God to punish them. God tried to help Jonah understand His grace and compassion through the plant, which at first provided shade and then died. Jonah was concerned for the plant, even though he didn’t plant it. But Jonah didn’t care for the people in Nineveh whom God made in His image. God cared for them, and in love, showed them mercy when they repented, just like He showed Jonah mercy in the storm. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “Jonah spent three days in a fish so that the people of Nineveh could hear God’s message, turn from sin, and be saved. Jesus was in the tomb for three days so that we could hear and trust the gospel, turn from sin, and be saved. Have you repented of your sin? ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 14, Session 2” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. How do you repent?
2. Why do Christians continue to repent of sin?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Point to Iran on a world map. Display the “George and Joan Braswell Photo” as you tell the kids about the missionaries and about life in Iran.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

SAY “ Dr. George and his wife, Joan, were missionaries in Iran from 1968 to 1974. At the time the Braswells lived in Iran, people mostly traveled on camels, motorcycles, and motorbikes. Now Iran has many options for transportation, including: buses, trains, taxis, and subways. Common foods in Iran include: lamb, rice, yogurt, bread, and fruit. Also, tea is an important part of the Iranian culture. Iranians drink tea after each meal and in between meals. They put sugar cubes in their mouths and sip the tea through the cube. ”

Discuss how missionaries have to learn about the people and the culture when they travel to a new country. Share how learning about the culture is one way missionaries can form relationships with people and find common interests. Pray for missionaries in Iran, asking God to help them form relationships and share the gospel with those they meet.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Deuteronomy 13:4 together.

SAY “ Our key passage reminds us that we should follow God, listen to God, and worship God always. God’s way is always the best way, and we can trust Him no matter what. ”

Form kids into two teams. Write the key passage on a dry erase board, leaving out three to five words. Place blank spaces for the letters of each missing word. Challenge teams to fill in the letters of the missing words before you draw a complete stick figure on the dry erase board. For each incorrect letter, draw a part of a stick figure. Invite each team to take turns guessing letters.

Lead kids to sing “Faithful to Him (Deuteronomy 13:4).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Lord, thank You for loving us even though we are sinners. Help us trust You and follow You in everything we say and do. Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, so we can be saved from sin. In Jesus’ name, amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Jonah 3. Remind kids that Jonah traveled from Joppa (F9) to Tarshish. Then after being spit out by the fish, Jonah went to Nineveh (E11). Consider pointing out these locations on the Old Testament Mediterranean Map.

Choose a volunteer to read aloud Jonah 3:3-5 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY “ The first time God told Jonah to go to Nineveh, he disobeyed. The second time God told Jonah to go to Nineveh, he obeyed and told the people about God’s judgment on their sin. When Jonah preached, the people of Nineveh turned from their sin and believed God.

Today, God calls Christians to tell others to turn from their sin and trust in Jesus to be saved. Christians have received the love and mercy of God and want others to receive these gifts too. Unlike Jonah, believers rejoice when God saves someone from the punishment of sin. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ Did Jonah deserve to be saved from the sea? Did Nineveh deserve to be saved from punishment? Why not? ”

Tell kids that both Jonah and Nineveh were sinful and disobedient. They did not deserve God’s mercy or grace. Share how all people deserve eternal death for their sin, but God is merciful and doesn’t give people what they deserve when they trust in Jesus. Tell kids that Jesus took the punishment people deserve for sin when He died on the cross.

SAY “ Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days. How long was Jesus in the tomb? ”

Remind kids that Jesus was in the tomb for three days after He died on the cross. Tell kids that when Jesus was on earth, He compared Jonah’s time in the fish to how long Jesus would be in the tomb. Jesus told the people that He was greater than Jonah. Jesus is greater than Jonah, because—while the Ninevites repented when Jonah preached—Jesus is the only One who can save people from their sin.

SAY “ Who can you share the good news of Jesus with? What will you tell them? ”

Encourage kids to remember that God calls all Christians to share the gospel. Tell kids that the gospel is the good news—the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Invite kids to practice how they might share Jesus with someone.





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: JONAH FINGER PUPPETS

Provide each kid with a “Jonah Finger Puppets” printable and direct kids to cut out each finger puppet. Use tape to secure the tabs of the finger puppets around two fingers on one hand and three fingers on another hand. Avoid placing a puppet on a middle finger. Then retell the Bible story while kids hold up the corresponding puppet for each part. Or form pairs and invite kids to retell the story with their partner.

Additionally, you may consider playing a review game, where you ask questions about the story, and the kids will hold up the puppet that corresponds to the answer. For example, “What did Jonah board when he tried to run away from God’s command?” (Kids would hold up the boat.)

SAY “Jonah was a prophet chosen by God. **GOD SENT JONAH TO NINEVEH TO TELL THE PEOPLE TO TURN FROM THEIR SINFUL WAYS.** God sent His Son, Jesus, to tell us to turn from our sinful ways and save us from sin. Only Jesus can save people from sin.”

OPTION 2: TAKE A STEP



Direct kids to line up at one end of the room. Tell kids to listen for words that describe God and His character. If the word describes God, they take a step forward. If the word does not describe God, they remain in place. Kids who take a step when the word does not describe God will return to the start line. Consider using the words below, and play as time allows.

- compassionate
- holy
- good
- sinful
- merciful
- unkind
- loving

SAY “The people of Nineveh stepped toward God and away from sin. They believed God and prayed God would be merciful. God is merciful. Even though we deserve judgment for sin, God sent Jesus to save us. When we repent of sin and trust in Jesus, we are saved.”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.

HOSEA, PROPHET TO ISRAEL

HOSEA



KEY PASSAGE: Deuteronomy 13:4

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why do Christians continue to sin? Christians continue to sin because we still have a sin nature, but when Jesus returns, He will make us sinless like Him.

CHRIST CONNECTION: Israel was not faithful to God, but God was faithful to Israel, just as Hosea loved his wife even when she didn't love him. God is faithful to save all sinners who repent and trust in Jesus.

STORY POINT: God warned and showed His love to Israel through the prophet Hosea.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

Although God had been faithful to the people of Israel, they were not faithful to God. The Israelites continued to disobey God, following worthless idols and acting wickedly. Israel even turned to other nations during times of trouble, trusting in the power of men over God. God warned Israel of their unfaithfulness and showed His faithful love through the prophet Hosea.

Though Israel was far from Him, God wanted to show a picture of His great love and relentless pursuit of His people through Hosea's life. God instructed Hosea to marry a prostitute named Gomer, explaining that she would not be faithful to him. Yet, God told Hosea to remain committed to her.

Hosea obeyed God and married Gomer. As God said, she was unfaithful to Hosea and left their family. In the same way, the Israelites were unfaithful to God, worshiping idols, acting corruptly, and loving violence. However, God's love did not relent, and He promised a day when He would forgive and restore them (Hosea 14:4-9).

To show the Israelites the depth of His love, God told Hosea to show love to Gomer, even though she had chosen a life of adultery (Hosea 3:1). Again, Hosea obeyed God. He paid the debts Gomer owed and brought her back home to their family.

On the cross, Jesus paid our debt of sin, restoring our relationship with God so we might be with Him forever. When we repent and turn to Jesus, He brings us into His family. Even when believers act unfaithfully, Jesus continues to be faithful and show unending love.

Encourage boys and girls to ask Jesus for forgiveness and praise Him for His unfailing love. God promised to be faithful to Israel, and He continues to be faithful to us. Point children to God's promises to Israel and the way these words of hope echo into Jesus' promises to followers of Christ to heal them, love them, and not be angry with them (Hosea 14:4).



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10-15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25-30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- "Color to Reveal" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- cardboard box
- heart cutouts, 1 per kid



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- boxes or bins, 1 per group
- pom-poms, 10 per group
- shredded craft paper
- timer

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- envelopes, 1 per kid

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible story coloring page



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video
- Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- "Hosea, Prophet to Israel" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- "Unit 14, Session 3" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- 5-by-5-inch piece of cardboard, 1 per kid
- various spools of yarn
- 7 inch long strips of ribbon

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "Faithful to Him (Deuteronomy 13:4)" song
- worship song of your choice (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “ How do you show someone you love them? How do you like someone to show they love you? Why? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Color to Reveal” activity page.

SAY “ God is always faithful, even when His people are unfaithful. Today, we will learn how God used the prophet Hosea to warn Israel of their sin and show His faithful love to them. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: BRING IT BACK

Before the session, write the word Love on an empty cardboard box. Create a heart cutout for each kid and hide the hearts around the room. Challenge kids to each find a heart. When kids find a heart, invite them to draw a picture of how God shows His love to people. Then direct kids to bring the hearts back to the cardboard box that says Love.

SAY “ God is faithful, and He loves His people. Today, we will learn how God’s people turned away from Him and worshiped other gods. **GOD WARNED AND SHOWED HIS LOVE TO ISRAEL THROUGH THE PROPHET HOSEA.** Like Israel was unfaithful to God, Hosea had a wife who did not show she loved him. But God sent Hosea to bring his wife back and show her unending love. ”

OPTION 2: PAPER HEART CHAINS



Provide each kid with a strip of paper about 11 inches long and 2 inches wide. Guide kids to fold their strip of paper accordion style, folding in one direction first, then flipping their paper over and folding in the other direction. Repeat this process until their strip is folded into a small square. Then lead kids to draw a heart on top of the folded paper. Cut out the heart, cutting the top and bottom of the heart, but being careful not to cut the side folds so the chain stays intact.

Then direct kids to take each of their paper heart chains, and with your help, staple the chains together to form one long paper heart chain. Hang the paper chain in the room and refer to it when you discuss God’s never-ending love.

SAY “ Our paper heart chains may have an ending point, but imagine if they went on and on and on. That’s like God’s love for His people. God is love, and His love for His people never ends. Today, we will see how God showed His unending love for His people through the prophet Hosea. Even though God’s people rejected Him, God continued to show His love for them. ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Welcome, kids! My name is [your name], and I’m happy you are here today to study God’s Word. Today, we will be in a book called Hosea. If you have a Bible with you, will you take it out? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one. Assist kids in finding Hosea.]

God loved His people, but they didn’t always love Him. Even though God took care of them and saved them from their enemies, Israel turned away from God and worshiped idols. Today, we will learn about a prophet named Hosea. **GOD WARNED AND SHOWED HIS LOVE TO ISRAEL THROUGH THE PROPHET HOSEA.** [Display the Story Point Poster.] Let’s pray and ask God to help us receive His truth: ‘Dear God, thank you for loving us even though we sin and don’t always show love to You. Help us know and trust in Your love for us and give us the desire to love You always. Amen.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “ What is our big picture question? [Allow responses.] **Why do Christians continue to sin?** What is the answer? [Allow responses.] The answer is, **Christians continue to sin because we still have a sin nature, but when Jesus returns, He will make us sinless like Him.** Let’s say that together one more time: **Christians continue to sin because we still have a sin nature, but when Jesus returns, He will make us sinless like Him.**

God’s people, Israel, continued to sin against God. God provided for Israel, cared for them, and displayed great patience, but Israel continued to turn away from Him. They had a sin nature and needed new hearts to be able to love God rightly. Through Jesus, God has showed us His perfect love and how people can receive new hearts. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives us of our sin and changes our hearts so we can love God and worship Him alone. One day, God will make Christians sinless like Jesus. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ Although the Northern Kingdom of Israel continued to worship idols, God provided prophets to warn His people—and even Nineveh—to turn away from their sin. God sent Elisha to speak His words and perform miracles, proving that God is the one true God. Then God sent to Jonah to Nineveh to preach against their sin. While Nineveh repented and didn’t experience God’s judgment, the nation of Israel refused to worship God alone. Today, we will see how God sent Hosea to warn Israel of their unfaithfulness to Him and remind them of His faithful love. ”



LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Hosea. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Hosea, Prophet to Israel.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

HOSEA, PROPHET TO ISRAEL

“ Israel was not faithful to God. They worshiped other gods, sinned by disobeying Him, and looked to other nations to help them in times of trouble.

God wanted to show His people a picture of how much He loved and wanted to be with them, even though they had been unfaithful to Him. He spoke to His prophet Hosea, saying, “Go and marry a woman who will not be faithful to you, and be committed to her.”

Hosea followed God’s direction and married a woman named Gomer. They had three children together. Sadly, Gomer was not faithful to Hosea and left the family.

Gomer’s unfaithfulness to Hosea was like Israel’s unfaithfulness to God. Israel had taken the grain, oil, silver, and wine that God had given to them, and had used it to worship Baal. They pursued false gods and looked to other nations to save them. **But God still loved Israel and forgave them for their lack of faithfulness.**

To show Israel how much He loved them, **God told Hosea to go get Gomer back. “Show love to Gomer, even though she hasn’t shown love to you, just as I have loved the Israelites.”**

Hosea obeyed God. He paid back what Gomer owed others and brought her back to live with him, and she agreed.

Hosea pled with the Israelites to come back to God, just as Gomer had come back to Hosea. Hosea reminded Israel of how God had loved Israel like a child, providing and caring for their every need. **But he also told the people that there would be consequences for their sin. He said, “Come, Israel, return to the LORD, for you have stumbled in sin. Repent and turn away and return to the LORD. Ask him for forgiveness and praise him. No one else can save us but God.”**

Through Hosea, God promised to be faithful to Israel. God also said that one day His people would seek the Lord their God. “I will heal them,” said God, “I will love them. I will not be angry with them anymore.”

Christ Connection: Israel was not faithful to God, but God was faithful to Israel, just as Hosea loved his wife even when she didn’t love him. God is faithful to save all sinners who repent and trust in Jesus. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Active listening: Tell kids that when they hear the word “unfaithful,” they should give a thumbs down. When they hear the word “faithful,” they should give a thumbs up.

Use movement: Move about the room and act out the motions of the action words in the story.



2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Have you noticed how God’s people were unfaithful to Him throughout the Old Testament? There are so many stories where Israel disobeyed God and turned away from Him. Today’s story is no different. Israel had sinned, worshiped other gods, and turned to other nations for help instead of asking God for help. Why do you think Israel kept turning away from God? [Allow responses.] Like our big picture question teaches us, all people are born with a sin nature. We want to do things our way. Israel was impatient, unfaithful to God, and wanted to do things their way instead of God’s way. Their hearts were broken because of sin, and they weren’t able to fully obey Him.

