



Date: _____
Series: Lookin' for a Leader
Fall Year 3, Lesson 22

Solomon Follows False Gods

Take Home Point: *Keep God on top.

*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

Bible Event: 1 Kings 11:1-13, 29-40

Key Verse: Exodus 20:3, "Never have any other god."

We will help kids know:

- The Bible event of Solomon pulling away from God by serving the gods of his foreign wives.
- We should have no other gods before the true God. We should keep God on top.
- When we trust in things or people to be most important in our lives, they can become like idols or false gods.




We will help kids feel:

- Disgust at Solomon's falling into idolatry.
- Inspired to keep God on top and to let their lights shine.

We will help kids do:

- Identify ways they can keep God on top and trust in him with their whole heart.
- Make a small lamp to remind them of God's light shining.

THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

| DESTINATION | PAGE # | DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY | SUPPLIES NEEDED |
|---|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Small Group Warm-Up  | 3 | Kids share things they enjoy doing or having. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a bowl of water • coarse pepper • cardboard matches • bowl of dishwashing soap |
| Large Group  | 4 10 14 17 | Overview Puppet Presentation – “Gordy Tries to Stay on Top” Dramatic Presentation – “Solomon Saddens God” Puppet Conclusion —“Gordy Tries to Stay on Top” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gordy with a baseball cap on • baseball bat • headpieces or costumes for Ahijah and Jeroboam • crown for Solomon |
| Small Group Application  | 5 | The kids discuss how to keep God first in their lives and how the result would be like “a light on a hill.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • baby food jar with lid for each child • vegetable oil or lamp oil • food coloring • water • gold glitter |

Small Group Warm-Up: 15 minutes



Purpose: *Get pointed in the right direction!* Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.

This warm-up involves a science experiment.

Sprinkle coarse ground pepper into a bowl of water.
The pepper will float on the surface tension of the water.



Give children a paper match. Using the cardboard side of the match, have the kids touch flakes of pepper to see if they can “capture” pepper on the ends of their matches.

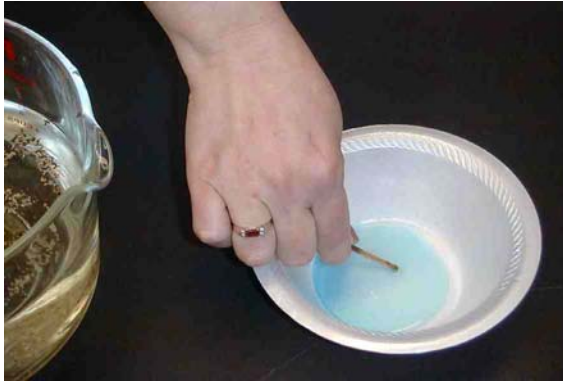
The following discussion takes place during the science experiment.

Today we will talk about our favorite toys or favorite things to do. I am going to pass you a match. Dip the cardboard end of that match into the water that is sprinkled with pepper. Try to grab one of the pieces of pepper with the end of your match. Then you can tell everyone what is your favorite toy or favorite thing to do.

After kids have shared and tried to “catch” a pepper flake, continue with:

Is it possible to ever like a toy or a special activity too much? Could it ever become like a god?

Be considerate in discussing these questions. Toys or fun activities are not evil. They can be wonderful blessings from God. Anything we look to with trust and confidence that it will provide the entire fulfillment we need in life, though, becomes like an idol or a false god. Examples can be made. “If I like basketball so much that I stay home from church every Sunday to play, basketball might be more important than spending time with God.” Other false gods or idols that can be easily identified are money, power, fame, or following false spiritual forces (crystals, séances, fortune-telling).



The final “wow” event is done by dipping the cardboard tip of one match into a bowl of dishwashing soap.

Put the match back into the bowl of water with the ground pepper. As soon as the match touches the water, all of the pepper will “fly” away.



Say: This is very much like how God wants to be on top in our lives. He wants us to have no other gods. Though we can have things that are important to us, He wants us to trust Him more than we trust things or people to make us happy. When we know and trust in Jesus, who gave His life for us, God helps us scatter all the other false gods.

Today we will learn to **keep God on top.*

Large Group Overview: 20-30 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids observe what the Bible says. Present the Bible event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.*

Carnival Game with Puppet Presentation: “Gordy Tries to Stay on Top”—Gordy thinks he is the biggest, baddest, best baseball player in the world until he realizes he might be making baseball his god.

