

Sunday School Year 3 *Teaching Helps* audio files and study sheets

This CD contains the *Teaching Helps* audio files for the 39 lessons in the Christ-Light Year 3 Sunday School curriculum.

For each lesson there is an audio file for the lower grades (approximately grades 1-4) and one for the upper grades (grades 5-6). Choose the one for the grade level you teach.

Each audio file begins with a study presentation of the Bible lesson itself as well as pertinent background information. This presentation will help you prepare to teach the lesson. The second part of the audio file includes an interview with a teacher who provides tips for teaching the lesson and for teaching Sunday school in general.

A PDF file provides two pages of notes for each lesson, which will help you follow along as you listen to the audio file. One page corresponds to the presentation of the lesson, and the other is a checklist of points made by the teachers in the interview section. (A separate PDF file is provided for each of the upper level and lower level audio files.)

The audio files are in MP3 format so you can upload and listen to them on an MP3 player or on a computer.

The files are found in three main folders, one for each set.

01 Yr3 Fall

02 Yr3 Winter

03 Yr3 Spring

Each main folder contains two subfolders, one with the lower-grades files and one with the upper-grades files.

The MP3 file labels indicate the Sunday school year, **3_1_01**; the set, **3_1_01** (Fall, Winter, Spring); and the lesson number, **3_1_01**.

01 Yr3 Fall

Yr3FallLower

3_1_01CreationLower.mp3

3_1_02FirstSinLower.mp3

3_1_03CainAbelLower.mp3

3_1_14TeacherNotesLower.pdf

Yr3FallUpper

3_1_01CreationUpper.mp3

3_1_02FirstSinUpper.mp3

3_1_03CainAbelUpper.mp3

3_1_14TeacherNotesUpper.pdf

02 Yr3 Winter

Yr3WinterLower

3_2_01JonahLower.mp3

3_2_02ThreeMenLower.mp3

Yr3WinterUpper

3_2_01JonahUpper.mp3

3_2_02ThreeMenUpper.mp3

Use of Teaching Helps Audio Files

If a congregation has purchased the Teaching Helps CD, the Sunday school superintendent may use or distribute the files in a variety of ways. The Sunday school superintendent may make a copy of this CD for each teacher. The Sunday school superintendent may e-mail files to the Sunday school teachers. The files can also be posted on a congregation Web site, but **only if it is a secure Web site** (password protected). See the copyright information below. Or, if the pastor wishes, the Sunday school teaching staff may listen to the segments as part of the Sunday school teachers' meetings.

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Sunday School Teaching Helps

Listening Notes

Year 3—Fall
Lower Grades



*I am the light of the world.
Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness,
but will have the light of life.*

John 8:12
(NIV 1984)



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These lesson titles are taken from Grades 1-2 of the Christ-Light Sunday school religion curriculum.

Introduction

Teaching Helps Audio Files

We have prepared an audio file for each lesson. The file begins with a presentation of the Bible lesson followed by an interview with a teacher who provides tips for teaching Sunday school.

Teaching Helps Printable Notes

Included is a PDF document containing two pages of notes for each lesson. The first page corresponds to the presentation of the lesson. The second sheet lists the topics discussed in the interview.

Tips on sharing these files within your congregation:

The files on this disk are meant to be shared with your entire Sunday school staff. This can be done in a variety of ways.

You may wish to burn a CD for each teacher, including substitute teachers.

Small, inexpensive flash drives also work well. They could be provided by the teachers or the church. The files could be copied from a public computer located in the church.

If only the regular teachers have the files, when they use a substitute, they could attach the appropriate audio file and the PDF notes to an e-mail in time for the substitute to use it in preparation to teach the lesson.

The files can also be stored on your server and be made available through your Web site. However, you are permitted to do this only if the area on your Web site where the files are accessed is password protected.

We hope you will make these files readily available to everyone who will be teaching in your Sunday school. We also ask that you observe the limitations to sharing as described in the copyright statement.

Year 3, Fall, Lesson 1

The Creation of the World—Genesis 1:1–2:3

Introduction

God’s creation of the world is the foundation for the rest of Scripture. A proper understanding that God created all things perfectly enables us also to understand that God loves us and wants to restore his perfect creation to what it was at the beginning. It is best not to get bogged down in the many details of this account. Keep the big picture before your class, and save some time to talk about the theory of evolution, which many of the children hear about almost daily.

God’s Plan of Salvation

If we accept and believe the account of creation as recorded in Genesis chapter 1, many of the basic teachings of our faith will fall into place. On the other hand, if we give way to the teaching of evolution or even the idea that God used the evolutionary process to create the world (theistic evolution), most of the rest of Scripture will be undermined.

In the first two chapters of the Bible, everything was perfect. In the last two chapters of the Bible, everything is perfect. In between there is sin and imperfection. In between we learn the story of how God did what was necessary to restore his creation to perfection. That’s the story of God’s plan of salvation.

There is almost too much in this lesson to cover in one week. But somewhere in the lesson you will want to bring up the subject of evolution and make it clear that (1) Scripture does not teach it, nor can the teaching of evolution be shoehorned into Genesis chapter 1, and (2) the teaching of evolution completely undermines everything we know about God, creation, and God’s plan of salvation.

First, evolution cannot be made to reconcile with Genesis chapter 1. It is clear that “day” means a 24-hour period. The normal Jewish way of speaking about a day is used. Their day began in the evening and concluded the next day. Most striking is the order of creation. Plants came into existence before the sun, moon, and stars. No evolutionary theory would allow this sequence of events.

Second, evolution undermines God’s salvation. The most striking difference between the teaching of creation and the theory of evolution is that Genesis teaches that death came into the world through sin and that Jesus’ work is to destroy death through his death on the cross. Evolution teaches that death is the tool through which the evolutionary process advances and therefore is a good thing. This completely undermines our appreciation of Jesus’ work for us and our understanding of his death on the cross.

The Account—Genesis 1:1–2:3

1:1-5 **“the earth . . . surface of the deep”**—This is the first thing God created. It was the beginning of this world. In the beginning there was no form to the mass God created. **“the Spirit of God”**—The Spirit was ready to go into action as God began speaking his creating word. Just what role he played in creation is not told us. We are told, however, that Jesus was God’s agent in creating all things. He was God’s powerful “Word” (John 1:1) through which God created all things. So the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were all active in creation. **“light”**—Since there was no sun or moon, this light was some type of general light that lightened everything. God’s first act was to separate light from darkness, thus creating a day.

1:6-8 **“an expanse . . . sky”**—God created two places where water was preserved and a support system to keep the two separated. There is a lot of speculation about what the water above the expanse was. You might want

to read a good commentary like the People’s Bible commentary on Genesis for more information.

1:9-13 **“dry ground . . . seas . . . vegetation”**—God separated the water under the expanse from land. He also caused vegetation to grow on the land.

