

JUDGES

DISOBEDIENCE AND DELIVERANCE

Original text: Eleanor Harwood

Adapted for Europe: Jennifer Haaijer

PLEASE NOTE!

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Introduction

Teaching Bible truths

We fall short of our responsibility as teachers if we only tell children Bible stories. It is essential that children learn the truths those stories were written down to teach us, and that we then take them a step further to show what that truth means to them in their daily lives. Of course, we cannot in one lesson cover all the teaching any particular story would provide, so in each of these lessons one central truth has been chosen. The teaching of the central truth has been woven throughout the narrative, but to help you in your preparation the teaching sections have been marked **CT**. These are also marked out in the lesson plan. You will notice that the central truths are marked with a **U** or an **S** to show the kind of children the truth is applied to - unsaved or saved. This is also made clear in the text by using phrases such as, “If you have not trusted the Lord Jesus to forgive your sin ...” or, “Christian, you ...”. The application of the truth has been highlighted with a line beside the text. You may feel it necessary to adapt the applications to better suit the children you teach. The important thing is that the Word of God is applied to their lives.

Making yourself available

When you present the Gospel message, there will be children who will respond to it independently. They may or may not tell you that they have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour at a later date. There will, however, be others who would like some help. They may have questions to ask; they may need help or encouragement in knowing what to say. As you also teach the saved children, there may be times when they would like advice in a difficult situation; they may need clarification on how a particular lesson applies to their daily lives; they may find themselves in a situation where they do not know what the Bible says they should do; they may want to share a difficulty so that you can pray for them, especially if you are the only Christian support they have. For these reasons it is important that the children know you are available to talk. It is also important that they know when and where to go when they want to talk to you. Finally, it is essential that unsaved children do not confuse coming to the Lord Jesus with coming to you.

In all cases you should not make yourself available at the same time as giving the Gospel invitation, so that the children never get the impression that they cannot come to Christ without coming through you, or that they are saved simply by waiting to speak to you.

An example for use with the unsaved child

“Do you really want to live for the Lord Jesus, but you don’t know how to come to Him? I will be glad to explain it from the Bible; come and see me. I’ll be standing by that tree when the meeting is over. Remember, I can’t take away your sin. Only the Lord Jesus can do that, but I will be glad to help you understand better how you can come to Him. Just come and sit with me under the tree.”

An example for use with the saved child

“If you have trusted the Lord Jesus as your Saviour and you have never told me about it, please let me know. I’ll be standing beside the piano after the meeting is finished. I would like to know if you too have trusted the Lord Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, so that I can pray for you and perhaps help you.”

Memory verses

A Scripture verse to teach the children is suggested for each lesson. If you are teaching the lessons as a series over six weeks it would be advisable to choose two or three verses to teach well, which the children will then remember. If you try to teach all six, the children may not really know any of them well.

Review questions

Review questions are provided. Review time, if conducted in an orderly way, can be an ideal opportunity to reinforce what you have taught while still being fun for the children. You will often discover misunderstandings or gaps in their knowledge which you can correct there and then.

Overview

| Lesson | Central truth | Application | Memory verse |
|--|---|---|--|
| Israel's Broken Promise Joshua 24 Judges 1 Judges 2:1-23 | God commands, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength" | Unsaved: Recognise you have disobeyed this command and turn to Christ for salvation Saved: Don't allow other things or people to become more important to you than God | "... you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind" Matthew 22:37 |
| Deborah and Barak deliver Israel Judges 4:1-24 (Deborah's song: Judges 5:1-31) | God is Lord over all | Unsaved: Trust Christ to break sin and Satan's power in your life Saved: Trust Him to help you when people are against you because you are a Christian | Review Matthew 22:37 |
| Gideon learns to be bold for God Judges 6:1-40 | Be a soldier for God as Gideon was | Unsaved: You become a "soldier" when you trust Jesus Christ to save you Saved: Be obedient and trusting as you fight Satan | "Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you" James 4:7-8 |
| Gideon and the 300 against the Midianites Judges 7:1-25; 8:22-23, 28 | Every true Christian is a soldier | Unsaved: Change sides by trusting Christ as Saviour Saved: Don't quit and be watchful | Review James 4:7-8 |
| God chooses Samson Judges 13:1-15:20 | God has special plans for every Christian | Unsaved: You begin to discover God's plans when you trust Jesus Christ Saved: You will become more like Jesus as God works out His plan in your life | "Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" Philippians 1:6 |
| Samson and Delilah Judges 16:4-31 | Sinful steps lead away from God | Saved: Come back to God, confessing your sin to Him | "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin" 1 John 1:7 |

Lesson 1

Israel's Broken Promise

Scripture for teachers

Joshua 24

Judges 1

Judges 2:1-23

Central truth

God commands, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength"

Application

Unsaved: Recognise you have disobeyed this command and turn to Christ for salvation

Saved: Don't allow other things or people to become more important to you than God

Memory verse

"... you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind"
Matthew 22:37

We suggest that you teach the verse before the lesson.

Visual aids

- ♦ Flashcards: 1-1, 1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5 and 1-6

Or

- ♦ Figures: JD-1, JD-2, JD-3, JD-4, JD-5, JD-6, JD-7, JD-8, JD-9a, JD-9b and JD-10

And

- ♦ Gospel visuals: 1-1 and 1-3 if you are using flannelgraph, or flashcards 1-4 and 1-5.

Lesson outline

Introduction

Joshua teaches history

Progression of events

- 1 Joshua promises to serve the Lord
- 2 Israel promises to serve the Lord CT
- 3 Joshua dies
- 4 Israelites consult God about the heathen people CT
- 5 God gives instructions and victory
- 6 The next generation turns to false gods CTU

Climax

- 7 The angel of the Lord comes
- 8 The Israelites weep
- 9 The Israelites return to false gods CTU

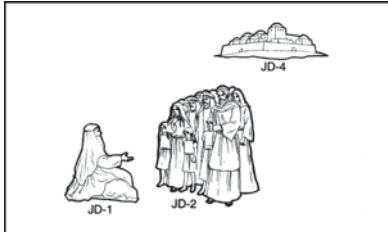
Climax

- 10 God gives success to their enemies CTS

Conclusion

God gives them judges

Flashcard 1-1



Lesson

Scene 1

What is your favourite subject in school? Maths? Geography? Art? Who likes history? Joshua was giving the Israelites a history lesson!

Place Joshua (JD-1), Israelites (JD-2) and city (JD-4) on the board.

He reminded them of what God had done for Abraham. *(If the children know about Abraham, ask them what God did for him, giving Abraham land, a son, etc.)*

He spoke again of God's marvellous rescue of His people from Egypt. Many of those listening could see it all happen again when their leader talked about crossing the river Jordan into Canaan - they had been there!

Joshua continued, "God says to you 'I have given you a land for which you did not labour, and cities which you did not build, and you dwell in them; you eat of the vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.'" (Joshua 24:13)

The Israelites knew that all of this was true, perhaps they nodded in agreement. Joshua had not finished. "So then," he urged the people, "throw away the false gods - wherever they are from. Get rid of them! Give yourselves totally and completely to the Lord."

That makes sense, doesn't it! Why should they worship gods of stone when they know the One, True and Living God. Many times they had seen His power and might. From experience they knew that God cared for them, His people. They also knew His command, "You shall have no other gods before Me" (Exodus 20:3). Would the Israelites follow Joshua's advice?

Joshua himself led the way. He announced, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

The people followed his example. "We also will serve the Lord, for He is our God," they promised.

CT

This is exactly how it should be - for you and me too. The Lord is the only God. He is awesome and mighty, kind and loving. Every person on the earth should love Him completely - 100%. But it does not happen. We find our friends are more important to us than God. Have you ever been persuaded by your friends to go somewhere without your parents' permission? That shows that your friends are more important to you than God. We can spend a whole day, or a week and never even think about God. It is an insult to God, who made us. It is disobedience to His command. Can you say it with me? "You shall love the Lord your God ..." Do you always keep God first? No! - neither do I. Nor did the Israelites, but now they seemed determined to love and obey God.

Joshua knew that the people would find it difficult to keep their promise. There were still many people in Canaan who worshipped other gods. Joshua said, "I am setting up a stone here, to remind you of your promise."

Scene 2

Not long afterwards Joshua died. The Israelites were very sad for he had been a great leader. But God was still their God and He was with them. Many of the people kept their promise to follow the Lord completely. This made a difference in how they handled their problems.

There were many Canaanites, idol worshippers, in the land. God was giving Canaan to His people and had said the others must be forced to leave. How would the Israelites do this? Very wisely they turned to God and asked Him to show them. Time and time again God told them which of the Israelites should fight and against whom. Were they successful? Yes! - even when they fought against giants. In the Bible we have the secret of their success (*read Judges 1:22*) "the Lord was with them."

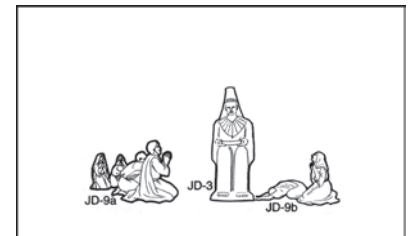
Gradually the Israelites who remembered the excitement of crossing the Jordan into Canaan, died. Their children knew the stories of what happened. They had been taught about God, but they also saw the idols their neighbours worshipped.

Place idol (JD-3) and Israelites worshipping (JD-9a and JD-9b).

They saw the dancing and drinking at the places where these gods were worshipped. The Israelites started to join in and worshipped these false gods too.

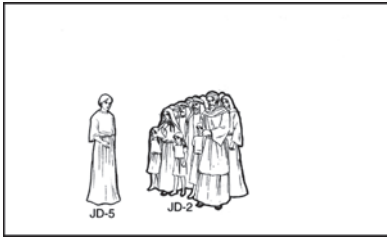
If you had asked them, "Do you believe in the Lord God?" they would have said, "Yes, of course." But they were trying to share their love and worship with other gods. Why is this not possible? (*Allow the children to reason this through.*) People still try to do this. They try to give God a little bit of their lives. They go to church, or perhaps say prayers. That is all. The rest of the time they do what they want and never consider what God wants. Are you like that? Being a Christian means that God is in charge. He comes before anyone else. Perhaps you see that you have had no time for God and you are very, very sorry. God says, "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19). Agree with what God says about your sin, turn away from it and trust Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord. Then little by little you will learn to love God with every bit of you. I am still learning! And I really want to love God more. But these Israelites did not. They spent more and more time worshipping the idols and they started to live the way the Canaanites did.

CT



CTU

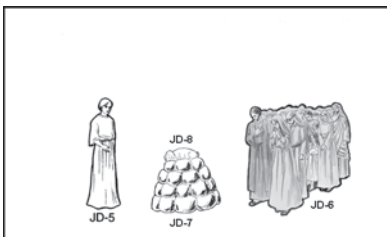
Flashcard 1-2



Many Bible students believe this was a theophany – a pre-incarnation appearance of Christ.

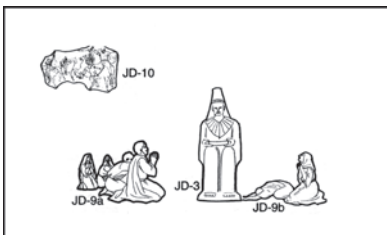
Flashcard 1-3

Flashcard 1-4



Flashcard 1-5

Flashcard 1-6



Scene 3

God was very displeased and sent a messenger.

Place Israelites (JD-2) and angel (JD-5).

We do not know what he looked like, but the people certainly knew who he was. The Bible tells us he was “the Angel of the Lord”. I am sure there was a hush as the Angel brought God’s message, “I told you not to enter into agreements with the heathen people. I told you to break down the altars to their gods. Yet, you have disobeyed me. I will no longer help you to drive them out. They will be like thorns in your side and their gods will be like a trap for you.”

Had you been there, how would you have felt? The Bible says the Israelites began to cry and they called out to God.

Remove figure JD-2 and place Israelites crying (JD-6).

They brought a sacrifice to God (*place altar and lamb - figures JD-7 and JD-8*) and it looked as if things were going to be different.

