

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF IRELAND



**JUNIOR
TEACHER'S
HANDBOOK**

Book 3

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF IRELAND

**SABBATH SCHOOL
TEACHER'S
HANDBOOK**

JUNIOR GRADE
BOOK 3

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PREFACE

THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF IRELAND

Sabbath School Materials Published by

The Committee on the Instruction of the Young

Junior Course - Suggested age 10 - 13

These materials form part of a three year course for junior children, designed to reach their minds and hearts with the Bible's message of salvation through Jesus Christ and to give them an understanding of the Word of God as their only infallible rule of faith and life.

Each lesson takes account of the two-fold aspect of teaching - the teacher's preparation and the classroom presentation. In the Teacher's material 'Background Notes' have been provided for most lessons. The purpose of these is to explain the meaning of certain words and passages as well as giving the teacher a good background knowledge of the topic under study by setting the passage in its historical and Scriptural context and/or explaining the custom of the time. Specific suggestions have been made as to how the lessons should be presented and also when the pupils' worksheets should be used. Teachers should be aware of the abilities and interests of the pupils and, where necessary, adapt a lesson to suit these needs.

It is most important for teachers to get pupils to see the importance of the lesson being taught and its relevance to every day life. To help with this an Application section has been included at the end of most lessons.

The Committee sincerely thanks the many members of the church who wrote and prepared these materials for publication. It is our earnest prayer that they will be used by the Holy Spirit to fulfil their aim.

LESSON 1

Studies in the Shorter Catechism

HOW MAN SINNED

Scripture Text - Genesis 2:15 - 3:7

Catechism No. 13 and No. 15

AIM OF LESSON

To explain how man's condition was changed from its original state by his disobedience of God's command.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Question 13 - 'being left to the freedom of their own will' - Adam and Eve had the free choice of obeying or disobeying God.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Ask the pupils the following questions:

What is a law? (A rule)

Who ensures that we keep the law of the land? (Police)

What do we call people who break the law of the land? (Criminals)

Who gives you rules to follow? (parents, teachers, God) Give examples.

What happens when you break these rules? (You are punished)

Where do we find God's rules? (In the Bible)

What is breaking God's rules called? (Sin)

Then relate the following story to the pupils.

The brakes on Sue's bike were not working properly. Dad had told her that he would fix them on Saturday when he was off work. He also said that she was not allowed to ride her bike before that, in case she had an accident.

On Friday after school three of Sue's friends suggested going for a ride on their bikes to the park. 'No, I can't,' said Sue. 'My brakes aren't working and Dad is going to fix them tomorrow. So I'm not allowed to use it yet.'

'Oh don't worry, there are no hills near the park, and we'll all ride slowly along with you,' said her friends. It was a lovely day, and the thought of playing in the park was very tempting. 'Well, I suppose I can ride slowly, or get off and push if there are any steep places,' reasoned Sue, 'and we'll get to the park much quicker by bike.' But of course, once the girls set off, the two who were riding behind

wanted to catch up with the two who were in front, and very soon a race had started.

Discuss with the children what they think might have happened later. Use the following questions: Would Sue's Dad be pleased? How would Sue feel? What about her friends? Would God be pleased with Sue's decision? Why not?

Outline

When God created Adam and Eve (our first parents) they were perfect and good and sinless. God wanted them to be His friends and to care for the earth and all the animals. God did not make them like robots or machines. He gave them a precious gift - free will - so that they could choose between right and wrong, good and bad. God did not want to force them to love Him; He wanted Adam and Eve to love Him freely.

God gave Adam and Eve one command to follow. They could eat of any of the fruit from the trees in the garden except from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:16-17). This was forbidden by God. To us the command seems straightforward, but then Satan (the serpent) began to put ideas into Eve's mind (Gen. 3:1-5). What he said made her question God's rule about the forbidden fruit. Like Sue in the story, she knew she should not give in, but did not think much harm would be done if she did. She could not resist the temptation and so she broke God's rule and ate the fruit. Then she gave some to Adam who joined her in breaking God's law. It was not because they ate the fruit that they displeased God; it was because they deliberately disobeyed His rule. All the perfection of the garden of Eden was spoilt.

Discuss No. 1 on the pupils' worksheet. Complete the last picture.

Look up Question 13 of the Shorter Catechism. Answer No. 2 of the pupils' worksheet.

Look up Question 15 of the Shorter Catechism. Answer No. 3 of the pupils' worksheet.

CONCLUSION

Ask the pupils if they have ever enjoyed a really great time, perhaps a day when everything has gone well. Then suddenly, because they have disobeyed Mum or Dad - even in a small way - they are unhappy and so are their parents. This is exactly what happened when Adam and Eve chose to go their own way instead of obeying God. By simply eating the fruit which was forbidden to them, they changed the whole course of their lives and the lives of every human being born into the world.

Complete No. 4 of the pupils' worksheet.

Ask the pupils to answer Catechism Questions 13 and 15 and write them out in a notebook.

Answers to No. 4 are:-FRUIT, FORBIDDEN, GARDEN, WISE, SERPENT, SIN, ADAM, EVE, TREE, EDEN.

LESSON 2

Studies in the Shorter Catechism

WHAT SIN MEANS

Scripture Text - Psalm 32

Catechism No. 14

AIM OF LESSON

To explain what sin is and how it can be forgiven.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Question 14: 'any want of conformity unto' is a failure to measure up to God's requirements, or not doing the things we should.

'transgression' means going over the proper line or deliberately breaking God's laws.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Relate the following story to the pupils.

Peter's class were taking an examination. Peter had worked quite hard but he knew that he had not really done as much as he could in preparation for his exam. The pass mark for the exam was 50 per cent. When the results appeared, Peter's mark was 49. 'Not too bad', thought Peter. 'I nearly made it.' He was surprised however when he was put into the same group as John, who had only got 5 per cent. 'All those who got 50 per cent or over have passed this exam,' said the teacher, 'and all those who failed will have to do it over again.' Peter was disappointed but he realised that, although his mark wasn't as low as some others, he was still counted as having failed the exam. He hadn't reached the standard.

Outline

(a) **Sin spoils.** Sin is like a blot on a clean page. Anything in our lives which is not up to God's standard spoils our happiness. Being lazy, selfish, thoughtless, telling lies, stealing, swearing - all these are sins.

(b) **Sin spreads.** Sin is like weeds in a garden; if not rooted out, they will soon spread. Little sins of dishonesty and disobedience soon become habits we cannot break.

(c) **Sin separates.** Sin is like a thick cloud which blots out the sun. God is pure and holy and He hates sin. He cannot and will not accept it. Sin blocks the way to God. (See Psalm 32:3-4)

Answer No. 1 of the pupils' worksheet.

However, God did not leave us in our sin. We may try to bridge the gap between God and

ourselves but we will never be able to do it on our own. He sent His own Son, Jesus Christ, to open the way back to Him. He was the only One who could do this, because only He was 100% perfect throughout His whole life. Everything about Him - His life, His teaching, His example, His care for others - everything was perfect. Only His death on the cross could bridge the gap between ourselves and God. Jesus suffered and died on the cross for our sins, so that we could be brought back to God. (See I Peter 3:18).

When people are really sorry for their sin (Psalm 32:5) and accept the Lord Jesus into their hearts and lives, then they receive God's forgiveness. (Psalm 32:1-2). Every sin they have ever done is forgiven. God promises not only to forgive all their sin but to forget it as well. Answer No. 2 on the pupils' worksheet.

Ask the pupils what happens if a Christian sins. When someone asks the Lord Jesus Christ into their life, they become a son or daughter of God. He becomes their Father, and they become His child. This new relationship can never be broken. This does not mean that they become perfect all at once. They will still sin, however hard they try not to do so. Illustrate what happens by telling the pupils the following story.

Sam was playing cricket in the garden. He had been told not to play there. Suddenly there was a sound of a window breaking. Sam kept out of his father's way. At teatime there was an icy silence at the table. Sam had disobeyed his father. This lasted until he owned up and said he was sorry.

The relationship between father and son had not changed. He was still a son but the closeness of the friendship was broken until Sam said he was sorry. Answer No. 3 of the pupils' worksheet.

When a Christian sins, he or she is still a child of God; the relationship is not changed but their friendship with Him has been spoiled and it is up to them to say they are sorry. God longs for them to do just that.

APPLICATION

'I sin when I do the things I shouldn't.' Ask the pupils to give examples.

'I sin when I don't do the things I should.' Ask the pupils to give examples.

Read verse 5 of Psalm 32. Now put it into your own words. Answer No. 4 of the pupils' worksheet.

Answers to No. 2 are: wrong desires, lies, swearing, idols, envy, unbelief, greed, taking God's name in vain, selfishness.

Answers to No. 3 are: 1D - NONE, 2D - HIDE, 3D - SAVED.

2A - HEAVEN, 4A - EDEN, 5A - JESUS

LESSON 3

Studies in the Shorter Catechism

THE TRAGEDY OF SAMSON

Scripture Text - Judges 13 - 16

Catechism Nos. 13 - 16

AIM OF LESSON

To show the consequences of sin in the life of Samson and to teach how we can keep from sin.

BACKGROUND NOTES

When God's people settled in the land of Israel, God promised blessing if they obeyed, and punishment if they disobeyed, His laws. (Deut. 28:1,2,15).

Throughout the lifetime of Joshua, the Children of Israel remained true to the Lord but after Joshua's day they 'forsook the Lord'. (Judges 2:7-12). Thus began a cycle of events which was repeated over and over again in the history of the Israelites: the Children of Israel did evil - God punished them by allowing their enemies to overrun the land - in their distress they cried to God for deliverance - God raised up a judge to deliver them - they prospered but after a time turned again to evil. Deborah, Jephthah, Gideon and Samson were some of the judges of Israel.

Samson was a Nazarite, i.e. one who was specially set apart for the service of God. The outward sign of a Nazarite was the fact that he did not cut his hair. They were forbidden to drink strong drink or to have contact with anything dead. (See Num. 6).

The Philistines were the enemies from whom Samson was to deliver the Children of Israel. They were a fierce, warlike nation, who would swoop down on Israel and carry away their cattle, grain and children.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Discuss with the pupils the things they like about beginning a new year at school: new books, new uniform, etc. We all enjoy writing on the first page of a new book and we resolve to make our hand-writing as neat as possible. However, as time goes on, books become messy, become curled at the corners, and so on. We made a good start but, sadly, we have a disappointing finish, a sad ending. The same happens in other areas of life.

Today we are going to think about a man who had a very good start in life but a very sad ending; an ending made all the more sad because he had been specially chosen by God to

do a particular job - to be a leader of the Children of Israel and to save them from their enemy, the Philistines. Not only was he specially chosen but he was given special strength for the task.

God had given His people a land of their own. While they obeyed God all went well but when they disobeyed and began to follow other gods, God allowed their enemies to overrun their land. When the Children of Israel turned back to God and cried to Him for help, He provided a leader (a sort of Prime Minister) called a judge, to save the people from their enemies.

The man in our story was one of these leaders. Ask the pupils who he was. (Judges 13:24) - Samson.

Outline

Do not attempt to read these four chapters in class. Relate the story using the outline below.

1. A Good Beginning

Let us look at the kind of start Samson had in life. Briefly recount events of Ch. 13 - Samson's birth foretold by an angel; the clear instructions about how the child was to be brought up; his parents' concern that they would know how to teach the boy. Ask the pupils to look up Judges 13 :8 where Samson's parents prayed for instruction on how to bring up their child.

He was to be a Nazarite, a person set apart for service to God. The outward sign that he was a Nazarite was the fact that he was not to cut his hair. Manoah and his wife realized the big responsibility which they had been given, to teach their boy God's Law and to ensure that he had a good beginning in life. Complete pupils' worksheet Section 1. We, like Samson, have had a good start to life, with parents, ministers, and Sabbath School teachers to help us understand the Word of God. As Samson grew up we find that in spite of his parents' teaching, he was rather selfish. He wanted his own way and when it came to choosing a wife, although he knew that God had forbidden His people to marry from the heathen tribes around them, he insisted on going his own way. Ask the pupils look up and read ch. 14: 1 2. Samson was behaving like a spoiled child who sees something and insists on having it. Samson's parents tried to persuade him to choose an Israelite girl for his wife but he refused.

2. Samson's Strength

See pupils' worksheet Section 2

The events of ch 14 - 15 should be very briefly summarised including reference to incidents in this section of the pupils' worksheet -

- (a) killing the lion without weapons
- (b) catching three hundred foxes and destroying the crops of the Philistines, and
- (c) killing one thousand men with the jaw-bone of a donkey.

Going his own way did not bring happiness to Samson. His marriage to the Philistine woman did not work out happily and he used his great strength sometimes in a very cruel way to get his own back on the Philistines. In this way God used Samson, in spite of his disobedience and selfishness, to rid Israel of its enemy.

3. Samson's Weakness

Although very strong physically, Samson had many weaknesses, the greatest of these being his desire to have a number of wives. Once he went to Gaza, a Philistine city, to visit a woman there and the Philistines decided that this would be their opportunity to capture him. Recount the incident in Judges 16: 2-3. The Philistines must have hated Samson for making them look such fools. Not only did he escape, he carried off their city gate and left it on a hilltop about fifteen miles away. However, the Philistines knew that if they were ever to capture Samson they would have to do it through a woman. They realised where his weakness lay.

Recount the story of Judges 16: 4-20 - the bribing of Delilah by the five Philistine rulers, the three false answers and Samson's revelation of the secret of his strength. Samson knew that to have his hair cut was an act of disobedience to God and by telling his secret to a heathen woman he was putting himself in danger. Misery and suffering followed Samson's sin. Disobedience always brings suffering, just as it did for Adam and Eve.

4. A Sad Ending

The Philistines gouged out Samson's eyes and led him in chains to the city of Gaza - that same city from which he had proudly carried the gates. How different it was now, he was weak and helpless, at the mercy of his cruel captors who brought him to the prison house where, day after day, he was forced to turn the handle of the great grinding stones to grind corn for the Philistines. Samson must have regretted his disobedience. However, as his hair grew, he prayed to God and his strength was restored.

Relate the final incident of the story: Judges 16: 23 -31

Review the story using numbers 3 and 4 of the pupils' worksheet.

APPLICATION

God restored Samson's strength but he still suffered the consequences of his sin. He died with his enemies. God used Samson to destroy the Israelites' enemy but what a tragic end to a life so full of promise.

Samson went to places where he was tempted to do wrong, where he met women who had a bad influence. He made friends with those who did not love or serve God. He probably thought 'I'm strong enough to look after myself,' but he was not. We cannot do what is right in our own strength. We need God's help.

2 Tim. 2:22 tells us what we should do when we flee from wrong things. We should turn to follow righteousness or right ways.

Samson had a good beginning but a sad ending because he did not flee from wrong things and follow right things.

LESSON 4

Studies in the Psalms

A PARENT'S PRAYER

Scripture Text - Psalm 72

AIM OF LESSON

To show that the perfect Kingship for which David prayed for his own son was only partly fulfilled in Solomon but perfectly fulfilled in Christ.

BACKGROUND NOTES

verse 3 'peace' - when used in Scripture includes the blessings of plenty, prosperity and general happiness.

verse 8 'the River' - the river Euphrates.

verse 10 'Tarshish' - may have been Spain.
'Sheba' and 'Seba' - may have been in South Arabia and Ethiopia.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Begin by telling or reading to the pupils the story recorded in I Kings 3: 16 - 28.

Two women came to King Solomon to seek his judgment. They each had given birth to a son, but one baby had died. The problem was each mother said the living baby was hers. Ask the children if they could suggest how to tell which one was speaking the truth. King Solomon listened to both women and then commanded, 'Bring a sword and divide the living child in two. Give a half to one woman and half to the other.' On hearing this the true mother exclaimed, 'Oh, give her the living child! Do not kill him.' The other woman said, however, 'Carry on and divide him.' King Solomon knew at once who the real mother was and said, 'Give the first woman the living child, she is his mother.' When the people of Israel heard how wisely the king had judged, they knew that God had given him wisdom.

Outline

Today's lesson, Psalm 72, is a prayer for Solomon and for his reign as Israel's king. Many things are prayed for him including the wisdom illustrated in this story of the two women. As well as prayer for grace and wisdom to give just decisions pleasing to God, many other things were prayed for Solomon. His reign over Israel shows how God answered.

Read the psalm with the class.

Solomon's name means 'peaceable' and during his 40 years as king, Israel enjoyed many years of peace with no wars. His reign was just and peaceful.

Ask the pupils to do No. 1 on their worksheets.

Answer - 'Safely.'

In the days of Solomon the people increased in number until they were as many as the sand of the sea-shore. Solomon reigned over all the kingdoms that his father David had conquered. All the kings of these countries brought presents to him and served him.

Now ask the pupils to do No. 2 in their worksheets.

Answer - river, land of the Philistines, border of Egypt.

With the aid of a map show the pupils the extent of Solomon's kingdom.

Besides being very wise, Solomon was also very rich. He lived in great splendour. He was wiser and richer than all the kings of the earth. People came from distant countries to see and to hear the wisdom that God had given him.

Turn to No. 3 in the pupils' worksheets.

Answer - The Queen of Sheba.

In spite of Solomon's wisdom he did foolish and sinful things. He disobeyed God's strict command that His people should not marry heathen wives. In Solomon's old age his heathen wives turned away his heart from the true God to heathen idols. Read 1 Kings 11:1-4.

Solomon could only fulfil imperfectly the ideals prayed for him in Psalm 72. The psalm however, looks far beyond Solomon to the coming of the Perfect King, the Lord Jesus Christ.

A reign of righteousness was expected of Solomon as well as of the coming Perfect King. The poor and down-trodden would be protected and would benefit from the righteous rule of the king (vs. 1-4, 12-14). The gospels show again and again that Christ was such a King, a King who had compassion for everyone in need.

Ask the pupils to do No. 4 on their worksheets.

Answers - (a) He gave Bartimaeus his sight;

(b) He said to the paralytic 'Arise take up your bed';

(c) He healed Peter's wife's mother.

We have seen that Solomon's kingdom extended from the River Euphrates to the Border of Egypt. Christ's kingdom, however, has no boundaries. It is worldwide (vs. 8 - 11).

Ask the pupils to do No. 5 in their worksheets.

Answer - Christ's Kingdom includes redeemed people from 'every tribe, and tongue, and people and nation.'

A long life was prayed for Solomon and God gave him a long reign of 40 years. However, Christ lives and reigns for ever. Of Him only can it be said, 'His name shall endure for ever. His name shall be continued as long as the sun.'

Now do No. 6 on the pupils' worksheet.

Answer - For ever, there will be no end.

APPLICATION

David had high ideals in his prayer for Solomon but Solomon was not able to be completely perfect and he disobeyed God. David's prayer was however completely fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Ask the children what it means to them to know that Christ is the Perfect King. Help them to see that He is in control of His world and we have the security of knowing that what He does is always right. We know that He will not deal with us unjustly or neglect our needs. We should respond to Him by receiving Him as our Saviour and seeking to reverence, worship and obey Him.

To revise ask the pupils to do No. 7 on their worksheet.

LESSON 5

Studies in the Psalms

THE PSALMIST'S HOPE IN GOD

Scripture Text - Psalm 130

AIM OF LESSON

To illustrate how God forgives and delivers the repentant sinner from sin.

