

LESSON 53

The God of Israel Cannot Be Captured

1 SAMUEL 4–7



BIBLE TRUTH

GOD'S PRESENCE IS NOT A GOOD LUCK CHARM
THAT CAN BE MANIPULATED FOR OUR BENEFIT

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: *The Gospel Story Bible* (story 53)

3. BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

Where Is Jesus?

SUPPLIES: Bible (ESV preferred); Review “Where Is Jesus?” to prepare

4. SNACK QUESTIONS 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: Snack food/water

5. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5-10 MIN

6. ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS (CHOOSE ONE OR MORE) 20-30 MIN

Coloring Page 53

SUPPLIES: markers/crayons

Dagon’s Temple Flannelgraph

SUPPLIES: flannelgraph set of Dagon’s temple; felt board

Dagon Falling

SUPPLIES: wooden blocks; shoebox

7. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

TOTAL 60-75 MIN

THE LESSON

OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

In today’s lesson we will see that God is stronger than people and that people cannot control God or capture God.

Ask the children if any of them are stronger than their parents. Of course they are not. Use this to help get them thinking about just how weak they are compared with their parents. Then ask them if God is stronger than their parents. Finally, make the connection that God is more powerful than even the strongest person they know.

Then speak to the issue of control. Ask them what we use to control a river. (a dam to make it into a lake) Ask them what we use to control wild animals in the zoo? (We put them in cages with iron bars.)

What do we use to control God? (Nothing can control God because God is all-powerful.)

Recall last week’s story about Eli’s sons, Hophni and Phinehas. Ask the children if they remember what God said about Eli and his sons. (God told Eli they were wicked and did not follow God and were not going to be able to be priests for God anymore. God also said that they were going to die because of their rebellion against God [1 Samuel 2:34].)

What was the name of the young boy who God gave a message to give to Eli? (Samuel)

Pray for the remainder of the class time before moving forward with the lesson.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read story 53, “The God of Israel Cannot Be Captured,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

After reading the story, use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion:

What happened in this story?

(People tried to control and capture God. First, Hophni and Phinehas were killed when they took the ark of God to battle without God's permission. Then, the Philistines took the ark of God to Dagon's temple, and they were made very sick.)

What can we learn about God from this story?

(God is all-powerful and cannot be controlled or captured.)

Who led the cows back to Israel?

(God commanded the cows to go back to Israel.)

SNACK QUESTIONS 10 MIN

While the children are eating the snack, engage them by asking:

What should Hophni and Phinehas have done?

(They should have prayed to the Lord and asked for his help in battle, and then followed his instructions.)

Why do you think Hophni and Phinehas took the ark?

(They thought the ark had some power of its own. They thought they could control it. They wanted to win the battle.)

What did God do in Dagon's temple?

(He caused the idol of Dagon to fall facedown on the floor before the ark and its head and arms to fall off.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5-10 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

Where Is Jesus? _____

Please use the following comments connecting today’s lesson to the gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God’s greater plan of redemption.

Passage: 1 Samuel 7:1–11

Samuel’s offering of a lamb (1 Samuel 7:9) was a picture of Jesus, the Lamb of God, who died on the cross to save us from our sins. While Samuel was sacrificing the lamb, the Philistines were marching against Israel to attack. But because Israel confessed their sins and offered up a lamb, God remembered his promises to Israel and turned against the Philistines and defeated them.

Every time we see a lamb sacrificed for sinners in the Bible, it should remind us of God’s plan to send Jesus to die on the cross in our place.

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS. 20–30 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES:

coloring page 53—one copy for each child

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

Why do you think God knocked the idol down?

(God wanted to show that he alone is God.)

Does anyone know the Ten Commandments that tell about there being only one God?

(The first commandment says, “You shall have no other gods before me.” The second commandment says, “You shall not make for yourself an idol ...” [Exodus 20:3–4 NIV].)

What do you think the Philistines thought when they came in the second morning only to find Dagon lying down broken?

(Then they knew it was not an accident but rather the power of God that caused Dagon to fall and break.)

Dagon's Temple Flannelgraph

SUPPLIES

flannelgraph set of Dagon's temple
felt board

Retell the story of Dagon's temple using the felt board. Be sure to highlight the importance of Dagon falling before the power and holiness of God.

Dagon Falling

SUPPLIES:

wooden blocks (enough for the class)
shoebox

Divide the class into three groups. Give each group an equal number of wooden blocks. Have the kids make a tower of blocks to represent Dagon. Encourage each group to make something that looks different from the other groups'. When they are finished, bring the shoebox, which represents the ark of God, to each group. As the ark comes to each group, tell the group to knock down the tower they built.

Explain to the children that no matter how strongly they are built, all idols and other gods must fall before the power of God. God alone is to receive worship, and God alone is to receive the love of our hearts.

PRAY 5 MIN

Take time at the end of class to thank God for all you learned today. Include parts of your Bible lesson in your prayer as another way for the children to remember what today's lesson was about.

