



COPTIC ORTHODOX
DIOCESE *of* LONDON

Year 2

Part I: Tout – Kiahk
(Mid-September – December)

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I Help Others

The Lucky Brother

Lesson content: We should be ready to help anyone in need if we can.

- Lesson objectives:** to help the child to:
- **Know:** The importance of helping others.
 - **Feel:** happiness in helping others.
 - **Practice:** ways of helping others.

Bible verse: *“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.” (John 15:12)*



The Lesson

- John and Simon were two brothers in the flesh, who were close in age, as well as in appearance and height, as if they were twins. Yet there was a great difference in their characters. Simon was short-tempered, moody and complained a lot, and was very self-centred. John however, was calm-natured, and loved to offer service to anyone in need.
- John also excelled in his studies more than his brother, and regularly won prizes at school because of his hard work and his activities. Because of this, Simon would be jealous of his brother John, and call him the lucky one. At the same time he complained to everyone who saw him of his lack of good luck.
- One day the two brothers came out of the school at the end of the day, and passed by the house of respectable old lady, who had poor sight, and who lived alone. She used to call Simon or John, or both of them, whenever they passed by the house, to come and help her with some of her household tasks. When Simon came near her house, he said to his brother: let us walk faster, before the old lady sees and calls us to help her. Simon did not wait for the reply of his brother, but started walking more quickly away from her house. But the lady saw John and called him "John, John, come. I need your help." John heard her calling him and stopped walking, and replied, "Good evening Miss, what would you like me to help you with." She replied: I can smell a strange smell in the house, and I don't know where it's coming from. Can you help me to find out where it is coming from, in case it is..... So John entered the house to try to find the cause of the smell. When he came into the kitchen, he found it filled with smoke, so that he could barely see in front of him. He began to look for the source of the smoke, until he found that it was coming from some lit coals, which had fallen in a corner of the kitchen. And the heat from the coals reached the damp wooden floor and began to burn it, and the fire was spreading, and the smoke becoming more dense. So John rushed to the kitchen tap, and filled a jug of water and poured it out over the fire. And the old lady came in to help him until he was able to put out the fire.
- The old lady then held the hand of John and said to him while weeping: I thank you my son, for had you not come in to help me, the fire would have spread to the whole house, and burnt it down before I had the known the cause of it. For I have poor sight and can hardly see. And the old lady said while holding the hand of John, "My son, Alex, is a pilot in the air force, and will visit me today, as he is always does when he has time off from his work. And I was cooking his favourite meal, which I prepare myself when he visits me. But i did not see that coal which fell onto the floor, which would have nearly burnt down the house. John said to her, "Do not worry, Madam, the fire is has been put out, and only a small piece of the

wooden floor was burnt. Have a seat and relax, while I make you a cup of tea. And after a few minutes, John presented to the old lady a cup of tea, and kept her company until she had calmed and had been assured that all was okay. And so he said goodbye to her, and returned to his house.

- Simon had just finished his meal when John entered the house. He wanted to tell his mum what had happened, so he asked his brother where his mum was, and he told him that she had gone to visit their grandmother. Simon then asked John to play with him in the garden. John was so occupied with playing, that he forgot about the old lady and what had happened to her, and did not mention to his mum anything about it when she returned home while he was playing. When evening came, he ate his supper and went to his room.
- The following day, while the two brothers were playing in the garden, a young man came to their house holding a small box. He rang the doorbell and entered the house, and the parents of Simon and John were in the house. And the young man sat down and talked to the parents about what John did, while they listened in wonder at what the young man was telling them about their son. The young man then opened the small box that he had brought with him, and took out a lovely toy, and placed it on the table in front of the parents, and said: this is a small present from me for John, in appreciation of his kind act in saving his mum and his house from being burnt down. That young man was the son of the old lady.
- And when the two brothers had finished playing, they came into the house where their parents were sitting. Simon caught sight of the toy, and took hold of it, and asked, "is this toy for me?" The mother said that it was for John. So he took the toy and broke it and said "everything is for John. He gets everything". But why did you buy this toy for John only?" The mother said: we did not buy this toy; it is a present. The old lady, Alex's mother, was in need of help yesterday. So your brother John offered to help, and saved her from a fire in her house. You were with him on your way from school; so why didn't you join him in helping her, instead of quickly walking past to get home, and leaving him by himself to save her? Simon went quiet, not uttering a single word. His face began to go red out from feeling ashamed. And since that day, Simon never said about his brother, that he is the lucky one, for he had learnt from this incident that the lucky one is always the one who does kind acts.
- But at our age, can we help others? Open a discussion on the abilities we have with which we can help others, and the different types of help that we can offer to our community, such as: cleaning, planting trees, helping others ..etc...
- The verse of the lesson: "*This is my commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you*" (John 15:12)



**The Cross is a Sign of God's Love
for the People**

The Cross is a Sign of Healing

Bible reference: Numbers 21:4-9

Lesson content: The power of the Cross

Lesson objectives: to help the child to:

- **Know:** The story of the bronze serpent in the Old Testament as a symbol of the Cross.
- **Feel:** That the Cross is the source of our strength.
- **Practice:** Taking pride in the Cross.

Bible verse: *"God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."* (Galatians 6:14)



The Lesson

- After the people of Israel went out of Egypt and journeyed through the wilderness, following Moses on the way to the promised land, they continued in their grumbling, and did not trust in God. When they reached the border of the promised land, they sent people to survey the land. The land was very good, but there were dangers there. So they had to trust in God. But the people were afraid to enter into the land and refused God's gifts to them. So God was sad and upset from his people because they did not trust in Him. But Moses prayed to the Lord and interceded for the people, and God heard his prayer. God told to Moses to say to the people, that they will wonder through the wilderness for 40 years. God also said that everyone who refused to enter the promised land will never enter it.
- While the people of Israel wandered through the wilderness, they grumbled more and more against God, and rebelled Him. So God allowed for serpents to go in among the people while they were camped, and to bite the people. Many of the people were bitten by the serpents. And again Moses prayed to God, and God heard his prayer. So God, who is great and merciful and compassion, and does not wish for his people to perish, commanded Moses to make a serpent from bronze and to place it on a pillar, so that everyone who was bitten by the serpent may be healed when they looked at it. And if they did not look at the serpent they would die. So Moses took the bronze serpent and placed it in the midst of the people.
- Those of the people who looked were saved, and the others, who refused to look at it, died. What does the bronze serpent symbolise? It symbolises the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the death of Christ on the cross granted is life. This is what he means by his saying: "everyone who *believes in him will not perish but have eternal life*" (John 3:16)
- The cross is a sign of healing, for it is the power of God. There are many stories that prove that the cross is the power of God.

The power of changing the nature of water

- The people used to travel to Jerusalem to receive the blessing of the holy cross. At one time, while a group of people were travelling to Jerusalem, a man who was also travelling with them, called Isaac the Samaritan, was criticizing the people for taking such trouble to go to Jerusalem to worship a piece of wood ... and he mocked the cross.
- Also travelling with that group of people was a priest called Eucharistus. And while they were travelling on the way, they got thirsty; but they did not find water. When they came to a well

they found its water was dirty and bitter. So the people were very frustrated. And Isaac the Samaritan began to mock them, saying: "If I witness a miracle done in the name of the Cross, I will believe in Christ. So the priest Euchydus was full of zeal, and prayed over the polluted water, and did the sign of the cross over it. And the water became sweet, and all the people and their livestock drank from it.

- As for Isaac, when he took some of the water to drink from it, he found it was polluted and bitter. So he went to St Euchydus and fell down at his feet, and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. And when he drank of the water, it tasted sweet. And the water of that well had power to be sweet to the believers, and bitter to others. A cross of light also appeared over that well, and they built a church on that spot.

St Barsoum El Erian (the Naked) miraculously tames a very large snake.

- St Barsoum El Erian locked himself up in a cave inside the church of St Mercurius Abu Siffein (bearer of two swords), for twenty years, fasting and prayer continually, night and day. And in that cave was a very large snake. And when he entered that cave he cried out saying: "O my Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, You are the one who has given us authority to trample upon serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy. You are the one who gave healing to the people of Israel who were bitten by snakes, when they looked to the bronze serpent. So now I look to you, O you who were hung on a cross, that you may give me power by which I can overcome this large snake. So he did the sign of the cross over himself, and walked towards the snake, while saying the verse from the Psalm: "The young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot ... The Lord is my light and my salvation. Of whom shall I be afraid. The Lord is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid." He then said to the snake: "O blessed one, stay in your place." And he did the sign of the cross, and asked of God to take away from the snake its venomous nature. And he did not stop praying until God changed the nature of the snake, and it became gentle in nature.



**God is Present in the Midst of
Tribulations**

Calming the Storm

Bible reference: Matt. 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-25

Lesson content: God is present in the midst of tribulations

Lesson objectives: to help the child to:

- **Know:** The Lord Jesus Christ has authority over nature.
- **Feel:** The presence of God in the midst of tribulation.
- **Practice:** Turning to God in time of tribulation.

Bible verse: *“Call upon Me in the day of trouble;
I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.” (Psalm
50:15)*



The Lesson

- One day during the night the Lord Jesus said to his disciples, who are how many? 12. That is the right answer, well done!
- He said to them: it is now nighttime, let's go to the other side. But first I will send the people the people that they may go home. So the disciples answered him saying: Sure, Lord, we're not going to leave the boat. We will stay sitting in the boat while you finish sending the people away.
- After he sent the people away, he entered the boat, and it left shore. The Lord said to them: I'm going to sleep for a while. And the Lord went to the back of the ship, and slept on a pillow. But something very, very strange happened. What do you think happened (listen to their responses). The sea became very stormy! And the boat was filling with water. So the disciples were very afraid, and said what is happening? Quick! let's go and wake up the Lord Jesus to save us from what's happening. We're about to die. So they kept calling the Lord Jesus to wake up. O Lord Jesus! O Lord Jesus! O Lord Jesus! So he answered them: what's wrong? They said, "the sea is stormy, and the wind is strong, and the boat is about to sink. Save us! We're very afraid. So the Lord Jesus got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea: be quiet. And the sea immediately obeyed the Lord Jesus and became calm again. He said to the disciples: why are you afraid? Where is your faith? And the disciples were amazed that the sea and the wind obeyed the Lord Jesus, and became calm again. Of course we know that the sea obeyed the Lord, because the Lord is the one who created the sea and has authority over it. So do you see now, how Lord is with us at all times and in every place, and especially in times of trouble? That's why anyone who has a problem, or is afraid of anything, should call on the Lord Jesus as the disciples did. And he will come to you straight away, because he loves us; and he is the one who said to us: "call me in the time of trouble. I will save you, and you will glorify me." What that means is that, when you are in any trouble, say "Lord" and he will straightaway save you.



The Lord Jesus Obeyed His Parents

Bible reference: Luke 2:41-52

Lesson purpose: To learn that we should obey our parents as the Lord

Bible verse: “*And [He] was subject to them*” (Luke 2:51)



Jesus talks with the pharisees in the temple of Jerusalem

The Lesson

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

- St. Mary, St. Joseph and the Lord Jesus went to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. It is the greatest feast for the Jews. Jesus was left behind among a crowd of people. After three days His worried parents found Him in the temple, discussing with some Pharisees. Jesus obediently left the temple and followed His parents to Nazareth.
- Jesus is God, yet He wants to teach us a lesson by example. We must obey our parents.

Why should we obey our parents?

- Because they love us. Whatever they ask us to do is for our benefit even if we do not understand it at first.
- Because God told us to obey and honour our parents.
- Because when we obey our parents, we receive God's blessings. Isaac obeyed Abraham when he told him to carry wood for the offering. Isaac did not know where they were going or what the offering was for, but he obeyed. Hence, he deserved to get the blessing of his father Abraham.
- Ask the children if any one of them has disobeyed their parents even once. If they say they have always obeyed and never disobeyed their parents, verify if indeed they are telling the truth. If one of them admits to disobeying their parents sometimes, the teacher should praise that student for being truthful.
- The consequence of disobedience is that we lose hope in God's help.



Exercise...

- We must take the Lord Jesus as our example in everything that we do. As He was obedient to His parents, so we should be to ours.



The House of God is to be Revered

The Church ... Meeting with God

Bible reference: 1 Kings 6-8, 2 Chron. 2-7, Matt. 21:12-16, John 2:12-22

Lesson content: The holiness of the house of God, and how we should behave in His house.

Lesson objectives: to help the child to:

- **Know:** God is zealous over the holiness of His house.
- **Feel:** The importance of venerating God's house, and to feel awe on entering His house.
- **Practice:** Respecting the House of God.

Bible verse: *"Holiness adorns Your house, O Lord, forever." (Psalm 93:5)*



The Lesson

- Our story today is about a boy called Abraham who lived in the city of Jerusalem... He lived a very long time ago, in the days when our Lord Jesus Christ was still on earth.
- Abraham's mum said to him "get yourself ready, Abraham, because tomorrow we are going to the Temple. You need to have a bath and get your clothes ready; and we have to sleep early, so that we can get up early and go to the Temple to pray.
- Abraham was very happy that he was going to the Temple, because that is the place where he prays and talks with God. He loves God, and tells him everything that makes him happy and sad. And he also asks him for anything that he needs. Sure enough, Abraham prepared himself before going to bed, for going to the Temple in the morning.
- He woke up early with great enthusiasm, because he is going where? He is going to the Temple. And while he was walking with his mum, he asked her question:

Abraham: Mum, why do we call the Temple, the Temple of Solomon? Isn't it the Temple of God?

Mum: Of course, my dear, it's Temple of God... But we call it the Temple of Solomon because Solomon is the one who built it.

Abraham: So before Solomon, there was no Temple?