BACKGROUND NOTES

This psalm is one of the 'Songs of Ascents', which is the title given to the psalms sung by the pilgrims as they made their way up to Jerusalem for one of the important Jewish feasts. The feast in this instance may have been the Feast of Atonement.

verse 6 - speaks about the watchmen keeping watch to defend the city all through the night. They would be longing for the first signs of morning when they would be released from their duty.

verses 7 - 8 - 'Israel' can, in these verses, be understood to indicate all Christians today.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Lead into the lesson by introducing the theme of forgiveness. Ask the pupils what they understand by this. Discuss with them how unhappy their home would be if their parents did not forgive them when they were disobedient.

Outline

Begin by asking the pupils to find the verse in the psalm which refers to marking iniquity. In this psalm the writer is very aware of his guilt and how much sin there is in his life. His sin is drawing him away from fellowship with God and he feels as if he is going to lose touch with God. The picture is like one of a person sinking in quicksand - he cannot save himself, so he has to call on God for help. Ask the pupils to do Nos. 1-3 on the pupils' worksheet.

1. A penitent prayer to the God of pardon (vs. 1-4)
Deep waters are a common figure for distress and danger. The psalmist has long been praying and continues to pray because he knows that only the Lord can forgive. The word 'Lord' signifies Israel's God: the God who has showed mercy toward Israel. Then he uses the term which signifies 'master'. These terms show his awareness of God's exalted holiness. This awareness of God the Redeemer

encourages him to pray. Note that the purpose of pardon is that God is to be revered, i.e. people are to live in awe of Him.

2. A prayer of faith (vs. 5-6)

The psalmist prays with confidence because of His knowledge of the God of Israel. He has faith in God because he believes in the Word of God. Just as the night watchmen wait for the light of the morning after the long dreary night so the psalmist believes that God will grant him his request. The Bible tells us that those who come to God must believe that He exists and that He is the rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Those who do come to Him can rest on His infallible promises and truths.

3. A testimony to share (vs. 7-8)

The person who is sorry for their sin, has confessed it to God and asked for forgiveness now has a testimony to share: it is worthwhile to hope in the Lord. Out of personal experience the psalmist calls others to enter into God's forgiveness. Then he gives the reason - with God there is mercy, i.e. Covenant love, and that is seen in the abundant redemption, i.e. the great ransom-price which has been paid through the death of Christ. The result is that Israel and all who accept God's mercy shall be redeemed from all their iniquities.

APPLICATION

We are sinners. We need, like the psalmist, to be aware of our sins (v. 3). God is the God who forgives sins (v. 4). To know His forgiveness we must confess our sins to Jesus Christ and believe that He died in our place to receive the punishment we deserve for our sins. When we do that God will not count our sins against us: He is just and He will forgive us.

If, however, we expect God to forgive and forget our sins, we must also forgive other people who have done us wrong. Next time we pray 'The Lord's Prayer', let us think hard about the words 'Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us'. Let us remember to thank God more often for the fact that Jesus died so that our sins could be completely forgiven.

Ask the pupils to complete their worksheets.

LESSON 6

Studies in the Psalms

TRUSTING GOD IN TIMES OF TROUBLE

Scripture Text - Psalm 31

AIM OF LESSON

To show that God will give us strength to endure our troubles if we trust Him.

BACKGROUND NOTES

David probably wrote this psalm when he was in hiding from Saul. He had rescued Keilah from the Philistines but was about to be betrayed by its inhabitants and so was forced to flee again. (See 1 Samuel 23.)

Since he was not physically ill at that time his troubles (vs. 9,10) are to be thought of as the distress of mind which seemed to break his physical strength and shorten his days.

verses 1-8 - The Psalmist's plea for help. David is confident that he can expect help from God because he has taken refuge in Him. God cannot fail anyone who relies on Him for help.

verse 4 - The trap mentioned here is probably a figurative expression.

verse 5 - Part of this verse was quoted by Christ on the cross. (Luke 23:46)

verses 9-13 - The Psalmist's pitiful situation. Here David describes his misery. He believes that God is interested in the well-being of His children. He tells God how miserable he is and how the troubles are having a very deep effect on his life.

verse 13 - David describes the whispering which is going on around him and the fact that his enemies are plotting to take his life.

verses 14-18 - The Psalmist's trust urges him to make further cries for help.

verse 15 - Here David shows his trust by saying 'my times are in your hands'.

verses 17-18 - The Psalmist's praise. Here David praises the goodness of God towards those that fear Him.

verses 23-24 - The Psalmist's plea. A closing plea to all God's children to trust Him.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Ask the class to consider three situations which could arise in school life:

1. The teacher's purse which contains some money is stolen from her desk. Everyone in the class knows the identity of the thief, who is a bully. No-one is prepared to speak. John, who is a Christian, tells the teacher and is ostracised by the whole class. No-one will speak to him and he is called names like 'tout' and 'grass'.
2. Mary is to represent her school at an important hockey match on Saturday morning. On Saturday morning her mother takes sick and needs a doctor. Mary's father does not live with them any more. Mary cannot contact the school and misses the match. The school loses and Mary is blamed for the defeat. She is ignored by her classmates who think she has let the school down.
3. Peter refuses to attend a party which is being organised by one of his school-friends on a Sabbath afternoon. As a result he loses his friends who do not understand his reasons.

John, Mary and Peter all find themselves in unpleasant situations where they are deserted, lonely and miserable because of the way other people are treating them.

Outline

Encourage the class to discuss these situations. It is important to remember that these three young people did what was right. Ask if any of the children ever found themselves in similar situations and how they reacted.

Emphasise that we will often find ourselves in circumstances where doing the right thing brings unpleasant results. Ask how we should behave when we find ourselves in such a situation. Complete No. 1 and No. 2 on the pupils' worksheet.

Consider the example of David:

1. He asked God for help confident that he would receive an answer (vs. 1-8)
2. He told God how miserable he felt. God is interested in His children and will be moved by their distress (vs. 9-13).

3. Even in his trouble David praised God for His goodness (vs. 19-22)
4. He encourages everyone to trust God completely (vs. 23-24).

John, Mary and Peter will find help in considering how David behaved when he was in great difficulty involving the possible loss of his own life.

Complete No. 3 on the pupils' worksheet.

APPLICATION

Remind the pupils that this psalm shows that in life we may face situations which are unpleasant through no fault of our own. In these situations we should trust in God. We should pray to Him confident that He will hear and have pity on us.

God will answer our prayers, not perhaps in the way that we wish, but in His way and in His time. He will give us strength to endure our troubles if we trust Him.

Psalm 31 is an example of how God's children should behave when they are in trouble.

Help the pupils to complete No. 4 on their worksheet.

LESSON 7

Learning to live for God means

GIVING OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Scripture Text - 1 Samuel 13: 1 - 14; 1 Samuel 15

AIM OF LESSON

To show the importance of total obedience to God.

BACKGROUND NOTES

1. Israel had no king but the people wanted one. God chose Saul from the small tribe of Benjamin to be anointed by Samuel the prophet as the first king of Israel (1 Samuel 10: 1). God chose him as king and He equipped and fitted him for the position (1 Samuel 10: 9). Saul was young and handsome (1 Samuel 9: 2). He had an excellent friend and spiritual adviser in the prophet, Samuel. Saul had all the opportunities anyone could have wished for but still failed in the job to which God had called him.
2. 1 Samuel 13 - In Israel only priests offered sacrifices. However, Samuel was late, the people were frightened and many were slipping quietly away so Saul decided to offer the sacrifice himself. By doing this he showed impatience and lack of trust: he should have waited for Samuel to come. His disobedience lost him the throne.
3. 1 Samuel 15 - When the children of Israel were coming out of Egypt the Amalekites prevented them from moving into Sinai. They were still warlike and cruel and a threat to God's purpose for Israel. God had to deal with this rebellion against Him.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Ask the class what obedience means to them. Look at No. 1 of the pupils' worksheet. Discuss whom they have to obey, e.g, parents, teachers, B.B. and G.B. officers. Go on to talk about the importance of rules and why it is necessary to obey them, e.g, the Green Cross Code for safety; rules made by parents or adults for the smooth running of the home, school, church. Ask the pupils to mention some rules which they know they should obey. God expects all His children to obey Him. Relate the stories about Saul's disobedience using the outline below - do not attempt to read the complete passages in class.

Outline

Chapter 13: 1-14. King Saul and his son Jonathan planned to attack the Philistines whose territory lay to the west of them. They mobilised 3 000 troops. Jonathan took 1 000 of these, fought and won the battle of Geba. His success encouraged Saul to attack also but when Saul's men heard that the mighty Philistine army, camped at Michmash, was numerically much

stronger, they were frightened. They hid in caves and among the rocks and some even fled across the Jordan hills.

Some time earlier Samuel had indicated clearly to Saul that he was to wait seven days for Samuel to come to tell him what God wanted him to do (1 Sam. 10: 8). However, the situation appeared desperate and when Samuel did not arrive at the appointed time, Saul grew impatient and offered the burnt offering himself. (See Background Notes.)

Just as the ceremony was coming to an end, Samuel arrived and quickly reprimanded Saul for not having waited. Ask a pupil to read 1 Sam. 13: 11-12. Saul was disobedient and showed lack of trust in God when he did not wait for divine guidance. Ask another pupil to read 1 Sam. 13: 14 to see the results of Saul's disobedience. Now ask the pupils to complete No. 2 on their worksheets.

This was not the only time when Saul disobeyed God. In I Samuel 15 we are told of another instance. God, through Samuel, commanded the total destruction of the Amalekites and everything that belonged to them. So Saul gathered a large army together, fought and defeated the Amalekites. However he did not obey completely the instructions given in 1 Samuel 15: 3. Ask a pupil to read this verse. Saul spared the Amalekite king and the best of the sheep and cattle. Samuel was very annoyed when Saul greeted him with the words, 'I have obeyed the voice of the Lord'. Questioned by Samuel about the noises of the animals, Saul did not admit that he had done anything wrong. He tried to justify his men's action by reasoning that their intentions were good and said that they had spared the animals in order to sacrifice them to God. Samuel told Saul that the motive, even if sincere, did not excuse the disobedience. Saul eventually confessed his sin. Then Samuel turned away saying that he would not go back with him but Saul tried to stop him and tore his robe. This signified that God had rejected him as king and was tearing the kingdom from him. Saul then begged Samuel to forgive him and go with him to worship the 'Lord your God'. Ask the pupils what they think the phrase 'the Lord your God' says about Saul's attitude (1 Sam. 15: 30).

At this point ask the pupils to turn to No. 3 of their worksheets. Read the story to them and ask them to answer the questions. The puzzle in No. 4 may be done at home or in class.

APPLICATION

Saul tried to partly obey God but this was not enough. God is holy and must be obeyed completely. When we obey parents, Christian teachers and leaders, we are obeying God. To be obedient is not always easy. Saul was tempted into disobedience by lack of trust, impatience, greed, and fear of other people. We should turn to God for help when we are tempted not to obey Him fully and ask Him to give us strength and courage to obey His commands. Then we will be able to call Him 'My God', not like Saul who spoke to Samuel of Him as 'Your God'.

LESSON 8

Learning to live for God means

BEING CONCERNED ABOUT GOD'S HONOUR

Scripture Text - 1 Samuel 17

AIM OF LESSON

To show that God's children should be concerned about God's honour and they can only do this by standing up for what is right.

BACKGROUND NOTES

The nations of Canaan believed that success or failure in battle was dependent on the success or failure of their gods. When two armies were equal it was the custom to choose representatives to settle the issue. The defeated champion, his army and god, were expected to surrender their property and become slaves. If Goliath had won, the Philistines would have claimed a victory over the Lord God Almighty.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Ask the pupils what sorts of things make them angry. Encourage them to say how they feel when decisions go against them; when someone interferes with their possessions; when they hear others taking God's name in vain. During the discussion point out that most of our anger stems from self-centredness and very seldom from righteous indignation (anger for a good reason, e.g, God's honour). Use the outline below to recount the story of David and Goliath to the pupils.

Outline1. David's concern for God's honour

David, although only a shepherd boy, was chosen by God and anointed by Samuel to be the next King of Israel in place of Saul. The Spirit of God was in his heart (1 Sam. 16: 13) giving him power to serve and honour the Lord. Notice how willing he was to obey his father and bring supplies to his brothers who were soldiers in the Israelite army (vs. 17 and 20). He reached the camp as the army was going out to battle and ran to talk to his brothers. David heard the defiant challenge of Goliath and recognised it as an insult to God (vs. 10 and 23). David was very angry. Help the pupils to understand how David felt by asking how they feel when they hear their parents or other members of the family being insulted. David knew he must fight Goliath and defend God's honour. Read verse 32. 'Let no man's heart fail because of him, your servant will go and fight with this Philistine'. That was what he said to Saul and the Israelites. The courage of King Saul

and the Israelite army had cracked under the constant pressure of Goliath. They ran from the Philistines in great fear. These men who should have honoured God were more concerned about their own safety. (See Background Notes).

Complete No. 1 on the pupils' worksheet.

2. David gave God the honour

He took off the armour which Saul gave him for protection; it would only hinder him. He needed only God's protection and the weapons he knew, his sling and five smooth stones which he chose carefully from the stream and put in his bag.

Now Goliath is really angry and insulted. Imagine a boy with a few stones challenging an armoured giant like him! He was confident of his own power and strength. Ask the pupils what he shouted. (vs. 43 and 44): 'Come to me and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field'. David knew he had no power or strength of his own. Notice how he answered Goliath (vs. 45 - 47). He said that that day the Lord would hand over not only Goliath but the whole Philistine army to the birds and beasts and that all the assembly gathered there would know that the Lord does not save with sword and spear. The battle was the Lord's. Ask the pupils what happened next. Ask a pupil to complete the story by reading verses 48 - 51. Find from verse 46 the true purpose of David's bravery. ('That all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel). Complete No. 2 on the pupils' worksheet.

APPLICATION

Ask the pupils if they are concerned about God's honour. We will only be concerned about God's honour if we are Christians and if God's Holy Spirit is in our hearts. If we are concerned about God's honour we must do as David did - stand up for what is right. This will not always be easy. People may think little of us and we may feel that what we do is not important. It is, however, important to God that we do stand up for what is right and if we trust Him, He will help us to do this.

Complete Nos. 3 and 4 of the pupils' worksheet and discuss the answer given.

LESSON 9

Learning to live for God means

NOT BEING ENVIOUS OF OTHERS

Scripture Text - 1 Samuel 18: 1 - 16; 19: 1 - 7

AIM OF LESSON

To contrast Saul's envy of David with Jonathan's friendship for him and to show that envy leads to further sin.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Ask the children to suppose their father and mother adopted another boy or girl into their home. Ask them to think about how they would feel or react if:-

1. he or she was younger than they were
2. he or she was always good and well behaved
3. they knew that he or she was going to inherit all that their father owned.

Ask them to think whether it would make any difference if they knew it was God's will and plan.

Outline

Suggest that the pupils try to imagine the scene in the Israelite camp after David had killed Goliath and the Philistines were defeated. Everyone would have been rejoicing, praising and thanking God and congratulating David for the part he had played as Israel's champion. Outlined below are events which happened soon after this. Tell the pupils about these.

1. David and Jonathan became friends

Read 1 Samuel 18: 1-4. David and Jonathan developed a true and lasting friendship. They promised before God to love each other as long as they lived ('covenant', v. 3). Jonathan showed his acceptance of David as a brother by giving him his clothes and weapons. At that time this was a sign of honour and equality. Complete No. 1 of the pupils' worksheet.

2. Saul became envious of David

Read verses 5 - 9. In the beginning Saul showed his gratitude by giving David command of his troops. However this was soon to change. As King Saul led the victorious Israelite army home, women came out from the towns to meet the men returning from the battle. They played musical instruments, danced and sang. Ask the pupils what they sang (Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands, v.

7). Saul was very angry. Ask the pupils what Saul said. Ask someone to read verse 8 and suggest this could be interpreted as 'they will be making him their king next'. From then on Saul became envious of David and kept a careful watch on everything he did. Complete No. 2 of the pupils' worksheet. Discuss briefly 2(c) pointing out that Saul should have been pleased and grateful rather than resentful and envious.

3. Saul's envy exploded into action

Read verses 10 - 16. Verse 10 tells us that an evil spirit from God came upon Saul because of disobedience. Saul had stopped depending on God and Satan had taken over in his life. He became moody and violent, and tried to kill David on two different occasions by throwing a javelin at him. Saul demoted David to captain of one thousand men and sent him into the country with them. Saul was afraid of David because the Lord was with David and had departed from him. Complete No. 3 of the pupils' worksheet.

4. Jonathan's love saved David's life

Read 1 Sam. 19: 1-7. Ask a pupil to read verse 1. Ask the pupils to describe Saul's attitude to David then. Ask them to describe in their own words what Jonathan did. He acted as a true friend and warned David, but he also showed how much he cared for his friend by speaking to Saul his father in David's defence. Saul listened (v. 6) and promised not to kill David, so Jonathan brought David back into Saul's presence as he had been in the past. Jonathan loved his father and also his friend David. He did not allow this clash of loyalties to lead him into sin against his father by breaking the fifth commandment nor did he allow his father's wrong decisions against David to make him break the sixth commandment. Ask the pupils to say what these commandments are. (Ex. 20: 12, 13). Read and complete No. 4 of the pupils' worksheet.

APPLICATION

This lesson teaches how envy changed King Saul and he became impatient and disobedient.

Ask the pupils if they are pleased and happy when their friends are more successful than they are. Ask them if they ever feel envious of others. If so, ask them what they think they should do about it. Complete No. 5 of the pupils' worksheet. 1 Cor. 13: 4 - 5 gives the answer.

(Answers: (i) kind, (ii) envious, (iii) proud, (iv) rude, (v) selfish, (vi) upset or disturbed.)

LESSON 10

Learning to live for God means

WAITING FOR GOD'S TIMING

Scripture Text - 1 Samuel 24

AIM OF LESSON

To show that we should always wait for God to give us what He has promised.

BACKGROUND NOTES

v. 6 'anointed' - In the Old Testament persons were anointed to indicate separation to God for a particular office. Thus we see why David's heart 'troubled' him in v. 5 when he cut off a piece of Saul's robe, for by even touching it he had virtually touched Saul - a favoured person of God.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Tell the pupils the following story about Gareth, a boy who loved football. Gareth couldn't believe it when his teacher said that he would become the new captain of the school's football team. His excitement began to wear off, though, as the weeks and months passed and he was still merely a player. About the only thing that had changed was that his friend, the present captain, having heard rumours of Gareth taking his place, began being very mean and nasty to him.

Outline

In the Bible we find a similar situation. God had chosen and set apart ('anointed') David to become the next king of Israel (1 Sam. 16: 12-13). Saul, the present king, had loved David (16: 22-23) but soon he became jealous of David's popularity (18: 7-9) and fearful of the threat David posed to his throne. King Saul therefore tried to kill David on numerous occasions and today's lesson describes one such attempt. In it we find King Saul and 3 000 of his men looking for David in the desert of En Gedi. As they travelled, they came to a cave. Saul went in, probably to rest himself, and did not realize that David and his men were hiding in that very cave. However, David's men recognized Saul immediately. Seeing that he was alone, they thought that this was David's perfect opportunity. They whispered to David that now was his chance to kill the man who was trying to kill him. David, carrying his knife, quietly crept up to Saul. Ask the pupils what they would have done. David knew that what his friends had said was true but David also remembered two very important things. The first was something that God has said not to do. Ask the pupils to complete Question 1 on their worksheets.

