

TEACHER
RESOURCE

UNIT 3

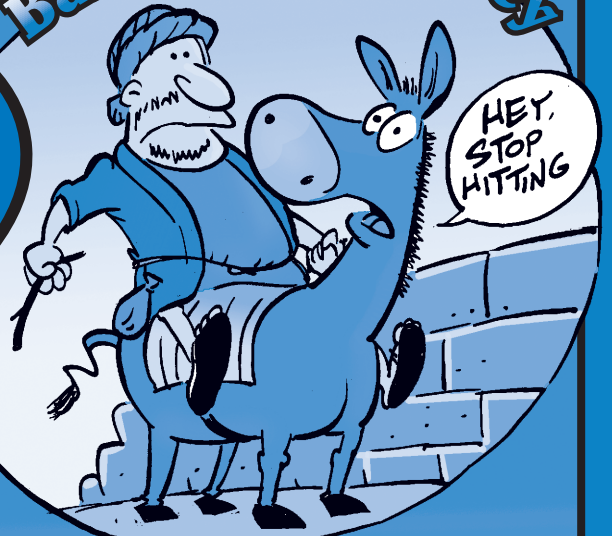
From Aaron's Rod to Eli

LEVEL THREE

SON SEEKERS .COM.AU

AGES 8-10

Balaam and his Donkey

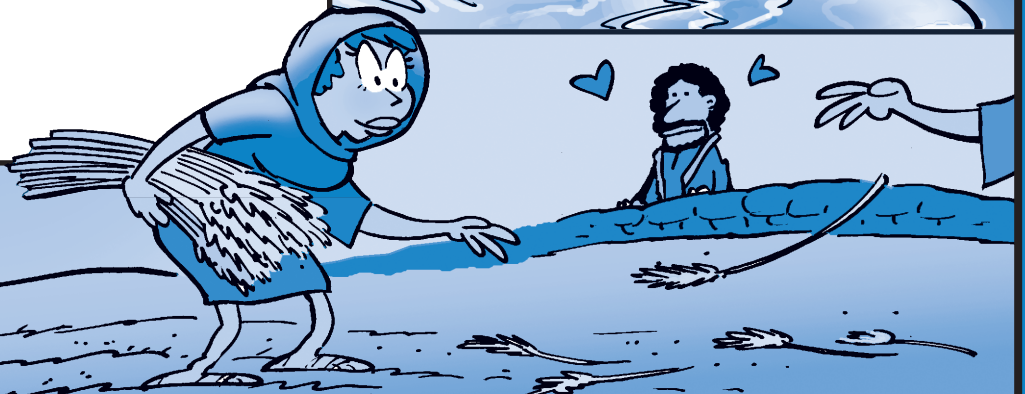


GOD'S PEOPLE
ENTER
A NEW
LAND



Name:

RUTH, NAOMI
AND BOAZ
A LOVE STORY



Teacher Resource

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Teaching Sonseekers ...

Dear Teacher

Teaching young people about God's Word is a great honour and privilege. We note God chose Abraham, a man of faith because he "would teach his children and his household after him, to know the Way of The Lord" (Gen 18:19)

One who undertakes such a task will understand they have accepted a responsibility to become a witness of God's great love and faithfulness. As an example of Christian faith and integrity they have a wonderful opportunity to share their love for God's Word. The tremendous blessing for those who commit themselves to this task is that the Holy Spirit will strengthen and equip you to shine as a light to your class.

Recent trends away from Sunday School structures towards child minding activities have, we believe, been unfortunate as they fail to recognise the impact and effect the message of God's love through Christ has on young people.

Children are the Church's future. As such they are precious and well worth any investment in quality resources and dedicated teachers.

The 'Sonseekers' curriculum offers children Sunday School material that gives them a sound background in Biblical events, people and places. Secondly it offers a pastoral approach for the children to know God is able to help them and change their lives.

Structurally, any program will operate effectively if those teaching are faithful, zealous and committed to a team approach that might include:

- regular prayer and discussion in relation to curriculum issues, student needs and upcoming events and presentations;
- organisation and management of resources;
- training and development needs of teaching staff.

Teaching Sunday School is a rich and rewarding task. May God bless and guide you as you serve in this way.

Yours in Christ

The Sonseekers Team

A teacher's guide to using the Sonseekers materials . . .

Timeline

4000BC	Creation Adam and Eve The Fall
2500BC	Noah The Flood Tower of Babel
2000BC	Abraham
1900BC	Isaac
1800BC	Esau and Jacob
1750BC	Joseph
1360BC	Moses
1280BC	Exodus from Egypt and Journeys
1240BC	Joshua Entry into and Conquest of Land
1220BC	Judges
1100BC	Gideon
1070BC	Samson
1063BC	Samuel
1020BC	Saul as King
980BC	David as King
940BC	Solomon as King
900BC	Kingdom Divided
839BC	Elijah Emerges; Mt Carmel Jehoshaphat
814BC	Elisha's Ministry
749BC	Jonah
662BC	Hezekiah; Isaiah
576BC	Josiah
540BC	Daniel taken to Babylon
527BC	Exile into Babylon
457BC	Restoration from Babylon
4BC	Birth of Jesus
26AD	Baptism of Jesus Call of Disciples
28AD	Feeding of 5000 Parables
29AD	Miracles; Transfiguration
30AD	Raising of Lazarus Parables Palm Sunday Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection Day of Pentecost Peter's Ministry
33AD	Conversion of Paul
45AD	Paul's Missionary Journeys
60AD	Paul as Prisoner to Rome

What are the Sonseekers materials?

The Sonseekers Sunday School materials are a four year course of 128 Bible lessons. The lessons are written with the twin aims of teaching the students an accurate chronology of Biblical events and also drawing from each lesson pastoral points relevant to the age and stage of each child. They are written at four levels to cover from Prep to 12+ age groups. The 128 lessons are organised into 8 units, each of sixteen lessons. The table below indicates the suitable age group for each level:

Sonseekers Level	Student Age	School Level
Level One	4 - 5	Kindergarten, Prep
Level Two	6 - 7	Lower Primary
Level Three	8 - 10	Middle Primary
Level Four	11 - 12+	Upper Primary

The Sonseekers materials comprise two related elements:

- **Teacher Resource** – including lesson plans & activity masters which can be photocopied;
- **Student Handbooks** – including homework activities.

There is also a Bible timeline showing chronology of major events, with the dates of the current unit's lessons highlighted, included in each Teacher Resource.

What's in my Sonseekers Level Three Teacher Resource?

Each Level Three Teacher Resource contains sixteen lesson plans for the relevant age of your students. Each lesson plan comprises:

- the key thought or focus for the lesson;
- a suggested way to introduce the lesson;
- a summary of the relevant bible story;
- a memory verse for the lesson, together with a suggested way of teaching that verse;
- an activity which can be used in the lesson;
- a number of extra ideas involving fun, practical activities.

Note: The photocopy masters for each activity are included with the lessons in this Teacher Resource book.

.../cont'd

... teacher's guide ...

How do I best use my Teacher Resource?

The art of serving as an effective Sunday School teacher is linked to the degree of diligence in preparing for each lesson. The Sonseekers materials are only designed to assist the teacher in this process. They do not take away from the teacher his or her responsibility to prayerfully consider the needs of the children in the class and to seek God's revelation and wisdom in presenting each Bible lesson. The following suggestions are then made with regard to using this resource.

Prior to the lesson

- ◆ Prayerfully read the Bible passage for the lesson. The reference is provided in the header on the first page of the lesson plan. All Scripture references are taken from the New King James Version (1983 edition).
- ◆ Read through the lesson plan and decide which activities will be most appropriate for the students in your class. Generally, aim for a variety of activities over a unit.
- ◆ Think about how you will combine the various elements of your lesson. Refer to the suggested teaching approach for ideas if necessary. Link the activity to the story so that the significance of the activity is clear to the students.
- ◆ Prepare all activities thoroughly prior to the lesson. Rehearse any planned activity at home to make sure:
 - that you know how to do it yourself;
 - that you have all the relevant materials in the quantities you will need;
 - that you know the length of time that the children will need for the activity.

During the lesson

- ◆ Review the memory verse from the previous lesson with the children. Also check on the completion of the homework activity page.
- ◆ Revise the previous lesson before going on to a new story. You may like to use the timeline to help you do this.

Publisher's note:

The publisher wishes to acknowledge the use of clip art from Coreldraw, Clickart, Bible View Clip Art by Pastoral Computer Services and Logos Bible Clips.

The publisher gives permission for artwork masters to be photocopied for the use of the students in the Sonseekers classes. However, no other part of this publication may be produced or transmitted in any form without permission in writing from the publisher.

Aaron's rod

Numbers 16 - 17

Storyline

Korah, Dathan, Abiram and On, who were leaders amongst the children of Israel, gathered to themselves a further 250 men to question Moses' and Aaron's authority. Moses challenged them to seek the face of the Lord but their hearts were rebellious. Moses became very angry and sought the Lord to reject their offerings. God heard Moses and destroyed these men, their households, and the other 250 leaders. However, the children of Israel continued to murmur and blamed Moses and Aaron for these deaths. God's anger broke upon them in a plague killing 14,700 people. Moses instructed Aaron to intercede on behalf of the rest of the people and the plague ceased. To prevent further murmurings, God commanded that 12 rods, one from each tribe, be placed in the tabernacle. The man whose rod sprouted was to be God's chosen leader, Aaron, of the tribe of Levi.

Suggested Teaching Approach

1. Present the story, emphasising the heart attitude of the rebellious leaders, and the discipline that the Lord placed on those who joined them.
2. Either in the presentation of the story or during the activity, remind the children of the benefits of obedience and the pleasure of the fruit.



Theme One

"Obedience to those in authority"

If we have bad attitudes such as anger, jealousy or envy in our hearts, God will discipline us and deal with us to see our attitudes changed. It is important that we guard our hearts, keeping them free from wrong attitudes that would damage relationships. We must desire to have a heart that is submissive to those in authority.

Key Thought

Keep our hearts pure and soft towards those in authority, ready to hear instruction and not be blaming others when our wrong attitudes have been exposed.

Aim

To encourage the children to willingly, not grudgingly, obey those in authority when they are at home, in church or at school.

Memory Verse

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." (Ephesians 6:1).

Theme Two

"Being fruitful for the Lord"

Just as Aaron's rod supernaturally budded, blossomed and produced fruit, so we will become fruitful as we allow the Lord to work in us. We cannot change ourselves but we can commit our ways into His hands that we might show forth the fruits of the Spirit which are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. This will happen as we make right choices and allow the Spirit to produce the fruit.

Key Thought

Godly attitudes, a willingness to be changed and waiting on the Lord will produce the fruit of the Spirit in our lives.

Aim

To show the children how God's love and life can become evident in their lives, as they yield to His hand.

Memory Verse

"I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit." (John 15:16).

Your class will be excited at the beginning of the year. It is important to be enthusiastic and focus your class on the year ahead. Discuss and formulate class guidelines together.

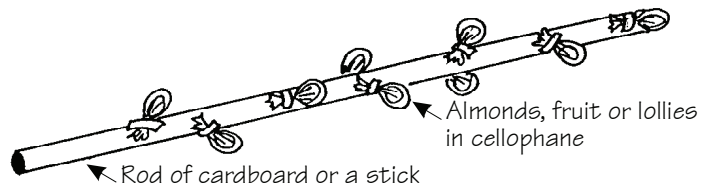
Activity A - Make a Fruitful Rod

Materials

- Cellophane (green, clear and red or orange).
- Almonds (either whole in the shell, or blanched).
- Sticky tape (one roll in a dispenser to every three children would be ideal).
- A 'rod' for each child. These could be strong sticks you have collected prior to the lesson, approximately 15mm thick and 600mm long. (An alternative would be cardboard tubes from finished rolls of dress materials, available from some haberdasheries, or firmly rolled and taped newspaper.)
- Mint leaves; small artificial flowers for buds.

Steps

- Show the children a finished 'rod' you have made at home.
- Cut cellophane into 8cm squares.
- Place an almond or lolly in the middle of a cellophane square and twist cellophane tightly around the almond. Secure the twist with sticky tape.
- Tape the almond to the 'rod'.
- Continue until each rod has approximately ten 'buds' or all almonds/lollies are used.
- Encourage the children to share and explain their 'buds' with their family.



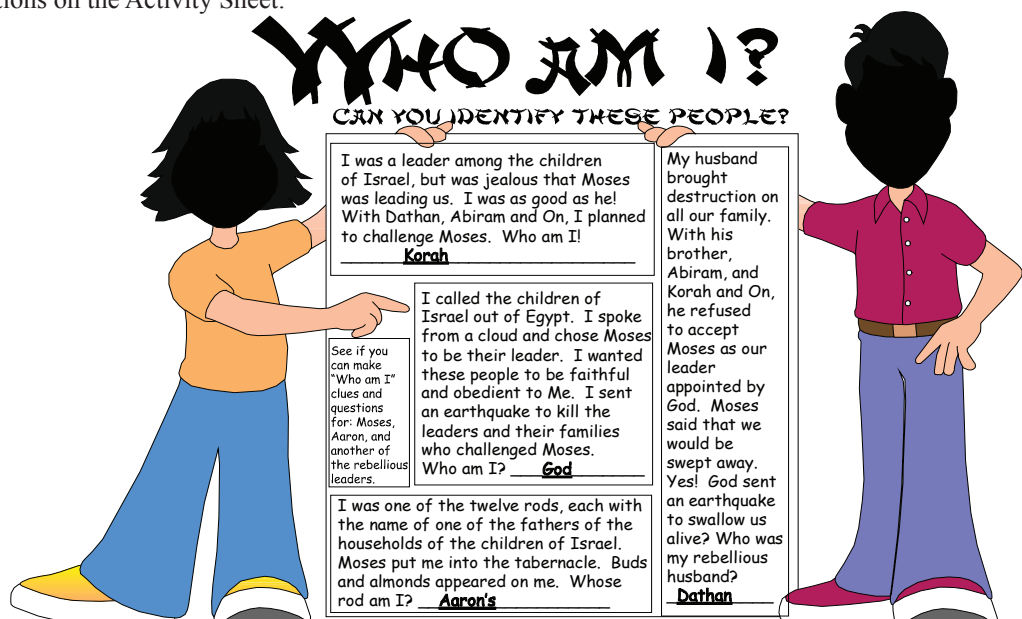
Activity B - "Who am I?"

Materials

- 1 Activity Sheet per child.
- Pens/pencils.

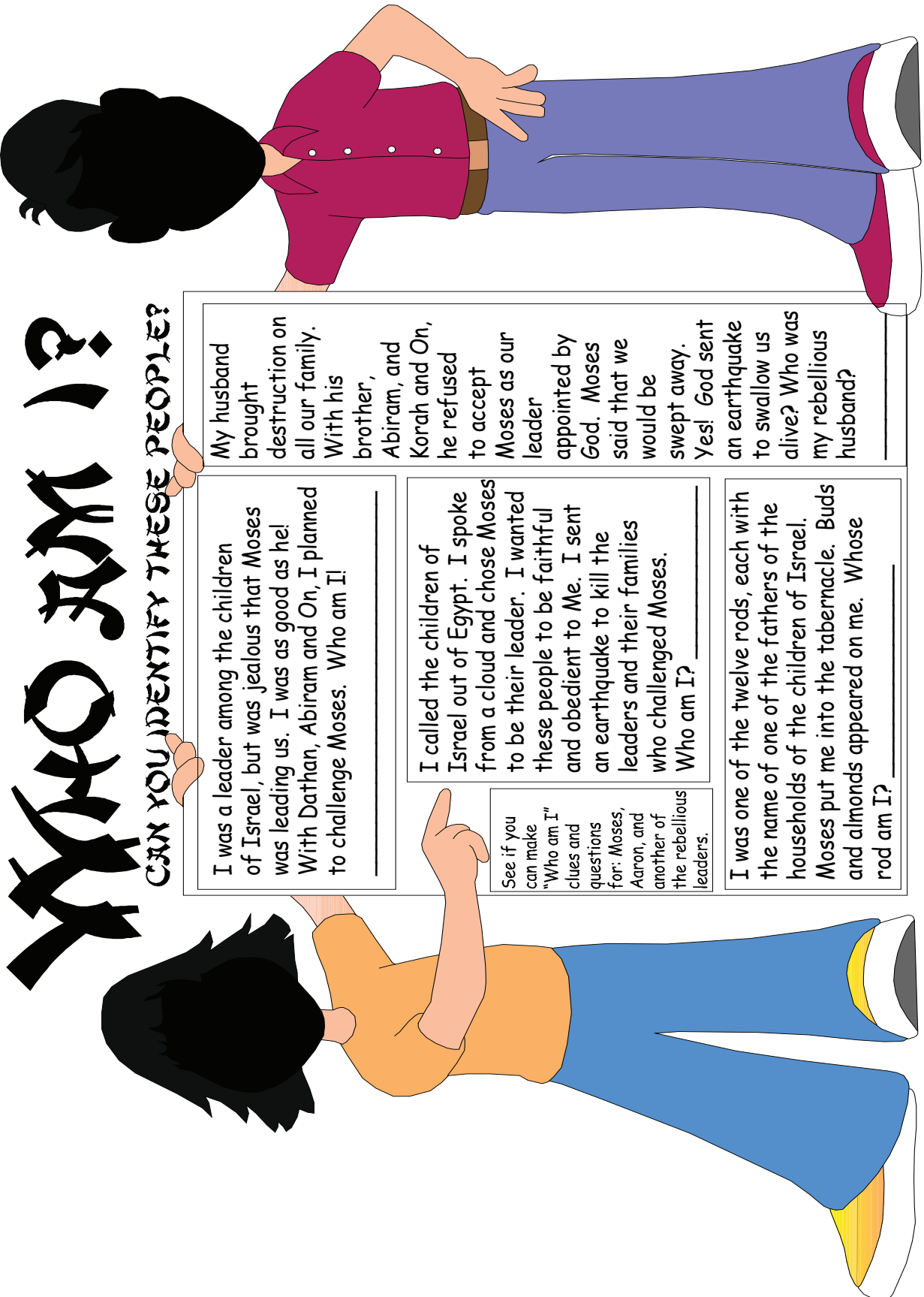
Steps

- Follow the instructions on the Activity Sheet.



Aaron's rod

Activity B – “Who Am I”



WHO AM I?

CAN YOU IDENTIFY THESE PEOPLE?

I was a leader among the children of Israel, but was jealous that Moses was leading us. I was as good as he! With Dathan, Abiram and On, I planned to challenge Moses. Who am I? _____

My husband brought destruction on all our family. With his brother, Abiram, and Korah and On, he refused to accept Moses as our leader appointed by God. Moses said that we would be swept away. Yes! God sent an earthquake to swallow us alive? Who was my rebellious husband? _____

I called the children of Israel out of Egypt. I spoke from a cloud and chose Moses to be their leader. I wanted these people to be faithful and obedient to Me. I sent an earthquake to kill the leaders and their families who challenged Moses. Who am I? _____

See if you can make "Who am I" clues and questions for: Moses, Aaron, and another of the rebellious leaders.

I was one of the twelve rods, each with the name of one of the fathers of the households of the children of Israel. Moses put me into the tabernacle. Buds and almonds appeared on me. Whose rod am I? _____

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Moses hits the rock

Numbers 20:2-13

Storyline

The children of Israel continued to travel in the desert. There was no water where they camped and the people murmured once again, blaming Moses and Aaron for their distress. Moses and Aaron approached the Lord at the Tabernacle of Meeting. God instructed Moses to take the rod and speak to the rock and water would pour forth. Moses struck the rock twice out of anger towards his brethren. Water did pour forth, but God reprimanded Moses and Aaron for their lack of faith and esteeming of His name. This prevented both from entering the promised land.

Suggested Teaching Approach

1. Present the story of Moses striking the rock rather than speaking to the rock. This shows how God requires obedience. You might like to point out that on a previous occasion God asked Moses to strike the rock for water to come forth, but this time He said to Moses just to speak to it. It would be good to share with the children that Moses and the Lord were talking, and Moses was in right relationship with the Lord. Then when Moses saw the people he became angry and disobeyed God. You could point out to the children that even though Moses was God's chosen leader, God needed an obedient leader. He had to discipline Moses and, in the same way, He will discipline parents, church elders and teachers.
2. Also point out to the children how faithful God was to His promise. He promised the children of Israel that they would enter the promised land. Despite the disobedience of Moses, and the grumbling of the people, God fulfilled His promise by meeting their needs in the wilderness. It is important for the children to understand that God requires us to have an open faced relationship with Him, to be obedient to His word and not to judge others' activities.

Theme One

"God desires obedience"

Moses recognised the children of Israel's need for water, so he and Aaron spent time with God seeking God's answer. God spoke to Moses and told him exactly what to do. He was to speak to the rock. However, Moses rose up in anger towards the people and, in disobedience to God, hit the rock twice with his rod. We need to be obedient to what God has instructed. Here we see Moses judging the people, and reacting to the people, rather than simply obeying God's command and allowing God to work His purpose through the circumstances.

Key Thought

God saw the need of His people. He told Moses what to do to meet that need. Moses disobeyed, and we see that God did not give any special treatment to Moses, but in fact disallowed him from entering the promised land.

Aim

To teach the children to hear God's voice and to be obedient to His instruction.

Memory Verse

"We ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29).

Theme Two

"God is faithful, merciful and loving"

God intended to reveal His holiness, even though the children of Israel continued to rebel. By looking at this story in the light of the faithfulness, love and mercy of God, we see how God displayed His great love to the children of Israel. We see how He is tolerant to His people throughout the ages, and how faithful God is. God had promised to deliver them, and meet all their needs. Even though Moses was disobedient and the children of Israel were rebellious, God met their needs, and God continues to meet the needs of His people. He is continually faithful to those who are called by His name.

Key Thought

We should never lose sight of God's continued faithfulness and His mercy towards us, even when we fail.

Aim

To help the children see that God's mercy and love is able to save them, even though at times they are like the children of Israel (when they grumble and murmur). God continues to be faithful.

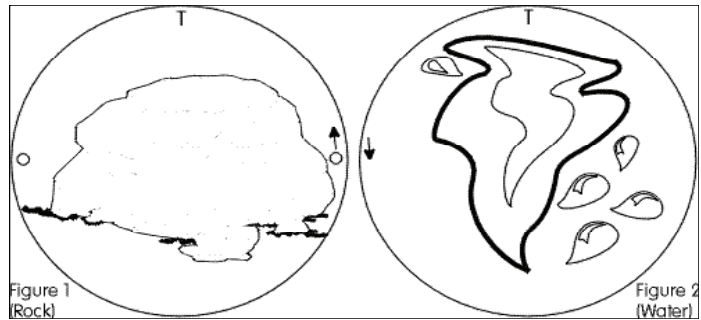
Memory Verse

"The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and great in mercy." (Psalm 145:8).

Activity A - Make a 'Water from the Rock' Spinning Disk

Materials

- Firm cardboard.
- Scissors.
- Hole punch.
- Colouring pencils/felt pens.
- Two medium to long rubber bands per child.
- Copy of Figure 1 and Figure 2 for each child.



Steps

At Home

- Cut out Figure 1 (whole circle) for each child and glue to cardboard. When dry, cut cardboard disk around outline of Figure 1.
- Cut out Figure 2 (whole circle) for each child and glue it to the reverse side of the cardboard disk, with T's to the top of the disk. The water must appear to be upside down, the opposite to the rock in Figure 1.

In Class

- The children colour each side of the disk (brown for the rock, blue for water).
- Punch a hole in each side of the circle.
- Thread a rubber band through each hole and fix as shown (Figure 3). You will need to demonstrate this carefully as the younger children may find this difficult.
- Place a rubber band over each forefinger and wind up the disk, by turning it in the direction of the arrows. When fully wound up, gently pull hands apart. As the rubber bands unwind, the disk will spin and the water will appear to come from the rock. It may be easier for the children to do this in pairs - one holding the bands, the other turning the disk in the direction of the arrows.

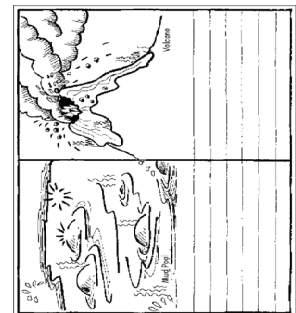
Figure 3



Activity B - Volcano Demonstration and Discussion

Materials

- A small moulded volcano of clay, plasticine or playdough, approx. 5-7 cm high, on a plate. The hollow in the top should be approx. 1 cm deep.
- Vinegar.
- Bi-carbonate (baking) soda.
- A syringe or dropper (syringe is best, or a small squirt bottle could also be used).
- Red or yellow food colouring or paint dye.
- 1 Activity Sheet per child.
- Pens/pencils/rubbers.