1:14-19 **“lights”**—God created the universe to serve the world we live in.

1:20-23 **“Let the water teem with living creatures . . . birds”**—On day 5 God created birds and fish.

1:24-31 **“according to their kinds”**—God created various types of animals. There was no half-cat-and-dog, to use a crude example. Exactly where the dividing line falls in our modern taxonomy of animals is difficult to say, but animals could not be bred across the “kinds.” **“in our image”**—God created man (men and women) in his spiritual image—righteous and holy, just as he is righteous and holy.

Year 3 Fall Lesson 1

3_1_01—The Creation of the World

Lower

Pick and choose carefully what you want to emphasize. There are many details in this account.

Be sure to save time for a discussion on evolution.

The idea of having large numbers inside which you can write or draw elements of the lesson.

Or use block numbers inside which the students can draw as you are teaching the lesson.

Discuss unique facts on the wonders of God's world.

Suggestions for using repeating phrases that can be found in a lesson.

Ideas for how children can make an accordion book on the account of creation.

Year 3, Fall, Lesson 2

The First Sin—Genesis 3

Review

A short review of the creation account may be in order. Remind the class that God created Adam and Eve perfect and holy. Sin was not an original part of God's creation.

Introduction

We are used to sin being in the world. It is impossible for us to imagine a world in which there was no sin. Today's account tells us how sin entered the world. But before you can begin to talk about the fall into sin, the class must know who Satan is. In our world, most people dismiss Satan, demons (evil angels), and hell. But the Bible is clear that all these exist. The angels, who are created beings, were most likely created sometime during the six days of creation. One of those angels, whom the Bible calls the devil or Satan, rebelled against God along with a large number of fellow angels. God created a place for them—hell. (Scripture does not give us many details. See Jude 6 and 2 Peter 2:4.) Intent on destroying God's perfect creation, Satan tempted Eve to disobey the one special command God had given her and Adam, not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

God's Plan of Salvation

This account is the foundation for the rest of Scripture. Here we see the problem we all have—sin. We also learn about the consequence of sin, namely, death. And we hear God's promise of a Savior from sin and death. You may explain it to your children like this: There are only two places in the Bible where everything is perfect, the first two chapters of Scripture and the last two, which describe the new paradise of God. Everything in-between tells us about how perfection was lost and how perfection was restored through Jesus' victory over sin, death, and the curse God put on the world after the fall.

The Account—Genesis 3

3:1-7 **“Did God really say . . . ?”**—At its heart, Satan's temptation was an attack on God's love. He said, “Would God really make all this wonderful fruit and then tell you not to eat any of it? God is just scaring you by saying you will die if you eat! God doesn't want you to be wise like him.” Satan used half-truths to deceive Eve. Note three of them. **“You will not surely die”**—Adam and Eve didn't die physically, but they died spiritually. **“your eyes will be opened”**—Their eyes were opened—to see sin, to experience lust, and to realize God's anger over sin. **“you will be like God”**—They became like God, knowing good and evil. But good was a thing of the past and evil was all they now knew.

3:8-13 **“they hid”**—We immediately see the effects of sin. Adam and Eve hid from their loving Creator. Adam said he hid because he was naked, which was a stupid, senseless statement. Adam shoved the blame onto the woman. The woman, in turn, blamed the serpent.

3:14 **“Cursed are you”**—The curse was spoken on the serpent, who bears the curse in his body. He must crawl on the ground and eat dust all his days.

3:15 **“enmity between you and the woman”**—This was a curse on the serpent but wonderful news to Eve. Before she and Adam fell, they were at peace with God and at enmity with (hostile to) Satan. After the fall into

sin, they were at peace with Satan and hostile to God. But God would restore the peace between them and him to what it had been before. Nevertheless, the enmity between Eve and her offspring and Satan and his offspring would bring suffering and persecution on believers throughout all time. **“head . . . heel”**—One of the woman's offspring would crush Satan's head, that is, destroy him. In the process, Satan would wound him.

3:16 **“pain . . . rule”**—God sent difficulties into the lives of Adam and Eve. He did not do this to punish them but to let them realize the results of sin, look forward to the Savior, and yearn for the day when God would re-create the world. Eve would suffer pain in childbirth. She would also live under the rule of her husband, which, in this sinful world, is often very difficult.

3:17-19 **“Cursed is the ground . . . to dust you will return.”**—Adam would have great difficulty in providing food for his family. Farming would be extremely difficult. In fact, from that point on, any method of acquiring one's food would be much more difficult. In the end, both Adam and Eve would die.

3:20-24 **“banished him from the Garden of Eden”**—God did not want Adam and Eve to live forever in their sinful condition. So he banished them from the garden to keep them from eating from the tree of life.

Year 3 Fall Lesson 2

3_1_02—The First Sin

Lower

Warm up: Explore opposites (*Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* article).

Suggestion: Eat an apple while children enter the room.

Illustrate the difference between what the children look forward to in heaven and the world today.

Applications for thinking about this lesson during everyday activities.

Year 3, Fall, Lesson 3

Cain and Abel—Genesis 4:1-16,25,26

Review

If any of your children did not hear the story of Adam and Eve’s fall into sin, you might want to spend some time reviewing it. The account of Cain and Abel shows the results of sin in the world. This account took place some time after Adam and Eve fell into sin. Their two sons had grown old enough to begin working at two different occupations. But it was before Adam and Eve had their third son, Seth.

Introduction

This account is often referred to as the story of the first murder. It is certainly that. But its real meaning is found in the reason why Cain killed Abel.

When Scripture talks about this account, it contrasts Abel’s faith with Cain’s lack of faith. Outside of the account itself in Genesis chapter 4, Cain and Abel are mentioned several times in the New Testament. A look at these passages will be helpful.

“By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead” (Hebrews 11:4). Comment: The difference between Abel’s sacrifice and Cain’s lies in their motives for offering their sacrifices. Abel’s sacrifice was offered in faith, that is, in love and appreciation to the Lord. Cain’s was offered without faith, so his sacrifice was either for show or out of a sense of law-based duty.

“Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother’s were righteous” (1 John 3:12). Comment: Cain murdered Abel because he saw that his own life (including his sacrifice) was dominated by Satan. He saw that Abel’s life (including his sacrifice) was righteous in God’s eyes. He refused to believe in God’s grace, and so in order to be rid of his pains of conscience, he killed Abel.

“Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain; they have rushed for profit into Balaam’s error; they have been destroyed in Korah’s rebellion” (Jude 11). Comment: Balaam and Korah rebelled against God. Cain is listed with them.

“Upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar” (Matthew 23:35). Comment: Jesus was addressing the Pharisees. Their forefathers had killed the prophets because they didn’t want to hear their message. The Pharisees would soon kill Jesus because they didn’t want to hear his message. Abel was killed by Cain for the same reason.

