

BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

We're in... Unit 4: The God Like None Other

Unit 4 Big Question and Answer:

Can Anybody Tell Me What the LORD Is Like?

He's Not Like Anyone Else!

PFI NIV Songs 4, Tracks 3,4

Unit 4 Bible Verse: 1 Kings 8:23, NIV 1984

"O LORD, there is no God like you." 1 King 8:23

PFI NIV Songs 4, Track 6

BIBLE TRUTH

We're learning... Bible Truth 2:

The LORD Is the Only True God

To worship means to love, honor and testify to the worth of someone. It usually means that we choose it to be more important than anything else in our lives. Sometimes it is a god that people worship. Sometimes it is other people or things that they love. Sometimes, they really just worship themselves.

But God created people to worship Him. He is the only, true God. He is our Creator and our king. He deserves for us to worship Him. He deserves for us to choose loving and obeying Him over everything else in our lives.

Not only does God deserve our worship, but only when we worship Him, will we be truly happy and live life as it was meant to be. Seeking His glory is also for our best good!

BIBLE VERSE

How do I know this is true? The Bible tells me so!

Bible Truth 2 Bible Verse: Psalm 86:8-10

"Among the gods there is none like you, O LORD; no deeds can compare with yours. All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, O LORD; they will bring glory to your name. For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God."

CASE STORY

Acts 19:23-20:1; Ephesians; Revelation 2

Our story is:

The Case of the Troublesome Tentmaker.

As you listen to the story, see if you can figure out:

1. Who was the Troublesome Tentmaker?
2. What did he do that caused trouble? Why was it worth the trouble he caused?

This story takes place in New Testament times, about twenty years after Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead.

Big money, big parties, and beautiful things. Does that sound like the lifestyle of the rich and famous today? Maybe so, but it also was life in Ephesus long ago, when it was once of the richest, most important cities in the Roman Empire.

What made Ephesus so important? One thing: the Temple of Artemis. Artemis was the most worshiped goddess in the Roman Empire. She was worshiped as Mother Creator: Maker and Sustainer of the earth. As the Mother Goddess: Queen of Heaven. As the Goddess of Nature: Giver of All Good Things. And, as the Moon Goddess.

The Ephesians built a massive temple to her. It was 450 feet long and 225 feet wide. And, while the temples to other gods were made of wood or maybe limestone, Artemis' temple was made of expensive marble and gold on the outside and filled with art work and statues from the world's finest artists on the inside. It was so stunning and many called this temple the world's most beautiful building.

The Temple was the center of life in Ephesus. Wedding and worship feasts were held in its gardens. Sacrifices were constantly being offered. People even used it like a bank, keeping their riches there for safekeeping. Who better to trust that the Mother Creator and Giver of All Good Things with their riches, they thought.

Because people came from around the world to worship Artemis and to bank their riches at her Temple, the city of Ephesus grew rich. Someone had to feed and entertain all the visitors. Someone had to keep track of their money and sell them souvenirs of Artemis and the Temple. And all those someones lived in Ephesus and grew rich.

But even with all these riches, the Ephesians weren't satisfied. Their hearts were empty because they were

trying to fill them with things that could never satisfy—riches, good times and a false god. Only knowing and loving the Lord, the one, true God could bring satisfaction, but they didn't know of Him. At least not yet.

But then, God sent a certain tentmaker named Paul to Ephesus to do just that. Now you may think of Paul as just a teacher, but he also made and sold tents. He did this to pay for his daily needs. He preached when he wasn't working.

At first Paul just taught the Jews and God-fearing Gentiles in the synagogue on the Sabbath once a week. These were people who would have known the Bible already and might have hearts ready to receive the good news of Jesus. But after three months, Paul moved to the Hall of Tyrannus where he preached every day from 11 to 4, during the city's mid-day lunch and rest break. And it was here that many of the other people of Ephesus heard about the LORD, the one, true God and Jesus, His Son, who came to save sinners from their sins.

What a very different message this was from what they heard at Artemis' Temple! The Holy Spirit worked in the hearts of many as Paul preached, giving them faith to repent and believe. Soon, so many Ephesians had become Christians that even the souvenir makers and sellers were noticing it in their sales. Artemis was losing! The Lord was winning!

Paul was overjoyed with this, but the souvenir makers and sellers were not! They were outraged! Something must be done to protect their jobs! Something must be done to protect Artemis!

Demetrius, a souvenir maker led the fight against Paul and the gospel. He called all the souvenir-makers together to discuss the matter. "Men, we make a lot of money from selling souvenirs, but now Paul has come and is causing trouble. He's convinced many that Artemis is no god at all. If we don't do something, we'll be out of business and Artemis and her great Temple will be robbed of the honor due her name," he warned.

