

1/2 GRADES

FUN + FRIENDS + FAITH



JUNE 12

FIRST SERVICE

LEADER Bible Study

The ark of the covenant was a physical reminder of God's tangible presence with His people. Rather than treat the ark with reverence, they treated the ark as a sort of good luck charm. In our Bible story today, we see what happened when the ark was taken from the people of Israel.

Except in times of war or when the people of Israel were on the move, the ark was kept in the holy of holies in the tabernacle. Once a year, a priest would approach the ark and sprinkle blood on the mercy seat on the ark's top for the forgiveness of the people's sins. The ark and what it represented was temporal and pointed forward to the substantial reality of God who would come and live among His people.

When we realize that Jesus lived a perfect life and then died in our place, we see that Jesus is better than the ark because He is always with us. We are filled with thankfulness.

Jesus is better than the bulls and goats whose blood was sprinkled on the ark because His sacrifice is once, for all time (Heb. 10:10). This should move us to worship.

Finally, we should be humbled and filled with confidence when we realize that Jesus, who lived perfectly in human flesh, died and then was resurrected and ascended into heaven where He, in His glorified human body, prays for us.

This should give you confidence in this life that no matter what we face, God's Holy Spirit is with us. The Son is interceding for us. Because Jesus stands between the Father and us, we can "approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us at the proper time" (Heb. 4:16). We can go before God daily because of Jesus.

ELI'S SONS DISOBEYED GOD

1 SAMUEL 4-6

TERMS TO KNOW

Ark of the Covenant: Wooden box covered in gold that contained the stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments were written, a jar of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded.

CHRIST CONNECTION

The ark of God reminded the Israelites that God was with them. Years later, God gave His people something greater than a sign that He was with them; God gave them His Son, Jesus—God in the flesh. One of Jesus' names is Immanuel, which means "God with us."

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

What are the consequences for sin?
The consequence for sin is separation from God.

KEY PASSAGE

Romans 6:23
For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.



Busy Hands

WELCOME KIDS // *"IT DOESN'T BELONG" ACTIVITY PAGE / CHILD, CRAYONS OR MARKERS*

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

Say: **Can you tell me about a time you disobeyed a parent, teacher, or coach this week?** Pause for answers. **Disobedience is sin and we all struggle with sin. Today, we're going to hear a story about two men who disobeyed God and faced the consequences of their sin.**

ACTIVITY PAGE: Invite kids to complete "It Doesn't Belong" on the activity page. There are 11 items they should circle. After some time, review the answers with the children. Say: **The picture had several things that didn't belong. Today, we're going to learn about two men who took something important and moved it somewhere it didn't belong. They did not obey God.**

Note: The coloring page is on the opposite side of the page, The kids may color it now or later in the lesson.

CHOOSE OBEY OR DISOBEY // *GREEN PAPER WITH WORD "OBEY," RED PAPER WITH WORD "DISOBEY", WHITE WALL TAPE*

Post the signs on opposite sides of the classroom. Gather the children to the middle of the room. Explain you will say different scenarios of children either obeying or disobeying. The kids are to decide if the child is obeying or disobeying by moving closer to the corresponding sign.

Possible scenarios:

- Malik's grandmother asked him to put on his shoes so they could go to the grocery store. Malik kept playing with his blocks and complained that he did not want to go to the store.
- Cari's father asked her to help fold the towels. Cari stopped playing and helped her dad fold the towels and put them in the cabinet.
- Miki's mother tucked her in bed and told her to go to sleep. After her mother left, Miki got up and started playing with her toys.
- Jamal's teacher asked him to put away the toys and come to group time. Jamal quickly put away the toys and went to group time.

Continue play as time allows and add addition scenarios for your class.