But God had always been faithful to His people. He never gave up on them and continued to show them His love. **GOD WARNED AND SHOWED HIS LOVE TO ISRAEL THROUGH THE PROPHET HOSEA.** How did Hosea display God’s love for Israel? [Allow responses.] God told Hosea to go find Gomer and show her love, even though she had left him. Hosea paid Gomer’s debt and brought her back to live with him. Hosea didn’t give up on Gomer, even when she turned away from him. God had shown even greater love toward His people. He rescued them from their enemies, took care of them, and gave them good gifts. But God’s people still turned away. So, in His love, God warned the people of their sin so they could repent.

Like Israel and Gomer, we are all unfaithful to God. We sin and disobey. But God is faithful to save anyone who repents and trusts in Jesus. When Jesus died on the cross, He paid the debt we owe because of our sin. Anyone who trusts in Jesus is forgiven and safe with God forever. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ God loves us so much that He warns us of our sin. The Bible reminds us that we are all sinners. But God has made the way for us to be forgiven. Through faith in Jesus, God will forgive our sin and give us eternal life. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 14, Session 3” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Why does God forgive us even though we don’t deserve it?
2. How does Jesus’ perfect, sinless life get credited (or given) to us?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

SAY “ Dr. George and Joan Braswell were missionaries in Iran from 1968 to 1974. Dr. Braswell was the only Christian professor at a Muslim university. This opportunity to teach at the university opened up doors for Dr. Braswell to build relationships with many Muslim people and share the good news about Jesus. ”



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Explain that women in Iran often work with looms to weave beautiful carpets. Tell kids that carpets from Iran are known as Persian rugs. Share how these looms can be quite large because they make carpets to fill a room.

Invite kids to practice weaving by creating a “loom” from a 5-by-5-inch piece of cardboard. Cut slits at the top and bottom of the cardboard equal distance apart. Then lead kids to take yarn and tape the end of the yarn to the back of the “loom.” Kids will then bring the yarn through the first slit, turn the “loom” over, and bring the yarn down to the matching slit at the bottom. Repeat, wrapping the yarn through all the slits. Next, weave 7 inch long strips of ribbon in an under-and-over pattern across the “loom.” Repeat, weaving multiple ribbon strips, each in a new row, until the desired length is achieved.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Deuteronomy 13:4 together.

SAY “God is loving, faithful, kind, and gracious. He deserves our worship and our obedience. He is worth following.”

Guide kids to sit in a large circle. Play music and direct the kids to pass the ball around a circle. When the music stops, lead the kid with the ball to say the key passage. Kids may use the Key Passage Poster for help. Continue until all have had an opportunity to say the verse on their own.

Lead kids to sing “Faithful to Him (Deuteronomy 13:4).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “Heavenly Father, thank You for being faithful even when we’re not. Help us trust You and to be faithful to You in everything we do. Thank You for loving us so much that You sent Jesus to die on the cross for our sins. Amen.”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Hosea 14. Explain that Hosea is part of the Minor Prophets in the Old Testament. Point out some of the other Minor Prophets such as Jonah, Joel, Micah, and Nahum.

Consider pointing out the location of Israel (E5) on the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Hosea 14:1-2 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud. Use these verses to point ahead to next week's session.

SAY “ God’s people were stuck in a pattern of sin. Even when they tried to follow God, they would eventually turn away again. In these verses, Hosea begged the people to once again turn back to God. He called the people to ask God for forgiveness. He wanted God to receive praise for how He is faithful to forgive people who repent of sin and trust in Him.

God wants us to keep turning to Him for forgiveness too. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives all of our sin. But because Jesus hasn’t yet returned, Christians still sin. **CHRISTIANS CONTINUE TO SIN BECAUSE WE STILL HAVE A SIN NATURE, BUT WHEN JESUS RETURNS, HE WILL MAKE US SINLESS LIKE HIM.** God’s people praise Him for how He has saved them from sin. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ Hosea warned about God’s judgment on sin. How did this show God’s love? ”

Tell kids that just as it is loving for a parent to warn a kid of danger, so it is also loving for God to warn His people of the judgment His people would face for their sin. God desires people to repent and trust in Jesus to be saved from the judgment of sin.

SAY “ What does it mean that God is faithful? ”

Share that the word faithful means steadfast, dedicated, dependable, and worthy of trust. God is always faithful because He never changes. God is faithful to His character. He will keep His promise to forgive sin for those who trust in Jesus. And He will be faithful to punish those who do not trust in Jesus.

SAY “ If God remains faithful to Christians no matter what, why do you think it’s good to obey God? ”

Help kids think through what it communicates to God and the world when we obey God. Help kids see that God loves us and wants us to love Him. Explain how God’s mercy, grace, and love toward us awakens our hearts to love Him, and our love for God will naturally lead us to obey Him.





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: RESCUE THE POM-POMS

Before the session, fill boxes with shredded craft paper for each group of three or four kids. Mix 10 pom-poms in with the paper, concealing them from view. Form kids into groups of three or four and provide each group with a box. On your start, challenge groups to find and “rescue” the 10 pom-poms hidden in their box. Start a timer and record the time it takes for each group to find all the pom-poms. Play again, hiding all the pom-poms again and challenging groups to beat their time.

SAY “ In our story, we learned how God sent Hosea to bring his wife back. Hosea rescued Gomer and brought her back to live with him. This reminds me of how God sent Jesus to rescue sinners. The Bible says we are all like sheep and have run away from God. But Jesus, the Good Shepherd, came to find us and bring us back to God. Those who trust in Jesus have their sins forgiven and are rescued from the punishment of sin. ”

OPTION 2: LOVE LETTERS



Invite kids to draw a picture of how they can love others, even when they make mistakes. Invite kids to think about how Hosea showed Gomer love even when she didn’t love him. Remind kids about God’s unfailing love for His people, even when they sin against Him. Place the drawings in an envelope. Then encourage kids to give their “love letter” to a parent or a friend, while telling them about God’s unfailing love.

SAY “ Have you ever had someone forgive you or show you love when you had wronged them? God shows us love all the time, even when we sin against Him. The Bible is one big story about God’s love for us and how He made the way for us to be forgiven of our sin. Romans 5:8 tells us that, ‘But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.’ Take your letters home and share how **GOD WARNED AND SHOWED HIS LOVE TO ISRAEL THROUGH THE PROPHET HOSEA**, and how He shows His love to us through Jesus. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.

THE NORTHERN KINGDOM WAS DESTROYED

2 KINGS 17



KEY PASSAGE: Deuteronomy 13:4

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why do Christians continue to sin? Christians continue to sin because we still have a sin nature, but when Jesus returns, He will make us sinless like Him.

CHRIST CONNECTION: The kingdom of Israel was destroyed because of their sin. We all sin against God and deserve death, but God sent Jesus to die in our place. Because of Jesus, those who trust in Him will never be removed from God's presence.

STORY POINT: God judged Israel's sin, and Assyria destroyed the Northern Kingdom.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

Hoshea was an evil king in the long line of the evil kings of Israel. In Hoshea's ninth year as king, the king of Assyria captured Samaria, put Hoshea in prison, and moved all the Israelites to Assyria. The kingdom of Israel was officially destroyed.

Why was Israel destroyed? Although God had been patient, the Israelites witnessed their kingdom crumble because of their unrelenting sin. God had freed Israel from the oppressive hand of Pharaoh and brought them out of the land of Egypt. The Lord loved the people of Israel, performed many miracles, and commanded them to worship Him alone. The people of Israel were meant to be set apart as the Lord's people, but they worshiped false gods and lived like the nations around them.

Through the prophets, God repeatedly warned the Israelites to repent and turn back to the one true God, but the people did not listen. The Lord warned the people, saying, "Turn from your evil ways and keep my commands and statutes according to the whole law I commanded your ancestors" (2 Kings 17:13). The Israelites, however, did not listen. Instead, they rejected God and His covenant and followed worthless idols.

As the people ignored God's warnings, He became angry. God judged Israel's sin and allowed Assyria to destroy the Northern Kingdom. He rejected them and cast them out of His presence. The king of Assyria moved the people of Israel out of their land and brought foreigners to live in Israel's land and cities.

The kingdom of Israel was destroyed because of the Israelites' sin. God's gracious patience lasted for years, but the people failed to repent and seek the Lord wholeheartedly. Like Israel, we sin, and all sin deserves death. Those who fail to repent and trust in Christ will be separated from God forever. Yet, the unfailing love of the Lord has provided the way for people to be forgiven and live with God forever. Those who trust in Christ will escape God's punishment of sin. They will not only find forgiveness but also receive the Holy Spirit who empowers them to live for God.

As you prepare for this week's session, pray for boys and girls to see their need for Jesus. Pray also that you would be able to clearly communicate the gift of the Savior, thanking God for sending Jesus to restore what we have broken through our sin and disobedience. Rejoice together in the fact that Jesus died and rose again so that we might be saved from certain destruction!



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10-15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25-30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- "Warning!" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- sticky notes, 40

Session Starter (Option 2)

- penny



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- set of 20 wooden blocks, 1 per group
- masking tape

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- index cards, 5 per group

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible story coloring page



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video
- Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- "The Northern Kingdom Was Destroyed" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- past Bible Story Picture Posters (optional)

Questions from Kids

- "Unit 14, Session 4" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- world map

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "Faithful to Him (Deuteronomy 13:4)" song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- cardstock sheets, 1 per kid



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “How would you feel if you warned someone about something dangerous, but he didn’t listen? What are ways people receive warnings about danger?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Warning!” activity page.

SAY “Today, we will see that even though God warned Israel about their sin, they didn’t listen. **GOD JUDGED ISRAEL’S SIN, AND ASSYRIA DESTROYED THE NORTHERN KINGDOM.**”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: DOWN THE LINE

Form kids into two teams. Direct each team to line up shoulder to shoulder. Give the first kid in each line a stack of 20 sticky notes. When you say “go,” challenge the kid to pull one sticky note from the stack and pass it down the line. Each kid will pass the sticky note to his or her neighbor until it reaches the last kid. The last kid in line will stick the sticky note to the wall. Repeat, until one team is the first to pass down all the sticky notes.

SAY “Imagine each sticky note represents thousands of sins against God. The sticky notes still wouldn’t add up to all the sin God’s people committed over the hundreds of years after God rescued them from Egypt. Down the line of each generation, God’s people continued to turn away from Him and follow idols. They didn’t listen to the prophets God sent to warn them of their sin. Eventually, their sin was so great, and God judged their sin. Today, we will see how God allowed the nation of Assyria to attack Israel and destroy it.”

OPTION 2: CAPTURED!



Lead kids to form a large circle. Choose one kid to be *It* and direct her to stand in the middle of the circle. Give one kid in the circle a penny. Tell *It* to close her eyes and count to 10. While *It* counts, direct kids to hold their hands behind their back and pass the penny around the circle. When *It* finishes counting, tell her to point to someone in the circle and say “captured.” If she points to someone holding the penny, that kid is out. If not, play continues. Remind kids to keep their hands behind their backs the whole time. After a couple of rounds, choose a new kid to be *It*. Play as time allows.

SAY “You didn’t want to be caught holding the penny, did you? Today, we will see how Israel was caught in the greatness of their sin. Because their sin was so great, **GOD JUDGED ISRAEL’S SIN, AND ASSYRIA DESTROYED THE NORTHERN KINGDOM.** Let’s get ready to learn how God’s people were captured and taken to Assyria.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Hi, kids! My name is [your name], and I’m glad you are here. If you have a Bible with you, will you hold it up? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Today’s Bible story can be found in the book of 2 Kings. As we hear our Bible story, we’ll learn how the Northern Kingdom of Israel was destroyed by the nation of Assyria.

The people of Israel did not repent of their sin. They continued to worship idols and rebel against God. We’ll see how **GOD JUDGED ISRAEL’S SIN, AND ASSYRIA DESTROYED THE NORTHERN KINGDOM.** [Display the Story Point Poster.] Let’s pray and ask God to give us ears to hear and hearts that believe His words: ‘Dear God, You are good and always do what is right. You are right to judge sin. Help us turn away from our sin and remember that through Jesus we can be forgiven of our sin. In Jesus’ name, amen.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “ Our big picture question is, **Why do Christians continue to sin?** What is the answer? [Allow responses.] The answer is, **Christians continue to sin because we still have a sin nature, but when Jesus returns, He will make us sinless like Him.** Let’s say that together one more time: **Christians continue to sin because we still have a sin nature, but when Jesus returns, He will make us sinless like Him.**

God loved His people, Israel, even though they continued to sin. They had a sin nature, like all people, and were not able to make themselves right before God. No one can make themselves sinless and right with God. But when we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and makes us right with Him. While Christians will still struggle with sin, they also have hearts that don’t want to sin. They want to obey God. One day, God will make believers sinless like Jesus! ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ God had done so much for His people. He saved them from slavery in Egypt, gave them a good land, fought their enemies, and made His presence known through the temple. But Israel continued to turn away from God and worship worthless idols. God provided prophets to warn His people to repent of their sin. Last week, we learned how Hosea was a prophet to Israel and how his marriage to Gomer was a picture of Israel’s unfaithfulness to God. Today, we will learn how the nation of Israel would suffer the consequences of their sin. ”



LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to 2 Kings 17:1-24. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “The Northern Kingdom Was Destroyed.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

THE NORTHERN KINGDOM WAS DESTROYED

“ King Hoshea (hoh SHEE uh) was another evil king in the long line of evil kings of Israel. He would also be the last.

In Hoshea’s ninth year as king, the king of Assyria captured Samaria in Israel, put King Hoshea in prison, and moved all the Israelites to Assyria. The kingdom of Israel was destroyed. This happened because of the sin of the Israelites.

God brought the Israelites out of the land of Egypt, freeing them from slavery. He performed powerful miracles for them and took care of them. He gave them instructions, including a commandment to worship Him alone.

But instead of worshiping God alone, they worshiped other gods. They acted like the people who once lived in the land the Lord gave them. They created altars to other gods and burned incense to them on every high hill and under every green tree. **They did evil things, just like the nations who lived there before them.**

God warned His people over and over through prophets. He said, “Turn from your evil ways. Keep my commandments and the law sent to you through the prophets.” But the people did not listen. They were stubborn like their ancestors. They rejected God and the covenant He made with the people at Mount Sinai. **They followed worthless idols.**

As the people ignored God’s warnings over and over, God became very angry. He rejected them, removed them from His presence, and handed them over to the nation of Assyria. The king of Assyria moved all the Israelites out of the land and brought in foreign people to live in Israel’s cities.