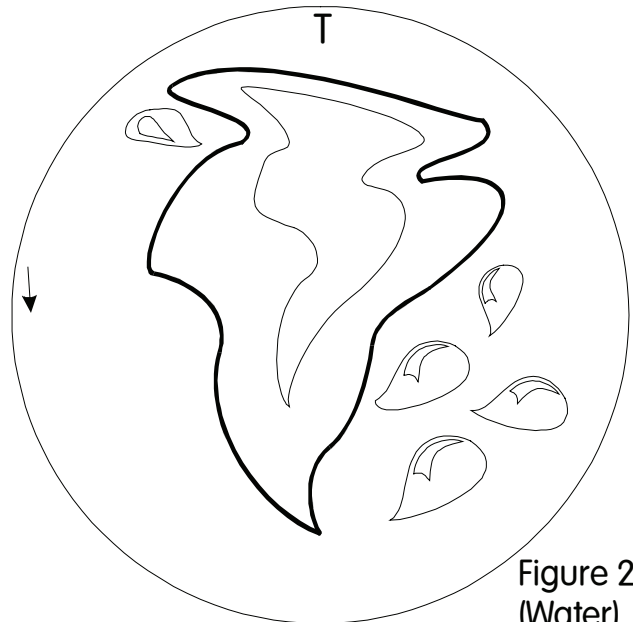
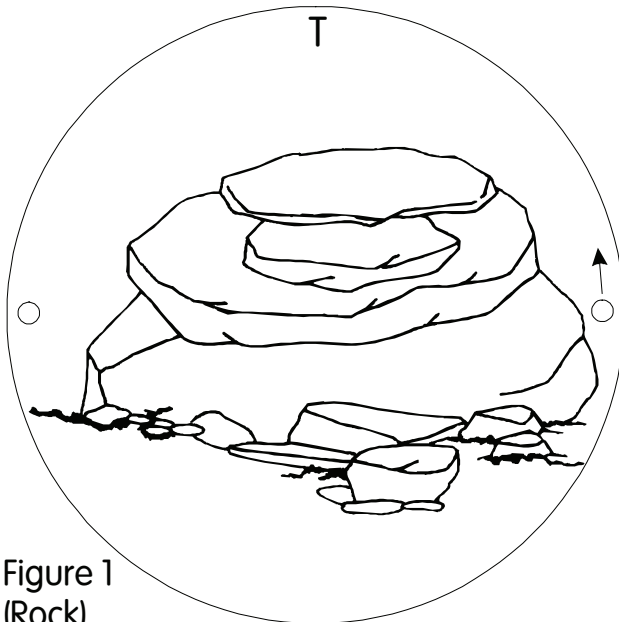
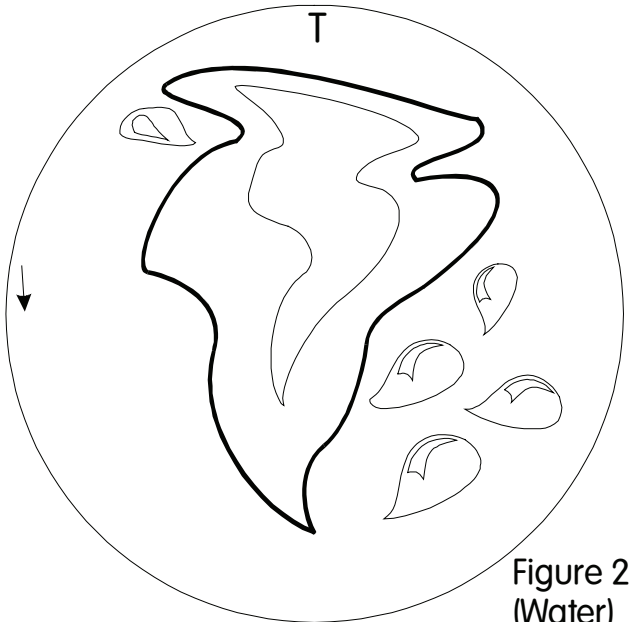
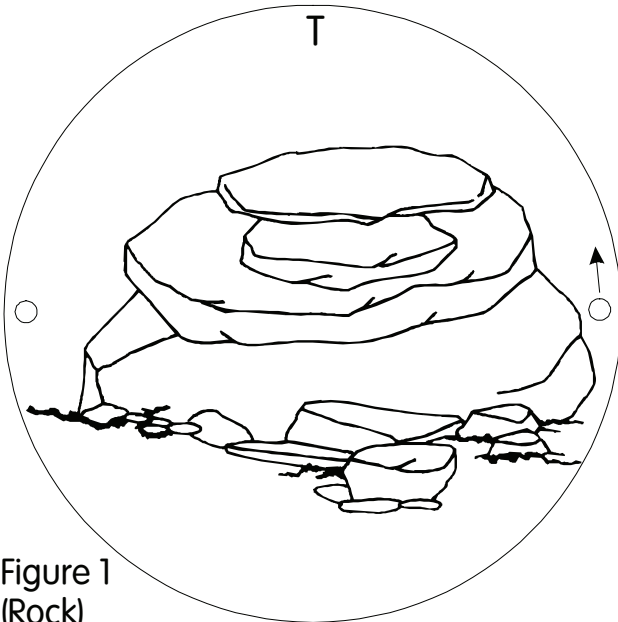


Steps

- Place 1 teaspoon of bi-carb into the hollowed top of the volcano and add a little food colouring.
- Draw up vinegar into the syringe and squirt a small amount of the vinegar into the bi-carb in the volcano. The mixture will froth and bubble and, with sufficient vinegar added, will run over the hollow and down the sides of the volcano.
- As a discussion, introduce the concept of quick reactions (like a volcano). Some people react to instruction, discipline and frustration like a volcano. They have a quick temper and react quickly and dramatically. Moses was like this when he struck the rock in anger, rather than speaking to it as instructed. Other people react by grumbling and being continually negative. They are always finding fault with teachers, parents and leaders. They are the knockers. They are like seething pools of hot bubbling mud. The children of Israel reacted like this.
- Ask the children to think about three different situations when they have been cross about what they have been told to do. Ask them to decide if they reacted like a grumbling mud pool or a violent volcano. They should then briefly write their situations in the appropriate half of the Activity Sheet.
- Encourage the children to share what is on their sheet. Discuss how God wants us to respond. Pray with the children, asking God's help to respond correctly to Him.

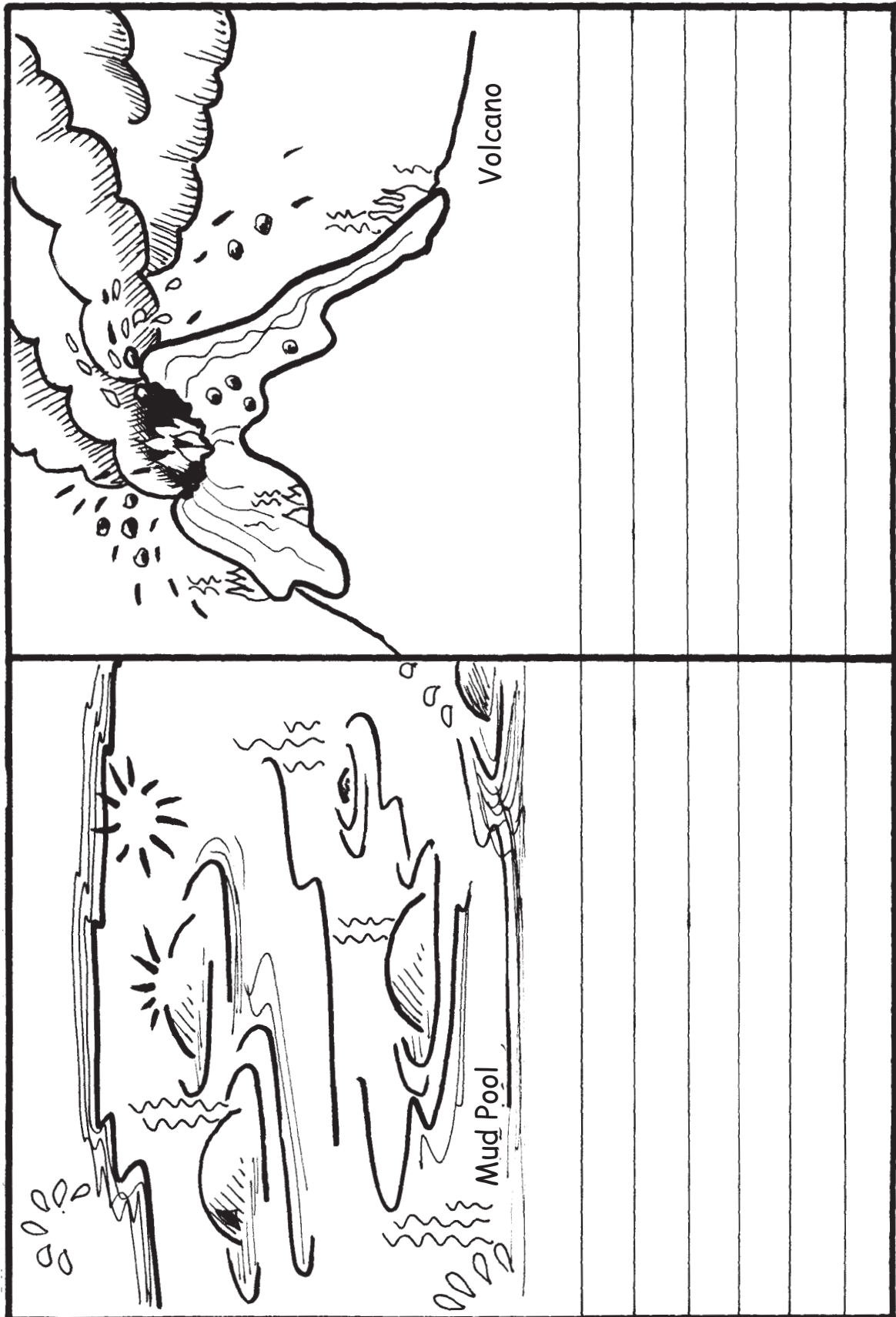
Moses hits the rock

Activity A – “Water From the Rock” Spinning Disk



Moses hits the rock

Activity B – Volcano Demonstration and Discussion



The bronze serpent

Numbers 21:4-9;
John 3:14-15

Storyline

As the children of Israel continued their journey through the wilderness, they became very discouraged and spoke against God and Moses, accusing them of not supplying their need of food and water. They rejected the manna too, calling it worthless bread. So the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people which bit them and many died. They cried out to Moses asking for forgiveness as they knew they had sinned. The Lord instructed Moses to make a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. If anyone was bitten, they were to look upon it and so be healed.

Suggested Teaching Approach

Present the story, expressing the many highs and lows the children of Israel experienced as they wandered through the wilderness. When they were faithful, God would bless them, but when they disobeyed, He had to discipline them. The children should be able to draw on their own experiences in this regard.

Engage all students in discussions by distributing your questions evenly throughout the group. Ensure your level of question is appropriate for each student. Some questions could be prepared beforehand.

Theme One

“Confess your sin”

The people soon realised they had sinned when the judgement of God came upon them in the form of deadly snakes. They admitted their sin and asked for deliverance. God’s answer was to have them lift up their eyes to look at a symbol of their sin - a snake on a pole. The penalty of our sin is death. In confessing our sin and looking to Jesus who became sin for us (He was nailed to a cross), we escape the judgement of God that would otherwise come.

Key Thought

Open confession brings God’s mercy to us instead of His judgement. Our sin is forgiven by God who is faithful and just in His dealings with us.

Aim

For the children to understand clearly the importance of recognising, admitting and confessing their sin in order to experience God’s forgiveness.

Memory Verse

“He bore our sins in His own body on the tree.” (1 Peter 2:24).

Theme Two

“God is our healer”

Because of their complaining, many Israelites were bitten by snakes and many died. We have all come under the curse of sin and its effects on our lives. As the children of Israel turned to look at the serpent on the pole, we too need to look to Jesus who died on the cross, and provided deliverance from sin and also healing for our bodies.

Key Thought

The children of Israel were healed as they turned to look at the serpent on the pole. As we turn or repent, we also can be healed and forgiven.

Aim

For the children to know that we can look to Jesus for forgiveness and for healing.

Memory Verse

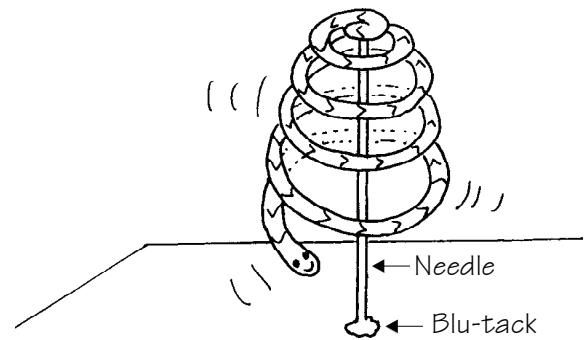
“And by His stripes we are healed.” (Isaiah 53:5).



Activity A - Make a Balancing Snake

Materials

- 1 Activity Sheet per child mounted or copied onto cardboard.
- Scissors.
- Glue.
- One knitting needle or skewer (minimum length of 35 cm) for each child.
- Blu-tack or plasticine.
- Either metallic crayons, metallic felt pens, gold spray paint or plain crayons or felt pens.



Steps

- Children paint or draw a pattern on their snake being careful not to obliterate the cutting lines.
- For a “bronze” finish, spray paint gold or copper paint (best done in a cardboard box outdoors with teachers help or supervision) or decorate with metallic crayons or felt pens.
- Alternatively, the children could write key words from the lesson along the snake to form a pattern.
- Cut out the snakes carefully along the cutting lines.
- Push the blunt end of the knitting needle onto the Blu-tack or plasticine on a flat surface eg. table, so that the needle points upright.
- Balance the tail end of the snake on the point of the needle so that its body is wound around the needle (see diagram above). Because the weight of the snake is spread evenly down to the head, it will balance and a slight breeze will make it spiral round and round. It takes a little patience to balance the snake but it really does work.

Activity B - Unscramble the Words

Materials

- 1 Activity Sheet per child.
- Pens/pencils.
- Colouring pencils/felt pens.

Steps

- The children try and unscramble the words, then if time permits they can colour and pattern the plain snakes around the border.

The letters of these words are all jumbled up. Put them back into the right order so that they make real words you can find in the story.

TEPSSRNE <u>SERPENTS</u>	TBITNE <u>BITTEN</u>
SNIS <u>SINS</u>	MSOES <u>MOSES</u>
BORZNE <u>BRONZE</u>	PCGMLONANII <u>COMPLAINING</u>
CSROS <u>CROSS</u>	LEOP <u>POLE</u>

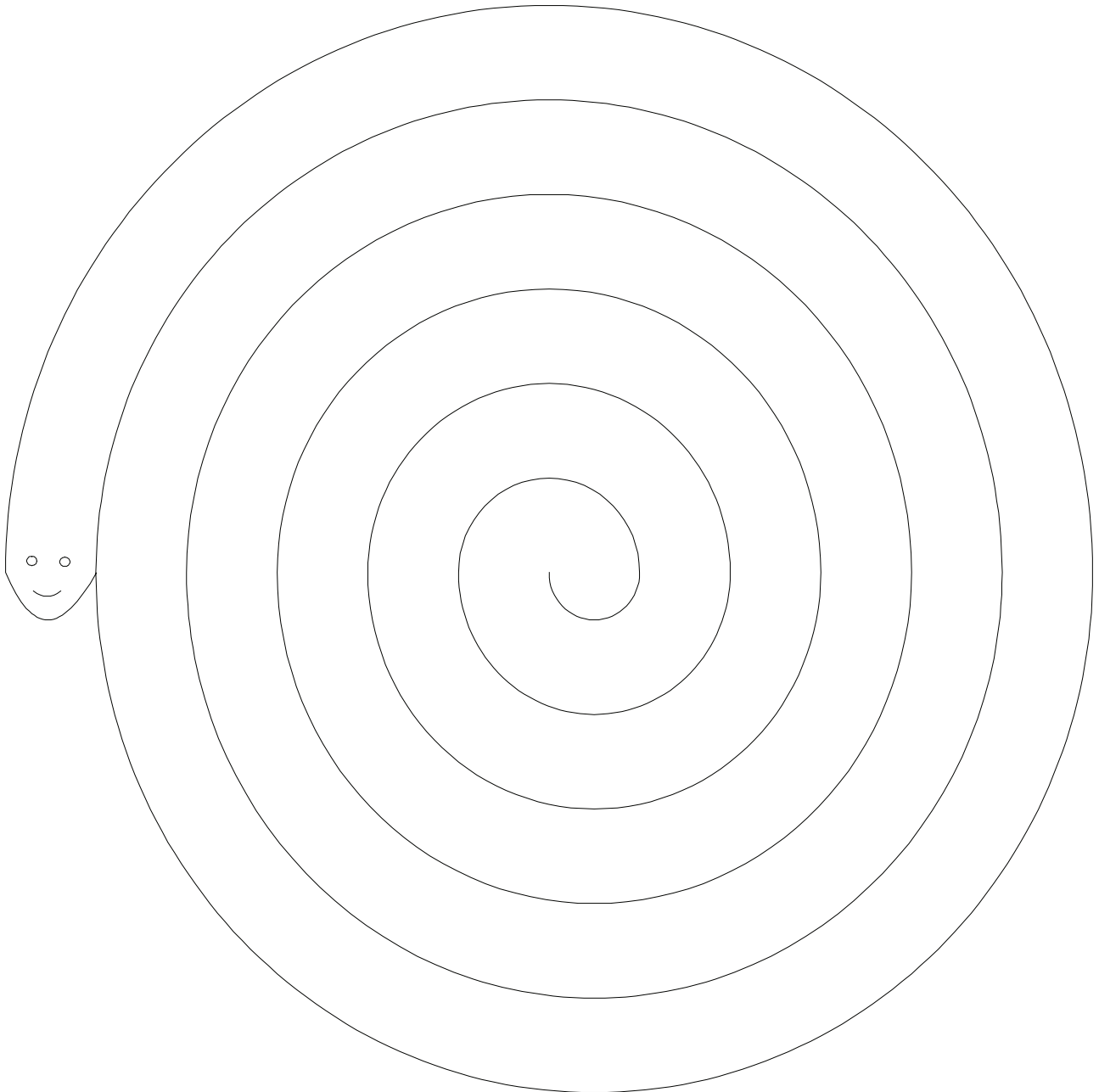
Now, read the hint below to work out the key word.

Hint:
They looked upon the bronze serpent and were DHALSE HEALED

If you finish early, you can complete the patterns on the plain snakes in the border.

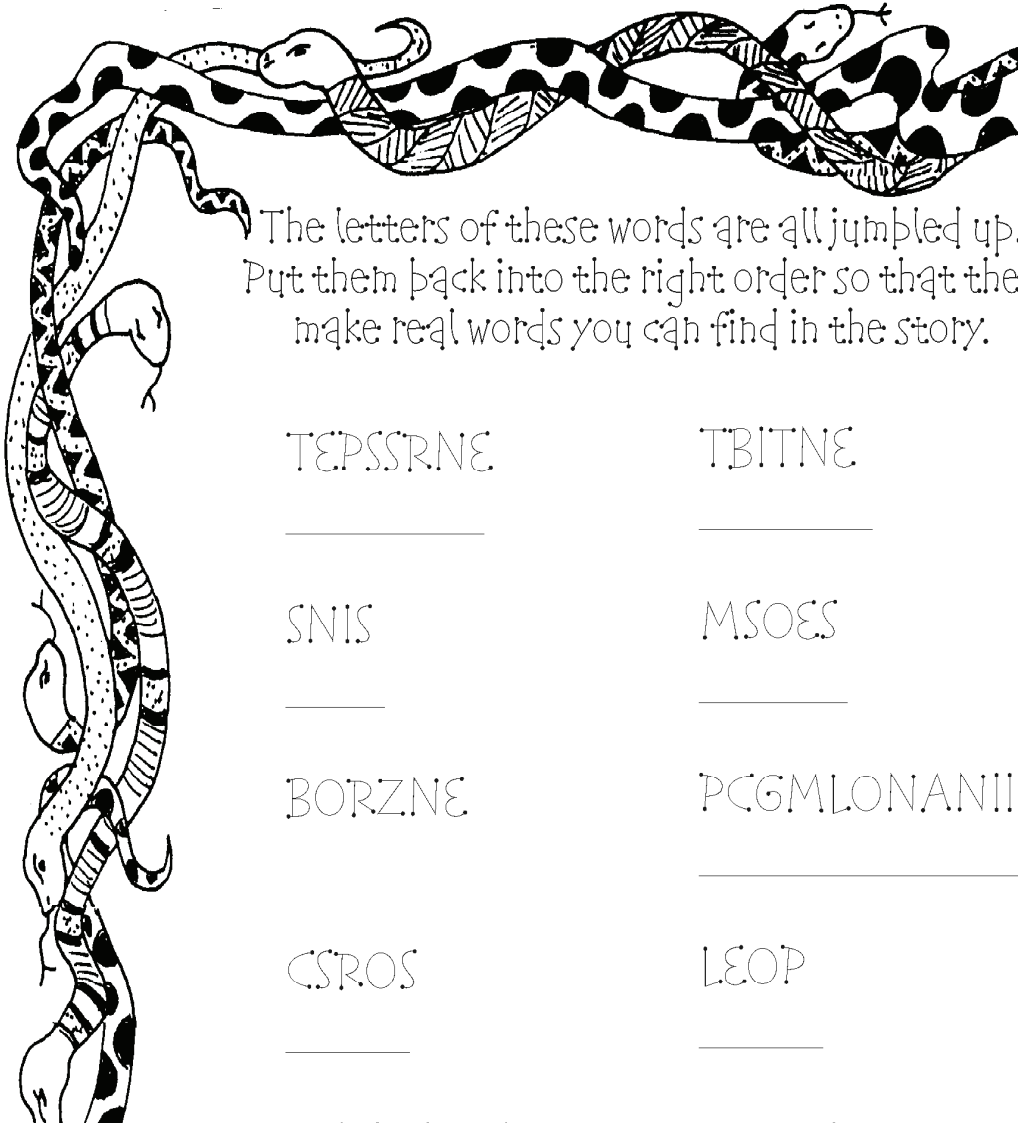
The bronze serpent

Activity A – Make a Balancing Snake



The bronze serpent

Activity B – Unscramble the Words



The letters of these words are all jumbled up.
Put them back into the right order so that they
make real words you can find in the story.

TEPSSRNE

TBITNE

SNIS

MSOES

BORZNE

PCGMLONANII

CSROS

LEOP

Balaam and his ass

Numbers 22 - 24

Storyline

The children of Israel camped in the plains of Moab. Balak, the king of the Moabites and all his people were afraid that the Israelites would over-run their land. So Balak sent for the prophet Balaam to come and curse the children of Israel. God spoke to Balaam twice, giving him instructions. The first time Balaam heeded God's word and the second time he didn't. Therefore God sent an angel to slay Balaam because of his disobedience. However, it was his donkey which saved him as she was able to see the angel with his sword drawn. Balaam struck the donkey three times in anger as it wouldn't move. God then spoke through the donkey to get Balaam's attention. His eyes were opened and he realised that he'd sinned. God directed him to go to King Balak and deliver the prophecy which was to "bless the Israelites and not curse them." Balak tried three times to persuade Balaam to curse the Israelites, and three times Balaam blessed them. This angered Balak. Balaam then prophesied what the Israelites would do to Balak's people.

Suggested Teaching Approach

1. Preparation for the teacher: To gain a further insight into what Balaam was really like read Numbers 25:1,2; 31:16; Jude 11; Revelation 2:14-20. This highlights why God stopped Balaam in such a dramatic way.
2. Converse with the children about whether they would expect animals to talk to humans. Ask what their reaction would be if one ever did.
3. Present the story emphasising God's love in the manner in which He stopped Balaam.
4. Go on to discuss with the children how desiring a love for the truth is so important to their protection.



Theme One

"God protects us against evildoers"

God's people were unaware of King Balak's intentions to have them cursed. Balaam listened to Balak and deliberately disobeyed God because he was a greedy man. God had full control of the situation and only allowed blessings to be declared over them. God guarded Israel against both Balak's evil intentions and Balaam's greed and unrighteousness. As we have a love for the truth and a hatred of evil we can then have great confidence in God's protection.

Key Thought

God always has our interests at heart and protects us even when we're unaware of dangers or difficulties.

Aim

To teach the children to trust God to protect them.

Memory Verse

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding." (Proverbs 3:5).

Theme Two

"You can't manipulate God"

Balak wanted to hear what suited him. He kept trying to get God to change His mind to suit his own purposes. He built altars and made offerings and moved to different places. However, the Lord's will was set for Israel and He would not have them cursed. We, with all our wiles and reasonings, cannot manipulate God to make our own plans and desires come to fruition. Instead we must seek His will, and desire His will for our life.

Key Thought

God will not be manipulated by us. Instead, He would have us search out His ways and set our hearts to serve His will and purpose.

Aim

To help the children realise that we are here to please God rather than have Him please us. God's will, not ours, is the central issue.

Memory Verse

"Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people." (Jeremiah 7:23).

Resource management is a key to successful teaching. Prepare your resources well in advance of the day that they are needed

Activity A - Bible Pictionary

Materials

- Set of small cards with a different word from the list, written on each card.
- Egg timer or stop watch.
- Blackboard and chalk, or several sheets of paper and pencil.

Steps

- Divide the class into two teams.
- From team A, one child draws the first card from the pile (without the other team members seeing it).
- When the egg timer is turned, the child commences to draw the word while his/her team mates try to guess what the word is. The drawer is not permitted to speak or spell, or use numbers, or to make the sounds of animals, or to mime an action, but they may say "yes" or "no" to their team mates' guesses.
- The team scores a point if they are able to guess the word before the timer runs out.
- The turn then moves to team B.
- Each player in both teams takes a turn as the drawer.
- Remind the children that all the words are found in the story. This should help their guesses.
- For the younger children the teacher may need to help them read the word they are to draw.

Word List

Donkey King Mouth *Fear
 Sword Message Saddle *Refuse
 Angel People Stick *Anger
 Eyes Road Speak *Curse
 Plain Servants Fight *Hit
 Riding Kill
 (Words with the * are more difficult)

Activity B - Hidden Verses and True or False Questions

Materials

- 1 Activity Sheet per child.
- Pens/pencils.

Steps

- Starting at the letter "O" the children write out every second letter, going around the puzzle twice, the second time skipping the letter "O", and then finishing with the word in the middle.
- They then circle true or false beside the questions below.

Begin at the letter "O" and go around the edge of the shield, skipping every next letter to find the hidden verse. You need to go around the circle twice to use all the letters, ending with "MY PEOPLE." Write the verse on the lines below.

Start here, then drop out the "O" second time around.



OBEDIENT
 MY VOICE, AND
 I WILL BE YOUR
 GOD AND
 YOU MY
 PEOPLE.

True or False

1. It was the children of Queensland who camped at Moab.
2. Balaam and his people were happy at the thought of the Israelites running over their land.
3. God gave instructions to Balaam twice.
4. Balaam did what he was told twice.
5. Balaam killed his donkey with his sword.
6. The donkey spoke to Balaam to get his attention so the Lord could speak to him.

False
 True
 False
 False
 True

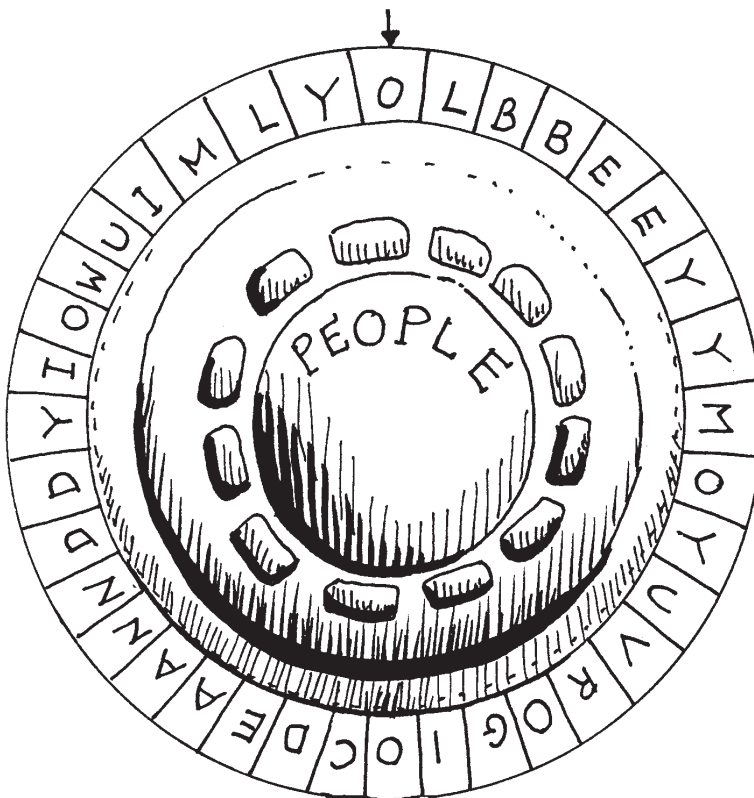


Balaam and his ass

Activity B – Hidden Verses and True or False Questions

Begin at the letter "O" and go around the edge of the shield, skipping every next letter; to find the hidden verse. You need to go around the circle twice to use all the letters, ending with "MY PEOPLE." Write the verse on the lines below.

