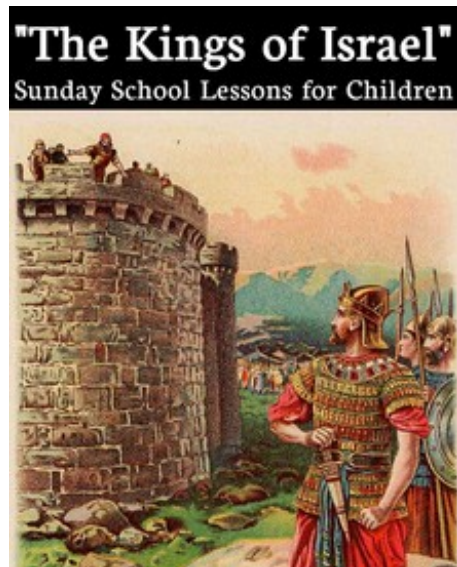


Sunday School Lesson: Jehoshaphat's Dangerous Friendship

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This lesson is for the study of Israel's kings. The lesson focuses on Jehoshaphat's dangerous friendship with Ahab. The students will discover from this lesson how believers should use wisdom in choosing relationships. After this lesson, the children will demonstrate comprehension by answering review questions and participating in Bible Lesson Charades.

This lesson is only a guide to help you to prepare for your class. It was created for older students but can be adapted for your individual needs. [Click here](#) to see all the Bible lessons in this series.

Bible Story: Jehoshaphat's dangerous friendship

Scripture: [2 Chronicles 17-19:3](#)

Target Age Group: Age 9 – 11 (U.S. 3rd – 5th Grade)

Learning Context: Sunday School

Target Time Frame: 60 minutes

Printer Friendly Bible Lesson:  [PRINT](#) this lesson plan

You Can Help: Please share your feedback and suggestions to improve this children's Bible lesson. [Click here to respond](#)

Supply List: Bibles, ingredients to make trail mix (or another type of snack that allows students to add ingredients), jar of dirt, other unappetizing ingredients (crushed red pepper, hot sauce, sand/rocks etc), cups or bags for students to put their snack in, flannel graphs or pictures for the Bible lesson,

Learning Goal: Students will learn that believers should use wisdom in choosing relationships.

Learning Indicator: Students will demonstrate comprehension by answering review questions and participating in Bible Lesson Charades.

Learning Activity #1: Make a snack.

Learning Activity #2: Bible Lesson Charades: At the end of the lesson choose a student to act out a part of the lesson for the other students to guess what he/she is depicting.

Test: Review Questions

Memory Verse: 2 Corinthians 6:14 “Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?”

Teaching the Verse: Choose different translations of this verse to emphasize what the word yoked means. Explain that this doesn't mean that believers are not to associate with unbelievers but it means that they should not be in a close relationship. (John 17:15-18) Have students brainstorm what being unequally yoked looks like for kids their age. (Examples: having a best friend who is an unbeliever, starting a club with an unbeliever, having a boy friend or girl friend that doesn't believe in Jesus etc. Explain how you can have friends that are unbelievers to be a Godly influence in their lives and to share the love of Jesus with them. The relationship should not be so close that the unbeliever's attitudes and sin influence their lives.)

Bible Lesson: Jehoshaphat's dangerous friendship

Make Snack: Let's make a snack to eat after our lesson. Take ingredients out of the bag and place on the table. Have students decide what ingredients they want to use for the snack (trail mix). Talk about why they do not want to put the unappetizing ingredients in their snack.

Let's look at our Memory verse for today. If you are a Christian you have been cleansed from your sin and made righteous before God. You need to make wise choices as you follow Jesus in your day to day life. What are important 'ingredients' of a Christian's daily life? (Allow responses-prayer, reading and memorizing God's Word) What would be some things that would make the life of an unbeliever 'unappetizing' to others? (Sin: ungodly attitudes, actions etc.) In order to be a light (appetizing) to others you have to continue to put in the important ingredients into your life every day. When you allow yourself to be in a close relationship with someone who doesn't believe in Jesus their unappetizing ingredients start to affect the way you live your life. It is very dangerous to your walk with Jesus to allow unbelievers to have a strong influence in your life.

In our lesson today we will see an example of someone who joined military forces with a wicked man. Take your Bibles and in a few minutes we will be travelling in Scripture to discover a dangerous friendship.

