UNIT 13 | SESSION 4

THE REIGN OF AHAB

1 KINGS 20–22; 2 KINGS 1



KEY PASSAGE: 1 Kings 8:60

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: *How many gods are there? There is one true God who alone deserves worship.*

CHRIST CONNECTION: Ahab was a disobedient, greedy, and stubborn king who refused to lead Israel in the ways of the Lord. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, always obeyed God and laid down His life for us. Anyone who follows Him will dwell with God forever.

STORY POINT: Ahab was an evil king, and God brought judgment on him.

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PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

Have you ever heard the expression "you reap what you sow"? Perhaps you feel the burn of those words as you think of times you made a hasty decision or took matters into your own hands, only to later watch things fall apart. In today's text, Ahab made a series of poor choices which ultimately led to his demise.

First, the Lord gave King Ahab victory over the Arameans—not once, but twice—to remind Ahab that He is the Lord. When Israel won the second battle, they captured Ben-hadad, but Ahab disobeyed God and agreed to a treaty, releasing Ben-hadad.

Second, a man named Naboth owned a vineyard that caught Ahab's interest. In his greed, Ahab and his wife Jezebel developed a wicked scheme to take Naboth's vineyard. Their deception turned murderous when hired men lied about Naboth, saying he had cursed God and the king. Naboth was falsely convicted and sentenced to death.

A few years later, Ahab wanted to go to war against the Arameans once again. Ahab's false prophets supported his decision, but Micaiah, a prophet of the true God, advised against it, since going to war against Aram would fail. Once again, Ahab acted stubbornly and went to war anyway. During the battle, he was struck by an arrow and died.

While God showed Ahab patience and gave him many warnings, Ahab ultimately refused to repent. Like Ahab, we can be greedy and stubborn. In our sin, we rebel against God and act according to our flesh. The Bible tells us that the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus (Romans 6:23). Jesus lived a perfect life and died in the place of sinners so that we might be forgiven and be made right with God.

Encourage boys and girls to see that because Christ laid down His life for us, we can escape the punishment we deserve because of our sin. Teach kids that when we believe in Jesus and repent of sin, Christ removes our unrighteousness and changes our hearts so that we desire to follow God and His ways.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel

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THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Hand out the activity sheets while the children are settling in. Use them to transition to the small group lesson and to help review the Bible story.

Even if you choose to skip the activity page, please send it home as parent information is on the back

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete "Before and After" activity page.

> **SAY** "*Today, we will learn more about King Ahab.* **AHAB WAS AN EVIL KING, AND GOD BROUGHT JUDGMENT ON HIM.**"

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

> **SAY** "*Even though Ahab was a bad king, God gave him victory in battle against some of his enemies. God allowed King Ahab and Israel to conquer Ben-hadad's army so that people would know that God is the one true God. Yet, even after this victory, Ahab did not follow God or listen to Him. Instead, we learned how Ahab was stubborn, greedy, and evil. How did we see that Ahab was stubborn?* **[Allow responses.]** *Ahab refused to follow God's commands. He released Ben-hadad when he was not supposed to. We also saw how Ahab refused to listen to the prophet Micaiah, who told him not to go to war with Aram. But again, Ahab did not listen.*
>
> *How did we see that Ahab was greedy?* **[Allow responses.]** *Even though Ahab was king and had so much, he still wanted more. He and his wife, Jezebel, made up lies about Naboth so they could take his vineyard. God told Ahab that he had done what was evil in His sight and that Ahab would be punished for his evil deeds. But Ahab did not take God's warning seriously.*
>
> **AHAB WAS AN EVIL KING, AND GOD BROUGHT JUDGMENT ON HIM.** *Eventually, King Ahab died in the battle against Aram, just as God said. Ahab refused to lead Israel in the ways of the Lord. But Jesus is the perfect King. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, always obeyed God and laid down His life for us. Anyone who follows Him will dwell with God forever.*"

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

> **SAY** "*We can be stubborn, greedy, and disobedient because we are all sinners. God sent Jesus to be our good Shepherd and follow Him. When we trust in Jesus, we turn away from our sinful ways. Jesus saves those who trust in Him from the punishment of sin.*"

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Why is death a consequence for sin, even though we were not the ones who sinned in the first place?
2. Why did Jesus take the punishment we deserve for our sin?

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6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud 1 Kings 8:60 together.

> **SAY** "*King Ahab refused to recognize God as the one true God. Eventually, he faced judgment for his sin. Yet, God sent Jesus—the perfect image of the one true God—to save us from sin and sin's judgment. When we trust in Jesus, we can rightly worship God as the one true God.*"

Form kids in a circle and give a ball to one kid in the circle. Challenge the kid with the ball to say the first word of the key passage, then toss the ball to another kid in the circle. Continue until kids have said the entire key passage, including the reference. Repeat as time allows.