Start here, then drop out the "O" second time around.



True or False

1. It was the children of Queensland who camped at Moab.
2. Balak and his people were happy at the thought of the Israelites running over their land.
3. God gave instructions to Balaam twice.
4. Balaam did what he was told twice.
5. Balaam killed his donkey with his sword.
6. The donkey spoke to Balaam to get his attention so the Lord could speak to him.



True/False

True/False

True/False

True/False

True/False

True/False

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Joshua and Rahab

Joshua 1 & 2

Storyline

After Moses died, Joshua, who was Moses' assistant, became the leader of the children of Israel. The Lord told Joshua that if he followed all the laws of Moses and was strong and courageous, then God would never leave him. So Joshua commanded the people to prepare to move into, and take, the land the Lord had promised them. Joshua sent two men to spy out the land. When the king of Jericho heard of it, he sent men to capture the two spies. Rahab, the lady of the house in which they hid, secretly helped them escape, because she knew of the God of Israel and His power. She asked the spies to deal kindly with her and all her house in return for their escape and her keeping their mission a secret. A scarlet cord hanging from her window would be the secret signal to save all her house when Israel attacked.

Suggested Teaching Approach

1. The building of the wall activity could be used as a teaching aid, if desired. Alternatively, tell the story and have the children repeat it as they build Rahab's section of the wall.
2. Talk about how life-changing this experience was for Rahab, and how God works in mysterious ways.

Arrange regular sessions with your Sonseeker team leader to give feedback on your class and program.



Theme One

“God’s way is different from ours”

God promised the Israelites they would possess the land of Canaan and the two spies believed that God had prepared the way. God had prepared the heart of a sinful Gentile woman, who became an instrument in God's plan for delivering the spies. We need not concern ourselves as to how God works to bring about His purposes in our lives, but simply trust that He knows the best way for us regardless of the method He uses.

Key Thought

Rest in the knowledge that we are in God's hands and by faith allow Him to organise things to bring about His perfect will in our lives.

Aim

For the children to realise that God's ways are not our ways, but we can safely trust His Spirit to lead us through the circumstances that He has tailor-made for us.

Memory Verse

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways, says the Lord.” (Isaiah 55:8).

Theme Two

“The Lord wants to change our lives”

Rahab had lived an evil life in an evil land, but when she heard about the Lord and what He had done for His people her heart was open and she was able to help the Israelites. This changed her whole life and she later married an Israelite and became the mother of Boaz and the great, great grandmother of King David. If we are really searching for the right way, when Jesus comes to us, we will open our hearts and let Him change our life.

Key Thought

When we ask Jesus to enter our life nothing is the same. He becomes the centre and change occurs as we focus our eyes on Him.

Aim

For the children to be aware that Jesus comes to dwell within us so that we can be changed to be like Him.

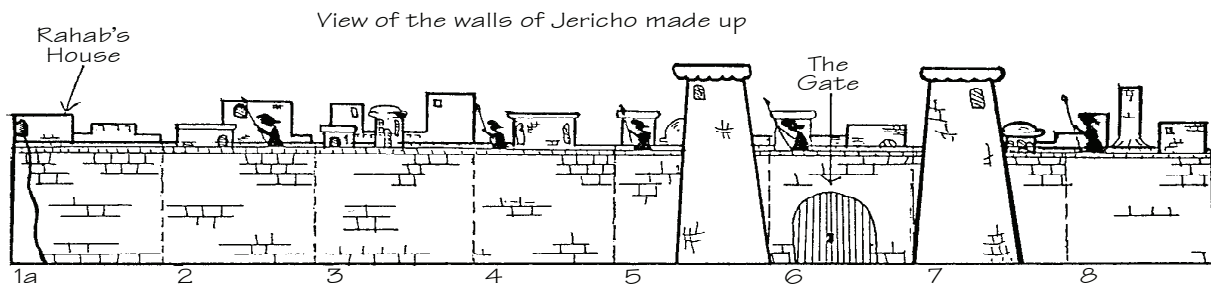
Memory Verse

“We ... are being transformed into the same image ... by the Spirit of the Lord.” (II Cor 3:18).

Activity A - Construction of the City of Jericho

Note

- This activity continues for two weeks.
- In next week's lesson are the instructions for the construction of the model of the wall, including Rahab's house, and the figures of the people for both lessons. The wall is in panels and may be made as a complete wall or in part to suit the class situation. If you wish you could just use Rahab's house with a panel either side, or another option is to adapt some panels as flannelgraph pieces by adding felt or sandpaper to the rear.
- The model can be made as a class activity over the two weeks, then used by the children to re-tell the story, thus reinforcing the learning. The walls can be knocked over to simulate the collapse of the city wall while Rahab's house remains standing.



Materials

- 1 set of the 12 Activity Sheets mounted or photocopied onto cardboard.
- Scissors/colouring pencils/sticky tape/red cotton/ruler.

Steps - see continuation in next lesson


































Activity B - Find the Secret Verse

Materials

- 1 Activity Sheet per child.
- Pens/pencils

Steps

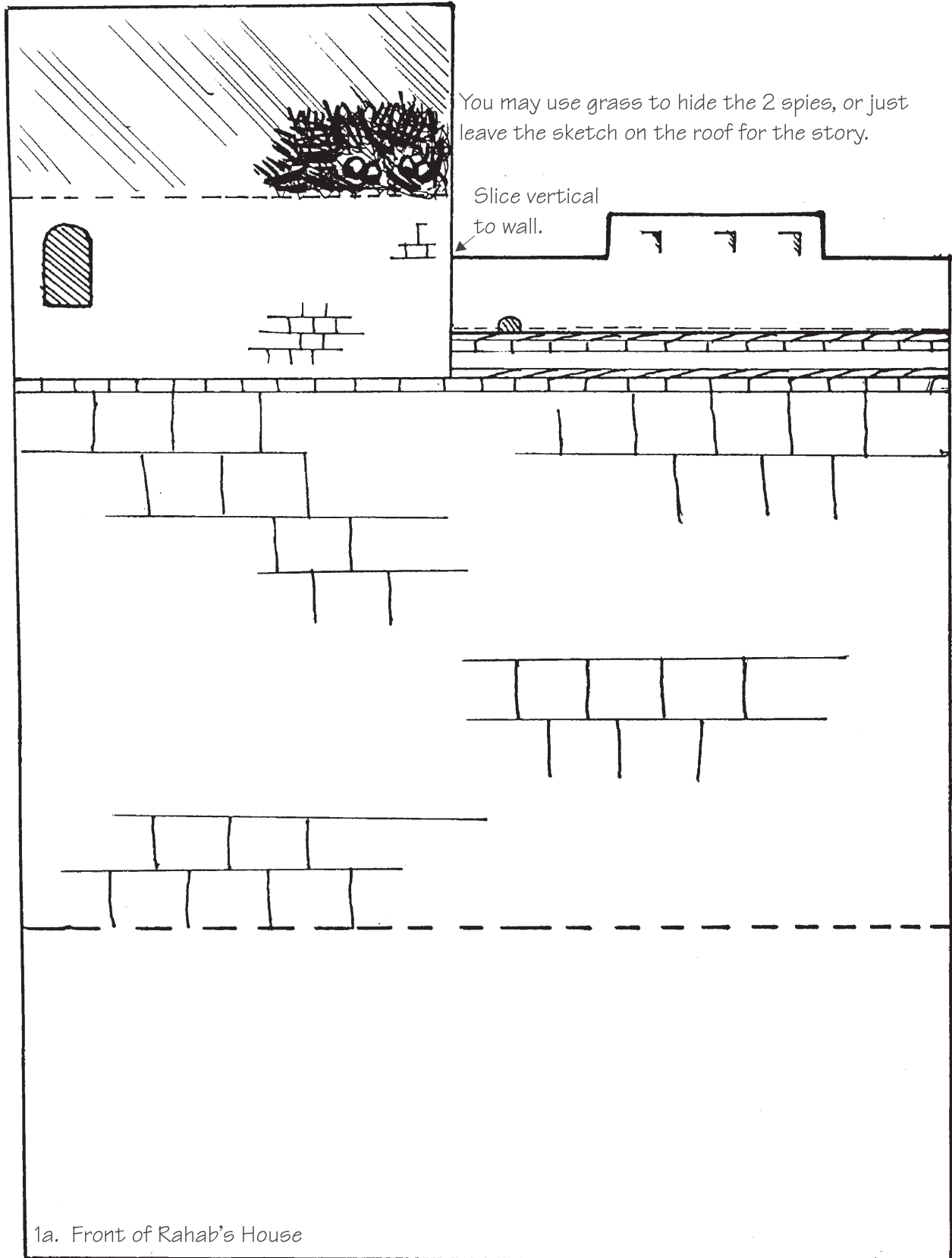
- The children discover the message by placing the first letter of each picture in the box provided.

						
T	H	E	L	O	R	D
						
Y	O	U	R	G	O	D
						
I	S	W	I	T	H	Y
						
W	H	E	R	E	V	E
						
Y	O	U	G	O		

Joshua 1 & 2

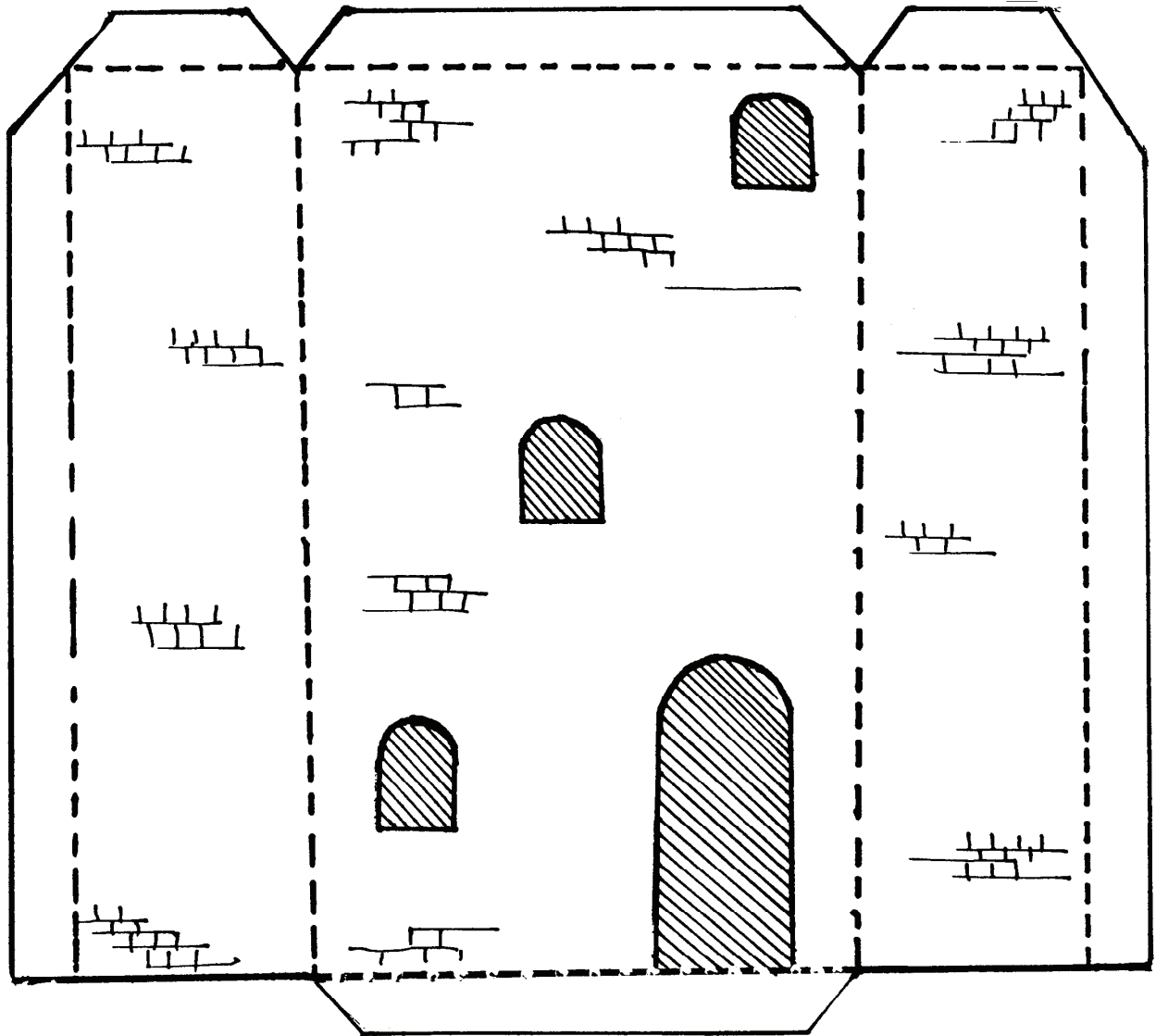
Joshua and Rahab

Activity A – Construction of the City of Jericho (Panel 1a)



Joshua and Rahab

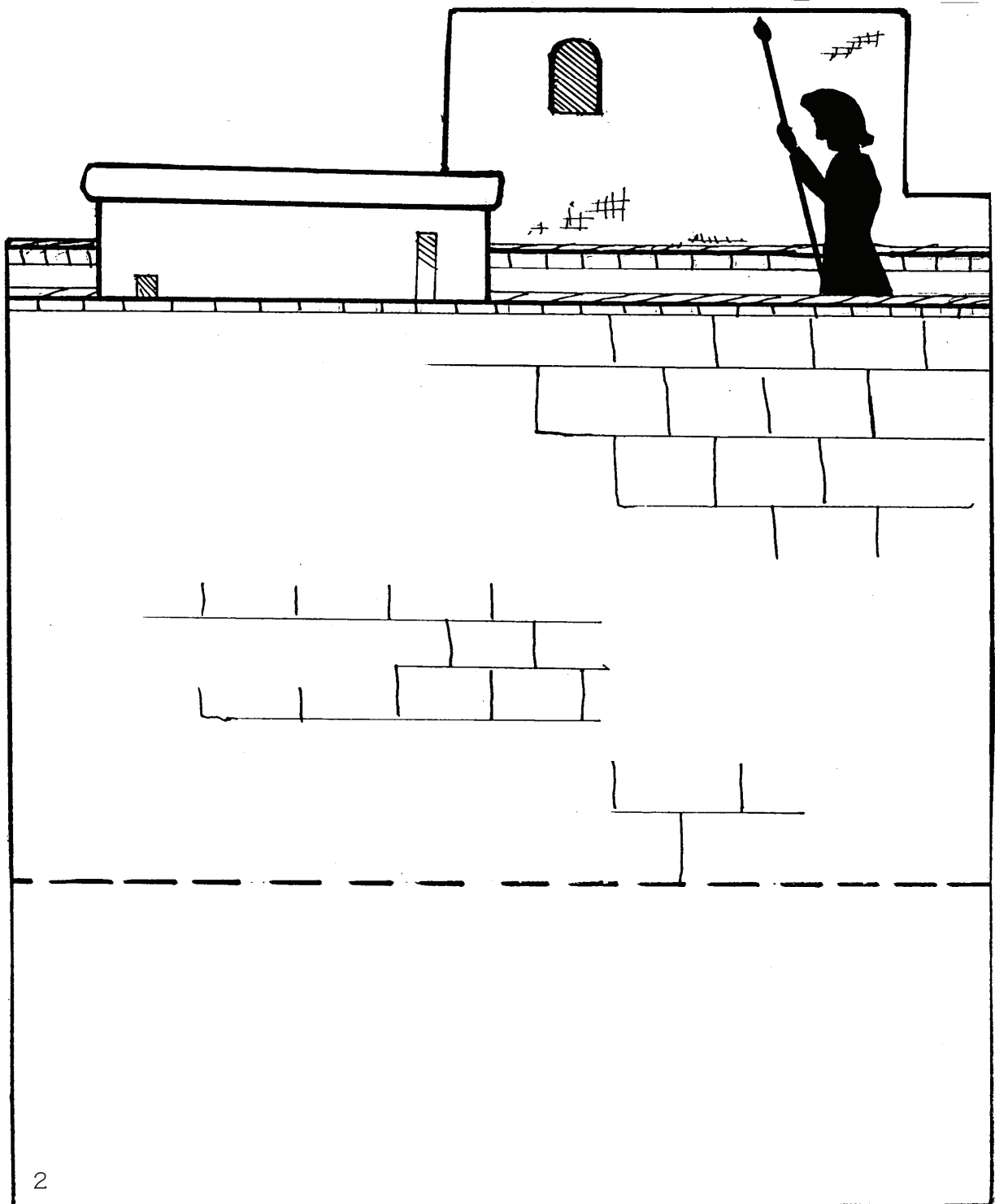
Activity A – Construction of the City of Jericho (Panel 1b)



1b Back of Rahab's House

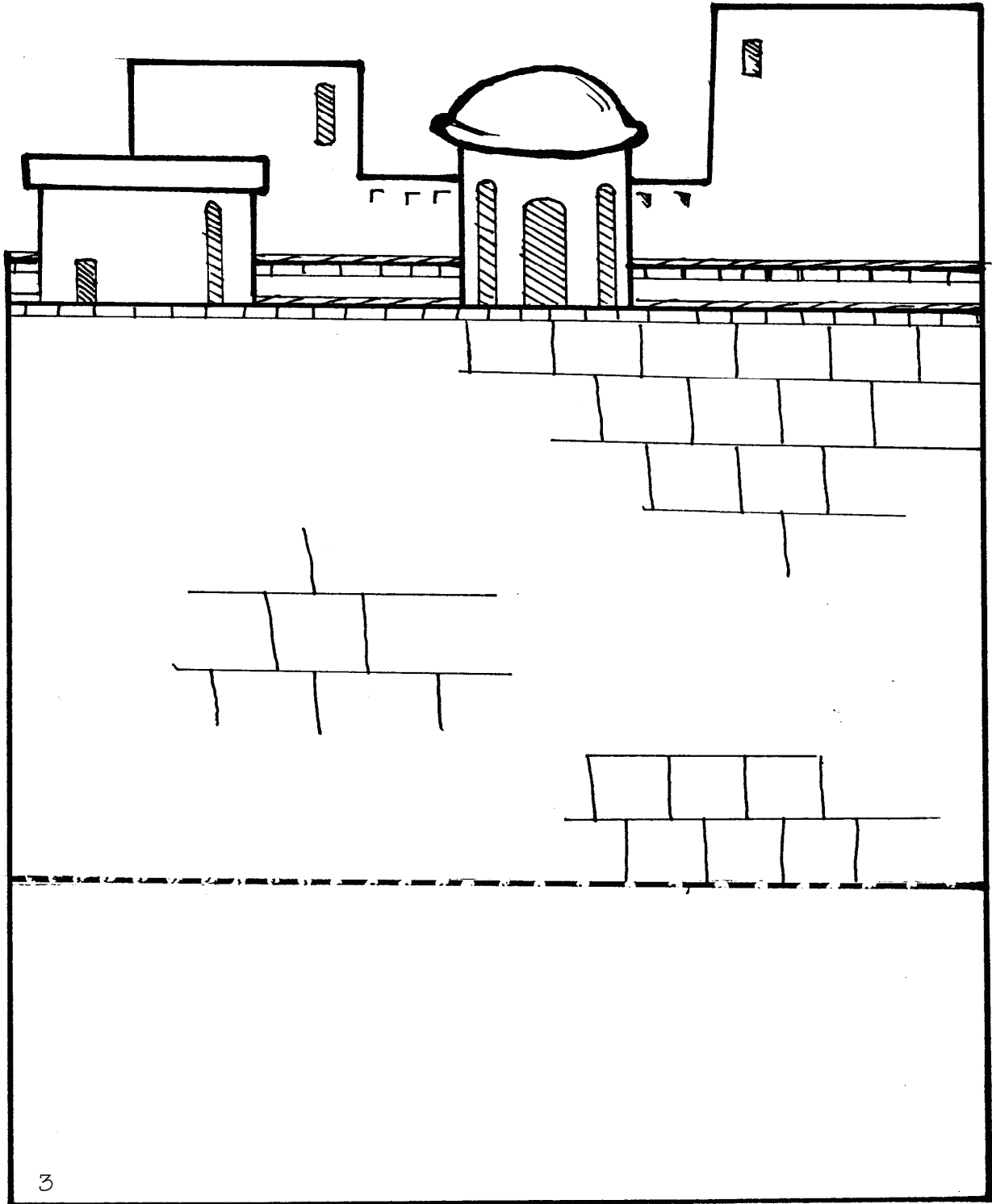
Joshua and Rahab

Activity A – Construction of the City of Jericho (Panel 2)



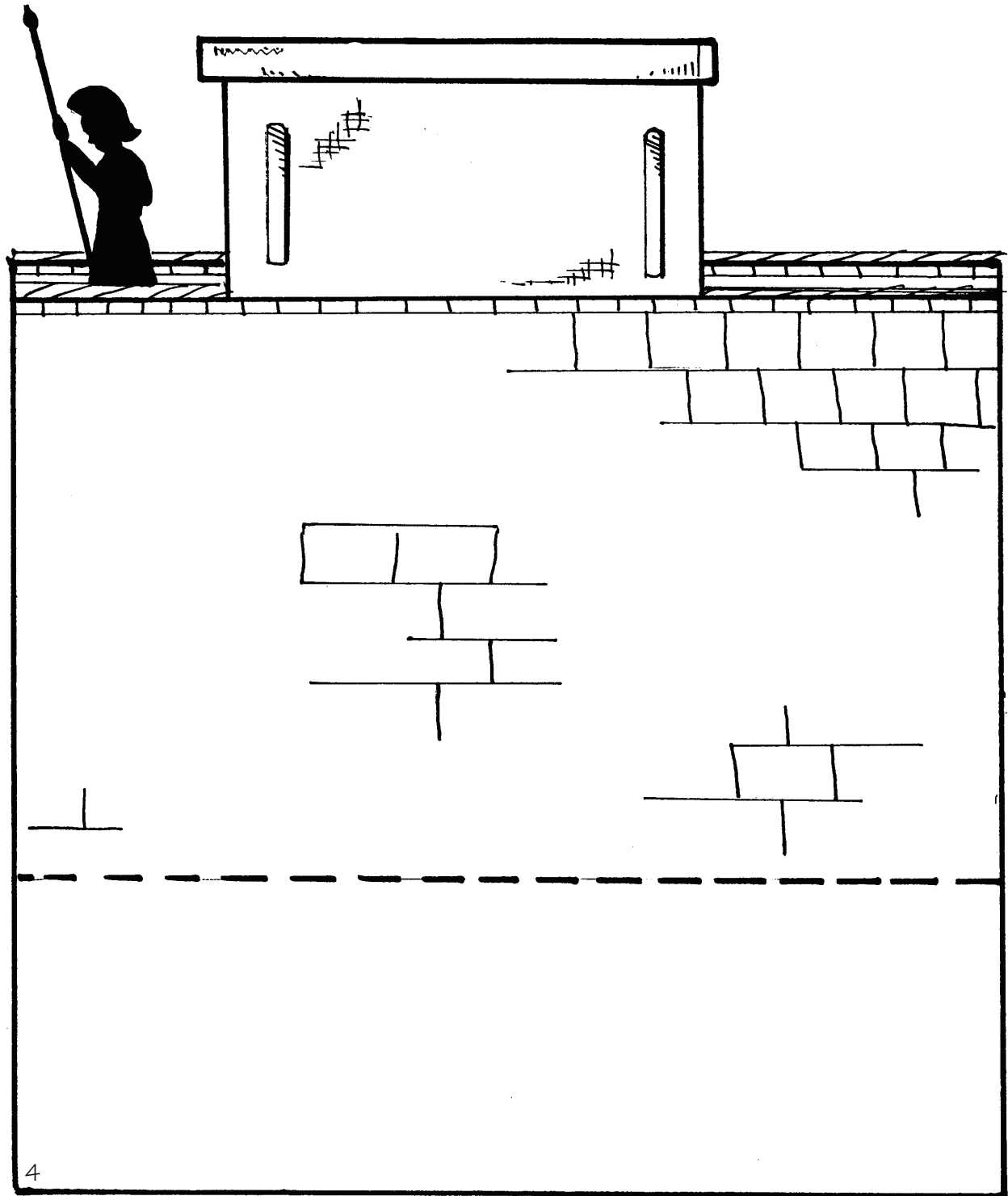
Joshua and Rahab

Activity A – Construction of the City of Jericho (Panel 3)



