

LESSON PLAN

For Lower Elementary Students & Classes

Classroom Greeting

Teachers should arrive 10 to 15 minutes before class to greet students and parents by name. Have the day's Bible Message written on the white board or on poster board that all the kids can see. Consider using a repeatable special greeting ("This is the day the Lord has made!") or handshake for your students.



Opening Prayer Song

Have kids gather on a rug or in a dedicated meeting space. Take a minute and have students greet each other by name. It helps build community after not seeing each other for a week. The opening prayer song should be sung every week with these young kids — repetition is good.

This is sung to the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star." Accompaniment music isn't needed.

*Heavenly Father, we love you,
thanks for everything you do.*

*Open our hearts and open our ears,
so we can learn from what we hear.*

*Thanks for hearing us when we pray,
and for loving us every day. Amen.*

Introduction to Today's Bible Message

Teacher's Script (student responses are in bold).

Today's Bible message is: We don't want a mean king. Sometimes we read stories in the Bible about kings that don't trust or listen to God. They are bad kings. Sometimes they are mean, and **we don't want a mean king!**

- Raise your hand if you can show me what a mean person looks like. (*Choose more than one child.*)
- Raise your hand if you can tell me some things a mean person does. (*Choose more than one child.*)

Today's story is about King Rehoboam (*ray-oh-bome*). He was young and not sure how to be a good king. His dad was a mean king and the people didn't like him because **we don't want a mean king**. Today's story is about what happened when young Rehoboam became king.

Read the Story while Showing the Pictures

Each Bible Story has been divided into four parts, each with an accompanying Poster Picture to be printed on letter-sized paper (or enlarged to ledger-sized paper if a bigger printer is available). The teacher should hold up or point to the relevant Poster Picture while reading the individual part of the story, asking questions while reading.

The Kingdom Divides

Based on 1 Kings 12:1-17

After the king died, his son, Rehoboam, was to be the new king. He was young and didn't know how to be a king. [*What was the new king's name?*]

Picture 1

When Rehoboam was ready to be king, he needed help. The people said, "Your father was a mean king. He had a lot of hard rules. He would hit us if we didn't work hard and made us give him a lot of money for taxes. He was a mean king." [*What did the mean king do?*]

Picture 2

The people didn't want another mean king. "Are you going to be like your father?" they asked. King Rehoboam talked to two groups of men to get help. [*Where did Rehoboam get help?*] First he talked to old men, who told him the people would love him if he was a nice king who was fair. [*Which men gave this help?*]

Picture 3

Then the king talked to young men. They told him that if he wanted to be strong and powerful he should be even meaner than his dad had been. [*What did they tell him to do?*] The king thought about it and decided to listen to the young men. He told the people that he was going to have hard rules and take a lot of money. [*What kind of king was he going to be?*]

Picture 4

The people didn't like this answer. They were tired of having a mean king. They said, "We don't want to be in your kingdom." They packed up their houses and moved to a new land. [*Why did the people move?*] God's kingdom was not one group anymore. There were two groups who lived in separate places.

Bible Message

Do you remember today's Bible Message? **We don't want a mean king!**

Optional Activities for Young Children

You can choose one or two of the optional activities, depending on how much time you have. Be sure to leave time to go over the Take-Home Page before students leave.

a. Fingerplay

A fingerplay is a story or rhyme with hand actions or movement that includes repeated lines to reinforce the story and/or the weekly Bible message.

We Don't Want a Mean King!

Explain that cruel means mean. Have kids do the actions. Say the rhyme a few times.

There once was a young king (*hands on head as crown*) who didn't know how to rule (*hands up in "I don't know"*).

Should he be a nice king (*happy face*) or should he be cruel (*mean face*)?

The old men said to be nice (*happy face*) and the people will love you (*hands over heart*).

The young men said to be mean (*mean face*) and you will be cool (*hands on hips in cool pose*).

