



Christian Education

Year 4 (age 9 -10)

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Year 4

God is Love

5 Weeks



Outcomes:

At the completion of the module students will understand that:

- God loves us and wants us to talk to Him through prayer
- Never give up praying
- God loves us and knows what we need
- Listening to others shows that we love and care for them.
- Speak kindly to others is showing the love of God to others.

Related classroom topics for Science, Social Studies and Health:

Special Communities: the elderly and the disabled

Link between “God is Love” and classroom topics:

God loves us and wants us to show love and care towards those who have difficulties. We can communicate with these people in a special and caring way.

Values

compassion; cultural understanding, sense of family and community, kindness, forgiveness

Biography: Joni Eareckson

God is Love

Week 1

God is a loving Father. We can talk to our Heavenly Father through prayer.

Bible references

Matthew 6:7-13 Jesus told us to say, "Our Father".

1 John 5:14-15 God hears us when pray the things that God wants us to pray.

Discussion

Think about the good things that God provides...things like rain and sunshine, food and clothes. There is another gift that God expects us to ask of Him. The gift of the Holy Spirit is available to all those who choose to invite Jesus into their life.

When we are a child of God we can talk to our Heavenly Father and tell Him whatever is on our heart. When we ask our Father for something, and if He knows that it is something good for us, He will give it to us. (Read 1 John 5:14- 15.)

Bible Lesson: The Lord's prayer

Matthew 6:1-13

Jesus' friends often heard Jesus pray to His Heavenly Father. They wished they could pray as He did. "Lord, teach us to pray," they asked.

And Jesus said, "When you pray, don't try to show off. Don't think about who is listening and how good your prayer is. God is listening, whether you pray out loud or just to yourself. He knows what you need even before you ask.

Pray in this way:

"Our Father in heaven,"

God is our Father. He loves and cares for us like the best father in the whole world. We call Him Father because we are God's child when we receive Jesus as our Saviour.

"Holy be your name."

Since God is holy, people should honour Him. Think about how great God is and begin your prayer by saying "Dear God" or "Dear Heavenly Father" We can also pray to Jesus, who is God.

"Your Kingdom come"

God is the ruler of all the world. But right now, because of His big plan for the history of the world, God is allowing Satan to do some work on earth. But one day Satan will be defeated completely. Then God's kingdom will come. For us living in the world now, we can defeat Satan by asking Jesus to rule in our life. If Jesus is king, (the boss) of your life, then the Kingdom of God on earth is within you. When you obey Jesus by doing

what is right at home, at school and when you are playing with your friends, then you are making God's kingdom come.

"Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven."

In Heaven, the angels always do God's will. God's people on earth should obey Him too. We know what God's will is by reading and learning from the Bible.

"Give us today our daily bread."

Only God can give us each day the things we need. He provides for us through His creation. God sends sunshine and rain so that food can grow. Crops need protection from storms, droughts and insects. God wants us to pray to Him to provide the things we need.

"Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us."

When we do wrong we should ask God to forgive us. And He wants us to forgive others when they hurt us. When you find it hard to forgive someone, think about all the wrong things that God has forgiven you for., and ask Him to help you to forgive others.

"Do not bring us to the test, but keep us safe from evil."

We can expect Satan to give us hard times. Maybe Satan will try to make us do things that God would not be pleased with. This is why we have to pray that God will keep us safe from the Evil One, and when we have wrong thoughts we can say 'no' to those wrong thoughts by thinking about God.

"For the Kingdom, the power and the glory are yours forever, Amen."

This is a wonderful way to end a prayer. God alone has the power to help us every day. And He will! Whatever happens, we know that God is in charge! We can give Him all the praise and honour.

Just as a good father wants to give his children good gifts, so our Heavenly Father wants to give us good things too.

Story: God gives special things

Luke was eight years old. He had always wanted a dog of his own but Dad said there was a lot of responsibility involved in looking after a dog. "Maybe when you're older," Dad would say.

Luke would have loved the company of a dog. He didn't have many friends at school. Jonathan, his best friend, had recently moved away to another school. Luke wasn't good at football like the other boys, and somehow he always got left out of games.

"How was school today?" Luke's Mum would ask as Luke sat down to his after-school snack.

"O.K.," he would reply. But didn't really want to talk about it.

"You know that God is a Heavenly Father who gives good things," said Mum. "If you have a problem you can tell Him about it."

That night Luke told his Mum why he didn't like school anymore.
"It's not the same now that Jonathan's left. I don't have anyone to play with."
"Why don't we ask God our Father to help you make new friends," said Mum.
Luke agreed, and together they asked God to do something really special.
"We don't know how God will answer our prayer, but we know that He will answer if we keep on asking," said Mum. God knows the best way to answer our prayers. He loves us and only does what's best for us."

Each night Luke and his Mum would pray. Then it happened. A new boy came into the class.

"Luke, would you take care of our new class member, Peter?" asked the teacher.
Luke and Peter soon found they had a lot in common. They both liked drawing, liked the same T.V. programs, and both had the same secret wish...to have a dog of their own.

"Guess what, Mum!" shouted Luke as he ran in the door after school. I've made a new friend today. God really does answer our prayers!"

Mum had a big smile on her face. It looks as if God has given you more than one good gift today. Look what Dad's brought home for you.

Dad walked in with a little brown bundle.
"A puppy!" shrieked Luke.
"Your very own," said Dad. "I didn't want you to have a dog of your own until I was sure that you were responsible enough to look after it. I think you're old enough now. What are you going to call him?"
Luke thought for a moment.
"Pete," he said, taking the puppy in his arms.

Then he remembered something.
"Thanks, Dad! You really are the best Dad in the whole world."
Luke gave Dad a big hug. Pete just gave Dad a big lick on the cheek.
"Pete is saying thankyou too," laughed Luke.

Discussion

What was Luke's problem?

How did God answer his prayer?

God is Love

Week 2 Keep on asking

Bible references

Luke 18:1-7 The parable of the widow and the judge.

Luke 11:5-13 Ask and keep on asking.

John 5:1-8 The crippled man at the pool.

Bible lesson 1: The widow and the judge

Jesus told this story to teach us about persevering in prayer. If our prayers are not answered the first time we pray, then we should not give up. We should continue to pray in faith. (Luke 8:1-7)

Jesus told his disciples a parable to teach them that they should always pray and never become discouraged.

In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected people. And there was a widow in that same town who kept coming to him to ask for help. She wanted the judge to tell certain people to stop treating her unfairly. For a long time the judge refused to act, but at last he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or respect people, because of all the trouble this widow is giving me, I will see to it that she gets her rights. If I don't, she will keep on coming and finally wear me out!'"

Why did the judge give the widow what she wanted?

Jesus wanted to show us that even a grumpy old judge will do what he is asked to do if he is asked enough times.

But God is not a grumpy old judge. He loves us very much and wants to give us the things we need, much more than any grumpy old judge.

Because God is loving father, He is not going to answer our prayer if what we pray is not good for us, or if we are praying with the wrong thoughts in our hearts.

Even though God knows what we need, He expects us to ask Him. And sometimes we have to wait because God knows the right time for our prayers to be answered. Maybe now is not the right time to get the thing we are praying for. He might have something to teach us about faith.

Read Luke 11:5-13

How is this passage similar to the story of the widow and the judge?

What are some examples of things we might pray for?

God wants us not only to keep on asking for these things but also, to keep on believing. We must never give up praying until the problem is solved. This is called perseverance. It is good to ask other people to pray with you when you really need something.

Bible lesson 2: The man at the pool (John 5:1-13)

The Bible tells us of a man who waited for healing for 38 years. He would lie beside a special mineral pool that occasionally bubbled a bit like a spa. It was meant to bring health to those who bathed in it. However the man could never get in because of the crowds of people all rushing to get in each time the water bubbled. The man never gave up hoping for healing. However one day Jesus came by. Jesus was able to offer the man far more than the mineral pool could ever do for him.

"Take up your bed and walk," said Jesus, and the man was healed immediately.

Maybe you know someone who is sick. Don't give up praying for them!

God is Love

Week 3 God knows what we need

Bible references

Matt 10:29-31

Matt 6: 25-34

Bible lesson

Read Matthew 10:29-31

Not even one small bird falls without your father in heaven knowing about it. And we are more valuable to Him than many small birds. We are so valuable that God even knows how many hairs are on our head. We should not be afraid. God knows all our needs and wants us to have what we need.

The little bird that Jesus spoke about here was the sparrow. Did you know that there are more sparrows in the world than any other bird? Sparrows build nests in trees or houses. A sparrow knows how to protect itself and perhaps that is why there are so many sparrows.

Sparrows are small brown or grey birds with short tails and short powerful beaks. Sparrows are seed eaters, but they also eat small insects. There are 35 species worldwide and one species is found in Fiji. That is, the house sparrow.

Jesus said, 'not even one sparrow falls without your Father in heaven knowing about it.' Do you know what that means? It means that God watches over and cares for all His creatures.

And if God knows about a sparrow how much more does he know about you? Jesus said, 'You are much more precious to God than a sparrow. God even knows how many hairs you have on your head!' There is a good reason why Jesus spoke about a sparrow. Can you guess what that reason is? See if you can pick the right answer from these three:

1. He wanted children to watch out for sparrows
2. He wants us to love all God's creatures
3. He wants us never to be afraid because if God knows and loves a sparrow how much more does he love you?

Do you ever worry? Do you ever get afraid?

When we are afraid we can pray to the Lord that he will keep us safe. He knows and loves you very much. He even knows how many hairs are on your head. We can trust Him to look after us.

Read Matthew 6:26 and verses 28-29

Don't worry about anything, about clothes, about food or about money for God knows you need all these things and he watches over you.

We can talk to God about everything!

We can talk to God not just about the things we need, or want Him to do for us. We can talk to God about everything; what makes us happy, sad, worried, upset or excited. God wants to be our best friend and share all our secrets. He wants us to thank Him all the time for all the good things in our beautiful world, and for looking after us. Having a thankful heart will mean that we have a happy heart.

What are some of the things we can thank God for?

A poem to read

Don't let the troubles of tomorrow
Bring you sorrow
For if the Father's eye is on the sparrow,
Then surely he will care for you.

He knows and cares,
Each burden he bears,
And if the Father's eye is on the sparrow,
Then surely he will care for you.

Questions

Does God know the things we need?

God wants us to ask Him for the things we need. Why?

Discussion

Which of these would your Heavenly Father expect you to pray for?

- control of your bad temper
- new friends if you are lonely
- a brand new car every year
- the ability to forgive someone who has done something awful to you
- losing your fear of the dark
- ice-cream for dessert every night
- a way to pay back someone who has wronged you
- strength to tell others about Jesus
- the latest fashions all the time
- a sick person

God is Love

Week 4 Listening to God

Bible reference

1 Sam 3 Samuel hears God speak

Matthew 11:15 Jesus said, "Anyone who has ears to hear should listen and understand." (NLT)

Listening activities

Use any games that focus attention on listening.

EXAMPLE 1: *Follow the sound*: One child is blindfolded. Another child stands somewhere in the room tapping. The blindfolded child must walk to the child who is tapping. (The blindfolded child will need another child to hold their hand to make sure they do not crash into things.)

EXAMPLE 2: *Identify the sound*

The teacher prepares a bag of objects that make sounds, e.g. a whistle, tapping sticks, a spoon and a glass, paper that can be scrunched, a pair of scissors opening and closing. Children have to close their eyes and try and identify each sound as it is performed by the teacher.

EXAMPLE 3: *How many sounds can you hear?*

Ask children to close eyes and count the number of sounds they can hear in the immediate environment.

Discussion

To listen carefully we must be very patient. It is important to be patient when someone is giving us instructions. See if you can listen patiently to these instructions, then carry them out:

Stand up. Pat your head three times, then touch your toes. Stand up again and blink three times.

God loves us very much and wants us to listen to Him.

How can we listen to God?

- By listening to the Bible
- By listening to those who teach us about Him
- By listening to our conscience, (when our mind says to do the right thing.)
- By being still and thinking about God. We can hear God in our hearts and minds.

Bible lesson 1: The Parables

Jesus told many stories to the crowds who gathered around Him. However not everyone listened carefully to the words of Jesus. Some people thought they already

knew everything they needed to know about God. These people were the Pharisees. They didn't even try to understand what Jesus was saying.

Jesus told stories called parables.

Children will already know of some examples of parables. Ask them if they can give an example. If not, remind them of one.

The parables were stories with hidden meaning. Jesus would tell parables to make people listen carefully. People had to think carefully about the story in order to understand the hidden meaning.

Jesus said, "Anyone who has ears to hear should listen and understand."

Bible lesson 2: Samuel

The Bible tells us about a woman who lived in Old Testament times. Her name was Hannah. She had been married for quite a long time but had no children. She really, really wanted to have a child. Every year she would go with her husband to a place called Shiloh.

While they were there, there would be a big festival and everyone would celebrate all that God did for them. They would thank God for their crops and everything God gave them, and give sacrifices or presents to God to show how thankful they were.

This sometimes made Hannah very sad because she wanted so badly to be thankful, but was discouraged because she couldn't have a child. Her husband loved her very much and tried to make her feel better but nothing seemed to work.

Finally Hannah did the only thing she knew that she could do to help her situation. One evening when they had finished eating and drinking Hannah went to the temple and began to pray.

When Hannah prayed she was very honest with how she was feeling. She sometimes cried a lot and probably felt like God had forgotten her. But while she was praying she promised God, "Dear God, if you would only look and see how sad I am and remember me, please give me a son. If you would do that for me I will dedicate my son to you for his whole life."

As Hannah was praying there was a man named Eli, a priest, who was sitting nearby and saw her. While Hannah was praying she was praying to herself, her lips were moving but Eli couldn't hear her say anything.

(We can pray just like this too if we need to; we can pray to God in our head so no one can hear.)

Eli realized that Hannah was being very honest and truthful with God and he said to her, "Go in peace and may God answer your prayer." After that Hannah left she felt

much better because she had talked to God about what bothered her. Early the next morning she even went to worship God before she went home.

Sometimes God doesn't answer our prayers straight away. God knows what's best so there's always a good reason why he hasn't answered your prayer.

God answered Hannah's prayer and gave her a son. She named him Samuel. Hannah had waited so long for this child and she loved him so much, but she remembered that she made a promise to God. Hannah kept her promise.

When Samuel was old enough she went back to the place where she had prayed and said to Eli the priest, "Do you remember me? I am the woman that cried and prayed for this child and God answered my prayer. Now I give him to the Lord and I will leave him with you to learn and work with you."

So Samuel lived with Eli and every year Hannah would pack her suitcase and visit him and bring him new clothes. It might have been hard for Hannah to see Samuel only once a year but she wanted to keep her promise. God blessed Hannah again and gave her and her husband even more sons and daughters.

Samuel did very well while staying with Eli. Then one night something unusual happened. Eli and Samuel had both gone to bed and were having a nice sleep. When Samuel all of a sudden woke up, someone was calling him, "Samuel."

Samuel thought it was Eli so he ran to his bed and answered, "Here I am; you called me?" But Eli said, "I did not call you; go back and lie down."

So Samuel went back to his bed. He didn't know this, but God was calling him. Just as Samuel got settled God said, "Samuel!" And Samuel jumped up and went back to Eli and said, "Here I am, you called?"

Again Eli answered, "No I didn't call you; go back to bed."

The Lord called Samuel a third time, and Samuel got up and went to Eli again and said, "Here I am; you called me."

Eli couldn't work out what was going on. He had been thinking who could be calling Samuel, they were the only ones there. Suddenly Eli realized what was happening. Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if you hear the voice again, say, 'Yes, Lord, I'm listening.'"

Sure enough, Samuel went to lie down and the Lord called again, "Samuel! Samuel!" So Samuel quickly replied, "Speak Lord, I am listening."

From then on Samuel knew when God wanted to talk to him and he always listened. God blessed Samuel and he grew up to be a great prophet who brought people

messages from God. Samuel learned to hear what God was saying from a young boy, and because he listened to God he was able to help many people know God better.



Discussion

God loves us very much and wants to speak to us.

How does God speak?

How do we speak to God?

God is Love

Week 5 Listening to God and others

Bible references

1 Kings 19 God spoke to Elijah in a still small voice

Matthew 14:23 Jesus went to a quiet place to pray.

Psalms 85:8 I am listening to what the Lord God is saying. (GNB)

Listening Game: Sound identification

Select some percussion instruments or noisy objects.

EXAMPLES: saucepan lids; rice shakers; spoons, OR, commercial instruments such as tambourine, maracas, drum.

Children sit in a circle. Place the instruments in the centre. Ask children to close their eyes, then play the instruments in sequence. (No more than three.) The children must identify the sounds in the correct order. Teacher asks: *Which did I play first? second? third?*

Discussion

Discuss the importance of listening.

We listen to others to show that we care about the person who is speaking. We don't butt in with our own words, but let the person have a chance to say what they want to say.

EXAMPLE 1

A student is telling the class about their holiday. What should the class do to show respect to the speaker?

EXAMPLE 2

A friend has lost something really important. They are really worried. They want to tell you about it. What should you do?

We can show God's love when we listen to people who have problems. We let them speak, then think about how we can help them.

We also have to listen carefully to people who are giving us instructions.

EXAMPLE 1

Mum wants you to go with your big brother to buy some things from the shop. She needs a carton of milk, a packet of biscuits and six potatoes.

Did you listen carefully? Can you remember what she needs?

EXAMPLE 2

Mum wants you to tidy your room. She wants the books stacked neatly in the shelves, the clothes on the floor to be placed in the dirty laundry basket, and the toys put away. Can you remember what to do?

God has important things to tell us too. But how do we listen to Him?

- By listening to the Bible.
- By listening to people who obey Him.
- By praying to Him, and then waiting quietly to see whether God wants to give you any special thoughts. Some people call this a 'quiet time'. You can have a quiet time every day. You can read from the Bible and then pray. After you have prayed you can wait for God to speak. He won't speak in a loud voice, but may speak through your thoughts.

Bible lesson: The still small voice

This is a true story from the Bible. It is about a man called Elijah. Elijah was God's special messenger. God would speak to him through his thoughts, and Elijah listened. Elijah would then bring messages from God to the people. Elijah was called a prophet, because He heard God speaking, and told others what God had said.

One day, while Elijah was having a sleep under a tree, an angel touched him and said, "Wake up. Eat and drink, Elijah." Elijah looked around and saw a loaf of bread and a jar of water near his head. Elijah ate some bread and drank some water, but then went back to sleep again. He was feeling very tired. Then the angel woke him again. "Eat and drink, Elijah, for you must go on a long journey to Mount Sinai. You will need this bread and drink to give you strength for the journey."

