

F1. Bible Skills – Old Testament

2 Timothy 3:14-17, Psalm 12:6, Psalm 119:160

Memory Verse

“The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of our God stands forever.”

---Isaiah 40:8 (NLT)

Bible Lesson

Message: *The Word of God stands forever.*

2 Timothy 3:14-17 (NIRV)

“But I want you to continue to follow what you have learned. Don't give up what you are sure of. You know the people you learned it from. You have known the Holy Scriptures ever since you were a little child. They are able to teach you how to be saved by believing in Christ Jesus.

God has breathed life into all of Scripture. It is useful for teaching us what is true. It is useful for correcting our mistakes. It is useful for making our lives whole again. It is useful for training us to do what is right. By using Scripture, a man of God can be completely prepared to do every good thing.”

Psalm 12:6

“The words of the Lord are perfect. They are like silver made pure in a clay furnace. They are like silver made pure seven times over.”

Psalm 119:160

“All your words are true. All your laws are right. They last forever.”

Talk About It

Talk with your child and share your favorite Bible story you remember from the Old Testament that you learned when you were young. Why was it a story you enjoyed so much? Remind your child that by reading the Bible, we can learn more about how God expects us to live our lives. We want to please God in everything we do, and we can learn so much by just opening our Bible and reading a little bit every day. Challenge your child to read his/her Bible each day for 10 minutes. This could be a special activity that you do together each night before bed. Keep the conversations going and take time each day to discover new things together from the book we call the Bible. Talk about it.

F2. Hannah and Samuel

1 Samuel 1:1 to 2:1

Memory Verse

"The Lord has given me what I asked Him for."

--1 Samuel 1:27

Bible Lesson

Message: *God wants us to keep our promises.*

Samuel Is Born

There once was a man named Elkanah, who came from the city of Ramathaim in the hill country of Ephraim. Elkanah's wife was named Hannah. Hannah did not have any children.

Year after year Elkanah went up from his town to Shiloh. He went there to worship and offer sacrifices to the Lord. Every time the day came for Elkanah to offer a sacrifice, he would give a special share of meat to Hannah. He did this because he loved Hannah and because the Lord had kept her from having children.

Hannah often was upset and she would cry and not eat anything. Elkanah would speak to Hannah. He would say, "Hannah, why are you crying? Why don't you eat? Why are you so angry and unhappy? Don't I mean more to you than ten sons?"

One time when they had finished eating their meal in Shiloh, Hannah stood up. The priest Eli was sitting on a chair near the entrance of the Lord's Holy Tent. Hannah was very sad. She cried and cried and she prayed to the Lord. She then made a promise. She said, "Lord, you rule over all. Please see how bad I feel! Remember me! Don't forget about me! Please give me a son! If you do, I'll give him back to you. Then he will serve you all the days of his life."

As Hannah kept on praying to the Lord, Eli watched her lips. She was praying in her heart. Her lips were moving. But she wasn't making a sound. When Eli questioned Hannah she told him that she was just telling the Lord about my troubles. I've been praying here because I'm very sad. My pain is so great."

Eli answered, "Go in peace. May the God of Israel give you what you have asked him for." She said, "May you be pleased with me." Then she left and had something to eat. Her face wasn't sad anymore.

Early the next morning Elkanah and his family got up and worshiped the Lord. Then they went back to their home again. After some time, Hannah became pregnant. She had a baby boy and she named him Samuel.

Hannah Gives Samuel to the Lord

Elkanah went up to Shiloh again to offer the yearly sacrifice to the Lord. He also went there to keep a promise he had made to God. But Hannah didn't go. She said to her husband, "When Samuel is old enough to eat solid food, I'll take him to the Lord's house. Then I will give him to the Lord there. He'll stay there for the rest of his life."

Her husband Elkanah told her, "Do what you think is best. Stay here at home until Samuel is old enough to eat. May the Lord make his promise to you come true."

So Hannah stayed home until Samuel was old enough to eat solid food. Then Hannah took him to the Tent of the Lord in Shiloh. Hannah said to Eli, "Sir, I am the same woman who stood here beside you praying to the Lord. I prayed for this child. The Lord has given me what I asked him for. So now I'm giving him back to the Lord. He will belong to the Lord all of His life." And all of them worshiped the Lord there.

Hannah said: "The Lord has filled my heart with joy."

Talk About It

In today's lesson, Hannah wanted a baby so much that she prayed and prayed to God for His help. As a result of her prayers, Hannah was blessed with a son, Samuel and she promised to give Him back to the Lord. Let your child know that young children's voices (like theirs) may seem tiny and childish, but to God the words spoken by children, especially in prayer, are very important. God hears and answers the prayers of children, just as He does for grown-ups. Share with your child a time when God answered one of your prayers. How did that make you feel in your heart? Talk about it.



F3. Samuel the Prophet

1 Samuel 3

Memory Verse

“Speak, for your servant hears.” --1 Samuel 3:10

Bible Lesson

Message:

God will bless us when we answer His call to serve Him.

The LORD Calls Out to Samuel

The boy Samuel served the LORD under the direction of Eli. In those days the LORD didn't give many messages to his people. He didn't give them many visions.

One night Eli was lying down in his usual place. His eyes were becoming so weak he couldn't see very well. Samuel was lying down in the LORD's house. That's where the ark of God was kept. The lamp of God was still burning. The LORD called out to Samuel.

Samuel answered, "Here I am." ⁵ He ran over to Eli and said, "Here I am. You called out to me."

But Eli said, "I didn't call you. Go back and lie down." So he went and lay down.

