

## Bible Lessons for Children

Learning to Know the Triune God through His Holy Word

### Beginner Lesson One Hundred Eleven: The Ark of the Covenant is Returned

- Overview** Bible Facts & Songs: Songs about the Bible and the Judges  
Bible Reading & Discussion: Judges 16:23; I Samuel 5:1-4, 6-12; 6:1-6, 10-16, 7:1-2  
Bible Memory & Craft: Questions about the Holy Spirit  
Learning Objectives: (1) The Philistines placed the Ark of God in the house of their god Dagon. (2) The statue of Dagon was found fallen and headless before the Ark of God. (3) The Ark of God was moved to various cities and the hand of the Lord was heavy against the people in each city. (4) The Philistines sent the Ark of God back to the Israelites. (5) The Israelites rejoiced at the return of the Ark and offered burnt sacrifices to the Lord. (6) For some twenty years the Ark of the Lord was lodged at the home of Abinadab. (7) Only the one true God is worthy of all glory and worship.
- Opening** Get students' attention by using a pre-planned silence signal.  
Have students sit in rows or a semi-circle facing you.  
Open in prayer asking God's blessing upon the time.
- Bible Facts** Materials: Song visuals &/or props as needed  
5-10 minutes Strategies: Sing It with Hand &/or Body Motions as appropriate  
Instructions: Ask students to help lead songs about the Bible & the Judges. Encourage students to think about what they are singing. Include actions and visuals as appropriate.
- Bible Reading** Materials: Bibles for students to use  
15 minutes Strategies: Missing Word Reading  
Scripture: Judges 16:23; I Samuel 5:1-4, 6-12; 6:1-6, 10-16, 7:1-2  
Instructions: Have students sit at tables. Leader reads aloud expressively. Whenever leader pauses and holds up one finger, students say, "Ark of God." Whenever leader pauses and holds up two fingers, students say, "Ark of the Lord." Leader should mark passage ahead of time and explain to students that these are simply other names for the Ark of the Covenant.
- Bible Discussion** Materials: Bean bag, word poster #3 "Work of the Holy Spirit," add "Fruit Producer"  
10 minutes Strategy: Beanbag Toss  
Instructions: Have students sit in a fellowship circle. The leader asks a question and then tosses a beanbag to someone who must answer and then toss the beanbag back to the leader.  
Questions:
- After the Philistines captured the Ark of God, they took it to the house of Dagon. Who was Dagon? (A god of the Philistines)
  - The first morning after the Ark of God was placed in the house of Dagon, the Philistines found the statue of Dagon face downward on the ground before what? (The Ark of the Lord)
  - The next day, what had happened to the Dagon statue? (Its head and hands had been cut off.)
  - With what did the Lord afflict the Philistines? (Tumors)
  - The Ark of God was moved to different cities. In each city the people were afflicted with tumors until there was a deathly panic among the people. After seven months, the Philistines decided to return the Ark to Israel. What did they send as a guilt offering? (Golden tumors, golden mice)
  - The Philistine priests and diviners said, "...give blank to the God of Israel. Perhaps he will lighten his hand from off you and your gods and your land..." (Glory)
  - About 400 years had passed since Israel left Egypt and came into the Promised Land. However, the Philistines knew about the plagues that God had sent to Egypt. The priests and diviners said, "Why should you harden your blank as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their blank? (Hearts)
  - The people of Beth-shemesh rejoiced when the Ark of the Lord was returned and the Levites offered burnt sacrifices to the Lord. Then the Ark was taken to the house of Abinadab and his son Eleazar was consecrated to have charge of it. How long did the Ark stay there? (Some 20 years)

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Transitional Thought: Because of the sin of Israel, God allowed the Philistines to defeat Israel and to capture the Ark of the Covenant. However, God, through the humiliation of Dagon and the affliction of the people, made it clear to the Philistines that He, the Lord God of Israel, is the one and only God worthy of glory. When God returned to Israel the Ark of the Covenant, the visual sign of God's presence in Israel, the Israelites worshipped God. Through Christ's sacrifice on the cross, God has overcome the consequences of sin, which is eternal death and has provided believers with His presence through the Holy Spirit. This one and only true God is worthy of all glory and worship.

Show students word poster #3 and have them act out the words – Work of the Holy Spirit: Prayer Interpreter (place hands at heart and then extend toward heaven); Convictor of Sin (turn two thumbs down and then point emphatically); Spiritual Life Giver (place hand over heart with fingers in the shape on an "L"); Seal of Salvation (clap fist of one hand to palm of other hand as though "stamping" with an ink stamp.); Fruit Producer (act as though arms are tree branches)

**Group Prayer** Through prayer, praise God for Who He is, for the work of Jesus Christ, and for the work of the Holy Spirit.

**Bible Memory** Materials: White board with markers and eraser

10-15 minutes Strategy: Hand Motions

Instructions: Have students sit in a semi-circle or rows facing a white board with the following passage written on it:

*Question: What does the Holy Spirit produce in the life of a believer?*

*Answer: The Holy Spirit produces the fruit of the Spirit.*

*Verse: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control..." Galatians 5:22-23a*

Simple hand motions are chosen to represent most words in the passage. Students repeat the passage a few times using words and hand motions from memory.

**Bible Craft** Materials: Paper, advertisers, scissors, glue, markers, sample project

As time allows Activity: Fruit of the Spirit Collage

Instructions: Have students sit at tables. Have students cut pictures of fruit from grocery store advertisers. Have students glue the pictures onto paper and copy or glue the nine words depicting the Fruit of the Spirit. (Words can be handwritten with black marker or printed from a computer for students to cut out and glue.) Discuss the growth and goodness of fruit compared to the growth and goodness of the Fruit of the Spirit in the life of a believer.

**Closing** Have students assist with clean-up.

Remind students to practice their memory work throughout the week.

Close in prayer & dismiss.

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**The Work of the Holy Spirit**

*Question: What work does the Holy Spirit do in prayer?*

*Answer: The Holy Spirit intercedes, interpreting the believers' prayer.*

*Verse: "...For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words." Romans 8:26*

*Question: What work does the Holy Spirit do concerning sin?*

*Answer: The Holy Spirit convicts people of their sin.*

*Verse: "And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin...because they do not believe in me." John 16:8-9*

*Question: What work does the Holy Spirit do in salvation?*

*Answer: The Holy Spirit gives life to believers in Jesus Christ.*

*Verse: "It is the Spirit who gives life..." John 6:63a*

*Question: What is a work that the Holy Spirit does for believers?*

*Answer: The Holy Spirit seals believers until Christ's return.*

*Verse: "...when you heard...the gospel of our salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit..." Ephesians 1:13-14*

*Question: What does the Holy Spirit produce in the life of a believer?*

*Answer: The Holy Spirit produces the fruit of the Spirit.*

*Verse: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control..." Galatians 5:22-23a*