Mum: In the beginning, our fathers used to build altars from stone, and offer on them sacrifices to God ... That is cattle and sheep for example ... But during the time of Moses the Prophet, the Lord said to him, "I want to live in the midst of the people that they may meet with me." That's why I want you to build for me a big tent, that will be like the Temple; and I want you to call it the Tent of Meeting. And divide it inside into different areas: the holy place and the holy of holies (like the nave and the sanctuary in the church). Not anyone can go inside it, but there are rules and conditions for going in... My house must be quiet, and tidy, and holy ... And you must consecrate people for my service from the tribe of Levi, to be priests and to serve me in the Tent of Meeting.

Abraham: But mum why did God ask for a tent to be made, rather than a house?

Mum: Because at that time the people of Israel moved a lot from place to place, so they could take with them the tent on their journey. But when the people settled in this place, which God had prepared for them, there was a king called David. David loved God very much, and desired to build a house for

God. But God said to him: no David, I want your son to build my Temple. ... And David said to him: as you wish Lord. And he prepared all the materials for his son Solomon, and commanded him to build a temple. And as soon Solomon became king of Jerusalem he built the great Temple of God and used stones and wood and a lot of gold. And it was a very large and magnificent building. And when he had finished building the temple, Solomon prayed a long and beautiful prayer, in which he said to God: "let Your eyes may be open toward this temple day and night" which means that God is present in his house and his eyes are upon it all the day and night. And he gets very upset when we don't respect the house of God because that means that we don't respect God Himself, who is the owner of this house. And in order for God to show that he will dwell in this house, his glory filled the Temple, and a cloud filled it.

Abraham: Wow, so that means that the Temple is very old.

Mum: That's true my dear. This temple was built by Solomon a long time ago, and it stood there for a long time. But the king from Babylon, called Nebuchadnezzar, came and fought against Jerusalem and took the people who were in it as captives, and plundered all the treasures in the Temple. And after 70 years when the Jews returned from captivity they began to build the temple in the days of Nehemiah and Ezra and Zerubbabel. And a long time after that, King Herod renovated the Temple, which means he made repairs to the buildings that had become ruined. Do you know Abraham, I've heard that the Lord Jesus is here in Jerusalem, which means he'll definitely come to the Temple.

Abraham: If the Lord Jesus in Jerusalem, then he will definitely come to the Temple. I really want to see him.

Mum: Is important that when we get to the Temple you stay by my side, because the Temple is very crowded. And Abraham and his mum arrived at the Temple.

Abraham: Why is the temple so crowded, and what's all this great noise? Abraham found the people selling and buying in the Temple, and found the Temple was dirty, because there were people there selling animals and birds and cattle and doves to the people who wanted to offer sacrifices. And there was a very bad smell. There were also people there fighting each other inside the Temple because of money. And there were people hitting each other. What a bad sight it is.

Abraham: I want to go into the Temple to pray. I don't like to see this bad sight. I am worried that the Lord Jesus will come and see what is happening in the Temple. He will definitely be very upset.

- And sure enough my friends, Abraham saw Jesus coming from afar ... And then?!! The Temple looked bad with the people who were selling and buying fighting each other... And surely my friends the Lord Jesus arrived at the Temple and looked around at the people while they were counting the money, and at the animals which were in the Temple!!!
- And Abraham saw the Lord Jesus after a while being very upset and saying to the people: take these things out of my house. My house is for prayer not for buying and selling. It is not a market; it's the house of God. (My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves!!!). And the Lord Jesus overturned the tables so that they would leave. And sure enough my friends all the people collected their things and left. And the disciples cleaned the Temple where the people were selling and buying. And Abraham was also helping them because the house of God must be clean. And also the house of God should be respected. And we also my friends must respect the house of God which is our church. We must walk quietly and respectfully in the church. And our voices inside church must be low. We must think before we do anything in church, whether that thing would please God or not. Do you think it is right, while we are in church and while the liturgy is being prayed, that we eat or talk or play for example? Definitely not. Let's remember the Psalm that says: Holiness adorns Your house, O LORD, forever (Psalm 93:5).



The Church is the Gate of Heaven

Jacob's Ladder

Bible reference: Genesis 28

Lesson content: The Church is the gate of heaven

Lesson objectives: to help the child to:

- **Know:** The story of the ladder of Jacob and what it symbolises.
- **Feel:** The reverence of God's presence in the church.
- **Practice:** concentrating in prayer in church as meeting with God.

Bible verse: *"How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!" (Genesis 28:17)*



Background information to servant

- **Jacob:**

The story of Jacob gives hope to the sinner who is drowning in his sins. For Jacob began his life with various weaknesses and sins, and if it was not for the grace of God which sustained him, it would have been impossible for him to become a son of the promise and of the blessing. The life of Jacob is given entirely in the book of Genesis.

- **The angels**

They are spiritual beings, and they are rational and powerful. The ability and power of angels surpasses the power of man, but they are not all-powerful like God (2 Peter 2:11). Angels move at the speed of a flash of lightning (Ezekiel 1:14), and have the power to appear and disappear. It is not possible to count them as they are innumerable (Hebrews 12:22). They continually praise and worship God; and they obey what He commands them, for they are ministering spirits (Hebrews 1:14). At the end of time, they will gather the people for judgment (Matthew 13:39).

- **The ladder of Bethel**

Jacob saw in a vision at night a ladder fixed upon the earth and its top reached to heaven. He saw this vision on his way from the house of his father to the house of his mother's brother, Laban, having fled from the face of Esau. In the vision he saw angels of God ascending and descending upon the ladder. This vision was a revelation of God's special care to Jacob. The ladder was a connection between heaven and earth upon which the angels came down; and God himself was at the head of the ladder. Jacob's ladder is considered as a symbol of the Mother of God, the Virgin St Mary, from whom came the Lord Jesus Christ incarnate.

- **The presence of God:**

The ladder of Jacob represents the presence of God in that place. This is what made our father Jacob cry out, saying: "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!" (Genesis 28:17)

The ladder of Jacob also represents the church, since the church is the place where God and the angels are present. The church is the house of God and the gate of heaven.

Therefore the servant in this lesson should place great emphasis on the awesomeness of the church, being the place in which God is present in its midst. Talk to the children how God through the ages has loved to dwell in the midst of his people. For example, in the Old Testament he commanded Moses to make the Tent of Meeting. And he was pleased with the Temple which Solomon built, and his glory filled the Temple on the day of its consecration. The visions of the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel reveal to us the awesomeness of God's temple and

the throne of God in the temple, and the train of his robe filled the Temple. In the New Testament the church became the dwelling place of God with his people. The church was established on Covenant Thursday and was openly declared on the day of Pentecost in great reverence, with the outpouring of God's Spirit.

Truly, how awesome is this place... and how beautiful it is.

Activities to introduce the lesson

You can use the one of the following ways to introduce the lesson.



Dialogue

Present to the children some images of different types of ladders and ask them: what a ladder is used for?

Is there a ladder that reaches up to heaven?

Where is this ladder? And where is it mentioned?

Listen to the answers of the children and reply saying that there is a ladder which extends between heaven and earth, but this ladder is found only in the Holy Bible in one of its early books, Genesis. written by Moses the Prophet; in Genesis he also recorded the lives of our fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This ladder was seen by our father Jacob in a dream while he was travelling from the house of his father to his uncle - his mother's brother... Let's us see what his story is.

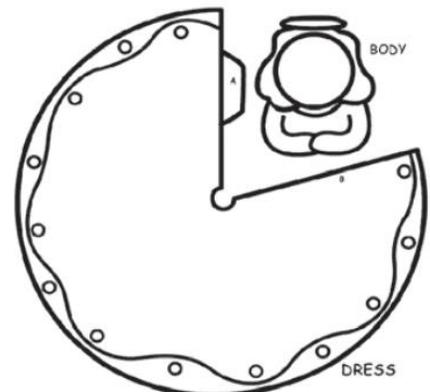


Paper Activity

Tools: Carton box, colours, blue, paper, toothpicks

Method of presentation: prepare these tools and give the children the following instructions

- prepare the box out of card and colour it in blue to symbolise heaven
- fix to it a leaning ladder made out of the toothpicks, then fix to it angels cut out of card, using the template shown below. (You can make copies according to the number of your children)



- Use pieces of card which have been rolled up, to represent the rock which Jacob slept on. Below the ladder stick an image of Jacob sleeping, and at the top of the ladder stick a picture of the Lord Christ.

The Lesson

- Jacob wanted to take the blessing from his father. So his mother helped him by making a plot to deceive his father. As Isaac had poor eyesight, she told Jacob to go to his father Isaac and pretend that he was Esau his firstborn, and that way he could receive the blessing from his father. And it turned out that this plot was successful and Jacob took the blessing. And when Esau found out about it, he was determined to kill Jacob. Therefore Rachel convinced Isaac to let Jacob to flee to his uncle Laban. And Isaac called his son Jacob and blessed him and commanded him not to marry from the girls of Canaan but to marry one of the daughters of his uncle Laban (as mentioned in the book of Genesis of Moses the Prophet).
- After a few hours Rachel stood outside the tent to say farewell to her son Jacob and said to him: God be with you my son; do not fear, for I will send to you shortly when the danger has passed, that you may return to me. And so Jacob began his long journey to his uncle. He walked 65 km in the wilderness. While walking he thought about how he would find food, and how he would deal with the beasts in the wilderness. But Jacob knew that God loved him despite all his sins. When he was a long way from the tent of his father, the sun began to set, and Jacob was all alone in the darkness of the harsh and empty wilderness. He knew that the difficulty he was experiencing was because of his sin.
- He felt in need of God's protection, so he lifted up his eyes to heaven and prayed. And being tired from the journey, he came to a rock and placed it under his head to sleep. No doubt many things went through his mind as he lay down in that place: he was thinking about his elderly father, and his mother who was worried and sad, and his angry brother, and the wild beasts in the wilderness. He also wondered whether God is with him, and whether will he forgive him for his sins. While he was thinking he was overcome by sleep. As he slept, he saw a vision of a ladder, shiny and bright, extending from earth to heaven, and he saw upon it angels ascending and descending, and the Lord himself standing up at the head of the ladder. The whole place was bright. And God spoke with Jacob saying: I am the Lord God of your fathers, Abraham and Isaac, and the land on which you are now resting I will give to you and your descendants, and through you and your seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed. And I will be with you and preserve you wherever you go, and bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done with you what I have promised.
- After seeing this vision Jacob felt comforted, for he had been fearful and lonely and had felt that God was far from him. But he now discovered that God was present and had sent his angel to look after him, even though he had sinned... Therefore Jacob acknowledged that God is present and said: "this is the house of God and this is the gate of heaven"

- Many times we think that God does not love us anymore especially when we sin. Many times we do not feel his presence with us because of our sins. But God does not leave us, as he did not leave Jacob. He is always with us, even though we do not see Him with our physical eyes. He is very near to us and is with us at all times.
- When Jacob awoke from the silence of the night and wanted there to be a memorial in that place to remind him of God’s mercy, love and care. So he took the stone that was underneath his head and made it upright as a pillar; and he poured oil over the stone, and stood in reverence before God and made three promises:
 1. that he would take the Lord as his God
 2. that he would build a house to the Lord in that place
 3. that he will offer a tenth to God
- And Jacob continued in his journey feeling comforted and strengthened for he saw God with him. He continued on his way until he found Laban his uncle.
- Notice that Jacob said: “how great is this place... This is nothing but the house of God and this is the gate of heaven!”... Truly the place where God is present is an awesome and reverent place. The church is the place where God is present. The church is a place of awe and reverence, for it where we meet with God Himself For this reason we should show awe and reverence in Church, and concentrate on the prayers. In the church we meet and talk with God Himself, as if we have been transported to heaven.

Application



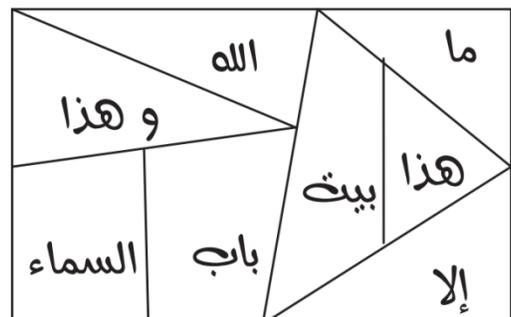
Activity for memorisation of the Bible verse

Verse of the Lesson

“How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!” (Genesis 28:17)

Method of memorisation

Write the words of the verse in the form of a jigsaw and cut out every word by itself. In the lesson give the pieces to the children and ask them to put the pieces together.





Comprehension Questions

- Where was Jacob travelling to?
- What was Jacob's feelings during his journey?
- What did Jacob see in his sleep?
- Was God with Jacob? How did you know?
- How should we behave in church? And why?



Drama ...Pantomime

Role-play game:

Ask some of the children to act out the events of the story (Jacob, Isaac, Rachel, Angels... etc).

Do not give them a written script, but leave them to act out the event from their own imagination, as it will allow them to express themselves more freely.



Exercise...

- Train the children in the correct behavior in the house of God such as bowing before the altar... Memorising the psalms prayers which are recited on the way to church... having reverence in prayer.
- Train them also to concentrate on the prayers in the church, prayer being a dialogue with God



Prayer

Meditate on it ... live it ... pray it on the level of the kids

I thank you all God for your love and care for us in spite of our sins. Lord I thank you and praise you and ask you to be with me as you are with Jacob and gave him joy at seeing you on gave him a promise of blessing. For this reason I bow down between Your hands, and ask for your mercy and protection for ever... Give me to feel your presence in the church... That I may meet you as if I have been raised up to heaven... You are the loving God with native me and to everyone of us at all times. Amen.



God Invites Me to His House

The Rite for the Church Building

Bible reference: Exodus 25

Lesson content: God invites me to his house - the rite of building churches

Lesson objectives: to help the child to:

- **Know:** the sections of the church.
- **Feel:** Joy in being in the church, the house of angels.
- **Practice:** having reverence for the house of God, and preserving its quietness.