The kingdom of Israel was destroyed. Only the tribe of Judah remained.

Christ Connection: The kingdom of Israel was destroyed because of their sin. We all sin against God and deserve death, but God sent Jesus to die in our place. Because of Jesus, those who trust in Him will never be removed from God’s presence. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Use Bible posters: Hold up past Bible Story Picture Posters as you review God’s past actions for His people.

Active listening: When you teach how the people were stubborn and did not listen, invite kids to place their hands over their ears.



2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ The Northern Kingdom of Israel had wicked kings who led the people to worship idols and do evil in God’s eyes. Who was the last king of Israel? [Allow responses.] Hoshea was the last king of Israel before the king of Assyria came and destroyed Israel.

Why did God say Israel was destroyed and the people captured? [Allow responses.] This disaster happened because of the people’s sin against God. **GOD JUDGED ISRAEL’S SIN, AND ASSYRIA DESTROYED THE NORTHERN KINGDOM.** The Israelites were taken away to Assyria and removed from God’s presence. God is right to be angry at sin because He is holy and sin is always wrong.

How did God show patience with His people over the many years? [Allow responses.] God sent prophets like Elijah, Elisha, and Hosea to tell His people to turn from their evil ways and worship Him alone. But the people did not listen. They were stubborn and ignored God’s warnings. While God is patient, He will judge sin. The Bible tells us that if we hear God’s voice, we should not harden our hearts and ignore the way to be saved (Hebrews 4:7). God sent Jesus to die for our sin so we can be saved. Because of Jesus, those who trust in Him will never be removed from God’s presence. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ The Kingdom of Israel was destroyed because of their sin. We all sin against God and deserve death, but God sent Jesus to die in our place. Those who trust in Jesus will never receive the punishment their sin deserves. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 14, Session 4” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. How can we not be afraid of the coming judgment?
2. Why is important not to delay trusting in Jesus?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Remind kids that Dr. George and Joan Braswell were missionaries to Iran from 1968–1974. [Point to Iran on a world map.] Tell kids that missionaries who travel to different countries often have to learn the language of the people. Ask kids if they can speak more than one language or if they know any words of a different language.

SAY “ Before Dr. Braswell and Joan left for Iran, they were given the opportunity to study the Iranian language called Farsi. The Braswells were originally going to study Farsi in the United States, but they decided to learn the language in Iran. While beginning their mission work in Iran, they also started to learn Farsi so they could share the gospel in the language of the Iranian people. ”

Invite kids to say “Salâm” (Sah löm), which means hello in Farsi. Pray for God to send more



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

missionaries to Iran to share the good news of Jesus with the Iranian people.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Deuteronomy 13:4 together.

SAY “ The Israelites were not faithful to God. They turned away from Him and worshiped false gods. Through faith in Jesus, we can be faithful to God. When we trust in Jesus, we are made new through the Holy Spirit. God’s Spirit helps us love God and worship Him alone. ”

Provide kids with a piece of cardstock and markers. Lead kids to draw a foot, trace their hand, and draw a heart on their paper. In the foot, kids will write the words “follow the LORD your God and fear him.” In the hand, kids will write the phrase about keeping God’s commands. Then in the heart, kids will write the phrase about worshiping God. Invite kids to take home their papers as a way to keep learning the key passage.

Lead kids to sing “Faithful to Him (Deuteronomy 13:4).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Lord, You are good, patient, and kind. Thank You for Your faithfulness and love. Help us trust You, worship You, follow You, and obey You in all things. Thank You for sending Your one and only Son, Jesus, so we can be saved. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to 2 Kings 17. Tell kids that the nation of Assyria was hundreds of miles away from Israel. Tell kids that the capital city of Assyria was Nineveh, the same city God sent Jonah to preach against. Discuss how God used Assyria to judge Israel's sin, but Assyria would also be judged for their sin and violence (Isaiah 10:12).

Consider pointing out the location of Assyria (D11) on the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud 2 Kings 17:14-15 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY “ Have you ever been told to do something, but you didn't listen? Israel continued to ignore God and disobey Him, even though God gave them many warnings. God warned His people of the judgment their sin deserved because He loved them. Following God was best for them because God leads His people to what is good and right. His commands are for our good because they lead people to love one another.

The Bible is God's Word to us, and when we listen to its words, we come to see how God has made the way for us to be saved. In the Bible, we learn that God sent Jesus to take the punishment our sin deserves. When we listen and obey God's call to trust in Jesus, we are saved from sin and death. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

| **SAY** “ Why does God take sin so seriously? ”

Remind kids that God is holy. Sin is disobedience and rebellion against God. God takes sin seriously because it affects His relationship with people, harms others, and has eternal consequences. Sin separates us from God, who we were made to be with. But God made the way to restore what sin has broken and bring people back to God through Jesus.

| **SAY** “ What are ways we are unfaithful toward God? ”

Guide kids to see how we can put things like money, popularity, friends, or activities, before God in our lives. We sometimes love these things more than we love God. When we place anything before God, it becomes an idol.

| **SAY** “ How can we be faithful to God? ”

Discuss how being faithful to God doesn't mean being perfect. Because of our sin nature, we won't be perfect. But we can strive to live like Jesus. We can be faithful to God by worshiping Him, obeying Him, following Him, and loving Him with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. We can trust that, in Christ, God will always be faithful to us. This truth encourages us to live for God no matter what.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: IT ALL FELL DOWN

Before the session, gather two sets of wooden tower blocks and place a strip of masking tape on eight blocks from each set. On each of the blocks with tape, write each of the following: *worshipped idols, ignored prophets, disobeyed God's commands, created idols, burned incense, did evil things, rejected God, and didn't worship God.*

Build the two wooden block towers with the tape strips facing outward. Form two groups of kids and assign a tower to each group. Direct kids to take turns carefully removing the blocks with the statements and continue until the towers fall. Repeat as time allows.

SAY “ Like the block towers were destroyed, the Israelites’ many sins led to their destruction. **GOD JUDGED ISRAEL’S SIN, AND ASSYRIA DESTROYED THE NORTHERN KINGDOM.** Like Israel, we sin and disobey God. The good news is that Jesus Christ came to take the punishment we deserve and save us from our sin. Through Jesus, believers can love God, obey Him, and worship Him rightly. ”

OPTION 2: DON'T BE STUBBORN



Form kids into groups of three or four. Provide each team with five index cards. Write the following references on a dry erase board: Nehemiah 9:29; Psalm 78:8; Jeremiah 5:23; Jeremiah 16:12; Zechariah 7:11. Then lead groups to copy each reference to an index card. Provide each group with a Bible. Challenge kids to find each reference in their Bible and place the index card at the reference. The first group to find all five wins.

Read the passages aloud and discuss how they all share how God's people were stubborn, choosing to ignore God's ways and follow their own way. Invite kids to share what the consequence is for rejecting God's ways and following our own hearts.

SAY “ Time and time again God warned His people to turn from sin, but they were stubborn and did not obey. Today, ask God to give you a tender heart that hears His Word and obeys it. Remember that Jesus changes our hearts so we want to obey the Lord. God's ways are always best because He leads us to forgiveness, life, and joy. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.

UNIT 15 | SESSION 1

JUDAH'S GOOD KINGS

2 KINGS 18-19; 2 CHRONICLES 14-24



KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 145:9

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving.

CHRIST CONNECTION: Judah's good kings led the people to God and away from sin. Yet when they died, the people returned to their sinful ways. Jesus is our good King who died and rose again, and always leads us to God and away from sin.

STORY POINT: Judah's good kings worshiped God.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

Good kings and evil kings—both were seen throughout the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Depending on who was king, the people would either be led to worship the one true God or led the opposite direction toward idolatry and wickedness.

King Asa sought to do what was good in the eyes of the Lord and removed the places of idol worship. He commanded the people of Judah to worship and obey God. But once Asa died, Ahaziah became king and led the people to once again turn to idolatry. When he died, his mother Athalia made herself queen by force. She ruled as queen for six years and did evil in God's sight.

The priest Jehoiada planned to overthrow the evil queen. His men captured her and made one of Athalia's young sons, Joash, king. Following Jehoiada's lead, Joash tore down the temple of Baal and restored worship in the temple to God alone.

After Joash came King Hezekiah. He also sought to do what was right in the sight of the Lord. After cleaning out the temple so the people could worship, Hezekiah invited Judah and Israel to celebrate the feast of the Passover. Afterward, everyone went back to their towns and destroyed their places of worship to false gods.

When the king of Assyria came to attack Judah, King Hezekiah prayed to God, and Judah was saved. God sent an angel to destroy the Assyrian army.

The last good king of Judah was Josiah. King Josiah was only eight years old when he came into power, but he also did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. Under his rule, the people renewed their covenant with God and remained faithful to Him.

The good kings of Judah led the people to worship the one true God. The Lord raised up kings who would lead Judah to turn away from idolatry and keep His commands. Judah would serve God under the rule of the good kings but returned to their sinful ways after the good kings died. Yet, despite the people's inconsistent worship of the Lord, God proved faithful to preserve His people. The line of Judah would one day give rise to the King of kings, who would make the way for people to worship God in spirit and truth.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- "Shadow Match" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- "Kings of Judah Spinner" printable, 1 per kid
- metal brads, 1 per kid



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- paper crowns in three different colors, 5 of each color

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- brown craft paper
- red construction papers, 1 per kid

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible story coloring page



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video
- Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- "Judah's Good Kings" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- "Unit 15, Session 1" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- "North African and Middle Eastern Peoples Intro" missions video
- world map

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "The Lord is Good (Psalm 145:9)" song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- index cards, 1 per kid



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “ If you could make a rule at your home or school, what would it be? Why? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Shadow Match” activity page.

| **SAY** “ In today’s story, we’ll learn about the good kings of Judah who led the people to worship God and follow Him. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: KINGS OF JUDAH

Print the “Kings of Judah Spinner” printable on cardstock for each kid. Provide each kid with a printable. Lead kids to cut out both circles. Give kids a metal brad and lead them to push it through the Xs on the circles. Close the brad, leaving some space so kids can spin the top circle. Review each king’s name, sharing how these were the good kings of Judah. Point out Jesus and share how Jesus is the truly good King who came from the line of Judah. Tell kids that while Judah’s kings were good because they worshiped God, only Jesus is the perfect, sinless King.

| **SAY** “ Today, we will learn about Judah’s good kings: Asa, Joash, Hezekiah, and Josiah. We’ll see how **JUDAH’S GOOD KINGS WORSHIPED GOD.** ”

OPTION 2: WHO WILL YOU FOLLOW?



Select two kids, one to be the “good king” and the other to be the “bad king.” Allow kids to see who each kid represents, then instruct them to close their eyes and listen closely. Explain that the “good and bad kings” will take turns giving the kids instructions. Some examples could be “jump on one leg,” “rub your head and pat your tummy,” “take two steps forward,” etc. The kids are to follow the instructions of the “good king”, but not the instructions given by the “bad king.” Tell kids that if they listen and obey the “bad king,” or don’t listen to the “good king,” you will tap their shoulder and they must sit down. Play additional rounds, choosing different kids to be the “good and bad kings.”

| **SAY** “ You needed to listen closely to each voice to tell who was the good and bad king. In the Old Testament, many kings ruled God’s people. Some were good, and some were bad. The good kings told the people to worship God and obey Him. The people were right to listen to them because the good kings led the people to follow God. ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Welcome, kids! My name is [your name], and I’m happy to see you. Did you bring your Bible? If so, will you hold it up? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Today, as we learn about Judah’s good kings, we will be in the Old Testament books of 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles. [Invite kids to find each book in their Bible.]

Do you remember how the kingdom of God’s people was divided in two? Last week, we learned that the Northern Kingdom of Israel was destroyed by Assyria. But the Southern Kingdom of Judah still remained. Israel had wicked kings. Judah had wicked kings too, but they also had some good kings. In our story, we’ll see how **JUDAH’S GOOD KINGS WORSHIPED GOD**. [Display the Story Point Poster.] Let’s pray: ‘Dear God, thank You for helping us to do what is right and good. Please help us remember that You are alone and worthy of worship. Amen.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “ We have a new big picture question to learn: **What is God like?** What do you think God is like? [Allow responses.] God is so great! We could spend forever learning more about Him and what He is like. To help us summarize what God is like, we will learn the answer: **God is holy, good, and loving.**

God was faithful to His people, providing Judah with good kings who told them to turn back to God. God desires that we turn to Him and worship Him because **God is holy, good, and loving**. The more we learn what God is like, the more we see how God is worthy of our worship. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ When God’s people failed to listen to God’s warnings about sin, they became a divided kingdom. Both Israel and Judah began to worship idols. We’ve seen how the Northern Kingdom of Israel was led by wicked kings—not one of them followed God. But the prophets Elijah and Elisha were sent to Israel to display God’s presence and power as the one true God. Even the prophet Hosea warned Israel about God’s coming judgment, but the people didn’t listen. Eventually, God allowed Assyria to destroy Israel because of their sin. Only the kingdom of Judah remained. Today, we will learn that **JUDAH’S GOOD KINGS WORSHIPED GOD**. ”



LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to 2 Kings 18–19; 2 Chronicles 14–24. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Judah’s Good Kings.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JUDAH’S GOOD KINGS

“ The Southern Kingdom of Judah had several good kings that led the people to follow God, worship Him, and turn away from sin.

King Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of God. He removed the places that the people worshiped false gods. He commanded the people of Judah to worship God and obey His laws. Asa rebuilt the altar that was in front of the Lord’s temple. Asa and the people of Judah promised to seek the Lord with all their heart and all their soul.

When an enemy army came, Asa prayed, saying, “Lord, we are counting on you to help us. You can give us victory.” The Lord answered his prayer, and Asa was loyal to God his entire life.

Years later, a wicked king named Ahaziah (ay huh ZIGH uh) became king over Judah. When Ahaziah died, his mother, Athaliah (ath uh LIGH uh), made herself queen by force. One of Ahaziah’s young sons, Joash, was hidden from Athaliah by his sister. Athaliah ruled as queen for six years and did evil in God’s sight.