Again the LORD called out, "Samuel!" Samuel got up and went to Eli. He said, "Here I am. You called out to me."

"My son," Eli said, "I didn't call you. Go back and lie down."

Samuel didn't know the LORD yet. That's because the LORD still hadn't given him a message.

The LORD called out for the third time. He said, "Samuel!" Samuel got up and went to Eli. He said, "Here I am. You called out to me."

Then Eli realized that the LORD was calling the boy. So Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down. If someone calls out to you again, say, 'Speak, LORD. I'm listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

The LORD came and stood there. He called out, just as he had done the other times. He said, "Samuel! Samuel!"

Then Samuel replied, "Speak. I'm listening."

The LORD said to Samuel, "Pay attention! I am about to do something terrible in Israel. It will make the ears of everyone who hears about it tingle. At that time I will do everything to Eli and his family that I said I would. I will finish what I have started. I told Eli I would punish his family forever. He knew his sons were sinning. He knew they were saying bad things about me. In spite of that, he did not stop them. So I made a promise to the family of Eli. I said, 'The sins of Eli's family will never be paid for by bringing sacrifices or offerings.'" ⁶

Samuel lay down until morning. Then he opened the doors of the LORD's house. He was afraid to tell Eli about the vision he had received. But Eli called out to him. He said, "Samuel, my son."

Samuel answered, "Here I am."

"What did the LORD say to you?" Eli asked. "Don't hide from me anything he told you. If you do, may God punish you greatly." So Samuel told him everything. He didn't hide anything from him. Then Eli said, "He is the LORD. Let him do what he thinks is best."

As Samuel grew up, the LORD was with him. He made everything Samuel said come true. So all the Israelites recognized that Samuel really was a prophet of the LORD. Everyone from Dan all the way to Beersheba knew it. The LORD continued to appear at Shiloh. There he made himself known to Samuel through the messages he gave him.

Talk About It

Talk with your child about serving others and discuss specific ways you and your children can serve our Heavenly Father each day, both at home and in your congregation. Talk about it.



F4. The Capture and Return of the Ark

1 Samuel 4:1-7:2

Memory Verse

"You who have respect for the Lord, praise Him!...honor Him!...worship Him!" --Psalm 22:23

Bible Lesson

Message: *Love God with ALL your heart, soul, mind and strength.*

Ark of the Covenant - a sacred wooden box covered with gold in which the Ten Commandments were carried.

The Philistines Capture the Ark

The people of Israel went out to battle against the Philistines. The Israelites camped at Ebenezer, while the Philistines camped at Aphek. The Philistines brought their forces together to fight against Israel, but the Israelites lost the battle to the Philistines and many Israelites died. The rest of the Israelite soldiers returned to camp. Then the elders asked them, "Why did the Lord let the Philistines win the battle over us today? Let's bring the ark of the Lord's covenant from Shiloh. Let's take it with us. It will save us from the power of our enemies."

So the people sent men to Shiloh and they brought back the ark of the covenant of the Lord into the camp. Then all of the people of Israel shouted so loudly that the ground shook.

The Philistines heard the noise. They asked, "What's all that shouting about in the Hebrew camp?" Then the Philistines found out that the ark of the Lord had come into the camp. So they were afraid. "A god has come into their camp," they said. "We're in trouble! Nothing like this has ever happened before. How terrible it will be for us! Who will save us from the power of those mighty gods? They struck down the people of Egypt in the desert. They sent all kinds of plagues on them. Philistines, be strong! If you don't, you will come under the control of the Hebrews. You will become their slaves, just as they have been your slaves."

So the Philistines fought another battle with the Israelites and they won again. Even more Israelite men died this time. The ark of God was captured. And Eli's two sons Hophni and Phinehas also died.

Eli Dies

That same day a man from the tribe of Benjamin ran from the front lines of the battle. He went to Shiloh. When he arrived, there was Eli sitting on his chair. He was by the side of the road. He was watching because his heart was really concerned about the ark of God (the Ark of the Covenant). The man entered the town and told everyone what had happened. Then the whole town cried out. Eli heard the people crying out. He asked, "What's the meaning of all of this noise?"

The man hurried over to Eli. Eli was 98 years old. His eyes were so bad he couldn't see. The man told Eli, "I've just come from the front lines of the battle. I ran away from there this very day." Eli asked, "What happened?"

The man who brought the news replied, "Israel ran away from the Philistines. Large numbers of men in the army died or were hurt. Your two sons Hophni and Phinehas have also lost their lives. And the ark of God has been captured."

When the man spoke about the ark of God, Eli fell backward off his chair. He had been sitting by the side of the gate. When he fell, he hurt himself badly and he died. Eli had led Israel for 40 years.

The Ark Is Taken to Ashdod and Ekron

The Philistines had captured the ark of God. They took it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. They carried the ark into the temple of their god Dagon. They set it down beside the statue of Dagon. The people of Ashdod got up early the

next day. They saw the statue of Dagon. There it was, lying on the ground! It had fallen on its face in front of the ark of the Lord. So they picked the statue of Dagon up. They put it back in its place. But the following morning when they got up, they saw the statue of Dagon. There it was, lying on the ground again! It had fallen on its face in front of the ark of the Lord. Its head and hands had been broken off. Only the body of the statue was left. Its head and hands were lying in the doorway of the temple.