Sadly, very little changed. They kept their friendships with the Canaanites, they continued to worship the false gods. They had cried because they were caught out, not because they were sorry for what they had done. For a short time they behaved as if they were going to change, but they didn’t.

Remove all visuals.

CTU

If you are not saved God wants you to see how wrong your life has been (*show Gospel visual 1-1.*) He wants to change you through and through. If that is what you want, tell Him so. Believe that Jesus died in your place, for your sin; (*show Gospel visual 1-3*) as it says in the Bible, “He was wounded for our transgressions.” (Isaiah 53:5.) He is alive today, so He can save you and change you if you trust Him. Perhaps that is what you want, but you have questions you would like to ask me. When the others leave, please go (*designate place*) and I will be happy to talk to you - it is very important that you understand. If you become a true Christian you will want to love God and obey Him - and it won’t be just words like it was with the Israelites.

Scene 4

Place Israelites worshipping (JD-9a and JD-9b) and idol (JD-3).

God’s warning came true. The Israelites went into battle and they were defeated. Their enemies constantly carried out raids. (*Place enemies - figure JD-10.*) Why did this happen? (*Allow children to answer.*) If only the Israelites had remained loyal to God. Those of us who are Christians should be careful that we do not allow other people or things to take God’s place. It can happen so slowly that we hardly notice.

Jack was a Christian and a keen swimmer. He entered lots of competitions. He practised as often as he could. One day after Good

CTS

News Club® his teacher said, “Jack, you miss club more often now, why is that?”

Jack was surprised, “Do I? I didn’t even think about it.”

On his way home he thought about it and realised that he went swimming so often that he missed Good News Club and sometimes he even forgot it was on. Swimming had slowly become the most important thing in his life. How could Jack put this right? *(Discuss with the children.)* God wants to be first in the lives of His children and His children want Him to be first.

But the Israelites did not want to put things right. Life became difficult and dangerous. It is amazing that God still loved the Israelites. He gave them new leaders, called judges, to help them defeat their enemies. Sometimes they listened to the judges and obeyed God. Sometimes they ignored them.

Do not be like them! If you are not saved, turn from your sin to the Lord Jesus, like it says in the Bible, “Repent therefore and be converted.” Can you remember what God will do? All your sin will be blotted out forever. God will change you, little by little and you will want to love Him with every bit of you.

Carry-over activity

Have the children paste the memory verse on to card, leaving a border. Make a small slit at the bottom. Suggest to the Christian children that they write on a small square of paper the thing or person that may take God’s place in their lives. They fold it up and put it in the slit to remind them to ask God for strength not to allow that thing to take His place.

Review questions

- 1 Why was Joshua giving the people a talk about their history? (To show them that they should love God and obey Him and not follow other gods.)
- 2 Joshua made it clear what he would do. He said, “As for me, and my house ...” - complete the sentence. (“... we will serve the Lord.”)
- 3 What did the people promise? (They too would serve the Lord.)
- 4 What did Joshua do to remind them of their promise? (He set up a stone.)
- 5 Why did they, and why do we, find it so hard to love God 100%? (They, and we, are sinners.)
- 6 When did Israel start to break their promise? (When the people who remembered seeing God’s miracles had died.)
- 7 What word is missing? “You shall love the Lord your God, with your heart, soul, mind and strength.” (“All.”)

Suggested questions:

What was Jack doing wrong? How could he put this right? What else might take the place of God in the life of a Christian?

Review game

Balloon score review

Prepare ten balloons by blowing them up and putting a piece of paper with a score inside each one. When a child answers a question for his team, he scores 100 points. He also chooses a balloon and bursts it to find his additional score.

- 8 Israel said “sorry” to God, but how do we know it was just words? (They kept on worshipping other gods and doing what displeased God.)
- 9 What could take God’s place in the life of a Christian? (A sport, a friend, computer, etc.)
- 10 Why should every person love God with all their heart? (He alone is God.)

Lesson 2

Deborah and Barak deliver Israel

Scripture for teachers

Judges 4:1-24

(Deborah's song: Judges 5:1-31)

Central truth

God is Lord over all

Application

Unsaved: Trust Christ to break sin and Satan's power in your life

Saved: Trust Him to help you when people are against you because you are a Christian

Memory verse

Review Matthew 22:37

Visual aids

- ♦ Flashcards: 2-1, 2-2, 2-3, 2-4, 2-5 and 2-6

Or

- ♦ Figures: JD-3, JD-9a, JD-9b, JD-11, JD-12, JD-13, JD-14, JD-15, JD-16, JD-17, JD-18, JD-19, JD-20 and JD-21

Lesson outline

Introduction

How would you have felt facing a huge army?

Progression of events

- 1 Israelites worship idols again
- 2 Oppressed by enemies for 20 years CT
- 3 Israel cries to God for help CTU
- 4 Deborah becomes judge
- 5 Israelites come to Deborah for counsel
- 6 Deborah calls for Barak and gives instructions CTS
- 7 Barak asks Deborah to accompany him to battle
- 8 Israelite army gathers, Sisera's army approaches
- 9 Deborah cheers Israelites on to victory

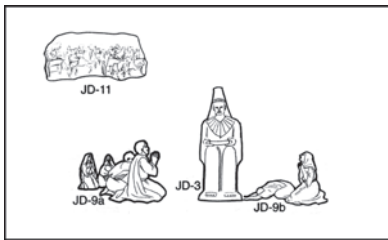
Climax

- 10 God sends storm, Sisera stuck in mud CTS
- 11 Sisera runs to Jael's tent
- 12 Jael kills him

Conclusion

Deborah, Barak and Israelites praise God CTU

Flashcard 2-1



CT

A helper or older child
whom you have prepared,
may read the Bible verse.

Lesson

Nine hundred chariots made of iron! Thousands of enemy soldiers! Hundreds of galloping horses! What would it have been like to live long ago and serve in an army facing an enemy like that - and your army did not have a sword or shield to protect yourself from them. How would you feel? Afraid? That is exactly how the people of Israel felt. They were terrified of the army of General Sisera.

Scene 1

Place idol (JD-3), Israelites worshipping (JD-9a and JD-9b) and Sisera's soldiers (JD-11) on the board.

The people of Israel had forgotten their promise to be loyal to God. They were back worshipping idols instead of the living God. This time their stubborn disobedience had lasted 20 long years. Twenty long years of being surrounded by enemy armies. Twenty years of not being able to walk down the main road to their homes. Bands of soldiers had attacked them so often, they sneaked down side roads trying to hide from them.

Remember, their army had no weapons. General Sisera's army had stolen all their iron and tools to make weapons. The people of Israel were helpless and afraid.

For these 20 years God used the enemies to punish His people for their disobedience. The enemies, including General Sisera, had no idea that God was using them. God was punishing His people for their disobedience. God can do whatever He pleases with anything or anyone. He is God. He is over all. Listen to what the Bible says about God. *(Read 2 Chronicles 20:6.)* "O Lord God of our fathers, are You not God in heaven, and do You not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, and in Your hand is there not power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You?"

Sisera was the greatest general of that time, but he was nothing in comparison with God. Sisera had some power, God has all power. How great He is! Weren't the Israelites foolish to turn to other gods?

I am sure that during the 20 years of trouble they turned to these gods and asked for help. But no help came. When they could take it no longer they cried out to God for help. "Oh God, deliver us. Set us free from this terrible army," they must have prayed. God used the enemy to turn His people back to Himself. At last they realised that only God was greater than their enemy.

Remove all figures.

CTU

Do you know who our greatest enemies are? Yes, Satan and sin. God is greater than Satan. He is more powerful than sin. He showed that when He brought His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, back to life. Christ died for our sins, but He did not stay dead. He can rescue you from the grip sin and Satan have on your life. You try to be good but you

can't be if you are not saved. You try to clean up your language - but in a day or two you are as bad as ever. Sin and Satan are too powerful for you. The Lord Jesus "is able to save to the uttermost (or completely) those who come to God through Him" (Hebrews 7:25). If you depend on the Lord Jesus to bring you to God, He will rescue you from sin and Satan. God is greater than anyone, so Sisera was small to Him.

Scene 2

Place palm tree (JD-12) and Deborah (JD-13).

God gave the Israelites a judge, a good wise judge called Deborah. Do you think the Israelites deserved God's help? Not at all! But God is kind and merciful so He appointed Deborah to lead them.

Place Israelites (JD-14).

A judge is a person who knows the law and decides what is right, based on what the law says. The law that Deborah knew about was God's Law. When there were disagreements among the people they came to Deborah and she decided each case. God gave her wisdom and understanding and the people respected Deborah's advice.

Remove Israelites (JD-14).

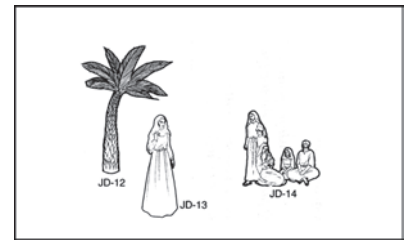
One day Deborah sent a message to Barak who lived in the north of Israel. She asked him to travel south to meet her.

Place Barak (JD-15).

"Barak, the Lord God of Israel has instructions for you. Go to Mount Tabor and take 10,000 men with you. God is going to bring General Sisera there with all his chariots and troops. God will give you victory over Sisera!"

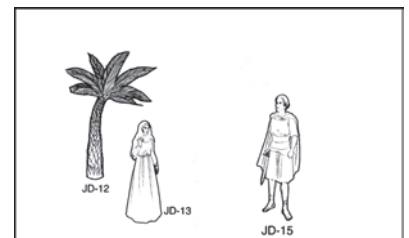
Deborah was sure of God. She knew that if Barak and the Israelites obeyed Him, He would certainly give victory. Deborah knew God was greater than Sisera and his powerful army. If you love the Lord Jesus, there may be a "Sisera" in your life; someone who is against you. Perhaps there is someone at home or at school who makes fun of you because you are a Christian. They make you seem small and foolish. Listen to God's Word. *(Read Psalm 34:15-17.)* "The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry. The face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles." How will God deliver you from the people who make life difficult for you? He may change them so that they don't mock you any more. He may work it out so that you do not see them so often. He may make you strong and brave enough to go through these hard times. Do remember that those who are against you are small to God. Perhaps you could mark these verses in your Bible, so it is easy to find them.

Flashcard 2-2



Using a map will be helpful for older children.

Flashcard 2-3



CTS

Make this possible, eg have the reference on a note which children may take home. Or, after club, help children find the verses in their own Bibles.

Deborah knew very well what God could do - but Barak was not so sure. The Bible tells us exactly what Barak said. Listen as I read it from God's Word. "If you will go with me, then I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go!" (Judges 4:8).

Why did Barak say this? *(Allow children to make suggestions.)* The Bible does not tell us why. Deborah replied, "I will surely go with you" (Judges 4:9). Deborah knew that God was great and mighty, that the battle against Sisera would not be a problem for God. God was Lord over all. Deborah told Barak that because he had hesitated about going into battle, he would not get the honour for victory, that honour would go to a woman.

Scene 3

Deborah left with him and soon 10,000 men were gathered at Mount Tabor.

Place soldiers (JD-16).

God worked it out that General Sisera heard where the Israelite army was, so, of course, he headed in that direction with his 30,000 strong army. They took position by the Kishon river.

Place soldiers (JD-11).

As General Sisera's army gathered in the valley below, *(place Deborah and Barak - figures JD-13 and JD-15)* Deborah, Barak and the Israelites could see them from their position on the mountain top. Was Deborah as confident now? *(Let children respond.)*

Deborah said, "Let's go. This is the day the Lord has given Sisera to us!" Deborah was so sure that God was going ahead of them into the battle, she was not worried at all. If she had compared the two armies she would have been afraid, if she had trusted in weapons and chariots she would not have gone out. Deborah knew that it was all in safe hands, God's hands. She knew that her God, Israel's God, was the Lord over all. He could not be defeated.

I wonder if Barak shouted, "CHARGE!" as he started down the mountain with his army right behind him.

