

**Cornerstone Christian Fellowship  
Children's Bible Curriculum**

**Year One**

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## Year One Memory Verses

- April: "The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." I Samuel 16:7
- May: "David danced before the LORD with all his might, while he and the entire house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouts and the sound of trumpets." II Samuel 6:14-15
- June: "He who fears the LORD has a secure fortress, and for His children it will be a refuge." Proverbs 14:26
- July: " 'Answer me, O Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, O Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again.' Then the fire of the LORD fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench." 1 Kings 18:37-38
- August: "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Psalm 139:23-24
- September: "A writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, after his illness and recovery. The living, the living, they praise you, as I am doing today. Fathers tell their children about your faithfulness. The Lord will save me, and we will sing with stringed instruments all the days of our lives in the temple of our Lord." Isaiah 38:9, 19-20
- October: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belongs wisdom and might. He reveals deep and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with Him." Daniel 2:20, 22
- November: "But if we confess our sins to him, He is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong." I John 1:9
- December: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose." Romans 8:28



# Lesson 1

## DAVID ANOINTED KING

I Sam. 16

### INTRODUCTION

Because Saul disobeyed God in his expedition against the Amalekites by sparing King Agag, and the best of the animals, the Lord rejected him as king over Israel. Saul and Samuel each went to their own homes after the battle, and Samuel went to see Saul no more in his lifetime.

The Lord told Samuel to mourn no longer for Saul but to go on a secret mission to Bethlehem. There He instructed Samuel to anoint a new king from among the sons of Jesse. Though Samuel was sure God had chosen one of Jesse's older sons, who must have looked more kingly, the Lord had Samuel anoint the youngest son, David, as the next King of Israel.

Although God "rent" the kingdom from Saul, David did not become king until after Saul's death.

Meanwhile, God's spirit rested upon David, and left King Saul. Saul was tormented by an evil spirit. Saul called for a harpist to play soothing music to help him to feel calm. Jesse's son, David (who'd secretly been anointed king and was known as a skilled harpist), entered into King Saul's service as a musician. Saul was very pleased with David and eventually made him an armor-bearer.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. Why God wanted Samuel to anoint a new king while Saul was still reigning.
2. That though most people would have chosen one of David's *older* brothers to be the next king, God chose to work through a young man. God was pleased with David's heart, not how he looked on the outside.
3. How David came to be in the service of King Saul.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Fold a piece of construction paper in half. On the cover, glue a human figure cutout (use a gingerbread man cookie cutter as a template), and write, "Man looks at the outward appearance..." on it. On the inside, glue a heart that says, "but the LORD looks at the heart. I Samuel 16:17."

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

God can work through anyone, no matter their age or size. He can work through you, too!

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"The First Three Kings" by JoLinda Crump

## **Lesson 2**

# **DAVID AND GOLIATH**

**I Sam. 17**

### **INTRODUCTION**

David first gained his reputation as a warrior during his contest with the Philistine giant, Goliath. The Philistines had gathered in the valley of Elah to battle the Israelites. The valley of Elah was in the lowland country of Judah, and the Philistines stood on the mountain on one side of the valley, while the Israelites stood on the mountain on the other side.

Jesse sent his son David to the scene of the battle to check on his three older brothers who were with Saul and the Israelite army. The Philistine's champion, a nine-foot giant, challenged the Israelites morning and evening for forty days.

When David heard Goliath's boasting, he was displeased and angry that the Philistine defied the armies of God. David accepted Goliath's challenge, and with Saul's reluctant permission, met the giant, slaying him with his sling and a single stone. He then took Goliath's sword and cut off the giant's head. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled, and the Israelites pursued them to the gates of the Philistine cities.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. For how many days Goliath the Philistine came out and challenged the Israelites to send someone out to fight him.
2. What David thought about the Israelite army's fear of fighting Goliath.
3. Why David was confident, that he, a mere boy, could fight and kill Goliath.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Bring in a 15lb weight to demonstrate how heavy *just the tip* of Goliath's spear was. Allow each student an opportunity or two to lift the weight, imagining that as the tip of a spear. Bring in a measuring tape and allow groups of two to measure out nine feet (Goliath's height). Tape a picture/drawing of a man's head nine feet up the wall to represent Goliath. Allow the students to take turns tossing a foam ball and attempting to hit "Goliath" in the forehead.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

David had the courage to fight a giant because he knew God would be with him. God is always with you, too!

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

Review "The First Three Kings" by JoLinda Crump  
"Little Boy David"



## **Lesson 3**

# **DAVID AND JONATHAN**

**I Sam. 18:1-9; 20**

### **INTRODUCTION**

When David appeared before Saul after he had killed the giant, Saul's son Jonathan was present. This meeting between David and Jonathan was the beginning of a lifelong friendship. The two young men made their first covenant, and Jonathan gave David his robe, sword, bow, and belt to seal the agreement (I Sam. 18:1-4).

David behaved himself wisely, and Saul set him over the men of war. Saul's servants and the people accepted David and were pleased. When Saul and David returned from the battle with the Philistines, the women came out of the cities singing and dancing to meet the king. They sang to one another, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." The saying displeased Saul for the women credited David with ten thousands and himself with only thousands. He feared David would replace him as king, and from that day forward Saul eyed David jealously. The next day when an evil spirit came upon Saul, David played harp for him as at other times. Saul cast his javelin at David, but David escaped his presence twice. Saul then demoted David to captain over a thousand men, but the Lord was with David, and the people of Judah and Israel loved him (I Sam. 18:5-16).

Saul had promised to reward the slayer of Goliath by giving him one of his daughters as his wife. However, when Saul became jealous of David, he broke his promise and gave his elder daughter Merab to another man. Nevertheless, his honor forced him to offer David his younger daughter, Michal, but he required David to kill one hundred Philistines as a dowry. He hoped that David would be killed by the Philistines, but instead David killed TWO hundred Philistines. Saul was forced to keep his promise, and he gave Michal to David. Saul knew then that the Lord was with David, and he became more afraid of David (I Sam. 18:17-30).

Saul told Jonathan and his servants to kill David. Jonathan warned David and told him to hide in a secret place until morning. He then formed a plan to speak to his father in the morning in the field where David was hiding. He told his father not to sin against David, for David had not sinned against him. Saul listened to his son and swore David should not be killed. Jonathan then called David from his hiding place and told him all his father had said. So Jonathan brought David back to Saul, and he was in his presence as before (I Sam. 19:1-7).

At a later time, as David played his harp, an evil spirit came upon Saul, and he again attempted to kill David with his spear. David managed to escape, but Saul sent messengers to watch David's house and kill him in the morning. Michal loved David and helped him to escape by letting him down through the window. David then fled to Samuel who was in Ramah (I Sam. 19:8-18)

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. That David had been running away from Saul for a long time, and that Saul had even had many priests and other people killed for helping David.
2. That David had the opportunity to kill Saul when he sneaked up on him in a cave, but didn't kill Saul, because he knew it wouldn't please the Lord.
3. That David was respectful with Saul and kept his word not to hurt him, but that David also knew not to trust Saul's promises.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Have the students choose from scraps of fabric and help them cut a swatch to represent the corner of Saul's robe that David cut off. Have the students draw a cave on a piece of paper and glue the swatch on it. On the bottom of the sheet, print, "David Spares Saul's Life in the Cave. I Samuel 24."

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

Be kind to people, even when they are not nice to you. This is how we show them that our God is great.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

Review "The First Three Kings" by JoLinda Crump

## Lesson 5

# SAUL AND THE WITCH OF ENDOR

### I Sam. 28

#### INTRODUCTION

Sometime during David's fugitive years, Samuel died and the Israelites mourned him. After David's encounter with Saul in the cave, David married Abigail, a woman of Carmel, and Ahinoam, of Jezreel. Both of these cities were located in the hill country of Judah where David was hiding. About the same time Saul gave his daughter Michal, who was David's first wife, to another man (1 Samuel 25).

Again the Ziphites betrayed David to Saul, and again Saul began his pursuit of David. This time David discovered Saul and his men while they were sleeping in their camp. A deep sleep from the Lord had fallen on them, and David was able to steal into the camp, take Saul's spear, and a jug of water. David then stood far off and called to Abner, Saul's captain, chastising him for not guarding the king. Again, Saul, realizing David had spared his life, said he had sinned and would no longer attempt to harm David. David then went on his way and Saul returned to his place, no longer pursuing David (1 Samuel 26).

David still did not trust Saul, however, and fled once more to Achish, the Philistine king of Gath. Achish gave the city of Ziklag as a home, and David, his men, and their families dwelt in the city (1 Samuel 27).

Once again the Philistines gathered their army together to fight against Israel. Saul gathered his army, and the two armies camped about five miles apart. When Saul saw the Philistines, he was frightened. He attempted to communicate with God, but was unsuccessful either by dreams, by the priests, or by the prophets. Saul previously had attempted to rid the land of witchcraft (**God expressly forbids witchcraft in Leviticus 19:31; 20:6,27; Deuteronomy 18:10-12**), but because of his fear of the coming battle, he told his servants to find a witch for him to consult. When his servants advised him that there was a medium at Endor, Saul went to seek her advice after disguising himself. He tricked her into calling for Samuel's spirit, and surprisingly Samuel's spirit appeared. Samuel's message, however, was not comforting or encouraging to Saul (1 Samuel 28).

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. Why Saul went to a witch for help, even though he knew God hated witchcraft.
2. That God used a witch to give Saul very bad news; even the witch was under God's authority.
3. That the bad news from Samuel was that God had rejected him, had "torn" the kingdom from him and given it to David, and that he (Saul) would be defeated by the Philistines.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Using fabric that tears easily (like light muslin) let the students choose a scrap of fabric (about 5" square) that has a little cut in the top to start the tear. Talk to them about the bad news Samuel gave Saul about God "tearing the kingdom" out of his hands. Have them tear the fabric in two pieces (assist them, if necessary). Then have them glue the fabric to a sheet that says "God tears the kingdom of Israel out of Saul's hands. 1 Samuel 28:17."

