



Stories of Hope

Teaching Guide

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Welcome to **STORIES OF HOPE!**

This curriculum was created just for you. It was designed to be used with children ages 6 through 12 and can easily be implemented in your Sunday School or Bible Club. The material will challenge children with God's Word and touch some of the deepest needs of their hearts, including their most basic need for salvation. It will help them seek, know, and understand the nature and character of the one true God.

The Stories of Hope Curriculum was designed for three main purposes:

- To provide children with an understanding of God's Big Story.
- To address key issues from a Biblical perspective and provide guidance on how to live by the truths found in God's Word.
- To create an opportunity for parents and children to interact while learning Biblical content.

God's Big Story

The Bible is not simply a collection of many short unrelated stories. Rather, it is a book of stories that collectively tell the bigger story of God's relationship with mankind. God created man for his glory, and even though man rebelled and became separated from God, the Bible tells of God's plan to bring man back to him through his Son, Jesus Christ. To read more about God's Big Story, see page 174. The corresponding pictures are in the back of this book and can also be found at the back of the children's book.

While the New Testament Scriptures clearly show how God used Jesus Christ to redeem mankind, the Old Testament clearly points to it and shows that this was God's plan from the beginning. Within Stories of Hope, one in every five Old Testament stories has been chosen to emphasize God's fulfillment of his plan for redemption through Jesus. Stories of Hope was written to provide children with an explanation of God's overall plan as seen throughout the entire Bible, using stories from both the Old Testament and the New Testament.

The Old Testament lessons that highlight events pointing to Christ are marked with a red circle, representing the blood of Christ. The red circle is found both in this Teaching Guide and in the children’s book. During these lessons, you can explain God’s plan of salvation and provide an opportunity for children to accept Jesus as their Saviour. (See page 171 for helpful hints on how to lead a child to the Lord.) **Be sure to show the children the connection to Christ in each lesson marked with a red circle.**

Family Interaction

Stories of Hope was designed to encourage interaction between children and their parents. Not only does it provide a way for children and parents to spend time engaging in an activity together, it will also help the child learn the Biblical content being taught if it is being reinforced at home. Involving the parents in this program will also serve to help the parents grow in their understanding of the Bible and of God’s love and plan for them. Information on page 4 and 5 in the Family Involvement section provides details about ways parents can be involved with the curriculum.

 *Key Issues*

Stories of Hope was designed to respond to 5 key issues: the value of life, purity, corruption, the one true God and absolute truth. Details about each of these topics are on the following page. Throughout the curriculum, you will see fifteen lessons marked with green circles. These lessons have been specifically identified as opportunities to address each of these five topics three times. Additionally, these themes are woven throughout many of the other lessons. You may want to focus on some of these issues even more and emphasize them in additional lessons depending on the needs of your children.

Notes:

Background on Key Issues

The Value of Life

God loved the people of this world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life and never really die. – John 3:16

Every life is valuable. However, our world is sometimes quick to place different values, or no value at all, on the lives of people who may be different, less skilled, sick, young, old, or even unborn. The Bible teaches us, though, that God created each of us in his image, making us extremely valuable. He also loved each one of us so much that he sent his only Son to die on the cross for our sins. **You can teach children the value of life by communicating God's love for each of them and for all individuals, no matter their background, race, social status, employment, age, or health.**

Purity

Don't be immoral in matters of sex. That is a sin against your own body in a way that no other sin is. – 1 Corinthians 6:18

God's design for our lives is perfect. And in that design, he places boundaries in our lives to protect us, to help us prosper, and to keep us pure. Sexuality is one area where God has given very specific boundaries. God designed sex to happen within the boundaries of a marriage between a man and a woman. When sex occurs outside of that plan, it can result in heartache, regret, and pain. You can teach children about the importance of staying pure until marriage by communicating the benefits of saving sex for marriage. **You can also stress to them that God does not give us boundaries to punish us, but he does so because he loves us and knows what is best for our lives.**

Corruption

Treat others just as you want to be treated. – Luke 6:31

God expects people in authority to be responsible and to put others before themselves. Sometimes, however, people in authority can become corrupt and abuse the power that they have over others. This can happen in government, work, and even in peer relationships. **You can teach children the importance of being responsible and honourable in every situation by explaining how Jesus led others by serving them and looking out for their needs.** The Bible teaches us to be honest and responsible and to put others first, treating them the way that we want to be treated. When children do that, corruption will stay far from their lives.

One True God

The Lord wants you to know he is the only true God, and he wants you to obey him. – Deuteronomy 4:35

There is only one true God. He is all-powerful, all-knowing, ever-present, and longs to have a relationship with mankind. The Bible provides countless stories of his power over creation, his miracles in the lives of people, and his ability to show himself greater than any fake gods that people have trusted. While people today may offer animal, or even human sacrifices to false gods, the one true God only desires for us to love him and grow in our relationship with him. We are to serve him with our lives, not our sacrifices. He also loves us so much that he invites us to pray to him directly. We don't have to pray to ancestors, priests, statues, or idols. Our God is living, loving, holy, and true. **You can teach children about the one true God by pointing out his power and authority in the Bible and by telling them that he is the only God who is alive and who can have a personal relationship with them.**

Absolute Truth

Everything in the Scriptures is God's Word. All of it is useful for teaching and helping people and for correcting them and showing them how to live. – 2 Timothy 3:16

Sometimes truth is difficult. It shows an unchangeable line between what is right and what is wrong, and it forces people to make decisions. It is always the same and does not change due to circumstances or the people involved. The Word of God is completely true. God is very clear about how we are to treat others, love him, and live our lives. No matter what situation we are in, we can always look to the Bible for guidance on what we should do. **You can teach students about absolute truth by stressing to them what the Bible teaches. Help them understand the importance of telling the truth at all times no matter the cost or price because that is what the Bible teaches. Empower them to feel confident that it is worth doing the right thing, even when it is hard, because God loves them and would never ask them to do anything that wasn't the best thing for their lives and for the lives of those around them.**

Notes:

Family Involvement

The Importance of Family

Christ holds it together and makes all of its parts work perfectly, as it grows and becomes strong because of love. – Ephesians 4:16

Imagine spending a great deal of time, energy, and money preparing meals for the week. You carefully create and serve your family one meal, but then lock everything else up and explain to your loved ones, “Sorry, that’s it. See you next week.” How would your family feel? Is it an effective way to care for your family? What kind of message would you be sending to your loved ones?

The Bible story and lesson you share with your students in each lesson provides great spiritual nutrition, but it’s only a single meal. How are they being nourished the rest of the time while they are at home? Are families taking an active role in helping meet the spiritual needs of their children? Or are the children left waiting until the next lesson provided by you? For the benefit of the children, the importance of working together with families cannot be emphasised enough.

Practice doesn’t always make perfect, but it most certainly makes better. And Christian living is no exception. Family support can help turn the lessons you teach into a meaningful and applicable part of daily life. When parents and caretakers support at home what you teach, it can make a world of difference in the life of a child and a dramatic difference in the world in which we all live.

As a teacher, you may have the opportunity to encourage families to more fully engage in the spiritual development of their children. To begin the process of working collaboratively with families, start by initiating contact. When you see parents and caretakers, **thank them for the valuable contributions their children make in class. Encourage them to go through the *Stories of Hope: A Book for Families* with their children.** You may also want **to phone them or visit them.** If you’re able, **send letters home** to share information about what their children are doing in class. Be specific. Parents and caretakers are grateful when anyone takes a personal interest in their child.

After you make initial contact, ask questions that will give you insight into their home life. **What do they like to do as a family? When do they spend the most time together? What are some issues that they’re working through with their children? Ask for ways you can help. Additionally, seek specific ways to facilitate the children’s spiritual growth together.** Some ways to do this include:

- Setting up spiritual goals to work on with their children. (These should be goals that you have to work together in order to accomplish.)
- Working together to develop a plan to be worked on both during class and at home.
- Create “check-off” steps so that you and the parents know whether you’re meeting your goals.

Supporting the Family

Look after yourselves and everyone the Holy Spirit has placed in your care. Be like shepherds to God’s church. It is the flock that he bought with the blood of his own Son. – Acts 20:28

First and foremost, Christ loved us and we are commanded by him to love one another (Mark 12:31). **One way to demonstrate love for your students is to provide support for their families.** Additionally, the church is charged with the important role of caring for those who follow Christ.

Support for families can be as simple as providing encouragement through prayer support or as concrete as helping them meet some of their physical needs. No matter the form, all support that you and the church provide families has a four-fold effect:

- Pleases God by keeping his command (John 14:15).
- Demonstrates Christ's own love for his followers (John 13:34).
- Provides a loving example to be followed (1 Timothy 4:12).
- Helps ensure the physical and spiritual health and safety of your students (which in turn helps them learn better) (Proverbs 22:6).

Some specific ways you can support your students' families include:

- Pray for your students and their families.
- Demonstrate a genuine concern for their well-being.
- Schedule and make home visits with each student's family.
- Be approachable and invite parents to bring their concerns to you.
- Invite parents to visit the class and participate in lessons.

Getting Family Involved

They spent their time learning from the apostles, and they were like family to each other. They also broke bread and prayed together. – Acts 2:42

As a teacher you not only provide spiritual guidance and education, but you serve as an important bridge between your student's family life and their spiritual development. This role provides you with the unique opportunity to help get families more involved in their children's spiritual education.

Some ways you can encourage your students' families to get involved:

- Schedule a Visitation Day or Open House and invite parents to come learn about the program their children will be involved in.
- Hold an "Open Question" forum during which families can ask specific questions about the program and what their children will be learning.
- Have the children prepare and present a performance for parents, such as singing songs from some of the lessons or reciting memory verses.
- Encourage your students to share what they've learned with their families and invite their families to ask them specific questions about what they're learning.
- Invite your students to share the games, songs, and stories from the lessons with their families at home.

Your teaching can have powerful impact in the lives of children, but it is difficult to do it alone. By partnering with families, you create a strong and effective support system that can strengthen the effectiveness of their spiritual education and help nurture their spiritual growth. Together, you can have a positive and significant influence on your students' lives – and the lives of their families – forever.

Notes:

How to Use Stories of Hope

The Teaching Guide

This Teaching Guide can be used in a variety of settings, including Bible Clubs and Sunday Schools. Ideally, it is best to teach all of the lessons in order so that children can incrementally learn how the individual stories are all connected to make God's Big Story. (Turn to page 174 for more details on this concept.) Depending on how consistently Stories of Hope is used, within a program that meets once a week, it could take more than a year and a half to complete. If time does not allow for all 75 lessons to be taught, teach the ● red circle, ● green circle, and ★ green starred lessons in order. *The lessons marked with a star correspond with the pictures in the back of the children's book and in the back of this Teaching Guide. These lessons provide an opportunity to review God's Big Story and make connections between previous lessons you have already taught.* These lessons were written to work with or without the book that the children receive. It is best for the children to have their books during each week's lesson, but even if they don't, the lessons will still work well.

The Children's Book

The book the children receive is titled *Stories of Hope: A Book for Families*. As the name implies, this book was created so that families could interact with the content together. The book was designed for use at both school and home. After each lesson, encourage the children in your class to take their book home and discuss the story with their parents. An introductory letter to parents in the front of the book encourages parents to do the following:

- Talk about the pictures with their children.
- Read the identified Bible passage with their children.
- Have their children tell them the Bible story that they learned in class.
- Discuss the questions.
- Help their children complete the activities.

At the bottom of each right hand page in the children's book there is a spot for the parents to sign. The parents should sign the page after their children have told them the stories and they have discussed the questions. During each lesson, it is important to remind the children to tell the story to their parents. It is also recommended that you check the children's books after every fifth lesson to see whether the parents have signed them. You may want to create a chart to track this and turn it into a contest. The children with the most pages signed will be the winners. When you see the parents, you can also encourage them to ask their children what they have been learning and to go through the book together.

The children's book can also be used during class. The pictures can be used to reinforce each lesson's content and encourage discussion about the Bible story. These pictures will help them connect with the story and remember the lesson so that they can share it with their parents at home. Depending on what works best in your class situation, the children can complete the activities either during class or at home.

Attendance

Taking attendance helps track which children are absent so that you can follow up with them and make sure that they are not having problems. This is also a way to show each child that you care whether they are present. If the class is large, taking attendance the standard way may take too much of the class time. An alternative method is to divide the children into groups and designate a child to track the attendance for each group.

How to Use This Teacher's Guide

This manual is written to help you with lesson preparation. It is not intended to be a rule book or script to use while teaching. Allow it to point you in the right direction and inspire your own ideas. It is meant for you, the teacher. **Please do not read directly to the children from this book.**

Each lesson was designed to last 45 to 60 minutes. However, depending on the children in your class and amount of time you have, it may not be possible to cover all of the content. This is not a problem. **The Bible story and discussion questions are the most important parts of each lesson.** Always include these. If facing time constraints, the Challenge Review and Life Challenge may be skipped. Also, depending on the lesson, you may want to skip the Introductory Activity or make the Closing very short.

Teacher Background

Here you will find the objectives for each lesson. They are designed to help focus your teaching efforts so that the learning goals are ultimately achieved. This section also points you to Scripture that provides essential context for each lesson. Studying the entire context will help deepen your own understanding as well as prepare you to answer any questions the children may have.

Lesson Review

This section is designed to reinforce what the children have learned in previous lessons. Review is crucial for children since repetition increases the likelihood of them remembering the content long-term. **Review Activities** is a section in the back of the book located on page 160-162. There you will find a variety of ideas from which you can select a meaningful and fun review activity for each lesson. Separate activities for reviewing the lesson and the memory verse are provided.

Challenge Review

The life challenge at the end of each lesson encourages students to actively live out their faith based on what they have learned in that lesson. The challenge review at the beginning of the following lesson gives them the opportunity to share their experience of applying to real life the truths they learned. It also allows them the opportunity of learning from each other's experiences.

Introductory Activity

The introductory activities at the beginning of each lesson are designed to get the children focused on the lesson. This allows them to begin thinking about and discussing spiritual topics.

Bible Story

The Bible story is the heart of each lesson. Make sure you have a Bible on hand, and start by reading the story from the Bible. The students can also look in their own books at a visual illustration of the Bible story. After reading the story in the Bible, retell the story in class. Each Bible story section will refer you to the **Storytelling Activities** located in the back of the book on page 163. This section will give you various ideas as well as different ways to approach storytelling. If a story is engaging, entertaining, and fun, it's more likely to be memorable and carried with a child for a lifetime, not just the duration of the lesson.

Discussion Questions

Discussion questions provide an opportunity for children to think about and respond to important parts of the story and the lesson. Specifically, the discussion questions serve

to move the students from a merely passive role to a more active role in their learning. This enables them to take personal ownership of truths in the lesson, and facilitates future authentic application in their own lives. The first question is always about what is taking place in the picture in their book. This is designed to allow the students to tell the entire story. If the children do not have their books with them, you can ask them instead what happened in the story.

Memory Verse Activity

The memory verse activity encourages children to commit a Scripture verse to memory that they can later call upon for encouragement and guidance. The length of time for this activity will vary, depending on which idea you select from the **Memory Verse Activities** provided on page 165.

Life Challenge

The life challenge is an opportunity for the children to take the lesson truths home and apply them in their own lives. The challenge also serves as a bridge activity between the previous lesson and the next. Remember to review the challenge from the previous lesson at the beginning of each new lesson. Additionally, talking about each lesson challenge reiterates the importance of applying what they learned to their lives. Encourage and demonstrate this by willingly sharing examples from your own life. The children should be given an opportunity to share about their experience in the challenge review in the next lesson.

Closing

This step facilitates the students’ ability to move from simply understanding the lesson to actual and personal application of what they’ve learned. It’s through this closing process that the students learn to apply God’s Word to their own lives. It helps them to internalize the message and reminds them to share what they’ve learned with their families and others.

Notes:

LESSON

1

Creation of the World

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to recall what was created on each day.
- Children will be able to identify characteristics of God.

Before the lesson, review Genesis 1:1-25 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of creation provides an opportunity to teach children that **God has no beginning or end** and that he is the creator.

Item(s) needed: paper

Introductory Activity: (5 minutes)

Have each child think of something in nature that they think is good or beautiful. Select children to share their thought. Have them explain why they think it is good or beautiful. Explain that the lesson today will be about God's creation of the world and how he made everything in the beginning.

Bible Story: (10-15 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 2 and look at picture 1. Read the story from the Bible in Genesis 1:1-25 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them assist in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story emphasizing the following key points:

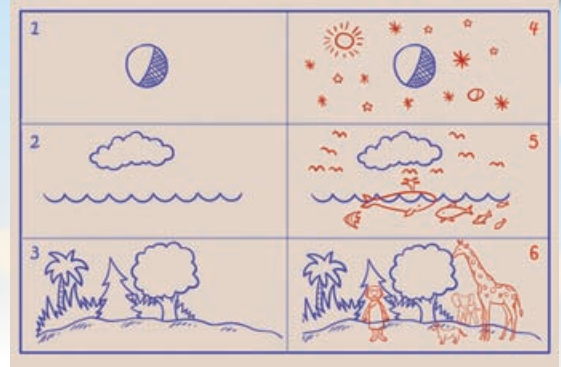
- On day 1, God created night and day.
- On day 2, God separated the waters above from the waters below. He made sky.
- On day 3, God made land, ocean and plants to grow on the land.
- On day 4, God made the sun, moon and stars.
- On day 5, God made fish in the sea and birds in the sky.
- On day 6, God made animals and humans.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- God created everything by the word of his mouth, by speaking it into existence.
- God saw that all of his creation was good.
- God was not only there "in the beginning" but also before the beginning. **God has no beginning and no end.** He lives forever and ever. (Revelation 4:9)
- Jesus was with God in the beginning and they created the earth together. (John 1:1)
- Through Jesus everything was made. From this we learn that Jesus is God, who was revealed to us in human form when he came to the earth. (John 1:14)
- We should care for the earth because God created it.

Activity: (10 minutes)

Provide paper for the children. Have them divide it into three sections with two horizontal lines. Have them draw the events for day one, day two and day three as illustrated. For day four, day five and day six, have them draw the created items surrounding the existing images. If various colours are available, have the students use one colour for days one, two and three and a different colour for days four, five and six.



Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. Who was with God as He created the earth? (Jesus)
3. **Does God have a beginning or end?** (No) Why? (He has always existed and always will exist.)
4. Have the students look at the image in their book for lesson one. What are some of the things God created in the image? What are other things that God created?
5. How can we take good care of the earth that God created?

Memory Verse Activity: Psalm 19:1 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

The heavens keep telling the wonders of God, and the skies declare what he has done. – Psalm 19:1.

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that we see God's creation all around us.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Select one of the following activities for the children to do throughout the week. Let them know that it will be discussed during the next lesson. They may be able to tell the class what they did for the Life Challenge.

- Encourage the children to think of something each day of the week that God created. Have them thank God for each particular creation.
- Challenge the children to not throw rubbish around their environment. Instead, they should pick up any rubbish they see around and put it in the rubbish pit.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God created the earth and all He created is good.
- Jesus was with God in the beginning, and they created the earth together.
- **God has no beginning or end.** He always has been and always will be.
- We need to take care of God's creation.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





Creation of Man



Objective(s):

- Children will be able to retell how God created Adam and Eve.
- Children will be able to describe ways in which they were created uniquely.

Before the lesson, review Genesis 1:26-31 and Genesis 2:1-25 to understand the context of the lesson. The story about the creation of man not only points to God's role in creating Adam and Eve but also how he cared for them. It also provides an opportunity to talk about how **God created each individual uniquely**.

Item(s) needed: none



God's Big Story
Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review lesson one.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children if they completed the Life Challenge from the last week. Have several children who completed it give examples of what they did.

- If the Life Challenge selected was to be thankful, ask the children to give examples of what they were thankful for.
- If the Life Challenge selected was to pick up rubbish, ask the children when and where did they pick up rubbish. Encourage them to continue to care for the earth around them.

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Ask the children to think about themselves for a moment, and reflect on what kinds of special skills and talents they have. In what ways did **God create them uniquely?** Then ask them to turn to a neighbour and share three things that make them unique.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 2 and look at picture 2. Read the story from the Bible in Genesis 2:7-9 and Genesis 2:18-24 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them assist in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story emphasizing the following key points:

- Adam was made from soil and God breathed life into him.
- God gave Adam a wonderful garden to live in.
- God saw that it was not good for Adam to be alone.
- God made Eve from one of Adam's ribs.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Humans or “man” were made in the image of God. (Genesis 1:27) This means that people have some characteristics that are similar to God. People can think and reason, be creative, have relationships with others and know the difference between right and wrong.
- **Individuals are each created uniquely.** No two people have ever been exactly alike.
- Adam and Eve were blessed by God, and told to be fruitful and rule over every animal on earth. (Genesis 1:28) We can still see humans being fruitful today in many ways. Babies are born, animals are looked after and crops and plants are planted, tended and harvested.
- God provided fruit and grain to eat. (Genesis 1:29-30) God continues to provide for us.
- God desires to have a relationship with us.
- God created only one partner for Adam. Adam and Eve were specially made for each other. Before sin entered the world, people did not have multiple partners.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. How was Adam created?
3. How was Eve created?
4. What does it mean to be created in God’s image?
5. What are some ways that **you are created uniquely**?

Memory Verse Activity: Psalm 139:14 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher’s guide.

And I praise you because of the wonderful way you created me. Everything you do is marvelous! Of this I have no doubt. – Psalm 139:14

Explain to the children that the memory verse will remind us **that God created us in a wonderful and unique way.** If there is ever a time when they do not feel special, this verse is a wonderful reminder that God created them just the way they are.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

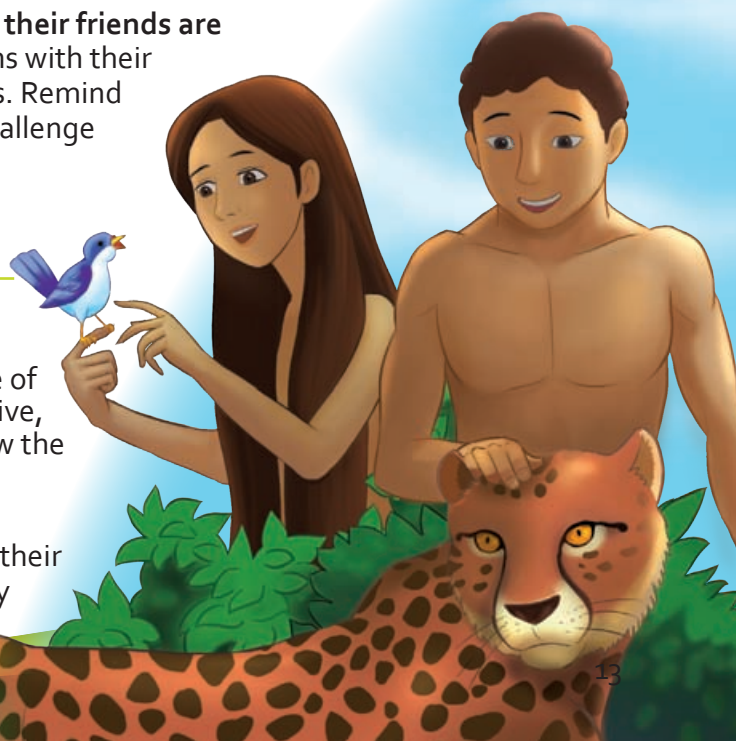
Encourage the children to observe ways **that their friends are created uniquely** and share their observations with their friends. This will be a blessing for their friends. Remind them that you will talk about how the Life Challenge went during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- We are valued and created in the image of God. We can think and reason, be creative, have relationships with others and know the difference between right and wrong.
- **God created each of us uniquely.**

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





LESSON

3

The Fall



Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to define sin.
- Children will be able to recall the promise that God made to defeat Satan.
- Children will be able to describe how God kept his promise.

Before the lesson, review Genesis 3:1-24 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the first sin provides an opportunity to teach children what sin is and how it separates people from God. It is important to communicate that the first sin did not surprise God. **God made a promise** to defeat Satan. From the very beginning, he had a plan for Jesus to overcome sin and to provide a way for humans' relationship with God to be restored.

Item(s) needed: bucket of soapy water, towel

★ God's Big Story Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review other previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. In what ways did they notice that their friends were wonderfully made? Was this a blessing to their friends? If the Life Challenge selected was to be thankful, ask the children to give examples of what they were thankful for.

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Place a bucket of soapy water at the front of the class where it can be easily seen. Ask for a volunteer. Ask the volunteer to come wash their hands. This will be easy for them to do. Ask for another volunteer. Ask this volunteer to wash their heart. This will not be possible. Explain that in the same way we cannot wash our heart, we also cannot wash the sin out of our lives. In the lesson today we will learn how sin entered the world and how we are all sinners. It is not possible for us to take away sin on our own. But **God made a promise** that he would defeat Satan and therefore defeat sin.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 2 and look at picture 3. Read the story from the Bible in Genesis 3:1-19 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them assist in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story emphasizing the following key points:

- The serpent deceived Eve and tempted her to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. She ate the fruit. Then Adam ate it.

- After they sinned against God, Adam and Eve knew that they were naked; they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.
- A curse resulted from Adam and Eve's sin: women will experience pain in childbirth; men will labour for food by the sweat of their faces; and the ground of the earth itself will bring forth thorns and thistles.
- **God made a promise** that the woman (Eve) would have a child (descendant) who would crush the serpent's (Satan's) head and defeat him.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- When Adam and Eve sinned, it caused a separation between God and man. (Isaiah 59:2)
- Hiding in shame and trying to "fix" ourselves are two common ways that people try to handle their sins.
- Sin is anything we think, say, or do that does not please God.
- We are all born in sin. (Psalm 51:5) Today as a result of sin, marriages are broken, parents neglect their children, children disobey their parents and people do all kinds of bad things.
- Spiritual death occurred the moment that Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit. As a result of sin, we are all separated from God. But God planned a way to bring us back into a relationship with himself. **God made a promise** to send a Saviour to defeat Satan.
- Many years later, **God kept his promise**. He sent his own Son (Jesus) to defeat Satan. Jesus was fully God and fully man. Jesus never sinned. He was perfect. Yet he died to take the punishment for our sins. His sacrifice was the final payment for our sins.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What is sin?
3. What sin did Adam and Eve commit?
4. What was the result of their sin?
5. What **promise did God make**? How was it fulfilled?

Memory Verse Activity: Romans 3:23 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

All of us have sinned and fallen short of God's glory.– Romans 3:23

Explain to the children that the memory verse will teach us something that is true of all people.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to confess their sins to the Lord and ask for his forgiveness throughout the week. Also, encourage them to ask their family members and friends to forgive them for the bad things they do.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- Through Adam, sin came to the whole world and therefore we are all sinners.
- **God made a promise** to send a Saviour to defeat Satan and sin.
- Jesus Christ died on the cross to take the punishment for our sins. Through his resurrection, we are able to receive eternal life.
- We should thank God for salvation.
- If any children have not invited Jesus Christ into their hearts to take away their sins and give them eternal life, they can do so.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

4

Leaving the Garden



Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to identify the consequences that resulted from Adam and Eve's sin.
- Children will be able to explain how the decisions they make have consequences.

Before the lesson, review Genesis 3:1-24 to understand the context of the lesson. This lesson provides an opportunity to discuss the consequences that Adam and Eve faced because of their sin. It also provides a time to talk about **actions having consequences** and about the impact that the decisions we make today - both good and bad - will have on our future.

Item(s) needed: newspaper

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review other previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they confess their sins to the Lord? What happened when they asked their family members or friends for forgiveness?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Divide the children into small groups. Give each group one sheet of newspaper. Ask them to tear it up into many small pieces. After they have torn it up, ask them to put it back together. (They will not be able to do this.)

Explain that before sin entered the world, we were whole and our relationship with God was unbroken. After the fall, our relationship became like this paper, torn and irreparable. The lesson today will show how Adam and Eve were separated from God. It will show that their **actions had consequences** and that they could not make things right after they sinned.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Before reading the Bible passage, remind the children of the following points from the last lesson.

- The serpent tricked Eve and tempted her to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. She ate the fruit. Then Adam ate it.
- After they sinned against God, Adam and Eve knew that they were naked; they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 3 and look at picture 4. Read the story from the Bible in Genesis 3:15-24 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story emphasizing the following key points:

- A curse resulted from Adam and Eve's sin. Women will experience pain in childbirth; men will labour for food by the sweat of their faces; and the ground of the earth will bring forth thorns and thistles.
- God made tunics of skin to clothe Adam and Eve.
- God sent Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden.
- God placed an angel with a flaming sword to guard the way to the tree of life.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- The results of the curse can still be seen today. God created work. However, because of the curse, people have to work very hard in order to have something to eat, a house to stay in, money to pay for school fees, and medical care. Also, women have pain during childbirth.
- We also see murder, disobedience, hatred, corruption and many other consequences of sin in the world.
- In the same way that Adam and Eve's **actions had consequences**, the decisions we make today will have an impact on our future.
- God still cared for Adam and Eve even though they sinned.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What were the consequences of Adam and Eve's sin?
3. What are examples today of **actions having consequences**?
4. What are some good decisions you can make today that will positively impact your future?

Memory Verse Activity: Galatians 6:7b-8 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

You will harvest what you plant. If you follow your selfish desires, you will harvest destruction, but if you follow the Spirit, you will harvest eternal life. – Galatians 6:7b-8

Ask the children what plant would grow if they planted bean seeds. What if they planted tomato seeds? Explain that the memory verse reminds us of the principle of reaping and sowing. It teaches that our **actions have consequences**.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to practice making good decisions this week. Ask them to pay attention to the **consequences of their actions** when they make good decisions and when they make bad decisions. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience with the class during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- Adam and Eve faced the **consequences for their actions**. We still see the impact of sin on the world around us.
- Our **actions have consequences**. Generally, good decisions have good results, and bad decisions have bad results.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

5

Cain and Abel

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will explain what offering God accepts from us today.
- Children will describe how God gave us Jesus as the ultimate sacrifice for our sins.

Before the lesson, review Genesis 3:22 – Genesis 4:16 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Cain and Abel offers an opportunity to teach children about what **we can offer to the Lord**. It also provides a context to talk about the sacrifice that Jesus made for us.

Item(s) needed: paper

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review other previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5-10 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. What decisions did they make that had consequences? Can they identify any good decisions they would like to start making regularly?

Introductory Activity: Offertory (10 minutes)

Provide pieces of paper for the children. Ask them to draw something **they could offer to God** as a gift or as a sign of worship. After giving them time to draw, discuss the following questions:

1. What picture did you draw? (Let the children show you their pictures, and select specific pictures to highlight that relate to the lesson.)
2. Why did you decide to draw that picture? (The child's answer will help you know what he or she thinks about sacrifice.)

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 3 and look at picture 5. Read the story from the Bible in Genesis 4:1-12 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them assist in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story emphasizing the following key points:

- Cain and Abel were brothers. They were the sons of Adam and Eve.
- Cain farmed the land, and Abel was a sheep farmer.

- Both brothers gave God an offering, but God was not happy with Cain's offering. (Cain gave God some of his harvest, and Abel gave God the first-born lamb of one of his sheep.)
- Cain was jealous of God's pleasure with Abel. In anger, Cain killed Abel.
- God punished Cain for his actions by telling him he would have to wander the land for the rest of his life and the land would not produce anything for him.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Long ago, before Jesus came, people used to offer sacrifices to the one, true God. The sacrifices were a way to worship God. They also provided temporary forgiveness for sins.
- When Jesus came, he was the perfect sacrifice for sins. After he died and rose again, it was no longer necessary for people to offer sacrifices. Some people still offer sacrifices to gods for different reasons. However, God does not accept these.
- Abel's faith and obedience were important to God. (Hebrews 11:4)
- God can see what is in our hearts, and it is very important to him. He sees when there is jealousy in our hearts just like Cain was jealous of Abel.

Discussion Questions: (10-15 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What happened after Cain and Abel brought their sacrifices to God?
3. Why is it not necessary for us to offer sacrifices to God like Cain and Abel did?
4. What **can we offer** to God today?

Memory Verse Activity: Hebrews 13:15 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Our sacrifice is to keep offering praise to God in the name of Jesus. – Hebrews 13:15

Explain to the children that this memory verse teaches us something that **we can offer to God**.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Have the children think of one thing **they can offer to God** throughout the week. Remind them that they may have the opportunity to share their experience with the class during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God gave us the perfect sacrifice once and for all. It was Jesus Christ. Because Jesus died for our sins, we do not have to offer animal sacrifices.
- Our memory verse tells us that we should offer sacrifices of praise and we can do this through singing songs to God, praying to God and doing good things for people.
- We should not get jealous of other people's possessions.
- We should **offer God our very best** from a pure heart.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

6

The Flood

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to explain the benefits of obedience.
- Children will be able to describe God's justice.
- Children will be able to describe God's mercy.

Before the lesson, review Genesis 6:5-22, Genesis 7:1-24, Genesis 8:1-22, and Genesis 9:1-17 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the flood provides an opportunity to teach children about God's justice and his mercy. Noah's actions also show the **benefits of obedience**.

Item(s) needed: paper or matooke fibre

★ God's Big Story Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review other previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. What did they offer to God since the last lesson?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide each child with a piece of paper. Have them draw Noah's ark and some of the animals that were in the ark. Alternatively, have the children make an ark from matooke fibre.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 4 and look at picture 6. Read the story from the Bible in Genesis 6:11-22 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- God was sad because of the sinfulness in people's lives on the earth.
- God judged the sinful world through a flood that covered the entire earth.
- Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord, and Noah and his family were saved from the flood.
- Noah built a huge boat exactly as God told him to design it.
- God told Noah to take a male and a female of each of the animals onto the giant boat; and God caused the animals to come into the boat.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- The rain lasted for 40 days and nights, and water covered the entire earth. No land or mountains could be seen for 150 days. Finally the boat came to rest on the top of a mountain. Slowly the water receded. Eventually Noah, his family, and the animals left the boat.
- God promised that there would never again be a flood that destroys the whole earth. He made the rainbow to be a sign of his promise. (Genesis 9:8-17)
- God is just. This means he must punish sin. The people on the earth were so wicked they only thought about evil. They had to be punished.
- Noah was righteous. He did what was right, and God was pleased with him. Because of God's mercy, he chose to protect Noah and Noah's family from the flood.
- Noah obeyed God when God told him to build a boat. **Because of God's mercy and Noah's obedience**, Noah's family did not die in the flood.
- **Because of God's mercy and Noah's obedience**, God did not destroy all of mankind.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What **good things happened because of Noah's obedience**?
3. In what way do we see God's justice in this story?
4. In what way do we see God's mercy in this story?

Memory Verse Activity: Proverbs 2:7-8 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

God gives helpful advice to everyone who obeys him and protects all of those who live as they should. God sees that justice is done, and he watches over everyone who is faithful to him. – Proverbs 2:7-8

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that God is just and merciful.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

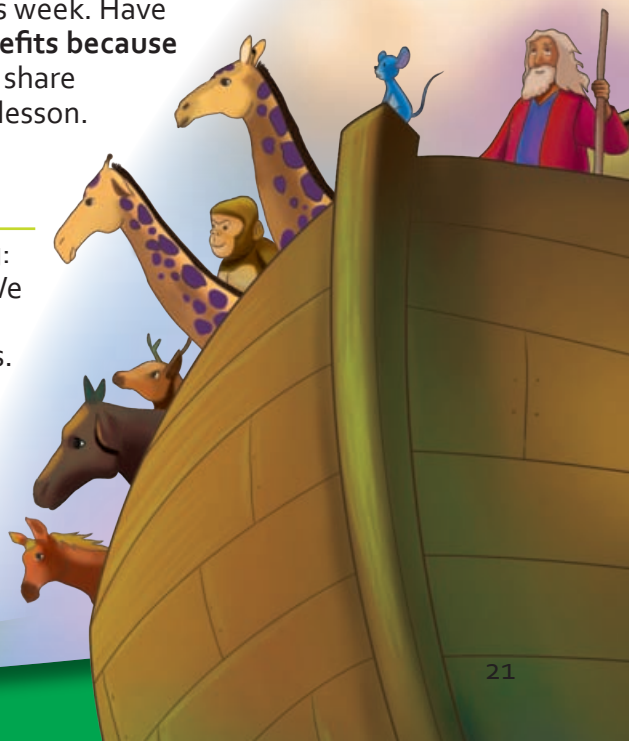
Encourage the children to obey those in authority this week. Have them identify situations where there are positive **benefits because of their obedience**. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience with the class during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God has control over everything on the earth. We should obey him and listen to his commands.
- Most of the time, obedience has positive results.
- God is both just and merciful. Sin must be punished. But God made a way for Jesus to pay for our sin through his death on the cross.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

7

Tower of Babel

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to identify situations where they can overcome pride.
- Children will be able to identify situations where they can choose God's way over their own.
- Children will be able to identify ways in which they can **give glory to God**.

Before the lesson, review Genesis 11:1-9 to understand the lesson's context. This lesson provides an opportunity to discuss the importance of overcoming pride, choosing God's way and **giving glory to God**.

Item(s) needed: building supplies for groups to complete Introductory Activity. See options below.

★ God's Big Story Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

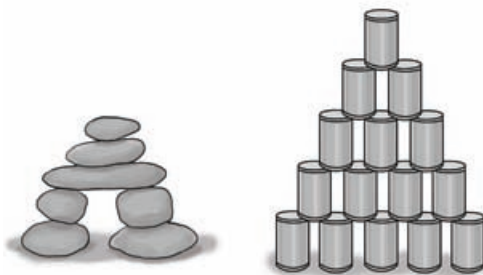
Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. What were the benefits of their obedience?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Divide the class into small groups with four to six children in each. Give each group equal quantities of items to build a tower. *Options for building supplies include the following: paper and paperclips, small sticks and string, cans, rocks or pieces of newspaper.* Instruct the children to try to make the tallest tower they can from the items provided. The team with the highest tower is the winner. Explain that the lesson today is about people who wanted to become famous by building a very big tower.



Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 4 and look at picture 7. Read the story from the Bible in Genesis 11:1-9 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them

take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. Retell the story emphasizing the following key points:

- There was one common language in the whole earth.
- The people rebelled against God again, and disobeyed His command to spread throughout the earth.
- Instead of obeying God, the people chose their own way by building a city and a great tower. They wanted to become powerful and important.
- God judged the people by confusing their language and scattering them all over the earth. The word "babel" means confusion.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Even though the people were doing things that did not please God, he still kept the promise he had made to Noah. He had promised to not destroy the earth with a flood.
- Today people are still filled with pride, trying to become powerful and important. Pride is relying on your own efforts and trying to receive glory for yourself. Pride can be seen all around us.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. How can people today be like the people in the story? (People seek to become powerful and important. They are full of pride.)
3. What are some ways that you can overcome pride?
4. What are some ways that you can **give glory to God**?