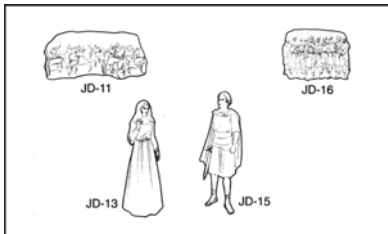
Remove Deborah (JD-13), Barak (JD-15) and soldiers (JD-16). Place rain cloud (JD-17).

As soon as Barak took that first step in obedience to God's command, God sent a strong storm with rain and hail and lightning.

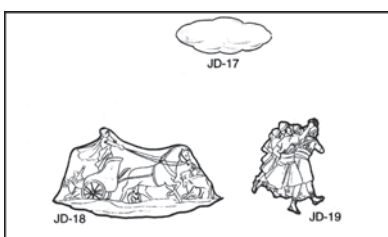
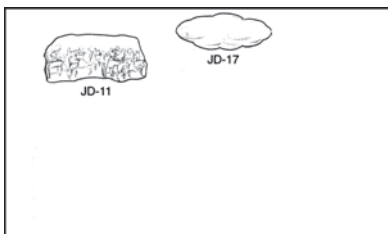
What a shock it must have been. It didn't normally rain at that time of year. It rained so hard and so fast that by the time Barak and his men got to the foot of the mountain, Sisera's heavy iron chariots were stuck in the mud!

Remove soldiers (JD-11). Add chariots (JD-18) and soldiers fleeing (JD-19).

The river was in flood making escape impossible. Don't you see that God is Lord over the weather too. He can send wind, rain, sunshine, lightning and hail whenever He pleases!



Flashcard 2-4



There was great confusion at the scene of battle. Sisera's men ran all over the place, some fell on their own swords. Barak kept after the enemy soldiers until there was not one of them left alive.

Remove chariots (JD-18) and soldiers (JD-19).

What a battle! Why did Israel win? *(Allow children to respond, emphasise again the central truth.)* Christian boy and girl, this is the God about whom we read in Psalm 34. Listen while I read verses 15 and 17 again and then tell me what God promises to do. He is the One who is with you when others are against you. Isn't it wonderful to know that and trust Him. Will you tell Him now, "Lord God, you know about those who are against me. Please help me. I know You can because You are Lord over everything and everyone. I know you have promised to help." God cannot be defeated.

Place Sisera fleeing (JD-20).

General Sisera was on the losing side and he knew it. He was so afraid that he abandoned his chariot and took off, running as fast as his legs could carry him. He ran to the tent of a woman named Jael and stopped there to rest. When he fell asleep, Jael took a tent peg and hammered it through his head. He never woke up.

Remove Sisera (JD-20).

Barak came looking for the famous general. "Come, I'll show you where he is," Jael said. She brought Barak into her tent and showed him the dead soldier. Who got the honour for this victory? - Jael, a woman - just as Deborah had said and she knew it because God told her.

Scene 4

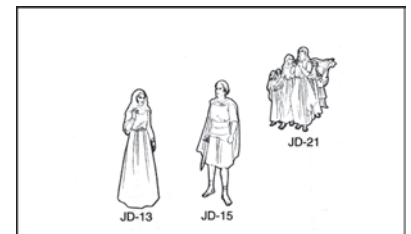
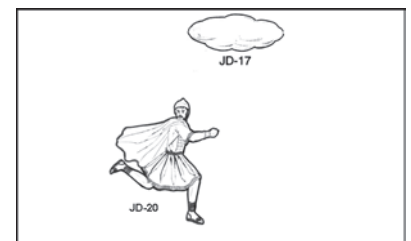
Place Deborah (JD-13), Barak (JD-15) and Israelites (JD-21).

There was great celebration throughout Israel. Deborah, Barak and the people of Israel sang praises to God. They were thankful that God had rescued them from their enemies - even though they had not deserved His help. They were so glad that God was their God. Is He yours? Do you know that in your life He is stronger than Satan and sin? If you really want to be rescued from these enemies, come to the Lord Jesus. He "is able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him" (Hebrews 7:25). Tell Him that you want to be rescued from sin and Satan. Give yourself over to Him. The Lord Jesus died for sin - Satan did not want that to happen but the Lord Jesus defeated him. The Lord Jesus came back to life. Satan did not want that to happen either - but the Lord Jesus defeated him again. Satan does not want you to be saved - but the Lord Jesus can defeat him in that also. He can save you completely! Then God's great power will be seen in your life as He makes you the kind of boy or girl He wants you to be. He will be there to help you in every situation, just as he helped Deborah and the Israelites.

Write up the answers as children call them out.

CTS

Flashcard 2-5



Flashcard 2-6

CTU

Review game

Build a tower

You will need 14 plastic, disposable beakers. Place 2 upside down on a table - one for each team. When a child answers for his team, he continues to build his team's tower by adding another beaker (the second one on the tower will be placed right way up, the third one upside down and so on). The team whose tower collapses first loses the competition (ie the team with the highest tower will win).

Review questions

- 1 Why could God use other nations, even the most powerful, to do as He wished? (He is all-powerful.)
- 2 Why was God punishing His people? (They had turned to idols.)
- 3 Who was the powerful general God used against Israel? (Sisera.)
- 4 When God chose to save Israel from her enemies, who did He choose as leader? (Deborah.)
- 5 How did God show He is more powerful than sin and Satan? (The resurrection of the Lord Jesus.)
- 6 When Deborah told Barak to go into battle against Sisera, what was his reply? (He would go only if Deborah went too.)
- 7 Why was Deborah not afraid to go? (She knew the Lord would win.)
- 8 Who could be like Sisera in your life, if you are a Christian? (Someone who is against you.)
- 9 What should you do if you are in that situation? (Trust God to sort it out.)
- 10 How did God give the victory to Israel? (He sent hail, rain and lightning and the enemy chariots got stuck in the mud!)
- 11 How did Sisera die? (In Jael's tent.)
- 12 Complete this sentence, "God is Lord ..." ("... over all.")

Lesson 3

Gideon learns to be bold for God

Scripture for teachers

Judges 6:1-40

Central truth

Be a soldier for God as Gideon was

Application

Unsaved: You become a “soldier” when you trust Jesus Christ to save you

Saved: Be obedient and trusting as you fight Satan

(The main emphasis in the text is for the Christian child)

Memory verse

“Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you” James 4:7-8

Visual aids

- ♦ Flashcards: 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, 3-4, 3-5 and 3-6

Or

- ♦ Figures: JD-7, JD-22, JD-23, JD-24, JD-25, JD-26, JD-27, JD-28, JD-29, JD-30 and JD-31

And

- ♦ Make a shield from card, using the pattern provided (page 47), and write “Be God’s soldier” at the top. As you teach add the following: “have an enemy”, “are chosen”, “obey”, “trust”.

Lesson outline

Introduction

Last time the Israelites were praising God, but now they are hiding

Progression of events

- | | | |
|----|--|-----|
| 1 | Midianites oppress Israel | CTS |
| 2 | Israel cries to God | |
| 3 | The Lord appears to Gideon | |
| 4 | Gideon asks for sign that God will use him | |
| 5 | God gives Gideon a sign | CTS |
| 6 | Gideon told to tear down Baal | |
| 7 | Gideon obeys | CTS |
| 8 | The deed is discovered | |
| 9 | Gideon’s father defends him | |
| 10 | Gideon puts out fleece | CTS |

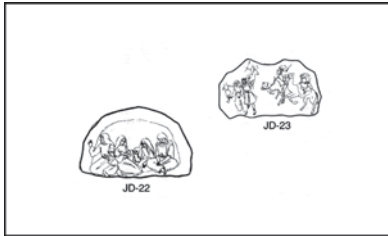
Climax

God gives the sign

Conclusion

Gideon is ready to fight the Midianites CTS

Flashcard 3-1



The Midianites were the first people known to use camels in battle.

Show on the map where Midianites came from to invade Israel.

Lesson

When we last saw the Israelites, they were singing praises to God. They actually enjoyed peace for 40 years. But look at them now.

Scene 1

Place Israelites hiding (JD-22) on the board.

What had happened? Once again they had turned away from God. After Deborah died they started to worship idols. Look what it got them.

Place Midianites stealing crops (JD-23).

For seven years the Midianites attacked them. The Midianites were desert people who lived in tents and had hundreds and hundreds of camels.

The Israelites always knew when the Midianites were coming. The sound of hundreds of camels galloping and the men making a high shrieking sound with their voices rang in the Israelites' ears. The Bible says they came up with their animals and their tents like swarms of locusts - so many at a time you couldn't even see the land beneath their feet. And they were not coming to pay a friendly visit. They were coming to steal, kill and destroy.

The Midianites came every year at harvest time. They pitched their tents on the land of the Israelites. Their cattle and sheep ruined the land. Their people ate, stole or destroyed the crops. The Israelites couldn't stay in their homes. They lived in caves and big holes in rock formations where the Midianites could not find them. When the Midianites left, the Israelites had nothing. No food. No animals. No homes. Nothing.

CTS

What a dreadful enemy. I am sure you are glad things like that do not happen to you. But if you are a Christian, you too have a strong, ruthless enemy. (*Write "have an enemy" on shield.*) This enemy is also God's enemy. Who is it? Yes, it is the devil or Satan. Let's listen to what the Bible says about him. (*Four children, who have been given these references earlier, read them aloud.*)

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| ◆ John 8:44 | He is a liar/murderer |
| ◆ Ephesians 6:11 | He is crafty |
| ◆ 1 Peter 5:8 | He is powerful and cruel |
| ◆ Mark 1:13 | He tempts |

The devil fights against God and Christians. Of course, he is not as powerful as God, but if you are a real Christian he will enjoy making life hard for you. You will have to fight against him.

The Israelites didn't try to fight the Midianites. They put up with these raids for seven years. God allowed it to teach His people how wrong they were to turn to idols. It took them seven long years to learn that lesson. In the end they did cry out to God and He sent

Write on board or card the 4 facts about Satan.

them a prophet who told them why they had suffered so much. God said to them, “You have not obeyed My voice” (Judges 6:10).

Scene 2

Place Gideon threshing wheat (JD-24).

Farmers, like Gideon, hid to thresh their wheat. Of course they did not have the machinery that is available today. They usually took the wheat to the top of a hill and beat it. Then the wind would blow away the part they did not use and the grain would fall to the ground. But it was too dangerous for Gideon to be seen in the open. So there he was, hiding in a wine press out of fear.

Place the Angel of the Lord (JD-25) and staff (JD-26).

Suddenly the Angel of the Lord appeared and said, “The Lord is with you, you mighty warrior!”

Gideon was confused and frightened. “If the Lord is with us, why are these bad things happening? Where are all the miracles God did for our fathers when He brought them out of Egypt? The Lord has abandoned us. He has left us to suffer at the hands of the Midianites.”

The Lord understood Gideon’s fear and spoke kindly. “I am sending you to save Israel out of the hands of the Midianites. Go in the strength you have.”

But Gideon didn’t think he had any strength! “How can I save Israel? My family is not important and I am the least important in my family. I’m nobody.”

Listen to what the Angel of the Lord said. (*Read Judges 6:16.*) “Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man.”

But there wasn’t only one of them. There were swarms of them, Gideon was sure of that. What he wasn’t sure of, was whether this was really the Lord talking to him. “Give me a sign if it is really You talking to me,” he said. “Let me prepare an offering for You. Please don’t go away until I do.”

Remove all figures. Place Gideon (JD-27).

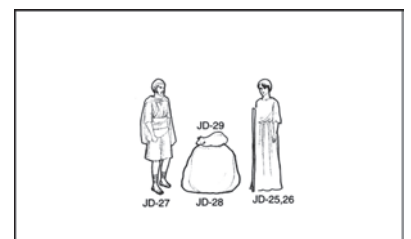
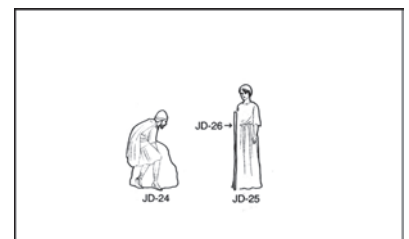
The Angel promised to wait and Gideon cooked a young goat in some broth and made bread without yeast for an offering. (*Place rock with offering - figures JD-28 and JD-29.*) Gideon took the offering to the Angel of the Lord and carefully followed His instructions, putting the meat and bread on the rock and pouring out the broth.