Dramatic Presentation: “Solomon Saddens God”—Events from 1 Kings 11 are acted out.

Puppet Conclusion: “Gordy Tries to Stay on Top”

Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible event in their lives. Use the questions to stimulate discussion but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.*

Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson.

Observation Questions: What happened?

Have kids refer to 1 Kings 11:1-13, 29-40 for the following questions about today's Bible event. *(It might be worth noting that a concubine is just like a wife except she does not have as many rights under the law.)*

How many wives did Solomon have that were princesses? *(1 Kings 11:3. Seven hundred)*

How many of Solomon's wives were concubines? *(1 Kings 11:3. Three hundred.)*

What did Solomon's wives tempt him to do? *(1 Kings 11:4. Follow other gods.)*

How did Solomon respond to these temptations? *(1 Kings 11:6-7. He did not wholeheartedly follow the Lord, as his father David had done. He even built an illegal worship site.)*

What was God's reaction to Solomon? *(1 Kings 11:9. God became angry.)*

What did God decide to do? *(1 Kings 11:11. God said he would tear away part of the kingdom from Solomon and give it to one of his servants. Solomon's son would have one tribe for the sake of David, Solomon's father.)*

What is the First Commandment? *(Exodus 20:3. Never have any other god.)*

Interpretation Questions:

Why do you think Solomon gave in to the temptations of his wives?

How did God keep his promises to David and Solomon? *(God promised that Solomon could be king as long as he was faithful to God.)*

God did not take away Solomon's kingdom in his lifetime because of his father David. God would not tear the whole kingdom away from the hands of Solomon's son who would only rule over one tribe.)

Application Questions: What does this mean to me?

Application Activity:

Today we are talking about how we can **keep God on top.*

Demonstrate making the craft. Fill a baby food jar three-fourths full of water. Fill the jar one-fourth with oil. Next, put in a drop of food coloring, close the lid, and shake it up.

What do you think will happen to the water and oil? The oil rises to the top. This is a reminder to always **keep God on top.* The memory verse today is, "Have no other god's before me." Let's see how we can do that.

John 1:18 says, "*No one has ever seen God. God's only Son, the one who is closest to the Father's heart, has made him known.*" What does this mean?

Jesus came into the world so he could make known God's heart. God showed us how much he loves us by giving up his Son to die on the cross for us.

Jesus told us he would be a light that lights up our lives.

Read John 1:4:

"He was the source of life, and that life was the light for humanity."

Also read Matthew 5:14-16, which describes how we will be lights—lights shining for him.

"You are light for the world. A city cannot be hidden when it is located on a hill. No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket. Instead, everyone who lights a lamp puts it on a lamp stand. Then its light shines on everyone in the house. In the same way let your light shine in front of people. Then they will see the good that you do and praise your Father in heaven."

One of the most important ways we can always keep God on top is to trust Jesus as our Savior and to let his light shine through us. To remind us of that, we are going to make a craft.

Give each child a baby food jar. Let kids fill the jars ($\frac{3}{4}$ full with water and $\frac{1}{4}$ with oil). Add a couple drops of food coloring. Have the children sprinkle a small amount of gold glitter into their baby food jars. After the children have tightly screwed the lids onto their

jars, they can shake the jars. Holding the jars up to the light, the kids can see the light reflect off of the glitter in the liquid. Remind them that this is how Jesus is the light of the world and they are lights that reflect Jesus to the world, also. The oil on the top is a reminder to **keep God on top*.

Encourage the children to talk at home about what they have learned in Kingdom Quest using their light jars.

Read the following story for further discussion.

"A Light on the Hill"

At school, Jeremy loved recess. His favorite game above all was King of the Mountain. A mound of dirt had been left on the playground from workers building nearby. Jeremy and his friends loved to play King of the Mountain there. The goal of the game was to stay on top of the mountain as long as possible without getting pushed off.

Jeremy was the best at the game. He was not only big but he was quick. When his friends would come to push him down, Jeremy could quickly dodge out of the way. His friends would lose their balance and go rolling down the hill.

One day all of the boys started to play before Jeremy arrived. Each boy pretended to be a superhero with super powers. One would charge up the hill and say, "Batman rules," and attempt to push off the boy on the top. If this boy won, he would give a dance and scream, "Batman rules!" Before he could scream it a second time, he would be pushed by another boy yelling, "Superman rules!"

