

A decorative border of musical staves with colorful notes (red, green, yellow, blue, orange) surrounds the central text. The notes are stylized and scattered across the staves.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

MUSIC FOR YEAR 2 - SUMMER QUARTER

LESSONS 1 - 4

THEME: Joshua enters the Promised Land

MEMORY VERSE

Psalm 126:3 "The Lord has done great things for us
and we are filled with joy." (Review previous memory verse
songs)

HYMN

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

CHORUS

Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord

ADDITIONAL SONGS

The Books of the Bible
There Ain't Nothin' that the Lord Can't Do
Whisper a Prayer

**CHILDREN'S CHURCH 4-6 YEAR-OLDS
CURRICULUM YEAR 2, SUMMER**

Lesson 1

Title: Rahab Helps the Spies
Text: Joshua 2
Theme: God brings those who are not His people to trust in Him, and makes them His people.

Memory Verse: *Psalm 126:3 The Lord has done great things for us and we are filled with joy.* NIV (Week 1 of 5 weeks with this verse.)

Teaching Objectives: By God's grace, each child will:

1. Know that God saves all who trust in Him.
2. Understand that God works in the hearts of people to bring them to trust in Him.
3. Ask God to work in his heart so that he can put his trust in Christ.

1. Teacher Direction:

Rahab is listed among the champions of faith in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. There are two things that make this surprising. First, Rahab was a prostitute, not the sort of person one would expect to find named among those whose faith God's people should emulate. Secondly, Rahab was not even one of God's people. She was not only a Gentile in an era when God was dealing almost exclusively with Jews, but also she was among the Gentiles God had expressly commanded the Jews to completely exterminate. Her story is a remarkable testimony to the long reach of the hand of God's grace, which changed her heart and brought her to take refuge in Him.

2. Learning Readiness Activity

Using a small piece of red yarn, play a version of "Button, Button, Who's Got the Button?" Children stand in a circle, with their hands cupped together and slightly open at the top. The teacher holds the red yarn in her hand and goes to each child, covering the child's hands with her own in such a way that she could drop the yarn, unseen, into the child's hands. She drops it into one child's hands (without letting anyone know whose) and continues around the circle. She chooses one child to be "it," and asks him, "Red cord, red cord, who has the red cord?" He tries to guess correctly. If he is correct, it is his turn to drop the red cord into someone's hands and to choose someone else to guess who has it. Play until everyone has had a turn to be "It." Tell the children that someone in today's story will have an important red cord. Ask them to listen for who has the red cord and why it was important.

3. Bible Story

Rahab was worried. A large crowd of people were coming, closer and closer to her city of Jericho. It was said that this crowd of people planned to take over all the cities around, including *her* city. It was said that this crowd of people would destroy everyone and everything.

Rahab did not often feel worried about things like these. Her city of Jericho had a strong, thick wall around it. No one could get in unless the people of her city opened the gates and let them in. Enemy armies had never been able to get inside Jericho's walls. Not only that, Jericho had a mighty army who would fight to protect the city, and this crowd of people who were coming were not soldiers at all. They were only slaves from Egypt who were traveling to a new land to make homes for themselves.

However, this crowd of people who had been slaves, the Israelites, were different. It was said they had a very powerful God who had made them able to get away from their Egyptian masters. This God had caused terrible things to happen in Egypt until the king of Egypt had let the slaves go. Not only that, but when the king of Egypt had changed his mind and chased after these Israelite slaves, their God had made the waters of the Red Sea open so they could cross it on dry land. Now they were getting close to Rahab's land and to Rahab's city of Jericho, because they believed their God was going to give that land to them. When neighboring kings had come out to fight with the Israelites, to try to stop them, even though the Israelites were only slaves and not trained soldiers, the kings and their armies had lost!

Not only was Rahab afraid, Rahab's friends and neighbors were afraid. Rahab knew some of the soldiers of Jericho and she had even heard *them* talking about the great power of the God of these Israelites. Even the soldiers were afraid.

Being afraid is not a good feeling, but God used Rahab's fear to cause something good for Rahab. God used her fear to cause her to trust in *Him* to keep her safe.

When the Israelites were very close to Jericho, their leader, Joshua, sent two spies into Jericho to look things over and see what they must do to drive out the people who lived there. God brought the two spies to Rahab's house. Rahab hid them, because she had decided to stop trusting in Jericho's army and in Jericho's false gods to keep her safe. She would trust in the Israelites' powerful God and she would help the spies.

The king of Jericho heard that the two Israelite spies had come to Rahab's house. He sent a message to her, telling her to bring the spies out and turn them over to him. Instead, Rahab hid the two spies under some plants up on her roof. She made the king's men believe that the spies had already left. Once the king's men went on their way, she went up on the roof and told the spies they should go hide in the woods for three days. Then it would be safe for them to go back to Joshua, their leader.

Rahab told the spies, "I know that your God will give you this land and my city of Jericho. We have all heard how powerful He is and what He has already done for you. I believe He is the true God, the One who made all that is. That is

why I have helped you. Please protect me and my family when you attack Jericho and God gives you this city.”

The spies promised Rahab that neither she nor anyone in her family would be harmed. Then she took a long, red cord, or rope, and hung it from her window. Rahab’s house was right on the city wall, so the cord hung out her window and down the city wall. The two men used the cord to climb down to safety outside of Jericho. Then they called up to Rahab. They told her that when they came with the rest of the Israelites to attack Jericho, she should gather all her family inside her house and hang the same red cord out her window. That was how the Israelites would know which house was hers. Anyone in the house with the red cord would not be harmed.

Later, that was just what happened. The Israelites did attack Jericho and they won. Everyone who lived there was killed, *except* Rahab and her family. The Israelites saw the red cord hanging from her window and they knew they must not harm the people in that house. Not only was Rahab’s life saved, but she went to live with the people of God for the rest of her life. The God of the Israelites, the true God who made all that is, became *her* God. Rahab and her family could say, “The Lord has done great things for us and we are filled with joy.”

4. Application

The people of Jericho were wicked people whom God was punishing by driving them out of their land. Rahab had been just as wicked as the rest of them, but God changed Rahab’s heart and she put her faith in God instead of in the idols of her people. Help the children to see that God still punishes people for their sin, but will save any who turn to Him by putting their faith in Jesus, the Savior He has provided. Encourage the children to ask God to work in their hearts as He did in Rahab’s, so they will be able to put all their trust in Him, as Rahab did.

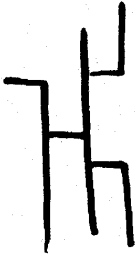
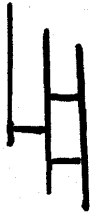
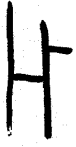
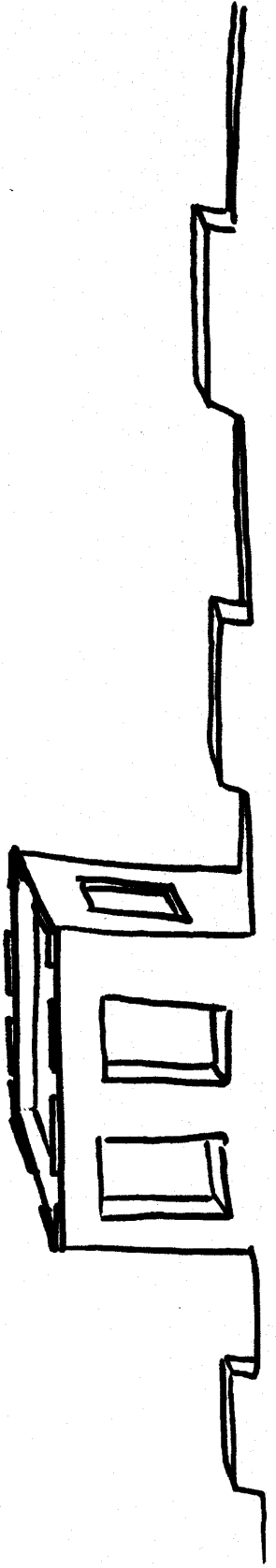
5. Review questions

- A. What was the name of Rahab’s city? (Jericho)
- B. Why were Rahab and the people of her city afraid? (Because the Israelites were coming to take their land and they had heard about the powerful things the Israelites’ God had done for them.)
- C. Who came to Rahab’s house? (Two Israelite spies.)
- D. When the king of Jericho asked Rahab to turn the two spies over to him, what did she do? (She hid them on her roof and told him they had already left.)
- E. Whom did Rahab trust to keep her safe, instead of the army and the gods of Jericho? (The true God.)
- F. How did the two spies get away from Jericho without being caught? (Rahab let them down from a window of her house on a red cord or rope.)
- G. Where in Jericho was Rahab’s house? (Right on the city wall.)
- H. What did Rahab ask the spies to do for her since she had helped them? (Protect her and her family.)
- I. When the Israelites came back to attack Jericho, how would they know which house was Rahab’s? (The same red rope would be hanging from the window.)

- J. Where did Rahab go to live? (With the Israelites.)
- K. Who was Rahab's god then? (The true God.)

6. Learning Reinforcement Activity

Make copies of the attached page, one for each child. Bring construction paper (red for brick or brown or grey for stones). Let the children tear pieces to glue stones or bricks on the wall. Encourage them to keep the window clear. When they have finished, give them each a piece of red yarn to glue from the window for Rahab's red rope. Remind them that the God who saved Rahab when she trusted in Him will save them, too, when they put their trust in Him.



**CHILDREN'S CHURCH 4-6 YEAR-OLDS
CURRICULUM YEAR 2, SUMMER**

Lesson 2

Title: Crossing the Jordan
Text: Joshua 3-4
Theme: God works through His chosen leader to bring blessing to His people.

Memory Verse: *Psalm 126:3 The Lord has done great things for us and we are filled with joy.* NIV (Week 2 of 5 weeks with this verse.)

Teaching Objectives: By God's grace, each child will:

1. Understand that God gives His people leaders who bring them blessing and victory when God's people trust and obey those leaders.
2. Know that God has given us Jesus as a leader who will give us all we need, including victory over sin.
3. Want to trust and obey Jesus, the Leader/Savior God has provided.

1. Teacher Direction

God had raised up Moses to confront the Pharaoh and lead His people out of slavery in Egypt. God did many wonders through His servant Moses, not the least of which was the parting of the Red Sea. Moses had faithfully led the Israelites through the wilderness, being used of God to provide for them over and over again. Now, however, Moses was dead and Joshua was the new leader. Would he be equal to the task of conquering a well-fortified land and settling the great Hebrew nation within it? Would God be with him as he had been with Moses? Could the people trust him to lead them rightly? Would it be safe to obey him? In this story, God promises Joshua that He will make it clear to the Israelites that He is with Joshua just as He was with Moses. Consequently, Israel's first steps into the Promised Land under Joshua's direction are reminiscent of the parting of the Red Sea under Moses. The people followed Joshua's directions and saw their need miraculously provided. In many ways, Joshua is a picture of Christ. When we trust Christ and obey Him, He leads us into victory and rest, and all our needs are met.

2. Introduction

If you have something that you keep as a reminder or as a memorial of something, bring it from home and explain to the children what it reminds you of. Use it to introduce the idea of a memorial, and ask the children to listen for what is a memorial in the story.

Ask the children the following questions to review the story up to this point:

- A. Why did the Israelites want to leave Egypt? (Because they were slaves there.)
- B. Who led the Israelites out of Egypt? (Moses.)
- C. When the Egyptians chased the Israelites right up to the Red Sea, how did the Israelites get across? (God told Moses to hold his rod out over the water. When he did, the waters separated, leaving dry land down the middle for the people to walk on.)
- D. Who led the Israelites all the way through the wilderness? (Moses.)
- E. Did Moses go into the Promised Land with the Israelites? (No, he died.)
- F. Whom did God choose to be the next leader of the Israelites, and to take them into the Promised Land? (Joshua)

3. Bible Story

The Israelites were surely sorry to see that Moses was not their leader anymore. God had used him to do so many things for them. Moses had parted the Red Sea so they could escape the Egyptians. He had asked God, and God had given them manna, bread from heaven, when they had nothing to eat. God had told Moses to hit a rock with his rod when there was no water, and water came from a rock for them to drink. When poisonous snakes were biting the people, God told Moses to make a bronze snake and put it on a pole so the people who looked at it would get better. God had given Moses the Ten Commandments. The Israelites may have wondered: what would they do without Moses?

Of course, they had a new leader. God had chosen Joshua, Moses' helper, to be the leader after Moses died. Joshua would lead the Israelites into the Promised Land. He would be their general and lead them in battle against the people who lived in the land, driving them out as God had commanded. That was a big job, though. The people may have wondered if Joshua would be able to do it.

The first thing Joshua had to do was to get the Israelites *into* the Promised Land. The wide Jordan River blocked their way. It was the time of the year when the river was its fullest from rains, sometimes even flooding. How could all the thousands of Israelites get across it, into the Promised Land?

Just as God had always told Moses what to do about the people's needs, so now God told Joshua what to do. God said to Joshua, "Today, I will begin to show all the people that I am with you, just as I was with Moses. Tell the priests to pick up the Ark of the Covenant, step into the Jordan River, and stand there."

So Joshua did. The priests picked up the Ark (which was like a wooden box, with the Ten Commandments inside) and stepped into the water. When they did, the river stopped flowing. All the water just piled up in one place instead of flowing on down the way it usually did. Soon, the place where the priests stood was dry enough for people to walk on. The priests continued to stand in the middle of the dry river bed, holding the Ark of the Covenant. As they stood there, all the Israelites crossed over the river, on dry ground.

When all the Israelites had finished crossing, God told Joshua to choose one man from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. The men were to step back into the dry river bottom and each pick up one large stone. The men did as they were told. God told Joshua to have the twelve men make a pile with their twelve large stones. The stone would be a memorial. Whenever any Israelite saw the memorial, they would remember what God had done for them, in making the Jordan River stop flowing so they could cross it on dry land. They would remember how God had used Joshua, the leader He had given them, to meet their needs. Years later, when these Israelites had children, the children would see the stone memorial and ask why it was there. Their parents would tell them and so there would always be a reminder of what God had done for His people through Joshua that day.

When the twelve men finished making the memorial of the twelve stones, God told Joshua to have the priests come on out of the Jordan River bed. They did. Just as soon as the priests carrying the Ark were out of the River and on the other side of it, the river came pouring on down its river bed, deep enough to flood once again.

That day, God made it clear to His people that Joshua was the leader He had chosen for them. As long as Joshua led the Israelites, they respected and obeyed him.

4. Application

God has appointed another Leader for His people, a leader even better than Joshua. God has given us Jesus. Jesus leads His people into being members of God's family. Jesus meets all our needs and makes us able to live in a way that is pleasing to God. God has given us such a wonderful leader. God has shown us that Jesus really is God's leader by

raising Him from the dead. God expects us to trust the leader He has given, to believe in Him, follow Him, and obey Him.

5. Review Questions

- A. Who led the Israelites out of Egypt? (Moses)
- B. Whom did God use to part the waters of the Red Sea so the Israelites could cross? (Moses)
- C. As the Israelites were getting ready to go into the land God had promised to give them, who was their leader? (Joshua)
- D. How did Joshua get to be the leader? (God chose him.)
- E. What was the first problem the Israelites had, under their new leader? (They had to get across the Jordan River.)
- F. What did God tell Joshua to have the priests do? (Carry the Ark of the Covenant out into the water.)
- G. When the priests stepped into the water, what happened? (The river stopped flowing.)
- H. How did the Israelites get across the Jordan River? (They walked across, on dry land.)
- I. After everyone was across, how many men did God tell Joshua to choose to get stones from the river bottom? (12)
- J. What did the twelve men do with the twelve stones? (Piled them up to be a memorial.)
- K. When everyone was across and the memorial was finished, the priests came out of the river. Then what happened? (The river waters came flooding back into their place.)
- L. Was God with Joshua, as He had been with Moses? (Yes.)
- M. What were the people to do for the leader God had chosen for them? (Respect and obey him.)
- N. Who is the leader God has given us? (Jesus)
- O. What amazing thing did God do for Jesus, to show us He is our leader? (He raised Him from the dead.)
- P. What does God want us to do for our leader, Jesus? (Trust Him and obey Him.)

6. Learning Reinforcement Activities

- A. Let the children role play this story. Choose a Joshua, priests (give them a box of some kind to carry), and children to represent the twelve men. If possible, bring some stones to use for the memorial. Designate an area to be the river. Retell the story, letting the children act it out.
- B. Have the children tear twelve paper stones from grey or brown construction paper. Count to twelve with them as they tear. Have them glue the stones in a pile to the attached memory verse page. As they work, talk with them about the memorial the Israelites made. Ask them what great thing God had done for His people in the story. Talk about how full of joy the Israelites would have been to be safely across the river and to know that God would be with their new leader as He had been with Moses. Ask them what great things God has done for us, in Jesus, and discuss how we are filled with joy because of them.

