

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF IRELAND



P R I M A R Y
T E A C H E R ' S
H A N D B O O K

Book 3

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF IRELAND

**SABBATH SCHOOL
TEACHER'S
HANDBOOK**

PRIMARY GRADE
BOOK 3

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Committee on the Instruction of the Young
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P R E F A C E

THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF IRELAND

Sabbath School Materials Published by

The Committee on the Instruction of the Young

Primary Course – Age 7 – 10

To the teachers of Primary Course

Thank you for your work. Teaching children the Word of God is a wonderful privilege and responsibility. These materials form part of a three year course and have been produced to assist you in getting God's Word across to the children in your class in a clear and relevant way. Yet we realise that we are totally dependent upon God for blessing so the first essential ingredient in your preparation is prayer. Pray regularly for the children in your class asking for God's help as you prepare and teach.

Getting Started

It has been truly said, 'There can be no substitute for a thorough study of the Word of God. Do not expect the Holy Spirit to remind you of things you have not bothered to find out for yourself!' (Arthur G Imbrey). Start early in the week and read the Scripture passage several times, in different versions if possible. Then turn to the teacher's material and note the Aim of Lesson as this will lead to the application of the lesson to the children.

Background Notes - are to supply you with background material and to help you cope with possible difficulties. Much of this material is for the teacher's use only as he or she ought to know much more than he or she will pass on to the class.

Visual Aids - are especially important for the Primary age group. Even the most simple of visual aids adds colour and interest to the lesson. Materials for use in your work need not be expensive. Paper is an essential commodity, and printers often have off- cuts of different sizes and colours which are usually thrown away. Most stationers or art shops supply rolls of white shelf paper, or a roll of lining paper from a wall-paper shop costs very little and will provide a good supply. Coloured paper is cheaper if bought in big sheets. You will also require felt tip pens and pencils, and possibly pipe cleaners, blunt ended scissors etc.

A piece of hardboard approx. 11" x 8", gives a firm surface for the child to rest on his knee and takes up very little storage space. A flannelgraph board is ideal for illustrating your Bible stories. Christian bookshops and C.E.F. offices sell the flannel, and this can be tacked to a sheet of hardboard cut to the required size. Flannelgraph story books may be purchased in these shops too, but you need not depend on these. You can use pictures from magazines which illustrate a point, and these can be backed with Blu-tak or sticky tape.

Suggested Presentation

It is vital to gain the attention of the children right at the beginning of the lesson by using the Introduction. Then, following the Outline, you can tell the story in your

own words. The Scripture passage should not be read round the class. At this age the children would be thinking more about their reading than the content so it is much better for you to relate the story. Neither should you simply read the story from the lesson book. It is important that you can relate the story yourself and that you can look at the children while you speak to them. You may find it helpful to have a few notes jotted down on paper and placed in your Bible.

The **Application** is as important as any other part of the lesson. Throughout you will be seeking to make the Scripture clear and relevant and the children must be encouraged to make a positive response.

The **Pupils' worksheets** help to revise and apply the story. Normally they will be used towards the end of the class time. If time does not permit for them to be completed in class this could be done at home.

We hope that you will provide yourself with other useful literature for further guidance, e.g., a concordance, Bible dictionary, Bible atlas, and Reformed commentaries.

LESSON 1

Worshipping Our Heavenly Father

TALKING WITH GOD - DANIEL

Scripture Text - Daniel 6

AIM OF LESSON

To encourage the children to allow nothing to keep them from praying to God.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Daniel is sometimes referred to as the 'statesman-prophet'. He was an Israelite, of the tribe of Judah and was of noble, perhaps even royal descent. He was among the first group of captives to be carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar in 606 BC. A young man of great promise he was nominated together with some of his companions for special training in the king's service. His excellent ability was quickly recognised, and in the years which followed, Daniel occupied leading positions in the government of Babylon under kings Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar and Darius. His loyalty to the heathen kings whom he served was surpassed only by the unswerving faithfulness and devotion which he showed to God.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Do you pray to God every day? Praying is really just talking to God. God wants us to spend a little while each day talking to Him. Today we are going to hear about a man who loved God very much, and he set aside three special times each day to pray to God. One day something happened which made it a very dangerous thing for him to go on praying to God. In fact, he might even die! Let's hear the story . . .

Outline

God's special people, the Israelites, didn't always love God the way they should. One day God allowed a heathen king, called Nebuchadnezzar, to take away many of the Israelites as prisoners. He took them from their own country of Judah to Babylon. Among the prisoners was a young man named Daniel. He was very wise and very clever. Most important of all, Daniel loved God and always put God first. The king didn't love God but he liked Daniel and gave him important work to do in the country. Daniel always did his work well.

When Daniel became older, the new king, Darius, made Daniel prime minister. The other presidents and princes who helped to rule the country were jealous of Daniel. They tried hard to get rid of him but they just could not find any fault in Daniel's life. Then

they remembered that three times each day Daniel went into his house and knelt down in his own room to pray to God. He never allowed anything to stop him doing this. This gave them an idea for a wicked plan.

They visited the king and persuaded him to make a new decree or law. The decree said, 'For the next thirty days no one is allowed to ask anything from God or from any man except from the king. Any person who disobeys will be thrown into the den of lions. The king did not know about the wicked plan, so he signed the decree. What do you think Daniel did when he heard about the decree? Do you think he stopped praying to God because he was frightened of dying in the lions' den?

Daniel realised the princes wanted him to die, but God helped him to be very brave. He knew it would be wrong to stop praying to God even if it meant being eaten by the fierce lions. So he went home and did what he always did. He went to his own room and knelt down to pray. He talked to God about the decree and the wicked plan. He asked God for help. The Bible tells us that Daniel also gave thanks to God in the middle of his trouble.

The wicked princes spied on Daniel, found him praying as he always did, and hurried to tell the king. King Darius was greatly distressed and did all he could to save Daniel. However, the princes insisted that the king have Daniel thrown into the lions' den. Before the opening of the den was sealed up the king called to Daniel, 'Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you.'

King Darius returned to the palace. How worried and unhappy he was! He knew Daniel had done nothing wrong. He didn't deserve to die. The king couldn't eat; he couldn't sleep. Very early in the morning he hurried to the den and called anxiously, 'Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God been able to rescue you from the lions?' 'O King, live forever!', cried Daniel. 'My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths'. The king was overjoyed. When Daniel was taken out of the lions' den they could not find even a scratch on his body. The lions had not touched him because he had trusted in God.

King Darius called the princes who had been responsible for the cruel plot and had them thrown into the lions' den, together with their wives and children. The king then issued a new decree and sent it to the people in every part of his kingdom. The decree said that they were to fear and reverence the God of Daniel, because He was so powerful that He was even able to deliver Daniel from the fierce lions.

APPLICATION

Daniel did not allow anything to stop him from talking with God - not even the hatred of his enemies, or the fear of being killed by the hungry lions. God was near to him all the time and helped him to be brave and strong.

We don't hear of people today being thrown to the lions because they pray. However, God's people are sometimes made to suffer in many different ways because they love Him. In some countries, men and women are even thrown into prison if they are found praying to God and serving Him. Let's say 'Thank you' to God that no one harms us because we pray to Him. Perhaps, however, the devil sometimes uses other things to try to stop us praying to God. In a moment we will think about some of these. (See Pupils' Worksheets).

Daniel chose three special times in the day to pray to God. God wants us also to choose special times each day to pray to Him. Some of these might be, for example, in the morning, as soon as we get up, before we go to bed at night, during family worship. God loves us very much and He tells us something else important about prayer. As well as having these special times, He tells us we can pray to Him at any time - it doesn't matter where we are and it doesn't matter how often we want to talk with Him - He will always be listening.

LESSON 2

Worshipping Our Heavenly Father

ASKING GOD FOR ALL THINGS - HANNAH

Scripture Text - I Samuel 1: 9 - 28

AIM OF LESSON

To point out that God hears and answers all our prayers and to explain the importance of thanksgiving in our prayers and of keeping the promises we make.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Hannah and her husband, Elkanah, were a God-fearing couple who often came from their home at Ramah to worship at Shiloh. Hannah was very unhappy, due not only to the unkind behaviour of Elkanah's other wife, but also to her own barrenness. Barrenness in Biblical times was considered a great disgrace for a Hebrew woman.

VISUAL AID

A picture or drawing of the temple. It may be possible to get a picture of Hannah praying.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

I am sure you have all recently asked your mummy or daddy for something. (Ask for suggestions and find out if they got what they asked for.) Today we are going to hear a story about a woman called Hannah who asked God to give her a baby boy.

Outline

One day after the sacrificial meal when Hannah was at Shiloh she went alone into the temple of the Lord. (Use your visual aid or explain what the temple was like.) She was very miserable and unhappy and she wanted to tell God what was troubling her and ask Him to help her. So she went to the temple, and cried bitterly to God. 'O Lord of Hosts', she prayed, 'Look upon me and help me in my trouble. Give me a little son'. Hannah also made a promise to God and said, 'If You give me a little boy of my own I will give him to You to serve You all the days of his life'. As Hannah prayed to God, Eli the priest saw her, and he thought she was acting very strangely as he could not hear what she was saying although her lips were moving. In fact he thought she was drunk. He went to her and said, 'Do you know what you are doing; you must not come into God's house drunk and act like this'. Hannah said, 'I was very unhappy and felt I had to tell God about my troubles. I did not mean to act strangely in the temple of the Lord'. She did not tell Eli what she had prayed for, but, as Eli looked at her he could see that she was very sad, so

he spoke kindly to her and said, 'Go in peace, and may God comfort you and answer your prayer'.

Hannah went away from the temple happy. She was no longer sad because she had told God what had been worrying her. She now joined her friends and went back with them and her husband to her home at Ramah. After a while God did give Hannah what she had asked for - He gave her a little son and she called him Samuel, which means, 'I have asked him of the Lord.'

Hannah and Elkanah were very happy now. Samuel's mother watched over him and took great care of him, and Hannah remembered the promise that she made to God in the temple about allowing Samuel to serve Him all the days of his life.

APPLICATION

When we ask our mummy or daddy for something they always listen to what we have to say, and they always give us an answer. Sometimes they immediately say 'yes'; other times they say 'no', and sometimes they say, 'wait until you are older'. Just as our mummy and daddy like to hear us asking for things, so God likes to hear us asking Him for things. We ask God for things when we pray to Him. What type of things do you ask God for? (Try to get as many examples as possible from your class, and not only general requests, but also specific requests where they can see that God has answered their prayers, e.g., bringing them safely to Sabbath School; helping them in tests in school; giving them a friend to play with; making a sick member of the family better.)

(Ask the class to give you the answers they received to their prayers. Point out that God ALWAYS answers our prayers with either yes, no, or wait.)

After we receive something from a friend we always say 'thank you'. When we receive an answer from God to our prayers we should also say 'thank you' to Him. We should remember the promises we make to God and to other people. Have you made a promise recently? Perhaps you promised your mummy or daddy that you would do something for them and then forgot. Hannah didn't forget the promise she had made to God

LESSON 3

Worshipping Our Heavenly Father

PRAYING FOR OTHERS - MOSES

Scripture Text - Numbers 14: 11 - 21

AIM OF LESSON

To show that Moses was concerned for the glory of God when he prayed for others. We are to do likewise.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Read Numbers 13 and 14 for the context. God had brought the people of Israel out of Egypt and now they were at the borders of the Promised Land. The 12 spies were sent in to see the land. They agreed that it was a beautiful and fruitful land, but 10 brought back an 'evil' report, (Numbers 13: 32), i.e., a report full of fear. They didn't believe they could overcome the people in the land for they were 'giants' and their cities were walled.

Two spies, Caleb and Joshua, said that God would give them the land.

When the people of Israel heard what the spies said they became afraid. Unbelief and despair spread like a disease through the camp. They refused to go forward and enter the Promised Land, despite the pleading of Moses and Aaron. Some of them even preferred to go back to Egypt.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Imagine the excitement as the boys and girls of Israel and the older people waited for the spies to return to the camp. Think of all the questions they would ask when they returned. (Suggest some.) Think of the excitement as they looked forward to going to live in a new country.

Outline

How disappointing it was to hear the report of the 10 spies. 'The land is good but the people are much bigger than we are. We could never take possession of it.' Caleb and Joshua disagreed. 'God promised that the land would be good and it is. God promised to give this land to us, and He will. Trust in Him.'

Whom did the people believe? Sadly, it was the 10. They didn't believe that God could keep His promise, even though He had protected them all along and provided for them. Can you remember some of the things God did for them? The people began to grumble

and complain. 'I wish we had never left Egypt.' 'Did God bring us to Canaan to kill us here?' Some wicked people even suggested that they get rid of Moses as their leader and let someone else lead them back to Egypt. God said, 'How long will these people make Me angry by refusing to believe Me and trust in Me? Haven't I brought them out of Egypt, made a path through the Red Sea, given them food and water, and kept them safe? Still they are disobedient. I will destroy these people and make another large family for Moses to lead.'

We might think Moses would be pleased when he heard this. He wouldn't have to put up with these complaining people any more. But no! He loves the people and doesn't want them to suffer. But more importantly, Moses thinks of God's honour. God has brought the people out of Egypt and He said He would give them another land. If He kills them now, the people in Egypt would say that God didn't have enough power to do what He promised. So Moses prays, 'Lord, the heathen will make fun of You. They will say God wasn't able to take them into the land, so He killed them in the desert. Lord, show that You are a God of power, and show that You are a God of mercy as well. Let people see that You are a heavenly Father who loves His children.' God did as Moses requested and didn't wipe them out. He made them live for 40 years in the wilderness. All the people who didn't believe God's promise and were not willing to go into the Promised Land died in the wilderness. At the end of the 40 years their children were led by Joshua into the land. God kept His promise and enabled them to overcome their enemies. Caleb, who followed God fully, was allowed into the land.

So people round about saw that God was a just, a powerful, and a merciful God.

APPLICATION

Moses didn't think about himself. He thought about God and His honour. We must think of God's honour and do all to please Him for God is honoured when we and others obey Him. Therefore we must pray for others, that they would do what is right and be blessed by God. Think of others we should pray for. What should we ask for them?

LESSON 4

Worshipping Our Heavenly Father

LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD - SAMUEL AND ELI

Scripture Text - I Samuel 3

AIM OF LESSON

To show that God talked to people many years ago, and still talks to us today. To challenge the children to listen when God speaks to them and to obey.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Samuel was born (approx.) 1090 B.C. of a godly mother in answer to her prayers. He was dedicated to God before his conception (I Samuel 1: 7), and while very young (approx. 3 years) was taken to the temple of Shiloh to be trained for the priesthood. As a child he served before God in the temple, and when still very young (approx. 10 years) God spoke to him. As he grew older, God gave him special revelations, and he became a prophet. A considerable part of his life has no detailed record, as with the life of Christ and Moses. After the death of Eli he became a judge of Israel. Samuel was responsible for anointing the first two kings of Israel - Saul and David.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Do you ever talk to God? Why do you talk to God? How do you talk to God? Many people talk to God in prayer, especially when they are in trouble or if they want to thank God for something He has done for them. Do you know that God talks to us and that He wants us to do things for Him? Do you know when God is talking to you, and are you willing to listen to Him and do what He tells you?

Outline

Many years ago God talked to a little boy. His name was Samuel, and he lived in the temple helping Eli the priest. One night God talked to Samuel. Samuel was lying in bed when God called, 'Samuel! Samuel!' Samuel thought Eli had called him, and jumping out of bed, he ran to Eli. However, Eli said, 'No, I did not call you'. So Samuel went back to bed. God called Samuel again, and for a second time Samuel ran to Eli only to discover that Eli had not called him. When Samuel heard the voice the third time he went again to Eli. Eli now realised that God was calling Samuel.

Eli told Samuel that God had called him, and if He called again he must say, 'Speak Lord, and I will listen'. Samuel must have wondered why God was speaking to him. He

was only a little boy. God uses all types of people - boys and girls, old people and young people, rich and poor. When he heard God's voice again Samuel said, 'Speak and I will listen'.

God talked to Samuel and told him things that were going to happen. He told Samuel that because Eli's sons had sinned and Eli had not restrained them, all the family was going to be punished. Samuel lay quietly in bed until morning, but he must have been frightened about telling Eli all of God's message. Samuel did not want to hurt Eli by being the bearer of bad news. Eli was not angry because he knew that God would only do what was right and just. Eli loved God and was willing to accept God's word although he knew that his family was going to be punished. Samuel had learned to listen to God's Word and to believe it. God talked to Samuel many times, and Samuel became a prophet telling the people what God wanted them to hear and do.

Revise the story by asking:

1. When did God call Samuel?
2. How many times did God call Samuel?
3. Did Samuel listen to God?
4. What did God tell Samuel?
5. Why was Samuel afraid to tell Eli?
6. Was Eli angry?

APPLICATION

Now we have heard the story of God speaking to a little boy many years ago, but how does God speak to us today? (Through the Bible.)

Many years ago when God spoke to men He told them to write down His words, and these words are the Book we call the Bible. When Samuel was a boy there was no Bible as we know it, and that is why God spoke to him in this way. The Bible is God's Word and it has been preserved and handed down to us today. God gave us the Bible so that we could learn about Him, and God talks to us through the Bible.

- (a) We can read the Bible ourselves.
- (b) The Minister reads the Bible to us.
- (c) Daddy and Mummy can read the Bible to us.
- (d) Our Sabbath School teacher can read the Bible to us.

In all these ways God is talking to us.

Are you reading the Bible yourself and loving it as a precious gift from God? Are you willing to listen to what God says and are you ready to obey Him? (Ask the class if they have a special story which they like to read themselves.)

LESSON 5

Worshipping Our Heavenly Father

SINGING TO THE LORD

Scripture Text - II Samuel 22

AIM OF LESSON

To teach the children the importance of praising God by the use of the Psalms.

BACKGROUND NOTES

This jubilant song of thanksgiving was written by David in special praise and gratitude to God. God had delivered him from his chief enemy Saul, and He had also granted him victory over heathen nations such as the Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, Syrians and Edomites. Some think this was written after the victories described in II Samuel 8.

David later gave this song to the chief musician for use in the temple worship. It appears in almost identical form in the Book of Psalms as Psalm 18. Much of the imagery used in this song of praise was no doubt suggested to David by his experiences during his long stay as a fugitive in the wilderness.

VISUAL AIDS

To be produced as the lesson develops - two flash cards on which should be printed the following words:

CARD 1 GOD IS MY SHIELD - MY PROTECTION

CARD 2 GOD IS MY LAMP - MY GUIDE

In both cases the second half of the statement should be printed in a different colour and folded behind the first four words, in order to be revealed at a later point. The flash cards could be supplemented by 'the real thing' if available! - or by drawings or pictures if preferred.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

It was John's birthday. He had just been given a new bicycle as a birthday present from his daddy and mummy. How thrilled he was! He was allowed to take it out for its first run along the road near his home. Off he went! It was a lovely day. The sun was shining, there wasn't much traffic and the new bicycle was working perfectly. Suddenly John laughed. Do you know what he was doing as he was pedalling along the road? Without realising it, he had started to sing! Why do you think he had started to sing? . . . Yes, because he was so happy! Perhaps sometimes you have suddenly found yourself

humming or even singing to yourself. Have you? If so, it was probably because you were feeling happy.

Today we are going to talk about a person who was so happy that he wrote a special song to say 'Thank you' to God. I wonder if you will be able to guess his name before I finish giving you some clues.

First clue: He had to live like an outlaw for a time.

Second clue: He could play the harp very well.

Third clue: He was a shepherd boy who later became king.

Yes, it was David!

Outline

Saul the king was David's greatest enemy. He was jealous of David and tried to kill him. David had to flee for his life. For a time he had to live like an outlaw in the wilderness, among the rocks and caves. Saul hunted everywhere for David. Sometimes it looked as if he were going to find him. However, God kept David safe and rescued him in wonderful ways from the wicked king.

Later, when David became king, God helped him to fight many battles against his heathen enemies. He gave David victory over all these wicked men, the Philistines, the Syrians and many others.

David loved God very much and he didn't forget all the things God had done for him. God helped him to write a special song about what had happened. God has included this song in the Book of Psalms as Psalm No. 18. He wanted David and the other people who loved God to sing this psalm in the temple during their worship. They were to think very carefully about the words as they sang, and were to use this psalm to praise God.

What did David write in this psalm or song which was so important? First of all, he thanked God for the wonderful ways in which He had helped him to win all his battles. Secondly, he gave thanks for the wonderful Person God was. You see, during the time David was an outlaw and living in great danger in the wilderness, God taught him new lessons and David grew to know God better. He could say 'God is my God'. He describes this in different ways in this special song. We shall think of just two of them. Firstly, David says (display first half of Flash card I) 'GOD IS MY SHIELD'.

Have you ever seen a real shield? David and his men used shields in battle. Often the enemy shot arrows at them to try to kill them. They held up their shields in front of them to stop the arrows from hitting their bodies, that is, they used their shields to protect their bodies. David

said 'That is just what God is like to me - GOD IS MY SHIELD (reveal second half of flash card) - He is MY PROTECTOR'. He protects me from my enemies. Secondly, David says (display first half of flash card 2) 'GOD IS MY LAMP'.

Have you had a power-cut recently in your home? If this happens on a winter evening when it is dark it is very awkward, isn't it? For a few moments all is confusion until your daddy or your mummy gets a torch, and then a candle or a lamp. The lamp helps you to find your way about. David often needed God's help to know which way to go in the wilderness in order to escape from Saul. He was able to say 'GOD IS MY LAMP (display second half of flash card) - He is MY GUIDE'.