Bible verse: *“I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go into the house of the Lord.’” (Psalm 122:10)*



Background information to servant

- A new church can only be built with permission from the bishop.
The “Church” is the name given to:
the congregation of the faithful those who shepherd the congregation (the clergy) the building dedicated for worship.
- In olden times the churches were built with three divisions divided by wooden screens or a built construction of medium height.
- **The first division:** for the deacons and cantors. This is directly adjacent to the sanctuary.
- **The second division** (called the Nave): where the faithful stand (those who are baptized and repentant). This is the middle division in the church.
- **The third division:** for the catechumens (those not yet baptized). This is the rear division in the church, where those who are nominated for entering the Faith would stand until they received the sacrament of Baptism. They were permitted to attend the liturgy of the word (the readings) and the sermon. At the end of the sermon they had to leave the church, as the liturgy of the faithful could only be attended by the Faithful.
- It is God himself who decreed the building of churches. He gave the original design of the Church to Moses, as represented by the Tabernacle of meeting (Exodus 25, Hebrews 8:5). Likewise Solomon made the Temple according to the design which God gave to David his father in the spirit. For this reason there are special rules for building of churches, which were handed down by our fathers the apostles and the early church fathers.

Activities to introduce the lesson

You can use the one of the following ways to introduce the lesson.



Group Workshops

- Take your children on a tour inside a church and stand at various points (four example: the icon stand, the ostrich egg, the doors, the lectern (Mangaleya), etc..
- Discuss with them what they know about these things, and the names of these things, and the reason and the reason for the likeness given to them.

- Obtain ice cream sticks, and get the children to make from them a picture of Noah's Ark
- discuss with them the likenesses between Noah's Ark and the church ... and are churches built in the likeness of Noah's Ark?



The Lesson

The lesson may be presented in the form of a puppets pantomime, as a dialogue between two puppets, "Kooky and Mandy"

Kooky Mandy, Mandy, what are you doing?

Mandy I'm drawing a church.

Kooky Wow... I love drawing. Can I help you? Are you drawing the church on the inside or the outside?

Mandy I'm drawing it on the outside first, and after that I will draw its on Makyt

Kooky Just curious to know in which shape you will draw the church?

Mandy What to do you mean in which shape?

Kooky Because we had a lesson in Sunday school to tell us that the church can be built in the shape of either a cross or a circle or a ship

Mandy And what is the meaning behind these shapes?

Kooky These shapes remind us that the church is a symbol of salvation... The Cross is the sign of our salvation, the ship is like Noah's Ark which saved Noah and his children from the flood.. likewise the church saves us from the sins of the world. And the circle reminds us of our Lord having no beginning and no end.

Mandy Okay I've decided to draw it in the shape of a ship

Kooky Okay, but don't forget that the church has three doors: the main door is in the western side and above it are domes which remind us of heaven.

Mandy And let's also draw the church tower which contains has inside it the bell of the church

Kooky Yes truly the church towers are very important, for the lights at the top of the towers remind us that the Church is a light to the world. Of course we must not forget the crosses on top of the towers and dome.

Mandy Of course, of course

Kooky Wow the church looks very beautiful from outside, it looks amazing

Mandy Do you like it?

Kooky Yes it does, and I'm really happy that I'm helping you. By the way we need to go over how the church is divided on the inside so we don't forget anything while we are drawing it.

Mandy I agree that it is divided on the inside into: the sanctuary and the nave of the church

Cooky That's correct.
The sanctuary is the holy place that symbolises heaven and inside it is the altar

Mandy The altar is where the priest offers up the body and blood of our Lord

Kooky Yes that's right.
By the way, the altar used to be built above the relics of the martyrs (that is their bodies)

Mandy And also on top of the altar is an ark (box) called the throne, which represents the Lord's presence with us at all times on the altar. And on the eastern side there is a recess in which there is a picture of Christ the Pantocrator (Almighty), and around Him the Cherubim and the Seraphim.

Kooky We want to draw what is inside the sanctuary, and our father the priest and the deacons, who alone serve in the sanctuary

Mandy Yes of course the sanctuary is a holy place and it must be entered and exited in an orderly way

Kooky And outside the sanctuary we should draw the icon stand.

Mandy We should draw on it the icons of the apostles and the martyrs and saints according to their order on the icon stand.

Kooky Let's also draw three doors in the icon stand, to symbolise the Holy Trinity. The central door is called the Royal door, because the sanctuary represents heaven, and the altar is the throne of God, and the royal door is the door of heaven.

Mandy And don't forget the ostrich egg which is placed before the icon stand.

Kooky Of course, it's a symbol of hope in the resurrection. For the egg appears to have no life in it. But the chick comes out of its alive as the Lord rose from

the tomb after his death.

Mandy Come on lets go into the nave of the church.

Kooky The church is arranged in sections

Mandy Yes in sections.

How many sections are there?

Kooky A long time ago, or now

Mandy What do you mean Kooky?

Kooky Because a long time ago they divided the church into three sections, but now there are only two

Mandy Let's keep to how it was in olden times.

Kooky The section for the deacons is raised three steps above the rest of the church. The deacons stand there for prayer; and of course it has the Mangaleya (the lectern)

Mandy The section for the faithful: the place which the peoples stand to pray, the ladies on the right and the men on the left - as the Psalm says: the Queen stands at the right side of the King". There are 12 columns in the nave, which symbolise the 12 disciples.

Kooky The section for the catechumens: it used to be there a long time ago, and in stood the people who were waiting to be baptised so that they may become among the faithful. They used to attend until the sermon and after that they left

Mandy Wow, how beautiful is the church and the way it is divided into sections

Kooky That's why they call the church: the house of God or the house of Angels or the bride of Christ

Mandy And don't forget that they also name churches after the martyrs and the saints and the apostles of Christ.

Kooky Come let us go and draw it exactly as it is should be

Mandy Let's go.

Application



Comprehension Questions

- What is the Church?
- What are the shapes in which the church is built?
- How many doors does the church have?
- How many sections is the church divided into?



Exercise...

The first thing we do when we enter the church is to kiss the threshold, and bow before the sanctuary.



Prayer

Meditate on it ... live it ... pray it on the level of the kids

We thank you O Lord Jesus, that you open your house to us so that we can meet with you there.
And in your house we enjoy getting to know your children the saints and the angels.

Please Lord teach us how to respect your house,
and keep it open to us at all times.

Amen.



God Gave Me a Mind

Abigail and David

Bible reference: 1 Samuel 25:1-24

Lesson content: God set me above the rest of creation: he gave me a mind

Lesson objectives: to help the child to:

- **Know:** Abigail's wisdom and calm thinking prevented evil from taking place.
- **Feel:** that he is distinguished from the rest of creation: God gave him a mind which he ought to use for doing good.
- **Practice:** thinking calmly before taking any action and asking God in prayer to grant him wisdom and right conduct.

Bible verse: *"A good answer turns away wrath"*
(Proverbs 15:1)



Background information to servant

- The lesson is divided into three sections (drama, story, felt board)
- God rejected Saul the King because of his many sins, and sent Samuel the Prophet to anoint David, the son of Jesse, a shepherd of sheep and the cantor of Israel, as king instead of Saul.
- Saul knew that God had rejected him and that David would become king instead of him. So he was determined to get rid of him. And when David, accompanied by his men, escaped from Saul he was pursued by him with an army of soldiers in order to destroy him.
- And one time when Saul was pursuing David, he fell into the hands of David; when his men advised him to get rid of him, David refused, saying his well-known quote “how can I extend my hand towards the anointed of the Lord?. What is strange is that David whose heart was so pure towards Saul, and was not overcome by feelings of wrath and the desire for revenge, would have fallen into the horrid sin of revenge, if it had not been for the wisdom of Abigail, the hero of this story.
- Read 1 Samuel 25 carefully, to note the the following:
 - Nabal was wealthy man who owned a great inheritance: 3000 sheep, and 1000 goats. The name Nabal means foolish. He lived up to his name for he was foolish in his conduct.
 - As for his wife Abigail, her name means “source of joy” . She was the complete opposite to Nabal, the Bible describing her as being of “good understanding” beautiful appearance”.
 - David was being hunted for by Saul. He moved from wilderness to wilderness and from place to place with his men. For a while he dwelt in the wilderness besides Nabal’s shepherds. There was a good relation between the shepherds of Nabal and the men of David, because David and his men were a source of protection to the shepherds and their flock.
 - After the death of Samuel the Prophet, David moved to the wilderness of Paran. There he heard that Nabal’s shepherds were shearing sheep. The occasion of shearing the flocks is one of joy and celebration, in which the shepherds offers sacrifices and hold feasts.
 - So David who was hunted for in the wilderness with the men that accompanied him sent 10 of his men to Nabal that he might receive food from him. His men reminded Nabal of the good that David and his men had shown to his shepherds, protecting them and his

possessions while they dwelt alongside them in the wilderness. They asked of a blessing of some of the food that had been prepared for this festive occasion.

- But Nabal did not answer them kindly. He replied “shall I then take my bread and my water and my meat that I have killed for my shearers, and give it to men when I do not know where they are from?”
 - When he heard of Nabal’s reply, David became very angry and was determined to go to attack Nabal and his household and everything that he had.
 - When Abigail heard about the situation, with great wisdom and in haste she arose and prepared a gift of food (verse 18) from the feast (or maybe that she had prepared specially), and she went speedily to meet David before he reached them.
 - And she met David, who was angry, on his way to fight against Nabal. In humility she bowed down to the ground and confessed the sin, attributing it to herself. Her words of wisdom had a great effect in calming David and making him come to his senses and to regret what he was intending to do. You can read for yourself some of the golden words which this wise woman uttered.
- Nabal is a foolish man.
 - She reminded him of God (“as the Lord lives and as your soul lives”) who had sent her to him to prevent him from avenging for himself and shedding innocent blood.
 - She was surprised how the man who did not seek to end the life of the person who exiled him (Saul), would today avenge for himself in such a way.
 - Is it possible that the man whom God chose to be king to uphold justice among his people commit such a sin as this? It would be a blackspot against him which would not be forgotten ... for he avenged for himself.
 - (You can write the verse number before every sentence to make clear its meaning) . As a result of Abigail’s words, David’s wrath subsided, and he came to his senses. And he blessed God saying, “blessed is the Lord God of Israel who sent youblessed is your advice and blessed are you.”

My dear servant:

- Wisdom is a gift from God. The apostle James taught us in his Epistle to ask wisdom from God: **“if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him”** (James 1:5)
- Remember that the one who acts hastily in his wrath will fall into many evils.
- **“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.”** (Proverbs 25:11)
- The mind is a gift from God. He granted it to man to use it for good: for himself, his family, his church, and his community, and all humanity.
- Do not return evil for evil but good for evil.

- Goat allowed us to see the weaknesses of the prophets, and even the apostles, to show that all are in need of salvation, and perfection belongs only to the Lord Jesus. Therefore **whenever you stand before those you serve, keep it in your heart always to learn from them and hear from their mouths the voice of God to you. And the Lord be with you.**

Activities to introduce the lesson

You can use the one of the following ways to introduce the lesson.



Discussion ... “Let us think the right way”

In a discussion with the children the servant can bring up some situations which the children could faceThe servant asks: what you think of this conduct? Why is it wrong? What should they have done?

Examples:

* Lola plays with her toys by herself; she does not allow her sister to play with her and if she comes neare she will hit her.

*Alex spends a lot of his time in front of the computer... he does not talk with anyone at home and does not obey what his mum asks of him, and he neglects his homework.

Through discussion, the servant can convey to the children correct behaviour.

Why is it wrong, and what is the right behaviour, and what would you do?



Introductory Story

The managers of a one of the banks in a certain country were shocked to hear that that some of the bank accounts of wealthy people were stolen from. The theft took place by a very clever idea. The thief broke into the computer system in an unknown way. And he obtained secret passwords, and used withdraw money from the accounts. No one knew how he was able to do this. He was certainly a very clever thief. He was arrested, but refused to disclose the secret. They do not know what to do. It was important not to arrest the thief but to know he stole the money. They wanted to make changes to the computer system so that it would never happen again. But the only one who could help them was the thief. So they decided to released him, and persuaded him to work with them in the operations centre of the bank. They gave him the offer of a high position, a large salary and car. And he would become a good citizen. They left

him to decide whether he wanted to escape and return to a life of stealing or to accept their offer of a new job ... After thinking much about it, he decided to accept the offer and at the allocated time they found him coming ... He sat at his desk and began to work, making complex changes to the computer system ... so that such thefts may never happen again. He became after that a scientist and an inventor.

God gave us a mind and many gifts. We should use them in doing good.

The Lesson

Part 1

The servant uses a felt board (or a large board on which there drawings, which the servant uses to present the lesson)

Paper characters:

(The shepherds of sheep, some sheep on the ground with grass vegetation, David's men, David.)

David's men meet with the shepherds, and the following dialogue takes place between them:

One of the shepherds: who are those men? they've been in the wilderness here for several days. I wonder what brought them here!

Another Shepherd: they look like nice people. Let's go and introduce ourselves to them. and ask who they are, and what brought them here. Come on.

(They meet with the men). Hello, who are you? ... what brought you here in this wilderness ... We don't see you shepherding any sheep

One of David's men: hello ... why don't you tell us first who your master is, whose sheep you are shepherding?

The Shepherd: we are shepherds ... Our master is very wealthy. He has 3000 sheep and 1000 goats.

One of David's men: that many! He's a very wealthy man ... What is his name?

The Shepherd: his name is Nabal.

One of David's men: that's a very strange name (the servant explains that Nabal = foolish)

The shepherds: we told you about ourselves. Now tell us, who are you?

One of David's men: our master is called David; we are living with him here.

The Shepherd: David! Did you say David?

One of David's men: have you heard about David?

The shepherds: of course ... We know that the Lord chose him to be king instead of Saul, and that he is looking for him to kill him, that's why David's is fleeing from him. Ah, so that's why you are here in the wilderness with David; you're in the wilderness here fleeing from Saul.

One of David's men: yes that's right. David is a very nice man and God loves him and chose. He says the Psalms and praises with them

the shepherds: yes, we actually heard someone yesterday praising with Psalms on a harp; but we did know who it was

(but after a while David decided to move with his men to the wilderness of Paran)

And this dialogue took place between David's men and Nabal's shepherds).