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

God says that real witches are dangerous and He doesn't like what they do. When King Saul asked a witch to help him, he got very bad news. If we want to know something, we should pray to Jesus or ask someone who loves us (parent, grandparent, teacher). God is not afraid of witches!

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

Review "The First Three Kings" by JoLinda Crump  
"Trust and Obey"

## **Lesson 6**

# **THE DEATH OF SAUL – DAVID BECOMES KING**

**1 Sam. 31; 2 Sam. 5:1-5**

### **INTRODUCTION**

As the Philistines prepared for war against Israel, the Philistine king, Achish, planned to take David and his men with him into battle. However, the other Philistines did not trust David to fight with them and forced Achish to send David back to Ziklag (1 Samuel 29).

When David returned to Ziklag, he discovered the city had been attacked and burned by some Amalekites and all the people of the city taken captive including David's two wives. David and his men pursued the Amalekites, and when they discovered the enemy camp, the Amalekites were feasting and celebrating their victory. David and his men attacked the Amalekite raiders, recovered the captives and all the spoil (plunder) the Amalekites had carried away from Ziklag. When David returned to Ziklag, he sent some of the spoil as a gift to the elders in various cities of Judah (1 Samuel 30).

Meanwhile the battle between the Philistines and Israel occurred at Mount Gilboa in the north. Saul was mortally wounded in the battle, and his three sons (including Jonathan, David's dear friend) were killed. The Israelite army fled, leaving the bodies of their king and his sons behind. When the Philistines discovered the bodies, they cut off the head and hung the bodies on the wall of the city of Beth Shan as trophies of their victory.

Remember the men of Jabesh Gilead? These were the people of the city whom Saul rescued from the Ammonites when he first became king (1 Samuel 11). These men of Jabesh Gilead, in an act demonstrating their gratitude for Saul's earlier bravery to them, stole by night to Beth Shan, removed the bodies of Saul and his sons, and took them back to Jabesh for burial.

After the death of Saul, the Lord instructed David to go to Hebron. There the tribe of Judah anointed David as their king, and he reigned over Judah for seven years in Hebron (2 Samuel 1-2). During this time there was a civil war between those loyal to David and the remaining descendants of Saul who attempted to claim for themselves the throne of Israel. When the house of Saul was finally vanquished, the elders of all Israel came to David and anointed him king over all Israel. The tribes of Israel for the first time were truly united and David reigned for another thirty-three years over a united Israel and Judah (2 Samuel 3-5:5).

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. How Saul's three sons (including Jonathan) and Saul died.
2. David was a very young man when Samuel secretly anointed him king. How old was he when he was acknowledged as king by the Israelites?
3. Which Israelite tribe anointed David king over Israel? Who is known as the "Lion of Judah"?

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Decorate a crown (similar to a Burger King crown) with fake jewels and glitter. Have the kids write "David Becomes King of Israel. 2 Samuel 5" on it.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

When Saul, the disobedient King of Israel died, God kept his promise to David, and made him King.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

Review "The First Three Kings" by JoLinda Crump

## **Lesson 7**

# **DAVID BRINGS THE ARK TO JERUSALEM**

**2 Sam. 6**

### **INTRODUCTION**

David's first military victory after becoming king over the united tribes was the capture of Jerusalem. From the time of Joshua's conquest of Canaan, Jerusalem remained a Jebusite stronghold within the territory of Judah. David took the city and made it his capital and home (2 Sam. 5:6-10). He then made Jerusalem the religious center of Israel by bringing to the city the ark of the covenant which had been at Kirjath Jearim (also called Baalah of Judah) since its capture and return by the Philistines in Samuel's day (1 Sam. 7:1-2; 2 Sam. 6:1-19).

David continued his military campaigns, subduing the Philistines, Moabites, Syrians, Ammonites, Amalekites, and Edomites (2 Sam. 5:17-25; 8). He expanded and extended the borders of his kingdom until all the territory promised to Abraham was under his dominion.

David desired to build a place of worship for the Lord at Jerusalem. However, the Lord did not permit David to build a house of worship, but instead He promised to make David a house. Through the prophet Nathan, the Lord said He would raise up David's seed who would build a house in the Lord's name, and the Lord would establish the throne of his kingdom forever (2 Sam. 7:1-17). Thus Abraham's promised seed (Gen. 12:3; Gal. 3:16) was to come from the house of David, and kingdom and throne of this see would be established forever. Although this prophecy had its immediate fulfillment in David's son Solomon (who built the temple), the prophet was speaking of Christ, the seed of David and Abraham (Matt 1:1), and His throne and kingdom.

David, the son of Jesse of the tribe of Judah, was the ancestor of Jesus Christ (Matt. 1:1-17). God promised to establish the throne of David's kingdom forever, a prophecy fulfilled in Jesus Christ. David was handsome and prudent (sensible) in speech. He was a skillful musician and poet, writing many psalms. He was a man of valor with great courage as a military leader and warrior. As king, David was without equal—all subsequent kings were compared to him. He was a religious leader, planning and preparing for the building of the temple, and organizing the worship. Although he sinned, he repented humbly before God. This is why the Lord said, "I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart" Acts 13:22.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. That David had the ark brought to Jerusalem to show that it was the now the most important city (capital) in Israel.
2. Why Uzzah was struck dead when he touched the ark. How did God want the Israelites to handle the ark?
3. David danced around in his underclothes as he worshipped the Lord when the ark was brought to Jerusalem. This embarrassed his wife Michal, who criticized him. What was David's response?

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

King David celebrated wildly before the Lord when he had the ark of the covenant brought to Jerusalem. Have the students draw pictures of what they think it would look like for a whole city to celebrate. While they're drawing, ask the students what they think it would have sounded like that day. Would the children back then be allowed to stay home from school? Would people bring their instruments into the streets? Provide sequins and other items to add to the festive nature of the scene.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

David, even though he was an important king and grown up man, danced like an excited child as he worshipped God. God loves when we worship him with all our might, not worrying what other people think about us.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

Encourage the kids to dance like David when they're singing praise songs.



## **Lesson 8**

# **DAVID AND ABSALOM**

**2 Sam. 3:2-3; 14:25-26; 15; 17; 18**

### **INTRODUCTION**

David had several wives and children. Although David was a man after God's own heart (1 Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22), David had family problems as a result of his sin of adultery with Bathsheba. Although David repented of his sin, God told him through the prophet Nathan that the sword would never depart from his house (2 Sam. 11-12).

Through the years David's sons caused him much anguish and heartache. When David neared the end of his reign, his son Absalom, who was handsome and popular with the people, attempted to usurp the throne. David and his followers were forced to flee Jerusalem for a period of time as Absalom gained control for the kingdom. Eventually Absalom was slain and David was restored to power, but he mourned greatly for his slain son (2 Sam. 15-18).

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. Absalom, David's handsome, popular son, was so greedy that he tried to have his father killed so that he himself could be king.
2. David sent his trusted adviser, Hushai, to be a double-agent in Absalom's service. Hushai gave Absalom advice that gave King David time to get ready for battle against Absalom.
3. God protected David punished Absalom for his evil plans against David (2 Sam. 17:14). Absalom was killed by David's men, and David mourned.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Create a "Sons of David" picture with a large crown at the top labeled "David." Have students glue smaller crowns beneath it labeled "Amnon," "Kileab," "Absalom," "Adonijah," "Shephatiah," "Ithream," and "Solomon."

**\*\*SAVE THESE CRAFTS FOR THE FOLLOWING WEEK, WHEN THE "SOLOMON" CROWN WILL BE ORNAMENTED TO INDICATE SOLOMON'S SUCCESSION AFTER DAVID \*\***

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

Absalom was greedy and fought his father, King David, instead of obeying him. God did not allow Absalom to ever become a king, even though he was a prince. God wants us to obey our parents.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

Read one of David's Psalms aloud during worship time. Talk about how David wrote Psalms to praise the Lord.

## **Lesson 9**

# **SOLOMON ANOINTED KING**

### **1 Kings 1**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

When David was old and near death, his fourth son Adonijah (like his brother Absalom before him) attempted to proclaim himself as king. With the help of Joab, the captain of the army, and Abiathar, the priest, he prepared chariots, horsemen, and runners to declare himself the new king. Then he invited followers to a religious feast.

The prophet Nathan, together with Bathsheba, David's wife and the mother of Solomon, informed David of the plot. David then ordered Nathan, the priest Zadok, and Benaiah, one of David's mighty men, to take Solomon on David's mule to Gihon spring. There they should anoint Solomon, then blow the trumpet and proclaim him the king before the citizens of Jerusalem.

When Adonijah and his followers heard the noise of the people rejoicing at Solomon's anointing, they were frightened. The guests left the feast and went their own way while Adonijah fled to the altar for safety. Adonijah believed that the altar, a place of worship, would offer him protection and justice even though he had attempted to usurp the throne.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. How Adonijah's behavior was similar to his brother Absalom's (trying to usurp the throne of Israel from their father).
2. That the prophet Nathan warned Bathsheba and then David of Adonijah's evil plan.
3. That David made his son Solomon king of Israel after reigning over Israel for 40 years.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Using the "Sons of David" crafts from the previous week, give the students jewels and glitter paint to decorate the crown of Solomon to indicate that he became king of Israel after David.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

King David had two wicked sons, Absalom and Adonijah, who were greedy and wanted to be King without permission. God blessed Solomon, another of David's sons, and made *him* king of Israel.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"The First Three Kings" by JoLinda Crump.