David had good reason to praise God, hadn't he? Remember God wanted the people in the temple as well as David, to sing the words of this psalm. If they truly loved God and obeyed Him they also could call God by these special names.

APPLICATION

Should we be singing to God too? God says 'Yes'. Listen to what He says in another psalm. Psalm 147: 1. 'Praise the Lord: for it is good to sing praises to our God'. In the Bible we read many verses like this one.

What should we use when we sing to God? God says we also are to worship Him by using His special book of Psalms, because they are His Word.

When should we be singing psalms to God? (Ask for suggestions from the children.) Yes, in church, in Sabbath School, at home in Family Worship. These are special times, but we can also sing psalms at any time.

Do you know how many psalms are in the Bible? 150! We have been talking about Psalm 18 and some of the important messages in that psalm. Each psalm has a special message for us every time we sing it. It is God's word to us, and we should try to sing it as well as we possibly can. Also we should think very carefully about the words as we sing and ask God to help us to find the message He has for us.

Do you remember the story at the beginning of our lesson? John was so happy he found it very easy to sing, in fact, he just couldn't help singing. Sometimes we will feel like that. When we are happy we will probably find it easy to sing 'Thank you' psalms to God. However, God wants us to praise Him even when it seems difficult. If we aren't feeling well, or if something sad has happened, God's book of Psalms has always something which just suits us at that moment.

So, we can sing to God, or praise Him, using His book of Psalms. Ask God today to help you to praise Him in your heart.

LESSON 6

Worshipping Our Heavenly Father

ASKING FOR FORGIVENESS - DAVID

Scripture Text - II Samuel 12: 1 - 24

AIM OF LESSON

To teach the children that God punishes sin, but if we truly repent He will forgive us and we will find joy in our relationship with Him.

BACKGROUND NOTES

David was the grandson of Ruth and Boaz and was the youngest of eight brothers, from whom he suffered ill-will and jealousy. As a boy he had been a shepherd and often thought of his Heavenly Father as he cared for the sheep. He considered himself as a lamb and God as his shepherd.

David had been drawn into temptation by foregoing events. Firstly, he had been neglecting his duties by remaining in Jerusalem when he should have been leading his army in battle. Secondly, he liked an easy time. We read in Chapter 11 that he arose from his couch late in the afternoon. His idleness was a great advantage to his tempter.

King David was around fifty at this time and would have had several wives and mistresses of his own, as was customary for eastern monarchs, but he did not have God's approval.

God had entrusted David to act in a just manner, as part of his duty as king was to enforce the law on criminals, especially adulterers.

It is possible that after this David wrote Psalm 51, in which he prays earnestly for pardon, though he had been assured that his sin had been pardoned.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Sometimes you may think it is easier to be naughty than good, and as a result you end up being punished by your parents or by your teacher. This spoils the joy and happiness at home or in school. In the same way God punishes sin, as it spoils everything.

Today I am going to tell you about a king called David, who was a good king and God loved him. But king David was not perfect. He did some very bad things which God did not like, so He punished him. When David showed that he was really sorry, God forgave him.

Outline

David had stolen the wife of Uriah who was one of his bravest soldiers. He wanted this woman who was called Bathsheba for himself, so he thought of a cunning plan to have Uriah killed in battle. He was therefore guilty of Uriah's murder.

God was very displeased at what David had done, and about a year afterwards He sent Nathan, who was a prophet, with a message for David. Nathan told David the story of the rich man who owned many sheep and who stole the only lamb which the poor man possessed. As well as taking the lamb which did not belong to him, the rich man was cruel to the poor man. Now this lamb was a pet, and stayed around the house. It was a very special lamb. The rich man wanted it for food to entertain his guest.

(At this point a discussion could take place on pets which the children may have.)

David was very distressed when he heard the story, and he told Nathan that this rich man should surely die. But Nathan said, 'You are the man'. Yes! Nathan had been talking about David. His sin against his neighbour was much worse than the sin of the man who took the lamb. David had committed more than one sin to get Bathsheba for himself for, as well as stealing Uriah's wife, he had caused others to do wrong, and he had had Uriah killed.

David had been ready to condemn the fault of others although he did not see the greatness of his own sin. If a man deserved to die for stealing his neighbour's lamb, should he not then deserve to die for stealing his neighbour's wife?

Now God spared David's life, but he showed his displeasure at what he had done by stating that the child born to him and Bathsheba would die. David pleaded for this child to live, but in his heart he knew that God had done the right thing. Although David was forgiven, Nathan told him that his family would suffer bitter consequences because of his sin. God showed His forgiveness by giving David and Bathsheba another son whom they called Solomon, which means 'peace'.

God has warned us, by giving David as an example, that if we sin He will punish us. But if our repentance is deep and real He will forgive us and we will find fellowship with Him once more. It is not good enough to say 'I'm sorry' and carry on just as we have been doing.

'Repentance is to leave the sins I loved before
And show that I in earnest grieve, by doing them no more.'

LESSON 7

Worshipping Our Heavenly Father

GIVING OUR BEST TO GOD - SOLOMON BUILDS THE TEMPLE

Scripture - II Chronicles 2: 1 - 10, 6: 1 - 21 and 7: 1 - 22

AIM OF LESSON

To show the children that nothing but the best is good enough for God.

BACKGROUND NOTES

The building of a permanent house of the Lord, instead of a movable tabernacle, was proposed by king David, and the necessary materials were largely gathered by him. God did not permit David to build the temple because he was a man of war. When his son Solomon came to the throne the country was at peace, and the time was then opportune.

VISUAL AID

Find photographs of large buildings and if possible, find out the size and how long each took to build.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

When you are asked to do something by your mummy or daddy or anyone else in charge of you, perhaps your teacher, do you always put your very best into it? There is a verse in the Bible which says, 'Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might' Ecclesiastes 9: 10. Solomon was a man who believed that God should have nothing but the best, and we are going to hear a story about him building the temple.

Outline

King Solomon was a happy young king. His father David had been blessed by God and had extended his kingdom and had gathered much wealth. He had wanted to build a temple for God, but God said that Solomon should do it. So Solomon thought about it and planned it. It would be huge and magnificent. Nothing but the best would do for God. But where would he get the right materials and the skilful workmen that would be needed? Then he remembered that Hiram king of Tyre had helped his father David to build a palace. So he wrote to him, 'I remember how you were a friend to David my father and helped him to build a palace. I hope you will help me because I want to build a temple for the worship of God. It has to be the best, for there is none like the Lord God Almighty. Would you please send me a skilled workman to work with gold and silver and things like that, and send me timber, for your men are good at that kind of work. I will be happy to pay you whatever it costs'.

Hiram replied that he would be pleased to help. And so the work began. Cedar and fir timber was brought on rafts by sea to Joppa. From there it was taken by Solomon's men to Jerusalem. We have to remember that in those days there were no machines like the ones we have today, and the work was very difficult. It was a huge building and it took 74 years to complete. There were thousands of people working at it. Some helped to carry the timber, some helped cut the blocks of stone, and others helped carve the beautiful decorations and sew the heavy curtains. How pleased Solomon was as he saw the work going on and the temple taking shape! At last it was finished, and Solomon ordered the Ark of the Covenant to be brought in. All the people gathered and gave thanks to God. 'Praise the Lord,' they sang, 'for He is good; for His mercy endures for ever'.

Solomon spoke to the people and reminded them of God's blessing to them. He had brought them out of Egypt and had chosen Jerusalem as His city. Now His purpose had been fulfilled, the temple had been built. Then Solomon led the people in prayer. Kneeling on a large platform that had been specially built he lifted up his hands and said, 'O Lord, we know that no house on earth is great enough for You, for You are everywhere. But hear our prayer and meet with Your people here. When they sin against You and ask for Your forgiveness hear their prayer and forgive them'.

All of a sudden, as Solomon finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the animals that were lying on the altar. A blinding light shone all around, and the people fell on their faces and worshipped God. 'Praise the Lord for He is good; for His mercy endures for ever'. So God showed, by letting His glory be seen, that He was pleased with what Solomon and the people had given. Only the best materials were used and every part was made with the most skilful hands. The people of Israel had given their best to God, and He was pleased to meet with His people there and to hear their prayers.

APPLICATION

Shortly after this, God appeared to Solomon in a dream one night and showed him that, while He was pleased with what the people had given, He would not be satisfied with offerings unless His people gave Him the very best offering of all - the love of their hearts. Do you love God in your heart?

Are you giving your best to God? Let's look at the pupils' worksheets to see some things that might stop us giving our best to God.

LESSON 8

Worshipping Our Heavenly Father

SERVING GOD - GIDEON

Scripture Text - Judges 6: 11 - 16; Judges 7: 2 - 23

AIM OF LESSON

To show how Gideon served God by delivering the Children of Israel from the Midianites, and that everything we do should be pleasing to God.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Gideon lived at a time in the history of the Children of Israel when Israel as a nation was in decline following the death of Joshua. Judges 17: 6 shows the spiritual state of the people. The Israelites worshipped false gods and had forgotten most of what God had done for them in previous generations. Gideon was one of the Judges, men raised up by God to represent Him in the nation. He is mentioned in Hebrews 11: 22 as being numbered amongst those who lived 'by faith'.

VISUAL AID

'The Man who won without Fighting', published by ARCH books may be helpful in illustrating this story. Try to find a picture of an eastern farmer threshing grain.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

I wonder has your mummy or daddy or your teacher in school ever asked you to do something for them? Maybe it has been to help with the dishes, help on the farm, or give out some books in school. Today we are going to hear a story about someone God asked to do something for Him. His name was Gideon.

Outline

Gideon was one of God's children, His special people, the Israelites. Do you remember how God had brought them out of Egypt and had given them a land all of their own, the land of Canaan? God's special people soon forgot Him, however, and did evil things in God's sight. They worshipped other gods and did not follow the commands of Jehovah, so their land was invaded by foreigners who destroyed their crops and killed their animals.

The people cried to God for help. God sent His angel to Gideon who was out threshing wheat at the time, not in one of our modern combine harvesters, but probably beating the wheat with a stick to separate the grain from the straw. (Use the visual aid of an eastern

farmer threshing grain.) He was threshing in secret because of the Midianites who had been destroying all the crops they could find. I'm sure he jumped when he heard a voice saying to him, 'The Lord is with you, mighty soldier. I am going to send you out to set the people of Israel free from these Midianites'. 'Who, me?' replied Gideon, 'But how can I do it. I am the least important in my family'. 'I will be with you', God answered.

Gideon gathered together an army and they camped near a little stream. The enemy army was camped in the valley below them. God then told Gideon, 'You have too many men in your army. If you use all these thirty-two thousand men they will think that they have won the victory on their own strength and will not realise that it is I, God, who has rescued them from the Midianites. Send home any who are afraid'.

Almost two thirds of the men went back to their families, but God told Gideon that he still had too many soldiers. Gideon took his men down to the stream where they all stopped to drink. Some of the men stooped down and lapped up the water with their tongues like dogs, while others cupped their hands to their mouths to drink. (You might like to get the children to do these two actions in mime.) God said to Gideon, 'Keep with you those men who cupped up the water to their mouths and send the rest of the men home'.

So now Gideon had three hundred men left, while down below them they could see what looked like thousands of little insects moving around. It was the enemy camp, and it seemed to stretch for miles and miles.

That night Gideon divided his men into three companies each of one hundred men, and gave each soldier a trumpet and an empty pitcher with a torch inside - not a torch like you might have but something like a burning stick. They followed their leader out into the darkness with the pitchers over their torches so as not to let the enemy know they were coming. Quickly they crept to where the enemy lay sleeping. All was still. Suddenly there was a terrific noise as three hundred soldiers broke their earthen pitchers and, holding their trumpets in their right hands, they all shouted at the top of their voices, 'For the Lord and for Gideon'.

When the enemy soldiers heard all this noise they were thrown into disorder. In the darkness and confusion they began to fight each other, and then they turned and fled. God had enabled Gideon to win a great victory with only three hundred men.

Revise the story by asking questions such as: 'What did God ask Gideon to do?' 'Why did God want Gideon to reduce the number of soldiers he had?' You might like to ask the children to fill in the true/false section of the pupils' worksheets now before going on to apply the lesson.

APPLICATION

You and I will probably never be asked to lead an army for God, but the Bible tells us that everything we do can be done in such a way that it is pleasing to the Lord. (Ask a pupil to read Colossians 3: 23.) What does it mean to work 'with all your heart'? How could this affect the way you do your work in school? Would you grumble about those jobs your mummy or daddy asks you to do if you remember that by doing them you are serving God?

Let the children complete the remaining sections in the pupils' worksheets. It may be possible for the children to give other examples of how they could serve God

LESSON 9

Worshipping Our Heavenly Father

LEADING OTHERS TO DO RIGHT - JOSIAH

Scripture Text - II Chronicles 34

AIM OF LESSON

To show the children that Josiah, even though he was very young, was able to influence others to turn from their evil ways to God and do that which was right.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Josiah was crowned king of Judah after his father Amon was assassinated in 640 B.C. Josiah was a descendant of David by thirteen generations (one generation before the exile of Babylon). See Matthew 1.

Josiah grew to be a strong good king who led the nation back to God. When he was 39 years old he was killed in battle against the Egyptians.

Jeremiah the prophet mourns the death of Josiah and shows what kind of character he had. Read Jeremiah 22: 15 - 16.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

How would you like to be suddenly told that you are now the new king or queen of this land? What would you say? 'I'm too young', 'Too much hard work', or 'Great! what fun I can have now', or would you just not believe it? Or if one of your friends or brothers or sisters were to become king or queen what would you think of them? Well, I do not think any of us will ever be king or queen as we are not one of the Royal Family. Today I'm going to tell you a story about a boy who did become king and he was only 8 years old.

Outline

This boy Josiah was a prince, as his father Amon was the king. They lived long ago in the land of Judah in a city called Jerusalem. King Amon was killed by his servants. After this Josiah was crowned king even though he was only 8 years old. He reigned for 31 years and was killed in battle when he was 39 years old.

We will look at some of the things Josiah did during his reign. He was a good king and tried to follow the good example of king David who was a relation of Josiah and was

king a long time before him.

When Josiah was 16 years old he wanted to get to know God. Four years later, when he was 20 years old, he began to clear up Jerusalem and the whole of Judah of all the wrong and evil which was going on there. He destroyed the altars and idols of the heathen people. These people worshipped evil gods instead of the true God whom Josiah worshipped.

After he had cleared Jerusalem of their evil gods and heathen priests he then went to other cities to do the same. It took Josiah six years to do this, so it was a long hard job. But Josiah was not finished yet. He now decided that the House of God in Jerusalem needed to be repaired. He picked three people to be in charge of this job. Before God's House was repaired money was needed, so these three men set up a collection system at its gates with some guards watching the money. People brought gifts of money from all parts of the land.

Hilkiah, the high priest, was in charge of counting the money which was used to pay the carpenters and builders, and to buy the blocks and timber used in the building.

The workmen all worked very well and were not lazy at their job. There were also men who sat and played music while the others were building, so they must have been a very happy crowd of men. Everyone had his job to do and did it well.

One day while Hilkiah was counting the money which had been collected he found an old book. When Hilkiah opened the book he found that it contained the laws of God which God had given to Moses many years earlier.

'Look', Hilkiah exclaimed to the king's secretary, 'see what I have found in the temple! These are the laws of God which He gave to Moses long ago!' The secretary took the book to king Josiah along with the report on how the building was coming on. 'The work is coming on very well,' king Josiah was told, 'also the men have been paid today'. 'Good', said the king. Then the secretary told the king about the book. 'Read it to me, please', said king Josiah. When he heard what God expected of the people, Josiah was very upset and he tore his clothes and cried. He then sent some men to the House of God to pray for Josiah and for all of Judah. King Josiah said, 'I have found the reason why the Lord has been so angry with us. It's because people have not obeyed these laws in the past.'

The men left king Josiah and went to a prophetess. When they told her the bad news

from the king she told them to go back and tell the king, 'Yes, the Lord will destroy this city and the people because the people have left Me and worshipped other gods, and the Lord is very angry with them. But the Lord knows that you are sorry and have humbled yourself before Him and that you cried when you heard these laws, so the Lord will not destroy the city nor the people until after your death'. The men returned to king Josiah and told him this. The king then told all the people to go to the House of God with him. There the king read the laws to them. The king promised to obey the laws of God with all his heart and soul. He asked everyone to do the same and they all promised to obey God's laws. So during the rest of king Josiah's life everyone served the Lord God.

APPLICATION

Well, I can say that none of you will ever become king or queen of the country because you are not a prince or princess, but that does not mean that you cannot lead others to do what is right.

You might become a leader of your class at school, a captain of a sports team, or maybe you are the oldest in your family. You can lead others to do right if you are any of these. But you can also be a good example to others without being a leader, when at school among your friends or at home among your brothers and sisters.

Listen to this story.

One day in the school playground John and Andrew started fighting. They were fighting over who should have a go on the swing first. They fought and yelled at each other, and some friends were watching them. David came over after a while. He knew it was wrong to fight, so what should he do? David was a quite shy boy and he felt like running away and forgetting about the fight, but he quickly ran forward and shouted, 'Stop fighting'. John and Andrew stopped and looked at him. 'Why?' said John. 'Because you shouldn't', replied David. 'It's not right'. Some one who was watching shouted to David, 'Leave them alone'. David carried on, 'Stop fighting now please and you can take turns on the swing'. After a moment Andrew said, 'Right, John, you go first and then me, because if we carry on fighting no one is going to get on the swing'. 'Thanks, Andrew', David said.

Who in this story is showing others to do right?

Now listen to this story.

Mary and Elizabeth are sisters. Mary is 10 years old and Elizabeth is 7 years old. Mary is hungry and wants a biscuit but she knows that she is not allowed to take any out of the biscuit tin. 'Mummy will never know', says Mary as she opens the tin and offers one to

Elizabeth. 'No', says Elizabeth. 'Don't do that. You are not allowed.' 'But Mummy cannot see us', Mary says. 'But God can, and it is wrong to take a biscuit without asking for it.' 'But hm . . . ; well, I suppose you're right', says Mary and puts the lid back on the tin. 'I would have felt bad about taking the biscuit anyway.'

Who in this story is following the example of Josiah?

In these two stories none of the children are kings or queens but they can still lead others to do right. Who would you want to be like? Mary, David, Andrew, John or Elizabeth?

You do not have to wait until you are older to show others the right way in life. Remember Josiah was only 8 years old when he began.

LESSON 10

Worshipping Our Heavenly Father

DOING HARD WORK FOR GOD - NEHEMIAH

Scripture Text - Nehemiah 4

AIM OF LESSON

To show how Nehemiah prayed for and received God's help so that he was able to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. To show that sometimes we have to do very hard work for God and we need to ask His help.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Nehemiah was Cupbearer to the Persian King Artaxerxes I. On receiving news of the desolate state in Jerusalem, Nehemiah obtained permission from the king to go to his own country and rebuild the gates and walls of Jerusalem. In 445 BC he was appointed Governor by the king. Nehemiah and the Jews rebuilt the walls and gates of Jerusalem in 52 days. (Cf. Nehemiah 6: 15). Nehemiah's main opponents of the rebuilding were Sanballat and Tobiah.

In 405 BC Sanballat was Governor of Samaria and, at the time of Nehemiah's coming to Jerusalem, he was either Governor or hoping to become Governor. Doubtless he also wanted control of Judea.

Tobiah was probably Governor of the province of Ammon. His name means 'God is good.' (Not very appropriate considering what he is trying to do to Nehemiah and the Jews.)

Sanballat and Tobiah could not openly oppose Nehemiah because Artaxerxes had given written permission to rebuild the walls. However, they attempted to do so secretly.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Do you ever get tired with something you are doing? Maybe you get tired doing your homework from school or learning your Sabbath School lessons. You would rather be outside playing and you feel like giving up. It seems like very hard work. Today we are going to hear about a man who had hard work to do. He was tempted to give up, but he didn't. He knew this work was what God wanted him to do, so he prayed to God for help and kept at it until the work was finished. His name was Nehemiah.

Outline

Nehemiah was serving the king of Persia when he heard how the walls of Jerusalem were full of holes and the people of the city were frightened because they did not have any place to be safe. Nehemiah asked the king for permission to go to Jerusalem and help the people to rebuild the walls. The king gave his permission and appointed Nehemiah Governor of Jerusalem. Some people did not want the walls to be rebuilt and they caused much trouble. The leaders of these people were called Sanballat and Tobiah. They lived in the surrounding country-side.

When one wants to build a wall to protect a city it has to be large and strong, therefore the stones that are used must be hard and cut to a good shape. (Explain about building a wall, square stones, etc.) At this particular time one way to destroy city walls was to set large fires against them, and when the walls became very hot, cold water was thrown over the hot stones. This caused the large stones to crack, break into small stones, and the walls would collapse. This is the type of stone with which Nehemiah and the Jews had to rebuild. This explains why Tobiah laughed at the idea of the wall being rebuilt with the old stones. He said that even the weight of a fox would cause a rebuilt wall to collapse.

However, when the people of God heard the insults of Sanballat and Tobiah, they were not downcast. Instead they prayed to God and asked Him to help them as they rebuilt the walls. When Sanballat and Tobiah heard that the walls were half built they decided to come and fight against Nehemiah and the Jews and stop the walls being built any higher. But Jews who lived outside Jerusalem heard of the plot by Sanballat and Tobiah to attack Jerusalem and brought word to Nehemiah. He prayed again to God and asked for His protection and help. At the same time the people took steps to protect themselves.