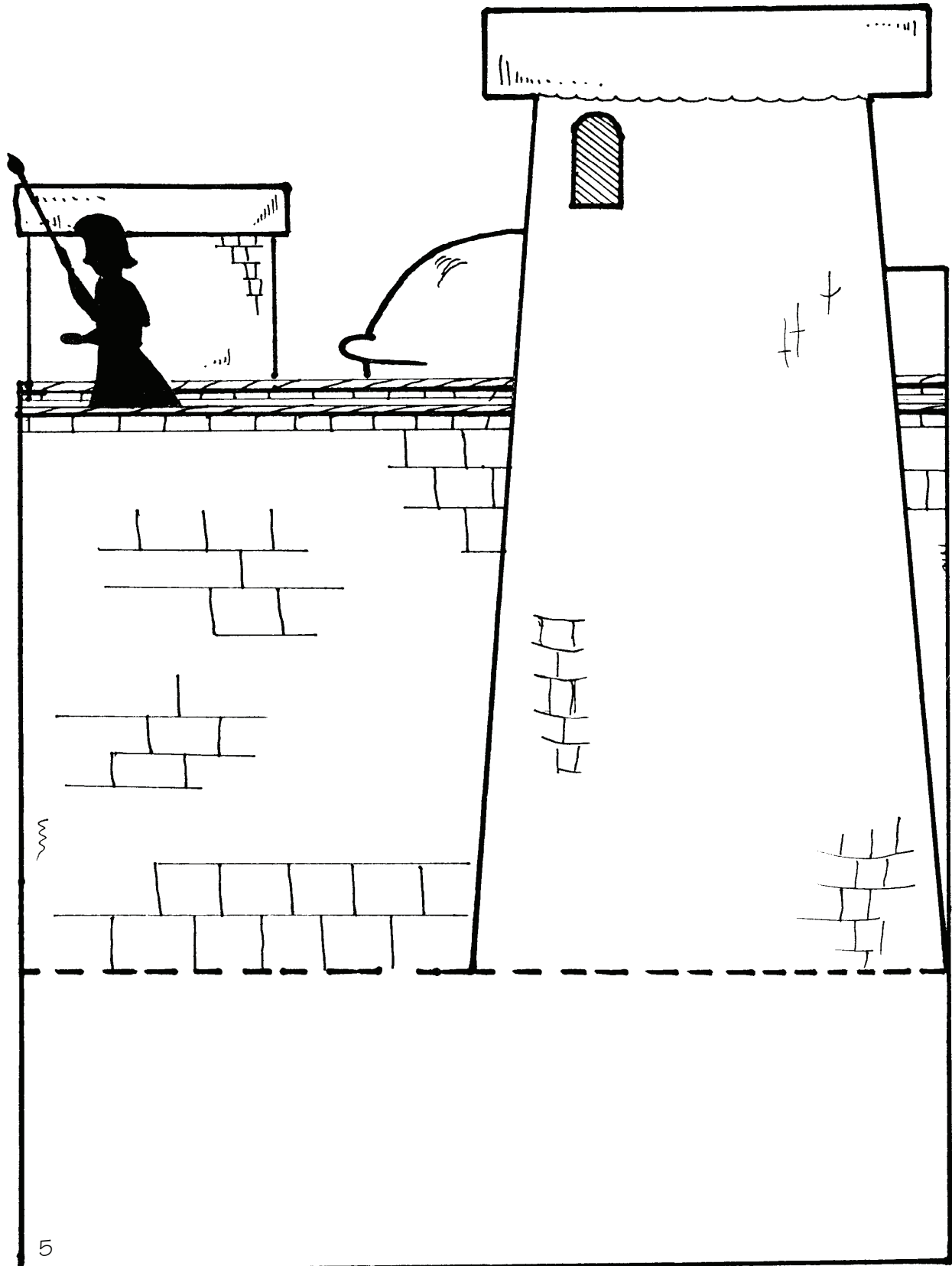
Joshua and Rahab

Activity A – Construction of the City of Jericho (Panel 4)



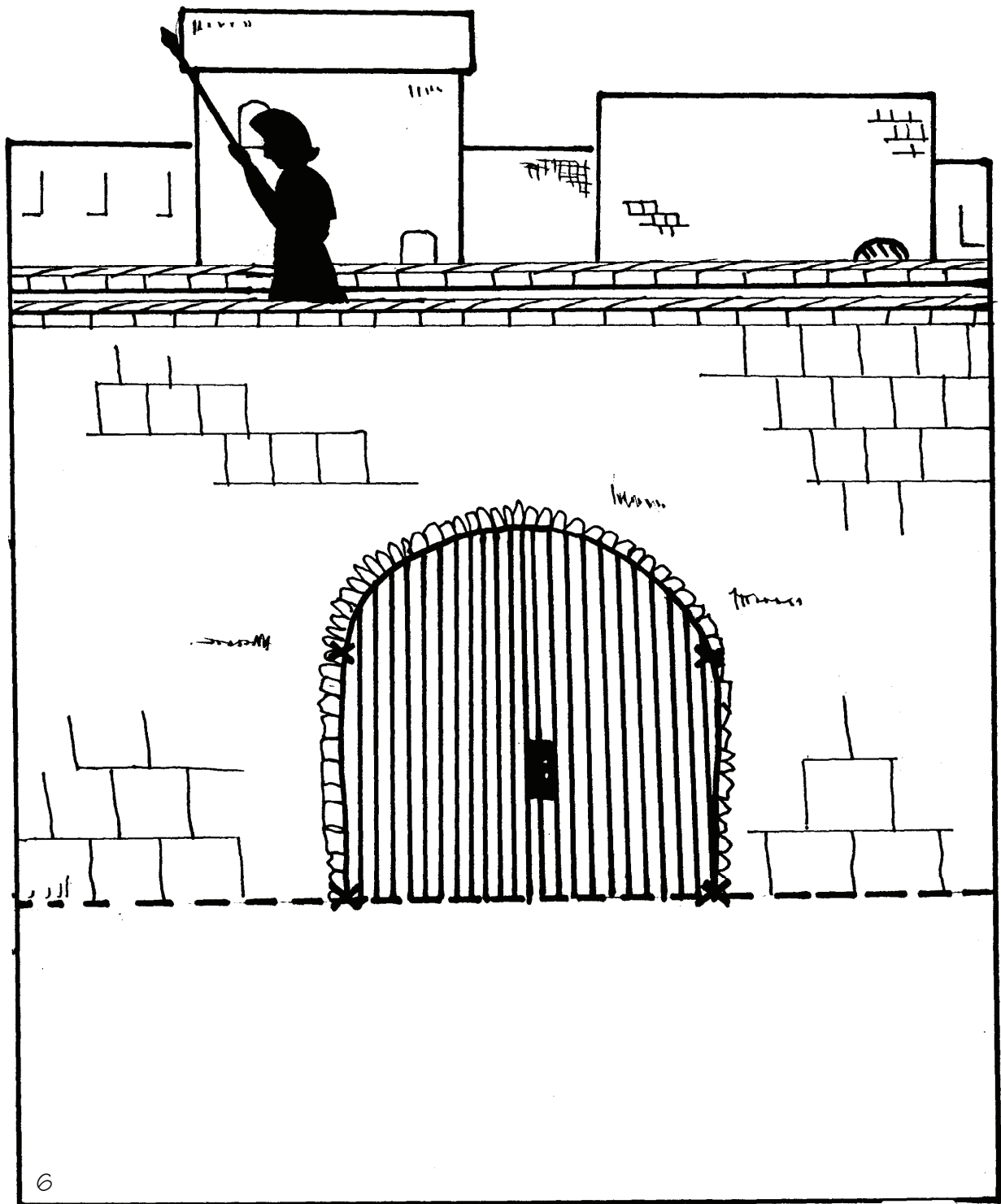
Joshua and Rahab

Activity A – Construction of the City of Jericho (Panel 5)



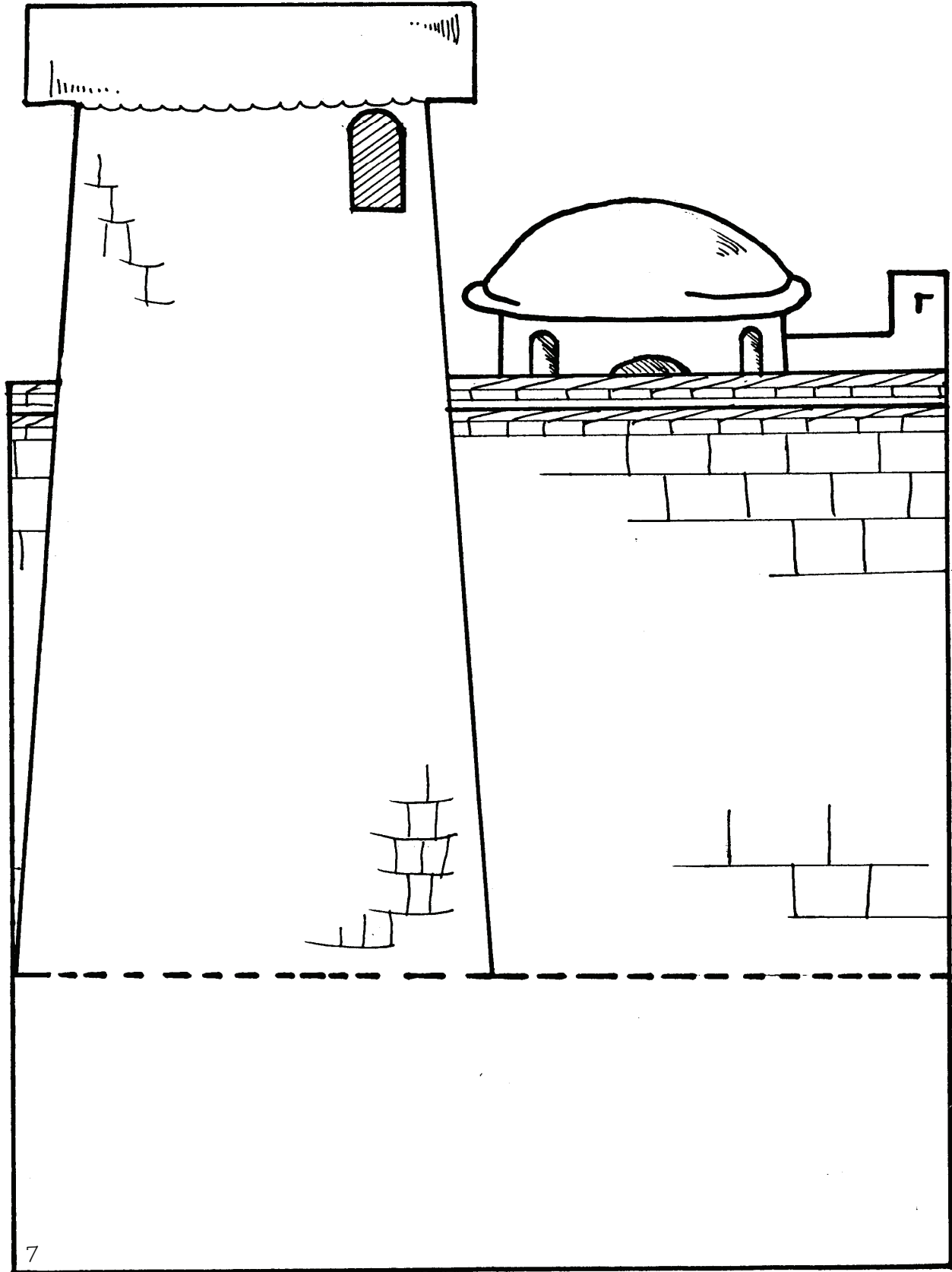
Joshua and Rahab

Activity A – Construction of the City of Jericho (Panel 6)



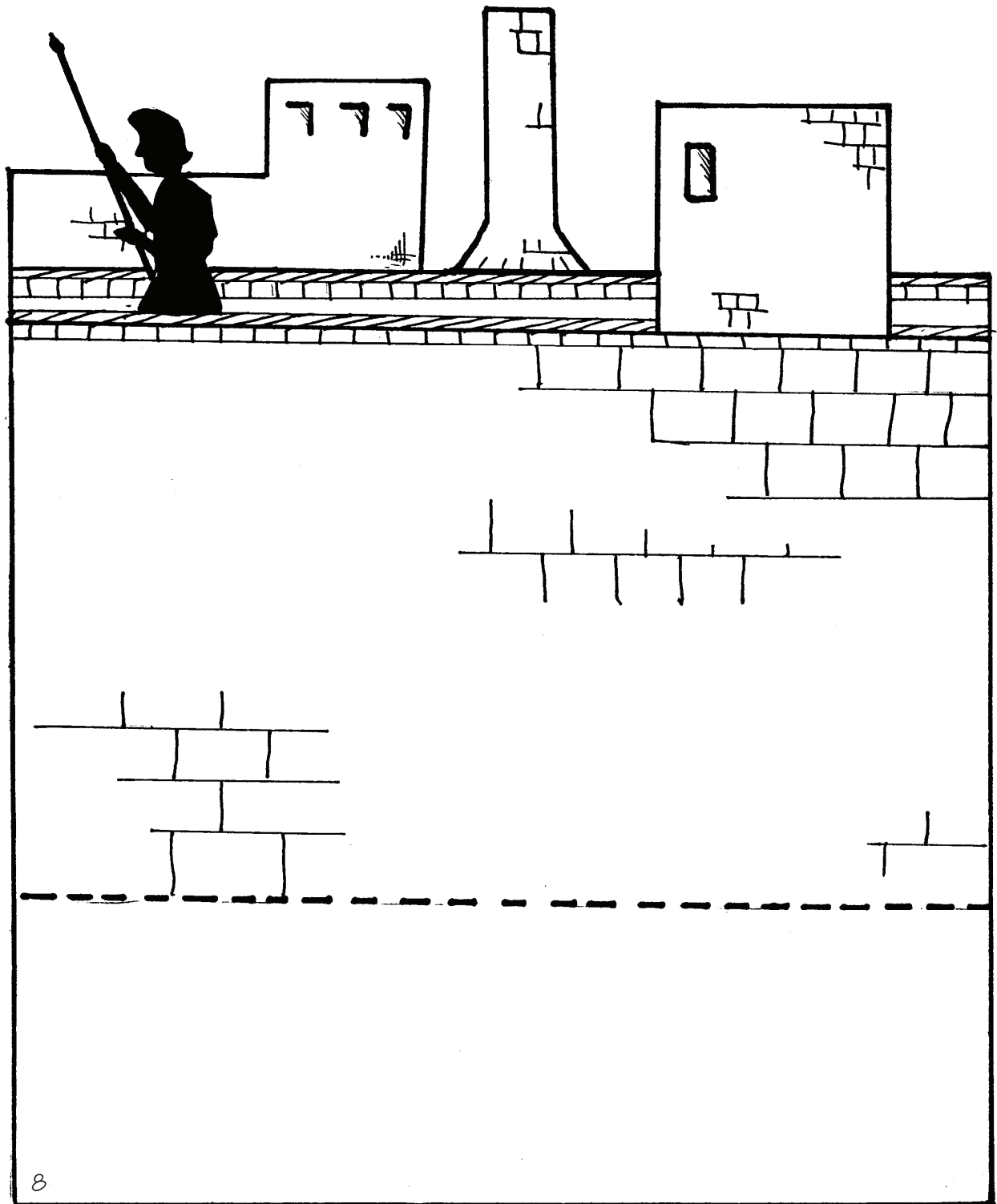
Joshua and Rahab

Activity A – Construction of the City of Jericho (Panel 7)



Joshua and Rahab

Activity A – Construction of the City of Jericho (Panel 8)



8

Joshua and Rahab

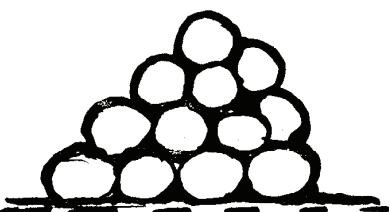
Activity A – Construction of the City of Jericho



Priests



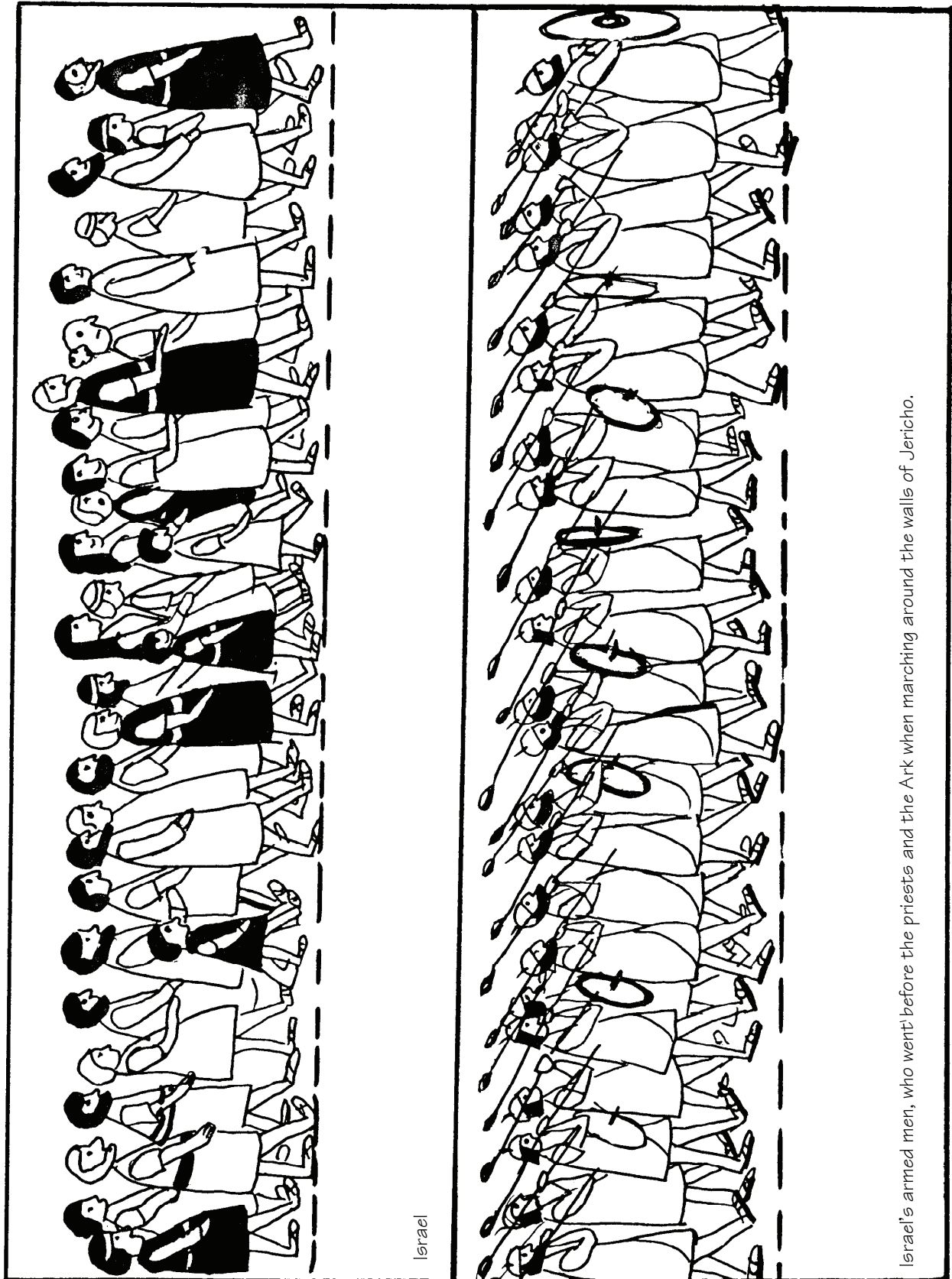
God's people crossing Jordan.



Priests entering the Jordan River with the Ark.

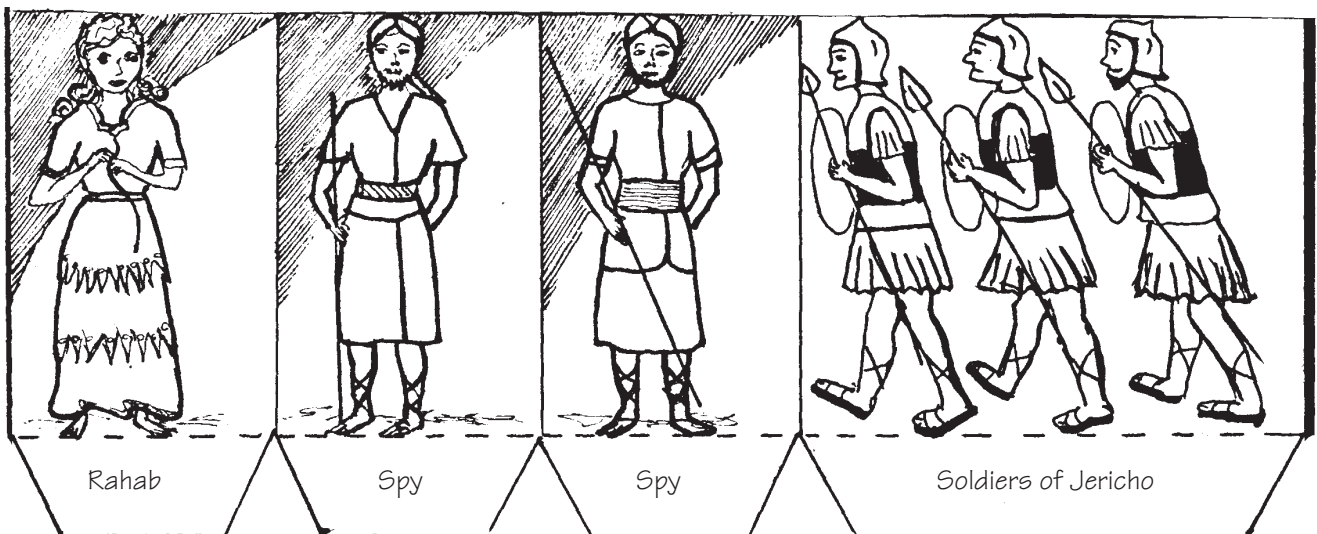
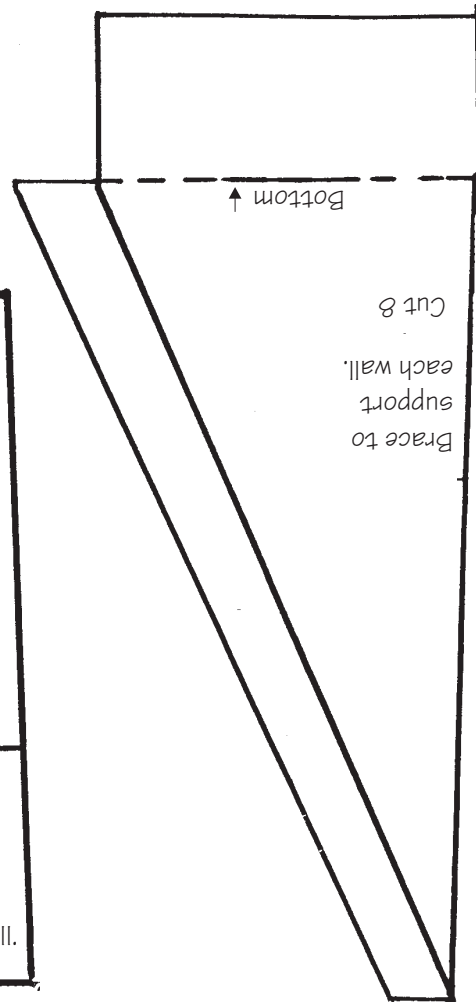
Joshua and Rahab

Activity A – Construction of the City of Jericho



Joshua and Rahab

Activity A – Construction of the City of Jericho



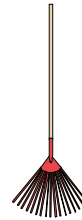
Joshua and Rahab

Activity B – Find the Secret Verse

To find the secret verse, take the first letter from each picture and place it in the box below.



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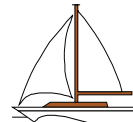
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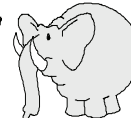
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Joshua 1 & 2

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Crossing the Jordan, Jericho

Joshua 3-6; I Kings 16:34

Storyline

Joshua obeyed God and followed the Lord's detailed instructions on how to enter the promised land. The priests carried the Ark of the Testimony into the Jordan River and the river stopped flowing. All the Israelites crossed over on dry ground and stopped opposite Jericho. The people sanctified themselves to the Lord and celebrated their first Passover feast in the promised land. God then told Joshua how to defeat Jericho. They had to march around the city once a day for six days. The men of war went first, then seven priests blowing seven trumpets, then the priests carrying the Ark, then more men of war. On the seventh day they marched around seven times, then the priests blew the trumpets and they all shouted, and the city walls fell down flat. The Israelites moved in and destroyed everything and everyone except Rahab and her family. The gold, silver, bronze and iron vessels were saved and consecrated to the Lord. Joshua then said that if anyone rebuilt Jericho he would be cursed and would suffer the loss of two sons. Six hundred years later this prophecy was fulfilled. A man by the name of Hiel of Bethel rebuilt the walls of Jericho and his eldest and youngest sons' lives were lost.

Suggested Teaching Approach

As part of telling the story, a wall could be constructed and then destroyed, leaving Rahab's section in tact. If the written activity is chosen, highlight the details whilst telling the story. It is important to tell the children that God is faithful to His promise. It is important to see that this time the children of Israel obeyed Joshua's command, thus they obeyed God's command. As a result of obedience, they became co-participants in the miracle of the walls of Jericho falling down flat.

Theme One

"Following God's word can bring miracles into our lives"

This generation, under Joshua's leadership, heard and obeyed the Lord in faith. The Lord stopped the river flowing and caused the city walls to fall down flat. When we hear the Lord's voice and obey His instructions, He is able to bring His will into our lives. As with the Israelites, the Lord can perform miracles in our hearts and in our attitudes to give us the victory over sin and disobedience.

Key Thought

Open hearts and hearing ears provide the way for God's will to be done in our lives. The Lord never changes, but the way He does things with us may be different from the way He did things with the Israelites. One thing is certain, God will fulfil what He promises.

Aim

To teach the children that they must be open for God to have His way in their lives. God often speaks to us through leadership. Eg. Dad and Mum, Sunday School teachers, elders, etc.

Memory Verse

"And Joshua said to the people, 'Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.'" (Joshua 3:5).

Theme Two

"The Lord keeps His word"

The Israelites had been wandering around the desert for 40 years waiting to enter the promised land. God kept His promise of years ago and the Israelites entered the land. We, too, can rely on God to keep His promises to us, and they will be fulfilled in His perfect time. Sometimes we have to be patient and live our lives in the assurance and knowledge of these promises. We also should note that God, having spoken through Joshua, said that the walls of Jericho were never to be rebuilt. Six hundred years later, we see a disobedient man building the walls, and as it had been prophesied, his firstborn and youngest sons died.

Key Thought

Even though we may be required to be patient, the Lord is faithful and will keep His promises.

Aim

For the children to understand that God is reliable, trustworthy and will not forget anything He has promised.

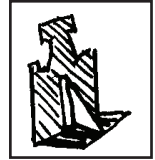
Memory Verse

"Do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises." (Hebrews 6:12).

Activity A - Construction of the City of Jericho (continued)

Steps

- Cut out the panels around the solid lines.
- Colour the panels if desired and if time permits.
- Fold the panels along the dotted lines to form tabs as bases and on Panel 1a and 1b to form tabs to glue back Rahab's house and the hidden spies.
- Make a hole for a piece of red cotton in the bottom corner of the front window of Rahab's house. Attach the cotton to the inside with tape, allowing it to hang down the outside.
- Glue the tabs and assemble the house.
- From scrap cardboard cut triangular braces to support the walls to the bases as shown. Attach with sticky tape.
- The gates in the wall may be cut around the curved top, down the centre and along the bottom. After scoring the straight sides, the gates can be open and shut.
- A further aid could be a U shaped section of blue cardboard to simulate the Jordan River for the tribes of Israel to walk through.



