

UNIT 9 | SESSION 3

THE ARK WAS CAPTURED

1 SAMUEL 4-6



CHRIST CONNECTION: God sent us His Son, Jesus, to remind us that God is always with us.

KEY PASSAGE PHRASE: God gives us all we need in Jesus. Philippians 4:19

BABIES GOSPEL GEMS

- When the Philistines won a battle, they took the special box, called the ark of God, from God's people.
- Soon, the Philistines got very sick. They were scared and wanted to give the ark back.
- The Philistines put the ark on a cart pulled by two cows and sent it back to God's people.

BIBLE STORY FOR TODDLERS: Long ago, God's people lost a battle with the Philistines. God's people were sad. They thought if they took the ark of God (a special box to remind them that God was with them) to battle, they would win. Eli, the priest, had two sons who took the ark to the battle, but the Philistines won again. And they even took the ark! The Philistines set the ark next to a statue of their pretend god. Every morning, the statue was lying facedown in front of the ark. God showed the Philistines that He is the real God. Then God made the Philistines very sick. They put the ark on a cart pulled by two cows and sent it back to God's people.



LEARNING Activities

Engage babies in the following activities during the session. In each activity, provide handheld Bibles for babies to handle. Open a Bible to 1 Samuel 4. Show the Bible Story Poster as you say the gospel gems in a soothing voice. Read the Key Passage Phrase Card. Pray for the babies.

1 SING A SONG

Sing the song below to the tune of “She’ll Be Coming Around the Mountain”:

“God gives us all we need in Jesus. [Point up to the sky.]
God gives us all we need in Jesus. [Point up to the sky.]
God gives all that we need through His Son who set us free. [Cross arms over your chest.]
God gives us all we need in Jesus. [Point up to the sky.]”

SAY “ Our key passage phrase says, ‘God gives us all we need in Jesus.’ God showed the Philistines that they shouldn’t worship pretend gods. Jesus is all we need! ”

2 EXPLORE NEW SHAPES

Gather foam blocks of different shapes and sizes. Sit babies in leaders’ laps or in horseshoe-shaped pillows. Let the babies hold and explore the blocks. Stimulate their senses by helping them feel the different curves and edges. Allow the babies to continue playing with the blocks as you read the gospel gems.

SAY “ When the Philistines won a battle, they took the special box, called the ark of God, from God’s people. Who did God send for us? Yes, Jesus! God sent us His Son, Jesus, to remind us that God is always with us. ”

3 COW SOUNDS

Gather a few soft cow toys. Encourage the babies to crawl toward the toys. Engage the babies by mooing like a cow each time they touch the toy. Repeat, reading the gospel gems as the babies play.

SAY “ What animal pulled the cart in our Bible story? Yes, a cow! The Philistines put the ark on a cart pulled by two cows and sent it back to God’s people. The ark reminded God’s people that He was with them. God sent us His Son, Jesus, to remind us that God is always with us. ”

Check diapers, serve bottles if needed, and release babies to parents according to your church’s security guidelines. Give parents today’s Big Picture Card. Repeat the Christ Connection, gospel gems, and Bible-learning activities for babies who stay a second hour.



LEARNING Activities

Engage toddlers in the following activities. In each activity, show the Bible Story Poster as you review the Bible story. Provide small Bibles for toddlers to handle.

1 CIRCLE TIME

Open your Bible to 1 Samuel 4. Show the Bible Story Poster as you tell the provided toddlers' Bible story. Read the Key Passage Phrase Card and guide toddlers to say it with you. Pray for the toddlers.

2 CREATE ARKS

Explain to the toddlers that today's Bible story involves a special box called the ark of God. Distribute tissue boxes (one per toddler), several stickers, and washable markers for toddlers to decorate their "arks." Review the Bible story as the toddlers decorate.

SAY "When the Philistines won a battle, what did they take? Yes, a box! They took the special box, called the ark of God, from God's people. This box was a reminder that God was with His people. God's people were sad when the box was taken."

3 COUNTING COW SPOTS

Cut out several circles from black or brown construction paper. Tape the circles to the wall starting with one, then placing two together, then three, and so on. Point to and count each spot. Encourage the toddlers to tell you how many spots are in each group. Remind them that today's story involved cows. Retell the Bible story.

SAY "What animal pulled the cart that carried the ark? Yes, cows! The Philistines put the ark on a cart pulled by two cows and sent it back to God's people. God showed the Philistines that He is the only God. God gives us all we need!"

4 PLAY DOCTOR

Gather an age-appropriate toy doctor kit. Invite the toddlers to give each other a checkup. Show them how to use each tool. Pretend to check things like temperature and heartbeat. Talk about the Bible story as the toddlers continue experimenting with the doctor kit.

SAY "The Philistines took something that didn't belong to them. They took the special box, called the ark of God, from God's people. Soon, the Philistines got very sick. They were scared and wanted to give the ark back."

5 SING AND PAT A SONG

Sing this song to the tune of "God Is So Good": "God is with me. [pat legs twice, point thumbs to your chest] / God is with me. [pat legs twice, point thumbs to your chest] / God is with me. [pat legs twice, point thumbs to your chest] / He's with me, always. [pat legs twice, clap hands twice]" Repeat as interest allows. Review the Bible story.

SAY "The ark was a special box to remind God's people that He was with them. Who did God send to us? Yes! God sent us His Son, Jesus, to remind us that God is always with us."

THE ARK WAS CAPTURED

1 SAMUEL 4 – 6

CHRIST CONNECTION: God sent us His Son, Jesus, to remind us that God is always with us.

KEY PASSAGE PHRASE: God gives us all we need in Jesus. Philippians 4:19

1 TRANSITION ACTIVITY: FEEL IN THE BOXES

Place three to four tissue boxes on a table. Fill each box with an item (one item per box). Suggested ideas are cotton balls, interlocking blocks, keys, pom-poms, buttons, and so forth. Allow toddlers to feel inside the boxes as you retell the Bible story.

SAY “ When the Philistines won a battle, they took the special box, called the ark of God, from God’s people. The box reminded the people God was with them. ”

2 SING A SONG

Sing the song below to the tune of “She’ll Be Coming Around the Mountain”:

“God gives us all we need in Jesus. [Point up to the sky.]
 God gives us all we need in Jesus. [Point up to the sky.]
 God gives all that we need through His Son who set us free. [Cross arms over your chest.]
 God gives us all we need in Jesus. [Point up to the sky.]”

SAY “ Who is all we need? Yes, Jesus! Our key passage phrase says, ‘God gives us all we need in Jesus!’ ”

3 HIDE ITEMS

Hide an item from around the room in plain sight. Explain that you are looking for an item. Describe the item in detail and ask the toddlers to help you find it. Guide the toddlers to the item by indicating when the toddlers come close to it. Replay as interest allows, choosing a new item for each round. Review the Bible story as toddlers search.

SAY “ The Philistines put the ark on a cart pulled by two cows and sent it back to God’s people. Do we need an ark? No, because God is always with us! ”

4 MAKE CARE CARDS

Print the Key Passage Phrase Cards (one per toddler). Provide washable markers and stickers for the toddlers to decorate their cards. Encourage the toddlers to give the card to someone they care about. Retell the Bible story as toddlers decorate.

SAY “ These cards can help remind someone of our key passage phrase, which says, ‘God gives us all we need in Jesus.’ We can share God’s love through sharing God’s words with others! ”

Check diapers, serve a snack if needed, and release toddlers to parents according to your church’s security procedures. Give parents today’s Big Picture Card to reinforce today’s Bible story, Christ Connection, and gospel gems throughout the week.