On the game went. Various superheroes would all have a short time of victory and ruling as king of the mountain.

Then Jeremy came to play. His friends were eager to see him, and Jeremy was ready to play. Along with Jeremy was his friend, David. It seemed that David was the smallest boy in the class. He wasn't very strong and he was made fun of so often that he was used to the mean comments he heard from the boys playing King of the Mountain.

"Come on, Jeremy! Come up and play! What superhero are you going to be?" his friends asked.

"Is Superman taken?" asked Jeremy.

“Yeah, I have Superman. Think of another one.”

“Okay,” said Jeremy, “but let David play, too.”

“Sure,” his friends said. “David can be Wimp Man.”

“Yeah. How about Geek Man?” another friend joked, while all of the boys laughed.

“How about Fly Man?” said another. “One little thump and he’ll go flying away.”

Jeremy was saddened at the way the other boys teased David. David pretended like he didn’t mind. He just stuck his hands in his pockets and shrugged his shoulders.

“I don’t want to play a stupid King of the Mountain game anyway,” David said.

“That’s okay,” Jeremy said. “I know who rules this hill.” At that, Jeremy bolted up the hill. He was quick to knock off Superman. He dodged Batman. Spiderman lost his grip. All of the X-Men couldn’t budge Jeremy. All tried to move Jeremy off the top of the mound but they couldn’t. They just sat down in a pile to rest at the bottom of the hill.

“So, who rules?” the boys shouted up at Jeremy. “What hero are you?”

“I’ll tell you in a minute,” said Jeremy. “Hey, David. Come up here. Take a shot at me.”

The other boys snickered, “Yeah, sure. Wimp Man is going to take out Jeremy. That’s a laugh!”

David, however, did not hesitate. He charged up the hill with a big smile on his face and gave Jeremy a push. To everyone’s surprise, Jeremy fell backwards.

“Whoa!” Jeremy said. “David pushed me off! David rules!”

“What?!” his friends shrieked. “That’s not possible.”

“Sure, it is,” Jeremy said, just as the recess bell was ringing. “David rules and he’s the winner.”

As the boys were walking in together, David asked Jeremy, “You were up on top of that hill for a long time and you never said which superhero you were. Who were you?”

Jeremy thought to himself and then he put his fist in the air. He said, “The best super hero of all. Jesus rules!”

Do you think Jeremy let David win?

What do you think Jeremy meant by saying “Jesus rules!”

Refer to Matthew 5:16.

How did Jeremy let his light shine in front of people?

**Do you think anyone praised God in heaven for what Jeremy did?
Who might have given thanks to God in this story?**

Think of a way you can let your light shine before others at your school. How is this like keeping God on top?

Closing Prayer:

Pray for specific ways in which the kids can **keep God on top* and let their lights shine.

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Large Group Presentation

Gordy Tries To Stay On Top

Gordy Puppet Script

The puppet script introduces the carnival contest that is played with a plastic baseball bat.

Contest: Four contestants are brought forward. The large group presenter tosses the bat to one of the contestants so he catches it, holding it vertically with one hand. The person to the catcher's right grabs the bat directly above the catcher's fist. The next person grabs the bat above the previous one. The fourth person continues in the same manner. The catcher can then grab the bat with his other hand, and so on with the rest of the contestants.

The winner of the game is the one who can put the last fist on the bat so the following person has no bat to grab. The game continues as the person to the right of the winner drops out. The game is then repeated. Each round a person is lost until one wins.

The game illustrates trying to stay on top. God says that he wants to be on top in our lives and we should have no other gods before him. When we put anything on top of God (even ourselves), that is idolatry and following false gods.

All of this sets up the drama that presents the Bible event of Solomon not keeping God on top. Solomon followed after the idols of his foreign wives.

Gordy appears onstage with a baseball cap. A baseball bat is leaning against the puppet stage.

Mr. King: Hi, boys and girls. Welcome to Kingdom Quest Carnival where we play some great games.

Gordy: You bet! Batter up!

Mr. King: Batter up? This is a carnival not a baseball game.

Gordy: Well, it's about time we played baseball at this carnival.

Mr. King: Why is that?

Gordy: Because I'm the best baseball player in the world!

Mr. King: The best in the whole world?

Gordy: Let me put it another way. The biggest, best in the whole world!