The Lord's powerful hand punished the people of Ashdod and the settlements that were near it. He destroyed them and he made them suffer. The people of Ashdod saw what was happening. They said, "The ark of the god of Israel must not stay here with us. His powerful hand is punishing us and our god Dagon." So they called all of the rulers of the Philistines together. They asked them, "What should we do with the ark of the god of Israel?" The rulers answered, "Have the ark moved to Gath." So they moved it. But after the people of Ashdod had moved the ark, the Lord's hand punished Gath. That threw its people into a great panic. The Lord made their people suffer too and he made them ill. It happened to young people and old people alike.

So the ark of God was sent to Ekron. As the ark was entering Ekron, the people of the city cried out. They shouted, "They've brought the ark of the god of Israel to us. They want to hurt us and our people." So they called all of the rulers of the Philistines together. They said, "Send the ark of the god of Israel away. Let it go back to its own place. If you don't, it will kill us and our people." So many people had died that the city was filled with panic. God's powerful hand was punishing the city. Those who didn't die suffered with growths on their skin. The people of Ekron cried out to Heaven for help.

The Philistines Return the Ark to Israel

The ark of the Lord had been in Philistine territory for seven months. The Philistines called for the priests and magicians because they wanted their advice. They said to them, "What should we do with the ark of the Lord? Tell us how we should send it back to its place."

They answered, "If you return the ark of the god of Israel, don't send it away empty. Be sure you send a guilt offering to their God along with it. Then you will be healed. You will find out why his hand hasn't stopped punishing you."

The Philistines asked, "What guilt offering should we send to him?" Their advisers replied, "There are five Philistine rulers. So send five gold models of the growths that are on your skin. Also send five gold models of rats. Do it because the same plague has struck you and your rulers alike. Make models of the growths and of the rats that are destroying the country. Pay honor to Israel's god. Perhaps his hand will stop punishing you. Maybe it will stop punishing your gods and your land.

"Why are you stubborn, as Pharaoh and the people of Egypt were? God was very hard on them. Only then did they send the people of Israel out. Only then did they let them go on their way. Now then, get a new cart ready. Get two cows that have just had calves. Be sure the cows have never pulled a cart before. Tie the cart to them. Then put the ark of the Lord on the cart. Put the gold models in a chest beside the ark. Send them back to the Lord as a guilt offering. Send the cart on its way. But keep an eye on the cart. See if it goes up toward Beth Shemesh to its own territory. If it does, then it's the Lord who has brought this horrible trouble on us. But if it doesn't, then we'll know it wasn't his hand that struck us. We'll know it happened to us by chance."

So that's what they did. They took the two cows and tied the cart to them. They placed the ark of the Lord on the cart. They put the chest there along with it. The chest held the gold models of the rats and of the growths. Then the cows went straight up toward Beth Shemesh. They stayed on the road. They were mooing all the way. They didn't turn to the right or the left. The Philistine rulers followed them all the way to the border of Beth Shemesh. The people of Beth Shemesh were working in the valley. They were gathering their wheat crop. They looked up and saw the ark. When they saw it, they were filled with joy.

The cart came to the field of Joshua of Beth Shemesh. It stopped there beside a large rock. The people chopped up the wood the cart was made out of. They sacrificed the cows as a burnt offering to the Lord. Some

Levites had taken the ark of the Lord off the cart. They had also taken off the chest that held the gold models. They placed them on the large rock. On that day the people of Beth Shemesh offered burnt offerings to the Lord. They also made sacrifices to him.

The five Philistine rulers saw everything that happened. On that same day they returned to Ekron.

The Philistines sent five gold models of growths as a guilt offering to the Lord, one for each of the towns: Ashdod, Gaza, Ashkelon, Gath and Ekron. They also sent five gold models of rats. There was one for each of the Philistine towns that belonged to the five rulers. Each of those towns had high walls around it. The towns also had country villages around them.

The Levites set the ark of the Lord on a large rock. To this very day the rock gives witness to what happened there. It's in the field of Joshua of Beth Shemesh. But some of the people of Beth Shemesh looked into the ark of the Lord. So he struck them down. He put 70 of them to death. The rest of the people were filled with sorrow. That's because the Lord had let so many of them die.

The people of Beth Shemesh said, "The Lord is a holy God. Who can stand in front of him? Where can the ark go up to from here?" Then messengers were sent to the people of Kiriath Jearim. They said, "The Philistines have returned the ark of the Lord. Come down and take it up to your place."

1 Samuel 7

So the men of Kiriath Jearim came and got the ark of the Lord. They took it up to Abinadab's house on the hill. There they made Abinadab's son Eliezar holy for the Lord so he could guard the ark. The ark remained at Kiriath Jearim for a long time. It was there for a full 20 years.

Talk About It

In today's lesson, we are able to witness the mighty hand of God. He was able to help the Ark of the Covenant to be safely returned to His people when He caused all those terrible things to happen to the Philistines. Talk with your child about how amazing God is that He could cause such things to happen. It is also amazing how many things God keeps going at the same time all the time. For example, God hears everyone's prayers, He keeps each planet and all the stars in place, He knows the number of hairs on each person's head, He knows how many grains of sand are on every beach, He knows what each person is thinking all the time, He knows each child before it is even born, and God still managed to supply each person and creature with exactly what they need each day. What else does God do? Try to think of some other examples together. Then remind your child that God is awesome and that His capabilities are never ending. God wants us to worship Him, to learn from Him and to praise Him for His goodness to us. Talk about it.

F5. Elijah: The Ravens and the Poor Widow

1 Kings 17:1-24

Memory Verse

"My God will meet all your needs." --Philippians 4:13 (NIRV)

Bible Lesson

Message: *Listen for God's voice.*

Elijah Is Fed by Ravens

Elijah was from Tishbe in the land of Gilead. He said to Ahab, "I serve the Lord. He is the God of Israel. You can be sure that He lives. And you can be just as sure that there won't be any dew or rain on the whole land. There won't be any during the next few years. It won't come until I say so."