Elijah ate and drank some more, then set off for Mount Sinai. When he arrived, God told him to go and stand on the top of the mountain, because God was going to give him a special message. Elijah went to the top of the mountain. He waited for God to speak. Elijah heard a great wind. Leaves on the trees swirled about, branches shook and dust blew against him. "This must be God speaking," thought Elijah. But no, it was not God's voice.

Then there was an earthquake. The ground trembled and the rocks fell down around him. Surely this must be God's voice," he thought. But no, it was not. Then Elijah saw a flickering fire. But no, God was not in the fire.

Then it became very still. Everything was very quiet. Elijah waited and waited. Then there came a soft whisper. Yes, this was God's voice. God spoke to Elijah in the quietness of the evening on top of the mountain. Elijah spoke to God too. Elijah told God how sad he was that the people of Israel were disobeying their Lord. God told Elijah many things. God told Elijah who the new kings would be, and about a new prophet called Elisha, who would be able to hear God's voice just as Elijah had done.

Discussion

- The story shows us that God wants to speak to us when we take time to listen. God wants to speak when everything is quiet. It could be difficult to hear God speaking during our favourite TV show, or while we are playing a game. However when we take time to read, think, pray and listen, God can speak to us. .
- Listening to a Bible story and understanding the meaning is one way that we can hear God speak to us. God can also speak to us through our conscience. That's something inside that tells us when it is right or wrong to do something.
- When Jesus was living on earth, he would often go away quietly on His own to talk with His Heavenly Father. After a busy day, He would send all the people away, and go and pray.

Year 4

God is Provider 5 Weeks



Outcomes:

At the completion of the module students will understand that:

- God has created us with unique abilities and He wants us to be thankful to Him for the way He has made us.
- We are responsible for the gifts God has given us.
- We are thankful to God for sending His son Jesus.
- We thank God for what He has provided for us and what He has done for us.
- We thank God even when we don't feel like it.
- We can express our thanks through prayer and song.
- We give praise to God for who He is.

Related classroom topics for Science, Social Studies and Health:

Water; the water cycle; how water gets to our homes; drinking water for health; washing and cleanliness; water content of our bodies; rivers and seas; communities living near rivers or sea

Link between “God is Provider” and classroom topics:

All living things depend on water. God has provided our planet with water for life.

Values:

Faith, care for the environment, responsibility, generosity, thankfulness

Biography:

Makea of Rarotonga

God is Provider

Week 1 Thank you God for the gifts you have given me.

Bible references

Matthew 25:14-30 The talents

Luke 16:10 Be faithful in little things.

Colossians 3:17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Psalms 139 We are wonderfully made.

Introduction

Let's think of all the things that God has provided for us.

Which special gifts does God provide for us through His creation?

Which special ability gifts has God given to people in their own lives? (These are things we can do.)

Make two lists: Creation gifts; ability gifts

Discussion

If we receive a gift, what should we do? (We say thank you to the person who gave us the gift.)

How can we show God that we are thankful for all that He has given to us?

- Say thank you by praying and singing to Him.
- Say 'grace' before our meals.
- Be thankful in our attitude, by not grumbling or complaining about what we have.
- Be responsible with the gifts God has given us.

Definition of thankfulness

Thankfulness is:

- Being grateful for what you have
- Having an attitude of gratitude towards God and other people
- Appreciating the little things which happen around you and within you every day.
- Looking at God's beautiful world with wonder and appreciation
- Knowing that God has given you special gifts and abilities and using these gifts and abilities to serve Him

How can we show thankfulness to other people?

- Show your appreciation when someone does something kind for you.

- Say thank you, and let them know how their kindness has helped you.
- We might want to make a 'thank you' card.

Saying 'please' and thank you' is showing good manners.

Bible lesson: The talents

This story is called the Parable of the Talents. A parable is a type of story Jesus would tell so we would learn something from it.

A talent in this story can also mean our gifts or abilities. A talent is something special and amazing God gives just to you.

The parable starts like this: A man decided to go on a long trip, so he called his servants and asked them to take care of his house, his belongings and his money.

The man in this story trusted his servants and believed that they would take care of his special and valuable things.

The man decided to give one servant five talents of money. (Let's say that it's about five thousand dollars), to another he gave two talents (or two thousand dollars) and to the last servant he gave one talent (one thousand dollars). He gave each servant a large amount he thought they could handle or according to their ability.

Our abilities are our special gifts that God gave to each of us. We are not all equally good at everything. Some of us are good at memorizing, some of us are better at certain sports, and some of us are better at knowing how to help others. Some can solve problems better and some are more generous. Your ability is something special to you, and often different to the abilities of others.

In the story, the man who gave the servants the money expected them to do something good with the money.

The man with the five talents went right away and used his money and got five more! The man with the two talents also used his money wisely and gained two more talents.

But the man with one talent took his talent and buried it in the ground to keep the money safe. He didn't even try to do something with it.

After his long trip the master came back and wanted to know what his servants did with his money. The first man with the five talents said, "You trusted me with five talents and I made five more!"

His master smiled and replied, "Great job, good and faithful servant! You are trustworthy with what I gave you so I will put you in charge of lots of things. Come celebrate with me!"

Then the man with the two talents came and said, "You trusted me with two talents and I made two more!"

His master smiled and replied, "Great job, good and faithful servant! You are trustworthy with what I gave you so I will put you in charge of lots of things. Come celebrate with me!"

Then the man who received the one talent came and told his master, "I know you work hard for your money, so I was afraid to lose any of it. I decided to bury it and keep it safe. Here is your one talent back."

The master was not impressed and said, "You lazy servant! At the very least you could've taken the money to the bank and you would've at least collected some interest from it."

He immediately took the talent away from the man and gave it to the first man who used his money to make more.

Discussion

The point Jesus was trying to make is that if you use your special gifts and abilities God will be pleased. With practice we can get even better at the things we are already good at. We can use these gifts to become better servants of Jesus.

If we have a chance to do something for God using our special gifts and talents, and we don't do it, we are not showing our gratefulness to God for the gifts He has given us.

The servants in the story received different amounts of money. We cannot measure God's gifts to people in 'amounts', but we can say that God gives people different KINDS of gifts.

To some He gives the gift of music. To others He gives the gift of caring. There are many different ways in which we can serve Him.

God has given each person not just one talent, but many. If we are to be faithful servants, we should ask God how we can use our gifts and talents for Him. Our whole life can be a gift to Him.

Make a list

Of the things people might be good at, and how they could use these gifts for God.
EXAMPLES: singing, drawing, sport, reading, being friendly, cooking

Question

Why is it wrong to say, "It's not fair God. I'm not good at *something*."?

Activity

Plan ways of using talents within the group to bring happiness to others, e.g. musical items, dance, showing friendship, preparing flowers, gifts, cards.

Work with a partner

Tell your partner what you could do for God.

Game: Charades

Each person must mime a talent. Others in the group try to guess what it is.

Interview

Invite a visitor... someone who has used their talents for God, e.g. Christian doctor, nurse or missionary. Conduct an interview with the visitor or ask them to give a short talk about their work.

God is Provider

Week 2 Thankyou God for sending your Son

Bible references

2 Corinthians 9:15 Thanks be to God for his priceless gift! (Good News Translation)
Matthew 26:26-28 The Lord's Supper

Bible lesson:

The night before Jesus died he shared a supper with his disciples. He did something special so that they would remember in times to come, why Jesus died.

Jesus thanked God for the bread and shared it with the disciples and said, "Take this and eat it. This is my body which is given for you". Then he took a full cup, thanked God for it and said, "This is my blood, which will be poured out for many people so their sins may be forgiven." Then they all took a sip from the cup.

Questions

- Where did this supper happen? (Answer: An upper room in Jerusalem around 2000 years ago, the night before Jesus died, and the night before Jesus was betrayed by Judas.)
- Who were present at the supper? (Answer: Jesus and His 12 disciples)
- What would happen later that night? (Answer: Jesus would be betrayed, denied, arrested, tried and crucified.)
- What do the bread and wine remind us of?
- Why did Jesus die?
- When did God plan that Jesus would come to earth?

Christians have celebrated this supper ever since this first supper with Jesus. Christian churches celebrate the Lord's Supper, where people take and eat a piece of bread, then drink wine or grape juice, to remember what Jesus did for us on the cross. This is a time of saying 'thank you' to Jesus for dying for us and taking our sins.

Other names for the Lord's Supper are: Eucharist, Holy Communion, Mass and Breaking of Bread. It is a time for saying 'thank you' to God for the gift of Jesus.

Discussion

Ask children if they have ever experienced a church service where the Lord's Supper has been celebrated.

Prayer: Write a prayer of thanks:

Thank you God for sending Jesus
Thank you Jesus that you came
Thank you Jesus for dying on the cross
And therefore be forgiven when I call on your name.

God is Provider

Week 3 Thankyou God for all that you have done for me.

Bible references

Luke 17 The one who said 'thank you'.

Psalm 150:2 Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.

Introduction

What do you say when someone gives you something special?

What do you say when someone does something for you that makes you feel happy?

What do you say when someone does something to show they love you?

Bible lesson: The man who said thank you

Once there were ten very sad men. They were sad because they all had a terrible disease called leprosy. Leprosy was a terrible disease because there was no cure. The disease could be passed on to other people very easily. If someone had leprosy, they had to leave their town and go live with other people who had the disease. The leprosy would make their skin turn white and eventually they would lose their fingers and toes. The men were so so sad because no one could cure them.

One day they saw Jesus walking down the road on his way to Jerusalem. They couldn't come close to Jesus, but they called out to him, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us."

When Jesus saw them, he said, "Go show yourselves to the priests." They did as Jesus told them and went to the priests. On their way to the priest, they were healed! All ten of them were healed! They were so excited. They didn't waste any time going back to their families.

But one of the men was different than all the rest. When he was healed, he was very excited, but he remembered to do something very important. He ran back to Jesus, shouting, "Praise God, I'm healed!" He fell, face down, on the ground by Jesus' feet, and thanked Jesus for what he had done.

Jesus looked around and asked, "Didn't I heal ten men? Where are the other nine men who were healed?" Jesus said to the man, "You may get up and go. Your faith has made you well."

Discussion

How do you think Jesus felt when only one man came back and thanked him?

Why should we say thankyou?

What are some of the things that God does for us?

Is there anything special that God has done for you or your family?

How do we say thankyou to God?

Psalm 150:2 says “Praise God for his mighty acts.” Acts are like actions. What were some of the acts that God did for the people of Israel in the Old Testament? Were the people always thankful? What were some acts that God did in the New Testament? What are some of the things God does for us today? Do we remember to thank him?

God is Provider

Week 4 Giving thanks even when things don't go the right way

Bible references:

Acts 16:16-40 Paul and Silas in prison

1 Thessalonians 5:18 Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Ephesians 5:20 Giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always.

Bible lesson: Paul and Silas in jail

When Jesus went back to heaven, the followers of Jesus did exactly what Jesus told them to do. They went everywhere telling people that because of Jesus we can be friends with God. Just as the leaders did not like Jesus, they did not like the followers of Jesus. It was hard being a Christian in these times.

Two of the followers, Paul and Silas were walking through the streets of Philippi in Macedonia which is now part of Greece. They saw a slave girl who seemed to be acting strange. The men that owned her made a lot of money from her because she did fortune telling.

The girl followed Paul shouting out that “These men are servants of the Most High God and they can tell us the way to God!” She shouted out in this way because the evil spirit inside her did not like Paul and Silas telling people about Jesus. She did this for days, shouting so loudly that Paul and Silas could not make themselves heard. One day Paul decided to do something about it.

Paul turned around and told the spirit that was in her to come out. The evil spirit in her went out, but her masters didn't like that because now she wouldn't be making all that money for them. She could only do fortune telling with the evil spirit inside her.

The masters dragged Paul and Silas into the marketplace to the government leaders. They told the judges that Paul and Silas had brought a lot of trouble to the city. They said that Paul and Silas were teaching customs that were against their laws.

The crowd was now angry. The judges tore off Silas and Paul's coats and commanded that they be beaten. Then Paul and Silas were thrown in prison. The jailer was told to

keep them securely locked. He was to make sure they couldn't escape, so the jailer put them in an inner prison and put their feet in stocks. Stocks are planks of wood with holes where the feet went. They could certainly not escape from these.

But at midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing to God. The other prisoners were listening to them. Can you imagine being beaten, thrown in prison and then singing?

Suddenly, there was a great earthquake. The foundation of the prison shook and all the doors opened and the chains were free from everyone. The prison guard woke up and saw that the doors of the prison were opened up and he drew his sword and was going to kill himself. He knew that he would be put to death for letting the prisoners escape.

But Paul shouted out "Don't do that! No one has escaped. We are all here!" The guard called for a light and ran to Paul and Silas and asked: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They told him that first, he had to believe in Jesus. The guard believed, and then all his household too.

Within the hour that night, the guard and his household washed Paul and Silas' wounds and ALL his family were baptized. Paul and Silas went back to the guard's home to share a meal and to rejoice with the guard because his whole family believed in God.

Questions

Why did Paul and Silas tell people about Jesus?

Why was it dangerous to tell people about Jesus in those times?

Where were Paul and Silas?

Why did the slave girl shout out?

Why did Paul cast out the evil spirit?

Why was the slave girl's master angry?

Why do you think the crowd were angry too?

What did the judge do?

What did Paul and Silas do in prison?

What happened during the night?

Why was the prison guard afraid?

What happened after Paul told him that no one had escaped?

Why do you think everything turned out well in the end?

Discussion

When might it be hard to give praise and thanks to God?

Can you think of a song of praise to God that you could sing when you are feeling sad or worried?

What could you pray to God when you are having a hard time?

God is Provider

Week 5 Thanksgiving and praise to God

Bible references

Acts 3:1-10 The lame man healed and gave praise to God

Psalm 147:7 Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving; Sing praises on the harp to our God.

Psalm 107:1 Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!

Psalm 106:1 Praise the Lord! Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!

Psalm 100:4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!

Discussion: What is praise?

We praise someone when they do something well. For example, we clap when someone performs well at a concert. It shows that we appreciate their performance. Imagine a concert with no applause. How would the performer feel?

We need to praise God too, for the great things He has done. It's more than just saying "thanks God" for sending rain, or for giving us food. It's saying, "God, You are wonderful! Everything you have made is beautiful. Lord, you are more powerful than anyone in the whole universe. God, you are great!"

Human beings owe all they have to God, and it is the right thing to express thanks and praise to Him.

When can we give praise and thanks to God?

- Anytime
- Before we eat
- Before we go to sleep at night
- In church
- Family prayer times
- When praying with other Christians

Bible lesson: The lame man praised God for his healing

After Jesus had gone back to heaven, two of his friends, Peter and John, were going to the temple to pray one afternoon. They walked across the courtyard, through a gate called "The Beautiful Gate." At this gate outside the temple, they saw a lame man sitting on the ground. He had never been able to walk; and as he was very poor, his friends carried him every day to this place; and there he sat, hoping that some of those who went into the temple might take pity on him and give him a little money.

Peter and John stopped; and Peter said to the man, "Look at us!"

The lame man looked at Peter and John, thinking they were about to give him some money. But Peter said:

"Silver and gold have I none; but what I have I will give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk!"

And Peter took hold of the lame man's right hand, and raised him up. At once the lame man felt a new power entering into his feet and ankle-bones. He leaped up, and stood upon his feet, and began to walk, as he had never done before in all his life. He walked up the steps with the two apostles, and went by their side into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

The people, who now saw him leaping up and running, knew him, for they had seen him every day sitting as a beggar at the Beautiful Gate; and every one was filled with wonder at the change which had come over him.

After worshipping and praising God in the temple, the man, still holding fast to Peter and John, went out with them through the Beautiful Gate into Solomon's Porch. And in a very few minutes a great crowd of people were drawn together to the place to see the man who had been made well, and to see also the two men who had healed him.

Then Peter stood up before the throng of people, and told the crowd about Jesus, who had died and rose again, and went back to heaven. But because of His power in the world today this man was healed.

Discussion

How could Peter and John heal the lame man? (Not because of themselves, but through the power of Jesus.)

What did the man do, once he knew that it was the power of God that healed him?

What do you think he might have said?

What would the people have thought if Peter and John did not tell them about Jesus? (The people might have thought that Peter and John had magic powers.)

What would you say to someone if...

...they thought that there were many beautiful things in the natural world but they got there over time by accident. (We would tell them that God is the one we must thank and praise because He is the creator.)

...they had a narrow escape from death or a near accident. (We would tell them that God is the one to be praised because He was looking after them.)

Year 4

God is our Saviour



3 Weeks

Outcomes:

At the completion of this module students will understand:

- The significance of the Passover meal
- Why Jesus died
- That Jesus is still alive today even though we can't see Him
- The meaning of 'faith' in things we cannot see

Related classroom topics for Science, Social Studies and Health:

Countries of the world: China

Link between "God is our Saviour" and classroom topics:

John 3:16 For God loved the world so much that He sent his only son so that whoever believes in Him should not die but have everlasting life.

God wants the people of every country in the whole world to come to know Him, so that they can live forever with Him in heaven. People of every nation can come to know the true God by asking Jesus to forgive their sins and then to follow Him. Some people have never heard about Jesus so those who know about Him must tell others.

Values:

faith; respect for truth; cultural understanding, thankfulness

Biographies:

Hudson Taylor; Gladys Aylward

God is our Saviour

Week 1 The Passover meal

Bible reference: Luke 22

It was the first day of a special feast that the Israelites celebrated. That feast was called the Passover. The Israelites celebrated the Passover ever since the time of Moses, when the Lord saved all the Israelite babies. This was when the Lord 'passed over' their houses, and they were kept safe. This feast is still celebrated by Jewish people today. During the time of the Passover celebrations the people don't eat bread with yeast in it. Yeast is what makes the bread soft and puffy. Without yeast the bread is flat, and that is called unleavened bread. This is what is eaten at a Passover feast.

The disciples asked Jesus, "Where would you like us to eat the Passover feast?" Jesus replied to them, "Go into the city and you will find a man, and tell him that we would like to come to his house for Passover."

The disciples did just as Jesus asked, and they found a place and got ready for the Passover.

The evening came, and Jesus and the twelve disciples sat to eat the Passover meal. The disciples were eating quietly; they had a lot on their minds. They were worried because some people wanted to kill Jesus because he was getting so popular.

Jesus could see the disciples were worried. He said to them quietly, "I tell you the truth, one of you here will betray me." The disciples looked at each other in shock, and some of them asked Jesus, "It isn't me, is it Lord?"

Jesus replied, "The one who dips his bread into the bowl with me will betray me. I will die, just as it is written, but the man who betrays me will feel sorry forever. The one He was talking about was Judas.