Say: **We can choose to obey or disobey. When we disobey God, we sin. Many times, there are consequences when we disobey. We will learn in our Bible story that God's people, the Israelites, sinned. Let's find out what happened to them.**



Active Minds

INTRODUCE THE STORY // *COUNTDOWN VIDEO (OPTIONAL), BIG PICTURE QUESTION POSTER, TIMELINE, BIBLES, THE “ARK”*

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

Say: **I’m glad you are here. I want to know which of you brought a Bible this week.** [Allow responses and distribute Bibles to any kids who need one.] **That’s great. The Bible is God’s Word. It tells us what is true about God and about ourselves so we can know how to have a right relationship with God through faith in Jesus. Studying the Bible is one way we can grow closer to God. The Israelites had something that made them feel close to God. It was called the ark of the covenant, or ark of God. The ark was a wooden box, covered with gold. (Show the “ark”). Inside were the two stone tablets that had the Ten Commandments written on them, as well as a jar of manna and other objects that were reminders of how God provided for the Israelites while they were in the wilderness. The ark represented God’s power and presence with His people. Today we will learn about a time some of the Israelites treated the ark like a sort of ‘lucky charm’ that would force God to do what they wanted.**

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Say: **Ultimately, sin boils down to our doing what we want instead of what God wants. We have discussed before that sin is rebellion against God. The Bible teaches us that sin is serious. What is the consequence for sin? It is separation from God. This means that because we all are born in sin, we should be separated from God forever. No good deeds can make up for our sin. Only faith in Jesus save us from our sins.**

REVIEW THE TIMELINE: Show the timeline. Point to individual Bible stories from this unit as you review. Say: **Let’s review. Who can tell us what happened in the first story about the judges?** [Allow responses.] **Yes, the Israelites were trapped in a cycle of sin and God raised up leaders called judges to help them. What happened in the story about Samson?** [Allow responses.] **Right! Samson was a judge who made many sinful choices, but God used Samson’s death to deliver the Israelites from their enemies. Who can tell us what happened in the story about Ruth?** [Allow responses.] **You got it! God used Boaz, a family redeemer, to provide for Ruth. Ruth and her family were ancestors of the ultimate Redeemer, Jesus. Who can tell us what happened in the story about Hannah?** [Allow responses.] **Yep, Hannah trusted God and dedicated her son Samuel to serve God. God used Samuel to deliver a message of judgment to sinful leaders. This week, we will see this judgment and see God’s justice on display.**

THE BIBLE STORY: ELI’S SONS DISOBEYED GOD // *BIBLES, BIBLE STORY PICTURE POSTER, AN “ARK”, QUESTIONS FROM KIDS VIDEO,*

Use the Bible Story Picture Poster and one or both of these storytelling tips to help you tell the story: Tell the story as if you were a witness to the events of the story and/or display and move the ark throughout the story.

Continued on the net page.



Active Minds

ELI'S SONS DISOBEYED GOD

The Israelites had been enemies of the Philistines for many years. One day, the Philistines defeated Israel in a battle. The leaders of Israel asked, "Why did God let us lose to the Philistines?"

The Israelites decided to battle again. This time, however, they would take the ark of the covenant with them. The ark of the covenant was a wooden box covered in gold that reminded them God was with them. Maybe the ark would help them win.

Eli's sons, wicked men who did not respect God, took the ark of the covenant to the Israelites' camp. When the army of Israelites saw the ark, they shouted with joy. Surely they would win the battle now! But when the Philistines came out to fight against the Israelites, the Philistines won again! They killed thousands of Israelites, including Eli's sons, and they captured the ark of God.

One of the Israelites ran to tell Eli what had happened. When Eli heard the news, he fell backward in his chair, broke his neck, and died.

The Philistines took the ark of the covenant to their temple where they worshiped a false god named Dagon (DAY gahn). They put the ark next to a statue of Dagon. The next morning, the Philistines found Dagon's statue facedown in front of the ark. They set the statue back up. The next day, the statue was facedown again. This time, its head and hands were broken off.

God punished the Philistines living in the city where they kept the ark. The people got sick, and they wanted to get rid of the ark. But when the Philistines moved the ark to another city, everyone in that city got sick. So they moved the ark to a third city. Then everyone in that city got sick too.

The Philistines were afraid. They didn't want God to punish them anymore, so they decided to return the ark along with gifts of gold to show they were sorry for taking it. The Philistines hitched two cows to a cart and put the ark on the cart. The cows moved the ark down the road until the ark of God was back with the Israelites, where it belonged.

Christ Connection: The ark of God reminded the Israelites that God was with them. Years later, God gave His people something greater than a sign that He was with them; God gave them His Son, Jesus—God in the flesh. One of Jesus' names is Immanuel, which means "God with us."