Then a message from the Lord came to Elijah. It said, "Leave this place. Go east and hide in the Kerith Valley. It is east of the Jordan River. You will drink water from the brook. I have ordered some ravens to feed you there."

So Elijah did what the Lord had told him to do. He went to the Kerith Valley. It was east of the Jordan River. He stayed there. The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning. They also brought him bread and meat in the evening. He drank water from the brook.

Elijah Visits a Widow at Zarephath

Sometime later the brook dried up. It hadn't rained in the land for quite a while. A message came to Elijah from the Lord. He said, "Go right away to Zarephath in the territory of Sidon. Stay there. I have commanded a widow in that place to supply you with food."

So Elijah went to Zarephath. He came to the town gate. A widow was there gathering sticks. He called out to her. He asked, "Would you bring me a little water in a jar? I need a drink." She went to get the water.

Then he called out to her, "Please bring me a piece of bread too." "I don't have any bread," she replied. "And that's just as sure as the Lord your God is alive. All I have is a small amount of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. I'm gathering a few sticks to take home. I'll make one last meal for myself and my son. We'll eat it. After that, we'll die."

Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid. Go home. Do what you have said. But first make a little bread for me. Make it out of what you have. Bring it to me. Then make some for yourself and your son. The Lord is the God of Israel. He says, 'The jar of flour will not be used up. The jug will always have oil in it. You will have flour and oil until the day the Lord sends rain on the land.' "

She went away and did what Elijah had told her to do. So Elijah had food every day. There was also food for the woman and her family. The jar of flour wasn't used up. The jug always had oil in it. That's what the Lord had said would happen. He had spoken that message through Elijah.

Sometime later the son of the woman who owned the house became sick. He got worse and worse. Finally he stopped breathing. The woman said to Elijah, "You are a man of God. What do you have against me? Did you come to bring my sin out into the open? Did you come to kill my son?"

"Give me your son," Elijah replied. He took him from her arms. He carried him to the upstairs room where he was staying. He put him down on his bed. Then Elijah cried out to the Lord. He said, "Lord my God, I'm staying with this widow. Have you brought pain and sorrow to her? Have you caused her son to die?"

Then he lay down on the boy three times. He cried out to the Lord. He said, "Lord my God, give this boy's life back to him!"

The Lord answered Elijah's prayer. He gave the boy's life back to him. So the boy lived. Elijah picked up the boy. He carried him down from the upstairs room into the house. He gave him to his mother. He said, "Look! Your son is alive!" Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God. I know that the message you have brought from the Lord is true."

Talk About It

In today's story, Elijah looked to God for direction and guidance a couple of times. God was able to answer him and let Elijah know what he should do. Elijah was listening for God's voice.

Talk with your child about the distractions that we have in our lives. There are so many things that take our minds and our hearts away from God, but when we look for God and really try to hear His voice, He can show us the right way to go in our lives. When we listen for God's voice, He will provide for all of our needs. Talk about it.



F6. Elijah and the Prophets of Baal

1 Kings 18:1-39

Memory Verse

"No one can serve two masters at the same time." --Matthew 6:24

Bible Lesson

Message:

God wants to be FIRST!

1 Kings 18 ~ Elijah Gives Obadiah a Message for Ahab

It was now three years since it had rained. A message came to Elijah from the Lord. He said, "Go. Speak to Ahab. Then I will send rain on the land." So Elijah went to speak to Ahab.

There wasn't enough food in Samaria. The people there were very hungry. Ahab had sent for Obadiah. He was in charge of Ahab's palace. Obadiah had great respect for the Lord.

Ahab's wife Jezebel had been doing putting to death the Lord's prophets. So Obadiah had hidden 100 prophets in two caves. He had put 50 in each cave. He had supplied them with food and water.

Ahab had said to Obadiah, "Go through the land. Go to all of the springs of water and to the valleys. Maybe we can find some grass there. It will keep the horses and mules alive. Then we won't have to kill any of our animals." So they decided where each of them would look. Ahab went in one direction. Obadiah went in another.

As Obadiah was walking along, Elijah met him. Obadiah recognized him. He bowed down to the ground. He said, "My master Elijah! Is it really you?"

"Yes," he replied. "Go and tell your master Ahab, 'Elijah is here.'"

"What have I done wrong?" asked Obadiah. "Why are you handing me over to Ahab to die?"

"My master has sent people to look for you everywhere. There isn't a nation or kingdom where he hasn't sent someone to look for you. Suppose a nation or kingdom would claim you weren't there. Then Ahab would make them take an oath and say they couldn't find you. And that's just as sure as the Lord your God is alive. But now you are telling me to go to my master. You want me to say, 'Elijah is here.' But the Spirit of the Lord might carry you away when I leave you. Then I won't know where you are. If I go and tell Ahab and he doesn't find you, he'll kill me.

"But I've worshiped the Lord ever since I was young. My master, haven't you heard what I did? Jezebel was killing the Lord's prophets. But I hid 100 of them in two caves. I put 50 in each cave. I supplied them with food and water. And now you are telling me to go to my master Ahab. You want me to say to him, 'Elijah is here.' He'll kill me too!"

Elijah said, "I serve the Lord who rules over all. You can be sure that he lives. And you can be just as sure that I will speak to Ahab today."

The Lord Answers Elijah's Prayer on Mount Carmel

Obadiah went back to Ahab. He told Ahab that Elijah wanted to see him. So Ahab went to where Elijah was. When he saw Elijah, he said to him, "Is that you? You are always stirring up trouble in Israel."