The Lord has done great things for us
and we are filled with

Joy!!

Psalm 126:3

**CHILDREN'S CHURCH 4-6 YEAR-OLDS
CURRICULUM YEAR 2, SUMMER**

Lesson 3

Title: The Battle of Jericho
Text: Joshua 6
Theme: God gives victory to His people.

Memory Verse: *Psalm 126:3 The Lord has done great things for us and we are filled with joy.* NIV (Week 3 of 5 weeks with this verse.)

Teaching Objectives: By God's grace, each child will:

1. Understand that God gave the Israelites victory through unusual means when they obeyed Him and followed the leader He had given.
2. Give thanks for our better leader, Jesus, who gives us greater victory, over sin.
3. Want to trust in and follow the Lord Jesus.

1. Teacher Direction:

It is God who gives victory, and He often chooses to use unlikely means to give it. In this story, when a band of slaves shout and blow trumpets, fortified walls fall and a city is theirs. They did this in obedience to the orders of Joshua, their leader, who had received those orders from God. In our case, God gives victory over sin when we put our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and follow Him, the Savior and the Commander God has appointed for us.

2. Introduction

Ask the children what they would do if they had a home and a yard and they wanted no one to be able to enter without their permission. Describe the walled cities of ancient times, helping the children to understand the idea of a wall around a city as protection. If you can find pictures of a walled city, bring them to show.

3. Bible Story

God had promised to give the Israelites the land to which He had led them. There was only one problem--other people lived there. The Israelites would have to drive these other people out and take the land and all its cities from them. Of course, usually God does not want people to take things away from other people. The people who were living in the promised land, though, had been very wicked. They worshiped idols and would not obey God. God wanted to give His people land *and* He wanted these people to be punished for their wickedness. So God had commanded the Israelites to take the land away from the people who lived in it. They would have to fight many battles, but God promised to be with them and to always make them able to win the battles.

To even get *into* the Promised Land, the Israelites and their leader, Joshua, had had a problem. Do you remember what it was? (They had to get across the Jordan River.) How did they cross? (God made the river stop flowing when the priests carried the Ark of the Covenant into the water and all the people went across on dry land.) Now they were in the Promised Land and facing the first city they would have to fight, Jericho. To take the city, the Israelites would have to fight the people who lived in it. But they could not fight the people in the city unless they got *into* the city. Jericho had a strong wall all around it, and the people of Jericho certainly would not open the gates for the Israelites. How would the Israelites get in? (Ask the children what an army could do to get into a strong walled city and

listen to their ideas. Things other commanders have used have included surrounding the city and waiting until the people had to come out to get more food, or knocking the wall down with big posts, or digging tunnels under the wall, or even making a big statue to hide soldiers in and giving the statue to the city.)

The Israelites used none of these ideas. Instead they followed Joshua, the leader God had given them, doing just what God told Joshua to do--even though what God told him did not sound like it would work. God told Joshua to line up all the soldiers, with all their weapons, and march around the city once. That was all. The priests would march in front of the soldiers, blowing trumpets, but the soldiers would only march. The next day, they were to do the same thing, nothing more. The third day, they were to march around the city again, with the priests blowing trumpets. On the fourth, fifth, and sixth days, they were to do the same thing--march around the city once, and that was all. The seventh day would be different. On that day, the people and the priests with trumpets would march around the city, not once or twice or three times, but seven times. After the seventh march around on the seventh day, the priests were to blow one long blast on their trumpets. When the soldiers heard that trumpet blast, they were all to shout as loudly as they could. When that happened, God told Joshua, the walls of the city would fall down by themselves and the Israelites could march right in and take the city.

What a strange way to take a city! What a strange way to make a strong, thick wall fall down--marching, blowing trumpets, and shouting. That was what God had said to do, though, and the people would follow Joshua and obey God. On Day Number One, early in the morning, Joshua lined up the priests with the Ark of the Covenant and their trumpets. Behind them, the army soldiers took their places. They began to march. The trumpets played and the soldiers marched. Around Jericho they went once, then they marched away. That was all. What did the people of Jericho think of this strange behavior for an army?

The second day, the priests led the way, blowing trumpets, and the army followed. Around they marched one time, then home. The third day, the same thing, and the fourth, the fifth, the sixth. The people inside the city must have been getting used to seeing it happen every day.

On the seventh day, as God had commanded Joshua, the priests led the way with their trumpets, and the army followed, but they marched around the city seven times. The people inside Jericho must have been surprised at this, and must have wondered what would happen next. As the Israelites ended their seventh trip around the city, the priests blew one long blast on the trumpets, as God had commanded. The Israelite soldiers shouted, as God had commanded. And the walls of Jericho fell down flat, as God had promised. The Israelites ran into the city, attacked the surprised people in Jericho and defeated them.

God's people had obeyed God and had followed the leader He had given them and God had given them victory. He had made them able to take this first, strong city in the land He had promised to give them. Imagine the celebration in the Israelite camp that night! They must have said something like, "The Lord has done great things for us and we are filled with joy!"

4. Application

Point out to the children that God has given us an even greater leader than Joshua who gives us even better victory. The Lord Jesus Christ gives us victory over the sin in our own hearts that keeps us from pleasing God and living for Him. God has given us Jesus because He knew we were not strong enough on our own to fight our sin and win. As the Israelite soldiers obeyed God by following Joshua and doing as he instructed, so we must obey God by following Jesus and putting our trust in Him to help us in the fight against sin. It is the only way we will have victory.

5. Review questions

- A. What was the name of the first city the Israelites needed to take in the Promised Land? (Jericho)
- B. Why could they not get in to fight the people? (There was a strong wall all around it.)
- C. How many days did God say they were to march around the wall? (Seven)
- D. On each of the first six days, how many times did God say they should march around Jericho? (Once)
- E. Who did God say should go first, in front of the soldiers? (The priests.)
- F. What did God say the priests were to do as they marched? (Blow trumpets.)
- G. What were the soldiers to do as they marched? (Nothing.)
- H. On the seventh day, how many times did God say the Israelites should march around the city? (Seven times.)
- I. After the seventh time, the priests were to blow one long trumpet blast. Then what were the soldiers to do? (Shout.)
- J. What happened when the soldiers did that? (The walls of Jericho fell down.)
- K. Were the Israelites able to take the city? (Yes)
- L. (From an earlier story:) What was the name of the lady who lived in Jericho and who hid the two Israelite spies? (Rahab)
- M. (From the same earlier story:) The spies promised Rahab she and her family would be safe when they took the city, as long as they stayed in her house. How would the Israelite army know which house was hers? (She was going to hang a red cord or rope in the window.)

Tell the children that Rahab did hang the red cord in her window. The Israelites saw it and did not harm her or her family when they took the city.

- N. Who is the even better leader God has given us, who gives us victory over our sin? (Jesus)

6. Learning Reinforcement Activities

- A. This is a fun story to role play, especially if you can bring some cardboard boxes or blocks or something to pile up for a wall to knock down at the appropriate moment. Paper towel rolls can be priests' trumpets. Retell the story, with the children as the actors. March in absolute silence, count the days and the times around the city, and shout.
- B. Review Game. Use construction paper to make a city wall in several pieces and tape it up to the classroom wall. Ask the review questions, allowing children to come up and take down a piece of the wall of Jericho each time they answer correctly.

**CHILDREN'S CHURCH 4-6 YEAR-OLDS
CURRICULUM YEAR 2, SUMMER**

Lesson 4

Title: Achan's Sin
Text: Joshua 7:1-8:29
Theme: God requires His people to obey Him. When they don't, their sin affects others as well as themselves.

Memory Verse: *Psalm 126:3 The Lord has done great things for us and we are filled with joy.* NIV (Week 4 of 5 weeks with this verse.)

Teaching Objectives: By God's grace, each child will:

1. Understand that God hates sin and will not tolerate it in His people.
2. Know that disobedience is sin.
3. Ask God to give him a hatred for sin.
4. Trust in Jesus to forgive his own sin and to make him able to obey God.

1. Teacher Direction:

It is easy to be like Achan. It is easy to forget how hateful sin is to God and to convince ourselves that, since we are numbered among God's people, all will be well and our sin won't matter. We must be always on our guard, asking God to cause us to see the seriousness of sin and to give us the same hatred for it that He has.

2. Learning Readiness Activity

Bring these three things to hide (all in the same place) before class: a piece of clothing, something gold colored or a ball of gold construction paper and several pieces of aluminum foil made to look like coins. Hide them somewhere in the room. When the children have gathered, describe the items to them and have them go find them. Tell them that when they find the hidden things, they are not to announce it or to tell anyone where they are. Instead, as soon as they find them, they are to come quietly back to their chairs and sit down, waiting until everyone has found the three items. When all the children are back in their seats, ask them why a person might hide something. Listen to their ideas and help them to see the difference between hiding things for a good reason--to give someone a pleasant surprise at a later time, for instance--and for a wrong reason--because the things were stolen or because you might get into trouble if you had them. Tell them that in today's story, a man named Achan caused serious trouble for God's people because he hid something for a wrong reason.

3. Bible Story

Do you remember the name of the city whose walls fell down in last week's story? (Jericho) Do you remember what the Israelites did to get the walls of Jericho to fall down? (In obedience to God, they marched around the city once a day for six

days, then they marched around it seven times on the seventh day. That day, they shouted after marching and when they shouted, the walls fell down.) **God gave the Israelites a great victory that day, because they had obeyed Him and had carefully followed His directions. However, God had given them other directions as well. He had told them to destroy everything in this city, absolutely everything, except anything made of silver or gold or bronze or iron. Those things were to be kept for the Lord's treasury. God was very clear about this. He told the Israelites that if they kept any of the things He had told them to destroy *or* if they kept any of the things He had told them to give to His treasury, it would be very bad for them.**

As the Israelites had obeyed God by marching and shouting to cause Jericho's walls to fall, so they also obeyed Him by destroying what was to be destroyed and by giving to His treasury what was to be given. It should be said that only most of the Israelites obeyed God. One man, Achan, did not. He saw a piece of clothing that he thought was very beautiful, a piece of gold, and some silver. He couldn't see how it would hurt anything if he kept those things for himself, so he took them. He hid them until he got home to his tent, then he buried them under the floor of his tent, where he was sure no one would ever find them. He was sure no one would ever know.

Meanwhile, Joshua and the Israelite army went on to take the next city, Ai. It was a much smaller city than Jericho. Not many soldiers would be needed to take such a small city. So Joshua sent part of the army to Ai, sure they would win--but the people of Ai chased the Israelites away and killed some of them.

Joshua was very upset! How could this be? *God* fought for the Israelites. He was the One who gave them victories. How could they lose? What could possibly be wrong? So Joshua cried out to God.

God answered Joshua by telling Him the Israelites had sinned. God told Joshua that the Israelites had taken some of the things they were to destroy and some of the things they were to give to the treasury of the Lord. God said He could not go with the Israelites and give them victory when there was sin and disobedience among them. In the morning, all the Israelites were to gather together and God said He would show them who it was who had disobeyed God.

Early in the morning, the Israelites gathered and God showed Joshua that it was Achan who had sinned. Joshua said to Achan, "What have you done?"

Achan knew he had been found out. He could not hide his sin any longer. So Achan admitted to Joshua that he had sinned. He told him about the beautiful piece of clothing, the piece of gold, and the silver he had taken from Jericho. He told Joshua that all those things were under the floor of his tent where he had hidden them. Joshua sent men to go look and it was as Achan had said. The things he had taken were there.

"You have brought all this trouble on God's people!" Joshua told Achan. Because of Achan's sin, God's people had been defeated, many of them had died, and, worst of all, God had been displeased with them. Achan was punished for his sin.

Then God told Joshua not to be afraid or discouraged, because God would be with His people again, now that the sin had been taken care of. The Israelites could

go attack Ai, the city that had beaten them, and God would be with His people, to give them victory. The Israelites obeyed God and went out to attack Ai again. This time they took the city. They went on to take one city after another in the land God had promised to give them. He was always with them to give them victory, as long as they obeyed Him.

4. Application

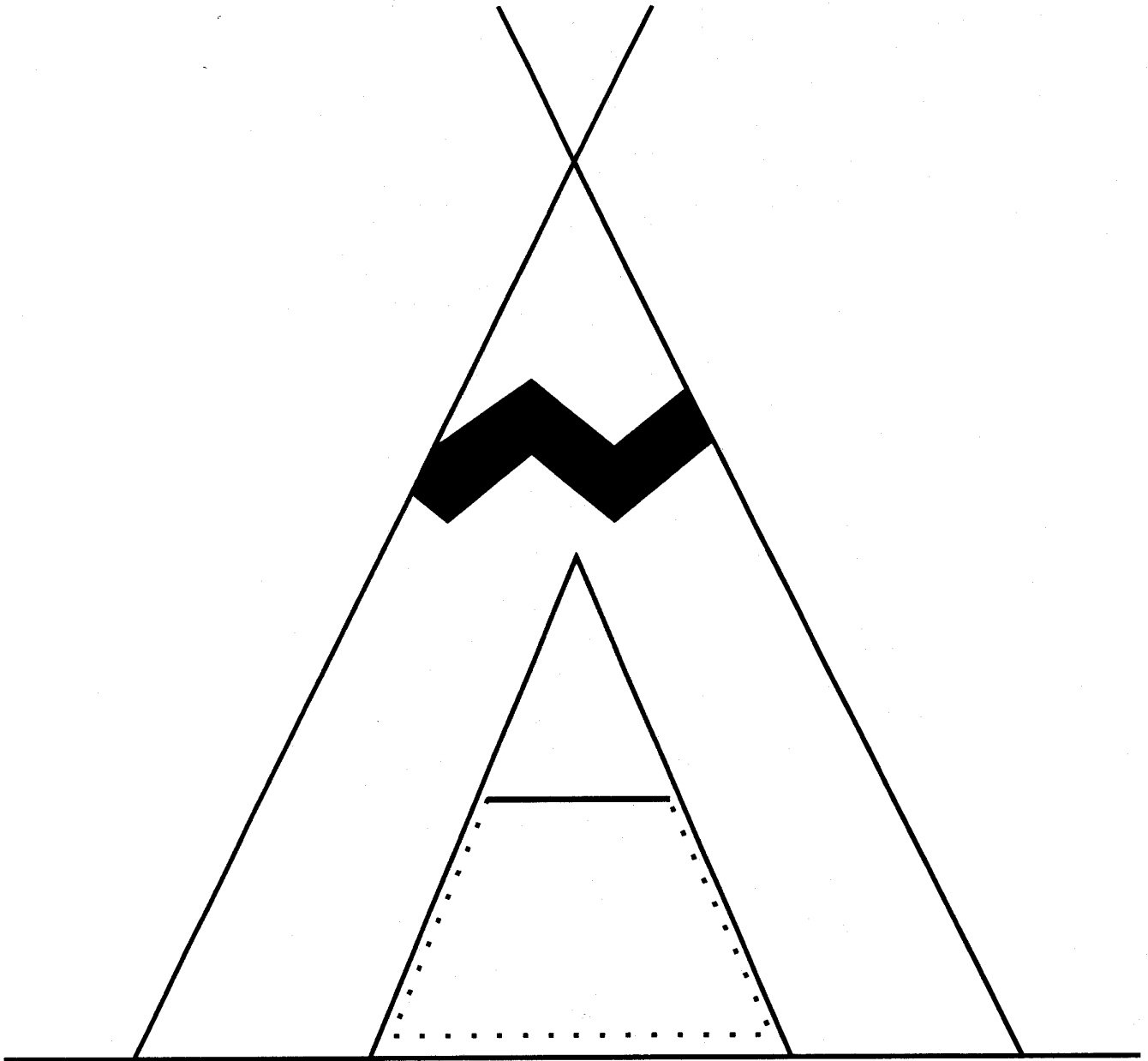
Help the children to see that every time they do what they know they should not, they are like Achan. Help them to see that, even though sin is so normal to us, God hates it. Sin hurts us and hurts others. Lead the children in asking God to help us to hate sin as He hates sin. Encourage them to see that when they don't hide their sin, like Achan, but admit it and confess it to Jesus, He will forgive their sin and make them able to obey God.

5. Review Questions

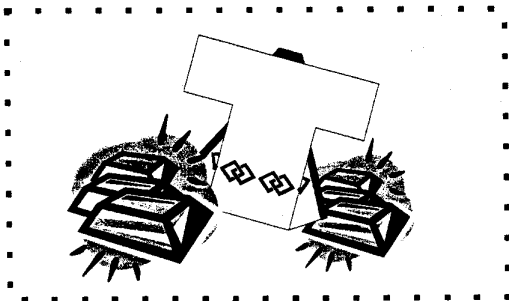
- A. What were the Israelites supposed to do with any gold or silver they took from Jericho? (Put it in the Lord's treasury.)
- B. What were they supposed to do with everything else they took from Jericho? (Destroy it.)
- C. What did Achan take from Jericho? (A piece of clothing, gold, and silver.)
- D. Where did Achan hide those things? (Under the floor of his tent.)
- E. When the Israelites attacked the city of Ai, what happened to them because of Achan's sin? (They lost the battle and some of them were killed.)
- F. When Joshua asked God why He had not helped them win the battle, what did God tell Joshua? (Someone had sinned and disobeyed Him.)
- G. Once Achan admitted his sin and was punished for it, what happened when the Israelites attacked Ai? (They won the battle and took the city.)