# **Lesson 10**

## **SOLOMON'S DREAM**

**1 Kings 3:5-15**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In order to secure his throne, Solomon began his reign by either removing from office or executing his father's enemies. He chose Benaiah, one of David's captains, to carry out his orders for the purge, then he appointed him commander of the army (1 Kings 2:13-46).

Early in his reign Solomon went to Gibeon, a city about six miles northwest of Jerusalem, to sacrifice, for at this time the tabernacle was there. As Solomon offered his sacrifices, the Lord appeared to him in a dream and asked what He should give him. Solomon's answer was one of complete humility.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. That God said to Solomon in a dream, "Ask for whatever you want."
2. Solomon could have asked God for great riches or a long life, but instead asked for wisdom—to be able to tell right from wrong.
3. God was so pleased with Solomon's answer that he agreed to give him not only wisdom, but also great riches and honor.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Give each student a slip of paper that says "Wisdom" on it. Have the students put the papers in small boxes and wrap them with wrapping paper and ribbon. Then have them put labels on the gifts that say "To: Solomon, From: God."

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

God said he would give King Solomon ANYTHING he wanted, and Solomon asked for wisdom (to be able to tell right from wrong). Solomon was not selfish, and God was pleased with him, giving him wisdom and many riches.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"The First Three Kings" by JoLinda Crump.

# **Lesson 11**

## **SOLOMON'S JUDGMENT/THE TEMPLE**

**1 Kings 3:16-28; 6**

### **INTRODUCTION**

As a young king Solomon asked God for wisdom to judge his people properly. God granted his request and gave Solomon wisdom and great understanding so that his fame was known throughout the surrounding nations. He also gave Solomon that for which he did not ask—riches and honor. God did require, however, that Solomon keep the Lord's statutes and commandments as had David his father. If Solomon remained faithful, then the Lord promised to lengthen his days.

It was not long before Solomon's ability to judge wisely was tested. One day two women came to him for judgment, each of whom had given birth to a son. During the night one child died, and each woman then claimed that the surviving child belonged to her.

\* \* \*

Since Solomon reigned during a period of peace and prosperity, he was engaged in many building projects. His greatest achievement was the temple, a permanent place for worship, which was built in Jerusalem according to the plans his father David received from the Lord. David wanted to build a house for the Lord, but God did not permit it because David was a man of war and had shed much blood (1 Kings 6; 1 Chron. 28; 29:1-9).

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. Two women came to King Solomon with a very serious problem—what was it?
2. How did Solomon find out who was telling the truth?
3. Up until Solomon's reign, the Israelites worshipped God at the Tabernacle. What did Solomon build as a permanent place of worship?

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Set puzzles, mazes, word searches, etc. out on the craft tables. Have the students choose what they'd like to work on and to work in groups to find the solutions. Talk about how wise God made Solomon so that he could figure out even very difficult problems.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

God made Solomon so wise that he could help people—even when they had REALLY big problems. God can help us with our hard problems, if we ask Him!

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"The First Three Kings" by JoLinda Crump.



## **Lesson 12**

# **SOLOMON'S KINGDOM – THE QUEEN OF SHEBA**

**1 Kings 4:20-21, 29-34; 10**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Many peoples and kings of the world came to Israel to hear the wisdom of Solomon which was greater than the wisdom of the people of the east and of Egypt. He spoke 3000 proverbs, wrote 1005 songs, and spoke of beasts, birds, creeping things and fishes (1 Kings 4:29-34). Solomon also wrote Psalms 72 and 127, most of the book of Proverbs, and possibly Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon.

One of the royal visitors to Solomon was the queen of Sheba. This ancient kingdom was located in the southern portion of the Arabian Peninsula, now the modern country of Yemen. Its people, the Sabaeans, were traders in gold, spices, and precious stones carried northward by camel caravans to the Mediterranean countries. Sabaeans were early colonizers of Ethiopia in northeast Africa also, and Ethiopian legends claim that the queen of Sheba was queen of Ethiopia.

The queen of Sheba visited Solomon not only to hear his wisdom but to discuss trade with him. Her trading caravans from southern Arabia (if that was the location of her kingdom) would have to pass through Israel to go to Egypt, Phoenicia, and Syria. She was overcome with the beauty and wealth of Solomon's kingdom, but more than anything else, his wisdom.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. Solomon wrote 3000 proverbs, 1005 songs, and knew all about plants, birds, beasts, reptiles and fish. His wisdom was shown in many, many ways.
2. The wealthy queen of Sheba traveled from far away to meet Solomon to see if he was a wise and rich as had been rumored. She was overwhelmed by how glorious his kingdom was, and how wise he was.
3. God kept his promise to make Solomon the richest man of his day—kingdoms surrounding Israel paid Solomon 25 tons of gold every year!

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Read some of the book of Proverbs aloud, then pair up students to write Proverbs like Solomon. Give the students sheets of paper with starter lines to finish, such as:

“A wise man is like...but a foolish man always...”

“A godly person says...but an ungodly person says...”

“A good person shares his...but a selfish person...”

Then have the students share what they've written with the rest of the group.

## **PRESCHOOL “BIG IDEA”:**

God kept his promise to king Solomon, and made him the wisest, richest king in the world. God always keeps His promises!

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

“The First Three Kings” by JoLinda Crump.

## **Lesson 13**

# **SOLOMON'S WIVES – AHIJAH'S PROPHECY**

**1 Kings 11:1-13, 26-43**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Solomon began his reign humbly asking God for wisdom to rule his people. However, in his later years his heart was not right, and he turned away from God.

In those times, treaties were often sealed by awarding the most powerful ruler with a beautiful woman. As a result, Solomon acquired many wives and concubines (secondary wives who were frequently purchased as slaves) due to his many alliances with foreign nations. These wives turned his heart from God, and he built idols and places for them to worship their false gods.

God appeared to Solomon a third time and said He would tear the kingdom from him, for he had not kept the covenant and statutes. Nevertheless, this division of the kingdom would not take place during Solomon's days, but during the days of his son.

One day in a field outside of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah met one of Solomon's servants, Jeroboam, from the tribe of Ephraim. Ahijah had put on a new robe, but he tore the robe into twelve pieces, each piece representing a tribe of Israel. He gave ten pieces to Jeroboam telling him that God would tear the kingdom from Solomon and give him (Jeroboam) ten tribes to rule. Solomon's son would receive one tribe, that David might always have a lamp before the Lord in Jerusalem (the 12th tribe not spoken for was the tribe of Levi, the priestly tribe, which had no territory).

## **TEACHING**

After the lesson, each child should know:

1. Solomon disobeyed God and married many wives from other countries. These women turned his heart from God and he began to worship their false gods.
2. God told Solomon that, since his heart had turned away, He would tear the kingdom from him. However, it wouldn't happen until Solomon's son became king. Then He would allow his son to keep one tribe to rule (Judah), and the rest would become another kingdom.
3. Ahijah the prophet tore his new robe in 12 pieces to represent the 12 tribes of Israel and gave Jeroboam 10 pieces to represent the 10 tribes God would give to him to rule when Solomon died.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

Experiences/Craft Suggestion:

Draw a robe on a piece of paper with the names of the twelve tribes on it. Give each student a copy to tear carefully to separate the names of the tribes. Have them glue the pieces on a piece of colored paper labeled "Ahijah's Prophecy: The Kingdom of Israel is Divided."

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

King Solomon started out as a good king who loved God, but then he started to worship idols. Solomon loved his things and himself more than he loved God, and Israel broke apart because of his sin.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"The First Three Kings" by JoLinda Crump.

# Lesson 1

## THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM

### 1 Kings 12

#### INTRODUCTION

God decided that because Solomon disobeyed him and did not follow the Lord completely, as his father David had done, He would tear apart the kingdom of Israel, leaving Solomon's son Rehoboam only one tribe, the tribe of Judah.

After Solomon's death, Rehoboam became king, and Jeroboam returned from Egypt. Jeroboam and the people of Israel went to the king and asked him to lighten their yoke. King Rehoboam first consults the elders who had served his father. They advised him to grant Israel's request, for Israel would in turn choose to serve him. Rehoboam ignores this advice and instead listens to the young men he had grown up with; they tell him to increase Israel's burden.

As a result, all of the Israelites, except for those living in the towns of Judah, went home. Rehoboam tried to regain control by sending one of his men in charge of forced labor, but Israel stoned him to death. Israel then appointed Jeroboam as their king.

Again, Rehoboam tried to regain control by gathering fighting men from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, but God told them not to fight against their brothers, the Israelites, for the division of the kingdom was by His hand.

And so, Jeroboam reigned over the Israelites. God had told Jeroboam that if he kept His commands, He would be with him and build him a dynasty. However, Jeroboam began to fear that, when the people went to offer sacrifices to the Lord in Jerusalem, they would give their allegiance to Rehoboam. Instead of trusting God's promise, Jeroboam took matters into his own hands. Jeroboam built two golden calves and told Israel to worship them as their gods. He also built shrines and instituted a festival on a day of his own choosing during which to offer sacrifices. The people followed him in this sin.

## **TEACHING**

After the lesson, each child should know:

1. Although Solomon's sin caused the division of the kingdom of Israel, God remembered his servant David and saved one tribe, the tribe of Judah, for David's line to rule.
2. Rehoboam, Solomon's son, ruled the tribe of Judah, in the south.
3. Jeroboam, Solomon's former servant, ruled the remaining tribes in the north, now known as Israel.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

Draw a simple map of the divided kingdom and have the students color it in. Point out the names "Israel" and "Judah."

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

God divided Israel into two kingdoms because their king disobeyed Him. When we disobey God, sometimes it hurts other people.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"The First Three Kings" or "The 10 Commandments" by JoLinda Crump..