Mr. King: The biggest best?

Gordy: The most important, biggest, best baseball player in the whole world!

Mr. King: And you think that's you?

Gordy: Well, I think I'm the most important, biggest, baddest, best in the whole world.

Mr. King: Gordy, I can tell that baseball is pretty important to you.

Gordy: Shouldn't it be if I'm the most important, biggest, baddest, best baseball player in the whole world?

Mr. King: Well, I suppose. I think you're getting a bit carried away, though.

Gordy: I'm not carried away. I'm just number one, on top! Baseball is everything to me.

Mr. King: Gordy, it's beginning to sound like baseball is like a god to you.

Gordy: Well, I guess I'm kind of a baseball god.

Mr. King: No, I mean you might be worshiping baseball or trusting in it more than you are trusting in God.

Gordy: Oh, I didn't know that I could do that.

Mr. King: It could happen.

Gordy: Are you saying that baseball is bad?

Mr. King: No, baseball isn't bad. When baseball becomes your idol or something that you put more trust in than God, then it is bad.

Gordy: But I am the biggest, baddest, best baseball player in the whole world.

Mr. King: Gordy, if you serve baseball like a god, I promise you that you will be disappointed.

Gordy: No way!

Mr. King: Yes way. What happens when you lose a game?

Gordy: Lose?! I've never lost a game!

Mr. King: That's amazing. How many games have you won?

Gordy: Oh, I don't know. Lots.

Mr. King: Twenty?

Gordy: Not quite.

Mr. King; Ten?

Gordy: No.

Mr. King: Five?

Gordy: Not quite.

Mr. King: Three?

Gordy: No.

Mr. King: Two?

Gordy: Well . . .

Mr. King: One?

Gordy: Yeah.

Mr. King: You mean, you have just won one game and you think you are the biggest, baddest, best baseball player in the whole world?

Gordy: Of course.

Mr. King: Gordy, learn something today. It's okay to have fun playing baseball, just don't make it your god. Don't make anything your god other than God, himself. God said, "Have no other gods before me." In other words, keep God on top.

Gordy: Oh, I think I can do that.

Mr. King: Here, let's watch a game. We're going to play a game of "Who's on Top" with a baseball bat. After that we will hear about how Solomon put something else on top of God's place in his life. Then, Gordy, would you come back and tell us what you think?

Gordy: Sure.

Mr. King: **Okay then. Let's go to our contest. I need four contestants.**

Select four contestants from the audience. Toss the bat vertically to one player so he catches it. The player to the right of the catcher should grab the bat just over the catcher's fist. The next person grabs the bat above the previous one. The fourth person continues in the same manner. The game continues with contestants other hands until a player places his fist on the very top. The player with his fist on top at the very end is the winner of the round. The player immediately to the winner's right is out of the game. The game repeats in the same manner until there is only one winner.

During this time, Gordy can make comments about being on top and being the best. At the conclusion, Mr. King introduces the drama.

Mr. King: **We have seen in today's carnival contest that no matter how often you try to be on top, sometimes you cannot stay there. God says that he wants to be on top in our lives. He wants to be most important so we don't serve any other gods. A god can be anything so important that we trust in that thing or person to give us our meaning and purpose in life.**

Today we are learning about King Solomon who started out as a very wise king. He asked God to show him how to choose right and wrong for the people he ruled over. Surprisingly, at the very end of his life, Solomon made some very bad choices. He couldn't even choose right from wrong for himself. Here's what happened.

Solomon Saddens God

Dramatic Characterization

The drama is narrated by an adult and acted out by children.

Cast:

*Solomon
Some of Solomon's wives
Jeroboam
Ahijah, the prophet*

The characters listen to the narration and act out accordingly. Dress the child actors in period costumes or headpieces. Practice in advance.

Props:

- *Ark of the Covenant, if available, or something that reminds the children of the temple*
- *Idols (a trophy, a puppet, or a clay statue)*

Narrator: **Solomon was known for wisdom in ruling his people. He asked God to help him know right from wrong and what the best way to rule his subjects was.**

Solomon points to his head and looks very smart.

Narrator: **Solomon was known for his great wisdom. Later in his life, Solomon step by step . . .**

Solomon walks on tiptoes.

Narrator: **...moved farther and farther away from God...**

(In the center stage should be something depicting God, such as the Ark of the Covenant. Solomon continues to move away from this symbol of God.)