6. Learning Reinforcement Activity


Make a copy of the attached page for each child. Cut the pictures of the stolen items out for each child. They will color the stolen items and Achan's tent, then will pull back the flap on the tent floor to glue the stolen items underneath. As they work, talk with them about the foolishness of trying to hide sin from God, who sees everything. Help them to see that He wants us to confess our sin and has given us a Savior in Jesus so we can be forgiven.



ACHAN TRIED TO HIDE HIS SIN FROM GOD.



Cut on dotted lines of tent flap.
Cut on dotted lines around
stolen items. Tape items behind
flap and lift flap to see them
revealed.



CHILDREN'S CHURCH
MUSIC FOR YEAR 2 - SUMMER
QUARTER
LESSONS 5 - 9

**THEME: God grants us repentance, forgiveness,
and deliverance from sin**

MEMORY VERSE SONG

1 John 1:9a "If we confess our sins, He will forgive our sins."

Review Psalm 126:3 "The Lord has done great things for us
and we are filled with joy."

HYMN

Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty

CHORUS

Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord

ADDITIONAL SONGS

The Books of the Bible

There Ain't Nothin' that the Lord Can't Do

Whisper a Prayer

**CHILDREN'S CHURCH 4-6 YEAR-OLDS
CURRICULUM YEAR 2, SUMMER**

Lesson 5

Title: The Sun Stands Still
Text: Joshua 10:1-15
Theme: God works miracles to meet His people's needs.

Memory Verse: *Psalm 126:3 The Lord has done great things for us and we are filled with joy.* NIV (This is the last of five weeks on this verse.)

Teaching Objectives: By God's grace, each child will:

1. Understand that all things obey God.
2. Praise God for the wonderful things He did for His chosen leader, Joshua, and for the wonderful things He has done through His appointed leader, Jesus.
3. Want to trust in and follow the leader God has appointed for him, the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Teacher Direction

God chose Joshua to lead the people of God into victory and rest in the land He had promised to give them. God did amazing things through Joshua in order to provide for His people. God has given the Lord Jesus Christ to lead His people into spiritual victory and rest. God did amazing things through Christ in order to provide for our needs.

2. Learning Readiness/Reinforcement Review Game

Play this game to review the last few stories in this series and to prepare the children for the main event in today's story. Draw a sun on one side of the chalkboard and a hill on the other side. Tell the children they are going to help the sun to set so the moon can come out. Each time they correctly answer a question about one of the last few stories, the sun will move in the sky until you finally draw it behind the hill. Then erase it and draw the moon.

- A. Where had the Israelites been slaves? (In Egypt)
- B. Who led them out of Egypt? (Moses)
- C. Who was their new leader when they were ready to enter the land God had promised to give them? (Joshua)
- D. Who did Joshua send into the city of Jericho to see what things were like? (Two spies)
- E. Who hid the spies when the king of Jericho was looking for them? (Rahab)
- F. The spies said that when the Israelites came to conquer Jericho, they would not harm Rahab or her family if they stayed inside Rahab's house. How would they know which house was Rahab's? (She would hang a red rope in the window.)

- G. How did the Israelites get across the Jordan River into the Promised Land? (God caused the river to stop flowing when the priests stepped into it, so the people crossed on dry land.)
- H. How did the Israelites get into the strong walls of Jericho, to take the city? (God made the walls fall down when the Israelites marched around it and shouted.)
- I. The Israelites were supposed to give any gold or silver that they found in Jericho to the treasury of the Lord. What were they supposed to do with anything else they got from Jericho? (Destroy it.)
- J. Achan disobeyed. What did Achan take? (A piece of clothing, some gold, and some silver.)
- K. Where did Achan hide these things? (Under the floor of his tent.)
- L. What happened to the Israelites because of Achan's sin? (They lost a battle and several men died.)
- M. Why was God not fighting for the Israelites? (Because Achan had disobeyed Him.)
- N. As soon as the Israelites punished Achan for his sin, they attacked the same city again. What happened this time? (They won the battle and took the city.)

3. Bible Story

In our picture on the chalkboard, night came after day. Does night always come after day? (Yes.) When the night is over, does day always come again? (Yes) Does the sun always go down at the end of the day? Yes, because that is what God has told the sun to do, and the sun and moon and all things always obey God.

What if someone told the sun not to go down at the end of the day, but to stay up longer. Would the sun obey? (Allow responses) Listen to our story now and see what the sun did when Joshua told it to do just that!

One day, the leader God had chosen for His people, Joshua, got a message. The message was from the people in a city that Joshua and the Israelites had promised to protect. The message said, "Help! Enemy soldiers are attacking our city!"

So Joshua gathered his army and hurried to the city. God told Joshua, "Don't be afraid. I will help you win this battle."

As Joshua and his soldiers fought the enemy soldiers, God helped them so that they were winning. All day long, they fought the enemy and all day long, God helped them.

At last, though, it was afternoon. Soon the sun would go down and it would grow dark. Joshua would not be able to finish the battle. While it was dark, the enemy soldiers would sneak away and escape. "Oh," Joshua thought, "if only it would stay light longer!"

Then Joshua did a strange thing. He talked to the sun. He told the sun to stop and stand still right where it was. The moon, too, Joshua told not to move. God caused the sun to obey Joshua. He made the sun stand still. God did not let the sun go down that day for a long, long time. He did not let the night come until the battle was over.

Have you ever talked to the sun? Have you ever told it what to do and had it obey you? Then how could Joshua make the sun obey? Because God was working through Joshua. With God working through him, Joshua could do amazing things people cannot usually do. God was working through the leader He had chosen to give His people what they needed.

4. Application

Lead the children in praising God for the great and wonderful things He does for His people, as when He caused the sun to stand still in this story. Point out to them that Jesus is the Leader God has given us. God raised Jesus from the dead--an amazing miracle!--in order to give us, His people, what we need. God has made it so clear to us that Jesus is the One He wants us to follow. Encourage the children to trust in Jesus and follow Him.

5. Review Questions

- A. Why was Joshua leading his army to battle? (Because a city they had promised to protect was under attack.)
- B. What did God promise Joshua? (That He would be with him and help him win the battle.)
- C. Why was Joshua unhappy that it was getting late in the day and soon the sun would go down? (Because he would not be able to finish the battle in the dark; the enemy soldiers would get away.)
- D. What did Joshua do about this? (He told the sun and the moon to stay where they were.)
- E. What happened? (The sun did not set and day was longer.)
- F. Who really made the sun stand still? (God.)
- G. What amazing thing did God do for Jesus that shows us that Jesus really is the Leader God has chosen for us? (God raised Jesus from the dead.)

6. Learning Reinforcement Craft Ideas

- A. Make sponge or potato stamps in the shape of suns, moons, and stars and allow the children to dip them in tempera paints and stamp shapes on paper.
- B. Have the children make flags to remind them of today's story. Each child chooses a piece of construction paper in the color of his choice. Print the words to the memory verse on his flag, where he shows you he wants them. Have star, moon, and sun shapes available for him to glue on his flag. Glue the flag to a dowel.
- C. Make sun-, moon-, and/or star-shaped cookies ahead of time. Bring frosting in several different colors and allow the children to frost cookies to eat for refreshments..

**CHILDREN'S CHURCH 4-6 YEAR-OLDS
CURRICULUM YEAR 2, SUMMER**

Lesson 6

Title: Deborah Leads Israel
Text: Judges 4-5
Theme: When we repent of our sin, God hears our prayers and gives us reason to rejoice.

Memory Verse: *I John 1:9a If we confess our sins, He will forgive our sins.*
International Children's Bible

Teaching Objectives: By God's grace, each child will:

1. Understand that there is no true joy or peace while we are sinning against God.
2. Confess his or her own sins, asking God's forgiveness.
3. Rejoice in God's forgiveness and grace.

1. Teacher Direction

The book of Judges describes a time in Israel's history before they had a godly leader, a time in which "everyone did what was right in his own eyes." The result was a cycle repeated over and over through the book. The people worship the idols of the neighboring nations, God gives them over to their enemies to oppress them, the people cry out to God (instead of their idols) for deliverance, God hears them and raises up a deliverer or "judge," who brings them victory, the people live in obedience to God until the judge dies, the people turn to the idols of the neighbors, the cycle begins again. As we look at five stories from Judges, our focus will be on our need to confess and repent of sin and on God's gracious willingness to forgive and give us victory and joy.

2. Learning Readiness Activity

Option A. Have the children make rhythm instruments. Attached is a page giving instructions for making several different kinds.

Option B. Using rhythm instruments you have made ahead of time or others you might have available, play "Rhythm Instrument Musical Chairs." Arrange chairs in a circle, one for each child. Place an instrument underneath each chair. Children walk in front of the chairs as music plays. When it suddenly stops, they sit in the chair directly behind them and take the instrument out from under the chair. Begin the music again. Children walk around again, this time playing their instrument with the music. When the music stops, they place the instrument underneath the chair directly behind them, and again march around to music until it stops. They stop again and play what will probably be a different instrument this time.

With either option, tell the children that we often use music to help us celebrate some big or joyful event. People in today's story used music to celebrate something wonderful.

3. Bible Story

God's people were unhappy. King Jabin, who lived near them, was a strong king with a strong army. Because he was so strong, he did whatever he pleased to his neighbors. One of the things that pleased him was being mean to other nations, including the Israelites. Jabin's army leader, Sisera, would lead his soldiers to the Israelites' towns to raid them, taking things that did not belong to them. Sisera's soldiers had nine hundred iron chariots, making it hard to stop them. For twenty years, King Jabin's men, led by Sisera, had made life miserable for the Israelites.

Of course, the Israelites were partly to blame. God had said He would be their God and He would always protect them and give them all they needed. God had commanded the Israelites to never worship any god other than Him. Yet the Israelites had turned to the gods of their neighbors. They prayed to idols to give them what they needed. They offered sacrifices to false gods. So God did not protect them from King Jabin and Sisera and their soldiers. He allowed enemies to make trouble for Israel, so that the Israelites would remember God again and turn back to Him.

After twenty years of misery, the Israelites *did* remember God. They stopped asking idols to help them and prayed to God instead. Because God is good and gracious, He heard them right away. He forgave their sin and provided a way for them to be saved from their enemies.

God spoke to a woman named Deborah. He told her that He would give the Israelites victory if they would go fight Sisera and his army. God told Deborah who should lead the Israelite army, a man named Barak. So Deborah told Barak, "God wants you to gather an army of Israelites and go fight Sisera. God has promised that you will win the battle."

Barak said he would go fight if Deborah would come with him, so together they gathered an army of Israelites and went off to battle. When Sisera heard they had gathered an army to fight him, he was not worried. Instead, he took his nine hundred chariots and gladly went to fight. The Israelites had never been strong enough to fight him and his army before. This time would not be any different. What Sisera did not know was that now *God* would be fighting for the Israelites. Now that God's people had repented of their sin of worshiping idols, they were right with God again and God would give them victory.

The battle began and God caused Israel's enemies to lose badly. Sisera's army ran away with all its chariots. Even Sisera got out of his chariot and ran away. The enemies were completely defeated that day. Not one enemy soldier was left alive.

Of course, Deborah and Barak and all the Israelites were very happy. They would have no more trouble from King Jabin and his army. God was with them once more, and He had shown it by fighting their enemies for them. Deborah and Barak were so full of joy that they needed a new song to celebrate it. Together, they wrote a song telling what wonderful things God had done for them. The song praised God for changing the people's hearts. It praised God for making His people strong and for fighting and destroying their enemies. After they had written their

song, they sang it. “I will sing to the Lord,” they said. “I will make music to the Lord, the God of Israel.”

4. Application

Help the children to see that pleasing ourselves is one of the easiest ways to live for an idol instead of for God. Doing what *we* want to do instead of what God calls us to do is sin and idolatry. Help them to see that, like the Israelites when enemies oppressed them, we cannot have joy and peace unless we turn *from* our sin *to* God. Lead the children in prayers and songs of praise to God for His forgiveness and for the victory He gives us over sin.

5. Review Questions

- A. Why were God’s people unhappy? (A neighboring king was troubling them.)
- B. What did that king’s army have that made them strong? (900 iron chariots)
- C. Why did God not protect His people from this king and his army? (Because God’s people had been sinning against Him by worshiping idols.)
- D. What did God’s people finally do? (Turned from their idols to ask God for help.)
- E. Did God hear and answer their prayer? (Yes)
- F. To whom did God speak? (Deborah.)
- G. Whom did God say was to gather and lead an army of Israelites? (Barak)
- H. What did God promise Barak? (God would give them victory.)
- I. How many enemy soldiers were left after the battle? (None)
- J. What did Barak and Deborah do because they were so happy about winning the battle? (Wrote and sang a song.)

6. Learning Reinforcement Activity

Sing some praise songs with the children, using the instruments they made or you brought. Lead them in a “victory parade,” making their own music.

MAKE-IT-YOURSELF RHYTHM INSTRUMENTS

1. **Plate shaker** Decorate two paper plates with markers. Staple them together with dried peas or beans between them.
2. **Box shaker** Decorate a small box or a small milk container with scraps of colored paper and glue. Enclose dried peas or beans inside.
3. **Sandpaper blocks** Paint two small wooden blocks. After the paint dries, glue sandpaper strips on one side of each block. These are then rubbed together.
4. **Hummer** Using paints, crayons, or markers, decorate a paper towel roll. A piece of waxed paper is fastened over one end. Children hum through this.
5. **Clinkers** Hit two coconut shells together.

6. **Gong** Hit an old license plate with a mallet.
7. **Jingler** Slap a set of measuring spoons against your hand.
8. **Wrist or ankle bells** Tie two or three jingle bells, laced through a shoestring, around a wrist or ankle and shake them.

**CHILDREN'S CHURCH 4-6 YEAR-OLDS
CURRICULUM YEAR 2, SUMMER**

Lesson 7

Title: Gideon's Call and his Destruction of the Altar of Baal
Text: Judges 6:1-32
Theme: God answers His people when they repent; true repentance produces fruit.

Memory Verse: *I John 1:9a If we confess our sins, He will forgive our sins.*
International Children's Bible

Teaching Objectives: By God's grace, each child will:

1. Thank God for His gracious forgiveness.
2. Ask God to make him able to turn from sin to do the things that are pleasing to God.

1. Teacher Direction

The emphasis in our series of stories from Judges is our repentance (turning from sin to God) and God's gracious forgiveness and deliverance. The Israelites were again worshiping idols, resulting in God's delivering them into the hands of their enemies, the Midianites. When God's people finally turned to God for help, God raised up a leader for His people, Gideon. The Israelites' move from idolatry to God could not be merely verbal, but must be real. A true turning from idols to God would result in fruit. Therefore, God's first task for Gideon is the destruction of the family altar to Baal and the erection of a proper altar to God in its place.

2. Learning Readiness Activity

Bring a variety of fruits to show the children. As you hold up each piece, ask the children where this piece of fruit came from. Make the point that a fruit tree produces fruit. When you see a tree, you may not know what kind of a tree it is, but once you see what kind of fruit it produces, you will know what kind of tree it is. Go over the memory verse with the children (they began working on it last week). Tell the children that when we are truly sorry for the sins we confess, when we truly repent, there will be fruit people will be able to see. To illustrate this, have them color and glue the "fruit" you have cut out beforehand to the "repentance tree." (A page with the tree and fruit is attached; make a copy for each child.) Talk about each of the fruit with the children as they glue them on. ("When God works in our hearts to make us truly sorry for being unkind to others, He will give us a *new love* for people. When there is true repentance for being grumpy, there will be a *new joy* and cheerfulness that others will be able to see. When God works in our hearts to help us turn from being afraid to trust in Him, He will give us *peace* and others will be able to see that. When we are really sorry for not honoring our parents, people see us being *respectful and obedient*.")

3. Bible Story

In last week's story, God gave a message to a lady named Deborah. The message was for a man named Barak. Do you remember what the message was? (Gather an army of Israelites and go fight the enemy king.) Why did the Israelites need to fight this enemy king? (He and his army were being mean to the Israelites and troubling them.) Why had God not protected the Israelites from this mean king and his army? (Because the Israelites had been worshiping idols instead of the true God.) What did the Israelites finally do, so that God would help them? (They prayed to God for help instead of to the idols.) Did God give them victory over the enemy king and his army? (Yes.)