Memory Verse Activity: Revelation 4:11 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Our Lord and God, you are worthy to receive glory, honor, and power. You created all things, and by your decision they are and were created. – Revelation 4:11

Explain that the memory verse reminds us to **give glory to God**.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to find one thing each day for which they can **give glory to God**. Have them write it down, talk about it with their parents, and bring the list to the next class. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience with the class during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- We see people trying to become powerful and important around us.
- Rather than doing that, we can overcome pride and **give glory to God**.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

8

The Call of Abram

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe the actions that showed Abram's **faith in God**.
- Children will be able to give examples of ways in which they can have **faith in God**.

Before the lesson, review Genesis 11:26-28 and Genesis 12:1-9 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the call of Abram provides an opportunity to talk with children about the importance of **having faith in God**. At times God may ask us to obey him even if we do not understand what he is asking us to do. This story also provides an opportunity to discuss how God uses normal, ordinary people.

Item(s) needed: cloth to use as a blindfold, paper

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they identify something each day for which to give glory to God? Did they discuss it with their parents and bring the list to class?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Ask for two volunteers. Have them stand near you. Tell Volunteer 1 that he or she must walk to a point in the room that you will select. Ask if he or she thinks they will have any problem getting to the spot. Then say there is just one small detail. They must be blindfolded and spun around. Blindfold Volunteer 1. Point to the location where they must go and ask them to go. They will be unable to get to the spot you have chosen. Then tell Volunteer 2 to give verbal instructions to Volunteer 1 to help them make it to the destination. If time allows, this can be repeated with other volunteers.

Explain that the lesson today will be about a man who had **faith in God** and obeyed God's instructions even when he did not know where God was leading him.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 4 and look at picture 8. Read the story from the Bible in Genesis 12:1-9 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- God called Abram to leave his country, his family, and his relatives and to go out into a land God would show him.
- God promised Abram that he would make his descendants into a great nation. God also promised Abram that he would be blessed greatly and that everyone on the earth would be blessed because of Abram.
- **By faith**, Abram left his country with his wife to follow God's call.
- Abram was 75 years old when he departed from his homeland.
- After Abram left his country, the Lord appeared to him and promised him that he would give him the land of Canaan.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Abram had **faith in God**. He obeyed God even though God had only told him to leave and had not yet told him where he was to go.
- God said that all nations would be blessed through Abram. Many years later Jesus, one of Abram's descendants, was born. All of those who have faith in Jesus are blessed, fulfilling the promise that God had made.
- God is powerful. He said he would make Abram into a great nation, and he did. He has the power to do what he says.
- Abram was an ordinary man. God usually uses ordinary people instead of those who are clever, rich or famous.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What did Abram do that showed he had **faith in God**?
3. What are some of the ways that we can have **faith in God**?

Memory Verse Activity: Hebrews 11:8 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Abram had faith and obeyed God. He was told to go to the land that God had said would be his, and he left for a country he had never seen. – Hebrews 11:8

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us about Abram's faith.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Provide the children with paper. Have them write down three specific areas in their life in which they can have **faith in God**. Encourage them to have faith in God throughout the next week. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience with the class during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- We need to have **faith in God** and be obedient to him.
- God is all knowing. He sees and knows our future and has a plan for us.
- He is all-powerful. Nothing is too difficult for him.
- God always keeps his promises.

Close in prayer. Ask the Lord to help the children have **faith in him** throughout the week. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

9

The Birth of Isaac

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to recall the promise that God made to Abraham.
- Children will be able to describe how God kept his promise by doing **the impossible**.

Before the lesson, review Genesis 15:1-6, Genesis 17:1-6 and Genesis 21:1-7 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Isaac's birth provides an opportunity to remind the children that God always keeps his promises. Also, it shows that **God is able to do the impossible**.

Item(s) needed: none

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. In what ways did they have faith in God since the last lesson?

Introductory Activity: The Father Abraham Song (5-10 minutes)

Sing the Father Abraham song with the children. Have the girls stand up when the words "Father Abraham" are sung, and have the boys stand up when the words "had many sons" as they all sing along.

The words for the last verse follow:

*Father Abraham had many sons
Many sons had father Abraham
I am one of them and so are you
So let us praise the Lord
Right hand, left hand, right leg, left leg, chin up, turn around, sit down!*

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 5 and look at picture 9. Read the story from the Bible in Genesis 17:1-6 and Genesis 21:1-7 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- God promised Abram that he would have many descendants.
- God changed Abram's name to Abraham which means "father of many".
- Many years after God made this promise for the first time, he fulfilled it by giving Abraham a son!
- Abraham and Sarah were so filled with joy that they named their son Isaac, which means "laughter".
- Abraham was 100 years old when his son Isaac was born.
- Nothing is too hard for the Lord!

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- God made a promise to Abraham. He promised Abraham that he would have so many descendants they would be like the stars in the sky or the sand on the seashore. (Genesis 22:17)
- God always keeps his promises.
- Abraham and Sarah were too old to have children. Abraham was 100 years old, and Sarah was 90 years old. The birth of Isaac shows that **God is able to do the impossible**.
- Abraham and Sarah celebrated when Isaac was born.
- Through Isaac, Abraham did become the father of a great nation. Future lessons will teach how Abraham's descendants became known as the Israelites.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What promise did God make to Abraham?
3. How did God keep his promise?
4. What did **God do in this story that was impossible**?

Memory Verse Activity: Luke 1:37 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Nothing is impossible for God! – Luke 1:37

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that **God is able to do the impossible**.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

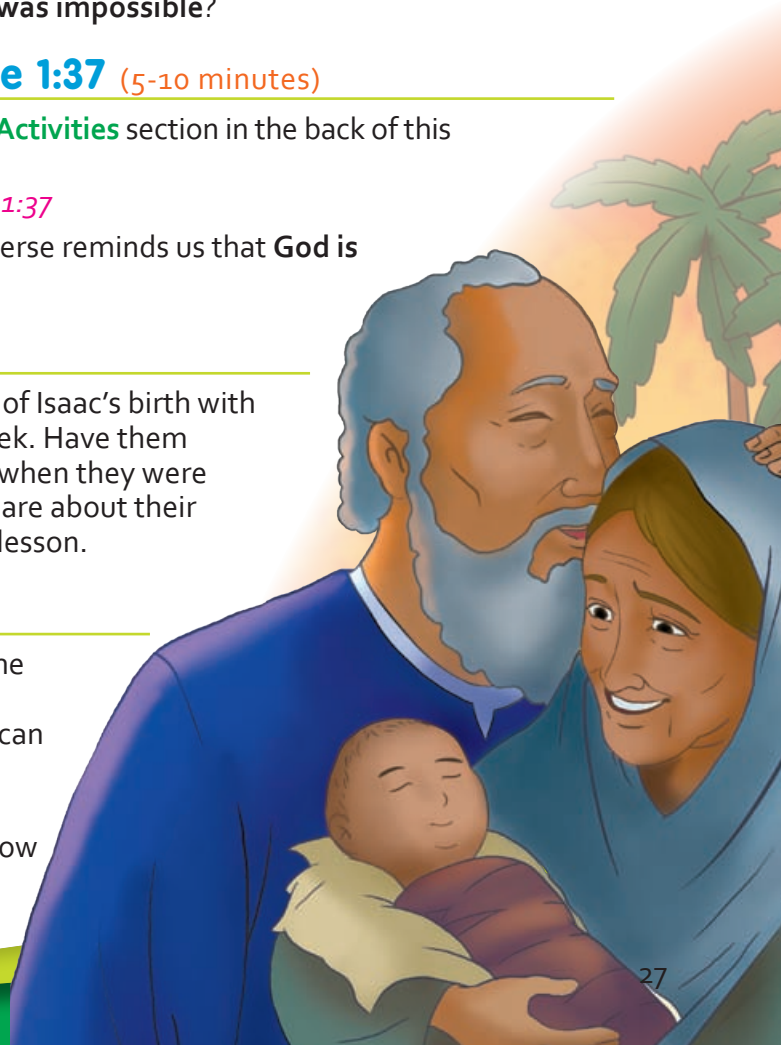
Encourage the children to share the story of Isaac's birth with their parents, brothers and sisters this week. Have them ask their parents to tell them the story of when they were born. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience with the class during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God always keeps his promises. We can trust in him.
- **God is able to do the impossible.**

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





LESSON

10

Abraham and Isaac



Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe the sacrifice that Abraham was willing to make.
- Children will be able to describe the sacrifice that God made when he sent Jesus.

Before the lesson, review Genesis 22:1-18 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Abraham and Isaac provides an opportunity to discuss how **hard it can be to do the right thing**. It is also a good time to talk about the sacrifice that Abraham was willing to make for God, and the sacrifice that God made for us.

Item(s) needed: paper

★ God's Big Story Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they share the story of the birth of Isaac with their families? Did their parents tell them the story of their birth?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide each child with a piece of paper. Ask them to draw a picture of a time when they had to make a really hard decision. What did they draw in their picture? What choice did they make? **Was it hard to do the right thing?**

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Before reading the Bible passage, remind the children of the following points from the last lesson.

- God promised Abraham that he would have many descendants. However, Abraham and Sarah had no children.
- God did the impossible and caused them to have a son. They named their son Isaac. Isaac was very special to them.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 5 and look at picture 10. Read the story from the Bible in Genesis 22:1-18 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- God tested Abraham by asking him to sacrifice his son, Isaac, on the mountain of Moriah.
- Abraham trusted and obeyed God, even though he did not understand God's plan.
- Isaac willingly followed his father Abraham, though he did not understand his father's plan.

- Abraham built an altar and placed the wood on it. He bound Isaac and laid him on the altar.
- The angel of the Lord stopped Abraham from sacrificing Isaac.
- God provided a ram for a sacrifice. Abraham called the name of the place, "The Lord Will Provide".

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Abraham trusted in God so much that he was even willing to sacrifice his son. He was willing to obey God and **do what was right even when it was hard**.
- There may be times when we do not understand what God is doing. We should still trust and obey him.
- In the same way that Abraham was willing to offer his son, God was also willing to sacrifice his son. In fact, Jesus did die. He died for all of the bad things that we have done. He did this because he loved us so much.
- Some people still sacrifice animals, or even people, to gods. However, the one true God no longer accepts sacrifices that shed blood. All of the Old Testament sacrifices point to the greatest sacrifice that was to come. Jesus was the ultimate sacrifice when he died on the cross. He was the only sacrifice for sin.
- Even though God no longer accepts blood sacrifices, he expects a different type of sacrifice. He says "our sacrifice is to keep offering praise to God in the name of Jesus. But don't forget to help others and to share your possessions with them. This too is like offering a sacrifice that pleases God". (Hebrews 13:15, 16) This means we should live our lives to please God. We should love others as we love ourselves. (Mark 12:31)

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. Why was God pleased with Abraham?
3. What sacrifice did God make for us?
4. What are situations where you can **do what is right even when it is hard**?

Memory Verse Activity: 1 Samuel 15:22 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Does the Lord really want sacrifices and offerings? No! He doesn't want your sacrifices. He wants you to obey him. – 1 Samuel 15:22

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us how important it is to God that we obey him.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to **do what is right even when it is hard** this week. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience with the class during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- We can trust God to see us through hard situations.
- We should **do what is right even when it is hard**.
- Jesus was the perfect sacrifice. We should not take part in any physical sacrifices.
- If children have not invited Jesus Christ into their hearts to take away their sins and give them eternal life, they can do so.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





Isaac and Rebekah



Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how God provided a wife for Isaac.
- Children will be able to identify God as the creator of family.

Before the lesson, review Genesis 24:1-67 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Isaac and Rebekah provides an opportunity to teach children about how **God is the creator of family**. If the children are old enough, it also provides a context for discussing how God designed sex as a gift to be enjoyed within the context of marriage.

Item(s) needed: paper

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they have an opportunity to do what was right even when it was hard?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide the children with paper. Have them write "**God created my family**" at the top of their paper and draw a picture of their family underneath. After they have completed the picture, have them share with a friend something special about each member of their family.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 6 and look at picture 11. Provide the children with the following background to the story:

- Abraham sent his servant to his homeland to find a wife for his son Isaac.

Read the story from the Bible in Genesis 24:15-27, 62-67 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- The servant prayed that God would direct him to the specific woman that would be Isaac's wife.
- God answered the servant's prayer by leading him to Rebekah.

- Rebekah had kept herself sexually pure before marriage.
- The servant bowed his head and worshipped the Lord for His special guidance and blessing of answered prayer.
- Rebekah travelled back to the land of Canaan and was married to Isaac.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- **God is the creator of family.** (Genesis 2:18-24) God has assigned different roles to different members of each family. Fathers, mothers and children each have their unique role.
- God cares about each detail of your life including your relationships with others.
- There are no perfect families. However, imperfect families are still a wonderful blessing from God. God desires for families to love and care for each other.
- When we desire to honour God, God makes a way. You can ask God to help you when the way to do the right thing seems unclear.
- If the children are old enough, explain that God desires for us not to have sex until we are married. God designed sex for enjoyment within marriage and for procreation.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What did the servant do to ensure that he found the right girl for Isaac to marry?
3. What does the Bible tell us about Rebekah? (can emphasize virginity)
4. **Who created family?**
5. What are the different roles within a family?

Memory Verse Activity: Proverbs 3:5-6 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Never rely on what you think you know. Remember the Lord in everything you do, and he will show you the right way. – Proverbs 3:5-6

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that we can trust in God no matter what we are going through. Abraham trusted that God would provide a wife for Isaac, and God did.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to tell at least one person in their family that they love them. Challenge them to pray for their family every day and thank **God for creating their family.**

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- Talk to God about the needs in your life. Trust that he hears you.
- **God created family** and planned for us to be part of the family we are in.
- God designed sex as a gift to be enjoyed within the commitment of marriage.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





Jacob and Esau

**Objective(s):**

- Children will be able to identify the results of Jacob taking what did not belong to him.
- Children will be able to identify **consequences for misleading others and treating others unfairly.**

Before the lesson, review Genesis 27:1-46 in order to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Jacob and Esau provides an opportunity to teach children that there are **consequences for misleading others and treating others unfairly.**

Item(s) needed: one object per child for the game



God's Big Story
Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they tell someone in their family that they loved them? How did they respond?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Give each child one object. It can be a small piece of paper, stones, sticks, books, etc. Explain to the children that the item they are holding is very valuable. Whoever finishes the game with the most items is the winner.

Break the children into groups of 3 - 5. Have each group pick a leader. Now explain that the leader has a special power. Tell them they cannot use this special power until you start the game. Explain that their special power is that they can take away the items that other students are holding

Ask the children, "Are you ready to start?" Before you start the game, ask the children if the game seems fair. Ask the students to explain why the game is not fair. Ask them how it feels to even **imagine being treated unfairly.** Since the object of this game is to discuss being treated unfairly, you do not actually need to play the game.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 6 and look at picture 12. Provide the children with the following background to the story:

- Isaac told his son Esau to hunt and prepare food for him. He promised to give Esau his blessing once the meal was prepared. A father's blessing brought prosperity and success.
- Jacob's mother, Rebekah, heard Isaac speaking to Esau. She told Jacob that she would prepare a meal for Jacob to bring to Isaac. She told Jacob to pretend that he was Esau in order to receive the blessing.

Read the story from the Bible in Genesis 27:13-38 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Jacob and Esau were brothers, but they were very different. Esau was a skillful hunter, while Jacob was a shepherd.
- Earlier, Esau sold his rights as a first-born son to Jacob for a bowl of stew.
- Isaac told Esau to hunt and prepare food for him. He promised to give Esau his blessing during the meal.
- Jacob pretended to be Esau, and he received Isaac's blessing.
- Jacob was forced to leave his family in order to escape Esau, who was bitterly angry with him for stealing his blessing.

After reading the passage, give the children the completion of the story:

- Isaac could not give Esau the same blessing he gave Jacob. He told Esau he would be a slave to his brother.
- Esau was angry with Jacob. Esau vowed to kill his brother.
- Rebekah sent Jacob away to escape from Esau's anger and never saw him again.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Like Jacob, we sometimes want to take things that do not belong to us.
- Sometimes, we **mislead people** around us in order to get what we want.
- We forget that there will be consequences for what we do.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. Why was Jacob worried about pretending to be Esau?
3. What happened when Jacob stole the blessing from Esau?
4. What does it feel like when **someone treats us unfairly**?

Memory Verse Activity: Philippians 2:3-4 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Don't be jealous or proud, but be humble and consider others more important than yourselves. Care about them as much as you care about yourselves. – Philippians 2:3-4

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that we should consider others more important than ourselves. It also says to care for others like we care for ourselves.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

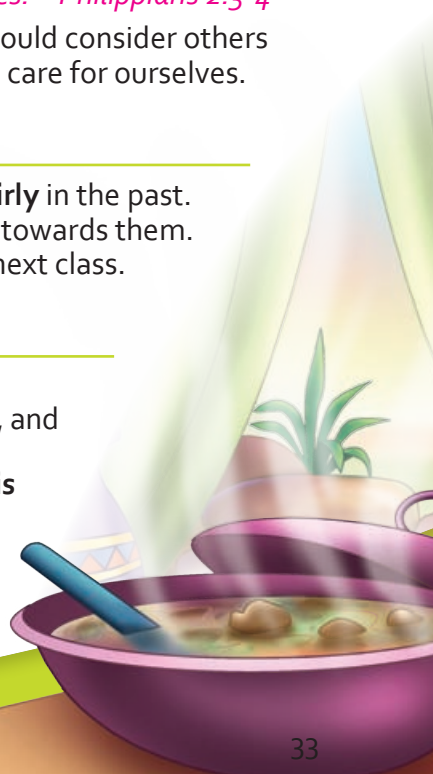
Encourage the children to think of someone they have **treated unfairly** in the past. Suggest that they find that person and apologize for being uncaring towards them. They may have an opportunity to share their experience during the next class.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- When Jacob stole the blessing from Esau, his brother hated him, and Jacob was forced to run away.
- The unity of Jacob's family was destroyed because he **treated his brother and father unfairly**.
- When we act selfishly or dishonestly, we hurt our relationships with the people around us.
- We should remember to value others above ourselves.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





LESSON

13

Joseph Sold into Slavery

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe positive ways to respond when others hurt them.
- Children will be able to explain how Joseph was rejected.
- Children will be able to explain how Jesus was rejected.

Before the lesson, review Genesis 37:1-36 to understand the lesson's context. The story of Joseph provides an opportunity to talk about the importance of **forgiveness when we are rejected or hurt by others**. It also provides a time to talk about the way in which Jesus was rejected.

Item(s) needed: a large serving bowl filled with water, a small plastic container and stones

★ God's Big Story Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they apologize to someone for being uncaring? What was their response?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Place a small plastic container in a large serving bowl filled with water. Explain to the children that the plastic container represents a child. Give the child a name and create a story using the scenario below, adding descriptive details so the children can relate.

In the morning, the child was feeling good. Throughout the day, the child was rejected, treated badly and made fun of. (Explain to the students that being rejected means to not be accepted or included.) Each time you tell about a negative situation that the child went through, add a stone to the plastic container. Discuss how the child may have felt. Explain that God made the best way to deal with rejection. It is forgiveness. Remove all of the rocks from the container when you say forgiveness. **Forgiveness is the best response when we are rejected or hurt by others.** It is much better than revenge!

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Provide the children with the following background to the story:

- Joseph had ten older brothers who were jealous of him. They hated him because their father loved Joseph more than any of them.
- To show his special love for Joseph, his father made Joseph a special coat.
- When he was 17 years old, God gave Joseph dreams. One dream had his brothers and even his father and mother bowing down to him.
- Joseph's brothers hated him even more because of his dreams.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 6 and look at picture 13. Read the story from the Bible in Genesis 37:12-28 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them assist in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- One day Joseph was sent to check on his brothers who were looking after sheep in the fields.
- When his brothers saw Joseph, they grabbed him and threw him in a pit.
- Later when some merchants were passing by, Joseph's brothers sold him to them as a slave. The merchants took Joseph to Egypt.

Explain that after Joseph was sold into slavery, his brothers killed a goat and dipped Joseph's colourful coat in the blood. Then they brought Joseph's coat to their father and lied, saying a wild beast had eaten Joseph.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- God had a good plan even though Joseph's brothers rejected him and sold him into slavery. In future lessons, we will learn that even though Joseph's brothers tried to harm him, God made it turn out for the best. (Genesis 50:20)
- In the next few lessons, we will also learn that Joseph recognized God's good plan and **forgave his brothers even though they had rejected him.**
- Many years later, Jesus was also rejected, though he helped people and had never done anything wrong. Even his closest friends and those he helped rejected him. Many of them said they wanted him dead! But **Jesus forgave everyone who had rejected him.**
- Jesus went through rejection for our sake. Because he was perfect, he paid the price for our sins when he died on the cross.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. How was Joseph rejected?
3. How was Jesus rejected?
4. Have you been hurt by others or rejected by people close to you? How did it make you feel?
5. What are some ways you can respond when you are **rejected or hurt by others**?

Memory Verse Activity: Ephesians 4:31b, 32 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Don't yell at one another or curse each other or ever be rude. Instead, be kind and merciful, and forgive others, just as God forgave you because of Christ.
– Ephesians 4:31b, 32

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us how important it is that we forgive others.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

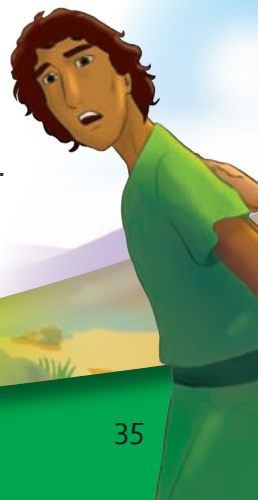
Encourage the children to **forgive when they are rejected or hurt by others**. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience with the class during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- People may hurt us and do bad things to us, but God loves us and treasures us.
- **Forgiveness is the best response when we are rejected or hurt by others.** (If someone is doing something to you that they should not do, it is important to get help.)
- Jesus loves you very much. He was rejected because of his love for people.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





Joseph and Potiphar's Wife

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to explain how Joseph responded when he was tempted.
- Children will be able to give examples of ways in which they are tempted and how they can **run away from temptation**.

Before the lesson, review Genesis 39:1-23 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife provides an opportunity to teach children **to run away from temptation** and the value of having self-control.

Item(s) needed: a rope

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they face any rejection? Were they able to forgive?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Select four volunteers to participate in a game of "tug of war" at the front of the class. Position two volunteers on each end of the rope. Explain that one side of the room represents a particular sin and the other side represents what God wants us to do. Allow the children to pull on the rope to demonstrate how we have difficulty deciding between doing what is right and what is wrong. This is temptation. Ask what would happen if the team on the side representing doing what is right let go of the rope. Would they still feel the pull to do what was wrong? What if they ran out of the room instead of holding on to the rope at all? Explain that the best thing to do when **tempted is to run away**. Today's lesson will be about a situation where Joseph **ran away from temptation**.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Provide the children with the following background to the story:

- Joseph was sold as a slave and was taken into Potiphar's house. Potiphar was a leading officer of Pharaoh (a Pharaoh is like a king).
- The Lord was with Joseph, and made him successful in all that he did in the house of his master, Potiphar.
- Joseph found such favour in Potiphar's sight that Potiphar put his entire house and property under Joseph's authority.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 7 and look at picture 14. Read the story from the Bible in Genesis 39:6-15 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them

assist in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Joseph was a handsome young man, and Potiphar's wife asked Joseph to have sex with her.
- Joseph chose to honour God and to have self-control. He told Potiphar's wife, "I won't sin against God by doing such a terrible thing as this."
- Potiphar's wife kept begging Joseph day after day, but he refused to even go near her.
- One day, Joseph went to Potiphar's house to work, and none of the servants were there. Potiphar's wife grabbed hold of Joseph's coat and said, "Make love to me!" But Joseph ran out of the house, leaving her holding his coat.

Explain to the children that after Joseph left, Potiphar's wife lied to her husband. She accused Joseph of trying to rape her. As a result, Joseph was thrown into prison.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Joseph **ran away when he faced temptation**. We should also **run away when we face temptation**. (2 Timothy 2:22)
- If it is appropriate for the ages of the children, explain that 1 Corinthians 6:18 tells us not to be immoral in matters of sex. If Joseph had chosen to have sex with Potiphar's wife, he would have committed a very serious sin.
- In a future lesson, even Joseph's imprisonment is revealed as part of God's good plan.
- God desires for us to have self-control. This is the ability to control what we do and do the things that are right and pleasing to God.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What did Joseph do when he was faced with temptation?
3. What are some temptations that you face?
4. How can you respond when you are tempted?

Memory Verse Activity: 1 Corinthians 10:13 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

You are tempted in the same way that everyone else is tempted. But God can be trusted not to let you be tempted too much, and he will show you how to escape from your temptations. – 1 Corinthians 10:13

Explain to the children that the memory verse encourages us that God will help us deal with temptation.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to practice running away from temptation this week. The children may have an opportunity to share about their experience with the class during the next lesson. Have the children ask their parents if they remember a time when they ran away from temptation.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- When we are tempted to do things that are wrong, we should run the other way.
- God understands the temptations that we face and he will help us deal with them.

Close in prayer. Ask God to help the children **run away from temptation** this week. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

15

Joseph's Rise to Power

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to explain how **God cared for Joseph** even during the difficult times.
- Children will be able to identify times God has cared for them or people they know.

Before the lesson, review Genesis 40:1 – 41:57 to understand the context of the lesson. This portion of Joseph's story offers an opportunity to teach children about **God's care for us**.

Item(s) needed: paper

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they face any temptation? Did they run away from it?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide each child with a piece of paper. Have them write "God's Care" at the top and draw a picture of either a flower or bird. Read Matthew 6:25-30 to the class. Explain that God cares for the birds and flowers. Ask the class how much they think God cares for them if he cares for the birds and the flowers. Explain that today's lesson will be about **God's care for Joseph** even during difficult times.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 7 and look at picture 15. Read the story from the Bible in Genesis 39:20-23. If they are able, have them assist in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story emphasizing the following key point:

- **God cared for Joseph** even when he was in difficult situations like being in prison. The Lord made Joseph successful in all that he did while he was in prison.

Explain to the children that one day Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, had dreams about the future. Joseph was able to interpret the dream for him. The dream meant that there would

be seven years of abundant harvest, followed by seven years of severe famine. God gave Joseph the ability to interpret the dreams and give Pharaoh wise advice about what he should do.

Continue the story by reading Genesis 41:37-49 out loud with the children.

Retell the story emphasizing the following key points:

- Joseph's advice pleased Pharaoh, and Joseph was promoted to be his governor and special assistant.
- Pharaoh took off his royal ring and put it on Joseph's finger. He gave him fine clothes to wear and placed a gold chain around his neck. He also let him ride in the chariot next to his own, and people shouted, "Make way for Joseph!"
- Joseph was 30 years old when he rose to power and became Pharaoh's governor.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Joseph was in very difficult situations, but **God cared for him**. In the same way, there may be times when we are in difficult situations, but God will always care for us.
- Joseph had been faithful to God during many hard times. He had been sold into slavery. He had to run from temptation. He had been unjustly put in prison. Because he had been faithful through all this, God was able to entrust him with a position of great power and authority.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. In what ways was Joseph faithful to God?
3. In what ways did God care for Joseph?
4. What are some ways that God has cared for you or people you know?

Memory Verse Activity: 1 Peter 5:6-7 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Be humble in the presence of God's mighty power, and he will honour you when the time comes. God cares for you, so turn all your worries over to him. – 1 Peter 5:6-7

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that **God cares for us**.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to find examples of how **God has cared for people**. They can ask their families or people they know who love the Lord to tell them examples from their lives. They may have an opportunity to share a story with the class during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- Even when situations are difficult, **God cares for us**.
- It is possible to remain faithful to God and do what is right even when things are hard.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





Joseph's Brothers Come to Egypt

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how God used for good what Joseph's brothers had intended for evil.
- Children will be able to identify situations where **God brought good things through difficult situations**.
- Children will be able to identify how Joseph did what was right even when it was hard.

Before the lesson, review Genesis 42:1-20, Genesis 43:1-16, and Genesis 45:1-15 in order to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Joseph's brothers coming to Egypt provides an opportunity to teach children that **God can bring good things through difficult situations**.

Item(s) needed: none



God's Big Story
Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they discover situations where God had cared for people?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Ask students to think about a situation in their life that seemed to be very bad but that ended up being good. Have them share their situation with a friend. If students have no examples, provide one of your own to start the conversation.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 8 and look at picture 16. Provide the following background to the story:

- There was famine throughout Egypt and the surrounding land. The famine reached as far as the land of Canaan where Joseph's family lived. Egypt had plenty of grain because they had stored it up in preparation for the famine.
- Joseph's 10 brothers were sent by their father to travel from the land of Canaan to buy grain in Egypt.
- Joseph was governor over all the land of Egypt, and he was the one who sold grain to all the people in the land. When Joseph's brothers came to Egypt, they bowed down before Joseph with their faces to the ground.
- Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not know that the governor was actually their brother Joseph.

Read the story from the Bible in Genesis 45:1-15 out loud with the children. If they are able,

have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Joseph revealed himself to his brothers, and his brothers were very scared.
- Joseph chose to forgive them for selling him as a slave into Egypt.
- Joseph invited all of his family to move to Egypt where there was plenty of food.
- Joseph was very glad to see his brothers. He hugged his brother Benjamin and kissed all his brothers.

Explain to the children that Joseph's family and all the people in Canaan moved to Egypt. Joseph was very happy to see his father. He provided his family with a place to live. Joseph told his family that what they meant for evil, God meant for good.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- If Joseph had not been there to interpret Pharaoh's dream, Egypt may not have saved grain for the famine. Without grain, many more people would have died from starvation.
 - Joseph had the power to hurt his brothers. However, he chose to forgive them. He did what was right even when it was hard.
 - If Joseph had not been willing to forgive his brothers, his family could have starved.
 - Joseph recognized that God had used his suffering to save his family.
 - It was God's plan for Joseph to be in Egypt so that God could use him to save his family.
- God can bring good things through difficult situations.**

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. Why did Joseph's brothers come to Egypt?
3. How did Joseph react when he saw his brothers?
4. How did **God bring something good through a difficult situation?**
5. What opportunities do you have to do what is right even when it is hard?

Memory Verse Activity: Romans 8:28 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

We know that God is always at work for the good of everyone who loves him. They are the ones God has chosen for his purpose. – Romans 8:28

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that God can use difficult situations to bring about good things.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to think of one person they have hurt. Encourage them to find them and ask for forgiveness. Before they do this, pray together to God for guidance and strength.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- There was nothing easy about the life Joseph was forced to lead because his brothers sold him into slavery.
- Joseph remained faithful to God even though his life was nothing it seemed it would be from his dreams.
- **God used a difficult situation to bring about good things for Joseph and his family.** He can do the same today.
- It is possible to do what is right even when it is hard.
- Whenever someone hurts us we should be quick to forgive and not seek revenge.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





The Birth of Moses



Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how Pharaoh **abused his power**.
- Children will be able to describe how they should treat others.
- Children will be able to recall how God protected baby Moses.

Before the lesson, review Exodus 1:8-16 and Exodus 2:1-10 in order to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the birth of Moses provides an opportunity to teach children about the **abuse of power** and how God dislikes the abuse of power. It also provides a context to discuss how we should treat others.

Item(s) needed: none

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they ask someone they had hurt for forgiveness? How did the other person respond?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Select two volunteers and ask them to come up to the front of the class. Have the children act out the action parts of what you are saying as you narrate. Expand on the scenarios in ways that are relevant for the children.

Introduce the class to the first student, Student A (provide her with a common name). She does all of her schoolwork on time. She helps her parents clean the house. She is kind to her classmates. She has studied hard for an exam, and she answered every question correctly.

Introduce the class to Student B (provide him with a common name). He does not do his homework. He refuses to help his parents around the house. He is mean to other children in his class. He did not study for the exam so he got many of the answers wrong.

The teacher likes Student B very much because he makes her laugh. She decided to give him a very good grade on the exam even though he got most of it wrong. She doesn't like Student A, and she gave her a failing grade on the exam, even though she answered every question right.

How do you think Student A felt? What should the teacher have done in this situation? Talk about what it looks like when people **abuse their power**. Talk about what happens when people use their positions of power to treat others well.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 8 and look at picture 17. Provide the

following background to the story:

- The descendants from Joseph's father, Israel, lived in Egypt. They were called the Israelites.
- The Israelites grew in number so that the land of Egypt was filled with them.
- A new king, Pharaoh, came to power. He did not remember Joseph. He was afraid that the people of Israel would become more powerful than the people of Egypt.
- Pharaoh treated the people of Israel very badly and made them work as slaves.
- Pharaoh even ordered that all the boy babies who were born to the Israelites be killed.

Read the story from the Bible in Exodus 2:1-10 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- During this time, the baby boy Moses was born. His mother hid him for three months.
- When Moses' mother could no longer hide him, she put him into a basket. She put the basket by the reeds on the bank of the Nile River.
- Pharaoh's daughter came to bathe in the river. She saw the baby in the basket and had compassion. She took Moses to be her adopted son.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Pharaoh chose to use his powerful position to harm people. **He abused his power.** God dislikes the abuse of power.
- God desires for us to show compassion to others, like Pharaoh's daughter did.
- God had a purpose for Moses' life, and he has a purpose for every baby's life.
- Moses was the person God chose to use to bring the Israelites out of the land of Egypt where they were suffering and into the promised land.
- God protected Moses' life by providing people to take care of him.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. Why did Pharaoh want to kill the Israelite baby boys?
3. How did **Pharaoh abuse his power**?
4. How should we treat others?

Memory Verse Activity: Luke 6:31 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Do to others as you would have them do to you. – Luke 6:31

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that God wants us to value other people and treat them as we would want them to treat us. He does not want us to **abuse our power**.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to recite the memory verse each day of the week and ask God to help them think of ways they can treat others well.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God is displeased when people **abuse their power**.
- When people are in need, it is good for us to help them.
- God has a plan and a purpose for each of us just like he did for Moses.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

18

The Burning Bush

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to discuss **God's holiness**.
- Children will be able to recall how God called Moses despite his limitations.

Before the lesson, review Exodus 3 and 4 in order to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the burning bush provides an opportunity to teach children about **God's holiness**. It also shows that God calls and uses normal people.

Item(s) needed: none

★ God's Big Story Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they recite the memory verse every day? How did they treat others?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide pieces of paper to the children. Have them draw a line down the middle. On the left side of the paper have them draw a picture of themselves doing something they do everyday. Once they have finished, have them draw a picture on the right side showing themselves in the presence of God. Discuss what they have drawn. Explain that we are always in God's presence. He is with us all of the time. He would be with us in the picture on the left and the picture on the right. However, there are times when we experience God's presence in a very special way. The lesson today will be about such a time for Moses.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 8 and look at picture 18. Provide the following background to the story:

- When Moses was a young man, he was forced to flee from Egypt into the desert because he killed an Egyptian who was beating one of Moses' countrymen.
- Moses was in the desert for 40 years, and one day he was tending a flock of sheep in the desert by the Mountain of Horeb.

Read the story from the Bible in Exodus 3:1-10 and Exodus 4:10-17 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are

available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- God appeared to Moses in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. The bush was glowing with fire, but it was not burned up.
- As Moses came close to the burning bush, God told him to take off his shoes because the place he was standing on was holy.
- God told Moses that he would be used to lead the Israelites out of slavery to a very good land.
- God promised Moses that he would be with him, and he told Moses to go before Pharaoh and command him to let the people of Israel go.
- Moses told God that he could not speak well. Moses asked God to send someone else.
- God said that Moses' brother, Aaron, would help. But Moses would perform miraculous signs.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- God is the creator of everything. He is so big, so powerful, and so great that even being in his presence can be dangerous. God is perfect. This is what it means that **God is holy**.
- Moses could not easily approach God. He took off his sandals and covered his face.
- There are times when people experience God's holiness like Moses. More frequently, God is with us all of the time no matter what we are doing.
- **God is holy**, but God is also merciful. He had a good plan to set his people free, and he planned to use Moses to free his people.
- God wanted to use Moses despite his faults. God is willing to use us as well despite our faults.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. Why did Moses remove his sandals?
3. What does it mean that **God is holy**?
4. What type of people does God call?

Memory Verse Activity: Psalm 77:13-14 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Everything you do, O God, is holy. No god is as great as you. You are the God who works miracles; you showed your might among the nations. – Psalm 77:13-14

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that **God is holy** and very great.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

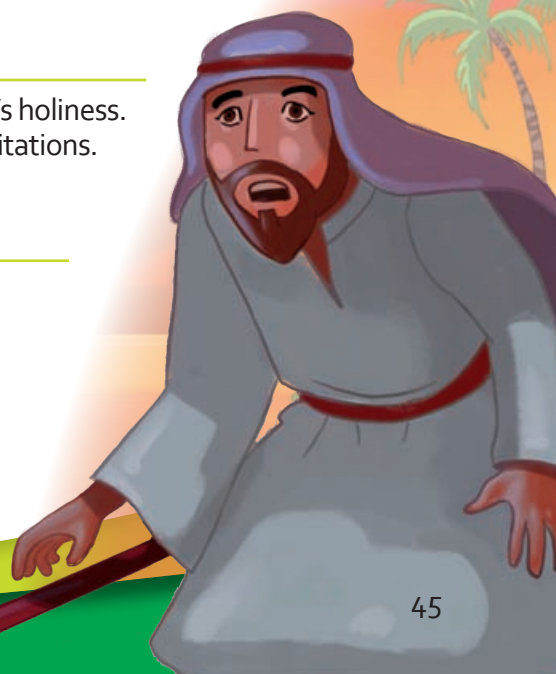
Encourage the children to spend the week thinking about God's holiness. Ask them to look for ways they can serve God despite their limitations.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God chose to use Moses even though he did not speak well. God has a purpose for each of us even though we are imperfect.
- **God is holy**. We should respect and **honour** him.
- God is always with us even when we are unaware.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

19

The Plagues



Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how God's power was greater than Pharaoh's witches.
- Children will be able to list the plagues.

Before the lesson, review Exodus 6:1-8 and Exodus 7:1-13 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the plagues provides an opportunity to teach children that **God is all-powerful**.

Item(s) needed: paper and pencils

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they find ways to serve God despite their limitations?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide a piece of paper for each child. Ask the children to think about what it means to have power or strength. Have them think about people they know who have power or who are very strong. Ask them to draw a picture of the strongest person they can imagine. Tell them that today they are going to learn about how God's power is much greater than anyone else's.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Provide the children with the following background to the story:

- After God spoke to Moses through the burning bush, Moses returned to Egypt.
- The king of Egypt, Pharaoh, was treating Moses' people, the Israelites, very badly. The Israelites were Pharaoh's slaves.
- God sent Moses to Pharaoh to tell him to let the Israelites leave Egypt.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 9 and look at picture 19. Read the story from the Bible in Exodus 7:1-13 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Moses and his brother, Aaron, went to see Pharaoh. They asked him to let the Israelites leave Egypt.
- God told Moses and Aaron to perform a miracle in front of Pharaoh.
- Aaron threw his staff on the ground and it turned into a snake.
- Pharaoh's witches did the same thing. But Aaron's snake ate their snakes.
- Pharaoh would not listen to Aaron and Moses. He would not let the Israelites leave Egypt.