The Shepherd: are you really going away from here?

One of David's men: yes we are going with David to another place

Another Shepherd: what a shame, we really loved you to stay, and we were so happy that you were with us here. . because from the day you came we have lived in safety.. No thief has been able to come near us... And not a single sheep has been stolen from us while you were with us ... But now good-bye give our regards to David the Prophet and ask him to pray for us...
Goodbye.

The second part: story: the servant tells the children about the following:

- the shearing of sheep ... and the feast that is held on the occasion of shearing the sheep
- that David heard about the celebration of the shearing of the sheep of Nabal. He sent 10 men to him
- what David commanded his men to say to Nabal, since the men were in need of food.
- Nabal's response
- David anger and his determination to attack Nabal and all his household
- one of the servants told Abigail what happened

The third part : felt board

- A picture of Abigail a beautiful woman, a donkey, the types of food which she took with her
- when the lady called Abigail heard what happened she took all these nice things and the food and went in a hurry to meet David and give them to him
- (tell the children of the foods... on the felt board)
- Abigail meets David
- while she walked, she met David who was going to them (Abigail bowed to the ground)
- Abigail: forgive me. Consider that I am the one who has done wrong. I didn't hear that you had sent to your men ... If I had heard I would have done something .. Please accept these things which I have brought for your men.. Don't upset God by preventing for yourself ... You forgave Saul ... Who wanted to kill you... And now you want to commit this wrong.
- Don't forget that you will be King and a King should act as you did with Saul

David: blizzard being God who sent you to me ... You had not come I would have done a great sin ... Blessed is your mind, and blessed are you. Today you made me aware of this great sin, that would have upset God with. Abigail walked on the way and David returned ... Thanking God and saying they're not then for this thoughtful and wise lady, , I would have upset God by giving this man and everyone with him. And after a while Nabal died and David married Abigail.

Application



Comprehension Questions

- Why was David and his men living in the wilderness?
- What good things did the shepherds of Nabal receive from David's presence with them?
- What was the reason of the great celebration that Nabal held?
- What the David do when you heard about the celebration? And what did he ask?
- How did Nabal reply to David's men?
- What was David's response? What did he decide to do?
- What did Abigail do? What did she say to David?
- How would you describe Abigail and her actions?
- What did you learn from this story?



Exercise...

In every prayer I thank God for giving me a mind, and I asked for wisdom before any action I take, and I trained myself not to act hastily in replying and in thinking, and I use nice words instead of swearing or bad words.



Prayer

Meditate on it ... live it ... pray it on the level of the kids

I thank you Lord Jesus Christ's that you gave me a mind and you made me different from all other creatures... For I am on your image and likeness... Or Lord give me wisdom and sanctify my thoughts and make me like Abigail in her wisdom... Always saying what may give you joy.



Evaluation

Did your children get the aim of the lesson:

The Aim	At the end of the lesson check that you children can:	Evaluation
Know	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember the names Nabal and Abigail and their meanings • Describe what happened when David sent his men, and how Nabal replied. • Explain what Abigail did, and what gift she prepared for him • Give a reason why David changed his mind about what he was going to do 	
Feel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw the gifts that Abigail prepared to give to David 	
Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To think and choose your words carefully ... Not to upset anyone • Thank God for giving you a mind, to ask for wisdom in your prayer 	



Using my Mind

Balaam's Donkey

(God gave me a mind and distinguished me from all other creatures, but it is my duty to show compassion towards animals)

Bible reference: Numbers 22

Lesson content: Using my mind

Lesson objectives: to help the child to:

- **Know:** he has a mind, which distinguishes him from the animal.
- **Feel:** that he has the ability to think in a right way.
- **Practice:** to have compassion on animals.

Bible verse: *"Let not mercy and truth forsake you;"*
(Proverbs 3:3)



Background information to servant

- Read the book of Numbers chapter 22 and familiarise yourself with the story of Balaam.
 - Who is Balaam, the son of Beor?
 - Balaam is a Hebrew name which probably means “devourer”. He is the son of Beor from Petheor, a village in Mesopotamia.
1. He is not of the people of God, but from Petheor which is in Mesopotamia Deuteronomy (23:4). In Numbers 23:7 he said: **“Balak, the King of Moab has brought me from Aram.”** And in Numbers 22:5 it says **“Petheor, which is near the River”** Aram is named after Aram, the son of Shem, who first dwelt there (Genesis 10:22, 23). It later extended to Syria and Lebanon. Aram is located between two rivers, the Tigris and Euphrates. When the Bible mention “two rivers”, it is a reference to the Euphrates and the Tigris; while mention of “the river” refers to the Euphrates only. So Petheor is near the Euphrates River in Iraq.
 2. Balaam was famed for performing supernatural acts over nature. News of him reached Moab so the king called for him
 3. The early church fathers saw Balaam as a sorcerer, and a psychic (someone who has telepathic powers), whom God used to fulfill a divine mission. It should not surprise us that God used someone such as Balaam, for He is able to bring from the eater something to eat and from the strong something sweet. Origen the Bible scholar wrote: Balaam was a sorcerer who wanted to practice divination against the people of God, by command of the King. But God intervened, not on account of the worthiness of the people, but to reveal his care for His people. Balak, King of Moab perceived that the victories of God’s people came about due to an supernatural power ... and a special blessing which accompanied them, since they did not use weapons to escape from their bondage in Egypt under Pharaoh ... but were victorious through the power of prayer to God. For this reason Balak did not resort to human armies to fight them, but used to divination and sorcery to confront the blessing of God. He resorted to Balaam for he had heard that whoever he blesses is blessed and whoever he curses is cursed. Balaam was pressured by Balak the King and the elders of Midian, whom the king sent to him, to go and curse the people of God. But God said to him: “you shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for they are blessed”. So the king’s elders returned to the king without Balaam.
But they returned to Balaam a second time and promised to offer him money if he went with them to curse the people. So this time Balaam rose up to go with them. As a result God’s wrath was aroused, and an Angel of the Lord stood in his way to oppose him while he rode a donkey, his two servants being with him. The donkey which he rode on saw the Angel of the Lord standing in its way, so it turned aside ; therefore Balaam struck the donkey. This was repeated three times. The mouth of the *** donkey was opened to put

to shame the one who considered himself to be a prophet and a wise person. And the Angel which was seen by the donkey could not be seen by Balaam ... until the Lord opened his eyes.

And by the command of the Lord, Balaam spoke 5 prophecies in praise of the children of Israel. The first prophecy focused on The vision of the new Israel (the Israel of the New Testament) through the incarnation. Secondly: through the crucifixion and the resurrection, thirdly: through the Holy Spirit, fourth and fifth: the missionary role of the church.

Prayer: Grant me O Lord to always hear your voice, while I say: speak O Lord, for your servant hears; and to distinguish your voice as the sheep distinguish the voice of their shepherd, and not to listen to the voice of the world once more. But train my ears to hear your voice that is pure, soft, gentle and compassionate.

Activities to introduce the lesson

You can use the one of the following ways to introduce the lesson.



Discussion ... “Who are you???”

Tools required: - prepare some pictures or masks of animals such as a monkey, elephant, donkey, ant...

The servant gives each child one of these pictures and asks him: if you were (for example)... a Monkey ... Elephant ... Donkey... would you be happy?

I wonder why? How are you better than the animal? Does the monkey or the donkey or ... know how to read or write or invent?

You are distinguished by your mind that God created for you, with which you think and invent and innovate. That’s why you are distinguished from animals.



Introductory Story

It happened that there was an eagle's nest on top of a high mountain. One day a strong wind blew the nest off the mountain, and its egg fell into the chicken's nest ...When the egg hatched the little chickens lived with the little eagle... and they were brought up together... And the little eagle thought that he was a chicken... even when he had grown up ... One day an eagle was flying above the chicken's nest, and he caught sight of the eagle among the chickens .. So he went down to the nest and began to ask the eagle the reason why he was in the chicken's nest. So he answered him: because I'm a chicken ... He was amazed to hear that... So he said to him: you are not a chicken, you are an eagle; this is not your place, your place is there flying in the sky ... the Lord created you to fly through the air. You are a different to a chicken ... so the eagle tried to fly until he succeeded, and he thanked the Lord that He created him as an eagle

The Lesson

Method of presentation: Pantomime

Balak: I am King Balak. I must be the strongest king, and my people the strongest people, I can't have the people of Israel (the people of God) to be stronger than us. I must do something to make that people weak, then I will be the stronger ... Guards, go and bring to me Balaam, son of Beor, and tell him to go and curse the people of the Lord.

(The guards with Balaam)

The Guards: O Balaam, King Balak says to you, come and curse the people of the Lord, that it may become weak, so that the people of Balak may be stronger.

Balaam: I must pray first to the Lord before I do anything. Stay with me this night and tomorrow I will reply to you.

Balaam: (Prays) O Lord, what shall I do? Shall I go with them or not? Guide me, O Lord.

The Guards: Come on Balaam, come with us to Balak

Balak No, I'm not going with you. God has refused that I curse the people.

(Balak with the guards)

Balak Why have you come back by yourselves without Balaam? Did he not come with you?

The Guards Balaam refused to come with us, Your Majesty

Balaam Refused!!! You must go and say to him: that the King will give him a lot of money if he accepted to come and curse the people.

(The Guards and Balaam)

Balaam Please don't force me; I'm not going with you. Actually, wait for me while I pray again, and see what God wants me to do.

Balaam: (Prays) okay Lord, I will go with them, and I will only do what you tell me to do.

(Balaam, the donkey, and the angel)

Balaam Go, go donkey ... Why doesn't the donkey want to move? Okay come and go along here ... And he doesn't want to go here either ... Go ... Go ... (he then hits the donkey) any tries to change its direction 3 times, and hits him 3 times.

Donkey What did I do to you so that you hit me? I'm the donkey that you ride on and I take you to any place that you want to go. Can't you see the Angel who is standing before us now,

Balaam: An angel! (an angel appears) ... Wow, there really is an Angel ... An Angel standing before the donkey preventing him from walking. I'm sorry I didn't see you. I didn't understand why the donkey did not want to go... If the Lord does not want me to go to the King I'm not going, I will obey what he tells me.

Angel No, go to the King, but don't say any bad things about the people of the Lord (don't curse them). The King wants you to curse the people of the Lord, but the Lord says to you to go and bless them. What did you do to the donkey?! Why did you hit him? The donkey didn't want to walk because I was standing before him in the way. So the donkey saw me but you didn't. And the Lord has distinguished you from any animal by giving you a mind. You could have thought about it and asked yourself why is the donkey refusing to walk? there must be something stopping him from walking.

Balaam Yes it was wrong of me to hit the donkey. I should have sought thought about it before hitting him. Hitting him will not make him walk.. I'm sorry

(And Balaam obeyed the word of the Angel and went and blessed the people of the Lord.

Application



Comprehension Questions

- What did God give us that makes us different to animals?
- What did Balak want from Balaam?
- What did God order him to do? To curse or to bless?
- Why didn't the donkey walk? What did he see? What did Balaam do to him?
- Did Balaam act in the right way?
- What did the angel say to Balaam



Exercise...

- Use my mind to think through any problem I face
- find the Lord for giving me a mind, that I am distinguished from all other creatures
- to deal with the rest of God's creation, whether it be an animal or plant, with care and compassion.



Prayer

Meditate on it ... live it ... pray it on the level of the kids

Lord Jesus Christ thank you for your great love to me... I thank you know that you made me special from the rest of creation, and I have many good things. Lord Jesus you created a mind for me to think with, by which I am different from the animals and plants. Help me Lord to know your words and live it. Hold me Lord to learn from you how to deal with animals, to be compassionate with them, and not do like Balaam did with his donkey. Help me or Lord to obey your Commandments, and be obedient son to you. Amen.



Evaluation

Did your children get the aim of the lesson:

The Aim	At the end of the lesson check that you children can:	Evaluation
Know	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remember the name of the King who called for Balaam• Describe the appearance of Balaam on the donkey when the Angel appeared to him• Remember what Balaam said to the messengers who came from Balak• Explain why the donkey refused to walk in the way• Recite the verse of the lesson: Let not mercy and truth forsake you; (Proverbs 3:3)	
Feel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Imagine the donkey while talking with Balaam• Draw how he would imagine Balaam when the Angel appeared to him	
Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pray before doing anything• Agree with his friends to be compassionate towards animals and treating them nicely	



I am Organised

The Five Loaves and Two Fish (A sign of Christ's Authority over Creation)

Bible reference: Matt. 14:13-23; John 6: 1-15

Lesson content: Virtue for life – I amorganised

Lesson objectives: to help the child to:

- **Know:** Importance of being organised
- **Feel:** God loves us to be organised and to be tidy
- **Practice:** tidy everything (his room, house and church)

Bible verse: *“Let all things be done decently and in order.”*
(1 Corinthians 14:40)



Background information to servant

It is the only miracle mentioned in all four Gospels: Matt. 14:13, Mark 6:30, Luke 9:10, John 6:1), which indicates the importance of the miracle.

The Lord Jesus satisfies us.

- + “And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick.” They left their cities and went on foot to our Lord Jesus Christ, who was in a deserted place by himself, praying” (Matthew 14:13,14)
- + And when they came to him, he went out to them... When he saw them carrying their sick, he had compassion upon them and healed them, and then offered them the bread of blessing. So healing came first, before the bread of blessing. In the same manner healing of our spiritual illness, through repentance and leaving of sin, should precede entering the sanctuary to receive from the hand of the Lord, not the bread of blessing, but his holy Body.
- + The multitude spent the whole day with the Lord Jesus Christ, hearing his voice and receiving His care and love.

- + When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, “This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food.”