Place Angel (JD-25) and staff (JD-26).

The Angel of the Lord took the staff in His hand and barely touched the meat and bread with the tip of it. Instantly fire flowed up from the rock and burned the offering.

Remove all figures.

Flashcard 3-2



Flashcard 3-3

You may stand in front of board and use staff and rock to make this scene more real.

Flashcard 3-4

CTSU

Just as quickly the Angel disappeared. Gideon was frightened, but God said, "Peace! Don't be afraid. You're not going to die."

Gideon was so grateful to God that he built an altar and worshipped Him there. He knew that God had chosen him to fight the enemy. He would be a soldier for God.

God did not choose Gideon because he was important, famous or clever. Only God knows why He chose Gideon. If you are a Christian, you too are a chosen one. You think back to when you trusted the Lord Jesus as your Saviour - perhaps you would say, "I chose to put my trust in Him." That is true. But it is also true that God chose you. The Bible says that Christians are a chosen people (1 Peter 2:9). (*Write "chosen" on shield.*) We do not deserve to be chosen, for we have disobeyed Him and gone against Him, just like everyone else. We will never understand why He loves us, and chose us. But if you are saved, you are chosen. Like Gideon, you are also chosen to be in a battle. The battle is against the enemy we talked about, Satan. If you are not saved, you are still on Satan's side. Is that what you want? If not, then trust Jesus Christ as your Saviour and you will be a soldier in God's army as Gideon was.

Scene 3

That same night the Lord spoke to Gideon again. "Tear down your father's altar to Baal and build one to Me," God said.

Why was this a hard command to obey? (*Allow children to reason this through.*) Everyone worshipped Baal, so they would all be angry. His own family was involved and that made it more difficult. Gideon was obedient to God.

Flashcard 3-5

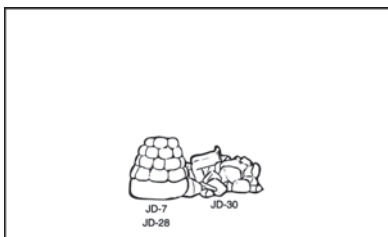
Place broken altar (JD-30), rock (JD-28) and altar to God (JD-7).

He took ten men with him at night and together they destroyed the idol and the altar of Baal. They built an altar to the true God in its place.

Gideon had learned the most important lesson in being a soldier for God. He was obedient. An army will never win if the soldiers do not obey commands. God gives us commands in the Bible and His soldiers obey, even when it is difficult to do so. (*Write "obey" on shield.*)

CTS

Alistair had a big selection of CDs - his friends envied him for he always had the latest hits. One day he read in his Bible, "Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely - think on these things" (Philippians 4:8). He thought of some of the songs on his CDs and he knew they did not pass God's test. Should he sell them, should he destroy them, should he keep them? What do you think? He was a Christian soldier, fighting against Satan. Alistair was obedient, he destroyed the ones that were not good for a Christian to listen to. He was like Gideon! ... but soon there was trouble for God's soldier.



Place men of Judah (JD-31).

“Who did this? Did you see anything last night?”

“If I get my hands on the man responsible, he’ll be sorry.”

“Who would do such a thing - destroy Baal’s altar, the culprit should die.” Word spread through the town like wildfire. It wasn’t long before they found out who did it: Gideon, (*place Gideon - figure JD-27*) son of Joash. Gideon could hear them coming. A mob of angry men from the city, shouting and threatening as they came closer to his father’s house. They called for his father to come outside (*place Joash - figure JD-32*). Joash had been one of them, worshipping the false god Baal. After all, it was his altar that had been torn down. Was he as angry with his son as these men were?

“Bring out your son,” the crowd demanded, “he deserves to die.”

Looking these angry, hateful men right in the eye Joash spoke without hesitation. “Does Baal need you to fight his battle for him? If Baal really is god, can’t he defend himself?” Gideon’s obedience to God seems to have helped change his father’s way of thinking.

When the people heard that the true God had spoken to Gideon they were ready to help him - the Bible tells us that the Spirit of God came upon Gideon (Judges 6:34) so that he was full of courage to fight the Midianites. This reminds us that we do not fight against Satan in our own strength, but the Holy Spirit helps every Christian. Gideon blew his trumpet - a sign that soldiers should gather. He sent messengers to different tribes of Israelites, calling them to join him against the Midianites. Soon many men were flocking to him, keen to fight now that they had a leader.

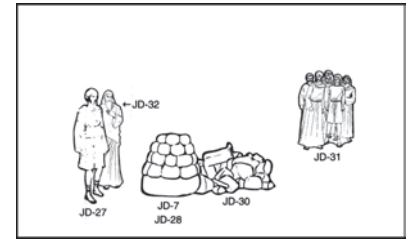
The Midianites were ready too. They had more than 120,000 men, three times as many as the Israelites.

Gideon still had times when he was unsure. But he did a very wise thing. He went back to God to be sure God would be with him in the battle.

“If You will use me to save Israel from the Midianites as You promised, will You show me one more thing?” Gideon put a fleece, a piece of lamb’s wool, on the ground. “If the dew falls only on the fleece and the ground is dry, I’ll know You are going to save Israel by my hand, as You said,” he told God.

God did exactly as Gideon had asked. The ground was dry. God was showing Gideon that he could trust God to do what He had promised. Without depending on God Gideon could not go into battle.

It is just the same for you, if you are a Christian. As a soldier for God, in the battle against Satan, you must trust God to keep His promises. (*Write “trust” on shield.*) Perhaps from time to time in school, the teacher says that parts of the Bible are not true. You would like



Flashcard 3-6

CTS

to point out that Jesus Himself believed in Adam and Jonah and the Flood, but you are scared. Or you are at a friend's house and they start to play the ouija board. You want to say it is wrong and you want to phone your Mum to bring you home. Can you trust God to help you? Yes, just as surely as Gideon did. God makes this promise in Isaiah 41:10, "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you" - help you to fight these battles. He wants you to trust Him, just as He wanted Gideon to do so.

Just to be 100% sure Gideon asked God to repeat the sign. But this time the other way around. So what did he ask? (*Allow children to respond.*) Yes, the fleece dry and the ground damp. God did as Gideon asked. Gideon was ready to fight - depending on God, even though his army was much smaller than the Midianites. Next time we'll hear how the battle went.

CTS

In the battle against sin and Satan, are you on God's side? If you have trusted the Lord Jesus as your Saviour you are a 'soldier' on God's side. God has chosen you. He wants you to obey Him and to trust Him, as Gideon did.

Carry-over activity

Have paper cut in shape of shield. Each child may glue his memory verse token at the top and print "God helped me win". The children may write about a victory over Satan and share it in club the following week.

Review game

Soldiers want victory

Divide the children into two "armies". Have 14 cards, all the same size with the following printed on them:

V I C T O R Y
O R Y I C V I C I C T
C T O R Y T O

Place the cards face downwards on a table. When a child answers for his army, he chooses a card. The objective of the game is to be first to create the word "VICTORY". If a child chooses a letter which his "army" cannot use he puts it back; if he chooses a card with two or three letters he may use it to replace one his army

Review questions

- 1 Why did God allow the Midianites to cause so much trouble for the Israelites? (The Israelites had turned to idol worship.)
- 2 Who is God's enemy? (Satan.)
- 3 Tell me two things that are told about him in the Bible. (He is a liar and murderer, he is crafty, he is like a roaring lion, he tempts people to sin.)
- 4 Who does the devil fight against? (God and Christians.)
- 5 How did Gideon feel when God told him he had been chosen to save Israel? (He felt weak. His family was not important or famous.)
- 6 What was the first job God gave Gideon? (Destroy the altar to Baal.)
- 7 Why are Christians also "soldiers"? (Christians fight the battle against Satan and sin.)
- 8 Who chooses the Christian soldiers? (God.)
- 9 How did God show Gideon that he really was the one to save Israel from the Midianites? (He did as Gideon asked with the fleece.)

10 Christian soldiers are chosen, like Gideon. In what two ways are they like Gideon? (They obey God, they trust God.)

already has. The replaced card is then placed face downwards with the others.

Lesson 4

Gideon and the 300 against the Midianites

Scripture for teachers

Judges 7:1-25; 8:22-23, 28

Central truth

Every true Christian is a soldier

(This lesson continues the theme of lesson 3)

Application

Unsaved: Change sides by trusting Christ as Saviour

Saved: Don't quit and be watchful

Memory verse

Review James 4:7-8

Visual aids

- ♦ Flashcards: 4-1, 4-2, 4-3, 4-4, 4-5 and 4-6

Or

- ♦ Figures: JD-16, JD-27, JD-33, JD-34, JD-35, JD-36, JD-37, JD-38 and JD-39

And

- ♦ Use outline of soldier (page 48) and add "chosen", "obedient", "trusting", "doesn't give up", "watchful" as appropriate throughout the lesson

Lesson outline

Introduction

Review lesson 3

Progression of events

- 1 Gideon and Israelites camp near Midianites
- 2 God says there are too many
- 3 22,000 fearful men go home CTS
- 4 Test at water, 300 left CTS
- 5 Gideon and servant visit Midianite camp CTS
- 6 Gideon orders army forward with trumpets, pitches and torches

Climax

God receives the credit for Israel's victory
CTSU

Conclusion

Midianites run, more caught and killed by Israelites

Lesson

Review lesson 3.

Where was Gideon when the Angel of the Lord came? (Hiding in the wine press, threshing wheat.) What did Gideon do when God told him to tear down his father's altar to Baal? (He obeyed.) What was the next job God gave Gideon to do? (Fight the Midianites.) What sign did Gideon ask for so he could be sure God would go with him? (Make the fleece wet and the ground dry, then the ground wet and the fleece dry.) How did God answer Gideon's prayer? (He did it.)

Scene 1

Now Gideon was ready to fight, even though his army was much smaller than that of the Midianites. It was early in the morning (*place Gideon and Israel's soldiers - figures JD-27, JD-16, JD-33 and JD-34.*) Gideon and his 32,000 men were camped by a spring of water. (*Place Midianite army - figure JD-35.*) Four or five miles to the north of them was the camp of 135,000 Midianite soldiers. It looked like a sea of tents stretched all the way across the valley and around the base of Mount Horeb.

One hundred and thirty five thousand men against 32,000. That was four Midianites against one Israelite. Does that sound like a fair fight? Let's see what God said. (*Read Judges 7:2.*) "The people who are with you are too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel claim glory for itself against Me, saying, 'My own hand has saved me'."

God knew that if the Israelites went into battle with 32,000 men they would take the credit for winning.

"Let any man who is afraid, go home," the Lord instructed Gideon.

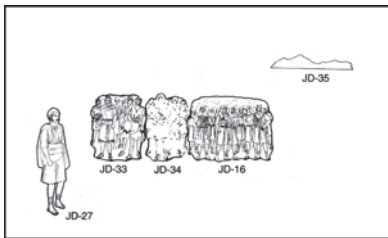
How many men were there? 32,000. How many do you think went home? 22,000! 22,000 men were too afraid to stick at being a soldier. They gave up very easily.

CTS

Last time, we learned that every Christian is a "soldier" for God. (*Place soldier.*) If the Lord Jesus is your Saviour, you are a soldier in the battle against sin and Satan. Can you remember some things we learned about a soldier? A soldier is chosen, obedient and trusting (*place these word strips under soldier.*) We can add "doesn't give up".

Alan had thought long and hard before he trusted the Lord Jesus as Saviour. His older brother dealt in drugs, his mother had left home. No-one in his family had any time for God. One day Alan searched and searched for his Bible, it was gone. His sister sneered when he asked about it. Sometimes at night a crowd of his sister's friends came to visit. It was terrible to listen to their talk. Alan found it hard to be a Christian but he did not quit.

Flashcard 4-1



Let a child point out the locations on a map.