These passages help us see that the main sin in this account was persecution. Abel, a child of God, was martyred by Cain, a child of the devil. So this account is really about the first persecution against God’s people.

God’s Plan of Salvation

Martin Luther said that Cain founded a false church based on the law. Abel was part of the true church that treasured God’s promises and lived by faith. Throughout history, those who follow God’s plan of salvation have been persecuted by those who rebel against God’s ways.

The Account—Genesis 4:1-16,25,26

4:7 **“If you do what is right”**—In the context, “doing what is right” meant offering God an acceptable sacrifice, one that was offered by faith. In other words, God was calling Cain to repent of his unbelief. If he did, he would be able to master his sin of jealousy. If he

didn’t, his sinful nature would lead him further into sin.
4:10 **“Your brother’s blood cries out to me”**—Murder demands punishment. God heard Abel’s blood cry out to him, and he would exact punishment from Cain.

Year 3 Fall Lesson 3

3_1_03—Cain and Abel

Lower

Introduce the lesson and have the children act out how Cain and Abel made their offerings.

Display how a match can illustrate the flame up of sin.

Activity of using stick figures with thought bubbles to show what the characters were thinking.

Note the different styles of learning children have.

Activity: team huddle prayer.

Year 3, Fall, Lesson 4

God Answers Hannah's Prayer—1 Samuel 1:1–2:11,18,19; 3:1-21

Review

The Christ-Light Sunday school series includes a number of core accounts, such as creation and the fall into sin from the Old Testament and the birth of Jesus and his death and resurrection from the New Testament. Between these core accounts, the series skips to major sections of Scripture and covers those sections in some detail.

We are at such a point again, skipping from the account of Cain and Abel to this week's lesson about Hannah and Samuel. In the interest of helping your children develop a bit of a sense for Scripture as a whole, it would be good to review what happened between last week's lesson and this week's lesson. A little time spent on this type of review will pay big dividends later on in your children's understanding of the Bible as a whole.

Here are topics you may want to briefly mention: the 1,500 years between Adam and Noah; the flood; the Tower of Babel; Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; Israel's deliverance from Egypt; the occupation of the Promised Land of Canaan; the period of the judges; and the lawlessness among God's people.

Introduction

Samson was the last of the judges listed in the book of Judges. He began the overthrow of the Philistines. (The Philistines were not among the original inhabitants of Canaan. They seem to have migrated from the area around Greece and settled in southwest Canaan sometime during the period of the judges.)

The Israelites would soon be asking for an earthly king to rule them. They had rebelled against God and were no longer content to let him be their king. The period of transition from God's rule to the rule of an earthly king would take a special person. Samuel would fill that role. He would be the last of the judges.

This week's lesson covers material that is often broken up into two parts. The first part consists of Hannah's inability to have children, her fervent prayer to the Lord for a child accompanied by her vow, Samuel's birth, and Hannah's song of praise. The second consists of the record of God's first contact with Samuel and God's giving him a prophecy about Israel's future.

God's Plan of Salvation

Samuel would serve God's plan of salvation in a special way. He would continue Israel's fight against the Philistines. He would judge the people according to God's laws and give them God-pleasing spiritual leadership. He would also oversee the rule of the first king, Saul, and provide stability in Israel during Saul's rebellion against God. Finally, he would anoint the next king, David, who would foreshadow the Messiah. All this was in the interest of the promise of the Savior that God gave to Abraham.

The Account—1 Samuel 1:1–2:11,18,19; 3:1-21

1:1-8 **“the LORD had closed her womb”**—In Scripture we see several instances of the Lord closing up women's wombs. For example: Abraham's wife, Sarah; Isaac's wife, Rebekah; Jacob's wife, Rachel; and Zechariah's wife, Elizabeth. God seems to have used this problem to put his power and love on display. He alone would fulfill his promises of a Savior by his great power.

1:9-28 **“I will give him to the LORD”**—Hannah meant that she would dedicate her son to the Lord by making him a lifelong Nazirite. The oath of the Nazirite was most often temporary. Israelites would put themselves under the oath in thanks to the Lord for a prayer answered or during the time they were asking the Lord for mercy. Samuel, Samson, and John the Baptist are the

three men whom we know were Nazirites for life.

2:1-11 **“He will give strength to his king”**—Hannah was speaking under the power of the Holy Spirit. Her entire song was a prophecy. She looked into the future, saw God's promised Savior-King, and asked God to give him strength to carry out his work of salvation and judgment.

Chapter 3—**“Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.”** What a wonderful motto for us all. God does not speak to us directly. But Samuel was to be God's special prophet and would sometimes experience such direct revelation. The first prophecy God gave Samuel related to his punishment of Eli, the high priest.

Year 3 Fall Lesson 4

3_1_04—God Answers Hannah’s Prayer

Lower

Imitate Hannah as the children enter the room. Ask for the children’s reactions, and use this to introduce the account.

Illustration of a trivia game show. (Discussion of a teacher having a set of activities to use and choosing one to fit the lesson.)

Ask the children to act out what they want to be when they grow up. Teacher acts out being a witness for Jesus.

The most important lesson children can learn is that God loves them.

Saul Becomes King—1 Samuel 8–11

Review

We left Samuel when he was still a very young boy. As he grew, the Israelites recognized him to be the Lord’s prophet and followed his leadership. The Lord blessed Israel’s army in its struggle with Philistia. Through Samuel’s leadership, the Israelites came to realize that God’s power, not their own power, was behind their victories.

Introduction

Our account in this week’s lesson begins when Samuel was old. Samuel’s sons had turned from his ways and were corrupt judges. The Israelites wanted a king. This was a sin. God had told them that he would be their king. He would guide them with his laws, keep the promise of a Savior alive in their hearts, and bless their land with peace and prosperity. But the Israelites didn’t want a King they could not see. They wanted a person—a fellow human being—whom they could see.

This does not mean that the Lord could not use Israel’s kings to bless the Israelites. He often did so. But the Lord would also use the kings of Israel to chasten the people. Note how he warned the people about this in advance in chapter 8.

God’s Plan of Salvation

God wanted to keep his people together as a nation. He had promised that his Savior would be born from them. The majority of the people, sad to say, had rejected his rule. They wanted a king they could see. We see God’s hand at work on behalf of his promise. He chastened the Israelites through the kings they received and also by giving them earthly rulers whose rule they could not simply brush aside. In some cases, he provided good kings who encouraged the people to remain true to his covenant and who even foreshadowed the Savior, as did King David.

The Account—1 Samuel 8–11

Chapter 8 **“But his sons did not walk in his ways.”**—We know the Lord promises that if we raise up our children in the fear of the Lord, when they are old, they will not depart from it. But we see in this case that even godly parents sometimes have children who rebel against God. **“warn them solemnly”**—With God as king, the Israelites would have been blessed beyond their wildest dreams. With a human being as king, they could look forward to losing many of their possessions and having to serve their king’s need for power, great buildings, and wealth. **“Then we will be like all the other nations”**—How foolish. Remind the children that God has called them out of the world and wants them to be different from the world. It is when they forsake him and choose to live as the world lives that trouble, heartache, and even eternal death result.