Explain to the children that God told Aaron and Moses to perform more miracles in order to convince Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave Egypt. These miracles were bad things that happened to the people of Egypt. They were called plagues. Plagues are very bad things that happen to many people.

1. First, all of the water in Egypt turned to blood. But Pharaoh would not let the Israelites go.
2. Then frogs covered the entire land. But Pharaoh would not let the Israelites go.
3. Then all of the dust in the country turned into gnats. But Pharaoh would not let the Israelites go.
4. Next Moses and Aaron sent flies. This plague was different because it did not affect the Israelites. Only the Egyptians had flies. But Pharaoh would not let the Israelites go.
5. Next God sent disease on the animals that belonged to the Egyptians. Still Pharaoh would not let the Israelites go.
6. Next boils appeared on Egyptians and their animals. But Pharaoh would still not let the Israelites go.
7. Next God sent a big storm. It hailed and destroyed many of the crops of the Egyptians. Pharaoh still did not let the Israelites go.
8. After the hail, God sent locusts. They ate all of the crops that the hail had not destroyed. But Pharaoh still would not listen.
9. Next God caused darkness to cover the entire country for three days. But the area where the Israelites lived still had light. Even after all of this, Pharaoh would still not let the Israelites leave.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Even though Moses spoke again and again to Pharaoh and sent plagues on the land, Pharaoh would not let the Israelites go.
- While the plagues struck Pharaoh and the land of the Egyptians, most of them did not harm God's people.
- God showed that he was all-powerful. He was much more powerful than Pharaoh's witches.
- God is all-powerful and there is no one like him.
- Because Jesus is more powerful than the devil, we do not have to fear evil powers or spirits.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. Why did God punish Pharaoh and his people?
3. Why could Pharaoh's witches not stop Moses and Aaron?
4. What can we learn from this story?

Memory Verse Activity: Exodus 15:11 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders? – Exodus 15:11

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that **God is all-powerful**.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

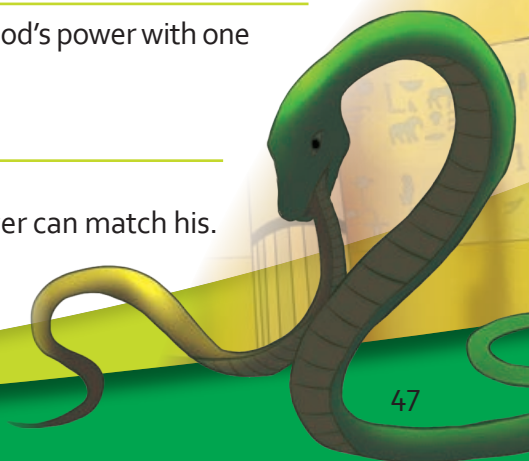
Encourage the children to share what they have learned about God's power with one member of their family or a friend in their neighbourhood.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- **God is all-powerful** and there is no one like him; no power can match his.
- We do not have to fear evil or spirits.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





LESSON

20

The Passover

Teacher
Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe what a sacrifice is.
- Children will be able to describe how **Jesus is the sacrifice for our sins**.

Before the lesson, review Exodus 12:1-42 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the Passover provides an opportunity to teach children about the symbolism of the sacrificed lamb, the **sacrifice that Jesus made**, and how Jesus' sacrifice makes it possible for us to have relationship with God.

Item(s) needed: paper and pencils

★ God's Big Story
Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

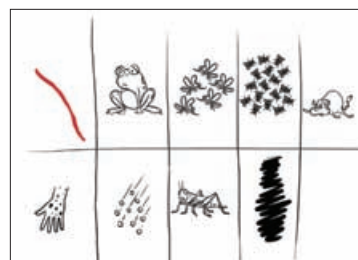
Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share their experience from the last lesson. Who were they able to share what they have learned about God's power with? What did they share?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide each child with a piece of paper and a pencil. Have them divide it into 10 boxes. At the bottom of each of the first 9 boxes, instruct them to write the plagues: water turned to blood, frogs, gnats, flies, sick animals, boils, hail, locusts, darkness. The tenth box will be blank. Allow the children time to draw each of the first nine plagues. Explain that today's lesson will be about the tenth plague, which was the worst one.



Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 9 and look at picture 20. Explain that today's lesson is about the final plague on Egypt.

Read the story from the Bible in Exodus 12:12-13, 21-23, 29-30 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- The tenth and final plague that God sent upon Pharaoh and the land of Egypt was the death of the firstborn sons of every family.
- God instructed each of the Israelite families to kill a Passover lamb and eat it. He told them to mark the top and sides of the doorposts of each of their houses with the blood of the lamb.
- At midnight that night, the Lord killed the firstborn son of every Egyptian family, from the son of the king to the son of every prisoner in jail. He also killed the firstborn male of every animal that belonged to the Egyptians.

- The Lord passed over everyone's house that was marked by the blood of the lamb. The lamb's blood protected God's people from death. Everyone whose house was not marked by the blood of the lamb suffered the death of their firstborn son.
- That night the king, his officials, and everyone else in Egypt woke up and started crying bitterly. In every Egyptian home, someone was dead.

Explain what happened after the firstborn sons of the Egyptians died:

- When Pharaoh heard what had happened, he sent for Moses and Aaron. Pharaoh told them to take the Israelites and leave the country.
- All of the Israelites packed their belongings and left the country of Egypt. There were about 600,000 men plus many women and children. They were finally free! God caused their Egyptian neighbours to bless them with gifts as they left.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- The Lord judged the country of Egypt because Pharaoh would not let the Israelites leave.
- The perfect lamb that each Israelite family killed represents a sacrifice that was offered as a substitute for their firstborn son. Because the lamb died, the firstborn son did not.
- The lamb was a sacrifice. A sacrifice is giving up something important for something even more important.
- Since Adam and Eve's first sin, all people on earth have sinned. We all do wrong things. God is holy and just. He is perfect. He cannot tolerate sin. The Bible says that the penalty for our sins should be death.
- However, God made a sacrifice that can pay for our sins. He sent his Son, Jesus, to die in our place, as our substitute. **Jesus was the sacrifice that paid for our sins.** Jesus is called the Lamb of God because by his death our sins are taken away. (John 1:29)

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. Why was God going to destroy the firstborn males of Egypt?
3. What did God tell the Israelites to do in order for them to be saved from the plague of the firstborn?
4. What **sacrifice did Jesus make?**
5. What is the result of Jesus' sacrifice?

Memory Verse Activity: Romans 3:25a (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

God sent Christ to be our sacrifice. Christ offered his life's blood, so that by faith in him we could come to God. – Romans 3:25a

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that **Jesus Christ was the sacrifice for our sins**. Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, we can have a relationship with God and live with him forever.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to give thanks to God for Jesus who shed his blood for us so that we can have a relationship with God. Challenge the children to tell at least one person about the **sacrifice that Jesus made**. They may have an opportunity to share their experience during the next class.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- **Jesus is the final sacrifice for sin.** Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, we can have a relationship with God.
- We should thank God for the sacrifice that Jesus made.
- Jesus' sacrifice is such good news that it is exciting to share with others!

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



Parting of the Red Sea

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how God delivered the Israelites from the Egyptian Army at the Red Sea.
- Children will be able to identify situations where they can **trust God even when life is hard**.

Before the lesson, review Exodus 14:1-31 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the Parting of the Red Sea offers an opportunity to teach children how God rescued his people. It also teaches us that **we can trust God even in the midst of difficult situations**.

Item(s) needed: none



Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they share about the sacrifice that Jesus made with someone? What did they say?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Ask children to close their eyes and imagine a time when they were afraid or when they had to do something they didn't think was possible. Then ask the children to respond to the following questions either by sharing with someone next to them or by volunteering an answer out loud: How did you overcome your fear or worry? What did you do? Explain that in this lesson, the Egyptian army was chasing the Israelites. The Israelites came to a sea that they could not cross. They were trapped! It looked like there was no escape. But they **trusted God even when the situation seemed impossible**.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 10 and look at picture 21. Read the story from the Bible in Exodus 14:8-31 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them assist in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story emphasizing the following key points:

- God told Moses to lead the people to camp next to the Red Sea.
- With a hardened heart, Pharaoh got his war chariot and army ready. He commanded

his officers in charge of his six hundred best chariots and all his other chariots to chase after the Israelites.

- The Israelites became very afraid, as Pharaoh and the Egyptians marched after them. They began to cry out to the Lord.
- Moses told the people, "Don't be afraid! Be brave, and you will see the Lord save you today. These Egyptians will never bother you again. The Lord will fight for you, and you won't have to do a thing."
- As Moses stretched out his staff toward the sea, God divided the sea so that the Israelites could cross on dry ground through the middle of the sea.
- When Moses and the people reached the other side of the sea, Moses stretched out his hand back over the sea and the waters covered the Egyptian army. The Lord delivered his people and overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- God rescued the Israelites from Egypt and he continued to protect them from Pharaoh's army.
- We probably will not be attacked by an army, but we will face difficult situations where it seems like there is no way out. God is able to take care of us just as he did for the Israelites.
- **We can trust God even in the midst of difficult situations.**
- God hears us when we cry out to him.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. Who was chasing the Israelites and why?
3. How did God rescue the Israelites?
4. Describe one way in which **you can trust God** in your life today.

Memory Verse Activity: Psalm 20:7-8 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Some people trust the power of chariots or horses, but we trust you, Lord God. Others will stumble and fall, but we will be strong and stand firm. – Psalm 20:7-8.

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us of the importance of **trusting in God** and how he helps us to be strong.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Have the children think of one challenging situation they have coming up in the next few days (a test, dealing with a difficult situation or person, etc.). Encourage each child to think of how they can **trust God in that situation**. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience with the class during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God loves and takes care of his children.
- He is able to protect us.
- We still go through difficult situations. **But we can trust God in the midst of them.**

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



The Ten Commandments

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to retell the story of the Ten Commandments.
- Children will be able to explain why **rules are made for their good**.

Before the lesson, review Exodus 19-20 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Mount Sinai and the Ten Commandments offers an opportunity to teach children that **rules are made for the good** of people and that following rules is beneficial.

Item(s) needed: none



Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Talk about last week's Life Challenge. Ask for children to share how they completed the challenge. What challenging situation did they face during the week? How did they trust God in that situation?

Introductory Activity: The Law (5-10 minutes)

Rules or laws are an important part of maintaining a healthy society. Ask children to raise their hands and share one rule or law they know. Write the laws or rules on the board if one is available. Then discuss the following questions: Why are these rules important? What would happen if we didn't have rules or laws? What happens when people break the rules?

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Before reading the Bible passage, remind the children that the Israelites escaped from Egypt and were in the desert. God protected them from the Egyptian army by enabling them to cross the Red Sea on dry ground. In this lesson, we will hear how God appeared to the Israelites. We will also learn about the rules he gave them to live by.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 10 and look at picture 22. Read the story from the Bible in Exodus 19:16-25 and Exodus 20:1-21 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story emphasizing the following key points:

- The Israelites were in the desert near a mountain called Mount Sinai. God came down on the mountain. He showed his presence by thunder, lightning, and very dark clouds. The whole mountain shook. The people were very afraid.
- God called Moses up to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. Moses spoke with God, and God gave him the Ten Commandments.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- God gave the people of Israel laws, principles, and commands to live by so that they would not sin against him, and so that they would be able to live at peace with one another. Discuss each of the Ten Commandments and the benefits of each:
 1. Do not worship any god except me. (Benefit: The one true God gives eternal life.)
 2. Do not make idols. (Benefit: Worshipping a God who can communicate with you. Habakkuk 2:18-19)
 3. Do not misuse my name. (Benefit: Increased respect for God.)
 4. Remember the Sabbath day. (Benefit: Having time to rest.)
 5. Respect your father and your mother. (Benefit: Having a blessed life PLUS a good relationship with your parents.)
 6. Do not murder. (Benefit: Staying alive and out of prison and showing respect for human life.)
 7. Be faithful in marriage. (Benefit: Developing a good marriage PLUS avoiding HIV if both members are always faithful, PLUS HIV will not impact the family.)
 8. Do not steal. (Benefit: Staying out of trouble.)
 9. Do not tell lies about others. (Benefit: Telling the truth leads to family members and friends trusting us.)
 10. Do not want anything that belongs to someone else. (Benefit: Being satisfied with what we have.)
- The Ten Commandments were given to the Israelites to help them live well.
- We, too, have rules that help us live well. **Rules are made for our good.** They help protect us and help us know how we should live.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. How would you have felt if you saw God's presence descend on the mountain?
3. List some of the Ten Commandments that you remember.
4. What are the benefits of following rules?

Memory Verse Activity: Deuteronomy 28:2-3 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

All these blessings will come upon you and accompany you if you obey the Lord your God. You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the country. – Deuteronomy 28:2-3 (NIV)

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us of the benefits of obeying God and the rules he has given us.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Have children find examples of rules throughout the week (classroom rules, speed limits, laws, household expectations). Tell them to keep a list of the rules they find. For each rule they find, they should also make a note about why that rule is important or valuable - **what good thing will happen if people obey the rule?** They may have an opportunity to share about their experience with the class during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God gave the Israelites the Ten Commandments to help them know how to live together well and love each other well.
- **Rules are made for our good.**
- It pleases God when we obey rules.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

23

The Golden Calf

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how the Israelites made a big mistake when they failed to **worship God above all else**.
- Children will be able to identify why the one true God should be worshipped instead of an idol.

Before the lesson, review Exodus 32:1-34 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the Golden Calf offers an opportunity to teach children about the importance of **worshipping God above all else**. It also is a reminder that there are consequences for our actions.

Item(s) needed: paper

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. What rules did they identify throughout the week? What good things would happen if those rules were obeyed?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide each child with a piece of paper. Have them draw a picture of the most important thing in their life. For example, it might be a toy or a game.

Explain that the lesson is about something that the Israelites thought was so important that they worshipped it instead of the one true God.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Before reading the Bible passage, remind the children that the Israelites had already received the Ten Commandments. They knew that God had told them, "Do not worship any god except me" and "Do not make idols that look like anything in the sky or on earth or in the ocean under the earth." (Exodus 20:3-4)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 10 and look at picture 23. Read the story from the Bible in Exodus 32:1-34 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them assist in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story emphasizing the following key points:

- After the people saw that Moses had been on the mountain for a long time, they went to Aaron (Moses' brother). They convinced him to make them an idol which is an image of a god. They wanted the idol to lead and protect them.
- Aaron told all the people to take off their golden earrings and jewelry and bring them to him. Aaron melted the gold and made a golden calf for the people.
- The people said to each other, "This is the god who brought us out of Egypt!"
- Moses was angry when he saw that the Israelites were worshipping an idol. He was so upset that he threw the tablets of stone on which God had written the Ten Commandments down on the ground.
- God judged the people because of their sin and idolatry. About 3,000 men died.
- Moses prayed to God and asked him to forgive the people for their sin and idolatry.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Even though the people suffered some consequences, God was merciful to the people.
- Idols have eyes, ears, and mouths. But they cannot see, hear or speak. (Psalm 115:4-9)
- The one true God knows all things, sees all things, speaks to us, and has power over everything.
- God wants us to **worship him above all else**. We should desire to make God the most important part of our life.
- We can worship God in what we think, what we say, and what we do.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. Why did God punish the Israelites?
3. What are some idols that might be in our lives today?
4. How is God different from an idol?
5. How can we **worship God above all else**?

Memory Verse Activity: Exodus 34:14 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

I demand your complete loyalty - you must not worship any other god! – Exodus 34:14

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that God wants us to **worship him and him alone**.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Have the children identify ways that they can **worship God above all else**. Encourage them to do this throughout the week. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience with the class during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- Without realizing it, we can worship things or people. The things that are the most important to us are the things that we worship. We should be careful what we give our attention to.
- God knows everything. He sees and hears everything. He wants us to **worship him above all else**.
- There are consequences for the wrong things we do, but God is still merciful.
- We should turn away from doing evil things.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

24

Rahab and the Spies

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to explain how God protected the spies.
- Children will be able to identify **ways they can be used by God**.

Before the lesson, review Joshua 2 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Rahab and the spies offers an opportunity to encourage children to make themselves available for God to use, like Rahab did. It also teaches us about God's protection.

Item(s) needed: a large object (such as a pot or box)

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Talk about last week's Life Challenge. Ask the children to share how they completed the challenge. Did they find ways to worship God above all else?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Bring a large object to class. It should be large enough that it will be difficult to hide in the classroom. For example, it could be a large pot or box. Select three volunteers. Ask the first volunteer to step outside of the room for a minute. Have the other two volunteers hide the large object in the classroom. Then have the first volunteer return to the classroom and locate the large object. It should not be difficult to find. If time allows, repeat the activity with other volunteers.

Explain that today's story will be about a woman who was a prostitute and was living a lifestyle that was not pleasing to God. Nothing that she did was hidden from God's sight. But **God still chose to use her**.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Before reading the Bible passage, explain that Moses had died. God had appointed Joshua, Moses' assistant, as the new leader of the Israelites.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 11 and look at picture 24. Read the story from the Bible in Joshua 2:1-24 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story emphasizing the following key points:

- Joshua sent two men to spy out the Promised Land and the city of Jericho.
- The men arrived at the house of a prostitute named Rahab. They decided to spend the night there.
- The king of Jericho found out about the spies in Rahab's house, and he sent soldiers to arrest the men. The soldiers told Rahab to bring out the men.
- Rahab hid the men in her house. She told the soldiers that the men had already left her house.
- After Rahab saved the men from the soldiers, she told them that all of Jericho had heard of the greatness of the Lord. She asked the men to show her and her family kindness when they returned to the Promised Land.
- The men promised Rahab that she and her household would be spared when the Israelites returned to the Promised Land.
- The spies escaped and returned to the Israelites' camp. They reported to Joshua everything that had happened. They told him that the Lord was going to give them the Promised Land.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- When the spies were in a difficult situation, God protected them. In the same way, God is able to protect us.
- Rahab had lived a life of sin. God knew her sin, but he still chose to use her.
- God is pleased when we make ourselves available to him. **He likes to use us to carry out his plans.**

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. How did God protect the spies?
3. How did God use Rahab to fulfil his plan?
4. What are some ways that **God can use you**?

Memory Verse Activity: Ephesians 2:10 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

God planned for us to do good things and to live as he has always wanted us to live. That's why he sent Christ to make us what we are. – Ephesians 2:10

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that God knows us and wants us to live in a way that pleases him. It also shows us that God has planned things for us to do.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

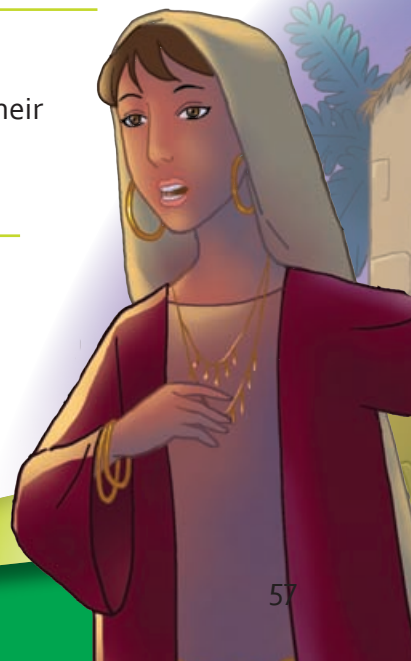
Remind the children that God used Rahab and he wants to use them as well. Encourage them to think of **ways they can be used by God** throughout the week. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience with the class during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God is able to protect us when we are in difficult situations. (Encourage the children to feel free to speak with you after class if they are in a difficult situation or in danger.)
- God sees what is in our hearts. Nothing is hidden from him.
- God used Rahab to protect the spies. It pleases God when **we make ourselves available for him to use us.**

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





LESSON

25

Entering the Promised Land

Teacher
Background

Objective(s):

- Children will give examples of how **God kept his promises**.
- Children will describe how God showed his power to the Israelites.

Before the lesson, review Joshua 3:9-17, Joshua 4:1-7, and Joshua 21:43-45 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the children of Israel entering the Promised Land provides a way to show children how **God keeps his promises**. It also shows that God is powerful and able to perform miracles.

Item(s) needed: none

★ God's Big Story
Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they find an opportunity to be used by God? What was it?

Introductory Activity: Promise Keepers (5-10 minutes)

This game is best played in an open area. If this is not possible, clear a space and tell the children they can walk fast but not run.

1. Choose one child to be the "Chaser". The Chaser must chase and touch as many children as possible.
2. Once a child is touched, they must cross their arms, "freeze" in place, and set off their emergency alarm (by saying "Beep, beep, beep..."). They must wait to be freed.
3. Any child that has not been touched can free another. The children that have not been touched are called "Promise Keepers". They free others by first touching the child on the shoulder and saying, "I'll be back". The touched child stops making beeping sounds. Then the Promise Keeper runs around the touched child twice. After that, they take the touched child's hands and pull them free.

After the game, ask the children who were Promise Keepers how many children they freed. Ask them, "How did it feel to be a rescuer?" Ask if anyone was stuck for a long time. Ask them, "How did it feel to be stuck?" Explain that the lesson today will be about a **promise that God kept**.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Remind the students of how the Israelites had been wandering in the desert for 40 years. They were camped next to the Jordan River, across from the Promised Land. They were finally going to enter the land.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 11 and look at picture 25. Read the story from the Bible in Joshua 3:9-17 and Joshua 21:43-45 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the

Storytelling Activities section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- God promised the Israelites that the waters in the Jordan River would stop flowing when they crossed.
- The priests of Israel went ahead of the rest of the people of Israel. As soon as their feet touched the Jordan River, the water stopped flowing.
- All of the Israelites crossed over the river on dry ground.
- The Lord gave the Israelites the land he had promised their ancestors. They captured it and settled in it.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- God had promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that he would give the land across the Jordan River to their descendants. (Deuteronomy 34:4)
- Many years later, **God kept his promise.**
- The Jordan River was flooded. It would have been very difficult to cross. God promised the Israelites that they would cross on dry ground. He kept his promise and showed his power by stopping the water.
- God had made another promise to Abraham. He had promised Abraham that through his descendants the whole earth would be blessed. (Genesis 22:18) (Galatians 3:16)
- This promise was fulfilled around two thousand years after it was made. God sent his Son, Jesus, to earth. When Jesus was born, he was born into Abraham's family.
- Through Jesus' death and resurrection, God made it possible for our sins to be forgiven. When we trust Jesus as our Saviour, we are blessed with the gift of a relationship with God. He also gives us eternal life.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. Why was the land on the other side of the Jordan called the Promised Land?
3. What promises did God keep?
4. How did God show his power?

Memory Verse Activity: Psalm 105:8 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

He will never forget his agreement or his promises, not in thousands of years.
– Psalm 105:8

Explain to the children that the memory verse teaches us that **God keeps his promises.**

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

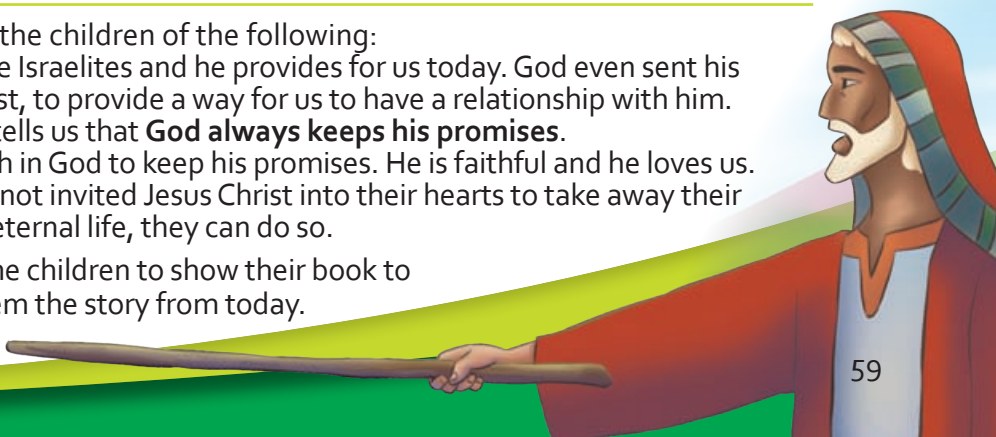
Tell the children that God told the Israelites to pick up 12 stones from the riverbed. They made an altar out of these stones as a reminder of what God had done for them. Encourage the children to collect several small stones during the week to help them remember the wonderful things that God does.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God provided for the Israelites and he provides for us today. God even sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, to provide a way for us to have a relationship with him.
- Our memory verse tells us that **God always keeps his promises.**
- We should have faith in God to keep his promises. He is faithful and he loves us.
- If any children have not invited Jesus Christ into their hearts to take away their sins and give them eternal life, they can do so.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

26

Deborah's Courage

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how Deborah's courage helped the nation.
- Children will be able to identify strengths that they can make available to God.

Before the lesson, review Judges 4 to understand the context of the lesson. Deborah's story is an opportunity to show how God uses people who **make their talents and strengths available to him**. Both women and men can be courageous leaders. Deborah had the courage to do what God commanded even when no one else did.

Item(s) needed: none

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they collect stones like the Israelites did? Did the stones remind them of the wonderful things that God has done?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Have the children try to do each of the following actions, as you call them out: touch your tongue to your nose, whistle, snap your fingers, roll your tongue, wiggle your ears without touching them, and move your nostrils.

Tell the children that not all of us can do all of these silly and small talents. Explain to the children that each one of us is unique and special. God has created each of us differently, and he has given each of us different gifts and talents to use. Tell them that one of the most exciting things about growing up is discovering what special gifts, talents and abilities you have and then using them to serve God. Some examples of talents are running, sports, music, reading, drawing, writing, making friends, listening to others, encouraging people, looking after people who are sick, and helping people in need. Tell the children that all of these gifts, and many more, can be used to serve God.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Before reading the Bible passage, explain the following points to the children:

- After the death of Joshua, priests and tribal elders led the nation of Israel.
- When the Israelites were not faithful to God, he punished them by allowing other nations to take control of their land. When the people repented and asked God for help, he sent judges to help them remain faithful to him.
- At the time of today's story, the Israelites had disobeyed God. God allows the Canaanites, an enemy tribe, to treat the Israelites very badly.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 12 and look at picture 26. Read the story from the Bible in Judges 4:1-16 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Deborah was a courageous woman and the leader of Israel.
- Jabin of Canaan conquered Israel and ruled for 20 years. He made life difficult for the Israelites. Sisera was the leader of Jabin's army; he had 900 iron chariots. The Israelites had to fight on foot.
- Deborah trusted God and had the courage to lead Israel into battle, though many people were too afraid. She went with Israel's soldiers and they defeated Sisera and his whole army.
- Deborah gave God praise and glory for bringing victory to his people.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- The Canaanite army had chariots, but the Israelite army did not. This made it easy for the Canaanites to control the Israelites for many years.
- But when the Israelites cried to God for help, he helped them. The Canaanite army could not stand up against the army of Israel when God was helping them.
- God has a purpose for everyone. He used Deborah's courage to overcome the Israelites' enemy. She was **available for God to use**, even in a difficult situation.
- Even when Barak was not courageous, Deborah was. She trusted that God would help them like he said he would.
- God helped the Israelites win this battle and the Israelites lived in peace for another 40 years! (Judges 5:31)

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. How was Deborah **available for God to use**?
3. How did Deborah's courage help her?
4. What are some of your talents or strengths?
5. How can you **make your talents available for God to use**?

Memory Verse Activity: Isaiah 6:8 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

After this, I heard the Lord ask, "Is there anyone I can send? Will someone go for us?" "I'll go", I answered. "Send me!" – Isaiah 6:8

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us to be available to God. Are we willing to say to God, "Send me"?

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

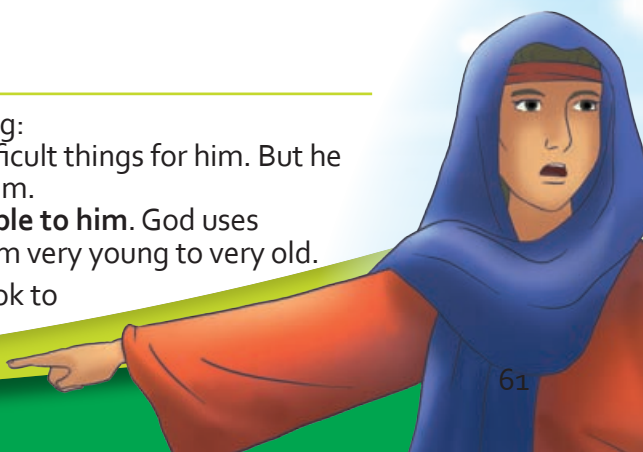
Encourage the children to think of ways they can be **used by God** to do things for him they might be scared to do. If time allows, have them share a few examples of what they hope to do. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience with the class during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- There may be times when God asks us to do difficult things for him. But he always gives us what we need in order to do them.
- God uses people who **make themselves available to him**. God uses women and men. He uses all ages of people from very young to very old.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

27

God Uses Gideon

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how God faithfully helped Israel.
- Children will be able to describe how God faithfully helped Gideon.

Before the lesson, review Judges 6 and 7 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Gideon provides an opportunity to discuss how **God uses human weakness to display his power**. It is also a good time to reflect on God's faithfulness.

Item(s) needed: none

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they find an opportunity to be used by God? What was it?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Divide children into groups of three or four. Have the children take turns saying encouraging words to each other such as, "You look pretty today," or "I am glad you're in my group," or "I feel blessed to be here with you all today." After a few minutes, let them know that they will learn about a man named Gideon who was afraid and desperately needed to hear an uplifting word from God, and he did! Tell them that God still speaks to people today through the Bible, and that if they listen closely they may hear him speak an encouraging word just for them!

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Before reading the Bible passage, explain to the children today's story takes place when judges were the leaders of the nation of Israel. The Israelites did bad things again. They were not following God's instructions. God allowed an enemy's army called the Midianites to mistreat the Israelites for seven years.

One day, God appeared to a man named Gideon. Gideon was not a powerful man. In fact, he was hiding from the Midianites. God called Gideon to help rescue the Israelites from the control of the Midianites. He encouraged Gideon to fight the Midianites and promised to be with him.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 12 and look at picture 27. Read the story from the Bible in Judges 7:9-22 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Although thousands of Israelite soldiers came prepared for battle, God told Gideon to take only three hundred. He did this so that the people would know that God won the battle.
- God encouraged fearful Gideon through the words of his enemies.
- When Gideon heard those encouraging words, he took time to worship God.
- With strengthened faith, Gideon led his small army to victory using only trumpets, torches, glass jars and their three hundred voices.
- The Lord caused the Midianites throughout the camp to turn on each other with their own swords.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Israel no longer believed in God so he made things hard for them. He did this so they would turn back to him. Sometimes when we turn away from God he also lovingly sends hardship into our lives to help us return to him.
- Gideon was just an ordinary person, but God chose to use him to defeat the Midianites.
- Gideon was afraid, but he still obeyed. God lovingly helped him to trust him. We may be afraid to do something God told us to do, but we can trust that he will strengthen our faith when we seek to obey him.
- God delivered Israel with one fearful leader and a small group of unarmed men (an impossible mission). He did this to show them his power, and help strengthen their faith in him.
- The Lord God, Creator of Heaven and Earth, does not need any help. However, he chooses to **use human weakness to display his power**.
- We need God. He goes to great lengths to help us turn back to him because he knows we need him.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. Why did God let the nation of Midian oppress Israel?
3. How did God rescue the Israelites from the Midianites?
4. Has God ever asked you to do something you were scared to do? If so, how did you respond?

Memory Verse Activity: 2 Corinthians 12:9 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

*But he replied, "My kindness is all you need. My power is strongest when you are weak."
So if Christ keeps giving me his power, I will gladly brag about how weak I am.
– 2 Corinthians 12:9*

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that when we rely on God in our weakness, he strengthens us with his grace for his glory.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to ask the Lord for help when they are in difficult situations this week. Ask them to pay attention to how he helps them. They may get to share this experience during the next class.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God uses ordinary people like Gideon. **He uses human weakness to display his power.**
- God understands our fearfulness and doubt, so he acts in special ways to reassure us of his love.
- When God tells us to do something, we should obey even if we are afraid, trusting that he will encourage us along the way.
- There is no limit to God's strength; he can do anything!

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

28

Samson



Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to explain how Samson's sin led to his downfall.
- Children will be able to identify **consequences to their disobedience**.

Before the lesson, review Judges 13:1-5, Judges 13:24-25 and Judges 16:4-31 to understand the context of the lesson. Samson's story provides an opportunity to teach the children that actions have consequences. This story shows the negative impact of bad decisions. It's also important to realize that good decisions frequently have good results.

Item(s) needed: pieces of paper with actions written on them, container to hold them

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Ask the children if they had the opportunity to ask God for help when they were in a difficult situation. How did he respond?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Before class, write down various actions on separate, small pieces of paper (such as cutting someone's hair, dancing, jumping, singing, crawling, clapping, whistling, sneezing, marching, waving, sitting, sleeping, standing, laughing, crying, shouting, smiling, twirling, running, rolling, doing a cartwheel, pretending to be a tree, chirping like a bird, pouncing like a lion, crawling like a crocodile, floating like a balloon, flying like a bat...). Fold each piece of paper, and place them in a container. Let each child pick one and read the action out loud and do it. Be sure that one of the children selects "cutting someone's hair".

Explain to the children that the story today will be about a man who had his hair cut off and this changed his life.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Provide the children with the following background to the story:

- When the people of Israel turned away from God and did evil things again, the Lord allowed their enemies, the Philistines, to rule over them.
- After forty years, God sent his angel to a woman who could not have children and told her she would have a son who would 'begin to deliver Israel from the Philistines'.
- The angel said that God dedicated the child (Samson) for something special. As part of this special dedication, Samson must never shave his head.
- God gave Samson super strength (as long as he never shaved his head). He was so strong that one time he killed a lion with his bare hands. Another time he killed a thousand Philistines with a donkeys' jawbone!
- Samson had mighty strength, and he defended Israel against the Philistines for twenty

years. But he did not make wise decisions about women. He fell in love with a Philistine woman named Delilah.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 12 and look at picture 28. Read the story from the Bible in Judges 16:4-22 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Delilah was offered a very large amount of money to find out the secret to Samson's strength. She agreed to trick Samson.
- Delilah failed several times, but she kept trying.
- Finally, worn out from her pleading, Samson told her that his hair was the secret of his strength. She immediately told the Philistine leaders, and they came and cut off his hair.
- God took away Samson's strength, and the Philistines captured him.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- God made Samson special from birth. He was set apart to deliver Israel from the Philistines with the strength God gave him.
- One of Samson's greatest weaknesses was his sexual desire for women. This desire led him into sexual sin with a woman who was not his wife. Sex within a marriage relationship is good, but outside of marriage it is sin. Samson chose to disobey God's command for sex to be limited to the boundaries of a committed marriage relationship. His sin made him weak and blind to the bad things Delilah was trying to do to him.
- By God's Spirit and his great physical strength, Samson defeated one thousand Philistine men, but it took just one deceitful woman to defeat him.
- Samson experienced **consequences for his disobedience**. God took away his super strength after his head was shaved.
- Many times, there will also be **consequences for our disobedience**.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What were Samson's weaknesses? (his sin and disobedience, attraction to bad women)
3. What was the consequence for Samson's disobedience?
4. What are some **consequences for disobedience** that you have experienced?
5. What are some results that have happened when you have made good decisions?

Memory Verse Activity: Deuteronomy 6:17-18a (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

*Always obey the laws that the Lord has given you and live in a way that pleases him.
– Deuteronomy 6:17-18a*

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us to live in such a way that we please God.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

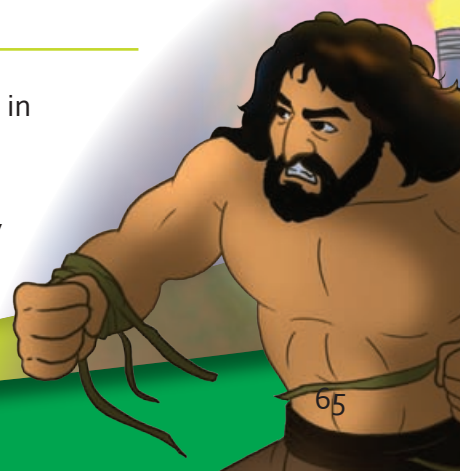
Encourage the children to be obedient to God and those who are in authority throughout the week. See if they can identify consequences for disobedience – either their own or someone else's. Tell them they may have an opportunity to share this experience in the next class.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God provides us with guidelines to live by. He also puts people in our life who are in positions of authority.
- **There are consequences for disobedience**. Good decisions usually have good results.
- It is very difficult to escape from sexual immorality. This is why the Bible tells us to flee or run away from it as fast as we can.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





LESSON

29

Ruth



Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe what Boaz did for Ruth.
- Children will be able to describe what Jesus did for us.
- Children will be able to identify ways they can help those in need.

Before the lesson, review the book of Ruth to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Ruth provides an opportunity for children to see how Boaz helped Ruth and how Christ helps us. It also illustrates **God's desire for us to be committed to and concerned for those in need.**

Item(s) needed: none

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they see any consequences of disobedience since the last lesson? What could have been done to avoid the consequences?

Introductory Activity: Follow the Leader (5-10 minutes)

Assign one child as the "leader". The leader can walk, sing, run, dance, make noises, talk, or do any activity he or she wants to do. Have the rest of the children follow the leader, doing exactly what the leader does. After a minute or so, assign a different child as the "leader". If time or space is limited, select four volunteers to play as a demonstration.