## **Lesson 2**

# **JEROBOAM AND THE MAN OF GOD**

### **1 Kings 12 & 13**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

When the 10 northern tribes of Israel rebelled against the high taxes and harsh rule of Solomon's son Rehoboam, they chose Jeroboam from the tribe of Ephraim as their king. Jeroboam soon turned to idolatry as a means to prevent his subjects from returning to Jerusalem to worship, for the city and temple were located in the southern kingdom. He corrupted the worship of God with his golden calves, shrines in high places, priests who were not the Levites, and unlawful feast days.

As Jeroboam stood by the altar at Bethel to burn incense during his unlawful feast, a man of God from Judah spoke against the altar. He prophesied that a descendant of David by the name of Josiah would one day pollute and destroy the altar. To prove the prophecy was true, he gave a sign: the altar split, and the ashes poured out. When Jeroboam in anger put forth his hand against the prophet, his hand withered. When he saw the altar split, he repented and entreated the man of God to heal his hand. When his hand was restored, Jeroboam invited the man of God to come home with him, promising to reward him. The man of God refused, saying that the Lord had forbidden him to eat or drink in that place and had commanded him to return to Judah by a different route.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. How Jeroboam corrupted the worship of God.
2. What the man of God prophesied and the sign that proved it.
3. What happened after the man of God left Jeroboam (killed by a lion for disobeying God's specific instructions).

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Draw a picture of a broken altar. Have the children color this and show the ash pouring out.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

God sent a man to tell King Jeroboam that He hates idols and disobedience.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"The 10 Commandments" by JoLinda Crump..



# Lesson 3

## ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW OF ZAREPHATH

### 1 Kings 17

#### INTRODUCTION

After the death of Solomon, the great Hebrew kingdom divided. Through the years, the southern kingdom of Judah was ruled by the descendents of David in fulfillment of God's promise to David (2 Sam. 7). Some of the kings of Judah were righteous, and some were wicked.

In contrast, the northern kingdom of Israel immediately became idolatrous. God promised Jeroboam to establish his kingdom and give Israel to him if he kept the commandments and statutes. Jeroboam, however, soon corrupted the worship of God with his golden calves and other sinful policies. As a consequence, God brought judgment against Jeroboam, cutting off his family, and thus several dynasties (families), who ruled in Israel. Unfortunately, all the kings of Israel were idolatrous, following the improper system of worship begun by Jeroboam, and later practicing Baal worship.

The sixth king of Israel was Omri, who built the city of Samaria for his capital city. Located about forty-two miles north of Jerusalem, the city was on a hill and could thus be easily defended. Samaria remained the capital city of Israel until the northern tribes were carried away into captivity.

Omri's son Ahab ruled after him. Ahab's wife was Jezebel, daughter of the king of Sidon. Jezebel was a worshipper of Baal, and Ahab introduced Baal worship into Israel. Ahab "did evil in the sight of the Lord" and "did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were brought before him" (1 Kings 16:30, 33).

Suddenly, the prophet Elijah, an inhabitant of Gilead, the territory east of the Jordan River, appears in the narrative making a dramatic appearance before King Ahab. After predicting to Ahab a devastating drought and famine, Elijah fled to a brook east of the Jordan River. During the ensuing drought, the Lord fed Elijah by ravens which brought him food in the mornings and evenings. When the brook dried up, the Lord directed Elijah to go to Zarephath in the territory of Sidon. There he was fed by a widow whose oil and meal miraculously increased during the drought. When the widow's son died, Elijah restored him to life.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. After the prophet Elijah gave King Ahab the news from God that there would be a drought in Israel for the next few years, he went to hide in a ravine near the Jordan River. What did he eat and drink?
2. When the river dried up, God sent Elijah to a poor widow in Zarephath. He asked her for food. What miracle happened that allowed the woman to continue being generous?
3. What other miracle did God perform through Elijah when the widow's son died?

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Give each student a miniature flower pot or other small container and allow them to decorate the outsides. Inside the pot, glue a note that says, "The Widow's oil and flour did not run out. 1 Kings 17."

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

God took care of a poor woman who was generous with the little bit of food she had. He made sure her oil and flour did not run out!

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

Sing songs about how God takes care of and provides for us, such as "God is So Good."

## **Lesson 4**

# **ELIJAH AND THE PROPHETS OF BAAL**

### **1 Kings 18**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

After three years of drought, the Lord instructed Elijah to go back to Israel, show himself to Ahab, and He would send rain. When Ahab met Elijah, he called him a “troubler of Israel,” but Elijah told Ahab it was *Ahab* who troubled Israel because he had forsaken the Lord and followed Baal. Elijah then challenged Ahab to gather all the 450 prophets of Baal and Jezebel's 400 prophets to Mount Carmel. Elijah proposed a contest to determine whose god was the true God. Both sides were to prepare an altar and bull for sacrifice. The God who answered by fire would be the one true God. When the prophets of Baal called upon their God for fire, they received no answer, but when Elijah called upon the Lord God of Israel, God set the altar on fire, causing the people of Israel to recognize Him as God. Elijah then slaughtered the prophets of Baal, and the Lord sent rain to end the drought.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. That Baal was probably the worst false god in biblical history.
2. The challenge Elijah proposed to the prophets of Baal.
3. What the prophets of Baal did to call down fire in comparison to how Elijah did.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Have the students glue dried beans on to construction paper to create two "altars."  
Have them draw flames around the one on the right. Underneath it write "GOD."  
Have the students draw sad faces around the other altar and write "BAAL"  
underneath it.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

When Israelites called for fire from an idol, nothing happened. When the good man, Elijah, called on God for fire, He sent enough fire to burn up the entire altar. Our God has power, and He hears us.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"The 10 Commandments" by JoLinda Crump  
"Awesome God" by Rich Mullins

## **Lesson 5**

# **JEZEBEL AND NABOTH'S VINEYARD**

### **1 Kings 21**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

When Jezebel, wife of King Ahab, learned that Elijah had killed her prophets, she threatened to kill Elijah. (Before this, Jezebel had killed prophets of the Lord.) In fear, Elijah fled. He then prayed that God would let him die. Instead, God sent an angel to Elijah as well as food and drink that would strengthen him for a journey of 40 days and 40 nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God.

The Lord spoke to Elijah and asked him what he was doing there. Elijah replied that he was the only one left in Israel who served the Lord and that the Israelites were seeking to kill him. There the Lord told Elijah to stand upon the mountain, and He passed by Elijah. There was as a strong wind, but the Lord was not in the wind; there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; then a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. After the fire, there was a still, small voice (1 Kings 19:10-12).

The Lord asked Elijah a second time what he was doing there. Elijah answered the same as before. He told Elijah to go back to the Desert of Damascus, instructing him to anoint Hazael king over Syria, Jehu king over Israel, and Elisha to succeed Elijah as prophet. He assured Elijah there were 7000 in Israel who still did not bow down to Baal.

Some time later, Ahab tried to acquire the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite. Naboth refused Ahab's offer because the Lord forbade him to give away the inheritance of Naboth's fathers. When Ahab returned home angry and sullen, Jezebel asked why her husband was upset. Upon learning of Naboth's refusal, she concocted a plan to get the vineyard: she sent letters to the elders and nobles in Naboth's city, instructing them to have two scoundrels testify that Naboth cursed both God and the king and then stone him to death. After he was dead, Ahab went to the vineyard to take possession of it, and Elijah met Ahab for the last time. Elijah prophesied the violent deaths of Ahab and Jezebel and the extermination of their house. When Ahab repented, the Lord allowed that the prophecy would not come to pass during Ahab's lifetime.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. What King Ahab wanted from Naboth.
2. The evil scheme his wife, Jezebel, created to help Ahab get what he wanted.
3. When Ahab repented, God relented. God is full of grace.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

### **Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Use parchment or white paper, markers, and sealing wax and stamp. Create and make copies of a letter like the one Jezebel sent to the elders and nobles in Naboth's city with the following words: "Proclaim a day of fasting and seat Naboth in a prominent place among the people. But seat two scoundrels opposite him and have them testify that he has cursed both God and the king. Then take him out and stone him to death." Have the students write sign "King Ahab" at the bottom of the letter. The letter can be folded in thirds and sealed with wax. Then have them write "Jezebel's Evil Plan" on the outside.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

Queen Jezebel made up lies about a man named Naboth so that she and her husband could take Naboth's vineyard. God hates when we lie, and ugly things happen when we do.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"The 10 Commandments" by JoLinda Crump  
"The Fruit of the Spirit" by JoLinda Crump

## **Lesson 6**

# **ELIJAH AND ELISHA**

**2 Kings 2:1-22**

### **INTRODUCTION**

After reigning over Israel for 22 years, Ahab was killed in a battle with the Syrians at Ramoth Gilead on the east side of the Jordan River. He was struck by an arrow as he rode his chariot in the battle, and his blood ran out of the wound into the bottom of the chariot. After the battle, Ahab's body was brought back to Samaria, his capital city. While his chariot was being washed, the dogs licked up his blood according to the word of the Lord spoken by Elijah.

When Elijah fled from Jezebel into the wilderness after he had killed the prophets of Baal and Asherah, God directed him to anoint Elisha to be a prophet. Sometime later, Elijah and Elisha journeyed together to the Jordan River and crossed on dry land after Elijah smote the waters with his cloak. As they walked and talked, Elisha asked for a double portion of Elijah's spirit. Suddenly a chariot and horses of fire appeared, and Elijah was taken to heaven in a whirlwind. Elisha picked up Elijah's cloak, and returning to the river, he smote the waters with the cloak, calling upon the God of Elijah. The waters parted, and Elisha crossed over. Sons of the prophets nearby who witnessed Elisha's action acknowledged him as Elijah's successor. As Elisha's first act of his ministry, he purified the dirty water at Jericho by pouring salt in it. The Lord said, "I have healed this water. Never again will it cause death or make the land unproductive."

