

ISRAEL'S EVIL KINGS

1 KINGS 14-15; 2 CHRONICLES 12-13



CHRIST CONNECTION: Even when we do wrong things, Jesus loves us so much. He died to take away our sins so we can be with God forever.

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

KEY PASSAGE: May all people know the LORD is God. There is no other! 1 Kings 8:60

STORY POINT: Israel's evil kings worshiped idols.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

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

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

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

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

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



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet preschoolers and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers the story of the gospel



LOVE

Lead preschoolers to love the God of the gospel

30–40 MINUTES



LIVE

Lead preschoolers to live the mission of the gospel



BONUS

60–65 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers for an additional hour



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a supply of the following items available during all teaching sessions: Allergy Alert, Bibles, washable markers, crayons, scissors (adult use), blunt-tipped scissors, construction paper, copy paper, glue sticks, glue, tape, baby dolls, blocks, play dough, and a beanbag.



WELCOME

Find crowns

- ☐ "Crowns" printable
- ☐ various luggage items
- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster



LEARN

Pass the toy cow

- ☐ toy cow figure

Tell the Bible story

- ☐ "Israel's Evil Kings" video (optional)

Review the Bible story

- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

Learn and practice the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker



LOVE

Build Jerusalem

- ☐ assorted cardboard boxes

Knock over idols

- ☐ large bin
- ☐ child-sized chairs, 5



LIVE

Chalk paint the key passage phrase

- ☐ assorted colored chalk
- ☐ cornstarch
- ☐ water
- ☐ small cups, 1 per table group
- ☐ paintbrushes, 1 per child
- ☐ art smocks

Missions activity

- ☐ "Aaron Taylor Photos" printable
- ☐ blankets
- ☐ books

Snack and transition

- ☐ hand sanitizer (optional)
- ☐ "Follow the Path to Jerusalem" activity page, 1 per child
- ☐ Big Picture Cards for Families



BONUS

Find the golden calves

- ☐ "Golden Calves" printable

Say the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker

Jump on plates

- ☐ paper plates
- ☐ painter's tape

Play with farm animals

- ☐ toy farm animals
- ☐ toy barn (optional)
- ☐ people figures



WELCOME Preschoolers

Provide as many learning activities as possible from the Love and Live sections to give preschoolers choices to learn. Incorporate the Bible story, the Christ Connection, and key passage phrase in your conversations as the preschoolers engage in learning activities throughout the session.

Use the following activity to greet children as they enter the classroom. Talk about the big picture question and answer. After each child completes the welcome activity, encourage him to participate in the activities provided from the Love and Live sections of the leader guide.

FIND CROWNS

Print and cut apart the “Crowns” printable. Hide crowns inside luggage items. Invite children to find the crowns inside the luggage items. Place the Big Picture Question Poster nearby and review as preschoolers discover the crowns.

SAY “I’m so happy to see you today! There is something hidden in each piece of luggage that is important to our story. Once you find an item, bring it to me and we will read our big picture question and answer together, which says, **How many gods are there? There is one true God.** In our story, we will learn about more kings of Israel. Sadly these kings did not obey God. Instead, they only did what was right in their own eyes. **ISRAEL’S EVIL KINGS WORSHIPED IDOLS.**”

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





LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 PASS THE TOY COW

Greet the preschoolers in group time and assist them in sitting in a circle. Give a toy cow to one child. Instruct the child to look at it closely and pass it to his or her neighbor. Continue passing the toy cow until all children have had a turn.

SAY “What do you know about cows? [Allow responses.] Some cows have horns, like a longhorn cow; some have short horns; some have no horns. Some cows give milk. Some cows are solid colors, and others have spots or even stripes. In our Bible story today, we will learn about a time when people worshiped statues of cows instead of worshiping God. Listen carefully to learn more.”

2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to 1 Kings 14–15; 2 Chronicles 12–13. Tell the Bible story using the following summary. You may choose to review the Bible story by showing the video.

ISRAEL'S EVIL KINGS

SAY “In the time of King David, all of God’s people lived in one big kingdom. But then the kingdom got split in two because the new king, Rehoboam, was mean. Most of the people started following another man named Jeroboam. Jeroboam was the king of a group called Israel, and Rehoboam was the king of a smaller group called Judah.

Judah was special because it had a city called Jerusalem, where people went to pray to God. But King Jeroboam did not want the people to go to Jerusalem to worship. So, he made two golden calves—like baby cows—and told the people to worship them instead. But that was wrong because only God should be worshiped!

God was not happy with Jeroboam. He sent a man named Ahijah to tell Jeroboam that because he sinned and did these bad things, he would not be king anymore.