Not only did David love God and want to obey Him but David also believed and trusted God to do what He had promised. Ask one of the pupils to read verse 4 to find out what David did with his knife. David then began to feel bad, for he knew that he shouldn't have even cut Saul's robe, let alone think about killing him. Saul was God's anointed king. (See Background Notes). Ask the pupils to read verses 7 - 8 and then tell you in their own words what happened next. David showed Saul the piece of cut robe and told him that he could very easily have killed him, if he had wanted to but he had never wanted to harm him. He couldn't even understand why the great king was chasing an unimportant person like him. David described himself as two things - ask the pupils to find out what they were by reading verse 14 and complete Question 2 on the pupils' worksheet. By using these two illustrations, David tried to show Saul how ridiculous it was for Saul and his thousands of men to spend their time chasing him.

Read vs. 16 - 20. Saul was very upset by this event. Notice he even admitted that David would be the future king of Israel. He then made David promise something. Read v. 21 to find out what that was. David gave the promise and both parted, at least for the time, as friends. In later months and years King Saul forgot David's kindness and repeatedly sought to kill him but every time David refused to harm Saul in any way. David knew what God had promised and so he waited for the time when God would make him king. Answer No. 3 on the pupils' worksheet to find examples of other Bible characters who were made to wait or still have to wait for things God promised them.

(1 - e; 2 - d; 3 - b; 4 - c; 5 - a).

APPLICATION

Complete No. 4 on the pupils' worksheet.

Stress the fact that we should never worry or fear in any situation. The Bible contains all we need to help and guide us. We should, therefore, turn to it and find out what God wants us to do. Whether it is a missed bus, a lost school book, a failed exam, or something more serious such as illness or some disappointment, we must always go to God because He has promised to guide and direct us (Prov. 3: 5, 6). We may not get an immediate answer. We can, however, be assured that God hears us, knows our situation, and will help us. We must wait patiently for Him, even as King David did in Psalm 40.

Ask the class to memorize Psalm 40: 1.

LESSON 11

Learning to live for God means

LISTENING TO GOOD ADVICE

Scripture Text - 1 Samuel 25

AIM OF LESSON

To show the importance of listening to and heeding good advice.

BACKGROUND NOTES

'Nabal' - This name means 'fool' and Nabal proved to be a fool.

v. 37 - 'His heart died within him and he became as a stone' - This probably meant that Nabal had a heart attack.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Ask the pupils how they would feel if they asked for and were refused a favour from someone for whom they had earlier done a good turn. Suggest that they might feel angry, hurt or resentful. A similar experience happened to David in his dealings with a man called Nabal. Look at the story in 1 Samuel 25 to find out what happened and the part played by a lady called Abigail.

Turn to No. 1 of the pupils' worksheet with the pupils and, using 1 Samuel 25, help them to complete the blanks in the story. Ask a pupil to read the completed story aloud to help the class have an overall picture. (The crossword should be completed at home). Then discuss the story with the pupils in greater detail.

Outline

David and his men had lived with Nabal's shepherds and had helped them to look after Nabal's sheep (vs.15,16). Now David and his men were in need of food, and they asked Nabal for help. Look at verses 10-11 to read about Nabal's reply. Ask some pupils to put his reply into their own words. David was angry at Nabal's rude refusal. He and his six hundred men were hungry. Complete No. 2 on the pupils' worksheet. There was a very tense situation. Ask the pupils to suggest what might have happened.

Abigail's good advice

David was planning to murder Nabal and his men. Ask the pupils who prevented this happening. (v. 14). Abigail went to David. She admitted that Nabal had been wrong and had lived up to the meaning of his name (a fool). However, she asked David not to take vengeance on her husband but to forgive him. She asked that when David became

king as God had promised, then he would not have murder on his conscience. Read verses 30-31. Consider whether or not it would have been easy for Abigail to do as she did. Look at verses 32-33 to see how David received this advice. He appreciated what Abigail had done and he also recognized that the good advice had really come from God. Complete the blanks of No. 3 on the pupils' worksheet.

APPLICATION

Ask the pupils how they know when advice is good or bad. We must judge all advice given by whether or not it is in keeping with the teaching of the Bible. We must ask ourselves such questions as, 'If I act on this advice, will my actions bring glory to God - will God be pleased?' etc. Complete No. 4 on the pupils' worksheet. Discuss the four different examples of advice given. Look up Proverbs 3:5, 6. Encourage pupils to memorize these two verses, which teach us to depend on the Lord for advice.

Crossword Solution:

	¹ L	I	S	T	E	N		² A	³ S	K
	O					⁴ K		H		
	R		⁵ M			⁶ F	I	V	E	
	⁷ D	I	E	⁸ D			L		E	
⁹ T			¹⁰ N	A	B	¹¹ A	L		P	
W		¹² B		V		B				
O		¹³ R	A	I	S	I	N	¹⁴ S		
		E		D		G		H		
¹⁵ M		A				A		E		¹⁶ M
A		D				I		A		U
R				¹⁷ K		L		R		R
R				I				I		D
Y		¹⁸ V	E	N	G	E	A	N	C	E
				G				G		R

LESSON 12

Learning to live for God means

SEEKING HELP FROM GOD ALONE

Scripture Text - 1 Samuel 28:1-20; 30:1-19

AIM OF LESSON

To show the importance of seeking help from God alone.

BACKGROUND NOTES

1 Samuel 28:6 - 'Urim' - The Urim and Thummin were kept in the breastplate of the ephod. By them the priest was able to declare to the people God's will (Exodus 28:30).

1 Samuel 30:7 - 'ephod' - This was the ceremonial robe worn by the High Priest (Exodus 39:2-7).

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Discuss with the pupils their own experiences of being in situations in which they did not know what to do. Maybe some have been undecided about going to Junior Camp or saving for a new bicycle. Discuss what they do when they are undecided about something. Perhaps they talk it over with someone older, perhaps with their mother, or they may pray about it. Remind them that all through life we have to make decisions. Sometimes people think that if only they knew what would happen next week or what the future held, it would be easy to make decisions. Saul and David, who were both kings of Israel, were faced with many problems and had important decisions to make. In this lesson we shall see how they approached their problems and made decisions. It is not necessary to read the full passages of the Scripture text in class but pupils should be encouraged to read these at home later.

Outline

1. 1 Samuel 28:1-20

(a) Saul's problem

Ask the pupils what Saul's problem was. (28:5-6). The Philistine army was preparing to fight against Israel (v. 1) and this filled Saul with fear. He prayed but God did not answer (v. 5-6). Discuss with the pupils various answers that God may give to our prayers. He may say 'Yes', or He may say 'No', or by His silence He may say 'Wait'. Ask them why they think God did not answer Saul when he prayed to Him. God's answer may have been withheld because of Saul's previous disobedience. (Recall Lesson 7, where God rejected Saul because of his disobedience). In any case, Saul was not prepared to wait for an answer.

(b) How Saul dealt with his problem

Saul was impatient to have his problem solved. In the past he had turned for advice to Samuel, God's prophet. Ask the pupils why he could not turn to Samuel directly now. (See 1Sam. 28:3). Samuel was dead.

However, this did not stop Saul from deciding to try to get advice from Samuel by doing something which God had strictly forbidden - speaking to a dead person's spirit through a witch or medium (Lev.19:31). Explain briefly the practice of witchcraft, where witches or mediums appear to have the ability to bring back the spirit of a dead person to speak to those on earth. The power they use is from the devil and is, therefore, sinful.

Ask the pupils if Saul knew that it was wrong to try to speak to the dead prophet through a witch (see 1 Samuel 28:3). Yes, he knew witchcraft was wrong because he had already expelled all the witches from the land, in obedience to God's command.

Relate the story of vs. 7-10, which tells of Saul's disguising himself and secretly going off to consult the witch. We see from v. 9 that the witch was also aware that witchcraft had been forbidden. However, Saul added to his sin by telling her that, if she did what he said, she would not be punished. The witch did as he asked and, at the appearance of Samuel, she recognised that it was King Saul himself who had come to her.

Although the witch and Saul were doing something which was very wrong, God used this appearance of Samuel to remind Saul that, because of his earlier disobedience, his kingdom was going to be taken from him and given to David. He also told Saul that he and his sons would be killed by the Philistines the next day. Ask the pupils to look at verse 20 and say how Saul was affected by this news. Point out that, although Saul was terribly afraid, we are not told that he was repentant. (Recap on the story by completing the pupils' worksheet No. 1 (a).)

Saul dealt with his problem in the wrong way. Now consider how David coped with his problem.

2. 1 Samuel 30:1-19

(a) David's problem

Ask the pupils to read verses 3 and 4 and tell you what David's problem was. David and his men returned from fighting and found that, while they had been away, the Amalekites had attacked their home town, burned it, and had taken all

the women and children captive. David's men were turning against him because they blamed him for what had happened.

(b) How David solved his problem

Read verse 6(b) to see what David did. Complete No. 1(b) on the pupils' worksheet. Suggest that this strength was found by praying and trusting God.

Verse 8 tells us that David prayed directly to God (using the ephod) and asked Him if he should pursue the Amalekites. God answered directly and told him to pursue them and his mission would be successful. However, David still had plans to make and decisions to take. For example, some of his men were tired and had to be left at Besor. He showed kindness to an Egyptian who in turn was able to help David by giving him vital information. (This Egyptian was a slave of an Amalekite. When the Amalekites were on their way home after raiding Negev and Ziklag this slave became ill and his master left him behind - (v. 13).) Later when David recovered the women, children and the spoils, he made sure that all his men, including those who had been left behind, received a fair share of the spoils.

APPLICATION

Both Saul and David had decisions to make. Both prayed the same prayer - the prayer that God would help them to take the right course of action. Here, however, the similarity ends. David depended on God alone. Saul, in addition to praying, sought other means of help.

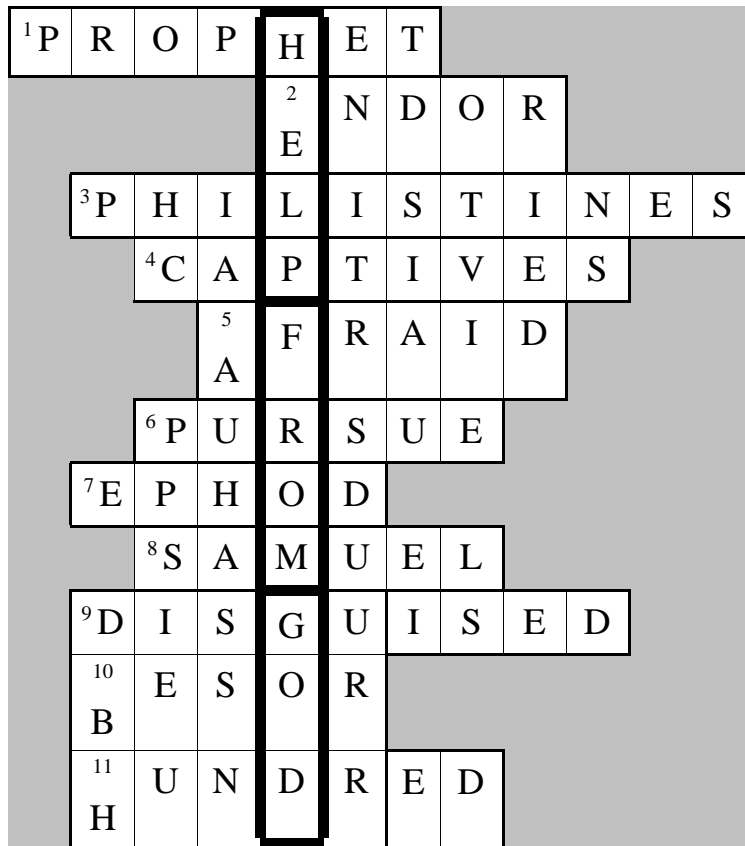
Encourage the pupils to see that Saul had already chosen a path of disobedience. He had insisted on going his own way. Ask the pupils if they think he could expect God to help him. Look up Psalm 66:18. This verse tells us that, if we have any sin which we know about and have not confessed, God will not hear our prayers.

Complete No. 2 on the pupils' worksheet. Psalm 66:18 may be learned as a memory verse. David sought help from God alone. Saul deliberately rejected God's ways and sought help by sinful means.

Complete No. 3 on the pupils' worksheet, pointing out that 'fortune telling' and horoscopes are ways of trying to look into the future and, like Saul's consulting the witch, are sinful.

No. 4 on the pupils' worksheet may be completed at home if class time does not permit.

Solution to pupils' worksheet No.4:



LESSON 13

Learning to live for God means

SHOWING GRATITUDE FOR GOD'S MERCY

Scripture Text - 2 Samuel 9

AIM OF LESSON

To show how David expressed his gratitude to God for His goodness to him by showing kindness to Mephibosheth.

BACKGROUND NOTES

2 Samuel 4:4 - Mephibosheth was Jonathan's son and Saul's grandson. When the news of the defeat of Israel and the death of Saul and Jonathan on Mount Gilboa reached the royal palace it is likely that the residents were filled with panic and fear that the enemy would come to kill and destroy what remained of the royal family, as was the custom in those days. So the nurse fled with the five-year-old prince and in her haste she dropped the child causing permanent injury to his legs so that he became lame.

2 Samuel 24:21-22 - Saul had asked David to swear that he would not destroy his descendants.

2 Samuel 9:8 - 'such a dead dog as I' - In the east the dog was not a pet; it was one of the lowest of God's creatures, unclean and despised. The word 'dog', therefore, became a term of reproach.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Ask the pupils if they know any lame boys or girls. Discuss how people become lame. (As a result of an accident, polio, or they may be born with a physical disability.) There is a story in the Bible often called 'The Lame Prince'. Ask the class if anyone knows this prince's name. (Mephibosheth). Ask the pupils to repeat his name. We are going to find out how this boy became lame.

Outline

Mephibosheth was Jonathan's son. The story of Mephibosheth begins in 2 Samuel 4:4, where we learn how he became lame. (See Background Notes and relate this incident). Let us now see how David treated Mephibosheth.

1. David remembers his friendship with Jonathan

Read 2 Samuel 9:1-4. David enquired if any of Saul's family was still alive, so that he could show kindness to them for Jonathan's sake. Jonathan, David's friend and Saul's son, had been dead for many years when this incident took place and

consequently only God and David knew of the covenant which he and David had made. (See 1 Samuel 20:14-17.) During the reign of David the kingdom of Israel flourished. He was the recipient of God's mercy and abundant love. As he experienced God's love and kindness to him, David remembered his covenant with Jonathan.

We recall how King Saul treated David; yet because David loved and obeyed God, he was able to forgive Saul and wished to show 'the kindness of God' to Saul's family. Ziba, an old servant of King Saul, told David that Jonathan had a lame son living with Machir in Lo-Debar. Ask the pupils to recall his name. Complete No. 1 on the pupils' worksheet. (Answers:- friends, family, Jonathan, son, nurse, five, lame, Lo-Debar.)

2. David meets Jonathan's son

Ask the pupils to picture this prince, lame, living in Machir's house in a poor town which frequently experienced famine. One day the king sent for him and brought him back to the palace at Jerusalem. Ask the pupils how they would expect him to feel.

Read 2 Samuel 9:5-8. King David sent for Mephibosheth, who arrived in fear and, although he was lame, he bowed low before David in humility and respect (v. 6). Ask if anyone in the class knows why he was afraid. As Saul's grandson he could not expect mercy, considering how Saul had treated David. Ask the pupils if they thought that David would kill him, as was the custom of Eastern rulers. David was very conscious of Mephibosheth's fear. How did he treat Mephibosheth? Ask a pupil to read v. 7 again. Instead of revenge, Mephibosheth experienced the wonderful 'kindness of God'. We can imagine the joy and humility in his heart as he again bowed before David and said, 'What is your servant that you should notice a dead dog like me?' (See Background Notes.)

3. Prince Mephibosheth seated at King David's table

Read 2 Samuel 9:9-13. David called Ziba to witness the promise he made to Mephibosheth (v. 9). Mephibosheth was restored to his former position as a prince. He received his grandfather Saul's estate and Ziba and his sons were appointed to farm the land. Mephibosheth was to live at the palace and eat at the king's table as one of David's sons. Complete No. 2 on the pupils' worksheet. (Answers:- (a) False, (b) False, (c) True, (d) False.)

APPLICATION

Using No. 3 on the pupils' worksheet discuss and fill in each triangle. (See overleaf.)

1. David had experienced God's wonderful love and kindness. He wished to fulfil his promise to his best friend Jonathan by showing kindness to Mephibosheth. Ask the pupils how David showed kindness to Mephibosheth. Revise the story as you complete triangle 1 of No. 3 on the pupils' worksheet.

2. God has shown great love and kindness to us. We may not be physically disabled like Mephibosheth, but because of sin we are often unable to do the things we know we ought to do. God sent His Son to seek and save us. He says 'Come to Me'. He has promised to supply all our needs. When we accept the Lord Jesus as Saviour we become His children, and members of a royal family much more important than David's!
Complete triangle 2 of the pupils' worksheet No. 3.

3. Ask the pupils to suggest ways of showing kindness to others. Encourage the pupils to think of some of the following ways of showing kindness: a smile and a cheerful greeting; a word of sympathy when others are hurt or unhappy; 'Thank you' and 'sorry' (often hard to say). Actions speak louder than words, but it is often hard to act. We can help our friends, those who are sick and those who are disabled. We can also help others in need through organisations such as Tear Fund, etc.
Complete the spaces in triangle 3 of No. 3 of the pupils' worksheet.

LESSON 14

Learning to live for God means

CONFESSING SIN AND ASKING GOD FOR FORGIVENESS

Scripture Text - 2 Samuel 12:1-14

AIM OF LESSON

To show we must realise that we have sinned and that we need to ask God to forgive us.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Reference is made in the Outline to 2 Samuel 11 in order to give the details of David's sin. Passing reference only is being made in this lesson to the fact that, while David is forgiven, he is also punished. (2 Samuel 12:10,11,15) - See title and aim of lesson.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Ask the pupils to listen while you tell them the following short story.

Johnny and Mary wanted to play in the kitchen but their mother said that they must not. She was expecting visitors and did not want things made untidy. Anyway she had the tea things laid out on a tray and if they played in the kitchen, something was sure to be broken. Johnny and Mary sulked. Then the doorbell rang and their mother went to greet her visitors. She took them into the sitting room. 'Let's have a game now,' said Johnny. 'We'll hear Mum coming and we can sit down then.'

They were having great fun when Johnny pushed Mary, who bumped into the tray and a cup fell. It did not break but it was cracked. 'What shall we do now?' wailed Mary. 'There are more of those cups in the cupboard,' said Johnny. 'Let's bring out another one for the tray and put this one at the back of the cupboard. Maybe Mum won't notice that it's cracked.' This is what they did and, by the time their mother came back into the kitchen, both of them were sitting quietly reading but feeling horribly guilty.