In today's story, we have exactly the same situation! God's people had gone along worshiping God for years, but then, little by little, they started praying to the idols of the neighboring countries again. So God let another enemy begin to trouble His people, so that they would turn back to Him. This enemy was the country of Midian. The Midianites were very powerful and they made life miserable for the Israelites. Every year, after the Israelites had worked hard all year, planting, watering, weeding, and growing crops of food to eat, right when it was time to go cut down the ripe wheat or pick the ripe fruit, the Midianites would come. *Thousands* of Midianites would come. They would move into Israel's land, with their tents and their cows and their camels. The Midianites would eat all the Israelites' food and let their animals eat all the food the Israelites had grown for their own animals. Then, when everything was gone, the Midianites would leave. The Israelites became very poor and hungry, because the Midianites took all they had. The Midianites were so mean that the Israelites would run and hide from them. While the Midianites were around, the Israelites hid in the mountains and in caves.

Seven years this went on until, finally, the Israelites remembered God. Their idols were not helping them at all, so the Israelites stopped praying to them and called on God to help them. Because God is good and forgiving, He heard His people right away and He answered them.

In answer to His people's prayers, the Angel of the Lord came to Gideon while he was working. Gideon had found a little bit of wheat that the Midianites had missed and was threshing it. (Threshing wheat is separating the part of the plant you don't eat from the part you do eat.) Gideon was doing his work in a place where you wouldn't usually thresh wheat. This made the work much harder, but this way the Midianites would not find him and take his wheat away. As he worked, the Angel of the Lord appeared to him and told him that God would be with him to destroy the Midianite army, so they would leave Israel alone. At first, Gideon did not believe the Angel of the Lord, especially because he said that Gideon would be the one to lead the army that would defeat the Midianites. Gideon knew he was no soldier. How could he lead an army to fight the large, powerful Midianite army? God promised Gideon, though, that He would be with Gideon so he would be sure to win the battle.

That same night, the Angel of the Lord gave Gideon his first job to do. It wasn't as big and as exciting as leading an army to fight a powerful enemy, but it was a very important job. The Israelites had turned from their idols to God, seeking His help against Midian. If they were truly sorry for worshiping idols, the

idols must be destroyed. So God told Gideon to destroy the altar his own family had used when they had prayed to the idol, Baal. Gideon did as God had told him. He tore down the altar to Baal. Then he built a new altar, an altar to God, and he presented offerings on it, just as God had told him. Now God's people had a leader who not only *said* he was trusting God for help, but he showed it by destroying the altar of the false god.

4. Application

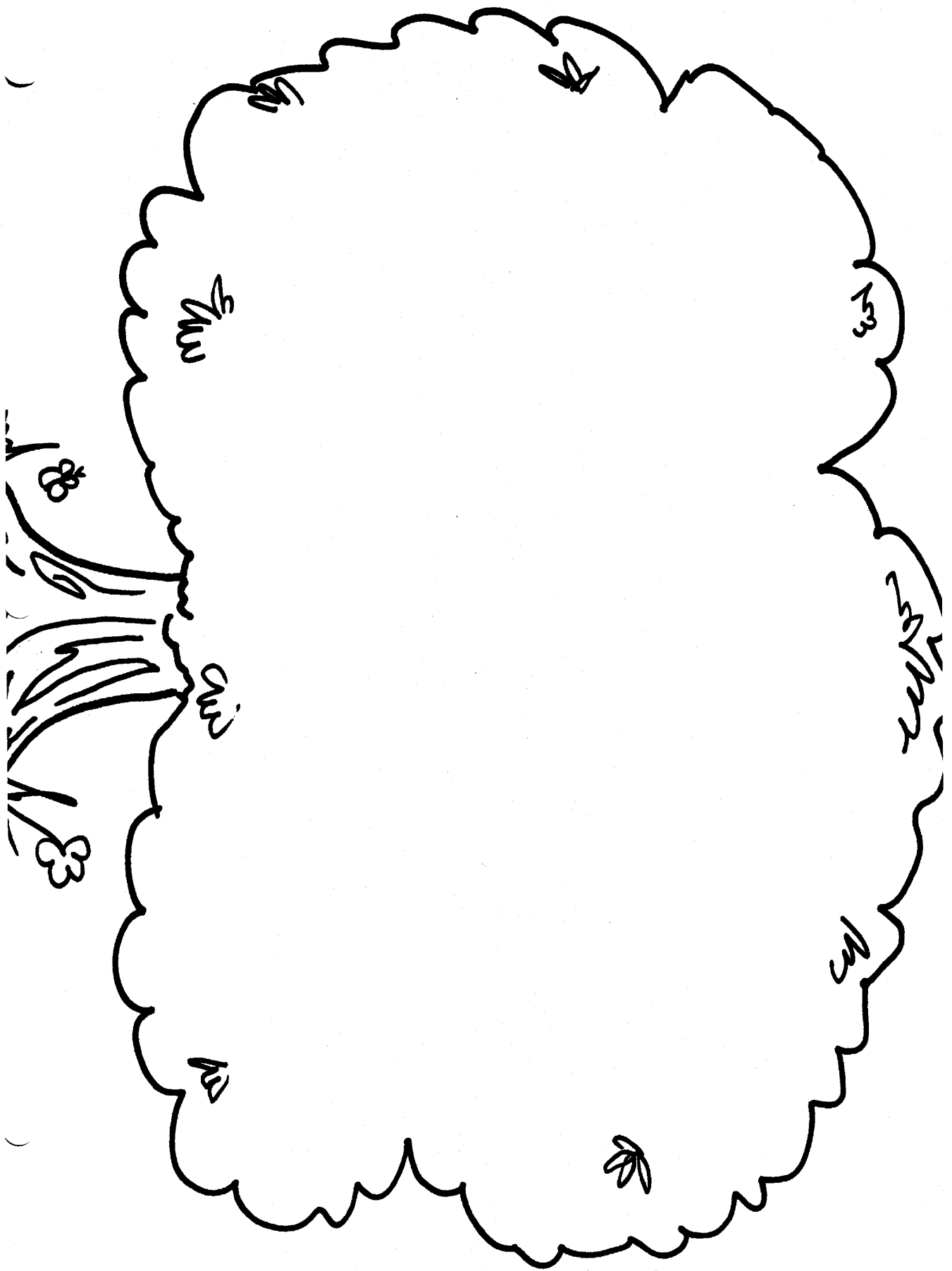
Help the children to see that though we don't build little statues and pray to them, we still worship idols when we choose to do what we want to do or what we feel like doing, even when God wants us to do something else. Use the pictures from the learning readiness activity to discuss the changes there will be in our actions and attitudes when we are truly sorry for putting ourselves first and begin to put God first instead. Lead them in asking God to give them hearts that truly turn from their own ways to God and His ways. Lead them in thanking God for always hearing the prayers of His people when they ask for forgiveness.

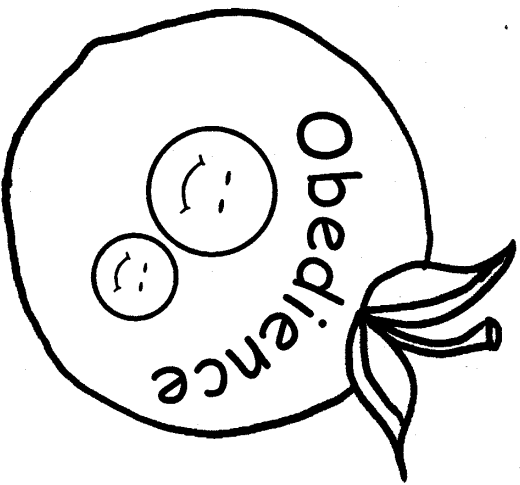
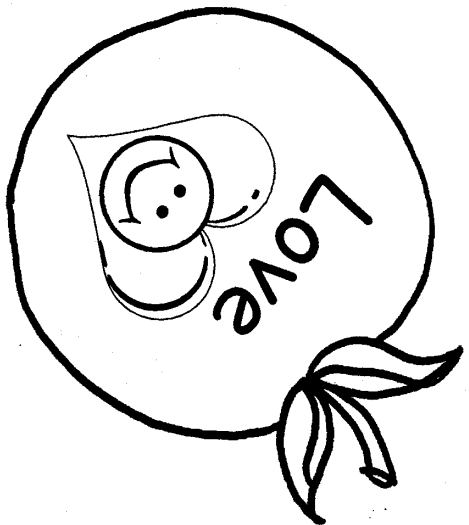
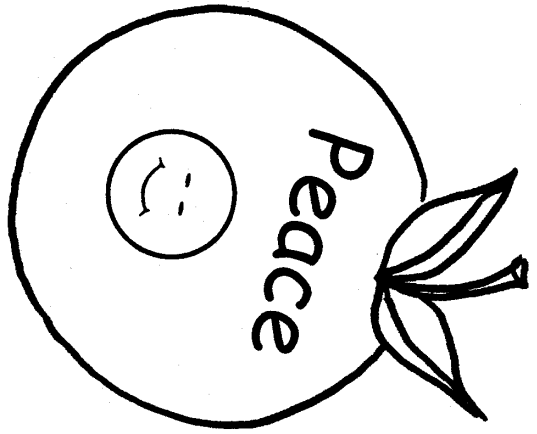
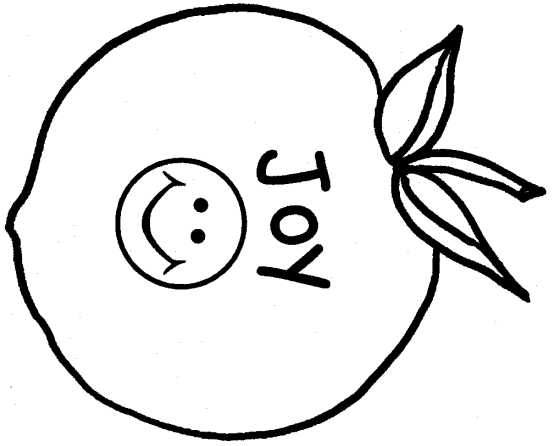
5. Review Questions

- A. What did the Midianites do that kept the Israelites poor? (After the Israelites had done all the work in the fields, the Midianites would come steal and eat all the food they had raised.)
- B. Why did God not save the Israelites from the Midianites? (Because the Israelites were sinning against God by worshiping idols.)
- C. When did God finally do something to help the Israelites? (When they stopped praying to idols and asked God to help them.)
- D. Whom did God call to lead the Israelites in battle against the Midianites? (Gideon)
- E. What was the first job God gave Gideon to do? (Tear down the altar to the idol of Baal.)
- F. Did Gideon do what God told him to do? (Yes.)
- G. What did Gideon build instead of Baal's altar? (An altar for God.)
- H. What did Gideon do with the altar he built for God? (Presented offerings on it.)
- I. When we are really sorry for our sins, what will happen? (There will be "fruit." People will be able to see by our actions that we are sorry for our sins and are obeying God now.)
- J. Who is the One who makes people able to be truly sorry for their sins and able to change the way they think and behave? (God.)

6. Learning Readiness Activity

Review Game. From newsprint, make stones for an altar and tape them to a wall or blackboard. Tell the children they will pretend to help Gideon tear down the altar of the idol. Each time they answer a question correctly, they may take down one of the stones.





**CHILDREN'S CHURCH 4-6 YEAR-OLDS
CURRICULUM YEAR 2, SUMMER**

Lesson 8

Title: Gideon's Victory

Text: Judges 7

Theme: We are to trust and obey God who is able to provide all we need.

Memory Verse: *1 John 1:9a If we confess our sins, He will forgive our sins.*
Children's International Bible

Teaching Objectives: By God's grace, each child will:

1. Praise God for being able to meet all our needs.
2. Understand that trusting God enables us to obey Him.
3. Ask God to help him trust God enough to obey.

1. Teacher Direction

The emphasis in our Judges stories has been on human repentance and divine forgiveness. In the story from two weeks ago, the Israelites were worshiping idols, then finally called on God when the oppression of the Canaanites became unbearable. God answered by giving them Deborah and Barak to lead them to victory. In last week's story, the Israelites were again worshiping idols and it was the oppression of the Midianites that became unbearable. When the Israelites stopped looking to idols for salvation and called on God, God raised up Gideon. In obedience to God's command, Gideon destroyed the altar of Baal and erected an altar to the Lord instead. In today's story, we see him continue to obey God's commands, even though they must have seemed illogical to him. Gideon's trust was in God and God proved Himself able to use the most unlikely means and people to accomplish His purposes for His people.

2. Introduction

Ask the children to imagine they are leaders of an army in Bible times. Ask them if they would rather have a tiny army, a middle-sized army, or a huge army. Then ask them what kind of weapons they would want to have for their soldiers. After listening to their ideas, show them a candle and a jar or clay pot that would fit over the candle. If you can get one, bring a horn or trumpet as well. Tell them that in today's story, God chose a tiny army instead of a large one and used things like clay pots and trumpets instead of weapons to win a battle.

3. Bible Story

In last week's story, God's people, the Israelites had been worshiping idols again. God was allowing another nation, the Midianites, to trouble the Israelites, so they would turn back to Him. Do you remember what the Midianites would do to the Israelites that made life hard for them? (They would come take all the crops the

Israelites had worked all year to grow. They would eat them all and let their animals eat all the food the Israelites had grown for their own animals.) **When did God finally do something about this?** (When the Israelites stopped asking their idols for help and asked God for help.) **Do you remember the name of the man God called to lead an army against the Midianites?** (Gideon) **What was the first thing Gideon did, to obey the Lord and to show that he would really trust God, not an idol?** (He destroyed the altar to the idol, Baal, and built an altar to the Lord instead.)

Now Gideon was getting ready to fight the Midianites, as God had said. He sent messengers through all of Israel, calling for men to come help him fight. Many men came; thousands of men came. Gideon was glad to see them come. However, he knew there were many more men in the Midianite army. “Where could I get more soldiers?” Gideon may have wondered. Then God said something to Gideon that Gideon must have thought very strange. “You have too many men,” God said. “I don’t want people to think it was your huge army that won the victory. The victory will come from Me, not your army. Send some of your soldiers away. Tell any of them that are worried about fighting in a battle to go back home.”

When Gideon announced to his army that any who were fearful could go home, most of his army left! For each man who stayed, two men left. Now Gideon’s army was looking very small, especially compared to the Midianite army, an army too big to be counted. Yet God said again, “You have too many men. Take them to the river to get drinks. See which ones make a cup with their hands and bring the water up to their mouths to drink.” When they went to the river to drink, almost all of Gideon’s men drank using their hands as cups. A few lay down to drink right out of the river. God told Gideon to keep only those few for his army and send everyone else home. That must have sounded crazy to Gideon--keep only a tiny little army to fight an army so huge you couldn’t see the end of it. Gideon trusted God, though. He knew God knew what He was doing. He knew God can do anything. He knew God doesn’t need help from anyone or anything to do what He wants to do. So Gideon sent almost all the men home, keeping only a few for his army.

That night, Gideon looked down from a hill on the *huge* army of the Midianites. The Bible says that it would have been as hard to count all the Midianites as it would be to count all the sand on the seashore. Gideon couldn’t help feeling a little afraid about attacking such a large army. So God told Gideon to sneak down to the Midianite camp and listen to what they were saying. “Then you will be encouraged to attack them,” God told Gideon.

So Gideon and his servant slipped quietly into the Midianite camp in the darkness. They heard the Midianite soldiers talking about Gideon and his little army. The Midianites understood that God would fight for Gideon. They were afraid and they were certain that God would enable Gideon to destroy them and their camp. God was right! Gideon was greatly encouraged to hear how frightened the Midianites were. Gideon stopped right there to worship God for what He had already done in filling the Midianites with fear. Then Gideon went back to his own camp. “Wake up!” he called to his few men. “God has given us victory over the Midianites.” Gideon divided his men into three groups. Each group was to go to a different place in the Midianite camp. Then Gideon gave his soldiers some strange

weapons. He gave each soldier an empty jar with a torch inside, and a trumpet. All the soldiers went down in the dark to the Midianite camp. Each group went to its own place. Then at a signal from Gideon, they all blew their trumpets and shouted. At the same time, they smashed their jars, causing the torches to shine out.

The Midianites did not know what was going on, but whatever it was, they did not like it. They became afraid and began to run away, screaming. Then God caused them to begin to fight with each other, so that all over the Midianite camp, Midianite soldiers were fighting with Midianite soldiers and killing each other.

God gave Gideon and his tiny army a great victory that day. Never again did the Midianites come into Israel to steal things or to bother them in any way. Gideon had trusted God and God had showed that He can take care of His people's needs, and that He needs no help to do it.

4. Application

Lead the children in praising God for giving Gideon victory and for always providing for His people. Especially praise Him for providing a way to give His people forgiveness from and victory over sin. Thank Him for the Lord Jesus who died and rose again so we could have these things. Help them to see that trusting God to provide means obeying His commands, like Gideon did. God commands all people to repent of their sin and put their faith in His Son. Lead the children in asking God to work in their hearts to make them able to trust and obey Him.