- + According to their limited human thinking, they saw that the best solution was to send the multitude away. Many times we arrange the matters of the service and spiritual matters according to our human intellect, and forgetting that the Lord who is present in our midst is able to grant us above the limits of nature. For though the place was deserted, yet the one who provides for the world was present. And though it was evening, the light of the world was shining. Even though the hour was late, the one who does not submit to time was in their midst. He said to them “you give them something to eat”, and they replied “we have only...”.
- + His command to them that they give them something was intended to reveal what resources they had available, and that they might present to Him what they had, however little it may be, even though it could not satisfy. When we place the little we have in the hands of God, it becomes great. We must participate with God, offering our energy, our gifts, and our spiritual efforts. And however feeble or little we have to start with, God looks to what we have as being important, that he may bless it with His grace and satisfy our life and the life of others.

- + And the crowds were seated orderly on the grass in groups of fifty; they sat together on the grass in simplicity, and in love and harmony.
- + (Since the aim of the lesson is about being organised, emphasise what the state of the people would have been like, if the food had been offered to them when they were not seated orderly). If they had been disorderly, not everyone would have been able to eat - some would take a lot and some little; there would be havoc. And they would not know where the food was coming from. Through being orderly they were able to see Jesus while he blessed the food and gave it to his disciples)
- + Do you think the Lord would have performed the miracle if the people were in a state of disorder? Does the Lord's blessing reach us when we are in a state of havoc?
- + Why did he seat them in an orderly way?
 1. Because he is the creator who loves orderliness and created and arranged everything in order.
 2. To teach us that everything we do should be done decently and in order, according to the commandment in (1 Cor. 14:30)
 3. To help the disciples distribute the food in a calm manner.. The people were seated in rows in groups of fifty, and each disciple was allocated a certain number of rows.
 4. If there was no order, those who were physically stronger would have grabbed the food first, depriving many of a share.
 5. To prevent the remaining fragments from being trodden upon, had the people been disorderly.
 6. The church learnt many things from this miracle. The church has a system and order in its worship, which it received from the apostles, who in turn received it from the Lord Jesus Christ.

There was much grass in that place

The presence of grass tells us that the Passover was near, and it was the end of the spring months. St John's attention to such precise details, shows that he was an eyewitness to this miracle. The sight of grass is reminder of the simplicity which Adam enjoyed in paradise before sin entered. The sight of green vegetation was a cause for Adam's happiness.

So the men sat down, about five thousand in number.

The counting of men only (except the women and children) (Matthew 14:21) does not imply that woman and children were despised; rather it is a sign of God's desire for every believer to be like a man in spiritual maturity and spiritual toil, and rejecting the soul that seeks

to be pampered, as a woman, and the one who lacks maturity, as a child. Nonetheless, he still permitted that the children and women also eat.

Those who have not yet reached spiritual maturity eat spiritual food, by which they may grow in spirit. ... And those whose souls are pampered eat that their souls may be sanctified.

The Lord Jesus Christ gave thanks despite being God, who was not in need of giving thanks. But he did so in order to teach us to give thanks. It is mentioned in the Gospel of St. Mark that he “blessed.” (Mark 6:14); for this reason this gospel reading is called the gospel of blessing, and is read on the fifth Sunday of any Coptic month (if that month has five Sundays).

And he also “broke” (Mark 6:14) that we may be reminded of what the Lord did when he instituted the Sacrament of Eucharist: said: And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." (Mark 14:22)

The 5 loaves and two fish symbolise the 5 books of Moses, or the 5 sacrifices offered in the Old Testament. It also represents man in his 5 senses – what man offers of his resources and faculties is weak and limited. The two fish are a symbol of the teachings of the Old and New Testaments.

Activities to introduce the lesson

You can use the one of the following ways to introduce the lesson.



Discussion

Tools required: (travel bag containing a sandwich, juice, crisps, water, biscuits

- Discuss with them Love you likes to go on trips?
- When you go on a trip what do you take with you? They will answer sandwich ... What we put them in?
- Let's see, what does this travel bag have in it?
- Imagine then that there is a nice trip to the monastery, and all the church will go on this trip, and Mina is the only one who takes with him back for his food (the servant gives the bag to one person only)
- we're all going on the trip ... No one has any food with him except Mina? Can we believe that?!
- Do you know that that actually did happen at the time of our Lord Jesus ... Let's see and hear the story of what happened.



Introductory Story

Alex and Peter were friends, who were also in year two at school. But they were very naughty. They ran around in church ... They talk while the story is being told in Sunday School, and they don't pay good attention to the lesson. And what else? (Does any of you behave like them? Of course not).

And one day when the liturgy had finished, Abouna gave the Holy Communion, and sprinkled the water saying, go in peace, and the people went out, Alex and Peter entered the church, and they do not find anyone there. They got up to their usual mischief: they played with everything in the church - the books on the Mangaleya, the napkins, the Agpeyas, the Liturgy books. Alex played with the cymbals, and Peter ran to the candles and lit them and blew them out. Although both of them kept fighting about who would speak into the microphone. At that point one of the big Deakins enter the church. As soon as Alex and Peter saw him they were afraid and ran ... But he said to them: don't be afraid, come here ... They went to him, trembling.... He said to them: are you afraid because you did something wrong... To upset the Lord, I'll God is a God of order... God created the world in order ... The heavens above, and the Earth below for us to walk upon ... And there is a time for the sun to shine and a time for the night.

In the long time ago when God spoke to Moses and ask him to make the Tabernacle to be house for God, , he said to him to make everything in an orderly way and place it in its place ... And the church is a house of God, and the house of Angels. ... But Jesus loves it to be organised and tidy, having its rites (its order)...

And now come with me to tidy the church and put everything in its place. And they began to put the reading books of the church on the Mangaleya, and the Agpeyas and Liturgy books in the cupboard, and they folded the napkins and placed them neatly away. And they also put the cymbals in its place, and the basket for the Lamb offering. .. And they blew out the candles... And who else knows what else they did?

And when they finished in the church was now tidy and beautiful he said to them: would you like to tidy the church again or not?

They said: of course we will come to tidy it. Also Alex and Peter said: after every liturgy, we will help you in tidying the church.

The Lesson

Method of presentation: a felt board

The lesson is explained in the following way:

the main servant explains and uses drawings for the felt board, and a helper servant or someone to discuss with the children, who sits in their midst.

The servant asks the children to stand and sit in order in a new way, that they may disagree about this way of sitting.

The main servant: What is wrong? Why are you looking upset?

Assistant servant: why are we seated in this way? We always sit in any place we like.

The main servant: we have to be tidy and organised in everything in our lives. At home whenever we use something we put it back in its place. We should be organised at school at church, Lord taught us to be organised.

Assistant servant: I know a story in the Bible where our Lord taught us to be organised. Shall I say it?

The main servant: Please wait, sir. Let's ask our friends first. Do we know the story?

The servant asks the children

The servant: long time ago the Lord Jesus was teaching the people in the place that was very far from the city. And because the words of the Lord were so lovely, the people sat attentively listening and learning from him ... until it was night time, the disciples went to the Lord Jesus and said to him: let the people go home, you should tell the people to go home, because there have been without food all day. But the Lord said to them, "you give them something to eat".

I wonder my friends what the disciples replied?

(Listen to the children's responses)

The servant: they replied saying where can we get enough food to feed all these people. There is only one boy here who has a bag containing five loaves and two fish. So the Lord Jesus said to them: bring them here; and when they brought the five loaves and the two fish to the Lord Jesus he said to them: now you have to organise the people ... Seat them on the grass and divide them into groups ...

On the disciples did as the Lord Jesus said to them. The people were divided into groups of fifty, and each group sat together. They were very organised... But the number of people was very great and there was only five loaves and two fish... Let's see what happened.

The Lord Jesus took the five loaves the two fish, lifted his eyes up to heaven, and prayed and blessed the food. And gave to the disciples. And when the Lord Jesus and prayed over the food, the food increased very greatly. There was a lot of bread and a lot of fish which was enough to feed all the people. In all the people ate and were filled. You know how many they were? 5000 men, that's not counting the women and children.

And after the people had eaten, the Lord Jesus said to his disciples: gather at the fragments that remain, and it came to 12 baskets. And that my friends teaches us to tidy after we eat. We shouldn't just eat and leave everything in a mess. And what is left over from what we eat can be given to someone else. And also we can't leave the food to fall on the floor.

Now do you see how great the Lord's blessing is. How the little food became a lot, and how it happened, and also when the Lord Jesus said to his disciples to organise the people, the eight were filled and are also 12 baskets full of fragments that were left over.

Application



Comprehension Questions

- Why did the crowds of people go to the Lord Jesus?
- What did the disciples say to the Lord Jesus when it was nighttime?
- What did the Lord say to them?
- What did the Lord Jesus ask of his disciples before he blessed the food?
- How did they organise the people? Do you know the importance of being organised?
- What did the Lord Jesus do when he offered him the little amount of food?
- What request that the Lord Jesus made his disciples after the crowds had eaten and were filled?
- What was the number of people who ate and were filled?



Exercise...

1. To be organised and tidy at home school and church for our God is a organised God.
2. Thanked the Lord always before eating and pray the following little prayer:
(bless O Lord this food, as you bless the five loaves and two fish, and give to everyone who is in need. Amen)



Prayer

Meditate on it ... live it ... pray it on the level of the kids

Lord Jesus our loving God, we thank you for your love to us and your gifts to us at all times. We thank you all Lord Jesus for your love for us and your care for us. You always teach us lovely virtues like being organised. We thank you O Lord Jesus that you bless everything in our hands however small it is, as you blessed the five loaves and the two fish.. Be with us or Lord Jesus and bless our lives. Amen.



**My Mind is Occupied with Heaven
- Heaven is my Goal**

St Mina the Wonderworker

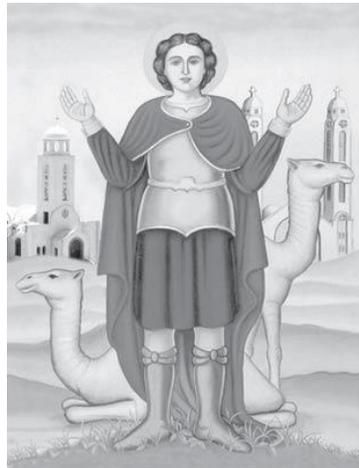
Bible reference: Matt. 19:21

Lesson content: My mind is occupied with heaven

Lesson objectives: to help the child to:

- **Know:** the story of St Mina, and how his goal throughout his life was eternal life.
- **Feel:** the love the eternal life, for in it we will live with our beloved Lord Jesus Christ.
- **Practice:** To ask God in his prayers to give him eternal life. To change a behaviour in his life which is not appropriate for the children of God. To ask the intercession of St. Mina.

Bible verse: *“Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” (Matthew 13:43)*



Background information to servant

To my dear servant:

Our aim in this lesson is to get the children to become used to thinking about heaven, and to become occupied with it, with its angels and saints, and to love heaven. For in heaven we will live forever with the Lord Jesus. One of the church fathers said: “when you remember the kingdom of God, the desire for it will be stirred up in your heart.

Activities to introduce the lesson

You can use the one of the following ways to introduce the lesson.



Discussion

If we want to achieve a desired goal, we must keep that goal before our eyes at all time and think continually how we can achieve that goal. In order to clarify to the children this principle to the children, present to them the following example:

- Mark is a boy in year 2. We want to help him to become top of his class. What can we do to help him achieve this goal?
(We can say to him that if he becomes top of his class he will feel very happy)
we can draw a picture for him, which shows him receiving the prize for being top of the class, and hang the picture above his desk in his room.
- If Mark forgets his goal, what can we say to him?
- What will Mark need to have to help him become top of his class?



Introductory Story

Discovery of the body of St Mina

There was a man who was a Shepherd of sheep, who was in the desert, in a place called Mariout, because sheep like to run around and play in a wide open place where there is grass to eat. Now this Shepherd had a sheep which was sick, he was very upset for his sick sheep.

One day... that sheep strayed from the rest of the sheep, and it got to a place where there was a pool of water. It dipped itself in the water, then rolled around in the sand. Suddenly the shepherd found the sheep had been completely healed. The shepherd was very happy and thanked God for the healing. When another of his sheep became sick, he took it to the same place and the same thing happened; the sheep was completely healed.

The story of how the sheep were healed spread everywhere, and anyone who was sick who came to that place was healed. Now the King of the city of Constantinople had a daughter who was very sick. Some people told the king about the miracles of healing that happened in the desert. They said to him "If your daughter goes to the desert of Mariout and lays in the dust in the same place, she will be healed. When the king heard it he marvelled and said: I will take her there and hopefully God will heal her. And the Princess went there and they made for her a tent in that place, and the Shepherd of the sheep said to her: dip your body in that pool of water and lay there in the sand and you will be healed ... And she did as he said to her. That same night the martyr St Mina appeared to her and said to her: my body is in this place. If you dig there, you will find it. And it happened that the soldiers who had come with her dug in the sand and found the relics of St Mina.

And everyone came to know that the cause of miraculous healings was the body of the martyr St Mina the Wonderworker. The King greatly rejoiced because of the healing of his daughter, and wished to honour the great martyr St Mina. So he built for him a crypt in the same place where his body had been buried, and placed his body was placed in the crypt. And all the people began to visit his crypt to ask his intercession.

How would you feel if St Mina came to us now and told us about his story?

The Lesson

St Mina enters Sunday School wearing the clothes of a soldier, and begins to tell the children about himself.

My name is Mina and my dad's name is Eudoxius. He was a governor, and he loved the people very much, and all the people also loved him very much. My mum's name was Euphemia. She told me how she couldn't have any children, and she prayed and fasted and gave to the poor, so that God would listen to her prayer and give her children. And one day while she was praying in the church of the Virgin Mary, she lifted up her heart before the picture of the Virgin Mary carrying the Lord Jesus and asked for her intercessions. And she heard a voice saying to her, "Amen". And that's why when I was born she called me Mina which means "Amen" (confirmed). She loved the church very much and taught me how to go to church and pray in church, and also how to read the Holy Bible. My dad encouraged me to learn the Christian teachings well. And every day my relation with the Lord Jesus Christ grew stronger; and the more I knew him, the more I loved him. My desire to live with him in heaven increased day by day.