Discuss this story with the pupils, drawing attention to the point that one sin led to another. Ask them what Johnny and Mary should have done and what they think might have happened when their mother found the cracked cup. Discuss and complete No. 1(a) on the pupils' worksheet. Now introduce the story of David's sins where one sin also led to another - all of which were of a very serious nature.

Outline**1. David's sin**

Briefly outline 2 Samuel 11 but do not read it in class. David's sin consisted of several sins. First of all he began to covet the beautiful Bathsheba, Uriah's wife. Then he committed adultery with her and, when he found out that she was

expecting his baby, he tried to cover his sin. He found an excuse to call Uriah back from the battle (2 Sam. 11:7) and tried his best to get him to go to his home, so that it would be thought that the child was his. Finally, when none of his other plans worked, he sent Joab a letter telling him to arrange Uriah's death by placing him in the worst of the battle. Uriah's death left David free to take Bathsheba as his wife. (2 Sam. 11:14-17). God was not pleased about this (2 Sam. 11:27). Complete No. 1(b) on the pupils' worksheet.

2. **David's sin is exposed**

David may have felt safe now he had married Bathsheba and probably thought his sins were a thing of the past but God had not forgotten. God sent Nathan the prophet to talk to David. Nathan explained by means of a story how David had sinned. Read 2 Samuel 12:1-14 with the class and complete No. 2 on the pupils' worksheet. Ask the pupils how they think David felt when Nathan said, 'You are the man'. Nathan told David that in killing Uriah to take his wife, he was just like the rich man in the story. Nathan pointed out to David that, like the rich man, he had plenty. God had blessed him richly (v. 7-8), yet he had murdered Uriah, because he coveted his wife (v. 9). David then realised that he had sinned and he confessed his sin (v. 13).

3. **David confesses his sin**

(2 Samuel 12:13) David realised how wrong his behaviour had been. It was at this time that David wrote Psalm 51, in which he confesses his sin and asks for forgiveness. Look up Psalm 51 and complete No. 3 (a) on the pupils' worksheet, pointing out to the pupils David's realisation of the seriousness of his sin and his need for cleansing and forgiveness. Ask the pupils if they think God dealt with David very severely. In fact, He showed mercy to David and spared his life but David was punished for his sin by the death of Bathsheba's baby. However, he knew then that his sin was forgotten and forgiven. His sin had brought him unhappiness and in Psalm 51, in his prayer for forgiveness, he asks for the joy of his salvation to be restored. (Ps. 51:12). Complete No. 3(b) on the pupils' worksheet.

APPLICATION

We all sin and do things that are wrong every day. Sometimes our parents, teachers or friends do not see the things we do wrong and we do not tell them, so they never know. Think back to the story about Johnny and Mary. Maybe their mother never knew who cracked the cup. Ask the pupils who would know apart from Johnny and Mary.

David also tried to cover up his sins but found it impossible to hide them from God. We cannot hide anything from God. He knows everything we do and think. He is angry when we do wrong and do not tell Him about it, saying we are sorry and asking for forgiveness. When we do this God is pleased and will show us mercy by forgiving us and we get rid of that nasty guilty feeling. Complete No. 4 on the pupils' worksheet.

LESSON 15

Learning to live for God means

LISTENING TO GOD'S WARNINGS

Scripture Text - 1 Kings 2:1-4; 9:1-9; 10:22-29; 11:1-13, 26-40

AIM OF LESSON

To show the importance of heeding God's warnings of judgement.

BACKGROUND NOTES

During the reign of King David, a strong and united nation was established in Israel; government and worship were centralised in Jerusalem, the majority of Israel's enemies had been defeated and strong alliances formed with surrounding countries (See 2 Sam. 5: 7-12).

His son, Solomon, whose reign followed, further strengthened the kingdom and Israel reached the peak of its strength as a politically secure and economically prosperous nation. It was a nation prospered by the Lord, with strong allies in Tyre and Egypt (1 Kings 3:1; 5:1), tremendous military strength (1 Kings 4:26; 10:26) and great commercial wealth (1 Kings 9:26; 10:14, 15, 28, 29).

Because David was a man of war who had shed blood, he was not permitted to build the house of God and therefore Solomon was entrusted with the task (1 Kings 5:3-5; 1 Chron, 28:6). Solomon spent thirteen years building a palace of unsurpassed grandeur for himself and seven years building the Temple of the Lord.

Solomon was greatly blessed with spiritual and material gifts (1 Kings 3:5-14)

In the division of the kingdom of Israel, spoken of in 1 Kings 11:31, ten tribes, which became known as the Northern Kingdom (Israel) followed Jeroboam, while two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, remained faithful to Solomon's son Rehoboam and became known as Judah (1 Kings 12:23).

In 1 Kings 11:13 the Lord said that He would give one tribe to Solomon, while the prophet in v. 30 tore his garment in twelve pieces and indicated that this represented the twelve tribes, ten of which would follow Jeroboam. The one tribe mentioned in v. 13 would appear to be the combination of the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin (see 1 Kings 12:23).

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Look at the picture in No. 1(a) of the pupils' worksheet. Ask the pupils what these signs have in common. All are warnings of danger; danger if we go too far in a certain direction,

or if we disobey certain commands. To disobey any of these warnings could have very serious consequences. Only a very foolish person would climb a fence into a yard where a guard dog is patrolling, or drink from a bottle marked 'Do not drink'. Ask the pupils to suggest reasons why some people disobey warnings. Complete No. 1(b) on the pupils' worksheet. Discuss the illustrations, pointing out that the boys might not believe that there is any real danger, and the child might not understand the warning.

Outline

The person in our lesson today was warned by God of the danger of disobeying Him and worshipping other gods. He could understand the warning but, perhaps like the two boys, did not really believe that anything terrible would happen to him. Ask the pupils if they know who this person was. Give the following clues. See how many clues are needed before pupils identify the person.

- (1) He was David's son. (2) He built the Temple. (3) He was very rich.
 (4) He was very wise. (5) The Queen of Sheba came to visit him.

Complete No. 2(a) on the pupils' worksheet.

Warnings

Let us look at some of the things we have said about Solomon. Solomon became king after David. Before David died he gave his son some advice. Read 1 Kings 2:1-4. Discuss what these verses tell us. Complete No. 2(b) on the pupils' worksheet. Ask the pupils if they can see the warning in these verses. It is in the little word 'if' (v. 4). 'If your sons take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth ... you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel'. This suggests that if David's descendants are not obedient to God's commands then they will not remain on the throne of Israel.

Not only did Solomon know, from the beginning of his reign, that his success depended upon obeying God but, in addition, God blessed him with wisdom, riches, honour and the promise of long life. Ask the pupils to relate briefly the familiar story of how Solomon's request for wisdom pleased God, who not only granted him wisdom but promised also riches, honour, etc. Refer where necessary to 1 Kings 3:5-15. Solomon was enabled by God to build up a kingdom of tremendous wealth and power. He was honoured and respected for his wisdom and counsel by the nations around. Look at 1 Kings 10:22-29 and complete No. 3 on the pupils' worksheet, describing something of the power and wealth of Solomon's kingdom.

With these blessings and responsibilities there were also warnings. Solomon carried out the great work of building the Temple and, in the service of dedication of the Temple to God, God spoke to him (1 Kings 9:1-9). Complete No. 4(a) on the pupils' worksheet. Discuss this warning - Israel cut off from the land and the Temple rejected by God if the people did not keep His commandments.

Solomon loved God and wanted to serve Him but, sadly, he let something else take first place in his life and turn his heart away from God. Read 1 Kings 11:1. Concerning this God had given a

very serious command: read 1 Kings 11:2. Ask the pupils if they know how Solomon treated these warnings (1 Kings 11:3-7). Complete No. 4(b) on the pupils' worksheet.

Judgement

Solomon's love for God had become less whole-hearted, as God had warned him it would. His foreign heathen wives persuaded him to worship their gods and to build palaces and places for the worship of these gods, so in 1 Kings 11:9-12 we read about God's anger and promise of judgement: 'Because ... you have... not kept My covenant ... I will ... tear the kingdom away from you'. However, God still showed mercy in His judgement of Solomon. He said, 'Nevertheless, I will not do it in your days, for the sake of your father David; however I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David...' (1 Kings 11:12-13). Complete No. 4(c) on the pupils' worksheet.

At this time someone was already plotting against King Solomon and planning to take his kingdom. It was a young man who had been given a position of trust by Solomon. Ask someone to look up 1 Kings 11:26 to see who he was. Relate the story of Jeroboam's meeting with the prophet who foretold the division of the kingdom, when the the tribes would follow Jeroboam and the remainder, known as Judah, would remain faithful to Solomon's son. (1 Kings 11:29-36) (See Background Notes). Complete No. 5 on the pupils' worksheet.

APPLICATION

From the position of one of the strongest, wealthiest kingdoms of its day, a nation chosen by the Lord to be His people, the nation of Israel became divided and eventually scattered. The nation suffered through Solomon's disobedience and failure to heed God's warnings. Jeroboam too, although promised a kingdom, was warned that it was on condition of obedience (ch. 11:38) 'If you heed all that I command you, walk in My ways ... I will build for you an enduring house as I built for David'.

God reminds us that if we want to be successful and to know His blessing in our lives, obedience is essential.

He says in Jeremiah 7:23 'Obey My voice, and I will be your God,
and you shall be my people, and walk in all the ways
that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.'

LESSON 16

Studies in Joshua

THE BATTLE OF AI

Scripture Text - Joshua 8:1 - 29

AIM OF LESSON

To show how God is with us and helps us when we keep His commandments.

BACKGROUND NOTES

It is important that pupils know of the events in Joshua 7.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Begin by summarizing, briefly, the events of chapter 7. Remind the children that the lives of many people may be spoiled by the disobedience of a few others e.g. football crowd violence. In chapter 7 we learned that the Israelites' 'team' lost a battle because one person had disobeyed God. In today's lesson we see what happens when the 'team' all work together and obey their 'coach'.

Outline

1. Read Joshua 8:1, 2 with the class to introduce the story.
2. Summarise verses 3 - 8 using the description below and the battle plan. Refer to No. 1 on the pupils' worksheet.

Joshua drew up a plan for the battle choosing 30, 000 soldiers. He sent them to Ai by night and commanded them to hide. The next day he took about 5, 000 men and put them in hiding on the west side of the city. The main army were then hidden on the north side of the city. When all were in position Joshua and the rest of the soldiers then camped in the middle of the valley, towards the north and in open view of the city. On seeing the Israelite soldiers the king of Ai and his men were drawn out of the city, unaware of the soldiers who were waiting in ambush. They seized the city which was left unguarded and set it on fire.

3. Now read verses 20 - 23 with the class.

When the soldiers of Ai saw the smoke from their burning city, they tried to escape, realising what had happened. Joshua and the Israelites also saw the smoke and they turned round to attack the men of Ai. The ambush force left the burning city and came

towards the men of Ai from the opposite side, so trapping them in the middle. The Israelites killed all the men of Ai but brought the king alive to Joshua.

4. Read verses 24 - 29 with the class. Note that this time Israel was allowed to carry off plunder for themselves. Pupils should now know the stories of the two battles. Use No. 2 on the pupils' worksheet to compare the two.

	Chapter 7	Chapter 8
God's attitude to Israel	Angry because of sin	Promised victory
Result of battle	Israel defeated - 36 dead	Israel victorious. Ai destroyed.
Plunder	Taken against God's command	Taken by permission of God

Ask the pupils to think about what happens to a football or hockey team if one or two members do not obey their coach, or refuse to work with their team-mates. This is the picture of ch. 7. In ch. 8, however, the Israelite team all obeyed their leader (God) and worked together to a fixed plan, so they were victorious. The consequences of disobedience often affect more people than just the person who has disobeyed. It is wrong to disobey God's commands. We cannot expect Him to help us if we disobey Him: rather, we should expect that disobedience will be punished.

APPLICATION

If we love God we will want to obey Him. Then we can expect that He will help us, like He did the children of Israel in overcoming the city of Ai. Christians, working together for God, are a part of a team. That team will work most effectively when every member obeys their orders. The apostle Paul uses a slightly different picture - He suggests that we are all like parts of a body, each with a job to do and the movement of each part being affected by the other parts. The overall function of the body is dependent on the correct function of individual parts.

Read No. 3 on the pupils' worksheet. Emphasise that every part of the body is important. (References: Eph. 4:15,16 & 1 Cor. 12:14-21)

Look at No. 4 on the pupils' worksheet. Pupils might write to missionaries, or talk to their friends about Jesus. Help them to think of other things they could do to help Christ's body function eg. practical ways they could show Christ's love by helping other people, or taking part in organisations within the church.

LESSON 17

Studies in Joshua

GOD FIGHTS FOR HIS PEOPLE

Scripture Text - Joshua 10:1 - 15

AIM OF LESSON

To show that when we trust God His power is working for us.

BACKGROUND NOTES

After the battle of Ai, Joshua's neighbours, the Gibeonites, wondered who would be next to be attacked. They tricked Joshua into thinking they were ambassadors from a far country. They had old, torn and mended wineskins, old patched sandals and mouldy bread to convince him they'd been on the road for a long time (Joshua 9).

Joshua believed them without asking God for wisdom. He made peace with them, promising to spare their lives only to find out 3 days later that they were his neighbours. He couldn't break his promise to spare their lives and so made them hewers of wood and drawers of water to Israel.

When the King of Jerusalem heard that Joshua had defeated Ai and that the Gibeonites were now on Joshua's side (for Gibeon was a great city) he was afraid and sought help from four kings to fight Joshua.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Set the background for the pupils by telling them that Joshua's fame as God's Colonel in Chief of the Israelite army was spreading. He had conquered the city of Jericho and then Ai and the surrounding kings wondered who would be next to be conquered. When they heard that Gibeon had joined Joshua's side they were afraid because Gibeon was a great city.

Outline

1. Joshua's powerful enemies (Joshua 10:5)

The king of Jerusalem had decided it was time to gather help from the four kings of the surrounding cities to try to stop Joshua's expected attack. They camped beside the city of Gibeon and prepared to attack it. Now that they were Joshua's servants, the Gibeonites sent to him for help.

(Complete No. 1 on the pupils' worksheet)
2. Joshua's loyalty to his servants

Though the Gibeonites had tricked Joshua into making them his servants, he remembered his covenant with them (Joshua 9:15) and went to their help.

God remembers His promises to His people too and when they call on Him for help, He also hears and answers.

3. God's promise to Joshua

'Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand; not a man of them shall stand before you.' (Joshua 10:8)

Even though Joshua had God's promise he didn't presume on God's goodness but worked and planned to surprise and defeat the enemy.

He marched all night from Gilgal to Gibeon, took his enemies by surprise and his army was able to kill many of their enemies with their swords (v9,10).

(Complete No. 2 on the pupils' worksheet)

4. God used His power to defeat utterly Joshua's enemies

Read verse 11.

God, by His mighty power caused more of Joshua's enemies to die from being hit by hailstones than from the swords of Joshua's army.

5. Joshua's prayer and God's answer

Read verses 12 - 14.

God heard His servant's prayer and by His almighty power caused the day to be lengthened to aid Joshua's victory.

We shouldn't be surprised if God, who made the sun, moon and stars, can cause them to act contrary to their normal behaviour if He chooses.

(Complete No. 3 on the pupils' worksheet)

APPLICATION

God expects us to trust Him and when we do He never lets us down, even in situations that to us seem impossible to solve. God often uses 'the few' against the 'crowd' to show His power. Perhaps someone may be the only person in a class at school who believes in God and it may be hard not to 'follow the crowd' and do things that everyone else is doing but which are wrong in God's eyes. If we have faith in God and ask Him to help, He will work it out for us to win those sorts of battles and do what is right. Perhaps pupils may suggest problems that they might have to face at home or school.

God is the same today as He was in Joshua's day. We should trust in Him at all times because He has the power to help us in every possible situation. We should believe Paul's statement in Romans 8:31(b): 'If God is for us who can be against us?'

LESSON 18

Studies in Joshua

THE CITIES OF REFUGE

Scripture Text - Joshua 20

AIM OF LESSON

To show that God's provision of the cities of refuge was an example of His great love.

BACKGROUND NOTES

v2 'of which I spoke to you through Moses' - See Num. 35:9 - 34 and Deut. 19:1 - 10.

v3 'the avenger of blood' - when someone was murdered, his/her next of kin was responsible for putting the murderer to death.

v6 N.B. The person who had killed returned home for trial. See Num. 35:24 - 35.

v7, 8 These cities were spaced evenly throughout Israel, so that no-one had far to travel to reach one.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Introduce the lesson by telling the pupils that it is somewhat different from the other lessons in Joshua. The fighting is now over and the land has been divided up between the different tribes. However, some things still have to be done to enable the implementation of the laws which God gave Moses. This lesson tells about the Cities of Refuge which God provided for those who killed someone accidentally. These were places where such a person would be safe until a fair trial could be held.

Outline

Explain to the pupils the system in use in the time of Joshua for the punishment of murder. When a murder was committed the murderer was to be put to death by the murdered person's nearest relative who was called the 'avenger of blood'. In this way, only the murderer was killed after the murder. This avoided an escalation of violence which could have been caused by seeking revenge and counter revenge between the family of the murderer and the family of the murdered. Ask the pupils to complete No. 1 on their worksheets in their own words.

In order to ensure that the killer received a fair trial, God appointed six cities of refuge. The killer could flee to one of these and gain sanctuary there before his trial. If he was found guilty, then he was released to the 'avenger of blood' to be put to death. If the killing was accidental, the killer could live safely in a city of refuge. If he left the city before the death

of the High Priest, he could be put to death by the 'avenger of blood'. The Israelites at this time had no kings and the only official position of leadership was that of the High Priest. His death marked the end of an era and the beginning of a new period in the life of Israel.

The exact position of all the cities is not known but it is clear that there were three on either side of the River Jordan: two in the north, two in the centre, and two in the south. Thus no-one had to travel far to reach a city of refuge.

Read ch. 20 with the class.

Refer to the map (No. 2 on the pupils' worksheet) and ask the pupils to fill in the names of the six cities from the list of jumbled names at the bottom. Remind them that the cities were well spread out, so that no-one had far to travel to reach one.

Ask the pupils to complete No. 3 on the pupils' worksheet by looking up Deut. 19:5 and writing out in their own words an example of someone who could make use of a city of refuge.

APPLICATION

God gave the Israelites 'Cities of Refuge' so that a person would not be unjustly killed. He understood the problems which could have arisen amongst the children of Israel and made provision to help them avoid such problems. God also understands us and is willing and able to provide help for us at any time and in any situation. See Hebrews 13:5-6.

God laid down rules and gave instructions about how the 'Cities of Refuge' should be used. He also has given us rules to follow in our lives. We should obey His commandments if we wish to have His help and friendship. We show that we love Him by keeping His commandments (John 14:21) and if we love Him we know that we can trust Him to keep His promise and always to give us help in times of trouble.

Complete part 4 of the pupils' worksheet in class or at home.

LESSON 19

Studies in the Shorter Catechism

THE FALL AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Scripture Text - Gen. 3: 8 - 24

Catechism Questions 16, 17, 18, 19

AIM OF LESSON

To show that all the sin and misery of mankind are a direct result of the Fall and that every person is affected.