Lead kids to sing "There Is No Other (1 Kings 8:60)." You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

> **SAY** "*Thank You, Lord, for sending Jesus to be the perfect sacrifice for our sins. Thank You that we can be saved and forgiven of sin through faith in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen.*"

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**



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LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to 1 Kings 22. Review the divisions of the Old Testament books: Law, History, Poetry, Minor Prophets, and Major Prophets. Remind kids that 1 Kings is in the History division.

Consider pointing out the location of Aram (B9) on the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud 1 Kings 22:17 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verse aloud.

> **SAY** *"The prophet Micaiah said that Israel had no one to lead them. Ahab was wicked and did not listen to the Lord. Ahab was stubborn and set against God's ways. But God's ways are always what is best. God loves His people and always does what is right.*
>
> *When Jesus came to earth, He also said people were like sheep without a shepherd (Matthew 9:36). Jesus saw how people were lost in their sin. Jesus came to rescue people and show them that He is the Good Shepherd who had come to lay down His life to save them from sin."*

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

> **SAY** *"Why should we obey God and His Word?"*

Remind kids that God's words are always true and right. Tell kids that the Bible is God's Word to us and leads us away from sin and toward God's Son, Jesus. Explain how we need the Word of God to help us recognize our sin and repent of it. Share how God's words will always happen just as He says because God never lies. Through faith in Jesus, we can obey God and live in ways that please Him.

> **SAY** *"Have you ever acted stubborn or greedy? When?"*

Answers will vary. Discuss how we can all act stubborn or greedy because we all sin. Tell kids that when we disobey our parents, do what is wrong, or ignore God's words, we act stubbornly. When we take more than we need or have been given, or when we have a selfish desire for what others have, we show greed. Tell kids that those who trust in Jesus recognize how much God loves them and has given them. Believers desire to live in ways that show obedience to God and generosity to others.

> **SAY** *"Ahab faced God's judgment because of his sin. How can we be saved from God's judgment for our sin?"*

Remind kids that all sin deserves God's judgment because He is holy. Tell kids that only those who trust in Jesus will be saved from God's judgment. Share how we can confess our sin, repent of our sin, and follow Jesus. Emphasize how the Holy Spirit works in the hearts of believers to convict them of sin and help them obey God.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**

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LIVE the Mission

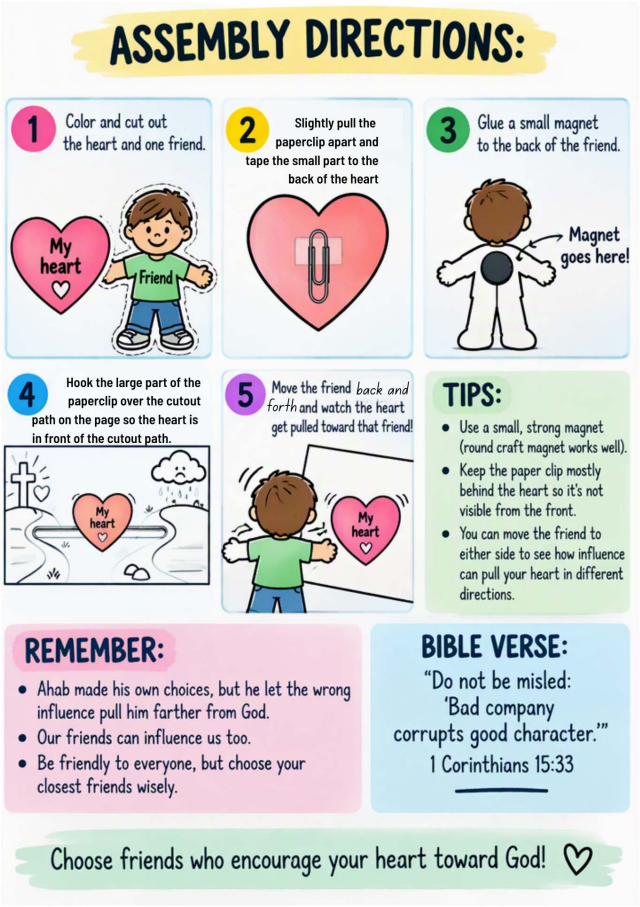
1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: BIBLE ROLL

Before this activity, make a list of tasks for kids to complete when each number of the dice is rolled. For example, 1: Name a person in the Bible. 2: Name a book found in the Old Testament. 3: Name a book found in the New Testament. 4: Name a division of the Old Testament. 5: Find [book's name] in the Bible. 6: Name or describe a story found in the Bible. Invite kids to each take a turn rolling the dice and answering the corresponding question. If a kid does not know the answer, help her answer and invite her to roll again. Continue until each kid has had at least one turn. For larger groups, consider forming kids into multiple smaller groups.

> **SAY** "*God's prophets spoke God's words to King Ahab, but he didn't always listen. God has spoken to us through His Son, Jesus, and the Bible. Jesus called people to repent and turn to God. When we read our Bible, we learn that when we repent and trust in Jesus, we will be saved from the punishment for sin. God is good to give us His Word and show us the way to be saved.*"

Option 2



2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.

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