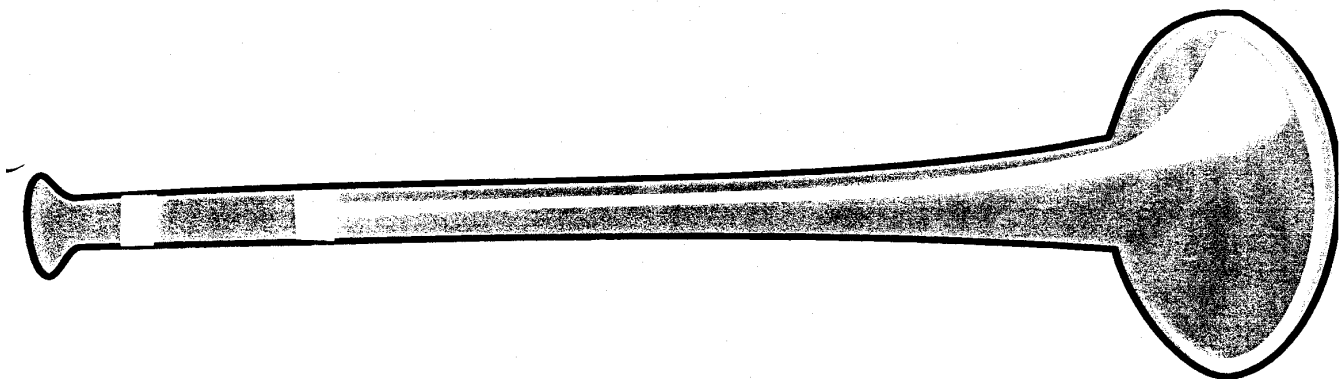
5. Review Questions

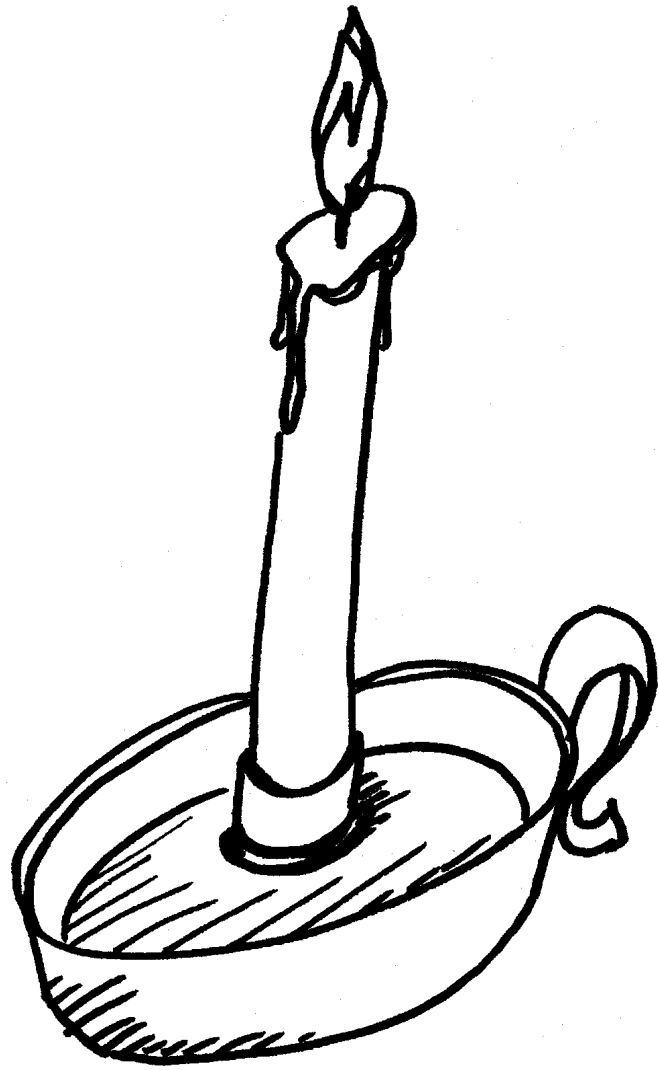
- A. Who did God choose to lead the fight against the Midianites? (Gideon)
- B. When Gideon had gathered his army, did he have as many soldiers as the Midianites had? (No.)
- C. What did God say about the size of Gideon's army? (It was too big.)
- D. God wanted Gideon's army to be small, so everyone would know they could not win the battle unless God helped them. What was the first thing God said to do to make the army smaller? (Let anyone who was afraid go home.)
- E. Was the army small enough for God then? (No.)
- F. How did God have Gideon make his army even smaller? (By keeping only the people who lay down by the river to drink and sending everyone else home)
- G. Did most of the people lie down to drink? (No.)
- H. What strange weapons did Gideon's little army use when they attacked the Midianites? (Empty jars with torches inside and trumpets.)
- I. What happened when Gideon's men blew the trumpets, broke the jars, and shouted? (The Midianites became frightened and began to run away.)
- J. Then what did God cause the Midianites to do? (They began to fight with and kill each other.)
- K. Does God need a big army for victory? (No.)
- L. Does God need any help to give His people what they need? (No.)
- M. If we trust God, what will we do? (Obey Him.)

6. Learning Reinforcement Activities

A. Role Play. Divide the class into a large group of Midianites and a small group of Israelites. Give the Israelites flashlights in brown paper bags and paper towel rolls for trumpets. The Midianites lie down in their camp and sleep. The Israelites sneak up on them, tear their bags so the flashlights shine out, and blow their trumpets. The Midianites jump up and run away, with the Israelites chasing them. Switch roles and repeat until everyone has had a chance to be an Israelite.

B. Gideon Craft. Use the attached patterns to cut out a construction paper jar, a construction paper candle, and a construction paper trumpet for each child. Cut a jagged line on the jar so that the two pieces can be pulled apart (see the pattern). Have the children glue the candle to a piece of white construction paper. They could also glue a piece of red, yellow, or orange tissue paper to the top of the candle for a flame. Have them glue the jar over the candle in such a way that the candle is hidden until the two parts of the jar are pulled apart. Have them also glue the trumpet to the white construction paper, somewhere beside the jar. Talk with them about what strange weapons these would be. Remind them that God can use anything to accomplish His purposes. He doesn't need any help to meet the needs of His people. That is one of the reasons why we can trust Him.





**CHILDREN'S CHURCH 4-6 YEAR OLDS
CURRICULUM YEAR 2, SUMMER**

Lesson 9

Title: Samson's Birth Announced

Text: Judges 13-15

Theme: The Holy Spirit is God's gracious gift to us and we depend on Him.

Memory Verse: *I John 1:9a If we confess our sins, He will forgive our sins.*
International Children's Bible

Teaching Objectives: By God's grace, each child will:

1. Praise God for His forgiveness.
2. Give thanks to God for the gift of the Holy Spirit.
3. Ask God to forgive his sins and give him His Holy Spirit to help him live for God.

1. Teacher Direction:

As we have been looking at the book of Judges, we have seen the Israelites' repeated sin and God's repeated grace and willingness to forgive. God's grace as *undeserved* favor is seen especially well in the stories of Samson. We have one account after another of Samson's failure to live up to His high calling, yet God continued to use him. Each time Scripture records a display of great power, it first explains that the Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson in power. When Samson is later rendered powerless, it is because the Lord had left him. Like the Israelites in the time of the judges, we are all dependent upon God's grace in forgiveness. Like Samson, we are also dependent on the power of His Holy Spirit.

2. Learning Readiness Activity

Make copies of the attached page for the children. Have them paint or color the gates and the bone and glue pieces of cut yarn around the lion's face for a mane. Later, you will help the children cut these out and glue them to the page that has the words "The Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson in power." At that time, you could cut the line between the doors so that the doors will open. Now, as the children work, ask them to imagine gates like the ones they are coloring that are at least as tall as the ceiling in your classroom. Ask them if they know anyone who could, all by himself, carry thick, heavy gates as tall as that. As they glue the lion's mane, ask if they know anyone who could wrestle a lion all by himself and win. As they color the jawbone, ask how good a weapon this would be against hundreds of armed soldiers. Tell them to listen for all three of these things--a lion, large gates, and a bone as a weapon--in today's story.

3. Bible Story

Again, the Israelites were worshiping idols. Again, God sent an enemy nation to trouble the Israelites. This time the enemy was the Philistines. For forty years, they attacked and bothered the Israelites, until God gave His people Samson.

One day an angel appeared to an Israelite woman and told her she would have a son who would save the Israelites from the Philistines. This son would be special, set apart for God to use. To show that he *was* set apart for God, there were certain things he must not eat or drink and he was to never cut his hair. After hearing these things the woman went to get her husband. He spoke with the angel, too. After the angel left, the man and his wife worshiped God.

Soon, just as the angel had promised, the woman had a baby boy whom she named Samson. Have you heard of Samson before? (At least some of the children will have heard of Samson before.) What is he famous for? (His great strength.) Samson became very, very strong, but it wasn't because he was just strong all by himself, or because he worked out and lifted weights. The Bible says that as Samson was growing, the Spirit of the Lord began to work in him to make him strong, so he could fight the Philistines for God's people.

One day after Samson was grown, he was out walking when, suddenly, a lion came roaring toward him. If you or I saw a roaring lion coming at us, we would run. Samson stood his ground and tore the lion apart with his bare hands. He did not do that just because he was strong. The Bible says, "The Spirit of the Lord came upon him in power so that he tore the lion apart with his bare hands." Samson would not have been that strong without the Spirit of God.

The Bible tells us of several times when Samson used his great strength to fight the Philistines who were troubling God's people. Each time, the Bible says that the Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson in power, making him able to be so strong and to fight with such amazing power. One time a large group of Philistines came after Samson. He picked up the jawbone of a donkey that happened to be lying on the ground and, using it as a weapon, he killed a thousand Philistines. He was able to do that because the Spirit of the Lord came upon him in power. Another time, the Philistines surrounded the town where Samson was sleeping. They locked the city gates so he could not get out through them. They planned to kill him in the morning. Samson got up in the middle of the night and went to the locked gates, and picked them up, with the posts to which they were attached, and walked away with them.

However, as gracious as God was to Samson by sending His Spirit to give him such great strength, Samson was not faithful to God. He fell in love with a woman, named Delilah, from the Philistines. God had told His people they were not to love or marry people from the idol-worshipping neighbors. The Philistines were idol worshipers and Samson should not have loved a Philistine girl.

The Philistines promised Delilah that if she could find out the secret of why Samson was so strong, they would give her money. Delilah asked Samson several times, "How can you be so strong? What makes you so strong?" The first few times Samson answered her, he made up things that were not true. Finally, though, Samson told Delilah that he had been set apart to the Lord from the time he was born. He was not to eat certain things and he was never to cut his hair.

That night, when Samson was asleep, Delilah called in a man to cut off all of Samson's hair, and Samson's great strength left him. Delilah quickly called in the Philistines who were waiting outside and they tied Samson up. He woke up and tried to shake off the Philistines and their ropes, but He could not do it. He did not know that the Lord had left him. Without the Spirit of God, Samson was no stronger than any other man. The Philistines took Samson away in chains and put him in prison.

4. Application

Point out to the children how patient God was with His people to keep sending them leaders like Samson, in spite of the way they kept going back to their sins. Help them to see that God is just as patient with us because we, too, often do what we know we should not do. Lead them in thanking God for giving His Son to die for us so we can be forgiven. Help the children to realize that just as Samson needed God's Spirit to do the work God had for him, so we need God's Spirit to give us the power to live the life God has for us. Encourage them to ask God to give them His Spirit to make them strong to obey and please God.

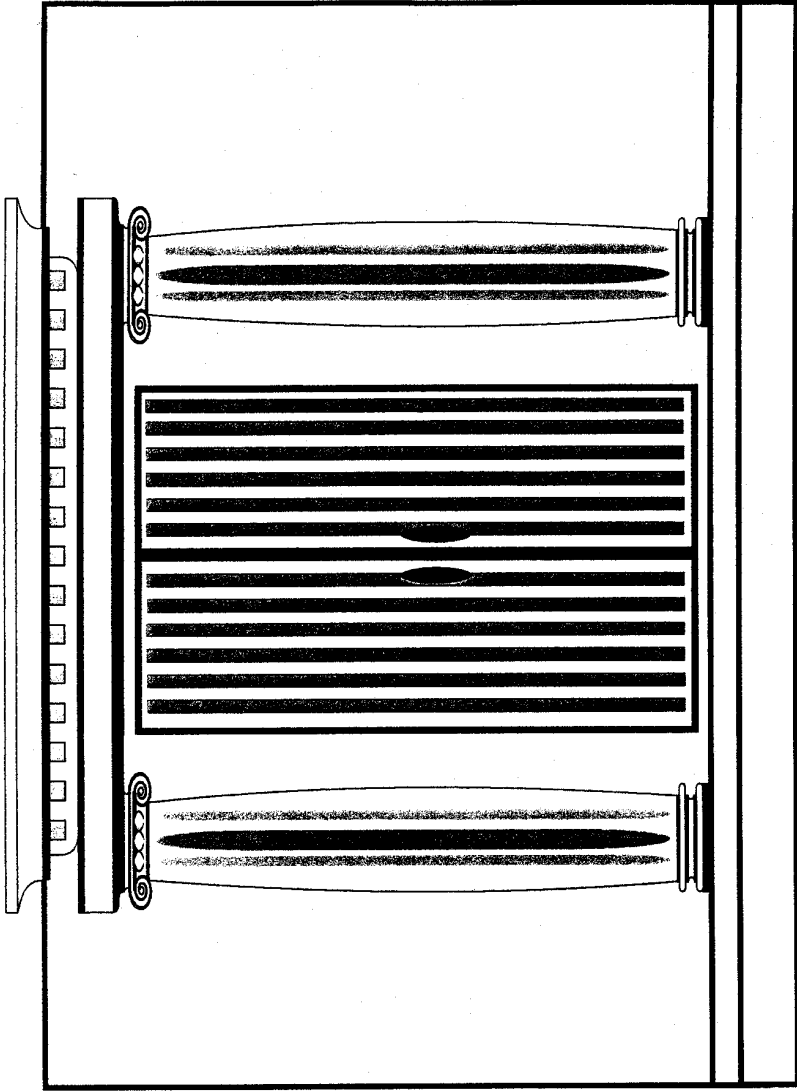
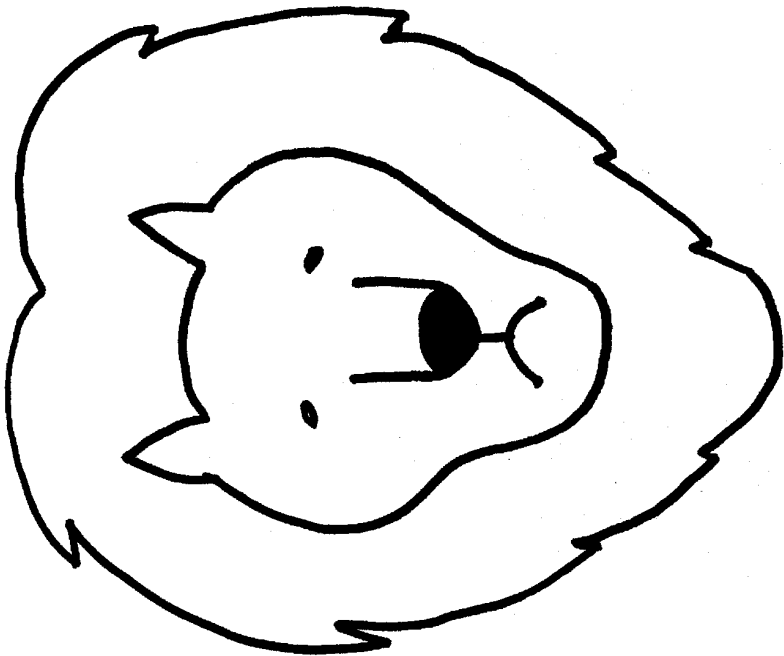
5. Review Questions

- A. Why did God allow the Philistines to trouble the Israelites for so long? (Because they were worshiping idols again.)
- B. Who told Samson's mother and father that they would have a baby? (An angel)
- C. To show that he had been set apart to be used by God, what was Samson not to do? (Eat or drink certain things; cut his hair.)
- D. What did Samson do when the lion attacked him? (Killed it with his bare hands.)
- E. How could Samson do that? (The Spirit of the Lord came upon him with power.)
- F. What weapon did Samson use to kill 1000 Philistines? (A bone from a donkey.)
- G. How could Samson do that? (The Spirit of the Lord came upon him with power.)
- H. When the Philistines locked Samson into a city and surrounded it, how did Samson escape? (He carried away the gates with their posts.)
- I. How could Samson be that strong? (The Spirit of God made him that strong.)
- J. Why was it wrong for Samson to love Delilah? (She was from the idol-worshipping Philistines.)
- K. What did the Philistines pay Delilah to do? (Find out why Samson was so strong.)
- L. When Samson told Delilah he was strong because he had never cut his hair since he was set apart for God, what did Delilah do? (She had someone cut his hair.)
- M. When Samson's hair was cut, what did the Lord do? (He left Samson.)
- N. When Samson woke up, why did he think he could get away from the Philistines? (He did not know the Lord had left him.)
- O. Samson needed the Holy Spirit to make him strong enough to do what God wanted him to do. Why do we need the Holy Spirit? (To make us strong enough to do what God wants us to do.)