Later, the people from Israel and Judah fought. God helped the people of Judah win a fight against the people of Israel because of a promise God made to King David.

When King Jeroboam died, his son Nadab became king, but he was not a good King either. Then another man named Baasha became king, and he was bad too. These kings led the people away from God.”

Christ Connection: Even when we do wrong things, Jesus loves us so much. He died to take away our sins so we can be with God forever.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

3 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

Display the Bible Story Picture Poster. Ask children to remember a time God helped His people and why He helped them.

SAY “ The people in Judah had a special city called Jerusalem. This is where the people would pray to the one true God. The people in Israel wanted to travel there to worship God. Jeroboam didn’t want them to go; instead, he made the two golden calves and told the people to worship them. Later, God helped Judah win a battle with Israel. God helped them because of a promise He had made to King David. **ISRAEL’S EVIL KINGS WORSHIPED IDOLS.** ”

4 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of “She’ll Be Coming ‘Round the Mountain”:

May all people know the LORD is God,
May all people know the LORD is God,
There is no other,
There is no other,
May all people know the LORD is God.

5 LEARN AND PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at 1 Kings 8:60. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Help children learn the key passage phrase. Repeat the key passage phrase together while encouraging the children to stand as still as statues.

SAY “ **How many gods are there? There is one true God.** God wanted His people in both kingdoms to worship only Him. Our key passage phrase tells us that the LORD is God. There is no other! ”

6 PRAY

Pray, thanking God for rescuing people from sin by sending Jesus.

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





LOVE

THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God because of what we learned

1 MAKE PLAY DOUGH PEOPLE



Give each child a ball of play dough. Explain that God's people wanted to go to Jerusalem to worship God at the temple. Encourage preschoolers to use their play dough to make people going to the temple.

SAY 🗨️ The people in Israel wanted to travel to the temple in Jerusalem to worship God. King Jeroboam was an evil king and he refused to allow them to go. Instead, he made two golden calves for the people to worship. He led the people to worship idols instead of God. Today, we can worship God anywhere, but it is good to meet together with other people who worship God. **How many gods are there? There is one true God.** 🗨️

2 BUILD JERUSALEM

Provide children with markers and crayons to decorate cardboard boxes. Lead children to build the city of Jerusalem from the cardboard boxes. Include a temple building as part of the structure. Retell the Bible story as children build together.

SAY 🗨️ **ISRAEL'S EVIL KINGS WORSHIPED IDOLS.** They led the people of Israel to do the same. The people of Judah had a special city called Jerusalem where the temple was located. The people of Judah traveled to Jerusalem to worship God at the temple. **How many gods are there? There is one true God.** 🗨️

3 KNOCK OVER IDOLS

Place a large bin with a lid in the center of the room. Place five plush cows on the top of bin. Assist preschoolers in taking turns knocking over the plush cows using a beanbag. Replace the cows and continue play as time allows.

SAY 🗨️ Baby cows—what a silly thing to worship! **ISRAEL'S EVIL KINGS WORSHIPED IDOLS**, and they led the nation of Israel to worship many kinds of false gods. **How many gods are there? There is one true God.** Our key passage also reminds us there is only one God. We all disobey God when we sin, and that sin separates us from God, but God sent Jesus to take the punishment for our sins. Jesus died and rose again so that when people trust in Him, they can be close to God again. 🗨️

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





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

1 CHALK PAINT THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE



Post an Allergy Alert. Write the key passage phrase on paper for each child. Prepare chalk paint for the children to use by mixing crushed chalk with a mixture of equal parts water and cornstarch. Assist children in putting on art smocks. Invite them to paint on the key passage phrase. Recite the key passage phrase aloud as children work.

SAY “ Our key passage phrase says, ‘May all people know that the LORD is God. There is no other!’ Instead of believing the truth found in 1 Kings 8:60, **ISRAEL’S EVIL KINGS WORSHIPED IDOLS**. You’ve made beautiful artwork from our key passage phrase. This should remind us that God’s Word is beautiful and always true. ”

2 MISSIONS ACTIVITY

Print and display the “Aaron Taylor Photos” printable. Invite preschoolers to wrap up in blankets and relax as they look at books. Mention that Columbus, Ohio, has many students because it is home to a large university.