Jesus thanked God for the bread and shared it with the disciples and said, "Take this and eat it. This is my body which is given for you". Then he took a full cup, thanked God for it and said, "This is my blood, which will be poured out for many people so their sins may be forgiven." Then they all took a sip from the cup.

The meal continued after this, it was a long celebration. The disciples took their time, because they enjoyed talking with Jesus and asking Him questions.

After some time Jesus got up from the table and went to a different part of the room. He took off his everyday clothes, and put a large towel around him, making himself look like a servant. After that, He poured water into a large bowl and began to wash the disciples' feet. Then He dried their feet with the towel that was wrapped around Him.

By washing the disciples' feet Jesus was doing something that only a servant would do, even though He was the King of heaven and earth! Just imagine if someone famous came to your house and started to clean your room, even getting down on their hands and knees to clean! It probably would never happen.

When it was Peter's turn to get his feet clean he said to Jesus, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus replied, "You don't understand what I am doing, but you will later."

"No," said Peter, "you will never wash my feet." He said this because he didn't feel right having Jesus wash his feet. He knew Jesus was very special.

Jesus replied back to him, "If I don't wash your feet, you cannot be with me."

"Then, Lord," Peter replied, "don't just wash my feet but my hands and head too." Jesus then explained that He only needed to wash his feet; and that would make his whole body clean.

When Jesus had finished washing all of the disciples' feet, he put his everyday clothes back on and returned to the table. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" Jesus asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and that is who I am. And now that I have washed your feet, you can also wash one another's feet."

Discussion

This is an example of how you should treat others. You don't have to actually wash other people's feet, but by helping others and doing kind things for others we are being servants for Jesus, and that is what He wants us to be.

How can we serve others?

At home? At school? In the community?

What is the meaning of 'humble'?

Why do we say that Jesus was a humble servant?

God is our Saviour

Week 2 Jesus dies on the cross

Bible reference: Matthew 26&27

Very early in the morning, the soldiers brought Jesus to Pilate, the governor at the time. Pilate asked Jesus, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus replied, "Yes, I am." This upset the chief priests because they were jealous of him and the friends He had made with the Jews.

Pilate listened to the complaints of the people that brought Jesus, but he couldn't find any reason to punish Him. Pilate questioned Jesus, but Jesus didn't stick up for himself (He knew that they wouldn't listen anyway). He had done nothing wrong.

Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people and said to them, "I have talked to Jesus, and I find no reason to kill Him."

After they heard that, all the people shouted, "We want Jesus! Release Barabbas instead!"

Barabbas had been in jail because he had killed someone, and the people wanted him to be free, and Jesus to be punished. (This sounds strange but the chief priests had told lies about Jesus, so that the people would be afraid of Him, and want to kill Him).

Pilate didn't like the idea of killing Jesus and letting Barabbas go free. He wanted to let Jesus go, so he tried to talk to the people but they didn't let him. They just kept shouting, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

Pilate tried again, yelling, "What has Jesus done wrong? I can punish Him but then I must let Him go, He doesn't deserve to die!" But the people just shouted louder to crucify Jesus and Pilate wanted to please the crowd so he freed Barabbas and sent Jesus to die.

The soldiers led Jesus into the palace and made Him put on an old royal robe and they twisted together a crown of thorns to put on His head. Then they made fun of Him and said, "Hail, king of the Jews." They didn't understand that He was a king, that's why they made fun of Him.

Next, the soldiers led Jesus toward a hill called Golgotha. They made Him carry the cross on His back. But Jesus couldn't carry it the whole way; he fell down. The soldiers had whipped His back and it hurt so much that Jesus couldn't handle the weight of the cross on His shoulders.

A man named Simon happened to be near Jesus when He fell, and the soldiers grabbed him, and made him carry the cross the rest of the way. The soldiers offered Jesus wine

mixed with myrrh. This was supposed to help make it less painful, but Jesus refused to have any.

When they reached the top of the hill they nailed Jesus to the cross. There were three crosses, Jesus was in the middle and there was a criminal on His right and on His left. Pilate made a sign to be put on the cross. It read what He was being punished for: Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.

The soldiers watched Jesus and made fun of him. Some people walked by and shouted, "You saved others, why can't you save Yourself?" Jesus could have saved himself, but he chose not to, He wanted to save us instead.

Jesus ignored the people, but He did see his mother, his aunt, and some other women he knew. Then Jesus saw John, one of his disciples, close to his mother Mary; He told John to take care of her. This he did, from that day on.

Later, the suffering Jesus had done all for His Father in heaven, paying for our sin and the sins of the world. He then said, "It is finished." That is when Jesus bowed His head and went to Heaven. He was truly the obedient servant.

Suddenly, a huge curtain that hung in the temple was torn in half, from top to bottom. And a man that had wanted Jesus to die saw all of this and he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!" He realized he had been wrong about Jesus.

It seems like a really sad story, but its one of the greatest stories of all! Jesus died knowing that we would do things that are wrong (that is what a sin is). Jesus died for everybody's sins, so now when we ask God to forgive us, and we are truly sorry for what we've done, He will act like it never happened. But that doesn't mean we should keep on doing wrong, because by doing that it's like we're hurting Jesus all over again.

This Bible verse helps us remember what Jesus did for us:

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16 (NIV)

Discussion

Why did Jesus die?

Who did He die for?

God is our Saviour

Week 3 Jesus is alive

Bible references: John 20, Luke 24

After Jesus died a man named Joseph (from a place called Arimathea) put Jesus in his tomb that nobody had ever used. The tombs they used then were cut out of rock, almost like a cave. The bodies weren't buried deep in the ground like they are now. Before Joseph left, he and some men rolled a large heavy stone in front of the tomb.

Mary and Mary Magdalene had waited until Sunday to go to Jesus' tomb, because they couldn't go on the Sabbath. (It was a day of rest). They made spices and oils as a sign of respect to Jesus, and went very early Sunday morning to go see Jesus' body.

As they were just about at the tomb the earth suddenly shook and an angel came down from heaven. He easily rolled away the stone at the entrance of the tomb and sat on top of it.

The women looked at each other and rubbed their eyes, they couldn't believe what they had seen, plus it was very early in the morning, and they were still a little sleepy. The angel was so bright, almost as bright as lightning. His clothes were as white as snow.

There had been guards watching the tomb so no one would steal Jesus' body. When they saw the angel they fell over and they couldn't move or speak because they were so afraid.

Then the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus who has died. But He isn't here; He has risen just as He said He would! Come and see for yourself, the tomb is empty."

The women were confused. How could this happen? They were sure Jesus had died, and now He was alive? They looked in the tomb and the cloths Jesus was wrapped in were lying on the ground, and the tomb was empty. Then the angel spoke again, "If you want to find Jesus He's on his way to Galilee."

So the women hurried away. They were laughing and crying at the same time. They didn't know what to feel, they had been so sad that Jesus was dead and now they were so excited He was alive! They just knew they had to find Jesus, and they had to tell the disciples the good news.

As they were running down the path they turned a corner, and there was Jesus. "Greetings," He said. The ladies fell at His feet and worshiped Him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my disciples to come to Galilee. That is where they will see me."

The disciples came to Galilee, and had heard by this time that Jesus was alive. They were sitting around talking about it, when Jesus walked into the room and said to them, "Peace be with you." The disciples immediately stopped talking. Even though they had heard He was alive, they were shocked to see Him standing there with them.

Jesus said to them, "Why do you look at me like you've just seen a ghost? Why don't you believe what you're seeing? Look at the scars in my hands and feet. It is really me! Touch me and see, I am not a ghost but a real person."

The disciples were amazed. They were so full of joy, and yet this seemed impossible. Jesus understood what they were thinking, so He said, "This is what I told you would happen, that everything must happen that has already been written in the Bible."

Jesus had told the disciples when they had the Last Supper together. They took the bread at communion and Jesus said, 'this is my body which I have given to you...' but the disciples hadn't understood what it really meant.

Then Jesus told them, "You have seen these things that have happened, so stay in the city and soon I am going to give you what God has promised you, the Holy Spirit."

Jesus had one more person to see. His name was Thomas, and he was one of the disciples that wasn't there when Jesus met with them. Thomas had also heard that Jesus was alive, but would not believe until he saw Jesus with his own eyes.

A week later when Thomas finally saw Jesus, Jesus said to him, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Stop doubting and believe." But Jesus continued, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; but blessed are those who don't see me, and believe anyway."

Discussion

Who was Jesus talking about when He said, "Blessed are those who don't see me, and believe anyway"?

How can we know that Jesus is alive, even though we can't see Him?

What does it mean to have FAITH in Jesus?

Year 4

God is Pure and Holy 4 Weeks



Outcomes

At the completion of this module students will understand that:

- God used, and is still using, the nation of Israel, to carry out His great plan for the earth.
- Because the Israelites were chosen to be the nation into which Jesus would be born, they had to remain pure and holy
- God required Israel to worship Him alone and no other gods
- God continually challenged the Israelites about holiness
- God chose Moses to lead a holy nation
- God judged those nations who worked against Him and worshipped other gods

Related classroom topics for Science, Social Studies and Health:

Cleaning up

Link between “God is Pure and Holy” and classroom topics:

Cleanliness is a symbol of holiness. God wants us to lead pure lives, pleasing to Him.

Values:

Integrity, honesty, fairness and respect for truth and justice, goodness, holiness

Biography:

Daniel Bula

God is Pure and Holy

Week 1

God wants His people to be holy

Bible references

Psalm 51:10 Create in me a clean heart O Lord.

Romans 3:23 All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Exodus 1-3 God calls Moses

Introduction

Ask the students if they know the meaning of 'holiness'.

Definition of holiness: purity in thought, word and actions.

Ask them to think about pure water. How can pure water become impure?

What does the Bible mean when it says, 'Create in me a clean heart O Lord'? We all know that a heart is the organ inside us that pumps our blood to keep us alive. But we can also use the word 'heart' to mean our thoughts, our words and our actions.

We can keep our heart pure by listening to what God says and doing what He says to do. Our hearts become impure when we do not listen to God and we go against Him. This is called 'sin'.

Holiness in Old Testament times

Sin came into the world when Adam and Eve disobeyed, and it was God's plan right from back then that Jesus would come into the world to give people a chance to come back to Him. God chose one nation of people, the people of Israel, to be the nation into which Jesus would be born. The Old Testament tells us about this group of people and how God taught them to love and obey Him. God said that this nation must be holy. They were not to worship other gods like the people in the neighbouring countries. But they often disobeyed God and they often did worship other gods. Then God would bring them back to Himself again. God told them to offer sacrifices to say 'sorry' for their sins.

When Jesus died He became the sacrifice. Now we can be holy by the following steps.

Steps to holiness

Draw four steps and write inside the steps: 1. God is perfect 2. All have sinned. 3. Jesus died for our sin 4. Follow Jesus

Use the following to explain each step:

Step 1

The God of the Bible is the only God who is perfect. He has never done anything wrong, and will never do anything wrong.

Step 2

People on the other hand are not perfect or holy, and everyone has done something wrong in their lives. Because of this they cannot be a friend of God. The Bible says, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God". (Rom 3:23)

Step 3

But wait! There is an answer! Jesus, who is God, came into the world and died on the cross, in order to take the punishment for our sin. Those who ask Jesus to forgive them and decide to follow Him, can now be friends with God. God no longer looks at our sin but sees us as holy, because Jesus is in our life.

Step 4

When we are a follower of Jesus, He expects us to live as Christians, pure in thought, word and actions.

Moses, chosen by God

God chose great leaders who spoke God's word to the people, to remind them about being holy. One of these great leaders was Moses.

You will remember that Moses was saved from death as a baby boy. The Israelites, (also called the Hebrews), were under the rule of the Egyptians at the time. Because they were rapidly growing in numbers, the Egyptian Pharaoh wanted the baby boys to be killed. But the baby Moses was placed by his mother in a basket boat to float on the river, hidden amongst the reeds. The Pharaoh's daughter discovered the baby and wanted to adopt him as her son. So Moses grew up in the palace.

When Moses grew up he learned that he had been adopted as a baby and he was actually a Hebrew, not an Egyptian. Moses was greatly troubled the way Pharaoh treated the Hebrew people; they were forced to work very hard as slaves, carrying huge blocks of stone for the Pharaoh's building projects.

One day Moses saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, and he became so upset that he killed the Egyptian. After that Moses had to run away from Egypt because the Pharaoh found out what he'd done and was very angry with Moses.

Moses came to a place called Midian. There he stayed with some shepherds for several years. He married one of the daughters whose name was Zipporah. Moses became a shepherd, and took care of many animals.

As the years went by, the Pharaoh in Egypt died, but the Hebrews were still slaves and they prayed to God for help. God heard their prayer. He had a rescue plan that was now going to take place.

Moses was out looking after some sheep when he noticed a bush on fire. The bush was completely on fire, but the fire wasn't burning up the bush. There was no smoke, just fire.

Then a voice came from the bush: "Moses! Moses!" Moses knew that this was God.

Moses replied, "I am here." He continued to walk closer to the bush but as he got closer God said to him, "Don't come any closer; take off your sandals because you are in the presence of God. I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."

These were men that Moses had heard about. He knew that God had done great things for these men, and He believed in their God. So when Moses heard God say these words he was afraid and covered his face with his cloak. He thought that if he saw God's face he would die because God is so bright and powerful.

Then God said to Moses, "I have seen all the pain my people have had to go through in Egypt. I have heard their prayers and want to save them from their slavery. I want to take them to another place where there is good land and plenty of milk and honey. So Moses, I am sending you to free the Israelites from Pharaoh."

"But God," said Moses, "I am just an ordinary person. Pharaoh won't listen to me," Moses said in disbelief.

And God said, "I will be with you and will help you. So go to the Israelites and tell them I have sent you and I have heard their prayers, and will send them to a better place. Don't worry! They will listen to you. But be patient because Pharaoh won't listen until he sees many signs and is punished, but after that he will let you go."

Moses still didn't think he was the right man for the job. "God, what if the Israelites don't believe me, what if they say, 'I think you're lying, God didn't talk to you.'"

Then the Lord said to him, "Throw your staff on the ground." Moses did as he was told and his staff became a snake right before his eyes. Then the Lord said, "Pick it up by the tail." Moses didn't like snakes but he obeyed God. He grabbed it by the tail and it turned from a snake, to his smooth wooden staff, (a walking stick).

Even after these signs Moses still didn't think he could do it. Finally God said to Moses, "I will send your brother Aaron to help you. I will help both of you, and give you the words to say." After that the bush stopped burning and God was gone.

So Moses put his sandals back on and made sure to take his staff, and went to get his wife and two sons. They traveled by donkey to Egypt where Moses would begin his work for God, who would set the Israelites free.

Discussion

1. Why did God choose a special group of people? (Jesus would be born into one of their families.)
2. Who were these people? (The Israelites, the Jews, the Hebrews are all the same people)
3. Why did they need a leader? (God wanted them to travel to a new land, and He wanted them to be holy.)
4. When did God choose Moses? (From when he was a baby boy)
5. Why did God want people of Israel to be holy? (They were to be the nation that Jesus would be born into; they had to show the world how to obey God.)
6. What did they have to do to be holy? (Obey God and never worship other gods)
7. What did they have to do to say 'sorry' for their sins? (Offer a sacrifice.)
8. What is a 'sacrifice'?
9. How can we become holy today? (Four steps)
10. How did Moses know that God was telling him to be the leader? (The burning bush and the snake)
11. How did Moses feel about becoming the leader? (He thought he was not good enough.)
12. What did God say about this? ("I will be with you and I will send your brother Aaron to help you.")
13. How would you know if God wanted you to do something for Him?
14. What if you were too afraid to do it? What would you do?

God is Pure and Holy

Week 2

God provided an escape plan

Bible references

Genesis 3 Sin enters the world.

Exodus chapters 7-11 God's strategy for the rescue

Deuteronomy 7:12 & 15; Exodus 15:26 "If you pay attention to my commandments, I will put none of these diseases upon you. I am the Lord who heals you."

Discussion

What happened to God's beautiful world after Adam and Eve sinned?

Did sickness and suffering exist in the world when God first made it?

God's beautiful world was once pure, perfect and holy. There was no sin, sickness or suffering. But when Adam and Eve disobeyed God these things entered the world. The fact that people suffer from pain, hunger, sickness and sadness makes God sad too. It was not God's original plan. It also made God sad that the people He had made could not be friends with Him. So God made a plan that would allow people to be friends with God.

Bible lesson Part 1: God prepares for the rescue

It made God sad that His special people, the Israelites were suffering under the cruel Egyptian Pharaoh. They were treated very badly as slaves, but God had a rescue plan for them.

It was not easy. It would take time, as the Pharaoh's heart was very hard. He was determined to keep the Israelites as slaves.

God decided that the person to be in charge of the rescue plan was Moses. Moses knew that God's special power was upon him for the dangerous and very important task of setting the Israelites free from Egyptian rule.

Again and again Moses went to the Pharaoh and said, "God says 'Let my people go'". Each time the Pharaoh said, "No!" and his heart became more and more hardened. The Israelites worked day after day making bricks for the Egyptians. If they did not work hard enough they were whipped. The Israelites cried to God to save them but the Pharaoh would not change his mind. There was now only one thing God could do. That was to send plagues and disasters to Egypt to show the Pharaoh that God was very serious about the release of the Israelites. Sending disaster to Egypt would be the only thing that would make the Pharaoh agree to letting God's people go. In fact, God had to send ten different disasters to Egypt before the Pharaoh would finally let the Israelites go.

Bible Lesson Part 2: Disasters upon Egypt

Disaster no. 1 The Nile River is turned to blood (Exodus 7:14-25)

God told Moses that Pharaoh's heart and the heart of the Egyptian people had become very hard because of all the wicked things they had done to the people of Israel. He told Moses to go and stand by the River Nile. God said to Moses, "When Pharaoh comes to have his bath in the river, tell him that you will strike the Nile with your stick and it will turn to blood if he will not let the people go."

This would be a terrible disaster for the Egyptians because if the river turned to blood then all the fish would die, the river would stink and the Egyptian people would have no water to drink. Pharaoh did not take notice of God's warning, and sure enough, all the water became blood. Even the water that was in their houses in jars became blood. But still the Pharaoh would not let the people of Israel go.

Disaster no. 2 Frogs invade Egypt (Exodus 8:1-15)

God sent millions of frogs into the land of Egypt, so everywhere the people went there were frogs. There were frogs in their beds, their cooking pots, their cupboards, their clothes and their shoes. Frogs covered the land. Finally Pharaoh had had enough so he called Moses. He said to Moses, "Tell your God that He is the winner. Take these frogs out of my land and I will let the people of Israel go." Then suddenly all the frogs died, and they were heaped up in huge piles in the streets and fields. The smell was terrible. However now that the frogs were no longer troubling the people Pharaoh broke his promise and wouldn't let the people go.