6. Learning Reinforcement Activities

- A. Finish the craft project begun in the Learning Readiness Activity.
- B. Use the review questions to play a game. Draw 15 stick figure Philistines on the board (more, if you want to use reciting the memory verse several different times as a question). The children can help Samson fight the Philistines. Each time they answer a question correctly, they may come erase a Philistine.

*The Spirit of the Lord came upon
Samson in power.*





CHILDREN'S CHURCH

MUSIC FOR YEAR 2 - SUMMER QUARTER

LESSONS 10 - 13

THEME: Rebuilding the Temple

MEMORY VERSE SONG

1 John 1:9a "If we confess our sins, He will forgive our sins."
Zechariah 4:6 "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,"
says the Lord Almighty.

HYMN

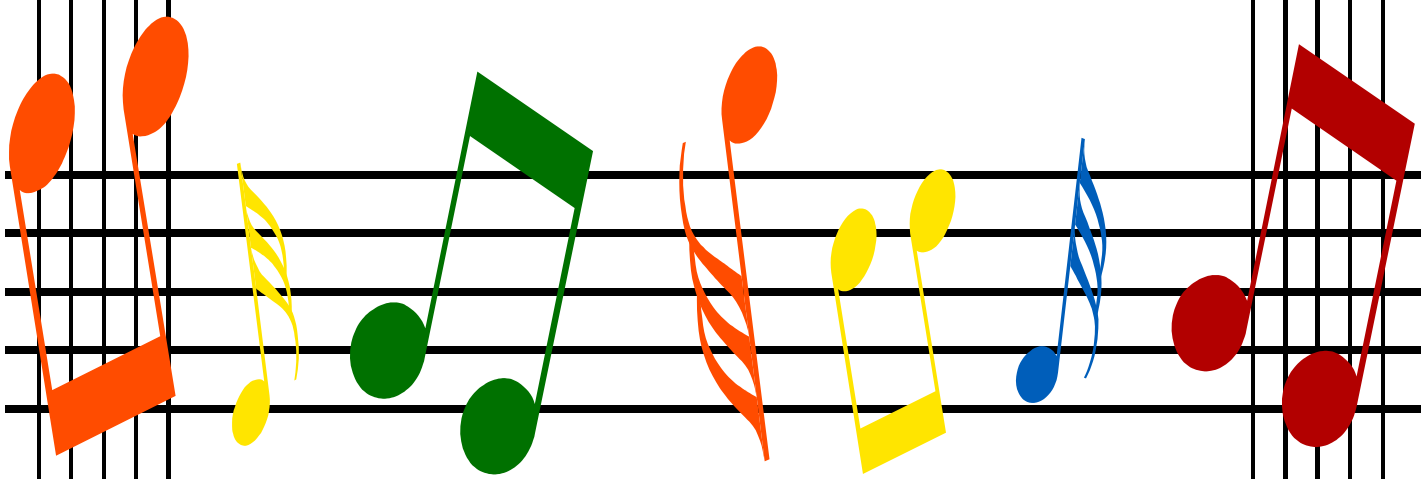
Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty

CHORUS

Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord

ADDITIONAL SONGS

The Books of the Bible
Do You Know What Time It Is?
I Love You Lord



**CHILDREN'S CHURCH 4-6 YEAR OLDS
CURRICULUM YEAR 2, SUMMER**

Lesson 10

Title: Samson's Repentance and Victory
Text: Judges 16:23-31
Theme: God gives forgiveness and victory to those who repent.

Memory Verse: *I John 1:9a If we confess our sins, He will forgive our sins.*
International Children's Bible

Teaching Objectives: By God's grace, each child will:

1. Praise God for His forgiveness.
2. Give thanks to God for the victory He gives.
3. Ask God to forgive his sins and give him the power he need to live for God.

1. Teacher Direction:

As we have been looking at the book of Judges, we have seen the Israelites' repeated sin and God's repeated grace and willingness to forgive. When the Israelites would repent of their idol worship and turn to God and call on Him, God would raise up a judge who would deliver them from oppressing neighbors. Last week we were introduced to Samson as a deliverer and saw the mighty acts of power he was able to do through the Holy Spirit. At the end of the story, though, we saw his unfaithfulness to God in loving a woman from the idolatrous Philistines. As a consequence, Samson's hair was cut, the Holy Spirit left him, and he was imprisoned, even enslaved. Today we see Samson turning back to dependence on God. We see again God's willingness to hear, forgive, and answer when we repent and call upon Him.

2. Introduction and Review

Ask the children these questions from last week's story to help them remember and review it.

- A. In last week's lesson, the Israelites were being oppressed by enemy neighbors again, this time the Philistines. Why didn't God help the Israelites? (Because they had been worshiping idols again.)
- B. God told a man and his wife that they would have a son who would be set apart to do God's work all his life. When the baby was born, he was named Samson. What was he not to do since he was set apart for God? (He was not to eat or drink certain things or cut his hair.)
- C. Once, a lion attacked Samson. What did Samson do? (Killed it with his bare hands.)
- D. How could Samson do that? (The Spirit of the Lord came upon him with power.)
- E. What weapon did Samson use to kill 1000 Philistines? (A bone from a donkey.)
- F. How could Samson do that? (The Spirit of the Lord came upon him with power.)

- G. When the Philistines locked Samson into a city and surrounded it, how did Samson escape? (He carried away the gates with their posts.)
- H. How could Samson be that strong? (The Spirit of God made him that strong.)
- I. Samson loved Delilah, a girl from the idol-worshiping Philistines. What did the Philistines pay Delilah to do? (Find out why Samson was so strong.)
- J. When Samson told Delilah he was strong because he had never cut his hair since he was set apart for God, what did Delilah do? (She had someone cut his hair.)
- K. When Samson's hair was cut, what did the Lord do? (He left Samson.)
- L. Was Samson able to get away from the Philistines this time? (No.)

3. Bible Story

It was wrong for Samson to love a girl from the idol-worshiping Philistines. When Samson told Delilah about his hair and she had it cut off, the Lord left Samson. Without the Lord, Samson was no stronger than anyone else. When a group of Philistines outnumbered him and captured him, he could not get away. Samson had done a lot of damage to the Philistines and they were happy to have him as a prisoner. They wanted to make sure he would never be able to fight against them again, so they poked out his eyes and made him blind. Then they chained him up in a prison and made him work for them.

Samson had plenty of time, working alone there in the prison, to think of how foolish he had been and how wrong. If he had been faithful to God, he would have been able to keep doing God's work of protecting Israelites instead of being a prisoner, working for the Philistines. If he had depended on God, God would have kept him strong and powerful. If he had been obedient, God would have used him to save His people. Instead Samson was there in prison, but while there his hair began to grow again.

One day, the Philistines had a big celebration in honor of their idol, Dagon. Thousands of them gathered in Dagon's temple. There were so many that 3000 of them even had to sit up on the roof. They brought Samson from his jail into Dagon's temple. They wanted to laugh at him and show him off to prove that their idol, Dagon, was more powerful than Samson's God. When blind Samson was led into Dagon's temple, he heard the cheering of the Philistines. He heard them praising their idol. Samson's enemies were saying, "Our god has delivered our enemy, Samson, into our hands!"

Samson may have thought again of how he had sinned and failed his God. If only he had been obedient, if only he had depended on God, the Philistines would not be able to say these things. Of course, their idol was not as great as the true God. Of course the true God was more powerful than Dagon. Samson wanted to show everyone that God is the true God.

Because he was blind, a boy was leading Samson. Samson asked the boy to place Samson's hands on two of the pillars holding up the roof of the temple. Then Samson, knowing he needed God to make him strong, prayed. "O Lord, remember me," Samson prayed. "Strengthen me again, just this once." God heard Samson's prayer and answered it. He made Samson strong again, as he had been before. Samson pushed on the pillars with all his might. They began to move, then they

crumbled. The roof they were holding up fell, along with all the people sitting up on it. The people inside the temple were crushed by falling pieces of ceiling. Thousands of Philistine enemies of Israel died that day.

4. Application

Help the children to see that even when we make terrible problems for ourselves by our sin, as Samson did, when we repent and turn to God for help, He will hear our prayers, forgive our sins, and make us able to do what He wants us to do. Lead them in praising God for His forgiveness and for the strength and power He gives to do His will. Encourage them to turn *from* living for themselves *to* God, asking Him for the power to live as He wants them to live.

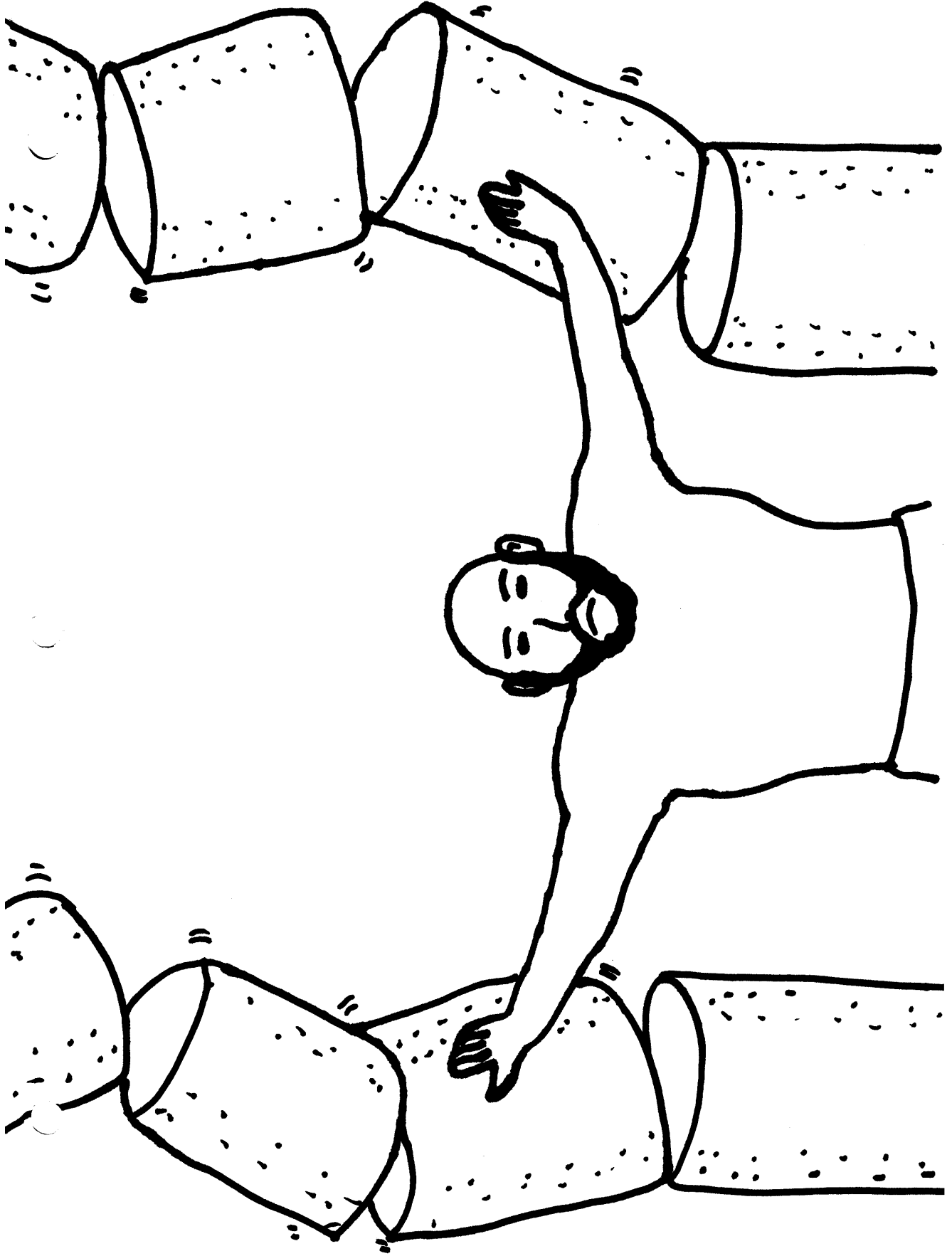
5. Review Questions

- A. What did the Philistines do to make sure Samson would not fight and kill many of them again? (They poked out his eyes so he was blind.)
- B. What did Samson have to do for the Philistines? (He had to work for them in the prison.)
- C. What was happening to Samson's hair while he was in the Philistine prison? (It was growing back.)
- D. What were the Philistines doing in the temple of their idol? (Praising their idol for making them able to defeat Samson.)
- E. When Samson was brought into the idol's temple, what did he ask the boy who was leading him to do? (Put his hands on the pillars holding up the ceiling.)
- F. What did Samson do while he was standing there with his hands on the pillars? (He prayed, asking God to make him strong one more time.)
- G. Did God answer Samson's prayer? (Yes.)
- H. What happened when Samson pushed on the pillars with all his might? (They fell and the roof fell down.)
- I. What fell with the roof? (The Philistines who were sitting on it.)
- J. What happened to the Philistines who were in the temple? (They were crushed by the falling roof.)
- K. Sometimes, like Samson, we sin and make problems for ourselves. What should we do when we realize we have sinned? (Repent and ask God to forgive us.)
- L. Does God hear us when we truly turn from our sins to Him? (Yes.)

6. Learning Reinforcement Activities

- A. Make enough copies of the attached picture page for each child to have one. Bring black or brown thread to cut into very small pieces. Children cover Samson's head with glue, then drop pieces of cut thread onto it for hair. They tear pieces of colored construction paper for pieces of falling ceiling to glue anywhere on the picture.
- B. Use the review questions plus the questions at the beginning of the story to play this review game from last week. Draw as many stick figure Philistines on the

board as you have questions. The children can help Samson fight the Philistines. Each time they answer a question correctly, they may come erase a Philistine.



**CHILDREN'S CHURCH 4-6 YEAR-OLDS
CURRICULUM YEAR 2, SUMMER**

Lesson 11

Title: The Work on the Temple Begins
Text: Ezra 1-3
Theme: God fulfills His word and keeps His promises

Memory Verse: ***Zechariah 4:6** "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the Lord Almighty.*

Teaching Objectives: By God's grace, each child will:

1. Praise God for His faithfulness and for His ability to keep His promises.
2. Depend on God to keep the promises He has made in Scripture.

1. Teacher Direction

This is the first of a three-week series from the book of Ezra. When the story begins, the Israelites have been in Babylon as captives for almost seventy years. God had called them to live in their land in obedience to His laws, but they had chosen repeatedly to disobey Him and worship idols, as the neighboring nations did. God had sent prophets to warn them, but they had refused to listen. So God had allowed the Babylonians to destroy Jerusalem--including the temple--and to take the Israelites to Babylon as captives. God had promised, however, that after seventy years He would raise up a ruler named Cyrus who would allow the Jews to return to their homes and rebuild God's house. In this first story, Cyrus' decree is issued and the Jews return to Jerusalem and begin to build. In the next story, we will see the Jews stop their building due to opposition from enemies. They will not resume building God's house because they will become too occupied with making their own houses comfortable. God will send the prophet Haggai to rebuke the Jews for this. In the third and final story, we will see God change the heart of Darius, the ruler, so the Jews may continue to build and we will see God change the hearts of His own people so they repent and return to the work He had given them to do until, finally, the temple is completed. In each story, God is at work so that His purposes are accomplished not by man's might nor by man's power, but by the Spirit of the Lord Almighty.

2. Learning Readiness Activity

Ask the children if they know what an altar was and what it was used for. Help them to understand that, before Jesus, God wanted His people to realize how bad sin was. God wanted them to know that sin separates us from God and can only be paid for by someone dying for sin. While the people were waiting for the Savior God would send,

they were to offer sacrifices of sheep and cattle they had killed. They could not come to God in worship unless they brought these sacrifices. The altar was a pile of stones on which the priest would place the killed sheep or bull to burn it as a sacrifice.

Give each child a pile of Play-doh and demonstrate how to break off pieces to roll into stones. Guide the children in forming enough stones to pile up to make small model altars. You may want to give them broken toothpicks or twigs to place on top of the altar, where the sacrifice would be burnt. Tell them that people in today's story will be building an altar.

3. Bible Story

How excited God's people were feeling! They were going to get to go home! It had been a long time since the Jews had seen their homes in Jerusalem--almost seventy years. During those years, they had lived in Babylon, a large and wonderful city, but not their home. The Jews had been taken to Babylon as prisoners. Babylonian soldiers had come to their city of Jerusalem and had destroyed everything. The soldiers had torn down houses and had burned the city walls. They had even destroyed the temple where the Jews had worshiped God. Then the Babylonian soldiers had made the Jews travel with them on the long journey to Babylon, where the Jews had been forced to live these many years.