When I was 11 years old my dad became ill and died, and went to heaven. And after three years my mum also passed away and went to heaven. When I was 15 years old I became a soldier in the Roman army, wearing the clothes that you now see me wearing. I had a very high position in the army because my dad was a governor. And all the people respected me very much. I learnt in the army defend with a sword and I was a very good soldier. . And I was loved by all the other soldiers. However, all that did not make me forget my beloved Jesus. But I used to pray more, and my love for him grew more and more, to the extent that I wanted to spend all my time with my beloved Lord Jesus. I wanted to spend all my life with him and didn't want anything to occupy me from him. So I decided to sell everything I had and all the money which my dad and mum left me, I gave it to the poor, so that I can go and live with the Lord Jesus, and spend the rest of my life in prayer and reading the Bible.

And I went and sold everything I had and I gave away all my money to the poor, and I went to the desert to live with my beloved Lord Jesus. And do you know which place I went to? Who of you have been to St Mina monastery? I lived closed that place, and every day I used to pray and read the Bible. I spent a lot of time in the desert, and I was really happy. And the more I prayed, the more I felt the Lord Jesus next to me, which made me very happy. I had never greater happiness.

And after three years I heard that the King Diocletian and the King Maximian made an order that everyone who disobeyed the commands of the King and does not bow down to the idols will be put to death. And one day while I was standing praying I saw the angels taking up the spirits of the saints to heaven and they were full of glory. I wished that I was with them, and I heard a beautiful voice saying to me "blessed are you O Abba Mina, for you were called to righteousness since your youth. So you will receive three crowns which will not fade away: one for your life of virginity, one for your ascetic life, and the third for your martyrdom. And your name will be famous among the martyrs, for I will make people from every tribe and tongue come and worship me in your church, which will be built in your name. And above all that you will receive glory which cannot be expressed in my everlasting kingdom.

And so I went quickly towards the city, and there was a celebration of the idols. All the people were celebrating. When I saw that, I was very upset, and I stood in the middle of the celebration and said in a loud voice that I am Christian. And the governor was really astonished that this was happening during the feast of the idol gods. He was very angry and commanded the soldiers to torture me; but I was really happy and felt that the Lord was with me, and at all the sufferings were nothing compared to the beautiful heaven that people will live in with the Lord Jesus. And the governor kept torturing me, but the Lord healed me more than once. So the governor sent me to another governor who also kept torturing me. And the Lord Jesus healed me and strengthened me. And when that governor got tired of torturing me, he asked the soldier to cut off my head. And I stood to pray and thanked the Lord. And the sword bearer cut off my head and I went to heaven with the Lord Jesus. And I was full of joy, because I had reached the place that all of my life I had of dreamt of going to. And after that the king tried to burn my body and put it in fire for three days; but my body did not burn. And the Christians took my body with great honour and buried it.

And many miracles happened from my body. For example, there was a general in the army called Athanasius. He was going to fight a war against the Barbarians, and he said to himself I will take the body of St Mina with me. When he opened the tomb of St Mina, a great light shone from the tomb. So the general and his soldiers took my body with them to Mariout and they fought the Barbarians there and won. When they wanted to return again after winning the war, they put my body on a camel, but the camel did not move. They tried every way to get the camel to move, and they tried another camel, but it did not want to move either. So they understood that the Lord wanted me to be buried in that place. And they buried me in that place, and that's the place of my monastery which is still there now.

Application



Comprehension Questions

- How much do you think the Lord Jesus loves us?
- Who of us would love to live with the Lord Jesus?
- What you think is the nicest thing in heaven? (The Lord Jesus)
- What do you think made St Mina sell everything he had and give away all his money to the poor?
- What made St Mina give up his job and his high position in the army and go to the desert, and then go to confess the name of the Lord Jesus before the governor?
- The name of the father of St Mina was and the name of his mum was
- Why was St Mina called by that name?



Prayer

Meditate on it ... live it ... pray it on the level of the kids

O my Lord Jesus, my beloved, I know that you love me very very much, more than I can imagine.

You created me and gave me a lovely family and a lovely life. And you also promised me that you would give me a place in your heaven. Grant me O Lord Jesus that I may always see eternal life before me, and the beauty of the life with you, and give me strength always so that I may moved towards that goal, which is to live with you in eternal life, and that all my actions may bring me nearer to you more and more.



Hear and Live God's Words

The Good Soil (Parable of the Sower)

Bible reference: Matt. 13:1-32; Mark 4:1-20; Luke 8:4-15

Lesson content: Hear and live God's word

Lesson objectives: to help the child to:

- **Know:** The parable of the sower teaches us to do by God's word.
- **Feel:** Importance of reading God's word and doing by it
- **Practice:** to read God's word regularly and to try to live by what it commands.

Bible verse: *"He has ears to hear, let him hear."* (Matthew 13:9)



Activities to introduce the lesson

You can use the one of the following ways to introduce the lesson.



Discussion

- Scatter some seeds of wheat on the ground, and ask your children to collect as many seeds as they can in a given time. At the blowing of the whistle gather your children to see who collected the greatest number of seeds. Then ask them what are these seeds? and what do we do with them?
- Prepare empty pots (for example yoghurt pots), cotton wool, and some water, and give them out to your children, and ask everyone of them to plant the seeds he has at home, to water them and to look after them at home until the seeds have sprouted and grown.
- Show your children four pots: one containing cotton wool, the second containing wax or some solidified substance, and the third containing stones (rocks) and the fourth containing thorns. Ask your children which type of soil would be most suitable for planting seeds... And why? Now I will tell you about a story which our Lord Jesus Christ told, about a sower who went out to sow.



Introductory Story

(You can narrate the story or use silhouette figures)

There were two fishermen - a father and son, who were in a boat in the middle of the Nile catching fish to eat and to sell. The father gave his son advice on how to catch fish: how to put the bait (the food) on the hook, how to cast his fishing rod, on choose the place where to fish, when to pull on the fishing line, and the types of bait to use. But the son did not hear any of the advice of his father. And one day, while they were fishing, the son was sitting in wrong way on the boat. Although his father warned that the son that he could fall if he sat that way, as usual the son did not listen, and suddenly he fell in the water. And he would have drowned if his father had not himself gone into the water for the sake of his son, and raised him up on his shoulders until he brought him up to the boat again. And the father rebuked his son, saying,

“my son, why did you not hear my voice when I called you, that you may not fall into the water. So his son answered “I was occupied with what I was doing and I forgot what you said to me; and because of this I was going to die.”

- I wonder, do we also listen to the word of God? And what is its importance for our life?
- Where do we find the word of God?
- Do we listen only? What else should we do?
- Today I will tell you about the parable (story) which our Lord Jesus said to us, about those who hear the word of God and do by it.

The Lesson

You can present the lesson as follows:

Prepare four transparent cups:

1. the first cup is empty
2. the second cup contains a third water
3. the third cup contains a mixture of water and vinegar
4. the fourth cup contains vinegar only

Then begin to present the lesson. You should also have with you some baking powder.

The lesson:

Prepare four pictures as given at the end of this lesson. On the back of each picture write the following:

- 1) the one who does not hear the words of God
- 2) the one who hears the words of God, but does not live by them
- 3) the one who hears the words of God, but his mind is busy with other things
- 4) the one who hears the words of God, and lives by them

Present the pictures during the presentation of the lesson.

- Today we are going to tell a story which our Lord Jesus said a long time ago to the people, so that we may learn the story. It is about a sower who one day went out to plant some seeds. While he was walking some of the seeds fell on the path that he was walking on... And the birds saw the seeds and ate them all. As he continued walking, the sower dropped some seeds among the rocks. And the seeds grew a little but the sun killed the seeds because they had no roots in the ground. And the third time my friends some seeds fell among thorns, and the seeds began to grow and grow, but the thorns overshadowed them and strangled them,

and the plant died. Finally, some seeds fell on the good soil, and these seeds grew and grew and produced a lot of fruit.

- After telling the lesson, the servant begins the following experiment:

I wonder what our Lord Jesus is trying to tell us? The sower is like our Lord Jesus, and the seeds are the word of God. The seeds that fell on the way: **here we place some baking powder in the first cup (the empty cup) and we notice that there is no effect.**

This is like anyone who hears the word of God but does not understand it, and does not care about it. That is why anybody can trick him, and that is why anyone can snatch the beautiful words of God from his heart.

The seeds that fell on the rock: **here we place some baking powder in the second cup (the cup that has a third water) here we notice also that there is no effect.** It is like the one who hears the word of God and rejoices in it greatly; and he attends the liturgy and has Holy Communion and is very happy and joyful. But soon as a problem happens, he forgets all these lovely things; and also someone can trick him and make him swear and do wrong things, and he upsets the Lord who loved him and saved him.

And what about the seeds that were thrown among the thorns: **here we place some baking powder inside the third cup (the cup that has a mixture of vinegar and water) here we notice a small effect but it quickly disappears.**

It's like the one who hears the word of God, but Satan tricks him by the beautiful things that are in the world. For example, like the one who wants to go to the liturgy, but he begins to play on the computer until it's late and goes to bed, and cannot wake up the next morning to go to the liturgy. In that way Satan has deceived him.

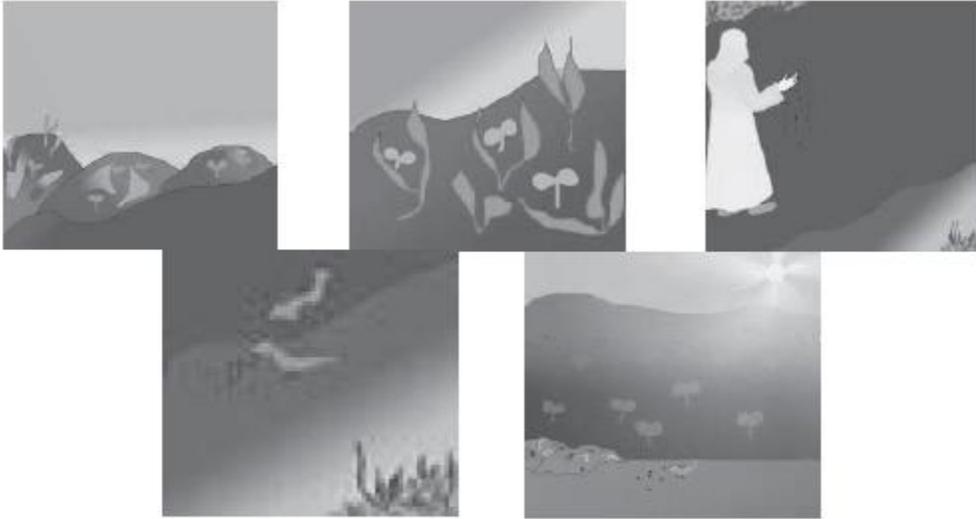
But the seeds that fell on the good soil which is suitable for planting: here we place some of the baking powder in the fourth cup (the cup that contains vinegar), and we notice a great reaction. That's like the one who hears the word of God, understands it, and lives by it. And he does not hear anything that deceives him. That's why he is like the good tree that bears good fruits.

I wonder my children what type of soil are we like?

Here the servant turn the over the pictures and reads the words that are written on the back, and leaves children to ponder what was said. Every child thinks to himself what type of soil he is like.

Now an important question... where can we find the words of God?

In the Holy Bible of course, which we must read every day regularly, or which we listen to in the sermon of the liturgy or in the Sunday School lesson, or we can read them on a computer. What is important is that we do by God's words, which means to practice it in our life. We must get used to reading the Holy Bible every day.





Christ is My God

Christ's Authority over Nature
(Jesus Christ Walks on Water)

Book reference: Matt. 14: 22-33; Mark 6: 45-56

Lesson content: My Faith (Christ's authority over nature)

Lesson objectives: to help the child to:

- **Know:** God's power over nature.
- **Feel:** He is in the care of God the Creator, who can do all things.
- **Practice:** to trust in God's power

Bible verse: "... speak, Lord, for Your servant hears..."
(1Samuel 3:9)



Background information to servant

The Lord Jesus walks on water

Read the miracle in Matthew 14:22-33, Mark 6:45-56

Let's contemplate on it together ...

+ Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat

When the Lord Jesus Christ performed this miracle all those in the boat worshipped Him, seeing that He had authority over nature... And they said: "Truly this is the Son of God!" The miracle began with the Lord Jesus commanding his disciples to enter the boat and to go before him to the other side, despite his foreknowledge of the harsh conditions that they would be exposed to.

The Lord willed that they pass through the strong winds and the high waves for one reason: in order to increase their faith... God allows us to pass through afflictions and trials... But he does not leave us to wrestle through them by ourselves. He comes to us and does wonders with us, that we may kneel down and worship Him...

+ And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up the mountain by Himself to pray:

I wonder if the Lord Jesus was praying for His disciples that they may remain firm in their trial and that their faith may be strengthened? At a later time he prayed for Peter that he may endure the trial that he would be exposed to during Jesus' arrest when he was accused of being with Jesus. The Lord had informed him beforehand of his trial: and the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail" (Luke 22:31)

+ But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves for the wind was contrary.

As soon as they had rowed some distance from the Lord Jesus and had reached the "middle of the sea", they were caught by surprise by the strong wind with and the high waves crashing against their small boat... causing it to rock from right and left with the aim of sinking it ... And the strong and contrary wind pushed them to the back of the boat trying to weaken their determination to get towards the shore. And they tried with all their strength to row and to move forward, while being tossed by the waves; but it was no use... They were not able to return back to shore or go forwards towards the harbor ...

Is this not what happens with us when we love ourselves, thus exposing ourselves to the contrary winds of this world. The waves of afflictions and trials of life crash against us, and the lusts try to drown us in its waters, and sin pushes us back, trying to prevent us from moving forward towards our Christ... And sometimes we feel that there are no solutions.