The priest Jehoiada (jih HOY uh duh) made a plan to overthrow Queen Athaliah. They captured her and placed a crown on Joash’s head, making him king. Under the leadership of Jehoiada the priest, Joash tore down the temple of Baal and brought back the proper worship of God in the temple. Throughout the time the priest Jehoiada instructed him, **Joash did what was right in the Lord’s sight.**

Many years after Joash, Hezekiah became king over Judah. He did what was right in the Lord’s sight just as his ancestor David had done. One of his first acts as king was to clean out the temple so the people could worship and make sacrifices to the Lord. The people brought so many sacrifices that the priests needed help to prepare all the offerings.

Hezekiah invited Judah and Israel to celebrate the feast of the Passover. They enjoyed praising God and feasting so much that they celebrated for two weeks! After the feast, everyone went back to their towns and tore down the altars and places of worship to false gods.

After this, the same king of Assyria who had destroyed Israel came to attack Judah. The Assyrians said, “Do you think your God will save you? All the other kingdoms we defeated thought so, too.” **King Hezekiah prayed to God, and God**

STORYTELLING TIPS

Active listening: Tell kids to cheer when they hear how the kings led the people to do what was right.

Review the kings: If you created the “Kings of Judah Spinner,” invite kids to spin to each king when you tell about them in the story.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

sent an angel to destroy the Assyrian army. Judah was saved!

The last good king of Judah was Josiah. Even though he was only eight years old when he became king, he did what was right in the eyes of God. He smashed and tore down the places of idol worship. As he was cleaning out the temple, he found the book of the law from Moses. When Josiah heard the words of the law, Josiah was sad, because the nation was not obeying God's commands. **Josiah read the words of the law to all the people at the temple. Then Josiah and the people promised to keep the commands found in the book of the law.** The people renewed the covenant with God and stayed faithful to God while Josiah was alive.

Christ Connection: Judah's good kings led the people to God and away from sin. Yet when they died, the people returned to their sinful ways. Jesus is our good King who died and rose again, and always leads us to God and away from sin. ”

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ The Kingdom of Judah had both good and bad kings. Who were the good kings of Judah? [Allow responses.] Asa, Joash, Hezekiah, and Josiah were good kings. **JUDAH'S GOOD KINGS WORSHIPED GOD.** But Judah also experienced the rule of the evil King Ahaziah and his mother Athaliah. What plan did the priest Jehoida make? [Allow responses.] Queen Athaliah was overthrown, and King Ahaziah's son, Joash, became the next king. King Joash made good decisions with the help of Jehoiada the priest. God also wants us to follow Him and obey His Word, but we don't have to do it alone. Can you think of another person who helps you learn more about God and follow Him?

Hezekiah was another good king over Judah who cleaned out the temple so the people could worship God. The King of Assyria came to attack Judah because he did not believe God would save them. What did King Hezekiah do? [Allow responses.] King Hezekiah prayed, and God sent an angel to destroy Assyria's army!

Then we learned that even though King Josiah was young, he wanted to follow God and obey Him. Does being young mean that you cannot understand God's law? [Allow responses.] We have been given God's Word, the Bible, and when we read it alone or with others, we can grow in our understanding of who He is and how He calls all people to obey Him. Even if you are very young or very old, you can know God and obey Him through the Holy Spirit. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ Judah's good kings led the people to God and away from sin. Yet when they died, the people returned to their sinful ways. Like Judah, we are sinful. But God sent His Son, Jesus, to be the permanent solution for sin. We are forgiven of our sin when we place our faith in Jesus. I'd be happy to share more of what it means to trust in Jesus. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

**4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)**

Show the “Unit 15, Session 1” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Is there anything we can do to be good enough for God?
2. How does trusting in Jesus help us want to turn away from sin?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Point to Northern Africa and the Middle East on a world map.

SAY “In Northern Africa and the Middle East, there are more than 800 different people groups present. Many of the people groups are unreached people groups, where people have never heard about Jesus and there are no churches or missionaries to help the people hear about Him.”

Play the missions video. Note: There is no narration for this video. It is meant to show snapshot images of the people and cultures of North Africa and the Middle East. Ask kids to name some animals they saw in the video. Then ask kids what some of the people were doing in the video.

Tell kids that many countries in this part of the world have governments that are hostile to the gospel and will not allow missionaries to openly tell people about Jesus. Explain that missionaries have to be cautious and creative when trying to reach people for Jesus. Tell kids that missionaries have started sharing the gospel through digital and online platforms in these dangerous places. Pray for missionaries serving in Northern Africa and the Middle East, asking God to give them boldness, courage, and peace. Pray the people in this region will have curiosity about Christ and be open to hearing the gospel.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Psalm 145:9 together.

SAY “Our key passage reminds us that God is good and cares for us. We are His creation and are called to obey Him.”

Provide each kid with an index card and a Bible. Assist kids in finding Psalm 145:9. Lead kids to copy the verse onto their index card. Encourage kids to work with an adult to help them memorize this verse.

Lead kids to sing “The Lord is Good (Psalm 145:9).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “God, You call us to obey You because You love us. Help us turn away from sin and turn toward Jesus, who saves us from sin and death. Amen.”





LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to 2 Kings 18. Explain that the book of 2 Kings is found in the Old Testament. The books of 1 and 2 Kings are in the History division of the Old Testament because they give an account of Israel and Judah's continued sin and the rebellion against a holy God.

Consider pointing out the location of Judah (14) on the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud 2 Kings 18:3-6 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY “ Hezekiah was a good king who tore down the idols in Judah and encouraged the people to worship the one true God. Can you think of anything in your life that you might care about more than God? [Allow responses.] We all have things that we care about like our family, our friends, or even a favorite toy. These things are all good, but God deserves all our worship. Nothing is more important or greater than God. Anything that we care about more than Him is an idol. The good kings of Judah recognized that only God is to be worshiped. Like Hezekiah, we can ask God to help us remove any idols in our lives. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ Why did the people of Judah fall back into sin when the good kings died? ”

Explain that the people of Judah tried to keep the law, but they could not do it in their own power. Tell the kids that Scripture reminds us how Jesus has done what the law could not; He has freed believers from the power of sin forever (Romans 8:3-4). Share how we cannot perfectly keep the law, but through the Holy Spirit, God gives believers power to obey Him.

SAY “ When Josiah read God's law, he learned what God commanded His people. How do we know God's commands? ”

Tell kids that the Bible is God's Word to us. Discuss how when we read the Bible we learn more about God, His commands, and how He made the way to save sinful people. While the law does not save us, Christians obey God's words to show they love Him and others. Reading the Bible is how we come to understand how God's ways are always right and good.

SAY “ The good kings of Judah worshiped God. How can we worship God? ”

Share how believers worship God with their heart, soul, mind, and strength. Worship of God is seeing God for who He is and loving Him more than anything else. Tell kids that we can show this through our actions, thoughts, and words. When we read our Bibles, we show that we love God and want to spend time with Him. When we care for others, we show we love God because we are doing what He loves.





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: STORY POINT CROWNS

Before the session, choose three different colors of paper and cut out five crowns from each color, for a total of 15 crowns. On each color set, write one word of the story point on individual crowns: **JUDAH'S GOOD KINGS WORSHIPED GOD**. Hide the crowns around the room. Form the kids into three teams and assign them a color. Explain to the teams that they must race to find their crowns and put the story point together. The first team to assemble their story point wins. Finish by reviewing the story point together.

SAY “ These crowns remind us of the good kings that led the people to worship God. The good kings point us to Jesus, who alone was sinless. Jesus is the King of kings, who died on the cross to save us from sin. When we trust in Jesus, we are able to worship God with hearts that love and obey Him. ”

OPTION 2: WALL OF WORSHIP



Tape a large piece of brown craft paper to a wall. Provide each kid with a piece of red construction paper. Lead kids to draw hearts on their paper, and inside the hearts, write or draw pictures of ways they can worship God. Invite kids to share how they can worship God at home, at school, at church or any other location. For example, kids may write: *I can sing praises at home, or I can help others and show God's love.* Then direct kids to cut out their hearts and tape them to the brown craft paper. Invite kids to share what they wrote or drew.

SAY “ King Asa, King Joash, King Hezekiah, and King Josiah led the people to worship God. We are called to worship God too. He is worthy of all worship. Because of Jesus, believers can worship God no matter where they are or what they're doing. Through our thoughts, actions, and words, we can show that we love and value God most of all. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

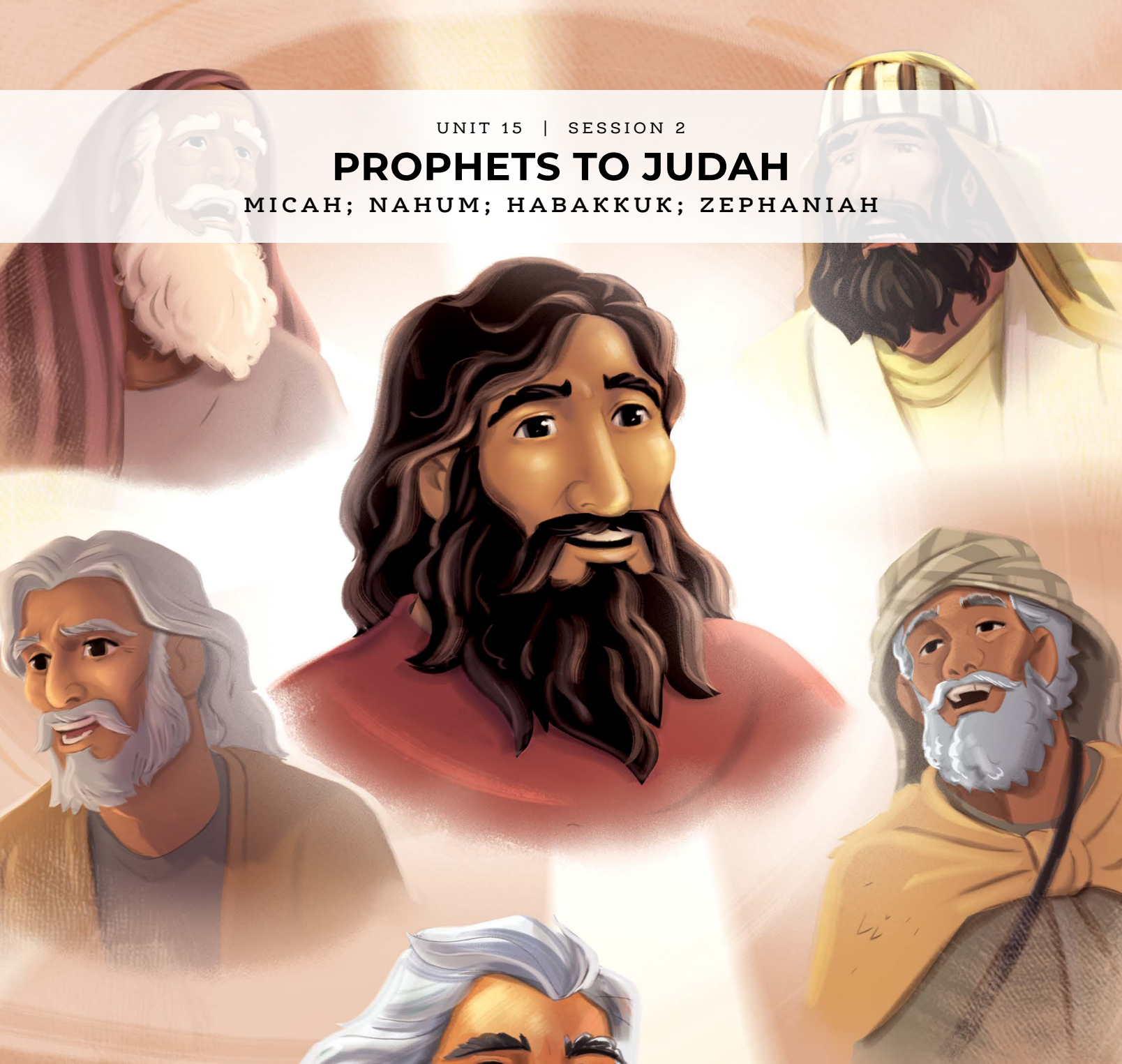
Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.

PROPHETS TO JUDAH

MICAH; NAHUM; HABAKKUK; ZEPHANIAH



KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 145:9

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving.

CHRIST CONNECTION: God sent prophets to His people to warn them to repent of their sin and turn to God. Jesus gave the same message, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.” When we trust in Jesus, we are restored to a right relationship with God and have the hope of eternal life.

STORY POINT: God sent prophets to tell the people to repent of their sins.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

While the Northern Kingdom of Israel had been destroyed by Assyria, the Southern Kingdom of Judah remained. During the years prior to Babylonian captivity, God continued to send prophets to Judah who called the people to repent of their sin. Even though the prophets pronounced the impending captivity, they also offered hope to the people: God would restore His people and provide salvation.

The prophet Micah spoke to the leaders of Israel regarding their ill-earned wealth. Micah called the leaders of Israel to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. Micah also shared a message of future hope: one day, God would send a new King who would be born in Bethlehem and rule over the restored people of God.

Nahum was another prophet sent to testify to God's judgment on sin. Nahum described how God would judge Assyria for its bloodshed, evil, and injustice. Nahum's message was a reminder to be faithful to God and a warning to not act like other evil nations, like Assyria.

Zephaniah begged the people to turn away from sin while there was still time. He showed that God will judge all the evil nations along with Judah.

Habakkuk spoke directly to God, asking Him why He would not stop the violence and sin of the people of Judah. God told Habakkuk that He will indeed judge the people and will bring destruction to the nation through Babylon. While Babylon would destroy Judah, Habakkuk also said he would celebrate in the Lord. Even in desolation and despair, God's people could rejoice in the hope of salvation.

God sent prophets to share the message of judgment, repentance, and restoration. Jesus willingly took on our judgment so we could turn from our sin and be restored to Him. When we trust in Jesus we are restored to a right relationship with God.