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. That Elisha knew that Elijah would be taken from him soon, but refused three times to leave Elijah's side.
2. The request Elisha made of Elijah.
3. How Elijah was taken up into heaven.
4. How Elisha healed the waters of Jericho.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Have the students draw (either individually, or on a large piece of mural paper) what they think it would have looked like when Elijah was taken up to heaven by a chariot and horses of fire.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

Elijah was a good servant of God. Instead of dying, he went up to heaven in a chariot of fire pulled by horses made of fire! Elisha was Elijah's helper, and he took on Elijah's job after Elijah went away.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"Awesome God" by Rich Mullins.  
"Days of Elijah"



# **Lesson 7**

## **THE WIDOW'S OIL AND THE SHUNAMMITE WOMAN**

**2 Kings 4:1-37**

### **INTRODUCTION**

At God's direction, Elijah chose Elisha to succeed him as a prophet to the northern kingdom of Israel. When Elijah ascended to heaven in the chariot of fire, a double portion of his prophetic Spirit fell upon Elisha.

Elijah's religious reformation in Israel was continued by Elisha, who ministered to the people of the northern kingdom for about 50 years. Elisha performed many miracles, and some of them were similar to the miracles of Elijah.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. The miracle Elisha performed to help the widow who owed a lot of money to her creditors.
2. What Elisha gave the generous Shunammite woman.
3. What happened when the Shunammite woman's son died.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Arrange a play with actors to play the widow, her son, Elisha, and townspeople with empty jars. Have the students act out the story. Props would include: empty jars or containers, a pitcher for the "oil", and fake money.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

God gave Elisha the power to perform many miracles to help people who loved God. He made it so a widow's oil didn't run out. He made it so an older woman could have a baby. He raised a dead boy back to life.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"Awesome God" by Rich Mullins.

## **Lesson 8**

# **NAAMAN THE LEPER**

### **2 Kings 5**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

During part of Elisha's ministry, one of Ahab's sons, Joram, was king of Israel. At that time, the captain of the Syrian army was Naaman, a great and honorable man, but he was a leper. During one Syrian raid into Israel, a young Israeli girl was captured, brought back to Syria, and became a servant to Naaman's wife. She told her mistress that a prophet in Samaria could cure Naaman of his leprosy.

The king of Syria wrote a letter to the king of Israel and sent the letter by Naaman with gifts of gold, silver, and clothing. The letter stated that the king of Israel could cure Naaman. After reading the letter, king of Israel tore his clothes, for he believed the king of Syria was seeking a quarrel with him by giving him this impossible task.

Elisha heard about the incident and sent a message to the king of Israel. Telling him to send Naaman to him. When Naaman arrived at Elisha's house, Elisha sent his servant out to him. The servant told Naaman to go wash in the Jordan River seven times and his flesh would be restored.

Naaman was furious and went away, saying the rivers of Damascus in Syria were better than all the waters in Israel. However, Naaman's servants persuaded him to do as Elisha had said. Naaman was healed and was so grateful that he returned to Elisha offering him gifts and acknowledging faith in the God of Israel. Elisha refused the gifts even though Naaman urged him to accept. Naaman then asked that he might take back to Syria two mule-loads of earth, apparently for the purpose of erecting an altar of Israelite soil in order to worship the God of Israel in his own country of Syria. Elisha bids him to go in peace.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. What the king of Syria sent to the king of Israel.
2. How many times Elisha had Naaman wash in the Jordan River.
3. Who convinced Naaman to do as Elisha said.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

### **Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Show the students picture of people suffering with leprosy. There are some resources in the literature from Independent Church in India, a mission supported by Cornerstone. Talk about how much leprosy must hurt and how it must make the person suffering from it feel lonely.

Have the students act out the story. Have "Naaman" be covered with "sores" made of felt or stickers. On the seventh time the student "washes in the Jordan" have the spots wash away.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

God is a healer!

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"Jesus Loves Me"

"God is So Good"

"Awesome God"

"Mighty to Save"

## **Lesson 9**

# **MIRACLES PERFORMED BY ELISHA**

**2 Kings 4:38-44; 6:1-23**

### **INTRODUCTION**

After the death of Elijah, Elisha succeeded him as prophet. On that day, but before Elijah was taken up to heaven, Elisha asked that he may receive, and was granted, a double portion of Elijah's spirit.

One time during his long ministry, Elisha was in Gilgal during a drought. He ordered his servant to prepare food for the sons of the prophets at that place. One man gathered some poisonous wild gourds by mistake and added them to the pot of food. Elisha cast some flour into the pot and the contents became harmless.

Another time when a man brought him 20 barley loaves and some grain, he ordered him to place the food before 100 men. The men ate, and there was enough to eat and some left over.

In another incident, the sons of the prophets wanted to build a new dwelling place at the Jordan River. As the men were cutting down wood, one man's axe head fell into the water. The man was distressed because the ax was borrowed. Elisha miraculously recovered the ax head.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. What poisonous food did one man accidentally put into a pot?
2. How did Elisha feed 100 men? What miracle did Jesus perform that was similar? (Mt. 14:13-21)
3. What miracle did Elisha perform with the ax head lost in the Jordan River?

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Bring in a small tub of water and various items that float and do not float. Allow the students opportunities to place the items in the tub to see whether they float. Talk about the iron ax head. Could just ANYONE get an iron ax head to float in the water?

If there's extra time, allow the students to draw a picture of any of the three miracles taught about today.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

God's miracles not only help people, but they show how great our God is.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"Awesome God"

# Lesson 10

## JOASH THE BOY KING

2 Kings 11; 12:1-16

### INTRODUCTION

During the time Elijah and Elisha were doing their work, Israel was divided into two kingdoms: Israel and Judah. Both kingdoms were in turmoil. In the northern kingdom of Israel, the wicked Ahab was succeeded on the throne first by one son, and following his death, by a second son. Both of these kings were wicked as their father.

A descendant of David ascended the throne in Judah about the same time as Ahab's first son began reigning in Israel. This king of Judah was married to Athaliah who was the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. The king was wicked, as was his wife, and his son who succeeded him on the throne was also wicked.

Meanwhile God instructed Elisha to anoint Jehu as king of Israel. God chose Jehu as his instrument to destroy the descendants of Ahab, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Elijah (1 Kings 21:21-22; 2 Kings 9:1-13). Jehu killed both the king of Israel and the king of Judah. He became the new king over Israel.

When Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, saw that her son the king of Judah was dead, she destroyed all the royal heirs and declared herself queen of Judah. However, the wife of the high priest, who was also the sister of the dead king, managed to rescue one of the king's sons, Joash (her nephew), and hide him from Athaliah. He remained hidden for six years in the temple of the Lord.

In the seventh year, the high priest Jehoiada presented Joash to the officers of the temple and took an oath of allegiance from them. Jehoiada then armed temple guards, and as they stood round about Joash, Jehoiada placed a crown upon the boy's head. As the people shouted, "Long live the king!" Athaliah, hearing the noise, came to the temple and saw the young king standing by the pillar. While all the people of the land rejoiced and blew the trumpets, Athaliah tore her clothes and cried, "Treason! Treason!" Jehoiada then commanded the officers to follow Athaliah and slay her outside the temple.

Joash was a wise king. He learned from Jehoiada, the high priest, and listened to all he said. He began repairs on the temple of the Lord.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. How Joash became king, and how the kings and queen before him were all wicked.
2. Who Jehoiada was and what his relationship was to Joash after he became king. Joash was considered wise because he listened to someone like Jehoiada who loved God.
3. That God can work through someone who loves Him, no matter how small, young, or little experience they have.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Create and cut out construction paper thrones to have the students glue to construction paper of their choice. Then have them draw a small boy on the throne. At the bottom of the sheet, have them write "Joash, the Boy King."

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

Wise kings listen to people who love God. A little boy named Joash became king, and he listened to the advice of an adult who loved God.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"This Little Light of Mine"



# Lesson 11

## HEZEKIAH AND SENNACHERIB

2 Kings 18:1-8, 13-37; 19

### INTRODUCTION

When Jehu destroyed Baal worship in Israel, the Lord was gracious to Israel for a time and had compassion on them because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He would not destroy them or cast them from his presence (2 Kings 13:23).

**THE END OF THE NORTHERN KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.** Jehu's dynasty continued after his death for sixty-some years with his son, grandson, great-grandson, and great great-grandson (four generations) succeeding him on the throne of Israel. The kingdom then fell into a period of tumult and rapid decline. Meanwhile, the ancient kingdom of Assyria located in northern Mesopotamia between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers commenced its greatest period about 745 B.C. The Assyrians were fierce, warlike, and extremely cruel.

In 723 B.C., the nation of Assyria conquered the northern kingdom of Israel and carried the people captive into foreign lands. This marked the end of the northern kingdom, which had been ruled by wicked kings for slightly more than two hundred years. The Assyrians then brought into Israel peoples from other nations they had conquered. Eventually these foreigners intermarried with the Israelites who remained in the land. This was the beginning of the mixed race of Samaritans who were held in contempt by the Jews in New Testament times.

**THE SOUTHERN KINGDOM OF JUDAH ALONE.** In Judah, the descendants of David continued to reign for another one hundred and thirty-some years. Some of the kings were righteous and some were wicked. The fifth king to rule after Joash was Hezekiah, who reigned about 715-686 B.C., shortly after the northern kingdom had been taken captive. Hezekiah was righteous and cleansed the land, reforming and restoring the true worship of God.