Activity B - Find the Hidden Message

Materials

- 1 Activity Sheet per child.
- Pens/pencils.
- Rulers.

Steps

- The children colour in the shapes, then rule a black line along the top and bottom of each line of shapes to reveal the secret message.



Follow God's command
 Look carefully at the page and see if you can read the hidden message ...
 Need some help? Try shading in the drawn shapes and then look at the white spaces in between. If you are still puzzled, draw a straight line along the top and bottom of each line of shapes.

S E V E N P R I E S T S

S E V E N T R U M P E T S

S E V E N T H D A Y

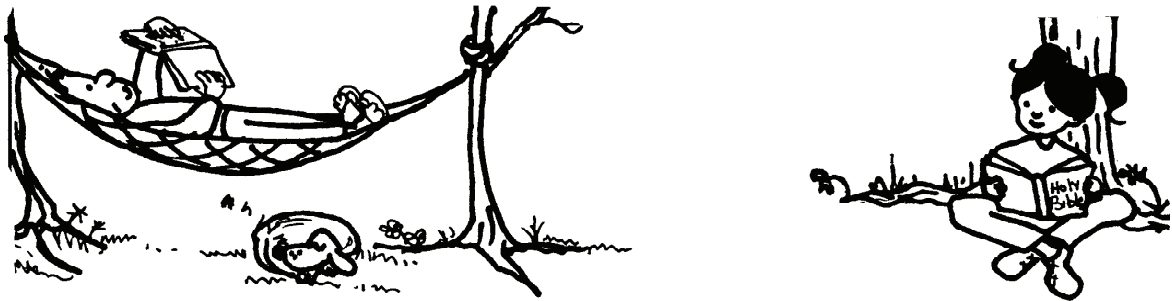
S E V E N T I M E S

S H O U A G R E A S H O U

G O U P E V E R Y M A N

Crossing the Jordan, Jericho

Activity B – Find the Hidden Message



Follow God's command

Look carefully at the page and see if you can read the hidden message ...
Need some help? Try shading in the drawn shapes and then look at the white spaces in between. If you are still puzzled, draw a straight line along the top and bottom of each line of shapes.

SAVE THE PRIESTS

SAVE THE RITUALISTS

SAVE THE IDOLATRY

SAVE THE MONKS

SHOUT WAR! SHOUT WAR!

HOPE EVERY MAN

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The sin of Achan

Joshua 7

Storyline

One of the Israelite soldiers, called Achan, secretly kept some gold, silver, and a robe, and buried them in his tent, even though God had told them to keep nothing for themselves from Jericho. This made the Lord angry and He caused the Israelites to be defeated when they went to battle against Ai. Joshua and the elders sought the Lord to ask why. The Lord said that Israel had sinned and He wouldn't be with them any more unless they destroyed what had been taken. The Lord told Joshua to have all Israel pass by Him by tribe, clan, family, household and He would show the sinner. God revealed it was Achan. He confessed, then he along with his family and belongings were destroyed, for Achan's sin had brought disaster on Israel and 36 men died because of him.

Suggested Teaching Approach

Highlight the following elements:

- God sees all we do, even when we try to hide our disobedience.
- Sin affects not only ourselves, but others also.
- When God reveals our sin, we must deal with it.



Theme One

“Sin is serious”

One man in all Israel disobeyed God's order to destroy everything except that which was to go into God's treasury. God saw his sin and punished all Israel, and eventually destroyed Achan and his family. God is not pleased when we sin and the consequences of our sin can hurt us and people we know and love. If we have sinned we must repent and ask God's forgiveness, while we still have the opportunity.

Key Thought

No matter how small we consider our sin to be, God still sees it as serious. God does not want us to excuse our sin, but to take responsibility for it.

Aim

For the children to understand that sin is serious and must be dealt with immediately and to know that Jesus offers us a way to forgiveness if we truly repent.

Memory Verse

“He who covers his sins will not prosper.” (Proverbs 28:13).

Theme Two

“Obey God”

God gave His people instructions - for a reason. They may not have understood why, but He required them to obey. God could not be with the army while there was sin in the camp. God desires and requires our obedience. God cannot walk with us if we hold on to sin and disobedience. The wages of sin is death. We cannot presume on God and live disobediently.

Key Thought

More than anything else, God asks us to obey Him. If we confess our disobedience, we can enjoy His presence.

Aim

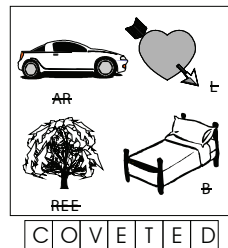
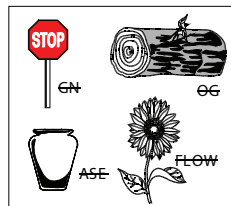
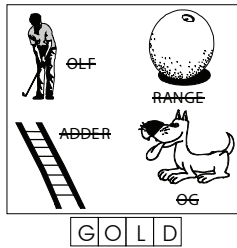
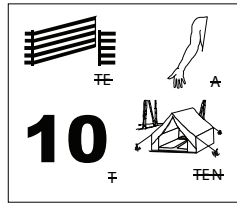
For the children to become aware of the need for God to teach them obedience.

Memory Verse

“Observe and obey all these words that it may go well with you” (Deut 12:28).

Some activities will require more time than others. If you are unsure of how long the activity will take, complete the activity at home.

Activity A - Word Puzzle



Materials

- 1 Activity sheet per child.
- Pens/pencils.
- Coloured pencils/felt pens.

Steps

- The children work through the puzzle, then colour the pictures.

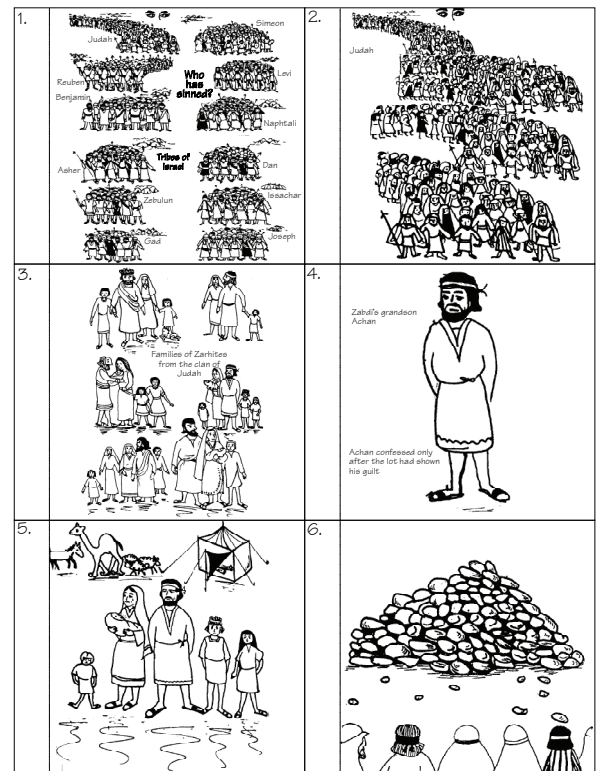
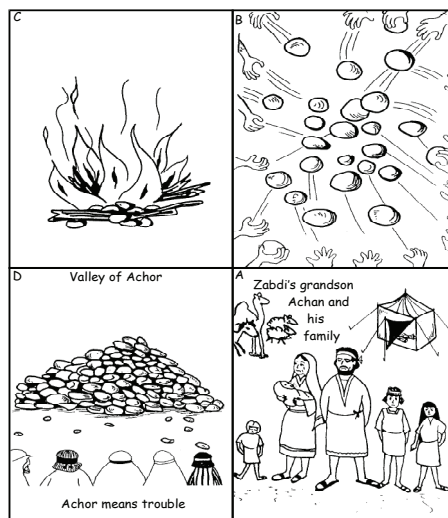
Activity B - Make a Storybook

Materials

- 1 of each Activity Sheet per child.
- Scissors.
- Glue.

Steps

- Have children cut out each section i.e. A B C D.
- Starting with Section A, show Achan with his family and possessions.
- Over the top, glue Section B, to show the stoning.
- Over the top, glue Section C, showing the burning.
- Over the top, glue Section D, showing the end result, the idea being to show how final it was.
- Now have the children make a storybook each from the second Activity Sheet.
- Cut out the six pages along the outside lines. The dotted lines indicate a border for stapling down the side. Let them turn the pages and follow the story as you tell it.

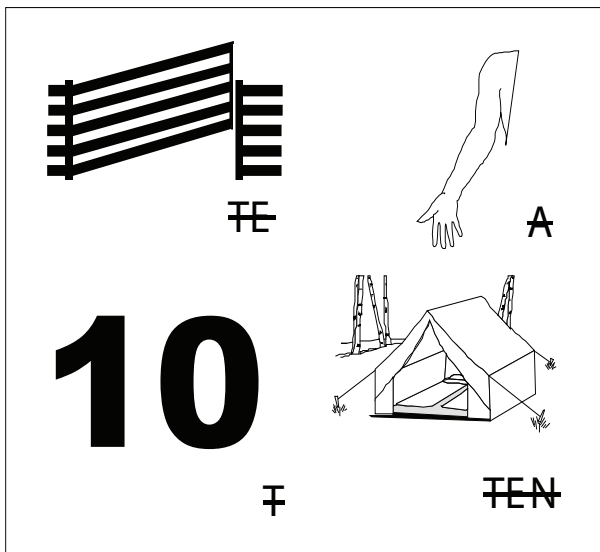


The sin of Achan

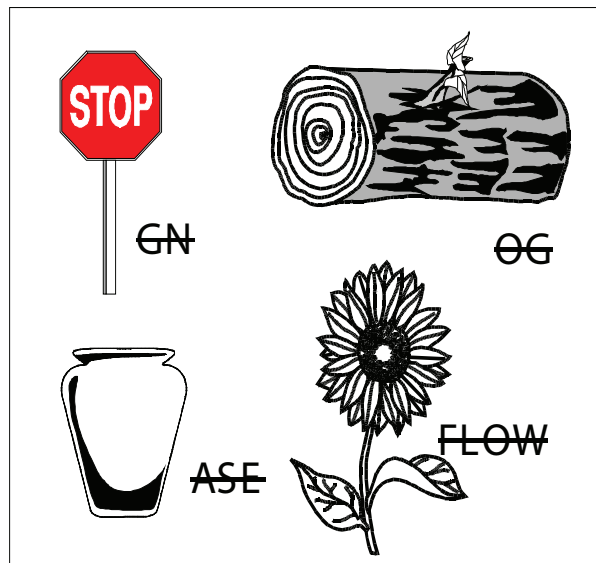
Activity A – Word Puzzle

To find the sin of Achan -
Take the letters from the word-picture
and join them together to form the sin of Achan.

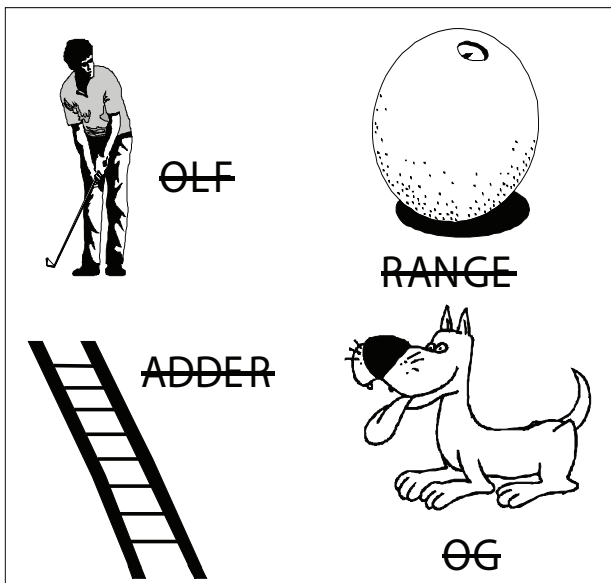
From Joshua 7



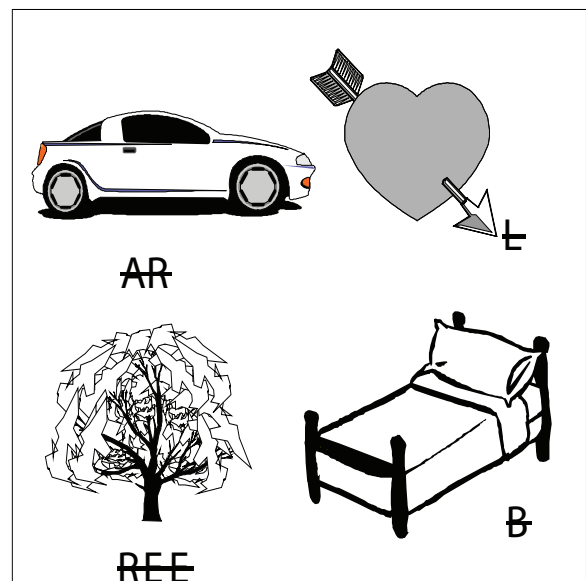
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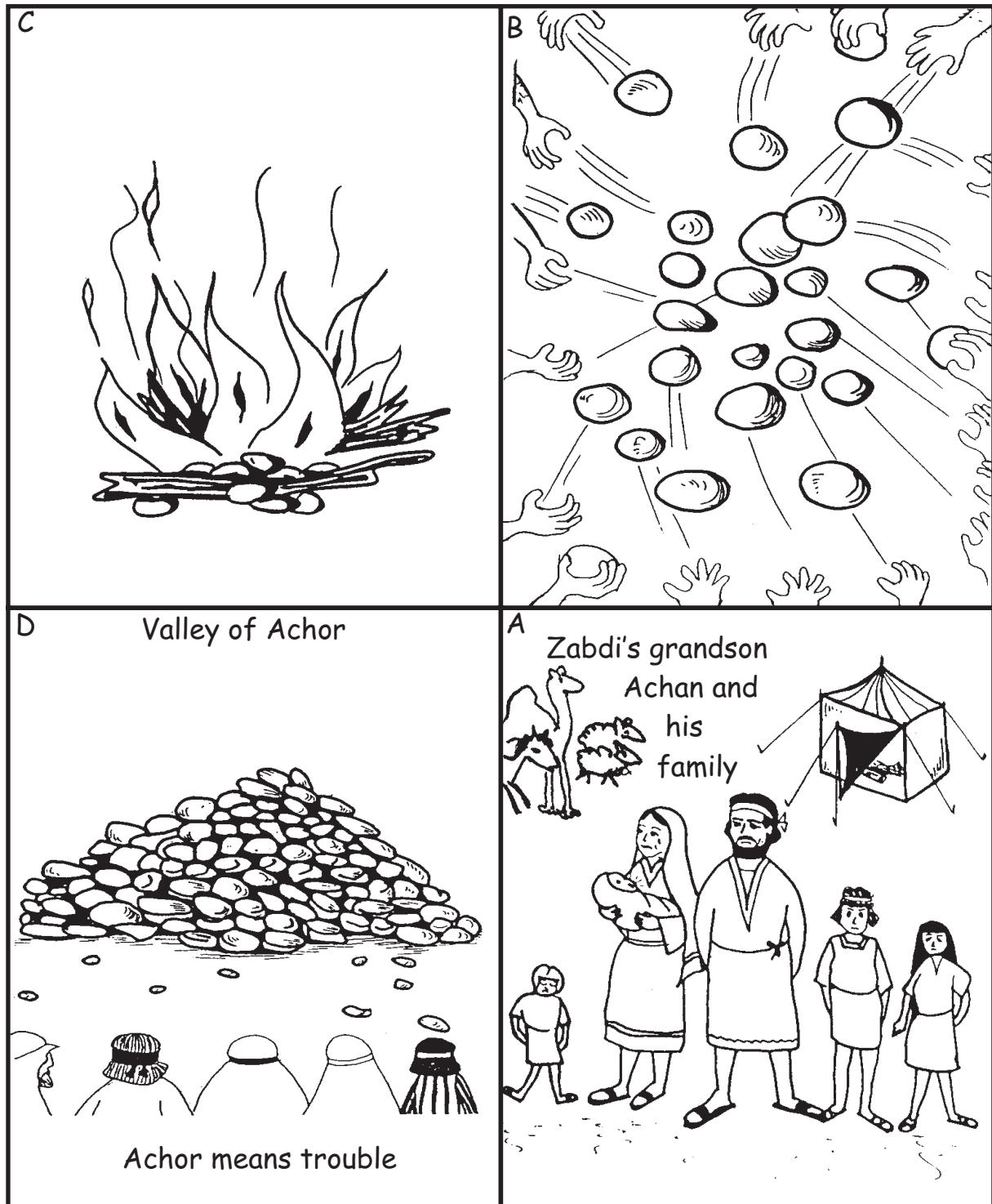
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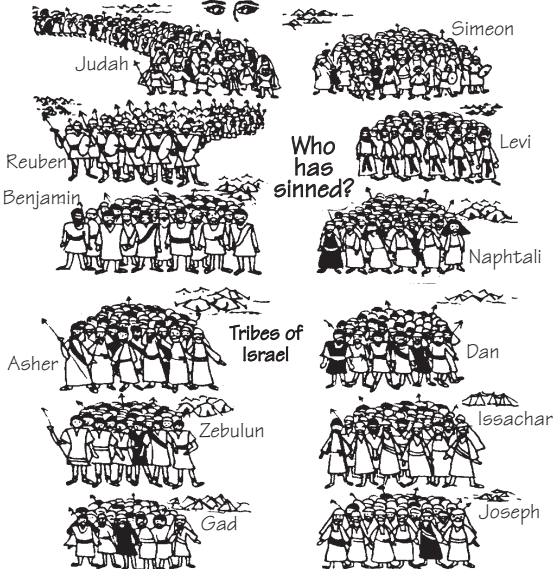


The sin of Achan

Activity B – Make a Storybook



The sin of Achan

Activity B – Make a Storybook

<p>1.</p>	 <p>Who has sinned?</p>	<p>2.</p>  <p>Judah</p>
<p>3.</p>	 <p>Families of Zarhites from the clan of Judah</p>	<p>4.</p>  <p>Zabdi's grandson Achan</p> <p>Achan confessed only after the lot had shown his guilt</p>
<p>5.</p>		<p>6.</p> 

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The sun stands still

Joshua 10:1-15

Storyline

The Gibeonite people had made a peace treaty with the Israelites because they did not want to be destroyed. So the Amorite people decided to attack Gibeon. The Gibeonites asked Joshua for protection. The Israelites went to fight the Amorites. The Lord told Joshua He would help Israel win. The Israelites were winning the battle and then God sent hailstones which killed more of the Amorites than the Israelites did. Joshua asked the Lord to make the sun and moon stand still as they needed more time to win the battle. God answered his prayer.

Suggested Teaching Approach

1. To arouse the children's interest – speak briefly about the way the sun, earth and moon work together to bring about night and day on the earth. You could use cut-outs on a felt-board or cardboard circles attached to a larger piece of cardboard with split pins – thus allowing rotation.
2. As you explain about the sun and moon standing still, talk about:
 - The power of God.
 - The faithfulness of God, causing all this to take place for the sake of Israel.
 - God performed a miracle so big; can He not perform miracles for us when we ask?

The last lesson of term should contain an element of celebration and reflection. A small party or 'fun' awards ceremony will encourage all students.

Theme One

"Nothing is impossible for God"

Joshua knew that God was with the Israelites and would help them win the battle. He had seen the hailstones the Lord had sent to kill many of the Amorites. He knew God had power over all things because He made all things. So he had no hesitation in stepping out in faith and asking God to make the sun and moon stand still. We too can pray knowing that nothing is too hard for God to deal with.

Key Thought

When we call on the Lord to help us with a problem, we should believe He can help us, no matter how impossible it may seem.

Aim

To have the children realise they shouldn't limit God only to what seems possible to them.

Memory Verse

"With God all things are possible." (Matthew 19:26).

Theme Two

"We can know God's will for us"

Joshua took a practical approach to seeing God's will performed in the defeat of the Amorites. He asked for the sun and moon to stand still. God's will for us is also very practical. He instructs us from His word how we should live. Learning to forgive, learning to love, learning to obey, are all practical ways of knowing and doing God's will.

Key Thought

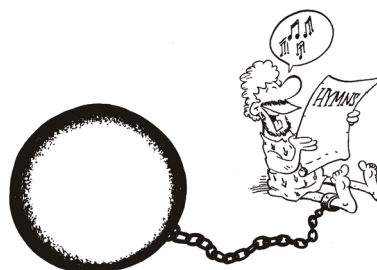
If we read His word and spend time in prayer, God will instruct us in practical ways how to do His will.

Aim

For the children to realise they can all know God's will for them and to want His will in their lives.

Memory Verse

"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go." (Psalm 32:8).



Activity A - Mystery Strip

Materials

- 1 Activity Sheet per child.
- 1 piece of cardboard 48cm long by 8cm wide per child.
- Scissors.
- Glue.
- Colouring pencils.

Steps

- The children cut out the six pictures on the Activity Sheet, arrange them in the correct order to tell the story, glue them on to the cardboard strip, and colour them.

Answer



Activity B - Hailstone Game

Materials

- Pieces of white paper or white tissues.
- Pens.

Steps

- Have the children write out the words from one or both of the memory verses on the pieces of white paper or tissue, one word per piece of paper. Roll up the white paper or tissues that have the memory verse words written on them, and also extra blank pieces, into small balls to represent hailstones.
- Select one child to be 'up' and with the pile of 'hailstones' beside him/her throws them at the other children as they run past and try and dodge the 'hail'. When they are hit by a hailstone they are 'dead' and out of the game. The last child remaining wins and you may like to have a prize for that child, and they can take the next turn at throwing the hailstones.
- When you have finished playing that, the children all scramble to find the hailstones with the words of the memory verses written on them and put them in the correct order to work out the memory verse.

The sun stands still

Activity A – Mystery Strip



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Gideon's fleece

Judges 6:36-40

Storyline

The nation of Israel had turned their backs on the Lord and so He allowed their land, crops and belongings to be plundered. They lived in caves and were very afraid of their enemies. The Angel of the Lord came to Gideon declaring, "The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valour! Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites." Gideon debated that he was a mighty man and needed assurance to confirm this. He placed a sheepskin on the threshing floor overnight and suggested that dew only be on the sheepskin and not on the ground. The Lord fulfilled this request but still Gideon was not convinced, and asked the Lord to reverse it by allowing the dew to be only on the ground and not on the sheepskin. God performed this other miracle, thus Gideon gained his confidence in the Lord.

Suggested Teaching Approach

Discuss what it must have been like for the Israelites to be living in fear and always hiding from the enemy. Just a quick play-act would reinforce this by having two teams, one trying to hide from the other. Consider what it must have been like to have the Angel of the Lord speak to them. Would it make it easier to believe?

Remember teaching is 90% organisation and 10% inspiration. Ensure that you review all lessons and materials for the term before the first lesson.

Theme One

"God knows our heart"

Gideon was very conscious of his weakness and doubted his ability to perform the task God had called him to do. Gideon appeared to find it difficult to believe. God was patient as He knew Gideon's heart and that he was well able to accomplish the task. We, too, may feel weak and unable to do God's work. However, if our heart is toward the Lord, He will strengthen us and we will succeed.

Key Thought

God never calls us to do anything for Him that He will not equip us to do, provided our heart is willing.

Aim

To help the children understand that, if their heart is willing, they are well able to do what God wants them to do.

Memory Verse

"God is greater than our heart, and knows all things." (1 John 3:20).

Theme Two

"Trust in the Lord"

Gideon wrestled in his trust of the Lord and wanted some proof that the Lord would be with him and enable him to save Israel from their enemies. Gideon knew his limitations and needed to know the power of God would be with him. It pleases God when we trust Him without requiring a sign from God.

Key Thought

We need to have a simple trust and faith in the Lord and to take Him at His word.

Aim

To encourage the children to believe God's word, not necessarily needing a sign.

Memory Verse

"O my God I trust in you; let me not be ashamed." (Ps 25:2).



Activity A - Blindfolded Obstacle Course and Picnic

Materials

- Blindfolds (enough for half the class).
- Any items you might like to use for a simple obstacle course, eg. a plank of wood and bricks, large cardboard boxes opened as tunnels, tables, chairs, old tyres, hoops, etc.
- Bowls, spoons, moist cloths, cups.
- Some form of soft food eg. yoghurt, jelly, ice cream or cereal, and drink eg. cordial or water.

Steps

Before Class

- Set up a simple obstacle course. It could be good to use parts of a children's playground if available at your Sunday School venue, but keep the course close to the ground for safety.

In Class

- Discuss briefly what trust is. Having confidence to do something in our own strength or by our own wits is not trust. Gideon had to come to trust that God was able to do what He said He would. Explain that these activities are about trusting, putting their faith in someone else to help them go or do what they can't see or do themselves.
- For the blindfolded obstacle course the children work in pairs, taking turns to be the sighted guide and the blindfolded person. The 'guide' directs or leads their blindfolded partner through the obstacle course OR
- Work in pairs, sitting opposite each other. One child is the blindfolded eater, the other is the sighted feeder. The blindfolded child must not use his/her hands.

Conclusion

- Regroup the class to discuss their experiences, relating to it Gideon's initial difficulty trusting God and to their own lives. You could ask:
- How did it feel to be fed, or climb steps blindfolded?
- Did you want to take over and feed yourselves?
- Did you wish you could peek under the blindfold?
- Did you feel angry at your partner if you had difficulties?
- What sorts of things does God want us to trust Him about?
- Are there times when it is hard to trust God or when you want to take over God's plan for you life?

Activity B - Jigsaw

Materials

- 1 of the Activity Sheets with the jigsaw plan per child plus a few extras.
- 1 jigsaw with the words per child.
- Pens/pencils.
- Colouring pencils.
- Scissors.
- Envelopes.
- Bibles.