BACKGROUND NOTES

'the covenant ... with Adam'. A covenant is an agreement between two or more persons. However when we think of God's covenant with men we must remember that God and man are not equal partners in that covenant. God did not consult with man to decide what the covenant or the terms of the covenant would be. God is Sovereign. He alone decides the terms and imposes the covenant upon Himself and man. The covenant ... with Adam, sometimes referred to as the Covenant of Life, contains God's promise on His part of continued favour to man on condition of man's obedience to Him and a penalty for disobedience.

'his posterity ... by ordinary generation,' This little phrase, 'by ordinary generation', is carefully included in the answer to Question 16, to remind us that everyone born since Adam is a sinner, except the Lord Jesus who 'knew no sin' (2 Cor. 5:21). He was not born by ordinary generation, for He had no earthly father. The angel told Joseph, 'for that which is conceived in her (Mary) is of the Holy Spirit' (Matt. 1:20).

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Look at Section 1 of the pupils' worksheet and read the text in Rom. 3:23. Ask the pupils who teaches a child to be disobedient, selfish or bad-tempered. No one needs to be taught to be bad (sinful). We are naturally sinful. The Bible explains why this is so. It began when Adam sinned.

Outline**1. The Fall**

Adam's first sin is commonly called 'the Fall'. In Gen. 3 we have the account of what happened. The Bible also provides the explanation of what happened, i.e., the

doctrine of the Fall, which is summarised in this section of the Shorter Catechism. In Psalm 51:5 David says, 'Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.' In Matt. 15:19,20 the Lord Jesus says, 'Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man.' Sin comes from within us: we are sinful when we are born. These are the implications of the Fall for us all. We are born with a sinful nature (original sin) and, because of our sinful nature, we commit sins (actual transgressions) - Shorter Catechism Question 18. 'There is none who does good, no, not even one' (Rom. 3:12). Complete Section 2 of the pupils' worksheet. Explain that there is only one exception - the Lord Jesus, Who is holy and undefiled and separate from sinners. Read Matt. 1:18,20 and complete Section 3 of the pupils' worksheet. See Background Notes for teachers.

2. The Consequences of the Fall

Ask the pupils to think of the world we live in, with all its trouble, violence and death. The teacher could have newspaper cuttings and Tear Fund leaflets to illustrate the sin and misery of our world, e.g., riots, violence, unemployment, disease, cruelty, starvation, death. Ask the pupils why the world is like this.

God created Adam and Eve perfect and happy. He placed them in a beautiful world, with sufficient food, with work to do and with the blessing of His companionship. Something caused a dramatic change. Read Gen. 3: 8-24. The disobedience of Adam and Eve spoiled everything. There was a condition attached to happiness - obedience to God. Read Gen. 2: 16-17. Breaking God's law would bring punishment. Ask the pupils to recall the answer to Question 6 in the Child's Catechism, 'How were they punished?' Answer 'They were doomed to sorrow, toil and death, and driven from the garden.' Happiness was changed to sorrow, work became toil, earth's beauty was marred, life ended in death. Complete Sections 4 and 5 of the pupils' worksheet and discuss the answers.

Sin separated Adam and Eve from God. Ever since, mankind 'has lost communion with God' (Question 19, Shorter Catechism). Read Isa. 59:2. The Bible tells us that man's wickedness became great and every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time ... The earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence (Gen. 6:11). God's Word explains the disorders in our world. It also warns that sin will be punished. Read Ezek.18:4b. Punishment for sin means more than death of the body. God's Word explains what happens to the sinner after death. He is separated eternally from God, and suffers 'the pains of hell for ever' (Shorter Catechism Question 19). See Matt. 25:46.

APPLICATION

This is the saddest story we will ever read. It is the story of punishment and death. It is as though a black cloud suddenly shut out the sun from the Garden of Eden. The world has been a dark place ever since. However, one ray of sunshine pierced the gloomy cloud. God made a promise to Adam and Eve, before driving them from the Garden, the promise of a Saviour. Read Rom. 5:12, 18 and 19. Death came through Adam, but God so loved the world, that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him, shall not perish, but have eternal life. Life came through Christ. See Section 6 of the pupils' worksheet and memorise this verse.

LESSON 20

Studies in the Shorter Catechism

GOD'S GRACE TO SINFUL MEN

Scripture Text - Gen. 12: 1 - 9; 15: 1 - 16; 17: 1 - 14
Catechism 20

AIM OF LESSON

To show how God, in His mercy, planned to save sinners.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Covenant of Grace - This was 'the covenant made in eternity between God the Father and God the Son, as the representative of all the elect, by which the eternal salvation of the elect is fully provided for and infallibly guaranteed and which was in time revealed to the people of God and put into execution according to the divine plan'. See Summary of Christian Doctrine by Louis Berkhof p. 187.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

To refresh the pupils' memories of how man sinned and what the consequences of sin were ask them to complete No. 1 on their worksheet. Emphasise that when Adam and Eve sinned, sin became a part of their lives and as a consequence was passed on to all mankind descending from them. This means that every one of us was born with the seeds of sin in our lives.

1. The effect of sin

Sin affects every part of us. To illustrate this ask the pupils what happens when a few teaspoonfuls of orange juice are added to a glass of water. (Demonstrate if possible.) Point out that all the water which was previously clear and pure is coloured orange. Not one drop remains uncoloured. So it is with sin - not one part of our beings, ie. our minds, our consciences, our hearts, remains unaffected. The consequence of this is to separate us from God, who is Holy and cannot look on sin. This is what the Catechism means by 'an estate of sin and misery'. Unless we are cleansed from this condition we remain separated from God and when we die we go to Hell.

2. God chooses some to everlasting life

Relate the following story. Susan was 10 years old. Sometimes she went shopping with her mother. One day when they were in a grocery supermarket her mother asked Susan to bring two packets of sugar. Susan went to the appropriate shelf where she saw hundreds of packets of the particular brand of sugar her mother wanted. From all these she chose two and brought them back to her mother.

Ask the class why Susan chose those particular two packets. Establish that it had nothing to do with the packets - they all looked alike in every way - no packet was any better or worse than another. The choice was therefore entirely Susan's and had nothing to do with the individual packets themselves.

By using this illustration help the pupils to understand that we are like the packets of sugar. We all stand equally guilty before God and fully deserving of His wrath. None of us has anything to commend ourselves to Him over and above anyone else. Yet we are told in God's Word that He chose (elected) some to take them out of their present condition and bring them into a true relationship with Himself. Emphasise that it is God who has chosen - not man.

At this point ask the pupils to read Gen. 12: 1 - 9. Explain that God chose Abram from all the other people who lived in Ur (Gen. 11: 31,32). Emphasise that we are not told that Abram was any more upright than anyone else. The choice of Abram from all the other people was entirely God's. Having been chosen by God, Abram took God at His word and obeyed Him. Ask the pupils to do No. 2 on their worksheets.

3. When did God choose His people?

Ask the pupils where they are going for their holidays. Point out that some people plan where they are going to go many months in advance. Read Eph. 1: 3 -6 to the class. Explain that God chose His people well in advance - indeed from before the beginning of the world. This is what the Catechism means by 'from all eternity'.

4. God's Covenant with Abraham

Read Gen. 17: 1-14. God here makes known His Covenant of Grace to Abraham. Remind the pupils that this covenant is an agreement between God and man in which God undertakes to do certain things and in which He requires certain obligations of man. In the Covenant of Grace God promised to be a God to Abraham and to his descendants (v7). In other words, He promised to take Abraham and his descendants out of their hopeless position and restore them to a position of fellowship with Him. In return, He required Abraham and his descendants to keep the covenant (v9). To do this they had to accept and believe what God said. This meant putting their trust in Him and committing their lives to Him. As the covenant is an everlasting one (v7) it applies to all Abraham's seed for ever. Explain that anyone who accepts the obligation of this covenant is of the spiritual seed of Abraham. Ask the pupils to do Nos. 3 and 4 of their worksheets.

5. How did God propose to restore His chosen ones?

Relate the following story. Many years ago a man called George was a slave on a plantation in the State of Georgia, USA. Like many another young man George was often disobedient and refused to do what his master told him. Eventually his master allowed George to go to another plantation owner. George's new master was very cruel and beat George frequently. On hearing

this, George's former master took pity on George and went and purchased him back. George went back gladly to his former master and resolved to do whatever he was told in the future.

In many ways we are like George. We are separated from God because of our sin and are in the ownership of a very cruel master - the devil. Only God can buy us back from the devil. He does this through His Son Jesus Christ. It was Jesus who took the punishment for His people's sin through His death on Calvary's Cross. He is known as the 'Redeemer' because He paid the price for their sin in this way. Just in the same way as George willingly agreed to go back with his former master, it is our responsibility to accept Christ's offer to save us.

APPLICATION

It is important to emphasise to the pupils that we are all sinners from birth and fully deserve the punishment which God has laid down for sin. God, however, has provided a means whereby we can escape this punishment. He does this by calling us out from our present sinful state through the reading and preaching of His Word. He tells us that He wants us to place our trust in Him as our Saviour and Lord. Abraham accepted God at His Word and followed Him. Ask the pupils to think about their own sin and their relationship to God and answer No. 5 on their worksheet.

LESSON 21

Studies in the Shorter Catechism

JESUS CHRIST - REDEEMER OF GOD'S ELECT

Scripture Text - Luke 1:26 - 38

Catechism Questions - 21, 22

AIM OF LESSON

To show that only Jesus Christ, being truly God and truly man, is able to save sinners.

BACKGROUND NOTES

A 'redeemer' is one who pays a price to get back something which belongs to him.

'True body and reasonable soul' means a human body and human soul.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Tell this story of some prisoners of World War 2 who were held by the Japanese. A particular group of men were made to do hard labour every day with picks and shovels. One evening, after work, the guards found one shovel missing. The prisoners were lined up and the man who took the shovel was ordered to step forward. No one moved. Then the guards threatened to shoot all the prisoners. When it became clear that this would happen one man stepped forward. He was shot. Later, it was found that a mistake had been made and all the tools were present. It became apparent that the man who was shot was not guilty of stealing a shovel. He gave his life to save the other prisoners.

Outline

Use the above story to illustrate our position as sinners condemned to death and held captive by Satan and how an innocent Person died on our behalf. Unlike the prisoners in Japan, however, we all have sinned and deserve to die. Now consider:-

1. The reason for redemption being required.

- (a) Our lives are sinful .
- (b) Sin deserves punishment.
- (c) As sinners, we are separated from God. Our relationship with Him cannot be bought back with anything that we can do by ourselves. Only Someone who was not sinful could do anything to change that situation.

2. How can these requirements for our redemption to God be met?

Since we cannot meet these requirements ourselves, God in His love, has given us a Redeemer. This Redeemer is the Son of God who became man, the Lord Jesus. He

knew no sin and deserved no punishment.

3. Two Distinct Natures

It must be understood that the divine and human natures of Christ, although in one person, were completely distinct. This was necessary so that He could be our 'Redeemer'. The divine nature of Christ had to be truly God and His human nature fully man. The two natures of Christ remain distinct yet united in one person and will remain so forever.

Do No. 1 on the pupils' worksheet to discover some of the differences in the two natures of Christ.

ANSWERS:-	DIVINE NATURE	HUMAN NATURE
	1. God is a spirit	A body of flesh and bones
	2. He always was	He was born in Bethlehem
	3. Everywhere	In heaven
	4. He does not change	Jesus grew up

4. How this happened

Read the Scripture passage Luke 1:26 - 38.

Christ became man by being born as a baby. Any ordinary baby is born out of a relationship between a man and a woman but Jesus was formed in Mary by the Holy Spirit. Jesus was therefore born with a body and soul like ours but He was unlike us in that He was not sinful.

SUMMARY

This lesson can be summarised in the Redeemer's name - Lord Jesus Christ. Do No. 2 of the pupils' worksheet.

The name 'Lord' is really 'Jehovah' and speaks of His divine nature. He is the eternal God having all the attributes of God (Matt. 1:23).

The name 'Jesus' means 'Saviour' and speaks of His human nature.

The name 'Messiah' means 'Anointed One' and refers to God's chosen One to redeem His people from sin - i.e. 'Christ'.

APPLICATION

1. Use Acts 4:12 to show that we can only be saved by Jesus. Stress that we must ask Him to forgive our sins.
2. Jesus is able to help us when we are tempted. He himself, as a man, was tempted, and He understands our difficulties. We should ask Him to strengthen us to overcome temptation.

LESSON 22

Studies in the Psalms

A SONG OF THANKSGIVING

Scripture Text - Psalm 116

AIM OF LESSON

To teach how we should respond to God's goodness and mercy to us.

BACKGROUND NOTES

The author of this psalm is unknown so its experiences cannot be related directly to any particular person.

- v 3 'pains of hell' means the state of death.
- v10 'I believed, therefore I spoke' indicates that even under great stress the psalmist still had faith.
- v11 'I said ... all men are liars' indicates that only God can be relied upon, men are unreliable.
- v. 13 'cup of salvation' refers to the salvation God offers to the psalmist.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Discuss with the pupils situations which cause them to feel afraid. It may be helpful if you share with them something from your own experience, so that they learn that life holds painful experiences for us and it is important that we learn how to cope with these when we meet them. The writer of this psalm had such an experience.

Outline

The psalm can be studied under the following headings:-

1. Facing Danger

The psalmist recalls a time in which he was in great danger and in such distress that he was almost driven to despair.

Ask the pupils to read the following verses -

v3: He was thinking of death and the grave. These seemed very near for him and the thought troubled him greatly.

vs. 10 - 11 He spoke of great affliction and despair. The words used indicate the

intensity of his distress: everything seemed hopeless. He felt there was no one on whom he could depend.

This illustrates the fact that the Christian life is not without problems and difficulties. Our faith may be severely tested and it may seem that no one can help. Ask the pupils to suggest a few incidents from the Bible where people were in danger, distress or despair, e.g. Job; David; Daniel. Briefly discuss these incidents.

2. Dealing with life's problems and difficulties

The psalmist shows us how to deal with these situations.

(a) He prayed for help. The psalmist prayed and called on the only One who could help ie. Jehovah - the God of the Covenant who is faithful and always near to bless His own people. His prayer was brief and to the point, 'Deliver my soul'. Ask a pupil to read verse 4. Prayer must be our response to distress. We too must turn to the God of the Covenant who has promised to be our God. Ask the pupils to suggest characters from the Bible who prayed for help e.g. Peter's friends who prayed for his release from prison.

(b) God answered his prayer:-

Ask the pupils to read the following verses:-

vs 1 - 2 God heard him.

vs 5 - 6 God had compassion.

v 8 God delivered him. He delivered his soul from death, ie, deliverance from physical danger and death; He delivered his eyes from tears, ie, God removed the cause of the psalmist's grief; He delivered his feet from falling, ie, God held him up and helped him to live in a way that pleased Him.

Note how completely God responded to the psalmist's need by taking away the danger of death, calming his emotional distress and strengthening him. This should encourage us to come to this great and powerful God with our problems and sorrows because we see that He is willing to hear, to have compassion on us and to meet our needs completely.

Suggest some examples from the Bible of God answering prayer; eg, Hannah's prayer (I Sam. 1: 11,20).

(c) He was thankful to God

Ask a pupil to read verse 12.

The psalmist wondered how to respond to the great mercy God showed to him. He thankfully accepted the salvation God offered and promised to

worship and serve Him.

Ask the pupils to do No. 1 on their worksheets and see how the psalmist showed his gratitude to God.

Make sure the pupils understand what each verse means.

Answers -

v 1 He loved God.

v 13 He will take the cup of salvation, i.e, accept salvation.

vs 2, 13, 17 He will call on God, ie, look to God for help.

v 7 He rested.

v 9 He will walk before God, i.e, live by God's standards.

vs 14, 18, 19 He will pay his vows to the Lord, ie, fulfil the promises he made in his distress.

v 16 He will be God's servant, ie, do everything to please God.

Summary

This psalm presents us with a person remembering a time of great distress. He turned to God and pleaded for help. God graciously heard and helped him. The psalmist responded with gratitude, and spoke of his love for God and resolved to serve and worship Him.

APPLICATION

There are several points in this psalm which could be developed for application and you may wish to use some of those mentioned in the outline. However, one of the most important things to be learned is the example of how the writer responds to God's overwhelming goodness to him. It is often when we are severely tried and brought low that we see something of the depth of God's love and mercy. Our response to God's unmerited love for us and His offer of salvation and strength must be a life totally dedicated to the active service of our King. No.2 on the pupils' worksheet gives some examples of situations in which a Christian may not find it easy to respond in a way that honours God. Ask the pupils to think of what they have learned from Psalm 116 and write down their answers.

LESSON 23

Studies in the Psalms

GUIDANCE FOR LIVING A CHRISTIAN LIFE

Scripture Text - Psalm 119: 9 - 16

AIM OF LESSON

To show the relevance of God's Word in our daily lives.

BACKGROUND NOTES

The author and the circumstances in which the psalm was written are unknown. The whole psalm lays great emphasis on God's law. The word translated 'law' in the Old Testament also means 'teaching' or 'instruction', i.e, the will of God revealed to Israel.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Show the pupils a town plan or map of their area. Find their homes on the map and then suggest that they imagine they are leaving home to go on a journey. Ask them what two things they would need to know.

1. Where they are going.
2. How to get there.

Outline

Lead into the Scripture passage by saying that our 'destination' or 'goal' should be to please God on earth and to be in heaven with Him when we die. God has left us a 'map' - the Bible - which explains the route we are to take.

In Psalm 119 the psalmist lays great stress on the importance of the Bible in the life of the Christian. Just as Guides and Scouts refer closely to their handbook so a Christian should rely totally on the Bible to help him live the Christian life. At this point ask the pupils to complete No. 1 on the pupils' worksheet.

In our Scripture passage the psalmist approaches this subject by posing a question (Psalm 119: 9) 'How can a young man cleanse his way?' He answers his own question in the same verse 'By living according to your Word'. In the remainder of the passage he goes on to explain different ways in which this may be done.

1. By memorizing God's Word (Psalm 119: 11). Point out to the pupils that this is why they are asked to learn portions of Scripture in the Sabbath School or elsewhere. Talk about other things they may have learnt by heart and how these come in useful,

eg, tables at school, Green Cross Code, etc.

2. By talking to other people about the Bible (Psalm 119: 13). Ask the pupils who has talked to them about the Bible (minister, parents, teachers, etc). Discuss with them opportunities they may have to talk to others about the Gospel.
3. By obeying God's Word (Psalm 119: 14). Ask the pupils to complete part 2 of the pupils' worksheet. Just as it is useless to read a recipe and then to make up your own ingredients, or to read the instructions for making a model aircraft and then not to put them into practice; so it is pointless to read the Bible and not to obey it.
4. By meditating on the Bible (Psalm 119: 15). It is not enough to read the Bible as we would read a novel or newspaper. To 'meditate' means to read slowly and repeatedly and to ponder over the meaning and application of a Bible passage.
5. By delighting in God's Word (Psalm 119: 14, 16). Encourage the pupils to talk about what parts of the Bible they enjoy reading, and why they enjoy those parts.