After conquering the northern kingdom of Israel, the Assyrians soon turned their attention to Judah, invading the land and conquering some of the cities. The king of Assyria, Sennacherib, sent a message to Hezekiah, warning him to surrender Jerusalem, for Judah was not strong enough to withstand the mighty Assyrian army.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. What happened to Israel and who was threatening Judah.
2. That Hezekiah's first reaction to the Assyrians was to go to the temple and pray to God for deliverance. He trusted God before he trusted any army to save him!
3. That God himself protected Judah against the Assyrians because Hezekiah prayed to the Lord.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Make shields out of cardboard. Cover them with construction paper and write "The Lord protects" on them. Decorate them as desired.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

God is strong enough to protect you against anything and anyone!

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"My God is so Great"

"Mighty to Save"

# **Lesson 12**

## **HEZEKIAH'S LIFE IS LENGTHENED**

### **2 Kings 20**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

About the same time that Sennacherib invaded Judah, Hezekiah became seriously ill. Isaiah told him to set his house in order and prepare to die. In great distress Hezekiah prayed to the Lord. The word of the Lord came to Isaiah with a message for Hezekiah. The Lord said he had answered Hezekiah's prayer, healing him, extending his life for fifteen years, and promising him deliverance from Assyria.

Hezekiah asked Isaiah for a sign that the Lord would heal him, and that he would go to the house of the Lord on the third day. Isaiah asked Hezekiah if he wanted the shadow to go forward ten steps or backward ten steps (2 Kings 20:8-9). He asked that it would go backward ten steps, and sure enough, it did.

The king of Babylon, Berodach-Baladan, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that Hezekiah had been sick.

At this time in history, this Babylonian king had been defeated by the Assyrians and was in exile. Having heard of Hezekiah's successful defense against Sennacherib, he probably sent his ambassadors to Judah in order to form an alliance with Hezekiah against the Assyrians.

Hezekiah showed the Babylonian messengers all the treasures of his kingdom. Isaiah rebuked Hezekiah for his action, saying that one day all these treasures shall be carried to Babylon as well as his sons.

## TEACHING

After the lesson, each child should know:

1. Who was Isaiah and what was his relationship to Hezekiah?
2. Upon hearing the bad news of his failing health, Hezekiah immediately prayed to the Lord, and the Lord heard him!
3. The contrast between Hezekiah's faithful prayer and his earthly desire to show off his wealth.
4. It is the Lord who hears our prayers and can heal us.

## ART/CRAFT STATION

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Take a box and cut a slit in the top to be used as a prayer box. Decorate it however you'd like. Give the students index cards, and have them write a prayer request on them. Let the kids take turns reading their prayer request out loud and then dropping it into the box. Make an "Answered Prayer Board" out of poster board. Take an index card and trace around it as many times as you can on the poster board so that you have outlined spaces for many index cards on the board. Next Sunday, read the requests in the box again and whenever a request is answered, have the kid tape their card to the board.

## PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":

God hears us when we pray to him. He loves to hear your prayers!

## WORSHIP TIME:

**"In the Secret"**

**"I Will Say My Prayers"**

(Sung to: Row, Row, Row Your Boat)

C

I will say my prayers,

C

Each and every day,

C

I will always talk to God,

C

And He hears what I say.

© Mary Flynn

# **Lesson 13**

## **JOSIAH**

**2 Kings 22; 23:1-20**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Hezekiah was followed on the throne by his son, his grandson, and then his great-grandson, Josiah. When he ascended the throne, Josiah was only eight years old. His father and grandfather who had reigned before him were extremely wicked, leading the people of Judah into sin and polluting the land with idolatry.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. What Josiah did as a king to obey God. When he heard God's Word and realized that it wasn't being obeyed, how did he react?
2. That Josiah was a great leader who wanted God's people to worship only God, not idols.
3. That even though Judah was not obeying God as a country, God loved Josiah because his heart was tender and humble toward God.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Make books with construction paper and yarn. Glue the memory verse for the month into it and/or past memory verses, so as to make a small "Bible".

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

God shows us that He loves us through His Bible. We can all listen to the Bible and know how much God loves us!

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"The B-I-B-L-E"  
"Jesus Loves Me"

# Lesson 1

## THE KING BURNS JEREMIAH'S BOOK

### Jeremiah 36

#### INTRODUCTION

Jeremiah, the son of a priest, was from the village of Anathoth, which was about three miles northeast of Jerusalem. When he was a young man, the Lord called him to be a prophet. He received his call from the Lord in the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign (about 627 B.C.). Although Josiah was righteous and the people served the Lord during Josiah's reign, the Lord told Jeremiah that Judah had not returned to the Lord with her "whole heart, but in pretense" (Jer. 3:10).

After the death of Josiah, the people of Judah soon became idolatrous again, and the nation fell into rapid decline. Three of Josiah's sons and a grandson reigned after him, but all of them were evil. During this tumultuous time, Jeremiah served the Lord as a prophet to Judah and the nations. However, the people did not heed Jeremiah's words, but rather ridiculed, maligned, and persecuted him.

**NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S FIRST SIEGE OF JERUSALEM.** When Josiah was killed by Pharaoh-Necho of Egypt at Megiddo in 609 B.C., his son Jehoahaz became king in Judah. After three months, however, Pharaoh-Necho took him captive and carried him to Egypt. Pharaoh placed Jehoiakim, another son of Josiah, on the throne and demanded heavy taxes from Judah (2 Kings 23:31-35; 2 Chron. 36:1-4).

In 605 B.C., the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, defeated Pharaoh-Necho and the Egyptians at Carchemish on the Euphrates River and then invaded Judah (Jer. 46:2). He marched throughout Judah, besieging Jerusalem and carrying captives back to Babylon. Among these captives was Daniel (Dan. 1:1).

In that fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, the Lord spoke to Jeremiah, foretelling the Babylonian captivity of Judah, which would last for seventy years (Jer. 25:1, 8-11). He then told Jeremiah to write all the words he had spoken on a scroll. When Jehoiakim heard the words Jeremiah had written, he destroyed the scroll. The Lord told Jeremiah to write again the former words He had spoken, and then he added a prophecy against Jehoiakim, predicting his violent death (Jer. 36:30-31). Josephus, the Jewish historian, states that Jehoiakim was killed by Nebuchadnezzar who ordered him cast before the walls of the city and left unburied.

## TEACHING

After the lesson, each child should know:

1. Why did God want Jeremiah to write His Word on a scroll? (Jer. 36:3)
2. What was the king's response to the message of the scroll? How was it different from how the king's officials response?
3. That God wants us to love him with our whole heart, and he will give us many chances to obey him, but in the end, he must punish sin.

## ART/CRAFT STATION

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Make scrolls. Dictate the memory verse and let the kids act as scribes writing down God's Word to the king.

## PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":

God gives us chances to obey Him; He *wants* to forgive us!

## WORSHIP TIME:

"The Ten Commandments" by JoLinda Crump



## **Lesson 2**

# **JEREMIAH IN THE CISTERN**

### **Jeremiah 38-39**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, invaded Judah and besieged Jerusalem three times, taking captives and deporting them to Babylon. The first invasion and deportation was in 605 B.C. when Jehoiakim, son of Josiah, was reigning in Judah. Jehoiakim became subject to Nebuchadnezzar for three years but then rebelled (2 Kings 24:1). Jehoiakim was apparently killed by Nebuchadnezzar sometime later in a violent manner, fulfilling the prophecy of Jeremiah (Jer. 22:18-19; 36:30).

**NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S SECOND SIEGE OF JERUSALEM.** Jehoiakim was succeeded on the throne of Judah by his son Jehoiachin. Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem the second time, and after three months in 597 B.C., he again took captives to Babylon. Among the captives were the king Jehoiachin, his mother, wives, and officers, the prophet Ezekiel, princes, mighty men of valor, craftsmen and smiths—10,000 captives (2 Kings 24:8-16; 2 Chron. 36:9-10; Ezek. 1:1-3).

**NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S THIRD SIEGE OF JERUSALEM.** After Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiachin captive, he placed Zedekiah, another son of Josiah and the uncle of Jehoiachin, on the throne of Judah. Some years later, Judah again rebelled against the Babylonians, and Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem for the third time. After a siege of more than two years, Nebuchadnezzar captured the city in 586 B.C. He burned the temple and houses, broke down the walls of the city, and carried the treasures of the temple and city to Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar took captive to Babylon those people who escaped the Babylonian sword, leaving only the poorest of the people in Judah to be vinedressers and farmers (2 Kings 24:17-25:21; 2 Chron. 36:11-21).

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. Jeremiah was thrown into a cistern because he was speaking God's Word to the people and they didn't want to hear it.
2. God protected Jeremiah when he was in the cistern and his friend came to rescue him.
3. The king of Judah didn't listen to God (through Jeremiah), and because of this he suffered at the hands of the Babylonians. Jeremiah and his friend did listen to God and they were saved. God cares about individuals; He sees when we obey, even when those around us have forgotten Him.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Make a "rope" out of old clothes tied together to represent the rope the king's men used to pull Jeremiah out of the cistern. Have the students role play the story, then draw what they think it would have looked like for Jeremiah to be stuck in the mud at the bottom of the cistern, all alone.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

The Lord saves (protects) people who trust Him. He sees us when we obey, even if people around us aren't obeying Him.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"Those who Trust," "Trust and Obey"

## **Lesson 3**

# **DANIEL IN BABYLON**

### **Daniel 1**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

In 605 B.C. during the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came against Jerusalem for the first time and besieged the city. Nebuchadnezzar took young princes and nobles captive, carrying them back to Babylon along with temple treasures. One of the young Jewish men taken captive was Daniel. As a result, Daniel, a prophet of God, lived his entire adult life as a captive in a foreign country. He was courageous, deeply devoted to God, and a man of conviction and faith (Heb. 11:32-33).