Explain that today's lesson is about Ruth, a woman who followed her mother-in-law when she moved to a different country.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Provide the children with the following background to the story:

- There was a famine in the land of Israel. People could not find food. A man and his wife took their two sons to live in a foreign country where they could find food.
- The two sons married local women.
- The man and his sons died, leaving the woman, Naomi, alone in a foreign country.
- Naomi decided to return home to Israel. She said goodbye to her daughters-in-law. But one of them, Ruth, refused to stay behind. She wanted to go with Naomi. Ruth said, "Please don't tell me to leave you and return home! I will go where you go, I will live where you live; your people will be my people, your God will be my God." (Ruth 1:16)
- When Ruth and Naomi returned to Israel, they were very poor. They did not have food, so Ruth tried to find something for them to eat.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 13 and look at picture 29. Read the following portions of this story from the Bible in Ruth 2:1-12 and Ruth 3:1-13 out loud with

the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Ruth went to the fields of a relative of Naomi's named Boaz. She picked up pieces of grain that the harvesters had missed.
- Boaz noticed Ruth and was kind to her. He instructed the harvesters to drop extra grain for her to pick up. He also gave her water to drink and food to eat.
- Naomi had lost her land, her husband, and her two sons. But Boaz could buy back the land and marry Ruth.
- Naomi advised Ruth to ask Boaz to marry her and buy back Naomi's land. Boaz liked Ruth and wanted to marry her.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Without husbands or sons, Ruth and Naomi were very poor.
- Because Boaz was a close relative of Naomi, the law allowed for him to marry Ruth and to buy the land that had belonged to Naomi's family. Boaz redeemed Ruth and her situation. This means that Boaz rescued Ruth and her family from a life of poverty with no descendants.
- Boaz saw how poor Ruth and Naomi were. He could have ignored this, but **he chose to help instead**. We have the same choice to make. **We can help people in need**.
- Ruth loved Naomi so much that she saved part of the meal Boaz gave her and brought it to Naomi. Ruth was concerned about Naomi. God wants us to care for our relatives too.
- Boaz and Ruth had a son. That son was the grandfather of King David. Many years later, another important descendent was born, Jesus Christ.
- Boaz saved Ruth and Naomi from a very desperate situation. He paid the price for the land that Naomi had lost. In the same way, Jesus redeemed us. He saves us from the desperate situation of sin. He paid the price for our sins, by dying in our place.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What did Boaz do for Naomi and Ruth?
3. How did Jesus rescue us?
4. **What are some ways you can help people in need?**

Memory Verse Activity: Romans 6:23 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Sin pays off with death. But God's gift is eternal life given by Jesus Christ our Lord.
– Romans 6:23

Explain that this verse reminds us of the biggest gift that we have ever received. God gave us eternal life through Jesus Christ!

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to find a way to **help someone in need** this week. They may have an opportunity to share their experience during the next class.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- **God loves people and provides for those in need. He wants us to do the same.**
- Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sins.
- God created families and wants us to help our families. We have a responsibility to do what we can to help our family members.
- If any children have not invited Jesus Christ into their hearts to take away their sins and give them eternal life, they can do so.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

30

The Calling of Samuel

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how God spoke to Samuel.
- Children will be able to identify different ways to hear God's voice.

Before the lesson, review 1 Samuel 3:1-21 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Samuel's calling provides an opportunity to teach children that God knows them by name and that he wants a relationship with them. This lesson also provides an occasion to talk about the different **ways that God speaks** to us today.

Item(s) needed: paper and pencils

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they find someone in need that they could help? How did they help?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide each child with a piece of paper and a pencil. Have the children draw a picture of the best dream they have ever had. Select several children to share their dreams with the class. Explain that the lesson today will be about something that happened while a young boy was sleeping. However, it wasn't a dream.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 13 and look at picture 30. Read the story from the Bible in 1 Samuel 3:1-21 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Samuel ministered to the Lord as a child. He served in the tabernacle of the Lord, helping Eli the priest of Israel.
- One day the Lord called Samuel, and Samuel answered, "Here I am!" Samuel ran to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." But Eli told Samuel, "I did not call; go and lie down again."

- The Lord called Samuel again in the same way, and again Eli told him to go back and lie down.
- The third time that the Lord called Samuel, he went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you did call me." Then Eli realized that the Lord was calling Samuel. He told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'"
- The Lord called Samuel again. This time Samuel said, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening." The Lord spoke to him.
- Everything happened just like the Lord told Samuel it would. The Lord continued to speak to Samuel for the rest of his life.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- The **Lord spoke** to Samuel in a voice that he could hear. It was loud enough that it woke Samuel up. God still speaks to us today. However, he usually speaks in other ways.
- **God speaks to us through the Bible.** The Bible is God's Word, and it provides us with direction and encouragement. There is value in reading it every day.
- Sometimes **God speaks to us through the advice of other people** who follow him. He may put wise Christians in our lives who hear from him.
- Sometimes **God speaks to us in a voice that we cannot hear.** It might seem like a thought in our mind that came from nowhere. This is the Holy Spirit leading us.
- God is willing to speak to all people. He speaks to young people and to old people. He speaks to men and to women.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. How did God speak to Samuel?
3. In what ways does **God speak**?
4. Have you ever heard **God speak**?

Memory Verse Activity: 1 Samuel 3:10b (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening." – 1 Samuel 3:10b

Explain to the children that the memory verse shows us how willing Samuel was to listen to God. We, too, can be ready to listen to God.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to read the Bible every day this week. Ask them to write down the verses that God uses to speak to them. The children may have an opportunity to share their verses with the class during the next lesson. Have the children ask their parents if they have any verses that are important to them.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God desires to communicate with us.
- **God speaks** to his children through his Word, through the advice of other Christians, and through the Holy Spirit in us.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

31

David and Goliath

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how David was faithful in his work before he killed Goliath.
- Children will be able to describe how God used David when he was young to do his will.
- Children will be able to describe how God can use young people to do his will.

Before the lesson, review 1 Samuel 17:25-58 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of David and Goliath provides an opportunity to discuss how important it is to be **faithful in the small things** and how God uses people of all ages.

Item(s) needed: paper

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they read the Bible throughout the week? What verses did God use to speak to them?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide each child with a piece of paper. At the top of the paper, have them write this portion of the memory verse: "Set an example for other followers by what you say and do." Then ask them to draw pictures of some of the chores they do.

Discuss how it is possible for us to be faithful in the areas of life that seem unimportant, such as chores. This provides an opportunity for us to be an example for others. Explain that today's lesson is about a young boy who was **faithful in small things** and then had the opportunity to do something big.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Before reading the story, explain that after the Israelites entered the Promised Land, God appointed judges to rule over the people. However, the people wanted to have kings like other nations so God gave them a king. Their first king was King Saul. He ruled the nation and led the army.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 14 and look at picture 31. Read the story from the Bible in 1 Samuel 17:25-58 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- The Israelite army was camped in a valley. The Philistine army was on one side of the valley

and the Israelites were on the other.

- For forty days, the giant Philistine, named Goliath, went out every morning and every night and challenged the Israelite army. He wanted someone to fight him. He said that if someone beat him, the Philistines would all serve the Israelites. But if Goliath beat the challenger, the Israelites would have to serve the Philistines.
- All of the Israelites (including King Saul) were afraid of Goliath. He was 3 meters tall and very strong.
- David was a young man. He took care of his father's sheep. He had three older brothers. David's father sent him to take food to his brothers who were in the Israelite army.
- When David heard Goliath's challenge, he wanted to fight him. David explained to King Saul how he had protected his father's sheep from a lion and a bear. King Saul allowed David to fight Goliath.
- As Goliath moved closer to attack him, David ran toward Goliath, grabbed a stone and put it into his sling. He swung the sling at Goliath. The rock sunk into Goliath's forehead and killed him.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- David was **faithful in his task** of caring for his father's sheep. He also took good care of the supplies that he had brought for his brothers. He put them in a safe place (verse 22).
- David was a young man when this happened. God is looking for people who are willing to serve him. He is not concerned about age.
- God helped David defeat Goliath. God is all-powerful.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What characteristics does God look for when he chooses someone to do something for him? (emphasize willingness over age)
3. In what **ways was David faithful**?
4. What are some **ways in which you can be faithful**?

Memory Verse Activity: 1 Timothy 4:12 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Don't let anyone make fun of you, just because you are young. Set an example for other followers by what you say and do, as well as by your love, faith, and purity.
– 1 Timothy 4:12

Explain to the children that the memory verse encourages us to be an example for others no matter how young we are.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to think of a way in which they can be an example for their friends, family, and community. Challenge them to be an example to others throughout the week. They may have an opportunity to share their experience during the next class.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God values young people and is always willing to use them to do his will.
- God wants us to always stand up for the right thing and do the right things in life, just as David stood up against Goliath's insults about God's people.
- God will always give us the strength we need when we stand up for what is right. For example, if we see someone steal something, we should tell someone in authority.
- It pleases God when **we are faithful in the small things**.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





Saul Tries to Kill David

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe the results of Saul's jealousy.
- Children will be able to identify possible results of their jealousy.

Before the lesson, review 1 Samuel 18:1-16 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of David and Saul provides an opportunity to discuss the negative **results of jealousy** and ways we can deal with it.

Item(s) needed: an arrow or other object to throw

★ God's Big Story
Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they find a way to be an example for others? What was it?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Bring a bow and arrows to class (if possible) or any other object that can be thrown a good distance. Have a contest with the children to see who can make it go the farthest. Explain that today's lesson will be about a king who tried to kill someone by throwing a spear at him.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 14 and look at picture 32. Read the story from the Bible in 1 Samuel 18:1-16 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- David served King Saul. Whatever Saul asked him to do, he did it very successfully.
- One day, David returned from a battle. Women sang a song saying he had killed more enemies than King Saul had. This made Saul very angry. He was jealous.
- When David was playing music for Saul, an evil spirit came upon Saul. He picked up a spear and tried to pin David to the wall with it. David escaped from Saul.
- Saul was afraid of David because God was helping him. He made David a commander in his army and sent him off to battle.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- God had already anointed David to be king. But David did not try to rush ahead of God's timing. He completed the tasks that Saul gave him to do.
- God protected David when King Saul tried to kill him. God can protect us as well.
- God provided David with a wonderful friend, Jonathan, who was Saul's son.
- The Lord has created each of us with certain gifts and talents. When we are jealous of others, we may focus so much on others that we don't use the gifts and talents that the Lord has given us.
- **When we are jealous of others, there are many negative results.** We may avoid friendships with people. We might miss out on relationships that would have been a blessing. We also might miss out on celebrating other people's successes with them.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. Why was Saul jealous of David?
3. What are some things that we might be jealous of?
4. What might be the **results of our jealousy**?
5. How can we overcome jealousy?

Memory Verse Activity: Proverbs 14:30 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

It's healthy to be content, but envy can eat you up. – Proverbs 14:30

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us of the value of being content. We should be thankful to God for everything he has given us. There is no need to be jealous of other people.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

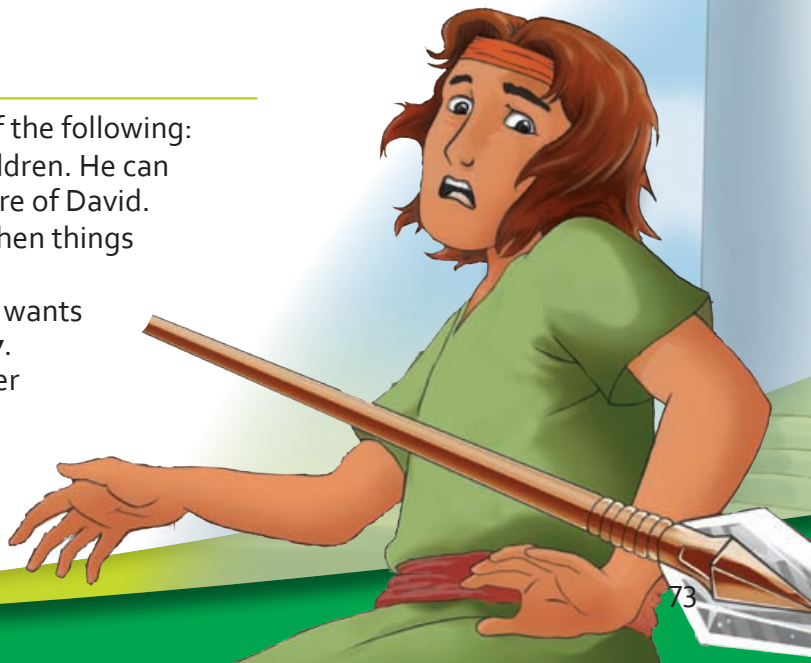
Ask the children to think of one or two people they are jealous of. Encourage them to think of ways to be kind to these individuals. Ask them to pray for these people every day this week. They can ask God to change their hearts and take away their jealousy. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience in the next class.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God cares for and protects his children. He can take care of us just like he took care of David.
- God provides friends to help us when things are difficult.
- At times, we may be jealous. God wants to help us **overcome our jealousy**. He knows that it hurts us and other people.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





David Spares Saul's Life

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how King Saul **misused his power**.
- Children will be able to describe how David honoured God with his actions.

Before the lesson, review 1 Samuel 26:1-25 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of David sparing Saul's life provides an opportunity to teach children about the **misuse of power** and the importance of honouring those in positions of authority.

Item(s) needed: none

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Were they able to be kind to people they have been jealous of? Did God change their heart?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Ask the children to raise their hands and share about a time when they might get upset for an understandable reason (for example: another child takes a toy from them, does something unkind, etc.). Write their answers on the board. Then ask the children what they can do in these situations to react in a godly way. (For the children's safety, emphasize the need to tell an adult if the incident is something more serious such as abuse.)

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Before reading the Bible passage, explain the following points to the children:

- King Saul was jealous of David, so he tried to kill him.
- God was with David and helped him escape. But King Saul still chased him. David hid from him in the desert.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 14 and look at picture 33. Read portions of the story from the Bible in 1 Samuel 26: 5-14 and 1 Samuel 26:17-25 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Saul went to the desert to look for David. He brought three thousand soldiers with him.

- David knew that they were nearby. He and another man went to King Saul's camp. When they arrived, Saul and his whole army were asleep. God had caused them to be in a deep sleep. The man who was with David wanted to kill King Saul. But David would not let him. David had respect for Saul because God had made him king.
- Instead of killing Saul, David took Saul's spear and water jug. When David was a safe distance from Saul's camp, he called out to Saul's army. Saul realized that David could have killed him so he returned home and stopped chasing David.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- King Saul was very powerful. He could have used his power to protect his people and help them. Instead, he was busy trying to kill David. **He misused his power** to do something that he thought would benefit himself. Today some people in positions of power still do things that will benefit themselves rather than others. (Provide examples of current situations that the children would be familiar with.)
- David was not afraid to stand up against King Saul. He helped Saul see that what he was doing was wrong. But David was still very respectful of King Saul because he knew that God had put Saul in a position of authority.
- David showed mercy to King Saul. He could have killed him but he did not. We have the opportunity to show mercy to people when they hurt us or are unkind to us.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. How did Saul **misuse his power**?
3. How might people today **misuse their power**?
4. How did David honour God with his actions?

Memory Verse Activity: Micah 6:8 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

The Lord God has told us what is right and what he demands: See that justice is done, let mercy be your first concern, and humbly obey your God. – Micah 6:8

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that God does not like corruption. The Lord is pleased with justice and mercy.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

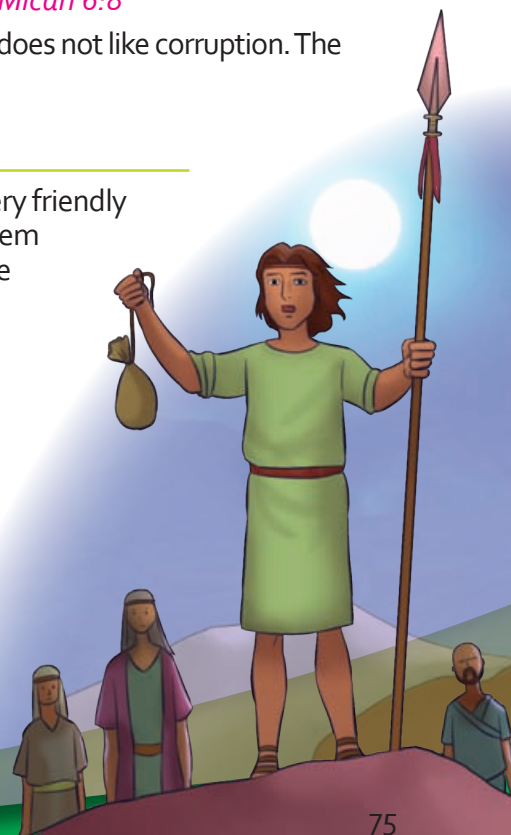
Ask the children to remember the names of people who are not very friendly with them. Ask them to pray for those people all week long. Tell them to ask God to give them more love for those people. Encourage the children to find opportunities to show mercy to them.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God is not pleased when people **misuse their power**. He gives us strength to stand up against them.
- God cares for and protects his children.
- God loves mercy. He is pleased when we show mercy to others.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





LESSON

34

David and Mephibosheth

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe what compassion is.
- Children will be able to explain how Jesus is an example of God's compassion for us.
- Children will be able to identify ways they can be compassionate.

Before the lesson, review 2 Samuel 9:1-13 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of David and Mephibosheth provides an opportunity to discuss the **importance of showing compassion to others**. It is also a good time to talk about honouring our friends and keeping our promises.

Item(s) needed: none

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they pray for others who are not very friendly? Did the Lord give them more love for these people? How were they able to show the love of God?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Ask children to tell the class about a time they helped someone. Ask how it made them feel and how it made the other person feel.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 15 and look at picture 34. Read the story from the Bible in 2 Samuel 9:1-13 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- After David became the king of Israel, he showed compassion and kindness to Mephibosheth, who was the son of Jonathan, King Saul's son. Compassion is concern and care for others.
- Mephibosheth was disabled. King David blessed him by inviting him to eat at the king's table for the rest of his life.
- King David treated Mephibosheth like one of his own sons.
- Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem and always ate at King David's table.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Mephibosheth was Jonathan's son and King Saul's grandson. Even though Saul had tried

to kill David, Jonathan and David were good friends. Before he became king, David had promised to be kind to Jonathan's family. (1 Samuel 20:14-17) After Saul and Jonathan had died, David became king. He remembered the promise that he had made. He made sure that he fulfilled his promise. He did this by being kind to Mephibosheth.

- Usually a new king would kill all of the previous king's family, to keep them from trying to gain power again. Instead of killing all of Saul's family, David showed compassion to Mephibosheth.
- Compassion is concern and care for others.
- God promised King David that one of his descendants would always be king. (2 Samuel 7:16) This was fulfilled many years later when Jesus was born into King David's family. Jesus is king of all kings, and he will be king forever!
- David showed compassion to Mephibosheth. In a much greater way, Jesus showed compassion to people. He showed compassion to the blind, the sick, people caught in sin, and many others during his time on earth.
- Jesus also showed compassion when he made a way for our relationship with God to be restored. Through his death and resurrection, he made a way for our sins to be forgiven. Because of Jesus we can have relationship with God and be forgiven.
- Jesus gives us the ability to **show concern and compassion for others**. It pleases him when we think of others as more important than ourselves.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. How did David show compassion to Mephibosheth?
3. How did Jesus show compassion to us?
4. What are some ways we can show compassion to others?

Memory Verse Activity: 1 Peter 3:8 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Finally, all of you should agree and have concern and love for each other. You should also be kind and humble. – 1 Peter 3:8

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us to be **concerned for others and to show compassion**.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

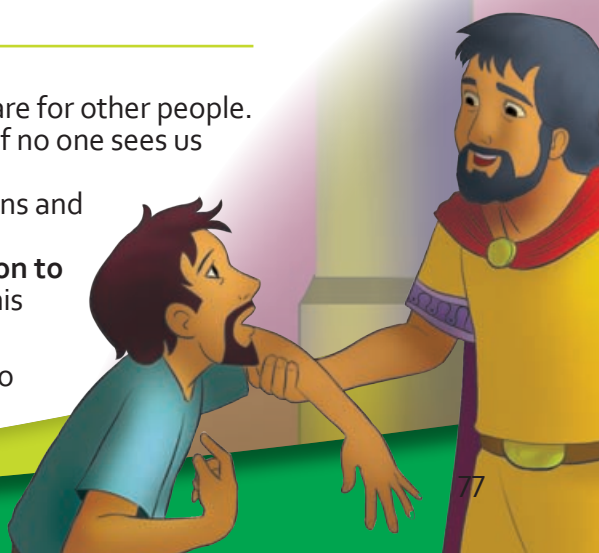
Encourage the children to think of ways they can **show concern and compassion for others**. There may be some ideas from the Introductory Activity that may be good to revisit. Help them think of simple things to do for others throughout the week such as washing the dishes, sweeping, helping the needy and elderly in the community, going to the market, etc. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience with the class during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God values friendships. We honour him when we care for other people.
- We are called to fulfil the promises we make, even if no one sees us fulfil them.
- God has shown compassion to us in forgiving our sins and providing Jesus as our Saviour.
- As God's children, we are called to **show compassion to others**. It pleases God when we are a reflection of his love to others.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





David and Bathsheba

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe why God was displeased with David.
- Children will be able to describe how David tried to cover up his sin.
- Children will be able to explain how God responded when David repented.

Before the lesson, review 2 Samuel 11:1-27 and 2 Samuel 12:1-25 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of David and Bathsheba provides an opportunity to teach children that God hates sin. It also teaches us that God is a forgiving God. **He is willing to forgive us when we repent.**

Item(s) needed: paper, pencils

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they have an opportunity to show compassion to someone? What did they do?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide each child with a piece of paper and a pencil. Ask the children if they have ever had something very special taken from them. Then ask them if they have ever taken something that was very precious from someone else. If something was taken from them, have them write down how they felt when they lost what was precious to them. If they took something from someone else, encourage them to write a note of apology. Encourage them to give the note to the person (if possible) and ask for forgiveness.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 15 and look at picture 35. Read the story from the Bible in 2 Samuel 11:2-5. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- King David sent his men out to war but he stayed home in Jerusalem.
- One evening, David was walking on the roof of his house. From the roof he saw a beautiful woman bathing.
- The woman's name was Bathsheba. She was the wife of Uriah, one of David's soldiers who was at war.
- David sent messengers to bring Bathsheba to him. He had sex with Bathsheba.
- Bathsheba became pregnant. She sent a message to David.

Describe how David tried to cover up his sin. He tried to make it seem like Bathsheba's husband was the father of her child. When that did not work, he did something very bad. He had Bathsheba's husband killed. God was very upset with what David had done.

Continue to read the story in 2 Samuel 12:1-13.

- God sent the prophet Nathan to David. Nathan told David a story about a rich man who owned many sheep and stole a poor man's only lamb.
- David was angry at what the rich man had done. Nathan said to David, "You are that rich man!"
- David realized that he had sinned very badly.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- David was very sorry for what he had done. He confessed his sins to God and asked him for mercy. (Psalm 51)
- **When David repented, God forgave him.** But there were still consequences of his sin. God told David that Bathsheba's baby would die. David begged God to let him live. Even though God forgave David, the baby still died.
- Despite his sin, David is described as "a man after God's heart" in the Bible. (Acts 13:22)
- When we sin, we can boldly go to God and ask for his forgiveness and help. (Hebrews 4:16) **God is willing to forgive us when we repent.**
- If the children are old enough, explain that God desires for us to be sexually pure. He is pleased when relationships are conducted according to his will. Sex should be saved for marriage. It should take place only between a husband and wife.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What sin did David commit?
3. How did David respond when Nathan confronted him?
4. How does God respond to us when we ask for forgiveness?

Memory Verse Activity: 1 John 1:9 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

But if we confess our sins to God, he can always be trusted to forgive us and take our sins away. – 1 John 1:9

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that **God forgives us when we repent.**

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to pray to God throughout the week no matter what they have done.

They can repent and receive God's forgiveness. They may have an opportunity to share their experience in the next class.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God is displeased when we sin.
- We should show love to people around us. We should not take what does not belong to us.
- Sexual sin, murder, injustice, and corruption should be far away from us.
- When we ask **God to forgive us our sins, he is faithful and will forgive us.** We should not be afraid to pray or talk to him.

Close in prayer. If the children are old enough, pray that God will help them be sexually pure until they get married and that he will help them be faithful to their partner. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



Solomon Builds the Temple

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to identify where God lives.
- Children will be able to explain the function of the temple.
- Children will be able to explain how Solomon fulfilled David's promise to God.

Before the lesson, review 1 Chronicles 22:5-13, 1 Kings 6:1-14, and 1 Kings 8:22-30 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Solomon building the temple provides an opportunity to discuss how **God dwells inside of every believer**.

Item(s) needed: none



God's Big Story
Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they have a situation where they had to repent? How did knowing about God's forgiveness make them feel?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Take the children outside and look around for different kinds of animal homes. Whatever you find (a bird's nest, an ant hill, a snake's hole, or a fish's pond) explain to them that every living creature has a home of some kind. Ask them what kind of house they would build for the maker of all the earth.

If it is not possible to go outside, provide each child with a piece of paper. Ask them to draw an animal and its home.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Provide the children with the following background to the story:

- Solomon's father was David, the king of Israel. David loved God very much. He disliked that he lived in a beautiful palace while the symbol of God's presence, the ark, lived only in a tent. So he decided to build a palace for God. He wanted it to be the most beautiful building in the whole earth.
- God had spoken about this special place where he would live. He said it would be a place for his people to worship and bring sacrifices and offerings to him. (Deuteronomy 12:5-7) This special place would be called a temple.
- David's desire to build a temple pleased God. However, God told David he could not build it. King David was a great warrior who loved God deeply. But he had killed too many people in battle. Because of this, God said David's son Solomon (whose name means 'peaceable') should build the temple.
- Solomon began building the temple 480 years after the Israelites left Egypt in 966 B.C. It took him a little over seven years to complete it.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 16 and look at picture 36. Read the story from the Bible in 1 Chronicles 22:5-13 and 1 Kings 8:22-30 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- David wanted God's temple to be so beautiful that people around the world would speak about it. He gathered the richest building materials and made the building plans for Solomon.
- Solomon dedicated the temple with prayer and worship.
- Solomon humbly acknowledged that no earthly building would ever be enough for God to live in.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- During Old Testament times, God interacted with his people through this temple. He came and lived in the holiest part of it. God instructed the priests how to come before him in certain ways. God's holiness, or 'set-apart' nature, was clearly shown.
- A thick curtain separated the holiest place in the temple from the rest of it. The Ark of the Covenant was there. The ark was a symbol of God's presence. God's holiness was so great that the people could not enter because of their sin. Only the high priest could go behind the curtain. And even then, he could only go once a year.
- Almost a thousand years later, the moment after Jesus died on the cross, this thick curtain tore in two from top to bottom. (Mark 15:37-38) This was a sign from God showing that we can now come freely into his presence. Jesus lived a perfect life and did not sin. His death on the cross made it possible for our sins to be forgiven. When we receive the gift of salvation, our sin no longer separates us from God. (Hebrews 4:14-16)
- Just as in Old Testament times when God required Israel to seek him in one chosen place, God now requires all men to seek him through one way - his Son, Jesus.
- When we trust in Jesus to save us, **God's presence comes to live in us**. We become his temple - a place of worship, prayer, and ministry. God's Spirit lives inside every believer!

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. Why did God choose Solomon to build the temple?
3. How did Jesus' death and resurrection make it possible to meet with God outside of the Israelite temple?
4. **Where does God live on earth today?**

Memory Verse Activity: 1 Corinthians 3:16 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

*All of you surely know that you are God's temple and that his Spirit lives in you.
- 1 Corinthians 3:16*

Explain to the children that the memory verse teaches **God's Spirit lives in us**.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Challenge the children to do one thing to help around the house without being asked. Suggest that they thank their parents or caretakers for giving them a place to live. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience in the next class.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- Jesus removed the need for a physical temple. Now we can meet with God anywhere at any time, by simply coming to Jesus.
- Since we are the temple of God, we should try to be holy, by the grace he gives us **through his Spirit who lives in us**.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





Solomon Makes Bad Choices

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to recall how Solomon was influenced negatively by others.
- Children will be able to describe the importance of choosing godly influences.

Before the lesson, review I Kings 11:1-13 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Solomon offers an opportunity to teach children that the **people in our lives influence us greatly**. They affect what we think and how we live. It also provides a context to talk about God's plan for marriage.

Item(s) needed: paper

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. What did they do to help out at home? Did they thank their parent(s) for giving them a place to live?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide each child with a piece of paper. Ask them to think of the people who are the biggest influences in their lives. Have them draw a picture of themselves with the one or two people who influence them the most. Explain that today's lesson is about a man who allowed many people to be a bad influence on him.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Before reading the Bible passage, explain the following points to the children:

- Solomon became king when he was young. Before he built the temple, God appeared to him in a dream. God said he would give Solomon one thing. Solomon asked God for wisdom, and God gave it to him.
- For many years, Solomon ruled wisely. God blessed him very much. His father, King David, had given him instructions for building the temple. Solomon built the temple. He loved God and followed him. King Solomon was a good ruler.
- However, something happened after he had been king for some time.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 16 and look at picture 37. Read the story from the Bible in 1 Kings 11:1-13 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Solomon disobeyed God and married many foreign women. He had 700 wives and 300 concubines. Concubines were women in Solomon's palace like wives but without all of the privileges. All of the women turned his heart away from God.
- Solomon did evil in the sight of God and did not fully follow God like his father David did. He even built places of worship for the different pagan gods that his wives worshipped.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- God had told the Israelites not to marry foreign women who worshipped false gods, because they would turn their hearts away from him. (Deuteronomy 7:1-6) Solomon directly disobeyed this command from God.
- God tells us not to worship any gods other than him. (Exodus 20:3) We worship other 'gods' when we consider someone or something more important than him. God tells us to put him first because he loves us and he wants what is best for us.
- As a consequence of his sin, Solomon's country was split in two after he died. A man from another family ruled most of the land. Solomon's family only ruled a small amount of the country.
- The Bible says we should not be unequally matched with unbelievers. (2 Corinthians 6:14) Solomon was married to wives who did not believe in God. His example is a warning for believers to choose a spouse wisely.
- Like spouses, friends help point us either towards God or away from him. We should choose our friends wisely. Close relationships with people who do not love and follow God may turn our hearts away from God. As a result, we might make decisions that are not good for us. Friends who love God will encourage us to love him too.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What happened to Solomon when he surrounded himself with women who did not love God?
3. Why is it important to **choose godly friends**?
4. What are some of the characteristics of a good friend? (Encourage each other, comfort each other, rejoice together, speak the truth in love even when it's hard, forgive.)

Memory Verse Activity: Proverbs 27:9 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

*The godly give good advice to their friends; the wicked lead them astray.
– Proverbs 27:9 (NLT)*

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us how important true friendship is.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Have the children think of a couple specific ways they can be a good friend. Encourage them to be a good friend throughout the next week. They may have an opportunity to share their experience in the next class.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God desires to be more important than anything else in our lives.
- **The people who are close to us have a big impact on our lives.** It is important to choose friends who will encourage us to do what is right.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





Elijah

**Objective(s):**

- Children will be able to describe what makes God the one true God.
- Children will be able to explain how the Israelites were unfaithful to God.

Before the lesson, review I Kings 18:16-40 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Elijah provides an opportunity to teach children that **God is more powerful than any other god**. It also provides a context to discuss not worshipping anything other than the one true God.

Item(s) needed: game item(s), such as a ball

★ God's Big Story
Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Were they able to be a good friend? What did they do?

Introductory Activity: Against the Odds (5-10 minutes)

Choose a short game to play with the children. Give Team A an unfair advantage so there is no way Team B will be able to win (e.g. bend the rules, give Team A more turns or a head start). After Team A wins, transition to the Bible story by telling the children they are going to read about a contest between one man and 450 men. Tell them that even though it looked like the 450 men had an unfair advantage, the one man won.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Provide the children with the following background to the story:

- After King Solomon died, his son became the king. His son made very bad choices and the country of Israel split in two. David and Solomon's family ruled a small part of the nation called Judah. Other kings who were not related to David and Solomon ruled most of the country, which was still called Israel.
- The kings in Israel did very bad things. God was angry with them. He made it stop raining in Israel for three years.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 16 and look at picture 38. Read the story from the Bible in I Kings 18:16-39 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Elijah called the people of Israel to the top of Mount Carmel. He challenged them to decide

who they believed the one true God was - Baal or the Lord.

- Elijah dared the false prophets of Baal to a competition. He told the people to bring two sacrifices - one for Baal and one for God. Then he told the false prophets to call upon Baal and he would call upon the Lord. Whichever answered by fire would be the true God.
- The false prophets of Baal went first. They spent most of the day performing rituals they believed would get the false god's attention, such as dancing and cutting themselves. But nothing happened.
- Then Elijah repaired the Lord's altar and the sacrifice, pouring so much water over it that the ditch was filled with water! Then he prayed that God would show all the people that he was the true and living God.
- Suddenly, the fire of the Lord fell from heaven and burned up the sacrifice. Even the wood, stones, and water were completely consumed by the fire! When all the people saw what happened, they bowed down and said, "The Lord is God! The Lord is God!"

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- God warned the Israelites that if they turned away from him he would make it stop raining. (Leviticus 26:19) It did not rain for three years. Then, after the people said, "The Lord is God," rain poured down upon the land.
- The people of Israel had chosen to worship gods other than the one true God. They prayed to a god named Baal. And they made sacrifices to him. This displeased the one true God.
- We do not have to harm ourselves or others to get God's attention.
- The one true, living God has power over the rain and fire and all created things. **He is more powerful than any other God.** He alone deserves our worship.
- When we worship the one true God, we do not need to sacrifice animals or people, visit shrines, or pray to our ancestors.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. **How did God show that he was more powerful than any other god?**
3. What "gods" do people worship today?
4. How can we worship the one, true God above all else?

Memory Verse Activity: Exodus 20:3 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Do not worship any god except me. – Exodus 20:3

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that God does not want us to worship false gods because he is the only real, living God.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children not to mix worship of God with worship of other things. Ask them to write down one false "god" that they might have. A "god" is anything that takes the time and place of the one, true God. Encourage them to pray for God's help to stop "worshipping" it and to identify a way they can worship God above all this week. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God is supreme and all-powerful. **He is more powerful than any other god.**
- We do not need to offer animals or people as sacrifices to God because Jesus was the final sacrifice. No further sacrifice is necessary.
- If anything is more important to us than God, it is a false god.
- We should worship God alone.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

39

Job



Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to recall how Job reacted to God during his suffering.
- Children will be able to describe how the **world was blessed through Jesus' suffering**.

Before the lesson, review Job 1:1-22, Job 2:1-13 and Job 42:1-17 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Job provides an opportunity to teach children that God allows suffering and even uses it at certain times for his purposes. As an example, you can discuss with the children the way that **Jesus' suffering was a blessing to the entire world**. This lesson also shows the importance of listening only to people who give good advice.

Item(s) needed: closed jar, sand, small toy boat

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they find ways to put the one true God above other "gods" throughout the week? What did they notice about the experience?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Show the students a closed jar containing sand, water, and a small toy boat that floats. Shake the jar so it looks like a storm. Then let the children watch the sand settle and the boat rise to the top. Tell them today's story is about a man whose faith in God helped him rise to the top during a storm in his life.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 17 and look at picture 39. Read the story from the Bible in Job 1:1-22 and Job 2:7-13 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them assist in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Job was a blameless man who was devoted to God and hated evil. He had seven sons and three daughters. He also had many, many animals and possessions.
- Satan thought that if Job suffered, he would curse God and stop worshipping him.

- God allowed Satan to test Job and make him suffer. Job lost all of his riches, his children were all killed, and he suffered from a painful disease.
- Job had three friends who stayed with him during his suffering.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- During his suffering, Job's wife and friends gave him bad advice. His wife even told him that he should curse God and die. Job replied that we should accept both good things and bad things from God. He did not listen to his wife or friends. The Bible says that Job did not sin in what he said. (Job 2:10) We, too, should be careful whose advice we listen to.
- Through all his suffering, Job still worshipped God. After Job was tested, God gave Job back everything he had lost. He even gave Job twice as much as he had before. Job also had seven more sons and three more daughters.
- God allowed Job to suffer in order to accomplish his good purposes. Even today, God allows much suffering to happen in the world. Often, we cannot see the purpose in suffering. But we can trust that God is in control no matter what happens.
- Many years later, another man suffered greatly. That man was Jesus. Many people hated him. His closest friends betrayed him. He was beaten and mocked. He died a painful death on a cross.
- After Job's suffering ended, he was blessed. **After Jesus' suffering, the whole world was blessed.** His death and resurrection provided a way for us to have a relationship with God.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. How did Job respond when he suffered?
3. What happened to Job after he was tested?
4. **How was Jesus' suffering a blessing to the whole world?**

Memory Verse Activity: Psalm 46:1 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

God is our mighty fortress, always ready to help in times of trouble. – Psalm 46:1

Explain to the children that the memory verse teaches us that God is with us even when we suffer.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage children to think of ways they can trust God this week if they are going through a difficult time. If they are not experiencing something difficult right now, they can think of a way to encourage someone else. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God has power over evil, but sometimes he allows suffering to happen.
- We should continue to trust in God even when life is difficult.
- **Jesus' suffering was a blessing to us.** Even today, we have a relationship with God because of what Jesus went through.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

40

Jonah

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to recall the events in the story of Jonah.
- Children will be able to describe how God showed compassion to the people in Nineveh.
- Children will be able to identify situations where they can be compassionate.

Before the lesson, review the book of Jonah to understand the context of the lesson. Jonah's story provides an opportunity to share about the depth of **God's compassion and how we can extend the same compassion to others**. Compassion is concern and care for others.

Item(s) needed: two clear bottles with lids, soil, water

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Were they able to trust God in the midst of difficulty? Or were they able to encourage someone who was going through a challenging time?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Before class, fill two clear bottles with water. Do not add anything to the first bottle. Add a few spoonfuls of soil to the second bottle. Put the lids on both bottles. Be careful not to shake the bottle with dirt in order to allow it to settle to the bottom.

Show the bottles to the children. Explain that the bottle without dirt is like a child who has God's compassion in their heart. Compassion is concern and care for others. The other bottle is like a child who does not have God's compassion. Even though they look similar right now, when they are shaken up there is a big difference.

During hard times in life, we can tell what is in someone's heart. Provide an example of a difficulty in life. Then shake the bottles of water. The bottle with dirt in it will become cloudy. The bottle without dirt will still appear clear. Talk about how someone with a compassionate heart responds to others. Explain that today's lesson is about **God's compassion and how we can show compassion to others**.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 17 and look at picture 40. Read the story from the Bible in Jonah 1:1-17, Jonah 2:1-4,10 and Jonah 3:1-10 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- God was greatly displeased with the evil things the people of Nineveh were doing. He told Jonah to go to Nineveh and to preach to the people there.
- But Jonah tried to run away from God. He got onto a ship that was going to Tarshish (the opposite direction of Nineveh).
- God caused a great storm to come upon the sea so that the ship was about to break into pieces.
- The sailors realised that the storm was caused because of Jonah. They tried to row back to land but they were unable, so they took Jonah and threw him into the sea. The storm stopped right away.
- God sent a big fish to swallow Jonah. Jonah was in the stomach of the fish for three days and three nights.
- From inside the fish's stomach, Jonah prayed to God, and God heard his prayer. God spoke to the fish, and it spit up Jonah onto dry land.
- Once again, God told Jonah to go to Nineveh and to preach to the people there. This time Jonah listened and did what God told him to do. The people of Nineveh believed God's message. When God saw that the people had stopped doing evil things, he had pity and did not destroy them as he had planned.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- When Jonah preached God's message to the people in Nineveh, they listened. They could have refused to listen. Instead, the people were very sorry for what they had done, and they repented. When we become aware of something we have done wrong, we also have the opportunity to respond quickly and ask for forgiveness.
- The people of Nineveh had done many evil things that displeased God greatly. They deserved to be punished by God. He could have destroyed them. Instead, he chose to have compassion on them. The Bible tells us that God is compassionate and slow to anger. (Psalm 103:8)
- **God's heart is full of compassion, and he wants our hearts to be like his.** As we get to know God better, we become more like him. We can be like God by having kind, loving feelings for others that result in kind, helpful actions towards them.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. How did the people in Nineveh respond to Jonah's message from God?
3. What characteristic of God is seen in this story? (compassion)
4. What are some ways **we can show compassion to others**?