All these things had happened to the Jews because they had disobeyed God. They had disobeyed Him not once or twice but over and over again. The Jews had refused to live by His commandments. They had worshiped and prayed to idols instead of to God alone. God had sent many prophets to tell the people to repent or He would send soldiers to take them away, but the Jews would not listen. Finally, it happened just as God said it would. Babylonian soldiers came to Jerusalem, destroyed the city, and took the Jews to Babylon with them.

Then God's people wished they had listened to God, but it was too late. There was no way to go back home. However, the Jews had hope. God had promised that after seventy years had gone by, He would let the Jews go back to their homes in Jerusalem. God had promised to raise up a king who would tell the Jews they could go home and who would encourage them to rebuild God's temple which had been destroyed.

Time had gone by and, just as God had promised, a king came into power who announced to all that any Jews who wanted to go home to Jerusalem could go. So the Jews were excited. They were going home. Grandmas and grandpas would see the city they had lived in when they were children. Mothers and fathers would be able to raise their children in their own land and not among strangers. Boys and girls who had always heard stories of Jerusalem would be able to see for themselves the city in which those stories had taken place.

Children packed their clothing and their favorite toys. They may have said to one another, "Just think. We get to see the land God gave to the Jews. Just as our parents and grandparents said in all the stories they told us, God raised up a king to let us go home." Mothers packed dishes and prepared food for the journey. They were busy, but happy and they may have said to their children, "Isn't God good? We never would have thought we would be able to go back to

Jerusalem, *except* that God promised. God keeps His promises. Whatever He promises, He is able to do.”

Fathers rounded up the animals they would take to Jerusalem with them. They gathered tools, because they knew there would be much work needing to be done when they got home. “King Cyrus says we are to rebuild God’s temple when we get to Jerusalem,” the fathers may have said. “That’s just what we want to do and just what God promised we would be able to do when the seventy years were over.”

Finally the people were ready and they set out on their long journey. They traveled for many days and finally arrived in Jerusalem. As the children looked around themselves, they may have felt disappointed. They had heard so many wonderful stories about Jerusalem--but there really wasn’t much there. Houses had been destroyed and walls had been broken down. The city was in ruins and it would take years to build it back up again. The governor of the Jews, Zerubbabel, had traveled to Jerusalem with everyone else and now he led the people in doing the thing that had to be done first of all. What do you think it was? They had just arrived in the land, all was in ruins--what do you think they would have wanted to do first? (Listen to children’s responses.)

The Bible tells us that the first thing God’s people did when they got back to Jerusalem was to rebuild the altar that had been in the temple. What did we say an altar was for? (Listen to responses.) Remember, that before Jesus came, people had to offer sacrifices when they worshiped God and when they asked Him to forgive their sin. There had been no altar and no sacrifices for many years. God’s people understood that the most important thing they could do would be to build the altar so they could offer sacrifices again.

Once they had done that, the Jews began the work of rebuilding the whole temple--which would take much longer. Again, Zerubbabel led the people in the work. They began building the temple the same way builders today begin work on buildings--they laid the foundation. The foundation is part of a building that you don’t see when the building is finished. It is the strong solid part of the building that is underneath, for the rest of the building to rest on. The Jews laid the foundation for the temple and then they stopped to praise God for His faithfulness in letting them get this far. Musicians blew trumpets and clanged cymbals while people sang praises to God.

The mothers and fathers were proud of their work and shouted for joy. The children were happy about all the excitement, and they shouted for joy as well. Some of the grandparents, though, cried to see this new foundation. They remembered Solomon’s great and glorious temple, so large and beautiful and full of gold. This temple would be so much smaller and simpler and plainer. It made the old people cry to see the difference. So some people cried out loud and other people shouted for joy, and it was a very noisy time!

It was only a foundation so far, but God’s people had come home and the temple was being rebuilt. God had kept His promise.

4. Application

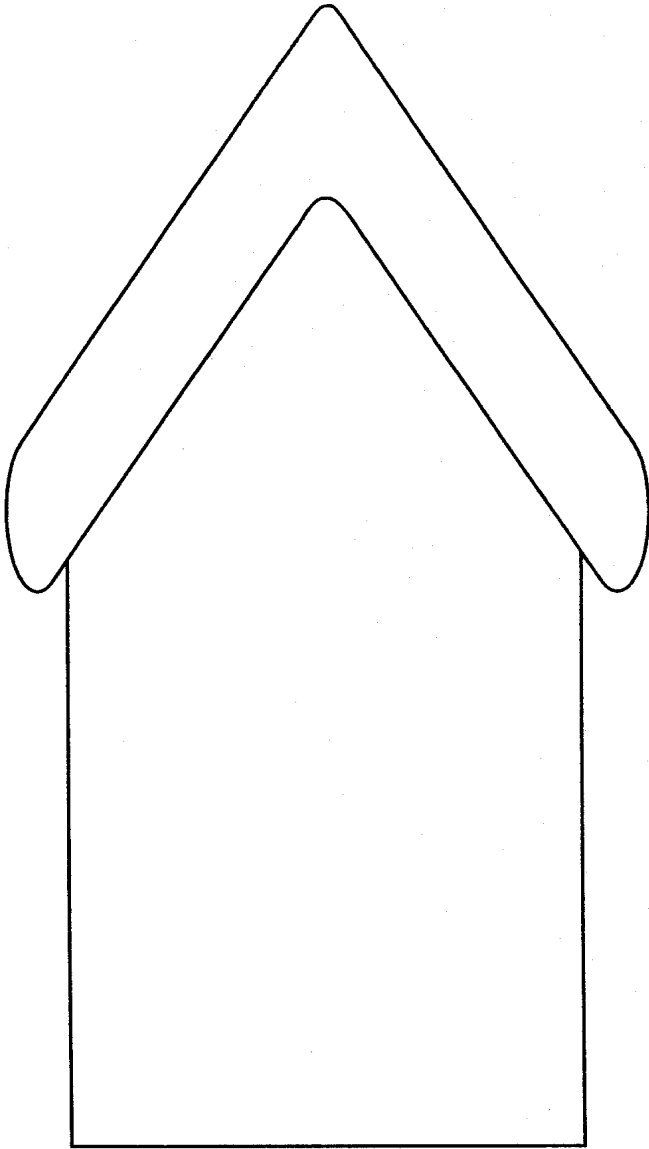
People often change their minds or they find they are not able to do what they had said they would do. Point out to children that God can always keep His promises because (1) He knows everything, so nothing will ever come up that He hadn't expected, keeping Him from doing what He had planned, and (2) He has all power, so nothing that He promises will ever turn out to be too difficult for Him to do. Lead the children in praising God for these things. Remind them of Bible promises ("I am with you always;" "If we confess our sins, He will forgive our sins;" etc.) and remind them that, if they are God's children, they can fully trust God to keep these promises for them.

5. Review Questions

- A. Where was "home" for the Jews? (Jerusalem)
- B. Why were the Jews living in Babylon? (Soldiers had taken them there when Jerusalem was destroyed.)
- C. Why did God allow Jerusalem to be destroyed? (Because the Jews would not listen to Him and obey Him.)
- D. What had God promised? (He would raise up a king who would let the Jews go back home.)
- E. God said this would happen after how many years? (70)
- F. Did God keep His promise? (Yes) Does God always keep His promises? (Yes.)
- G. What was the first thing the Jews did when they got back to Jerusalem? (Rebuilt the altar so they could offer sacrifices.)
- H. What was the first part of the temple the Jews built? (the foundation.)
- I. Many Jews were happy once the foundation of the temple was laid and they shouted for joy. Why were some of the Jews sad? (Because they remembered the old temple that Solomon had built and it had been so much larger and more beautiful.)

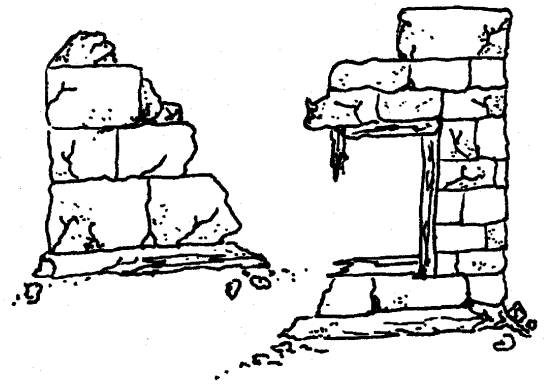
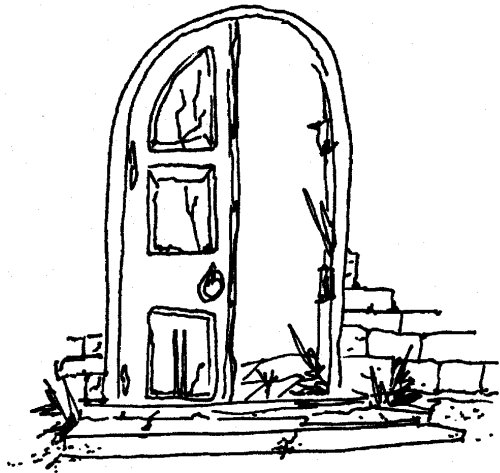
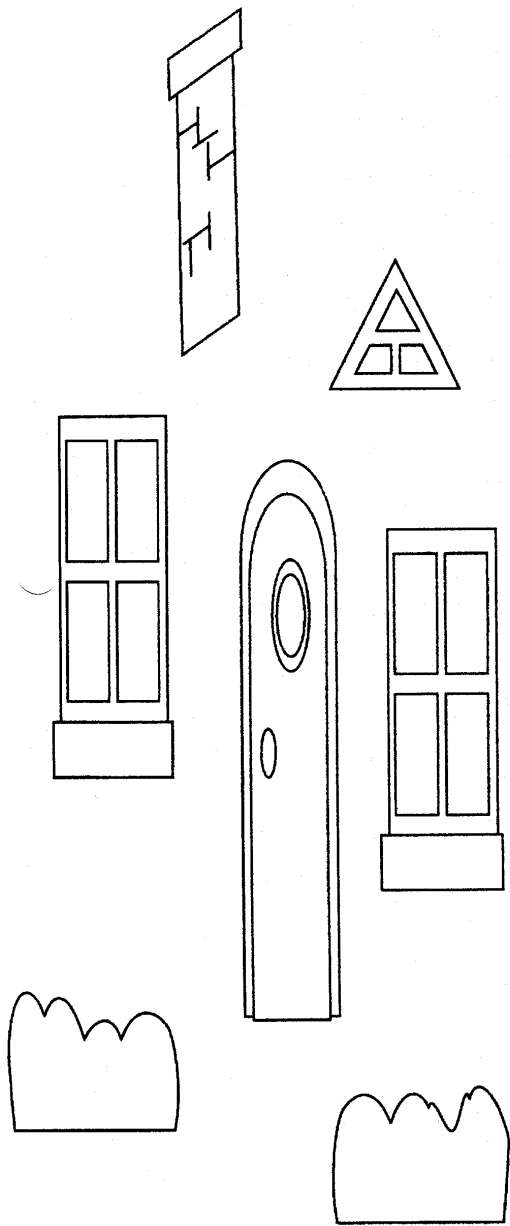
6. Learning Reinforcement Activity

Role play the story. The children can act out packing, traveling, building an altar, beginning the building of the temple, and celebrating when the foundation is laid.



People's
Houses

God's
House



**CHILDREN'S CHURCH 4-6 YEAR-OLDS
CURRICULUM YEAR 2, SUMMER**

Lesson 12

Title: The Work on the Temple Stops
Text: Ezra 4 with Haggai 1-2
Theme: God calls His people to trust Him and to put Him first.

Memory Verse: ***Zechariah 4:6** "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the Lord Almighty.*

Teaching Objectives: By God's grace, each child will:

1. Understand that God calls His people to put Him first in how they use their time and possessions.
2. Ask God to help him to serve God with what he has instead of living only for himself.

1. Teacher Direction

In last week's story, we saw God's faithfulness in allowing His captive people to return to Jerusalem as He had promised. The Jews returned and began to rebuild the temple. Ezra 4 records the opposition of enemy nations, resulting in a letter from King Artaxerxes halting the building. It would seem that the Jews did not mind this too much, because God sent the prophet Haggai to them to rebuke them for building their own houses and decorating them beautifully while His own house remained unfinished. The events of Ezra 4 and Haggai's message are the focus of today's story. Next week, we will see how God changed the hearts of His people and the heart of a king so that the temple could be completed.

2. Learning Readiness Activity

Bring magazine pictures that children may select and glue to a large piece of newsprint to make a class collage depicting how we may spend our time, energy, and money on service to God. These could be pictures showing people demonstrating service or they could be pictures of the results--church buildings, people from other countries who have been helped or taught, etc. Give children time to select and glue pictures, discussing with them how each picture shows something that can be done with our time or our money that is a means of serving God.

3. Review of last week's lesson

- A. Last week, we saw that God keeps His promises. What promise did God keep in last week's lesson? (To let the Jews go back home to Jerusalem.)
- B. Why were the Jews not living in Jerusalem? (God had sent enemy soldiers to destroy their city and take them away because they had not obeyed Him, but had worshiped idols.)

- C. What was the first thing the Jews had done when arrived in Jerusalem? (Built the altar so they could offer sacrifices.)
- D Then what did they begin to build? (God's temple.)

4. Bible Story

The Jews in Jerusalem had built only the foundation of the temple--the part underneath that all the rest of the building rests on. There was still a long way to go and a lot of work ahead. So you would think the Jews would have been happy when people from the neighboring towns came and offered to help them build. "We offer sacrifices to your God, too," these neighbors told the Jews. "Let us help you build a temple for Him." The Jews knew that although these neighbors offered sacrifices to the true God sometimes, they also offered sacrifices to many idols as well. So the Jews did not want *their* help in building a house for God. "We don't want your help," said Zerubbabel, the leader of the Jews. "We will build God's temple by ourselves."

This made the neighbors angry and they began to do whatever they could to discourage the Jews and to make them stop building. The neighbors even paid people to do things that would make it hard for the Jews to build their temple. Finally, when a new king came to the throne, the enemies of God's people saw their chance. They sent a letter to this king. This is what it said. "Did you know that the people who live in Jerusalem are rebuilding things in their ruined city? Did you know that Jerusalem used to be a strong city that refused to obey great kings like you? Did you know that when Jerusalem was strong, kings like you could not get tax money from the people of Jerusalem? If the Jews keep building, they will make Jerusalem strong and powerful again. Then the Jews will not obey you as king and they will not pay you money anymore."

When the king read this, he immediately gave an order that the building in Jerusalem must stop. The temple could not be rebuilt.

Do you think the Jews were sad? They probably were at first, but they soon saw that all the time and money they had been spending on building *God's* house, they could use to build their own houses. Years went by and the Jews never tried to get the king to change his mind. They never tried to go back to the work on the temple. Instead, they made fine houses for themselves. They built and they painted and they decorated and their houses became more and more beautiful, but God's house lay in ruins.

So God sent two prophets to His people. One was Zechariah and one was Haggai. Haggai scolded the Jews. "Is it right for you to be living in fine houses while God's house is still a ruin? Each of you is busy with your own house and you keep saying, 'It isn't time to build God's house yet,' so My house is never built. Go up to the mountains, cut down trees, bring wood to build My house so I may be pleased with it and so that I may be honored."

The other prophet God sent, Zechariah, encouraged the Jews. God knew that the Jews were afraid of their enemies. He knew that Zerubbabel wondered if he would be a good enough leader to finish building the temple. So God gave Zechariah words of encouragement for the Jews. One of the things God told

Zechariah to tell Zerubbabel was our memory verse: “Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the Lord Almighty.”

So God was calling His people to stop building their houses and build His. He was encouraging them to trust Him for the power to finish the work. Would God’s people listen?

5. Application

Help the children to see that we all have things that we want, but God’s people are to want, most of all, what *God* wants. Lead the children in asking God to help them to want to give their time and their things to doing what He wants done. Thank God with the children that He gives His people His Spirit to give us the power to obey Him.

6. Review Questions

- A. What did the neighboring countries offer the Jews? (Help with building the temple.)
- B. Did the Jews accept their help? (No.)
- C. Then what did the neighbors do? (They tried to keep the Jews from building.)
- D. What happened when the neighbors sent a letter to the new king? (The new king ordered the Jews to stop building.)
- E. When the Jews could not work on the temple, what did they do instead? (Built and decorated their own houses.)
- F. Why did Haggai the prophet scold the Jews? (Because they were spending time and money on their own houses and not finishing God’s house.)
- G. What message from God did Zechariah give to Zerubbabel? (“Not by might nor by power but by My Spirit,” says the Lord Almighty.)