Daniel's first test of courage occurred early in his captivity when he was very young, probably in his teens. The young captives were taken to Babylon for instruction in the Chaldean (another name for Babylonian) language and customs. They were trained for three years in preparation for service in the king's court. Daniel and three of his Jewish friends courageously, but courteously, refused to eat the king's food and drink his wine which possibly were foods offered to Babylonian idols or those which were a violation of the dietary laws in Leviticus.

The servant in charge of the young men was fearful his own life would be in danger if the Jewish boys' health suffered as a result of their refusal to partake of the king's food. Daniel suggested a ten-day trial, and the servant agreed to serve them vegetables and water during that period. At the end of the ten days, Daniel and his three friends appeared to be in better health than those who had eaten the king's food.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. Why was Daniel, a Jew, living in Babylon? They had been taken captive when Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem.
2. Daniel and his three friends wanted to honor God even in a place that didn't know Him. God made this possible for them by keeping them strong even though they didn't eat any meat.
3. Part of honoring God was honoring the authority they were under. Daniel and his three friends were very respectful of those they were under.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Bring in some raw vegetables for the students to eat during the craft time. Talk about what an athlete eats every day (high protein diets) in order to build muscle. Explain the miracle of God strengthening Daniel and his friends, who were eating only vegetables. Find a coloring page of a "muscle man" or athlete, and some vegetable stickers. Have the students color and decorate the pictures and write, "God made Daniel Strong" on the bottom.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

No matter where you are, you can always find a way to obey God.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"My God is so Great"

"The Four Kingdoms" by JoLinda Crump

## **Lesson 4**

# **NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM**

### **Daniel 2**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

In the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, he had a troubling dream. He wanted his dream interpreted, but claimed he could not remember the dream. When the Babylonian wise men could not reveal or interpret the dream, the king became angry and commanded that the wise men be slain—a decree that included Daniel and his friends. Daniel asked the king for some time, then he and his friends prayed to God for mercy. God revealed the secret to Daniel in a vision during the night.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. Daniel was respectful to the king in asking for more time.
2. God is the one who is able to reveal mysteries. He knows all the secrets in our hearts, things that even we don't know about ourselves. When we ask Him to reveal something, we should expect the unexpected!
3. Daniel's heart was to honor God. First, he prayed to him for mercy (Dan. 2:17-18), then he blessed God when the dream was revealed (Dan. 2:20-23). Finally, God was honored by the king himself when the dream was told to him by Daniel (Dan. 2:47).

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Bring in materials to represent what comprised the statue of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, so the kids can see what each part was made out of. Definitely talk about which ones smash the others. Have the students draw what they think the statue may have looked like.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

God knows all secrets. You can tell him anything!

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"My God is so Great"

"The Four Kingdoms" by JoLinda Crump

"He Knows My Name"

## Lesson 5

# The Fiery Furnace

### Daniel 3

#### INTRODUCTION

Nebuchadnezzar became king of Babylon in 605 B.C. and reigned until 562 B.C. Three times he invaded Judah and took captives, deporting them to Babylon. His first siege of Jerusalem came in 605 B.C. during the reign of Jehoiakim (Dan. 1:1). At that time Nebuchadnezzar carried to Babylon temple treasures and some captives who were nobles. Daniel and his three friends were among these captives. After three years, Jehoiakim rebelled against the Babylonians (2 Kings 24:1).

Nebuchadnezzar's second siege of Jerusalem was in 597 B.C. It was probably at this time that he bound the rebellious Jehoiakim in fetters to take him back to Babylon (2 Chron. 36:6). Apparently, however, he killed Jehoiakim instead, casting his body outside the walls of Jerusalem as prophesied by Jeremiah (Jer. 22:18-19; 36:30). Jehoiakim's son Jehoiachin then ascended the throne of Judah, but after three months Nebuchadnezzar deported the young king and others, including Ezekiel, to Babylon.

When Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah the third time, he completely destroyed Jerusalem and Solomon's temple. Most of the remaining people of the land were taken captive to Babylon including the last king of Judah, Zedekiah, another son of Josiah. The Babylonians killed Zedekiah's sons before him, then put out his eyes and carried him captive to Babylon.

In addition to his military career, Nebuchadnezzar was a great builder, and his capital city of Babylon was a place of great splendor. He fortified the city heavily, building a series of double walls; he also constructed streets, canals, temples, and palaces. His most famous works were the hanging gardens built in terraces to please his wife who missed the hills of her native land of Media. The hanging gardens of Babylon were one of the "seven wonders of the ancient world."

Sometime during his reign, Nebuchadnezzar constructed a great image of gold, about ninety feet high. He then ordered his subjects to fall down and worship the image at the dedication ceremony. Anyone who refused would be thrown into a fiery furnace. Daniel's three friends—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—refused to worship the image. When they were saved miraculously from the fiery furnace, Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged once again the Most High God.

## TEACHING

After the lesson, each child should know:

1. Who was Nebuchadnezzar?
2. Sometimes God doesn't rescue us from hard times, but he will always go with us into the fire.
3. Through it all, God was glorified. Even a great king like Nebuchadnezzar was amazed at how much greater our God is than the idol he built.

## ART/CRAFT STATION

### Experiences/Craft Suggestion:

This is the perfect role-playing story. Bring or make some instruments (paper plate tambourines, kazoos, Rubbermaid drums) and have some of the kids play music before an "idol" (a poster of some celebrity would do nicely). The three friends can stay standing and the king can come out and yell, "Throw them into the furnace! Make it extra hot!" at which point, a few guards can throw them into a box or tent of some sort with red streamers hanging over a window or entrance (making sure that the guards fall down dead because of the heat from the furnace), and a fourth person can appear in the furnace. Everyone is amazed and it ends with everyone praising God, king and all (shake your tambourines, blow your kazoos!)

### PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":

God is always with us, even when we hurt.

### WORSHIP TIME:

"Ancient of Days" (this song is taken from Dan. 7:13-14)



## **Lesson 6**

# **BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST**

### **Daniel 5**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

After Daniel had been in Babylonian captivity for nearly seventy years, Belshazzar, the last king of Babylon, hosted a drunken feast for a thousand lords. The king and his guests drank from the gold and silver vessels brought to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar from the temple in Jerusalem. Suddenly, a hand wrote on the words MENE MENE TEKEL PARSIN on the wall of the palace. When no one could understand the message, the queen remembered Daniel, and he was brought to Belshazzar to interpret.

MENE means "numbered"- God has numbered the days of your reign and has brought it to an end.

TEKEL means "weighed"- you have been weighed on the balance and have failed the test.

PARSIN means "divided"- your kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and Persians.



## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. While King Belshazzar and his men drank from the temple vessels, a hand appeared and wrote on the wall.
2. The king's wise men were unable to interpret the message.
3. Daniel was brought in, and he confronted the king with his sin.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Have a secret code with a message for the students to figure out; maybe something in another language or pictures.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

God knows when we sin. When a king drank from fancy cups stolen from the Israelites, God wrote a message on his wall to warn him.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"The Four Kingdoms" by JoLinda Crump  
"Oh, Be Careful Little Eyes What You See"



# **Lesson 7**

## **DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN**

### **Daniel 6**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Darius the Mede was appointed governor of Babylon by Cyrus, king of the Medes and Persians who was the conqueror of Babylon in 539 B.C. Darius appointed 120 princes or satraps over the kingdom, and placed three presidents or governors over the satraps of whom Daniel was one.

Because Darius favored Daniel for his excellence, the other two presidents (governors) were jealous and attempted to discredit Daniel. When they could find no fault in Daniel, they tricked Darius into making a royal law that no one could make a petition of any god or man for thirty days except the king (Darius). Anyone disobeying this law would be cast into a den of lions.

In spite of this law, Daniel courageously continued to pray to God three times daily at his window which was opened toward Jerusalem. The jealous men reported this to Darius, who was greatly displeased by the trickery and tried to find a way to deliver Daniel. However, since the law of the Medes and Persians could not be changed, Daniel was cast into the den of lions.

Darius spent the night fasting, and very early in the morning went to the lions' den to determine Daniel's fate. When Daniel emerged unhurt, the king commanded that the men who had accused Daniel be cast into the den of lions. Before they reached the bottom of the den, the lions broke them to pieces.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. King Darius gave Daniel a high position for his outstanding work.
2. The other leaders tried to catch Daniel doing wrong. Frustrated, they plotted to use Daniel's faithfulness to God against him.
3. Daniel chose to continue his daily worship even though it could mean death.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Fold paper in half and trace hand fingers together, with little finger on the fold. Cut out hand (not folded part). Open the praying hands and write or draw things you thank God for or prayer requests. Talk about how Daniel prayed to God faithfully, even when he was warned to stop.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

Do not stop praying! People may make fun of you, or not understand why you pray. Remember, Daniel prayed no matter what, and God protected him in the lion's den.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"The Four Kingdoms" by JoLinda Crump  
"Dare to be a Daniel and Stand Alone"

## **Lesson 8**

# **JONAH AND THE GREAT FISH**

### **Jonah 1, 2, 3**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Jonah was a prophet to the northern kingdom of Israel. His home was Gath Hopher, a border town in the territory of Zebulun. He prophesied, by the word of the Lord, the expansion of the borders of Israel during the days of Jeroboam II who reigned over Israel 793-753 B.C. (II Kings 14:23-29). Jeroboam II was the great-grandson of Jehu, the king who destroyed the house of Ahab and cleansed the northern kingdom of Baal worship.

One day the Lord told Jonah to go to Nineveh, the great capital city of Assyria, and "cry against it: for their wickedness is come before me" (Jonah 1:2). Nineveh was located on the Tigris River about 225-250 miles north of Babylon. The city was surrounded by a high, massive wall about eight miles in circumference. The population at the time of Jonah's mission was 120,000 or more (Jonah 4:11).