Memory Verse Activity: Psalm 103:8 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

The Lord is merciful! He is kind and patient, and his love never fails. – Psalm 103:8

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that **God is merciful and compassionate to us.**

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

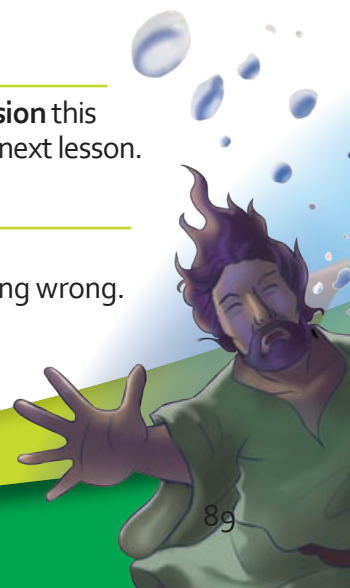
Encourage the children to think of one person to whom **they can show compassion** this week. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- We have the opportunity to repent when we realize we've done something wrong.
- **God is compassionate** and slow to anger.
- As we know God better, we become more like him. **We can show his compassion to others.**

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





Daniel Refuses to Eat the King's Food

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to recall what happened when Daniel did the right thing.
- Children will be able to identify ways they can do what's right even when it is hard.

Before the lesson, review Daniel 1:1-21 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Daniel refusing to eat the king's food provides an opportunity to teach children about God's absolute truth and why we should follow God's truth and instructions. It is important to communicate that we should still follow God's truth, even when others do not. We should **strive to live for God in every area of our lives.**

Item(s) needed: none

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. How did they show compassion to someone? What was their response?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Ask the children to list things that they know are true (e.g. the sun always rises in the east, gravity always keeps their feet on earth, tomatoes always grow from tomatoe seeds). Explain that God's instructions in the Bible are also truth. They can believe in God's words and know they are right. They should follow God's truth because God loves them and wants what is best for them.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 18 and look at picture 41. Read the story from the Bible in Daniel 1:1-20 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them assist in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story emphasizing the following key points:

- Daniel and his three friends were brought as captives from Jerusalem to the land of Babylon. They were being trained to serve before the king of Babylon.
- Every day, the king provided them with food and wine from his table.
- But Daniel decided that he would not defile himself with the king's food or wine.
- Daniel asked the guard who was in charge of them to bring them only vegetables and water for 10 days. The guard agreed to do what Daniel had asked.

- After 10 days, Daniel and his friends looked better and healthier than all the young men who ate the king's food.
- God made Daniel and his friends wise. They served before the king.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- The Babylonians worshipped idols instead of the one true God. Sometimes they took meat and offered it as a gift to their idols and then they ate that food.
- Daniel knew he could not eat the food the king gave them. He wanted to obey God and eat the food that God said he could eat.
- Daniel wanted to **serve God in every area of his life**. Even in the midst of an ungodly situation, he wanted to do what was right. He did not want to have anything to do with idols.
- It would have been easy for Daniel to do what everyone else was doing. He and his friends were willing to be different. They were willing to stand up for what they believed in.
- In the same way, it is important for us to do what is right according to God. Even if other people are all doing the wrong thing, we should follow God's instructions.
- Daniel had faith that God would help him when he did what was right. God protected and blessed Daniel for his obedience.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What happened when Daniel ate vegetables and water instead of the king's food?
3. What are some situations where it is easy to do what everyone else is doing instead of what is right?
4. Why is it important to do what God wants us to do, even when the people around us are not doing that?

Memory Verse Activity: Matthew 6:33 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

But more than anything else, put God's work first and do what he wants. Then the other things will be yours as well. – Matthew 6:33

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us to **make God the most important thing in our lives. We should choose to live our lives for him.**

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

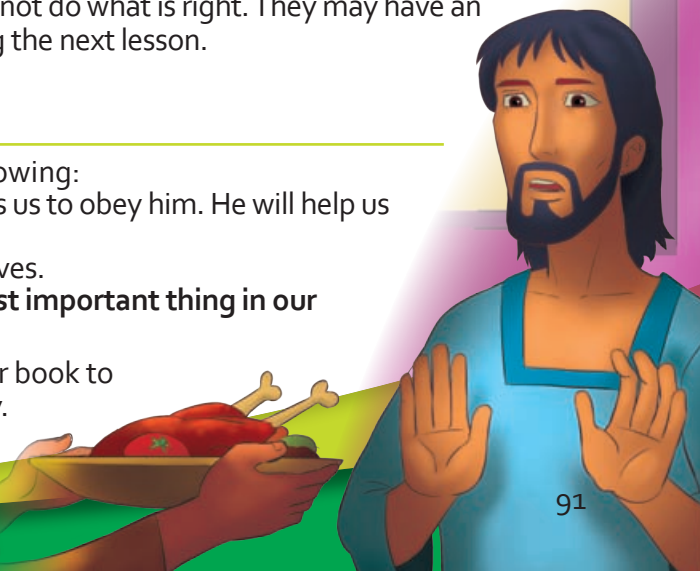
Encourage the children to identify ways to **make God the most important thing in our lives and to live for him**. This week, they might experience situations where they can do what is right instead of doing what everyone else is doing. They can ask God for strength to do what is right even when they are pressured by others to not do what is right. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- No matter what others are doing, God wants us to obey him. He will help us do the right thing.
- God is concerned about every detail of our lives.
- **It pleases God when we make him the most important thing in our lives and choose to live for him.**

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



The Fiery Furnace

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how God's presence is always with us.
- Children will be able to identify idols in their community.
- Children will be able to identify situations where they can stand up for what is right.

Prior to the lesson, review Daniel 3:1-30 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the fiery furnace provides an opportunity to teach children that we should not worship idols. It is a good time to communicate how **God is always with us**, during good times and hard times. The story also teaches us about the importance of doing what's right even when others do not.

Item(s) needed: paper, stapler (if available)

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Were any of them in a situation where they had to choose between doing what was right and doing what other people wanted them to do?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide each child with a piece of paper. Have them fold it back and forth to make a fan like the one pictured to the right. If a stapler is available, you may want to staple the bottom part of the fan to make a handle. Have the children wave their fans. Point out the wind that the fan creates. Ask them what effects the wind has. Tell them that even though they don't see the wind, they know it is there because they can see the effects of the wind. Tell them that **God is always with them**. Even though they can't see him, they can see the effect he has on their lives.



Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 18 and look at picture 42. Read the story from the Bible in Daniel 3:1-30 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them assist in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- King Nebuchadnezzar made a gold statue and ordered that all people worship the statue. If people refused to worship it, they would be thrown into a fiery furnace.
- Daniel's three friends (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego) refused to worship the golden statue. Some officials told the king that the three young Jewish men were disobeying his command.

- The king gave the three young men another opportunity to bow down to the statue. But they refused.
- The king was angry. He ordered that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be thrown into the fiery furnace. They told the king, "The God we worship can save us from you and your flaming furnace. But even if he doesn't, we still won't worship your gods and the gold statue you have set up."
- The king ordered that the furnace be heated seven times hotter than it normally was. It was so hot that it killed the soldiers who threw the young men into the fire. But the three young men were not harmed.
- The king saw a fourth man walking in the fire with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. The fourth man looked like the Son of God.
- King Nebuchadnezzar saw that God had rescued the three young men from the fiery furnace. He worshipped God, saying no other god was like him.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were willing to die for doing the right thing. They would have preferred to be burned to death than to worship an idol.
- An idol can be anything that we worship or make more important than God. The three young men made God more important than anything else, even their own lives.
- **God was with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, even in the fire.** No other god or idol could have saved them. God is more powerful than anything else. But he is not distant. He was near to the three men when they were in the furnace, and **he is with us now.** He is with us even when we are not aware of his presence.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in the book?
2. Why was the king angry with the three young men?
3. What did the three young men say to the king?
4. How do you think you would have responded to the king's command?
5. What can we do to be more aware that **God is with us?**

Memory Verse Activity: Psalms 56:3 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

But even when I am afraid, I keep trusting you. – Psalm 56:3

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that we can trust in God even when we are afraid.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to **practice being aware that God is with them.** Have them identify an activity that will remind them to think about how God is with them (e.g. when they wake up in the morning, when they eat lunch, when they go to bed). When they remember that God is with them, they can thank him and ask him to speak to them. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- We should worship God alone. He should be the most important thing in our lives.
- God will give us the courage and strength to do what is right, even when it is difficult.
- **God is always with us** even when we are afraid. We can be aware of his presence many times throughout the day.

Before praying, stop for a moment and ask the children to think about God being with them. Close in prayer asking God to make his presence especially real to the children throughout the week. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



Daniel and the Lions' Den

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to recall how God protected Daniel.
- Children will be able to describe Daniel's character.
- Children will be able to identify positive character traits they would like to develop.

Prior to the lesson, review Daniel 6:1-28 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Daniel and the lions' den provides an opportunity to teach children about Daniel's character and how we can **develop good character**. It also offers a context to talk about God's power and about the importance of standing up for what is right, even when the people around us are not doing that.

Item(s) needed: paper or paper plates, crayons, glue and yellow thread (if available)

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they choose a daily activity to remind them that God is always with them? Were they more aware of God's presence?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide each child with a piece of paper or a paper plate, if available. Have the children draw a lion's face on their paper or paper plate. If glue and yellow thread are available, cut the yellow thread into 2-inch pieces. Have the children glue the thread around the plate to make the lion's mane. If that is not possible, they can draw the lion's mane. Explain that the lesson today will be about some lions that could have been very dangerous.



Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 18 and look at picture 43. Read the story from the Bible in Daniel 6:3-23 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them assist in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Daniel was a governor in King Darius' kingdom. He did his work much better than the other governors and leaders. The king was pleased with Daniel and decided to put him in charge of the whole kingdom.
- The other leaders were jealous of Daniel. They tried to find something wrong with the way he did his work. But they could not accuse Daniel of anything, because he was honest and faithful in everything he did.
- The other leaders persuaded the King to make a law that prevented anyone from

praying to any god or man other than the king for the next 30 days. Anyone who disobeyed would be thrown into the den of lions.

- Daniel heard about the law. He went home and knelt down at the open windows and prayed to God three times a day, just as he had always done.
- The other leaders found Daniel praying to God, and they brought him to the king. The king was upset, but the law forced him to throw Daniel into the lions' den.
- Early the next morning, the king hurried to the lions' den. When he got there, Daniel told him, "My God knew that I was innocent, and he sent an angel to keep the lions from eating me."
- The king was happy that Daniel was still alive. He ordered that Daniel be pulled up out of the pit. Then the king gave orders to arrest all the men who had accused Daniel. They were thrown into the lions' den. Before they even reached the bottom of the pit, the lions killed them.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- The other leaders tried to find something that Daniel had done wrong. However, they could not find anything. He was not corrupt, and he did a good job at everything he did.
- Daniel had excellent character. Character is who we truly are. It is shown by what we choose to do when no one is watching us, or when we are in a difficult situation. Good character is made up of traits like honesty, patience, helpfulness, and kindness. Daniel's good character was seen when the leaders found that he was honest and hardworking.
- It is possible to **develop good character**. However, good character does not grow by itself. It is the result of many small decisions. When Daniel was thrown into the lions' den, he was an old man. He had made many good decisions for many years.
- God was with Daniel even when he was in the lions' den. God is also with us when we are going through difficult situations.
- God used his power to protect Daniel when he was in danger.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. How was God able to protect Daniel from the lions?
3. Describe Daniel's character.
4. What type of character would you like to have?
5. How can you develop good character?

Memory Verse Activity: Colossians 3:12 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

God loves you and has chosen you as his own special people. So be gentle, kind, humble, meek, and patient. – Colossians 3:12

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that God loves us and wants to help us **develop good character**.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to identify one good character trait they would like to develop in their lives (e.g. honesty, patience, kindness). Ask them to think of one specific thing to do this week that will help them develop that trait. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience in the next class.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God is always with us, even in difficult times.
- God can use his power to protect us.
- **Developing good character** takes work. The small choices we make each day are an important part of our character.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





LESSON

44

Esther



Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will explain the risk that Esther took to save her people.
- Children will describe the sacrifice that Jesus made to save people.

Before the lesson, review the book of Esther to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Esther provides an opportunity to teach children about the sacrifice that Esther made for her people and the **sacrifice that Jesus made for people**. It also offers the opportunity to discuss how God sometimes calls an unexpected person to do great things for him.

Item(s) needed: paper, crayons, markers, scissors (if available)

★ God's Big Story Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Which good character traits are they trying to develop in their lives? What choices did they make that showed these character traits?

Introductory Activity: Crown of Courage (5-10 minutes)

Provide each child with a piece of paper with a crown drawn on it. Ask the children to decorate the crown with crayons, markers, and whatever is available. If scissors are available, ask the children to cut out the crown. Explain to the children that today you are going to read a story about a very brave queen.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Provide the children with the following background to the story:

- The people from Judah had disobeyed God by worshipping foreign Gods. God punished them by allowing an enemy army to defeat them. Many of the people were living as captives in a foreign country.
- Esther was a Jewish girl from Judah. Both of her parents had died. Her cousin Mordecai took care of her. She was very beautiful. When the king was looking for a new queen, he chose Esther.
- Haman was a powerful government official. He hated the Jews. He convinced the king to issue an order that all the Jewish people should be killed.
- Mordecai begged Esther to talk to the king. However, she was not allowed to approach the king unless he asked for her. If she did go to the king and he was displeased, he could have her killed.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 19 and look at picture 44. Read the story from the Bible in Esther 5:1-7 and Esther 7:1:10 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the

Storytelling Activities section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story emphasizing the following key points:

- Esther fasted and prayed about the situation. Even though she was risking her life, Esther went to see the king. The king was not angry. He said he would give her whatever she wanted.
- Esther invited the king and Haman to dinner. She told the king about Haman's plan to kill all of her people.
- The king was angry. He gave orders to have Haman killed.

The king could not change the law. However, he issued a new law that said the Jews could protect themselves. The Jews were saved from Haman's evil plan!

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Before becoming queen, Esther was an orphan and a foreigner in the land. People would not have expected her to be able to save her people. God often uses unexpected people to do great things for him.
- Esther fasted and prayed before she went to the king. God wants us to pray to him when we need courage and wisdom about what we should do.
- God is always in control. Esther was queen at a very important time. God had placed her in a position to save her people.
- Men and women are equal in God's sight. God used Esther, a woman, to fulfil his purpose.
- Esther risked her life by going to the king. She was willing to die for the sake of her people. Because of her sacrifice, her people were saved.
- Many years later, another **man sacrificed his life for his people**. That man was Jesus. He came as a baby and lived as a human. He lived a perfect life, and he died on the cross for our sins. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, people can have eternal life.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What sacrifice was Esther willing to make for her people?
3. How did God use Esther to save her people?
4. **What sacrifice did Jesus make for people?**

Memory Verse Activity: Romans 8:28 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

We know that God is always at work for the good of everyone who loves him. They are the ones God has chosen for his purpose. – Romans 8:28

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that even in the midst of bad situations God is able to work things out for good.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Fortunately, we probably won't have to risk our lives for others. But we can still do things that really help others. Encourage the children to do one kind thing this week that they have never done before. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience with the class during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- Esther's sacrifice saved her people many years ago. **The sacrifice that Jesus made still saves us today.**
- God is in control. He has a reason and plan for allowing good, and even bad things to happen in our lives.
- In difficult times, we can depend on God.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

45

Nehemiah



Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how Nehemiah and the people rebuilt the wall.
- Children will be able to explain the value of teamwork.

Before the lesson, review Nehemiah 1:1-2:20, Nehemiah 4:1-23 and Nehemiah 6:15-16 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Nehemiah provides an opportunity to discuss **the importance of caring for your community**. It is also a good time to talk about the benefits of working together as a team.

Item(s) needed: a container and several objects to fill it with

★ God's Big Story Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they do kind things that they had never done before? What were they?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Scatter several objects around the room. Choose one child to pick up the items and put them in a container. Time the child to see how long it takes him/her to finish. Scatter the objects around the room again. Have the children work as a team to pick up the items and place them in the container. Tell them that you are going to time them again to see how much faster they can finish by working together. Explain that today's lesson is about people who worked together as a team.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Provide the children with the following background to the story:

- The people from Judah worshipped many gods other than the one true God. This displeased God greatly. God punished them. He allowed a foreign army to defeat them in battle. The foreign king took many of the people as captives to live in another country.
- Nehemiah lived in the foreign country. He was a trusted servant of the king. He was called the cupbearer. One of his jobs was to drink the same drink as the king, to make sure it was not poisoned.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 19 and look at picture 45. Read the story from the Bible in Nehemiah 1:1-4 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story emphasizing the following key points:

- The Israelites living in Jerusalem were very sad that the wall surrounding the city was broken down. The broken wall left the city open to enemy attacks.

- Nehemiah became very sad when he heard about Jerusalem’s broken wall. He began praying and fasting, asking God to forgive the sins of his people and give him favour with the king.

Explain the following items:

- The Lord made the king pleased with Nehemiah. Nehemiah asked the king to give him permission, supplies, and safe passage to Jerusalem to rebuild the wall around the city. The king granted Nehemiah’s request.
- Nehemiah travelled to Jerusalem and told all of the people of how God’s favour was upon them to rebuild the wall.
- The people were encouraged and said, “Let us rise up and build!” However, once they started working, there were challenges.

Continue reading Nehemiah 4:10-23 and Nehemiah 6:15-16 with the children. Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Each person worked within his family, building a specific part of the wall. All the families worked side-by-side along the wall.
- Although their enemies tried to scare them, they still worked hard every day.
- Nehemiah and the people worked together as a team. Even though their enemies tried to stop them, with God’s help they rebuilt the wall in only 52 days!

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- God wants us to **love our community** like Nehemiah did.
- When we see something wrong in our community, we should pray about how to help the situation, and then take action.
- Sometimes when we try to help our community we will face discouragement, but God will encourage us in our work.
- We accomplish much more when we work together as a team than when we work alone.
- God gave Nehemiah skills to lead the people in rebuilding. God gives each of us skills that we can use on a team as well.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What are some benefits of working together as a team?
3. What are ways that we can **help our family, school, and community**?

Memory Verse Activity: 1 Corinthians 12:5-6 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher’s guide.

There are different ways to serve the same Lord, and we can each do different things. Yet the same God works in all of us and helps us in everything we do. – 1 Corinthians 12:5-6

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that each of us can serve God in different ways, like members of a team.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to think about what abilities God has given them to help others. As a class, select an activity to do that will **help the community**. Determine a time to complete this together. They may have the opportunity to share about the experience during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- We should be concerned with what happens in our community and be ready to help.
- When we work together as a team, we can accomplish great things.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

46

Birth of Christ



Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to recall the events of Jesus' birth.
- Children will be able to describe how Jesus' birth is a **fulfilment of God's promises** to people in the Old Testament.
- Children will be able to describe the type of people who God told about the birth of his Son.

Before the lesson, review Luke 1: 26-38 and Luke 2:1-20 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Jesus' birth provides an opportunity to talk about the fulfilment of God's promises. It is also possible to talk about the humble surroundings into which Jesus was born.

Item(s) needed: paper, pencils, colours (if available)

★ God's Big Story Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they find a way to help their community? What did they do?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide each child with a piece of paper. Explain that today's lesson is about a very special birthday. Encourage each child to create a special invitation to a birthday party celebrating Jesus' birth. They may want to fold the paper in a unique way. Ask the children to include a section about why Jesus is special to them.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Provide the children with the following background to the story:

- The angel told Mary that she was going to have a baby boy. He would be the "Son of God Most High".
- Mary asked the angel how this was possible, since she was not married. The angel told her that the child would be God's Son.
- Even though she was afraid, Mary said, "I am the Lord's servant! Let it happen as you have said."

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 20 and look at picture 46. Read the story from the Bible in Luke 2:1-20 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story emphasizing the following key points:

- About that time, the country's ruler gave orders for the names of all the people to be listed in record books. Everyone had to go to their hometown to be listed. Mary went with Joseph to

Bethlehem. While they were there, she gave birth to Jesus.

- She dressed him in baby clothes and laid him on a bed made out of dried grass called hay, because there was no room for them in the inn.
- That night, some shepherds were guarding their sheep in the fields nearby. An angel from God came to them and said, "I have good news for you, which will make everyone happy. This very day in King David's hometown a Saviour was born for you. He is Christ the Lord. You will know who he is, because you will find him dressed in baby clothes and lying on a bed of hay." (Luke 2:10-12)
- Suddenly many other angels came down from heaven and praised God, saying, "Praise God in heaven! Peace on earth to everyone who pleases God."

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- God made many promises to people throughout the Old Testament. When Adam and Eve sinned, God promised to send a Saviour to defeat sin. He promised Abraham that the whole world would be blessed through him. God promised King David that one of his descendants would always be on the throne. **Jesus was the fulfilment of all of these promises.** Jesus is the Saviour of the world. He blessed the whole world by providing a way for humans' relationship with God to be restored. Jesus is the King of Kings!
- When God sent his Son into the world, he did not send him to a palace. Mary and Joseph were not rich, and the angels told poor shepherds about Jesus' birth.
- God created family. When Jesus came to earth, he came as a baby in a family. He had a daddy and a mummy who cared for him.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. Why did God send his Son to the world?
3. What type of people did God tell about Jesus' birth?
4. How did **Jesus fulfil promises that God had made** to people in the Old Testament?

Memory Verse Activity: John 3:16 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

God loved the people of this world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life and never really die. – John 3:16

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that God sent Jesus to earth because he loved us and wanted to make a way for us to be with him forever.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to share with a family member or friend what they have learned about Jesus and how he **fulfilled many of God's promises**. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- Jesus' life, death and resurrection were the **fulfilment of many promises that God had made** to people in the Old Testament.
- God sent his Son to be a part of a family. God has also placed us in families. Our families are a gift from God.
- God loves us and values us. He sent his Son to die on the cross so that we could have eternal life.
- If any children have not invited Jesus Christ into their hearts to take away their sins and give them eternal life, invite them to do so.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

47

John the Baptist

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus.
- Children will be able to recall how God showed that Jesus was his Son.
- Children will be able to explain the importance of baptism.

Before the lesson, review Matthew 3 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of John the Baptist provides an opportunity to discuss how God showed that Jesus was his Son. It is also a good time to consider the importance of baptism as well as John's statement: **Jesus must become more important, while I become less important.**

Item(s) needed: paper, pencils, thread (if available)

★ God's Big Story Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they share the story of Jesus' birth with a friend or family member? How did the person respond?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide each child with a piece of paper. Have them draw the outline of two sandals on the paper. You may want to allow them to trace around their shoes or feet.

Have them write John 1:27 on the left sandal and John 3:30 on the right. If thread is available, have the children put four holes in each sandal with a pencil as the picture indicates. Then they can create shoelaces for the sandals.

Explain that the lesson is about how God sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for Jesus.



Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 20 and look at picture 47. Read the story from the Bible in Matthew 3:1-6 and Matthew 3:11-17 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story emphasizing the following key points:

- John the Baptist preached to the people, telling them to repent of their sins and be baptized. Repent means to be sorry for one's sins and to live a different way. Crowds of people listened to John and were baptized. He dipped them in the river.
- God sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for Jesus. John said that someone more powerful was going to come. He told the people that he was not good enough to carry this

person's sandals.

- Jesus came to John to be baptized. John did not want to baptize Jesus. He said that Jesus should baptize him instead. But Jesus insisted that John baptize him.
- After Jesus was baptized, the Spirit of God came down like a dove and a voice from heaven said, "This is my own dear Son, and I am pleased with him".

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- God sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for Jesus. When John saw Jesus, he said, "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29) John announced Jesus' arrival.
- After Jesus was baptized, God showed his approval of Jesus by the words that he spoke from heaven. He told the world that Jesus was his Son. This marked the beginning of Jesus' work of ministry, which lasted for about three years.
- Jesus was baptized as an example for us. He showed us that baptism was important. Later, Jesus said that his disciples (people who believe in Jesus and follow him) should be baptized. (Matthew 28:19)
- Baptism does not take away our sins. Our sins can only be forgiven because of Jesus' death and resurrection. However, baptism is a way of showing that we have put our trust in Jesus. When a person who is being baptized goes under the water and then comes out of it again, it is a sign that they have died with Jesus and have been raised with him to walk in newness of life.
- John knew that Jesus should be more important than anything else in our lives. He said, **"Jesus must become more important, while I become less important."** (John 3:30) If we are followers of Jesus, this should be our desire as well. **We should want Jesus to become more important while we become less important.**

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What did God send John the Baptist to do?
3. What happened after Jesus was baptized?
4. What does baptism represent?
5. In what ways could you **make Jesus more important in your life?**

Memory Verse Activity: John 3:30 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Jesus must become more important, while I become less important. – John 3:30

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that God sent Jesus to earth because he loved us and wanted to make a way for us to be with him forever.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to think of ways that they can make Jesus more important this week. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- Jesus is God's Son. He died for our sins and made it possible for us to have a relationship with God.
- Baptism is an important sign for a believer in Jesus. Everyone who believes in Jesus should consider being baptized.
- We should ask God to help us **make him more important and us less important.**

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





Temptation of Jesus



Objective(s):

- Children will be able to recall how Jesus used the Word of God when tempted.
- Children will be able to identify common temptations in their lives.
- Children will be able to identify ways they can resist temptation.
- Children will be able to identify the pieces of the armour of God.

Before the lesson, review Matthew 4:1-11 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the temptation of Jesus provides an opportunity to discuss how to **overcome temptation using the Word of God and the armour of God**. This is also a time to talk about Jesus' nature being both God and man at the same time. He was tempted in the same ways that we are tempted and he suffered in the same way that we suffer. Yet he never sinned.

Item(s) needed: paper

★ God's Big Story Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they find a way to make Jesus more important in their life? What did they do?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide a piece of paper for each child. Ask them to imagine what they would wear if they were going into a big battle. Have them draw a picture of themselves wearing armour. Explain that armour is the metal that soldiers used to wear to protect themselves in battle. Explain that today's lesson will be about temptation and the armour of God. **We can use the Bible and other pieces of the armour of God to help us when we are tempted.**

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 20 and look at picture 48. Read the story from the Bible in Matthew 4:1-11 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story emphasizing the following key points:

- God's Spirit led Jesus into the desert. He fasted in the desert. (This means he did not eat food.)
- Satan tempted Jesus after he had fasted for forty days.
- Jesus used the Word of God as his power and strength to answer the devil's temptation.
- After the devil finished testing Jesus, he left him for a while. Angels came and cared for Jesus.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Satan tempted Jesus to do things that would not please God. At times, he tries to tempt

us as well. (1 Peter 5:8)

- Jesus was tempted in every way that we are tempted, but he never sinned. He was perfect. (Hebrews 4:15)
- Jesus was completely God and also completely man. He had the ability to sin. But he used the Word of God to help him not sin.
- God is faithful. He will not let us be tempted beyond our ability to resist. He will help us when we are tempted. (1 Corinthians 10:13) We can ask him to help us overcome the temptations in our lives like stealing, lying, sexual sin and other sins.
- **We, too, can be protected from Satan by relying on the Word of God and wearing the armour of God.** (Ephesians 6:13-17) The armour of God is made up of different pieces that protect us:
 - » The belt of truth should be buckled around your waist. The truth holds everything together.
 - » The breastplate of righteousness protects your body.
 - » Your desire to tell others the good news about Jesus should be like shoes on your feet. It should go wherever we go.
 - » Faith is like a shield. It can stop the flaming arrows of Satan.
 - » The helmet is salvation.
 - » The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God.
- God gives us everything we need to have victory over temptation. (Romans 8:37)

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. How was Jesus tempted?
3. What are some ways we might be tempted?
4. **What should we do when we are tempted?** (Do what the Bible says. Focus on truth and pray for God's strength.)

Memory Verse Activity: Ephesians 6:10-11 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

*Put on all the armor that God gives, so you can defend yourself against the devil's tricks.
– Ephesians 6:10-11*

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us to **use the armour of God to fight against Satan**. God will stand beside us when we are tempted. He will give us the strength to resist temptation.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

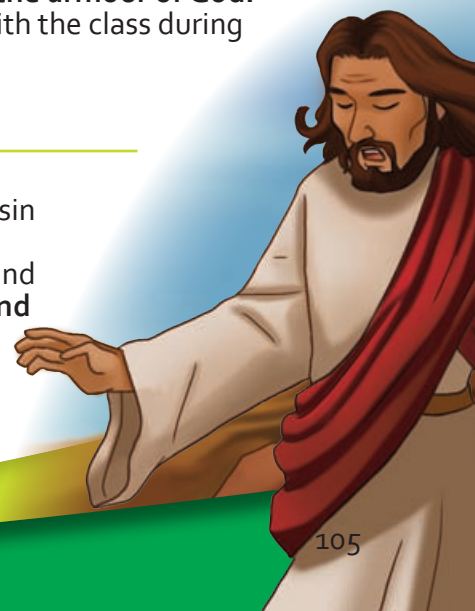
Ask the children to think of temptations that they face regularly. Have them identify ways that they can resist temptation. Encourage the children to **resist one or two specific temptations throughout the week using the Word of God and the armour of God**. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience with the class during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- We are all tempted. It is not a sin to be tempted. It is only a sin when we do something we should not do.
- When we are tempted, we can ask God to give us courage and strength to stand firm. **We can also use the Word of God and the armour of God to resist temptation.**
- God will never let us go through something that is too hard for us to handle. He is always with us.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



Calling of the Disciples

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to recall what the disciples were doing when Jesus called them to follow him.
- Children will identify things they may have to give up in order to follow Jesus.

Before the lesson, review Matthew 4:18-22 and Matthew 9:9-13 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the calling of the disciples provides an opportunity to teach the children that Jesus did not choose rich or educated people to be his disciples. Instead, **he chose ordinary people**. Today, **God is looking for people who are willing to follow him**.

Item(s) needed: paper

★ God's Big Story
Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they have situations where they needed to use the Word of God to resist temptation? What happened?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Open the class by singing "Fishers of Men".

Provide each child with a piece of paper. Have them draw a line across the paper to divide it in half. On one side, ask them to draw a very rich man. On the other side, ask them to draw a poor fisherman. They may want to draw a palace for the rich man and a boat for the fisherman. As they finish, ask which type of man Jesus called to be his disciples. They may be surprised to learn he called fishermen. If they already know that it's the fisherman, encourage them for knowing that **Jesus typically uses ordinary people**.

"Fishers of Men"
I will make you fishers
of men.
Fishers of men (2x)
I will make you fishers
of men.
If you follow me.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 21 and look at picture 49.

Read the story from the Bible in Matthew 4:18-22 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story emphasizing the following key points:

- As Jesus walked along the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers fishing. Their names were Simon and Andrew.
- Jesus asked them to follow him. He said he would teach them "how to bring in people instead of fish".
- Immediately they stopped fishing and followed Jesus.

- Jesus walked a bit further and saw two other brothers, James and John. They were also fishermen and were busy fixing their nets.
- Jesus also called them to follow him. Immediately they left their father and their boat and followed Jesus.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Jesus did not choose rich people, popular people, or highly educated people to be his disciples. Instead, **Jesus chose ordinary people** like you and me to be his close friends and followers.
- A disciple was someone who followed Jesus and learned from him. For about three years, Jesus was involved in ministry. He chose a group of 12 disciples to be with him during this time. Out of the group of 12, there were three who were Jesus' closest friends – Peter, James and John.
- As soon as Jesus called the disciples, they immediately responded. They left what they were doing and followed Jesus. Sometimes Jesus asks us to do things. We should respond with joy and obedience when he does. We can trust that he is good and that he knows what is best for us.
- Even though the disciples left everything they had known, they gained far more by deciding to follow Jesus. These ordinary men are remembered to this day for how they influenced the entire world. The disciples wrote several books in the Bible, including the gospels. The gospels are the first four books in the New Testament (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). These books tell the story of Jesus' time on earth.
- Today, **God is still looking for people who are willing to follow him.** But like the disciples, we may have to give up certain things in order to follow Jesus.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What were the disciples doing when Jesus called them?
3. How did the disciples respond when Jesus called them? What did they give up?
4. What are some things that Jesus might call us to do?
5. What might we have to give up in order to follow Jesus?

Memory Verse Activity: Matthew 16:24 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide to use to teach the verse.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, If any of you want to be my followers, you must forget about yourself. You must take up your cross and follow me. – Matthew 16:24

Explain to the children that as followers of Jesus we are called to obey what he asks us to do.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

It is important that we intentionally ask God how we can follow him better. Stop for a moment of silence so the children have time to ask God how they can follow him. Encourage the children to continue to listen for God's voice throughout the week. Tell them to ask him to speak to them about a way they can follow him. If they think he is speaking to them, they should make sure that what they are hearing is in line with what the Bible - God's Word - says. Then they should do it joyfully. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience in the next class.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- **Jesus uses ordinary people.**
- When we believe God is speaking to us, we should make sure that it is in line with what the Bible says and then obey right away.


Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

50

The Sermon on the Mount



Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to recall some of the things Jesus taught about how we should live.
- Children will be able to recite the Lord's prayer.

Before the lesson, review Matthew 5, 6 and 7 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the Sermon on the Mount provides an opportunity to talk about Jesus' teachings. It also is a good time to talk about **not just hearing the things that Jesus taught but also obeying them.**

Item(s) needed: none

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they find a specific way to follow Jesus? Did they hear him speaking to them?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Divide the children into four groups. Each group will act out a portion of one of the Beatitudes without using words or sounds. If the class is too large for everyone to participate, select two to four volunteers to be in each group. Have the other children try to guess what is being portrayed.

Each group should act out one of the following:

1. Weeping (Being very sad)
2. Being hungry and thirsty
3. Showing mercy
4. Making peace

Explain that today's lesson is about Jesus' teaching. He taught about people who would be blessed. These activities represented some of his teachings.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Before reading the story, explain that lots of people followed Jesus. They came from many places to listen to him. One day, he preached a sermon while he was on the side of a mountain. It is known as the Sermon on the Mount.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 21 and look at picture 50. Read portions of the Sermon on the Mount from the Bible in Matthew 5:1-12, Matthew 5:43-48, Matthew 6:9-15, Matthew 6:25-27, and Matthew 7:24-27 out loud with the children. If

they are able, have them assist in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- The first part of Matthew 5 includes eight blessings. The blessings are called "the Beatitudes" which means "blessed". Jesus said the following people would be blessed:
 - Those who depend only on God.
 - Those who grieve.
 - Those who are humble.
 - Those who want to obey him more than to eat or drink.
 - Those who are merciful.
 - Those who have pure hearts.
 - Those who make peace.
 - Those who are treated badly for doing right.
- Jesus said to "love your enemies and pray for anyone who mistreats you".
- Jesus taught the people how to pray. This is called the Lord's Prayer.
- Jesus said we should not worry. He said that God knows what we need. We can trust God to take care of us.
- Jesus taught the importance of obeying his teaching. He said, "Anyone who hears and obeys these teachings of mine is like a wise person who built a house on solid rock."

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- **Jesus taught that it was important to hear his teachings and to obey what he said.** He does not just want people to live better and do good things. He wants their hearts to be transformed.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. Who will be blessed by God?
3. What teachings of Jesus stand out to you?
4. What are some ways **you can apply Jesus' teachings to your life?**

Memory Verse Activity: Matthew 6:9-13 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

You should pray like this: Our Father in heaven, help us to honour your name. Come and set up your kingdom, so that everyone on earth will obey you, as you are obeyed in heaven. Give us our food for today. Forgive us for doing wrong, as we forgive others. Keep us from being tempted and protect us from evil. – Matthew 6:9-13

Explain to the children that the Lord's prayer is not a magical prayer. God hears all of our prayers to him. But it provides good guidelines for how we can pray.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to identify a way they can apply the teachings of Jesus to their life this week. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience in the next class.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- Jesus is pleased when we **hear his teachings and obey them.**
- Jesus taught that we should not worry because he will care for us and our families.
- We can be merciful and make peace.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

51

Nicodemus

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to explain **what it means to be born again**.
- Children will be able to describe what God did because of his love for people.

Before the lesson, review John 3:1-21 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Nicodemus provides an opportunity to discuss how God loves us and values us greatly. It is also a good time to talk about how no one can enter the Kingdom of Heaven unless they are born again. The children will learn how they can be born again.

Item(s) needed: school bag, polythene bags, suitcases or others containers filled with heavy items

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they find a way to apply Jesus' teaching to their life? What did they do?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Bring to class a school bag, polythene bags, suitcases, or others containers filled with heavy items. Ask for a volunteer from the class. If you have many heavy objects, you may want to pick several volunteers. Explain that the volunteer is going on a trip. Then begin to load him or her down with all of the heavy items that you brought. Ask them how they would feel about walking a long distance with the heavy load.

Explain that the lesson today is about Jesus and a man named Nicodemus. Jesus taught him about forgiveness and salvation. Sometimes our sins are like big loads that we carry. But Jesus wants to take these loads off of us. Remove the heavy load from the volunteer. Ask how it feels to not have to carry the heavy items.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 22 and look at picture 51. Read the story from the Bible in John 3:1-21 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Nicodemus was a Pharisee and a leader of the Jewish people. One night, he came to talk to Jesus.
- Jesus said to Nicodemus, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God

unless he is born again.”

- Jesus explained to Nicodemus what it means to be born again. He said, “Humans give life to their children. Yet only God’s Spirit can change you into a child of God.”
- To be born again, we must have faith in Jesus. Everyone who has faith in Jesus has eternal life.
- Jesus also told Nicodemus, “God loved the people of this world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life.”

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Nicodemus was a religious leader. He was a Pharisee. The Pharisees cared more about obeying the law than loving God. But Nicodemus still went to Jesus. He wanted to know the truth about God.
- God loves us so much. He wants us to have a relationship with him.
- God’s only Son, Jesus Christ, died on the cross for our sins. He did this so that we could be reconciled with God and have a relationship with him.
- When we accept Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Saviour, we are born again and we will have eternal life.
- Jesus is able to remove all of the sin and evil ways from our lives.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. **What does it mean to be born again?**
3. What did God do for us so we could be reconciled with him?
4. **What should we do in order to be born again?**

Memory Verse Activity: Romans 10:9 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher’s guide.