The Israelites are God's chosen people. God promised Abraham that he would have many descendants (Genesis 15:5) and one of those descendants would be the Savior of the world. The Israelites had been slaves in Egypt and God rescued them and gave them their very own land to live in. He gave them laws to live by so they would not live as the ungodly nations all around them. God was using the Israelite people to prepare the world for the coming Savior. If they lived according to God's Word they looked very different than the people who were not Israelites.

God gave His people laws to protect them from sin. Sin destroys lives and God wanted His people to enjoy life and His blessings. One of the laws that God gave His people before they moved into the Promised Land was that they were not allowed to marry anyone who was not

an Israelite. He knew that if the Israelites married people who did not worship the One True God they would turn away from Him and worship false gods. (Deuteronomy 7:3-4)

Just as we discussed with our memory verse the Israelites would be adding unappetizing ingredients to their worship by marrying anyone other than an Israelite.

As we have studied Israel's kings we have seen that God's people don't always obey His laws. Who remembers why Israel was divided into two kingdoms with two kings? (Solomon sinned against God and married many pagan wives and worshiped their gods. God punished him by taking the kingdom away from him and allowed a divided kingdom in Israel. 1 Kings 11:1-13)

We have seen the Israelites that were part of the northern kingdom sinned and followed the wickedness of their king. The southern kingdom has had some kings that were faithful to God and led the people to obey Him.

To get an idea of what life in each kingdom was like in our lesson today we will turn to the northern kingdom and discover how God's people the Israelites are living their lives.

The king of the northern kingdom is Ahab. Scripture describes Ahab for us. Let's turn in our Bibles to 1 Kings 16:30-33. (Choose volunteers to read) If you were living in the northern kingdom at this time in history what would it look like to you? (Allow responses) People typically follow their leaders. Do you think the people living in the northern kingdom ignored Ahab's sin and continued to worship the One, True God according to the laws He gave Moses?

The sin in the northern kingdom was displeasing to God and He sent His prophet Elijah to tell them that there would be a famine in the land for 3 ½ years. Sin must be punished and God sent the famine in the land to punish the wickedness of Ahab and the northern kingdom. He punishes sin and desires that people turn from their sin and live a life that pleases Him. (Ezekiel 18:32) Ahab didn't repent or turn from his sin but continued to live a wicked life. His wife Jezebel was not an Israelite and murdered any prophets who served the One True God.

The northern kingdom was a wicked, dark place filled with sin as Ahab ruled. When sin reigns God must deal with sin by sending severe judgment. (Exodus 34:7, Leviticus 26) God is merciful and doesn't want anyone to be destroyed. However, unless there is repentance sinful people are under the cloud of God's soon coming punishment. The northern kingdom's sin against God was provoking Him to anger. He always does what He says He will do and the northern kingdom will be punished for their sin.

In the southern kingdom Jehoshaphat is reigning as king. Turn in your Bibles to 2 Chronicles 17 to discover what kind of king he is. Let's look at 17:3-6. What do you learn about Jehoshaphat? (Our next lesson is going to explore the ways that Jehoshaphat led the southern kingdom to be faithful to God.)

(Use a visual that depicts the darkness of the northern kingdom and the light that currently exists in the southern kingdom)

The northern kingdom is in darkness because the people are being led by Ahab who is disobeying God's laws and sinning against Him. The southern kingdom is walking in light because Jehoshaphat is leading the people to obey God's laws.

Let's recite our memory verse again.

Jehoshaphat has nothing in common with Ahab until he makes an unwise decision. Jehoshaphat begins a very dangerous friendship with wicked king Ahab by allowing his son Jehoram to marry Athaliah, Ahab's and Jezebel's daughter. (2 Chronicles 18: 1; 21:5-6)

Through this marriage Jehoshaphat had a relationship with a very wicked king. Let's read what Ahab asks Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 18:3. Ahab wants Jehoshaphat to join forces with his army and fight against his enemies in Ramoth-gilead.

Jehoshaphat was not using wisdom when he agreed. Was he really just like Ahab and were his people just like Ahab's people? ("I am as you are, and my people as your people")

On a positive note Jehoshaphat tells Ahab that they should seek God's direction for this battle.

2 Chronicles 18:5-27

Ahab gathers his prophets. What kind of prophets do you think Ahab had? (False prophets- he was not obedient to God's prophet Elijah). All his prophets told him what he wanted him to hear. They told him to go to battle because he would be victorious against his enemy.

Jehoshaphat had a sense in his heart that these prophets were not speaking God's words so he asks Ahab if there is a prophet of the Lord that can give them direction.

Read 2 Chronicles 18:7. We see Ahab's wickedness and rebellion towards God in his attitude towards God's prophet. He hates Micaiah because he never says anything good about him.