Nehemiah set a constant watch for his enemies and, while half of his men worked at the wall, the other half stood on guard, armed with spears and shields. Even the builders kept their swords at their sides. A trumpeter stood by Nehemiah, and at its sounding, the people were to run to it, as they were working widespread around the wall.

Nehemiah's enemies grew angrier and tried different ways to stop the work. They sent a message to him that said, 'We know what you have planned. You are rebuilding the walls because you want to make yourself king of Jerusalem. You had better come and discuss this with us, or we will tell King Artaxerxes'.

But Nehemiah knew that they were planning to kill him, so he refused to meet with them. He answered, 'The things you say are only lies and the work that I am doing is too important to stop to talk'. Again Nehemiah prayed to God for strength so that the workers would not become discouraged.

At last the work was finished. The walls were built up again and the big city gates were

hung in place. Jerusalem was a safe place once more and the people had much for which to thank God. He had helped them to keep on working when the enemies mocked, and He had protected them from danger. Without God's help they could never have finished this hard work.

APPLICATION

While it is probably very unlikely that you will have to rebuild a wall around a city, there are many ways in which you do hard work for God. You can work for God in three main areas - in the home, in school, and in the church.

It is good and proper that you should help your parents in the home. In this way you follow the example which Jesus set us many years ago when he helped in His home at Nazareth. You should want to help your parents because you love them and because they do so much for you. When the work seems hard or when you think you would like to be doing something else instead, ask God for help to finish the work.

School work can be difficult and use up much of your time which you would prefer to use for play and fun. It is, however, necessary for you to work hard and do the best you can. You must remember to ask God to help you and give you strength to carry on when you are tired and discouraged. Nehemiah and his people prayed to God and asked for His help and protection.

It is important that you learn to work in the church when you are young. As members of the Sabbath School do you work hard at your lessons and pay attention to what is taught in class? Learn to listen to what your minister says in the sermon. Then during the week put into practice the teaching which you have been given at Sabbath School and church, so that you can honour God in your life and be a witness to Jesus. For example, it is important to speak kind words and be helpful and loving towards other people. Ask God to help, and you will find that He is very willing to help you as soon as He is asked.

LESSON 11

Telling Others about God's Son

JESUS SHOWS HIS LOVE

Scripture Text - Matthew 27: 26 - 53

AIM OF LESSON

To help the children appreciate something of Jesus' love for them and to show that the only adequate response from them is to trust Him for salvation and to serve Him with loving devotion and obedience.

BACKGROUND NOTES

vs 27 'Common hall' - the Governor's quarters.

'Band' or 'Company' - about 360 men.

vs 28 'Scarlet robe' - a cloak worn by military officers, fastening by a buckle on the right shoulder. Also a mark of royalty.

vs 32 'Cyrene' - a district in North Africa where many Jews lived. Simon's sons, Rufus and Alexander, later became well known Christians.

'Carry the cross' - the cross was carried by the prisoner. Jesus had done so at first, but had found the weight too much - remember, He had just been severely flogged and struck repeatedly on the head by a heavy staff.

vs 34 'Vinegar or wine' - this was probably meant as a sedative or pain-killer. Jesus refused anything to lessen His suffering.

vs 45 'The sixth hour' was 12 midday.

vs 46 'My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?' Jesus was regarded by God as the sin-bearer - surely the most dreadful of all His sufferings.

vs 51 'the veil' or temple curtain separated the Holy of Holies from the outer area. The tearing of this was symbolic of the way being opened up for a free access to God.

SUGGESTED READING (for the teacher in preparation, not to be read in class)

Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53.

Remember in telling this story that Jesus' sufferings were two-fold - physical, and especially spiritual. It is important not to dwell too much on one to the exclusion of the other. Remember also the impressionable age of your hearers.

VISUAL AID

Make a zig-zag book of 6 sides depicting the following:-

1. the whip
2. the robe, crown and stick.
3. the cross.
4. hill of Golgotha.
5. hill with 3 crosses
6. earthquake.

Use these as you tell your story.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Today we want to think about love and especially Jesus' love for us. (Spend some time talking about love and the practical ways it is shown in a family. Ask the following questions and ask the children to talk about a love that they understand).

1. Who are the people you love best?
2. Can you say why you love them?
3. How do you know that they love you?

Outline

It is a wonderful thing that God has given us fathers, mothers, uncles, aunts or friends to love us in this way, but even this only shows us a tiny bit of the way that Jesus loves us. We have to remember that God says that 'while we were still sinners Christ died for us'. Jesus didn't die for us because we loved Him. No! He died for us before we loved Him, when we were still His enemies, and this makes His love for us even more wonderful.

While Jesus was on earth He showed His love in many, many ways - (let the children tell of some of these) e.g., He healed lepers and other sick people, He made blind people see, He held little children in His arms and He raised people from the dead. However, after 3 years of doing this there came a time when He would show everyone how much He loved His people. It was now time for Him to die on the Cross for them, so that they would not have to be punished for their own sins, because if He had not died, each one of us would have to be punished by God.

Jesus had been betrayed by His disciple, Judas, and brought before Pilate to be tried. The people had screamed for Barabbas, the murderer and thief, to be set free and for Jesus to be crucified. So Pilate, unwillingly, handed Jesus over to be severely whipped and then He was taken off to be crucified. As if whipping wasn't enough, the soldiers took Jesus into the middle of a large group of other soldiers and made fun of Him. They put a scarlet robe on His bleeding back, and made a crown out of sharp spikey thorns and set it on His head. They put a big stick in His right hand to make Him look like a king, and they mocked and made fun of Him. Even worse, they spat on Him and then beat Him again and again with the stick. They shouted, 'Now, see the King of the Jews'.

Has anyone at school ever teased or made fun of you? (don't allow yourself to be side-tracked here by their stories!) Then perhaps you can understand a tiny bit of what Jesus must have felt. But He didn't get angry and fight back. He really was King and He could have called for armies of angels to come and rescue Him, but He didn't, because He loved us and knew He had to die for us.

Then a heavy wooden cross was placed on Jesus' back and He was led away down the streets and out of the city to the place where they were going to kill Him - to Golgotha. On the way

Jesus was so weak from being beaten that He couldn't manage to carry the cross and so the soldiers grabbed a man nearby and made him carry it instead. This man was Simon from Cyrene, in North Africa. When they came to Golgotha the soldiers crucified Jesus by nailing Him to the cross and standing it upright in the ground. Then they waited around at the foot of the cross - where they took His clothes and divided them among them. As Jesus hung on the cross there was a sign above His head which said, 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews'. But the people didn't really believe this. They had put it there in mockery. Even as He was hanging there dying, they jeered and laughed and made fun of Him. 'If you are the Son of God', they shouted, 'save yourself'. How hard that must have been for Jesus, for He was the Son of God and He knew that, if He wished, He could save Himself. He also knew if He were to save us, His children, He couldn't save Himself.

Jesus was crucified between two robbers who were being punished for the bad things they had done. Jesus was being punished although He had never done anything wrong or bad. He was suffering for our sins. He was taking our place. Then at mid-day an extremely strange thing happened. It should have been the brightest hour of the day, but all at once it became pitch dark - for 3 whole hours. Something awful was happening. Suddenly Jesus cried with a loud, heart-broken voice, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?' This was the most terrible time for Jesus. God, because He hates sin so much, turned His back on His dearly loved Son, all because He was taking all our sin on Himself. Jesus, for the only time in His existence was alone, forsaken by His Father because He loved us.

The people round about didn't understand what Jesus was saying. They thought He was shouting for Elijah for some of the words He said sounded like that. Even then they mocked Him. Then once again Jesus cried out in a loud voice and died. But He wasn't killed before His time. The Bible says, 'He gave up His Spirit'. When Jesus was ready to die, He gave His life into the hand of God.

Some more very strange things happened just then - in the temple a big curtain, like one across a platform in a hall, was torn right in two; there was an earthquake, graves opened and people came out alive. These amazing things happened to show us that the death of Jesus, bearing the sin of the world, was an amazing and tremendous happening.

Remember, Jesus could have said 'No, I don't want to go through all this pain and suffering', but He knew that this price had to be paid for sin, so that God would be satisfied, and so that we would not have to be punished by being separated from God forever.

APPLICATION

What do you think of Jesus' great love for us? Does it not make you want to love Him in return? How can we show our love to Jesus? By being sorry for the bad things we have done that caused His death, by thanking Him for dying and being punished for us, by asking Him to be our very own Saviour, and most of all, by deciding to live an obedient life, do all the things He wants us to and tell others about His great love.

LESSON 12

Telling Others about God's Son

A GLAD STORY TO TELL

Scripture Text - Luke 24: 33 - 48; Acts 1: 6-9

AIM OF LESSON

To help the children grasp the wonder and the reality of the Resurrection. The disciples were sent to tell the glad story of Jesus who died and rose again, so we His followers today, have the same responsibility to tell the Good News.

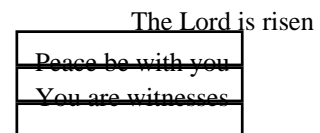
BACKGROUND NOTES

'has appeared to Simon', vs 34. There is no record of this interview of the risen Lord with Peter. Paul, in I Cor. 15: 5 refers to it as the first of Jesus' appearances to any of the twelve.

VISUAL AID

Draw an open tomb and prepare 3 flash cards.

Use these cards in turn as you tell your story.



SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Do you remember what the lesson was about last week? Yes, Jesus' death on the cross, and His great love for us. Jesus was dead, there was no doubt about that. How do you think His disciples and other friends felt now? How would you feel if the person you loved most of all in the world had died? (Let the children respond. As death and grief are probably not familiar things in the life of those in your class the following story will help them to understand the disciples' sadness and then joy at Jesus being alive).

Outline

Let me tell you about a boy who thought he'd never be really happy again, but who got a wonderful surprise. Alan was 10 years old and in all his 10 years he'd never had such a sad day. He had never cried so much. He didn't think there were any more tears left. His head hurt and there was a big lump in his throat. Even worse was that Mummy had been crying too, and he had never seen her cry before. It had all started when a policeman had come to the door that morning and told them the awful news. His dear daddy was dead, and that meant he was never going to see him again. The day before daddy had kissed them good-bye and set off on a business trip in a small aeroplane. Something had gone wrong, the plane had crashed, and daddy and the other men had been killed. Daddy wouldn't be coming home again. Can you imagine how sad Alan and his Mummy were? Two or three days went past and many friends and relations came to the house to say how sorry they

were and to try to comfort Mummy. Everyone was very quiet and solemn. They couldn't have the funeral yet, for although the other men's bodies had been brought back, Daddy's hadn't been found. They just had to wait.

One evening Alan and Mummy were sitting in the living room when the door bell rang again. They went to see who it was. Alan screamed with delight and Mummy nearly fainted for there, standing at the door was a person who looked just like Daddy. But it couldn't be him! He was dead! But it was, for as soon as he spoke they knew his voice. He threw his arms round both Mummy and Alan and hugged them so tight that he almost squeezed them to death. They laughed and cried, for they were so happy. They could hardly believe it was true. How could this have happened? Why was he not dead? The answer was that when the plane had crashed he'd been thrown out of it and had been knocked unconscious. Then when he'd recovered, he'd lost his memory, so he couldn't find his way home. He had wandered around for a while and finally, when his memory returned, he'd been able to make his way home. Oh! how happy Alan and his Mummy were! They kept hugging and touching Daddy just to make sure he was really there, and then, after some time Mummy started to make phone calls to tell all the friends the wonderful news. It spread like fire. Daddy was alive! He was not dead. What a day! What a happy ending!

After Jesus' death the disciples were a little bit like Alan and his Mummy when they thought that Daddy was dead; but for them it was much, much worse. They had run away from Jesus when he needed them most, they had thought Jesus was going to be a king and now He was dead, and they had loved Jesus so much, they could not imagine life without Him. They'd forgotten that Jesus had told them many times that he would rise from the dead - or maybe they just didn't think it was possible. Anyway there they were, sad, scared and frightened.

Our lesson story is about one of the times Jesus appeared to His disciples after His Resurrection. Already He had appeared to Mary and Peter and John. They had seen the empty tomb and so, when our story starts, they were a little bit happier. They had begun to believe that He must be alive. One day the disciples were sitting in an upstairs room in Jerusalem. They had the doors shut tight for they were afraid that the same Jews who had killed Jesus, would now try to kill His disciples. Into the room burst Cleopas and his friend telling them of how they had walked along the road to Emmaus with a stranger who turned out to be Jesus! While Cleopas and his friend were still talking Jesus suddenly stood in the middle of the room and said, 'Peace be with you'. Instead of being wild with joy, the disciples were terrified. They thought He must be a ghost, because He had come in when the doors were locked. Then Jesus said, 'Why are you frightened, and why do you think that I am a ghost? Touch me and see that I have real flesh and bones. A ghost does not have a body as I have'. Then He showed them His hands and feet, torn by the nails of the cross. Even when they saw the nail marks on His hands and feet, they were so filled with

joy and amazement that they still could hardly believe it. Jesus asked if they had any food in the room and they gave Him a piece of cooked fish which He ate to prove He really was alive.

Then Jesus asked them, 'Do you not remember that when I was still with you, I told you that I must suffer and die, as the prophets wrote in the Bible?' He began to explain all the prophecies about Himself in the Old Testament. He said, 'I suffered and died and rose again on the third day so that all who are sorry for their sins and turn from them may be forgiven'. Don't you think that this is wonderful news? Do you think Jesus told them this so they could believe it for themselves and be happy and tell no-one about it - just keep it all to themselves?

No, of course not! Jesus said, 'Go and preach to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You who have been with Me and have seen all these things are to tell them to all the world. I am going to send the Holy Spirit, but stay in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit comes and gives you power.'

APPLICATION

Remember Alan and his Mummy when Daddy stood at the door - how did they feel? (Excited and very, very happy). Did they just sit down and keep it all to themselves? (Let the children respond to these questions). No, they told as many people as possible, for it was such exciting news!

The news of Jesus Christ is far, far more exciting than anything that can happen to us today, no matter how wonderful. It is wonderful that Jesus loved us enough to die for our sins. But He proved that He was the Son of God and had overcome death by rising from the grave. No other person has ever done that. Jesus is alive today. No other religion has a leader who died and is now alive. We have a tremendously exciting story to tell. It is also a story that people need to hear and we, if we are Christ's followers, should want to tell others about it. Indeed we are commanded by Jesus to do so.

The important thing for each of us to ask ourselves is, 'Is Jesus Christ my Saviour? Do I believe He died and rose again for me? Do I have a glad story to tell?'

LESSON 13

Telling Others about God's Son

POWER TO TELL ABOUT JESUS

Scripture Text - Acts 2: 1-24, 36-41

AIM OF LESSON

To show the children that we need God's power to tell others about Jesus: The Holy Spirit brings that power to our lives.

BACKGROUND NOTES

The teacher will observe that not all of Acts 2 has been included in the story notes. It was not felt that verses 25 - 35 and verses 40 - 47 were directly relevant to the main aim of the lesson, and they were not included.

The teacher should familiarize himself/herself with the places mentioned in verses 9-11. See map on pupils' page.

Pentecost was a feast day, marking the 50th day after the offering of the barley sheaf at the beginning of the Passover. Male Israelites presented barley loaves in joyous gratitude to God for harvest; following sin and peace offerings.

VISUAL AIDS

Draw a large copy of the map given in the pupils' page, and mark the countries from where Peter's audience came on the day of Pentecost. Prepare WHO?, WHAT? and WHERE? questions on a sheet of paper, e.g.

WHO had told the disciples to wait?)	Use these at the end
WHAT had God promised to give them?)	of your lesson to summarize
WHERE did He tell them to wait?)	the main points.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Do you think your Mum would ask you to go for the groceries to the shop, without giving you the money to buy the messages? Or if Dad wanted you to clean the car for him, he wouldn't expect you to do it without a bucket and sponge, would he?

In the same way, God never asks us to do anything for Him, without giving us all the help we need. Today we're going to discover what God did to help the first disciples to obey Him.

Outline

Do you remember the last thing Jesus told the disciples to do, before He left them? (Give the children time to think and reply).

Yes. He told them to go all over the world, and tell everybody about Jesus. When people believed in Jesus, they were to teach them to follow Him and obey Him. Can you imagine how they felt? Jesus had left them, and now they were 11 men, in a small country called Israel. Probably none of them had ever left their country before, because people didn't travel so much then. And Jesus had told them to go into the whole world with the news about Him. If only Jesus was still there! He had always been there to teach them how to do things, to encourage them, and sometimes to correct them when they said wrong things about each other. But Jesus had promised they wouldn't be alone. He had told them God would send them someone to teach them, to help them, and to keep them right. Jesus had also told them to wait in Jerusalem, not to try to do the job on their own, but to wait until God sent them the power they needed.

So they waited in Jerusalem. They prayed together a lot, and read their Bibles.

One day something amazing happened. The disciples were all together in one house, and there was a loud noise - as if a gale was blowing. Then what looked like flames of fire appeared on their heads, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and found they could speak languages they had never learned before.

Lots of people ran up to see what the noise was, among them foreign Jews from places as far away as Rome, Egypt and Arabia. They were astonished to hear people speaking their own languages - and even more so, when they learned the speakers were all from Galilee. 'These men are talking about the wonderful things God does, in our own languages', they said. 'How can this be happening?' Others in the crowd just laughed. 'It's quite obvious', they said. 'These men are just drunk'.

Then Peter stood up with the other disciples, and shouted to the crowds to listen while he explained. 'Listen all of you', he began. 'These men are not drunk - it's too early in the day apart from anything else. This is what Joel the prophet said would happen. God promised He would pour out His Spirit on men and women everywhere, and incredible things would happen in the sky and on the earth. A man called Jesus lived here recently. He did many miracles in front of you, and proved He was God's Son. But you deliberately plotted against Him and murdered Him. However, He is not dead now. He is alive and sitting at the right hand of His Father, God. The reason all these amazing things happened today, is that God has now sent His Spirit, as He promised He would, after Jesus rose from the dead'.

When the Jews realised the awful things they had done, they became really worried and

said to Peter, 'What can we do about it now?' Peter explained how they needed to ask God's forgiveness and receive Jesus as their Saviour, and they too would be filled with God's Spirit. And that day 3, 000 people became disciples of Jesus, and the 12 men who wondered how they could possibly tell the people of the world about Jesus, had started without realising it. And how did it happen? Because God sent them His Spirit.

APPLICATION

God wants all His disciples today to tell others about Jesus. The disciples wouldn't have had the courage to do it alone - they were ordinary people just like us. But did God leave them to do it on their own? Suppose one of your friends in school asked you if you believed in Jesus - would you feel very shy about answering, or wish you could disappear somewhere? Remember God has given us His Spirit to make us brave to speak so that our friends will hear about His Son. We can always depend on His help.

LESSON 14

Telling Others about God's Son

USING THAT POWER

Scripture Text - Acts 3: 1 - 10

AIM OF LESSON

To show the children that God's power is not given to us just for our benefit: but that we can use it to serve Him - in whatever way He shows us.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Apostles were literally 'sent ones', usually commissioned by Jesus, and witnesses of His Resurrection. So the 12 disciples (because Matthias replaced Judas) and Paul (because he witnessed the risen Christ on the Damascus Road) were referred to as apostles. These men had special gifts of healing and exorcism on Christ's authority.

VISUAL AID

Use a large picture of a temple entrance, and cut out figures to illustrate this story. Move them around as you tell it.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Let me tell you about a boy called Brian. One day in school the teacher was telling Brian's class about the boys and girls in the world who were in less happy circumstances, the boys and girls who didn't have enough to eat. The teacher said that Brian's class were going to help a boy in India, a boy called Mohammed. They were going to send money every month so that Mohammed would have food to eat, and perhaps go to school.

Brian came home to his Mummy very worried. 'My money box is empty', he said 'and how can I help Mohammed?' 'Well, Brian - don't you remember that your Auntie sent you money and we put it into the bank for you', said his Mum. 'That money is yours to use as you like, and if you want to get some of it out for Mohammed, that's easy to do.' So they did.

Brian had the money to help Mohammed all the time He just didn't realise it was there for him to use.

Today we're going to hear about two men who were different from Brian - because they did know right away how they could help someone . . .

Outline

Do you remember what happened on the exciting day we learnt about last week? (Pause

and ask the children for a brief account of the story, stressing that Pentecost was when God gave His people the Holy Spirit to bring the power of Jesus into their lives.)

Last week Peter was preaching to hundreds of people and 3, 000 people became Christians all at once. But every day was not like that: some days were quite ordinary.

This week we find Peter and John going to the temple to pray to God. On their way into the temple, they saw a crippled man sitting at the gate. He had been born crippled and hadn't ever walked in his whole life. Every day some friends carried him to the gate of the temple to beg. He spotted Peter and John and must have thought they looked kind, so he asked them for some money. Peter and John didn't ignore him. Instead they looked at him and he guessed that they were going to give him something. So he kept staring at them. Then Peter spoke. 'I don't have any money to give you,' he said, 'but I'll give you what I have got. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk'. He took the crippled man's hands, helped him on to his feet, and the man's feet and ankles suddenly became strong. He jumped up and started walking. Then he went on with them into the temple, jumping for joy, and shouting praise to God.

All the people saw what was happening and heard him praising God. They realised that this was the man who used to sit begging outside the gate called Beautiful. The people were absolutely astonished at what had happened.