7. Learning Reinforcement Activity

Make copies of the attached pages for the children. Cut out the items on page 2 ahead of time. The children will make a picture showing what the Jews were doing. They will glue the door, windows, and roof to the picture of the house, then glue the piles of ruins in the space for God’s house. As they work, talk with them. Help them to see that having things or doing things for ourselves is not wrong, but we want to be sure that God is most important to us and that we always have time and money for His work.

**CHILDREN'S CHURCH 4-6 YEAR-OLDS
CURRICULUM YEAR 2, SUMMER**

Lesson 13

Title: The Work on the Temple is Completed
Text: Ezra 5-6
Theme: God changes hearts to accomplish His purposes for His people.

Memory Verse: *Zechariah 4:6* "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,"
says the Lord Almighty.

Teaching Objectives: By God's grace, each child will:

1. Praise God that whatever He plans to do He always does.
2. Ask God to work in his heart so he will want to have a part in doing what God plans.

1. Teacher Direction

Today we complete our three stories on the rebuilding of the temple when the Jews returned to Jerusalem from captivity in Babylon. In last week's story, the building on the temple had stopped, partly because of the opposition of enemies and the command of a king, and partly because of the Jews' own preoccupation with making fine houses for themselves instead of building the temple. God had promised that the temple would be rebuilt after seventy years. Today we will see how God changed the heart of a king and the hearts of His people so that this word of His would be fulfilled.

2. Learning Readiness Activity and Review

Use the attached patterns to make and cut out a number of paper tools that can be hidden around the room. Give the children time to find the tools. Remind them that, in our last two stories, the Jews had been building something but then they had stopped. What was it? (God's temple.) Ask them why the Jews had stopped building. (The king had ordered them to stop.) Then the Jews got busy building something else. What was it? (Their own houses.) What did the prophet Haggai say about that? (The Jews should not have been building beautiful houses for themselves while God's house was in ruins.) Tell the children that, since it had been a long time since the Jews had worked on the temple, they would have needed to find and gather all the tools and materials for the job, like the children finding the paper tools this morning.

3. Bible Story

Why had God's people let God's house sit in ruins for so long while they built their own fancy houses? Because they were selfish and sinful, like we are. The prophet Haggai told them they were sinning, but what could they do about it? Could they change their own hearts so they would want to do God's work? No,

people cannot change themselves and stop being selfish. But God can change people's hearts and give them the desire to do His will. People don't change their hearts by their own might or by their own power, but God changes them by His Spirit. That is just what God did for the Jews who had returned to Jerusalem. First He sent Haggai the prophet, then He worked in the hearts of His people so they would obey Haggai's words and fear the Lord.

The enemy neighbors were still there, though, so God encouraged His people by telling them He would be with them. He also reminded them that this temple would be built not by their might nor by their power but by His Spirit.

When the Jews began to work on the temple again, the enemy neighbors came by and watched what they were doing. "Who said you could do this?" they asked. Then the neighbors sent another letter off to the king. There was a new king, though. God worked in the heart of this new king so that this king wanted the work on the temple to go well. The king sent a letter back to the Jews' enemies. This letter told them, "Don't do anything to keep the work from going on. If you try to stop the Jews, I will punish you. Not only that, but whatever they need for the work, *you* are to pay for with money from your treasury."

So the Jews worked and God blessed the work and the temple was finished. God had promised that after His people had been in captivity for seventy years, He would bring them home and His house would be rebuilt. God kept His promise. He changed the hearts of kings, He changed the hearts of His selfish people, and He stopped their enemies. God always does exactly what He plans to do.

4. Application

Lead the children in praising God for always perfectly doing exactly what He plans to do. Encourage them to ask Him to change their hearts so that they will want to be a part of doing what He has planned.

5. Review Questions

From Lesson 11:

- A. Where was "home" for the Jews? (Jerusalem)
- B. Why had the Jews been living in Babylon? (Soldiers had taken them there when Jerusalem was destroyed.)
- C. Why had God allowed Jerusalem to be destroyed? (Because the Jews would not listen to Him and obey Him.)
- D. What had God promised? (He would raise up a king who would let the Jews go back home.)
- E. God said this would happen after how many years? (70)
- F. Did God keep His promise? (Yes) Does God always keep His promises? (Yes.)

From Lesson 12:

- A. What did the neighboring countries offer the Jews? (Help with building the temple.)
- B. Did the Jews accept their help? (No.)
- C. Then what did the neighbors do? (They tried to keep the Jews from building.)

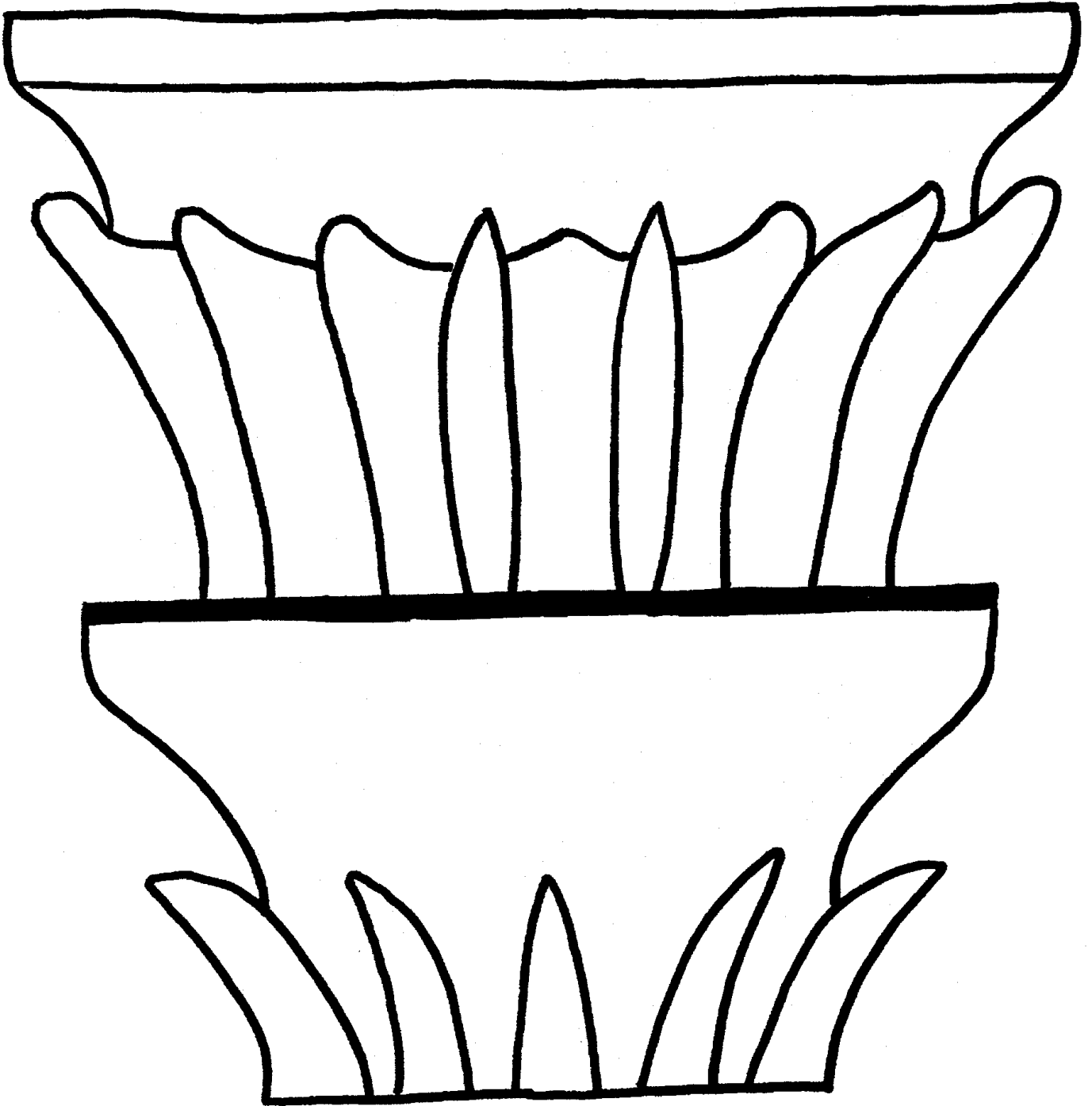
- D. What happened the first time the neighbors sent a letter to the new king? (The new king ordered the Jews to stop building.)
- E. When the Jews could not work on the temple, what did they do instead? (Built and decorated their own houses.)
- F. Why did Haggai the prophet scold the Jews? (Because they were spending time and money on their own houses and not finishing God's house.)
- G. What message from God did Zechariah give to Zerubbabel? (It's our memory verse.) ("Not by might nor by power but by My Spirit," says the Lord Almighty.)

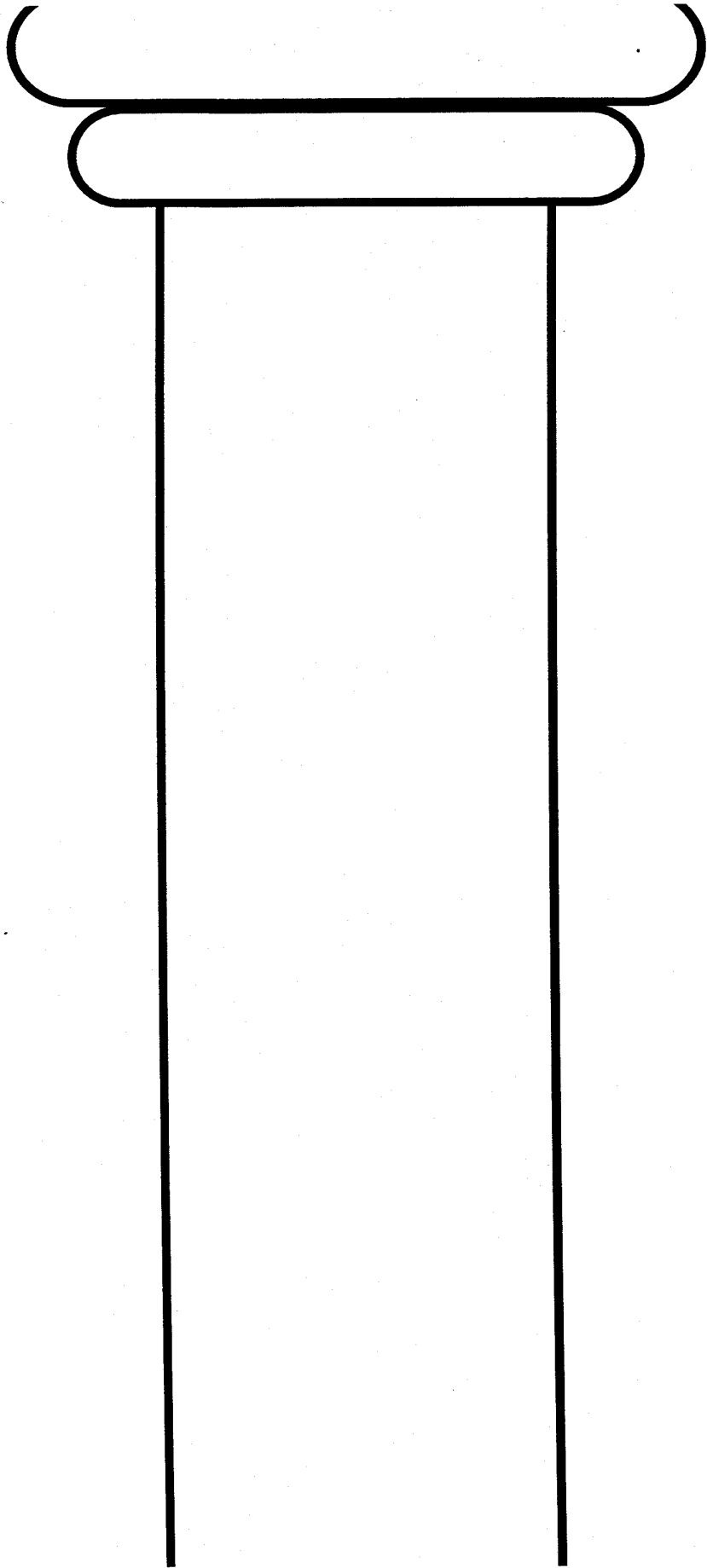
From Lesson 13:

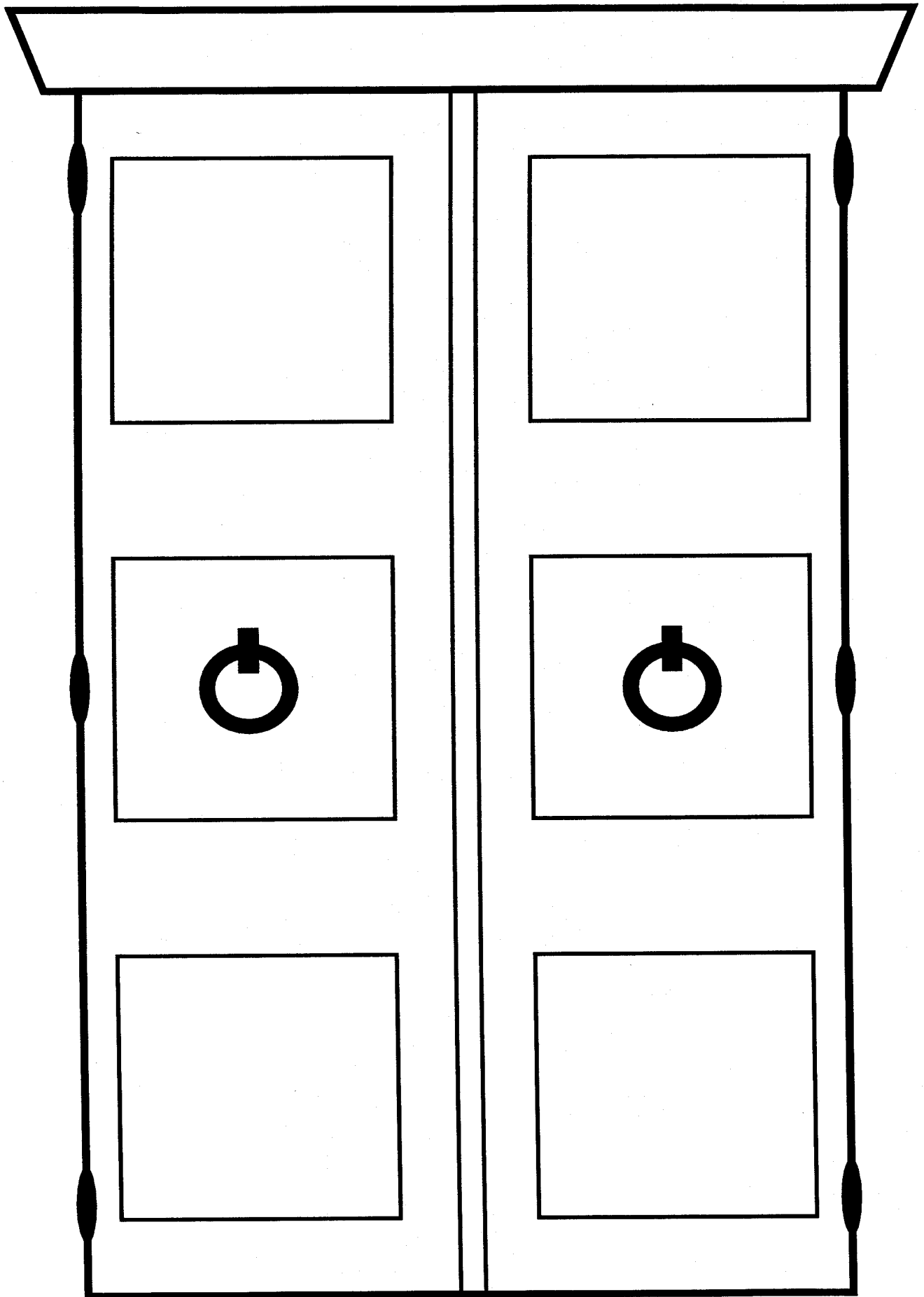
- A. Why were the Jews building their own houses instead of God's? (Because they were selfish or sinful.)
- B. Could the Jews change their selfish hearts? (No.) Who can change selfish hearts? (God.)
- C. Did God change the hearts of the Jews? (Yes.)
- D. So what did the Jews do? (They began to build the temple again.)
- E. What did the enemies do to try to stop them? (They sent another letter to the new king.)
- F. Can God work in a king's heart so the king will help God's work? (Yes.)
- G. Is that what He did with this king? (Yes.)
- H. The king said the enemy neighbors could not stop the Jews from building. What did the king say the enemies had to do for the Jews? (Help pay for the work.)

6. Learning Reinforcement Activity

Build the Temple Review Game. Use the attached patterns to cut out temple pieces. As the children answer review questions correctly, they may come up and add a piece to the temple.







Cut out 16 separate blocks and for placement on board.

Cut out one door and 4 separate column pieces.

Sample of proper positions for temple components.