Another boy, Pete, decided to be a Christian. But as soon as anyone laughed at him he gave it all up. It was too difficult. And that was the way it was right through his life. He stopped praying. He stopped going to Bible class. He just didn't want to know about Christianity. He showed that he had never been a true soldier of Jesus Christ, for His true followers don't quit like that - or like the 22,000 who seemed to melt away when the message went out, "If you are afraid, go home."

Remove 22,000 soldiers (JD-16).

There were now 10,000 Israelites. That was fourteen Midianites to one Israelite. Fourteen to one. Surely they would give God credit for winning the battle now. But wait, God was speaking again. "There are still too many men. Take them to the river and watch the way they drink the water. I will tell you which ones to send home."

God said to send home all the ones who got down and drank the water directly from the river. Gideon was to keep the ones who cupped the water in their hand. The ones who lapped up the water with their tongues showed that they would not be very watchful for enemy soldiers, for you cannot do that and keep an eye out for possible ambushes! These men were not watchful for the enemy. God's soldiers have to be on the lookout for their enemy Satan (*place "watchful"*).

When you find yourself going to bed late and tired and not even thinking about reading the Bible or talking to God, and it happens night after night - watch out! The devil is crafty, and in this way you are leaving yourself open to him.

It may be that the girls who are the most friendly to you are the ones who are always in trouble. Watch out! Their company could lead you into the same trouble and wouldn't that please the enemy, Satan?

We need to be watchful, just like the soldiers who cupped up the water with their hands. But there were hardly any of them! (*Remove soldiers - figure JD-33.*) Only 300 men! Now do we have a fair fight - 450 Midianites to one Israelite? It doesn't sound like it, but don't forget! God is with the Israelites! He told Gideon He would give him victory over the Midianites with only 300 men.

Scene 2

That night God spoke to Gideon again. "Gideon, if you are afraid to attack the Midianites, take your servant and go into the camp. Listen to what they say and you will be strengthened."

Place Gideon (JD-36) and servant (JD-37).

Gideon and his servant crept quietly through the night to the camp of the Midianites. There were so many enemy soldiers they could hardly see the ground for men and camels! The Bible says there were so many you couldn't count them.

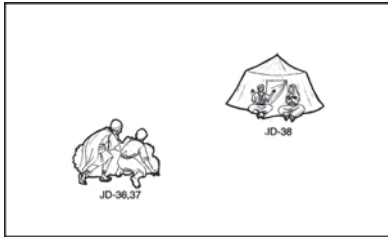
Flashcard 4-2

CTS

Flashcard 4-3

Choose two children to show how Gideon and his servant crept along. The rest of the group must be absolutely silent; the Midianites must hear nothing.

Flashcard 4-4



Place Midianites talking (JD-38).

Just as Gideon and his servant arrived, they heard two men talking. "I had a dream," one man said. "A round loaf of barley bread came and tumbled into our camp. It hit a tent so hard that the tent overturned and collapsed."

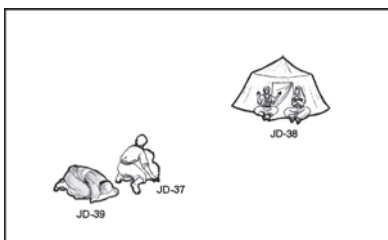
His friend spoke with fear in his voice, "I know the meaning of this dream. God has given victory to Gideon over the entire camp."

What do you think Gideon did when he heard that?

Replace Gideon listening (JD-36) with Gideon worshipping (JD-39).

CTS

Flashcard 4-5

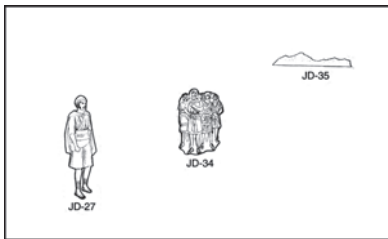


He worshipped God. He knew he could trust God. Remember last time we learned that the Christian soldier trusts God. (*Point to "trusting".*) You can trust Him to give you victory over sin and Satan. Perhaps it is your temper. You are "hot headed". Trust God to help you to be different and to win over this sin.

Scene 3

Gideon knew he would win. God had made that very plain, and he trusted God.

Place Gideon (JD-27), Israelite soldiers (JD-34) and Midianites (JD-35).



Gideon and his servant hurried back to camp. "Get up! The Lord has given us victory over our enemies," Gideon shouted.

Gideon divided the men into three groups of 100. He gave each man a trumpet to blow, and a jar with a flaming torch inside. He gave instructions to surround the enemy camp. "Watch me and do exactly as I do," he said.

What a strange way to go into battle, but it was God's way. Gideon had learned to obey God. (*Point to "obedient".*) It is so, so important for every Christian to do what God says in the Bible.

Gideon and his men reached the edge of the Midianite camp about 10.00 pm, soon after the Midianites had changed their guards. The men who had gone off duty were probably standing around talking to the ones who had just come on duty.

Gideon gave the signal. All 300 men blew their trumpets at the same time. They smashed the jars and the light from the torches inside lit up the sky.

"The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!" they shouted. The piercing trumpet blast, the sudden bright light and the men shouting all around the camp frightened the Midianites so much that they ran screaming. Maybe they mistook their own soldiers coming off guard duty for Israelite soldiers. God made the Midianites so confused that they turned on each other and killed one another with their own swords.

God gave Israel victory. He got the praise for it. Gideon and his 300 men would never forget that night. You know if you are a soldier for

CTS

Allow the group to shout out as if they were Gideon's army.

God, you are on the winning side. It doesn't always appear like that, there are so few Christians, there is so much that is wrong in the world. But on the great day when the Lord Jesus comes back everyone will see He is the Victor. Satan and those on his side will be punished for ever. Sin will be shut out from heaven. What side are you on? You change sides when you trust the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour. The Bible makes that plain. "He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed (or brought) us into the kingdom of the Son of His love" (Colossians 1:13). Will you trust Him today, now? Then He will help you to be His soldier, chosen, obedient, trusting, watchful and not giving up – just like Gideon and his 300 men.

The Midianites who survived ran away but were caught and killed by other Israelites. God gave complete victory.

Review questions

- 1 How many Midianite soldiers were there? (135,000.)
(Points: 100 soldiers added.)
- 2 How many soldiers had Gideon at first? (32,000.)
(Points: 10 soldiers added.)
- 3 Why did God want Gideon's army smaller? (So that God would receive the glory for the victory.)
(Points: 600 soldiers added.)
- 4 Why did 22,000 men leave Gideon's army? (They were afraid.)
(Points: 1,000 soldiers added.)
- 5 We learned from this something that a Christian soldier should not do. What is it? (Give up.)
(Points: 5 soldiers added.)
- 6 What did Gideon's 300 men show about themselves when they drank from the river? (They were watchful.)
(Points: 700 soldiers added.)
- 7 How can a Christian be watchful? (Watch out for letting your quiet time slip, watch out for where bad company will lead.)
(50 soldiers added.)
- 8 What was the dream Gideon and his servant overheard in the Midianite camp? (A loaf of bread hit the tent and it collapsed.)
(Points: 1,100 soldiers added.)
- 9 What did Gideon and his 300 men do in the battle against the Midianites? (They blew their trumpets, smashed their pitchers and shouted, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!")
(Points: 250 soldiers added.)
- 10 When will everyone see that Jesus Christ is the great Victor in the battle against Satan and sin? (When He returns.)
(Points: 30 soldiers added.)

CTU

Review game

The smaller army wins

Write the numbers 1-10 on a board or piece of card. There are two "armies" (teams.) The team chooses the question they want, from the numbers 1-10. When they answer the question, they are told how many soldiers have been added to their army. Remember to cross out the question numbers they have chosen. Failure to answer the question correctly automatically adds 500 soldiers to their army. At the end count up the number of soldiers each "army" has and as in the story of Gideon it is the smallest army that wins!

Lesson 5

God chooses Samson

Scripture for teachers

Judges 13:1-15:20

Central truth

God has special plans for every Christian

Application

Unsaved: You begin to discover God's plans when you trust Jesus Christ

Saved: You will become more like Jesus as God works out His plan in your life

Memory verse

"Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" Philippians 1:6

Visual aids

- ♦ Flashcards: 5-1, 5-2, 5-3, 5-4, 5-5 and 5-6

Or

- ♦ Figures: JD-25, JD-31, JD-41, JD-42, JD-43, JD-44, JD-46, JD-47, JD-48, JD-49 and JD-50

Lesson outline

Introduction

Do you like riddles?

Progression of events

- 1 Israel worships idols
- 2 Manoah's wife receives message from the Angel CTS
- 3 Angel comes second time
- 4 Birth of Samson CTU
- 5 Samson wants to marry Philistine CTS
- 6 Samson defeats lion
- 7 Samson's wedding and his riddle
- 8 Philistines get the answer
- 9 Samson in anger kills 30 Philistines
- 10 Samson in anger burns harvest
- 11 Philistines pursue Samson to Judah
- 12 Samson is tied by men of Judah

Climax

Samson breaks free and kills 1,000 Philistines
CTSU

Conclusion

Samson is judge for 20 years

Lesson

Do you like to solve riddles? See if you can solve this one: “Out of the eater something to eat, out of the strong, something sweet”. If you know the answer, you may come whisper it in my ear. In Bible times, riddles were popular games. In fact, this riddle comes from the Bible. All of you will learn the answer to that riddle during our Bible lesson today. Our story begins before the man who gave the riddle was born.

Scene 1

The people of Israel began to worship false gods again after Gideon died. What did God do each time this happened? (*Let children respond.*) He allowed the people who lived in the land to rule over the Israelites. This time it was the Philistines. These strong, mighty warriors who worshipped the grain gods, Dagon, were the ones causing trouble for the Israelites now.

Not everyone in Israel worshipped false gods. Manoah and his wife worshipped the true living God.

Place Manoah's wife (JD-41).

Manoah's wife had not been able to have children. In Bible times, and even today in many parts of the world, if you do not have children your life is not complete. It caused great sadness to Manoah and his wife that they had no children.

Place the Angel of the Lord (JD-25).

Imagine Mrs. Manoah's joy and surprise when the Angel of the Lord came to her and said, “You have not been able to have children, but now you are going to have a son.” God had a special purpose for the baby that was born to Manoah and his wife. That is why the Angel gave them strict rules to obey.

“You may never cut his hair because he is to be a Nazirite,” the Angel said. A Nazirite was a person specially dedicated to God. The baby's hair could never be cut. The people of Israel knew that this was a sign of someone specially dedicated to God. When people saw him they could tell by the way he looked that he had been chosen by God for a special purpose.

“Your son is the one God has chosen to begin to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines,” the Angel told her. God had chosen her son even before he was born for this special purpose.

The Angel who came to Mrs. Manoah gave strict rules for her and her son to follow because God had a special purpose for his life.

If the Lord Jesus is your Saviour, God has a special purpose for your life too. His plan for you is good. (*Read Jeremiah 29:11.*) God has plans for all the days ahead of you – the school you go to, the job you get, the church you go to. He also has a plan for what you will be. He wants



God does not tell us Manoah's wife's name. We will call her Mrs Manoah.

See Numbers 6:1-21 for additional information on the Nazirite restrictions.

CTS

you to be like His Son, the Lord Jesus. (*Romans 8:29*.) If you are saved, His great plan for you is that you should think and behave like the Lord Jesus. This is God's special purpose for you, it is even more wonderful than what He had planned for Samson.

Doing all for the glory of God means doing it to please God. People will give God credit for the kind of person you are. Show by the way you live that you know God has a special purpose for your life.

Remove the Angel of the Lord (JD-25) and place Manoah (JD-42).

Manoah's wife thought about the rules the Angel had given them to follow because He had a special purpose for her son's life.

Mrs. Manoah hurried to tell her husband the good news. "A man of God came to me today ... he looked like an angel ... I didn't ask him where he came from ... he didn't tell me his name ... but he told me I will give birth to a son ... and not to drink wine or eat anything unclean ... the boy will be a Nazirite from birth."