So you will be saved, if you honestly say, “Jesus is Lord,” and if you believe with all your heart that God raised him from death. – Romans 10:9

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that we are saved from the punishment for our sins when we accept Jesus as our Lord and Saviour.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to share the good news about Jesus with a friend, family member, or someone in their community this week. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God loves us so much that he gave his only Son, so that we can live forever with him.
- Human life is so valuable. That is why God gave us Jesus, to save us from eternal death.
- When we accept Jesus as our personal Lord and Saviour, we get to live forever.
- If any children have not invited Jesus Christ into their hearts to take away their sins and give them eternal life, invite them to do so.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

52

Jesus Heals the Paralytic

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how the paralyzed man's friends helped him.
- Children will be able to identify ways they can help their friends.
- Children will be able to identify **Jesus' power to both heal and forgive sins**.

Before the lesson, review Luke 5:17-26 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of how Jesus heals the paralytic provides an opportunity to discuss the importance of being compassionate and helping others. Compassion is concern and care for others. This lesson is also a good time to talk about Jesus' power to **heal people and forgive sins**.

Item(s) needed: blindfold (cloth to cover the eyes of someone)



Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they have an opportunity to share the good news about Jesus with anyone? How did the person respond?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Ask for two volunteers. Blindfold one child and have the other child lead them from one side of the room to the other, demonstrating how a person can help a friend in need. You may want to put up some obstacles or "roadblocks" in the room to make it more difficult for the children. Explain that today's lesson is about some friends who were willing to do whatever it took to get their friend to Jesus.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 22 and look at picture 52. Read the story from the Bible in Luke 5:17-26 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Jesus was teaching in a crowded house. Some people arrived, carrying a paralyzed man on a mat. Someone who is paralyzed cannot move part of their body. This man could not move his legs so he could not walk.
- They tried to bring him inside the house, but the crowd was too big. Since they couldn't get him to Jesus, they went up on the roof and removed some tiles. They lowered the

man through the roof and into the middle of the room.

- When Jesus saw how much faith they had, he said to the paralyzed man, "My friend, your sins are forgiven."
- The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began arguing, "Jesus must think he is God! Only God can forgive sins."
- Jesus knew what they were thinking and he said, "Why are you thinking that? Is it easier for me to tell this crippled man that his sins are forgiven or to tell him to get up and walk? But now you will see that I have the power to forgive sins." Jesus said to the man, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk home."
- At once the man stood up in front of everyone. He picked up his mat and went home, giving thanks to God.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- It is important that we help others around us who are in need. We can also help introduce them to Jesus by telling them about him.
- Only the power of **Jesus can heal people and forgive sins**. No one else is able to do this.
- God is supreme over every evil power and disease. There is nothing that is more powerful than God.
- God has given Jesus authority. And Jesus has given us authority to pray for ourselves and for others. We can be healed and freed from sin in the name of Jesus.
- The paralyzed man had faith that Jesus would heal him, and his faith was followed with an action. When Jesus told him to get up, he stood up.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. How did the paralyzed man's friends help him?
3. What can Jesus do that no one else can do?
4. What are some ways that we can help people around us who are in need?

Memory Verse Activity: Psalm 103:2-3 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

With all my heart I praise the Lord! I will never forget how kind he has been. The Lord forgives our sins, heals us when we are sick. – Psalm 103:2-3

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that **God is able to heal us and forgive our sins**.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Have the children think of one way they can help someone in need this week. Encourage them to do so. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience with the class during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- It is important for us to help people who are in need and tell them about Jesus.
- **Jesus is the only one who can forgive our sins and totally heal diseases.**
- We need to have faith in God. He can do anything!

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





Woman at the Well

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe reasons why the disciples might have been surprised that Jesus was talking to the woman.
- Children will be able to identify ways that they can **encourage people who might be overlooked or mistreated by others**.

Before the lesson, review John 4:3-30 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the woman at the well provides an opportunity to discuss **how we should treat people, even if they are different than us**. It is also a good time to talk about how we can help others who have been mistreated.

Item(s) needed: paper

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Who did they help? How did they feel afterwards?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide each child with a piece of paper. Ask them to write down things about people that may lead others to treat them differently than they should. Ask the children to share some of their answers. Then have all of the children throw away their papers, to symbolize that there is **no reason to treat others differently than how Jesus would treat them**.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 22 and look at picture 53. Read the story from the Bible in John 4:4-18, 25-30, 39-42 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Jesus was walking through the region of Samaria. He was tired from his journey, and he sat by a well.
- A Samaritan woman came to draw water from the well. Jesus asked her, "Would you please give me a drink of water?"
- The Samaritan woman said, "You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink of water when Jews and Samaritans won't have anything to do with each other?"
- Jesus told her that if she knew who he was, she would ask him for the water that gives

life. He said, "The water I give is like a flowing fountain that gives eternal life."

- Jesus talked with the woman. He knew all about her life. Jesus told her, "You have already been married five times, and the man you are now living with isn't your husband."
- The woman said, "I know that the Messiah will come and he will explain everything to us." Jesus told her that he is the Messiah.
- She ran back to her village to tell others about Jesus. Many Samaritans in that town put their faith in Jesus because the woman said, "This man told me everything I have ever done!"

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- The Jews and the Samaritans were from different tribes. They did not like each other. Normally, Jewish men would not speak to a Samaritan woman because of the tribal difference and because she was a woman. But Jesus was different. He valued everyone regardless of what was normal.
- Jesus accepted the woman when no one else did. Even though he knew about all of the bad things she had done, he still encouraged her. He was kind to her.
- The woman was amazed at Jesus' teaching and his knowledge of her life. She was so excited about Jesus that she told everyone around her about Jesus.
- In the same way that Jesus valued everyone, he calls us to value everyone. We can follow Jesus' example. **We can encourage those who are treated poorly or misunderstood.**
- God equally values all people. It does not matter what tribe they are from, what language they speak, whether they are a man or woman, what they put on or what they look like. (Galatians 3:28)

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What are some of the reasons why the disciples might have been surprised that Jesus was talking to the woman?
3. How can we **encourage others who might be overlooked or mistreated?**

Memory Verse Activity: Matthew 7:12 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Treat others as you want them to treat you. – Matthew 7:12

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us to treat everyone with kindness and concern.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to always **treat others with kindness and concern - even if they are different than us**. Challenge them to do something this week for a person who may be feeling mistreated or lonely. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience with the class during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- Jesus loves and values everyone regardless of what others say or think about them.
- We should treat people the same way Jesus would treat them. **We should be nice to others, even if they are different than us.**
- We should be friends with those people who feel mistreated or lonely.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





Casting Out of Evil Spirits

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to remember how the evil spirits responded to Jesus' authority.
- Children will be able to describe what the man did after the evil spirits left him.
- Children will be able to identify situations where they have seen **God's power** at work.

Before the lesson, review Mark 5:1-20 and Luke 8:26-33 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of casting out of evil spirits into swine provides an opportunity to discuss Jesus' authority over evil spirits. It is also a good time to talk about **God's power** and how the children have seen God at work in their lives and in the lives of others.

Item(s) needed: a polythene bag and small pieces of paper

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. How did they reach out to someone who may have been feeling lonely?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Blow into the polythene bag so it contains air. Rub it against your clothes for a few moments. This will cause it to develop static electricity. Then you will be able to use it to pick up small pieces of paper. Explain that the static electricity causes the polythene bag to have power over the paper. Tell the children that today's story is about **Jesus' power** over evil spirits.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 23 and look at picture 54. Read the story from the Bible in Mark 5:1-13 and 18-20 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- A man with evil spirits inside him ran to Jesus. The man was very strong. No one could control him.
- The man ran up to Jesus and shouted, "Jesus, Son of God in heaven, what do you want with me? Promise me in God's name that you won't torture me!"
- Jesus asked, "What is your name?" The man said, "My name is Lots, because I have

'lots' of evil spirits." He begged Jesus not to send them away.

- Jesus sent the evil spirits out of the man and they went into a large herd of pigs.
- The whole herd of about two thousand pigs rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned.
- The man was completely healed and in his right mind.
- After Jesus healed the man, he told him, "Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you and how good he has been to you." The man did just that, and the people who heard his story were amazed.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Even when people did not know who Jesus was, the evil spirits knew that Jesus was the Son of God. They also knew how powerful he was. They had to obey him. Jesus showed that he is more powerful than any evil spirit.
- **God is all-powerful.** There is nothing that is more powerful than God. Because God is so great, he deserves all of our worship.
- It hurts God when people go to witch doctors or make sacrifices to anything or anyone other than him.
- The power of God seen in this story is still at work in the world today. God is actively involved in our lives and he is more powerful than Satan or any evil spirit.
- The healed man told others about what Jesus had done for him. It is important that we share with others about God's power and what God has done in our lives.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in the book?
2. How did the evil spirits respond when they saw Jesus?
3. How did the evil spirits respond when Jesus spoke to them?
4. What situations have you seen where **God's power was at work**?

Memory Verse Activity: Luke 1:37 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Nothing is impossible for God! – Luke 1:37

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that **God can do all things. He is all-powerful.**

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

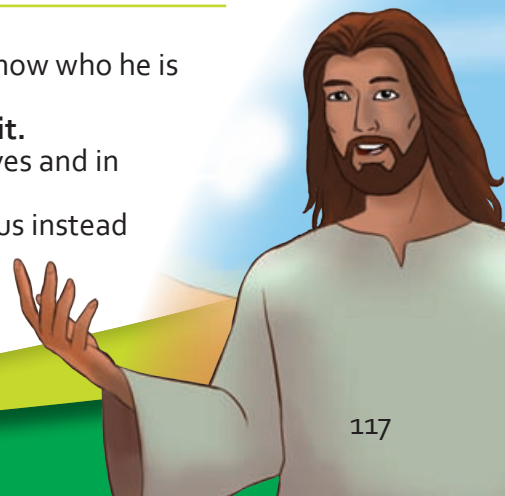
Have the children think of at least one thing that they have seen God do. Encourage them to tell someone about God's power this week.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- Jesus is the Son of the Most High God. Even evil spirits know who he is and how powerful he is.
- **God is all-powerful and has authority over any evil spirit.**
- We need to be aware of how God uses his power in our lives and in the lives of others.
- When we are faced with problems, we should pray to Jesus instead of going to witch doctors.
- We need to tell others about what God has done for us.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

55

Jesus Feeds 5,000

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how Jesus did something big with the boy's small gift.
- Children will be able to identify what they have that God can use.

Before the lesson, review John 6:1-14 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Jesus feeding 5,000 provides an opportunity to discuss how **Jesus can use whatever we are willing to give to him**. It is also a good time to talk about how God can use each student to make a difference in the lives of others.

Item(s) needed: food items, coins, and a few pieces of clothing

★ God's Big Story Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. How has God used his power in their lives or in the life of someone they know? Did they tell someone else about God's power?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Place food items, some coins, and a few pieces of clothing in front of the children. Then ask the children to think of ways God can use the food, coins, and clothing they have to help others.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 23 and look at picture 55. Read the story from the Bible in John 6:1-14 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- A large crowd of people had seen Jesus perform miracles and heal sick people. They followed Jesus. There were around 5,000 men, plus some women and children.
- When Jesus saw the crowd, he asked his disciple Philip, "Where will we get enough food to feed all these people?" Jesus was testing Philip. He already knew what he was going to do.
- Philip told Jesus that it would take almost a year's wages to feed all of the people.

- A young boy brought five small loaves of bread and two fish to the disciples.
- Jesus took the bread in his hands and gave thanks to God. Then he passed the bread and the fish to the people. Everyone had plenty to eat.
- Jesus told his disciples to gather the leftovers. They filled 12 large baskets with the leftovers.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Even though the boy offered a small gift, Jesus used his small gift to give thousands of people a big blessing.
- Jesus wants us to share what we have with other people, even if we don't have very much. God is able to use whatever we have, as long as we are willing to offer it to him and allow him to use it.
- Jesus can use a gift of any size to greatly bless another person.
- Jesus thanked God for the food he provided. We should always thank God for what we have, even if it is not a lot.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. Why did the disciples want Jesus to send the people away?
3. How did Jesus feed the crowd of people?
4. **How can we use what we have to help others?**
5. What are some things we can be thankful for?

Memory Verse Activity: Matthew 6:26 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Look at the birds in the sky! They don't plant or harvest. They don't even store grain in barns. Yet your Father in heaven takes care of them. Aren't you worth more than birds?
– Matthew 6:26

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that we are important to God. He will provide for our needs.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to pray silently and **ask God how he would like them to use what they have to help others**. They may want to talk with their parents about sharing food with others who do not have as much as they do. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- Jesus is caring, compassionate, and performs great miracles.
- As Jesus' followers, we need to share what we have with others, even if we do not have much.
- God can do great things with what we give to others.
- God will provide for us when we follow him and give to others.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





Jesus Heals a Boy

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to explain how we need to have faith in God and pray to him about everything in our lives.
- Children will be able to describe how the boy's father showed faith.
- Children will be able to describe Jesus' interaction with the evil spirit.

Before the lesson, review Mark 9:14-32 and Luke 9:37-45 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the healing of a boy with an evil spirit provides an opportunity to discuss God's power over evil spirits. This is also a time to talk about the importance of faith, believing God is able to do something and trusting in him, and **bringing everything to God in prayer**.

Item(s) needed: none



God's Big Story
Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did the children use something they had to help others? What did they do? What was the response?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Have the children stand up and breathe deeply in and out. Ask them what they are filling their lungs with. Then tell the children to hold their breath for five seconds. Ask them what would happen if they stopped breathing. Can they see the air that they are breathing in? How do they know they are breathing?

Explain that sometimes we must believe things even though we cannot see them. Today's lesson is about a man who asked Jesus to give him more faith. Faith is trusting in God even when we don't know what will happen.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 24 and look at picture 56. Read the story from the Bible in Mark 9:17-27 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- A father asked Jesus to heal his son. The boy had been suffering because of an evil spirit. The evil spirit prevented the boy from talking. The father told Jesus, "Whenever the evil spirit attacks my son, it throws him to the ground and makes him foam at the

mouth and grit his teeth in pain. Then he becomes stiff.”

- When the evil spirit in the boy saw Jesus, it made the boy shake all over. The boy fell down and began rolling on the ground and foaming at the mouth.
- The boy’s father said to Jesus, “Please have pity and help us if you can!” Jesus said, “Anything is possible for someone who has faith.” The boy’s father said, “I do have faith! Please help me to have even more.”
- Jesus said to the evil spirit, “I order you to come out of the boy! Don’t ever bother him again.” The evil spirit obeyed Jesus and left the boy.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- God is more powerful than any kind of evil spirit. The evil spirits not only know who Jesus is, but they must obey him. If we have faith in Jesus, we do not need to fear evil spirits.
- Sometimes situations may seem impossible. In those times, we can remember that God is faithful to us. We can trust him. He will always care for us. However, there may be times where he responds differently than we would like him to.
- The man brought his son to Jesus for help. In the same way, **we can talk to God about everything that is happening in our lives.**
- Prayer is talking with God. He hears us when we speak. If we listen closely, many times we will also hear God speak to us.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What was wrong with the boy?
3. How did the boy’s father show his faith?
4. How did the evil spirit respond to Jesus?
5. What are some situations where you can have faith?

Memory Verse Activity: Luke 17:6 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher’s guide.

Jesus replied: If you had faith no bigger than a tiny mustard seed, you could tell this mulberry tree to pull itself up, roots and all, and to plant itself in the ocean. And it would!
– Luke 17:6

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us how important it is to have faith and trust in God.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

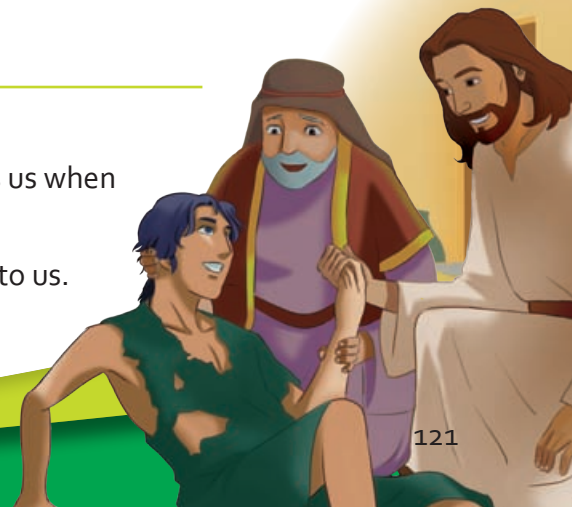
Ask the children to silently ask God what he would like them to pray for this week. Once they have identified a situation to pray about, encourage them to pray about it every day this week. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God is more powerful than any kind of evil spirit.
- God is faithful to us. We can have faith that he hears us when we pray and answers according to his will.
- **We can pray to God about everything in our lives.**
- If we listen closely, we will often hear God speaking to us.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

57

The Prodigal Son

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to recall the story of the prodigal son.
- Children will be able to identify forgiveness as God's response to our repentance.

Before the lesson, review Luke 15:11-32 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the Prodigal Son provides an opportunity to discuss how **nothing can ever separate us from God's love.**

Item(s) needed: paper and pencil

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they pray each day about the situation identified in the last class? How did God respond?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide each child with a piece of paper and a pencil. Ask them to draw a picture of a very deep and wide river through the middle of the page. Have them draw a picture of themselves on one side of the river. Then have them draw a picture of Jesus on the other side of the river. Ask them to draw a bridge across the river, linking themselves and Jesus. **Tell the children that nothing can ever separate them from God's love.**

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 24, and look at picture 57. Read the story from the Bible in Luke 15:11-32 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- There was a man who had two sons. The younger son said to his father, "Give me my share of the property." So the father divided his property between his two sons.
- The young son packed up everything he owned and left for a foreign country. There he wasted his money on parties and things he did not need. Soon he had nothing to eat.
- The only job the son could find was to feed pigs. He was so hungry he wanted to eat the food for the pigs. Finally, he decided to return home and apologize to his father, saying, "Father, I have sinned against God in heaven and against you. I am no longer good enough to be called your son. Treat me like one of your workers."

- The younger son started the journey to go back to his father. But when he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt sorry for him. He ran to his son and hugged and kissed him.
- The father was so happy his son was back. He threw a big party in celebration.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- The father was eager to forgive his son. He welcomed him back gladly. In the same way, God is eager to forgive and welcome back a sinner who repents. To repent means to stop doing wrong things and to live to please God.
- God's love is far greater than any father's love or any love we experience on earth. He knows everything there is to know about us and he cares for us, no matter what we have done.
- God desires to restore our relationship with him, which was broken by sin. God wants everyone to turn from sin and to know him. (2 Peter 3:9)
- God treats us better than we deserve. (Ephesians 2:8) He loves us so much that he sent Jesus into the world to save us from our sin. (1 John 4:9) **There is nothing that can separate us from the love of God.** (Romans 8:38)
- God loves us so much that he calls us his children. (1 John 3:1) The Spirit of God reminds us that we are his children. We will receive all that he has promised for us and spend eternity with him. (Romans 8:16-17)
- We love God because he first loved us. Because of the love we have received, we should also love others. (1 John 4:16)

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What did the younger son do with his inheritance?
3. What happened after the son spent all of his money?
4. What happened when the younger son returned home?
5. What does God do when we repent? (He forgives us.)
6. What do we know about God's love?

Memory Verse Activity: Romans 8:39b (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Nothing in all creation can separate us from God's love for us in Christ Jesus our Lord!
– Romans 8:39b

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that **nothing can separate us from God's love.**

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to think about how **nothing can separate us from the love of God.** Have them thank God for loving them no matter what they do. Ask them to come to class prepared to share what they have learned about God's love.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God forgives us when we repent.
- There is no love that can compare to the love of God. He loves us more than we can imagine.
- **There is nothing that can separate us from the love of God.**

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.





The Good Samaritan



Objective(s):

- Children will be able to recall the story of the Good Samaritan.
- Children will be able to identify who their neighbour is.
- Children will be able to describe situations in which they can show compassion and help others.

Before the lesson, review Luke 10:25-37 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the Good Samaritan provides an opportunity to **teach the children the importance of helping others.**

Item(s) needed: none

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they spend some time thinking about how nothing can separate them from the love of God? Ask them to share anything they have learned about God's love.

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Divide the children into groups of 2-3. Tell them to talk in their groups about some needs they have seen in the area where they live (they should not share names of people). What have they seen their neighbours struggling with? How could they help? After five minutes, have the children raise their hands to share the needs they discussed. Choose one student volunteer to write a list of needs on the black board or a piece of paper. Tell the children that everyone has the ability to help their neighbours in some way, even if it is small.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 24, and look at picture 58. Read the story from the Bible in Luke 10:25-37 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Jesus told a story about a man who was on a journey. Robbers attacked him and stole everything he had. They beat him up and ran away, leaving him half dead.
- A priest was walking on the same road. But when he saw the man who had been beaten up, he walked by on the other side of the road.

- Later, a temple helper walked by. But when he saw the man who had been beaten up, he went by on the other side also.
- A man from Samaria then came travelling along that road. When he saw the man, he felt sorry for him and helped him. He even paid for the man to stay at an inn, and he gave the innkeeper money to help care for him.
- Jesus said that we should be like the Samaritan man and help those who are in need.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Jesus told many parables (or stories) to illustrate God's truths. He told the parable of the Good Samaritan to help religious leaders see how important it is to **care for others**.
- Neither the priest nor the temple helper was willing to stop and check on the man who had been hurt. However, the Samaritan man was willing to help. He went out of his way to take care of the injured man.
- The man who was hurt was probably a Jew. The Jews and the Samaritans were from different tribes. They did not like each other. Normally, they would not have had anything to do with each other. But the Samaritan man overlooked that and still helped the injured man.
- Jesus told this parable to show that we should be kind to everyone and help others. Jesus showed in this story that a neighbour is everyone we meet. It is important to care for our friends and family. But Jesus also wants us to help others.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What did the first two men do when they saw the injured man?
3. What did the Samaritan man do to help the injured man?
4. What can we **do to help or care for others**?

Memory Verse Activity: Matthew 22:37-39 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Jesus answered: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind. This is the first and most important commandment. The second most important commandment is like this one. And it is, Love others as much as you love yourself. – Matthew 22:37-39

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us how we should love God and people.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

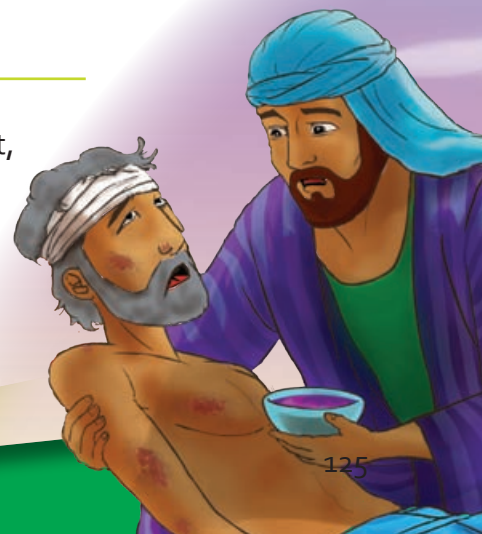
Encourage the children to think of someone in their life that they can help. Ask them to commit to helping that person in some way this week. It could be sweeping the floor or bringing a cup of water to someone who is thirsty. **Ask them to come to class prepared to share how they have helped or cared for someone.**

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- Jesus taught that we should love the Lord with all our heart, soul, strength and mind.
- He also taught that we should love our neighbour in the same way that we love ourselves.
- **We should help and care for others.**

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

59

Peter Walks on Water

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how Peter displayed faith.
- Children will be able to explain how Jesus showed his power over nature.
- Children will be able to identify areas of their life where they can trust Jesus.

Before the lesson, review Matthew 14:22-33 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Jesus walking on water provides an opportunity to discuss how Jesus has power over nature and **is always in control**. It is also an example of how we should keep our eyes on Jesus.

Item(s) needed: none

★ God's Big Story Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Ask them to share how they helped someone and how the other person responded.

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Divide the group into three sections. The first section will be the 'wind'. Have them practice imitating the sound of the wind and waving their hands in the air. The second section will be the 'rain'. Have them practice making rain sounds and imitating falling rain with their hands. The third group will be the 'thunder'. Have them practice imitating the sound of thunder by clapping their hands on their thighs. Show the children the hand signal that you will use to indicate when everyone should stop the sounds and motions.

Then begin telling a story of a huge storm: First, there was a big wind that came up (cue the wind section)! Then there was a sudden rainstorm (cue the rain section)! And then the thunder began (cue the thunder section)! When all three sections are doing their assigned sounds and motions, suddenly use the hand signal for them to stop. There should be immediate silence. Go through the routine another two or three times until everyone responds immediately to your signal and the 'storm' suddenly stops.

Talk about how they will learn today that Jesus has power over nature, including the weather.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 25, and look at picture 59. Read the story from the Bible in Matthew 14:22-32 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- It was the middle of the night. Jesus' disciples were in a boat on a lake. The wind and waves were tossing their boat all around.
- Jesus came walking on the water towards his disciples. When they saw him, they thought he was a ghost. They were frightened and started screaming.
- Jesus said to them, "Don't worry! I am Jesus. Don't be afraid."
- Peter said, "Lord, if it is really you, tell me to come to you on the water."
- "Come on!" Jesus said. Peter then got out of the boat and started walking on the water towards him.
- But when Peter saw how strong the wind was, he was afraid and started sinking. He shouted, "Save me, Lord!" Straight away, Jesus reached out his hand. He helped Peter up.
- When Jesus and Peter got into the boat, the wind died down. The men in the boat worshipped Jesus and said, "You really are the Son of God!"

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- At times there may be difficulties in our lives that feel like storms. We might not know how to escape from them. Jesus is always with us, even when it doesn't feel like it.
- Peter had the faith to step out of the boat. We can ask God to give us more faith to trust in him.
- Jesus was there for Peter when he lost faith. He saved him from drowning. Jesus' presence with us is not dependent on what we do. He is always with us. **He is always in control.** He always cares for us.
- Jesus is all-powerful. He stopped the storm by speaking to it.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What did Peter do when he saw Jesus?
3. What did Jesus do when Peter began to drown?
4. How did Jesus show his power over nature?
5. What are some areas of your life where you can trust Jesus?

Memory Verse Activity: Psalm 55:22 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Our Lord, we belong to you. We tell you what worries us, and you won't let us fall. – Psalm 55:22

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that **God is in control** and cares for us.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

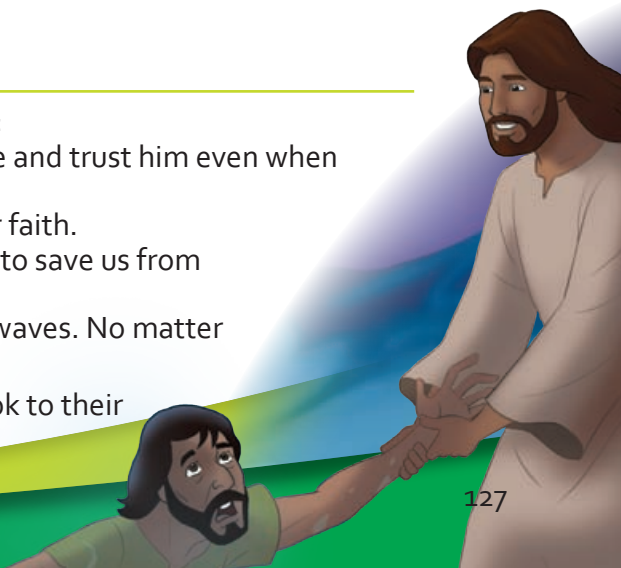
Encourage the children to think of a situation or problem in their life that they can't control. Ask them to pray this week whenever they think of the problem, in order to focus on Jesus and have faith that **he is in control**.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- We should have faith in God for everything in life and trust him even when we don't know what will happen.
- Once we take our eyes off Jesus, we can lose our faith.
- Even when we lose our faith, Jesus is still willing to save us from drowning in that problem.
- Jesus had the power to calm the storm and the waves. No matter what happens, **he is in control**.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

60

Lazarus

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how Jesus showed compassion and concern.
- Children will be able to explain how Jesus showed his power over death.
- Children will be able to explain the connection between **believing in Jesus and eternal life**.

Before the lesson, review John 11:1-45 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Lazarus provides an opportunity to discuss how much Jesus cares about us and about the difficulties we may face. It is also a good time to talk about Jesus' power over everything and the connection between **believing in Jesus and eternal life**.

Item(s) needed: paper, pencils, and crayons (if available)

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they pray about a difficult situation throughout the week? Were they able to believe that God is in control?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Give each child a piece of paper, a pencil, and crayons (if available). Have them create a "Get Well Card" for someone they know who is sick. In case a child does not know of someone who is sick, suggest someone that they can make a card for.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 25 and look at picture 60. Read the story from the Bible in John 11:1-6, 17-44 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Jesus' friend, Lazarus, was very sick. Lazarus had two sisters, Mary and Martha.
- The sisters sent a message to Jesus to tell him that Lazarus was sick.
- When Jesus heard this, he said, "His sickness won't end in death. It will bring glory to God and his Son."
- Jesus did not arrive until Lazarus had already been dead for four days.
- Jesus told Martha, "Your brother will live again!" He said, "I am the one who raises the

dead to life! Everyone who has faith in me will live, even if they die. And everyone who lives because of faith in me will never really die. Do you believe this?"

- When Jesus saw that Mary and the people with her were crying, he was terribly upset. He started crying.
- There was a stone rolled against the entrance of the tomb. Jesus told the people to roll the stone away. He prayed to the Father. Then he called out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"
- Lazarus, who had been dead, walked out of the tomb. His hands and feet were wrapped with strips of burial cloth, and a cloth covered his face. Jesus then told the people, "Untie him and let him go."

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Jesus cried with Mary and Martha after their brother had died. God understands everything that we go through. He is always with us, and he cares about the things that concern us.
- God is more powerful than anyone or anything else. He has power over life and death. He knows all things. He knew that Lazarus would die and then be raised to life to bring glory to God.
- **Everyone who has faith in Jesus will live for eternity in heaven after they die here on earth.**

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. How did Jesus show his power over death?
3. What did Jesus mean when he said that he was the one who raises the dead to life?
4. What should we do in order to live forever with God?

Memory Verse Activity: John 11:25 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Jesus then said, "I am the one who raises the dead to life! Everyone who has faith in me will live, even if they die." – John 11:25

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that anyone who believes in Jesus will have eternal life.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

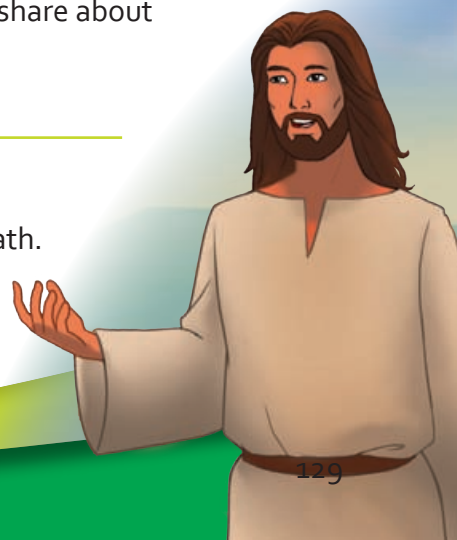
Challenge the children to give the card that they made today to the person who is not well. Ask the children to encourage the person by sharing with them how God has power over everything and that they can always find hope in him. If a student does not know of anyone who is sick, challenge them to encourage someone in their community who is going through a difficult time. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God loves us and understands what we experience.
- Jesus has authority and power over everything, including death.
- Anyone who believes in Jesus and accepts him as Lord and Saviour will **live with Jesus forever in heaven.**

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

61

The Triumphal Entry



Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to identify two Old Testament prophecies fulfilled by Jesus.
- Children will be able to describe how people worshipped Jesus in the past and how we can worship him today.

Before the lesson, review Matthew 21:1-11 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Jesus' triumphal entry provides an opportunity to discuss how the prophecies Jesus fulfilled show that he is God's Son and that the Bible is truth. It is also a good time to talk about how **people worship Jesus**.

Item(s) needed: none

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Who did they give their card to or encourage? What did they share about God's power? How did the person respond?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Ask the students if they have ever seen a famous person or someone with authority walk past them. Ask them how people around the famous person behaved. If there is time, have some of the students play the part of a king or queen and ask the other students to act out how they would respond if they saw the king or queen near them. Explain that today's lesson is about how people responded to Jesus when they saw him.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 26 and look at picture 61. Read the story from the Bible in Matthew 21:1-11 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- It was the feast of Passover in Jerusalem. When the people heard that Jesus was coming for the festival, they went out to greet him.
- Jesus found a donkey and rode on it. This was written in the Old Testament many years before Jesus came to earth, "Announce to the people of Jerusalem: 'Your king is coming to you! He is humble and rides on a donkey. He comes on the colt of a donkey.'"
- Many people spread clothes in the road, while others put down branches which they had cut from trees.
- The people shouted, "Hooray for the Son of David! God bless the one who comes in the name of the Lord!"

- Everything happened exactly as the Scriptures said it would.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- There are many prophecies in the Old Testament that Jesus fulfilled. A prophecy was a message that God told to people about something that was going to happen in the future. In the story of Jesus' Triumphal Entry, we see two Old Testament prophecies about Jesus that were fulfilled.
- God had promised King David that one of his descendants would be a king forever. Jesus fulfilled this promise. He was from the family of David. He is the King of kings, and he will reign forever.
- The Scriptures also said that Jesus would ride into Jerusalem on a donkey. This is another prophecy about Jesus that he fulfilled.
- When God makes a promise in the Bible, we can be sure that he will fulfil it, just like the prophecies about Jesus were fulfilled.
- **The people around Jesus worshipped him** by going out to greet him, waving palm branches, and shouting words of excitement. They thought that he was a king who was going to rescue them from the people who ruled over them. They did not realize that Jesus had come to rescue them in a different way. He came to rescue people from their sins by dying on the cross and rising from the dead.
- Today we worship God through praise and worship. But more than that, **we worship God by living lives that please him.**

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What two things recorded in the Old Testament as prophecies came true in this story?
3. What can we learn from this story about the truth of the Scriptures?
4. **How did the people respond to Jesus and worship him** when he entered the city?
5. What are ways that **we can worship Jesus**?

Memory Verse Activity: Psalms 145:13 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Your kingdom will never end, and you will rule forever. Our Lord, you keep your word and do everything you say. – Psalm 145:13

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that God is faithful and that everything he has promised will happen.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

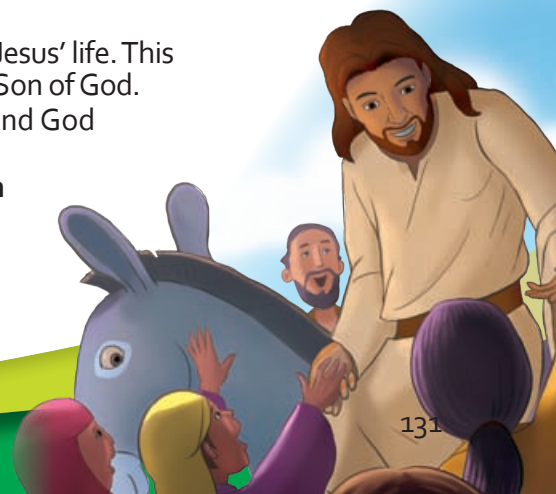
Encourage the children to identify other prophecies in the Old Testament that were fulfilled by Jesus's life, death, and resurrection. For the students who do not have Bibles, you may want to assign them groups to work in throughout the week with someone who does have a Bible. They may have an opportunity to share what they've learned during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- Many Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled through Jesus' life. This reminds us that God's Word is true and that Jesus is the Son of God.
- We can believe everything the Bible says. It is truth, and God always fulfils the promises he makes.
- **We can worship Jesus by spending time with him in prayer, reading the Bible, singing worship songs, attending church, and making decisions with our lives that are pleasing to him.**

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

62

The Last Supper



Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe what the bread and wine in communion represent.
- Children will be able to define the word betrayal.

Before the lesson, review Matthew 26:14-35 to understand the context of the lesson. The stories of Judas and the last supper provide an opportunity to discuss what it is like to be betrayed. It is also a good time to talk about **the practice of communion and what it represents**.

Item(s) needed: items to set a table for a special meal, along with a treat for the children (if available)

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Ask whether any of the students found more prophecies in the Old Testament that Jesus fulfilled. What were they? How did he fulfil them?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Set a table in the classroom like it would be set for a special meal. Tell the students that sometimes when we want to bless our friends or say a special goodbye, we gather around the table with those we love. Then, as time allows, gather the children around the table and pretend to have a meal together. You may want to bring an actual treat to share with them. Tell them that today they are going to learn the special meaning of the last supper Jesus shared with his friends.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 26 and look at picture 62. Read the story from the Bible in Matthew 26:14-35 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Judas Iscariot, one of Jesus' twelve disciples, went to the chief priests and agreed to betray Jesus for thirty silver coins.
- Jesus celebrated the Passover meal with his disciples. It was his last supper.

- While Jesus was eating with his 12 disciples that evening, he said, “The one who will betray me is eating with me now.”
- During the meal, Jesus took some bread in his hands. He blessed the bread and broke it. Then he gave it to his disciples and said, “Take this and eat it. It is my body.”
- Jesus picked up a cup of wine and gave thanks to God. He gave it to his disciples, and said, “Take this and drink it. This is my blood, and with it God makes his agreement with you. It will be poured out, so that many people will have their sins forgiven.”
- Jesus said to his disciples, “All of you will reject me.” Peter spoke up, “Even if all the others reject you, I never will!” Jesus replied, “This very night you will say three times that you don’t know me.”
- But Peter said to Jesus, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never say that I don’t know you!”

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- **The elements of communion have special meaning.** The bread that Jesus blessed and broke represented his body. Jesus’ body was “broken” for us when he died on the cross. The wine that Jesus gave to his disciples represented his blood. His blood was shed when he died on the cross to save people from their sins.
- When we take communion, we remember the special meanings of the elements. We remember the sacrifice that Jesus made for us. And we remember the gift of salvation.
- Judas was one of Jesus’ 12 disciples. He betrayed Jesus. Betrayal means being unfaithful, breaking someone’s trust, or being disloyal. Judas betrayed Jesus when he went to the high priests and agreed to help them arrest Jesus.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. **What does the bread and wine that Jesus shared with his disciples represent?**
3. How did Jesus say Peter would reject him?
4. Have you been betrayed by someone? How did it make you feel?

Memory Verse Activity: John 6:47-48 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher’s guide.