APPLICATION

Just supposing Peter and John hadn't bothered to do what they did. The man had asked for money, and they didn't have any. So they could have just ignored him or even politely said 'No'. But they knew that God's power could make this man well, and that they had received this power from God to be used, not stored up. So they used God's power to make this man well. Sometimes, like the money in the bank that Brian didn't realise he could use, we can forget that God has given us His power to help us meet needs in other people's lives.

Are there those in your class at school who are lonely, and perhaps a bit unpopular? All the others ignore them or talk about them. God wants us to help such people. Though you might think that's terribly difficult, you will find that if you pray and ask God, He will give you His power to do it. With God helping you, it's not nearly as difficult as you thought. You may also have a sick friend or relative. It's not likely that God will tell you to help them get better immediately like Peter and John helped the cripple. They were special disciples of Jesus called apostles and God used them in special ways. But you can help your friends by praying for them.

Just as Brian had some money to use for himself and for other people, so God gives us His power to make us stronger Christians so that we can help others who are in need.

LESSON 15

Telling Others about God's Son

TEACHING A MESSAGE OF JOY

Scripture Text - Acts 8: 26 - 40

AIM OF LESSON

To show the importance of obeying God in evangelism and to remind the children that receiving the gospel brings great joy, which should encourage us as we seek to find people willing to receive it.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Following Stephen's death, the Jerusalem church was persecuted and most disciples apart from the apostles fled to the adjoining districts of Samaria and Judea. Philip went north to Samaria and following much successful preaching Peter and John went up to further instruct the new converts.

VISUAL AIDS

A good map to show the areas and places mentioned would be useful. You might like to cut out figures and use them on the map as you tell this story.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

For the last few weeks at Sabbath School we've been thinking about telling others about God's Son. I wonder if you have been trying to do it? I wonder if you've found that maybe just as you were about to say something to a friend, someone else ran up and interrupted, and your opportunity was lost. Or maybe your friend was not a bit interested, or told you, 'No-one believes in all that nowadays'. It's very easy to get discouraged and imagine that no-one will ever listen to us, or begin to understand what we're talking about.

God wants to encourage us today by reminding us of the joy that people have when they do come to know Him. People may not listen to what you say, may laugh at you or tell you it's not true, but none of that changes the importance of God's message for them and everybody. It's still the most wonderful news (the word 'gospel' means good news) and when people come to discover this, they find great joy.

Outline

After Stephen's death it wasn't safe for a lot of the Christians to stay in Jerusalem. So Philip had gone up to Samaria, where he went about preaching.

One day an angel of the Lord said to him, 'Go down to the Gaza road out of Jerusalem, the

road that goes through the desert'. So Philip obeyed God at once, and went to that road where he met a very important man. He was very important in the court of the Ethiopian Queen, called Queen Candace. In fact, this man was a Chancellor of the Exchequer for Queen Candace, for he was in charge of all her treasure. This important man had travelled up to Jerusalem to worship there. As he was travelling home again in his chariot, he was reading in the Old Testament, in the book of Isaiah, chapter 53. God told Philip to go up close to the chariot as it was travelling, and Philip heard the man reading. He must have been reading aloud. Philip asked the man, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' 'How can I', he replied, 'unless someone explains what it means?' He invited Philip to sit beside him in the chariot. He was reading verses 7 and 8 of the chapter which tells all about the suffering and shame of Jesus when He was tried and crucified.

'Who is the prophet talking about here?' he said. 'Is he talking about himself, or someone else?' So Philip explained to him all about Jesus, starting with Isaiah's writing in this chapter.

As they travelled along, they came to some water - perhaps a river with a sloping bank. 'Is there any reason why I can't be baptized in this water?', the man said to Philip.

'If you truly believe with your heart, you may certainly be baptized', Philip replied.

'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God', the man answered.

He ordered the chariot to stop, and Philip and the man went down into the water, where Philip baptized him.

After they came up out of the water, the chancellor didn't see Philip any more, but it didn't really matter. He went home full of joy for he had found the Saviour. Philip went on preaching in all the towns around Caesarea.

APPLICATION

I wonder do you think Philip was someone special because the people he spoke to believed? Certainly we see that when he spoke to people about Jesus many believed what he said. Perhaps we can learn why from today's lesson.

Why did Philip go to this lonely desert road, and speak to this man? Because God told him to. So not only was Philip listening to God talking to him, but he also obeyed Him.

We don't hear God talking to us the way other people talk to us. But we can know what God wants us to do. He tells us sometimes by using that voice we have inside us, which we call our conscience, or sometimes as we read His Word to us in the Bible. When we obey God we can trust Him that people will believe. Philip was an ordinary man, who did what God told him to do.

We must remember too, that knowing Jesus will bring joy into people's hearts. Think how

LESSON 16

Telling Others about God's Son

ANSWERING GOD'S CALL

Scripture Text - Acts 9: 1 - 29

AIM OF LESSON

To show how God chose and called Paul to a life of service in His world.

To help each child respond to God's call and be willing to serve the Saviour.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Saul was born in Tarsus, a major port in the Mediterranean and one of the greatest university cities of the ancient world. He was taught a strict interpretation of the law by Gamaliel in Jerusalem. As a rabbi, he was eager to obey the Jewish law and customs. Because the Christians were, in his opinion, blaspheming against God and liable to the death penalty (according to Leviticus 24: 15, 16; Deut. 18: 20) he arrested them wherever he could. On the journey to Damascus he was blinded by a light from Heaven. Jesus spoke from Heaven and told Saul that he was persecuting God, rather than obeying Him.

After his conversion, as a witness to the risen Christ, instead of persecuting the Christians, Paul became their greatest preacher. More details are given in Paul's testimonies in Acts 22: 6 and 26: 12.

VISUAL AIDS

On a sheet of paper, prepare 2 columns for BEFORE Paul believed, and AFTER Paul believed. Write up the words in each column as you tell the story, e.g., hated Christians, became blind, believe, see, etc.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

What would you like to be when you grow up - a farmer, an engineer, a carpenter, a secretary, a nurse or a teacher? (allow a few moments for the children to express themselves and show an interest in their ambitions. Help them if they are slow to respond.) Today we are going to hear about a young man who wanted to spend his life serving God and studied very hard to do so. But he went about it completely the wrong way! His name was Saul.

Outline

When Saul was a small boy, he lived with his mother and father in a town called Tarsus. They were good parents who loved the God of Israel and sent Paul to the synagogue school. There he would have learned about Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as well as Moses and The Law. He would also have memorized several long sections of the Old Testament. When Saul grew older, his parents sent him to Jerusalem for his 'university' education and one of his teachers

there was a very famous man called Gamaliel who knew God's Word in the Old Testament very well.

About this time Jesus was teaching and healing many, saying He was the Son of God and forgiving sins. Many believed Him. He also showed the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem how wrong they were to keep the Law of Moses outwardly but not in heart. Basically they were unfair, unloving and greedy, pleasing themselves. Because they were like this they put Jesus to death.

But after Jesus died and rose again, those who had become Christians went back home from Jerusalem after the Passover, and told their friends about Jesus. Many believed and more and more people became Christians. The religious leaders in Jerusalem were very angry about this and put many of the Christians in prison and some were even killed.

Saul, who had now grown up, also hated the Christians because he thought they were committing the greatest possible sin against God - calling Jesus God's Son. You can see then how Saul really thought he was serving God by persecuting the Christians, can't you? But God had a great plan for Saul's life as we shall see.

Saul heard that there were many Christians in the city of Damascus, so he asked the High Priest at Jerusalem for a letter giving him the power to bring these Christians back to Jerusalem and put them in prison. The High Priest was very pleased and gave the letter to Saul, who set off with some soldiers for Damascus. It was a very large town, approx. 224 km from Jerusalem. The journey would have taken several days perhaps on horseback or on foot, but about mid-day, a very strange thing happened! When they were almost at Damascus, suddenly a great light from Heaven, even brighter than the sun, flashed all around Saul and the soldiers. Saul fell to the ground and he heard a voice from Heaven saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' Can you imagine how surprised and amazed Saul was when he heard the voice? Although Saul could hardly speak, he asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting', the voice replied. 'Get up, for I have called you to be My witness. Go into Damascus and there you will be told what to do.'

When Saul got up and opened his eyes, he discovered that he was blind. The soldiers who were with him had to take him by the hand and guide him to Damascus. For the next 3 days Saul remained blind and spent the time praying, not even wanting to eat or drink. That must have been a very special time in Saul's life, mustn't it? How do you think he was feeling - happy, excited, afraid? (Try to get the children to identify with Saul, allowing them to express their thoughts).

As this was happening to Saul, God called Ananias who lived in Damascus and who already loved the Lord Jesus. 'Yes, Lord?', said Ananias. 'Ananias, go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for Saul of Tarsus, for he is praying and he is waiting for you to go and heal him.' Ananias was alarmed and he talked to God about it saying, 'Lord, I have heard many

stories about this man and the harm he has done to the Christians here in Jerusalem. He has come to Damascus to take the Christians here back to Jerusalem and put them into prison.' But God said, 'Go, Ananias, for I have chosen this man to tell others about Me, the Gentiles and even their kings, and the people of Israel too. I will show how much he must suffer for My Name.'

Off Ananias went, putting his fears behind him and trusting God's words. When he found Saul he lovingly placed his hands on him saying 'Brother Saul, the same Lord Jesus, who appeared to you as you were coming here has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.' Immediately Saul was able to see and, after having something to eat and drink, felt much stronger. What do you think Saul and Ananias talked about? (Take time to listen to any comments made by the children).

The Bible tells us that immediately Saul began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus was the Son of God. All those who heard him were astonished saying, 'Isn't this the man who caused all the trouble in Jerusalem among those who believed in Jesus, and hasn't he come here to take them as prisoners back to the Chief Priests in Jerusalem?' Yet Saul preached more and more, proving that Jesus was the Son of God. The people were amazed at the great change that had taken place in his heart and life. The man who had come to take Jesus' friends to prison and destroy the message they believed, was going about telling how he fought against the Saviour and how Jesus appeared to him on the road to Damascus.

Those who did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God hated Saul for what he was doing and planned to kill him. He had to escape from Damascus at night when it was dark. His friends helped him by lowering him in a basket through an opening in the city wall. Later he went to Jerusalem to the Christians there. They were afraid of him at first, but accepted him with the help of a man named Barnabas. There too the Jews tried to kill him. This was the beginning of the many things Paul was willing to suffer for the Name of Jesus. Paul was glad that God had called him to be His servant. God used him as a missionary to far away cities and towns where many came to believe in the Lord Jesus.

APPLICATION

What lessons do you think this story has for you?

(In discussing this together, help the children understand the following points in the story).

1. God chose Saul.
2. Before Saul could truly serve God, he had to come to know the Lord Jesus in a personal way. (Perhaps the teacher could illustrate from his /her own conversion).
3. We can learn from Ananias how God uses us if we are followers of the Lord Jesus, e.g., He talked to God in prayer. He was ready to obey - 'Yes, Lord?'
4. How can you serve God - at home - at school?

LESSON 17

Telling Others about God's Son

PRAYING FOR GOD'S MESSENGERS

Scripture Text - Acts 12: 1 - 19

AIM OF LESSON

1. To show that through the prayers of Peter's friends, Peter was delivered from prison and imminent death to continue his witness for Christ.
2. To help the children understand how they too can share in the missionaries' work by praying for them.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Herod Agrippa, the grandson of Herod the Great, had been educated at Rome where he became the friend of two Roman Emperors. But when he returned to Judea, he acted like a good Jew to win the favour of the people. He killed James, the brother of John, and then arrested Peter when he realised how popular the death of James had made him. The Passover Feast would have reminded the Christians of God delivering His people from their enemies in Egypt, through Moses, (Exod. 12) and also how Christ had died at the Passover.

After Peter's deliverance, he remained one of the key leaders of the Church for another 20 years, with a special mission to the Jews around the world, (Gal. 2: 8; 1 Peter 1: 1).

Herod died miserably soon after this as God struck him down for claiming to be a god, as his Roman Emperor friends had done.

VISUAL AIDS

Photographs of our current missionaries and pictures of missionary work from good magazines to illustrate the point of the lesson to the children.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

At home, do you say things like, 'Mummy, may I have an apple?', or 'Daddy, may I have my pocket money, please?'. What have you asked for this week? (Talk about this subject briefly, being ready to help discussion along).

When we answer God's call like Paul did in the lesson last week, it is like becoming a member of a very large family with lots of brothers and sisters, God being our Heavenly Father. The Christians in the early church were like this. Today we are going to learn from them what happened when they asked God to save one of His children and how exciting that was.

Outline

You see, Peter had been thrown into prison. Do you remember Peter who used to be the fisherman? Since becoming a follower of Jesus, despite failures, he was now one of the leaders among the Christians at Jerusalem. But Herod Agrippa, who was king at that time, put Peter into prison. He knew that by putting Peter into prison he would please the Jews and be popular with them. Herod intended having Peter put to death as he had done to James, but because it was a special feast time, the Passover Feast, he could not take him to court or have him sentenced to death. He had to wait 7 days until the feast was over, so he had him put into prison with 16 soldiers guarding him, 4 at a time - 2 at the door of the prison and the other 2 with Peter's wrists chained to their wrists.

The Christians loved Peter very much. He was like a brother to them. God was using Peter to tell others about Jesus, so they prayed to God for him. The Bible tells us that 'while Peter was in prison, the church was earnestly praying to God for him'. (Acts 12: 5)

The Christians met in a large house owned by a lady called Mary. She loved and served the Lord Jesus and taught her son John Mark to love Him too. A girl called Rhoda helped in Mary's house. As well as doing other things, she would answer the door, if visitors called. People would come for meetings and to pray. Peter used to come too, but tonight, if Herod had his way, was to be Peter's last night on earth. Tomorrow the feast would be over and Peter would be tried and put to death. As the Christians prayed earnestly well into the night for Peter, their prayer, unknown to themselves, was being answered in a wonderful way.

Peter must have been very calm and at peace for he was fast asleep in prison! Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in Peter's cell. The angel struck Peter on his side, wakening him up. 'Get up', he said, and the chains fell off his wrists. 'Get dressed, and follow me.' Peter thought he was having a vision but obeyed, passing by one guard, then another, through the city gate which opened for them by itself, and down a street. At this point the angel left Peter. Only then he realised that this was no vision! Peter knew beyond any doubt that the Lord had sent His angel to rescue him! Quickly he hurried off to Mary's house where his friends were praying. (Pause) Suddenly, in the stillness of the night, Rhoda heard a knock at the door. She listened and the knock came again. As she enquired who it was, someone asked to be let in. She couldn't believe it! It was Peter's voice! How had he got out of prison? With great excitement, forgetting to open the door, she rushed into the room where the Christians were praying and told them Peter was at the door! They would not believe her, telling her she was mad. She did not mind, but kept repeating that Peter was there. Perhaps he knocked even louder, for at last they opened the door, and to their astonishment - it was Peter himself!

They must have been laughing and hugging Peter and talking a lot, because he signalled to them to make less noise and told them how the Lord had delivered him to them.

After asking them to tell James what had happened, he left them knowing it would not be long before he would be missed in prison. In the morning, a great search was made for Peter, but he was nowhere to be found. Herod Agrippa was furious and ordered the soldiers to be put to death.

(You might like the children to complete the true / false section of the pupils' worksheet before going on to apply the lesson).

APPLICATION

1. How do you know the Christians were concerned for Peter? (their love, prayers and joy on his release).
2. How did this help Peter?
(He knew they loved and supported him. Through their prayers he was delivered).
3. Why did God rescue Peter?
(God had more work for him to do, especially among the Jews scattered throughout the world).
4. Has God answered one of your prayers that you'd like to tell us about?

God might have rescued Peter without the prayers of His people, but He has given us the pleasure and joy of sharing in His work through prayer. Missionaries abroad and in the Irish Mission work, ministers and Christians who tell others about Jesus, are all God's messengers today. Who would you like to pray for? In the way that our parents listen to us and love to give us what is good for us, so God, our Heavenly Father, has promised to hear us and give us even more! See if you can complete the 2 verses about prayer on your pupils' worksheet. The section above this will help you know how to pray for missionaries.

LESSON 18

Telling Others about God's Son

ANSWERING THE CALL FOR HELP

Scripture Text - Acts 16

AIM OF LESSON

1. To show each child how Paul and his friends answered an urgent call for help from the people of Macedonia.
2. To help each child see how urgent it is to tell those people who don't know Christ about Him.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Philippi was a Roman colony where a number of Roman ex-soldiers were settled. It was run like a mini Rome, with Roman language, law and Government. Roman citizens were particularly privileged in this type of colony, e.g., they were exempt from degrading forms of punishment, which meant that it was illegal for Paul and Silas to be flogged and imprisoned, especially without a trial.

It had probably a very small Jewish community, less than the 10 men needed to have a synagogue, hence the need for the women to meet for prayer at the riverside. Lydia was an Asian Gentile, turned Jew. She was, most likely, quite wealthy for her trade was lucrative.

VISUAL AIDS

Materials needed - a sheet of paper for a background. Draw the inside of a prison - a simple brick wall with a small barred window high up will be sufficient. From some thin card (or pipe cleaners) make 3 figures to represent Paul, Silas and the jailer. Then cut out figures for Paul and Silas in the stocks and the jailer kneeling. These figures can be attached with blutack to the background as the story progresses.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Describe to the children a scene at a fire station, when a call comes in about a big fire in a home. Mention how the firemen pull on their equipment, rush to their engines which are standing ready, and speed off to the fire, through the town streets or along the country roads, sirens blaring. Ask the children questions about the scene, trying to draw from them how essential it is for firemen to act on such a call as quickly as they can in order to save lives. The following questions are examples:-

1. Have you ever seen a fire engine speed through the town or along country roads?
2. Why do they sound their sirens?

3. Why do you think they are in such a hurry?

Outline

Our story today is also about a call for help, but not one from a burning house. It came to Paul, who was staying in Troas with some friends, among whom were Silas and Timothy. Paul received this call for help in a vision, a sort of dream. In this vision it seemed to him as if a man was begging him, 'Come over to Macedonia and help us'. Macedonia was a country north of Greece. No one had gone there before to tell the people about the Lord Jesus. Paul was sure that this vision was from God, and that He wanted him to go. He knew that his call was important and urgent, so he and his friends set out at once.

The missionaries travelled by foot and by ship. After a few days they arrived in Philippi, a big city in Macedonia. On the Sabbath Day there was no church to preach in. Paul and his companions went to a place by a river, where people sometimes met to pray. Paul wanted to tell them about Jesus. They found some women there who knew about the God of Israel, but had never heard about the Lord Jesus Christ. As Paul talked to them, one woman called Lydia, listened very carefully. The Holy Spirit opened her heart and she believed in the Lord. After she was baptized, along with the members of her family, she invited Paul and his friends to stay at her home.

Among the other people the missionaries met in Philippi was a young girl who was not in her right mind. She was a fortune teller, another name for someone who tells people what will happen to them in the future. It was an evil spirit in her which made her do this. This poor girl was the slave of some men in the city who forced her to tell fortunes for money. They had become quite wealthy in this way. When this girl saw Paul and his friends in the streets, she followed them, shouting, 'These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved'. She followed them for many days. At last Paul turned to her and said, 'I command you in the name of the Lord Jesus to come out of her.' Immediately the evil spirit left her and she was in her right mind. This meant that she could not tell fortunes, or earn money for her masters any more. When these men found this out, they were extremely angry with Paul and Silas. They dragged them in front of the city's rulers. They told lies about them, saying that they were teaching things against the law. The rulers ordered Paul and Silas to be severely beaten and thrown into prison. The jailer was asked to make sure that they did not escape, so he put them into the cell furthest from the door. Their feet were fastened together in a wooden frame called stocks, which held them so tightly they could only sit down and hold their feet out in front of them.

Poor Paul and Silas. Their backs must have been very sore and bleeding from the beating. Do you think they were sorry that they had come to Macedonia? Do you think that they complained and wanted to go home to try and forget the people of Philippi? (Allow the

children to talk about how Paul and Silas might have felt and how they would have reacted in their place). In fact, Paul and Silas were very happy in this prison. They prayed and sang thanks to God, because they were allowed to work and suffer for Him. After all, at least one person had already come to love the Lord Jesus because Paul and Silas had spoken to her. How surprised the other prisoners must have been to hear them so cheerful.

Although Paul and Silas had been thrown into prison, God had not forgotten them. Suddenly, at midnight, there was a great earthquake. Everything began to rock. The very foundations of the prison were shaken and the doors flew open. The stocks fell apart and the chains broke in pieces, leaving Paul and Silas free to go.

The jailer woke up. He saw the prison doors open, and was shocked. 'Surely,' he thought, 'the prisoners have escaped'. He was certain that the city's rulers would be very angry with him, so he decided to kill himself. Just as he was about to plunge his sword into his body, Paul shouted, 'Don't harm yourself, we are all here'.

The jailer called for a light and, trembling, fell down before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them out of the prison and said, 'Men, what must I do to be saved?' Paul and Silas told him to believe in the Lord Jesus with his family. After Paul and Silas had explained about Jesus, the jailer and his family believed and were baptized. Then they gave the missionaries a meal and washed their sores.

The next day, the city's rulers had to come and apologise to Paul and Silas for putting them in prison when they had done nothing wrong. The missionaries were released and, on the way out of the city, they visited Lydia.

More people in Philippi became Christians. We know this, because a few years later Paul wrote them a letter. It is called the 'Letter to the Philippians', and you can find it in your Bibles.