Imagine how excited Manoah was to hear this great news! What do you think he did? The Bible says the first thing he did was to pray. He asked God to send the messenger back to tell them how to bring up their baby. Wouldn't it be great to have a father like that!

Scene 2

One day, while Mrs. Manoah was working in the fields the Angel came again. She hurried to get her husband.

Place Manoah's wife (JD-41), the Angel of the Lord (JD-25) and Manoah (JD-42).

Manoah knew God had a special plan for his son's life. He wanted to know exactly what it was so that he and his wife could be the kind of parents God wanted them to be. Do you have Christian parents who pray for you so you will know the purpose God has for your life? That is a special blessing from God.

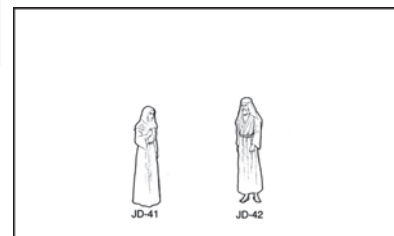
Scene 3

Place Samson (JD-43).

When their baby was born, Manoah and his wife named him Samson. They prayed for him and watched him grow. His hair grew long and his body grew strong. The people of Israel could tell by looking at him that God had chosen him for a special purpose.

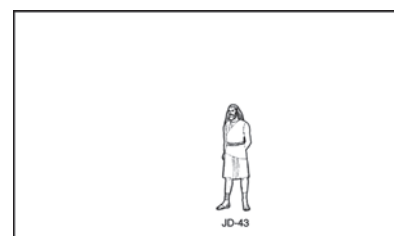
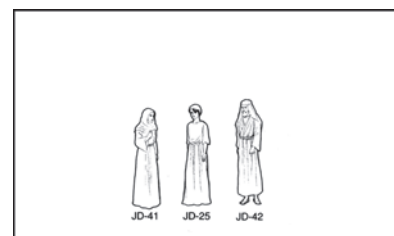
The Bible says he grew and the Lord blessed him. Probably when he was a young teenager, God began to give him the power to deliver Israel from the Philistines and to be their judge.

We do not know when Samson came to know God but we do know that he had faith in God (*Hebrews 11:32*). It is only when you come to know God, by trusting Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, that you realise that God has your life planned out. His plans are good and



Speak quickly as if out of breath with excitement.

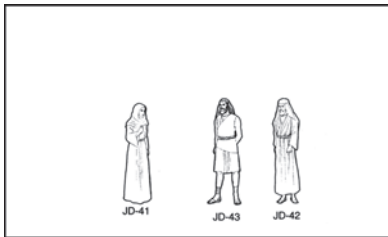
Flashcard 5-1



CTU

TIM-nuh. Show on map.

Flashcard 5-2



CTS

Flashcard 5-3

wise. He plans to make each Christian like the Lord Jesus. You don't become perfect – Samson certainly was not perfect. When you become a Christian, God the Holy Spirit, comes to live in you. He helps you to do the things which please Him. He helps in your attitude to your parents, He helps you clean up your language. It is all part of God's plan for you.

It is very exciting to know that God has a plan for you, but if you are not saved you miss out on this.

Samson had faith in God and I think he knew that God wanted him to rescue the Israelites from the Philistines.

One day Samson went down to Timnah and saw a Philistine girl there. (*Place Philistine girl, JD-44.*) It must have been love at first sight because he came home and told his parents to make arrangements for him to marry her. In those days, children did not choose their own marriage partners. Their parents did that for them. Israelites were not supposed to marry anyone who did not believe in the true and living God. This girl had grown up around the Philistines who worshipped the grain God, Dagon. She did not believe in the true and living God.

Remove Philistine girl (JD-44) and place Manoah (JD-42) and his wife (JD-41).

Samson's parents believed in the true and living God. How do you suppose they felt when they heard his plans to marry the Philistine girl? I am sure they were very sad. They knew God had a special purpose for Samson's life.

How could God possibly fulfil His purpose for Samson's life if he married a Philistine? I don't think Samson was thinking about God's plan for his life. He was thinking about that beautiful girl and how he wanted to marry her. But God had not forgotten the special purpose He had for Samson. That is one of the marvellous things about being in God's family. If you belong to God then you can be sure that God does not set aside His plans for you when you make a big mistake or sin against Him. Of course your sin spoils your relationship with God, and you must come to God and say "sorry", but God still has that special plan to make you behave and think like the Lord Jesus. We read those wonderful words in the Bible, "He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6). God does not give up on you, nor did He give up on Samson.

Samson and his parents went back to Timnah. On the way, Samson was attacked by a young lion. For some reason his parents were not around to help him at that moment, but God was. The Spirit of the Lord gave Samson the strength he needed to rip that lion apart with his bare hands. Samson didn't tell anyone what happened, not even his parents.

Scene 4

Some time later when Samson returned to marry the Philistine girl, he stopped by the place where he had killed the lion. In its skeleton a swarm of bees had built their hive and made honey. He dipped down into the honey with both hands and ate it as he continued on to his wedding. He gave some to his parents when he saw them, but he didn't tell anyone where it came from.

Place Samson (JD-43), Philistine girl (JD-44) and wedding guests (JD-46).

At the marriage feast, Samson was given 30 wedding guests to help him celebrate. Everyone was laughing and having a good time at the party. Samson decided to give them a riddle to solve. "If you solve it in seven days, I will give each one of you a beautiful set of clothes, but if you can't solve it you must each give me new clothes," Samson told them. He was sure they would not be able to solve the riddle.

Do you remember the riddle? Did you solve it? Here's your last chance.

Remove Samson (JD-43) and Philistine girl (JD-44).

The 30 men tried for three days to solve the riddle with no success. On the fourth day they went to Samson's wife and threatened to burn her and her father to death if she did not get the answer from Samson and give it to them. They were serious about solving that riddle!

Remove wedding guests (JD-46) and place Samson (JD-43) and Philistine girl (JD-44).

Samson's wife cried and nagged the rest of the week! "You don't love me! If you really loved me you would tell me the answer to the riddle!" she moaned. Samson got so tired of listening to it, he told her the answer.

Remove all figures.

She hurried to tell the men so they would not hurt her and her family.

Place Samson (JD-43) and wedding guests (JD-46).

Imagine the proud look on the faces of the Philistines as they came to Samson with the answer to the riddle. They waited until the last minute, just before sunset on the seventh day so Samson would think they had not been able to solve it.

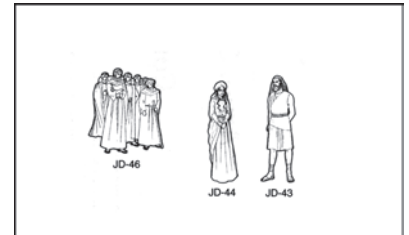
"What is sweeter than honey? What is stronger than a lion?"

Those men had solved the riddle. It was the honey in the lion. Samson knew they got the answer from his wife. He was furious!

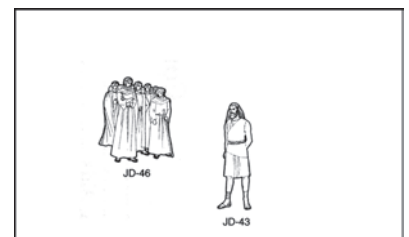
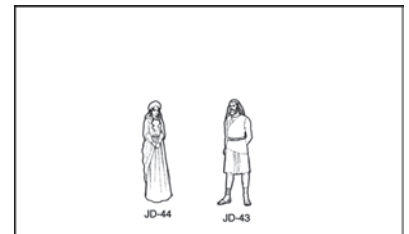
Now Samson had a reason to fight the Philistines. The Spirit of the Lord came upon him and gave him power to kill 30 Philistines in another city. He took the clothes from each one and gave them to the men who had tricked him for solving the riddle.

The men had not won the clothes fairly and 30 of their countrymen had died as a result. If Samson was angry enough to kill 30 men,

Flashcard 5-4



Let a child read the riddle from his Bible.



think how angry he must have been with his wife! I won't stay here, Samson thought as he went straight to his parents' home. His wife's father was so sure Samson would never come back, he told his daughter to marry Samson's friend. And she did.

Scene 5

By the time of the Philistine wheat harvest, Samson had calmed down and went to visit his wife. His father-in-law would not let him in because she had remarried. How do you think Samson felt about that?

Place foxes in fields (JD-47).

Samson was furious! Somehow he caught 300 foxes and tied their tails together in pairs. Then he fastened a torch to each pair of tails, lit the torches and let the foxes loose in the standing grain of the Philistines. The crops were dry and caught fire quickly. The fire spread to the vineyards and olive groves. Everything was burning. It was impossible for the Philistines to put out the fire. They couldn't get close to it because of the great heat. Of course, they had no fire brigade to call for help. All of their crops were destroyed at one time!

Remove foxes in field (JD-47).

How do you think the Philistines felt about that?

"What can we do to pay him back?" the Philistines must have asked one another. They were so angry that they killed Samson's former wife and her father.

Then Samson decided to kill even more Philistines. He went down to Etam and stayed in a cave. Meanwhile the Philistines gathered their army and went to Judah to kill Samson.

Place men of Judah (JD-31) and place ropes (JD-48) on Samson.

Fearing for their lives, the men of Judah found Samson, tied him up with two new ropes and took him back to the Philistines. Samson agreed to go with them as long as they promised not to kill him themselves.

Place Philistines running (JD-49).

The Philistines saw Samson coming and came running toward him shouting their war cry in a shrill voice. What would Samson do now?

The Spirit of the Lord gave Samson great power. As he pulled on the ropes, they dropped to the ground as if they had been burned off. Samson quickly looked around for something to fight with.

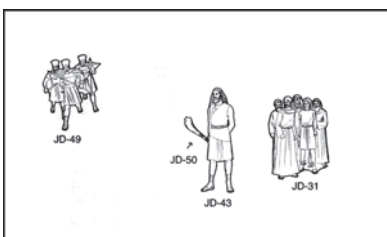
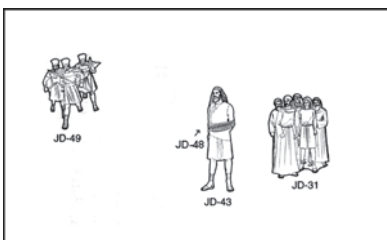
Remove ropes (JD-48) and place jawbone (JD-50).

A fresh jawbone of a donkey lay nearby. He grabbed it and began to swing. Back and forth he swung the jawbone in the midst of the

Flashcard 5-5



Flashcard 5-6



Philistines. Before they realised what was happening, Samson killed 1,000 men with the jawbone of a donkey!

Samson was beginning to destroy the Philistines. It was part of the special plan God had for him.

Israel had waited for someone like Samson. They realised God had chosen Samson to begin to deliver them from the hands of the Philistines and be their judge.

Samson judged Israel for 20 years. Sometimes he made good choices. Sometimes he went his own way. He was not a perfect leader, but God used him to keep the Philistines under control. Samson was part of God's plan for Israel.

It is amazing and exciting to think of being part of God's plan. He is so great, so mighty, so wise and His plans include you, if you are saved. His plan for you is that you should be like the Lord Jesus. The Holy Spirit lives in you to help you become like Him. Of course God has plans for your future too. When you have choices to make, ask God to help you choose His way.

The first step in finding out God's purpose for your life is to turn from your sin and trust the Lord Jesus as your Saviour. When you do that, the Bible says you are "in Christ". Listen what happens when you are "in Christ". (Read 2 Corinthians 5:17.) "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation." You will be a new, different person who will want to live for God. That is God's plan. Won't you trust Jesus Christ now, believing that He died for you? Tell Him that you want His plans to work out in your life.

Review questions

- 1 How was the birth of Samson announced? (By an Angel.)
- 2 What was the special purpose God had for Samson? (To begin to deliver Israel from the Philistines and to be their judge.)
- 3 What is the special purpose God has for every Christian? (To become more and more like the Lord Jesus.)
- 4 How could someone tell by looking at him that Samson was a Nazirite? (His long hair.)
- 5 When do you begin to discover God's plan for you? (When you trust Jesus Christ as your Saviour.)
- 6 With what riddle did Samson puzzle the Philistines? ("Out of the eater came something to eat, out of the strong came something sweet.")
- 7 Why did Samson's mistakes not upset God's plans? (God is almighty and wise.)
- 8 What did Samson do with the jawbone of a donkey? (Killed 1,000 Philistines.)