The other souvenir-maker were furious. They took the matter in their own hands. Over and over they official worship motto of Artemis: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" Soon the whole city was upset. They looked for Paul but couldn't find him so they grabbed Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's friends. Then the mob of thousands of people rushed down the street and to the huge, sports stadium with them.

When Paul heard what was happening he said, "They have my friends, but it's me they want. I must go and speak to the crowd about this! myself," he told the Ephesian Christians.

"No, Paul, we can't let you! You know what that crazy mob will do to you. They will kill you!" they insisted.

As they were talking a messenger came with a note for Paul from the rulers of the city: "Paul, please don't go to the crowd in the stadium. They will kill you." Paul obeyed their wishes and stayed where he was.

The crowd in the stadium were getting upset and confused. Some were shouting one thing, some another. Most didn't even know why they were there. A Jewish man named Alexander was pushed to the front of the crowd to try to talk with them. Just as the crowd was quieting down to hear what he had to say, someone shouted, "Don't listen to this man, he's no better than Paul. He's no worshiper of Artemis, he's a Jew! This sent the crowd into another angry uproar and they began to shout in one, big voice again: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" and they kept shouting it for almost two hours straight! Wow!

Finally the mayor of Ephesus came forward to quiet the crowd and said: "Men of Ephesus, the whole world knows that our city is the special caretaker of Artemis and her temple. Nothing these men have said or done has dishonored her. If Demetrius and the other souvenir makers have a problem, they can bring it before the city leaders and they will take care of it. Just calm down and go home. If you don't, we may all get in trouble for rioting," he warned them.

When the crowd settled down and went home, Paul and the Ephesian believers gathered together. After the day's frightening events, Paul had something to tell them. "My dear brothers and sisters, it is time for me to leave Ephesus," Paul told them. "But before I go, I want to encourage you. When you think of these men and what happened today, don't be scared of what they might do to you because you believe in the Lord, the one, true God. Don't turn back to your old ways of worshiping Artemis. You know that she is only an idol of lifeless stone. You have been chosen and loved by God. You have come to know His love for you through Jesus. His Holy Spirit fills your hearts with joy. You have joined the people of God who in their praises of the Lord make something far more beautiful than even their splendid Temple of Artemis. Keep trusting in the Lord. He

is able to do immeasurably more than all you ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within you!" Then Paul and the Ephesians said goodbyes; and he, Gaius and Aristarchus were off.

What happened to the Ephesian Christians after Paul left? They did face a lot more trouble from the worshipers of Artemis. Some were even tempted to turn away from Jesus and go back to the easy life of worshiping Artemis. But through it all, the Lord helped them to remain faithful. Never did He stop helping them to worship Him; and never did they grow weary in telling others about the Lord, the one, true God.