APPLICATIONS

Do you remember at the beginning of this story, we talked about firemen rushing to fires, trying to save lives? Well, what would you think of a fireman who, when he was called to a fire, said 'I'm too tired tonight to go out. It's raining and I'm watching a good programme on the TV'? Such a man would not deserve to be called a fireman, would he? He would be selfish, and his laziness might mean that someone would be killed or hurt. When Paul was asked to go to Macedonia, what did he do? Did he say, 'It's too far'? or, 'I might get hurt by these people if they don't like me'? or, 'Let someone else go'? (Let the children tell you what he did). Yes, he went right away, because he knew that if he didn't tell these people about Jesus they might never hear from anyone else and would die not knowing about God's Son.

Do you know anyone who hasn't heard about Jesus? (Let the children reply). If you do

know anyone like that, you must ask God to help you tell them, and perhaps they will come to love God as well. You must try very hard to tell them, even if you find it difficult, because they might never hear from anyone else.

There are many people in the world who have never heard about Jesus, people in places like China, Russia and France. When you pray, will you remember to ask God to send people to tell them. Maybe God will ask you to go to other countries to tell about Him when you grow up. Remember also, won't you, to pray for our own missionaries (name them and their country and town). Sometimes people are very unpleasant to them when they talk about Jesus. Will you ask God to keep them safe, make them brave, and help them bring people to love Him?

LESSON 19

Telling Others about God's Son

GOD'S MESSENGERS ARE NOT DISCOURAGED

Scripture Text - Acts 17: 16 - 34

AIM OF LESSON

To show Paul's faithfulness, as he continued his preaching despite the discouragements which he faced.

To encourage each child to be a faithful witness, not discouraged by scorn or apparent lack of success.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Paul and Silas had been spending time preaching the Gospel in Berea. Some Jews followed them from Thessalonica and stirred up trouble against Paul who was forced to flee to Athens for safety. There he waited for his companions to follow him.

Athens was a city filled with great works of architecture and sculpture. But these were not viewed simply as works of art. They were temples built for the worship of many pagan deities, and the city was full of idols dedicated to the worship of false gods. It was this evidence of ignorance and superstition which so greatly distressed Paul. In Athens Paul debated with 2 different groups of philosophers, the Epicureans and the Stoics. The Epicureans believed that there were gods, but that they did not interfere in the life of humans. They believed that there was no life after death, and hence had no fear of future judgement. This is why they found Paul's preaching on the Resurrection so difficult to accept. The Stoics believed, on the other hand, that a man's reason should rule his life. Happiness was found in accepting life as it was and not allowing personal tragedies to affect one's contentment. They had a very high standard of personal conduct. The Areopagus was a court in Athens where Paul was brought, not to be put on trial, but simply to give an account of his beliefs.

VISUAL AIDS

1. Write out clearly the word DISCOURAGED on a large sheet of paper.
2. Draw and cut out an altar shape, and on one side write 'To An Unknown God', while on the other, write the characteristics of the true God as listed in verses 24 - 26. Use it when repeating Paul's speech in the Areopagus.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Today's story is about not being discouraged. (Have the word written out to show the pupils.) Do any of you know what this big word means? (Listen to the response.) Well, almost everyone has felt discouraged at sometime or other.

It is a feeling you could get when you have worked very hard on a homework; you have made it especially neat and tidy and you expect a good mark. But then the teacher tells you it is all wrong. Or maybe some of you have felt discouraged when you have played Ludo or draughts all afternoon with a friend, and every time you have played you have lost. Or some of you might have been discouraged when trying to learn to rollerskate. You just don't seem to be able to manage it. You keep falling down and, worst of all, people are watching you and laughing. So discouragement is what you feel when you just want to give up and forget all about it. Have you ever felt that way? (Allow the children to tell you some of their experiences which have made them discouraged. It is important that they are able to recognise this feeling.)

Most of us have felt discouraged, but it can be very dangerous because it can stop us from doing things God wants us to do. In our story today we shall see what Paul did when faced with events which could have discouraged him from preaching about God.

Outline

Paul, Silas and Timothy were travelling together teaching about God. Paul was forced to leave his companions for a time, so he went to Athens and waited for them there.

Athens is a city very famous for its ancient buildings and statues. Even though they are now mostly in ruins, people still travel from all over the world to see them, because they were very beautiful and carefully made from expensive stones and metals. The buildings were in marble, and the statues in silver, gold or ivory. In Paul's time these buildings were still in good condition and in use, but while he looked around he could not admire them.

The Bible tells us that Paul was very distressed by these buildings and statues. The reason was that they had been made for false gods. The Athenians believed in many gods. They thought there was a god for food, for drink, for war and many others. These beautiful buildings were temples for the worship of these gods, and the statues were idols the people would pray to.

Paul saw that the Athenians did not know the real God, who had made them and who gave them every good gift. He knew that God wanted him to tell them about Jesus. He could have felt discouraged and said, 'It is no use preaching God's Word to these people. They are very religious and they have many gods and are certainly not going to listen to

me talk about one God'. But Paul knew that there was only one true God, and that these people needed Him.

He went into the synagogues and began to talk with the Jews. Then he went every day into the market place and preached to all who would listen. Now the people of Athens liked to know all that was going on. Many were well educated, and some were very clever but, whenever someone came along saying something new, they all wanted to hear it. The wise men of the city listened to Paul and some began to argue with him. Then they took him away to a court and asked him to explain his beliefs.

Paul told them that he could see that they were a very religious people for, as he had walked around, he saw their temples and statues. He had even found an altar 'To The Unknown God'. Paul was going to explain now who this unknown God was. He said that God had made the world and everything in it. So because He was the Lord of heaven and earth, He didn't need to live in temples made by people's hands. He did not need the gifts they gave their idols, because He Himself had given them all their good gifts. They should not think of God as an idol made from gold, or silver or stone, because idols were dead but, as they were alive and made in God's image, so God too must be alive. In the past they had not known any better, but now God wanted them to repent and believe in Him, for one day Jesus Christ would return to judge them. God had given them proof that what He said was true by raising Jesus from the dead. Paul preached a very good sermon to these people, and it would have been wonderful to be able to say that all his listeners became Christians, but this did not happen. A few people did come to trust God, and others said, 'We want to hear you again on this subject', but others sneered and mocked Paul for his faith.

Paul was not discouraged by the small numbers who believed or by the mocking. He was glad to have obeyed Jesus, and he was glad that the Holy Spirit had brought some people to God. He would not stop preaching so that people would all admire him. No! He preferred to be scorned rather than stop telling people how to love God.

APPLICATION

Do you remember at the beginning of the story I told you that to get discouraged could be a very bad thing if it stops you from obeying God. God has told us to let other people know about Him, but we can easily be discouraged from this. Here are some of the ways we can be put off. Have you ever told someone about God and they have laughed at you and told others you were odd? Well, if that happens to you, will you remember Paul and how faithful he was when people laughed at him? He knew that it was more important to obey Jesus and to tell people how to believe in Him, than it was to be popular. God wants us to be faithful like Paul.

Or have you ever wanted to tell someone about God, but were put off because you thought

they were too clever. Well if you have, remember Paul again. He was in a city where the people were famous for being clever, but that did not put him off. These people knew many things but they did not know the most important thing - that there was only one God and they needed Him. So do not be put off telling people because of their 'cleverness', just ask God to give you the right words to say.

Most people get discouraged doing God's work sometimes. If you see that you are getting discouraged, remember, won't you, that God wants you to be faithful like Paul, and ask Him to give you more courage. Don't forget also when you pray for our missionaries to ask God to help them not to get discouraged. This could be very easy for them, because sometimes they are mocked or sometimes, after many years of work, they see only a small number of people come to love God. So it is very important that you remember to pray for them.

LESSON 20

Telling Others about God's Son

GOD'S MESSENGERS TRUST IN HIS PROMISE

Scripture Text - Acts 27

AIM OF LESSON

To show how Paul experienced God's faithfulness in keeping His promise. To help the children trust God and His promises.

BACKGROUND NOTES

This story was written by Luke, who seems to have accompanied Paul on this journey. Paul had been arrested for crimes which the Jews considered serious. He was questioned by Festus but, being a Roman citizen, he refused to stand trial before the Jewish Court. Instead, he appealed to have his case heard by Caesar in Rome. He was to make the slow and treacherous journey by sailing-boat.

The Day of Atonement fell sometime in October. This month was particularly dangerous for sailing because fierce storms could blow up suddenly.

VISUAL AID

To give the children some understanding of the effect of wind on sailing boats, float in a bowl of water in front of them an empty matchbox boat, with a toothpick or matchstick mast and a paper sail. Allow each of the children to blow the matchbox, pretending that their breath is a wind blowing a boat in the middle of the great sea. Point out that the boat goes where it is blown. Pretend also that the rim of the basin is great rocks. Blow forcibly on the boat, and show from this how a small boat can be damaged if blown onto rocks in a gale.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Today's story is about Paul who had been arrested for preaching about Jesus. The Jews wanted to put him on trial, but Paul had asked to be tried by Caesar, the ruler, who lived in Rome. It was decided that Paul should go the long journey to Rome by sea, but the voyages then were very different from now. It was long before the days of steam boats, so Paul had to travel in a sailing boat, that is, a boat pushed along by the wind. (At this point do the experiment with the matchbox in a bowl). Also, in those days the sailors had no compasses to show them the way the ship was going. They could only tell their direction by the moon and stars at night, or the sun in the day-time. When it was cloudy they could not know where they were going.

Outline

Paul was a prisoner, among some others, when he boarded the ship. His guards were a centurion called Julius and the soldiers in his command. Julius was very kind to Paul for, when the boat called at a port on the way, he allowed Paul to leave the ship for a while to visit some friends. After a time the prisoners changed ships at a port called Myra. This time they boarded a grain ship going to Italy. The next part of their journey was very slow because the winds were blowing in the wrong direction. At last they reached the island of Crete, and stopped at a place called Fair Havens.

Now it was very late in the year, which is a dangerous time for sailing, because fierce storms could blow up suddenly in this sea, the Mediterranean. Paul said to those in charge of the ship, 'Men, I can see that our voyage is going to be disastrous, and will bring great loss to ship and cargo, and to our lives also'. He did not want them to go any further until spring, but they did not heed his advice and decided to sail on to another port. A gentle wind began to blow and they set out.

However, not long afterwards, the winds changed and a terrible storm blew up, a real hurricane. The winds beat on the ship so fiercely that soon the sailors could not manage to steer it. It tossed to and fro on the sea, going where the wind blew it. The storm continued. On the second and third days the passengers and sailors threw overboard everything they could spare to make the ship lighter. The sailors fastened ropes round the ship to stop it breaking up. For many days the storm raged, hiding the sun, moon and stars, so that they didn't know which way they were going. The men were very frightened and lost all hope of being saved. Only Paul was calm and had courage.

He stood up in front of them and said, 'Now you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete, then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss. But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost: only the ship will be destroyed. Last night an angel of the Lord, whose I am and whom I serve, stood beside me and said, "Do not be afraid, Paul, you must stand trial before Caesar, and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you."' Paul was not frightened because he had this promise from God. He believed that God would do as He promised, so he told the sailors to have courage for they would all be saved. But God also said that the ship would be destroyed.

On the fourteenth night after the storm had started, the sailors thought they were coming near land, and they measured the depth of the sea several times. They found it getting more and more shallow. Instead of being happy, they knew that there could be more danger ahead for, if the ship was blown onto rocks, it could be broken in pieces. They dropped the ship's anchor (pieces of iron on rope which stopped the ship from moving) and prepared to wait for daylight. But the sailors were too frightened to wait. In the darkness they tried to steal a lifeboat which would take them to land. Paul saw them and they were stopped by the soldiers.

As the morning broke, Paul told all the people that they needed to eat. They had not had anything since the storm started, and so must have been very weak. Paul reminded them of God's promise. No-one was to drown. The sailors listened as he took bread, gave thanks to God and ate. The people felt happier and, when they had eaten, they were strong enough to lighten the ship, by throwing their cargo of grain into the sea. When daylight came, the sailors saw some strange new land, and spotted a sandy beach where they might be able to land. They cut off the anchors, and headed the ship towards the beach. However, the ship soon hit a sand bar. Its front stuck in the sand and wouldn't move, and the waves at its back were so fierce that it began to break up.

Everyone on board was in great danger but, most of all, Paul and the prisoners. The soldiers wanted to kill them all in case they would escape. However, Julius did not want Paul killed, so he did not allow it. He ordered those who could to swim ashore. The others clung to pieces of wood from the broken ship. Everyone was brought safely to land. God had kept His promise.

APPLICATION

Paul was sent on a long journey. He had been faithful in preaching about God. Now he was a prisoner going to be tried for it. His journey was very dangerous. (Allow the children to recap on the story by answering the following questions.)

1. Did God forget Paul on this journey?
2. What promise did God give Paul?
3. Was Paul sad and frightened on this journey?
4. Did God keep His promise?

Yes! God kept His promise. There are many of God's promises in the Bible, and we can trust them all. (At this stage, allow the children to unscramble the two Bible promises in their worksheets. When they have finished, go over their meaning with the children).

Have you ever been in trouble or frightened and needed God's help? Do you ever wake up at night when it is very dark and everyone else is asleep? Have you ever been afraid then? Well, remember God is always with us, looking after us. We should ask Him to take away our fears and trust Him to care for us. Some people are very afraid of thunder and lightning. Perhaps you are. Well, when it happens again, ask God to look after you and He will.

Sometimes bigger boys and girls at school can make some children very frightened by saying wrong things or hitting them. Well, if this ever happens to you, ask God to help you, and, as He kept Paul safe in the great storm, He will keep you safe. (Ask the children for specific instances when they have been frightened, and explain to them how God can be trusted to care for them.)

LESSON 21

Learning To Please God

THINKING OF OTHERS FIRST - ABRAHAM AND LOT

Scripture Text - Genesis 13

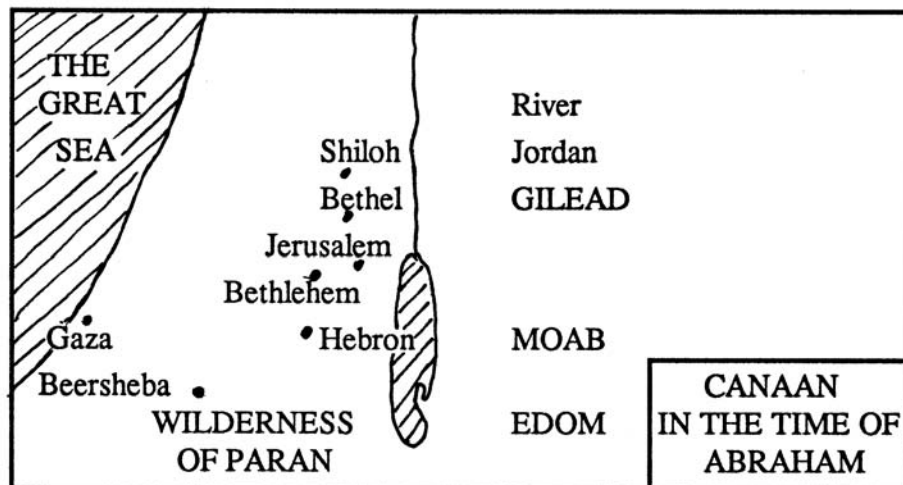
AIM OF LESSON

To encourage the children to show their love for God by thinking of others before themselves.

BACKGROUND NOTES

When Lot's father Haran died, Terah, his grandfather, looked after him. Then when his grandfather died, his uncle Abraham took care of him. When Abraham left Haran, Lot went with him. They took their many possessions and servants when they travelled to Egypt. Our lesson takes up their story as they leave Egypt and journey to Bethel.

VISUAL AID



SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Produce a tube of 'smarties' making sure you have one for each child and a lot extra left over. Tell the children they have been given to you to share with them. Give each child one sweet and keep all the remaining 'smarties' in a big pile for yourself. Ask the class if they honestly think you have been generous. Possible answers:- You wanted to have the most, you were mean, selfish, thoughtless, greedy.

Well, listen to the story today and you will hear about a grown-up who wanted the best for himself. (The children may eat their sweet now before the story.)

Outline

Refer to the small map when necessary to show where the places mentioned in the story are located.

Tell the story to the class.

Do you remember God told Abraham to leave his home? God said 'Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.' Abraham didn't argue with God, instead he obeyed Him. Now Abraham didn't live on his own. He had a wife called Sarah. He had a nephew called Lot and many servants. So when God told Abraham he was to leave his home, he brought his family and all his possessions with him. Lot was part of Abraham's family, so he came too, bringing his own sheep, cattle and servants. There were many, many sheep and cattle - some belonged to Abraham and some belonged to Lot. After a long time they arrived at a place called Bethel. The tents were made ready to live in, the pots and pans were unpacked and the servants looked for some grass to feed the animals.

Everybody was busy but not everybody was happy. There were so many people and so many animals that there just wasn't enough room for them all to live together. Soon Abraham's men and Lot's men began to quarrel and shout at each other. Abraham heard them and it made him sad, so he said to Lot, 'Let's not have any arguments between your men and mine'. He didn't want any unkind words but he knew there were too many people and animals so they would have to go their separate ways.

Abraham could have had first choice as he was the elder, but he didn't. Instead he said to Lot, 'The whole land is before you. Let's go our separate ways. If you go to the left, I'll go to the right, or if you go to the right I'll go to the left'. Lot was allowed to choose - what should he do? Abraham had been so kind to him all his life - he was more like a daddy than an uncle. However Lot didn't think like that at all. He forgot all about his Uncle Abraham - he thought only about himself. He looked selfishly at all the land. He could see that the Jordan Valley to the east was well watered and that the land there looked the best, so Lot chose it for himself. He thought he had made the best choice, but he had moved his tents near to the city of Sodom and this was a foolish choice because the men of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the Lord. What happened to Abraham? Well, God saw how kind and unselfish he had been, and God made another promise. He said, 'All the land which you see, I will give to you and to your offspring for ever'.

(The lesson can be revised using the questions in the pupil's material.)

APPLICATION

Remember God saw everything that happened and He knew just what Lot was thinking when he made his choice. God sees us all the time, and He knows when we are being selfish. Read I Samuel 16:7b with the class. Discuss what this verse is saying.

LESSON 22

Learning To Please God

FORGIVING ONE ANOTHER - JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS

Scripture Text - Genesis 37:17 - 28; 45:1-15

AIM OF LESSON

To show the children how Joseph, even though treated very harshly and unfairly by his own brothers, remained loving towards them, and was ready to forgive them completely for the wrong they had done, without any thought of revenge.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Jacob lived in the land where his father had stayed - in Canaan. He had twelve sons whom he loved dearly, but best of all he loved the two youngest - Joseph and Benjamin, sons of Rachel. Of these two, Joseph was his favourite.

According to Eastern custom, Joseph as the youngest available son, should have tended his father's flocks, but instead we find the elder sons doing the shepherding. Joseph's father also presented him, at the age of 17, with a 'coat of many colours' - a garment usually reserved for the eldest son. This was a special long-sleeved coat signifying that the eldest was heir to his father's property, and would have all the privileges and honours attached to such a position.

Joseph had two dreams, both of them meaning that he, the younger brother, was to be master and all the others were to bow down to him. The fact that Joseph was given more important duties than shepherding, wore the coat of many colours, and had dreams in which he was lord and master, only served to make his brothers detest him totally. One day Jacob sent Joseph to Shechem to see how his brothers were faring.

Canaan - name probably given at first only to the low-lying coast line of Palestine, to distinguish it from the neighbouring hill country.

Shechem - a walled town by mount Gerizim in the hill country of Ephraim.

Dothan - a town not far from Shechem and Samaria, very near a caravan route.

Cistern/Pit - small artificial reservoir dug in the earth and enclosed by stone or brick work, or scooped in a rock to collect and retain rain water.

VISUAL AIDS

Some books you may find helpful are:-

'Joseph' - Ladybird

'Joseph' - published by 'The Bible Societies'

'I wish I lived when Joseph did' - Geoffrey T. Bull, published by Pickering and Inglis

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Imagine you are doing a special project in school for a competition. You plan it out very carefully, collect all the materials you need for it and spend ages working at it. When it is finished you are very pleased and proud, for it is the neatest and best project you have ever done. Your teacher is extremely pleased and tells you so, in front of some friends. However, there is one boy in the class who isn't at all pleased. Your project is better than his and he is jealous. While all the class are outside in the playground, he sneaks in and rips, smudges and ruins your project. The teacher finds out who the culprit is. Naturally you are very upset about your project being spoiled after you had taken such care over it. What would you do? Would you become very angry and think of a way 'to get your own back'? Punch him? Say you would never speak to him again? Or would you say you were sorry and disappointed he should have done that, but that you would forgive him and still be his friend? Today we are going to hear a story about a young man whose brothers were very jealous of him and who did a most cruel and unkind thing to him. Even though the young man could have got his own back on them years later, he forgave them completely because he loved God.

Outline

Joseph's brothers were looking after and feeding their father's sheep near Shechem. One day, his father Jacob said to him, 'Joseph, I want you to go to Shechem and see how your brothers are getting on.' So Joseph put on the special coat of many colours his father had made for him and set off.

When he arrived, he found they weren't there. Joseph was a bit puzzled and was just wondering where they might be when he saw a man coming towards him.

'Excuse me,' said Joseph, 'I am looking for my brothers. Have you seen them about here?'

'Yes,' said the man, 'I saw them with their flocks. They said they were going to Dothan to find fresh pasture.'

So Joseph thanked the man and set out for Dothan which was quite near the route on which camel caravans travelled from Damascus to the land of Egypt. His brothers saw him coming in the distance and immediately planned to kill him because they hated him so much. 'Look,' one of them said, 'here comes the dreamer. Let's throw him into one of the pits and leave him. We can tell our father an evil beast has eaten him. Then what will become of his dreams?'