Disaster no. 3 The Gnats (Exodus 8:16-19)

Then God sent lots of stinging insects like mosquitoes, (called gnats), onto the land. The people were driven mad with the itchy bites. Pharaoh's magic men said that the God of Moses was doing this, and Pharaoh should listen to Him. However Pharaoh would not take their advice.

Disaster no. 4 Flies (Exodus 8:20-32)

Then God sent flies into Egypt in dark clouds, and they swarmed everywhere. The people could not speak because if they opened their mouths they would swallow flies. They could not keep the flies out of their houses, their food or their water. Flies were everywhere except in the houses of the Israelite people. Pharaoh said that the people could go and Moses prayed to God that the flies would be removed. Not one fly remained. But Pharaoh hardened his heart and would not let the people go.

Disaster no. 5 Plague on the animals (Exodus 9:1-7)

Then God sent a plague on the animals that the Egyptians used for food. All their cows, goats and sheep died, but the animals belonging to the Israelites did not die. And still Pharaoh would not let the people go.

Disaster no. 6 Boils (Exodus 9:8-12)

God then told Moses to take some fine dust out of the ovens they used for baking the bricks. Moses was to throw the dust into the air. Suddenly the dust spread all over the land of Egypt and settled on the people. Boils, (sores), broke out on all the

animals that were left, the donkeys, horses and camels, and on the Egyptian people as well. But still Pharaoh would not let the Israelite people leave the land of Egypt.

Disaster no. 7 Hail (Exodus 9:13-35)

By now God was very angry with Pharaoh because he had made so many promises and broken them all. God told Moses to tell Pharaoh that he was going to send hail. Hail is small drops of ice that fall during a bad thunderstorm in cooler climates. The sky became dark and thunder started. Huge hailstones fell, destroying the plants in the fields used by the Egyptians for food; the barley, the corn and the wheat, all was now ruined. Their grapes, olives and vegetables were now spoiled too.

Pharaoh called Moses and said, “The people can go, but just stop the hail!” Moses prayed and the hail suddenly stopped. For a while the fields were covered in a layer of thick white hail, but the sun came up and melted it. Then Pharaoh hardened his heart again and would not let the people go.

Disaster no 8 Locusts (Exodus 10:1-20)

God sent locusts into the land of Egypt, and all the grain and corn that was lying on the ground, and all the new plants that had sprung out of the ground, were eaten by locusts. Locusts are like grasshoppers. They made a carpet on the ground as they moved from place to place eating everything.

Disaster no. 9 Darkness (Exodus 10:21-29)

Then God told Moses to stretch out his hand toward heaven, and a thick darkness came over the land of Egypt. The darkness was so black that it was like a blanket that blotted out every bit of light. The darkness stayed for three days, so people could not move around. Only where the Israelites lived did the sun shine. Pharaoh said to Moses, “Take your children and go, but you must leave your animals here.” But Moses said no; they must take everything.

Disaster no. 10 Death of the first son (Exodus 11)

This was the final disaster and it caused Pharaoh to let the Israelites go. It was most serious. God said that if Pharaoh did not let the Israelites go the first born of every Egyptian family would die.

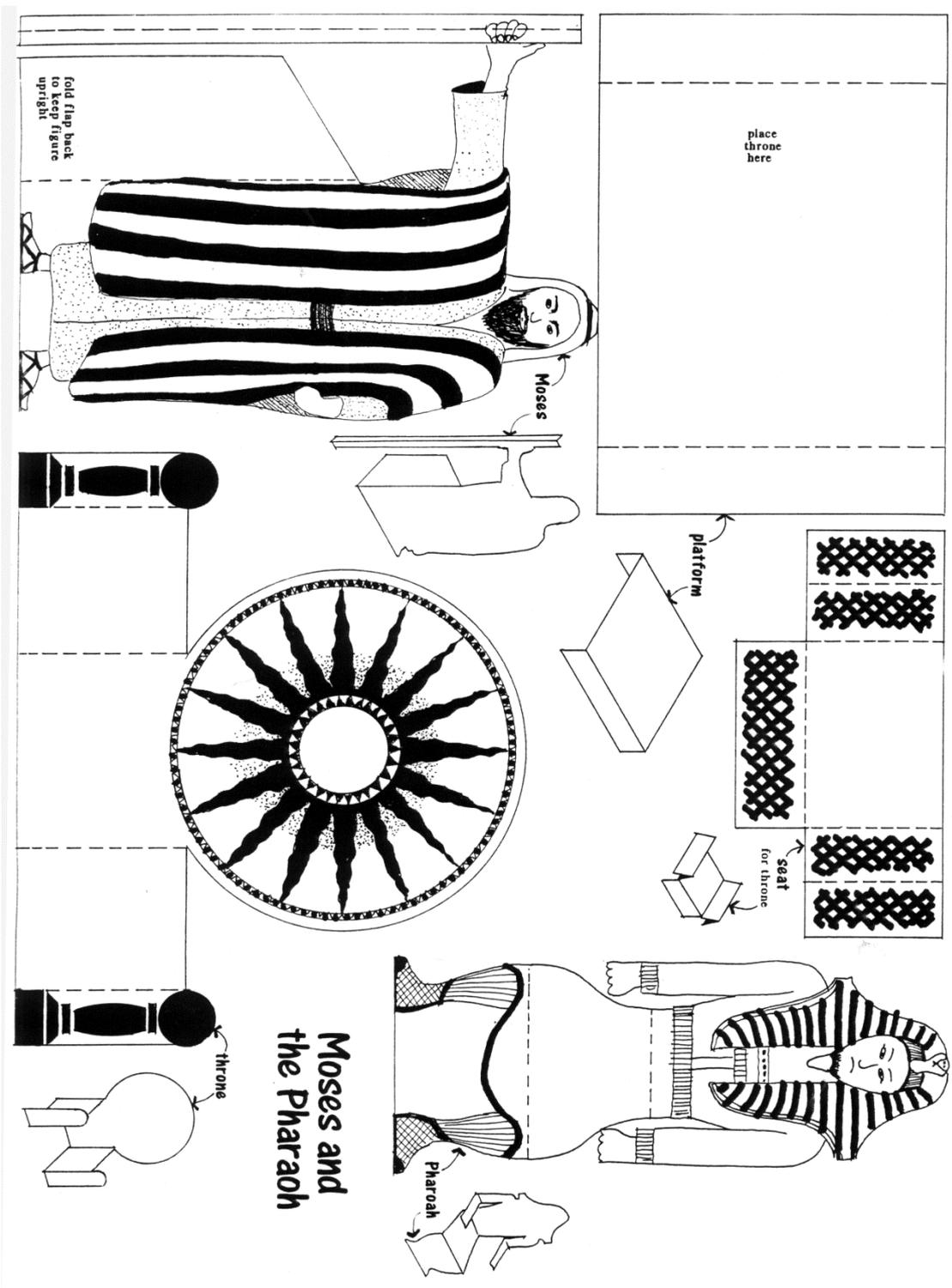
Discussion

God is love, so why did He send the disasters upon the Egyptians?

God’s love for the whole world is great. In order for His plan to be carried out, to save the world through Jesus, He had to judge the Egyptians for their cruelty to the Israelites.

God had a rescue plan for the Israelites, but this was part of a bigger rescue plan for the whole world. That was, to bring Jesus into the world. Israel therefore needed to be a holy nation. They needed to be a strong nation to carry out God’s plan. They needed to be set free from the cruel Egyptian Pharaoh.

Art/Craft: Make a cardboard model of Moses and the Pharaoh.



God is Pure and Holy

Week 3

God rescues those who trust Him.

Bible references

Exodus 9-11 God's strategy for the rescue

Psalm 91 No plague shall come near your dwelling.

Exodus 12 The escape.

Bible lesson: Disaster no. 10 and the Escape

God told Moses that the tenth disaster would be the final one. After this the Israelites were to escape. God told Moses exactly how the people were to prepare for the escape. Moses gathered the people together.

"Tonight we are leaving Egypt," he said. "Tonight at midnight, God will send the angel of death into Egypt. The oldest child in every family will die. However God will protect all the Israelite children. Every family must kill a lamb. Use the blood to make a sign on the door-posts of your houses. The blood should be placed down the side posts and across the top. Then when the angel of death goes through Egypt he will pass by your door and your oldest child will be safe."

God also told the Israelites to roast the lamb and eat it, and to make some flat bread like roti. This is bread without yeast. Yeast makes the bread soft and spongy but it takes a whole day to rise. There was no time to wait for the bread to rise so they ate flat bread instead.

The angel of death passed through Egypt at midnight, exactly as God had said, but the Israelite children were protected.

As the sun rose in the sky next morning, there was weeping and wailing and crying all over the land as the first-born sons were found dead. Pharaoh's own son was dead as well.

Then Pharaoh sent word to Moses, "Go. Leave Egypt! Take your children and your animals with you. Go before we all die!"

So God's people left Egypt that night. God went with them to show them the way to their new land.

Discussion

How were the first-born sons of the Israelites saved from death?

The blood of the lambs that were killed saved the Israelite boys.

How is this like the blood of Jesus when He died on the cross?

Art/Craft

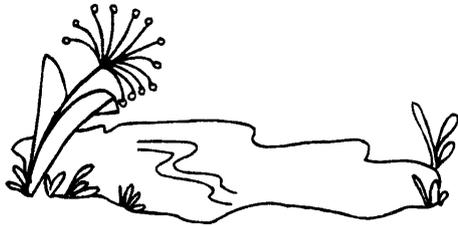
Illustrate one of the plagues of Egypt, OR, draw the Israelites with all their animals and belongings leaving Egypt.

Puzzle

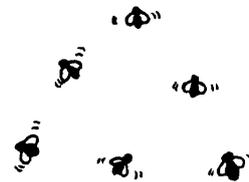
There are six words missing from this message. Use the words below to complete the message from Psalm 91.

GOD HAS _____ HIS _____ IN _____ OF YOU. THEY WILL _____ OVER YOU _____ YOU _____.

Missing words: ANGELS, WHEREVER, GO, PUT, CHARGE, WATCH.



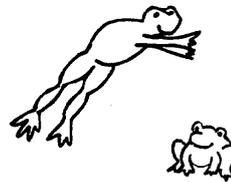
Blood



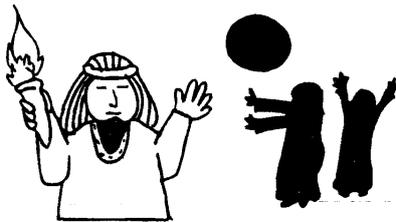
Flies



Boils



Frogs



Darkness



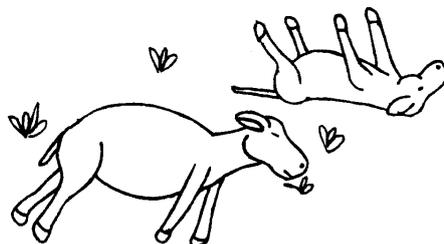
Hail



Death of a 1st son



Gnats



Locusts

God is Pure and Holy

Week 4

God rescue plan for all people.

Bible references

Exodus 14 God protects His people again. He opens the Red Sea.

John 3:16 God's rescue plan for us

Bible lesson: God Rescues His People Again

The Pharaoh was sorry he had let the Israelites go. Even though God had sent ten disasters, Pharaoh had not learnt his lesson. He called his soldiers together.

"Get ready!" he commanded. "Take your horses and chariots and go after the Israelites. Bring them back to Egypt."

The Israelites were a big group. With their children and animals and all their goods they could only move slowly. It did not take long for Pharaoh's army to catch up. The Israelites saw them coming, and were terribly afraid. The Red Sea was in front of them and they had no boats. They shouted to Moses, "What have you done to us bringing us out of Egypt? We should have stayed in Egypt and remained slaves." But Moses trusted God.

"Don't be afraid," Moses said, "Just stand where you are and watch, and you will see the wonderful way the Lord will rescue today."

Moses went into his tent to talk to God. The Lord spoke to him and said, "Ask the people to move forward. Use your rod. Hold it over the water and the sea will open up a path before you and all the people of Israel shall walk through on dry ground."

God had been leading the Israelites by a big cloud. God was in the cloud. Suddenly the big cloud was behind God's people. The sky became black over the Egyptians, but over the Israelites it was bright daylight. The Egyptians had to stop their chariots and rest because the darkness was like a thick blanket over them. They couldn't see the Israelites.

Moses went to the edge of the sea and stood there with his hand and rod stretched out over the water. Suddenly the water began to separate at the point where Moses held the rod. The sea rolled back on either side of Moses' rod, until it formed a huge wall of water on each side. Then a wind blew from the east all night, and the sea bottom became dry! What an amazing sight!

The people began walking. They walked in a straight line while the water rolled up on either side of them. They would probably have been afraid, thinking that the wall of water might come crashing down on top of them. The children held their parent's hands while they walked quickly across.

But there were so many Israelites that it took hours to cross over. Now the sun was up and the Egyptians were coming after them again! Some of the members of Pharaoh's army started to follow the Israelites across through the walls of water. But God made the wheels of their chariots get stuck in the mud and fall off.

When all of the people of Israel had crossed to the other side, the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand again over the sea, so that the waters will return." Moses did that, and suddenly the walls of water came crashing down. The Egyptians were running and riding their horses as fast as they could, back to where they came from, but they were trapped in the falling water and no-one survived.

Discussion: God's protection and rescue plan

Why did Pharaoh finally let the Israelites go free?

Was it because Moses was a very powerful man, or was it because of God's power?

Why did God allow the Egyptians to suffer the disasters?

God always gives people plenty of time to stop doing wrong, and to ask for forgiveness. He gave the Pharaoh and the Egyptians plenty of warnings and plenty of time to do the right thing. But the Egyptian enemies refused to obey God even though He proved Himself in so many ways through mighty miraculous deeds. God did not want them to die, but because He is pure and holy, had to judge them for their sin.

We have seen through the Exodus story that God had a rescue plan for His children. However God is not just concerned about the Israelites. He has a rescue plan for all people. When people became separated from God through sin in the Garden of Eden, God needed to make a rescue plan so that all people could once again be friends with God. God's rescue plan was to send Jesus. Because of Jesus we can be forgiven for the wrong things we do and become friends with God. Find out what John 3:16 says about God's rescue plan.

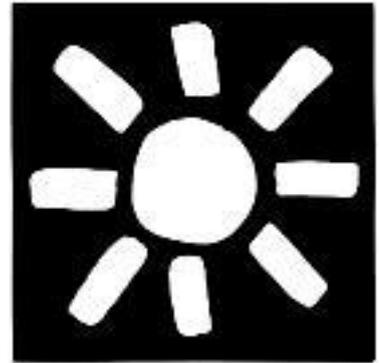
Activity

Make a summary of the Exodus story. Using a large sheet of paper, write down the main points, place them in correct sequence and illustrate the events.



Year 4

God is Creator 5 Weeks



Outcomes

At the completion of this module students will understand that:

- God created the universe in six days
- God created the world for humans to enjoy and care for
- We have a responsibility to care for God's creation
- God created plants to provide for us
- We should thank God for all that he has provided for us

Related classroom topics for Science, Social Studies and Health:

Living things; caring for animals; animal extinction; caring for the earth

Link between "God is Creator" and classroom topics:

God has put human beings in charge of His creation. We have a responsibility to care for the earth, for plants, animals and other human beings.

Values

respect for truth; faith, care for the environment, responsibility

Biography:

Maitaka (Pacific Island Stories)

God is Creator

Week 1

God created us with the ability to make choices.

Bible references

Genesis 1 The six days of creation.

Genesis 1:26-30 God created human beings in His image. He placed them above other created things. He asked human beings to care for the created world.

Genesis 2 The creation of human beings; God's instructions about the tree of Good and Evil.

Genesis 2:19-20 God gave Adam the responsible task of naming the animals.

Psalms 8:4-6 God created man to rule over the creation

Bible lesson: The seven days of Creation.

Read or tell the story from Genesis 1.

Discussion

Revise the sequence of events in the seven days of Creation.

On the sixth day God created land animals and man.

Why was man special? (Read Genesis 1:26-30)

God said that He would make man in His image. Just as God can think, choose, decide and create, so can we. By placing people in charge of the plants and animals, God was giving them an opportunity to make choices and decisions. One of Adam's first jobs was to choose names for all the animals. Read about this in Genesis 2:19-20.

Story: Adam names the animals

The children sat outside with Grandpa on a clear, starry night. They loved to go camping with Grandpa. They especially loved these times when they were allowed to stay up a little later than usual. They would cook food over the fire. Then Grandpa would tell a story.

"Twit-twoo," they heard from the bush.

"That's a barn owl," said Grandpa. "Listen carefully and you might hear some other night animals. The bush is very active at night you know. Many animals are awake at night time."

The children all listened carefully.

"How did the animals get their names anyway?" asked one of the children.

"Well," said Grandpa. "I'll tell you the story. It's a very old story actually. It's as old as the Creation itself."

"After God made the world," went on Grandpa, "He made a man called Adam. One of the first things God asked Adam to do was to give names to all the animals...not just the land animals but the birds and fish as well. God did this because He wanted Adam to know that animals were created to help humans. Some animals were tame and some were wild, but whether tame or wild, Adam was to take care of them. God wanted Adam to name the animals so that he would get to know them, and also, so that he would realise his responsibility in taking care of them.

It must have been fun for Adam to think up names for the animals. Just imagine! 'That one with the long neck... I'll call him a giraffe... and what could I call that funny animal that looks a bit like a duck and a bit like a beaver. I'll have to call him a platypus... and that friendly one...I think he would like to be my special friend. I'll call him a dog.'

Adam spent a long time naming the animals. He remembered what God had told him: "You shall rule over all the animals of the earth."

Adam knew what God meant. He was to look after all the animals. He was to be God's caretaker. What a responsible job that was. Adam felt happy that God had given him the ability to make choices and decisions.

Discussion

God created the animals so that we could enjoy them. Some animals provide for us. Some animals are just good friends. God wants us to take care of all the animals in His creation.

1. We should remember that when God first created the animals, there was no killing, because sin had not yet entered the world. Adam, Eve and all the animals ate only plants. Write the bible verses that tell us this. (Genesis 1:29-30).
2. Read Genesis 2:19-20. Which verse tells us that Adam named the animals?
3. Make a list of some of the choices and decisions that Adam had to make, (e.g. He could choose right from wrong; to obey or disobey God.)
4. What did God mean when He said that people would rule over the animals?
5. Give some examples of ways in which people can take care of God's creation, including animals.
6. Name two animals that are endangered today, and explain why they are endangered.
7. How can we take good care of our pets?