Chapter 9 **“today you are to eat with me”**—God had no trouble finding the right person for the job. He used the search for the donkeys, the servant’s knowledge of Samuel’s presence, and a direct revelation to Samuel to bring Saul and Samuel together. **“the smallest tribe of Israel”**—Judges chapters 20 and 21 tell us how Benjamin came to be so small. God often uses the smallest and weakest to do his work. **“Here is what has been kept for you.”**—Samuel used this meal to begin

revealing to the Israelites who their king would be.

Chapter 10 **“Has not the LORD anointed you . . . ?”**—To anoint someone is to set that person aside for a special work. This is the first example of a man being anointed as king. High priests had been anointed for a long time. Some of the prophets would later be anointed for their work. Anointing symbolizes God’s outpouring of his Spirit on a person, giving that person the zeal, power, and skills necessary to carry out work for him. **“God changed Saul’s heart”**—This is the key to any success in serving the Lord. We should all pray for clarity in understanding God’s gospel and his will for our lives. When he gives us his Holy Spirit, we are completely equipped to do his work. **“Saul son of Kish was chosen.”**—The Israelites chose their king by lot. The Lord was still in control of who would be king. **“he has hidden himself among the baggage”**—Saul began his reign well, in humility.

Chapter 11 **“When Saul heard their words, the Spirit of God came upon him in power”**—Again we see the power of the Holy Spirit, in this case, working strength and righteous anger in Saul’s heart. Saul won a great victory through the Spirit’s power. **“No one shall be put to death today”**—Saul even acted graciously toward those who had questioned his kingship.

Year 3 Fall Lesson 5

3_1_05—Saul Becomes King

Lower

Introduce the lesson by using a teaching picture and asking the children what they see.

The value of starting the class in a circle.

Discuss “humility” and “helpfulness.” Then do an activity to illustrate the nature of boasting.

An activity using carpet squares.

Have children draw key elements of the lesson.

Year 3, Fall, Lesson 6

David and Goliath—1 Samuel 16,17

Review

There is a bit of a jump between last week’s lesson and this week’s lesson. Saul had been anointed king over Israel. He had started out well, but he soon rebelled against the Lord and against Samuel. On one occasion, Saul offered sacrifices to the Lord as a plea for victory against the Philistines. He had no call to do that. Another time he made a foolish vow that almost cost his son Jonathan’s life. On another occasion, the Lord sent Saul to punish the Amalekites, but Saul did not completely carry out the Lord’s command. The Lord chose to anoint another man as king who would be ready to assume leadership over Israel as soon as Saul died.

Introduction

First Samuel chapters 16 and 17 tell us about Samuel anointing David as king over Israel, how David became a member of Saul’s court, and how David defeated Goliath. The account of David and Goliath will fill a greater or smaller part of your lesson, depending on which level you are teaching. If you are going to focus on David and Goliath, set the stage by pointing out that David had already been anointed as king and that the Lord was working in David’s heart by his Spirit, giving him courage and power to begin delivering Israel even before he became king. (See especially 16:13.)

The story of David and Goliath is one of the most striking in all of Scripture. As you teach about the contest between the two, keep David’s words in 17:45-47 in mind. These words are really the heart of the account.

God’s Plan of Salvation

One thing is emphasized throughout these two chapters: The battle is the Lord’s. Whether we are talking about a contest between a shepherd and a seasoned warrior or between Jesus while hanging on a cross and the prince of darkness or between our hope in Christ and the powers that want to rob us of that hope, the Lord is in control and his plan of salvation will not fail. David must have looked foolish to Goliath. The cross of Christ looks foolish to the world. But God saves not through the powerful things of this world but through weak and foolish things. When he acts through our human weakness, his strength is put on display.

The Account—1 Samuel 16,17

<p>16:1-13 “Do you come in peace?”—The residents of Bethlehem respected Samuel, but they also were afraid they may have done something wrong that had angered the Lord. Samuel assured them that they had nothing to fear. “Samuel saw Eliab and thought”—Based on his physical characteristics, Samuel considered Eliab a worthy king. “but the LORD looks at the heart”—When it comes to using a person to serve him, the Lord is not interested in physical or mental gifts. He is interested in a heart of faith. He can use whatever gifts he has given us to accomplish his work. But he wants to use a person who relies on him alone. The Lord saw that David had that quality.</p> <p>16:14-23 “the Spirit of the LORD had departed from Saul”—Because Saul rebelled against the Lord, the Lord took his Spirit from him. The Lord replaced this with an evil spirit who tormented Saul. (The Lord can even use demons as tools of his just anger over sin.) “Then relief would come to Saul; . . . and the evil</p>	<p>spirit would leave him.”—The Lord gave Saul an evil spirit that Saul had some control over. God used his own control (through music) to form a bond between David and Saul and to put David in a position to become king at the right time.</p> <p>Chapter 17 “that he should defy the armies of the living God?”—This is the heart of the story. This was not just a battle between two men. It was a battle between the unbelieving world and the God of Israel. (Note Eliab’s reaction to David’s charge.) “he despised him”—What the world despises (like the cross of Christ) is treasured by the Lord. “cursed David by his gods”—The battle was really between the true God and his followers and the false gods and their followers. “it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves”—David’s speech to Goliath could become our motto for life. Be sure to read it through slowly with your children, and let them savor every line.</p>
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Year 3 Fall Lesson 6

3_1_06—David and Goliath

Lower

Create a line drawing of Goliath, and fill it with things about him that caused the Israelites to be afraid.

Draw David with a heart, and ask the children what was in his heart.

Discuss with the children how they should choose heroes.

Discuss the similarities and differences between David and Saul.

A suggestion for helping the children learn Memory Treasures.

David Shows Kindness to Saul—1 Samuel 19,20,22–26

Review

At the end of our account last week, Saul was very pleased with David. However, 1 Samuel chapter 18 sets the stage for chapters 19 and following. In chapter 18 we hear how Saul first became angry with David when the people praised David more than him. Then he became jealous of David’s success. He saw his son Jonathan, a firm believer in the Lord, become close friends with David. He saw his daughter fall in love with David. Most troubling of all for Saul was that the Lord was blessing David in everything David did, and for this reason Saul became afraid of David. Chapter 18 ends, “And he remained his enemy the rest of his days” (verse 29).

Introduction

The account for this week tells us what happened between David and Saul over the next few months. You will have a chance to contrast Saul’s unbelieving hatred toward David with David’s lasting respect for Saul because Saul was Israel’s king and the Lord’s anointed. David could have killed Saul and taken the kingship, but he didn’t.