Joseph's eldest brother, Reuben, didn't want Joseph to die. So he said, 'Don't kill the lad. Throw him into the pit if you want to, but don't harm him.' Reuben really meant to keep

Joseph alive and take him back to Jacob, their father. When Joseph came near, they grabbed him, tore off his beautiful coat and threw him into a dry, empty pit nearby. As they ate and talked, they saw a long train of camels coming along the road on their way to Egypt. The camels carried spices and rich merchandise.

Suddenly Judah, another brother, jumped up. 'Listen,' he said, 'I have a better idea. What good will it do us to kill Joseph? Let's sell him to these merchants and then we'll be rid of him for good.'

'Yes! That's a good idea,' said another brother. They pulled Joseph up out of the pit and sold him for twenty pieces of silver. So Joseph was taken to Egypt.

Meanwhile his wicked brothers returned home and told lies to their father. They said they had found Joseph's coat of many colours all covered in blood and that Joseph must have been devoured by a wild beast. Their father was very sorrowful, and no-one could comfort him.

Meanwhile, Joseph had arrived in Egypt. He felt lonely in the strange land, but he knew God would take care of him. First of all Joseph worked for Potiphar, captain of the king's guard. The Pharaoh, the king, thought so highly of him that he made him governor of all the land. Joseph was a great help to the king and his country, especially when famine came. He was in charge of the corn stores - selling the corn and sharing it out among the people who had no food.

When people in other countries heard there was corn in Egypt, they came to buy some. Among those who came, were Joseph's brothers.

Joseph recognised them immediately but they did not know Joseph. At first he called them spies and they were very frightened of this majestic governor of Egypt. By talking to them Joseph found out that they were very sorry about what they had done to him many years before. He saw how their lives had changed and he knew he loved them very much. When at last he told them who he was, they were terrified. They thought to themselves, 'Surely he will kill us now that he is a powerful ruler?' But Joseph knew what they were thinking and said, 'Don't be angry or frightened about what you did to me. I forgive you. God planned that all these things should happen so that many lives would be saved in the famine. Now hurry back and tell my father that I am alive. Then bring all your families down to the land of Goshen and live there until the famine is over. You will have plenty of food for yourselves and your families and good pasture for your flocks.'

So Joseph's father, his brothers and their families came and settled in the Land of Egypt.

APPLICATION

So many times we let God down and do and say things that make Him disappointed in us. Perhaps we tell lies, are nasty to our friends, are disobedient to our parents, or take some things belonging to someone else. But God still loves us and, if we are truly sorry, He will forgive us these sins. If someone is really nasty, or spiteful, or tells lies about us, or breaks something belonging to us, we shouldn't immediately think, 'I'll pay him back!' No! God wants us to be loving and forgiving to one another all the time, not only when people tell us they are sorry, but even when they don't. This seems very difficult, but remember that God helped Joseph because he trusted Him, and He will help us too if we love and trust Him. If we expect God to forgive us, in return we must be ready and willing to forgive others.

LESSON 23

Learning To Please God

HONOURING GOD AND MY FAMILY - RUTH AND NAOMI

Scripture Text - Ruth 1; Ruth 2:1-3, 8-12; Ruth 4:13

AIM OF LESSON

To show the children how Ruth pleased God by honouring her mother-in-law.

BACKGROUND NOTES

God had chosen Israel to be special to Himself but Israel turned away from God. The book of Ruth opens with the words, 'In the days when the judges ruled' This was the time of chaos and corruption when everyone was a law unto himself. The famine in the land of Judah was a consequence of the people turning to idols and rejecting God. It was sent so that they might realise their helplessness and turn again to God.

VISUAL AIDS

The inside cover of the 'Lion Encyclopedia of the Bible' shows women working in the fields at harvest time.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Ask the children if they can mention some things their mothers have done for them since they got up this morning - e.g. made their breakfast for them, had nice clean clothes ready for them to put on etc. They could go on to mention more generally what their mothers or fathers do for them e.g. take them to school, buy new clothes/shoes for them, look after them if they are ill, etc. Ask, 'Why do your mummy and daddy do all these things for you?' Because they love you and want to do all these things for you. Our mummies and daddies love us but how can we show that we love them? Ask children for suggestions. In our story today we are going to hear about a girl who really loved her mother-in-law. Her name is Ruth.

Outline

The story began when Naomi, her husband and two sons went to live in the country of Moab because there was not enough food where they lived in Judah. After they had been in Moab for a while Naomi's husband died. How sad Naomi must have felt living in this strange country where people worshipped idols, now without her husband. However she still had her two sons, Mahlon and Chilion who married two girls from Moab. Their names were Orpah and Ruth.

She decided to go back to Bethlehem. Orpah and Ruth wanted to go with her but Naomi

knew that life would not be very easy for her in Bethlehem, now that she had no one to support her and so she urged the two girls to go back to their own families. Eventually Orpah decided to turn back but Ruth loved Naomi and God so much that she said,

'Entreat me not to leave you,
Or to turn back from following after you;
For wherever you go, I will go;
And wherever you lodge, I will lodge;
Your people shall be my people,
And your God, my God.
The Lord do so to me, and more also,
If anything but death parts you and me.'

Ruth left all her family, friends and false gods behind her and set off with Naomi to a country where she knew no one. They could not go by bus, train or car as there were not any then, so they probably walked the miles back to Bethlehem. When they arrived there, the farmers were just beginning to harvest their barley and because they did not have any supermarkets or shops which sold food, Ruth went out into the fields to collect grain which would be threshed into flour and then made into bread. The farmers did not mind the poor people picking up the stalks of grain which were left behind by the harvesters. Of course they did not have combine harvesters or balers like farmers have nowadays - everything was done by hand. (If possible show the picture of women working in the fields seen in 'The Lion Encyclopedia of the Bible').

Ruth found herself working in a field which belonged to Boaz. He was a very kind man and looked after Ruth very well, even though she was a stranger. He saw to it that she had enough food to eat and told her to get a drink from the water jars whenever she was thirsty. He also told his men to drop extra stalks of grain on the ground for her to pick up. I'm sure it was not easy work, bending and stretching to pick up the stalks of grain, especially when the sun was shining high in the sky. How hot and tired Ruth must have felt many times and I'm sure her back ached, but she worked very hard so that she could bring back as much grain as possible to Naomi.

Boaz noticed how hard-working Ruth was, and how well she looked after Naomi. They got to know each other and after some time they were married. A while later they had a baby boy. How happy Naomi now felt. She had a grandson who became the grandfather of King David.

(Have the children revise the story by answering the six questions in the first section of the pupil's material).

APPLICATION

Ruth turned from the false gods she had been brought up to worship, to love the true and living God whom Naomi knew. Ruth also loved Naomi very much. Have the children list in the pupil's material the sentences which show that she loved God and the sentences which show that she loved Naomi. (A number of sentences have been given. The children have to place them in the correct column.)

Think of ways that you can love God - e.g. put him first (i.e. no other gods), take Him to be your God, trust Him that He will look after you no matter where you are, etc.

Look up Col. 3:20. Fill in the spaces in this verse in the pupils' material.

Taking Ruth as an example how can you honour your mummy and daddy? e.g. be obedient to them, do your best at school for them, do things for them at home without being asked to, think of doing things which would make them happy, make a card for their birthday, etc.

By honouring your parents you are pleasing God. Home is the hardest place to please God as parents really know what their children are like, and you need God's help to honour and obey your parents.

(If time permits, have the children work out some of Ruth's characteristics. Take the first letter of each picture to make up the word. Alternatively the children could complete this at home with their parents.)

LESSON 24

Learning to Please God

RETURNING GOOD FOR EVIL - DAVID & SAUL

Scripture Text - 1 Samuel 24:1-13; 26:6-12.

AIM OF LESSON

To help the children understand that God wants us to forgive our enemies. We are not to look for ways to get our own back, even when we have the opportunity.

BACKGROUND NOTES

A resume of the story so far will help to put the lesson in its context.

King Saul who was chosen by God at the people's request to be the first king of Israel started his reign well in obedience to God. David the shepherd boy had been anointed by the prophet Samuel to be Israel's future king at Saul's death. After defeating the Philistines by killing Goliath, David was brought to the palace both as a reward for his bravery and as a companion to King Saul. David's bravery and subsequent popularity aroused great jealousy, envy and hatred in Saul's heart. Saul's character changed considerably during his reign. In I Samuel 10:27, we see that even when Saul was despised and slighted 'he held his peace' but several years later we see the same man consumed with envy when he hears the people singing, 'Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands.' We are told, 'Saul eyed David from that day forward.' I Samuel 18:9. This hatred grew stronger until David found it necessary to leave the palace where his life had been threatened. He sought for refuge in the mountains and for many years he was a fugitive, always alert for Saul's attacks.

The area where David hid, Judah, is a very mountainous district e.g. Jerusalem lies 2 500 feet above the Mediterranean Sea and about 3,800 feet above the Dead Sea. The descent from this area is very steep. To the south and west of it the land is barren, wild and full of caves.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

What would you do if someone at school called you names and was unkind to you even though you had tried to be friendly to them? Would you quickly think up something horrible to say? Would you wait for days or even weeks until you had the chance to pay them back by saying or doing something mean? Well, I know that David in the Bible was treated badly by Saul - I wonder what happened? If you listen carefully to the story you

will find out.

Outline

David the shepherd boy had been living in king Saul's palace for some time. Saul was often grumpy and moody, so David would play his harp and sing to him to make the king happy again. Everybody liked David - indeed that is how the trouble started. People were always praising him and Saul became jealous of David. He didn't want to hear the harp any more or the beautiful psalms David sang. In fact he was so jealous of David that soon he began to hate him. Eventually David had to leave the palace with his friend Jonathan, and now here he was out in the mountains hiding, even though he didn't deserve this treatment.

The king didn't give up once David had left the palace, instead he hunted him from place to place. We must remember that David was not alone. God was taking care of him and God had a special plan for his life. (Remember David was to be the next king of Israel after Saul's death.) David also had support from men who stayed out in the mountains with him to help him to hide from Saul.

One day king Saul heard that David and his men were hiding at a place called En-gedi. When Saul heard this he quickly set off with 3 000 men to help him catch David. Although there were lots of caves at En-gedi the king went into the very cave where David was hiding with his men. Saul didn't even see David! Probably the cave was large and dark, and I am sure David and his men stayed very quiet when they saw Saul. They knew that the king was out to kill David, so David's men urged him on. 'Go on, now is your chance to attack. God must have given you this way to get rid of Saul!' It would have been so easy for David to end his troubles and be free from Saul by killing him there and then. They all watched David as he crept near to Saul but, instead of killing him, he just cut a piece of material from the royal robe. The men could not understand this so David explained that it would be a sin to kill the king, the one whom God had chosen.

Saul left the cave and he was not far away when David bravely called after him, 'My Lord, the king!' When Saul turned round to see who was calling him, there stood David with a piece of his robe in his hand. David challenged the king 'Why do you listen to people who tell you lies - people who tell you that I want to kill you? I have not sinned against you although you want to take my life. Surely today you can see that I do not wish to harm you. I will not harm the Lord's anointed.' The king stopped, he listened to David and seemed to be sorry for the way he had behaved. I wonder was the king really sorry? Did he act in a kind way to David from that day on? Well, Saul was not really sorry for what he had done against David because he didn't change, in fact the Bible tells that Saul continued to hunt David, forgetting or ignoring the kindness David had shown to him.

Saul was determined not to give up and one day, when he heard that David was hiding in the wilderness of Ziph, he quickly set off with his 3 000 men to trap David. They had been travelling a long way and, as it was getting late, they set up their camp for the night. The king had a body-guard called Abner, and he and Saul slept in the middle of the camp with the whole army around them to keep them safe. Abner was meant to stay awake to guard Saul, but soon he was snoring along with all the other men. David's men were spying out the land and, when they brought back the news that Saul was nearby, David was quick to look for someone to go with him over to the enemy camp. Abishai, who was David's nephew, agreed to go.

It was night time and probably very dark with only the stars in the sky for light. Quietly the two men crept through the camp, past the rows of sleeping soldiers right into the centre of the camp where Saul and Abner were. The whole army lay asleep for God was taking care of David and He had sent a deep sleep upon them all. Not one man saw what was happening. Again David was urged to kill the king, - after all wasn't this the second time that Saul was at his mercy? Saul's water jug and spear were on the ground at his head. David bent over the king and quietly took the jar and spear. Then he put his hands to his mouth and shouted across to Abner and held up Saul's jug and spear. At once Saul's men were awake - 'What's wrong? What had happened? Where's the king? Is he all right?' they asked. 'David has been right into the middle of our camp, Abner was asleep but look, King Saul isn't harmed!' they exclaimed. David showed Saul the spear and jug to make him understand that again his life had been spared. So David did not take his chance to get his own back on Saul. Instead he remembered God and obeyed Him. 'Vengeance is Mine. I will repay, says the Lord'.

(This verse can be explained to the children. Now help pupils to complete numbers one and two in their worksheet.)

APPLICATION

Work through number three in the worksheet with the pupils. This will help them to see that it pleases God when we do not try to get our own back if we have been wronged.

LESSON 25

Learning to Please God

LOVING GOD ABOVE ALL - THE WIDOW'S GIFT

Scripture Text - Luke 21:1-4

AIM OF LESSON

To show the children how we, like the widow, must love God more than anyone or anything else in our lives.

BACKGROUND NOTES

The temple in Jerusalem was vast. To make an area large enough for his temple, King Herod built an artificial platform over the south end of the temple hill. The outer walls holding this structure still stand and enclose an area of 35 acres! It was very lavishly decorated. The walls inside were covered with gold plating.

The temple was divided into different courts. Non-Jews could only enter the Court of the Gentiles - to go further was a crime punishable by death. The next court was The Court of the Women. This was as far as women were allowed to go into the temple itself. It was in the Colonnades which surrounded this women's court that there were thirteen collecting boxes called shopheroth or 'trumpets' because they were shaped like trumpets. They were set there to receive the offerings of worshippers for the support of the temple services. (For a plan of the temple and for further information about it, see the 'Lion Encyclopedia of the Bible')

VISUAL AIDS

Page 137 of the 'Lion Encyclopedia of the Bible' gives a plan of Herod's temple. Page 246 of the same book shows two coins similar to those which the widow placed in the temple treasury.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Show the children a 10p piece. Ask the children, 'If this was all the money you had and you had no more money in your pocket or in your money box at home - what would you do with it?' Maybe you would buy a comic or your favourite sweets.

Today we are going to hear about a women who was very poor. She had very little money. She didn't even have as much as 10p - in fact all she had amounted to less than this! (Show the children a penny) However, she didn't spend it on sweets or even food. Let's find out what she did with it.

Outline

One day Jesus and his disciples were in the temple at Jerusalem. Jesus had been teaching the people, and many were eager to listen to Him, but some people were trying to find a way to trick him.

Jesus was probably tired, and He sat down near the place where people put money into collection boxes. These boxes were a rather strange shape. They weren't round like the offering plates you have in church. They were shaped like trumpets and there were thirteen of them altogether. They were made of brass and had wide open mouths. The money which people put into them was used for the temple.

Many people came along and threw some money into the boxes. Many of them were rich. They most likely wore beautiful clothes. They took out handfuls of coins and threw them into the boxes. Because these trumpet-like boxes were made of brass, everyone around probably heard the noise of the coins as they dropped down, and so all those standing by would know how much they had given. The rich people liked to 'show off' by throwing in lots of coins, but even after putting in this amount of money they still had plenty left for themselves.

Along came a poor widow. She had no husband to support her. She wasn't wearing any beautiful clothes. She was often hungry but she loved God and so she took out two small coins which were worth less than a penny and dropped them into the collection box. She probably walked away quietly, hoping that people hadn't seen how little she had put into the box. But Jesus had seen her and knew that she had put in more, much more, than any of the other rich people who had dropped many coins into the box.

Jesus called his disciples to Him and said, 'This poor widow has given more than all the others'. The disciples may have looked surprised at this for they knew that the rich people had given much to the temple treasury. 'All the rich people have plenty of money left for themselves after giving', Jesus continued, 'but that poor lady has given ALL she had - she has no more money left to live on. She has given the most'.

Lesson Summary

The children could revise the story by answering the true/false questions in the first part of the pupil material.

APPLICATION

The widow put all the money she had into the box because she loved God more than she loved herself. Discuss with the children the situations presented in the second part of the pupil material. Ascertain, by asking questions, whether the children in the pupils' material are loving God or themselves most. For example:-

Q. 'Do you think Darren loves himself more than he loves God?'

A. (Yes)

Q. Why do you think this?

A. (Because he is cutting down on the amount of money he gives to God so that he can buy a new football.)

Ask similar questions about the other children - Alison, Julie, Mark and Ivan.

Alison- loves God more than herself. Even though she would like to go to her friend's party because it is on the Sabbath she won't go.

Julie - loves herself more than God. She would rather watch T.V. than go to Girls' Brigade.

Mark - loves himself so much that he would try to obtain money dishonestly so that he can buy more sweets.

Ivan - on the other hand won't participate in telling lies even though it would save him being told off by his teacher.

Have the children place the names under LOVE GOD MOST/LOVE SELF MOST. Put a red ring around the children who love God most and a blue ring around the children who love themselves most.

Emphasise that although it is not wrong to watch some programmes on T.V. or enjoy ourselves, or spend some of our money on ourselves, if these things mean more to us than God does then we are not putting Him first in our lives and so not pleasing Him.

LESSON 26

Learning to Please God

REJOICING IN THE LORD'S DAY - PLUCKING GRAIN

Scripture Text - Matthew 12:1-15

AIM OF LESSON

To teach the children how they are to use the Sabbath Day.

BACKGROUND NOTES

The Jewish leaders, contrary to God's command (Deut 4:2; 12:32), had added a large number of rules about Sabbath observance. They said people must not come to be healed on the Sabbath (Luke 13:14) and must not carry anything (John 5:10) for all this would amount to work. Such 'rules' became a burden to the people (Matt. 23:4), for no one could remember all the rules about what they could and could not do, and so they were afraid to do anything on the Sabbath.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

I wonder can you tell me what today is called? Do you know why we call it the Sabbath day? Sabbath means rest. So the Sabbath day is a rest day. Who can tell me what God did on the very first Sabbath? He rested. Not because He was tired, for God never gets tired, but He rested in order to teach us that we need to have a day of rest. (At this point you might like to quote the fourth commandment.) Does this mean that God wants us to sit about all day and do nothing? No, because we are told that Jesus, God's son, went about doing good on the Sabbath day, healing people and tending to their needs. Now, the leaders of the people did not like Jesus for doing this. They had made a long list of rules forbidding all kinds of work on the Sabbath day, even the good work of healing people. (You could ask a pupil to read Luke 13:14.) But these were their own rules and not God's rules. Each Sabbath day these men followed Jesus and watched Him to see if He would break any of their rules.

Outline

One Sabbath day the leaders of the people watched Jesus enter the synagogue. 'Look,' they whispered to each other, 'There is a man here with a withered hand. Let us watch Jesus and see if He will heal him.' Just as they expected, Jesus, seeing the crippled hand hanging limp and useless at the man's side, went over to him.

(Ask the children how having only one hand would have affected the man.) Jesus felt very sorry for him because He knew that the man could not do any work with a hand like that. Maybe he had to beg to get money for food. He realised that it would even be hard for him to dress himself or have a happy life with only one hand. But Jesus saw that the leaders were watching Him closely to see what He was going to do. He knew that they would be

angry with Him if He healed this man on the Sabbath day. So turning to them he said, 'What would you do if you had one sheep, and that one sheep fell into a deep hole on the Sabbath day and could not get out again? Would you leave it there to die or would you pull it out even though to do so would mean breaking one of your Sabbath day rules?' Jesus knew very well what they would do. They would not leave their sheep to die in a hole. No, they would break their Sabbath day rules in order to save it. 'Well then,' said Jesus, 'is not a man much more important than a sheep? If it is right to help a sheep in need, then is it not right to help a man like this who is suffering? Surely we please God when we do something good on the Sabbath.'

The leaders did not know what to say. They could not answer Jesus because they knew that what He had said was right. All they could do was stand back and look while Jesus said to the man, 'Stretch forth your hand,' and when the man did what he was told they saw that the crippled hand was made well and strong like the other one. From then on he would be able to dress himself and work and do all the things that other men could do with two hands.

APPLICATION

You and I are meant to rest on the Sabbath day, but that does not mean we are meant to be lazy and spend the day in bed or sit about and do nothing. In our story we saw that Jesus entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day. Why did He do that? In order to worship God. So we must go to church on the Sabbath day to sing praise to Him and listen to His word.

Jesus healed people on the Sabbath day, and we are also to do deeds of kindness to others on the Sabbath. Ask the children what things they must do on the Sabbath day. (e.g. eat, dress themselves, feed their animals.) Emphasize that these works are necessary and therefore can be done on the Sabbath. Ask the children to think about deeds of kindness they can do on the Sabbath day.

Jesus shows us that we are to rest from the work we do on the other six days so that we will have time to think about God, to worship Him in church and to show kindness to others. Those who truly love God should be pleased that He has given them this special day when they can go to Sabbath School and church to learn about Him and His Son, Jesus Christ.

Are you glad that God had given you this day?

REVISE THE STORY

1. Why did the leaders watch Jesus on the Sabbath day?
2. Where did Jesus go on the Sabbath day?
3. Who did Jesus see in the synagogue?
4. What did He decide to do for the man?
5. What did Jesus know the leaders would do even though it would mean breaking their own rules?
6. What is more important, to help a sheep in need or a man who is suffering?

