



UNIT 9 | SESSION 5

ELI'S SONS DISOBEYED GOD

1 SAMUEL 4-6

KEY PASSAGE:

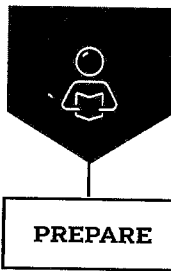
Romans 6:23

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What is the fair payment for sin? The fair payment for sin is death.

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."



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



PREPARE

PREPARE YOUR HEART TO TEACH; PLAN THE SESSION



WELCOME

GREET KIDS and OPEN THE SESSION



LEARN

TEACH KIDS THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL



LOVE

LEAD KIDS TO LOVE THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL



LIVE

LEAD KIDS TO LIVE OUT THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

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.

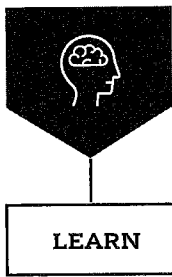
Finally, we should be humbled and filled with confidence when we realize that Jesus, who lived perfectly in human flesh, died and then was resurrected and ascended into

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.

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



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

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

SAY ☞ Hey there, friends. I'm glad you are here. Welcome back to [ministry name]. 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. Inside were the two stone tablets that had the Ten Commandments written on them, as well 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. ☞

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

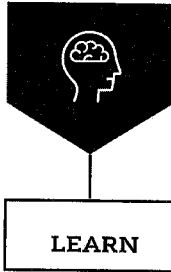
SAY ☞ Ultimately, sin boils down to our doing what we want instead of what God wants. We have discussed before that sin is rebellion against God. The Bible teaches us that sin is serious. **What is the fair payment for sin? The fair payment for sin is death.** This means that because we all are born in sin, we all deserve death—not just physical death but spiritual death, or separation from God forever. No good deeds can make up for our sin. Only faith in Jesus save us from our sins. ☞

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories 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 STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to 1 Samuel 4–6. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Eli’s Sons Disobeyed God.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

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.” **”**

STORYTELLING TIPS

Use a visual aid: Create a model of what the ark of the covenant might have looked like using foam or cardboard, or find a good drawing of the ark to display as you tell the story.

Act it out: Tell the story as if you were a witness to the events of the story. You could even dress up in biblical costume.