Ask the class to suggest characters from the Bible who lived according to God's Word -

1. By memorizing it, eg, Samuel.
2. By talking to other people about the Bible, eg, Paul, Philip.
3. By obeying God's Word, eg, Noah, Abraham, Moses.
4. By meditating on the Bible, eg, David.
5. By delighting in God's Word, eg, Paul, Mary (sister of Martha).

Encourage pupils to briefly relate some of the stories connected with these characters.

APPLICATION

In order to put into practice the lessons learned from today's passage, introduce the pupils to the challenge in Section 3 of pupils' worksheet. Discuss with them what they would actually do in order to put each point into practice and encourage them to put a tick opposite each one as they fulfil it during the coming week. Ask them to think of any difficulties they might have in achieving each challenge and how they might overcome these.

LESSON 24

Studies in the Psalms

DESIRE TO WORSHIP

Scripture Text - Psalm 84

AIM OF LESSON

To study the psalmist's desire to worship and to think about our attitude to worship.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Ask the class members if they have ever missed a Sabbath at church (eg. because they were ill or away from home). Ask them if they remember how they felt about it: perhaps they felt sorry that they hadn't been to church or perhaps they felt it was quite nice to have a day off for a change.

Today's lesson is called 'Desire to Worship'. Ask the pupils what the word 'worship' means to them. (Definitions include service paid to God, adoration, respect, or to honour love or admire.) As we think about Psalm 84 we are first of all going to think about someone who loved worshipping in God's house and then we are going to think about how we ourselves feel about going to worship God in church.

Outline**1. The Psalmist's Desire to Worship****(a) Read Psalm 84:1-4**

Ask the pupils how the psalmist (or writer of the psalm) describes God's house (v1 - 'lovely'). Ask how he feels about being there (v2 - longs to be there). We can see that the psalmist's desire to be in God's house was very great. We might say that he is 'dying' to go and worship there. One reason why the writer of the psalm is speaking so strongly here is that he is unable to go to God's house at this time. He would like to be as free as the sparrows or swallows to enter God's house (v3) so that he could enjoy God's presence and protection. In v4 he describes those who are able to spend much time in God's house as 'blessed'. In the Bible 'blessed' means truly happy: we cannot be really happy without God's presence.

(b) Read Psalm 84:5-7

The last word in v5 is 'pilgrimage'. Ask the pupils if they know what a pilgrimage is. It is a journey which people make to a special place, and it is usually long and often difficult. The place is mostly one connected with their religious beliefs. People used to go to places where apostles or saints had lived or died; Moslems still journey to Mecca,

their most important city; people have always journeyed to Israel, to see where Jesus lived. Ask if the pupils can tell where the pilgrims in these verses are going (v7 - Zion, Jerusalem). They wanted to worship God in Jerusalem. Part of their way was difficult. 'Baca' (v6) can mean balsam trees, which grow in very dry places but God provided His travelling people with water and they reached Jerusalem safely in the end.

Christians, too, are pilgrims journeying through life, desiring to get to know God better and be with Him in Heaven at last. 'Baca' in v6 can also mean 'weeping', and the word for 'pools' can also mean 'blessings'. This tells us that God will help us and provide for us in the difficult times of our earthly pilgrimage.

(c) Read Psalm 84:8-12

The writer of the psalm has told God how much he misses His house and now in vs8-9 he asks God to hear his prayer by looking with favour on the face of the king, God's anointed one.

God still hears our prayers today through the King, Jesus Christ. In v10 the psalmist says that he would rather have a lowly position in God's house than spend his life with people who do not honour God. The psalm ends with praise to God, who the writer knows will always give good things to His people.

Complete No. 1 on the pupils' worksheet.

2. My Desire to Worship

We have seen how much the writer of Psalm 84 loved worshipping in God's house - he was 'dying' to be there and he was envious of those who were able to be there when he was not. This should make us consider how our feelings about worshipping God in church today match up to his.

First, ask the pupils to suggest some reasons why we should want to worship God. (For example, because He is so great, because of all the things He has done for us.) Ask them to tell you some of the things that God has done for them or given to them. (eg.(a) material things - homes, food, clothes, etc.; (b) spiritual gifts - God forgives our sins, accepts us as His children, promises that we will be with Him in Heaven.)

Complete No. 2 on the pupils' worksheet. (Answers to 2(b): home, food, family, clothes)

We can go to a special place, ie our own church building, to thank and worship God.

Ask the pupils to say if they think it is possible to worship God in any other place, and if so, where.

Although it is possible to worship God anywhere at any time, there are reasons why we must go to church on Sabbath to worship. Ask the pupils to tell you why we should do so. (Coming to church every Sabbath helps us to thank God regularly; it is good to meet with other Christians; God has commanded it.)

Complete No. 3 on the pupils' worksheet.

APPLICATION

Discuss with the class ways in which our desire to worship could be increased. Suggestions may be:

- (a) by changing our attitude, perhaps thinking of church as a place to go and thank God for His gifts and not just a place to go out of habit or because we have to go there.
- (b) by changing the church service in some way, perhaps by using psalms that have been learnt in Sabbath school, or changing the order of service.

Discuss the type of children's addresses the pupils enjoy and how much they understand the sermon and prayers. Ask them if they think these parts of the service could be made easier to follow, or if children could be more involved in the service.

Complete No. 4 on the pupils' worksheet.

LESSON 25

Working for the enlargement of God's Kingdom means

GOING FORWARD IN FAITH

Scripture Text - Jeremiah 32:1 - 33: 7

AIM OF LESSON

To show that Jeremiah demonstrated his faith in God's promise despite unfavourable circumstances.

BACKGROUND NOTES

This chapter is important because it demonstrates Jeremiah's faith and hope for the future restoration of his people.

The incident occurred in 587/8 BC, in the tenth year of Zedekiah's reign. Jerusalem was under siege by the Chaldeans, and Jeremiah predicted that the city would be captured because of the sins of the people.

In this unpromising political situation Jeremiah's cousin wanted to sell him some land which may have already been occupied by the enemy. Jeremiah purchased it, and the details of deal were written, signed and witnessed in a deed. Two copies of the deed were prepared: one was sealed and one was left open according to the law at that time. The entire transaction demonstrated the great faith which Jeremiah had in the Divine promise that the nation would eventually be renewed.

Jeremiah had some second thoughts about the wisdom of his action once he had purchased the property. In some distress he prayed to God and was reassured concerning the future. Jeremiah's faith and obedience under the circumstances are an example to all true believers.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Ask the pupils to tell you what they remember about the story of how God brought the Israelites out of Egypt to the 'promised land' (see Exodus 13,14). Once they had settled in Judah, the people began to be disobedient, and God punished them by allowing them to suffer famine, disease and death. The background to today's story is that Jerusalem was being attacked by the troops of Babylon.

Outline**1. The facts of the story**

Relate today's story using the outline below and the map in the pupils' worksheet. Do not attempt to read the entire portion of Scripture in class. The King of Judah, Zedekiah, had made God's prophet, Jeremiah, a prisoner. This was because Jeremiah had prophesied that Babylon would capture Jerusalem and that the king, Zedekiah, would not escape.

While in prison God spoke to Jeremiah and said that Hanamel would come and ask Jeremiah to buy some of the family's land at Anathoth. According to God's law, a person wishing to sell his land must offer it first to his nearest relative. Consequently, Hanamel offered it to Jeremiah his cousin.

When Hanamel did come, Jeremiah knew that God was directing him to buy the field. So, he responded in faith, bought the field from Hanamel and signed the deed in the presence of witnesses. This demonstrated Jeremiah's own assurance that God would keep His promise (Jer.32:15). Jeremiah then gave the deeds to Baruch to keep.

After this, Jeremiah remembered God's faithfulness to His people. Though he acted in faith, he confessed that he was confused (Jer. 32:25). God had promised that the Israelites would repossess Jerusalem, yet He had allowed the city to be taken over by the Chaldeans.

God again spoke to Jeremiah and reassured him that He would bring His people back to the land He had promised to give them and once more they would turn to God and be obedient to Him (Jer.32:37-39). God promised that He would help them to defeat their enemies (Jer. 33:7).

2. The setting of the story.

You may wonder why someone like Jeremiah bought this piece of ground in the land of Judah. Under normal circumstances, the purchase of property would seem to be a natural thing to do. However at this time circumstances were far from normal. The country was in a state of war and the prophet himself was in prison.

When Hanamel came to sell his field, Jeremiah could have said, 'You know very well it would be impossible for me to buy ground while I am imprisoned. Don't you know it is only a matter of time before the Babylonians take over the land you now offer to sell me?' While he may have thought this he didn't say it. Rather, Jeremiah made arrangements for the legal purchase of his uncle's field in Anathoth. He called for a number of Jews to act as witnesses to the signing of the deed and he made arrangements for the scrolls to be preserved for future times. People may have doubted the wisdom of his purchase but he believed God's promise and obeyed His command (Jer. 32:8(b),25). Despite unfavourable circumstances he trusted God.

To revise today's lesson complete Nos. 1 & 2 on the pupils' worksheet.

APPLICATION

Jeremiah did not live long enough to see the fulfilment of God's promises. However he had faith in God and knew that God would prosper His people again. Once more they would turn away from doing evil deeds and obey God, as they used to. Jeremiah was not afraid to speak out and tell people God's messages. He did not worry if people laughed at him or harmed him. His first concern was to do what God told him to do, even though he may have been puzzled at times. We should try to be like Jeremiah.

Complete No. 3 on the pupils' worksheet in class or at home.

Ans. to pupil's worksheet: 1. C, E 2. (c) Approx. 1000 km; 625 miles
3. Jacob, Noah, Abraham, David, Samson, Sarah, Samuel, Elijah.

LESSON 26

Working for the enlargement of God's Kingdom means

DEPENDING SOLELY ON GOD'S WORD AND SPIRIT

Scripture Text - Acts 8: 5-8, 14-17, 26-39

AIM OF LESSON

To show how God's Kingdom grew through Philip's faithful teaching of God's Word and his dependence on the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

BACKGROUND NOTES

The persecution following Stephen's death (about 35 - 37 A.D.) led to the first broadening of the Church's outreach, as Christians fled from capture or death.

Philip was a Greek-speaking Jew and one of the seven deacons (Acts 6:3,5). He depended on the Holy Spirit to change the lives of the diseased, deluded and demon-possessed people of Samaria. During a successful period of evangelisation among the Samaritans, he obeyed the angel's call to go to the Gaza Road, a desert area and an unlikely place to meet many people. He was guided by the angel to join the Ethiopian, who was puzzled as to the meaning of God's Word. The passage he quoted is from the Greek translation of the O.T. (Isaiah 53: 7, 8). The Spirit had prepared both men for this meeting.

VISUAL AID

Map showing Jerusalem, Samaria and Gaza (see pupils' worksheet).

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

1. Ask the pupils: 'What is a command?' 'What kind of people give commands?'. Suggest that they are orders or instructions given by people in authority. Ask the pupils to do No. 1 on the pupils' worksheet. (Answer to 1(b): go, baptizing and teaching).
2. Jesus promised to give His followers power to carry out these commands. Do No. 2 on the pupils' worksheet. Ask the class what the disciples were to receive (power) and who would give them this power (the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit).

The following could be written with a marker on a large sheet of paper and used as a visual aid.

Jesus said

Go and teach
My Holy Spirit will
give you power

Outline

Using the map in the pupils' worksheet, point out Jerusalem, where Jesus' disciples received the Holy Spirit and where they started witnessing. Explain that when persecution began, many Christians were scattered. They fled to Judea and Samaria. (Use map). Explain that wherever the Christians went they taught people about Jesus Christ, and so the Good News was spread abroad. Do No. 3 on the pupils' worksheet.

1. Philip's Work in Samaria

Read Acts 8: 5-8 and 14-17 to the class, and ask them to do No. 4 on the pupils' worksheet.

(Ans. (a) Samaria (b) preached (c) yes (d) Peter & John (e) prayed that the people would receive the Holy Spirit (f) the Holy Spirit.)

2. Philip's Encounter with the Ethiopian Eunuch

Tell in your own words the story of Philip's meeting with the Ethiopian (Acts 8: 26 - 39).

Include the following points:-

- a) The angel of the Lord told Philip to leave Samaria and go to the Gaza Road. (Use map)
- b) Philip obeyed, although he was unlikely to meet many people on that lonely, desert road.
- c) The Ethiopian treasurer was travelling home, in a chariot, from Jerusalem where he had been worshipping God.
- d) He was reading from the book of Isaiah, where God's gift of the Messiah is foretold and where Jesus is referred to as being 'led as a sheep to the slaughter' and as a 'lamb silent before its shearer'.
- e) The Holy Spirit prompted Philip to join the Ethiopian in his chariot where he answered his puzzled questions (v34). He told him that the lamb in the prophecy referred to Jesus Christ who suffered and died for him.
- f) The Ethiopian believed, was baptised and went home rejoicing.

When you have told the story, ask the class to do No. 5 on the pupils' worksheet.

(Ans. (a) ii, (b) ii, (c) iii)

3. Revise the story using the following questions:

Q.1. How did Philip come to meet the Ethiopian?

The Holy Spirit prepared this meeting. He instructed Philip to go to Jerusalem and the Gaza Road and Philip obeyed.

Q.2. The Holy Spirit also prepared this meeting in another way. What was the Ethiopian doing?

The Ethiopian had been worshipping God, was reading from God's Word and in particular was reading a passage which referred to Jesus. This was the Holy Spirit's work. Philip had only to teach the man what it meant.

Q.3. Why did the Ethiopian go home so happy?

He realised that he was a sinner and deserved to be punished. He believed that Jesus had taken his punishment Himself. He was now free from the power of sin and was baptised, showing that he was beginning a new life as a follower of Jesus. This gave him joy.

APPLICATION

We can all help to make God's Kingdom grow as Philip did.

1. First we have to make Jesus our King and to ask Him to rule in our lives.
2. Philip obeyed Jesus' command to tell others about Him. We should obey that command too.
We must read the Bible so that we know all about Jesus. The Holy Spirit will help us to understand.
3. Philip obeyed the angel of the Lord. The Bible is God's Word to us. It will guide us when we read it regularly and it will help us to know what Jesus wants us to do and to live as Jesus would have us live. God's Holy Spirit will help us to live and obey Jesus.

Complete No. 6 on the pupils' worksheet in class, if there is time, or at home.

LESSON 27

Working for the enlargement of God's Kingdom means

OBEYING GOD'S COMMAND

Scripture Text - Acts 10

AIM OF LESSON

To show how, through Cornelius' and Peter's obedience, it became known that the gospel was for all men and not for the Jews only.

BACKGROUND NOTES

This chapter deals with the formal admission of the first Gentile convert and a further broadening of the Church's outreach.

CORNELIUS - a Roman army officer in charge of approximately 100 men. He believed in God, prayed to Him and kept the Jewish hours of worship.

JOPPA - Jaffa, now called Tel Aviv, a city on the Mediterranean coast of Israel. It was and is a seaport. There are famous orchards nearby with oranges, lemons and apricots.

CAESAREA - about 30 miles from Joppa i.e. more than a day's journey. It was a great Gentile city, residence of the Roman governors and headquarters of the Roman troops.

PETER'S TRANCE - to satisfy his hunger, Peter was told to eat unclean flesh and in doing so break the Mosaic laws in Deut. 14. These laws regarding clean and unclean animals were important in separating Israel from the ungodly nations around her. By forbidding the eating of certain types of meat the Jews were daily reminded of the call to separate themselves from sin and be a holy people. Through the vision God taught Peter that Christ died for all men regardless of race, religion, colour or social position. (Matt. 28:19).

JEWISH HOURS OF PRAYER

3rd hour - 9 a.m.

6th hour - Noon

9th hour - 3 p.m.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Ask the pupils to name some kinds of meat which we eat. Tell them that the Israelites (Jews) had laws forbidding them to eat certain types of meat, e.g. Jews are forbidden to eat

pork, ham or bacon because the pig is an 'unclean' animal (see Deut. 14). Explain that these laws were given to God's people to keep them a holy people, separate from other nations (Deut. 14:2). Jews were very particular about the observance of these laws. Do No. 1 on the pupils' worksheet.

(Ans. Clean: deer, sheep, snake, ox, goat, goose. Unclean: raven, pig, hare, camel)

Outline

Today's lesson tells us how God brought together two men - Peter, one of Jesus' disciples and Cornelius, a non-Jew.

CORNELIUS

Ask the pupils what a centurion was. Explain that Cornelius was a Roman centurion, who lived at Caesarea, the local H.Q. of the Roman army. He gave gifts to the poor and had heard of the one true God and prayed to Him but he did not know Jesus Christ.

Summarize the story of Acts 10, telling the pupils that one afternoon when Cornelius was praying, he had a vision of the angel of God. This angel told Cornelius that God had heard his prayers and remembered his kind deeds and He told him to send to Joppa for a man called Simon Peter. Explain that this must have seemed a strange command to Cornelius who likely knew that a Jew would not enter the home of a Gentile. Nevertheless, Cornelius obeyed the command. He told two of his servants and a soldier all about his vision and sent them to Joppa.

Do No. 2 on the pupils' worksheet.

SIMON PETER

Ask the pupils: 'Who was Simon Peter?'

Further summarize Acts 10 for the pupils, using a map to show Joppa, where Peter was staying with Simon the tanner. Tell them that about noon on the day following that of Cornelius' vision, Peter went up to the flat roof of the house to pray. He grew hungry and as he waited for food to be prepared, he fell into a trance in which he saw what looked like a large sheet being lowered by its four corners from heaven to earth. On this sheet were all kinds of animals, reptiles and birds. Suddenly a voice said, 'Rise up Peter, kill and eat!' Peter must have been very shocked as some of the creatures were ones which Jews did not eat. Remind the pupils of what was said about this at the start of the lesson. Peter replied, 'Certainly not, Lord! I have never eaten anything common or unclean'. The voice spoke again, 'Don't call anything unclean which God has declared clean'. This happened three times, after which the sheet was taken back to heaven. Explain that Peter wondered why God was telling him to break the Jewish law which made a distinction between Jews and other people.

Shortly after Peter's vision three men came to Simon's house looking for Peter. Ask the pupils if

they can guess who these men were.

Explain that God's Spirit spoke to Peter telling him of the arrival of three men and telling him to go down and meet them and not to be afraid to go with them.

Explain how Peter obeyed God's Spirit by meeting the men and by accompanying them back to Caesarea the next day.

Do No. 3 on the pupils' worksheet.

Ask the class if they can remember what Peter was told to do in his strange vision. Explain that Peter now knew that God was telling him to treat non-Jews in the same way as he would treat his own Jewish people. Peter was not to think of any person as less important than another. As a result of understanding this, Peter had no hesitation in entering Cornelius' house when he arrived in Caesarea.

SIMON PETER MEETS CORNELIUS

The following summary of verses 24-48 may be used to recount the story to the class.

Cornelius, his relatives and closest friends were waiting, eager to hear everything that Peter had been instructed by God to say. Peter realised that he had been sent by God to tell these people about Jesus Christ. So just as he had told the Jews, he now told this non-Jewish household all about Jesus. 'Everyone who believes in Jesus will have his sins forgiven through the power of His name,' Peter told them. God's Spirit fell on all those who heard. Peter's friends were amazed because this was the first time they had seen non-Jews being converted. The new believers were then baptised. The good news of Jesus Christ was intended not just for the Jews only but for all men of all nations.