This wonderful account teaches us how God cares for those who put themselves in his hands. David could have taken matters into his own hands and avenged himself on Saul’s wicked actions toward him, but he didn’t. In fact, he put his life on the line in order *not* to kill the Lord’s anointed.

The various levels of Christ-Light focus on various elements of the story. But the theme is the same in all of them. David refused to take matters into his own hands, and he trusted that the Lord would take care of him and punish Saul at the proper time.

God’s Plan of Salvation

During these months of flight from Saul, David learned to trust in the Lord. He wrote several psalms that we continue to use today. These were the years during which David grew in faith, experienced how God delivers those who love him, and saw firsthand the Lord’s desire to maintain Israel as a nation and fulfill his promise to Abraham. David served as a picture of Christ, who would likewise suffer at the hands of evil people and entrust himself to his heavenly Father.

Account—1 Samuel 19,20,22–26

<p>Chapter 19 “But Jonathan was very fond of David”—Jonathan shared David’s faith. His primary concern was for the Lord’s will and not for his own political advancement. As Saul would correctly point out (20:31), unless David was killed, Jonathan would not replace his father as king. “he walked along prophesying”—Saul spoke God’s Word, not by conviction but because the Holy Spirit forced him to.</p> <p>Chapter 20 “when the LORD has cut off every one of David’s enemies”—Here we see clearly that Jonathan knew David would be the next king. David promised never to harm Jonathan’s family. Later on, David had an opportunity to honor that promise.</p> <p>Chapter 21 This chapter records David’s flight from Saul—how he found help at the tabernacle from Ahimelech the high priest and how he tried to find safety among the Philistines, out of Saul’s reach.</p> <p>Chapter 22 “Go into the land of Judah.”—After his family was out of danger, David spent several months</p>	<p>playing cat and mouse with Saul in southern Judah.</p> <p>Chapter 23 “Shall I go and attack these Philistines?”—This lesson shows us just how weak David’s position was and how he learned to trust in the Lord. Not only was David fleeing from the king of Israel but he was now called on to fight the Philistines, who were attacking an Israelite city. Then, when Saul came to attack Keilah and capture David, the people of Keilah were ready to surrender David to Saul. David and his men were left with only one ally, the Lord. “Saul’s son Jonathan went to David at Horesh and helped him find strength in God.”—This is the last time David would see Jonathan, who would die with his father in battle. But note the kind of help he gave David on this occasion. What a wonderful example of friendship!</p> <p>Chapters 24–26 The account of David’s flight from Saul continues. These chapters contain the two accounts of David sparing Saul’s life. From these stories, your children will learn what it means to trust in the Lord when the enemies of the gospel persecute God’s people.</p>
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Year 3 Fall Lesson 7

3_1_07—David Shows Kindness to Saul

Lower

Have each student draw on a paper plate facial expressions that portray Saul's jealousy.

Do another paper plate with facial expressions that portray David's kindness.

Do a skit using the paper plate masks.

Talk about the kindness of Jesus.

Suggestions about classroom rules.

Year 3, Fall, Lesson 8

David Sins—2 Samuel 11:1–12:25

Review

David continued to flee from King Saul. After some time, he sought refuge in a Philistine city. Saul was defeated in battle by the Philistines, and he and Jonathan were killed. The tribe of Judah asked David to become their king, while the northern tribes were ruled by one of Saul’s sons. After 7 ½ years, David became king over a united Israel. David made Jerusalem his capital and continued waging war against Israel’s enemies.

Introduction

This is a sad account about sins David committed. But it also tells us how David repented of his sins.

The best way to tell the first part of the story is to focus on the various sins David committed. We are not just dealing with David’s sin of adultery. The notes below discuss his sins.

In the second part of the account, David’s repentance, we come to understand the meaning of God’s chastening. This is an important part of the lesson that will help the children understand some things about how the Lord deals with them in life. For various reasons, the Lord may send difficulties into a Christian’s life when that Christian sins. This kind of chastisement is designed by a loving Lord to help us overcome our sinful nature in the future. We call this God’s chastisement to distinguish it from mere punishment to atone for guilt.

God’s Plan of Salvation

God used David’s sin in his plan of salvation. When David was forgiven, he composed Psalm 51 and perhaps also Psalm 32. These psalms have helped Christians throughout the centuries deal with the guilt of their sin. After you have taught the lesson, you might choose some sections from these psalms to read to the class. The class will be amazed at how clear these words become when they know the background.

The Account—2 Samuel 11:1–12:25

<p>11:1-5 “David remained in Jerusalem.”—It was not wrong to let the men go out by themselves. Nevertheless, this gave David some time alone and afforded an opportunity for temptation.</p> <p>11:6-26 “Send me Uriah”—David should have confessed his sin and repented of it. He might have made arrangements to care for the child and made restitution to Uriah. Yet he chose to add one sin to another in order to escape discovery. The first thing he did was to call Uriah back from the battle, where Uriah was doing the Lord’s work. He wanted to give Uriah an opportunity to sleep with his wife, Bathsheba, so no one would know that she had become pregnant by David. “the Hittite”—Don’t overlook this point in telling this story to the children. He was a non-Israelite, a convert, who had given his life to the God of Israel. This made David’s sin even more horrible. “But Uriah slept at the entrance to the palace”—His fellow soldiers were putting their lives in danger for the Lord, so how could he go to his home and sleep with his wife? “he [Uriah] ate and drank with him”—David wined and dined Uriah in order to get him drunk. Perhaps then he would lose his principles and go home to sleep with Bathsheba. But once again, Uriah nobly slept outside at the entrance</p>	<p>to the palace. “Put Uriah in the front line where the fighting is fiercest.”—David decided that the only way to be rid of the problem was to have Uriah killed. Then he could have “compassion” on Bathsheba and make her his wife. “some of the king’s men died”—That day David created more widows in Israel than just Bathsheba.</p> <p>Chapter 12 “the sword will never depart from your house”—Nathan’s parable had its intended result. David was forced to put himself in the place of the wicked rich person who killed his servant’s only sheep. Nathan accused David of the guilt of his sin. God also revealed that he would chasten David in three ways: (1) Because he used the sword to kill Uriah, the sword would not leave his house. He would always have enemies he would have to fight. “I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you”—(2) David committed adultery with Bathsheba; he would suffer by seeing his wives taken by someone close to him. “the son born to you will die”—(3) This would show the world that God did not condone what David had done. “I have sinned against the LORD.”—The parable Nathan told David hit home. “The LORD may be gracious”—David accepted God’s chastening.</p>
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Year 3 Fall Lesson 8

3_1_08—David Sins

Lower

Use the Wordwise suggestions. But don't stop there.

Connect various elements in the liturgy, sermon, or church (in general) to the lesson. Help the children learn about the liturgy in general.

Never let props, crafts, or teaching aids overshadow the lesson.