Moses and his people long ago experienced a similar situation when he led them to the edge of the red sea and were caught by surprise by Pharaoh and his powers coming behind them... So Moses calmed the people who were fearful, saying to them: “stand and see the salvation of the Lord.”

The only solution is for God to interfere... The God of impossibilities will certainly come to us, even if He delays Himself to the fourth watch of the night ... He will come shining forth his light that cast out the pitch black darkness of the night.

“Darkness precedes light. Likewise we must endure through trials until the knowledge of truth shines forth its light in our souls.”

(St John Saba)

+ **Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea.**

Jesus came to them walking on the sea... the storm tossed sea which threatened to drown them... For afflictions problems and trials, and likewise evil and sin, all have their place under the feet of our Christ.... He comes walking above them ... submitting them under his feet to confirm that they are all under his power.

+ **Be of good cheer ... It is I; do not be afraid**

These words of encouragement will endure through the ages, resonating in the ears of the Church which crosses the sea of this world... They are words of peace and joy that stand before all the fears of the world.

Jesus called to Peter, “Come”. And Peter came down out of the boat and walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid. The Lord Jesus gave Peter power to walk on water... and to tread underfoot the stormy waves. But when he saw that the wind *was* boisterous, he was afraid, because he took his eyes off the Lord Jesus who had given him power, and who was standing before him, and who stretched out his hands to him and called him to come....

O beloved servant, learn to fix your eyes on the Lord Jesus... and on Him only, even if you are surrounded by trials and temptations, which try to make you afraid... Be confident that you will pass through them filled with peace.

Our prayers do not mean that the Lord will take away trials, but that Christ will come to us and pass with us through them... so that we may cross over filled with peace (Hegomen Bishoy Kamel).

We should place our trust in him who stands before us in our trials. And even if we do take our eyes off him and look around us, and begin to sink, we should cry out with Peter, “**Lord, save me.**” And immediately the Lord Jesus will stretch out his hand and catch us. And when he got into the boat, the wind ceased.

Activities to introduce the lesson

You can use the one of the following ways to introduce the lesson.



Discovery Activity

Some float, and some drown and sink ... of which type are you?

Required items: a bowl containing water - different objects, some which float and some sink, for example: piece of wood, metal spoon, piece of foam.

Begin by placing the bowl of water in front of the children, and place the objects which float and sink beside the bowl. Then say to the children: here you see a bowl full of water and the things placed beside it. If we place these things in the water, some of them will float and some will sink... When I point to one of these objects, you have to tell me whether it will float or sink. We will then place it in the water and see if your answer is right or wrong. And the servant begins to present to the children the objects and hear their responses, and place them in the water, one by one.

The servant then makes the following comments: now are you of the type that floats or sinks?! Don't worry, I won't throw you in the water, but you will see the answer to my question in the Holy Bible.



Discussion

Walking on a rope:

Objects required: rope, plank of wood, bench

Method of presentation:

- + Who can walk on a rope ...?
 - o After hearing the responses of the children, tell them that the only one who can walk on a rope is Albert the clown.

- + Who can walk on a plank of wood?
 - o After hearing the responses of the children and the attempts of someone to walk on the plank of wood, say to them ...
- + Who can walk on the sofa? All of us can
- + who can walk on water? The children answer And we begin to tell the story



Introductory Story

George went to visit his grandad in the village during his school holiday. George was very happy because he would enjoy spending time playing at his grandad's house, and especially with his relatives, the children of his age. And one day during the holiday, while George was playing with his cousin, while they were running here and there in the house, a very large and beautiful statue, fell down, and unfortunately a bit of it broke off... And George ran to his grandfather to inform him that the statue had broken, but he was very afraid of his grandad because the statue was very precious to him. But George was determined to tell his granddad that he had broken the statue by accident. And when George told his granddad ... he was quiet for a second, and then said: don't worry about it, I'm not upset... And they sat down together to think of how to repair it, but they did not know how to. They thought about many ways to repair the statue. Finally they remembered that the only one who can repair the statue is the one who sculpted it. And the granddad phoned his son who had sculpted the statue many years ago for he is the only one who knows the statue and is able to repair it. For he is the one who sculpted it. And he was able to repair and rejoice greatly because he did so.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the creator of the universe... the wind... the seas and all nature, and he the only one who has authority over His creation... He commands and it obeys him.

The Lesson

Method of presentation: a boat made of cork, connected to a fishing line (a nylon line); a glass basin containing water; a full body cardboard cut-out of Christ fixed to a piece of cork floating above the water; a full body cardboard cut-out of Peter fixed to a cork which has holes in it, that it may sink in the water; a cardboard cut-out of the disciples.

One day the Lord Jesus was sitting with many people and His disciples were with him. And he asked the disciples to go before him, and get on the boat, and to go to a town called Bethsaida. What is it called??? **(Attach the cut-out model of the disciples to the boat)**

After the disciples had gone a long distance in the shore from the boat and it was night-time, there was a storm and many high waves, and the boat was about to sink. And the disciples were very very very afraid **(move the boat by fishing line which is tied to the boat, making it sway from left to right, such as to create waves in the water basin)**

+ And suddenly something strange happened. Can anyone think what happened? While the disciples were going through this great difficulty, they saw a person walking on the water, coming towards them. They could not believe they were seeing, and became more afraid. But He comforted them saying, "Be of good cheer. It is I; do not be afraid." **(Place the cut-out of the Lord Jesus Christ on the surface of the water while continuing to move the boat). That must be Jesus.**

So Peter answered him saying: "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." The Lord Jesus replied: "Come". And Peter David on the boat in the midst of the high waves (put the cutout of Peter on the water) and he had his eyes fixed on the Lord Jesus while walking on the water. But he became afraid and began to drown and kept crying out to the Lord of saying, "Lord, save me" And straightaway Jesus stretched out *His* hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" Then they went into the boat, and the wind stopped, and the sea became quiet. And the disciples worshipped the Lord Jesus, saying: "Truly, you are the Son of God!", He is God the Creator the one we must worship, and he is the one who has authority over nature, so it obeys him. And he has power over nature which is why the water supported him and he came walking on the water.

Application



Comprehension Questions

1. What was the problem that the disciples based when they were in the midst of the sea?
2. Describe what they saw. Who is it that has the power to come walking on the water?
3. Do you know why the Lord Jesus was the only one was able to walk on the water, and to command Peter also walk on the water?
4. What did the Lord Jesus say to them when they were afraid?
5. Why did St Peter drown after he was able to walk on the water?
6. What happened when the Lord Jesus entered the boat?
7. Did the faith of the disciples increase when they saw all this? What do they do and what did they say?

Connect each circle to the correct rectangle:

The Lord Jesus heals a leper

The Lord Jesus' authority over the wind

The five loaves and two fish

The Lord Jesus' authority over illness

Raising up daughter of Jairus and Lazarus

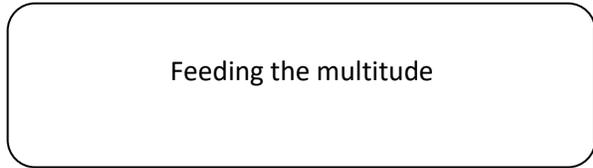
The Lord Jesus' authority over nature

The Lord Jesus walks on the water

The Lord Jesus' authority over the water



He stills the storm



Feeding the multitude



Exercise...

1. Faith and trust in God's power over all things.
2. To turn to God in prayer when I face any problem or trial for he has the power to solve it.



Prayer

Meditate on it ... live it ... pray it on the level of the kids

I thank you O Lord Jesus because you keep us safe. I thank you O Lord Jesus because you are my God who created all the world, and you have power over all things. O Lord Jesus, give me a strong faith which I may live by. Take care of me, O Lord Jesus, and strengthen my faith in you and in your power, for you are my strong God who is able to do anything to keep me safe and protect me.



Evaluation

Did your children get the aim of the lesson:

The Aim	At the end of the lesson check that you children can:	Evaluation
Know	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe what happened to the disciples while they were in the boat.• Describe how the disciples felt when they saw the Lord Jesus coming to them walking on the water.• Remember what the Lord Jesus said to the disciples to comfort them.• Remember what the Lord Jesus said to Peter while he was saving him from drowning.• That the Lord Jesus is the only one who can walk on water.• Recite the verse of the lesson: "Truly you are the Son of God." (Matt. 14:33)	
Feel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Imagine how the disciples felt when they saw the Lord Jesus walking on the water.• Peter while he was drowning and the Lord Jesus was saving him.	
Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not to be afraid of anything the Lord is with us.• To agree with his friends to live by faith.	



My Gifts are for You

The Book of Psalms and the Midnight Praise

Lesson content: My gifts are for you

- Lesson objectives:** to help the child to:
- **Know:** The order of the Midnight Praise.
 - **Feel:** Joy in praising God
 - **Practice:** To use his gifts in praise

Bible verse: *“Praise the Lord! For it is good to sing praises to our God. (Psalm 147:1)*



Background information to servant

The Midnight Praise

Praise is the most elevated type of prayer, for through it the believer expresses his feelings to the work of God, in particular his work of salvation. While praising he feels his closeness to God. Praise makes man to be like the angels, for praise is the work and the food of the heavenly beings.

The history of compiling the church hymns and praises

There are manuscripts and sayings of the early Fathers that show that the Church hymns and praises were used in the early church, for example:

- + In a letter by Pliny the Younger, a governor, addressed to the Roman Emperor Trajan, he wrote about the Christians: "they were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang in alternate verses a hymn to Christ, as to a god."

Tertullian (160-220 AD) in his Apology Number 39 wrote: "the holy books are read to the people, followed by a short sermon regarding the Christian obligations. The people then sing hymns and partake of the Lord's Supper. Finally they come together for the Agape feasts offered by the people."

St Cyprian Bishop of Carthage (200-285AD) in one of his discourses on prayer wrote that the Christians of the early church used to sing hymns and spiritual praises when they gathered together, praising with distinct, audible voices.

The church history tells us that St Athanasius the Apostolic (297- 373 AD) made changes to the way of hymns and produced a way of praising which involved as little tune as possible.

.He commanded the reading of the Psalms (the deacons) to utter the words with as little as possible of shocks, without changing the plate that it may be heard clearly.

Terms used the church Psalmody

Hos: A Coptic word meaning **Praise**

Lobsh: a Coptic word meaning **commentary or exposition** of a praise in the psalmody. The literal meaning of this word is: crown, completion or fulfilment. There is a Lobsh after the first, second and third Hos, and at the end of Theotokia for each day, except for Sunday.

The Doxologies: glorification to the saints. The word doxology is made up from two words: **Doxa**, which means **glory**, and **Logia**, which means **blissing**. Thus the word doxology means

that we take the blessing of the glory which the saints attained. The doxologies four the Lady virgin, the Angels, the heavenly beings Et cetera.

And also the doxologies on the festive occasions point to the blessing which we received on these occasions. These include the Feast of the Lord, both major and minor, the Feast of the glorious cross, the month of Kiahk, the great fast. The doxologies are said in the same way as is said in the Commemoration and the Lobshes on the Watos days of the Psalmody.

Psalia: comes from the Greek word Psali which means “**hymn**”. It is a glorification to the Lord Jesus Christ. There are separate Psalis for the Adam days (Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday) which are called Psali Adam, which having a short tune, and for the Watos days (Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday), which are called Psali Watos, and have a somewhat longer tune.

Theotokia: a glorification to our Lady the Virgin from whom the divine incarnation was fulfilled. Each day of the week has its own Theotokia.

The benefits of the church hymns and praises

It serves an important function in strengthening the unity of the church, and dissolving any contentions between the believers. It has a marvellous power in turning any bad inclinations into good ones; the profound effect of the hymns of holy week on the believers is particularly felt. Regular attendance of the praises and hymns raises us up above the world into the spiritual realm, and is able to change us, even if little, from our worldly image into a new spiritual one.

Praise sanctifies our mouths, minds, and time, and connects us with the heavenly beings and with eternity. It is a very effective way of handing down the Christian doctrine and Orthodox faith from one generation to the next

Saint Basil summarises the benefits of hymns and praises of the church in this beautiful saying: “the chanting of hymns gives quietness to the soul, and rest for the spirit and grants peace to reign over our hearts and to stills the storms within our hearts.”

St John Chrysostom says: there is nothing which gives the soul wings, and raises it above the earth, and saves it from the bonds of the flesh, and teaches it to despise temporal things, like praise.

To You servants, who love literature, reading and thought, we advise that you have as your first reference the liturgies of praise in all its areas. For praise, by its nature, purifies the heart from all worldly emotions, with its emaciations and weakness and purifies the thought from everything which does not please the goodness of God and his Lordship, so that we may ascend and soar in the heavens...!!

“Who gave to those on earth the praise of the Seraphim, accept from us also our voices with the invisible.” (The Gregorian liturgy)

Activities to introduce the lesson

You can use the one of the following ways to introduce the lesson.



Discussion

Present cards to the children you serve, on which are written: happy birthday, consolations, congratulations on your success, wishing you a speedy recovery, may God heal you, happy anniversary, happy New Year, and ask them: what are the occasions on which these expressions are said? The purpose of this is to let the child know that every occasion has an expression specially for it, and that likewise, every praise in the Praise is chanted for a reason, and on a particular occasion. Let us now go together to know what is the occasion for every part chanted in the Praise.



Introductory Story

There was a musician who was very talented in creating different pieces of music. One day that musician was sitting feeling anxious and sad. He tried many times to drive out this sadness by playing one of his old musical pieces, but he could not. So he tried to drive it out by composing a new musical piece, but nothing of which he composed and played made him happy. He continued feeling anxious and sad, and sat down by himself in silence. While he sat, he heard a beautiful hymn which took away his anxiety and sadness. He kept trying to hear the words but was not able to; he could only recall the tune which had taken away his sadness. He decided to play this hymn before a large audience. One of the people in the audience recognised the tune, and after the concert went to the musician and thanked him for playing this hymn which is taken from the church. The musician marvelled when he heard that, and after doing some research he discovered that he was playing the hymn “Aripsaleen” from the Praise. So he listened to the rest of the Tasbeha which brought him out of his sadness, and was a source of joy and a change in his life.