QUESTIONS FROM KIDS: Show the "Unit 9, Session 5" questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Is it ever OK to disobey?
2. Why do you think God asks us to obey Him



Open Hearts

KEY PASSAGE AND PRAYER // *KEY PASSAGE POSTER, 4 SMALL BOXES OR GIFT BAGS EACH WITH THE KEY PHRASE ON INDEX CARDS, KEY PASSAGE SONG: "ETERNAL LIFE (ROMANS 6:23)"*

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Romans 6:23 together. Then say: **We all have sin in our heart that separates us from God, but God offers us the free gift of salvation. Jesus is the greatest gift. He died in our place for our sins and gives us eternal life.**

Select four kids to open the prepared "gifts." Challenge four groups of children to work together to put the key passage in correct order. Then lead kids to sing "Eternal Life (Romans 6:23)." You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

PRAY: Lord God, thank You for being with us. Thank You for sending Jesus to be with us. Thank You for inviting us to be with You forever. Help us, God, to obey You in all we say and do. Amen.

REVIEW AND BIBLE SKILLS // *BIBLES, OLD TESTAMENT MEDITERRANEAN MAP*

Distribute Bibles. Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 4–6. Explain to kids how they can use the table of contents to locate a book of the Bible. Point out that 1 Samuel is in the Old Testament History division, right after the Book of Ruth. Choose a volunteer to read aloud 1 Samuel 4:1-11 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud. Consider pointing out the location of Israel (F9) on the Old Testament Mediterranean Map.

Say: **The ark of the covenant was a symbol of God's power, holiness, and presence with the Israelites. The ark had gone before the Israelites in other battles. But instead of believing in God's power that helped them win those battles, Eli's sons put their hope in the ark itself. They used the ark like a good luck charm in their battle against the Philistines. The Philistines captured the ark of God, and they thought their false god must have been stronger than the one true God of Israel. The Philistines got sick and sent the ark back to the Israelites. God's people had the ark to feel close to God, but we have Jesus. Only Jesus brings us near to God.**

WITH YOU ALL THE WAY // *NONE*

Form two teams of kids. Instruct both teams to line up on one side of the room. Choose one child on each team to be that team's helper. Teams must choose one of two ways to cross the room: Either each kid may cross one at a time by walking heel-to-toe, or the helper can lock arms with kids one at a time and cross as fast as they can.

The first team to get all teammates to the other side first wins the game. Play again with new helpers as time allows.

Continued on the next page.



Extra Ideas

Say: **God is our ultimate Helper. He will be with us wherever we go. The ark wasn't God and God wasn't contained by the ark, but the ark of the covenant reminded the Israelites that God was with them. Years later, God gave His people something greater than a sign that He was with them; God gave them His Son, Jesus—God in the flesh. One of Jesus' names is Immanuel, which means 'God with us.'**

GROUP DISCUSSION // NONE

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

Say: **Why was the ark of the covenant so important to the Israelites?** Remind kids that the ark of the covenant was a wooden box covered with gold. Inside were the two stone tablets with the Ten Commandments on them, as well as other objects from their time in the wilderness, such as a jar of manna. The ark was a symbol of God's power, holiness, and presence with the Israelites. Explain that the ark of the covenant was also used in special ceremonies required by God's law.

Say: **Why did Eli's sons take the ark into battle?** Guide kids to discuss how the nation of Israel had taken the ark into battle before; however, in this case, the people treated the ark like an idol, believing that it would save them from the Philistines. They were not honoring God or obeying His law, and as a consequence, God did not fight for them, whether they had the ark with them or not.

Say: **Have do you know God is with you? What can you do when you feel alone?** Remind kids that God promises in His Word to always be with us through the Holy Spirit. Emphasize that God is in all places at all times. We are never alone. Suggest that when kids feel alone, they talk to an adult and pray to talk to God. Point out that even though the Israelites treated the ark like an idol, God graciously brought the ark back to them. God will never leave His people, even when they sin against Him.

REFLECTION AND PRAYER // CRAYONS, COLORING PAGE

Discuss these questions: **•What does this story teach me about God or the gospel? •What does this story teach me about myself? •Who can I tell about this story?**

Be sure to send the activity page home so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group