CTS

CTU

Review game

Where is the treasure?

Draw out a grid as follows:

| | A | B | C | D | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | |

This is not a team game. When a child answers a question, he guesses where the treasure is, eg B2. Then give him a slip of paper with that on it. Continue until all the questions have been answered. Then open an envelope which reveals where the treasure is. The child who has guessed correctly receives a prize.

- 9 What should Christians do as they plan what job to do in the future? (Ask God to guide them.)
- 10 Repeat Philippians 1:6. ("Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.")

Lesson 6

Samson and Delilah

Scripture for teachers

Judges 16:4-31

Central truth

Sinful steps lead away from God

Application

Saved: Come back to God, confessing your sin to Him

Memory verse

“But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin”
1 John 1:7

Visual aids

- ♦ Flashcards: 6-1, 6-2, 6-3, 6-4, 6-5 and 6-6

Or

- ♦ Figures: JD-43, JD-48, JD-49, JD-51, JD-52, JD-53a, JD-53b, JD-54, JD-55, JD-56, JD-57, JD-58, JD-59a, JD-59b, JD-60 and JD-61

And

- ♦ Footprints with “me first”, “bad company”, “lying”, and “disobedience” written on them

Lesson outline

Introduction

Footsteps

CT

Progression of events

- 1 Samson in love with Delilah
- 2 Delilah, bribed with money, tries to find the secret of his strength CTS
- 3 Samson tells her
 - “use bow strings”
 - “use new ropes” CTS
 - “weave my hair”
- 4 Samson tells her “cut my hair” CTS
- 5 Delilah cuts his hair
- 6 Samson captured by Philistines
- 7 Samson blinded and grinding grain CTS
- 8 Samson brought out to be mocked
- 9 Samson stands between pillars
- 10 Samson prays

Climax

Samson pushes and temple collapses

Conclusion

Samson and all the Philistines present die

CTS

Lesson

Place several footsteps (with no words) on the ground, leading away from you. Ask a child to come, put his feet onto the steps and walk the direction they lead.

“These steps are leading you away from me, aren’t they?”

CTS

Samson took some steps which took him away from God. This is one of them. (*Hold up “me first”.*) Can you think of a time he really wanted his own way? Yes, when he wanted to marry the Philistine girl, even when his father advised against it. When you are a Christian and you are selfish, it leads you a step away from God. It is sin and spoils your friendship with God. That happened in Samson’s life too.

Scene 1

What happens next in Samson’s life? He fell in love again. This time with a beautiful woman who lived among the Philistines. Her name was Delilah.

Place Samson (JD-43) and Delilah (JD-51).

The Philistine rulers hated Samson for all he had done to them. When they learned Samson had fallen in love with Delilah, they were delighted! They came to her with a clever plan.

Place money (JD-52).

“Find out the secret of Samson’s great strength for us and you will become a rich woman,” they told Delilah. “Each of us will give you 1,100 pieces of silver for that information.” That is thousands of pounds in our money - a big temptation for Delilah. The Bible doesn’t say anything about her loving him.

Scene 2

Place bald Samson (JD-53a) with hair (JD-53b) on his head, and Delilah sitting (JD-54).

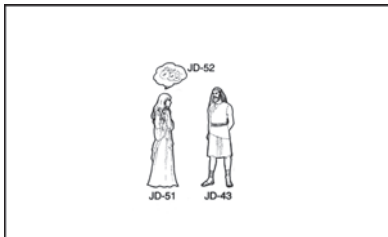
The next time Samson came to visit Delilah, she had Philistine men hiding - ready to capture Samson as soon as he told her the secret of his strength.

“Oh, Samson, tell me the secret of your great strength. I want to know how you can be tied up and captured,” Delilah spoke sweetly in Samson’s ear.

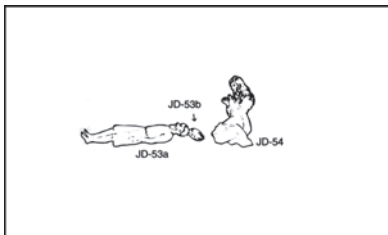
Samson should have had a clue that she had a reason for asking that question, since he was in enemy territory and the Philistines would like nothing better than to find out how to make him weak, so they could capture him. It should have seemed a little strange for this woman to ask him that question. But Samson didn’t have a clue about what was happening. He had taken another of those steps away from God - bad company. (*Place this footprint on the board.*) If you get into bad company you do wrong things you would not normally do.

That happened to Gerry. He was a Christian but when he changed schools he started to go around with the “tough guys”. They wrote

Flashcard 6-1



Wycliffe Bible Commentary states there were probably five rulers because there were five major Philistine cities.



CTS

graffiti on walls and some of the things they wrote were disgusting. One evening one of them had drugs and they all tried them. Gerry started to use bad language too. He stopped going to Bible class where he had trusted the Lord Jesus as his Saviour. This went on for months before Gerry came back to God and told Him how sorry he was for making such a mess of his life. God forgave him because His promise is, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Gerry learned from it all that bad company leads you away from God – it did just the same for Samson.

How would Samson reply? Perhaps it was like a game to Samson. He made up this answer, "Tie me up with seven fresh bow strings and I will become as weak as any other man." Bow strings were made from the intestines of animals and did not break easily, especially when they were fresh and not dried out.

Samson told Delilah a lie, perhaps for fun, but it was a lie. Samson was enjoying this dangerous game.

Place bow string (JD-55) on Samson.

Probably while Samson was sleeping, the Philistine rulers brought Delilah the bow strings and she tied him up. Carefully and quietly she wrapped them around his strong body.

With men hidden in her room ready to capture him, Delilah called to Samson, "The Philistines are here to get you!"

Remove bow string (JD-55).

Samson snapped the bow strings as if they were pieces of string. The secret of his strength was not discovered and the Philistines did not come out of their hiding place.

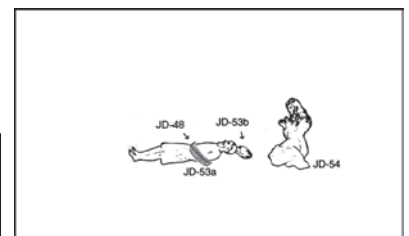
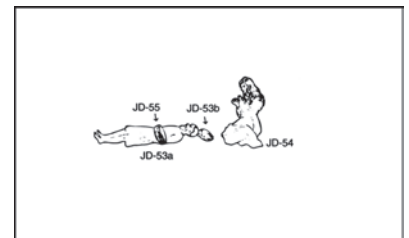
"You've made a fool of me Samson," Delilah whined. "Please tell me how you can be tied."

Samson was ready with another story. We have it in the Bible. "If they bind me securely with new ropes that have never been used, then I shall become weak, and be like any other man" (Judges 16:11). Another lie!

Place ropes (JD-48) on Samson.

What does God think of lies? Listen for the answer in these words from the Bible. (Read Proverbs 6:16-17.) Yes, the Lord hates lies. Lying is certainly a step away from God. (Place footprint "lying".) Christian boy or girl, have you been telling lies? If so your "closeness" to God is spoiled. When you do something which really displeases your Mum or Dad things between them and you are tense and strained. They don't put you out of their family, but they want you to apologise. It is like that with God too. Do not let your lies spoil your relationship with your Heavenly Father. Lying displeases God – Samson's lies were no different.

Flashcard 6-2



CTS

This time it was the Philistines who should have had a clue that Samson was not telling the truth. How do we know that new ropes wouldn't bind Samson? Yes, the men of Judah had tried them!

Delilah tied him with new ropes and called, "Samson, the Philistines are here to capture you."

Remove ropes (JD-48).

Samson snapped the ropes off his arms as if they were pieces of thread; once again the Philistine men stayed in hiding.

Delilah was not easily discouraged. She wanted that money and did not give up. This time when she asked him, Samson told her - let's read it from the Bible (*read Judges 16:13b*) - "If you weave the seven locks of my head into the web from the loom."

In those days there were no factories where people worked to make clothes. (*Place loom - figure JD-56.*) Women wove thread by hand in a loom like this. Carefully Delilah took Samson's hair. It was so long he kept it braided in seven large braids. She took each braid and wove it into the fabric on the loom. It must have been very relaxing for Samson, for soon he was fast asleep. He had come dangerously near to telling the truth about the secret of his strength.

Delilah put a pin through his hair and into the loom to hold it tight. "Samson, wake up! The Philistines are here to capture you!" Samson awoke and jumped up. What do you think happened to the loom? It came right up with him and probably fell apart in the process! What do you think the Philistine men did? They stayed in their hiding place!

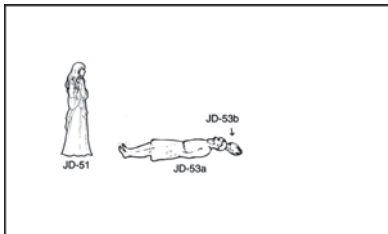
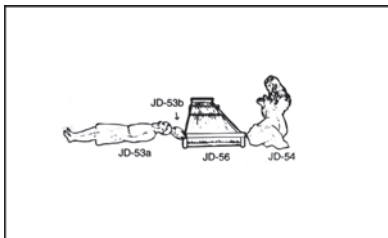
Remove loom (JD-56) and Delilah sitting (JD-54). Place Delilah (JD-51) to the left of Samson.

"How can you say you love me, when you won't confide in me, Samson? This is the third time you've made a fool of me and haven't told me the secret of your great strength." Day after day Delilah nagged and pestered Samson until he was tired to death of it. He thought he could stand it no longer and this is what he told her. (*Read Judges 16:17.*) "No razor has ever come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If I am shaven, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man." Samson knew very well that he should not tell her. God had given him this great strength to help the Israelites against the Philistines. He knew that Delilah would pass on the important information. Surely this was a step of disobedience.

Place footstep with "disobedience".

CTS

Christians can be disobedient like this. Do you have a grudge against someone? Another girl won a prize you hoped for and you refuse to be her friend. Or a boy knocked down your bike and it got a little bit damaged. He apologised but you still hold it against him. God says, "Love your neighbour as yourself." So these reactions are disobedience, a step away from God. If you keep these grudges in your heart, things will not be right between you and God.



Sadly Samson was not sorry. He fell sound asleep on Delilah's lap. Delilah (*replace figure JD-51 with JD-54*) knew he had told her the truth. She knew that the Philistines were waiting, and they were ready to give her the money. Delilah quietly called a man to shave off all seven braids. As each braid fell to the floor, more of Samson's strength left him. When his hair was all gone, so was all his strength. God had commanded that his hair should never be cut.

Remove Samson's hair (JD-53b).

Samson lay there helpless and didn't even know it. He was sound asleep - until he was wakened by Delilah. "Samson, the Philistines are here!"

Place Philistines running (JD-49) and stand Samson (JD-53a) on feet.

Samson was not worried. He thought, "I'll escape just as I did before." But listen to these words from the Bible (*read Judges 16:20b*). "But he did not know that the Lord had departed from him."

The Philistine men jumped out of their hiding place, brave now because they saw Samson so weak. They captured him and gouged out his eyes and took their prisoner to Gaza.

Scene 3

Place Samson grinding grain (JD-57).

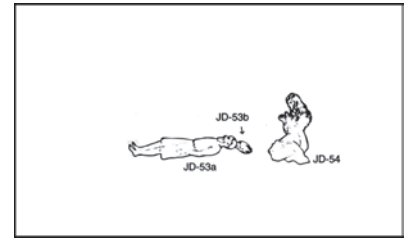
In Gaza the Philistines forced Samson to grind grain for them. Day after day he turned the axle. Blind, helpless, Samson spent the next year doing the work of a woman. That was one of the most embarrassing things that could happen to a man in those days. This was all the result of his steps away from God. When Christians go their own way, instead of God's, it leads to trouble. Perhaps there is a Christian here and you feel you have taken all these steps away from God and you are very, very sorry. Won't you come to Him and tell Him so. Remember that wonderful promise, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). God will help you to avoid these steps. Don't continue on the disobedience way. Our Bible verse tells us the right steps to take (1 John 1:7).