This week, encourage kids to see God's goodness through His Word. Like the prophets to Judah proclaimed a message of hope, the Word of God shares good news: Jesus died and rose again to save people from sin and death. Rejoice in the God of salvation.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10-15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25-30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- "What's the Message?" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- balloon
- straw
- cup
- pitcher of water
- pipette
- small paint brush
- tongs



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- paper plate
- metal brad
- paper clip
- construction papers, 4

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible story coloring page



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video
- Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- "Prophets to Judah" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- "Unit 15, Session 2" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- world map

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "The Lord is Good (Psalm 145:9)" song
- worship song of your choice (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “ Have you ever fixed something that was broken? What was it? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “What’s the Message?” activity page.

| **SAY** “ You all did a great job unscrambling the prophets’ message! In today’s story, we’ll learn how God sent prophets to tell the people to repent so they could be restored to God. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: A BETTER WAY

Perform the demonstrations below and ask kids if they know a better way to do each task. Invite kids to share their ideas, or use the suggested answers below.

- Inflate a balloon using a straw. (use your mouth or a helium pump)
- Fill a cup with water by transferring water from a pitcher using a pipette. (pour the water into the cup directly from the pitcher)
- Use a very small paint brush to paint an entire piece of paper. (use a larger paint brush)
- Use tongs to fold paper into an airplane. (use your hands)

| **SAY** “ Each of these tasks had a better way to do them. Today, we will see how the prophets of God called the people to a better way. The prophets told the people to repent and turn to God. Following God and worshiping Him is not only a better way to live; it is the best way. ”

OPTION 2: THE MINOR PROPHETS



Provide each kid with a Bible. Tell kids that you will call out a book from the Minor Prophets division of the Old Testament. Explain that when they hear the book, they should find the book in their Bible. Remind kids they can use the table of contents for help. Begin calling out one of the Minor Prophet books such as Nahum. Once every kid has found the book, call out the next book. Encourage kids to help their neighbor, if needed. Tell kids to close their Bible before they begin the next round.

| **SAY** “ These 12 books are not less important, but because they are shorter, they are referred to as the Minor Prophets. Today, our story focuses on four of these prophets: Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah. We’ll see how **GOD SENT PROPHETS TO TELL THE PEOPLE TO REPENT OF THEIR SINS.** ”





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Welcome, kids! My name is [your name], and I’m glad you’re here to learn from God’s Word. If you have a Bible with you, will you hold it up? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Today, we will learn about prophets God sent to His people in Judah.

In our story, we’ll see how **GOD SENT PROPHETS TO TELL THE PEOPLE TO REPENT OF THEIR SINS.** [Display the Story Point Poster.] Let’s pray: ‘Dear God, thank You for warning people of their sin. Help us turn away from sin and follow You. Amen.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “ Do you remember the big picture question we learned last week? [Allow responses.] **What is God like?** What was the answer we learned? [Allow responses.] **God is holy, good, and loving.**

The people of Judah continued to worship idols instead of the one true God. But God is loving and sent prophets to warn the people of Judah. The prophets told God’s people to repent and turn back to God. The Bible tells us that God loves us and wants us to turn from sin. Because sin brings death, God is good to warn us so we can be saved. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ After the kingdom split into the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah, God’s people were led by many wicked kings who did what was evil. Last week, we learned that Judah had some good kings who did what was right in God’s eyes. Yet, when the good kings died, God’s people returned to worshipping idols. God even sent prophets to warn His people to turn away from their sinful ways. Eventually, the Northern Kingdom of Israel was destroyed, and the people were exiled to Assyria. Today, we will learn how God continued to send more prophets to tell the people of Judah to repent of their sins. ”



LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Micah; Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Prophets to Judah.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

PROPHETS TO JUDAH

“ God loved His people so much that He sent messengers, or prophets, who called the people to repent of their sin so they could be restored to a right relationship with God.

The prophet Micah said that God was going to judge the wicked leaders of His people. They had become rich by stealing from others. **Micah warned that God would send foreign nations to destroy Israel, and called the people to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. Micah’s message also included hope—he said that God would one day send a new king from the line of David,** who would be born in Bethlehem and rule over the restored people of God.

Years later, God gave a message for the prophet Nahum to share. The main message of Nahum’s writings is this: “God is slow to anger and great in power. He will not let the wicked go free.” Nahum comforted God’s people and gave them hope by showing that God will punish their enemies, the evil nations and empires that love violence. Nahum’s message was also a warning to not act like these nations, and to remain faithful to God.

Zephaniah was another prophet. He saw that the nation of Judah was going to be judged for worshiping idols and that God would send a great nation to destroy the city of Jerusalem. **Zephaniah begged the people to turn away from sin while there was still time, so that they might be spared from God’s righteous anger against sin.** Zephaniah said that God will also judge all the evil nations and Judah because they acted like these evil nations.

The prophet Habakkuk was also sent to the people of Judah. Habakkuk spoke directly to God, asking Him why He would not stop the violence and sin of the people of Judah. God responded by saying He would gather the army of Babylon to destroy Judah. God shared that even though this disaster would come, the righteous will live by faith in Him. Habakkuk ends his message by pleading for God to be merciful to His people. Even though God’s judgment would come, Habakkuk said: “I will celebrate in the Lord; I will rejoice in the God of my salvation!”

Christ Connection: God sent prophets to His people to warn them to repent of their sin and turn to God. Jesus gave the same message, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.” When we trust in Jesus, we are restored to a right relationship with God and have the hope of eternal life. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Shout it out: As you tell the story, encourage the kids to listen for the word “prophet.” When you say “prophet,” instruct them to shout, “God’s got a message!” This will remind them that a prophet brings a message from God.

Use Bibles: Invite kids to turn to each Bible book as you share about Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, and Habakkuk.



2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “**GOD SENT PROPHETS TO TELL THE PEOPLE TO REPENT OF THEIR SINS.** What were some of the evil things the prophets said the people of Judah were doing? [Allow responses.] Micah said the people were mistreating the poor, loved violence, and did not do what was just. Zephaniah said the people rebelled against God. Habakkuk said the wicked people rule and have power. Nahum reminded God’s people that He would punish all evil, even the sins of Assyria.

While the prophets told of God’s coming judgment, they also gave the people hope. What did Micah say about the new king who would be born in Bethlehem? [Allow responses.] Micah said the new king would rule over God’s people and bring them back to God. Micah brought a message of hope through the promise of Jesus Christ’s coming birth. Jesus was born in Bethlehem and came to offer forgiveness so people can come back to God.

God sent prophets to His people to warn them to repent of their sin and turn to God. Jesus gave the same message, saying, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.’ When we trust in Jesus, we are restored to a right relationship with God and have the hope of eternal life.”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “Even though the people of Judah were sinful, God loved them and gave them hope. He made promises through the prophets about how He would send a new King who would make the way for sin to be forgiven. Jesus is the King the prophets said would come. When we trust in Jesus, we will not receive the punishment we deserve. Jesus makes us right with God and helps us follow God.”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 15, Session 2” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Why were there multiple prophets in the Old Testament?
2. How does the Bible help us see our sin and need for Jesus?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Share how a woman named Rose desired to share Jesus with the people who lived in an area known as the Horn of Africa. [Point to the Horn of Africa on a world map.]

SAY “Rose told the leadership at her church that she wanted to be a missionary to the people in Africa. The church’s leadership knew they could not send her alone or provide all of her financial needs. Rose’s pastor recruited 15 other churches across Mexico and Panama to support Rose as a missionary to the Horn of Africa.

When Rose arrived in Africa, she began to work with farmers who tend livestock. The farmers live in a harsh environment that is very dry. The area they live in also has no running water or



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

electricity. But despite the difficult environment, Rose is committed to sharing Jesus. The people Rose shares the gospel with can often be hostile to the gospel. But, by God's grace, some have trusted in Jesus. ”

Pray for Rose as she shares the gospel with people who don't always want to hear it. Pray for the churches who support the mission work in the Horn of Africa.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Psalm 145:9 together.

SAY “ Though we have sinned, God is faithful and has made the way to save us from sin. Our key passage reminds us that God has shown us love. ”

Recite the key passage aloud for the kids. Explain that you are going to recite it again, but this time you are going to repeat it incorrectly. You might switch some of the words, leave some words out, or even add something silly. Tell the kids to pay close attention as they share what was incorrect. Repeat several times. Then close by leading the kids to correctly recite the key passage with you.

Lead kids to sing “The Lord is Good (Psalm 145:9).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Thank You, God, for not leaving us in our sin. You have made the way for us to be forgiven because of Your great love for us. Help us share this good news with others. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to the Table of Contents. Point out the books of the Major Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel) and the books of the Minor Prophets (the 12 remaining books). Invite kids to find the books of the Minor Prophets from the Bible story: Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, and Habakkuk.

Consider pointing out the location of Judah (14) on the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Micah 5:4 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verse aloud.

SAY “ Micah warned God’s people of the coming judgment for sin and their need for repentance. Like the people of Judah, we are all guilty of disobeying God. We deserve God’s judgment for our sin.

But even though Micah shared some bad news, he also shared good news. Micah’s message from God was a future promise of the birth of God’s Son, Jesus. As we read Micah’s words, we can rest in knowing that God’s promise has been fulfilled! God has made the way for us to be forgiven of our sin because of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ What does Nahum’s message that ‘God does not let the wicked go free’ tell us about God’s character? ”

Explain that God is just (Deuteronomy 32:4). Remind kids that being just means doing what is right and fair. Nahum reminded the people that God always does what is right and punishes those who do evil. **God is holy, good, and loving.** God is good to punish sin because all sin goes against God’s holy, good, and loving ways.

SAY “ How was the prophets’ message similar to Jesus’ message when He was on earth? ”

Share how Jesus also told people to repent because the kingdom of God was near. Tell kids that the message of repentance is one of mercy and grace. When God tells us to turn from our sin, we are given an opportunity to recognize our sin and our need for Jesus. When we trust in Jesus, we are forgiven and receive eternal life.

SAY “ Why didn’t God completely destroy the people of Judah for their sin? ”

Remind kids of God’s faithfulness and His truthfulness. God had promised that He would bless the world through Abraham’s family. Abraham’s family included the line of Judah, which included people like King David. Jesus would come from the line of Judah. Help kids understand that God is patient and that He always keeps His word. Praise God for how we can always trust Him and believe in His words.





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: GAME OF CHANCE

Before the session, create a spinner using a paper plate, a paper clip, and a metal brad. Punch a hole in the center of the plate and loosely secure the paper clip using the metal brad. Divide the plate into six sections and label each section with a number 1–6. Tape four pieces of construction paper to the floor in a straight line.

Direct kids to form a single line behind the construction paper. Tell kids that before you spin the spinner, they will guess what number the spinner will land on. If the kid guesses correctly, he steps on the “board.” If he does not guess correctly, he moves to the back of the line. Once a kid makes it to a piece of construction paper, he will remain in place if he doesn’t guess correctly. Kids on the “board” may need to stand side-by-side. Play until the first kid makes it to the end of the papers or as time allows.

SAY “ God’s message of Judah’s coming judgment was not a game of chance. It was going to happen as part of God’s plan for His people. We all deserve punishment for our sin, but we have the certain promise of salvation when we place our faith in Jesus. ”

OPTION 2: PICTURE MESSAGES



Play a game of pictictionary by having kids draw pictures of dangerous situations. For example, kids may draw a fire, shark-infested waters, a cliff, a thunderstorm, etc. Form kids into two teams. Choose a kid from team one to draw first. Assign her a picture to draw and challenge her team to guess within 30 seconds. Award the team a point if they guess correctly. Repeat as time allows or until every kid has had a turn to draw. The team with the most points is the winner.

SAY “ All of the pictures you drew involved dangerous situations. What would you do if you saw a friend heading toward a dangerous situation? [Allow responses.] Most likely, you would warn them and tell them to turn away from it. This is exactly why God sent prophets to His people. God loved His people and wanted them to turn away from the danger sin leads to. Unfortunately, God’s people didn’t always listen. However, when we hear God’s warnings about sin, we can turn away. When we trust in Jesus, the Holy Spirit gives us power to say no to sin and follow God. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.

GOD PROMISED A NEW COVENANT

JEREMIAH 17; 31



KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 145:9

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving.

CHRIST CONNECTION: Like God's people, we all have sinful hearts that do not obey God or love Him rightly. Through Jesus' death on the cross, God made a new covenant. Those who trust in Jesus have their sin forgiven and have the law written on their hearts.

STORY POINT: God promised His people a new covenant and forgiveness of sin forever.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

The prophet Jeremiah was a priest sent to speak the word of the Lord to His people. Jeremiah taught plainly about sin and how our disobedient hearts cannot be trusted. Jeremiah predicted God’s judgment on Judah’s sins through the nation of Babylon. Yet, Jeremiah also declared how God would make a new covenant with His people.

The people of Judah faced the same problem we face today: sin. Their failure to abide by and uphold the law was a constant reminder that they were sinful and fell short of God’s standards. Jeremiah told the people that those who put their trust in mankind are cursed because men are sinful and imperfect. He also said that people cannot save themselves. But Jeremiah shared good news. He told the people that the person who trusts in the Lord will be strong and healthy, like a tree planted by water (Jeremiah 17:8).

Through Jeremiah, the Lord spoke of His everlasting love toward His people. He shared the promise of gathering His people, watching over them, and turning their mourning into joy. God promised His people a new covenant and eternal forgiveness of sin.

The old covenant required complete obedience to the law; yet no one can be justified by the law (Galatians 2:16). In His grace, God did what we cannot do. He promised a new covenant which would be accomplished by Him. Jesus is the fulfillment of the new covenant; He fulfilled the requirements of the law on our behalf. As Paul wrote, “For what the law could not do since it was weakened by the flesh, God did. He condemned sin in the flesh by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh as a sin offering” (Romans 8:3).

Forgiveness that lasts forever only comes through faith in Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:11). As you prepare to teach on God’s promise of a new covenant, take time to thank Him for His forgiveness in your life. Remind boys and girls of how God changes believers’ hearts to hearts that love and obey Him.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- "A Great Promise" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- cups, 3
- small object like a cotton ball

Session Starter (Option 2)

- block of wood with the word SIN carved in it
- block of wood
- permanent marker
- paper towel



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- buy or bake heart-shaped cookies, 1 per kid
- cookie icing
- paper plates, 1 per kid
- plastic baggies (optional)

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- ball
- music

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible story coloring page



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video
- Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- "God Promised a New Covenant" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- "Unit 15, Session 3" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- world map

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "The Lord is Good (Psalm 145:9)" song
- worship song of your choice (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “ Have you ever made a promise you couldn’t keep? What happened? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “A Great Promise” activity page.

| **SAY** “ Today, we will learn about a wonderful promise God made and how God always keeps His promises. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: CAN YOU BE TRICKED?