Drama ...Pantomime

(The Triangle enters while placing his hands on his head):

The Triangle: Ah! my head! Now the deacon is going to hold me all night while hitting me on my head. Ah! my head!

(The Cymbals enter)

The Cymbals: What's the matter Triangle? What's wrong with your head?

The Triangle: I'm going to church now, the praise is about to start. The Deacon of course will be hitting on my head all night. Ah! My head! AhAh!

The Cymbal: Ah! My body also is going to feel shattered all through the month of Kiahk, while the Deacon holds me and keeps hitting and clashing me. My son, the teacher is not going to show me any mercy.

The Triangle: Okay tell me Uncle Cymbals, why does the church care so much about the praise in the Vespers? And of course we are the victims in all this.

The Cymbals: No, Triangle, my son, it's not just the praise! but also in the month of Kiahk, there are prayers and praises through the night till the morning. Not just the Vespers!

The Triangle: Do you mean to tell me, that there is something else other than these few hours of Vespers. Ah, my head! Ah!

The Cymbals: If only I knew who invented the Praise, and they got all the words from? And what is the whole point of it? Besides, nobody feels what we have to endure.

(The Psalmody enters)

The Psalmody: Just wait a bit, I will explain to you everything. I will tell you why the Praise is important and why Abouna and the teacher and the deacons gather and perform the praise.

The Triangle: And how did you know about it?

The Psalmody: I keep inside me all the things related to the Praise, the hymns and the Howses. Come with me, I will tell you why the praise is important, and why we give so much attention to it.

(Begin to present the lesson)

The Lesson

Method of presentation: Have a model book prepared beforehand, comprising the following: the midnight prayer from the Agpeya – “the three watches”; the first Howse and its Lobsh; the second Howse and its Lobsh; the third Howse and the praise of the three youths and the Lobsh; the Commemoration of the saints and the doxologies; the fourth Howse; The Psali and Theotokia for that day; the Conclusion of the The.

We are going to begin a lovely journey. Let’s see what this great book wants to talk to us about:

1. **The Psalms and the Midnight prayer:** Before we begin the Praise, we always pray the Psalms and prayers of the Midnight prayer given in the Agpeya. And of course we pray it from our hearts, and we remember David the Prophet while he was writing the beautiful Psalms, so that we may be prepared for starting the Praise, and may praise the Lord who loves at all times.

(The servant turns the page)

2. After that we begin our beautiful praise with the **first Howse**. The word Howse means praise. The first Howse reminds us of Moses the Prophet when he crossed the Red Sea with the people of Israel, and how all the people were very joyful because of this great miracle. And they continued to praise the Lord and glorify him because He saved them from harm and from Pharaoh and his army. We also say the Lobsh after the Howse. The word Lobsh means explanation of the Howse itself.

(The servant turns the page)

3. After that comes the second Howse. This is a praise from the Psalms (Psalm 135). Here we remember how much the Lord loves us, and always looks after His people, and never forgets them, and saves them from any harm. After that we say the Lobsh.

(The servant turns the page)

4. After that we say the praise of the third Howse. It is the praise of the three saintly youths while they were in the fiery furnace. We remember that the three youths loved the Lord so much, to the extent that they refused to obey the king’s command to offer to incense to the idols. And they were thrown in the fiery furnace. Amazingly they were praising the Lord while they were in the middle of the furnace, and were completely unharmed by the fire.

(The servant turns the page)

5. After that we begin the commemoration of the saints. Here we remember the saints and martyrs that we all love, and we ask them to remember us before the Lord, that the Lord may forgive us our sins. We also sing the doxologies; these are a glorification to the saints, like the doxology of the Virgin Saint Mary, and the doxology of St George Et cetera

(The servant turns the page)

6. After that comes the fourth Howse. It is the last Howse in the midnight praise, and it consists of Psalms 148, 149 and 150 from the Psalms of David the Prophet.

(The servant turns the page)

7. The last thing we sing in the Praise is the Psali and the Theotokia of that day. The word Psali means “a praise to the Lord Jesus”, who loves us and takes care of us. And the word Theotokia comes from the word Theotokos, which means the birth-giver of God (Mother of God). It is a glorification to the Virgin Saint Mary who gave birth to our Lord Jesus Christ for our sake.

(The servant turns the page)

8. Finally we conclude the praise with “Kyrieleyson” which means “Lord have mercy”, in which we ask the Lord to have mercy on us, hear us, deliver us from evil, and forgive us our sins.

The praise really is very beautiful and a lovely journey that takes us to heaven and makes us live in heaven while we are on earth, because when we go up to heaven we will continually stand before the Lord praising Him and glorifying Him with the saints.

Application



Comprehension Questions

- What is the meaning of the word Howse?
- How many Howses are there in the praise?
- Who does the third Howse talk to us about?
- What is the difference between the days of Adam and the days of Watos?



Games... Take care not to drown

Aim of the game: to know the order of the Midnight Praise

Formation: divide the children into two groups

Tools: Chalk, white Paper

Instructions: the servant divides the ground into two sections, and with the white chalk draws a square grid of 25 squares (5 x 5) in each section. He then takes 25 sheets of white paper. On 12 of the papers he writes a part of the Praise, (e.g. introduction, first Howse, etc...), and on the remaining papers, he writes the letter "X" (landmine). The servant randomly places the 25 papers on the 25 squares face down. Each group chooses one of the children to stand at the first square (the start point). He then goes from square to square, picking up a paper on each square, until he reaches the finishing point. If he stands on a square with an X on it, the children shout "landmine", and the player is out of the game. But if it is a paper on which is written something in the order of the praise, he gives it to his group. The aim is to gather all the 12 papers on which are written the order of the midnight praise. Once the group collect all 12, they have to memorise it, and to say it in order to the servant in a loud voice.

The winner: the first group to arrive at the finishing point with all 12 parts of the praise, and recite the 12 parts in order to the servant.



Exercise...

1. Use his gifts joyfully in praise to God.
2. Learning some of the parts of the praise.
3. Attending the praise. Preferably, the servant should attend with the children.



Prayer

Meditate on it ... live it ... pray it on the level of the kids

My Lord Jesus Christ, I thank you for your great love to me. I thank you, Lord Jesus, for the many gifts that you gave me. Grant me, O Lord Jesus, to use my gifts for your service, and to use the gift of speech in prayer and singing hymns and praises, for the glory of your holy name. Help me O Lord to live for you and to rejoice in you and in praising you, all my life... Amen.



A Courageous Man

Prince Theodore El-Shatby

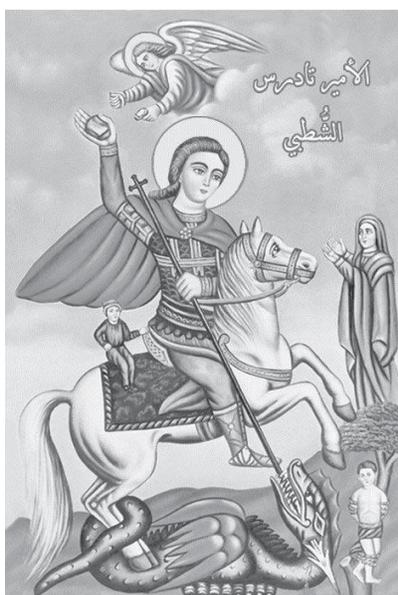
Book reference: Synaxarion for 20th Abib

Lesson content: A courageous character

Lesson objectives: to help the child to:

- **Know:** The courage of the martyr St Theodore and his love for the Lord Jesus.
- **Feel:** he is courageous because God is with him.
- **Practice:** To turn to the Lord in every difficult situation

Bible verse: *“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” (Philippians 4:13)*



Activities to introduce the lesson

You can use the one of the following ways to introduce the lesson.



Idea for discussion Courageous soldiers

Show the children pictures of martyrs who were soldiers and tell them their names. Even though they were soldiers in the Roman army and reached great positions, and fought in battles and were victorious, yet they left all this behind, because they loved the Lord Jesus more than anything or any position. And with great courage they confessed Christ before wealthy governors and kings and were not afraid, but witnessed to Christ and despised their idols.

The martyr soldiers: St George, St Mar Mina, Abu Siffein (bearer of two swords), Prince Theodore El-Shatby, Prince Theodore Al-Mishriki, St Abu-eskhyron, St Boctor. Each of them has their own well known picture, by which we can know them.



Handicraft

Have you ever fought in a battle? Or have you ever seen a soldier? Okay, but you have definitely not seen a soldier in the Roman army. Let's see what he wore, and what he held, using the felt board.

Stick up a soldier on the board; then place on him different parts of his clothing: his helmet, the body armour, and shoulder plates. For defence, he holds a sword or a javelin, and a shield. The servant should prepare the clothing and the weaponry and colour them in.



Drama ...Pantomime

A servant should dress up as a Roman soldier (Prince Theodore). The children should not be told who it is).

Prince Theodore: How are you my children...can you guess who I am.

Children: (they will probably say that it St George)

Prince Theodore: I love St George very much... and I was martyred like him. And I was also a soldier in the Roman army. Do you know St George was the only Christian martyr in the Roman army? No, we are many. Ask some questions about me and I will answer you. Maybe you will work out who I am. The children should try to guess the name of the saint.

The Lesson

The servant then tells the story to the children:

My dear servant, inform yourself of the story St Theodore El-Shatby. You can give it in a simplified way to the children, mentioning the following points:

- ❖ A prince came from Antioch to Egypt to choose soldiers, and he got to know John in Upper Egypt and took him as a soldier.
- ❖ John married a princess called Eusania who was pagan, and they had a son called Theodore.
- ❖ The princess gave Theodore to John to bring him up by himself after she learnt that John was a Christian.
- ❖ Theodore was a brave soldier in the Roman army ... he was promoted to the highest rank.
- ❖ When Theodore learnt that his father was Christian, he himself believed in Christ and adopted the Christian Faith.
- ❖ The reunion between the martyr and his father was a fruit of the prayers of his father, who rejoiced that Theodore had become Christian.
- ❖ The story of the dragon and the courage of Prince Theodore
- ❖ His martyrdom in the name of the Lord Jesus, and receiving the crown of martyrdom.



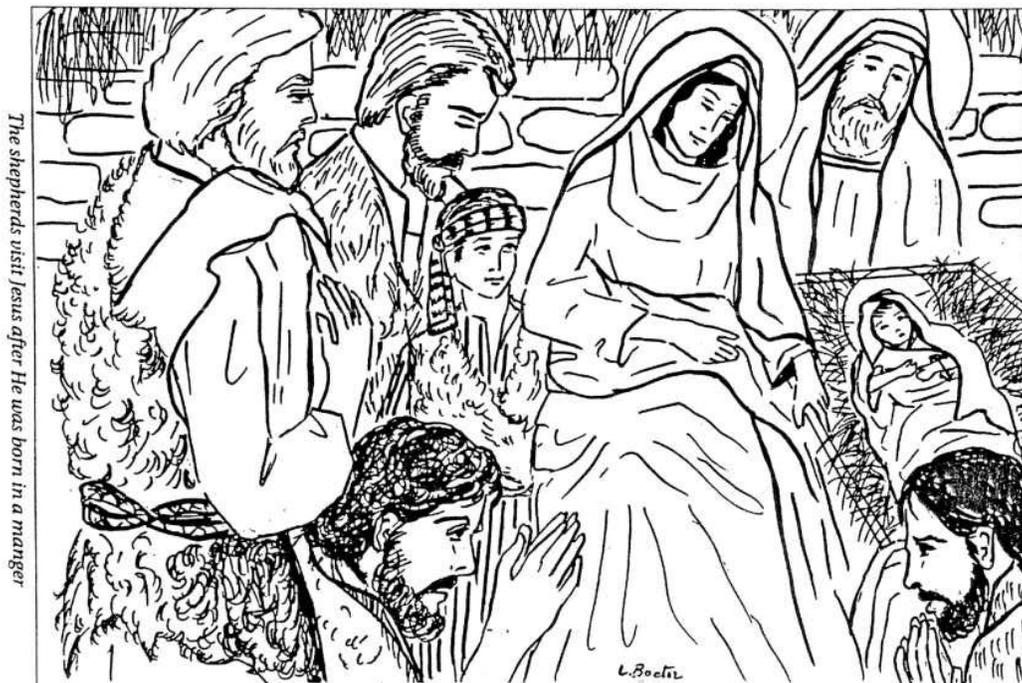
The third week of the month of Kiahk
(December)

Lessons Benefited from the Birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Bible reference: Luke 2:4-20 and Matthew 1:18-33

Lesson purpose: To know that the Lord Jesus has come because He loves us and wants to be with us in our daily lives. We benefit a lot when we let the Lord Jesus be with us in everything we do

Bible verse: *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" (Luke 2:14)*



The Lesson

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

- Please start by reading from St. Matthew chapter 1:18-33.
The Lord Jesus means the Saviour because He saved His people from their sins. Emmanuel means God is with us.
- **From these two names for our Lord we could learn that**
 1. He loves us and has come for our salvation.
 2. He is with us in our daily lives.

Because of His love for us, He came in the form of a servant, born in a manger.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son" John 3:16

So loved...He gave.... means, because God loved us, He came for us.

- Sing here the song, — "He came for us...with His tender love."
When Jesus came to our world He wanted to stay with us, live in our hearts and give us peace and love in our lives.
Tell the story of the shepherds, the visit to Jesus. They were very happy when they heard the news from the angel.
- The teacher may ask the children to act out what happened by the Jordan River, the conversation between the Lord Jesus and John the Baptist and the Baptism of our Lord Jesus.

Application



Exercise...

1. If someone loves you that much, as Jesus does, what do you have to do? You must love Him in return.
2. We must live our daily lives with God because He is with us. Let God study with us, bless our food, heal us when we are sick and lead all our actions in our daily life.
3. God has not created us with the intention to leave us in isolation from Him. He wants to develop an intimate relationship with us as a Father, and a friend.