The king decided to be mean (*mean face*). He wanted to be cool (*cool pose*). Some people chose another king (*hands on head as crown*) who wanted to be good (*happy face*).

Now that there were two kings (*hands on head as crown*), the people had to choose (*hands up in "I don't know"*). What kind of king would you want (*point to each other*), the mean one (*mean face*) or the nice (*happy face*)?

b. Then What Happened?

Then What Happened is a learning game that helps kids retell the story and remember it. The rule is that whoever is speaking can only say one sentence or one thing. The teacher reads the starting sentence and then chooses a student to continue the story. The story needs to be in the right order.

If the younger kids have trouble, cut a Take-Home Page apart and let them put the illustrations (no words) in order while they tell the story.

START: Young King Rehoboam was going to be king. He didn't know how. Then what happened?

c. Song

This simple camp song has motions and can be found online.

This is the Day!

Leader: This is the day (arms sweep like a rainbow)

Kids: This is the day (arms sweep like a rainbow)

L: That the Lord has made (both hands point to heaven)

K: That the Lord has made
(both hands point to heaven)

L: We will rejoice (clap, clap)

K: We will rejoice (clap, clap)

L: And be glad in it. (spin around)

K: And be glad in it. (spin around)

All: This is the day that the Lord has made
(rainbow arms, then point to heaven)

All: We will rejoice and be glad in it
(clap, clap, then spin)

L: For this is the day (rainbow arms)

K: This is the day (rainbow arms)

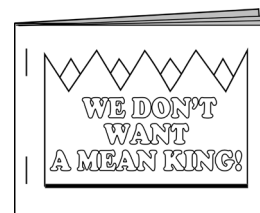
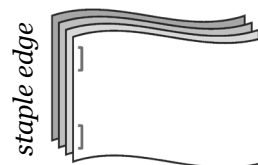
All: That the Lord has made.

d. Young Children's Craft

Mini-Book

- Copied pages of mini-books.
- Crayons or markers for coloring.
- Stapler

Copy both of the craft templates for the mini-books back-to-back prior to class.



Help the kids hand cut the pages apart. (Older kids can cut their own.) Let kids color each page of the book. Staple the pages together in the correct order.

Crafts may best be left to the end of class if behavior is a challenge. See the craft summary list for a description of all the younger children's crafts in this unit.

Take-Home Page

Repetition is very important to learning. The Take-Home Page allows teachers to review the story at the end of class. Invite children to take a seat at a table, and give each a copy of the Take-Home Page. Use the following questions to guide discussion. If necessary, explain to kids about thought and dream bubbles.

Encourage children to use the Take-Home Page to tell the story to their family.

Have children point to Picture 1.

- Raise your hand if you can tell me what is happening in this picture. *(Allow kids to answer until they start repeating answers or become silly.)*

Read the words under Picture 1.

- Why did the people think the old king was mean? What did he do?

Have children point to Picture 2.

- Raise your hand if you can tell me what you see in this picture. *(Allow kids to answer until they start repeating answers or become silly.)*

Read the words under Picture 2.

- What do the men look like? *(happy, mean, sad, young, old)*
- Do you think you would like a nice king or a mean king? Why?

Have children point to Picture 3.

- Raise your hand if you can tell me what you see in this picture. How are the people in this picture different from the people in Picture 2?

Read the words under Picture 3.

- Does the king like what the men are saying? How can you tell?
- Do you think the people will be happy that the new king will be meaner than the old king?

Have children point to Picture 4.

- Raise your hand if you can tell me what you see in this picture. Do the people look happy?

Read the words under Picture 4.

- What did the people do when the king decided to be mean?

Have children point to the Bible Message at the top of the page.

Do you remember today's Bible Message? **Nobody wants a mean king!**

Closing Prayer

End class with this closing prayer, repeated each week for memorization.

Thank you, Jesus, for teaching me.

Bless me, my friends, and my family.

*This week I ask you to keep me safe
and through the week to grow my faith.*

*Bring me back to learn again,
and fill my heart with love. Amen.*