"I haven't made trouble for Israel," Elijah replied. "But you and your father's family have. You have turned away from the Lord's commands. You have followed the gods that are named after Baal. Now send for people from all over Israel. Tell them to meet me on Mount Carmel. And bring the 450 prophets of the god Baal. Also bring the 400 prophets of the goddess Asherah. All of them eat at Jezebel's table."

So Ahab sent that message all through Israel. He gathered the prophets together on Mount Carmel. Elijah went there and stood in front of the people. He said, "How long will it take you to make up your minds? If the Lord is the one and only God, follow Him. But if Baal is the one and only God, follow him." The people didn't say anything.

Then Elijah said to them, "I'm the only one of the Lord's prophets left. But Baal has 450 prophets. Get two bulls for us. Let Baal's prophets choose one for themselves. Let them cut it into pieces. Then let them put it on the wood. But don't let them set fire to it. I'll prepare the other bull. I'll put it on the wood. But I won't set fire to it. Then you pray to your god. And I'll pray to the Lord. The god who answers by sending fire down is the one and only God." Then all of the people said, "What you are saying is good."

Elijah spoke to the prophets of Baal. He said, "Choose one of the bulls. There are many of you. So prepare your bull first. Pray to your god. But don't light the fire."

So they prepared the bull they had been given. They prayed to Baal from morning until noon. "Baal! Answer us!" they shouted. But there wasn't any reply. No one answered. Then they danced around the altar they had made.

At noon Elijah began to tease them. "Shout louder!" he said. "I'm sure Baal is a god! Perhaps he has too much to think about. Or maybe he has gone to the restroom. Or perhaps he's away on a trip. Maybe he's sleeping. You might have to wake him up."

So they shouted louder. Things were beginning to look hopeless. It was now past noon. The prophets of Baal continued to prophesy with all their might. They did it until the time came to offer the evening sacrifice. But there wasn't any reply. No one answered. No one paid any attention.

Then Elijah said to all of the people, "Come here to me." So they went to him. He rebuilt the altar of the Lord. It had been destroyed. Elijah got 12 stones. There was one for each tribe in the family line of Jacob. The Lord's message had come to Jacob. It had said, "Your name will be Israel." Elijah used the stones to build an altar in honor of the Lord. He dug a ditch around it. The ditch was large enough to hold 13 quarts of seeds. He arranged the wood for the fire. He cut the bull into pieces. He placed the pieces on the wood. Then he said to some of the people, "Fill four large jars with water. Pour it on the offering and the wood." So they did.

"Do it again," he said. So they did it again. "Do it a third time," he ordered. And they did it the third time. The water ran down around the altar. It even filled the ditch.

When it was time to offer the evening sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward. He prayed, "Lord, you are the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel. Today let everyone know that you are God in Israel. Let them know I'm your servant. Let them know I've done all of these things because you commanded me to. Answer me. Lord, answer me. Then these people will know that you are the one and only God. They'll know that you are turning their hearts back to you again."

The fire of the Lord came down. It burned up the sacrifice. It burned up the wood and the stones and the soil. It even licked up the water in the ditch.

All of the people saw it. Then they fell down flat with their faces toward the ground. They cried out, "The Lord is the one and only God! The Lord is the one and only God!"

Talk About It

In today's lesson, Elijah made a choice to put another "god" before the one true God. This did not please our God because he wants our hearts to be solely devoted to Him. Explain to your child that anything we put before God can become an idol for us. Remind him/her of the first commandment: "I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other Gods before me." God wants us to put NO other gods before Him. Help your child to understand that if we put our time and effort into something other than God and make it a priority in our lives, it can be the same thing as worshiping and idol in God's eyes. Remind your child how important it is to put God first in our lives. One way we can do this is by taking time to connect with Him each day, through our Bible study and prayer. Help your child to find a time to do these things in their day. Talk about it.



F7. Elijah is Taken to Heaven

1 Kings 19:19-21, 2 Kings 2:1-11

Memory Verse

“But anyone who is joined to the Lord becomes one with Him in spirit.”
--1 Corinthians 6:17 (NIRV)

Bible Lesson

Message:

Stay close to Him.

The Lord Chooses Elisha

Elijah left Mount Horeb. He saw Elisha, the son of Shaphat. Elisha was plowing in a field. He was driving the last of 12 pairs of oxen. Elijah went up to him. He threw his coat around him. Then Elisha left his oxen. He ran after Elijah. "Let me kiss my father and mother good-by," he said. Then I'll come with you."

"Go back," Elijah replied. "What have I done to you?"

So Elisha left him and went back. He got his two oxen and killed them. He burned the plow to cook the meat. He gave it to the people, and they ate it. Then he started to follow Elijah. He became Elijah's assistant.

2 Kings 2 ~ Elijah Is Taken Up to Heaven

Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. The Lord was going to use a strong wind to take Elijah up to heaven. Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here. The Lord has sent me to Bethel."

But Elisha said, "I won't leave you. And that's just as sure as the Lord and you are alive." So they went down to Bethel. There was a company of prophets at Bethel. They came out to where Elisha was. They asked him, "Do you know what the Lord is going to do? He's going to take your master away from you today."

"Yes, I know," Elisha replied. "But don't talk about it." Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, Elisha. The Lord has sent me to Jericho."

Elisha replied, "I won't leave you. And that's just as sure as the Lord and you are alive." So they went to Jericho. There was a company of prophets at Jericho. They went up to where Elisha was. They asked him, "Do you know what the Lord is going to do? He's going to take your master away from you today."