Try teaching in a conversational style.

Year 3, Fall, Lesson 9

Solomon’s Wisdom—1 Kings 2:1-12; 3; 5; 6; 8; 10:1-13

Review

For the most part, the rest of 2 Samuel deals with how the Lord chastened David. David’s son Absalom played a prominent role in this. First Kings picks up the account at the point of David’s death. The first chapter of 1 Kings tells us how Solomon was established as the future king of Israel. (Adonijah, another son of David by a different wife, had made a bid for the throne against David’s will.)

Introduction

The various levels of the Christ-Light lesson material cover various parts of Solomon’s life. The two main parts of his life are his asking for wisdom to rule Israel and his building the temple. Two other accounts focus on David’s commission to him and the visit of the queen of Sheba.

God’s Plan of Salvation

The Old Testament contains many pictures of the coming Savior. Many of those pictures are found in God’s law, where we are taught about priests and sacrifices. Some are found in events, such as God’s deliverance of Israel from slavery in Egypt, which pictures how the Savior would deliver all people from the guilt of sin. Some are found in people, such as Moses, a prophet who pictured Jesus, a greater prophet.

David and Solomon are both pictures of the Savior. Of course, the sinful parts of their lives do not picture Jesus. David was Israel’s greatest ruler, who extended the kingdom of Israel farther than any king. He pictured Jesus, one of his descendants, who would extend God’s kingdom of grace throughout the world.

Solomon was another king who pictured Jesus. He pictured Jesus as a king, ruling over a kingdom of peace (the Hebrew word *Solomon* means “peace”) whose enemies had been subdued. He pictured Jesus’ wisdom, as well as his work of building a temple for God made out of the living stones of true believers. He pictured the wealth of Jesus, who will establish a new heaven and a new earth where believers will enjoy all the blessings God intended for our first parents. Point these pictures out to your children. It will help them connect the Old and the New Testaments and will lead to a greater appreciation of the Old Testament.

The Account—1 Kings 2:1-12; 3; 5; 6; 8; 10:1-13

<p>2:1-12 “observe what the LORD your God requires”—This was Solomon’s key to being a good ruler. If he would carefully follow God’s laws, God would fulfill his promise to David: “you will never fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.”—Sad to say, Solomon later strayed from God’s commandments. The Lord removed part of the nation of Israel, the Northern Kingdom, from under David’s sons’ rule. God allowed David’s descendants to rule only the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Later on, because of their continued rebellion against God, God also took that kingdom away from David’s sons. Yet hundreds of years later, because of his promises to Abraham, he restored the kingdom to Israel under the rulership of Jesus Christ.</p> <p>Chapter 3 “give your servant a discerning heart”—God was pleased that Solomon had asked for wisdom. He became the wisest person who ever lived and wrote several books of the Bible in which he shared his wisdom: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, and possibly Job. “they held the king in awe, because they saw that he had wisdom from God”—The account of Solomon’s ruling is one of the most famous sections of</p>	<p>the Bible.</p> <p>Chapters 5,6 “I intend, therefore, to build a temple”—David had wanted to build a temple for the Lord. The original temple still may have been in existence, or it may have been destroyed. In any case, the ark of the covenant had been taken out of it and had been stored in a private residence near Jerusalem and then in Jerusalem itself. With no ark, the tabernacle was gutted of its spiritual importance. David had made blueprints for a new temple in Jerusalem, and he had gathered money and materials to do the project. God left the actual building of the temple to Solomon.</p> <p>Chapter 8 “the ark of the LORD”—As noted above, the ark of the covenant was the heart of the tabernacle. It would be the heart of the temple also. It symbolized God’s presence. When it was placed in the temple, God’s glory in the form of a cloud filled the temple.</p> <p>Chapter 10 “the queen of Sheba”—She is a picture of the Gentiles who would hear the gospel and consider it the greatest wisdom they had ever encountered.</p>
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Year 3 Fall Lesson 9

3_1_09—Solomon’s Wisdom

Lower

Get the children into the Bible as much as possible.

Children like to work with picture puzzles. Presented are some ideas for using Bible puzzles in class. For example, if the puzzle is of a Bible story, have the children place pieces as the story is taught. Or use a puzzle, but put the words of a Memory Treasure, using labels, on the front of each piece. Then have the children assemble the puzzle as they recite the passage. This can be done more than once for each passage.

Refer to the account as a Bible “event” rather than a “lesson” or “story.”

Stay connected with the students’ parents.

Elijah and the Prophets of Baal—1 Kings 16:29–17:1; 18:1–19:3

Review

Quite a few years have passed since Solomon’s reign. You might want to touch briefly on how the kingdom of Israel divided into two parts, the Northern Kingdom called Israel and the Southern Kingdom called Judah. This was God’s judgment on the house of David because of Solomon’s sins. The house of David continued to rule in Judah at Jerusalem. Various kings, all of them evil, ruled in the north. Their capital was Samaria. God sent prophets to both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms to warn the people about their sins and to lead them back to the Lord.

Introduction

The account for this week took place in the Northern Kingdom. A wicked king named Ahab was ruling there. He married a foreign wife named Jezebel, who served the idol Baal and who led the Israelites to serve him also. Baal was the god of the people living in the area of Phoenicia, to the north of Israel along the Mediterranean Sea. Baal was one of the fertility gods, to whom the people looked for blessing on their crops. People usually worshiped such gods with festivals, during which they engaged in illicit sex and other sins of the flesh.

Elijah was one of the greatest prophets. By God’s grace he refused to worship Baal. By God’s power he defeated the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel.

God’s Plan of Salvation

The gospel of God’s grace comes out clearly in this lesson. In the darkest times of Israel’s rebellion, God showed that he was still in control of all things, working on behalf of his promise.

One of the most important sections of this account comes at the end. In fact, it comes in the verses after those used in our Christ-Light materials for this lesson. Read 19:9-18. You might consider spending some time explaining these verses to the students. There are two important points to bring out. First, Elijah was hiding in a cave at Mount Horeb (Mount Sinai). God sent powerful signs to Elijah, but God was not in those powerful signs. God came to Elijah in the sound of a gentle blowing. God was teaching Elijah that he does not convert hearts through powerful signs, as necessary as they might be. Rather, he converts people through the gentle blowing of his gospel promises found in his Word. Second, God told Elijah that his Word was working in the hearts of some in Israel. Seven thousand still held firmly to God’s gospel promises. Elijah was not alone, as he had thought.