God is Creator

Week 2

Wrong choices

Bible references

Genesis 3 The Fall

Genesis 4 Cain and Abel

Introduction

Place on a tray a collection of objects, e.g. coloured pencils, toys, some books. Ask a few children to come and make a CHOICE. Ask the children whether it was hard to choose.

Explain

God could have created Adam and Eve like robots. He could have made them to think and act exactly as HE wanted them to. However, God did not do this. He gave them a mind to think with. He gave them the ability to make decisions for themselves. He gave them a conscience too, so that they would know the difference between right and wrong.

The problem came when Adam and Eve did not listen to their consciences. They knew the right thing to do. They knew that God had forbidden them to eat a certain kind of fruit, but they chose to disobey.

Bible Lesson: Wrong choices

The first wrong choice:

Read or tell the story from Genesis 3:1-14 and 21-24.

Adam and Eve chose to disobey, and the children born to them disobeyed God as well.

Another wrong choice:

Adam and Eve had two sons. They called their first son Cain, and the second one, Abel. When the boys grew up they helped their parents to grow food and look after the animals. Cain became a farmer. He grew grain and fruit and vegetables. Abel became a shepherd.

It was the custom in those days to bring an offering once a year to say 'thank you' to God for providing everything they needed. They built a special table called an altar, and placed upon it their gifts to God. Abel brought a lamb, and Cain brought some of the produce that he had grown.

God was happy with Abel's gift because Abel had chosen to love and obey God. God was not happy with Cain's gift because Cain did not love God. Cain chose evil. He knew in his heart that God was not happy with him. He also knew that God was happy with Abel. Cain became angry and jealous. He was jealous of his brother who always was a good man, and he knew that God was pleased with him.

One day when Cain and Abel were alone in the field, Cain suddenly rose up and killed his brother. God saw what he did.

Soon God came to Cain. "Where is your brother?" he asked.

"I don't know," replied Cain. "Am I supposed to take care of my brother?"

"I saw what you did Cain," said God. "Because of your sin the ground will not give you good food to eat. And I will send you away from your father's house and from your family. You shall wander around the earth without a home."

So Cain had to go far away from his father and mother. He was never really happy again, because he hated his brother and had killed him.

God created us to choose for ourselves

When God created people, He gave them the ability to think and choose for themselves. He wanted people to be responsible, and to make good choices. One of the first things Adam had to do was to name the animals. He had to choose names for them. The next choice was a bit more difficult. Adam and Eve had to choose between good and evil. That is, between obeying God or disobeying God. I wonder what choice we would have made. Because of one wrong choice, the whole of creation suffered. People made more and more wrong choices.

Cain's first wrong choice, to hate his brother, was just one of many more to follow. Cain made many wrong choices. It seemed that one wrong choice led to another. Firstly, he ignored God's ways. Then he allowed jealousy to grow in his heart. This finally made him kill his brother. The next step was lying to God.

Questions

1. Who was the first baby boy ever born?
2. Why was Cain jealous of Abel?
3. What did Cain say to God after he killed Abel?
4. Was this the truth?
5. What was the punishment?
6. What was Cain's first wrong choice?
7. How did it lead to other wrong choices?
8. What would you say if someone asked you to do something you knew was wrong?
9. Think of some of the choices we have to make in life. Name some good choices. Name some bad ones.

God is Creator

Week 3

Choosing to obey God

Bible references

Joshua 24 Choose this day whom you will serve.

Exodus 3-4 The choice to obey God was not easy for Moses.

Romans 1:20 God has made His eternal power and divine nature clear, so that we are without excuse. Everyone has a choice.

Romans 8:9-14 Live as God's Spirit tells you to live. (verse 9)

Galatians 6:7-10 A person will reap exactly what he plants... Let us not become tired of doing (choosing) good. (GNB)

Galatians 5:22-23 Choose to let the Fruit of the Spirit control your thoughts, words and actions

Introduction

We have to make choices and decisions every day. Some choices are easy to make. Others are not so easy.

Do you sometimes find it difficult to choose what to wear?

If you were allowed to choose one toy for your birthday, would you find it difficult?

Do you find it difficult to choose what to eat when you go to a restaurant?

There are other sorts of choices too. If a group of children are saying unkind words about someone in the playground, you can choose to join in, or not to join in. If someone in the playground is lonely you can choose to make friends with that person, or to ignore them.

In these sorts of choices we should ask ourselves, "What would Jesus choose?"

When Jesus lived on earth He always obeyed His Heavenly Father. When we ask Jesus to be in charge of our life, He helps us to choose what is right.

Adam and Eve knew the right thing to do but disobeyed. Cain knew right from wrong too, but he also chose to do the opposite to what his conscience told him. Today, people keep on choosing to do wrong things. This is why all people need God's forgiveness. There were many people in Bible times who did obey God, just as there are many people today who obey God. Moses was one of these people.

Revision: Moses obeys God's call.

Revise God's special plan for Moses, covered in Weeks 1-5.

What was this plan? (Exodus 3:1-10)

Was it easy to obey God's command? (Exodus 3:11 & Exodus 4:19)

Moses did obey, even though it was very difficult for him. God gave Moses many signs to let him know that the Lord was with him. Because Moses obeyed, God was able to use him to set the Israelites free.

Can you think of times when it may be difficult for us to obey God?

Joshua asks the people to choose

Moses continued to be faithful in obeying God. He led God's people to the Promised Land. However, it was Joshua who took the people into the Promised Land. There were enemies that had to be conquered first, and God chose Joshua to lead the Israelite army into battle against the enemies. When the enemies had been conquered God told Joshua that he could rest. Joshua was an old man by this time.

There were twelve Israelite tribes. These were large family groups. Three of the tribes were already settled on the land on the other side of the River Jordan. Nine tribes still needed a place to make their home. God told Joshua to divide the land among the nine tribes. When all the land was divided, Joshua called the tribes together. Now that his work was finished, Joshua had some final instructions for the people. He wanted to remind the people that they must always worship the true God. The Israelites were going to be living in a land where people around them worshipped false gods. Several times before, the Israelites had fallen into the trap of worshipping false gods. Joshua told the Israelites that they must make the choice now. Would they choose to serve the Lord?

Read about this in Joshua 24:14-27.

Think

Adam, Eve, Cain, Moses and the Israelites were all faced with choices. Try to think of some choices that people could be faced with today in everyday life.

EXAMPLES: to forgive or not to forgive; to be honest or dishonest.

Activity 1: Decode these Bible messages:

Vowels a= ■ e= ◆ i= + o= ● u= ♠

Message no. 1:

L+VE ■ L+F◆ TH■T +S PL◆ ■ S+NG T● G●D (Romans 8:9)

Message no. 2:

CH●●S◆ TH+S D■Y WH●M Y●♠ W+LL S◆RV◆ (Joshua 24:15)

Activity 2: Make a large fruit tree from cardboard. Place nine fruits on the tree. Read the list of 'Fruits of the Spirit' (Galatians 5:22-23). Label the fruits. Ask students to think of an opposite word for each Fruit of the Spirit. Explain that we can choose the Fruit of the Spirit or the opposite.

God is Creator

Week 4

Choosing to care for God's world

Bible references

Psalm 65:9-13 (Good News Bible)

Genesis 2:15 God's command to care for the earth

Bible lesson: Psalm 65:8-13

Read through the Psalm, then read it again making a list of all the things that God provides:

Verses 8-11 Rain to make the plants grow; fertile soil; streams of water

Verses 12-13 Pastures for flocks of sheep on the hills; crops of wheat

Also read Genesis 2:15. God told Adam to look after the Garden of Eden, and to eat the food that grew in the garden. Christians believe that God still requires us to care for the earth, and make sure that we protect the land, so that it can grow food for everyone. This is being good stewards of the earth. In Fiji we are blessed with plenty of rain and sunshine as well as good soil. However in some countries there is drought, and poor soils. There are organizations that help people in need of food. These organizations rely on people to give money to help those in need. This is what God wants us to do: to share with those who do not have enough.

Recycle, Re-use, Reduce

Let's think about how we can be good stewards of the earth.

Recycle means to use something to make something else and not to throw it away. For example, the bags we bring home from the supermarket can be recycled by using them for rubbish bags.

Re-use means to keep using something as long as we can and not to throw it away when it is no longer shiny and new. Sometimes something that is too worn out to use for its original purpose can be recycled and used for something else. (See the story below.)

Reduce means not to use any more than we have to. For example, when we brush our teeth, we often let the water keep running in the tap. That's wasting water. We should wet the toothbrush, then turn off the tap.

(Ask the children for other ideas.)

Story: 500 New Garments

This is a story from Thailand

Ananda was in charge of a Buddhist monastery. That's where men trained to become priests. They were very poor. King Udyana gave Ananda 500 new garments for the men in the monastery, because their clothes were worn out.

King Udyana asked, "What will you do with the old garments?"

Ananda replied, "We will make bed covers out of them."

The king asked, "What will you do with the old bed covers?"

"We will make pillow cases," Ananda replied.

"And what will you do with the old pillow cases?" asked the king.

"We will make floor mats out of them," said Ananda.

"And what will you do with the old floor mats?" asked the king.

"We will use them for wiping cloths," said Ananda.

"And what will you do with the old wiping cloths?" asked the king.

We will use them for floor mops," said Ananda.

"And what will you do with the old floor mops?" asked the king.

"We will tear them into pieces and mix them with mud and use the mud to plaster the walls of our house," replied Ananda.

Discuss

Things that can be re-used, e.g. vegetable peelings for compost

Ask for ideas for using the following: jars, old clothes, newspapers, plastic bags, metal cans.

Activity

Ask the children to work in groups to create a picture of Psalm 65:9-13. Each group can choose a leader who can make final decisions on who does what. As well as coloured felt pens you could provide collage materials such as coloured paper, cotton wool for sheep, and actual plants.

God is Creator

Week 5

Choosing to care for myself and others

Bible reference

Mark 12:31 Love your neighbour as yourself

Mark 12:28-31 The Good Samaritan

Introduction

Over the past four weeks we have been talking about caring for God's creation. We have talked about caring for the environment, for plants and for animals, but we have not thought about caring for people. People are the most important part of God's creation. Why is this so?

Bible lesson: Love your neighbour as yourself

Read Mark 12:28-31

What does it mean to love yourself?

It doesn't mean to boast and tell everyone how good you are. It doesn't mean to think that you are the greatest. But it does mean to be thankful for the gifts God has given to you, and not to complain about the way God has made you. It also means that we should take care of our bodies. How can we do this?

God also wants us to care about other people. Jesus told a story to help us understand how to help others.

The Good Samaritan

One day Jesus was teaching the people. A certain lawyer was listening and stood up and asked, "Teacher, what must I do to go to heaven?"

Jesus answered, "What does the Bible tell you to do?"

The lawyer answered, "The Bible tells us to love God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself."

"That is right," Jesus said.

"But who is my neighbour?" the man asked.

Jesus decided to answer this question with a parable to help everyone who was listening understand. Jesus said: There once was a Jewish man walking along a road. He was coming from Jerusalem and was heading to Jericho, which was a full day or two of walking.

The road was rocky and there were small hills all around. Suddenly a group of men jumped out from behind a hill. They took all the Jewish man's belongings and tore off most of his clothes. They didn't want him to follow them so they beat him up very badly, and left him lying and bleeding on the side of the road.

A few minutes later a priest was walking down the same path and noticed the man lying on the side of the road. Do you know what he did? You'd think he would run over and help the man. Instead he crossed the road and walked on the other side and acted like he didn't see the man.

About an hour or so later another man called a Levite was walking down the road. Levites were people who assisted priests with their work. You would think that he would probably help the man. But no, he didn't. He slowed down and walked a little closer to the man, but then kept walking without helping him at all.

You might be thinking that maybe the man lying by the side of the road looked like he was resting or something, that's why the priest and the Levite didn't stop to help. No, it was easy to tell he was badly hurt. The man was bleeding, had most of his clothes ripped off him, and he was bruised and hardly breathing.

Just a few minutes later another man came walking past. He was a Samaritan. One thing you should know about Samaritans is that Jews didn't like them. Jews usually didn't treat Samaritans very well, so they never got along. The man who was dying on the road was a Jew. So what do you think the Samaritan did? You'd think he would walk by and maybe even laugh at the man.

But as soon as he saw the man he went over to him and felt compassion for him. He put bandages on his sores and poured expensive oil and wine on the sores to prevent them from getting worse. Then he lifted the man onto his own donkey and took him to a hotel to take care of him.

The next day the Samaritan gave the hotelkeeper enough money so the man could stay at the hotel until he was well enough to leave. He asked the hotelkeeper to make sure that the man was looked after, and if there was any further cost he would come back and pay.

After Jesus finished the story he asked, "Which of the three men do you think was a neighbour to the man who was left beaten on the side of the road?"

The man who asked him the question at the beginning replied, "The one who had compassion and helped him." Jesus told him, "Go and do the same."

Discussion

The Good Samaritan had a choice to help, or not to help, but he chose to help the man.

We are going to think about times when we can choose to help another person.

What would you do if...

Mum or Dad needed help at home?

You noticed that one of your friends looked sad?

You saw your pet cat or dog looking hungry or hurt?

You saw that Mum's plants were looking as if they needed water?
You knew that your Grandma was sick in bed?

(Ask the children to identify who or what needs care in each situation.)

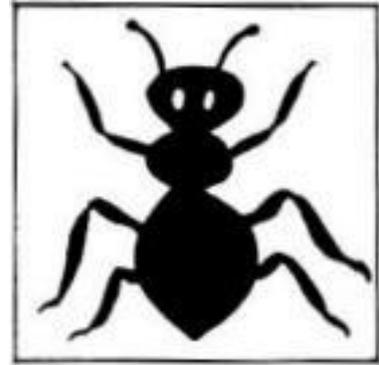
Caring for all of God's creation (including people)

Read out the following sentences and ask the children if they can guess what the last word in the sentence could be:

1. I treat others, myself and the earth with (care).
2. I look at people and listen closely to what they are (saying).
3. I handle my own things and other people's things (carefully).
4. I am gentle and loving when I am looking after my (e.g. little sister).
5. I treat my body with (respect).
6. When I do my school work I always try my (best).
7. When I know that someone needs help I stop playing and (help).

Year 4

God is Wise 4 Weeks



Outcomes

At the completion of this module students will understand:

- The definition of wisdom: “Wisdom is to know the right thing to do, and to do it.”
- That God expects us to care for our planet.
- That we can ask God for wisdom, rather than just relying on our own good ideas.
- That the wisest choice in life is to put God at the centre of our life.
- That wisdom is about making wise choices.

Related classroom topics for Science, Social Studies and Health:

Safe and healthy

Link between “God is Wise” and classroom topics:

Our response to God’s wisdom is to show wisdom ourselves. Following hygiene and safety rules is an example of wisdom.

Values:

responsibility, fairness and respect for truth and justice; lifelong learning, goodness, discernment, humility

God is Wise

Week 1

Choose to care for our planet

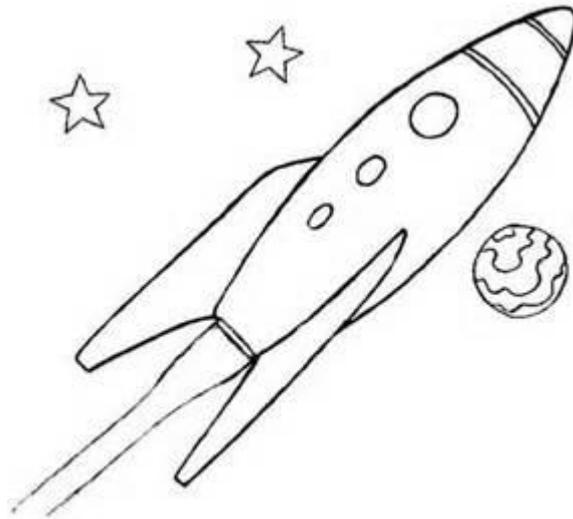
Bible references

Psalm 24:1-2 The earth is the Lord's and all that is within it.

Psalm 50:10-12 Every animal in the forest is mine and the cattle on a thousand hills.

Introduction: Our world is like a spaceship

Ask the children if they have ever seen a picture of a spaceship. Draw one for them:



In 1962 a book was written by Mr. Buckminster Fuller called “Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth”. This was not a book about spaceships, but a book that explained that the Earth is like a spaceship flying through space. The spaceship has only a certain amount of resources and cannot be resupplied once the resources run out.

This is what he wrote: “Many people these days wonder what it is like to be on a spaceship. They don’t realise that they are on a spaceship. Humans have been on a spaceship all this time. It is a tiny little spaceship, only 8,000 miles in diameter (across). It is also a lonely little spaceship. The nearest star is 92 million miles away, so far away that it takes two and a half years for its light to come to us. And yet this tiny spaceship is so wonderfully designed that it provides everything people need for their journey through space.”

Discussion

What would it be like to travel on a spaceship?

What would we need to take with us?

Why would we have to use everything very careful and not waste anything?

How would we store our rubbish?

Who designed our earth spaceship?

What are some of the things the designer provided for our journey through space?

Bible lesson: The earth is the Lord's

Read Psalm 24:1-2

Who does the earth belong to?

Who do all the earth's resources belong to?

Who are the caretakers of the earth?

Who do the people of the earth belong to?

Why does this Psalm say that the earth was founded upon the waters? (Genesis 1:2)

Read Psalm 50:10-12

Who owns the animals?

Who owns the world and everything in it?

How can we be wise in the way we use the following:

Water

Food packaging and plastic bags

Electricity

Glass

Metal

People who didn't care for God's world and God's people

Make a copy the following scenarios and cut them up. Divide the class into eight groups. Give each group one scenario. Ask the group to act out the scene using mime. Each group is to choose a leader as well as one person who will explain to the class what is happening.

Scenario 1

A family went to Suva point for a picnic. They finished eating and swimming and left their lunch papers, plastic bags and empty drink cans and glass bottles lying on the beach. The tide came up and carried the rubbish out to sea. Next weekend they went to the beach at Deuba. Lying on the beach they found rubbish washed up by the tide. The sea had broken a bottle on the rocks and buried the glass just under the sand. One of the children stepped on the glass, cut his foot badly, and had to go to Navua Hospital to have stitches and a tetanus injection. The wound hurt very badly. The family was sorry they hadn't carefully put their rubbish into the bin.

Scenario 2

A passenger threw a glass drink bottle out of a bus window. It hit the windscreen of the car following, and the glass from the bottle cut people.

Scenario 3

A child threw a glass bottle out of a car window. It smashed on the road, cut someone's car tyre and their vehicle went out of control. It was a bad accident and the mother of the family died.

Scenario 4

A family went to the beach for a picnic. They put all their rubbish in a plastic bag and threw it all, including the plastic bag, into the sea. A beautiful dolphin saw the plastic bag floating way out to sea and thought it was a jelly fish. It swallowed the plastic bag and died a very slow, painful death.