"Yes, I know," Elisha replied. "But don't talk about it." Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here. The Lord has sent me to the Jordan River."

Elisha replied, "I won't leave you. And that's just as sure as the Lord and you are alive." So the two of them walked on. Fifty men from the company of the prophets followed them. The men stopped and stood not far away from them. They faced the place where Elijah and Elisha had stopped at the Jordan River. Elijah rolled his coat up. Then he struck the water with it. The water parted to the right and to the left. The two of them went across the river on dry ground.

After they had gone across, Elijah spoke to Elisha. He said, "Tell me. What can I do for you before I'm taken away from you?"

"Please give me a double share of your spirit," Elisha replied. "You have asked me for something I can't give you," Elijah said. "Only the Lord can give it. But suppose you see me when I'm taken away from you. Then you will receive what you have asked for. If you don't see me, you won't receive it."

They kept walking along and talking together. Suddenly a chariot and horses appeared. Fire was all around them. The chariot and horses came between the two men. Then Elijah went up to heaven in a strong wind.

Talk About It

In today's lesson, Elijah was taken to Heaven. He had a very close relationship with God. Ask your child what kind of relationship he/she has with God. Remind your child that we can become closer to God by reading the Bible, praying to Him, and finding time to worship Him each day. We always want to stay close to Him, because the farther away we become from God, the harder it is to have a relationship with Him. Encourage your child to do their best to stay close to Him and to make time for Him each day. Talk about it.



F8. Elisha and the Miracles

2 Kings 4:1-36

Memory Verse

*"You will experience all these blessings if you obey the Lord your God."
--Deuteronomy 28:2 (NLT)*

Bible Lesson

Message: *Be a blessing to others.*

Elisha Provides Olive Oil for a Widow

The wife of a man from the company of the prophets cried out to Elisha. She said, "My husband is dead. You know how much respect he had for the Lord. But he owed money to someone. And now that person is coming to take my two boys away. They will become his slaves."

Elisha replied to her, "How can I help you? Tell me. What do you have in your house?"

"I don't have anything there at all," she said. "All I have is a little olive oil."

Elisha said, "Go around to all of your neighbors. Ask them for empty jars. Get as many as you can. Then go inside your house. Shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour oil into all of the jars. As each jar is filled, put it over to one side."

The woman left him. After that, she shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her. And she kept pouring. When all of the jars were full, she spoke to one of her sons. She said, "Bring me another jar." But he replied, "There aren't any more left." Then the oil stopped flowing.

She went and told the man of God about it. He said, "Go and sell the oil. Pay what you owe. You and your sons can live on what is left."

The Son of a Woman From Shunem Is Brought Back to Life

One day Elisha went to the town of Shunem. A rich woman lived there. She begged him to stay and have a meal. So every time he came by, he stopped there to eat.

The woman said to her husband, "That man often comes by here. I know that he is a holy man of God. Let's make a small room for him on the roof. We'll put a bed and a table in it. We'll also put a chair and a lamp in it. Then he can stay there when he comes to visit us."

One day Elisha came. He went up to his room. He lay down there. He said to his servant Gehazi, "Go and get the Shunammite woman." So he did. She stood in front of Elisha.

He said to Gehazi, "Tell her, 'You have gone to a lot of trouble for us. Now what can we do for you? Can we speak to the king for you? Or can we speak to the commander of the army for you?'"

She replied, "I live among my own people. I have everything I need here."

After she left, Elisha asked Gehazi, "What can we do for her?" Gehazi said, "Well, she doesn't have a son. And her husband is old."

Then Elisha said, "Bring her here again." So he did. She stood in the doorway. "You will hold a son in your arms," Elisha said. "It will be about this time next year."

"No, my master!" she objected. "You are a man of God. So don't lie to me!" But the woman became pregnant. She had a baby boy. It happened the next year about that same time. That's exactly what Elisha had told her would happen. The child grew. One day he went out to get his father. His father was with those who were gathering the crops. The boy said to his father, "My head hurts! It really hurts!"

His father told a servant, "Carry him to his mother." The servant lifted the boy up. He carried him to his mother. The boy sat on her lap until noon. Then he died. She went up to the room on the roof. There she laid him on the bed of the man of God. Then she shut the door and went out. She sent for her husband. She said, "Please send me one of the servants and a donkey. Then I can go quickly to the man of God and return."

"Why do you want to go to him today?" he asked. "It isn't the time for the New Moon Feast. It isn't the Sabbath day."

"Don't let that bother you," she said. She put a saddle on her donkey. She said to her servant, "Let's go. Don't slow down for me unless I tell you to." So she started out. She came to Mount Carmel. That's where the man of God was. When she was still a long way off, he saw her coming. He said to his servant Gehazi, "Look! There's the woman from Shunem! Run out there to meet her. Ask her, 'Are you all right? Is your husband all right? Is your child all right?'"

"Everything is all right," she said. She came to the man of God at the mountain. Then she took hold of his feet. Gehazi came over to push her away. But the man of God said, "Leave her alone! She is suffering terribly. But the Lord hasn't told me the reason for it. He has hidden it from me."

"My master, did I ask you for a son?" she said. "Didn't I tell you, 'Don't get my hopes up?'"

Elisha said to Gehazi, "Tuck your coat into your belt. Take my wooden staff and run to Shunem. Don't say hello to anyone you see. If anyone says hello to you, don't answer. Lay my staff on the boy's face."

But the child's mother said, "I won't leave you. And that's just as sure as the Lord and you are alive." So Elisha got up and followed her.