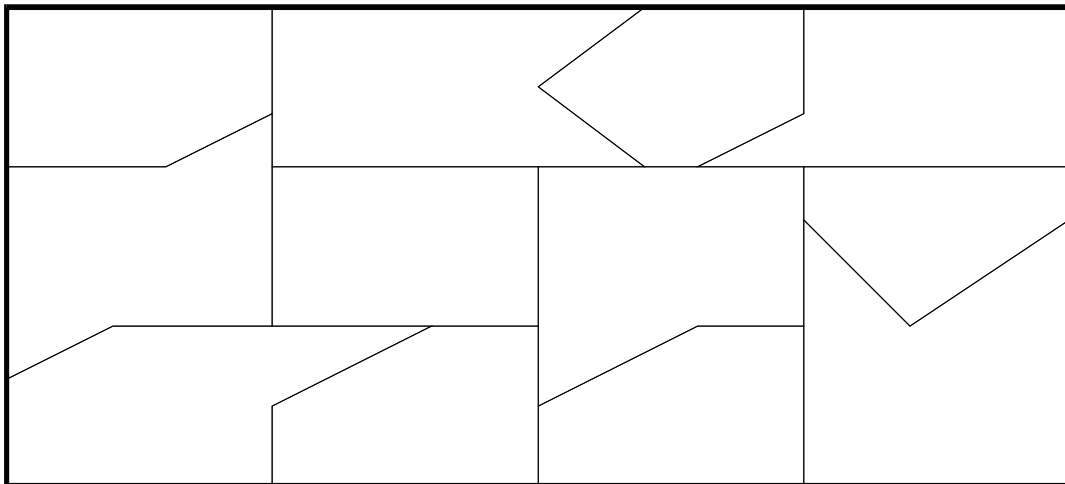
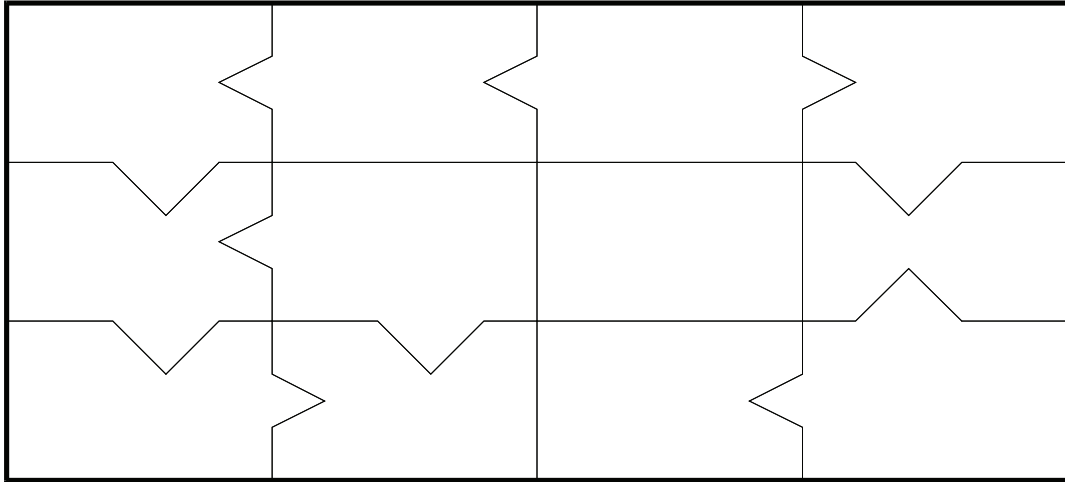
The	Lord	is	with
you	,	you	mighty
man	of	valour	.

Steps

- Children read Judges 6:36-40.
- Children cut out the pieces of jigsaw with the words on them, and place the pieces in the right spaces on the jigsaw at the top of the page.
- Then using the blank jigsaw at the bottom of the page, colour the pieces lightly in one colour (so they do not get mixed up with other children's). Then write one of the ways Gideon asked God to prove that he could trust Him. One word each piece.
- Cut out the pieces and give them to a partner to make up.
- Any children who finish early can use a spare jigsaw to write down something God is saying to them, then cut it out and ask a friend to reassemble it.
- Jigsaw pieces can be taken home in an envelope.

Gideon's fleece

Activity B - Jigsaw



Gideon's fleece

Activity B - Jigsaw

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Gideon and his army

Judges 6:11-35;
7:1 - 8:28

Storyline

At God's command Gideon destroyed the altar his father had built for Baal. Gideon then gathered 32,000 fighting men to defeat the neighbouring enemy armies. God said there were too many men as He knew Israel would be inclined to claim glory for themselves in the victory, so He instructed the fearful to return back, and 22,000 returned home. There were still too many and God instructed those remaining to go down to the water's edge and drink. Those who lapped by bringing water to their mouths were chosen over those who knelt down, leaving only 300 men. These assembled during the night with only a trumpet in one hand and a flaming torch in a pitcher in the other, surrounding the enemy's camp. At Gideon's command they blew their trumpets and smashed the pitchers, shouting, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." The enemy was taken off guard and in their confusion took the sword to one another, killing 120,000. Some escaped including two kings but were pursued by Gideon's army. God's people wanted to make Gideon their ruler but he declined saying "The Lord shall rule over you."

Suggested Teaching Approach

Discuss what armies are for, eg defence of a nation/to protect the people. Normally the bigger the army, the better and safer the people are. Comment on the fact that God reduced the size of the army and discuss how the people must have been feeling about this. Their victory depended on following God's command - compare the battle of Jericho. Note that Gideon must have been a humble man to refuse to become their ruler as he lifted the Lord up instead.



Theme One

"God's ways are not our ways"

Even though Gideon chose a large army, God in His wisdom reduced the number drastically. In this way, the army could not take the glory to themselves; instead, God would get the glory. To men it may seem stupid to go into battle with such a small army, but Gideon was willing to trust God's plan. Gideon was convinced that the Lord would bring the victory. We have to learn to listen to God rather than follow the way that would seem more logical.

Key Thought

God's wisdom far surpasses worldly wisdom. We need, therefore, to discover God's way and not follow the way of the world.

Aim

To encourage the children to seek God's wisdom for all situations.

Memory Verse

"My foot has held fast to His steps; I have kept His way and not turned aside." (Job 23:11).

Theme Two

"God gives the victory"

Because Gideon's army was not able to rely on being heavily armed or on their numbers, they stood in the "Name of the Lord" and were victorious. God is our defence if we'll put our trust in Him. This may be difficult for us to do as we look at the battles we have to face, however, we should trust in the Lord to give us the victory.

Key Thought

We can have the victory if we stand in faith and rely on the Lord's power to overcome.

Aim

To emphasise to the children that if they are obedient to the Lord, He will win their battles.

Memory Verse

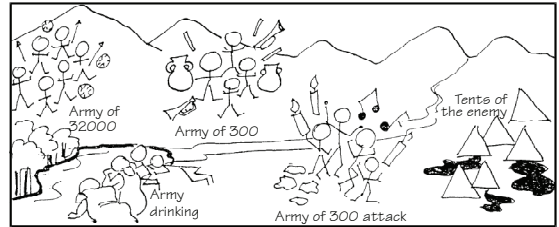
"It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man." (Psalm 118:8).

Middle primary aged students are interested in facts and practicalities. Add to discussions on spiritual principles, practical responses. eg. 'God gives us wisdom. How does He do this?'

Activity A - Group Mural

Materials

- A large sheet of paper, at least .7m x 1m, but preferably 1m x 2m. (Printing firms often sell 'end of rolls' of good quality paper, quite cheaply, or join several sheets of paper.)
- Photocopies of Activity Sheets.
- Scissors, glue sticks, sticky tape.
- Colouring pencils, felt pens, crayons.
- Blue coloured paper, red cellophane, brown paper, and Alfoil or gold paper.
- 3" squares of plain coloured cloth (calico, canvas or hessian) cut into 2 triangles.
- Small sticks or birthday candles, toothpicks or small skewers.



Steps

- Discuss the suggested plan for the mural as per the diagram above and allocate or help the children select sections of the mural to work on, in pairs or small groups. You could pencil the guide onto the mural sheet first if you wish. Explain what needs to be done in each section before the children commence the mural.
- Army of 32,000. On the main sheet of paper, the children draw many small stick figures in a group. Cut small circles of Alfoil for shields and glue them among the stick men. Glue or sticky tape toothpicks to mural for spears.
- Army Drinking. Cut river or lake shape from blue paper and glue to the mural. Colour the drinking soldiers from the Activity Sheets, cut around them and glue to the mural at the edge of the blue paper.
- Army of 300. Draw figures (fewer than for army of 32,000). Glue the trumpets to Alfoil and cut them out. Glue the pitchers to brown paper and cut them out. Glue trumpets and pitchers to the mural. Tape half the sticks or candles to the mural as torches.
- Gideon and the 300 Attack. Cut out Gideon, colour and glue to the mural. Draw stick figures for soldiers running. Draw musical notes around the men (for the trumpet sound). Tear small pieces of brown paper for broken pitchers and glue to mural. Tape small pieces of cellophane to remaining sticks and tape to mural (torches lit).
- The Enemy. Glue cloth triangles to mural for the enemy tents. Draw red puddles to represent the slain Midianites' blood.
- To finish, children could draw in sky, mountains, trees etc. and write short captions next to each part of the mural.

Activity B - A Scytale (A secret Battle Plan in Code)

Materials

- Long thin strips of plain paper - these should be approx. 30 mm wide and 1 metre long. You may have to join shorter pieces with masking tape to give this length.
- Matching pairs of sticks eg. cardboard rolls from lunch wrap etc., broomstick handles or length of thick dowel, each pair at least 25 mm thick and 300 mm long.
- Pens or pencils and sticky tape.



Steps

- Explain what a scytale is used for. Demonstrate how to write the secret message by winding a long strip of paper around the first of one pair of sticks, then writing the message along the length of the stick, one letter to each turn of the paper (see diagram). Do not allow spaces between words. Unwind the strip of paper. The jumble of letters will make no apparent sense until wound around the matching stick where it can be decoded.
- Children form pairs or groups, with message writers and message receivers. The writer wraps his paper around the first stick, using sticky tape to secure, and writes one of the following messages or similar, related to Gideon and his army. (Younger children may need to copy from the board.): The battle cry is "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." Listen for the trumpet signal. Those who are afraid should leave. Hide your torch in your pitcher. God will give the victory. 300 will defeat 120,000. Do as the Lord commands. Soldiers who bring water to their mouths should stay and fight.
- Writers unwrap their message and pass it to whoever has the matching stick to decode. (The receivers should not see the message while it is being written. They write their own secret message to swap with their partners.)

Gideon and his army

Activity A – Group Mural



Gideon and his army

Activity A – Group Mural



Samson

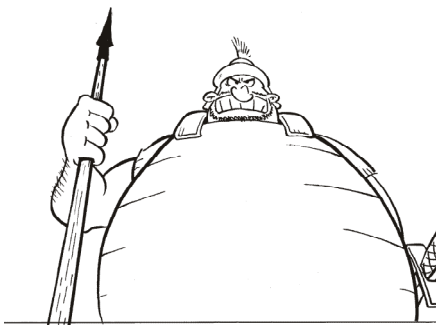
Judges 13, 15

Storyline

The children of Israel did evil once again and the Lord handed them over to another enemy - the Philistines. The Angel of the Lord came to a childless couple and declared they would have a son and no razor would touch his hair because he would be a Nazarite (set apart to God from birth, he would begin the deliverance of Israel). They believed, and a son, Samson, was born to them. He grew and God's Spirit stirred in him. He took a Philistine wife but was denied her, and in his anger took vengeance by tying 300 foxes' tails together and attaching lit torches which set ablaze the Philistine's fields of wheat and other valuable crops. In retaliation, they killed Samson's wife and father-in-law and then demanded Samson's life. The Spirit came upon him and he slew 1000 Philistines with the jawbone of a donkey, declaring victory.

Suggested Teaching Approach

Consider the reasons why the children of Israel kept falling and committing the same sins. Compare our walk and how we can avoid falling and committing the same sins. Samson was an ordinary man who was strong with the power of the Holy Spirit and it is the same for us.



Theme One

“God brings deliverance”

God's people were being oppressed by the Philistines because of their sin and unfaithfulness to God. However, in spite of their sin, God's heart was toward them to see them delivered. For this reason, He raised up Samson to be their deliverer. We, too, have been unfaithful to God, but He has provided Christ as our deliverer, not only from our enemies but also from our sin.

Key Thought

We can know God as our deliverer, setting us free from sin and the enemy of our souls, Satan.

Aim

To help the children understand God's faithfulness to deliver His people in spite of their rebellion.

Memory Verse

“The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer.” (Psalm 18:2).

Theme Two

“Separated to God”

God called Samson to be set apart as a special vessel for His purpose to deliver Israel. As a Nazarite, Samson was called by God to live a particular type of life, which would show that he was set apart for God. Even though Samson struggled in his personal life, nevertheless God was with him. God has called us to be set apart and to live a life that is pleasing to Him.

Key Thought

God wants to set us apart for Himself and His purposes, so that we don't walk the way of the world.

Aim

To help the children to see that being separated to God means living godly lives.

Memory Verse

“But know that the Lord has set apart for Himself him who is godly.” (Psalm 4:3).

Practical approaches to retelling the story can engage some students better than discussions. Remember, not all students learn in the same way. Vary your delivery to cater for all students.

Activity A - Mystery Person or Object (Team Quiz)

Materials

- 1 Activity Sheet.
- List of people, tribes or objects from Judges 13 and 15.
- Blackboard and chalk, or large sheet of paper and pen for scoring.
- Scissors and a hat, bowl or box.

Steps

At Home

- Cut the Activity Sheet along the dotted lines, and fold each section.
- Place in a hat, bowl or box.

In Class

- After reading and discussing Judges 13 and 15, divide the children into two teams.
- Team 'A' draws a name from the hat. Team 'B' asks questions, one at a time, to determine who or what the mystery person or object is.
- Team 'B' is allowed up to 10 questions.
- For each question asked, Team 'A' scores a point, until Team 'B' runs out of questions, or guesses the correct answer.
- Team 'B' may attempt to guess at any time, but an incorrect guess is counted as a question and scores a point for Team 'A'.
- If Team 'A' is unsure of an answer to a question, they should check the Scripture reference by asking the teacher, who has the master list.
- After 10 questions and 1 final guess (unless the answer has been guessed earlier), Team 'A' tells Team 'B' the answer. Team 'B' then selects a mystery item from the hat and Team 'A' asks the questions.
- Turn continues until all the people or objects from the list have been used. Tally the scores to determine the winning team.

Activity B - Wanted Poster

Materials

- 1 Activity Sheet per child.
- Pencils, felt pens, rubbers and rulers.

Steps

- Discuss with the children what the Philistine leaders may have put on a 'Wanted' poster, if one had been issued for his capture.

Here are some details you might suggest they include:

- A picture of Samson.
- His age, and a description of him.
- Examples of what he has done, and of his strength.
- Where Samson comes from, and whom he worships.
- Why the Philistines want him.
- Where he was last seen, and with whom.
- What reward is offered.
- Warning to approach Samson with care as he is dangerous.
- Children design their own Wanted Poster for Samson.



Samson

Activity A – Mystery Person or Object (Team Quiz)

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| 1. Samson's mother | Judges 13 |
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| 2. Angel who spoke to Samson's mother | Judges 13 |
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| 3. Samson | Judges 13 & 15 |
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|--------------------|-----------|
| 4. Samson's father | Judges 13 |
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|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 5. Samson's father-in-law | Judges 15:1,2,6 |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
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|--------------------|-----------------|
| 6. The Philistines | Judges 13:1; 15 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
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|----------------------|-----------------|
| 7. 3000 men of Judah | Judges 15:11-13 |
|----------------------|-----------------|
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| 8. Foxes | Judges 15:4-5 |
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| 9. Donkey's jawbone | Judges 15:15-17 |
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|-------------|---------------|
| 10. Torches | Judges 15:4-5 |
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| 11. New ropes | Judges 15:13-14 |
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| 12. Spring of water | Judges 15:19 |
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-

Samson

Activity B – Wanted Poster



Samson and Delilah

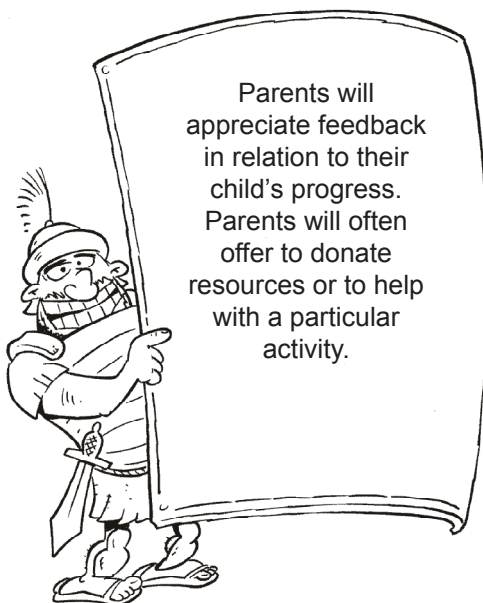
Judges 16

Storyline

Using his strength, Samson had destroyed and embarrassed the Philistines during his 20 year leading of Israel. They wanted to discover the secret of his strength. Samson fell in love with a Philistine woman called Delilah. The Philistines persuaded her to get Samson to tell her the secret. He did, and while he slept his hair was cut off and his strength left. The Philistines captured him, put out his eyes and used him as a grinder in the prison. His hair began to grow. During a Philistine festival he leaned on two pillars, causing the building to collapse, killing himself and thousands of Philistines.

Suggested Teaching Approach

Discuss the sorts of things that might cause someone to choose not to follow God. Consider together how important it is to keep obeying so that our life of service does not get cut short.



Theme One

"God brings good out of bad"

Although Samson had been called by God to deliver the Israelites from the Philistines, he strayed from the Lord and was captured, blinded, and imprisoned by them. How could he now continue in God's plan to help save the Israelites? God knew of a way for Samson and He knows a way for us, too. Even if we don't do God's will and are in a bad situation, if we repent and turn to God He can still bring good out of the situation.

Key Thought

Even though God can bring good out of bad, this is no excuse for us to please ourselves or live our own way.

Aim

For the children to realise that while God can bring good out of bad situations, it is best to always obey the Lord as there are still consequences for us to face.

Memory Verse

"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." (Luke 9:23).

Theme Two

"Men should never be so confident in themselves that they forget God"

Samson's whole being from his conception was by the grace of God. God created him to fulfil His purposes. During Samson's life, it seemed he could do great exploits for God because of God's gift that was on him. He felt he was infallible. Without God, he failed miserably. God's gifts and talents are only a blessing while we serve the Lord.

Key Thought

When God gives a gift to us, it is for always, but it will only bless us and others while we are living in His Spirit.

Aim

To have the children understand that only when we are living in His Spirit, will His gifts and purposes really work for good - for God's will.

Memory Verse

"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28).

Activity A - Samson Model

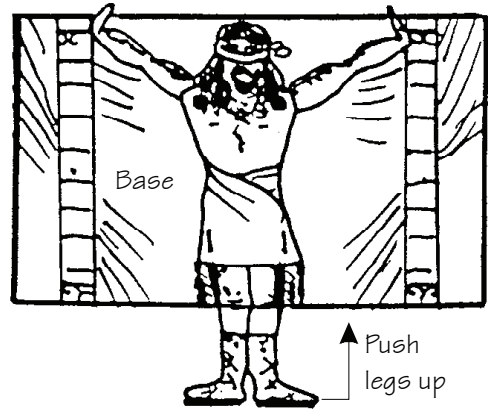
N.B. This activity is time-consuming in preparation. If time is short, consider making one only for a class demonstration.

Materials

- 1 of each 2 Activity Sheets per child photocopied or mounted on cardboard (the arms need to be on double thickness cardboard).
- 1 piece of strong A4 sized cardboard for the base per child.
- Glue, stapler, small hole punch or a sharp object to form the holes.
- Six split-pins per child.

Steps

- Cut out all the pieces.
- Join A and B on the arms to the shoulders behind the body with split pins.
- Bend the hands forward at right angles to the arms at the wrists.
- Cut a slot in the cardboard base parallel to, and 40 mm from, the bottom edge. The slot is 50 mm long centrally located on the long side of the A4 cardboard.
- Push the legs through the slot from behind extending up to the shoulders.
- Connect the legs to the arms with split pins C and D.
- Fit the washer behind the body to separate the arm movements. It is stapled at X to the body.
- Staple thighs to the base at Y.
- Staple head to the base at Z.
- Fold the pillars to form square columns.
- Insert the split pins at E through the columns and then the base 90 mm from the centre of the body and 90 mm from the bottom.
- Glue the columns.
- Use the model horizontally. By moving Samson's legs he will knock down the pillars. After completion, the legs may be joined together below the knees with sticky tape if desired.



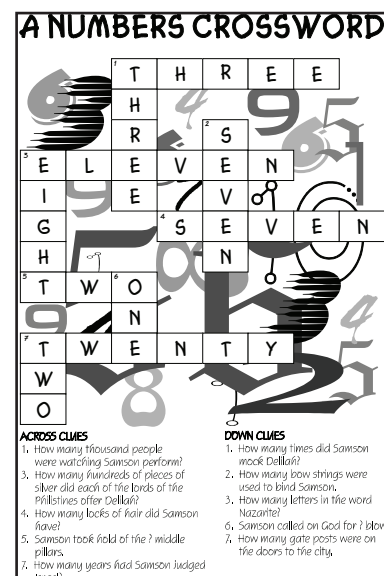
Activity B - Jumbled Words

Materials

- 1 Activity Sheet per child.
- Pens/pencils.
- Bibles.

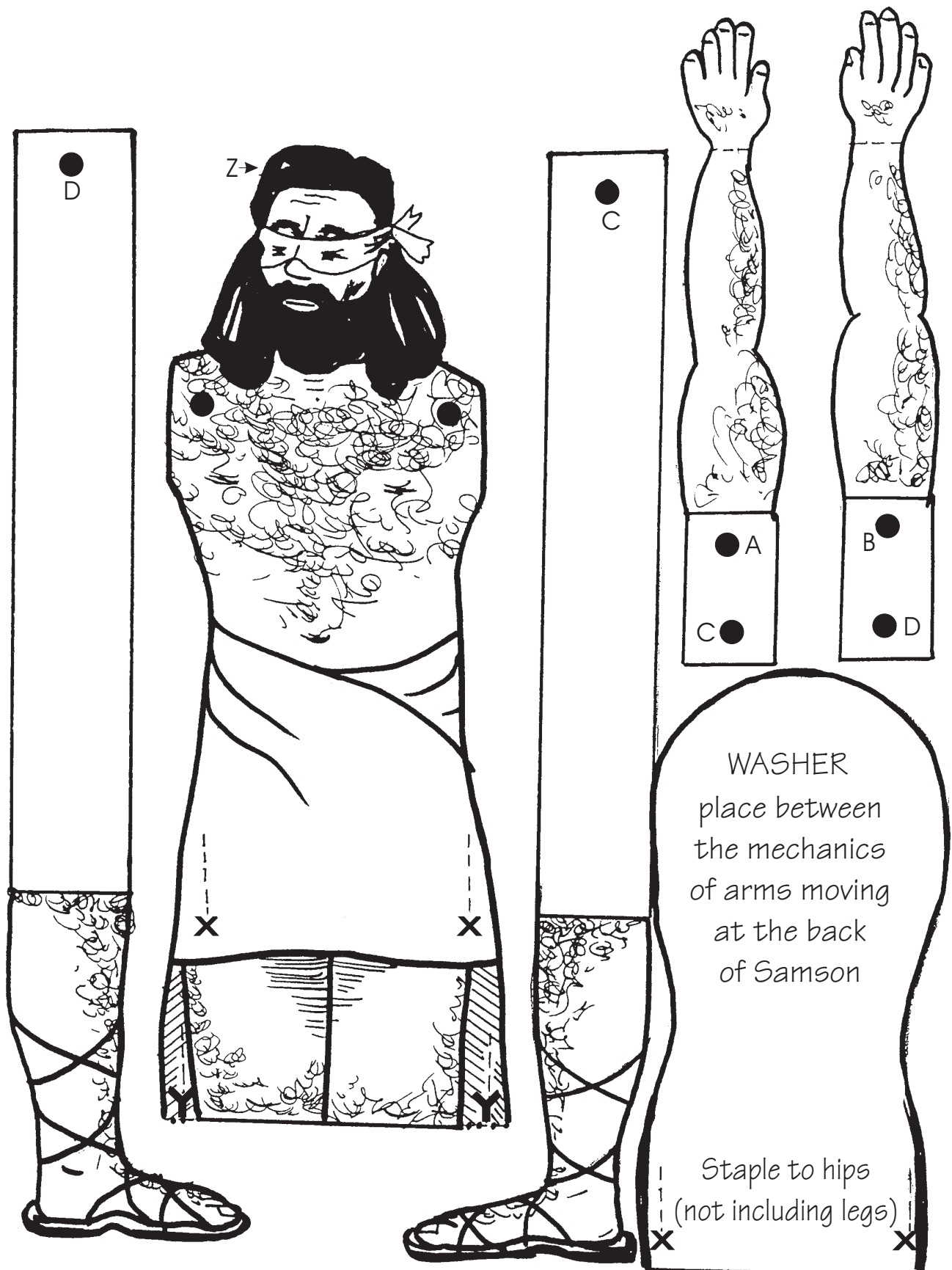
Steps

- The children complete the crossword.



