



BIG STORIES OF THE BIBLE 36

EXILE (2 KINGS 17)

Scripture: 2 Kings 17:7-20

Open: Greet, Praises, Requests, Pray

Supplies: Bottles (with one for each kid or a large one for all to see), organic material, banana and orange peels if possible, a sunny spot.

Ask:

- Which two men have we been learning about the past few weeks? (Elijah and Elisha)
- Does anyone want to share what they remember about these guys?
- Remember that these men prophesied between the time of the kings of Israel and Judah. Do you remember how we made cards of all those kings? Some were good, but many were bad, and during this time, the people turned away from God.
- Today, we're going to see what happens because of this

Read: 2 Kings 17:7-20

Explain:

This is a really sad story. This is a story of a people who rejected all the laws and things that God asked them to do. If you remember back to the Ten Commandments, the people made a covenant with God. That is supposed to be stronger than a pinky promise. They promised to obey him and follow his laws. But we just read that they didn't.

What are some of the bad things they did? (Worshiped Baal and Asherah, sacrificed children, worshiped the stars, built high places)

Because of this, God removed them from the land.

Does anyone remember what land this was? (The Promised Land)

Yes, this was the land that God had promised to Moses. They had waited 40 years in the desert for it after they came out of Egypt. But when they got there, they began to forget about God and worshiped other gods like the nations around them. Even when Elijah proved that Baal wasn't god!

Ask:

Do you think it's fair for God to remove them from the land? (Allow for answers)

If you don't think it feels fair, let me put it this way for you. What if you had a toy that was special. It is your favorite toy, and you love it. But you love your sibling, and they want to play with it. You tell them they can but that you have certain rules for how to play with the toy, so it doesn't break. But your brother or sister doesn't follow the rules, and they break your toy. So you get it fixed. But then they ask to play with it again. You love them so very much, so you allow them to. But they break your rules and your toy again. This happens 7 more times. One day, you decide since they cannot follow your rules, they cannot play with your toy. Would that be fair? I think it would.

God is doing the same thing. He gave them rules that they agreed to. He also said if they didn't follow his rules, this would happen. God doesn't lie. He wouldn't be just or good if he lied to the people, so he is simply staying true to his Word. And because of that, the Israelites get exiled (that's a big word for kicked out of their land).

Do an Experiment:

The problem with the Israelites is that their allegiance to God had rotted. All their obedience to God had decayed and was turning bad. Today, we're going to gather up some rotten things and place them in exile.

Use a clear bottle with a lid. Fill it part way with organic material that will break down (grasses, banana peels, leaves, rotten fruit etc).

If you have enough bottles for each child, have them all gather organic material into a bottle.

Seal the bottles and place them in the sun. Observe them for several days or the next week.

Explain:

Something had decayed in the hearts of the people. They had turned from God and forsaken and broken their promises to him. So he sent them away. But we'll find out as we continue our story that he didn't leave them. Though they were being punished, God had not forsaken them. He left what is called a remnant. He left people who still loved him. Though they endured being removed from their home, he rose up incredible leaders that we'll learn about in the next few weeks. And guess what? He brings his people back! Next week, we'll see what has become of our rotten material. Does anyone have any guesses? (Allow for answers). This will turn to rich compost over time, allowing for things to grow out of the rotten, decaying material. God wasn't done with the Israelites because of their rottenness, and he used their exile to produce a better soil in their hearts.

Play a Game:

Play a game of “cops and robbers.” This one, however, will be Israelites and Assyrians. Divide the kids into two groups. The Assyrians will try to capture the Israelites and put them in “jail” which is where the Israelites are exiled to. Switch so the other team gets to be the Assyrians.

Explain:

Even though this was just about the Israelites today, this also happened to the land of Judah. Eventually, they were also exiled to Babylon for the same reasons.

What is so important to remember is that, even though they were punished, God did not forget his people. Eventually, he will lead them back, but he needs to work on the soil of their hearts. We'll see more of this when we look at our compost next week.

Comic Book Bibles:

Have the kids color the story of the exile in their comic book Bibles.

Memorize: 2 Kings 6:16

Close in Prayer



Our compost held a rotten banana peel, leaves and sticks.