Ask the pupils to complete No. 4 on their worksheets.

APPLICATION

Cornelius and Peter both obeyed God even though they did not fully understand what He was asking them to do. Through their obedience a number of Gentiles including Cornelius accepted Christ as their Saviour and in addition the Jewish Christians were taught that Christ died for all nations and not just for the Jews. We, too, must obey Christ in all things even though we may not completely understand all of His Word. Our membership of God's family does not depend on our colour, class or creed but on our acceptance of and obedience to Jesus Christ.

Ask the pupils to complete No. 5 on their worksheets.

LESSON 28

Working for the enlargement of God's Kingdom means

SENDING WORKERS TO MAKE HIS KINGDOM GROW

Scripture Text - Acts 11: 19 - 30; Acts 13: 1 - 3

AIM OF LESSON

To show the importance which the church in the New Testament placed on telling people from other countries about Christ.

BACKGROUND NOTES

It is estimated that there were several thousand Christians in Jerusalem at the time of Stephen's death. Saul's activity resulted in the scattering of quite a number of these to distant and safe places. Some of them migrated into Phoenicia and Cyprus and many went as far north as Antioch.

Antioch had a population of half a million people and was rated as the third largest city in the entire Roman Empire. Many Jews resided in this pagan city and it was these people to whom the Christian fugitives witnessed in the synagogues.

Acts 11:26 This was the year 43 or 44 AD. Barnabas and Saul were in close association in the work at Antioch for an entire year. They worked energetically together, successfully teaching many people and bringing them into the Church.

'Christian' - the word appears twice more in the New Testament, in Acts 26:28 and 1 Peter 4:16, each time as a name that was given to the disciples by others. Since the name was derived from 'Christ', the Greek word for 'Messiah', it is certain that the disciples were given this name in Antioch and not by the Jews.

Acts 11:30 - 'elders' - Those who had the spiritual oversight of the congregation.

Acts 13:1 - 'prophets and teachers' - refers to men who thoroughly understood the Word and were able to teach it to others.

Acts 13:3 - 'laid hands on them' - an act showing that these men were set apart for God's work in witnessing to the Gentiles.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Ask the pupils what they think a church is. After discussing this for a few minutes, do No. 1 on the pupils' worksheet.

The correct answers are: a (iii); b (i) (ii) (iv); c (ii); d (ii) (iii); e (ii) (iii).

Outline

Relate this story to the class using the outline below. Reference should be made to the map on the pupil's worksheet.

After Stephen was killed, it was not safe for the disciples to stay in Jerusalem. Ask the pupils if they can remember why it wasn't safe. The High Priest had begun persecuting and killing many of God's people; Saul had been helping until his dramatic meeting with Christ which had changed him and he was now one of the believers. They had to move to other places. Ask the pupils if they know some of the names of some of the places they went to. Look at the map on the pupils' worksheet and complete No. 2 - Answers: Cyprus; Antioch.

Antioch was near the sea-coast and a very important city. The disciples there told their new neighbours about Jesus and how He had died for their sins. Many of the Greeks who lived in the city believed. When the Church in Jerusalem heard that the Greeks were turning to God, they sent Barnabas to help the growing Church. Complete No. 3 on the pupils' worksheet to find out about Barnabas.

The people at Antioch were glad to have Barnabas come to preach to them. The new congregation grew so fast that soon it needed two ministers. Barnabas went to Tarsus where Saul was living and asked him to come and help. For one year the two disciples stayed at Antioch. It was at Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians, or followers of Christ. All over the world that name is given to them to this day.

While the Christians in Jerusalem were living in fear of the wicked king Herod, the church in Antioch was quietly growing stronger and stronger. At this time the Holy Spirit spoke to the church at Antioch and said, 'I want Barnabas and Saul to leave this church and to go farther into other countries to preach to the heathen'. After the Christians had prayed and laid their hands on the heads of Saul and Barnabas, they sent them away.

APPLICATION

Christ's command to be His witnesses, or missionaries, still applies to us today. Read Matt. 28:16 - 20. God does not call all of us to go to foreign countries. We can witness for Him in our everyday situation e.g., at home, school or on the games field. There are those specially called by God to leave their homes and work for Him somewhere else. Ask the pupils if they know the names of any missionaries and where they are working.

The whole church at Antioch was involved with the sending of missionaries. They all prayed for Saul and Barnabas. Ask the pupils to suggest ways in which they could become involved with our missionaries. Discuss this for a few minutes and then read No. 4 on the pupils' worksheet.

LESSON 29

Working for the enlargement of God's Kingdom

BEING READY TO TELL THE GOOD NEWS IN ANY CIRCUMSTANCE

Scripture Text - Acts 16

AIM OF LESSON

To show that we should be prepared to tell others about Jesus whatever the situation in which we find ourselves.

BACKGROUND NOTES

vs 10, 11 It is assumed that at Troas the three missionaries, Paul, Silas and Timothy were joined by Luke, the author of the Acts, for at this point the use of 'we' begins.

vs 17, 18 Paul and his friends were disturbed that the people should be hearing of them and their message from an evil spirit.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Visual Aid - Map on pupils' worksheet.

Introduction

Ask the pupils if they have ever gone on a long journey. Discuss how they felt when they arrived. Ask if they were tired or hungry and if they went immediately to a friend's house. Tell them that today's lesson is about travelling.

Outline

Paul and some of his friends had set out on a long journey. They planned to visit all the cities where Paul had preached on a previous trip, to see how their Christian friends were getting along. While they were on their journey, God told them that He wanted them to change their plans and go to Macedonia. Paul and his friends, Silas, Timothy and Luke obeyed, and soon they had arrived in one of the big cities of Macedonia, called Philippi. Philippi was a long way from where Paul and his friends had intended to go but they went willingly, believing that God had something very important for them to do there. Look at the map on the pupils' worksheet.

Paul and his friends did not know anyone in Philippi. They had had a long trip, part of it by sea and the rest probably on foot. Complete No. 2 on the pupils' worksheet to see what they did on the Sabbath day. They did what they knew God wanted them to do. They went to where people were known to gather to pray and they told people about Jesus. Three people had their lives greatly changed because of this.

1. The first person was Lydia. Read vs. 14, 15 with the class. She was a business woman who was very religious. She was worshipping at the riverside with other women when Paul and his friends arrived to worship with them and tell them of Jesus. God spoke to

Lydia through what Paul was saying and she believed and became a Christian. She then invited Paul and his friends to stay at her house. Fill in the details about Lydia in No. 3 on the worksheet.

2. The second person was a slave girl. Read vs. 16-19 with the class. She was possessed by an evil spirit and was used by her owners to tell fortunes. The evil spirit, through the girl, kept shouting that Paul and the others were followers of God who had come to preach the way of salvation. This happened continually as they were going to prayer. Paul was very disturbed by this and, in the name of Jesus, he commanded the evil spirit to come out of her. At that very moment the spirit left her. Fill in the details in No. 3 on the worksheet.
3. The third person was the jailer at Philippi. Read vs 20 - 36 with the class. Paul and Silas were in prison because, when Paul cast the evil spirit out of the slave girl, she could no longer make money for her owners by telling fortunes. Her owners had made a complaint and the two missionaries were cruelly beaten and put in prison. However, even in prison at midnight, although they must have felt very sore, they were still singing praises to God. Then suddenly there was an earthquake. The prison doors were flung open by it. The jailer was frightened. He was sure all the prisoners had escaped and he would be blamed. He was about to kill himself but Paul and Silas stopped him, saying everyone was still there.

The jailer could see that these men were different from any others he had known. He asked them how he could be saved. Paul and Silas told him and he, too, believed on Jesus and became a Christian. To show that he was really changed he washed and dressed their painful wounds. He and his family were then baptised to signify their cleansing from sin. Now fill in the details about the jailer in No. 3 on the worksheet.

APPLICATION

These things would not have happened if Paul and his friends hadn't gone to the riverside on the Sabbath or if Paul and Silas had grumbled and complained instead of singing and praying in prison. Instead of thinking of their own comfort, they used every opportunity that came along to speak to people about Jesus. As a result they had many experiences, some good, some not good at all. However they were willing to let God use them in every circumstance to spread His good news. They did not complain when things seemed to go against them because they knew it was all part of God's great plan. Our circumstances will not be exactly the same but we too, have many opportunities to tell the good news about Jesus Christ.

Ask the pupils to suggest times or places where they might not feel like telling anyone about Jesus Christ. Discuss how best they could witness for Jesus in such situations. Paul commanded Timothy to preach the Word in all circumstances. Look up 2 Timothy 4:2 and ask the pupils to complete No. 4 on their worksheet. Remind them of God's promise that He will always help us to do what He asks us to do and of what Paul also said in Phil. 4:13. Help the pupils to complete No.4(b) on their worksheet.

LESSON 30

Working for the Enlargement of God's Kingdom means

CONTINUING TO WITNESS EVEN WHEN FEW APPEAR TO BE RESPONDING

Scripture Text - Acts 17

AIM OF LESSON

To show that all Christians should follow Paul's example and continue to tell others about the gospel, regardless of whether or not there appears to be any positive response.

BACKGROUND NOTES

- v 6 'These who have turned the world upside down' - international trouble-makers.
- v 9 'When they had taken security from Jason' - Jason and his friends were let out on bail and were required to keep the peace and not to annoy the imperial government.
- v 17 In Athens Paul not only preached in the synagogue but discussed the gospel in the market place with those who happened to be there. This Greek custom was particularly effective in Athens where the people were always anxious to hear new philosophies.
- v 18 Paul encountered Epicurean and Stoic philosophers in Athens. Both these schools of philosophy were prominent in the N.T. period. The Stoics were founded by Zeno who taught in the 'stoa' or porch in the market place in Athens almost three centuries before Christ. The Epicureans derived their name from the philosopher Epicurus who lived about 300 years before Christ.
- v 19 It is uncertain whether Paul was taken to the place known as Areopagus or Mars Hill or to the Court of Areopagus, which was a body of philosophers. It would appear likely that he was given a formal hearing at this court.
- v. 28 Paul appears to have been well acquainted with the prominent philosophies and was able to quote from the poetry of Epimenides of Crete, the line 'For we are also His offspring'. This is the same Epimenides which, Greek legend tells us, advised the setting up of altars to, 'unknown gods' such as the one in Athens to which Paul referred at the beginning of his speech (v 23).

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Ask the pupils if they can remember the name of the town where Paul and his friends preached, which they heard about last week. Show them the position of Philippi on the map. (No. 1 on the pupils' worksheet.)

Outline

While it is thought that Luke stayed in Philippi to help and encourage the Christians there,

Paul, Silas and Timothy travelled on to spread the good news about Jesus to other parts.

1. Their first stop was Thessalonica. Help the pupils to trace Paul's journey from Phillipi to Thessalonica on the map in the pupils' worksheets. In Thessalonica Paul preached in the synagogue for three Sabbaths. He told the people how Jesus the Saviour suffered death and rose again from the dead according to the Old Testament Scriptures.

A number of people, mostly Greeks, believed and became Christians. The Jews were jealous. By telling lies, they brought Paul and his friends into trouble with the authorities in Thessalonica. So the Christians at Thessalonica sent Paul, Silas and Timothy on to Berea to keep them from harm. Help the pupils to complete No. 2 on their worksheet. (Ans. (a) f, (b) f, (c) t, (d) t.)

2. Their next stop was Berea. Trace the journey from Thessalonica to Berea on the map. Berea was a town quite close to Thessalonica. When they arrived, Paul and his friends went to the synagogue and began to preach the Gospel. Here the people were very willing to hear Paul preaching and they tested everything he said against Scripture to see if it was true. Many of them became believers. Meanwhile back in Thessalonica, the Jews heard about Paul preaching in nearby Berea. They came to the town and, once again, caused trouble. Silas and Timothy stayed with the new Christians but it was felt that it would be safer for Paul to leave. So he was taken to Athens and waited for his friends there. Complete No. 3 of the pupils' worksheet. (Ans. (a) ii; (b) ii; (c) ii; (d) i; (e) ii.)

3. Their third stop was Athens. Trace the journey from Berea to Athens on the map. While waiting for his friends at Athens Paul told people about Jesus Christ. He preached about Him in the synagogue and he talked about Him to people in the marketplace.

The people of Athens liked to hear new ideas, so they invited Paul to tell them more about Jesus Christ. He told the people that Jesus is the living God who has made and controls everything, that Jesus died on the cross and rose again from the dead, and that He calls men to repent of their sin and believe on Him. Some of the people listening didn't think Paul's 'philosophy' or 'ideas' very good at all and they made fun of him. Others couldn't quite make up their minds. However, some people believed on Jesus, and they would always be thankful that Paul told the Good News of Jesus Christ in Athens. We are even told the names of two of them - a philosopher called Dionysius and a woman called Damaris. Complete No. 4 on the pupils' worksheet

APPLICATION

Ask the pupils to suggest why Paul kept travelling from city to city telling people about Jesus when only a few people believed his message. Ask them if they would have thought that it was worth all the trouble he kept getting into and the countless times he was punished and laughed at.

Paul knew that it was worthwhile because -

- (a) He knew that he must show his love for the Lord Jesus by obeying His command to be a witness for Him - even when he did not see results right away. God also expects us to show our love for Him by our obedience to this command too. (Matt 28:19, 20; John 14:23.)
- (b) Paul knew what it felt like to be forgiven for his sin and he was anxious that others should have this experience too. We should also feel like that. Ask the pupils to take a moment and think about whether or not they know what it is like to be forgiven by God.
- (c) Paul knew that his responsibility was to tell people about Jesus Christ and he must be faithful to do that. If we know Jesus Christ as our Friend and Saviour we should also feel that we have a responsibility to tell other people about Him and not be discouraged if we meet difficulties. The pupils should complete No. 5 on their worksheets at the end of the class. (Ans. (a)Philippi; (b)Athens; (c)Thessalonica; (d)Berea)

FURTHER READING

GRESHAM MACHEN, J. - "The New Testament - An Introduction to its Literature and History". Banner of Truth 1976.
New Bible Commentary Revised. I.V.P

LESSON 31

God's people at worship

WHAT IS WORSHIP?

Scripture Text - 2 Chron. 29: 30; Neh.8:1-8; Psalm 95; Luke 4:16-21; Acts 2:42.

AIM OF LESSON

To show that worship should be our response to God and to consider the content of true worship.

BACKGROUND NOTES

One of the primary Hebrew words for 'worship' means to 'bow down' or 'prostrate oneself' (i.e. lie flat on the ground), as in paying tribute to a monarch or superior.

In Daniel 3:5-7 we see that falling down and worshipping go together.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Ask the class if they have ever seen the Queen on television. Discuss how people react when they meet her. The men bow and the ladies curtsy.

Ask the class if they have seen a courtroom scene and if they know what people do when the judge enters. (They stand up.) Ask them to think of why people do this. (It is a recognition of the office and authority of the Queen and the Judge.)

If human rulers are due such honour and respect, much more is due to God who is 'King of Kings' and 'Judge of all the earth'.

Outline

The word 'worship' really means 'to bow down'. This should be our natural response to God when we understand who He is and what He has done for us. Help the class to do No. 1 of the pupils' worksheet. This question deals with three people who worshipped God. Ask them to write what each person realised about God and what he realised about himself.

Answers:

	<u>About God</u>	<u>About himself</u>
Job	God gives us every thing we have	He depended on God for everything
Isaiah	God is King and He is Holy.	He was sinful.
Peter	Christ had power over the fish i.e. over nature.	He was sinful and unworthy of Christ's attention.

Help the pupils to understand that worship involves the following:

1. **The reading and explaining of the Scriptures**
Read Neh. 8: 1-8. This is the account of how Ezra and the Levites read from God's Word and explained its meaning to the assembled Jews who had returned from exile. Explain that the reading of Scripture was always important to God's people. Later on during His time on earth, Jesus himself frequently went into the synagogue and read from Scripture to the assembled congregation. Ask a pupil to read Luke 4: 16-21 which gives an account of one such occasion. Still later, the apostles taught the people by explaining the doctrines of God's Word (Acts 2: 42). Emphasise that it is very important for each one of us to have a good knowledge of God's Word so that we know what God does or does not want us to do.

2. **Praise**
Singing God's praise is also a part of worship. God has given the book of Psalms and these alone are to be sung in worship. Everyone is to sing and we are to sing with joy, gladness and thankfulness. Read Eph 5: 19. Explain that 'psalms, hymns and spiritual songs' refer to the contents of the book of Psalms.

3. **Prayer**
Prayer is one of the great privileges of God's people. We have the example of Jesus who prayed often and taught His disciples to pray. Read Matt 6: 9-13 with the class. Explain how in prayer we are to confess our sins, give thanks to God, and make our requests in the name of Jesus Christ because He intercedes for us before God.

4. **Offering**
Everything we have is a gift from God and He requires us to return a proportion of our wealth (at least one tenth) for the work of His Church. It is to be done cheerfully and regularly. Read 1 Cor 16: 1-2. Explain that Paul is requesting the Christians in Corinth to give regularly to support the believers in Jerusalem.

5. **Sacraments**
A sacrament is an holy ordinance appointed by Christ and is a way of teaching the gospel by outward signs. The sacraments are designed to represent the gospel to us and to enable us to apply the gospel to our own lives. In the New Testament, we find the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper which Christ appointed. (Matt 28: 19; Luke 22: 19-20.) When we observe these sacraments God has promised a special blessing which we receive by faith. Baptism and the Lord's supper replace the Older Testament Sacraments of circumcision and the Passover.

Do No. 2 in the pupils' worksheets.

Answers:-

- (a) Reading God's Word

- (b) Listening to the Word explained
- (c) Prayer
- (d) Singing praise
- (e) Giving an offering
- (f) The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

APPLICATION

Ask the class if they participate honestly and sincerely in the different aspects of worship. Discuss what this means and how people may be present at a service of worship but they may not truly be worshipping God, e.g. by not listening to the sermon, not joining in the attitude of prayer, or not singing praise. Remind them that in worship we aim to pay tribute to God and honour Him. Discuss how they might improve their worship in the light of today's lesson.

Further Reading - Testimony of the R P Church of Ireland Ch 4.

LESSON 32

God's people at worship

WHO MAY WORSHIP?

Scripture Text -Psalm 15; Luke 18: 9 -14

AIM OF LESSON

To teach that true worship must come from a pure and a holy life and a humble heart.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Psalm 15 speaks of the qualities of the one who may go to heaven - God's Holy Hill (v 1); but it also applies to the earthly worship of God when it uses the term 'tabernacle' or 'sanctuary'.

The Pharisees were a group within the Jewish religion who had made their religion very much a matter of 'do's' and 'don'ts'. They tried to add their laws to the laws of God.

The Publicans or Tax Collectors were Jews who collected taxes for the Roman government. Often the tax collectors demanded more money than was due, and were considered to be traitors by their fellow Jews.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Ask the children 'Who may drive a car on a public road?' Draw out the answer that it is those who hold a driving licence, which shows that they are qualified to drive. It is only given to those who prove that they are able to meet the standards that the law demands.

Outline

1. Who may worship God?

With the idea in mind that the law requires certain standards before one may do certain things, introduce the question 'Who may worship God?' God's law requires certain standards. These are summed up in Psalm 15. Read the psalm and use No.1 on the pupils' worksheet to identify these standards.