Scenario 5

A bus company didn't fix their bus properly, and as it went up the hill it blew huge clouds of black smoke out of the exhaust pipe. The smoke drifted into homes of the people living on each side of the road, and soon a little child was sick with asthma.

Scenario 6

A sugar mill was not careful and let a lot of waste material spill into the river. Soon all the fish were dead and people couldn't gather and eat shellfish from the river.

Scenario 7

A ship in the harbour pumped oily waste into the harbour, and people fishing along the sea wall got sick when they ate the fish they caught.

Scenario 8

Some families didn't pack their rubbish carefully into plastic bags, and dogs came and pulled the rubbish all over the footpath. The children had to step over the rubbish to go to school. Mosquitoes were attracted to the rubbish and some children caught dengue fever.

God is Wise

Week 2

Ask God for wisdom.

Don't rely on your own good ideas.

Bible references

Proverbs 3:5-8 Trust in the Lord with all your heart and don't rely on your own understanding.

James 1:5 Ask God for wisdom.

Proverbs 2:6-10 Only the Lord gives true wisdom.

1 Corinthians 3:18-19 The wisdom of this world is foolishness to God.

Genesis 6-8 Noah relied on God's wisdom for the construction of the ark.

Genesis 6:2 Noah did everything just as God commanded.

Genesis 11 The people of Babel depended on their own wisdom.

Introduction

Ask the children for examples of people who are very wise.

Ask them if they think a scientist is wise.

Conduct a scientific experiment. Ask students to try to explain how the experiment works, e.g. make a paper plane and fly it in the air; use a magnet to pick up some pins.

Discussion

Scientists have to be wise to understand scientific principles. How wise is a scientist compared to God? Read 1 Corinthians 3:18-19

Sometimes we confuse being 'wise' with being 'clever'. A scientist or an inventor can be very clever, but they may not be wise. Wisdom is making the best choices in life. The best choice anyone can make is to listen to God.

Because God is the source of all wisdom, it is important that we ask Him for wisdom in all we do. Being clever without God is not being wise at all. The wisest thing we can do is to ask God to be in charge of our life.

Bible lesson: Noah listened to God, but the people of Babel did not.

In the early days of the history of the world, the people that God created decided that they did not want to listen to God. They were involved in all kinds of evil. There was only one family who loved and served God. That was Noah's family. Because Noah listened to God, God was able to give him instructions on a rescue plan for his family and the animals of the world.

Was the building of the ark Noah's idea or God's?

What might have happened if Noah refused to listen to God's instructions?

What if he decided to build it his own way?

About 150 years after the Great Flood, all the people of the world lived in the Middle East. They all spoke the same language. You would think that they would have learned never to go away from God because they knew about God's judgement of sin at the event of the Great Flood. But once again the people of the world decided that they didn't need God. They wanted to do their own thing. They were filled with pride. They thought more of themselves than of God. And so they wanted to build a tower.

"Let us make a name for ourselves," they said.

They began to work very hard. They made bricks and mortar. Little by little the tower began to grow higher and higher into the sky.

But God saw what they were doing. God knew that the people were building the tower because they wanted to do without God. He knew that they wanted to be strong for themselves. They did not want to listen to God. They did not want to obey Him.

God said, "The people are all one group and they all speak the same language. If I do not stop them they will become wicked."

So God stopped the people from building their tower. He did this by changing their language. Instead of one language, there were many languages. They could not understand each other. They could not go on with their tower, so the building of the tower was stopped.

Soon the people who spoke one language went together to one place, and the people who spoke another language went to another place. After a while the people were scattered all over the earth. The people called their unfinished tower, the Tower of Babel because Babel means 'noise' or 'confusion'. When God changed the languages there was truly babble or a confusion of languages. Today, people from different countries still speak different languages.

Discussion

How do we know that Noah was wise?

How do we know that the people who built the tower were not wise?

When did all the people of the earth have the same language?

Why did God change the language?

God is Wise

Week 3

The wisest choice

Jesus at the centre of our life

Bible references

Matthew 16:26 Will a person gain anything if he wins the whole world but loses his life?

Psalms 16:7-8 The importance of allowing God to guide us.

Proverbs 9:10-12; Proverbs 10:13, 14 & 19 Wisdom in speech.

Proverbs 14:16-17 Wisdom in actions.

Proverbs 8:11 Wisdom is better than riches.

Matthew 19:16-29 The rich young ruler's choice.

Introduction

Enlarge the drawings below, or refer to the student work books. Discuss the drawings with the class. How do we put God at the centre of our lives? What might happen if we put self at the centre of our lives?

Bible lesson: The Rich Young Ruler

Read the story from Matthew 19:16-29.

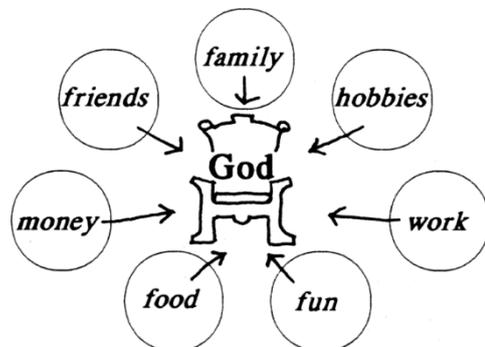
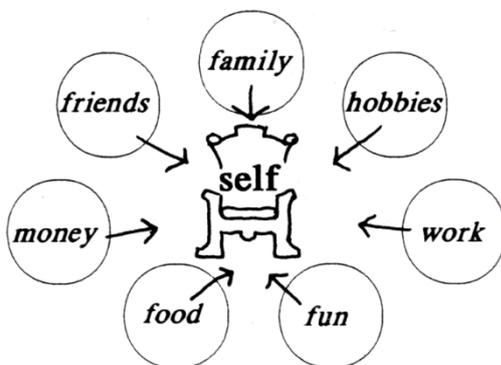
What was the choice?

Did Jesus mean that everyone has to sell all they own to become a Christian?

Why did Jesus say this to the rich young ruler?

Discussion

Discuss the meaning of these pictures.



God is Wise

Week 4

Choose who you will serve

Bible references

Joshua 24:14-16 A choice between the true God and false gods.

Matt 7:24-27 A choice between building your life on the rock or the sand.

Bible lesson

The true God or false gods? Joshua Speaks to the People at Shechem

God chose Moses as a great leader who would lead the people of Israel to their new land. But Moses died just before entering the land and it was Joshua who led the people into the land and was their leader for many years after that. As an old man, just before his death, Joshua gathered the people together at a place called Shechem, for one final message from God. Joshua knew that God was holy and that He had warned the people many times about worshipping false gods. This was Joshua's message to the people:

"This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has to say:

You lived in the desert a long time. Then I brought you to the land of your enemies, who lived on the east side of the Jordan. They fought you, but I gave you victory over them. Now you are living in a land where there is plenty to eat."

"Now then," Joshua continued, "honour the LORD and serve him sincerely and faithfully. Get rid of the gods which your ancestors used to worship in Mesopotamia and in Egypt, and serve only the LORD. If you are not willing to serve him, decide today whom you will serve, the gods your ancestors worshiped in Mesopotamia and Egypt or the God of Israel. As for my family and me, we will serve the LORD."

The people replied, "We would never leave the Lord to serve other gods! Joshua said to the people, "If you leave Him to serve foreign gods, He will turn against you and punish you. He will destroy you, even though he was good to you before."

The people said to Joshua, "No! We will serve the Lord."

"You have made a promise to God," said Joshua. "I will write God's commands on this stone. This stone will be your reminder never to worship other gods."

Then Joshua sent the people away, and everyone returned to their own part of the land.

Discussion

What was the choice?

Why do you think the people of Israel in the past wanted to worship the gods of Mesopotamia and Egypt?

Why is it so important to God that we worship only Him?

Some people may not actually worship carved gods, but they may worship things like sport or possessions. How can these things become false gods?

The decision to throw away false gods was a life-time decision. What is the greatest life-time decision people can make today?

When we decide to have Jesus at the centre of our life, we have a source of wisdom for all of life's decisions. How does God help us make important decisions in life?

What important decisions may we have to make in the future?

How do we know when God is telling us something?

It is wise to do what Jesus tells us to do

Read Matt 7:24-27

Verse 26 tells us about the foolish man whose house fell down.

Why did his house fall down?

How can people be like the foolish man? (Some children may say 'because they don't follow Jesus'. That is true but a better answer is 'because they hear the words of Jesus and do not obey them.')

Year 4

God is a Servant 4 Weeks



Outcomes

At the completion of this module students will understand:

- That a servant is one who helps others without complaining.
- That a servant always does one's best.
- That the life of Jesus is the greatest example of a servant.
- That a faithful servant can be trusted and will never let you down.
- That a faithful servant will continue to serve even when things get difficult.
- That God wants us to be faithful in little jobs, and then He can trust us with bigger jobs.
- The definition of diligence and how to practice diligence.

Related classroom topics for Science, Social Studies and Health:

Serving through gifts and talents

Link between "God is a Servant" and classroom topics:

God has given each individual gifts and talents to be used to serve Him and others.

Values

Compassion, flexibility, service, humility, willingness, thoughtfulness, sacrifice

Biography:

Joel Bulu

God is a Servant

Week 1

A faithful servant

Jesus showed us how to be a faithful servant by His own example.

Bible references

John 17:1-26 Jesus was faithful to His friends. He prayed for them; He provided for them.

John 5:19 The Son was faithful to His Father, doing nothing on His own.

John 13:4-5 Jesus washed the disciples' feet.

Luke 12:35-47 The faithful servant is the one who knows what his master wants, and does it. A faithful servant is ready for the return of Jesus.

Hebrews 2:17 Jesus, the faithful servant

Phil 2:14 Do all things without complaining.

Introduction

What is a servant?

A servant is one who helps another person, doing the job well without complaining.

What is a faithful servant?

A faithful servant is one that you can rely on; one who never lets you down.

Serving at school

Who are servants in our school?

Teachers – help the students to learn

Students – help one another and help the teachers

What are some ways in which students can help to keep the school running well?

Listening to the teacher and doing what the teacher says.

Working well without getting distracted

Keeping the classroom clean

Keeping the playground clean

Asking the teacher if there are any other jobs to be done

What would our school be like if no one did these jobs?

What would it be like if one person had to do all the jobs?

Serving at home

What are some of the jobs that need to be done at home?

What are some of the jobs that need to be done every day, and which jobs don't need to be done every day? (Make two lists.)

Who does the tasks? (Write names next to the jobs)

Which jobs do you do at home?

What would it be like if one person had to do all the jobs?

Bible lesson: How did Jesus serve?

As a boy, Jesus would have helped his earthly father Joseph in the carpenter's shop. Maybe he would hand Joseph the tools, or clean up the wood shavings and sawdust. Jesus would have helped his mother in the home too, carrying water, (because there were no taps in the houses), helping to wash the dishes and clean the floor. Jesus also worked hard at his studies. He went to the synagogue, (like a church), and there he listened to the teachers. He learned to read from the Scriptures which were written on a scroll.

When Jesus grew up, the first time we hear of Him performing a miracle was at a wedding. It was the wedding at Cana. His mother came to Jesus very worried that the drinks had run out and there were no more for the guests. Jesus showed that He was a servant by performing a miracle. He told the waiters to go and fill the jugs with water. Then Jesus, by His mighty power, turned the water into wine so that there were enough drinks for all the guests. The guests even commented that this wine was better than the first lot of wine.

From this time on, we read about Jesus being a servant in many ways. He healed people who were sick, He talked with people who had problems and He even raised people from the dead. He taught twelve friends about God and helped them get ready for the job they would do after Jesus had gone back to heaven.

Jesus taught His friends to always rely on God when they helped others, and never to do anything without Him. He also taught them never to think you are too important to do the humble jobs. He showed them this by washing their dirty, dusty, smelly feet. The disciples did not want Jesus to do this for them, but Jesus said that it was okay. He showed them that He loved them by caring for them in this way. He set an example for us to follow.

There are some jobs that no one really likes to do, but doing the humble jobs is the sign of a true servant.

Discussion

What are some jobs that most people do not like to do?

What is the best way to get these jobs done?

God is a Servant

Week 2

Serving when things are difficult

Bible references

Acts 1-2 The disciples receive power to work for Jesus.

Acts 4:13-22 The disciples were warned not to speak about Jesus.

Acts 7 Stephen was faithful.

Acts 8:1-4 The disciples continued to be faithful in the face of danger.

Luke 12:35-47 Be faithful in doing what Jesus wants us to do.

Acts 4:20 We cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard.

Game: Masters and Servants

Work in pairs. For each pair, one acts as the 'master'; the other as the 'servant'. The master must give the servant a series of instructions to be followed. The servant must follow the instructions faithfully, without forgetting any steps. (You may prefer to limit the number of steps.)

The group may like to draw up a list of suitable instructions first.

EXAMPLES:

1. Walk to the table.
2. Take ... paces backwards.
3. Touch your toes ... times.

Discussion

In the game you needed to listen carefully in order to remember what the master wanted you to do. If we are to understand what Jesus wants us to do, then we must also listen carefully.

What does 'listening to Jesus' really mean?

A master wants his servants to know the right things to do, and to do them well. This is being faithful. Read what Jesus said about being a faithful servant: Luke 12:43.

What does Jesus expect us to do, as faithful servants?

Just as Jesus was faithful to His twelve best friends, the friends, (except for one), were faithful to Jesus.

Bible lesson: The faithful friends

Imagine that you are one of the eleven faithful friends. You are feeling sad because Jesus has gone to be with his Heavenly Father. Jesus has told you to tell others about Him, and to heal people in his name, but you don't know how you can possibly do these things. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would come and give you power. "How would this happen? What is the Holy Spirit like?" you are thinking.

Then, as you are waiting and praying with the other disciples, it happens. There is a mighty rushing wind. The sound is almost deafening. Then there appear to be little flames of fire on everyone's head, including your own! What is happening? No, your hair doesn't catch alight. It's not that kind of fire. You feel so happy, and just full of God's love.

The wind and fire leave, but you feel different. You are no longer sad that Jesus has gone. You can feel Him right there with you all the time, even though you can't see Him. You are no longer afraid. You want to go and tell others about Jesus. You want to pray for people and help them just like Jesus did. Your friends feel the same way.

All the friends of Jesus are now speaking about Him in the streets and market places, healing people and seeing other miracles. People are being healed and set free from their problems. Thousands of people are becoming followers of Jesus.

However it is not long before there is trouble. It's the religious leaders again. They do not like everyone following this new religion called Christianity. Peter and John have been told not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John cannot keep quiet. "We must speak about what we have seen and heard," they say.

One of the followers called Stephen speaks very boldly about Jesus and even puts down the teachings of the religious leaders. The older religious leaders talk amongst themselves. "This man is always saying things against the old way of Moses. He talks about a new way... that Jesus can forgive sins and there is no need to offer sacrifices anymore! We don't like the new way. Let's get rid of him!" they say.

Stephen does not stop talking about Jesus even though he knows what the religious leaders are thinking. It is not long before the religious leaders decide to get rid of Stephen.

Read Acts 8:2-4.

Now all the followers of Jesus are faced with a choice. It is obvious that following Jesus from now on will be very difficult, and very dangerous. If you want to stay out of trouble, then you will have to give up following Jesus. Or, you could choose to be faithful and continue speaking about what you know to be true.

With the other followers, you decide that you will continue to speak about what you have seen and heard. You continue to meet together to pray and sing and learn about God's kingdom, but you now have to do it in secret. You often meet in underground caves so that the Roman soldiers will not find you. On the walls of the caves there appears the special secret sign that shows you are Christians. It is the sign of the fish.

Discussion

Why do you think the early Christians chose a fish for their secret sign?

The early followers did not give up following Jesus, even when it was difficult. When might it be difficult for us to be Christians today?

What can we do when things get difficult?

Act it out

Make up endings to these sketches, to show how a Christian might react in these situations.

Person A is not a Christian.

Person B is a Christian.

Sketch 1

Person A is handing out sweets. He/she boasts about stealing the sweets from the shop down the road.

Person B is offered a sweet.

Sketch 2

All the children are having great fun teasing a new boy/girl. They decide to play a mean trick on him/her.

Person A asks person B to join in.

Puzzle

Code: a= ■ e= ◆ i= + o= ● u= ◆

Decode the following sentence:

W◆ c■nn● t st● p sp◆■ k■ ng ■b●◆t wh■ t w◆
h■ v◆ s◆◆ n ■ nd h◆ ■ rd.

God is a Servant

Week 3

Be faithful in little things

Bible references

Luke 16:10 Be faithful in little things.

Matthew 25:14-29 Parable of the talents.

Colossians 3:23 Whatever you find to do, do it with all your heart.

Galatians 6:3 You are never too important to help someone else.

John 13:15 "I have set you an example. Do as I have done."

Introduction

We learned in Term 1 about using our talents to serve God.

What is a talent?

Do we all have the same talents?

Jesus told a story about three men who were given different amounts of money. The Bible tells us that the money was called 'talents'. The word 'talent' could mean 'dollars' today. The master gave the money to the men, not for themselves, but to look after while he went on a long trip.

Two of the men used the money wisely to make more money. When the master returned they were able to give him back more money than they had originally received. But the third man was afraid of losing the money. He buried it in a hole in the ground. So when the master returned the third man gave the master back the same amount of money that he had originally received.

Jesus tells us to use the talents He has given us to serve Him. This is being faithful in using the gifts God has given us.

Bible lesson: Be faithful in little things

Jesus said, "Whoever is faithful in small matters will be faithful in large ones; whoever is dishonest in small matters will be dishonest in large ones." (Luke 16:10 GNB)

A faithful servant does everything with their whole heart. Read Colossians 3:23.

It doesn't matter how small the jobs is. God wants us to do it well. No one is too important to help with ordinary jobs. No one is too important to help someone in need.

The Bible also says, "If you think you are too important to help someone in need, you are only fooling yourself. You are really a nobody" (Galatians 6:3 NLT).

It is in the small jobs that we grow to be the servants that Jesus wants us to be.

Jesus did many ordinary jobs that other people tried to avoid: washing feet, helping children, fixing breakfast, and serving lepers. Nothing was beneath him, because he came to serve. Jesus wants us to follow His example (John 13:15).

Jesus got tired just like everyone else, but he did what everyone needed. No task is beneath you when you have a servant's heart.

Don't just look for great tasks to do for God. Just do whatever around you needs doing. Then when God sees that you are faithful in doing these small jobs, He will give you greater things to do for Him.

There will always be more people willing to do "great" things for God than there are people willing to do the little things. But God is pleased when we do the little things.