LESSON 27

Learning to please God

LOVING OTHERS - GOOD SAMARITAN

Scripture Text - Luke 10: 25-37

AIM OF LESSON

To show the children, through the parable of 'The Good Samaritan', that if we truly love God, we ourselves will love and care for any needy person - regardless of who he is.

BACKGROUND NOTES

The land where Jesus lived was divided into three parts. Judea was in the south, Galilee in the north, and Samaria in the middle. The people in the south hated the Samaritans. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho was a downhill road - approximately 17 miles long. Along certain parts of it were towering inaccessible rocks and caves where bandits lived.

Priest - authorised minister who officiated at the sanctuary before God, taught the people the law of God and inquired for them God's will. Many priests lived in Jericho. Dress consisted of short breeches, a seamless coat fitting close to the body, extending to the ankles in later times, gathered at waist by a symbolically ornamented girdle, a cap shaped like a cup. These were made of white linen. Contact with a human corpse was a grave defilement. Uncleanliness arising from this cause continued 7 days. For purification, the ashes of a red heifer were required. The priests washed their hands and feet before entering the sanctuary or burning an offering on the altar.

Levite - an assistant to the priest in the sanctuary. Played instruments and sang psalms.

Samaritan - Jews disliked Samaritans intensely and had no social or religious association with them.

VISUAL AIDS

(Some visual aids which may be useful -

1. 'STORIES JESUS TOLD - BOOK 3' by Lutterworth Press
2. Series - 'THE STORIES JESUS TOLD - THE GOOD SAMARITAN' by World. This book includes a simple map.
3. 'JESUS TEACHING PEOPLE' by Denholm House Press.)

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

I wonder if I asked you the question - 'Who is your neighbour?' - how many of you would say - 'My neighbour is Mrs. Mills' or 'Tom lives next door to me, he's my neighbour?' These answers are correct, but have you ever thought that the word 'neighbour' can mean a boy or a girl in your class at school, the milkman, your teacher, the woman in the sweet shop, etc? In fact, a neighbour can be anyone we come into contact with, or hear about, or read about, in our everyday lives. Today we are going to hear a story about a person who was a 'neighbour' to someone who needed his help.

Outline

One day a lawyer, a man whose job it was to teach the people about God's law, asked Jesus a question - 'I know I should love my neighbour,' he said, 'but who is my neighbour?' Jesus told him this story to answer his question.

One day a man set out to walk on the long, lonely road from Jerusalem to Jericho. The road was a very dangerous one, winding among rocky hills. There were no trees, no grass, just bare crags. In the cliffs were caves where thieves and bandits lived. They made their living by stealing from travellers, especially ones who were alone.

The man hoped he would reach Jericho safely for he had money and goods with him. He shivered as he thought of robbers and walked faster. Suddenly there was a noise of falling stones above him. He looked up and saw a gang of ugly-looking men running towards him, waving sticks and knives. They surrounded him. He shouted for help, but there was no one else near him. He tried to fight, but it was hopeless. They beat him with their sticks, took everything he had - even his clothes, and left him lying at the roadside. They didn't care that they had hurt him and left him half-dead.

The poor man lay there for a long time, suffering from his beating and about to die. After a while, he heard footsteps. Someone was coming along the road, someone who might help him. The footsteps belonged to a priest who has been serving in the Temple in Jerusalem. When he saw the injured man he quickly ran on thinking to himself, 'Those dreadful robbers again! I wonder where they are now? If I stay here, perhaps they'll catch and kill me too.' He went on, thinking only of himself.

Soon another traveller came walking briskly down the road. He was a Levite, one of the priests' special helpers in the Temple. The poor man could see him coming, and he thought to himself, 'Surely he will help me. He does God's work in the Temple.' The Levite stopped and looked at him. This man looks dead already. If I stop to help him and if I touch him, I'll have to wash before the service and that will mean a lot of bother. Someone else may come along soon and help him'. So he too hurried on.

By this time the injured man was getting weaker and thinking to himself that no one would

find him and help him, and he would die on the lonely road. Then he heard the 'clip-clopping' of a donkey coming along. On the donkey was a man who was not a priest, nor a Levite, but a Samaritan. When the poor man saw who it was, his hopes fell - 'He'll not help me,' he thought, 'the Jews and Samaritans have been enemies for years.'

But he could hardly believe his eyes when the man got off the donkey and came over to help him. 'Let me help you,' a kind voice said, 'No! Don't try to move until I see if you have any bones broken.' The injured man was really very badly bruised and cut, and the Samaritan wiped his cuts with some oil, like ointment, and bandaged them up. Then he gave him a drink, put a warm coat round him and gently lifted him on to his own donkey. The sick man could hardly believe it. At last, he said feebly, 'You're a Samaritan. Don't you know I'm a Jew?' The Samaritan smiled, 'Yes, of course I do. But surely in God's sight we are all brothers and we should love one another.' Then he took him to an inn nearby (like a small hotel) and, together with the innkeeper, helped the sick man into a nice, clean bed. Before the Samaritan left again he told the innkeeper, 'I must continue my journey, but my friend is not well enough to travel. Please look after him and see he gets everything he needs. Here is some money and if it costs more to care for him, I will pay it when I come this way again.' 'Thank-you,' the sick man whispered, 'I'll never forget your kindness.'

When Jesus had finished the story, He asked the lawyer a question - 'Which was the neighbour to the man who was attacked? Was it the Priest, the Levite, or the Samaritan?' Although the lawyer didn't like to admit it, he had to reply, 'The one who stopped and helped him.'

SUMMARY

Ask the children questions, for example -

Where was the man travelling from?

Where was he going?

What happened to him?

Who passed him first, second, last? ...

Why did the Samaritan help the sick man even though he was a Jew?

APPLICATION

When Jesus said you must love your neighbour, He didn't just mean the person next door, or your family, or your friends. No! He meant we must love every human being - even our enemies. We must really love them as ourselves - that means treating them the way we like to be treated and doing everything we can to help them. It pleases God when we love one another as we should. Is there anyone in your class you dislike? Is there anyone you are nasty to? Is there anyone you won't share with (sweets, toys, books, etc.) because you don't like them? 'Loving our neighbour as ourselves' may seem very difficult, but God will help us if we really love Him and want to do what He says.

LESSON 28

Learning to Please God

SPEAKING THE TRUTH - ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA

Scripture Text - Acts 5: 1-11

AIM OF LESSON

To show that we ought to speak the truth at all times.

BACKGROUND NOTES

We read that in the early church 'they had all things common.' Why? Because they felt that they were like a lot of limbs in one body, and one should help another, and each limb help the whole body. However, this sharing was not compulsory, but voluntary. (Acts 5:4) Again, it was not universal. It was only found in the church at Jerusalem. It was only temporary too. It was quite natural so long as the number of disciples was small, but when the church grew it became more difficult.

The passage shows the activity of Satan in trying to discredit the witness of the church. Behind the lie was the suggestion of the devil. (Acts 5:3)

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

All of you have got tongues. Can you tell me what your tongues are used for? - To taste and to talk. If you had no tongues then you could not taste - there are little taste buds on your tongue, - and you could not talk to each other. So your tongues are very useful. But you have to be very careful what you do with your tongues, for it is easy to use them in the wrong way.

We are going to hear today about a man and woman who did a wicked thing with their tongues. They told a lie. (Ask the children what it means to tell a lie.)

Outline

Ananias and his wife Sapphira joined the church shortly after Jesus went back to heaven. In those days the disciples of Jesus lived like one big family. They loved each other and took care of each other. Many of those who were rich sold their possessions and land and brought the money to the apostles to give to those who were poor and needy. They believed that the things they owned did not really belong to them but to God, and so they shared them with each other.

One day a man called Barnabas sold a field and all the money that he got for it he gave to Peter. He wanted it to be divided among the poor people in the church. When Ananias and

Sapphira saw what Barnabas had done and heard how the people talked about his being such a good and kind man, they thought to themselves, 'How nice it would be to have all the disciples say such good things about us too. We could sell our land, and bring the money to Peter. Then everyone will say, "Look at what Ananias and Sapphira have done. How they must love Jesus. How good and kind they are. The Holy Spirit has filled their hearts with a concern for the poor.'"

But Ananias and Sapphira did not want to give all their money away. The Holy Spirit had not been at work in their hearts. It was Satan who was working there and had put wicked thoughts into their minds. They said to each other, 'We could give Peter only part of the money and keep the rest for ourselves. He would never know.' So Ananias and his wife sold a field and brought Peter only a part of what they had received for it. That was all right of course. They did not have to sell the land at all and, having sold it, they did not have to bring all or any of the money. They could have kept it all to themselves and no one would have objected. The wrong thing was that they agreed to tell a lie. Ananias said to Peter, 'I have sold a field and here is all the money I was paid for it.' He was sure that nobody would know the truth and that now he would be praised for being such a good and kind man.

But the Holy Spirit showed Peter that what Ananias had told him was a lie, and that he had kept back part of the money for his wife and himself. It was a dreadful thing that there was a liar among the disciples in the church of Jesus Christ.

Instead of praising Ananias, Peter said sternly. 'Why has Satan come into your heart and told you to tell a lie? No one made you sell your land, and after you sold it the money was your own to do with as you pleased. But you are trying to deceive people into thinking that you are a very generous Christian. Do you not know that you are telling a lie to God and not just to me?'

As Peter spoke Ananias was punished by God for his lie. He fell down dead at Peter's feet. Some of the young men came and lifted his body and took it out and buried it.

Then about three hours later Sapphira came in. She did not know that her husband was dead. Peter said to her, 'Tell me, did you sell your land for this amount of money which your husband gave to me?' Since Sapphira had agreed beforehand with her husband to tell the lie, she said, 'Yes, that is the amount of money which we received for our land.'

Peter said sadly, 'How is it that you and your husband have agreed together to lie about the price of the land? The young men are just coming back from burying your husband. They are going to carry you out and bury you too.'

As Peter spoke, Sapphira fell down dead. The young men came in and took her out and buried her beside her husband.

APPLICATION

Ananias and Sapphira thought no one would ever know about their lie. But God knew all about it. They could not hide their lie from God. Have you ever told a deliberate lie? Perhaps you told the boys and girls at school that you got a bike for Christmas, and it was untrue. You told the lie to make them think that you got as much as they got.

One day Mummy noticed that one of the buns she had just baked was missing. Mummy asked you if you had taken it. You had, but you said 'No!', in order to hide from her what you had done. Mummy believed you. She did not know you had told a lie, but God did.

We saw that God punished Ananias and Sapphira for their lie. Sometimes a surgeon has to cut off a diseased leg or a diseased arm in order to save a man's life. God took Ananias and Sapphira away from the church because if they had been allowed to remain the church would have got the name of being full of liars.

God does not punish lying in this way today, but if we continue to tell lies God says, 'there shall by no means enter it (heaven) anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of Life' Rev. 21:27. So we ought to be very careful how we use our tongues. One way to keep from lying is to ask God to 'Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth, keep watch over the door of my lips.' Psalm 141:3

REVISE THE STORY

1. What did the disciples of Jesus do in order to have money to give to the poor?
2. What was it that Barnabas sold?
3. What did Ananias and Sapphira decide to do when they saw Barnabas sell his field and give the money to Peter?
4. Did they bring to Peter all the money they had received for the field.
5. Did they tell Peter that they had brought only a part of the money? So they told a ...?
6. Why did they tell a lie?
7. Did God know what they had done?
8. How were they punished for their lie?
9. What will happen if we continually speak lies?

LESSON 29

Learning to Please God

TRUSTING GOD TO SUPPLY MY NEEDS - MANNA & QUAIL

Scripture text - Exodus 16:1-18 (See also rest of chapter and John 6:30-59)

AIM OF LESSON

To show the children that God provides for our needs - both physical and spiritual - on a daily basis.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Moses had led the Israelites out of Egypt. After over a month of travel, they left Elim (an oasis whose name means 'oaks') and entered the Desert of Sin (v. 1). The little food they had brought with them from Egypt was no doubt now used up. They had been able to live off the land to a certain extent up to this point. Now there was very little food or drink available. And so for the third (and certainly not the last) time, the Israelites grumble against God for not providing good things for them to eat (see 14:10-14 and 15:22-26 for two earlier cases, and Numbers 16:41 for a later one).

VISUAL AIDS

Map of the Exodus route.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

When you sit down to eat your dinner today, will you like what your mother has prepared for you, or will you grumble and complain and criticise what is placed before you? Isn't that what you do so often, even though you know that your mother loves you and prepares good things for you to eat several times each day? And if all your brothers and sisters joined you in your complaints, wouldn't your mother feel terrible?

Outline

So it was one time for the Israelites, God's special people of long ago. God had brought them out of the land of Egypt (show on map) where they had been slaves, so that they could live in the land of Palestine (show on map) which He had long before promised them. But first they had to go through a desert (show on map). Do you know what a desert is like? It is not like our lovely green hills! It is a place without much green at all. Because there is almost no rain the soil is poor. Therefore few plants grow and few animals can live from eating the few plants.

But now, a large number of Israelites were slowly travelling through this great desert. What would they eat? They looked around and saw nothing to eat. They looked into their

bags and found nothing to eat. So they despaired that they would ever find food. They thought back to all the food they could eat in Egypt, which had plenty because the Nile River flowed through it. They wished they were there again. They complained to Moses and Aaron, the leaders God had given to them, but really, they were criticising God. He had brought them out of the land of Egypt by many miracles but they found it hard to believe that God would perform any miracles in this barren land!

Moses was discouraged by the complaints of the people, but he knew what to do - he talked to God about the problem. God told Moses that He would give bread to the Israelites but they wouldn't get it the way we get bread. We buy the flour and mix it with certain other things and bake it in the oven. No! This bread would come down out of heaven during the night, just like the dew on the ground when you wake up in the morning. Each morning the people were to go out and collect the food for that day. There was a catch however! If anybody collected more than they needed for one day, the bread would spoil. When some tried to collect extra, thinking the bread might not return the next day, it became filled with worms. But on the day before the Sabbath there was a double portion of bread. They were told to collect it then and not to work on the Sabbath day and when they did that the bread kept well.

When the Israelites went out the next morning, they looked at this strange, miraculous bread and said, 'What is it?' And so that was what they called it - 'manna', in Hebrew, or 'What is it' in English. Six days every week for forty years they collected the manna in the barren desert. God provided bread for them every day. And it was good for it tasted like honey!

But God provided more, for bread, however delicious, is not all that we humans need to eat. He gave them quails to eat, a type of bird. The birds passed through the desert on their long migrations twice each year. God brought them to rest in the Israelite camp in the desert so that the people could kill them and eat them too. While this miracle did not happen every day, God gave them quails many times when they needed them to eat. Always they had enough for their needs.

APPLICATION

God provided all the food the Israelites needed to live in the hot, dry desert. And it is God also who provides food for us every day. Yes, your mother buys it and cooks it or prepares it. Perhaps your father grows it. It does not arrive miraculously with the dew each morning, but it is regular, like the manna, and it is always enough for you, like the manna and the quail. (You may want to use the 'Foods God gives me' in the pupil's manual at this point.)

We need to eat food for our bodies, but we also need to eat food for our souls. Where do you find such spiritual food?

Jesus referred to himself as spiritual food from heaven, something like the manna that came from heaven. He told us to drink His blood and to eat His body so that whoever comes to Him would never be hungry again. This we do by faith. But as well, this is pictured for us in the sacrament we call the Lord's Supper. All the good things that our spirits need are found in Jesus Christ. This is why the members of the Church regularly gather for the Lord's Supper. Be sure to attend that Supper too, in order to see the pictures, in the wine and bread, of Jesus' blood and body sacrificed that our sins might be forgiven. You yourself will not be eating and drinking, but you will see what you need to eat and drink.

God has provided all that we need for both body and spirit. Let's thank Him for His gifts, for surely we have nothing to grumble about!

LESSON 30

Learning to Trust God's Care

TRUSTING GOD WHEN I AM IN TROUBLE - ELISHA HELPS A POOR WIDOW

Scripture text - II Kings 4: 1 - 7

AIM OF LESSON

To help the children to prepare for future troubles by seeing how God provided for a poor widow.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Elisha was one of the ninth century B.C. prophets in Israel, having succeeded his master Elijah. Elisha's name means 'God is salvation', but otherwise, we don't know a great deal about him with any certainty.

The story concerns the widow of 'a man from the company of the prophets', one of the bands of prophets sent by Yahweh to His people. They were evidently not the young, unmarried monastics we sometimes imagine the prophets to have been! The creditor of the late prophet may have been justified in demanding the two sons as slaves (see Lev. 25: 39), although in any case they would have been free in the Year of Jubilee (Lev. 25: 40).

Snaith has well remarked that 'the quantity of the oil was limited only by her faith in collecting empty vessels' (in the Interpreter's Bible). Is your faith limited?

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Two little Israeli boys, whom we'll call Joseph and Jehu, were surprised to find their mother crying one day when they came in from playing. They threw their arms around her and tried to stop her tears, but it took a while. 'What's wrong?' they asked her.

'A certain man was just here,' she replied through her tears, 'and he has threatened to take you both away and make you his slaves!'

'But I won't let him,' promised Joseph bravely. 'I'll run away into the hills where he can't find me.'

'So will I,' added Jehu.

'It is worse than that, my dear, dear boys,' came the response, 'for your dead father owes money to this man, and he has a certain right to take you since I can't pay him.'

'But surely there must be something we can find in the house for selling ...', Joseph began

hopefully. 'But just look! ...' The two boys scampered about the small house, but all they could find was a small amount of oil which their mother used in cooking. They returned glumly to their mother's side.

After a pause, their mother said, 'Surely the Lord our God, whom your father served so faithfully as a prophet and whom he feared, will supply for us what we need in our time of trouble. But', she added, 'I don't see how He will do it.'

The prophet Elisha was walking by at just that moment, so in her desperation the mother cried out to him, 'Elisha, help us!' He stopped, and she explained their troubles.

Elisha asked, 'How can I help you? Tell me, what do you have in your house?'

'I have nothing there at all, except for a little oil,' the mother responded.

'OK! Now go round and ask all your neighbours for empty jars. Don't ask for just a few. Then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons. You will need to be alone. Pour oil into all the jars and, as each one is filled, put it to one side.'

Joseph and Jehu dashed around the neighbourhood borrowing jars, big and small, tall and fat, pretty and plain. Soon the house seemed to be filled with them and they stopped searching. They closed the door behind themselves. What would God do?

One by one they brought the jars to their mother as she poured oil into them. One by one the jars were filled to the brim with oil! Finally, when there were no other jars before her, the mother said, 'Bring me another one!'

Jehu replied, 'There is not one jar left!'

And with that the oil stopped flowing. The boys and their mother looked around them, though, and there were jars filled to over-flowing with good cooking oil! All through the house there were jars. What would they do with all of them?

Their mother hurried off to Elisha and told him what had happened. He told her, 'Go, sell the oil and pay your debt. You and your sons can live on what is left.'

So she and her sons did just that. They paid off their debt to the man who wanted to take the boys away. And they had enough to live on from the money that was left over!

APPLICATION

Most of us never see empty shelves and cabinets in our mothers' kitchens, although some

of our parents may be able to remember such troubling times. But still, each of us knows of times when the future seems very dark indeed. Sometimes our parents cry - and so do we!

What we need to do at such times is to stop feeling sorry for ourselves and start looking to the Lord.

What is He doing through this trouble? Is He teaching you something you didn't know, or perhaps had forgotten? Is He not teaching you to depend upon His help in every circumstance? Also, we should look to see how the Lord will deal with the problem and ask ourselves, 'Is there something we must do in obedience to Him?'

LESSON 31

Learning to Trust God's Care

TRUSTING GOD WHEN I AM SAD - ELISHA AT SHUNEM

Scripture text - II Kings 4: 8 - 37

AIM OF LESSON

To help children to learn how to deal with grief, and sadness in general.

BACKGROUND NOTES

Here is another of the many stories about Elisha found in this section of the Bible. He is again shown to be a marvellous wonder-worker of God.

The passage contains several exegetical problems. In vs. 23, it would seem that even at this time the Sabbath day was observed by some pious Jews by gathering at the homes of the prophets for worship and/or study. The mother's words at the end of that verse are most likely a farewell (literally, the Hebrew says, 'shalom', or peace.) In vs. 27, Gehazi seems to have been over-zealous for the honour of his respected master in pushing the woman away. Later, the question is whether Elisha knew that Gehazi's effort was doomed to failure from the outset. Probably not, but the episode shows that 'the gifts of the Spirit with which God arms His servants the prophets, for extraordinary deeds, cannot be transferred by these to others.' (Lange's Commentary, p. 48.)

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

It is enjoyable to welcome guests into our homes sometimes, isn't it? The Bible even promises us that we can thus entertain angels without realising it! Once there was a wealthy woman in Israel who enjoyed having guests. One of her regular visitors was the prophet Elisha. At first, he would simply stop to eat with her and her husband.

Then, one day, she had an idea. They would build a little room on the flat roof of their house, and put a bed, a table, a chair and a lamp in it. Elisha could come and stay there with his servant Gehazi whenever he was on a journey through the area.

So Elisha enjoyed her hospitality. One day while he was lying on his bed, he asked Gehazi if he could do something for his kind hostess. 'Could I speak to the king or the military commander for some favour?'

But this kind lady assured Gehazi that she had everything she needed. Then Gehazi remembered that this woman and her husband were old and had never had any children. How much they would love to have children! But it was no longer possible, they were too old.