Narrator: **...and this is how it happened.**

Solomon made agreements with other kings. The kings gave their daughters to Solomon to be his wives.

One girl comes over to Solomon.

Narrator: **But there was more than one wife. There were many. There were twenty, then fifty, then a hundred, then three hundred, then finally seven hundred wives.**

The other girls come on stage.

Narrator: This is when Solomon got in trouble. He did something that saddened God and pulled him farther away from God. You see, when a wife from a foreign country came, she brought her own idol or god with her.

One of the girls holds up an idol represented by a trophy, puppet, or clay statue.

Narrator: Solomon allowed his wives to keep their gods with them. He even let them build temples to their gods.

The girl puts her idol in a special place in the room, bows down to it, and pulls Solomon over to where the idol is.

Narrator: Instead of learning to worship and serve the true God, the wives worshiped their idols. Solomon loved his wives and tried to do what they asked. When they asked if he would come to the temples with them, he said yes.

The girl drags Solomon to the temple.

Narrator: Before long, many of his wives were pulling him farther and farther away from God.

At this point, several of the girls show Solomon their idols. The girls tug at Solomon and confuse him as they drag him around.

Narrator: How could it be that a man who was once so wise in ruling over his people was now making such terrible choices for his own spiritual life? Solomon visited other temples and even bowed before other gods.

Didn't Solomon remember what God had promised him when he dedicated the temple? God said there would always be a descendant of David on the throne as long as they were faithful to God. Didn't Solomon understand that he was not being faithful to God as he bowed down to other idols?

The girls continue to pull Solomon in different directions.

Narrator: So it happened. By the end of his forty years of ruling, Solomon was only serving God half-heartedly. He was trying to please his wives too much by serving their gods as well.

The commotion stops and everyone listens for God's voice.

Narrator: God said, “Solomon, because this is your attitude and you have no respect for my promises, I will tear the kingdom away from you. I will give the kingdom to one of your servants, but I won’t do it in your time. I will tear it away from the hands of your son. I will also not tear the whole kingdom away, but I will give your son one tribe for David’s sake and for the sake of Jerusalem.”

Solomon and the girls move offstage. Jeroboam and the prophet, Ahijah, enter.

Narrator: Among Solomon’s servants was young Jeroboam.

Jeroboam bows to recognize who he is.

Narrator: He was such a good worker...

Jeroboam points to himself.

Narrator: ... that Solomon made him foreman in building his big project. One day, God sent the prophet, Ahijah, to speak to the young man.

Ahijah bows.

Narrator: He took off his robe and tore it into twelve pieces. He gave ten pieces to Jeroboam and said, “Take these. The Lord will take the kingdom away from Solomon and give you ten tribes. Solomon’s son will have one tribe because David obeyed the Lord as long as he lived.”

When Solomon heard this, he tried to kill Jeroboam. Jeroboam ran to Egypt and stayed there safely until Solomon was dead.

Solomon ended his life in a sad way. He wasn’t keeping God on top.

Gordy Tries To Stay On Top

Puppet Conclusion

Mr. King: So there you have it, Gordy. Solomon did not keep God on top so he didn't finish his life very well, did he?

Gordy: You can say that again. How silly! Seven hundred wives? Wow, think of what it would cost! I can just see him at a hot dog stand at the ballpark. "I'll have seven hundred hotdogs for my wives here."

Mr. King: But Gordy, that's not the worst thing. It's getting pulled away from God.

Gordy: Oh, I see. That kinda might even be like me if I let baseball be on top and my baseball bat as an idol. Well, I sure hope that never happens to me.

Mr. King: I hope so, too. But is there something you can do about it?

Gordy: Not marry seven hundred wives?

Mr. King: Of course that...but most important is to remember what God has done for you so that you can keep him on top in your life. Do you know what God did for you?

Gordy: I know that God sent his Son, Jesus, for me.

Mr. King: That's it! You know how God sent his Son who gave his life for you on the cross. He paid the price of forgiveness for any of the times you let other things become like an idol to you. And Jesus is there to fill you with his love to help you keep God on top!

Gordy: That's for me!

Mr. King: Great. Then why don't you close us with prayer?

Gordy: Sure. Dear God, Thank you for being a good God. You actually like us and want us to belong to you. Thank you for giving us Jesus and forgiving us for the times we don't put you on top. Please help us keep you on top. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.