

Bible Lessons for Children

Learning to Know the Triune God through His Holy Word

Beginner Lesson Eighty-seven: Altar of Witness

- Overview** Bible Facts & Songs: Songs about the Bible and the Judges
Bible Reading & Discussion: Joshua 21:43-45; 22:1-6, 10-34
Bible Memory & Craft: Questions about Salvation
Learning Objectives: (1) God fulfilled all of His good promises to Israel. (2) God gave Israel rest from their enemies. (3) Sinners are saved through faith in Christ. (4) Faith is a gift from God.
- Opening** Get students' attention by using a pre-planned silence signal.
Have students sit in rows or a semi-circle facing you.
Open in prayer asking God's blessing upon the time.
- Bible Facts** Materials: Song visuals &/or props as needed
5-10 minutes Strategies: Sing It with Hand &/or Body Motions as appropriate
Instructions: Lead students to sing songs about the Bible & the Judges. Spend some time discussing the meaning of new songs. Encourage students to think about what they are singing. Be very careful to choose songs that only speak truth. Ask students to help lead songs, including actions and visuals as appropriate.
- Bible Reading** Materials: Bibles for students to use
15 minutes Strategies: Character Cues
Scripture: Joshua 21:43-45; 22:1-6, 10-34
Instructions: Have students sit at tables. Leader reads expressively while students change position depending on who is speaking. The leader should prepare ahead by marking the passage according to who is speaking. To help students to follow who is speaking, leader should say "Name said" instead of reading a pronoun. Leader should pause often to give students time to respond.
Joshua – Students stand because Joshua was God's chosen leader
People of Israel – Students raise ten fingers for the ten chiefs
People of Reuben/Gad/Manasseh – Students raise three fingers
Phinehas the priest – Students fold hands as in prayer
- Bible Discussion** Materials: Number cards, Word poster #1 Add: Rest provider
10 minutes Strategy: Count Down
Instructions: Have students sit in a fellowship circle. Numbers are written on small cards and handed out randomly to students. The leader asks questions and students answer in numerical order (1,2,3).
Questions:
- Who gave Israel rest from their enemies? (The Lord)
 - How many of the Lord's promises had come to pass? (All)
 - The Reubenites, Gadites, and half tribe of Manasseh had been given land on the other side of the Jordan, so they crossed over the Jordan into the land of Canaan with the other Israelites only to help to conquer the land. When Joshua sent these tribes back to their own land he said, "You...have been careful to keep the charge of the blank your blank." (Lord, God)
 - Joshua also gave them instructions. He said, "Only be very careful to observe the blank and the law (commandment)
 - ...to blank the Lord you God (love),
 - and to blank in all his ways (walk)
 - and to keep his commandments and to cling to him and to blank him with all your blank and with all your soul (serve, heart)."
 - Before crossing into their own land, what did these tribes build near the Jordan? (An altar)
 - The rest of Israel thought they built the altar "in blank against the Lord." (Rebellion)

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- Were there really plans to offer sacrifices on the altar, to replace the tabernacle altar? (No)
- The altar was to be “a witness between us that the blank is blank.” (Lord, God)
- What was the name of the altar? (Witness)

Show students the word poster and have them act out the words: God is...Creator, Omnipotent, Omniscient, Merciful, Righteous, Just, Creator of Nations, God is in control, Long-suffering, Glorious, Deliverer, Savior, All-seeing, Faithful, Judge, Provider, Prayer Answerer, Sovereign, Gracious, Way to Heaven, Protector, Promise Keeper, Success maker, King of kings, Holy, Law maker, Skill instiller, Guide, Victory giver, Truth, Rest provider (Lay head on hands as though resting)

Ask students which words on poster #1 describe God in this lesson. (Answers: Promise keeper, Rest provider, etc.)

Group Prayer Through prayer, praise God for Who He is, listing His attributes.

Bible Memory 10-15 minutes
Transitional Thought: As He had promised, God saved the Israelites from their enemies and gave them rest. As he promised, God gave Christ to save sinners and give them rest in Him.
Strategy: Clap-a-word
Instructions: Have students sit in a semi-circle or rows facing a white board with the following passage written on it:
Question: How does the work of Christ save sinners?
Answer: A sinner is saved through faith in the work of Christ.
Verse: “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God...” Ephesians 2:8-9
Students read the passage in unison a few times. Students then read the passage replacing some words with claps. The word “save(ed)” is clapped once rather than read aloud. The word “sinner(s)” is clapped twice rapidly. The Word “faith” is clapped three time rapidly. Students read the passage in unison trying to remember to clap the chosen words instead of reading them. The process is repeated until students try to repeat the passage from memory.

Bible Craft As time allows
Materials: Paper, markers, sample project
Activity: Faith mural
Instructions: Have students sit at tables. Discuss laws of nature that students believe without even thinking about it, such as...when you drop something it will fall; you cannot breathe under water so you hold your breath; fire is hot so you do not touch it, etc. Relate this to belief/faith in Christ for salvation from sin. Have students make a mural depicting the many things in which they have “faith/belief.” The mural may show spiritual as well as natural beliefs, such as...God answers prayer; God is all powerful; God is the creator, etc.

Closing Have students assist with clean-up.
Remind students to practice their memory work throughout the week.
Close in prayer & dismiss.