Sin hardens our hearts. By allowing a little sin here and a little sin there we no longer want to hear God's truth. We want to hear good things and not how we need to turn away from our sin or be punished. (2 Timothy 4:3-4) Even if we don't want to hear God's truth it will not keep us from suffering punishment for our wickedness.

Jehoshaphat is tender towards the Lord because he does want to please him even though he has made this dangerous decision to join forces with Ahab. He doesn't like it when Ahab speaks unkindly towards God's servant and he speaks up and tells him not to speak that way. (Exodus 22:28)

Micaiah tells Ahab what the result will be and the outcome for Ahab will not be good. He tells Ahab that God has allowed an evil (lying) spirit to entice him to go to battle. Ahab's false prophets were sharing the message from the evil spirit who was enticing Ahab to go to battle.

If we reject God's truth we will listen to the devil's lies. He is the father of all lies and his purpose is to destroy lives. (John 8:44)

2 Chronicles 18:28-34

Ahab is not a true friend to Jehoshaphat. Even though he has heard the truth he still plans to go to battle. He must have believed in part what the Lord's prophet Micaiah said because he decided to go into battle wearing a disguise. He must have thought if he was disguised he couldn't be killed. He told Jehoshaphat to go into battle wearing his kingly robes.

When Ahab asked Jehoshaphat to do this was he looking out for Jehoshaphat's safety? Why or why not? This was a dangerous relationship that Jehoshaphat unwisely became involved with.

Let's read verses 30-34. Jehoshaphat made an unwise decision and was in a very dangerous situation. When he was about to be killed he cried out to the Lord and God rescued him and spared his life.

Sometimes we will make unwise decisions and get ourselves into dangerous situations. God sees everything we do and we can call upon Him even in times when we have not made wise choices.

Ahab thought he could avoid God's punishment by disguising himself. God sees everything and no one can hide from Him. (Hebrews 4:13) Ahab's death may have seemed 'random' but God is sovereign and nothing is random or coincidental. He guided that arrow to strike Ahab in the part of the armor that was not protecting him. Ahab died and did not have victory in this battle just as Micaiah prophesied.

God loves Jehoshaphat and just as a good father disciplines his child; God sends a message of rebuke to Jehoshaphat. Let's finish our lesson with God's message to Jehoshaphat. Read 2 Chronicles 19:1-4.

God knew it was dangerous for Jehoshaphat to join forces with wicked king Ahab. He rebuked Jehoshaphat and spoke these words to warn him not to make this unwise decision again.

If you are a Christian God has given you His Word to protect your life. He knows that we live in a world filled with sin and darkness. By following Him and not joining forces with unbelievers we will be protected from turning away from God and following the ways of His enemy Satan. Stay in God's Word every day, pray and surround yourself with Godly relationships so you can be a light to those who are not saved. By being a pure light (with no 'unappetizing' ingredients) others will see Jesus and want to know Him better.

If you aren't a Christian your life is like Ahab's. He was filled with sin and because he would not turn away from that sin and turn to God he suffered punishment for his sins. You may not feel like you are as wicked as Ahab but the price for all sin (anything we do that displeases God) is death (Romans 6:23). The punishment for your sin is to be separated from God for all eternity. You don't have to suffer this punishment because Jesus, God's Son died on the

cross, was buried and rose again the third day for your sins. If you believe in Jesus He forgives your sins. Because He died in your place, God sees you as righteous and without sin because Jesus' blood cleanses you from all your sins.

What did God show you about yourself from this lesson? What is He warning you not to do? If you have made unwise decisions you can turn away from them with God's help and make wise decisions that please Him. If you are not a Christian is He calling you to be saved today? Whatever He is speaking to you about as we close in prayer will you use the few moments of silence to talk to Him about it?

Close in prayer.

Review Questions:

1. Describe the northern kingdom under the reign of Ahab.
2. Describe the southern kingdom under the reign of Jehoshaphat.
3. What did Jehoshaphat do that was unwise? (Allowed his son to marry Ahab's daughter, joined forces with Ahab)
4. Why did Ahab hate Micaiah? (He never said good things about him)
5. How did God protect Jehoshaphat when he was in danger? (He didn't allow him to be killed in battle)
6. What happened to Ahab in the battle? (He was killed by a random arrow)
7. How can you influence unbelievers but not be in a close relationship with them?

Bible Lesson Charades: Have students choose a part of the story to act out and have the other students guess what part of the lesson is being acted out.

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