SAY “ Aaron Taylor is pastor of Living Hope Church in Columbus, Ohio. The church helps people in the area with their needs and tells them about Jesus. The church has a ministry center called the Finding Hope Center. Families can get items like mattresses, sheets, and blankets at the center. Pray for Aaron and his wife, Elizabeth, and their two daughters as they serve at Living Hope Church. Pray for the ministries of Living Hope Church and the Finding Hope Center. ”

3 SNACK AND TRANSITION



Post an Allergy Alert. Serve the snack. As children eat, review and talk about the Bible story. When children finish their snack, lead them to complete the activity page. As they work, continue talking about the Bible story and emphasize the Christ Connection.

SAY “ Even when we do wrong things, Jesus loves us so much. He died to take away our sins so we can be with God forever. ”

Remember to communicate helpful information to the bonus teaching hour leaders. If parents are picking up children at this time, tell them something their child did well during the session. Distribute Big Picture Cards for Families. Encourage parents to engage with the family discussion starters and family activities during the week.



BONUS Teaching Hour Group Time

1 FIND THE GOLDEN CALVES

Print, cut apart, and hide the “Golden Calves” printable pictures in random places around the room. Encourage children to find the pictures and bring them to join you in group time. Collect the pictures and ask the children to listen closely to the story for how King Jeroboam used the golden calves.

2 TALK ABOUT THE BIBLE STORY

Open the Bible to 1 Kings 14–15; 2 Chronicles 12–13. Use the summarized points below to talk about the Bible story.

ISRAEL’S EVIL KINGS

- In the time of King David, God’s people lived together in one big kingdom. But then, the kingdom split in two. Most of the kingdom—called Israel—was ruled by King Jeroboam. The rest—called Judah—was ruled by King Rehoboam.
- There was a special city in Judah called Jerusalem where people went to worship God. But King Jeroboam did not want his people to leave Israel. So, he made two golden calves and told the people to worship them. But people should only pray to God!
- God was not happy with Jeroboam. God told Jeroboam he would not be king anymore.
- Later, the people of Judah fought the people of Israel. God helped the people of Judah win.

3 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of “She’ll Be Coming ‘Round the Mountain”:

May all people know the LORD is God,
May all people know the LORD is God,
There is no other,
There is no other,
May all people know the LORD is God.

4 SAY THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at 1 Kings 8:60. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Say the key passage phrase together creating a clapping pattern for children to repeat.

5 PRAY

Pray, thanking Jesus for dying on the cross and rising again to make the way for us to be forgiven of our sins. Ask God to help us worship and follow Him

BONUS Teaching Hour Activities

6 MOVE NEAR AND FAR



Show preschoolers a Bible. Lead the children to cover their eyes tightly while you hide the Bible somewhere in the room. Instruct boys and girls to open their eyes and begin to search for the Bible. Give verbal clues by saying “near” and “far” as they move closer or farther away from the Bible.

SAY “ You found the Bible! At first, you were far from it, but you listened to my clues and moved closer until you found it. In today’s Bible story, God loved His people, and He wanted them to obey and worship Him, but the people’s leaders stopped following God. **ISRAEL’S EVIL KINGS WORSHIPED IDOLS.** When we disobey God, we are also far from Him, but God loved us so much that He sent Jesus to take the punishment for our sins. Jesus rose again to bring people back to God. ”

7 JUMP ON PLATES

Using green for happy and red for mad, draw happy faces and mad faces wearing crowns on individual paper plates and tape the plates to the floor using painter’s tape. Tell preschoolers that the happy and sad faces remind us that God’s people had some good kings but also many bad kings. Lead children to hop only on the plates with the happy faces while saying the Christ Connection aloud with you.

SAY “ It’s fun to jump and say the Christ Connection together. If the evil kings had prayed to God and said they were sorry for the wrong things they had done, God would have forgiven them. Sadly, they did not. Instead, **ISRAEL’S EVIL KINGS WORSHIPED IDOLS.** We can remember that even when we do wrong things, Jesus loves us so much. He died to take away our sins so we can be with God forever. ”

8 PLAY WITH FARM ANIMALS

Set farm animals on the floor near blocks. Suggest children work together to construct a barn or animal pens with the blocks. Lead children to sort the animals by type, size, or color. Add a few people figures and guide children to play out life on a farm. Point out the cows and mention their significance to today’s Bible story.

SAY “ Did you build a pen for the cows? Do you know what a baby cow is called? Yes, it is called a calf. In today’s Bible story, King Jeroboam made statues of two gold calves and led the people to worship them instead of worshiping God. **ISRAEL’S EVIL KINGS WORSHIPED IDOLS** and led the people away from God. When we sin, we disobey God. Our sin separates us from God. Even when we do wrong things, Jesus loves us so much. He died to take away our sins so we can be with God forever. ”

Release preschoolers to parents according to your church’s security procedure. Tell them something their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session.