Discussion

What are some of the 'little things' that we can do to be helpful? (Make a list)

God is a Servant

Week 4

Serve with diligence

Bible references

Ecc 9:10 Work hard at whatever you do.

2 Thessalonians 3:10 Warning against laziness

Acts 9:36-42 Dorcas showed diligence in sewing

Genesis 6:14-16 Noah showed patience and diligence in building the ark.

Hebrews 6:10-12 Diligence in helping others.

Proverbs 31:10-29 The diligent wife.

Discussion

Have you ever wanted to be really good at something? Maybe you would love to be able to play a musical instrument well, or to be a ballet dancer, or even an Olympic gymnast. People who are good at difficult things can only become successful with lots of practice. They need to listen to their instructor carefully with concentration, and then do exactly as the instructor says. It is important to keep trying and not give up, even when things seem difficult.

Activity

Take a survey. Find out how many in your group are learning to do something that requires particular skill. It might be gymnastics, sport, ballet, or learning a musical instrument. Record the information on a chart. Find out about practice routines. Is practicing always easy?

Working hard at something, and doing the best job you possibly can, is being diligent. If we really want to do well at something then we must be diligent. Diligence is the opposite to being lazy.

Without diligence:

People don't get much done

People act as if it doesn't matter

People will not be successful

If you are diligent:

People will trust you and rely on you to do something well

You will get something done with excellence and enthusiasm

What kinds of distractions could make it difficult to be diligent in these situations?

- doing homework
- training for athletics
- practising a musical instrument
- keeping your room tidy
- doing jobs for Mum

Bible lesson: Diligence

The Bible speaks about two women who were very diligent in what they did. One was Dorcas who was very diligent in making clothes for the poor. She was one of the followers who became a Christian after Jesus went back to Heaven.

Sewing is a job that requires a lot of patience and diligence.

In Bible times there were no sewing machines. Imagine how much patience you would need to make an entire garment by hand. Dorcas never gave up. She kept working because she knew that God wanted her to serve Him in this way.

Read her story in Acts 9:36-42.

Another person who showed diligence was Noah. Think about the size of the ark. What a huge job for one man! God wanted Noah to be very exact in how he built the ark. Noah didn't just throw it together. He made it exactly according to the plans that God had given him. He took time to find special materials and also took time in making exact measurements.

Read about it in Genesis 6:14-16.

God wants us all to be diligent in doing good things. That means working at something even when we don't feel like it. It means finishing something we start, even if we are not so excited about it anymore.

Here are some people who serve with diligence:

a) artists and craftsmen

b) farmers

Farmers need to get up early, especially if they have animals to feed or milk. When crops need harvesting, or hay needs to be brought in from the paddocks, the work must be done as quickly as possible before the crops spoil.

What would happen if these people were not diligent?

c) doctors, especially surgeons performing operations

d) construction workers who build bridges

e) aircraft crews and pilots

Read this verse which tells us about working hard:

2 Thessalonians 3:10.

Story: The Little Red Hen

Once upon a time there was a little red hen who wanted to make a loaf of bread, but she had no flour.

"I shall grow some wheat," she said.

The little red hen asked her chicks to help her.

"First we must plant the wheat," she said.

The little red hen asked the other farmyard animals to help too.

"Who will help to plant the wheat?" she asked.

"Not I," said the dog.

"Not I," said the cat.

"Not I," said the mouse.

So the little red hen and her chicks planted the wheat by themselves.

The wheat grew, and the heads turned to golden brown.

"We must harvest the wheat," said the little red hen to her chicks. "Then we must collect the grain and put it into sacks."

"Who will help me harvest the wheat?" the little red hen asked the other farm animals.

"Not I," said the dog.

"Not I," said the cat.

"Not I," said the mouse.

So the little red hen and her chicks harvested the wheat and put the grain into sacks all by themselves.

"Now we must take the sacks of wheat to the mill to be ground into flour." said the little red hen. "Who will help me?" she asked the other animals.

"Not I," said the dog.

"Not I," said the cat.

"Not I," said the mouse.

So the little red hen and her chicks took the wheat to the mill and brought back the freshly ground flour.

"Now it is time to make the bread," said the little red hen.

"Who will help me knead the dough?" she asked.

"Not I," said the dog.

"Not I," said the cat.

"Not I," said the mouse.

So the little red hen and her chicks made the bread by themselves. Soon some hot brown loaves were taken out of the oven. They smelled delicious.

"Who will help me eat the bread?" the little red hen asked.

"I will," said the cat.

"I will," said the dog.

"I will," said the mouse.

"Oh no," said the little red hen. "You wouldn't help me to plant the wheat, or to harvest the wheat, or to put the grain into sacks, or to take the sacks to the mill, or to knead the dough. My chicks and I will eat the bread all by ourselves. And they did."

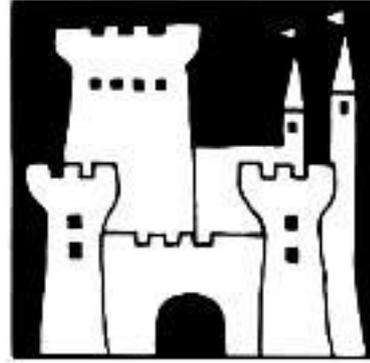
Discussion:

Which animals were diligent?

Which animals were not diligent?

Year 4

God is Protector 3 Weeks



Outcomes

At the completion of this module students will understand:

- As God's people, He expects us to obey Him
- God is with those who are doing His work
- God can provide special protection for those doing His work

Related classroom topics for Science, Social Studies and Health:

The senses: Taste and smell

Link between "God is Protector" and classroom topics:

God has given us five senses for protection. The senses of taste and smell alert us to foods that may be rancid, and our sense of smell alerts us to dangers such as fire and toxic substances in the air.

Values:

Responsibility, safety and security, peace, faith, care for self

Biography:

Colin Marsden, (Saved from the sea)

God is Protector

Week 1

God protects His people

Bible reference

Joshua 1 Rahab helps God's people

Bible lesson: Rahab and the spies

We remember from last term that God chose Moses to lead His special people, the Israelites, out of slavery and into a new land. But Moses did not see the new land. He died just before they entered it. Joshua was the leader who followed Moses, and he was the one who led God's people into the new land.

One day God came to Joshua and said, "Joshua, Moses is dead. I want you to take these people across the River Jordan into the Promised Land. Just as I was with Moses, I will be with you. Be strong and full of courage. Don't be afraid for I will go with you."

Joshua told all the people to get ready to cross the river. "In three days," he said, "we will pass into our new homeland."

First Joshua wanted to find out just how things were in that country. He chose two men to go quietly across the river without anyone seeing them. They were going to be spies. He told them to sneak into the first city, called Jericho. They were to look around and see how they could take over the city of Jericho.

The two men swam across the river when no one was looking. The city of Jericho had a big wall all around it to keep out enemies. There was one gate through which people could come and go, but at night the gate was locked. The men managed to walk through the gate with no one noticing that they were strangers. They walked around and saw what they wanted to see. Then they went to a woman's house and asked if they could stay there. The woman's name was Rahab and her house was built on the city wall. She invited the men to come into her home.

Rahab talked to the two men. Their whole city had heard about the great things that God had done for the Israelites – How He had taken them across the Red Sea and how the Egyptian army was drowned in the sea; and how the enemies of Israel had been defeated on their journey. "My people are afraid of the Israelites," Rahab said to the men.

Now the two men were in danger because someone had seen the two men go into Rahab's house. They ran and told the king. The king sent his soldiers to Rahab's house. "We want the men who came to your house," they said.

Rahab knew that these two men were God's men. She also knew that God was going to take Jericho away from the people who lived there. So she decided to protect her visitors, in the hope that they might help her escape in the future. She decided not to tell the soldiers where they were. She said to the soldiers, "Two men were here but I didn't know them. They have already gone. Just as it was getting dark they hurried to get through the gate before it closed. If you run you should still be able to catch up with them."

The soldiers ran quickly to find the men. They went as far as the River Jordan, but of course they did not find them. For the men were still in Rahab's house. She had hidden them on her roof, under some plants she was drying.

When the soldiers were gone, Rahab went up to the men on the roof. She told them what had happened. She begged them to be kind to her as she had been kind to them. "Please promise me that you will save me when you come to take our city," she said.

Then she got a red rope and secured it so that the men could climb out the window and down the rope, over the city wall. Then she said, "Go and hide in the mountains for three days. By then the soldiers will have stopped looking for you."

The two men looked at Rahab and said, "If you promise not to tell anyone why we were here, then we will save you. Bring your father and mother and your relatives into your house. Then when we come back with our soldiers, hang the red rope out of the window. In that way our men will know which house is yours and we will save you and your family."

The two men hid in the mountains for three days. Then they swam across the river and went back to Joshua. They told him all the things that had happened, and that the people of the city were afraid of the Israelites. Now Joshua had to work out how to get all the people and animals across the fast-flowing Jordan River which was in full flood.

God told Joshua how to cross the river. First Joshua told twelve priests to each go and find a big stone to carry across the river. Then carrying their stones, they went to the river's edge. The people followed, picking up their tents and all their belongings. As soon as the priest's feet touched the water the river stopped flowing. The water piled up like a high wall making a path from one side of the river to the other, just like when Moses led the people through the Red Sea many years before. The priests went first, carrying their stones. All the Israelites and their animals followed them. In the middle of the dry riverbed the priests piled up their stones to make a big pillar which was to be a monument. Then they continued on to the other side, followed by the people. When all crossed the river safely, the water came back to where it belonged. But the pillar of stones could be seen above the water. Joshua said to the people, "Now you can always show your children this pillar, which marks the place where the Lord took us across the river. Then all the people of the earth will know that your God is mighty!"

Discussion

Why was the red cord important?

It was a lifeline.

Let's count the people saved by the red cord:

- 2 spies got away using the red cord
- Rahab and her family were saved by putting the red cord out the window, so that Joshua could see that this was her house and it was not to be destroyed.

The Old Testament has many symbols of the New Testament.

In the New Testament we read that everyone in the world can be saved by a red lifeline. That lifeline is the blood of Jesus.

When we say thank you to Jesus for dying for us, and decide to follow Him, we can be saved from our sin.

God is Protector

Week 2

God is in charge of everything.

God is great, strong and mighty.

Bible references

Matthew 17:20 Nothing will be impossible.

2 Samuel 22:33 It is God who arms me with strength.

Joshua 6 The walls of Jericho.

Introduction

In last week's lesson, we learned that God's people, the Israelites, had travelled through the desert for many years. They finally reached the Jordan River, and across the river was the beautiful land that God had promised to them. Moses was not their leader anymore. He had become very old. A new leader would take them into the Promised Land.

Who was the new leader of the Israelites?

How many spies did Joshua send across the river to investigate the new land?

What was the name of the city?

Why did it have a wall around it?

What did Rahab do to help the spies?

What did they promise her?

How did the Israelites get across the fast-flowing River Jordan?

Bible lesson: Joshua and the walls of Jericho

Once the Israelites were across the River Jordan they camped on the river bank. The women and children and the animals stayed here while the men went out to fight their enemies. Jericho was the first city against which they had to fight. The people of Jericho worshipped false gods and there was much wickedness in the city which displeased God. They had built a huge wall around the city to protect themselves from attacks. The people of Jericho knew that the Israelites were close by and they were afraid. They locked the city gate and would not let anyone in or out.

God told Joshua exactly how they would take the city. Every morning for a week the Israelite soldiers marched around Jericho. The people of Jericho watched from behind their walls. They became more and more afraid. They knew that the God of Israel was fighting for His people.

On the seventh day the Israelites got up at sunrise. They marched around the city seven times instead of only once. Then the priests blew their trumpets long and loud. Joshua called to the people, "Shout, for the Lord has given you the city!"

So the priests blew their trumpets and the people shouted. Suddenly the huge walls of Jericho fell down flat. The Israelite soldiers walked over the broken walls right into

the city. The wicked people of Jericho were killed, but Rahab, who had been kind to the two spies, was saved. So was all her family. The two men found Rahab's house and brought her and her relatives to the camp of Israel. From that day onward Rahab and her family followed the true God. She married one of the Israelites, and she became part of the family tree of Jesus.

After the city of Jericho was destroyed, the soldiers gathered all the gold and silver from the city and put it in the Lord's house. So the Lord was with Joshua and the people of all the cities around heard of God's greatness.

Discussion

In the days of the Old Testament, God's people had to fight many enemies. God promised to be with them and protect them from their enemies, as long as they worshiped Him alone and no other gods.

Joshua's army could never have taken the city without a powerful miracle. No one could normally win a battle by just marching and blowing trumpets. It was really God's great power that caused the walls to fall. God is just as powerful today. If we trust in God, He will help us fight different sorts of battles: battles against the enemy Satan.

Here are some of the battles we might have to fight against Satan:

- getting angry
- wanting to do wrong things
- being afraid
- hating others
- other people hating us
- forgetting about God

If we want God to protect us from the works of Satan, what do we have to do?
Why is Jesus able to protect us from Satan?

Answers to the questions in the workbook:

What is the name of the city in the background? *Jericho*

Why was God not pleased with the people of the city? They worshipped *false* gods and were very *wicked*.

How many times did Joshua's army march around the city on the 7th day? *Seven*

God protected the people of Israel from the enemies through His great *power*.

God's power can protect us from our enemy *Satan*.

God is Protector

Week 3

With God, nothing is impossible.

God helps us when we serve Him.

Bible references

Joshua 10 The day the sun stood still.

Jeremiah 10:12-13 God made the earth by His power.

Luke 1:37; Luke 18:27 Nothing is impossible.

Revision

God's special people, the Israelites, had to fight many battles in Old Testament times. They had to fight enemies in order to survive, but God protected them in their battles when they trusted in Him. The Israelites were important to God, because from this group of people, Jesus would come. Once Jesus was born, all people had the chance to know God, and there was no longer need for these kinds of battles.

Bible lesson: The day the sun stood still

Not long after Jericho was defeated, the Israelites defeated another city. All the kings in the land of Canaan knew how powerful the Israelites were in battle. One of the kings, the king of Gibeon decided that he wanted to be on Joshua's side because it would be safer. However, five other kings in Canaan did not like this. They joined together and formed one big army to fight the Gibeonites.

Joshua and his soldiers joined with the Gibeonites.

"Don't be afraid," Joshua told his army. "God is with us."

Joshua and his army marched all night until they met the five kings and their army. There was a big battle. God helped Joshua win the battle. Soon the enemies were running away. God sent huge hail stones from the sky. (Hail stones are balls of ice.) The hail stones fell on the enemy.

The battle went on all day. It would soon be night. Joshua knew they could not fight in the dark so he commanded the sun to stand still until the battle was over. God caused the sun to stand still. Night did not come until the battle was over. God worked a miracle because Joshua trusted in Him. God has power over everything He has made and can do amazing miracles to protect His people.

The Bible says, "You created the moon to mark the months, and the sun knows the time to set" (Psalm 104:19 GNB). God is in charge of everything.

Discussion

This miracle shows us God's power to do unusual things. The earth is always spinning around in space. God made it that way. And yet, if He needs to, God can even change the patterns in nature.

God can do unusual things for people today too. There are some people who are so sick that the doctor said they could never become well again. There are some people who are born blind or deaf, with no chance of ever getting better. However, God can do unusual things for people like this. He can heal them through His great power, even though doctors say that they cannot be cured.

Activity

In the olden days, people did not have clocks like the ones we have today. They measured time by the sun. They could tell the time by the length of the shadow made by a shadow stick. (These were also called sun-dials)

You can make one of these by placing a stick in the ground, or mounting it on a piece of cardboard, then drawing along the line made by the shadow every hour. The shadow will move as the sun moves across the sky.

What would have happened to the sun-dials on the day that the sun stood still?

Think

Was it really the sun that stood still when Joshua prayed, or was it the earth?
(When we see the sunrise and set, it is really the earth that is moving, not the sun.)
Ask students to name the planets in order, (See diagram in workbooks)

Year 4

God is Truth 3 Weeks



Outcomes

At the completion of this module students will understand that:

- God's word is true.
- God's word is the right foundation for life.
- God's truth can change the lives of those who accept it.
- Many do not accept God's truth as in the example of the Sower.
- The Bible is an essential text book for those who want to live by the truth.

Related classroom topics for Science, Social Studies and Health:

Geology: rocks, fossils, dinosaurs

Link between "God is Truth" and classroom topics:

Building one's life on the truth is building one's life on the rock: obedience to the words of Jesus. To understand geology, we must accept the Bible as truth. The Bible tells us that the rocks and landforms we see around us today are a product of the Creation and Great Flood, occurring around 4000 BC and 2348 BC respectively (see Biblical time line.) Because of sin, God destroyed His once perfect creation through the Great Flood. Many, many fossils found today, including dinosaurs, are a result of animals buried quickly in the swirling mud.

Values:

honesty, fairness, respect for truth and justice, integrity

Biography:

Mary Jones and her Bible

God is Truth

Week 1

God's word is a sure foundation

Knowing Jesus is the most important thing in life.

Bible references

Matthew 7:24-27 The house on the rock.

John 14:6 Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.

Introduction

Make a collection of rocks, sand and soils. Discuss the way in which soils are made.

Can some rocks be made from soil?

Can some soils be made from rocks?

Consider the qualities of rocks.

Some are hard, some are soft, some are rough or smooth.

Consider different uses for rocks.

Rocks can be used for building houses, floors, fences; for making roads and driveways.

Very soft rocks, like limestone, can be used for writing upon.

If you were going to build a house, would you choose to build it on sand or something harder?

Good building foundations are often made from concrete. If the house has wooden foundations, then the ground beneath must be very hard and stable, or over time the building could sink into the ground, and eventually fall apart.

Story: The House on the Rock

Read the story from Matthew 7:24-27.

Discussion

How can we make Jesus the foundation of our life?

It is not enough just to listen to the words of Jesus. What else must we do? (verse 26)

When Jesus IS the foundation of our life, we always stand up for the truth, and nothing will move us from the truth.

In the story, the houses faced storms. In every-day life certain troubles may come our way. These may seem like storms.

Think of some examples of troubles that could come into a person's life.

If Jesus is not the foundation, these troubles could cause people's faith in God to crash. Some people might say, 'If God is really there, then He would not have allowed this to happen.' However, people who have Jesus as their closest friend find that instead of

blaming God for troubles, they depend more and more on Him when things get difficult.

Activity

Write the words on the bricks in the spaces in the house, to make a sentence starting with "Build".



God is Truth

Week 2

Be committed to the truth

Bible references

Mark 4:1-20 The Sower

Ephesians 3:17 Christ in our hearts

Philippians 3:16 Following the example of truth

Introduction

Show some different kinds of seeds.

What would we do if we wanted these seeds to sprout?

What would we need?