Our Bible Truth is: The LORD Is the One, True God

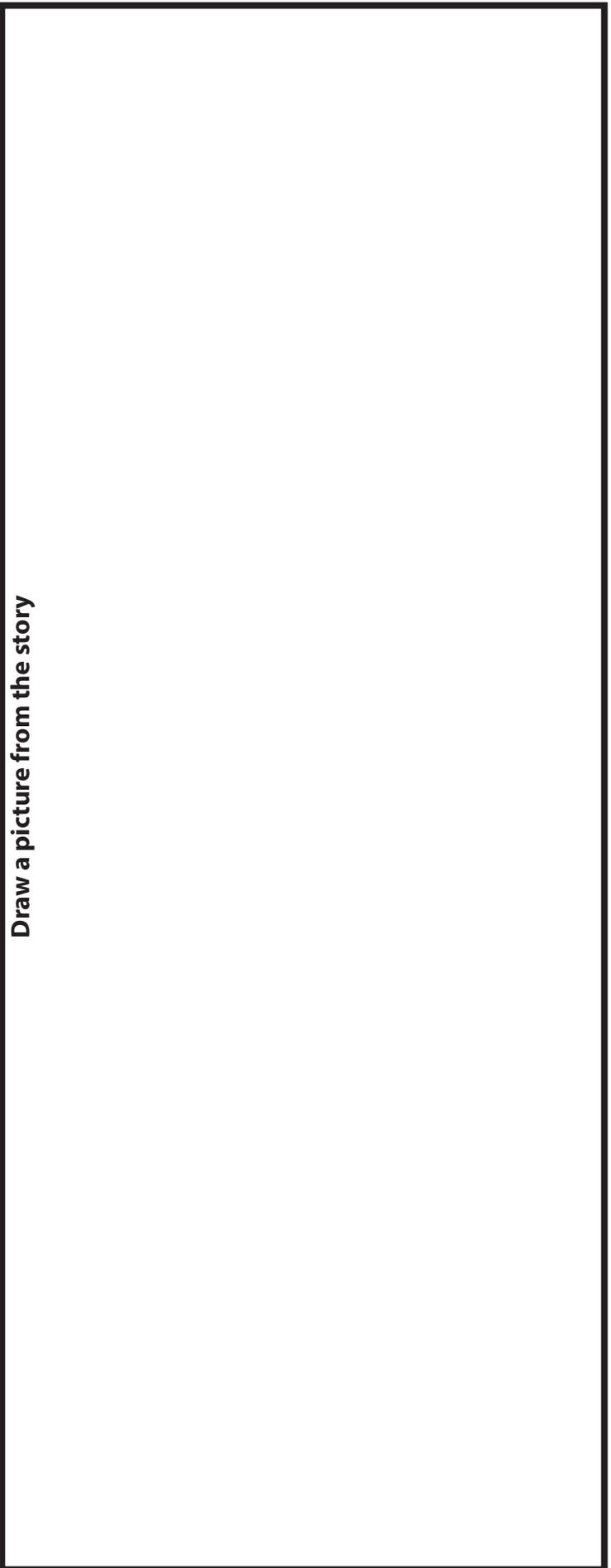
Our Bible Verse is: Psalm 86:8-10

"Among the gods there is none like you, O Lord; no deeds can compare with yours. All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, O Lord; they will bring glory to your name. For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God."

These verses remind us that the LORD is alone worthy of all our worship. Paul rejoiced to see so many Ephesians turn away from Artemis and praise the Lord as the one, true God that He is. But what about you and me? The Lord calls us to come and worship Him as the amazing God who does marvelous deeds that He is.

Let's praise Him for being greater than all other gods.

Let's ask Him to work in our hearts, helping us to repent of our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Let's ask Him to help us to bring glory to His name the rest of our lives.



Draw a picture from the story

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU

1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False:
 Sometimes people worship gods, but sometimes it is other things or people they worship. Sometimes people even worship themselves.
 Answer: True.

2. Crack the Case Questions:
a. Who were the Curious Children? Who did they want to meet?
 Answer: Adeoti and Oke Oreokin. They wanted to meet the Babaagebe's wife and baby.

b. Who else did they meet? How was he different from Shango?
 Answer: The Lord. He was the one, true God. He was wonderful and good. He welcomed and forgave sinners who turn from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior.

3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse:
Psalm 86:8-10
 "Among the gods there is none like ____, O LORD; no deeds can compare with yours. All the ____ you have made will come and worship before you, O LORD; they will bring ____ to your name. For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God."
 Answers: you, nations, glory.

BIBLE TRUTH HYMN

Holy, Holy, Holy
PFI NIV Songs 4, Track 9

Verse 3
 Holy, holy, holy,
 Though the darkness hide Thee,
 Tho' the eye of sinful man
 Thy glory may not see;
 Only Thou art holy;
 There is none beside Thee,
 Perfect in pow'r,
 In love and purity.

Words: Reginald Heber Music: John B. Dykes

"The LORD made us to worship Him as the only, true God; yet, our sinful rebellion against Him "darkens" our hearts so that we refuse to see and confess Him as the glorious God He is. Instead, we seek other things to worship in His place. Nonetheless, there is none like the LORD, who is perfect in power, love and purity. He is holy!"

AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY

A=Adoration, C=Confession, T=Thanksgiving, S=Supplication

A God, we praise You for being the one, true God, unlike any other god that this world worships.

C God, we confess that like the Ephesians we need Jesus to be our Savior. The good things in this life we love can never satisfy our hearts. Only You can.

T God, we thank You for sending people to tell us the good news of Jesus, just like you sent Paul to tell the Ephesians.

S God, work in our hearts! Help us to turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Satisfy our hearts with You.

BIBLE VERSE SONG

There Is None Like You
PFI NIV Songs 4, Track 10

Among the gods, there is none like you, O Lord;
 No deeds can compare with yours.
 For you are great
 and do marvelous deeds, O Lord,
 You alone are God.
 Psalm Eighty-six, eight and ten.

Words: Psalm 86:8, 10 NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012

This verse tells us that there is no one like the LORD. If we compare anyone else's deeds to the LORD's, it is easy to see just how great He is. He alone is God and worthy of our worship.