Yet what is impossible with man is often possible with God. Elisha liked the idea

suggested by Gehazi, so he had him call the lady in, and he announced to her, 'About this time next year, you will hold a son in your arms!'

'No, my lord,' she objected. 'Don't mislead your servant, O man of God!' She couldn't bring herself to believe him.

But soon the woman became pregnant and, just as Elisha told her, about one year after Elisha's promises, she gave birth to a son.

The boy grew and grew. One day, years later, he went out into the field with his father and the reapers. Suddenly he clutched his head and cried out in pain. A servant lifted him up and took him to his mother. For several hours he sat on his mother's lap but, about noon, he died in her arms. She carried him up to Elisha's little room, laid him on the bed, shut the door and went out. She took a servant and a donkey, and rushed away to find Elisha the prophet of God.

She found him at Mount Carmel and rushed upon him, grasping hold of his feet, such was her distress. 'Did I ask you for a son, my lord?' she said. 'Didn't I tell you, "Don't raise my hopes"?' Elisha realised that the boy had died.

He handed his staff to Gehazi, his servant, and told him to run quickly to the boy's side and put the staff on the boy's face. Then, more slowly, Elisha walked with the mother to her home. Gehazi ran on ahead but the staff had no effect on the boy. He lay there stiff and cold.

Finally Elisha arrived. He went into the room, shut the door behind him, and prayed to God. Then he stretched out his body over the body of the boy. Twice he did this, and gradually the boy's body warmed up. The blood was flowing again. The boy sneezed several times, and opened his eyes. He was alive!

Elisha called the boy's mother, and she was overwhelmed with joy to see her precious son alive again. She fell at Elisha's feet, bowing to the ground out of gratitude to him and out of respect for God who had done this miracle through the prophet.

APPLICATION

The woman's joy had turned to sadness, but then the Lord restored her joy. Sometimes we become sad too. And that is especially hard to bear when we have been joyful beforehand. We cry and mope about and wish that things were different. And we will be sad from time to time throughout our whole lives!

How will we become joyful again? Like the woman in the story, we will seek the help of

the Lord through His servants. We may not receive the same kind of help as she did, but we will receive help from Him. First of all, we'll be helped by God's prophets of old who speak to us in the pages of the Bible. That is why we must learn God's Word well, so that we'll remember what God has to say to our needs when we are sad. Secondly, we'll seek the help of older people, our minister and the elders of the church. God has put them as rulers over us in the church so that we can be helped when we are sad. And you know, all of them have been sad at times too! They know what they are talking about, and so they can comfort us when we are sad, because God has comforted them.

LESSON 32

Learning to Trust God's Care

TRUSTING GOD'S CARE WHEN I AM WEAK - PETER WALKING ON THE WATER

Scripture Text - Matthew 14: 22 - 36

AIM OF LESSON

To show the children how Jesus was willing to care for Peter even when his faith failed him.

BACKGROUND NOTES

This incident took place about 30 A.D. Jesus had fed the 5 000 on a lonely mountainside near Bethsaida, after having preached to them. Jesus sent the disciples across the Sea of Galilee to Gennesaret while He went up into the mountain to pray.

The Sea of Galilee even to-day is the scene of great storms that sweep across it from the mountains to the north.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

I wonder if you would like to do something that no one else could do? Wouldn't it be exciting to have special powers which enable you to do the impossible? Today our story is about a man who walked on water, but he didn't do it because he was a special man, he did it only because Jesus made him able to do it.

Outline

This story takes place after Jesus had fed the 5 000. Do you remember what He used to feed this large crowd? (5 loaves and 2 fishes) Jesus sent His disciples back home across the Sea of Galilee, away from the crowds of people. I'm sure that the disciples were tired after having cared for the big crowd, and were glad to get away in their boats. Jesus sent the crowds back to their own homes as it was getting late.

After the crowds left, Jesus went up the mountain to pray. Why do you think Jesus wanted to be by Himself when He was praying?

Shortly after the disciples went out on the lake a storm blew up. Can you imagine being out in a small boat, at night, in a rough storm? Would you be afraid? The disciples certainly were, even though several of them were fishermen before they left all and followed Jesus.

About four in the morning they thought they saw something walking on the water. They were terrified. Would you like to see some dark shape coming towards you when you are out in a boat at night? Would you be afraid? The disciples thought that it was a spirit (or ghost).

Immediately Jesus spoke to them. He said, 'Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid'. Peter answered him, 'Lord, if it is really you, tell me to come over to you, walking on the water'. Jesus answered, 'Come along'. Would you have got out of the boat in the middle of the storm, in the darkness, and tried walking on the water? Do you think Peter sank? No, he started walking on the water towards Jesus. Peter didn't sink because Jesus was there.

After walking a short way a big wave came towards Peter and he became afraid. He shouted to Jesus to save him. Jesus reached out and caught him. Jesus said to him, 'Why did you doubt?' Even though Peter was afraid, he still trusted Jesus as he called out to Him to save him from drowning.

After Jesus and Peter got into the boat the storm stopped. The others were amazed and said, 'You really are the Son of God'. They realised that no human could walk on the water by themselves. They reached the shore of Gennesaret safely. News of Jesus' arrival spread very quickly throughout the countryside. Soon a lot of people were bringing their sick friends and relatives to Jesus to be healed.

LESSON SUMMARY

Revise story by asking questions such as:

- (a) How did the disciples travel to Gennesaret?
- (b) What happened when the disciples were in the boat in the sea?
- (c) Why did Peter start to sink?
- (d) Why could Peter walk on the water? etc.

APPLICATION

Sometimes it is difficult to trust God. When everything is going well it is easy to trust God and give Him the praise. But sometimes when we are sick or in trouble, it is hard to trust God to make us better or to help us. Do you grumble when you are sick, or do you trust God to make you better? Are you afraid sometimes when mummy or daddy go out and leave you alone? We should trust God to look after us and protect us.

LESSON 33

Learning to Trust God's Care

TRUSTING GOD'S CARE TO KEEP US FROM SIN - PETER'S DENIAL

Scripture text - Luke 22: 54 - 62

AIM OF LESSON

To show the children that they need to trust God to keep them from sinning as they are not able to do so by themselves.

BACKGROUND NOTES

This incident took place about 33 A.D. Peter's denial was foretold by Jesus after the institution of the Lord's Supper (Luke 22: 31 - 34). The supper was followed by Judas betraying Jesus with a kiss (Luke 22: 47 - 53).

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

This is another story about Peter. Do you remember how he walked on the water towards Jesus on the Sea of Galilee? Wouldn't you think that this man who trusted Jesus to keep him from sinking on the lake would have trusted Jesus to take care of everything? We see in this story to-day how Peter's faith in God's care wasn't as strong as it should have been.

Outline

This story took place after Judas had betrayed Jesus to the chief Priests and elders of the Jews in the Garden of Gethsemane. They took Jesus to the high priest's house; the high priest at this time was called Caiaphas.

Peter followed Jesus to the high priest's house - but not too openly! He didn't walk too close to Jesus, in case someone might have connected him with Jesus! Perhaps he was curious to see what would happen to Jesus. Perhaps he was a little ashamed that he, like all the other disciples, had run away when the crowd came to Jesus. But now, he was at Caiaphas' house.

And he was not alone, for there were quite a lot of people who had gathered in the courtyard of the house. Someone lit a fire and everyone gathered around it.

Peter did too. They were all waiting for the high priest to finish questioning Jesus. Can you imagine what Peter felt like? He was the only disciple among all the friends of the chief priest at the fireside! He must have been scared that he too would be arrested and maybe killed.

Before long a young servant girl looked at Peter and said, 'This man was with Jesus of Nazareth'. Peter froze. What could he say? Peter lied, 'Woman, I don't know Him.' He had failed to trust God to protect him from the people. A little while later someone else said to him, 'You too are one of Jesus' followers.' Peter again denied that he knew Jesus.

About an hour later, still another said, 'Certainly this fellow was with him for He is a Galilean.' Peter lied for a third time, 'Man, I don't know what you are talking about.' As he said these words the cock crowed.

At that moment Jesus was being led through the courtyard and He turned and looked at Peter. Peter immediately remembered what Jesus had told him earlier: Peter would deny Jesus three times before the cock would crow. After Jesus had looked at Peter, Peter realised that he had sinned in denying that he knew Jesus. Right away, Peter was ashamed of what he had done. He went outside and cried and cried.

Peter had failed to trust God to care for him when he was among the friends of the chief priest. He was afraid of what they might do if he admitted who he was. He hoped that if he denied that he even knew Jesus that the Jewish leaders would not bother about him. He had failed to heed the warning of Jesus and to rely upon God to keep him from sin.

LESSON SUMMARY

Revise the story by getting the children to tell the story over again in their own words. Better still, get them to act out the story.

APPLICATION

We have all been afraid at one time or another in our lives. Maybe we are tempted to do wrong or sin to get out of the situation as we think there is no other way out. We must trust God and do what is right.

Sometimes we might think that if we told the truth someone would be cross and so we are tempted to lie. We must speak the truth at all times.

Peter didn't heed the warning of Jesus and trust God when he was afraid. If he had trusted God, He would have kept him safe and kept him from sinning. On our own, we are all weak. We all have the tendency to sin. But if we trust God, He can keep us from sinning. 'Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.' (1 Peter 5: 7) When you are tempted to do what is wrong, ask God to show you what is right and to give you the strength to do it. Remember, 'With the temptation, He will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.' (1 Corinthians 10: 13) None of us needs to cry as Peter did, if we look to God to protect us from sin and to provide the way of escape.

LESSON 34

Learning to Trust God's Care

TRUSTING GOD TO GUIDE ME - ISAAC AND REBEKAH

Scripture Text - Genesis 24

AIM OF LESSON

To show how God guided Abraham's servant, and provided a wife for Isaac from one of their own believing people.

BACKGROUND NOTES

God rewarded Abraham wonderfully for his act of obedience in that he had been willing to offer his only son to God. God repeated his promise to Abraham that He would make his descendants as the stars of the heavens or as the sand of the seashore. This story is the first sign of God's promise being fulfilled.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

I wonder have you ever prayed for something, and at times it looked almost impossible that your prayer would be answered, and then in a marvellous way God answered your prayer? This is the story of how God answered the prayer of Abraham's servant to guide him in finding the right wife for Isaac.

Outline

After Isaac had grown up, his mother Sarah died. Abraham and Isaac were lonely. Abraham was very old, and Isaac was forty years old and not yet married. Abraham did not want him to marry any of the women who lived near him, because they did not believe in God and worshipped idols. Abraham wanted to see Isaac married to a good woman - one who believed and worshipped God.

Abraham called his oldest servant and made him promise that he would not take a wife for Isaac from the Canaanite people living beside them. He asked his servant to go back to the country where he came from and get a wife for Isaac from some of his relatives.

The servant started on his long journey through the hot, sandy country. He took ten camels with him and some servants.

At last after several days of travel he reached the country that Abraham had come from, and the city where Abraham's brother Nahor lived. This city was called Haran. Outside the city was a well of water. In that dry country there was often only one well for the whole city. Every night the young girls of the city went to the well with tall pitchers

balanced on their heads. They brought water home from the well.

Abraham's servant was a good man who believed in God. He had come safely on his journey and had reached the city to which Abraham had sent him. But he thought to himself, 'How will I be able to tell which young girl is the one that God wants Isaac to have for his wife?' Then he knelt down and prayed, saying, 'O Lord, help me this day! When the girls of the city come to get water and I say to one of them, "Let down your pitcher, that I may drink", and she says to me, "Drink, and I will give your camels drink as well", let that girl be the one You have appointed as the wife for Isaac.'

Almost before the servant had finished praying a beautiful girl called Rebekah came to the well. The servant thought, 'Can this be the girl?' He went to her and said, 'Let me drink a little water from your pitcher, please'. Rebekah replied, 'Drink, and I will draw water from the well till your camels have finished drinking.' She said the very words that the servant had prayed to the Lord. She took the pitcher and gave him a drink. Then she watered the camels. When Rebekah had finished watering the camels, the servant gave her a valuable golden ring and two beautiful bracelets. Then he asked her who her father was and if they would have any room for them to stay at their house? Rebekah replied, 'I am Nahor's grand-daughter and we have plenty of room for you to stay and plenty of straw and food for the camels.'

When the servant heard this he was so happy that he bowed his head and worshipped God, saying, 'Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who has led me to the home of my master's family.'

Rebekah had a brother named Laban. Rebekah told him all that the man at the well had told her. When Laban heard this and saw the precious jewels, he went quickly to the well and invited Abraham's servant at once to the house. When they came to the house, Laban took the camels and gave them food and bedding. Then he brought water to wash the feet of the servant and the men who had come with him. They prepared food for them, but the servant said, 'Before I eat I must tell you what I have come for.' They all listened to the servant's story. At last he said, 'I want you to tell me whether or not you will let Rebekah go back with me to be my master's son's wife.'

Nahor's family felt that it was truly by God's guidance that all these things had happened. They said, 'Take her, and go to your master.' Rebekah's mother said, 'Let her stay with us a little while,' but the servant said that he wanted to go back to his master. They called Rebekah and asked her what she wanted to do. She said, 'I will go now.'

They said their good-byes and set off on their journey, all riding on the camels. Rebekah had her old nurse as a maid, and some girl friends with her as companions so that she

would not be lonely.

One evening Isaac was out thinking about God and praying to Him. He saw a camel train coming and he knew who it was. Rebekah also saw Isaac, and she asked her servant who the man was who was walking in the field. The servant said it was Isaac. Then she commanded the camels to stop. She got off her camel, because she wanted to dress herself properly before she met the man who was to be her husband. She covered her face with a veil, because that was the custom in that country. Only her eyes were to be seen. Isaac fell in love with Rebekah when he saw her. He took her home with him and took her into the tent which had been his mother's. Soon they were married.

APPLICATION

Abraham was one of the best men who ever lived. He was called 'the friend of God'. He obeyed God in everything just as a child obeys his father. Because Abraham trusted God so simply and obeyed Him so well, God made him the father of a great nation.

Abraham is in heaven now and, if we love God and try to please Him, we shall one day see Abraham there. We must learn to trust God and ask Him to guide us and help us to do the right things. We must listen to our parents when they tell us what to do, e.g., places we should go, books we should read, TV programmes we may watch, etc.

We must remember too that God can say 'No' to our prayers as well as 'Yes', but He knows what is best for us. He knows all about us and about our future.

LESSON 35

Learning to Trust God's Care

TRUSTING GOD FOR SALVATION - CORNELIUS' CONVERSION

Scripture Text - Acts 10

AIM OF LESSON

To show the children how we trust God, i.e., what we must believe, in receiving salvation, by looking at Cornelius as an example.

BACKGROUND NOTES

The church members were enthusiastically speaking to others about Christ and the Lord was adding to the church. However, in general the believers spoke only to the Jews. In Acts 10 God gave Peter a vision to dispel his prejudice. The lesson he learned is stated in verses 28 and 29. This is dealt with more fully in Junior Book 3 so the teacher should not dwell on this aspect now. Here we centre our attention on Cornelius and God's dealings with him. In this chapter we see our sovereign God at work - preparing Cornelius, bringing Peter many miles to him, and granting salvation to him and all his household.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

Do you want to be a soldier when you grow up? (Discuss the nature of a soldier's work, and the qualities he needs.) A soldier needs to be strong and tough because the work he does is dangerous. Sometimes soldiers don't think about God at all. Maybe they think to themselves, 'We're so tough we don't need God.' That is a wrong way to think, and to-day we are going to learn about a soldier who came to know and trust God through Jesus Christ, the Saviour. His name was Cornelius.

Outline

Cornelius was an Italian. He was such a good soldier that he was made the captain over 100 men. He was strong and tough, but he was also kind and thoughtful and helped the needy people in Caesarea where he was stationed.

He had heard about the Lord God and prayed to Him every day. He had taught his family to do this too. Think how much we should thank God for parents who love God and teach us about Him.

One day when Cornelius was praying as usual, God sent an angel in a vision to him. Cornelius was frightened! But the angel calmed him down. It was as if he said, 'Don't worry. I haven't come to punish you, but to bring you a blessing. Send someone to get Peter, who is staying in Joppa. He has something important to tell you.'

Immediately Cornelius sent some of his servants to ask Peter to come. Imagine how excited

Cornelius must have been, to think that God had come to him in this way, and now He was going to teach him something wonderful through Peter. While he waited for Peter to come he gathered his family and friends together so that they too could hear the good news.

When Peter arrived Cornelius fell down before him and began to worship him. Peter stopped him immediately. 'Don't worship me! I'm just a man.' Cornelius told him about the angel he had seen and then they were all quiet while Peter spoke to them. They were very careful to listen to everything he said. When anyone is speaking about God, in Sabbath School or the minister in church, we should do our best to listen and try to understand.

This was the message that Peter gave:- First of all, it doesn't matter what country you were born in. What does matter is that you trust in God and serve Him. The Lord Jesus Christ came from Nazareth and went about helping people and doing good, but the people of Jerusalem put Him to death on a cross. However, God raised Him from the dead on the third day, when the disciples saw Him and ate and drank with Him. He commanded them to go and tell people about Him, because He is coming again and will judge all people. Those who believe in Him will be forgiven all their sins.

While Peter was explaining what he was saying, God was working in the minds and hearts of Cornelius and his family, and suddenly the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. God had brought them to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. As an outward sign of this He enabled them to speak in languages that they hadn't learned, just as He had done with the 120 disciples on the day of Pentecost. They all joined in worshipping God, and Cornelius and his family were baptised. God wanted this to show that He had brought them into His big family and that they loved the Lord Jesus.

APPLICATION

Wasn't this a wonderful thing that happened? Let's think again of what God did in Cornelius' life.

Cornelius was a good man. He prayed to God and helped needy people. Yet there was something missing in his life. He didn't know the Lord Jesus and wasn't trusting Him. Maybe you are like Cornelius - you go to Sabbath School and church every week, you say your prayers every day, and you are kind to others. We need something else. We need to love the Lord Jesus and trust Him. That is what Cornelius found.

Cornelius learned as much as he could about the Lord. He obeyed God when he was told to send for Peter, and he listened to everything he said when he came. God speaks to us through the Bible and we should read a little of it each day. We should listen carefully when someone is speaking about the Lord. Peter's message was all about the Lord. We should trust God to forgive us our sins because of what Jesus did on the cross.

LESSON 36

Learning to Trust God's Care

TRUSTING GOD'S CARE FOREVER - HEAVEN

Scripture Text - John 14: 1 - 4; 16: 5 - 16

AIM OF LESSON

To show the children how God has provided a place for everyone who has put their trust in Him and loves Him, after their life on earth is ended.

BACKGROUND NOTES

After Jesus had the Passover Supper with the disciples, He said many things to comfort them, for He was soon going to leave this earth and they would not be able to be with Him any more in bodily form.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION

Introduction

I'm sure at some time you have seen a king's or a queen's palace on TV or in some book, and thought to yourself, 'Oh! How lovely it must be to live in such splendour!' To-day we are going to learn of a place that is far beyond the splendour of a palace on earth, a place called heaven.

Outline

The disciples loved Jesus and they did not want to see Him leaving them, although He had told them often that He would be leaving them. Jesus was trying to comfort them before He left them. He said, 'Don't let your hearts be troubled, and don't be so sad. I am going to my Father, and in my Father's house are many beautiful places. I am going there to prepare a place for you when your work here on earth is finished.'

Jesus knew how His disciples were feeling and what they were thinking. They were sad because Jesus said He would be leaving them. They were troubled because He said that one of them would betray Him and the others would run away. They were wavering in their faith, wondering how, if Jesus was the Saviour as they believed, He could be put to death. So He said, 'Let not your hearts any longer be troubled.' Now remember that Jesus would soon have to suffer and die, yet He was not thinking about Himself but about His disciples.

He comforted them by telling them about heaven. It is a wonderful place with so much room. There are mansions for all of God's children, dwelling places that will last forever. There will be no over-crowding like there sometimes is on earth in the big cities or in big crowds. And the best thing is that God Himself will be there. It is 'My Father's house.' Jesus told His disciples that He would not be separated from them for ever. He was going

away so that they could have a great reunion later. He was going to get everything ready for them in heaven. So what appeared to be a calamity was in reality a blessing. It was only because Jesus died on the cross for sinners and rose again that there is a place in heaven for us.

The disciples knew that these were the last words that Jesus would teach them so they listened very carefully. Jesus said, 'When I go to heaven I will ask my Father to send you a Comforter to stay with you forever. He will send you the Holy Spirit into your hearts to comfort you. I am not able to stay with you all the time here on earth in my bodily form, but when the Holy Spirit comes into your hearts He will tell you about Me.

The disciples remembered these words, for after Jesus went to Heaven, the Holy Spirit came to live in the hearts of those who loved Jesus, to help and comfort them and to teach them.

The Holy Spirit is God, just as Jesus and the Father are. These three are all one God.

Jesus told His disciples, 'You have been with Me from the beginning and you have heard all My words and what I was teaching, and you have seen what I have done. So now I want you to go and tell all the world about Me. The Holy Spirit will help you as you speak and will convict people of their sin.'

With the assurance that the Spirit would come and help them, the disciples had no need to fear what was before them.

APPLICATION

We may never be able to go and live in a king's or queen's palace here on earth, but if we ask Jesus to take away our sins and trust and obey Him while we are here on earth, then when we die we will go to live with King Jesus in heaven in His palace. We still have sadness and trouble because of sin down here on earth, but when we get to Heaven there will be no more sin and no more sadness. Life here on earth soon passes away but Heaven will be forever.