I tell you for certain that everyone who has faith in me has eternal life. I am the bread that gives life! – John 6:47-48

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that Jesus’ death provided a way for us to have eternal life.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Have the children think of times when they may have betrayed the trust of a friend or family member. Encourage them to ask for forgiveness from that person this week.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- **When we take communion, we think about what the bread and wine represent.** We think about how Jesus’s body was broken and his blood was shed so that we could be saved.
- Loyalty and trust are very important in relationships. Jesus wants to help us be good friends and not break anyone’s trust or betray them.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

63

Jesus Arrested



Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how **Jesus desired to do his Father's will**.
- Children will be able to recall that Jesus was innocent and without sin.

Before the lesson, review Matthew 26:47-75 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Jesus' arrest provides an opportunity to discuss how **Jesus wanted to do his Father's will**. It also offers an opportunity to discuss Jesus' innocence and perfection.

Item(s) needed: paper and pencils

★ God's Big Story Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they ask someone they had betrayed for forgiveness? How did the person respond?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide each child with a piece of paper and pencil. Ask them to draw a picture of the hardest thing they have ever had to do. Ask for several volunteers to share what they have drawn. Discuss why the situations were difficult.

Explain that today's lesson is about a very difficult thing that Jesus had to do. Even though it was difficult, he still wanted to do whatever the Father wanted him to do.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 26 and look at picture 63. Read the story from the Bible in Matthew 26:36-56 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Jesus went with his disciples to a garden called Gethsemane where he prayed. The disciples were so sleepy that they could not stay awake to pray or be with Jesus.
- Jesus wanted to do what God, his Father, wanted him to do. He prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, don't make me suffer by making me drink from this cup. But do what you want, and not what I want."
- While they were in the Garden of Gethsemane, Judas, the betrayer, arrived with a large mob armed with swords and clubs. Judas kissed Jesus to show the mob who he was. The men grabbed Jesus and arrested him.
- One of Jesus' followers pulled out a sword. He struck the servant of the high priest and

cut off his ear. But Jesus told him to put his sword away.

Explain that the people who had arrested Jesus took him to be tried at the house of Caiaphas, the high priest. While he was at his trial, Peter waited outside. Continue the story by reading Matthew 26:69-75.

- That night, Peter denied Jesus three times, just like Jesus said that he would. He swore, "I don't even know that man!"
- When Peter remembered what Jesus had told him, he cried hard.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Jesus knew that he was going to have a very difficult, painful experience. **But despite the difficulty, he wanted to do his Father's will.**
- Jesus was perfect. Still the religious leaders arrested him. They were jealous of him because many people followed him. They hated that he told them that they were wicked and did not really know God.
- Jesus is all-powerful. There is nothing he cannot do. But he did not resist arrest. He willingly went with those who arrested him. He did this because he loved us and wanted to do his Father's will.
- We also have situations where it is difficult to do God's will. Sometimes he asks us to do things that are hard. But he always gives us the strength to obey him if we ask him for his help. If we hear of someone being accused of something they did not do, God will help us speak the truth. We should not accuse anyone of things they did not do.
- Peter also faced a challenge. But it was very different. He did not do what was right. Just like Jesus had predicted, Peter denied Jesus three times. There may be times when it would be easier for us to deny Jesus. But God is pleased when we do what is right and acknowledge Jesus.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. Why did Jesus allow himself to be arrested?
3. **How did Jesus do his Father's will?**
4. **How can we do God's will?**

Memory Verse Activity: Philippians 2:8 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Christ was humble. He obeyed God and even died on a cross. – Philippians 2:8

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that **Jesus did his Father's will.**

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to identify something that might be difficult for them to do but that they know is **part of God's will**. Encourage them to make sure that they do it this week. They may have an opportunity to share their experience during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- Jesus was innocent, yet he was arrested.
- **Despite how hard it was, Jesus did his Father's will.**
- Jesus had the power to save himself but he chose to fulfil God's purpose for him.
- God will give us courage to be bold and tell others about Jesus. We should not accuse people of things they did not do. Instead, we should always tell the truth and do what is right.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

64

The Cross

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to recall the events surrounding Jesus' crucifixion.
- Children will be able to explain how **Jesus' death on the cross paid the price for our sin in full.**

Before the lesson, review Matthew 27:1-66 to understand the context of the lesson. Today's story provides an opportunity to discuss how **Jesus' death on the cross paid the price for our sins.**

Item(s) needed: none

★ God's Big Story Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Were they able to do something that they knew God wanted them to do?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Ask the children if they have experienced what it is to take someone else's punishment. Ask them why they did it, what it was like, and how the other person reacted. Explain that today's lesson is about the way in which **Jesus took the punishment for our sins.**

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

Provide the children with the following background to the story:

- Jesus was taken to the Roman governor, Pilate, to be tried.
- Pilate questioned Jesus. When the chief priests and leaders brought their charges against him, he said nothing.
- The people asked Pilate to release Barabbas, who was a terrorist. They cried out for Jesus to be nailed to a cross.

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 27 and look at picture 64. Read the story from the Bible in Matthew 27:28-35, 45-61 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- The governor's soldiers stripped off Jesus' clothes and put a scarlet robe on him. They made a crown out of thorn branches and placed it on his head. They mocked Jesus and spit on him. They beat him.
- They led him to a place known as "The Skull". There, Jesus was nailed to the cross.
- At noon the sky turned dark and stayed that way until three o'clock. Once again Jesus shouted, and then he died.

- At the moment when Jesus died, the curtain in the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, and rocks split apart. Graves opened, and many of God's people were raised to life.
- The officer and the soldiers guarding Jesus felt the earthquake and saw everything else that happened. They were frightened and said, "This man really was God's Son!"
- Jesus was buried in the tomb of Joseph from Arimathea. A big stone was rolled against the entrance to the tomb.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Since Adam and Eve sinned, all people have been separated from God because of sin. Our sins are a roadblock between us and God. (Isaiah 59:2)
- This is true of all people. Everyone has sinned. (Romans 3:23)
- We all deserve to be punished for our sins. Because God is holy and just, he cannot tolerate sin. The punishment for our sins should be death. (Romans 6:23)
- There is nothing that we can do to pay the price for our sins. Even the best things we do are like dirty rags to God. (Isaiah 64:6)
- Because he loved people so much, God made a way for our relationship with him to be restored. He sent his Son, Jesus, to save us. Jesus was fully man and fully God. He lived a perfect life. He came to pay the price for our sins. **When he died on the cross, he took the punishment for our sins on himself.** (1 Peter 2:24)
- When Jesus died, the curtain in the temple tore in two from top to bottom. This curtain had separated the holiest place in the temple from the rest of it. God's holiness was so great behind the curtain that the people could not enter because of their sin. Only the high priest could go behind the curtain. And even then, he could only go once a year. The tearing of the curtain showed that Jesus made it possible for us to go directly to God.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What happened immediately after Jesus died?
3. Why did Jesus die on the cross?

Memory Verse Activity: Isaiah 53:5 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

He was wounded and crushed because of our sins; by taking our punishment, he made us completely well. – Isaiah 53:5

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that **Jesus took the punishment for our sins.**

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to find one friend from their class during the week and spend some time together thanking **Jesus for paying the price for their sins** by dying on the cross.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- **Jesus paid the price for sin when he died on the cross.**
- Jesus is the Son of God. He is the only person who could take the punishment for sins, because he had never sinned.
- If we acknowledge Jesus as Lord and Saviour and repent of all our sins, we can have a relationship with God. God forgives all our sins.
- We can come into the presence of God at any time. We do not need any other person or thing to connect us to him.
- If any children have not invited Jesus Christ into their hearts to take away their sins and give them eternal life, they can do so.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

65

The Empty Tomb

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe the significance of Jesus' death and resurrection.
- Children will be able to recall the events surrounding Jesus' resurrection.

Before the lesson, review Matthew 28:1-10 and John 20:1-23 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the empty tomb provides an opportunity to discuss the fact that Jesus is alive. **He conquered sin and death.** Because of him, we can receive the gift of eternal life.

Item(s) needed: small stone or other small object to represent a stone

★ God's Big Story Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did any of the children meet with a friend from their class and spend time thanking Jesus for paying the price for their sins by dying on the cross? Ask the children to share what they learned.

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Select two to four volunteers. Have each volunteer stand on one foot and extend the other foot in front of them. Place a stone or an object representing a stone on their extended foot. The volunteer who is able to balance the stone for the longest wins.

Explain that today's lesson includes a very big stone that was in front of Jesus' tomb.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 27 and look at picture 65. Read the story from the Bible in Matthew 28:1-10 and John 20:19-23 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- When the women went to the tomb, they did not find Jesus' body. There was an earthquake, and an angel appeared. He told the women not to be afraid and that Jesus had risen from the dead.
- As the women went to tell the disciples, Jesus met them. They worshipped him. Jesus told them to tell the disciples where to meet him.

- That evening, Jesus appeared to his disciples. They were very happy to see him. He said to them, "I am sending you, just as the Father has sent me." He breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Jesus was alive! This was big news! God sent an angel who had an amazing appearance. When the angel came down, there was a strong earthquake. The angel looked as bright as lightening and his clothes were bright white. He told the women the best news that the world has ever heard!
- Before Jesus died, he said that he would give his life up to rescue many people. (Mark 10:45) This promise was fulfilled when he died and rose again. Jesus died on purpose. It was not an accident. He suffered and died for everyone who would believe in him.
- The consequence for our sins should be death. (Romans 6:20) **When Jesus rose from the dead, he showed that he was more powerful than sin and death.**
- Because Jesus died and rose again, he made a way for us to be able to have eternal life. This means that everyone who has believed in Jesus as their Lord and Saviour will live forever in heaven with him.
- Trusting in Jesus as our Saviour is the only way we are able to spend eternity with God in heaven. God is holy and just, and he cannot tolerate sin. People who do not accept Jesus as their Saviour will spend eternity separated from God in hell.
- Jesus died for our sins so that we could live with him forever. But he also came to impact our lives on earth. He said he came so we could have life and have it in its fullest. (John 10:10) Jesus wants to be a part of our lives today.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. How would you have felt if you saw the angel who looked like lightening?
3. Why is it **important that Jesus rose from the dead?**
4. What does it mean to be a follower of Jesus?

Memory Verse Activity: John 5:24 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

I tell you for certain that everyone who hears my message and has faith in the one who sent me has eternal life and will never be condemned. They have already gone from death to life. – John 5:24

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that **Jesus' victory over death** means that we can live forever with him and not spent eternity in hell.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Encourage the children to share the exciting news about **Jesus' victory over death** with a friend or family member. Challenge them to tell their friends the story of Jesus' death and resurrection and invite them to class.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- **Jesus overcame sin and death when he rose from the dead.**
- God is faithful and fulfils his promises.
- In order to live forever with Jesus, we must believe in him and accept him as our Lord and Saviour.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

66

The Great Commission

Teacher
Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to recall the last command that Jesus gave before returning to heaven. Before the lesson, review Matthew 28:16-20, Mark 16:14-18, and Acts 1:6-11 to understand the context of the lesson. Today's story provides an opportunity to discuss the Great Commission and **God's desire for all people to know him**.

Item(s) needed: 3 candles, match box with match sticks, jar (with cover or lid) to hold the candle

★ God's Big Story
Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they share the story of Jesus' resurrection with their friends or invite them to class? How did they respond? If there are any new students, be sure to welcome them to class.

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Light one candle and hold it out so the children can see it. Explain that Jesus is the light of the world, and we are all called to share the good news of his death and resurrection with others. Use the candle to light the other candles.

Then place the first candle in the jar. Explain that God wants us to share the message of Jesus with others. But sometimes people keep the good news to themselves. Place the cover or lid on the jar. After a few moments, the flame will dim and then go out.

Explain that today's lesson is about the last command that Jesus gave his disciples. He told them to help other people become his disciples.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 28 and look at picture 66. Read the story from the Bible in Matthew 28:16-20 and Acts 1:6-11 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Jesus' disciples went to a mountain where Jesus had told them to meet him. Jesus appeared to them. They worshipped him.
- Jesus said, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth! Go to the people of all nations and make them my disciples. Baptize them in the name of the Father, the

Son, and the Holy Spirit and teach them to do everything I have told you. I will be with you always, even until the end of the world.”

- Jesus also told his disciples, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you and give you power. Then you will tell everyone about me in Jerusalem, in all Judea, in Samaria, and everywhere in the world.”
- After Jesus said these things to his disciples, and while they were watching, he was taken up into a cloud.
- Two men dressed in white clothes appeared to the disciples and said, “Why are you standing here and looking up into the sky? Jesus has been taken to heaven. But he will come back in the same way that you have seen him go.”

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- The last thing that Jesus shared with his disciples was something he wanted them to remember. It was very important! It is called the “Great Commission”. To commission someone means to give them the instruction and authority to do something. When Jesus commissioned the disciples, he gave them the direction and the ability to do what he had said.
- Jesus told his disciples to help other people become his disciples. A disciple is someone who learns from and follows Jesus. Knowing who Jesus is does not make a person a disciple of Jesus. Being a disciple of Jesus is much more than that. Being a disciple means learning from him. A disciple tries to follow all of Jesus’ teachings and become more like him. The things that are important to Jesus are important to a disciple, and a disciple’s life shows these things. (John 15:8)
- God loves the people of the world so much. **He wants all people to know him and have a relationship with him.** He desires that everyone know the truth and be saved. (1 Timothy 2:4) As disciples, it is our responsibility to go tell others and teach them about the Word of God.
- It does not matter how young or old you are; everyone can tell others about Jesus.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What did Jesus tell his disciples to do?
3. **What does it mean to know God?**
4. How can we help other people become disciples of Jesus?

Memory Verse Activity: John 15:8 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher’s guide.

When you become fruitful disciples of mine, my Father will be honoured. – John 15:8

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that **God is pleased when people know him.**

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

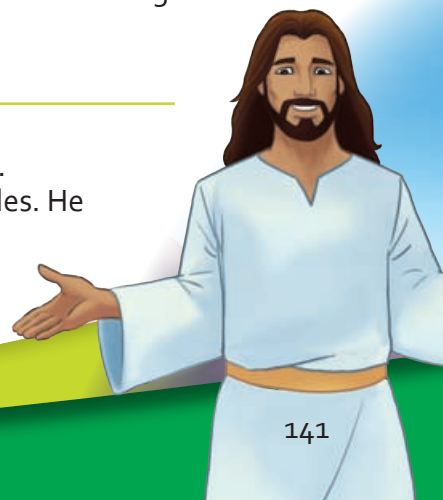
Encourage the children to share the good news about Jesus with someone who might not know him. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God loves people so much. **He wants all people to know him.**
- Jesus told his disciples to help other people become his disciples. He asks us to do the same thing.
- A disciple is someone who learns from Jesus and tries to live like him.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



The Day of Pentecost

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe the transformation that occurred in Peter's life.
- Children will be able to describe the characteristics of the Holy Spirit.
- Children will be able to identify ways **the Holy Spirit can give them power**.

Before the lesson, review Acts 2:1-47 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Pentecost provides an opportunity to teach children about the Holy Spirit. It is also a good time to talk about how the **Holy Spirit can give them power to follow Christ**.

Item(s) needed: paper, pencils and crayons (if available)



Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they have an opportunity to share about Jesus with someone who might not know him? What was their response?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide paper, pencil, and crayons (if available) to the children. Ask them to draw something they waited a long time for. Perhaps they waited a long time to see a person who lives far away from them. Ask them to describe what it was like to wait and how they felt when they finally got what they had been waiting for. *Note:* Some of them may still be waiting. Emphasize that God always fulfils his promises. Explain that today's lesson is about the gift of the Holy Spirit whom Jesus' disciples received after waiting for a long time.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 28 and look at picture 67. Read the story from the Bible in Acts 2:1-13 and Acts 2:38-47 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- One day all of Jesus' followers were together in one place. Suddenly there was a noise from heaven like the sound of a mighty wind!
- They saw what looked like fiery tongues moving in all directions, and a tongue came and settled on each person. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and they began speaking whatever languages the Spirit let them speak. A crowd gathered, because of the noise. When the crowd heard Jesus' followers speaking in different languages, they were excited and amazed.

- Peter stood up and boldly preached the message of Jesus to the crowd. He explained that Jesus was God’s Son and told them how Jesus rose from the dead.
- The crowd asked Peter what they should do. Peter told them to turn back to God and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.
- On that day, about 3,000 believed and were baptized.
- The people who believed in Jesus were united. They sold what they owned and used the money to help others. They praised God. More people believed in Jesus.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- There is only one God. But he exists as three distinct persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each of the three is fully God.
- The sound of the wind and the fire were physical signs of the Holy Spirit’s presence. The Holy Spirit is always present, although we cannot usually see him. But if we pay attention, we can be aware that he is with us.
- The people in the crowd spoke many different languages. However, each person heard what Jesus’ followers were saying in their own language. They were amazed.
- After Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit, he became very brave in sharing the good news about Jesus. His life had been transformed since the time he had denied Jesus three times. He was no longer ashamed of Jesus. **The Holy Spirit is with us today and gives us power to follow Jesus.**

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What were the visible signs showing that the Holy Spirit had come?
3. After Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit, how was he changed?
4. In what ways would you like to ask the **Holy Spirit to give you power?**

Memory Verse Activity: John 14:26 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher’s guide.

But the Holy Spirit will come and help you, because the Father will send the Spirit to take my place. The Spirit will teach you everything and will remind you of what I said while I was with you. – John 14:26

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that **the Holy Spirit gives us power and helps us follow Jesus.**

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to take time this week to write down some things they know about God, Jesus, and the Bible. Tell them that it is the Holy Spirit who reminds us of those things. They may be able to share some of the things they write down during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- The Holy Spirit helps us day after day to be mindful of God.
- The Holy Spirit helps us to remember God’s Word.
- The Holy Spirit helps us in our weaknesses and prays to the Father for us when we don’t know what to say. (Romans 8:26)
- The Holy Spirit lives in us, will always be in us, and will guide us to God as we are his children.
- **The Holy Spirit can give you power in the same way he gave Peter power.**

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

68

A Disabled Man Healed

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how the disabled man responded when he was healed.
- Children will be able to express that God still performs miracles through his followers today.

Before the lesson, review Acts 3:1-10 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the disabled man who was healed provides an opportunity to discuss how **we should be thankful to God for the blessings and miracles in our lives**. It is also a good time to talk about God's healing power and how God still performs miracles through his followers today.

Item(s) needed: none

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. What things did they write down about God, Jesus, and the Bible?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Divide the class in two teams and have a relay race with the children. Ask the children to run the race jumping on one foot. When the race is over, have the students repeat the race, but this time with the students running normally. Ask:

1. Which race was easier to run?
2. What was the hardest part about running while jumping on one foot?
3. Do you think it is important to be thankful to God for having a healthy body?

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 28 and look at picture 68. Read the story from the Bible in Acts 3:1-10 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- One day Peter and John were on their way to the temple to pray.
- A man who had been born lame was being carried to the temple door. Each day he was



placed beside this door. He sat there and begged from the people who were going in.

- The man saw Peter and John entering the temple, and he asked them for money.
- Peter said, "I don't have any silver or gold! But I will give you what I do have. In the name of Jesus Christ from Nazareth, get up and start walking." Peter then took him by the right hand and helped him up.
- At once the man's feet and ankles became strong, and he jumped up and started walking. He went with Peter and John into the temple, walking and jumping and praising God. Everyone saw him walking around and praising God. They were very surprised.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Peter healed the disabled man through the power of Jesus' name. Even though Jesus had gone up to heaven, the Holy Spirit was with his disciples. The disciples continued to do the work of Jesus. Miracles have not stopped happening. God still performs miracles through his followers today.
- After the man was healed, he was so excited and thankful. He was jumping and praising God for what had happened to him.
- We have received many blessings from God and should thank him for them. The greatest gift that he has given us is the gift of salvation. Because of that gift, we can live forever with Jesus in heaven.
- We should express our **thankfulness to God** every day.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What did Peter say to the disabled man?
3. What did the man do after he was healed?
4. How can we express our **thankfulness** to God?

Memory Verse Activity: Psalm 118:1 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Tell the Lord how thankful you are, because he is kind and always merciful. – Psalm 118:1

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us to **always be thankful to God**.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to start a list of things they are **thankful to God for**. Encourage them to add at least one thing to the list each day. They may have an opportunity to share their list during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- Just like the healed man was grateful to God, **we also need to be thankful to God for the blessings he gives us and for the prayers he answers**.
- There is power in the name of Jesus to perform miracles. There is no other name like his.
- When there is a need in our lives or in the life of someone we know, we should pray for that need and have faith that God will meet that need, because he still works miracles.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

69

The Death of Stephen

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to identify why the religious leaders were angry with Stephen and killed him.
- Children will be able to identify how God empowered Stephen to stand up against the religious leaders.

Before the lesson, review Acts 6:8-15 and Acts 7:1-60 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Stephen provides an opportunity to discuss the **importance of forgiving others**. It is also a good time to talk about the power God can give to a person through the Holy Spirit.

Item(s) needed: none

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they add something each day to the list of things they are thankful for? What is on their lists?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Have the children sit down on the floor. Ask them to stand up without letting their hands touch the floor. Then put the children in pairs. Have one child in each pair sit down and tell the second child to help their partner stand up by lending them a hand and pulling them up. Lead the children in a discussion about how some things are easier when you have help. Explain that today's lesson will help us understand how the Holy Spirit helps us.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 29 and look at picture 69. Read the story from the Bible in Acts 6:8-15 and Acts 7:51-60 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. Explain that today's lesson is about one of the leaders in the early church.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- God gave Stephen the power to perform miracles. However, some people did not like what he was doing. They falsely accused him of saying terrible things about God. They took him to the religious leaders and told lies about Stephen.
- Stephen spoke to all of the people, clearly explaining God's plan through Jesus Christ that can be seen throughout the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit helped Stephen know exactly what to say.

- Stephen said to the Jewish people, “You stubborn and hard-headed people! You are always fighting against the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors did. You have killed the one that God sent, Jesus Christ!”
- When the religious leaders heard Stephen’s speech, they were very angry.
- But Stephen was filled with the Holy Spirit. He looked toward heaven, and he saw God and Jesus standing at his right side. He told the people, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right side of God!” The religious leaders were furious at Stephen’s words. They attacked Stephen and started throwing stones at him.
- As Stephen was being stoned to death, he knelt down and shouted, “Lord, don’t blame them for what they have done.” Then he died.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- The Holy Spirit empowered Stephen to perform great miracles. He also had the confidence to speak and knew the words to say because he was filled with the Holy Spirit. No matter what happened, Stephen kept speaking the truth. He did not deny Jesus. Instead, he spoke boldly. In the same way, the Holy Spirit empowers us today. He will help us as we seek him.
- Stephen was a man of good character. He forgave people who wronged him. Even as he was being killed, he forgave the people who were killing him and asked God to forgive them.
- God gives us the ability to **forgive others**. By believing in Jesus, we can be forgiven of all of our sins. We can then forgive others. If you do not forgive, we are disobeying God, and there is a danger that we might become bitter. Bitterness can hurt our relationship with God and with other people. We can ask God to help us forgive others.
- Stephen did what was right even when it was hard. In the same way, the Holy Spirit gives us power to do what is right even when it is hard.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What did the Holy Spirit empower Stephen to do?
3. How did Stephen react when the people threw stones at him?
4. What can the Holy Spirit empower us to do today?
5. What might we need to **forgive others** for?

Memory Verse Activity: Colossians 3:13 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher’s guide.

Put up with each other, and forgive anyone who does you wrong, just as Christ has forgiven you. – Colossian 3:13

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us of **the importance of forgiving those who do wrong to us**.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Have the children think of someone with whom they are angry. Encourage them to pray for that person this week. If possible, they can find the person and tell them that they forgive him or her.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- The Holy Spirit can empower each of us to speak with courage about Jesus and do what is right, even when it is difficult.
- **We should always be willing to forgive** those who hurt us, because God forgave us of all our sins.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



Paul's Conversion

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to identify what Saul was like before he met Jesus.
- Children will be able to recall the interaction that Saul had with Jesus on the road to Damascus.
- Children will be able to identify the change that took place in Saul's life.

Before the lesson, review Acts 9:1-19 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Paul's conversion provides an opportunity to discuss Saul's interaction with Jesus and the **change that takes place when people meet Jesus**.

Item(s) needed: paper, pencil, crayons (if available), a plant seed, an actual plant grown from the seed or a photo (if available)

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Was it hard to forgive the person? How did the other person react?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide each child with a piece of paper. Show them the seed, and ask them to draw a picture of what they think it will become. Once they have completed their drawings, show them an actual plant or photo of the plant (if available) or tell them what type of seed it is. Discuss the changes that take place within the seed and how it becomes a plant. Explain that today's lesson will be about the changes that took place in the life of a man named Saul.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 29 and look at picture 70. Read the story from the Bible in Acts 9:1-19 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Saul kept on threatening to kill the Lord's followers. He tried to have Christians arrested and thrown into prison.
- When Saul was traveling to Damascus to arrest Christians there, a bright light from heaven suddenly flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice that said, "Saul! Saul! Why are you so cruel to me?"
- "Who are you?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus," the Lord answered. "I am the one you are so cruel to."

- Saul was blind for three days. A follower named Ananias prayed for Saul to receive his sight. Something like fish scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see.
- Saul believed in Jesus, and he began telling people the good news of the gospel.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- To "persecute" someone means to do wrong to someone by treating them in a very bad way.
- Saul was persecuting Jesus' followers because he believed they were spreading a wrong message to the Jews. Jesus told Saul that by persecuting the Christians he was also persecuting Jesus. When we do wrong to others, we are also doing wrong to God.
- God has different ways of getting people's attention. In Saul's case, Jesus actually appeared to Saul through a bright light and spoke with him. If we listen closely, we can often hear God speaking to us.
- God used Ananias to heal Saul and to tell him about the Holy Spirit. God also wants us to tell others about him and make a difference in their lives.
- Even though Saul was doing wrong, God still loved him. God does not always like the things we do, but he always loves us. Saul was changed from someone who killed Christians to someone who told others about Jesus. **When we become Christians, our lives can change** and we can have a new start, just like Saul.
- Saul was baptized as a confirmation of his faith in Jesus Christ.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What kind of man was Saul before he met Jesus?
3. How did Jesus appear to Saul? What did he say?
4. What was Saul like after he met Jesus?
5. What are some things in your life you would like to ask **Jesus to help you change**?

Memory Verse Activity: 2 Corinthians 5:17 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Anyone who belongs to Christ is a new person. The past is forgotten, and everything is new. – 2 Corinthians 5:17

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that **Christ wants to change us** and help us live to please him.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

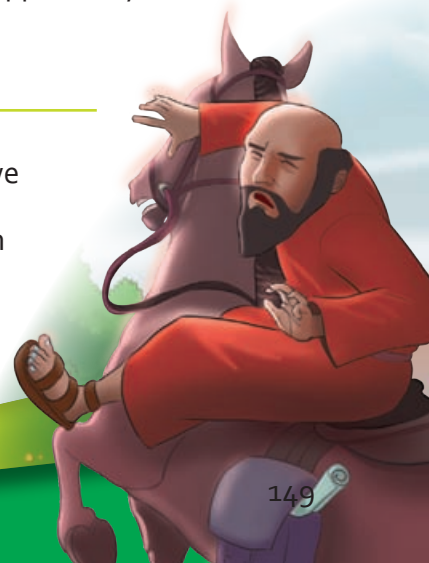
Ask the children to listen quietly for the voice of God. Encourage them to ask him **how he would like to help them change in order to live for him**. Have them write down what they believe they hear. Encourage them to continue to pray about it throughout the week. They should make sure that what they hear aligns with the Bible. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God does not like sin. But he loves each of us no matter what we have done.
- When a person becomes a Christian, **their life changes**. We can have a new beginning in our life. God continues to change the lives of Christians so they can live for him.
- God wants each of us to tell others about him and his love.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

71

Philip and the Ethiopian

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to explain how Philip used the Bible to explain who Jesus was.
- Children will be able to explain how this story shows that **Jesus wants all people to hear the gospel.**
- Children will be able to identify the way in which Philip obeyed the Lord.

Before the lesson, review Acts 8:26-40 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Philip and the Ethiopian provides an opportunity to discuss how **God wants everyone - regardless of nationality, skin colour, or social level - to know the good news about Jesus.** It is also a good time to talk about how we can use the Bible to explain that Jesus is the only way a person can be saved and live forever.

Item(s) needed: pictures of people from different countries and cultures

★ God's Big Story Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they identify some ways the Lord wants to help them change? Were they able to work on them?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Show the children some pictures of people from different countries and cultures. Ask them what they know about those places and cultures. Point out good things about each culture. If there is time, ask students where they would like to visit.

Explain that today's lesson reminds us that **God wants everyone - regardless of nationality, skin colour, or social level - to know the good news about Jesus.**

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 30 and look at picture 71. Read the story from the Bible in Acts 8:26-40 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- The Lord's angel said to Philip, "Go south along the desert road that leads from Jerusalem to Gaza." Philip obeyed God's directions.
- An important Ethiopian official happened to be going along that road in his chariot. The official was sitting in his chariot reading the book of the prophet Isaiah.
- The Holy Spirit told Philip to catch up with the chariot. Philip ran up close and heard

the man reading aloud from the book of Isaiah. Philip asked him, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

- The official answered, "How can I understand unless someone helps me?" He invited Philip to come up and sit beside him.
- Philip began at the Scripture passage the official was reading and explained the good news about Jesus.
- As they were going along the road, they came to a place where there was some water. The official said, "Look! Here is some water. Why can't I be baptized?"
- They both went down into the water, and Philip baptized him.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- Philip obeyed God by going along the desert road and running up to the chariot. God does not usually speak to us out loud, but if we listen carefully we can often hear him speaking to us without audible words. We can listen to him with our "inner ears" when we quiet our mind and our heart.
- Philip used the part of the Bible that the Ethiopian was reading to explain who Jesus was. The Bible tells us clearly that Jesus is the Son of God and that the only way to be saved and live forever is to believe in him as our Lord and Saviour. We can use verses in the Bible to tell others about Jesus.
- God sent Philip to tell someone from a different country about Jesus. It is likely that the man from Ethiopia returned to his country and told people there about Jesus. **God wants everyone from every country to know the good news about Jesus.**

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. How did Philip obey the Lord?
3. How did Philip use the Bible to explain who Jesus was?
4. After Philip explained the good news to the Ethiopian, what did the man want to do?
5. **Whom does God want to hear the good news about Jesus?**

Memory Verse Activity: 1 Timothy 2:4 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

God wants everyone to be saved and to know the whole truth. – 1 Timothy 2:4

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that God **wants people all around the world to know about him.**

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to think of a particular area that they can pray for so that people there will come to know God. They might pray for a village, town, county, or country. Challenge them to pray for the people in that place every day until the next class.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- We can use the Bible to tell others about Jesus.
- It is important that we always obey God when he asks us to do something.
- God loves each and every one of us, no matter where we live or what our culture is.
- **God wants everyone in the world to know the good news about Jesus.**

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

72

Peter's Escape from Prison

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how Peter escaped from prison.
- Children will be able to describe how **God is in control no matter what happens**.

Before the lesson, review Acts 12:1-19 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Peter's escape from prison provides an opportunity to discuss how God hears our prayers and answers them according to his plans for our lives and for his kingdom. It is also a good time to talk about how **God is in control no matter what happens**.

Item(s) needed: pictures of people from different countries and cultures

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they select an area of the country to pray for? What was it? Did they pray throughout the week?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Select two to four volunteers. Explain that all they have to do is stand up straight in front of you, facing away from you. Tell them (one by one) to fall backwards, and you will catch them. If they fall straight back, they get one point. But if their feet move or their knees bend, they don't get a point, since that shows that they did not really trust you. Assure them that they can trust you and that you are in control. You can repeat it several times. The volunteer with the most points wins. Ask them how it felt to fall backwards.

Explain that today's lesson is about a situation where Peter might not have understood what God was doing. But we will see that **God was in control**.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 30 and look at picture 72. Read the story from the Bible in Acts 12:1-19 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- Peter was thrown into prison and four groups of soldiers were guarding him.
- While Peter was being kept in prison, the church never stopped praying to God for him.
- The night before Peter was to be put on trial, he was asleep and bound by two chains. A soldier was guarding him on each side, and two other soldiers were guarding the entrance to the prison.

- Suddenly an angel from the Lord appeared, and light flashed around in the cell. The angel poked Peter in the side and woke him up. Then he said, "Quick! Get up!"
- The chains fell off Peter's hands. Peter followed the angel out of the city.
- Then Peter went to a house where many of the Lord's followers were praying.
- When they saw Peter, they were completely amazed. Peter told them how the Lord had led him out of jail.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- James, one of Jesus' disciples, had just been killed. Then Peter was put into prison. If he had been found guilty at his trial, he might have been killed also.
- It might not have seemed like it, but **God was in control** when James died as well as when Peter escaped from prison. Even when bad things happen, **God is in control**. We can trust him.
- While Peter was in prison, the church kept praying for him. In the same way, we can continue to bring to God the things that concern us. He never gets tired of hearing our prayers. There is power in prayer when Christians gather together and pray.
- God always hears our prayers and answers them according to his plans for our lives and for his kingdom. At times he may not say "yes". But he is always at work in our lives if we have committed our lives to him and are living in a way that pleases him.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. How did God rescue Peter?
3. What did the church do for Peter while he was in prison?
4. What do we learn from Peter's escape from prison?
5. What are some situations that we might not understand and may need to remind ourselves that **God is in control**?

Memory Verse Activity: Zephaniah 3:17 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

The Lord your God wins victory after victory and is always with you. He celebrates and sings because of you, and he will refresh your life with his love. – Zephaniah 3:17

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that **God is always in control** and is always with you. He loves you more than you can even imagine.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

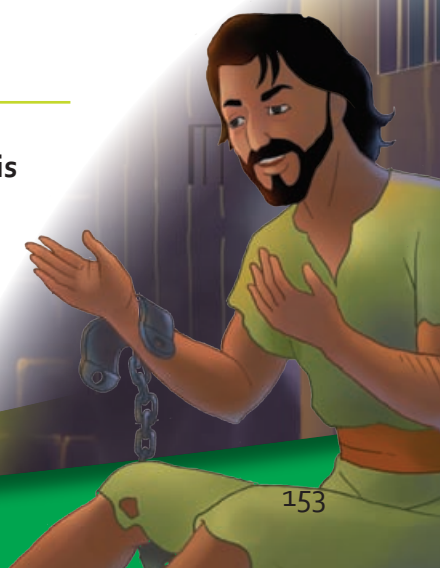
Encourage the children to identify situations this week where they can remind themselves that God is in control. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- God has more power than any king or person in authority. **He is always in control**, no matter the situation.
- God is always with you, no matter where you are.
- God answers the prayers of his people.
- It is important that we continue to pray and never give up, even when a situation seems hopeless.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

73

Paul's Journey



Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how God intervened so that the gospel could be shared.
- Children will be able to identify how God's power was greater than that of Bar-Jesus.

Before the lesson, review Acts 13:1-12 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Paul's journeys and trials provides an opportunity to discuss the fact that **God is more powerful than anyone or anything else**. It is also a good time to talk about how we can respond in difficult situations.

Item(s) needed: a small object to hide in the classroom

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they remind themselves that God was in control? How did that make them feel?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Hide an object somewhere in the room. Tell the children that something is hidden, but don't tell them what it is or where it is. Tell them that their job is to find it. Guide the students in a discussion about how that task is virtually impossible because they don't know where to look and they don't even know what they are looking for. Then tell the students that sometimes things look really hard to accomplish until God steps in. Spend the rest of the activity time giving the children clues about what the object is and where it is hidden until someone finds it.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 30 and look at picture 73. Read the story from the Bible in Acts 13:1-12 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- As the church in Antioch was worshipping and praying, the Holy Spirit told them, "Appoint Barnabas and Saul to do the work for which I have chosen them." (Saul later became known as Paul when the Lord changed his name.)
- Paul and Barnabas left and began to preach God's message.
- They met a Jewish man named Bar-Jesus. He practiced witchcraft and was a false prophet. He greatly opposed Paul and the gospel of Jesus.
- The governor of the island where they were had sent for Barnabas and Paul because

he wanted to hear God's message. But Bar-Jesus tried to keep the governor from having faith in the Lord.

- Paul was filled with the Holy Spirit. He looked straight at Bar-Jesus and said, "You son of the devil! You are a liar, a criminal, and an enemy of everything that is right. The Lord is going to punish you by making you completely blind for a while."
- Suddenly the man's eyes were covered by a dark mist, and he went around trying to get someone to lead him by the hand. When the governor saw what had happened, he was amazed at this teaching about the Lord. He put his faith in the Lord.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- God did not let Bar-Jesus prevent the governor from hearing the good news about Jesus. He wants everyone to hear the good news, and his power can overcome any obstacle.
- God's power amazed the governor, who put his faith in the Lord. **God is all-powerful.** There is no other god or person like him.
- Paul and Barnabas could have been afraid and left when they faced a difficult situation, but they did not let trials stop them from doing the work of God.
- We may face people who will want to discourage us from doing the right thing or telling others about Jesus. If that happens, we need to remember that God's power is greater than anyone who wants to discourage us.
- We need to ask God to give us wisdom and confidence to share the good news about Jesus. We need to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to do his work in us.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. What did God do so that the gospel could be shared?
3. How was **God's power greater** than that of Bar-Jesus?
4. When can we tell others about Jesus?
5. What should we do when we are faced with trials?

Memory Verse Activity: Philippians 3:14 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

I run toward the goal, so that I can win the prize of being called to heaven. This is the prize that God offers because of what Christ Jesus has done. – Philippians 3:14

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us to continue doing what God has planned for us to do.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to think of things that **God is more powerful** than. Encourage them to continue to think of the power of God and thank him for his great power every day this week. They may have an opportunity to share some about their experience during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- We need to use every opportunity to tell others about Jesus, even when it is difficult.
- When faced with problems, we should pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help us.
- Sometimes we will have problems, but they should not discourage us. Instead we should press forward in doing and finishing God's work.
- We need to remember that **God is more powerful than anyone or anything.**

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

74

Paul Shipwrecked

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe how **God protected Paul**.
- Children will be able to describe how Paul responded to the difficulties he encountered.

Before the lesson, review Acts 27-28 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of Paul's shipwreck provides an opportunity to discuss **God's protection**. It is also a good time to talk about how we can respond to difficult situations.

Item(s) needed: a chair for each student (or students can sit on the floor)

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Did they thank God for his power? What are some things that God is more powerful than?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Have the children sit on the floor or on chairs lined up as if they were in a boat. Make noises to represent the sea and the strong wind. Give commands to the children to save the boat from the storm. End the adventure with the class getting shipwrecked on a safe island. A shipwreck occurs when a ship crashes. Ask them about what they will do to keep each other safe until they are rescued. Help them plan ways to survive while help is on the way.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 31 and look at picture 74. Explain that Paul was traveling on a boat to Rome as a prisoner. He had been arrested because of his faithfulness to Jesus. He was going to Rome to stand trial before the Roman Emperor.