Gehazi went on ahead. He laid Elisha's wooden staff on the boy's face. But there wasn't any sound. The boy didn't move at all. So Gehazi went back to Elisha. He told him, "The boy hasn't awakened."

Elisha arrived at the house. The boy was dead. He was lying on Elisha's bed. Elisha went into the room. He shut the door. He was alone with the boy. He prayed to the Lord. Then he got on the bed. He lay down on the boy. His mouth touched the boy's mouth. His eyes touched the boy's eyes. And his hands touched the boy's hands. As Elisha lay on the boy, the boy's body grew warm.

Elisha turned away. He walked back and forth in the room. Then he got on the bed again. He lay down on the boy once more. The boy sneezed seven times. After that, he opened his eyes.

Elisha sent for Gehazi. He said to him, "Go and get the Shunammite woman." So he did. When she came, Elisha said, "Take your son."

She came in. She fell at Elisha's feet. She bowed down with her face toward the ground. Then she took her son and went out.

Talk About It

In today's lesson, Elisha was able (with God's help) to make some pretty miraculous things happen. Talk with your child and remind him/her that God can still make such amazing things happen in our lives. God wants to bless us and to help us. He also wants to hear us ask Him for His help when we pray to Him. If possible, share with your child an experience from your own life in which God truly was able to provide for you. Talk about it.

F9. Thanksgiving

Matthew 6:25-34, 1 Timothy 6:17, and 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Memory Verse

“Give thanks no matter what happens.” --1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NIRV)

Bible Lesson

Message: *In all things give thanks!*

Matthew 6:25-34

"I tell you, do not worry. Don't worry about your life and what you will eat or drink. And don't worry about what you will wear. Isn't there more to life than eating? Aren't there more important things than clothes?"

"Look at the birds of the air. They don't plant or gather crops. They don't put away crops in storerooms. But your Father who is in heaven feeds them. Aren't you worth much more than they are?"

"Can you add even one hour to your life by worrying? And why do you worry about clothes? See how the wildflowers grow. They don't work or make clothing. But here is what I tell you. Not even Solomon in all of his glory was dressed like one of those flowers.

"If that is how God dresses the wild grass, won't He dress you even better? After all, the grass is here only today. Tomorrow it is thrown into the fire. Your faith is so small!"

"So don't worry. Don't say, 'What will we eat?' Or, 'What will we drink?' Or, 'What will we wear?' People who are ungodly run after all of those things. Your Father who is in heaven knows that you need them.

"But put God's kingdom first. Do what He wants you to do. Then all of those things will also be given to you. "So don't worry about tomorrow. Tomorrow will worry about itself."

1 Timothy 6:17 (NIRV)

"Command the people who are rich in this world not to be proud. Tell them not to put their hope in riches. Wealth is so uncertain. Command those who are rich to put their hope in God. He richly provides us with everything to enjoy."

1 Thessalonians 5: 18 (NIRV)

"Give thanks no matter what happens. God wants you to thank Him because you believe in Christ Jesus."

Talk About It

Talk with your child about the first Thanksgiving Day in the United States. The pilgrims were in a new land, and they had winter coming quickly. When it is cold in the winter, it is hard to even find food to eat. And yet, the pilgrims had a very deep faith in God and decided to bring thanks to Him for all He had provided for them.

Today's memory verse says to "Give thanks no matter what happens." This is exactly what the pilgrims did so long ago. Talk with your child about the concept of "giving thanks." Isn't it easy to say "thank you" to someone when things are good in our lives and when we receive something that we wanted? What about when we receive a gift from someone that we really did not want? Is it as easy to say, "thank you" and really mean it? Remind your child that God is filled with goodness and love. He wants us to keep a thankful heart and He wants us to give thanks to Him in all things, because He is good. Talk about it.

F10. Prayer

James 5:13-16

Memory Verse

***“But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private.”
--Matthew 6:6 (NLT)***

Bible Lesson

Message: *We can pray to God anywhere, anytime, about anything, AND He wants to hear from us!*

James 5:13-18 ~ *The Prayer of Faith (NIRV)*

¹³ Are any of you in trouble? Then you should pray. Are any of you happy? Then sing songs of praise.

¹⁴ Are any of you sick? Then send for the elders of the church to pray over you. Ask them to anoint you with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ The prayer offered by those who have faith will make you well. The Lord will heal you. If you have sinned, you will be forgiven.

¹⁶ So admit to one another that you have sinned. Pray for one another so that you might be healed. The prayer of a godly person is powerful. It makes things happen.

Talk About It

Talk with your child about prayer and how it is such an important part of our lives. Remind him that It is our lifeline to God, because it is how we are able to communicate with Him. Help your child to learn how to pray. They can use their five (5) fingers to remember: Praise, Thanks, Others, Me, Forgiveness.

1. *PRAISE God*
2. *THANK God*
3. *Pray for OTHERS*
4. *Pray for ME*
5. *Ask God for FORGIVENESS for the specific things we have done wrong, and for His help so that we may “do better”.*

It is very special when the whole family can kneel and pray together. Pray together with your child and help him to learn to pray by listening to your example. Or you may be learning too, so take the time to learn together. God wants to hear from us each day. He wants us to communicate with Him, and we need Him to be a part of our lives. Talk about it.

F11. Jesus is Born

Luke 2:1-20, Matthew 2:1-12

Memory Verse

“For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”
-- Luke 2:11 (NKJV)

Bible Lesson

Message: We are waiting for Jesus to return.

Luke 2:1-20

¹ In those days, Caesar Augustus made a law. It required that a list be made of everyone in the whole Roman world. ² It was the first time a list was made of the people while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be listed.