ANSWERS

- (a) Blameless; always does what is right.
- (b) Speaks the truth and does not gossip.
- (c) Does no harm to others; does not harm anyone's good name.
- (d) Holds them in high esteem.
- (e) Keeps his word even if it hurts him to do so.

2. Who can reach these standards?

Ask the pupils if they can meet these standards or say that they always do what is right and always speak the truth. The answer is 'no'. No mere man was ever able to live according to God's perfect law because all have sinned.

However, God in His mercy has provided a way by which man can approach God and worship Him. That way is through the Lord Jesus Christ. He, being the Son of God was born without sin and had the power to live a perfect life without committing any sin. He is the one who is spoken of in Psalm 15; the only one who is able to live to these standards.

Jesus is known as the 'mediator' between God and man. That means that He goes between God and man. We cannot approach God because of our sin but Christ can because He is without sin. We can approach God through Christ because He is man as well as God. He knows what human life is like and He can help us.

The book of Hebrews talks a lot about this. In Heb. 4: 15 -16 we are told to approach God with confidence through Christ because He sympathises with our weakness. In Heb. 7: 25 we learn that He lives for ever to plead with God for us, and that He is able to save those who come to God through Him.

3. Does this mean that we can live without any standards of behaviour?

No, God wants us to become more and more like Christ as time goes on. He has given the Holy Spirit to dwell in our hearts and to renew our lives. We should try to reach the standards of Psalm 15. It must be recognised that in this life we will never be perfect. In worship we should come to God recognising our sin and asking His forgiveness. If we come with the idea that we are good enough we will not be accepted.

In Luke 18: 9-14 Jesus told a parable about two men who went to pray - an act of worship. Read the passage with the class. We are told in v14 that one man went home justified (i.e. with his sins forgiven) and the other man was not changed. Ask the pupils what made the difference. Use No. 2 on the pupils' worksheet to compare the two men.

The outward actions and words of the Pharisee and the Publican indicate what they were like inwardly. The Pharisee was proud. He thought a lot of himself and his good works which went beyond what the law demanded, but he failed to see that he was a sinner who needed God's cleansing.

The Publican was completely different. He could see no good in himself - nothing that would please God. We can see his distress as he beat his breast and said 'God have mercy on me, a sinner'. The Publican was humble in his heart and was forgiven.

APPLICATION

Ask the pupils what thoughts they have about themselves when they come to worship God. Perhaps they belong to good, religious families, attend church regularly, read the Bible every day, pray every day, do and say all the right things. However, perhaps it is all outward show. Ask them to think whether or not their lives really meet the standards set in Psalm 15.

The Publican realised he was a sinner. We are all sinners, and only when we come to Christ, confess our sin and humbly ask for forgiveness can we approach God's holy place in true worship.

LESSON 33

God's people at worship

HOW MUST WE WORSHIP?

Scripture Text - Hebrews 9:1-15; 10:19-25.

AIM OF LESSON

To show that God is not to be worshipped by ritual or formality but from a sincere heart.

BACKGROUND NOTES

It is because Christ's one offering for sin is adequate, and He Himself is the perfect priest that Christians are able to draw near to God in worship. We can draw near with confidence through Christ. It is our duty to meet together for worship, instruction, and mutual encouragement.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Ask the pupils why they go to Church on the Sabbath. Ask them if they think it matters how we worship God. Discuss the students' answers to these questions and then proceed to today's lesson on worship.

Outline

1. Wrong worship

We often read in the Bible of people who worshipped God but sometimes their worship did not please Him. Briefly relate to the class the story of Exodus 32. It describes how the children of Israel got tired waiting for Moses to return from talking with God on Mount Sinai. They came to Aaron demanding that he make them an idol. From the jewellery Aaron made a golden calf and the people worshipped this idol. They were disobeying God and worshipping in a way that they wanted, but not in a way that pleased God.

Read Isaiah 29: 13 with the class and complete No. 1 in the pupils' worksheet

Stress the following points -

- (a) the people were not sincere in their worship
- (b) they did not worship God with their heart, merely by empty words and actions.
- (c) they did not reverence (respect) or fear God.

Complete No. 2 in the pupils' worksheet.

2. (a) Read Heb 10: 19-25 with the class. Stress from the passage the following requirements of worship. We must -
- (i) have a belief and faith in Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Lord (v 19)
 - (ii) avoid distractions during our times of worship (v 22a)
 - (iii) respect or be concerned about other church members (v 24)
 - (iv) try to help other people (v24)
 - (v) meet together in Sabbath School, Church, C.Y.P.S. and other meetings to help each other (v 25)

Complete Nos. 3 & 4 on the pupil's worksheet.

- (b) Summarise by asking the pupils to think again about the meaning of their worship -
- (i) singing Psalms because God has given them to us for the purpose of praise, so that we can sing according to His will.
 - (ii) praying, because He has promised the help of the Holy Spirit in order that we may pray according to His will (Rom 8: 26, 27). We should pray both in church and at home.
 - (iii) reading God's Word because He speaks to us through it.
 - (iv) listening carefully to the preaching of His Word so that we can understand what He is saying to us.
 - (v) giving - the offering taken during the service is also part of our worship.

Ask the pupils what we can do to make our worship more acceptable to God.

Complete No.5 on the pupils' worksheet.

APPLICATION

Talk to the students about how they worship. They may be in the church building physically but miles away in their thoughts. Encourage them to think seriously about each part of worship. Make suggestions regarding how they can be helped in their worship. Perhaps they could be encouraged to pray quietly and briefly before the service begins, seeking God's help for and blessing on their worship. Encourage them to bring their Bibles, follow the passage the minister is reading, and listen carefully to what he is saying in the sermon. Stress the importance of joining in the singing of the Psalms

LESSON 34

God's people at worship

WHERE DO WE WORSHIP?

Scripture Text - Matt. 6:6; Heb. 10:25; Deut. 6:6-9; Gen. 35:2-3; John 4:20-24.

AIM OF LESSON

To show that the place of worship is not important but that God should be worshipped in private, in the family and in public.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Deut 6:6-9 Moses has just delivered the Ten Commandments to the Israelites in preparation for the new life on which they are about to embark. He stresses to them the importance of knowing God's law thoroughly, and of passing it on to their children so that they too may be obedient.

Gen 35:2-3 After Jacob's reunion with his brother Esau, God calls him to renew his covenant at Bethel, where he had first experienced God's presence. He now comes with thanksgiving for all that God has done for him since then.

John 4:20 For the Jews and Samaritans, worship was closely linked to a particular place. For the Jews it was Jerusalem and for the Samaritans it was Mount Gerizim. Jesus pointed out that the place was unimportant as long as the worship was genuine and spiritual.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Ask the pupils to discuss what would happen if, instead of worshipping in church, the congregation all moved out into the streets or the fields and the service was held there. Encourage them to think of the distractions there would be which we do not normally have to cope with in the church building. Ask them what they think God would think of this.

Outline

Go on to say that God tells us in His Word that what matters is not where we worship God but whether our worship is true and sincere. In the Bible people worshipped God in many different and varied places, and their worship, if it was true, was equally acceptable to God. Complete No.1 on the pupils' worksheet.

However, the Bible tells us that there are three main areas of our lives in which we are to worship Him - in private, in the family and in public.

1. In private - Read Matt 6:6 with the class. We need to spend time with God every

day in private. He is our friend and is displeased if we do not come to Him. Christians often talk about the 'Quiet time' - the time which they spend alone with God speaking to Him in prayer and listening to what He has to say to them through reading the Bible.

Jesus condemned the Pharisees who recited their prayers aloud in the middle of the street so that everyone would admire them for their religious enthusiasm. He made it clear that if we pray to God in secret other people will be aware that we are spending time in prayer because

- (1) God will answer our prayers and bless us, and,
- (2) the more time we spend with God the more we become like Jesus in our daily lives.

Most people find that the best time to read and pray is in the morning, when they are alert and ready to communicate with God and prepared for the day ahead. To help them understand what they read in the Bible and apply it to their own lives, many use Bible notes which explain difficult passages and provide a useful reading plan.

Complete No. 2 on the pupils' worksheet.

2. In the family - Read Deut 6:6-9 with the class. Ideally the Christian family is a closely knit group of people who want to serve God together. Often there are needs which affect the whole family and so God requires that the family, as well as spending time with Him as individuals, should also meet together with Him. It is the responsibility of the father, as the head of the home, to gather his family around him to read God's Word and pray.

In Deut. 6 Moses told the children of Israel how God wanted them to conduct themselves when they began their new life in the Promised Land. The parents were to teach God's commandments to their children and talk about them to each other. Today God's Word remains the same and He has given parents the responsibility of teaching it to their children as they meet for family worship.

Read Gen 35:2-3. Here God commands Jacob to worship at Bethel along with his family. Jacob gives his family orders to get rid of all foreign gods and to purify themselves before they come to worship. In the same way a father has a responsibility to see that his family give worship that is pure and acceptable to God. In v 5 we see that the result of Jacob's obedience in this matter was protection for his family as they passed through a land where people could have attacked them.

Complete No.3 on the pupils' worksheet.

3. In public Read Heb 10:25 with the class. The Bible also clearly teaches that it is important for us to meet together with other Christians in order to worship God. When we come to church we are obeying God's command.

A minister once went to visit a member of his congregation who had not been attending church. When asked about his reasons, the man replied that he could grow on his own as a Christian and that he did not need to meet with others to worship. At this the minister leaned forward, picked up the tongs, lifted a piece of burning coal out of the fire and laid it on the hearth; it soon stopped glowing and became cold and black. The man had to understand that just as the coal could not keep burning when separated from the other coal, he could not survive and grow without having the fellowship of other Christians.

In the New Testament church Christians often had to meet for worship in someone's house but they made sure that they met regularly to encourage one another. Paul says that Christians are like parts of a body: they are all different but they all need each other in order to function properly. When Jesus was here on earth, He set us an example by going to church on the Sabbath day and meeting with the people of God.

Complete No.4 on the pupils' worksheets

Summary - Read John 4:20-24 with the class.

When Jesus met the Samaritan woman at the well He taught her an important lesson about worship. She had been trying to sidetrack Him by arguing that the place where the Samaritans worshipped was better than the place where the Jews worshipped. Jesus said in reply that our worship ought to be 'spiritual', that is, it is the attitude of our hearts towards God that is important rather than the building in which we worship. Whether we are worshipping God in our bedroom, with our family, or in church we must remember the greatness of the God with whom we are communicating.

APPLICATION

Ask the children to reconsider their answers to the questions in the introduction in the light of what they have learned. Ask them to decide in which of these three areas they are most neglectful, both in terms of time spent with God and in the attitude of their hearts while they worship.

LESSON 35

God's people at worship

WHEN DO WE WORSHIP?

Scripture Text - Exodus 20:8-10; 29:38-42; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2

AIM OF LESSON

To show -

- (a) that worship is applicable to every day and to every aspect of life.
- (b) that the first day of the week is the Christian Sabbath and is a day set aside especially for congregational worship.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Exodus 20:8-10 - In these verses God commands Israel to set apart every seventh day as a Sabbath to the Lord. The fact that they were to refrain from normal work did not mean inactivity - rather by obeying this command they were given time to think about the glory of their God.

Exodus 29:38-42 - These verses indicated:

- (a) that God is not just to be worshipped on the Sabbath day but every day (v 38,42).
- (b) That worship (sacrifice) was to be undertaken each morning and also each evening (v 39).

Acts 20:7 - While in the Old Testament times the Sabbath was observed on the seventh day of the week it is clear from this passage that the early Christian church was in the habit of meeting on the first day of the week to 'break bread' and to read and study God's Word. This change enabled them to remember Christ's rising from the dead and reminded them of the Lord's redemption of His people.

1 Cor. 16:1-2 - Paul here orders all the members of the Christian congregations in Corinth, just as he had commanded those in Galatia, to lay aside a special contribution for the poor believers in Jerusalem on the first day of the week - a clear indication that the Christians in these churches were already observing the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath.

Introduction

Tell the pupils about Johnny who was 10 years old. Although he attended Sabbath School and church regularly he never read his Bible or prayed during the remainder of the week. Ask them to think of Johnny's behaviour. Ask if he was worshipping God as frequently as he should.

Outline1. Daily Worship

Read Exodus 29: 38-42 with the class. Explain that these were the directions given to the priests for the daily sacrifice. Emphasize that the sacrifice was not just to be undertaken once per week but twice per day - once in the morning and once in the evening. Point out that in the New Testament church all Christians are priests and are required to offer the sacrifice of worship. The command given to the priests in the Old Testament regarding the

frequency of worship is one each Christian must seek to follow. We should therefore spend some time each morning and evening reading God's Word and praying. Emphasize that Jesus Himself set us this example. At this point ask the pupils to do No.1a on their worksheet.

Yet reading God's Word and praying each morning and evening is not enough. We must worship God every moment of every day. Ask the pupils how we can do this. Help them to complete No.1b on their worksheet. (Ans: obeying, serving, thanking, honouring, praising, praying, reading.) Discuss with the pupils how they can worship God at school and at home, e.g. by doing their best; by obeying the teacher; by obeying their parents.

2. Sabbath Worship

Read Exodus 20: 8-10 with the class. Explain that while God requires us to worship Him every day He has also set aside a special day each week - the Sabbath day. The word 'sabbath' means rest from every day activities such as school work, playing with our friends, etc.. The Sabbath day is to be a holy day not a holiday. We cannot do what we like on that day because God set it apart as a day of rest; of gladness and of duty. We are not, however, to remain idle on the Sabbath day; rather we are to spend it with God's people in the reading and study of His Word. When we are not meeting with God's people we should spend time thinking about what God has done for us and about our shortcomings and mistakes. Ask the pupils to write down under No.2 on the pupils' worksheet what they do on the Sabbath. Discuss their answers.

3. The Sabbath - The seventh day or the first day

In Old Testament times the Israelites observed the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath. This was in obedience to the commands which God gave Moses on Mount Sinai - Exodus 20:10. Today Christians observe the first day of the week rather than the seventh. At this point ask the pupils to do No. 3 on their worksheet.

Stress that it was because of Christ's rising from the dead on the first day of the week and His particular worship activities on this and subsequent first days of the week that the early Christians began to regard the first day as especially important. From then they began to meet together for worship on the first day of the week. Ask one of the pupils to read Acts 20:7. Explain that Paul was at Troas and had worship with the believers there on the first day of the week. Later on he reminded the Christians at Corinth as he had also done those in Galatia that they should lay aside a certain amount of money each Lord's day (first day of the week) for the believers in Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16:2). They could not really have done this if they had not been meeting together on that day for worship. The Christians realised of course that Jesus was Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2:28) and therefore could change the Sabbath

from the seventh day, which reminded them of God's creation and rest, to the first day of the week which reminded them of His rising from the dead. The new 'Christian Sabbath' is therefore not just a day of rest but a day especially of remembrance of and thanksgiving to God for what He has done for us through Jesus Christ. The pupils may complete No. 4 on their worksheet in class or at home.

APPLICATION

1. We have a duty to worship God every moment of every day. Each one of us must do this not only through praying and reading our Bible in the morning and evening, but also through living our lives at home and at school in obedience to His Word.
2. God has set aside the Sabbath day as a special day. We should not engage in the normal activities of other days but should use it to rest and to think about God and His goodness to us. It is also our duty on the Sabbath day to come to church and Sabbath School to meet with others for worship

LESSON 36

God's people at worship

WORSHIPPING TOGETHER

Scripture Text - Heb. 10:24-25; 1 Cor. 12; Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Peter 2:1-5

AIM OF LESSON

To show that it is important that we join with others in worship.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Heb. 10:25 tells us that we are not to neglect meeting together with others in order to worship God.

1 Peter 2:5 refers to Christians as 'living stones' to be built up together, as stones into a house, in order to 'offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God' i.e. in order to honour and glorify God in worship.

1 Cor. 12 speaks about the Church being the body of Christ and reminds us of the variety of different gifts which individual Christians may possess. These gifts are all distributed by God. We must respect the fact that every individual person has an important part to play in the functioning of the body, i.e. the Church, as a whole.

Eph. 4:15 tells us of the purpose of working and worshipping together, i.e. that we should grow up into Christ and become more like Him who is the Head of the Church.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION**Introduction**

Remind the pupils that they learned in Lesson 34 that it is important to meet with other Christians to worship God in public. Read Heb. 10:25 with them.

Now ask them to tell you things they have done before coming to the class. They may tell you about getting up, eating breakfast, talking to family or friends, driving or walking to church. Encourage them to think about the different parts of their bodies they have used when doing these things. Help to see how much more difficult it would be to do these things if they could not see, or move a limb, hear or talk and how important it is that all the different parts of their bodies work properly together. Ask if anyone has ever broken a bone or had a serious illness when they were not able to do certain things. Read 1 Cor. 12:14-22 with the class.

Outline

Help the pupils to understand that, as individuals, we are all different: some of us can do

certain things better than others. All of our gifts and abilities are given to us by God and we must always remember this. We should not feel envious of someone who is able to do some things better than we can, but remember that God has made us different from them. It may be helpful to think of different members of a team playing sports: not all members of a football team are good goalkeepers, not all are good goal scorers, but every single member is important and without each one doing their job properly the team is not likely to be successful.

Within the church different people have different gifts. If everyone works together it helps the church to function well as a body and it is essential that this happens in order to honour God. Complete No.1 on the pupils' worksheet. (Examples of people helping in church may be: welcoming people at the door; teaching in the Sabbath school; singing; lifting the collection; etc.)

When we worship together, recognising everyone's different abilities and functions within the church, we will glorify and honour God. Paul suggests that we should think of Christians as being 'living stones' (1 Peter 2:1-5). He uses this illustration to show us how important it is that we should work together in harmony. Ask the pupils what would happen if some bricks were not properly placed when someone was building a house. At the very least that wall would not appear to be correctly built and probably it would not be as strong as it should be: the whole structure of the house may even be affected. This idea should help us realise the importance of joining with others in worship and playing our part within Christ's body. This is how a group of Christians can grow as a church and how they should worship God together.

Read 1 Cor. 9:10 with the pupils. Then ask them to complete Nos. 2 & 3 on their worksheet. Help them look up 1 Cor. 12:25.

In order to please God we should care for one another and we should work and worship together without disagreements. While the church grows, individual Christians should also grow, that is, they should become more and more like Christ (Eph. 4:15). There are certain characteristics which should be seen more and more in the lives of Christians as they become more like Christ. These are known as the 'fruits of the Spirit' and are listed in Galatians 5:22-23. Read these and explain them to the class. Ask the pupils to do No.4 on their worksheet.

APPLICATION

By worshipping together in harmony Christians honour God and offer Him worship which pleases Him. As they do so the church will grow and individual Christians should also grow in grace and become more like Christ. Mention again the characteristics which should be seen in a Christian's life.

Just as Christians belong to Christ who is head of the Church, they also belong to each other.

Jesus told His disciples that it was by loving one another that others would know they were His disciples (John 13:35). This should be true of us today. Ask the pupils to do No.5 on their worksheets and to think of practical ways in which they might show love to other members of the church during the coming week.

Discuss ways in which the pupils can play a part in the life of the church. Ask them to mention abilities or gifts which could be used or ways in which they could help in church activities.