What kind of soil would be best for planting the seeds...fine and soft...or hard and rocky?

Story: The sower and the seed

Read the story from Mark 4:1-8 and Mark 4:14-20.

OR use the following story.

There was once a farmer who wanted to grow some wheat. He took his bag of seed and started to throw it here, there and everywhere. He didn't plant each little seed carefully in the ground as you may do with peas or beans. That would take too long. He just threw the seed all around the field.

Well I'm sure you can guess what happened. Not all of the seed landed in the nicely ploughed soil. There was a little breeze blowing that day. Some of the seeds blew away and fell onto the path. That was no place for seeds to grow. It was far too hard, and the seeds would be trampled under people's feet. Besides that, the birds flying above could see the seeds lying there on the road so they would quickly swoop down and eat the seeds.

Some of the seeds blew away and fell on hard stones beside the path. The seeds would never have a chance to grow there. There was no soft soil for sending their roots down, and who would water them?

In one corner of the field was a thistle patch. These were plants with thorns. Some of the seeds blew across there too. Very soon the thistles decided that they didn't want any little seeds growing in their patch. As the seeds tried to grow, the thistles took all the water from them, and then finally grew up so tall that the little plants couldn't get any sunshine.

Meanwhile, the seeds that fell on the fine ploughed soil sprouted. As the farmer watered them and the sun shone on them, the little seeds grew into beautiful heads

of golden wheat. But the seeds that fell on the road, the rocks and among thistles, just didn't grow at all.

Jesus told that story because He wanted people to understand their own hearts. When our hearts are ready to accept Jesus, God's word can be sown in our hearts and we will receive it with joy. As we learn more about Jesus and choose to love and obey Him, it is like sun shining into our hearts.

Some people however do not want to accept Jesus. Their hearts are hard, just like the road or the rocks in the story. There are still other people who say, "Yes, I want to be a Christian," but later they see their friends who are not living for Jesus. They forget about Jesus and go with their friends. Their hearts are like the soil where the thistles grew. The soil is soft enough, but other things get in the way. Jesus wants us to have hearts that will receive His words and never turn away from them.

Discussion

Discuss the representation of the four soil types.

1. The person who hears what the Bible has to say, but is tempted by Satan to forget about it. This person turns their back on Jesus. (*the path*)
2. The person who hears the message of the Bible and is so happy to accept it. This person decides to be a follower of Jesus. However, when difficult times come they decide they no longer want to be a Christian. This is a bit like a person who built his house on the sand. (*the rocky soil*)
3. The person who hears the message and lets other things like money or personal interests become more important than God. (*the thorny ground*)
4. The person who hears the word of God, obeys God and remains with the truth. (*the good soil*)

Puzzle

If our hearts are to be like the good soil then we need to _____ God's word and _____ it, then produce _____ fruit.

(The children can find the missing words from Mark 4:20... hear, accept, good)

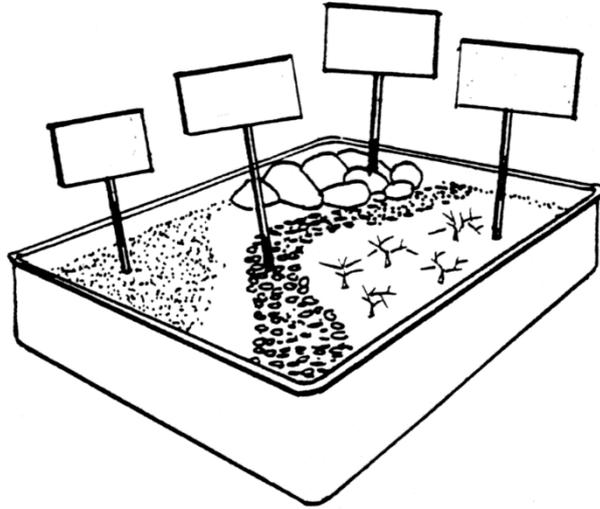
Art/Craft

Decorate a terracotta pot or a paper cup with painted designs. When dry, fill it with some good fine soil and plant some seeds. Water them and watch them sprout.

For comparison, other pots could be prepared containing different types of soil, e.g. rocky, sandy, full of weeds. How well do seeds grow in these pots?

Alternative activity

Make a model of the four soil types in a sand tray. Make labels for the soil types.



Act it out

You will need a narrator, and children to represent:

- seeds which fall upon 4 different kinds of soil
- the sun
- the rain
- the wind

The 'seeds' take their places in four designated areas (good soil, stony path, rocky ground, and thorny ground). 'Seeds' curl up into small balls. They gradually open up as they are visited by 'sun' and 'rain'.

Narrator:

Once a farmer planted some seed. Some fell on the good soil, some on the stony path, some on the rocky ground and some on the thorny ground. The rain watered the seeds. The sun shone. The seeds began to sprout. Soon the little seeds grew into tall plants. The sun shone hotter and hotter. (*Wipe brow*) The rain fell. (*Open hands to sky*) The wind blew. (*Sway*) One by one the little plants withered and wilted...all except the plants with their roots deeply planted in the good soil. These plants continued to grow tall and strong.

God is Truth

Week 3

The Bible is God's book

Bible references

Proverbs 30:5-6 The word of God is truth.

Psalms 12:6 God's word is pure.

Psalms 119:9-11 Obey God's word.

Psalms 119:105 God's word is a lamp to our feet.

Ephesians 6:17 God's word is a sword.

Discussion

Why is the Bible different to other books?

How do we know the Bible is true?

Why did God give the Bible to us?

Why is it important for everyone in the world to have the opportunity of reading the Bible?

Can you think of missionaries who have helped to make this possible? (e.g. Bible translators, Bible smugglers).

Bible lesson: The Bible is God's book

The Bible is God's book. Many hundreds of years ago God directed many men to write down all the things He wanted to have in His Book. The Bible is divided into two large parts. The first part is called the Old Testament. There are 37 books in the Old Testament. It tells about the world when it was first made, and about God's special people, the children of Israel. The Old Testament Israelites were always forgetting to serve the true God. They often went away from God and worshipped idols instead. Again and again God had to punish them for serving idols. They were sometimes sent to other countries as slaves and sometimes other kings ruled over them.

The second part is called the New Testament. There are 29 books in the New Testament. It tells us mostly about Jesus Christ, our Saviour. The New Testament begins with the birth of Jesus. At this time their country was called Palestine and it was ruled by the king of Rome. (Rome is in Italy.) At this time the Scriptures were kept in the temple. They were written by hand on rolled up paper called a scroll. The people of Israel knew from the Scriptures that one day a Saviour would come to set them free. They were looking forward to that day. But many did not recognize that Jesus was the One.

Questions

What are some of the things we read about in the Old Testament?

How did the people of Israel in the Old Testament know what God was saying?

Why did God punish the Israelites by putting them under the rule of another king?

At the time of the New Testament, who ruled their country?

What is the New Testament mainly about?

What were the people of Israel waiting for?

True Story: Mary Jones and her Bible

Mary Jones was a girl who lived in Wales more than 200 years ago. If you look at a map of Great Britain you will find Wales next to England. In those days the people of Wales didn't speak English. They only spoke their own language, Welsh.

Mary started school when she was nine years old and soon became a very good reader. At school there was a big Bible written in Welsh. One day she was asked by the teacher to read aloud from the Bible. Mary was excited. She loved the Bible stories and was now able to read them for herself.

She told her parents about her opportunity to read the Bible at school, but at the same time felt sad that there was no Bible at home. Her family was poor and could not afford to buy a Bible.

Mary decided that she would save up to buy one, no matter how long it took. Mary worked hard. She collected firewood and helped her neighbours with cleaning and baby-sitting. Every job earned her a few pennies. Finally, after six years she had enough money.

Mary was fifteen now. She knew of a man who sold Bibles in a village 40 kilometres away. Mary decided to go to see this man.

"How will you get there?" asked her parents.

"I'll walk," said Mary. "I know I can walk that far."

"We will pray that God will keep you safe," said her parents.

Mary had only one pair of shoes. She knew that she couldn't afford them to wear out, so she decided to walk barefoot. It was rough and stony. Mary's feet became sore but she pressed on. Finally she arrived at the village.

"Can you direct me to the house of Mr. Charles?" she asked a friendly minister. The minister took her to the home of Mr. Charles.

"I'm so sorry, Mary," said Mr. Charles, "but I only have one Bible left and I have already promised that to a friend."

Mary started to cry. Mr. Charles felt sad too.

"Mary," he said, "I will let you have the Bible. My friend can have an English Bible while I am waiting to get some more."

Mary's tearful face quickly changed to a happy one.

The next day she started the long journey home with her Bible under her arm. After some days she arrived home. How happy her parents were to see her. God had protected Mary and helped her to get the Bible. Now they too could read the Bible.

Meanwhile Mr. Charles thought of Mary's eagerness to own a Bible.

"I'm sure there are others who would like to have their own Bibles as well," he thought. Mr. Charles went to London, and with a friend started working to produce Bibles for the many people who needed them. This involved translating and printing. It was his aim that one day there would be enough Bibles for the whole world. The work started by Mr. Charles in 1804 later became known as the British and Foreign Bible Society.

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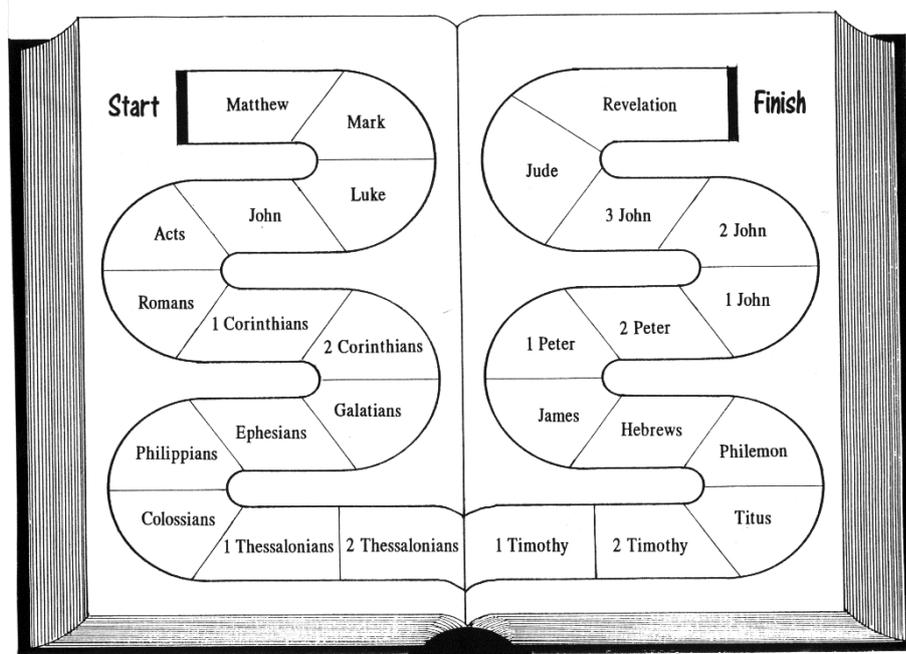
Activity

Make a list of Bible verses that can be helpful in different situations.

God's word can help me when I am:

- angry.....James 1:19-20
- sad.....2 Corinthians 1:3-5
- afraid.....Psalm 27:1
- feeling selfish...Galatians 6:2-3
- tempted.....Ephesians 6:10-11

Game: Books of the New Testament This is a dice game for 2-4 players. If you don't have die, ask the children to cut little squares from paper and write numbers 1-6 in the squares. They can work in pairs, put the paper squares in a pile and when it is their turn they can close their eyes and select a paper square. When you see that the children have finished their game they can try to say the books of the New Testament in correct order, without looking!



Year 4

God is Lord and King 3 Weeks



Outcomes

At the completion of this module students will understand that:

- God is in charge of the whole world
- Christmas is a special time when we remember when God sent Jesus into the world as part of his big plan for the world
- Baby Jesus was God's son. This means that although he was a human baby, he was also God.

Related classroom topics for Science, Social Studies and Health:

The world map – countries and continents

Link between "God is Lord and King" and classroom topic:

Discuss with children that God is in control of the whole universe. That is, our world, the sun and the stars. He tells the sun the time to set. He makes the tides because the moon is under His control (Ps 104:19). Because God is looking after our world, He looks after the people that He made. He sent His son Jesus into the world so that every person in the whole world could have the opportunity of knowing the true God.

God is Lord and King

Week 1

Waiting for a Saviour

Bible reference: Luke 1

The people of Israel had read the Scriptures. They had read the words of the prophet Isaiah that a Saviour would come. They thought that this Saviour was coming to set them free from the rule of Rome. The people were not happy being ruled by the king of Rome.

And so the people waited and longed for the great day to come. Every mother of Israel hoped that she might be the one to receive this wonderful child as her baby. Finally, about 2000 years after the promise given to Abraham, it was time for God to make this happen.

Find where Abraham is on your timeline.
Find where Jesus is on your timeline.

An angel visits Zechariah

In the time of King Herod, an old man called Zechariah was a minister in God's House. His wife's name was Elizabeth. Zechariah and Elisabeth loved God and always tried to do what was right. These two people were sometimes lonely, for they had no children. They had asked God many times for a baby, and now they were too old to have children.

Sometimes Zechariah stayed in God's House for many days. One day when he was working in one of the smaller rooms in God's house an angel came to him. Zechariah was afraid.

The angel said, "Don't be afraid, Zechariah, for God has heard your prayers. Your wife, Elisabeth, is going to have a son. Soon God will send you a baby boy, and you must call his name John. He shall be great in the sight of God and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. When he grows up he will turn many people to the Lord. Soon God is going to send His own Son into the world as a Saviour. Your son will tell people that the Saviour is coming."

It was hard for Zechariah to believe what the angel told him. "How shall I know that this is true?" he asked. "I am an old man and my wife is old too. People don't have babies when they are old. Give me a sign so that I know that this is true."

The angel answered, "I am Gabriel. I live with God. He sent me to you to tell you this happy news. I shall give you a sign. Because you did not believe me, you will not be able to speak until the baby is born."

There were people in the main part of God's House. They had been waiting for Zechariah to come out to them. Finally when he did come out, he could not talk. He made hand signs to them and tried to tell them what had happened. Soon the people understood that he had seen an angel.

When Zechariah's work in God's house had finished he went home to Elisabeth. He could not tell Elisabeth what had happened, so he wrote it down for her to read. Zechariah and Elisabeth were full of joy while they waited for their new baby to come.

Discussion

Who was Zechariah?

Why were Zechariah and Elisabeth lonely?

What message did the angel give to Zechariah?

Why couldn't Zechariah talk?

God is Lord and King

Week 2 An angel visits Mary

Bible reference: Luke 1

In the little town of Nazareth lived a lovely young lady named Mary. Mary was going to be married to a carpenter named Joseph. God knew that Mary loved and served Him. He chose her for a very special task. He sent his angel Gabriel to speak to her. "Good day, you highly favored one," Gabriel says to her. "God is with you." Mary was afraid because she had never seen an angel before.

"Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel said. "God is very pleased with you. That is why he is going to do a wonderful thing for you. You will soon have a baby. And you are to call him Jesus. This child will be great, and he will be called Son of the Most High God. God will make him king, as David was. But Jesus will be a king forever, and his kingdom will never end!"

"How can this all be?" Mary asked. "I am not even married, so how can I have a baby?"

"God's power will come upon you," Gabriel answered. "So the child will be called God's Son." Then he said, "Remember your relative Elizabeth. People said that she was too old to have children. But soon now she will have a son. So you see, there is nothing that God can't do."

Straight away Mary replied, "I am a servant of the Lord. May it happen to me just as you have said." The angel then left.

Not long after this Mary went to visit her cousin Elisabeth. When Elisabeth opened the door for Mary, God told her Mary's secret.

"You are blessed Mary, and the baby you are going to have is blessed," she said. Mary was filled with joy. She stayed with Elisabeth for three months and then returned home and to find Joseph. She shared her wonderful secret with him. It was hard for him to believe Mary's words. He thought that perhaps he should not take Mary as his wife after all.

Then one night he had a dream. An angel came to him and said, "Joseph. Don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife. Her baby is going to be the Son of God. You must call His name Jesus because He is going to save people from their sins."

Then Joseph was happy too. He remembered the angel's words. He married Mary and together they waited for this wonderful child.

Discussion:

What good news did the angel Gabriel bring to Mary?

How did Elisabeth know that Mary was going to have a baby?

What event made Joseph believe that this was true?

God is Lord and King

Week 3

The Saviour is born

Bible reference: Luke 2

Mary and Joseph were still waiting for the baby that the angel had promised them. One day, a Roman king, Caesar Augustus, sent out a message. He told the people about a new law which the king had made. Everyone was to go to the city where their parents and grandparents had been born, for an official count of the people in the country.

Even though Mary and Joseph were expecting the baby to come soon, they had to leave Nazareth and go to Bethlehem. It took many days to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Day after day Mary sat on the little donkey while Joseph walked beside her. When they finally arrived in Bethlehem it was too late to find a place to sleep. The city was crowded and there was no room for them anywhere. The only place they could find to sleep was a stable at the back of an inn. (A stable is where the animals are kept and an inn is a place where travelers can stay.) The innkeeper said that they could sleep there. So Joseph made a bed for Mary on a pile of straw in the stable.

That night God sent Mary her baby. She wrapped him in some soft rags that she had brought with her. There was no special bed for the baby. Mary laid her baby in the manger. (A manger is an animal feeding box.)

That same night there were shepherds in the fields near Bethlehem. They were taking care of their sheep. Suddenly they saw a great light. It was so bright that they could not see anything for a moment. They covered their eyes. There was an angel standing before them and God's glory shone all around them. The shepherds trembled with fear.

But the angel said, "Don't be afraid. I am bringing you good news. This good news is for all the people. Today, in this city, a Saviour has been born. He is Christ the Lord. You will find the baby wrapped in cloths, lying in a manger."

Suddenly there were many angels above them. They all began to sing, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth let there be peace." Then all the angels went back to heaven.

The shepherds looked at each other in amazement. "Come," they said, "let us go at once to Bethlehem." They left their sheep on the hillside and hurried to Bethlehem. They went to the stable behind the inn.

"Is there a new baby here?" they asked. Joseph opened the stable door and the shepherds explained the message of the angel, that this new born baby would be their Saviour and Lord."

The shepherds knelt down beside the manger and watched the baby with joy in their hearts. The Saviour had finally come! God had kept His promise!

The shepherds went back to their sheep, and when morning came they hurried to the town to tell everyone that the Saviour has been born.

Discussion

Why did Joseph and Mary go to Bethlehem?

Where did they sleep in Bethlehem?

Why was that the most important night in history?

Who were the first visitors to come and see Baby Jesus?