The cruel Assyrian empire had inflicted great suffering on the peoples of the world for centuries. Their first conflict with Israel had occurred one hundred years earlier during the reigns of Ahab and Jehu. Jonah, therefore, was reluctant to go to Nineveh to preach a message of repentance to Israel's enemy. Jonah instead attempted to run away from God. The book of Jonah can be summarized as follows:

Chapter 1- Jonah runs from God

Chapter 2-Jonah runs to God

Chapter 3- Jonah runs with God

Chapter 4- Jonah runs ahead of God

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. God commanded Jonah to warn the people of Nineveh that the city would be destroyed because of their wickedness.
2. Jonah ran to Tarshish to get away from the Lord, but God sent a storm and a fish to swallow Jonah.
3. Jonah prayed to the Lord to save him and then went to Nineveh.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Make a great fish (or use a folding play tube). Talk to the students about how it must have felt to be swallowed by the fish and how if Jonah had obeyed he would have been saved from the pain of disobedience. Act out the story. Use props like tattered clothing, maybe face paint or stickers to show how Jonah might have looked after being vomited up by the fish.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

God wants us to obey Him. Jonah ran away when God gave him a job to do. He wants us to say "yes" the *first* time He asks us to do something.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"Trust and Obey"

Any songs relating to Jonah



## **Lesson 9**

# **ESTHER BECOMES QUEEN**

### **Esther 1; 2**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

In 539 B.C., Cyrus, king of the Medes and Persians, conquered the Babylonians. Thus the great Babylonian kingdom, represented by the head of gold in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, ended and was succeeded by the Medo-Persian Empire, the silver breast and arms.

Cyrus permitted the deported peoples in his conquered territory to return to their homelands. Many Jews returned to Palestine to once again live in their "promised land" and rebuild their temple and cities, fulfilling the prophecy of Jeremiah (Ezra 1:1-4; Jer. 25:11-12). Not all Jews returned to Palestine, however; some remained in the lands to which they had been carried as captives. Throughout the years they had established new homes and businesses, becoming prosperous.

The book of Esther takes place in Shushan, the Persian capital, during the reign of Xerxes (Greek name for Ahasuerus). Xerxes was the son and successor of Darius I, who we learned about (last month) in the story of Daniel and the lion's den. Xerxes ruled Persia from 485 to 465 B.C. Esther was a brave and courageous young Jewish girl who became queen of Persia and saved her people from disaster.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. The Jewish man, Mordecai, brought up his orphaned relative, Esther as his own daughter.
2. The Persian king, Xerxes, selected Esther as his queen. Esther obeyed Mordecai and did not tell anyone that she was a Jew.
3. Queen Esther told the king about a plot to kill Him, and gave the credit to Mordecai.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Cut pieces of cardboard into the shape of a handheld mirror; one for each student. Have them cut out aluminum foil ovals to glue onto one side of the "mirror." On the back, glue a note that says, "Queen Esther was beautiful inside and out." Decorate the mirror with sequins, glitter, etc.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

Just as Esther followed Mordecai's instruction (Esther 2:20), it is important for you to obey your parents.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"Trust and Obey"

"The Four Kingdoms" by JoLinda Crump

# **Lesson 10**

## **HAMAN'S PLOT**

**Esther 3;4**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Vashti, the queen of Persia, was removed from her position when she refused to obey the king's command to parade her beauty before his drunken guests. As a result, beautiful young women from all over the empire were brought to the palace in Shushan in order for King Xerxes to choose a new queen. Esther, a young Jewish woman, pleased the king more than any of the beauties brought before him, and he placed the royal crown upon her head. Sometime later, Esther faced a great dilemma requiring immense courage on her part.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. Mordecai angered Haman by refusing to bow in respect to him. Haman then devised a plan to destroy him and all the Jews.
2. Mordecai urged Esther to go into the king's presence to plead with him for her people.
3. Esther sent word to Mordecai to have all the Jews fast for her for 3 days and nights. Mordecai carried out all of Esther's instructions.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Play a "trusting" game to demonstrate how Esther had to trust Mordecai and God. Take turns blindfolding each student, and have the other students direct them in a simple task, such as pouring water into a cup; retrieving an item from somewhere in the room; building a pyramid from blocks; etc. Ask them how it felt to have to listen and not be able to see how it would turn out.

**PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

Like Queen Esther, we should ask others to pray for us in hard times.

**WORSHIP TIME:**

"The Four Kingdoms" by JoLinda Crump

"Read Your Bible, Pray Every Day"

# **Lesson 11**

## **ESTHER SAVES THE JEWS**

### **Esther 5-9**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Xerxes, the Persian king, appointed Haman his chief advisor and ordered all of his servants to bow to Haman. Mordecai, a Jew and an official in the palace, refused to pay homage to Haman and thus incurred his wrath. Haman, in his anger, planned to destroy all Jews in the kingdom, not just Mordecai, and received authority from the king for his revenge.

When Mordecai heard about Haman's evil plot, he sent word to Esther, his adopted daughter, to intercede with the king on behalf of her people the Jews. Xerxes had chosen Esther, a young and beautiful Jewish woman, to be his queen to replace Vashti who had disobeyed him. However, Esther had not revealed to Xerxes her Jewish ancestry. Esther agreed to speak to the king to spare the lives of the Jews. Thus she placed her own life in danger, for she had not been summoned by the king to appear before him.

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. Esther went before the king and he held out his golden scepter to her. What did that symbolize?
2. Esther requested the king and Haman to come to a feast. How did Haman feel after he left the banquet?
3. Whom did King Xerxes order Haman to honor and how?
4. At the second banquet, Esther told the king about the plot to destroy the Jews.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Print out pictures of scepters from the internet, or bring in Bible history or art history books that show scepters to show the students. Have the students make scepters out of sparkly pipe cleaners or other craft items. Talk to them about how a king's scepter represented power.

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

God gave Queen Esther courage to do what was hard and scary.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"The Four Kingdoms" by JoLinda Crump

## **Lesson 12**

# **NEHEMIAH REBUILDS THE WALLS**

**Nehemiah 1; 2; 4:1-18; 6:15-16**

### **INTRODUCTION**

When Cyrus, king of the Medo-Persian Empire, conquered Babylon in 539 B.C., he issued a decree allowing the deported peoples throughout his empire to return to their homelands. The first group of Jews to return to Palestine was led by Zerubbabel, a descendant of David. The main purpose of this return, besides resettling the land, was to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. Cyrus gave to these returning exiles 5400 vessels of gold and silver that Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple and put in the house of his gods in Babylon. The new (second) temple was completed and dedicated to God in 515 B.C. (Ezra 1; 6:15).

A second group of Jews returned to Palestine in 458 B.C. The leader of this second return was Ezra, a scribe and descendant of Aaron. Ezra had set his heart to seek the Lord, and his mission was to teach the laws and statutes to the Jews who had returned to Palestine (Ezra 7:1-10).

In 445 B.C., in the twentieth year of the reign of the Persian king Artaxerxes, Nehemiah, a Jew and high official in the king's court, learned that conditions back in Jerusalem were deplorable--the people were in great affliction and the walls of the city broken down. The king appointed Nehemiah as governor of Judah and gave him permission to lead a third group of Jews back to Jerusalem with authority to rebuild the walls of the city (Neh. 1-2:8; 5:14).

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. Nehemiah challenged the people of Jerusalem to rebuild the walls, telling them how God gave him favor with the king. (Neh. 2:17,18)
2. Four armies plotted together to fight against Jerusalem and the Jews prayed to God and guarded the city night and day. (Neh. 4:7-9)
3. The wall was completed in 52 days. When the enemies heard about this, the surrounding nations were afraid because they realized that this work had been done with the help of God. (Neh. 6:15,16)

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Cut many small rectangles of grey or tan construction paper, and have the students cover a page with as many as they can, like laying bricks of a wall. At the bottom of the page, print "Nehemiah Rebuilds the Walls of Jerusalem."

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

God protected the Jews as they rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem. They were surrounded by many enemies, but God kept them safe.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"Awesome God"

"My God is So Big, So Strong, and So Mighty"



# Lesson 13

## JOB

**Job 1; 2; 42:7-17**

### INTRODUCTION

Job was a patriarch (father and ruler of a family or tribe) who may have lived during the same period of time as Abraham. His home was in the land of Uz. The exact location of Uz is unknown, but it was in the "east" (Job 1:3) near the desert or "wilderness" (Job 1:19). Uz was probably a region east of the Jordan River, bordering the Arabian desert from Edom north to the Euphrates River.

Job was a righteous and wealthy man with seven sons and three daughters, 7000 sheep, 3000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys, and a great household. One day Satan appeared before the Lord making an accusation against Job. He complained that Job was righteous because God had blessed him richly, building a hedge about him to protect him. He then challenged the Lord to "put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face" (Job 1:11). The Lord then permitted Satan to afflict Job, but He did not allow Satan to harm Job himself. Thus the Lord limited Satan's power (Job 1: 1-12).

The book of Job is a type of writing called wisdom literature, and it deals with the question: "Why do the righteous suffer?"

## **TEACHING**

**After the lesson, each child should know:**

1. Satan accused Job of serving God because of his blessings, God gave Satan permission to attack Job's family and possessions.
2. Job did not sin even though he lost his wealth, his children, and his health.
3. God poured out His blessing, rewarding Job for his patience in suffering.

## **ART/CRAFT STATION**

**Experiences/Craft Suggestion:**

Make a crown and print on the crown James 1:12, "God blesses the people who patiently endure testing. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised those who love him."

## **PRESCHOOL "BIG IDEA":**

God never leaves us, even in very hard times.

## **WORSHIP TIME:**

"God is So Good"