⁴ So Joseph went also. He went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea. That is where Bethlehem, the town of David, was. Joseph went there because he belonged to the family line of David. ⁵ He went there with Mary to be listed. Mary was engaged to him. She was expecting a baby.

⁶ While Joseph and Mary were there, the time came for the child to be born. ⁷ She gave birth to her first baby. It was a boy. She wrapped him in large strips of cloth. Then she placed him in a manger. There was no room for them in the inn.

Angels Appear to the Shepherds

⁸ There were shepherds living out in the fields nearby. It was night, and they were looking after their sheep. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them. And the glory of the Lord shone around them. They were terrified.

¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy. It is for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord. ¹² Here is how you will know I am telling you the truth. You will find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger."

¹³ Suddenly a large group of angels from heaven also appeared. They were praising God. They said, ¹⁴ "May glory be given to God in the highest heaven! And may peace be given to those he is pleased with on earth!"

¹⁵ The angels left and went into heaven. Then the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem. Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and the baby. The baby was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ After the shepherds had seen him, they told everyone. They reported what the angel had said about this child. ¹⁸ All who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

¹⁹ But Mary kept all these things like a secret treasure in her heart. She thought about them over and over. ²⁰ The shepherds returned. They gave glory and praise to God. Everything they had seen and heard was just as they had been told.

Matthew 2 ~ *The Wise Men Visit Jesus*

Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea. This happened while Herod was king of Judea. After Jesus' birth, Wise Men from the east came to Jerusalem. They asked, "Where is the child who has been born to be king of the Jews? When we were in the east, we saw his star. Now we have come to worship him."

When King Herod heard about it, he was very upset. Everyone in Jerusalem was troubled too. So Herod called together all the chief priests of the people. He also called the teachers of the law. He asked them where the Christ was going to be born. "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied. "This is what the prophet has written. He said, 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are certainly not the least important among the towns of Judah. A ruler will come out of you. He will be the shepherd of my people Israel.' "

Then Herod called for the Wise Men secretly. He found out from them exactly when the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem. He said, "Go! Make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, bring me a report. Then I can go and worship him too."

After the Wise Men had listened to the king, they went on their way. The star they had seen when they were in the east went ahead of them. It finally stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were filled with joy. The Wise Men went to the house. There they saw the child with his mother Mary. They bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures. They gave him gold, incense and myrrh. But God warned them in a dream not to go back to Herod. So they returned to their country on a different road.

Talk About It

Talk with your child about today's story, and ask him to share his favorite part. Remind him that Jesus was a gift that God gave to us and to all of mankind. Ask your child what they think the greatest gift they ever received was, and why.

Share with your child what gifts and talents that you believe he was born with or has today. Ask your child to think about how he can use the gifts that God gave him and give back to God by serving Him? Help your child to think of ways they can use that gift in the congregation AND outside of the congregation, in your neighborhood, school, or community. Remind your child that God wants us to use our gifts to serve God and show the love of Jesus to others EVERY DAY until Jesus comes again. Talk about it.

F12. The Wise Men/Escape to Egypt

Matthew 2:1-23

Memory Verse

"...We have come to worship Him." --Matthew 2:2

Bible Lesson

Message: *Make time to worship Him every day.*

Matthew 2 ~ The Wise Men Visit Jesus

Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea. This happened while Herod was king of Judea. After Jesus' birth, Wise Men from the east came to Jerusalem. They asked, "Where is the child who has been born to be king of the Jews? When we were in the east, we saw his star. Now we have come to worship him."

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Jesus' Family Escapes to Egypt

When the Wise Men had left, Joseph had a dream. In the dream an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph. "Get up!" the angel said. "Take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you to come back. Herod is going to search for the child. He wants to kill him."

So Joseph got up. During the night, he left for Egypt with the child and his mother Mary. 15 They stayed there until King Herod died. So the words the Lord had spoken through the prophet came true. He had said, "I brought my son out of Egypt."

Herod realized that the Wise Men had tricked him. So he became very angry. He gave orders about Bethlehem and the area around it. He ordered all the boys two years old and under to be killed. This agreed with the time when the Wise Men had seen the star. 17 In this way, the words Jeremiah the prophet spoke came true. He had said,

"A voice is heard in Ramah. It's the sound of crying and deep sadness. Rachel is crying over her children. She refuses to be comforted, because they are gone."

Jesus' Family Returns to Nazareth

After Herod died, Joseph had a dream while he was still in Egypt. In the dream an angel of the Lord appeared to him. The angel said, "Get up! Take the child and his mother. Go to the land of Israel. The people who were trying to kill the child are dead."

So Joseph got up. He took the child and his mother Mary back to the land of Israel. But then he heard that Archelaus was king of Judea. Archelaus was ruling in place of his father Herod. This made Joseph afraid to go there. Joseph had been warned in a dream. So he went back to the land of Galilee instead. There he lived in a town called Nazareth. So what the prophets had said about Jesus came true. They had said that he would be called a Nazarene.

Talk About It

Talk with your child about Christmas and take some time to share a memory or two from Christmas' past. Remind your child about how at Christmas we get new things, and then after a while, we sometimes set those new things aside and forget about them. Sometimes we also forget about God and set Him aside. When we set a toy aside, we spend less and less time playing with it. When we set God aside, we spend less and less time praising and worshipping Him. We also may give less and less of our love to Him. God wants us to take the time to worship Him EVERY DAY, no matter what. In a small way or a very big way, we can find the time to worship Him. Talk about it.