The Account—1 Kings 16:29–17:1; 18:1–19:3

<p>16:29–17:1 “the sins of Jeroboam”—Jeroboam had set up an image in the north and one in the south of Israel, where his people were to serve the Lord. He did this to keep the Israelites from going to the temple in Jerusalem lest they become loyal to the kingdom of Judah.</p> <p>Chapter 18 “While Jezebel was killing off the LORD’s prophets”—Jezebel was a wicked person. Not only did she take care of a large number of Baal’s prophets but she also tried to kill off all of God’s prophets.</p> <p>“Obadiah”—Here is an example of a person who remained loyal to the Lord. The Lord also put him in a high administrative position so he could protect some of God’s prophets—which he did at the risk of his own life. “you troubler of Israel”—Unbelievers always accuse Christians of making trouble. “But there was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention.”—</p>	<p>This powerful sentence gives the perfect picture of what happens when people depend on idols. “the sound of a heavy rain”—The Lord had kept it from raining for 3 ½ years. His time of judgment was over, because the people had confessed him as the Lord God. See James 5:17 for a New Testament reference to this account.</p> <p>19:1-3 “if by this time tomorrow”—Jezebel had just learned about what had happened to her prophets and how powerless Baal had been. This is a clear example of how hard-hearted and blind we sinful human beings can be. How thankful we should be that God has opened our hearts to believe and trust in him. God’s people should never think that the Christian life will be easy, especially after we have witnessed God’s power in action. This side of heaven, we must realize that unbelief and hostility toward God will also overflow into our lives.</p>
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Year 3 Fall Lesson 10

3_1_10—Elijah and the Prophets of Baal

Lower

Show various pictures to the children, and have them compare the pictures.

Get to know the children on a personal level.

Stressing that nothing is impossible with God (Luke 1:37) and that all things are possible through him (Matthew 19:26).

Sit with the children, and stay on their level. Keep the class informal, and avoid any sources of stress.

Sunday school teaching is a great blessing, not just for the student but for the teacher also.

Naboth's Vineyard—1 Kings 21:1-27; 22:29-40; 2 Kings 9:30-37

Review

This lesson and the next deal with a series of events that are not presented in chronological order. You will want to read 1 Kings chapter 21 through 2 Kings chapter 9 to learn the sequence of events. This lesson deals with (1) Ahab's murder of Naboth, which happened some time before Ahab's death; (2) Ahab's death in battle with the Syrians; and (3) God's punishment on Jezebel, which happened some years later when Ahab's dynasty had been destroyed. What links these three events is Elijah's prophecy to Ahab at Naboth's vineyard, which predicted these three events. Next week's lesson will cover an event that happened before Jehu destroyed Ahab's house and killed Jezebel, namely, Elijah's being taken into heaven and Elisha succeeding him as prophet.

Introduction

To understand the account of Naboth's vineyard, the children have to understand one of the laws God gave to the Israelites through Moses. When the Israelites entered the Promised Land, God did not permit each family to stake out its own claim. This was his land, and he was letting Israel use it. He determined where each tribe and clan would live.

After Israel took the land of Canaan, God gave an allotment of land to each of the 12 tribes. Each tribe, in turn, divided the land among its clans. People had no right to sell the land as if they were the owners. If they had to sell it because they had become poor, they were actually selling the right to use the land for a period of time. Every 50 years, in the Year of Jubilee as it was called, the land returned to its original owner. (See Leviticus 25:23-28 for more insights into the laws regarding one's inheritance.)

Ahab was not merely trying to "rent" Naboth's land. And Naboth apparently was not so poor that he had to sell his land. Most important, Naboth understood that Ahab actually wanted to purchase the land for his own and permanently keep it in his family. If Naboth had sold his inheritance, he would have been going against God's laws and would have shown little regard for God's blessings.

God's Plan of Salvation

Naboth's refusal to sell his property to Ahab is a wonderful example of faith in action. Naboth treasured his little piece of the Promised Land so much that he was willing to risk his life to keep it. He withstood great pressure from King Ahab to part with it. He risked his life at the hands of a woman who had already murdered as many of God's prophets as she could get her hands on.

Through this picture God encourages his people to hold on to their inheritance. We are looking forward to a heavenly promised land. Our inheritance there is a gift of God to us. It is not something we should ever part with, no matter how much pressure is put on us to abandon our hope. Naboth was a martyr for his faith, and if it should come to it, we should be willing to die for the inheritance we have in our Savior.

The Account—1 Kings 21:1-27; 22:29-40; 2 Kings 9:30-37

<p>21:1-27 "the inheritance of my fathers"—Naboth was reminding Ahab of the law we spoke about above. After hearing this, Ahab should have backed off and not put any more pressure on Naboth. "sullen and angry"—Naboth's action should have reminded Ahab to be content with what God had given him. Instead, Ahab brooded in his discontent. "Is this how you act as king over Israel?"—Jezebel could only see puny Naboth, who was making her husband sad. She could not see the powerful God who was over both Naboth and her husband, Ahab. "Have you not murdered a man and seized his property? . . . dogs will lick up your</p>	<p>blood"—This would happen when Ahab was fighting against the Syrians. "and went around meekly"—Ahab humbled himself under God. Accordingly, God let Ahab die in battle so as not to see the destruction of his house.</p> <p>Chapter 22 "and hit the king of Israel between the sections of his armor"—There is nothing we can do to stop the Lord from fulfilling his will.</p> <p>2 Kings Chapter 9 "they found nothing except her skull, her feet and her hands"—Elijah's prophecy about Jezebel's death also came true.</p>
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Year 3 Fall Lesson 11

3_1_11—Naboth's Vineyard

Lower

Begin your teaching preparation with prayer.

The real curriculum is the Bible, and the teaching materials are supplemental.

Let the children know what a vineyard is.

Have the children draw on whiteboards what a Bible character might have looked like.

Libraries will often supply old magazines from which teachers can glean pictures.

Use puppets to retell the story.

Suggestion for using magnetic strips.

Elijah Goes to Heaven—1 Kings 19:14-21; 2 Kings 2:1-25

Review

Elijah had fled from Ahab and gone to Mount Horeb (Mount Sinai), where God appeared to him. God comforted and encouraged Elijah. God was working through his powerful Word and people were being sustained in their faith, even though Elijah could not see it happening.

God told Elijah to return to Israel. Very soon he would anoint Elisha to succeed him as prophet.

Introduction

God told Elijah to return to Israel. He was to anoint three men for special roles. He was to anoint Elisha to succeed him as prophet, Jehu to start a new dynasty in Israel, and Hazael to become king in Syria. (Actually it was Elisha who ended up anointing Jehu and Hazael.) The general role these three men would play was to bring God’s wrath down on the house of Ahab. This whole rather involved account comes to an end in 2 Kings chapter 9, when Jehu destroys Ahab’s house and kills Jezebel (as you taught the children last week).

Today’s lesson focuses on two events that happened before the final downfall of Ahab’s house: Elijah’s commissioning Elisha to succeed him as prophet and Elijah’s being taken to heaven.

God’s Plan of Salvation

Don’t forget to call attention to 1 Kings 19:18. The accounts at the end of 1 Kings and the beginning of 2 Kings tell of a time of great wickedness, especially in the Northern Kingdom. Yet man’s wicked unfaithfulness would not put a stop to God’s perfect faithfulness to his gospel promises.