Samson had enjoyed his sinful foolish way for a while, but not anymore. He had time to think and I am sure he realised how foolish and wrong he had been. Day by day, something was happening to his hair. It was growing.

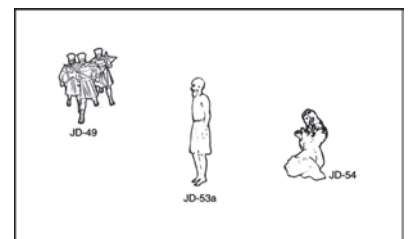
Scene 4

Place Philistines in temple (JD-58), pillars (JD-59a and JD-59b) and Dagon (JD-60).

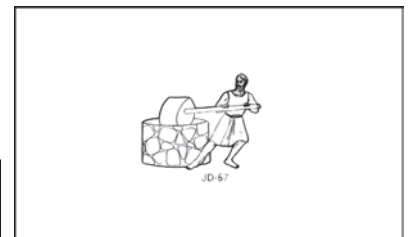
The Philistine rulers were pleased with themselves over Samson's capture. They enjoyed watching their helpless captive. Of course, they believed that their god, Dagon, had given them the victory over Samson.



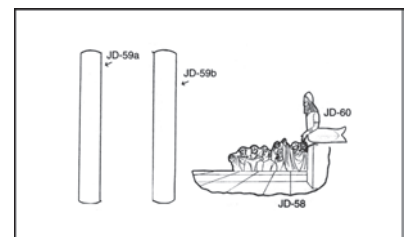
Flashcard 6-3



Flashcard 6-4



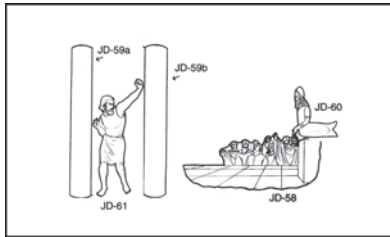
CTS



Wycliffe Bible

Commentary says the temple was a long inner chamber with two major centre pillars supporting the roof.

Flashcard 6-5



Flashcard 6-6

CTS

“Praise be to Dagon. Our god has delivered the one who burned our land and killed our people into our hands,” they chanted in praise to Dagon.

Then someone had a great idea. It spread quickly throughout the crowd. “Bring out Samson to make us laugh!” they shouted.

Can’t you see them running to get Samson. Over 3,000 men and women on the roof, pointing and jeering at Samson. The more important rulers were downstairs where they could be shaded from the sun. They looked at him with hatred and mocking scorn.

Samson asked the lad who was leading him, “Take me to the pillars, so that I can lean against them.”

The jeering laughter continued. Samson had had enough. He called out to God. *(Read Judges 16:28.)* “O Lord God, remember me, I pray! Strengthen me, I pray, just this once, O God, that I may with one blow take vengeance on the Philistines for my two eyes!” Samson knew he needed God. Samson trusted God and God did not let him down.

Place Samson leaning (JD-61) between two pillars.

Samson reached towards the two centre pillars which held up the temple. Bracing himself against them, his right hand on one and his left hand on the other, Samson cried out, “Let me die with the Philistines!”

Topple scene to show pillars falling, then remove.

Samson pushed with all his might, and down came the temple on top of him and all the people in it, including the Philistine rulers.

The dust settled. No one was alive. In his death Samson killed far more Philistines than in his life. God had used Samson throughout his life, in spite of all his faults. We see how kind, patient and loving God is with His people who take foolish, sinful steps away from Him. God is just the same for you. Keep coming back to Him when you take a step in the wrong direction. Trust His promise to forgive you. He will use you, He will carry out His plans for you, just as He did for Samson, the last of Israel’s judges.

Carry-over activity

Have card “footsteps” available for the children. They may write on it a step they have taken away from God. When they confess it to Him, they turn it over so that it faces the opposite direction and the writing disappears.

Review questions

- 1 With whom did Samson fall in love? (Delilah.)
- 2 Why did this prove foolish and dangerous? (The Philistines used her to discover the secret of Samson’s strength.)

- 3 Delilah was bad company for Samson and she led him into another step away from God. What was this? (Lying.)
- 4 What does God think of lying? (He hates lies.)
- 5 Tell one of the three unsuccessful ways in which the Philistines tried to capture Samson. (Tied him with bow strings; tied him with new ropes; wove his hair into a loom.)
- 6 In the end Samson told Delilah the secret of his strength. What was it? (His long hair.)
- 7 What step did he take away from God? (Disobedience.)
- 8 How many people have taken that same step? (All.)
- 9 What did the Philistines do with Samson when they captured him? (They destroyed his eyes and kept him prisoner.)
- 10 What should a Christian do when he realises he has sinned? (Confess it to God.)
- 11 What harm does sin do in a Christian's life? (Spoils his friendship with God.)
- 12 How did Samson's life end? (He pulled down the temple of Dagon and died with all the Philistines who were in it.)

Gospel presentation

As the application in this lesson is for saved children, you may wish to include the following Gospel presentation in your programme.

Most of you are past learning your ABCs, but today we are going to learn a lesson from ABC.

(Teacher walk in a certain direction, stop and go the opposite direction.)

What have I just done, it begins with "A". It is an "about turn". "A" for "about turn". Ever since you were born you head in the wrong direction – away from God. Many people enjoy going that way and don't want to turn away from it. But if you want to be saved from sin, you must be willing to turn away from sin and go the opposite direction (Acts 3:19).

"B" is for "believe". Jesus Christ, God's Son, died for sin. He was nailed to the cross and God punished Him for the sin of the world. He died, but He came back to life. Perhaps you know all that but have you believed in Him? To be saved, you must trust Jesus Christ to save you. The Bible says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31). If this is what you really want, but you have questions and would like to talk with me about it, please stay in your seat at the end of the meeting and I will know you want to talk to me.

Alexander had trusted the Lord Jesus as his Saviour, but he was a shy boy and had not told anyone. One day his friend Jack invited him to

go sailing on Sunday morning. “Sorry,” said Alexander, “but I’ll be going to church.”

“What?” demanded Jack. “You go to church? I can’t think of anything more boring.”

“I like to go,” explained Alexander quietly, “especially since Jesus saved me – I’m a Christian now, you see.”

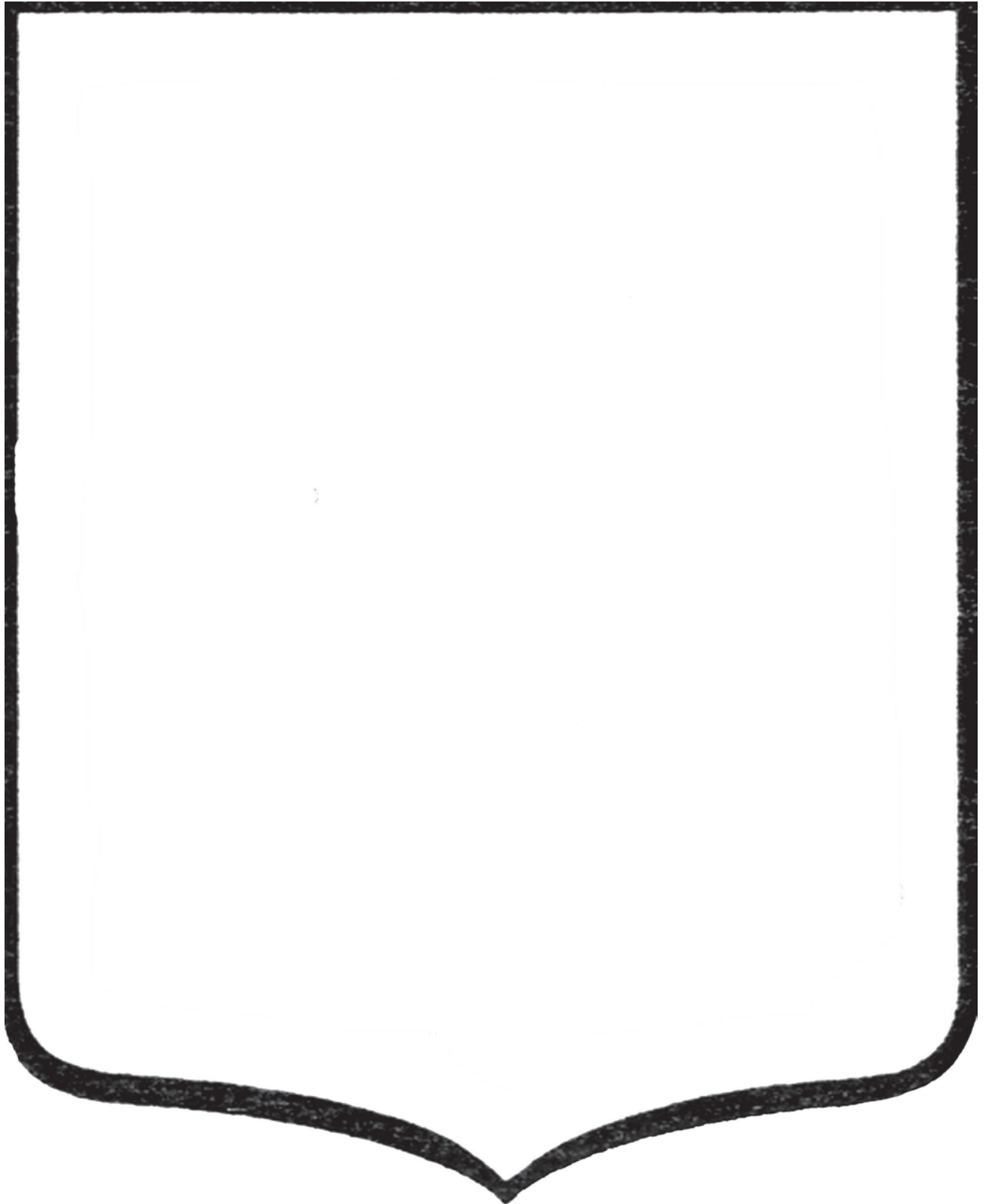
“Bah,” retorted Jack, “stuff and nonsense!”

But Alexander felt very “right” about having told Jack. He had obeyed the “C”. Listen to these words from the Bible and tell me what “C” is for. (*Read Romans 10:9.*)

It is for “confess”. We must confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus. We cannot keep it a secret that we are saved. Perhaps you have taken steps “A” and “B”, but not “C”. Why not tell me before you leave that Jesus is your Saviour?

Pattern for shield

(Lesson 3)



Outline of soldier

(Lesson 4)



Copy, cut out and keep in your Bible



Summary of steps for counselling the child who wants to come to Christ

Make sure the child understands about

God

Who is God?
God made us. He speaks to us through the Bible.
God is holy and pure. He loves us.

Sin

What is sin?
Sin is disobeying God's commands. It is against God.
Speak about specific sins.
The child is a sinner by nature and act. (We sin because we are sinners.)
Sin deserves punishment.

The Saviour

Who alone can take away your sin?
God the Son died on the cross for sinners.
The Lord Jesus rose again from the dead.
He is Lord of all.

Explain how to be saved

Explain what the Lord wants us to do, and what He will do.
Use a Bible verse (*John 1:12; 3:16; 6:37; Acts 16:31; Romans 6:23 or 10:13*).
What does the Lord want you to do?
What will the Lord do?
Warn about difficulties.
Ask: "Do you want to trust Christ, or would you rather wait?"
Encourage the child to pray audibly (if ready).

Speak about assurance of salvation

Go back to the Bible verse you used.
Speak about a changed life.
Tell him what the person who is truly trusting in Christ can know.

Give (later) some advice about the Christian life

Read and obey your Bible.
Talk to God, our heavenly Father.
Tell others what the Lord has done for you.
Ask God to forgive you when you sin.
Meet with other Christians.
Remember the Lord promises: "*I will never leave you*" (*Heb 13:5*).