Samson and Delilah

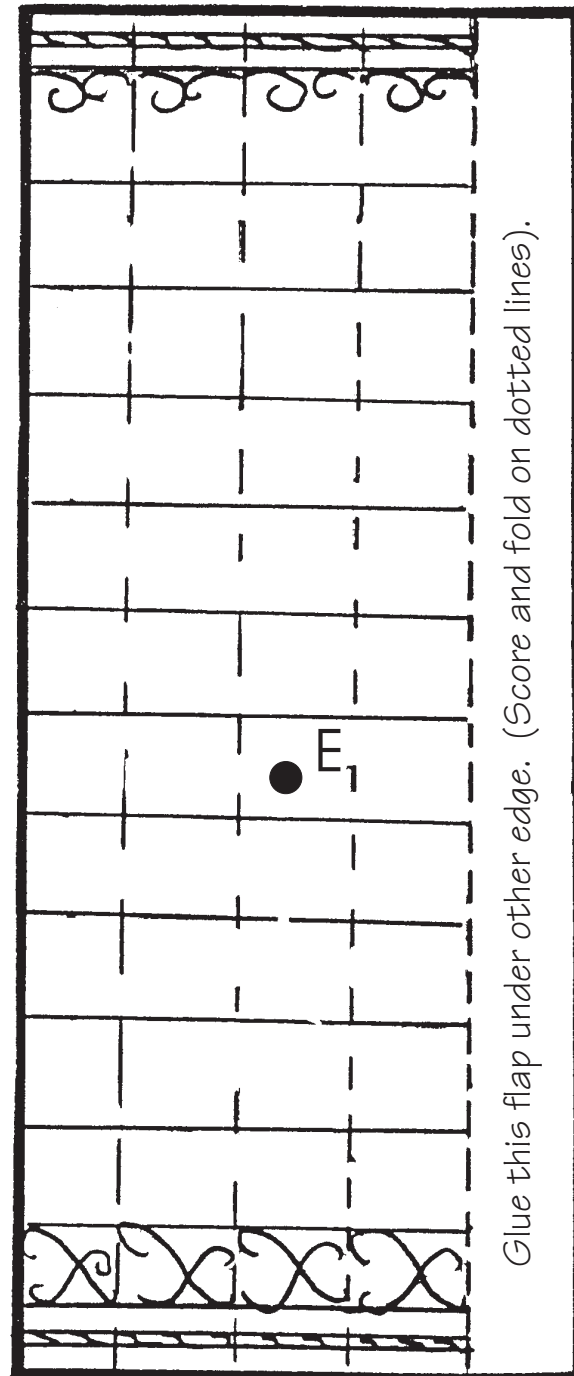
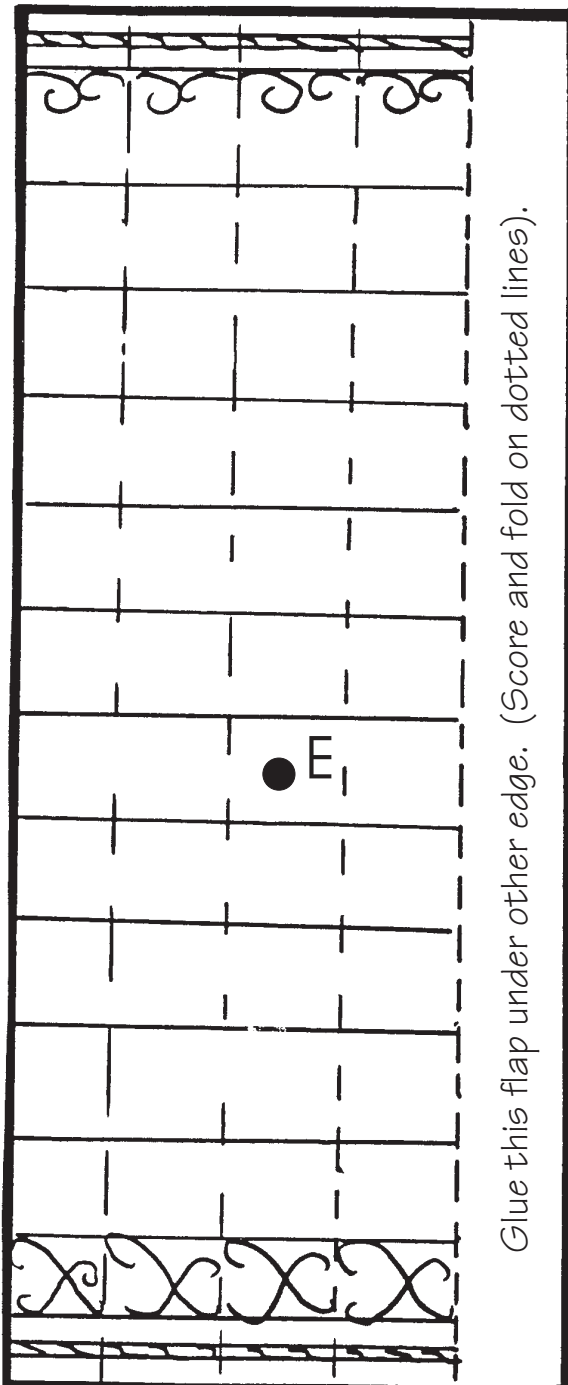
Activity A – Samson Model



Samson and Delilah

Activity A – Samson Model

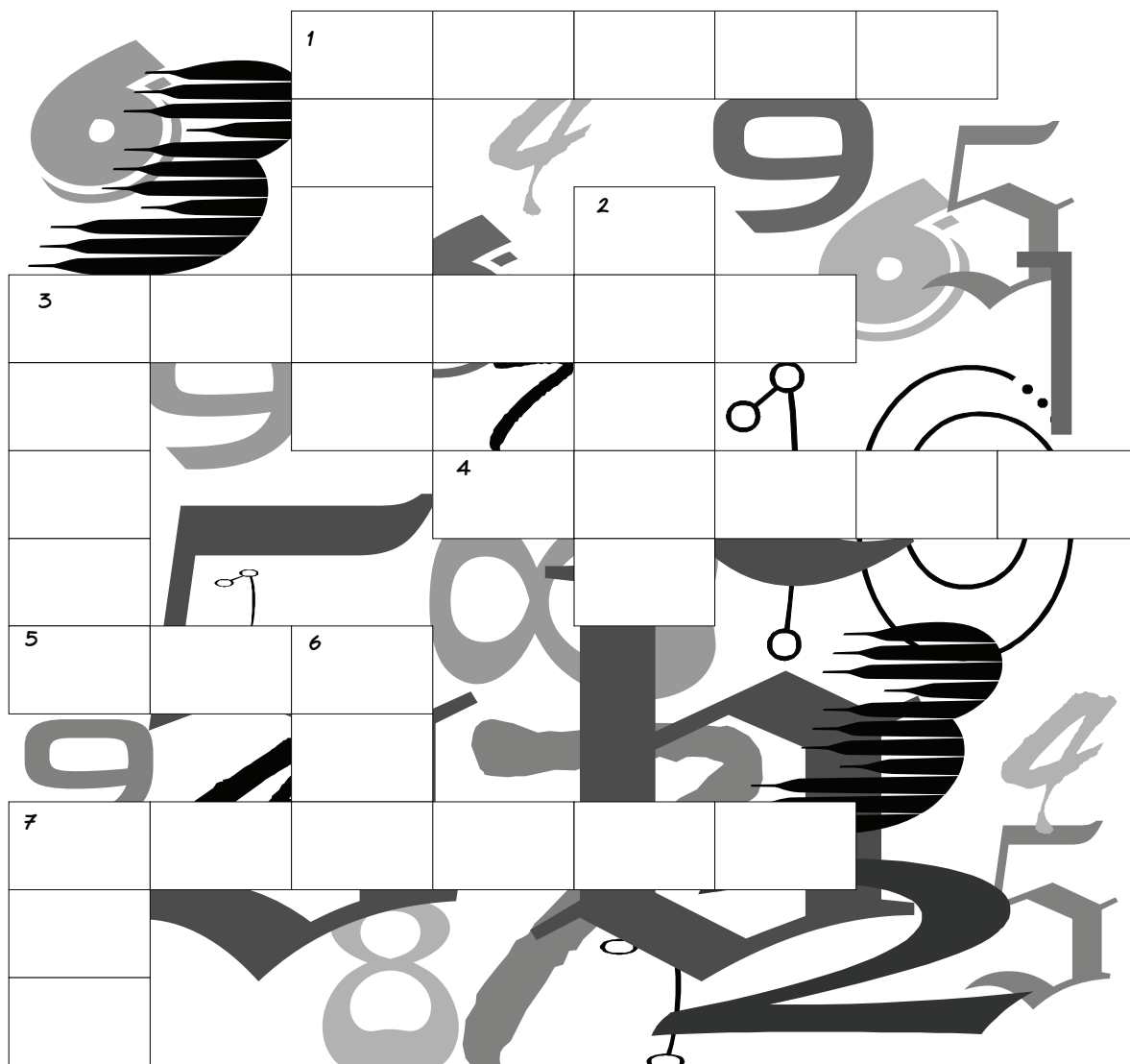
The two pillars.



Samson and Delilah

Activity B – Numbers Crossword

A NUMBERS CROSSWORD



ACROSS CLUES

1. How many thousand people were watching Samson perform?
3. How many hundreds of pieces of silver did each of the lords of the Philistines offer Delilah?
4. How many locks of hair did Samson have?
5. Samson took hold of the ? middle pillars.
7. How many years had Samson judged Israel?

DOWN CLUES

1. How many times did Samson mock Delilah?
2. How many bow strings were used to bind Samson.
3. How many letters in the word Nazarite?
6. Samson called on God for ? blow.
7. How many gate posts were on the doors to the city.

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Ruth, Naomi and Boaz

Ruth

Storyline

Naomi, her husband and two sons settled in Moab during a famine in Judah. Her two sons married Moabite wives but after some time her husband and later her sons died. Naomi started back to Judah telling her daughters-in-law to stay in Moab. Ruth insisted on going with Naomi. In Judah, Ruth gleaned in Boaz' field to earn food. He was kind to her. Naomi advised Ruth to go to the threshing room floor and lay at Boaz' feet after he'd gone to sleep. When Boaz woke, he blessed her and said he would speak to her closer relative about redeeming Naomi's land. Later Boaz married Ruth and they became the great grandparents of King David.

Suggested Teaching Approach

1. Play "Follow the Leader."
2. Discuss why Ruth decided to follow Naomi.
3. Observe leaves/bugs etc. through a magnifying glass. Relate this to how people closely observe us at times and also how Ruth must have closely observed Naomi's life.

Both you and the children will find it rewarding if you monitor their workbooks. Giving stickers and showing an interest in 'home activities' encourages students to do their best.



Theme One

"Follow the Lord"

Ruth decided to follow Naomi even though she knew it could be the harder lifestyle. She knew in her heart it was the right thing to do. She wanted to link herself with Israel and to make Israel's God her God. Just as Ruth did this, so must we follow the Lord even though it may look to be the harder road, uninviting, and we can't see how things might get better. As Naomi gave Ruth a choice, God gives us a choice.

Key Thought

God allows us to make a freewill choice as to whether or not to follow Him and it is not always an easy one to make.

Aim

For the children to realise they have choices to make during their lives as to whether or not they will follow God's way in various situations.

Memory Verse

"But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Joshua 24:15).

Theme Two

"Your lifestyle as a Christian is observed"

Ruth went quietly about following Naomi's instructions and caring for her. The community noticed Ruth's hard work, caring lifestyle and worth. God saw too and blessed her with a husband and child and she became King David's great grandmother. Neighbours, school friends, teachers, will notice your lifestyle - what you do, say, and how it matches your actions if you say you are a Christian. God will also notice.

Key Thought

We need to be aware that people around us, and God, observe our lives and notice any contradictions in them.

Aim

To impress upon children the importance of their lifestyle as a witness to those around them.

Memory Verse

"Therefore be followers of God as dear children. And walk in love." (Ephesians 5:1-2).

Activity A - Board Game

Materials

- 1 picture board and 9 counters per child.

Steps

At Home

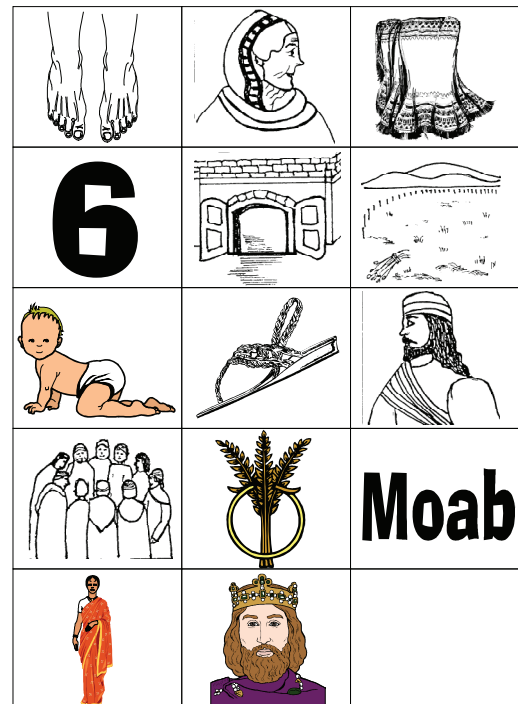
- Make up one picture board per child by photocopying the pictures from the Activity Sheet as many times as needed, then cutting them out and gluing them in varying combinations onto the squares on the other Activity Sheet, making sure no picture appears twice on the one picture board and that no two picture boards are the same.

In Class

- Give each child their picture board.
- Read out the questions below one at a time. The children place a marker on the picture answer if it is on their picture board. The first child with all their pictures marked wins.

Questions and Answers

- Where did Ruth lay? Feet.
- Whom did Ruth obey? Naomi.
- What did Boaz fill with barley? Shawl.
- How many measures of barley did Boaz give Ruth? Six.
- Where did Boaz meet with the elders? City gate.
- What did Boaz buy from Naomi? Field.
- What did the close relative take off to show he would not buy the land? Sandal.
- What did Ruth and Boaz have after they were married? Baby.
- To whom did Ruth go on the threshing room floor? Boaz.
- Ruth became the great grandmother of whom? King David.
- Who was loving and kind to Naomi? Ruth.
- Who witnessed Boaz' redeeming of the land? 10 elders.
- What were the men winnowing? Barley.
- The country Ruth came from? Moab.



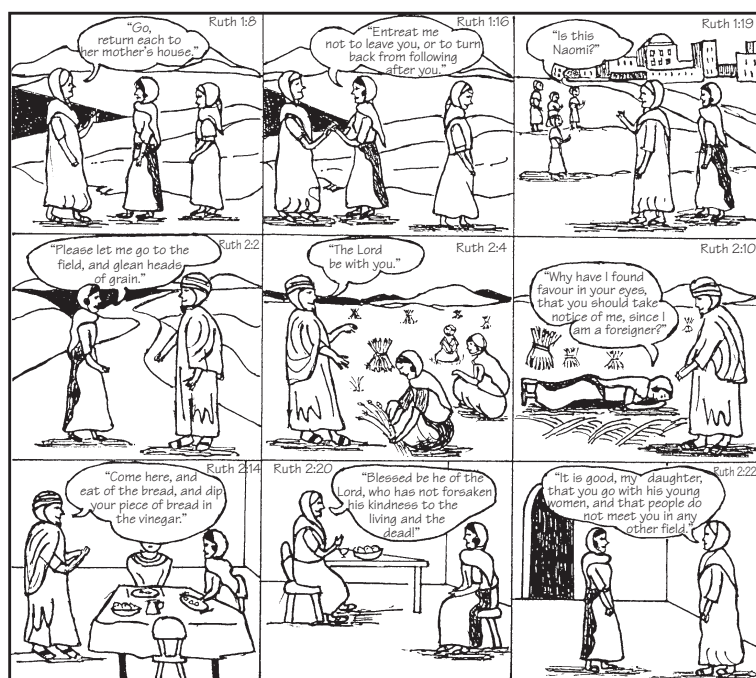
Activity B - Story Strip

Materials

- 1 Activity Sheet per child.
- Scissors.
- Glue.
- Colouring pencils.

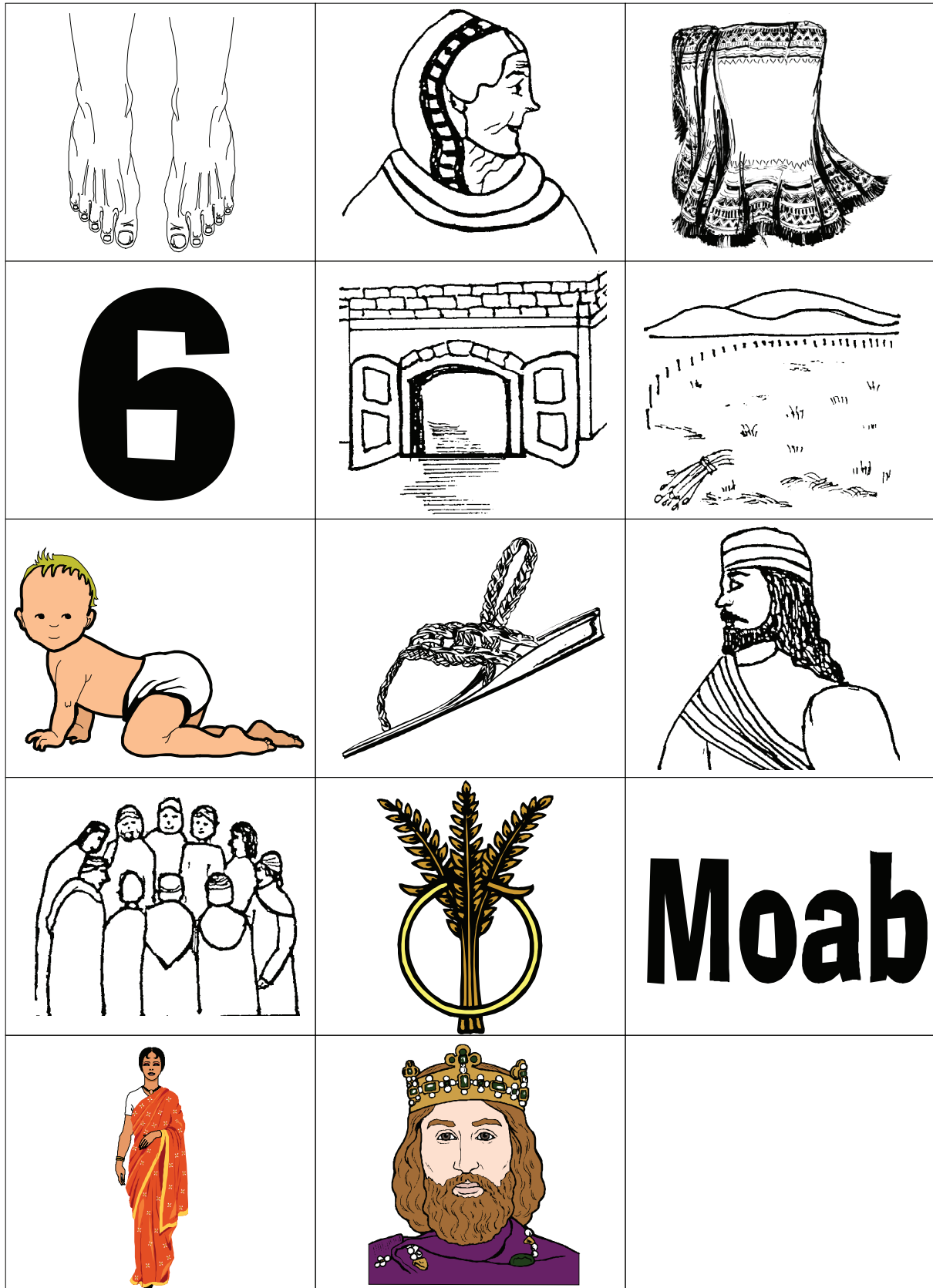
Steps

- Children cut out word balloons and glue them in the correct box to tell the story of Ruth and Naomi.
- Children could then colour the strip.



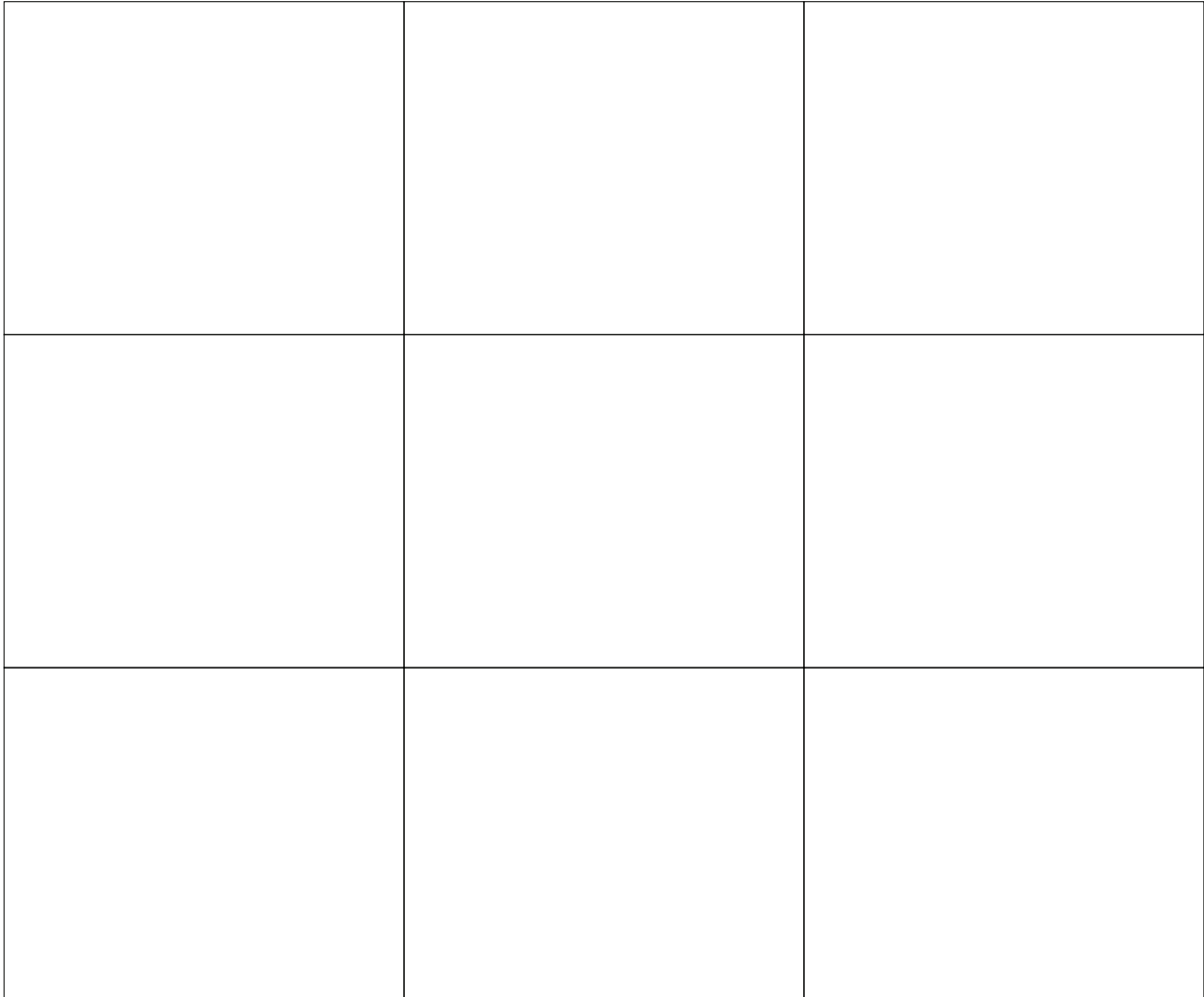
Ruth, Naomi and Boaz

Activity A – Board Game



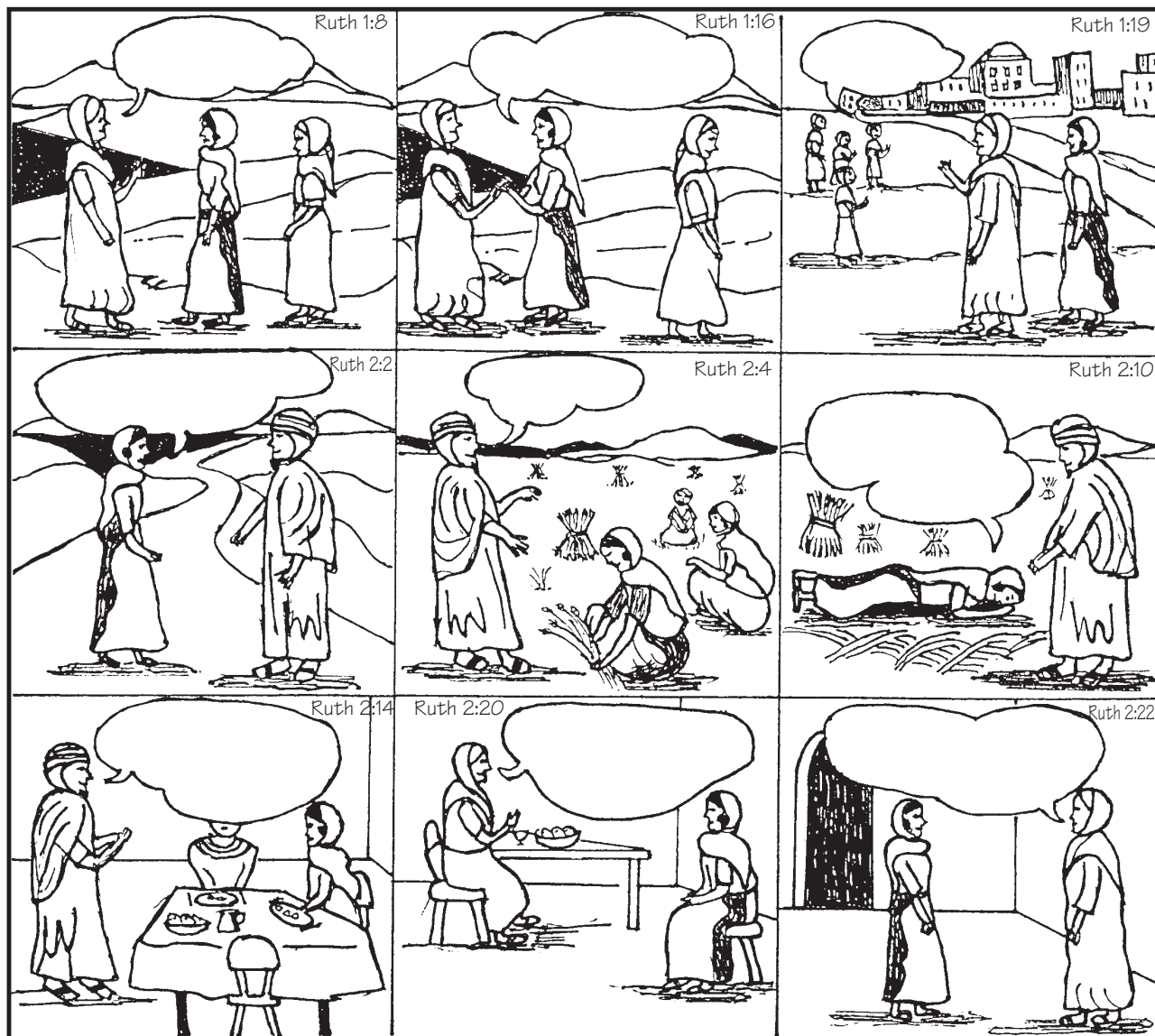
Ruth, Naomi and Boaz

Activity A – Board Game



Ruth, Naomi and Boaz

Activity B – Story Strip



"It is good, my daughter, that you go with his young women, and that people do not meet you in any other field."

"Come here, and eat of the bread, and dip your piece of bread in the vinegar."

"Is this Naomi?"

"Please let me go to the field, and glean heads of grain."

"Blessed be he of the Lord, who has not forsaken his kindness to the living and the dead!"

"The Lord be with you."

"Why have I found favour in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?"

"Go, return each to her mother's house."

"Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following after you."