Display three cups on a table. Place a small object, like a cotton ball, under one of the cups while the kids watch. Shuffle the cups around slowly at first, then increase the speed as the game progresses. Ask a kid to guess which cup has the object. Play several rounds, inviting different kids to guess where the object is. Consider allowing a kid be the cup-mover.

| **SAY** “ The Bible says in Jeremiah 17:9 that our hearts can trick us. We might think we’re doing right, but we can’t always trust our hearts. Just like this game tricked our eyes, our hearts can fool us. Today, we’ll learn how we need God to change our hearts so we can follow His ways. ”

OPTION 2: IMPOSSIBLE TO WIPE AWAY

Before the session, carve the word SIN into a block of wood. Pass the wood around to the kids, inviting them to feel the indentations of the letters. Then take the wood back and invite kids, one at a time, to make a mark on the wood using a permanent marker. Once all kids have made a mark, try wiping away the marks and the word SIN with a paper towel. Emphasize how it is impossible to wipe them away. Share how our hearts are like this marked-up piece of wood because we all sin.

Then hold up a clean block of wood. Tell kids that we are going to learn how God promised to give His people a new heart. Discuss how only God can forgive us and wipe away our sin forever.

| **SAY** “ Today, we will learn about God’s promise to make a new covenant through Jesus. This means He would forgive people’s sins and give them a new heart. Let’s get ready to hear how this promise came true. ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Welcome, kids! My name is [your name], and I’m excited you’re here. If you have a Bible with you, will you hold it up? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Today, we will be learning from the book of Jeremiah. As we study from the book of Jeremiah, we will learn about a good promise God made and how that promise is for us today.

As we hear our Bible story, we will learn that **GOD PROMISED HIS PEOPLE A NEW COVENANT AND FORGIVENESS OF SIN FOREVER.** [Display the Story Point Poster.] As we have seen, God’s people continued to sin and couldn’t take away their sin on their own. But God had a plan. Through Jesus, God was going to make the way for people to be forgiven and have hearts that desire to love and obey God. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “ What is God like? [Allow responses.] **God is holy, good, and loving.** The Bible is a book about God, and throughout the Bible, we continually see how God is holy, good, and loving. He always does what is right and shows that He loves His creation.

Today, we will see how God’s promise to provide a new covenant displayed His holiness, goodness, and love. A holy God must punish sin, but through the new covenant God promised to forgive people’s sin. The new covenant would be accomplished by Jesus because Jesus would take the punishment for people’s sin. God’s forgiveness of sin through faith in Jesus shows His goodness and love. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ We’ve learned about some of the prophets God sent to Israel to warn them of their sin, but the people did not listen. Eventually, the Northern Kingdom was destroyed, and the people were taken captive to Assyria. Judah, the Southern Kingdom, was all that remained of God’s people. While Judah had some good kings who led the people to worship God, after the good kings died, the people returned to worshipping idols. Last week, we learned how God sent prophets to Judah to tell them to repent of their sin. Today, we will learn about another prophet, Jeremiah, who told God’s people to repent and also shared the hope of a new covenant. ”



LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Jeremiah 17:1-10; 31:31-34. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “God Promised a New Covenant.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

GOD PROMISED A NEW COVENANT

“ Before Babylon came and attacked Judah, God sent a prophet named Jeremiah to speak His words to God’s people. Jeremiah said, “The sin of the people of Judah is like words carved into a stone—it can’t be simply wiped away.”

Jeremiah shared more of God’s words, saying, “The person who trusts in other people is cursed, because people are sinful and imperfect. People cannot save themselves. The person who trusts in the LORD, however, will be strong and healthy, like a tree planted by water.”

Through Jeremiah, God also said, “Our hearts are deceitful, and we cannot understand them. But God knows our hearts, and God is trustworthy. He gives each person what they deserve according to their character.”

Even though people have sinful, deceitful hearts, Jeremiah shared how God promised to make a new covenant with His people. Jeremiah said, “Look, the days are coming when I will make a new covenant with my people. It will be different from the old covenant I made with them when I freed them from Egypt. They broke that covenant, but they will not be able to break this one. I will put my teaching within them and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. All my people will know me, from the least to the greatest. I will forgive them and never remember their sin.”

Christ Connection: Like God’s people, we all have sinful hearts that do not obey God or love Him rightly. Through Jesus’ death on the cross, God made a new covenant. Those who trust in Jesus have their sin forgiven and have the law written on their hearts. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Pass it: Pass around a small stone as you describe how the sin of people’s hearts is like words carved into a stone.

List it: On a dry erase board, write a list of God’s promises through the new covenant: God’s teaching on people’s hearts, He will be their God, His people will know Him, He will forgive their sin.



2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ The prophet Jeremiah was sent by God to warn the people of the seriousness of sin. God’s people had God’s law, but they couldn’t obey it perfectly. They kept sinning and turning away from God. What did Jeremiah compare the sin of the people of Judah to? **[Allow responses.]** By comparing the people’s sin to words carved into stone, Jeremiah helped them understand that people cannot take away their sin. Jeremiah explained that people are not able to save themselves. We can never obey God perfectly.

Why did Jeremiah compare the person who trusts in God to a tree planted by water? **[Allow responses.]** Trees receive water through their roots, so a tree planted beside water will never go dry; it will always be filled with life. When we trust in God, He gives us new life and fills us with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit guides us as we grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus.

What did Jeremiah say about people’s hearts? **[Allow responses.]** People’s hearts are untrustworthy and lead us to follow our own desires instead of God’s. The people of Judah were unable to keep the old covenant because their hearts led them to sin. But God promised to make a new covenant with His people—one they could not break. Jeremiah shared that a day was coming when God would forgive sin forever. God would give people new hearts that desire to obey Him.

Jesus, God’s sinless Son, came to earth, died on the cross for sin, and rose again. Jesus’ death paid the price we deserve for our sin. Through Jesus’ death on the cross, God made a new covenant. Those who trust in Jesus have their sin forgiven and have the law written on their hearts. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ The people of Judah were unable to keep God’s law under the old covenant. We have also broken God’s law by sinning against Him. But God sent Jesus to live a perfect life and die on the cross for our sin. When we trust in Jesus, we receive forgiveness of sin forever. Have you trusted in Jesus to save you? ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 15, Session 3” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. How can God be in all believer’s hearts at the same time?
2. How can Christians show others that Jesus has changed their heart?



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Point to the country of Libya on a world map as you tell kids about a man named Youcef who lives in Libya. Share how Youcef became a Christian after a friend gave him a copy of the New Testament to read.

SAY “ While Youcef was reading the New Testament, he learned about Simon of Cyrene and how he carried Jesus’ cross on the way to Golgotha. As Youcef began to learn more about Simon of Cyrene, he found out that Simon was from the city of Cyrene in Libya.

Youcef wrote a book about his research. Since many people of North Africa are oral learners, he hopes to make his book into a movie so more people in North Africa will hear the gospel message. He hopes more people will believe the truths of the Bible and trust in Jesus as their Lord and Savior. ”

Pray for Youcef as he continues to share the hope of the gospel with the people of North Africa. Pray for the people of North Africa and that they would trust in Jesus.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Psalm 145:9 together.

SAY “ Jeremiah reminded the people that their sin was great but hope was not lost. God did not leave His people in their sin, because just as our key passage reminds us, He is good and compassionate over all He has made. ”

Provide the kids with several sheets of paper and some markers. Help the kids break the key passage down into smaller pieces, using only a few words at a time. Encourage them to work together to draw pictures for each of the phrases to help them remember each part of the key passage. Once complete, instruct kids to recite the key passage using their pictures.

Lead kids to sing “The Lord is Good (Psalm 145:9).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ God, Your Word reminds us how much You care for us. We praise You for being greater than the power of sin. Help us turn away from our own desires and follow You. Help our hearts love You more than anything else. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Jeremiah 31. Explain that the book of Jeremiah was written by the prophet Jeremiah. Share how the book of Jeremiah is in the Major Prophets division of the Old Testament because it is larger in size.

Consider pointing out Jerusalem (H5) on the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Choose a volunteer to read Jeremiah 17:9-10 or ask kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY “ Have you ever heard the phrase ‘follow your heart?’ [Allow responses.] Jeremiah reminds us that our hearts can’t always be trusted. Because we are sinful, our hearts lead us to follow our own ways rather than God’s ways. God is always trustworthy, and His truth is unchanging.

Through God’s promise of a new covenant, we have the way for our hearts to be made new. Jesus did what we cannot do: He perfectly obeyed God. When we trust in Him, we are forgiven of our sin and God changes our hearts so that we want to obey God. We may not always obey God perfectly, but because of faith in Jesus, God still sees us as if we have done everything right. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ How does God write His law on our hearts? ”

Tell kids that God does not write on our hearts with a marker or a pen. Explain that when we turn to God, He permanently changes the desires of our hearts. As believers, we will want to obey God’s law not because of written rules, but because we have a transformed heart that loves Him (Romans 6:17).

SAY “ Why should we obey God? ”

Help kids understand that we obey God because He loves us. Tell kids that we don’t obey God to earn His love, because through Jesus, we already have it. Because of sin, our hearts want to do what we want instead of what God wants. We can try to obey God perfectly, but we will sin. Through the new covenant, God promised to save us through Jesus and to change our hearts to help us obey Him.

SAY “ The people in the Old Testament broke the old covenant because they did not keep all of God’s laws. Why can’t the new covenant be broken? ”

Share how the new covenant cannot be broken because God Himself accomplished it. When Jesus came to earth, He obeyed every one of God’s laws perfectly. Jesus always did what the Father commanded. The new covenant was completed when Jesus died on the cross. His blood washes away the sin of those who trust in Him. Before Jesus died on the cross, He said, “it is finished.” Jesus did what God sent Him to do so people could have forgiveness of sins.





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: EDIBLE HEARTS



Before the session, buy or bake sugar cookies in the shape of a heart. Consider leading kids to wash their hands or use hand-sanitizer prior to touching the cookies. Provide kids with a heart-shaped cookie, paper plate, and cookie icing. Direct kids to decorate their cookies using the icing. Then invite kids to share their cookie designs with the group. Allow kids to eat their cookie or provide plastic baggies for kids to take their cookie home.

SAY “ Apart from Jesus, we don’t love God and want to obey Him. We love ourselves more than we love God, and we follow our own way. But when we trust in Jesus, God changes us. He gives us new hearts—hearts of flesh that are soft toward Him, like these cookies. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and changes our hearts so we love Him and want to obey Him. ”

OPTION 2: PROMISE PASS



Lead kids to sit in a circle. Direct kids to pass around the ball while the music plays. When the music stops, the kid holding the ball answers a question about the promises found in the Bible story or completes a phrase you say, such as:

- Who said God would make a new covenant? (Jeremiah)
- God’s new covenant means... (God loves us.)
- God will write His law on... (our hearts.)
- What did God promise to forgive? (our sin)


SAY “ Jeremiah told about a day when God would forgive sin and change people’s hearts. Jesus made these words come true. Just like the people of Judah, we need a heart change so that we can obey and follow God. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.



UNIT 15 | SESSION 4

JUDAH WAS TAKEN CAPTIVE

2 CHRONICLES 36

KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 145:9

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving.

CHRIST CONNECTION: The people of Judah continued to sin and were destroyed by Babylon. Even though God was patient, all sin deserves judgment. God's patience is meant to lead us to repentance. Those who repent and trust in Jesus will escape God's judgment.

STORY POINT: The people's consequence for disobeying God was exile to Babylon.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

Growing up, you likely learned that disobedience has consequences. The people of Judah learned that the consequence for their disobedience to God was exile to Babylon. Despite their sin and unfaithfulness, God had been very patient with His people and was slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

Not only had God sent the prophets to warn and encourage the people, but He also gave them good kings to help set an example. Still, the people continued to sin and worship idols. In today's text, the people of Judah once again find themselves in the hands of evil kings.

King Jehoahaz, son of the final good king, Josiah, was dethroned by King Neco of Egypt after only three months of ruling. King Neco made his brother, Jehoiakim, king in his place. Jehoiakim, however, was captured by King Nebuchadnezzar eleven years later. Next came his son, King Jehoiachin. He also did evil in the Lord's sight and was quickly replaced by Zedekiah.

King Zedekiah ruled over Judah for eleven years. He is described as a hard and stubborn man who refused to turn to the Lord (2 Chronicles 36:13). In the same way, the people and priests became more and more unfaithful to God.

Because of the sin of the people and their disregard for the many warnings they received, God allowed the Babylonians to destroy the nation of Judah. The Babylonians took all the treasures from the temple and palace and burned them down. This all came to pass just as God had said through the prophet Jeremiah. God's people were captured and taken to Babylon. Yet, hope remained: after 70 years, God promised to rescue and restore His people to their land.

When we disobey God, we also face consequences. For those who have not trusted in Jesus, the consequence is eternal death in hell. The good news is that Jesus bore the consequences for all who trust in Him. The Bible shares how Jesus "bore our sins in his body on the tree; so that, having died to sins, we might live for righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:24). Our sin has been paid for by His death and defeated by His resurrection.

As you prepare this week, remember that we serve a God who is faithful to keep His word. Pray for boys and girls to understand the consequences of their sin, so they can experience the gift of Jesus' forgiveness and eternal life.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- "What Doesn't Belong?" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- clear glass of water
- various food colors

Session Starter (Option 2)

- strips of paper, 40
- staplers, 2



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- plastic cups, 20-30
- marshmallows, 20-30
- party blowers, 1 per kid

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible story coloring page



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video
- Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- "Judah Was Taken Captive" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Old Testament Mediterranean Map or world map (optional)

Questions from Kids

- "Unit 15, Session 4" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- "A Moment of Vast Opportunity" missions video

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "The Lord Is Good (Psalm 145:9)" song
- worship song of your choice (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “What’s the longest trip you have taken? How did you pass the time?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “What Doesn’t Belong?” activity page.

| **SAY** “Today, we will see how the people of Judah were taken to a new country, called Babylon. They didn’t belong there, but because of their sin, they were taken captive.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: DARKER AND DARKER

Place a clear glass of water on a table and invite the kids to gather around it. Invite one kid to select a color of food color to be added to the clear water. Then ask another kid to add a different color. Repeat this process until the water is no longer colorful, but dark. Prompt the kids to consider anything that might reverse the color of the water.

| **SAY** “Our glass of water started out clear, but the more color we added, the murkier the water became. This reminds me of how sinful choices lead to consequences. The more we choose to disobey God and go our own way, the darker our consequences become. In today’s story, we will discover that the people’s consequence for disobeying God was exile to Babylon.”