Read the story from the Bible in Acts 27:27-44 and Acts 28:1-10 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- For 14 days, there was a fierce storm. Eventually, the ship ran aground on a sandbank.
- God spared the lives of the 276 people on the ship. Not one of them died in the shipwreck.
- The island the ship wrecked on was Malta. The people there were very friendly.

- A snake bit Paul on the hand. Everyone thought he was going to die. But nothing happened to him.
- The governor of the island welcomed Paul and the others. His father was sick. Paul prayed for him and he was healed.
- After this happened, everyone on the island brought their sick people to Paul, and they all were healed.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- **God protected Paul** during the storm, the shipwreck, and when a snake bit him. God also protected Paul by bringing him to an island where the people were friendly and took care of him. In the same way, God is able to protect us.
- Even though Paul was a prisoner, he gave advice to the captain of the ship and the soldiers during the storm to help protect them.
- When others on the boat were discouraged and looking out for themselves, Paul encouraged the people on the ship and persuaded them to eat. In the same way, God can use us to be an encouragement for others who are going through a difficult time.
- In the middle of the crisis on the boat, Paul still gave thanks to God. We, too, can give thanks to God no matter what is happening in our lives.
- While he was on the island, Paul used the opportunity to heal people by praying and placing his hands on them.

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. Why was Paul on the ship?
3. How did Paul respond to difficulties?
4. How did **God protect Paul**?
5. What are some situations where we can trust **God to protect us**?

Memory Verse Activity: Matthew 28:20b (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

I will be with you always, even until the end of the world. – Matthew 28:20b

Explain to the children that the memory verse reminds us that Jesus promises to be with us every day of our lives.

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Tell the children to encourage someone who is going through a difficult time. Tell them to share with that person about God's love for them and how God can protect them. They may have an opportunity to share about their experience with the class during the next lesson.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- **God can protect us from anything that we are facing.**
- God is more powerful than any storm or problem in our life.
- When we are in difficult situations, we need to remember God's power, encourage those around us, and point others towards him.
- Jesus promised to be with us always.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.



LESSON

75

The New Heaven and The New Earth

Teacher Background

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to describe the characteristics of heaven mentioned in the passage.
- Children will be able to describe how Jesus' death and resurrection make eternal life in heaven possible.

Before the lesson, review Revelation 21:1-7 to understand the context of the lesson. The story of the new heaven and the new earth provides an opportunity to discuss what heaven is like and the **great things that God has in store for us**. It is also a good time to talk about how Jesus' death and resurrection make it possible for us to live forever with him in heaven.

Item(s) needed: paper, pencils and crayons (if available)

★ God's Big Story Review Day

Lesson Review: (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story, key points, and memory verse from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the **Review Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide. If time allows, review previous lessons as well.

Challenge Review: (5 minutes)

Ask the children to share about their experience from the challenge in the last lesson. Were they able to encourage someone who was going through a difficult time? What did they say? How did the person respond?

Introductory Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Provide paper, pencils and crayons (if available) to the children. Ask them to draw the most beautiful place they have ever seen or dreamed of. Ask them to tell you things about that place and who is allowed to go there. Ask why the place is so special to them. Give opportunities for them to share as time allows.

Bible Story: (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to page 31 and look at picture 75. Read the story from the Bible in Revelation 21:1-7 out loud with the children. If they are able, have them take part in the reading. Methods of storytelling are available in the **Storytelling Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

Retell the story, emphasizing the following key points:

- In heaven, God will be with us and will make his home among his people.
- God will wipe all tears from our eyes, and there will be no more death, suffering, crying, or pain.
- At the end of time, the new heaven and new earth will be a place for those who have followed Jesus to enjoy restored fellowship with him.
- God will give all of these blessings to those who believe in the gospel of Jesus.

Explain and discuss the following concepts with the children:

- One day, there will be a new heaven and a new earth. There will be no more sadness, tears, pain, or death. God will walk among us there like he did with Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. He will make his home among his people.
- Since Adam and Eve sinned, all people have been separated from God because of sin. God promised to send a Saviour to restore his relationship with humans. He made promises to Eve, Abraham, David, and many others that the Saviour would one day come.
- God fulfilled these promises when he sent his son, Jesus, to earth. Jesus was fully man and fully God. He was tempted in every way we are, but he never sinned. Jesus died on a cross for our sins. The punishment of sin is death, and Jesus took the punishment of our sins on himself.
- God desires for everyone to know him and have a relationship with him. Everyone who accepts Jesus as their Lord and Saviour will live with God in heaven forever.
- Since God is holy and just, he cannot tolerate sin. People who do not accept Jesus as their Lord and Saviour will be separated from God forever in hell.
- After Jesus died and rose again, he returned to heaven. He sent the Holy Spirit to be with those who believe in him. The Holy Spirit lives in us. He guides and comforts us. He also gives us power to tell others the good news about Jesus.
- Everyone who has trusted in Jesus as their Saviour can look forward to **wonderful things in heaven and spending eternity with Jesus.**

Discussion Questions: (5-10 minutes)

After reading or telling the story, discuss the following questions:

1. What is happening in the picture in your book?
2. Jesus promised his disciples he would prepare a place for them. What is this place like?
3. What will be some of the differences between our home in heaven and this world we live in today?
4. Who is allowed in this new heaven and new earth?

Memory Verse Activity: Revelation 21:4 (5-10 minutes)

Select an activity from the **Memory Verse Activities** section in the back of this teacher's guide.

He will wipe all tears from their eyes, and there will be no more death, suffering, crying, or pain. These things of the past are gone forever. – Revelation 21:4

Explain to the children that the memory verses remind us of the **great things God has in store for us.**

Life Challenge: (5 minutes)

Challenge the children to live out everything they have learned throughout all these classes. Encourage them to pick a few of their favourite Life Challenges to continue doing even though this curriculum is over.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Life Application: Remind the children of the following:

- Everyone who accepts Jesus as their Saviour will live with him forever.
- Our lives on this earth are just a tiny moment compared to the wonderful time we'll spend with Jesus for eternity.
- **God has promised us a life of delight in his presence.** In heaven, there will be no more sin, pain, tears, or death.
- Jesus will be our joy forever.
- We will be delighted to see him, to be with him, and to praise him.
- We need to hold on and not give up on our relationship with God. We should look forward to the future where we shall be with him.

Close in prayer. Remind the children to show their book to their parent(s) and tell them the story from today.

Review Activities

Lesson Review

Is that You?

Have all the students stand up. Give directions to the children to sit down or remain standing, depending upon whether or not statements apply to them. Some sample statements include:

- Everyone whose name does NOT start with the letter “A”, please sit down.
- If you have a brother or a sister, remain standing.
- If you’re wearing anything blue, sit down.
- Everyone whose name has an “E” in it, please sit down.

When you have a handful of students still standing, ask each student to quickly review or sum up what the lesson was about or share something that was particularly meaningful to them.

Ready, Set, True or False!

Line the children up shoulder-to-shoulder along a wall or in a line. Create a finish line no more than ten child-size steps ahead of them. Explain that the children will be told true or false statements about the lesson. Once they hear each statement, the children must hold up their hands to indicate whether they think it is true or false. Those who are correct move one giant step forward. Those who are not correct stay put. The goal is to reach the finish line. The following are some example true/false statements from Lesson 44:

- Mordecai is Esther’s father. (F)
- Mordecai discovered a plot against their people. (T)
- Haman hated Mordecai and his people. (T)
- After 5 days of not eating and drinking, Esther went to the King. (F, 3 days)
- The king gave orders to have Haman killed. (T)

What Do You Think?

Have the students review the lesson by responding to true or false statements. Ask the children to stand up if they believe the statement is true or remain sitting if they believe it’s false. The following are some example true/false statements from Lesson 42:

- When the music played, everyone was supposed to bow down and worship the statue of the king. (T)
- There were 3 people thrown into the fiery furnace. (T)
- The king saw only 2 people in the furnace. (F)
- The king saw 4 people walking in the fiery furnace. (T)

Quiz to Win

Split the class into teams. Ask specific questions about the lesson. The team that answers the most questions correctly wins. Consider asking extra questions that are worth double the amount of points, to increase the fun. In case of a tie, be sure to have a tiebreaker question ready to use to end the game.

Say What?

Make one-sentence statements about the lesson, leaving out a word or short phrase. Ask the students to complete the statements by filling in the blank or missing piece aloud simultaneously. Some sample questions include:

1. Abraham had a son named _____.
2. Abraham was about to _____ Isaac, but then God provided a _____ instead.
3. Abraham had faith and _____ in God.

4 Corners

Choose two corners of the room as locations where the students go to as they answer the questions true or false. Then present a question about the story to the students and have them move to the corner they think is the right answer. For example, one corner of the room is designated for true statements and another corner is designated for false statements. Upon hearing the statement, "Abraham sacrificed Isaac," students are to move to one of the two corners, according to whether they believe the statement is true or false.

Talk Show Review

Take a seat at the front of the room and inform the students that you will now be pretending to be a character from the story. Have the students raise their hands and ask you questions about the story and answer them from the perspective of that particular character. This activity not only helps students recall specifics about the lesson and Bible story, but it helps make the people from the story much more relatable to the students.

What Would _____ Do?

The acronym "WWJD" has been made popular as an instant reminder to think about "What would Jesus do?" We can learn much from what other people in the Bible would do, too. Reflecting on this can be a fun and effective way to review a lesson.

Name a character from the story. Ask the students to raise their hands and share specific details and traits they know about the person. Using that information, ask the students to answer the question "What would _____ do?" in response to different possible scenarios.

Telephone

Separate the story into 4 parts. Then divide the children into 4 groups, and have them sit in four circles. Give the leader of each group one of the four parts of the story. Have them whisper it to the person to their right and have it continue until the last person in the circle has heard it. At the end have the last person recite the part of the story he was told. Then go back and compare it to what the leader started with.

Simon Speaks the Truth

Explain that you will be giving the class instructions, but that they must only follow the instructions that are given right after a true statement from the day's lesson. Students who follow the instructions given after a false or incorrect statement are "out." After you've provided a few statements and instructions, allow a student volunteer to do the same.

'Round and 'Round We Go

Have the children sit in a circle. Begin by sharing something about the lesson and toss (throw) a ball to one of the students. That student must then share something he or she remembers from the lesson. Then he or she tosses the ball to the next student. The game continues until everyone has had the opportunity to share something they remember from the lesson.

Memory Verse Review

Quote If You...

Pose different statements to the students and ask that they rise and recite the verse in unison, but only if the statement applies to them. To mix it up, alternate statements that apply to only a few children and statements that refer to the majority. Some sample statements include:

- You are wearing the colour "yellow."
- You are wearing shorts.
- You have a sister.

Bible Verse "Around the World"

Have the students sit in a circle. Select a volunteer to begin, and give him or her a ball. That student starts the game by saying the first word of the memory verse and then tosses the ball to someone else. The process is repeated over and over until the verse is completed. Those who are unable to remember the next word in the verse are "out."

Bible Verse Scramble

Write each word of the verse on an index card (or small piece of paper) and mix them up. Challenge the students to put the word cards in the correct order to reveal the Bible verse. This activity works best in small groups. To increase the challenge, set a time limit in advance.

Can You Remember?

Display the Bible verse for all to read. Remove the verse. Let one child at a time come up to the board and write one word of the verse, in order. When the entire verse is written, have the children read it together. Then, erase the verse and recite it together.

Pass the Rock

Form a circle. Start passing a rock (or another small object) around the circle as you sing a song. When you stop singing, the child with the rock must recite the verse. The game is over when time is called or when everyone has had a turn. To make the game more interesting, give different students a chance to sing and stop singing as the rock goes around.

Taxi

Choose a taxi driver. The driver goes around the classroom picking up other kids who need a ride, but the only way to get a ride is to pay a fare. Instead of paying with money, they have to pay with the memory verse. Have them recite the memory verse aloud and if they can say it correctly they are allowed in the taxi. Have them ride in the taxi, following the driver as he picks up other students. Soon, the taxi will be full and the whole classroom will be in the taxi riding around the classroom.

Mistake Detector

Divide the class into two groups. Recite the verse, but intentionally make a mistake. Each time a mistake is made, teams try to be the first to make a certain noise. Decide on the sound in advance. It might be a dog barking or clapping or the sound of rain. The team who makes the noise must also be able to say how to correct it. They would receive one point for this. Choose certain times for teams to earn bonus points by quoting the verse correctly. If a team signals that a mistake has been made when it has not, a point is deducted.

Storytelling Activities

Picture This

Divide the story into four parts. Then have the children draw a picture for each part. Hold up each picture in order and ask the children to retell their portion of the story.

Story Scramble

Divide the class into small groups and assign each group one portion of the story. Have them create a drawing for their specific part. Next, collect the pictures and as an entire class work together to put the pictures in the correct order to reveal the story.

Ready, Set, Action!

Divide the children into two to four groups (depending on the number of children). Have each group act out the story. Each group will naturally remember different details about the story, and seeing the story from the different perspectives is not only fun, but a great review activity.

Clockwise

Make two circles, one inside the other, and have the students face one another. Have the students take turns telling the story to the person in front of them. After enough time has lapsed for each person to tell the story, have everyone move clockwise one seat and then tell the story again.

Storyteller

Choose two volunteers. One will be the storyteller and the other one will be the actor. The storyteller will tell the story from start to finish, and the other volunteer will act it out. The actor is not allowed to say anything, and may only act it out as the storyteller shares it. Once the two volunteers have finished the story, select another pair of volunteers to do the same.

Time's Up!

Have the children stand in a circle. Start the story by giving them the first sentence, then have the next student, working counter clockwise, pick up the story where it was left off. Decide on a particular sound (a sheep's bah, a lion's roar, a baby's cry, etc.) to signal that it's the next person's turn. Continue until the story has been completely retold.

Act It Out

Put the students in charge of acting out the story. Depending upon the number of students, have the whole group work together to create a short play, or divide them into small teams and assign them small portions of the story to present to the class.

Who Am I?

Explain to the students that you will pretend to be one of the characters from the story. Make statements, act out portions of the story, and use exaggerated body language in an effort to accurately portray that particular character. Have the students silently raise their hands as soon as they can identify who you are. When all or the vast majority of the students have their hands raised, ask them to answer in unison aloud the question, "Who am I?"

Catch Me If You Can

Begin by telling the students that you will briefly retell the story. However, ask them to listen carefully so that they can catch you if you make an error. Ask them to clap their hands, snap

their fingers, or raise their hand as soon as they catch an error. Call on one of the students to politely point out your error and provide the correct information.

Character Association

As a group, create a list of all the characters from the story. Next, assign a body movement or sound to each character. For example, clap your hands once for Abraham, snap your fingers for Esther, or whistle for Moses. Tell the children that you will be retelling the story and ask that they create the assigned movement or noise as each character enters the story.

Mystery Identity

Tell the students that you’re pretending to be someone from the story, but that you won’t be sharing or acting anything out. They can only ask you questions that can be answered with “yes” or “no” to try to figure out your identity. Instruct the students to silently raise their hands when they know who you are. Allow the students to ask you questions until the majority of the students have their hands raised.

Match Up

Create a list of nouns and a list of characters from the story that match up or are associated with each other. Ask the students to try to figure out the relationship between the words and match them up. For example, the words “Mordecai” and “Plot” would go together because Mordecai discovered the plot, and the words “Abraham” and “Isaac” would go together because Isaac was Abraham’s son.

Notes:

Memory Verse Activities

Echo to Know

Divide the class into two groups, and move them to opposite sides of the room. Assign each group a portion of the verse. Have the group with the first portion begin by shouting it across the room. Have the next group echo the next portion. Continue until the verse has been completed several times. Then have the groups change portions and start again. Conclude by having the class recite the entire verse.

Fill in the Blanks

Start with the complete verse written on the board. Slowly remove words, having the students fill in the blanks from memory. Continue this process until the entire verse can be said without any words remaining.

Now You See It, Now You Don't

Write the verse on a large piece of paper. Then cover the verse with a second piece of large paper by taping across the top edge. Do not allow the children to see the verse before the game. On the first round, reveal the verse to the children for fifteen seconds. See if any child can repeat the verse. Increase the exposure time on future rounds until all the children have learned the verse.

Let's Get Moving

Say the Bible verse together. Then change it up and ask the children to say the Bible verse in each of these different ways:

- At a normal place while standing
- In fast forward while jogging in place
- In a whisper while tiptoeing
- In slow motion while walking very slowly
- In a silly voice while jumping up and down

To The End

Begin reciting the entire verse aloud. After a few times, purposefully stop short of completing it. Have the children complete the rest of the verse after you stop. Repeat the process over and over, leaving more of the verse for the students to complete each time. By the end, the students should be able to recite the entire verse with only the initial word as a prompt.

Sing! Sing!

Some songs already have tunes that you might already know. Teach your class the song, and you've taught them the verse! If a song does not already exist, use an existing tune and put the words of the verse to it.

Divide to Conquer

Divide the students into pairs and provide each pair with a beanbag, a small ball, or a piece of crumpled paper. Have them toss the item to one another as they take turns saying the next word in the memory verse. Once the verse is completed, have them switch so that each student gets the opportunity to say the words they only heard the time before. Finally, have them toss the item as they say the verse aloud together.

Memory Motions

Introduce the verse to the class and then ask them to think of motions that represent each word or thought. Repeat the verse with the motions until the verse is memorized.

Games

When time allows before or after class, group games can be a lot of fun. These games require very few resources. They can be adapted and modified to suit the needs of your students. They encourage kinetic play and provide a release for some of your students' extra energy. You may want to modify the games or change the names so they relate to the Bible lesson.

Capture the Flag

- 10 or more children
- Two "flags" are needed for this activity. You can use shoes, pieces of cloth or almost anything.
- Best Played Outside
- High Activity

Split the playing area into two areas and determine a location for jail. Divide the children into two teams, assigning an area to each team. Give the teams three minutes to hide their flag in their part of the playing area.

After the flag is hidden, announce that play will begin. Each team tries to get the other team's flag. Anyone who is tagged in the opponents' playing area must go to jail. They can only be freed by a teammate who grabs them without getting tagged and escorts them back to their side of the playing area.

The first team to capture the flag and bring it back to their side wins.

Come a Little Closer

- 5 or more children
- Best Played Outside
- Moderate to High Activity

One person is "it." The person who is "it" finds a "base" (like a wall, tree, or pole) that is not too big or too small. The "it" has to have one part of her body on the base; she cannot let go of it. Set boundaries but don't make the boundaries too big. The person who is "it" should be able to see all four corners of the boundaries.

The person who is "it" shuts her eyes and counts to 20 while the other people hide. When "it" is done counting, she opens her eyes and says, for example, "Peter behind the shed," or "Sarah at the side of the white fence," or wherever she thinks the children are. If she gets it right, the children who are spotted are "out." If she can't find anybody "it" says, "come a little closer 1,2,3,4,5," with her eyes closed. While she does that, the children who are hiding come a little closer. Or, if a child thinks he can make it to the base before "it" counts to 5, he can try to make a mad dash for the base. If he makes it to the base, he wins and is the next "it."

Duck, Duck, Goose

- 5 or more children
- Best Played Outside or in a Large Open Area
- High Activity Level

Have the children sit in a circle. One person is "it" and walks around the circle. As he walks, he taps people's heads and says whether they are a "duck" or a "goose." Once someone is the "goose," they get up and try to chase "it" around the circle. The goal is to tap the person who is "it" before he is able to sit down in the "goose's" spot. If the goose is not able to do this, they become "it" for the next round and the game continues. If they do tap the "it" person, the person who was tagged has to sit in the center of the circle. Then the "goose" becomes "it" for the next round. The person in the middle can't leave the center of the circle until another person is tagged and he is replaced.

Red Rover

- 14 or more children
- High Activity Level
- Best If Played Outside

Separate the children into two teams. Have each team hold hands and form a line. The two teams should be facing each other, with some space between them. The first team begins by selecting a person on the opposing team and saying "Red Rover, Red Rover, send Alison right over." Alison then lets go of her teammates and begins a headlong rush for the other line. Her goal is to break through the line by overpowering the kid's hold on each other. If she breaks through, she chooses one person from the opposing team to take back to her team. They both go back and join the other line. If Alison fails to break through, she becomes part of the other team. Each team alternates calling people over until one team has all the people and is declared the winner. Since all the players are on the winning team at the end, there are no losers in this game.

Stuck in the Mud

- 5 or more children
- High Activity Level
- Best if Played Outside

This is a version of tag. When the person who is "it" tags someone, the person tagged is "stuck in the mud." They cannot move and must stand with one of their arms out. The only way they can get unstuck is if a person passes under their arm. The game continues until all the players are stuck. The last person to be stuck is "it" for the next game.

Windows and Doors

- 10 or more children
- Best if Played Outside
- Moderate/High Activity Level

Have the children form a circle, holding hands. Then tell them to spread out so that everyone's arms are straight out, and large spaces are formed between them. These spaces are the windows and doors. Tell one child to start running, weaving in and out between children. As they do this, the children in the circle randomly drop their arms down, trying to touch or trap the child who is weaving their way in and out. Once the child is caught or touched by the arms of someone, they are out. They then choose which child will be next to weave in and out of the windows and doors.

Sharks and Fish

- 10 or more children
- Best if Played Outside
- High Activity Level

Depending on the size of your group, choose two or more children to be "sharks." Line the majority of the kids (the "fish") on one side of the field and have the "sharks" line up in the middle of the field. When the leader blows the whistle or the sharks say, "GO!" the fish run from one side of the field to the other, trying not to get caught by the sharks. The fish that are tagged by the sharks now turn into sharks and help capture more fish. The fish line up on the opposite side of the field and the sharks line up in the middle. The game continues until all of the fish have been tagged.

Tips for Teaching

Teaching

If we can serve others, we should serve. If we can teach, we should teach. – Romans 12:7

Christian teaching is not only about imparting knowledge; it is also about shaping lives. The goal of Christian teaching isn't only to educate students about God, but to motivate them to love him on a personal level and empower them to identify and choose to do what is right. But how can you be sure your Christian teaching is effective?

It can be tempting to equate memorization with learning, but this isn't necessarily the case. A student may commit a Bible verse to memory in order to earn a prize or small reward but fail to remember it just hours later. Additionally, Bible verses committed to memory and even accurately recalled do not ensure meaningful understanding. Empowering students to do what is right and teaching them about God certainly requires them to understand his Word. But God desires that we give him our whole hearts and minds. He desires relationships with us, not tape recorders.

While Bible memorization is very important (Psalm 119:11), it is our responsibility and our calling as Christian teachers to help move the students under our guidance towards a true and meaningful understanding of God's Word. Help your students make the leap from simple recitation to meaningful comprehension by explaining God's Word in words they can easily comprehend.

Additionally, the effectiveness of Christian teaching can be gauged by personal transformation, even in students. But without the ability to authentically take ownership of what God's Word means, students lack the ability to apply it to their lives. Help the students identify ways that the teachings are impacting their lives. Lead them in purposeful discussions about the content they are learning. Ask them to share examples from their own lives. Offer insights that are relevant and applicable to them. The discussion questions in Stories of Hope have been designed to do this. But feel free to add additional questions. How do Bible verses apply to their lives today? What are some authentic examples of how students can truly love others? What does it really mean to "turn the other cheek?"

The Teacher

Set an example for other followers by what you say and do, as well as by your love, faith, and purity. – 1 Timothy 4:12b

You've accepted a great calling (Romans 12:7): to teach students about God and his word (Proverbs 22:6). You have the chance to forever impact student's lives.

Along with this calling comes great responsibility, including how you live your own life. Actions speak so much louder than words. Live so that your own life is not only pleasing to God, but also echoes his will to the student you're teaching. Spend time daily with the Lord in prayer and reading his word. Seek to walk closely with the Lord every moment of every day. Your students will be able to see how God is working in your life.

Preparation

If any of you need wisdom, you should ask God, and it will be given to you. – James 1:5a

Lean not on your own understanding (Proverbs 3:5). Spend time with God in preparation of each lesson. Pray for your students and their understanding. Ask God to provide you with discernment and wisdom regarding Scripture passages. The more thorough your own understanding, the more capable you will be of teaching and the more effective the lesson will be. Carefully read through each passage in the Bible. Seek to not only remember the events and the facts, but to also uncover the deeper truths in the passage for your students and for yourself.

Knowing and Caring for Your Student

*I speak to you as my friends, and I have told you everything that my Father has told me.
– John 15:15b*

Develop meaningful relationships with your students. By getting to know and interacting personally with them, you will develop a relationship of mutual trust and respect. As Christian teachers, it should be our goal to emulate how Jesus taught others: through love, respect, and genuine caring, not through judging and preaching. No one can learn in an environment of fear, especially students. Strive to be friendly and approachable, so that the students feel welcomed and safe, not threatened. Create a warm and inviting environment by positioning yourself at the student's own level. Make eye contact and smile often. Invite them to talk with you outside of class if they have any problems they don't feel comfortable discussing in class.

Facilitating a mutually respectful environment means a commitment to balanced communication as well. Do you provide ample opportunities for student feedback? Do you invite them to ask questions? Do you share the floor for classroom discussions? Lessons in which the students truly take part are far more likely to "stick" than those in which they don't contribute.

Lastly, don't be afraid to share some of your own personal stories. By sharing a bit about yourself, you enable your students to get to know you as a person, not just their teacher. You become much more relatable, someone with whom your students can identify. What were your likes and dislikes when you were a child? What were you good at? What did you struggle with? The lessons you teach will resonate more deeply if they come from someone the students relate to on a more personal level.

Active Learning

My dear friends, stand firm and don't be shaken. Always keep busy working for the Lord. You know that everything you do for him is worthwhile. – 1 Corinthians 15:58

Initially, many parents and teachers assume that a quiet classroom means that learning is taking place, but this is often not the case. In a quiet classroom, students may be listening. But in a classroom filled with active learning, students aren't just listening; they are engaged. They're thinking, processing, and reacting to what they're hearing, too.

As the phrase implies, active learning is anything but passive. It's often filled with laughter (that can be loud), student discussions and debates (that are often filled with real emotion), and it usually requires the students to actually be **DOING** something (that results in students in places other than their seats). Fostering active learning may seem daunting at first, but it translates to more effective teaching and can actually minimize classroom management challenges. Active students who are truly engaged in a lesson are far less likely to have time for other, less productive pursuits.

Storytelling

No one loves a good story better than children, and fortunately the Bible is full of them. And it likely isn't a coincidence that most of Jesus' teachings were stories. They not only convey information, but they also touch the heart and provide a great opportunity for learning life lessons.

Captivating storytelling is an effective teaching tool. And it's a skill that anyone can learn. Here are just a few easy ways to help bring the stories you share to life.

How to tell a wonderful story:

- **Make the stories rich with details.** Where did the story take place? What time of day was it? What would you have seen? What smells would there have been? What people were present? What emotions would you have felt if you were there?
- **Start by getting their attention.** Do something different or interesting at the very

beginning. For example, when introducing Lesson 30 (The Calling of Samuel) say, "Have you ever heard a noise in the middle of the night? What if it was a voice you didn't recognize? Would you be afraid?" Or while introducing Lesson 19 (The Plagues), describe what Pharaoh's palace might have looked like and what it would have been like for Moses and Aaron to be there. Hook their curiosity early on so that their ears—as well as their minds and hearts—are open and wanting more.

- **Ensure that the story is organized, so your students don't get lost or confused.** Decide in advance who will be the main person in the story, and tell the story from their perspective. Allow the story—and the excitement—to build naturally with details as you reach the most exciting part of the story, the climax. There should be a clear conclusion that wraps things up and brings the story to a close.
- **Introduce students to unfamiliar vocabulary beforehand.** They'll be better able to understand, appreciate and enjoy the story if they're not stumbling on challenging words.
- **Be an active storyteller in order to better bring the story to life.** Let your voice shout in triumph, whisper in secret, or tremble with excitement along with your characters. Use your body to act out key moments in the story. There need not be illustrations for your students to look at. Your own voice, body language and facial expressions can effectively bring the characters and story to life.
- **Invite students to help act out portions of the story with you.** Consider giving impromptu volunteers a few lines to speak. By sharing the responsibility (and the fun) of storytelling, you immediately change storytelling from a passive to an active experience. And the more involved the students are, the much more likely they are to commit it to memory as well as take it to heart.

Memorizing Scripture

Verses that are memorized will remain with a child long after class is over. All Scripture is God-breathed and useful for various purposes (2 Timothy 3:16). It provides nourishment for the soul (Matthew 4:4) and direction for life (Psalm 119:105). It also is a valuable weapon when faced with temptation (Luke 4) and keeps us from sinning (Psalm 119:11). One of the most valuable gifts you can give your students is to help them hide God's Word in their hearts.

Before teaching a memory verse, it is important to memorize it yourself. You may want to write it on a small piece of paper and carry it with you during the week before class. Whenever you have a free moment, you can work on memorizing it.

As you introduce the verse to your students, explain what it means and how it connects to the lesson. If there are words that the children do not understand, explain them as well. A variety of fun methods for teaching verses are available in the Memory Verse Activities section of this book on page 165.

Closing the Lesson

Just as every good story must come to an end, so too should good lessons. Take the time at the end of each lesson to remind students of the key points they learned, as well as what they should continue to think about. Give students the opportunity to ask any final questions and allow volunteers to share what they personally found interesting. If the students are able to summarize the lesson themselves, that's even better. The very best lessons and the most effective teaching leave students thinking, but not grasping for clarification. A quick but planned review at the end of each lesson will drive the key points home before your students leave.

Reviewing

Review is an important memory tool not only immediately after the lesson but also at the beginning of other lessons. Through repetition, your students will not only remember the stories and memory verses but also be reminded of how they can apply them to their lives.

Take time to review not only the last lesson and associated memory verses but previous ones as well. Continual review of the content of Stories of Hope will help your students better understand God's Big Story.

Leading a Child to the Lord

Stories of Hope provides many opportunities to share the gospel with your students. If you think a child is ready to accept Christ, you may want to find a time to talk with the child one-on-one. The following presentation can be used as a guide when explaining to the child how he can receive Christ.

STEP 1: Help the child understand that everyone has sinned and needs to be forgiven. Explain that sin is simply disobeying God.

Scripture: *"All of us have sinned and fallen short of God's glory." (Romans 3:23)*

STEP 2: Help the child understand that sin separates us from God and the punishment for sin is death. Explain that God loves us so much, though, that he sent his Son Jesus to die for our sins so that we can have eternal life in heaven instead of being punished by death.

Scripture: *"Sin pays off with death. But God's gift is eternal life given by Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23)*

STEP 3: Explain that the only way for us to receive forgiveness is to confess our sins to God and ask God for his forgiveness. When God forgives us, he washes all the sin out of our lives.

Scripture: *"If we confess our sins to God, he can always be trusted to forgive us and take our sins away." (1 John 1:9)*

STEP 4: Ask the child if he would like to ask God to forgive him and to invite Jesus into his life to be his Lord and Saviour. If so, tell the child to pray the following prayer and really mean it.

Prayer: *Dear God, I know that I have sinned and done wrong things. Please forgive me for my sin. I now receive Jesus Christ into my life to be my Saviour. I want to live my life for you. Help me to be the kind of person you want me to be. I ask this now in Jesus' name. Amen.*

STEP 5: Ask the following questions to make sure that the child understands what just happened:

- What did you ask God to do?
- What do you think God did?
- Did you mean what you said?

If the child didn't understand some things, take the time to explain things again clearly to the child.

Step 6: Congratulate the child on becoming a follower of Jesus! Then encourage him to do the following things to help him grow in his faith and understanding of God:

1. Read the Bible every day or have someone read it to you.
2. Talk to God through prayer every day like he is your best friend.
3. Go to church.
4. Tell others about Jesus and how you received Jesus as your personal Saviour.

(The selection above was adapted from Safari Club, published by Africa's Children, 1998.)

A large yellow rectangular area with rounded corners and a blue border, containing 25 horizontal yellow lines for writing.

God's Big Story

(1) God created the world in six days. Everything he made was good. He made people in his own image, and we are very special to him. Adam and Eve were the first people God created. (2) They sinned by disobeying God, which caused all people to be separated from God. But because he loves us, God promised that one day a descendant of Eve's would defeat Satan and be the Saviour for the sins of the world. Because of their sin, God made Adam and Eve leave the garden. After they left the garden, the whole world became filled with evil. (3) But God was pleased with Noah. God told Noah to build a big boat called an ark. Then God sent a great flood, which destroyed the whole earth. Noah's family was saved and began to grow. But once again, the people disobeyed God. (4) They tried to become famous by building a great tower. God confused their languages and spread them across the earth.

(5) God chose a man named Abraham. God promised Abraham that he would make a great nation from him and that through his descendants the whole earth would be blessed. Abraham had faith in God and believed in his promises. When he was 100 years old, God gave him and his wife a son named Isaac. (6) Isaac had a son named Jacob. God changed Jacob's name to Israel. Jacob had 12 sons, who became the 12 tribes of Israel. The Israelites were the great nation that God had promised would come from Abraham. (7) Joseph was Jacob's favourite son. Joseph's brothers were jealous of him. They sold him into slavery in Egypt. (8) But God was with Joseph and caused him to become very powerful. Joseph's father Jacob and his entire family moved to Egypt. The Israelites were in Egypt for about 400 years. A new Pharaoh rose to power, and he mistreated the Israelites.

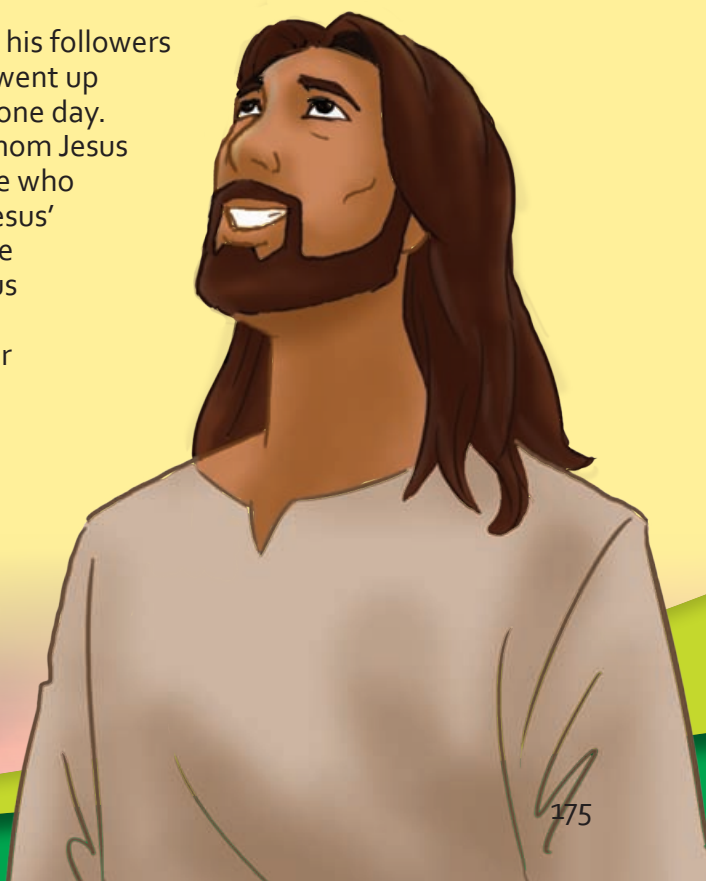
(9) God called Moses to rescue his people out of Egypt. Pharaoh would not let God's people go, so God brought 10 plagues on Egypt. (10) During the last plague, God killed the firstborn males of the Egyptians. But he passed over the Israelite families, and none of them died. After this, Pharaoh let the people go and Moses led them out of Egypt. (11) But Pharaoh's army chased after them. God saved his people by dividing the Red Sea and destroying Pharaoh's army. (12) While the people were in the desert, God gave Moses the 10 Commandments. (13) After Moses died, Joshua led the people. He led them across the Jordan River into the Promised Land.

(14) For a time, judges like Deborah, Gideon, and Samson led the nation of Israel. But the people wanted a king. The first king of Israel was Saul. He disobeyed God, so God chose another king: David. David had a special relationship with God. David ruled for many years and wrote many of the Psalms in the Bible. God promised David that one of his descendants would always be king. (15) David's son, Solomon, built the temple where the people came to worship God. But when he was old, Solomon made bad choices and his heart was turned away from God. After Solomon died, the nation did

not follow God. (16) God sent prophets like Elijah to warn the people to serve God. The people were always turning away from him, so God allowed a foreign army to take them away from their homes. (17) While they were in captivity, an evil man tried to have them killed. God used Queen Esther to save her people. (18) Even though the people were in captivity, they still cared about their homeland. Nehemiah went back home to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

(19) Since sin first entered the world, God had made a series of promises. Through these promises to people like Eve, Abraham, and David, he revealed his intent to bring salvation to the world. Throughout all of this time, the people were waiting for God to send the promised Saviour. Many people were expecting the Saviour to be a mighty king who would overthrow their enemies. At just the right time, God sent the Saviour, his Son, Jesus Christ. But it was not as people had expected. Jesus came humbly, as a baby born in a manger. It was a miracle from the Holy Spirit that Jesus was born to Mary, a virgin. (20) Jesus was fully God. (21) Jesus was also fully man. He faced temptation just like we do, but he did not sin. Jesus came to serve and to give his life so that everyone who believes in him can live forever with him. (22) He chose 12 disciples, who followed him. (23) Jesus healed the sick, (24) fed the hungry, (25) cast out evil spirits, (26) and calmed storms while he was on earth. (27) Even though he did these wonderful things, the religious leaders hated Jesus. One of his disciples, Judas, betrayed Jesus to them. (28) They accused him falsely and he was crucified on a cross. (29) But on the third day Jesus rose again. Jesus conquered sin and death.

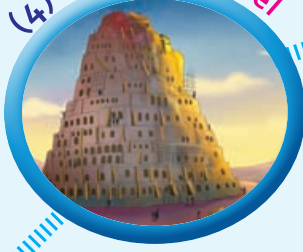
(30) After his resurrection, Jesus appeared to his followers for about 40 days and taught them. Then he went up into heaven, promising that he would return one day. (31) His followers received the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus said would be with us and live inside everyone who believes in him. (32) The Holy Spirit helped Jesus' followers to spread the good news all over the world. Since that time, the good news of Jesus has continued to spread. (33) One day, all of the people who have believed in Jesus as their Saviour will be with him in heaven.





(1) Creation

(4) Tower of Babel



(5) Abraham and Isaac



(2) The Fall



(6) Isaac and Jacob



(3) Noah and the Ark



(12) Ten Commandments



(7) Joseph in Egypt



(11) Crossing the Red Sea

(15) King Solomon



(8) The Israelites in Egypt



(10) Passover



(16) Elijah



(9) Moses



(18) Nehemiah

(17) Esther

(20) Jesus is Baptized



(19) Jesus is Born

God's Big Story

Retell the stories of the Bible using these pictures.



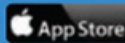
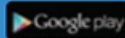
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