Throughout the Israelites’ history, God continued to do two things for them. First, he continued to send them prophets. The prophets warned the wicked and urged them to return to God. The prophets also led people to faith and continued to sustain their faith through God’s Word. Second, the Lord gathered to himself a group of true believers. Throughout the darkest periods of Israel’s history, he kept the true church alive—the seven thousand who did not bow their knees to Baal or any other false god. Elijah thought he was alone, but God wanted him to know that his work of spreading God’s Word and putting God’s power on display was producing fruit.

The Account—1 Kings 19:14-21; 2 Kings 2:1-25

19:14-21 **“twelve yoke of oxen”**—Elisha was a farmer before he was called to be a prophet. He may have been a wealthy farmer since he seems to have owned 12 yoke of oxen. Oxen were very expensive. He was not a lazy farmer since he himself was driving one of the yoke of oxen. **“threw his cloak around him”**—Elijah’s cloak was the symbol of his prophetic office. Elisha knew immediately that he was being called to replace Elijah. **“He took his yoke of oxen and slaughtered them.”**—When Elisha returned home, it was not a symbol of a wavering attitude toward being a prophet. Elisha was intent on making a complete break with his past, which he did at great cost to himself.

2 Kings 2:1-6 **“I will not leave you.”**—Elisha repeatedly showed his dedication to the Lord and to Elijah. He would stay close to his master until the Lord chose to take his master away. **“company of the prophets”**—There were other prophets besides the “main” prophets we know well. We don’t know exactly how they served the Lord or how they studied for their

tasks. See 6:1. We know they held formal meetings.

2:7-25 **“struck the water with it”**—Elijah displayed the same power God had given to Joshua years earlier. **“Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit”**—A double portion does not mean twice as much. Rather, it is the larger portion given to the eldest son at the death of the father. Elisha was asking to be Elijah’s successor and receive all the blessings of the Holy Spirit that Elijah had been given. That, of course, was not Elijah’s to give, but he gave Elisha a sign so he would know if God was going to give him that or not. **“went up to heaven in a whirlwind”**—The horses and chariot of fire separated Elisha from Elijah. Elijah did not die. He was taken body and soul into heaven in a whirlwind. Those who live in the western US have probably seen whirlwinds (called dust devils) swirling along the desert floor. **“and struck the water with it”**—God fulfilled Elisha’s request. Elisha quickly was given power to perform two miracles. The entire world would soon know that Elisha had succeeded Elijah.

Year 3 Fall Lesson 12

3_1_12—Elijah Goes to Heaven

Lower

Help the children find the lesson in Scripture themselves.

Avoid the use of the term *story* to refer to one of the Bible's accounts.

Give the children a chance to get their wiggling and talkativeness out of their systems.

The idea of showing various types of homes.

Ideas for helping the children picture heaven.

A suggestion for teaching the children songs to use in a nursing home.

Naaman Is Brought to Faith—2 Kings 5:1-19

Review

Once again, we are in that complex period of Old Testament history when separate kings ruled over the nations of Israel and Judah. Ahab is dead, but Jezebel is still alive, continuing to influence the next kings of Israel. The wicked house of Ahab is still in control of Israel.

Introduction

In the midst of all the wickedness and idolatry, God continued to work faith in the hearts of his elect. This is one of the most beautiful stories in the Old Testament. It is a story of evangelism. It is a story of God creating a humble and sincere faith in the heart of a powerful gentile general.

This is one of those stories that takes us beyond the uproar and ruckus of Israel and Judah and transports us to an event where we see God’s grace in action in people’s hearts. We see examples of the seven thousand who did not bow on their knees to Baal and who were intent on serving the Lord. So enjoy this lesson. Have fun teaching it.

God’s Plan of Salvation

God had given Abraham’s descendants a special place in his plan of salvation. They were to follow him; they were to experience his blessings; they were to show his glory to the nations. That last part is sometimes forgotten. The Israelites were to remain separate from the Gentiles (non-Jews), but only so that they would not be corrupted by the Gentiles’ gods and their wicked practices. The Israelites were not to think of God’s favor on them as a sign that they were by nature better than others. Rather, God’s blessings were to show his power and glory. Israel’s blessedness was to be a beacon to the rest of the world, letting them know that the God of Israel was the true God. God did not do this to push the Gentiles away but to draw them into his fold.

God’s will in this regard was often thwarted by the wickedness of his people. But God could still work through the believers and draw Gentiles into his church. This week’s lesson is one of those times.

The Account—2 Kings 5:1-19

<p>5:1-3 “a great man in the sight of his master”—This sets the stage for the rest of the account. The Lord can work in the heart of everyone he has elected to come to faith and become a member of his kingdom. “had taken captive a young girl”—If anyone had reason to be bitter and hostile toward Naaman, this little girl did. “If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria!”—Yet this little girl tried to help the man who had taken her from her family. She had no doubt that God would help Naaman. What love and faith!</p> <p>5:4-8 “Am I God?”—The king of Israel was right in saying he was not God. Yet his answer implied that he did not know where he could send Naaman to find the help he needed. “Why have you torn your robes?”—Elisha rebuked the blindness of Israel’s king. It is amazing that the truth the little servant girl knew so well was a mystery to Israel’s king.</p> <p>5:9-14 “Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan”—Elisha did not pay Naaman the honor he was used to. Elisha was not acting arrogantly. There was a reason for this. Elisha was representing God, and God wanted Naaman to realize that God would graciously</p>	<p>use his power to bless Naaman and was not swayed at all by Naaman’s position or authority. The Jordan is a muddy little stream, not some mighty river. Naaman wanted a sign of power from God. God wanted a humble spirit from Naaman. “if the prophet had told you to do some great thing . . .”—We are often willing to do great things for God, because that fuels our pride. God only wants us to humble our hearts and turn to him for forgiveness.</p> <p>5:15-27 “Please accept now a gift”—Naaman naturally wanted to thank the Lord. That was fine. But Elisha did not want Naaman to get things mixed up and consider his gift a payment for a miracle. “as much earth”—God would allow Naaman to take a little bit of the Promised Land back home so he could worship God there. “Go in peace”—Sometimes living in the world puts us in awkward positions. Elisha’s words comfort us in such situations. “Naaman’s leprosy will cling to you”—A harsh punishment, but Gehazi had sinned greatly. His sin was not just greed but misrepresenting God’s grace toward Naaman and making it seem as if God expected something from Naaman in return.</p>
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Year 3 Fall Lesson 13

3_1_13—Naaman Is Brought to Faith

Lower

Always be flexible in your teaching. Answer your students' questions.

Give the children time to answer questions.

Idea for inviting someone to Sunday school.

Idea for using an inflatable globe.