OPTION 2: PAPER CHAIN RELAY



Form kids into two teams and give each team 20 strips of paper and a stapler. Provide each kid with a piece of construction paper. Explain that on your start, the first kid will form the first link of a paper chain by stapling a strip of paper into a ring. Then the first kid will pass the stapler to the next kid who will add another link to the chain. Kids on each team will continue to assemble their paper strips into a paper chain using the stapler. The first team to assemble their paper chain wins. As an added challenge, kids could be required to write a word of the story point on their strip of paper before creating the chain.

| **SAY** “Chains remind me of someone being taken as a prisoner. Chains can hold a person captive. Today, we will learn how the people of Judah were taken captive by the nation of Babylon. **THE PEOPLE’S CONSEQUENCE FOR DISOBEYING GOD WAS EXILE TO BABYLON.**”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Hi, kids! My name is [your name], and I’m so glad you’re here. Did you bring your Bible with you? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Today’s Bible story can be found in the book of 2 Chronicles. [Assist kids in finding 2 Chronicles in their Bible.] As we hear our story, we will learn how Judah was taken captive by the nation of Babylon.

We learned about some of the good kings of Judah, but Judah also had many wicked kings. The bad kings led the people to worship the idols of other nations and turn away from God. Even in their sin, God was patient. But God will punish sin. In our story, we’ll see how **THE PEOPLE’S CONSEQUENCE FOR DISOBEYING GOD WAS EXILE TO BABYLON**. [Display the Story Point Poster.] Let’s pray: ‘Dear God, help us hear Your Word and turn away from sin. Please give us hearts that love You and want to follow You. In Jesus’ name, amen.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “ What is God like? [Allow responses.] **God is holy, good, and loving.** To be holy means that God is without sin and everything He does is right. God’s holiness will always mean that sin must be punished. And God is good to punish sin. It would be wrong for God to allow evil and sinfulness to never be punished. In His love, God disciplines His children so they will turn away from their sin and trust in Him. Today, as we learn about the consequences Judah faced for their sin, we can remember how Jesus faced the punishment we deserve for our sin. Even though Jesus never sinned, He took the punishment for sin in our place. God shows He is holy, good, and loving through Jesus. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ We have already learned how the Northern Kingdom was destroyed, and the people were taken captive to Assyria. Judah, the Southern Kingdom, was all that remained of God’s people. While God sent prophets to Judah to tell them to repent of their sin, the people remained stubborn and did not repent. The prophets said God would judge their sin by sending the nation of Babylon to destroy Judah. Today, we will see that **THE PEOPLE’S CONSEQUENCE FOR DISOBEYING GOD WAS EXILE TO BABYLON**. ”



LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to 2 Chronicles 36. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Judah Was Taken Captive.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JUDAH WAS TAKEN CAPTIVE

“**Even though the people of Judah continued to sin, God gave them chance after chance to turn from their sin and return to Him. He sent prophets to warn and encourage them.** He gave them good kings who did what was right and set good examples. **But God’s people did not listen.** They hated God’s words and mocked His prophets. The people continued to sin and worship idols.

Josiah was the last good king of Judah. His son, Jehoahaz (jih HOH uh haz) was only king for three months before God allowed the king of Egypt to take him away. The king of Egypt made Jehoahaz’s brother, Jehoiakim (jih HOY uh kim), king over Judah.

Jehoiakim did evil in the sight of God. So, God allowed King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to attack him and take him to Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar also took some of the riches of God’s temple to Babylon.

Jehoiakim’s son, Jehoiachin (jih HOY uh kin), became king in his place. He did evil in the sight of God and was only king for three months. Nebuchadnezzar sent for him and brought him to Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar told Jehoiachin to bring even more riches from God’s temple. **Nebuchadnezzar made Zedekiah (zed uh KIGH uh), Jehoiachin’s brother, king over Judah.**

Zedekiah also did what was evil in the sight of God. He did not humble himself before the prophet Jeremiah. **Under Zedekiah’s leadership, the people became more and more sinful like the other nations.** They dishonored the Lord’s temple in Jerusalem.

Because the people continued to sin and rebelled against God, God allowed the Babylonians to destroy the nation of Judah. Their army attacked and conquered them. They took all the treasures from God’s temple and from the king’s palace. They burned the temple and the palaces and tore down the wall of the city. **King Nebuchadnezzar took the people who survived the attack to Babylon to be servants. Jeremiah had warned God’s people about this, and now his words had come true. God said the people would be captives in Babylon for 70 years.**

Christ Connection: The people of Judah continued to sin and were destroyed by Babylon. Even though God was patient, all sin deserves judgment. God’s patience is meant to lead us to repentance. Those who repent and trust in Jesus will escape God’s judgment.”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Display a map: Point to Babylon (E11) on the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Or, point to Iraq on a modern-day map.

Active listening: Invite kids to cover their eyes, every time they hear the phrase, “did evil in the sight of God.”



2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ God showed the people of Judah faithfulness and patience by giving them multiple chances to turn away from sin. Who did God send to warn His people and tell them to turn back to Him? [Allow responses.] God sent prophets to warn His people, but they did not listen to the prophets. The people continued to sin and worship idols.

The last four kings of Judah were wicked. They led the people away from God, so each king was punished for his sin. **God is holy, loving, and good**; He will punish sin. Jehohaz was removed as king of Judah by the king of Egypt. Then Jehoiakim became king of Judah. Who did God allow to attack Jerusalem when Jehoiakim was king? [Allow responses.] God allowed King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to attack Judah and take Jehoiakim to Babylon.

Next, Jehoiachin became king, but he was punished for his sin too. He was also taken captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. Finally, the last king Zedekiah was also punished for his sin. Because of his sin, and all the people of Judah’s sin from all the years, God allowed Nebuchadnezzar to attack Jerusalem again. The walls, temple, and palace of Jerusalem were destroyed. What was the people’s consequence for disobeying God? [Allow responses.] **THE PEOPLE’S CONSEQUENCE FOR DISOBEYING GOD WAS EXILE TO BABYLON.** Even though God was patient, all sin deserves judgment. God’s patience is meant to lead us to repentance. Those who repent and trust in Jesus will escape God’s judgment. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ We all deserve punishment for our sin, but through Jesus, we don’t have to face the punishment we deserve. God made the way for us to be right with Him through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Anyone who calls on the name of Jesus will be saved (Romans 10:13). ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 15, Session 4” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. How can we know that God will always be there for us, even when we sometimes feel He isn’t?
2. Why is trusting in Jesus the only way we can be with God forever?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Play the missions video, explaining how many people in North Africa and the Middle East need to hear the gospel. Invite kids to point out how the cultures in the video may be similar or different to their own.

SAY “ In the video, you may have noticed how the land of Northern Africa and the Middle East



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

is desert-like. The video also pointed out how many people in North Africa and the Middle East are Muslim or Jewish. A woman named Vera is a missionary to this area and is working to share the gospel with people who are Muslim. However, she faces some challenges. Oftentimes the people are not interested in hearing about Jesus. There is also the threat of persecution for Christians. And it can be difficult to reach people who live in remote, desert areas. Vera needs the wisdom of God to best know how to work among the people and build relationships that will allow the people to be open to hearing the good news about Jesus. ”

Pray for Vera as she continues to build relationships with the Muslim people. Ask God to open the hearts of the people of North Africa and the Middle East so they will be willing to trust in Jesus and be forgiven of sin.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Before the session, print a copy of the key passage from the Key Passage Poster on 8.5-by-11 inch cardstock. Cut the cardstock into 10–12 puzzle pieces. Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Psalm 145:9 together.

SAY “ Our story reminds us that sin has consequences. But God is good, and He has provided the way for His people to come back to Him through Jesus. Anyone who trusts in Jesus will live with God forever. ”

Provide kids with the puzzle pieces and challenge them to put them together to complete the key passage. Then invite kids to remove one of the word pieces and say the key passage aloud, filling in the missing word. Repeat, until each of the word pieces is removed.

Lead kids to sing “God Is Good (Psalm 145:9).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Dear God, thank You for being patient with us, even when we sin. Thank You for loving us so much that You sent Your only Son to die for our sins. Help us turn away from sin and follow Jesus. In Jesus’ name, amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to 2 Chronicles 36. Explain that the book of 2 Chronicles mainly focuses on the kings of Judah from the time of Solomon until the people of Judah were taken into exile by Babylon.

Consider pointing out the location of Babylon (E11) on the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud 2 Chronicles 36:15-16 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY “ God is so patient and kind. He kept warning His people, over and over again, about their sin and what would happen if they did not repent. But the people ignored God’s words through the prophets.

Today, God has given us His Word, the Bible, so we can know Him and recognize our need for a Savior. Like Judah, we continue to sin and cannot save ourselves. However, we don’t have to ignore God’s words like Judah did. When we read the Bible or hear the gospel, we can trust in Jesus and be saved from our sin. Jesus took the punishment we deserve when He died on the cross. Anyone who trusts in Him will be forgiven of sin and receive eternal life. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

| **SAY** “ Does God give people unlimited chances to repent and follow Jesus? Why not? ”

Remind kids that the people of Judah were given many chances to turn away from sin, but God eventually brought judgment on them. Explain that the Bible tells us that we will all eventually die. If people die without trusting in Jesus as Savior and Lord, it will be too late for them to repent. Encourage kids with the mission of sharing the gospel with a lost world.

| **SAY** “ Why does sin deserve to be punished? ”

Prompt kids to remember that God is holy, good, and loving. God is right to punish sin because sin is wrong and goes against Him and His ways. Tell kids that God’s standard is perfection, but because no one is perfect, we all deserve punishment for our sin. Share how only Jesus lived a perfect, sinless life.

| **SAY** “ Did God ever stop loving His people? Why not? ”

Tell kids that God never stopped loving His people. Even though many of the people were taken to Babylon, God took care of them in a foreign land. God showed His faithful love by telling them that they would be free from captivity after 70 years. Years later, God would send Jesus, who came from the family of Judah, to die on the cross for our sins so that everyone who trusts in Him will be saved.





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: KNOCK IT DOWN

Place a line of 10–15 cups on two tables. On top of each cup, place a large marshmallow. Form kids into two teams and assign a table of cups to each team. Provide each kid with a party blower. Line up each team at an end of the room opposite their table. On your start, send the first kid from each team to knock off the marshmallow on the first cup by using their party blower. After the first kid returns to his team, the next kid will run to the second cup and knock off the marshmallow using her party blower. Repeat, until one team is the first to knock off every marshmallow. Play again, as time allows. Consider adding more cups and marshmallows for an added challenge.

SAY “ Today, we learned how King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon knocked down the walls of Jerusalem and destroyed the temple. The destruction of Jerusalem gives us a picture of what sin does: it leaves us broken and without hope. But God loves us so much that He didn’t leave us in our brokenness. He sent Jesus to restore or rebuild what sin destroys. Through Jesus we can be made right with God and have an everlasting hope. ”

OPTION 2: REMOVE THE KING



On a dry erase board, draw two stick figures with a head, two eyes, a nose, a mouth, two arms, two legs, and a crown. Form kids into two teams. Explain that you will ask review questions from the Bible story and the first team to raise their hand will get to answer. If they get the question right, erase one part of their “king” such as an eye or a leg. If they get it wrong, nothing is erased. The first team to erase their king entirely wins. Example questions may include:

- Who was the last good king of Judah? (Josiah)
- Who was the last king of Judah? (Zedekiah)
- Who destroyed Jerusalem and took the people captive? (Nebuchadnezzar)

SAY “ God removed the last four kings of Judah and allowed Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to destroy Jerusalem. **THE PEOPLE’S CONSEQUENCE FOR DISOBEYING GOD WAS EXILE TO BABYLON.** Our sin has consequences too, but when we trust in Jesus, we are forgiven and made right with God. Christians want to be like Jesus and obey God. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.

EZEKIEL GAVE HOPE

EZEKIEL 37



KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 145:9

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving.

CHRIST CONNECTION: God breathed life into dead bones in front of Ezekiel. The apostle Paul said that we are dead in our sins, but God gives us new life in Him when we trust in Jesus. God will forever be the God of all people who trust in Jesus.

STORY POINT: God promised to restore the land to His people and be their God forever.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

Have you ever had a lingering question or been in a difficult situation in which you knew only the Lord could truly answer or provide clarity? God presented an interesting question to the prophet Ezekiel amid a dire setting. The Spirit of God took Ezekiel to a valley of bones and asked him, “Son of man, can these bones live?” Ezekiel replied, “Lord God, only you know.” (Ezekiel 37:3).

God then instructed Ezekiel to speak to the bones, saying, “Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! This is what the Lord God says to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you will live” (Ezekiel 37:5). Ezekiel did as God said, and as the prophet was speaking, the bones began to rattle and reconfigure into human bodies. After that, God told Ezekiel to prophesy to the breath, commanding it to breathe life into the dead bodies. Ezekiel did as he was instructed, and the beings came to life.

Ezekiel’s prophecy was a picture of the people of Israel. They were like dead bones with no hope, but God would give them life. God would make the way for those dead in their sin to have life resurrected.

Then God had Ezekiel take two sticks—one for Israel and one for Judah. He told Ezekiel to take the sticks in front of all the people and join them to make one stick. Through this imagery, God was demonstrating how He was going to take the Israelites out of the nations where they were scattered and bring them into their own land. God was going to unite His people and give them one King to rule over them.

Ezekiel reminded the people of the promise God had made to David hundreds of years before. The new King would come from the family of David, and He would have the power to raise dead, sinful people to life.