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Hannah

I Samuel 1 & 2

Storyline

Elkanah had two wives, Peninnah who had children, and Hannah who was barren but deeply longed for a child. Peninnah would provoke Hannah about her childlessness and make her weep. Each year they all went to the house of the Lord to make sacrifices to the Lord. One year, after being teased by Peninnah, Hannah wept and prayed to the Lord for a child. Eli saw her and also asked the Lord to grant her request. In time she had a son, Samuel. She was so thankful to the Lord for her son that she took him to the house of the Lord after he was weaned, and gave him back to the Lord. He lived at the house of the Lord to be trained by Eli. Then Hannah prayed in thankfulness and joy to the Lord.

Suggested Teaching Approach

Discuss things children may have asked parents for and why they may have had to wait for some time before their request was granted or not granted. Help each child to select a prayer point and to persist in prayer for about a week. Discuss elements of prayer as exhibited in the "Lord's Prayer" Matt 6:9-13, eg. thanksgiving, supplication and intercession.

Reward based charts for memory verses and activities work effectively for this age. Remember, however, that rewards are for effort and not to generate competition..



Theme One

"Persist in prayer"

Hannah had been wanting a child for years and had been mocked because she didn't have one. Each year the family went to the house of the Lord. One year, she prayed so fervently for a child that Eli, the high priest, thought she was drunk. She explained her longing for a child and Eli promised her she would have a child. Just as Hannah poured out her soul to the Lord in prayer, so must we. We can bring everything to the Lord in prayer. Keep praying and seeking Him until we find an answer to our situation. Be serious about seeking the Lord in prayer.

Key Thought

We need to keep praying to the Lord about an issue until we receive an answer - be it yes or no.

Aim

For the children to realise that God wants us to be earnest and persistent in our prayers.

Memory Verse

"But we will give ourselves continually to prayer." (Acts 6:4).

Theme Two

"Giving to God"

Although Hannah desperately wanted a child, she also made a vow that if God would give her a male child, she would give him back to God. Hannah kept her vow and when the child, Samuel, was born and weaned, she took him to the house of the Lord to serve there. She later had three other sons and two daughters. She delighted in giving to God and He rewarded her. Many people make vows to God, but not all of them remember to pay their vows.

Key Thought

When we make a promise to give something to God, He expects us to keep our promise. Most of all, He wants us to give ourselves.

Aim

For the children to understand that it is very important to keep the promises we make to the Lord.

Memory Verse

"They ... first gave themselves to the Lord." (II Corinthians 8:5).






Activity A - Thumbprint Strip

Materials

- 1 Activity Sheet per child.
- 1 or more light coloured stamp pads.
- Pens/pencils/colouring pencils/felt tips.
- Wet cloth for removing excess ink from the children's thumbs.

Steps

- Children create Hannah as a thumb print person in each of the six boxes. To do this, the body is made by pressing the child's thumb onto a light coloured stamp pad and then pressing the thumb into the centre of each square. The features of the person are simple enough to be copied by the children. Have a wet cloth available to remove excess ink from children's fingers.
- Teachers may wish to ask children why Hannah acted as she did in each square. Older children could write their answers in the boxes.

<p>1</p>  <p>Hannah was miserable. 1 Samuel 1:6</p>	<p>2</p>  <p>Hannah wept. 1 Samuel 1:7</p>
<p>3</p>  <p>Hannah prayed. 1 Samuel 1:10</p>	<p>4</p>  <p>Hannah's face was no longer sad. 1 Samuel 1:18</p>
<p>5</p>  <p>Hannah worshipped the Lord. 1 Samuel 1:28</p>	<p>6</p>  <p>Hannah sang to the Lord. 1 Samuel 2:1-10</p>

Activity B - Praying Hand

Materials

- 1 sheet of blank paper or cardboard per child.
- Pens/pencils.
- Scissors.

Steps

- Children trace their hand onto a piece of paper or cardboard.
- Cut out the handprint.
- On one side, children write or draw something they are praying for on as many fingers as they wish. However, if they don't have a prayer point for each finger it doesn't matter.
- On the other side of the hand they can:
 1. write or draw on each finger something they are thankful for,
 - OR
 2. write a poem of praise to the Lord on the palm.
- Children could keep their prayer hand in their Bible as a reminder.

Hannah

Activity A – Thumbprint Strip

1	2
Hannah was miserable. I Samuel 1:6	Hannah wept. I Samuel 1:7
3	4
Hannah prayed. I Samuel 1:10	Hannah's face was no longer sad. I Samuel 1:18
5	6
Hannah worshipped the Lord. I Samuel 1:28	Hannah sang to the Lord. I Samuel 2:1-10

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Samuel hears God speak

I Samuel 3

Storyline

The child Samuel ministered to the Lord before Eli. In those days the word of the Lord was rare and there was no widespread revelation. At first Samuel did not recognise the Lord's voice when He called. Three times the Lord called Samuel. Each time Samuel ran to Eli presuming it to be his voice. Each time Eli sent Samuel back. Only on the third time did Eli realise that it was the Lord and instructed Samuel to respond accordingly. When the Lord called Samuel the fourth time, He told Samuel that He would not abide the iniquity of Eli's house any longer. In the morning Eli made Samuel reveal all that the Lord had said. Eli knew that it was of the Lord. From that time on the word of the Lord was with Samuel and all of Israel knew that he was to be a prophet.

Suggested Teaching Approach

1. Read the background story, I Samuel 3.
2. Discuss with the children that even though they may be brought up in the church, they still need to learn to listen for God's word and that their hearts need to be willing to receive the word.
3. Share with the children a personal experience of hearing God's voice.

Students at this age are beginning to enjoy working cooperatively. This type of activity still needs careful planning to provide the children with structure that encourages success.



Theme One

"Learning to hear the voice of the Lord"

Samuel began his service in the house of the Lord when he was still only a boy. There was no recognised prophet at that time and Samuel had not yet learnt to hear from God. He heard his name being called three times, but thought it was Eli who was calling him. Eli realised God was wishing to speak to Samuel and he instructed him as to how to respond. We live in a very different age, but it is still very important for us to learn to hear God's voice. Sometimes He speaks through parents and leaders and elders, sometimes He speaks through His word. Sometimes He speaks through circumstances or by direct instruction.

Key Thought

We need to learn how to hear the voice of the Lord and how to respond when He speaks.

Aim

To encourage the children to realise that they need instruction to hear and understand and obey the voice of the Lord.

Memory Verse

"You must say, 'Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears.'" (I Samuel 3:9).

Theme Two

"A willing heart"

When the Lord called Samuel, and Samuel responded, the Lord told him of the terrible judgments that would fall on Eli and his sons. When Eli asked him the next morning what God had said, Samuel told him everything. From that day, the Lord was with him and he became known as a prophet in Israel. The Lord requires us, not only to hear His voice, but also to declare His message without fear. In that way, the Lord will share more things with us.

Key Thought

No matter how young we are, God can speak to us, but He requires us to have a willing heart to speak out the message He gives us.

Aim

To encourage the children to have the same heart attitude as Samuel - that when the Lord calls they will respond with a willing heart.

Memory Verse

"They came, both men and women, as many as had a willing heart." (Exodus 35:22).

Activity A - Games - Listening to the Voice of the Lord

Game 1 – Chinese Whispers

Materials

- Messages on the Activity Sheet, cut out along dotted lines. Pen, notebook for scoring, a large open space.

Steps

- Divide the class into two teams. (If the class is smaller than eight children, remain as one big team.) Teams take turns alternately. Children sit in rows.
- Hand the first child in Team A a message (make sure he can read it) and ask him to whisper it once only to his neighbour without anyone else hearing.
- The message is passed down the line and the last child speaks out the message he receives. The team score 1 point for each word that exactly matches the original message.
- Team B then have their turn.

Game 2 – Who Calls?

Materials

- Blindfold and a large open area.

Steps

- Seat all children in a circle with one child in the centre, blindfolded.
- The children in the outer circle may swap places with each other until the teacher says, “stop.” The teacher then points to one child (without calling his name), who then calls to the child in the centre, addressing them twice by their name, eg. “Samuel, Samuel.”
- The blindfolded child tries to guess who called him.
- The children take turns in the middle, blindfolded.

Discussion

Help the children to consider what it means to listen to God’s voice. You could ask:

- Why didn’t Samuel know that it was God calling him?
- How did Eli know that it was God?
- Why didn’t God call to Eli or Eli’s sons?
- When God talks to us, is it easy to hear Him?
- What does He say?
- What things make it difficult for us to hear God?

Activity B - An Acrostic

Materials

- 1 Activity Sheet for each child.
- Chalk, blackboard, pencils, Bible.

Steps

- Practice completing the acrostic on the blackboard first (see example below).
- The children can refer to their Bibles to help complete a sentence about Samuel and then Eli, with the first letter of each sentence, starting a letter in Samuel or Eli.
- Suggest that an action, or doing words, are the easiest to fit as the first word in each sentence.
- If you have younger children, you may wish to work as a group, writing all the sentences on the blackboard.

Steps

- S – said, “Speak, for Your servant hears.” E – eventually realised that God was speaking to Samuel.
- A – arose when he heard God’s voice. L – lived so long, his eyesight failed.
- M – ministered to the Lord under Eli. I – in the end had his family punished by God.
- U – understood he had to give Eli God’s message.
- E – expected that Eli would be angry.
- L – loved God and Eli.

Samuel hears God speak

Activity A – Chinese Whispers

Each team should have messages of equal difficulty, so the messages are grouped in pairs.

1a. God called to Samuel.

1b. Samuel served the Lord.

2a. Eli became old and blind.

2b. God made Samuel a prophet.

3a. Samuel was afraid to tell Eli.

3b. Eli said to tell him everything.

4a. God called Samuel four times.

4b. God would punish Eli's house.

5a. Samuel didn't know it was God at first.

5b. Samuel thought that Eli was calling to him.

6a. As Samuel grew, God was with Him and revealed Himself to Samuel.

6b. Eli said, "It is the Lord. Let Him do what seems good to Him."

Samuel hears God speak

Activity B – An Acrostic

S _____

A _____

M _____

U _____

E _____

L _____

E _____

L _____

I _____

Eli, Hophni and Phinehas

I Samuel 4 - 6

Storyline

Israel fought against the Philistines and were beaten, losing four thousand men. The ark was brought from Shiloh by the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas. In the next battle Israel lost thirty thousand men, the ark was stolen and Hophni and Phinehas were killed. Eli fell over and died on hearing this news. God judged the Philistines wherever they took the ark, until they finally sent it back. God also judged Israel when some men looked inside the ark, and fifty thousand and seventy were slain.

Suggested Teaching Approach

As the lesson spans three chapters just summarise the main points. Make reference to the verses which relate in particular to the theme that you choose, eg:

1. Chapter 4:3-5,17; 5:7-9; 6:13.
2. Chapter 4:2-4,16-17,21-22.

The key thought can be reinforced by reading the memory verse and then doing the alphabet code (Activity B). If time permits Activity A can also be done in class time - this can be coloured in also. Provide a brief explanation on the homework activity.

Vary your routine to celebrate your last lesson. The students could write some feedback to you on their favourite lesson, bible character or activity.



Theme One

“Sin of presumption”

The Israelites might have expected that God would fight for them against the Philistines, but instead they were defeated. Then they took the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the house of the Lord and took it into battle, thinking the Lord would certainly give them the victory. This was very wrong and very presumptuous. The result was that they lost the battle and the ark. In the same way, we must not presume that God will give us the victory unless we are walking with Him in His ways.

Key Thought

Because we call ourselves Christians, read the Bible and go to church, we may think God has to make us successful in all we do. To do this is mere presumption.

Aim

To teach children that being a good Christian is not just a matter of always doing the external things, like going to church, etc., but of being obedient to God, parents and others, from the heart.

Memory Verse

“Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins.”
(Psalm 19:13).

Theme Two

“We must respect God”

The ark of the covenant was a very holy thing and only the high priest was allowed to approach it once a year. But the Philistines captured it and put it in the temple of their god. The result was that their god fell and was broken. Wherever the ark went there was illness. Eventually the Philistines realised that God’s hand was against them and they sent the ark back to Israel. When the ark arrived back in Israel, the people looked inside the ark and over 50,000 were killed. Only then did they realise how holy God is. We must never treat the things of God lightly, but give honour and respect to God.

Key Thought

It is very important that we understand that our God is a holy God. We must give Him reverence, honour and respect.

Aim

For the children to appreciate the holiness of God and the things of God. We must never treat God or His things lightly.

Memory Verse

“Serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.” (Hebrews 12:28).

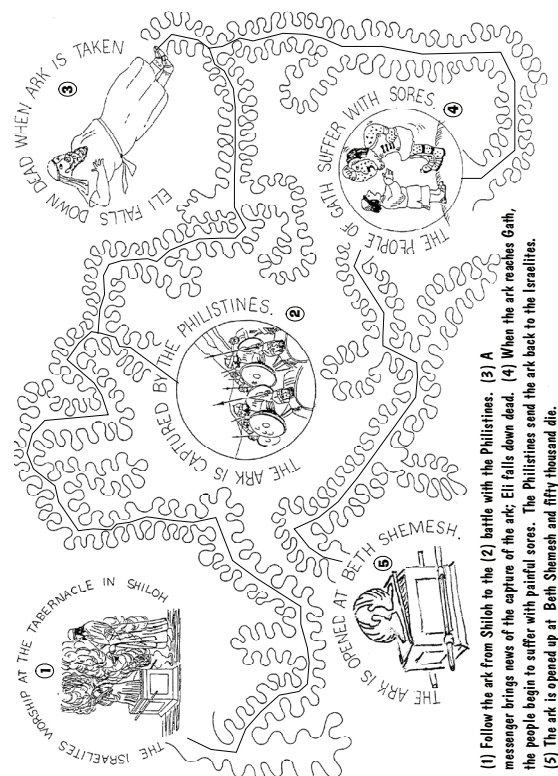
Activity A - Find the path

Materials

- 1 Activity sheet per child.
- Pen.
- Bibles

Steps

- Ask the children to follow the ark as in the Scriptures I Samuel 4,5,6.
- The children can then colour in the pictures.



Activity B - Alphabet Code Memory Verse

Materials

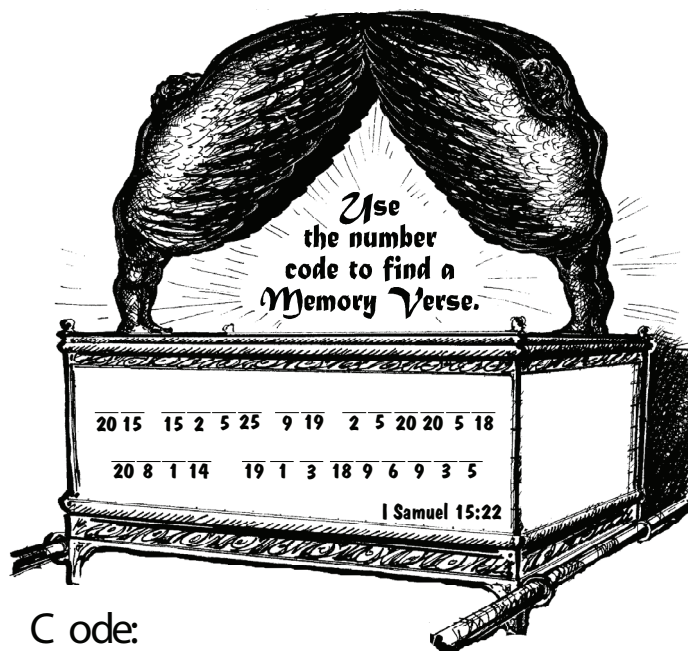
- 1 Activity Sheet per child.
- Pen.
- Bible.

Steps

- Use the number code to find the Memory Verse.

Answer

- Use the number code to find the Memory Verse.

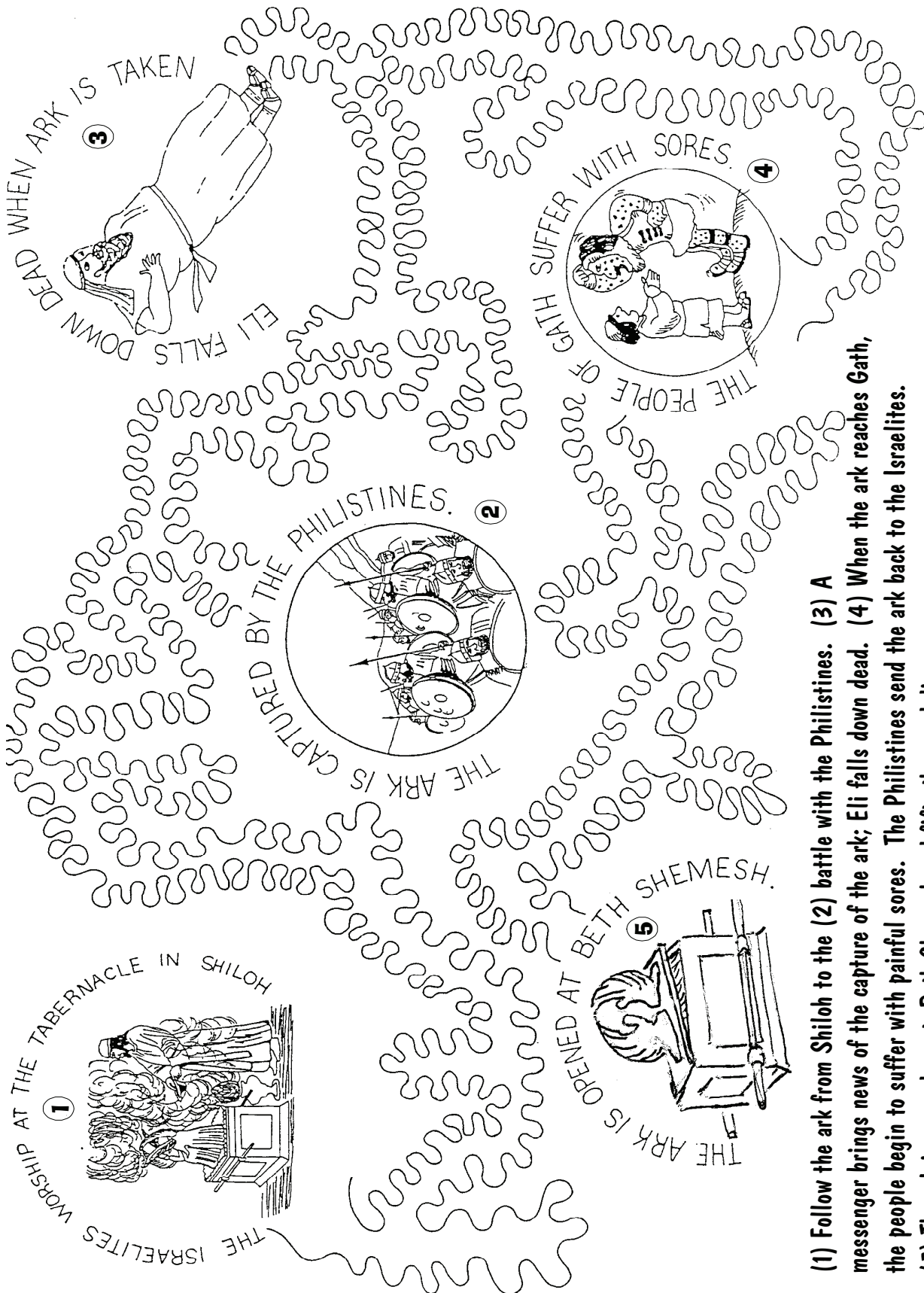


C code:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Eli, Hophni and Phinehas

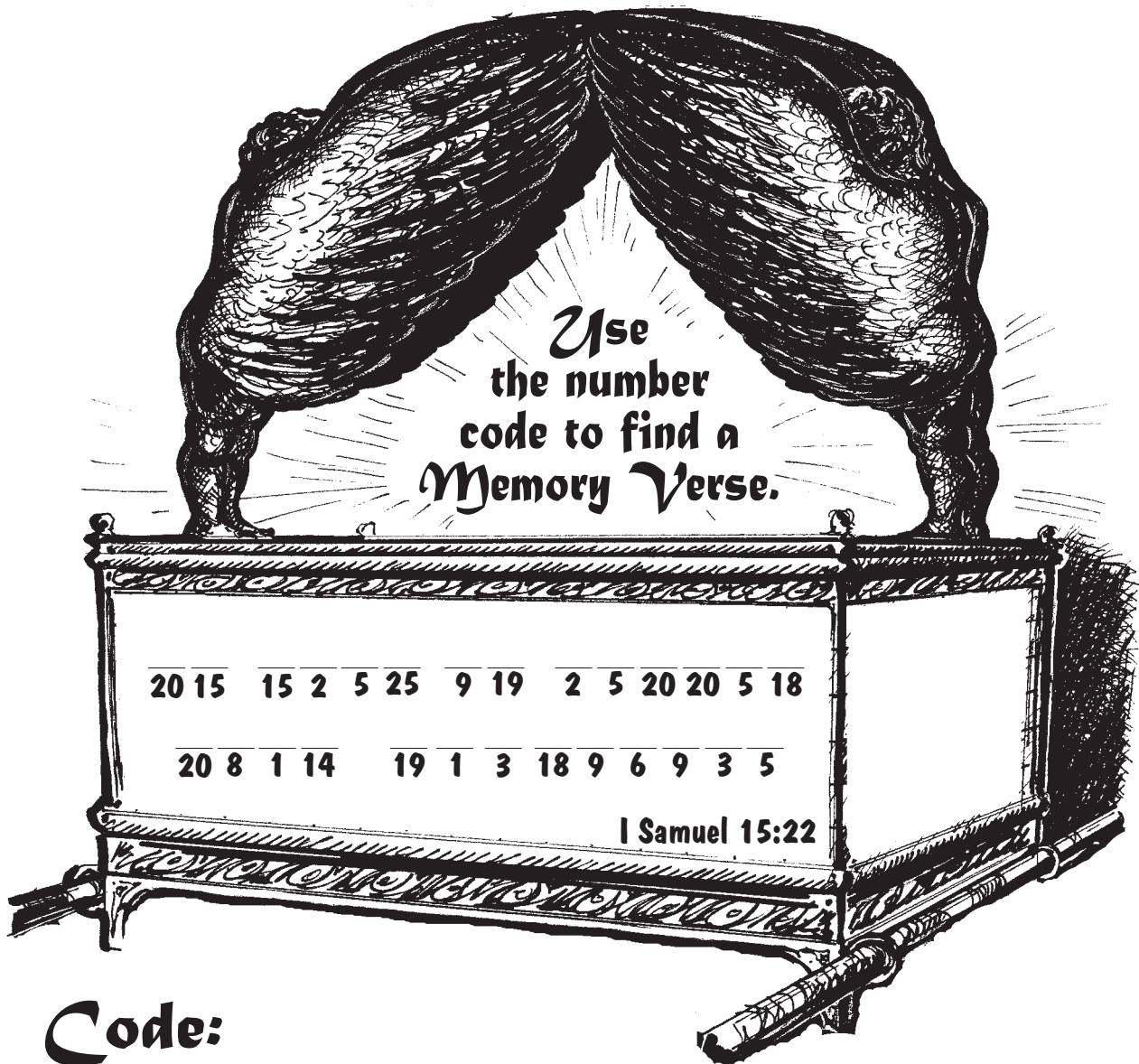
Activity A – Find the Path



- (1) Follow the ark from Shiloh to the (2) battle with the Philistines. (3) A messenger brings news of the capture of the ark; Eli falls down dead. (4) When the ark reaches Gath, the people begin to suffer with painful sores. The Philistines send the ark back to the Israelites. (5) The ark is opened up at Beth Shemesh and fifty thousand die.

Eli, Hophni and Phinehas

Activity B – Alphabet Code Memory Verse



Code:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

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Well Done!



for completing
SonSeekers Unit 3
From Aaron's Rod to Eli



Well Done!



for completing
SonSeekers Unit 3
From Aaron's Rod to Eli



Sonseekers Curriculum

Unit One	Unit Two	Unit Three	Unit Four
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Creation 1 Creation 2 Adam and Eve The fall Cain and Abel Noah builds an ark The flood, Noah and his sons The tower of Babel Abram called, Abram and Lot The covenant with Abraham Ishmael and Isaac Sodom and Gomorrah The sacrifice of Isaac Rebekah, Isaac's bride Jacob and Esau Jacob's ladder, Leah and Rachel 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Jacob becomes Israel Joseph, the favourite son Joseph goes to Egypt Joseph interprets the dreams Joseph's brothers Israel in Egypt Israelite slaves, Moses born Moses flees and returns to Egypt "Let My people go" The first passover, Israel delivered Crossing the Red Sea Manna, water from the rock Sinai and the ten commandments Moses and the tabernacle The golden calf Twelve spies, 40 years of wandering 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Aaron's rod Moses hits the rock The bronze serpent Balaam and his ass Joshua and Rahab Crossing the Jordan, Jericho The sin of Achan The sun stands still Gideon's fleece Gideon and his army Samson Samson and Delilah Ruth, Naomi and Boaz Hannah Samuel hears God speak Eli, Hophni and Phinehas 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Saul chosen Saul and the Amalekites David chosen David and Goliath David and Jonathan David and Saul David crowned David and the ark Absalom Solomon becomes king Solomon's temple Israel divided, Rehoboam and Jeroboam Elijah and the widow Elijah on Mount Carmel Good King Jehoshaphat Elisha and the double portion
Unit Five	Unit Six	Unit Seven	Unit Eight
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The widow's oil, a boy raised Naaman Famine in Samaria Jonah The captivity of Israel (the northern kingdom) Hezekiah and Sennacherib Isaiah Josiah Jeremiah The captivity of Judah (the southern kingdom) Daniel interprets the king's dream The fiery furnace The writing on the wall Daniel in the lions' den Esther Restoration 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Zacharias, Elizabeth, Mary and John The birth of Jesus Jesus in the temple John the Baptist Jesus baptised and tempted The call of the disciples Water turned to wine The temple cleansed, Nicodemus The woman at the well Healing of the paralysed man The house built on the rock Jesus stills the storm The feeding of the 5000 The centurion's servant Forgiveness in Simon's house The sower and the seed 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Jairus' daughter, a woman touches Jesus Jesus walks on the water Miracles of healing The transfiguration A boy is healed The unmerciful servant A man born blind The good Samaritan Prayer The raising of Lazarus The lost sheep, coin and son Attitudes of a servant The marriage of the king's son The ten lepers The ten virgins The talents 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Palm Sunday The last supper and Gethsemane The crucifixion The resurrection Peter restored The risen Christ and His ascension The day of Pentecost Peter and John Peter and the Gentiles Stephen Philip Paul's conversion Paul's first missionary journey Paul's second and third missionary journeys Paul's capture and imprisonment Paul's final journey