Without Jesus, we are like the dead bones with no future hope. We are dead in our sins. But by faith in Jesus Christ, we are made alive (Ephesians 2:1-5). God’s promise to Ezekiel remains true: King Jesus will unite all who trust in Him, and through the Holy Spirit we will walk in His ways.

Thank God for the hope we have because of Jesus. Remind boys and girls of the new life Jesus gives to those who trust in Him. As you point boys and girls to the God who can make dead bones come to life, pray for each kid to understand that nothing is too difficult for God.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- "Made New" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- flexible straws, 2
- strong tape
- paper bags, 2



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- hot plate or crock pot (optional)
- melted white chocolate chips
- pretzels, 10 per kid
- mini marshmallows, 20 per kid
- parchment paper, 1 sheet per kid
- plastic tablecloths, 1 per table
- plastic baggies, 1 per kid

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible story coloring page



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video
- Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- "Ezekiel Gave Hope" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- hand-held fan (optional)

Questions from Kids

- "Unit 15, Session 5" Questions from Kids video

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "The Lord Is Good (Psalm 145:9)" song
- worship song of your choice (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “What is something you own that you wish you could make new again? Maybe a bike or a doll. How could it be made new?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Made New” activity page.

SAY “Today, we will learn how God promised to give His people new life and return them to their land.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: IN AND OUT

Before the session, create a lung model for kids to see how we breathe in and out. First, tape two flexible straws together, allowing the flexible ends to point away from each other. Then, tape a paper bag to the flexible end of each straw. Make sure no air can leak out and the tape is secure. For added fun, consider creating a “face” and taping it to the top of the straw, away from the “lungs.”

Ask kids to point to where their lungs are in their body. Ask kids what God made their lungs to do. Discuss how we can’t live without lungs because they supply our bodies with oxygen. Tell kids that we need breath to live. Demonstrate how our lungs work by slowly blowing air through the straws. The paper bags should inflate. Then inhale to deflate the paper bags, or squeeze the air out of the bags. Repeat several times.

SAY “Today, we will learn how the prophet Ezekiel saw a valley of dry bones. The bones were dead and had no breath in them. But we will see how God called the dry bones to hear the word of the Lord, and then caused breath to enter the dry bones so they came alive.”

OPTION 2: GATHER THE STORY POINT



Before the session, write each word of the story point on individual sticky notes. Lead kids to stand in a circle. Place the sticky notes in the center of the circle. Add 10 other sticky notes of a different color to the pile. Choose four kids and give each kid a paper plate. Tell the four kids that their job is to “blow (or fan)” the sticky notes away from the other kids using their paper plate. When you say “go,” challenge kids to gather all the sticky notes with the story point within 30 seconds while the four kids try to “blow” them away. Play again, choosing four different kids to “blow” the sticky notes away.

SAY “Today, we will learn how God spoke through the prophet Ezekiel to give His people hope. Even though God’s people were like dry, dead bones, God would speak and breathe new life into them. **GOD PROMISED TO RESTORE THE LAND TO HIS PEOPLE AND BE THEIR GOD FOREVER.**”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Welcome, kids! My name is [your name], and today we will hear a Bible story that gave God’s people hope while they were in Babylon. Did you bring your Bible with you? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Let’s open our Bibles to the book of Ezekiel. [Assist kids in finding Ezekiel in their Bible.]

Today, we will see how God spoke through the prophet Ezekiel to share good news: **GOD PROMISED TO RESTORE THE LAND TO HIS PEOPLE AND BE THEIR GOD FOREVER.** [Display the Story Point Poster.] Through this promise, God would also make the way for His people to have new life. We’ll see how God is able to take dead, sinful people and give them new life in Jesus. Let’s pray: ‘Dear God, thank You for Your words that bring life. Please help us to hear and believe what You say so we might live through Jesus. Amen.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “ What is God like? [Allow responses.] **God is holy, good, and loving.** As we finish learning our big picture question and answer, we can remember that God always acts for the good of His people. Even though His people sinned and deserved punishment, God promised to bring them back home and provide the way for them to have new life. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ At this point on our timeline, both Israel and Judah had been destroyed by foreign nations. The king of Assyria attacked Israel and took the people captive. Then more than a hundred years later, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon attacked Judah and took the people captive in Babylon. But God loved His people and wanted to give them hope and new life. Long before Israel or Judah sinned against God, He had promised to send a Savior who would give people new hearts and new life. Today, we will see how God spoke through Ezekiel to remind the people of this hope. ”



LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Ezekiel 37. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Ezekiel Gave Hope.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

EZEKIEL GAVE HOPE

“Ezekiel was a priest and a prophet. While God’s people were captives in Babylon, God called Ezekiel to give them hope. The Spirit of God led the prophet Ezekiel to the middle of a valley full of bones. God said to him, “Ezekiel, can these bones live?”

Ezekiel replied, “Only you know, LORD God.”

God told Ezekiel to speak to the bones and say, “Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD! ‘I will cause breath to enter you, and you will live. Then you will know that I am the LORD.”

While Ezekiel was saying these words, he heard a rattling sound, and the bones came together into the shape of people. Then, muscle and skin grew over the bones. They looked like people, but they were not alive; they were not breathing.

God said to Ezekiel, “Say to the breath: ‘Come from the four winds and breathe into these dead people so they may live!’” Ezekiel did so, and the breath entered them, and they came alive!

God explained to Ezekiel that this was a picture of the people of Israel. They were like dried up bones, without hope, but God would put His Spirit into them, and they would live and live in their own land. God said, “I have spoken, and I will do it. This is the declaration of the LORD.”

Then God told Ezekiel to take two sticks and write “Israel” on one, and “Judah” on the other. God told Ezekiel to take the sticks in front of all the people and join them into one stick, and then to say, “This is what God says: ‘I am going to bring all my people from the nations where they have gone. I will gather them and make them one nation again, and one king will rule over them, a descendant of King David. They will no longer worship idols, and they will follow my laws and obey Me. They will be my people, and I will be their God. My dwelling place will be with them. And when I make my home with them forever, all the nations will know that I make Israel holy.”

Christ Connection: God breathed life into dead bones in front of Ezekiel. The apostle Paul said that we are dead in our sins, but God gives us new life in Him when we trust in Jesus. God will forever be the God of all people who trust in Jesus.”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Make facial expressions: As you tell the story, invite the kids to use facial expressions to show how Ezekiel might have felt. Remind them that God’s people were sad and hopeless as a result of their sin, but Ezekiel brought a message of hope.

Use a fan: Hold up a hand-held fan and walk about the room, blowing air on the kids as you tell about the breath God breathed into the dead bones.



2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ After leading Ezekiel to a valley of bones, God asked Ezekiel if dry bones could live. Ezekiel understood that only God knew the answer to that question. What did God tell Ezekiel to do? [Allow responses.] God commanded Ezekiel to speak to the bones and they would live. Then He told Ezekiel to call for breath to enter the bodies. Ezekiel obeyed God both times, and the bones that were once dead became living people.

What did God say this event was a picture of? [Allow responses.] God explained that the people of Israel were like dead bones without hope. But He promised Ezekiel that when He put His Spirit in them, they would live. Only God can make something dead come alive. This is a message of hope for all people because all people are dead in their sins (Ephesians 2:1-2). We all need to hear the good news about Jesus to be forgiven and be made alive.

What did God say the sticks showed? [Allow responses.] God promised He would bring Israel and Judah back together as one nation. **GOD PROMISED TO RESTORE THE LAND TO HIS PEOPLE AND BE THEIR GOD FOREVER.** Judah had been ruled by both good and bad kings, but God’s people were in need of a greater King who could make them alive and able to obey God. Jesus Christ is the only King who can raise our dead, sinful hearts back to life. Through faith in Jesus, people receive the Holy Spirit, who gives them power to obey God. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ The people of Israel and Judah were dead in their sin and without hope. The Bible tells us that we are dead in our sins, but God gives us new life in Him when we trust in Jesus. God sent His son Jesus to die on the cross for our sins. God will forever be the God of all people who trust in Jesus. Have you trusted in Jesus? ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 15, Session 5” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. What does it mean to be raised to life again?
2. New life in Jesus means we want to follow His commands. How are you obeying His commands?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Remind kids that many people in North Africa and the Middle East are Muslim or Jewish. Tell kids that these religions do not believe in Jesus as God’s one and only Son sent to save people from sin.

SAY “ Missionaries in North Africa and the Middle East have a heart for those who do not know



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Jesus. They desire to display God’s love to others so they can know what God is like and how He loves them. Missionaries share the gospel to offer hope: though people are dead in their sins, by faith in Jesus they can be made alive! Romans 10:14 reminds us how people cannot believe in Jesus if they have never heard about Him. Just as Ezekiel shared God’s words, missionaries go and share the good news of Jesus so people may hear and believe. ”

Pray for missionaries serving in North Africa and the Middle East. Pray the people living in those areas will hear and believe the good news about Jesus.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Before the session, create two sets of key passage cards. Write a word from the key passage on each card, including the reference. Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Psalm 145:9 together.

SAY “ God is good! God shared with Ezekiel that He would not leave His people in Babylon. Just as He wanted to bring His people back to their land and be with them, God wants a relationship with us too. In His goodness, God sent Jesus so everyone who trusts in Him can be with Him forever. ”

Form kids into two groups and give each group a set of key passage cards. Challenge groups to arrange their cards as mirror images, being sure to place the cards in the correct order. Remind kids that God promised to bring His people together as one nation, and He promises to bring us into His family when we trust in Jesus.

Lead kids to sing “God Is Good (Psalm 145:9).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ God, thank You that You are good to everyone. You always remain faithful to Your people, despite our sin. Help us share the good news of Jesus with others so they can be made alive and live with You forever. In Jesus’ name, amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Ezekiel 37. Explain to the kids that the book of Ezekiel was written by the prophet Ezekiel. Ezekiel was also a captive of Babylon.

Consider pointing to Babylon (E11) on the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Ezekiel 37:21 or have the kids follow along as you read the verse aloud.

SAY “When the people were taken captive to Babylon, God promised they would only be in exile for 70 years. Through Ezekiel, God reminded the people of this promise and told them that He would bring them back to their own land. **GOD PROMISED TO RESTORE THE LAND TO HIS PEOPLE AND BE THEIR GOD FOREVER.**

When we trust in Jesus, God promises to be our God forever. We will live with Him in His kingdom, a kingdom without sin that will last forever. Just as Ezekiel gave the people hope while they were in Babylon, God gives His people hope through Jesus.”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “In the valley of dry bones, what did God tell Ezekiel to do first?”

Tell kids that God told Ezekiel to speak to the bones and say, “Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! ‘I will cause breath to enter you, and you will live. Then you will know that I am the Lord.’” Before we can be made alive and saved from sin, we first need to hear the gospel. We need someone to share God’s Word with us so we can know how to be saved from our sin.

SAY “The bones had flesh, but they were still dead. What did God tell Ezekiel to do next?”

Remind kids that God said to Ezekiel, “Say to the breath: ‘Come from the four winds and breathe into these dead people so they may live!’” Ezekiel obeyed God, and the dead people came alive when the breath entered them. Share how we can only be made alive when we trust in Jesus and the Holy Spirit comes to live inside us. Tell kids that the Bible calls this being born again (John 3:5-8). Explain that the Holy Spirit gives new life to people and helps us to live for God.

SAY “How can we, like Ezekiel, share hope with people?”

Encourage kids to remember that if they are a Christian, God has given them a message of hope. We call this message the gospel. God commands us to share the good news of how Jesus lived a perfect life in our place, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again to defeat sin and death forever. Anyone who trusts in Jesus will be saved from sin, made alive through the Holy Spirit, and live with God forever.





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: SAVE THE CITIZEN



Form kids into two teams. Use tape to divide the room in half. Instruct each team to select one kid from their team to be the “citizen.” The citizens must move over to the opposing team. Explain that each team’s goal is to save their “citizen” from the opposing team by bringing them back across the line. If kids are tagged by a member of the opposing team while trying to rescue the “citizen,” they are out. Play until a team has successfully saved their citizen. Then play again, choosing a new kid from each team to be the “citizen.”

SAY “ God’s people were in exile in Babylon because of their sin, but God gave Ezekiel a message of hope to share with God’s people. One day, God would rescue His people from Babylon and make the way for them to have new life. **GOD PROMISED TO RESTORE THE LAND TO HIS PEOPLE AND BE THEIR GOD FOREVER.** ”

OPTION 2: EDIBLE BONES



Before the session, melt white chocolate chips in a sauce pan. Because the chocolate needs to remain melted, consider keeping the pan on a hot plate or melting the chocolate in a crock pot. Cover tables with plastic tablecloth.

Provide a sheet of parchment paper for each kid, 10 pretzel sticks, and 20 mini marshmallows. Lead kids to stick a marshmallow on each end of their pretzel sticks. Then carefully assist kids with covering their pretzels and marshmallows with the melted white chocolate. Place the pretzels on the parchment paper to dry. Provide plastic baggies for kids to take their edible bones home in.

SAY “ God breathed life into dead bones in front of Ezekiel. The apostle Paul said that we are dead in our sins, but God gives us new life in Him when we trust in Jesus. When we trust in Jesus, God promises to be our God forever, and we will live with Him in His kingdom. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.



THE GOSPEL

GOD'S PLAN FOR US

The gospel is the good news—the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use these prompts to share the gospel with your kids.



Ask: “Who is in charge at home?” Explain that because God created everything, He is in charge of everything. Read Revelation 4:11.



Ask: “Have you ever done something wrong?” Tell kids that everyone sins, or disobeys God. Our sin separates us from God. Read Romans 3:23.



Explain that God is holy and must punish sin. God sent His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment we deserve. Read John 3:16.



Ask: “What is the best gift you’ve ever received?” Say that Jesus took our punishment for sin by giving His life, and He gives us His righteousness. God sees us as if we lived the perfect life Jesus lived. This is the best gift ever! Read 2 Corinthians 5:21.



Explain that everyone has a choice to make. Ask: “Will you trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord? You can turn from self and sin and turn to Jesus.” Read Romans 10:9-10.

THE GOSPEL PROJECT

The Gospel Project is designed to help your kids **LEARN** the gospel story of Scripture, **LOVE** the Author and Subject of that gospel story, and then to **LIVE** out their part in this ongoing gospel story.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

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