Gideon

AIM:

To recognize that Gideon, an ordinary man, was chosen to rescue Israel from their enemies based on his God given qualities.

Theme: Submission to Divine Calling UNIT 2, LESSON 7

Judges 6 and 7 (NRSV)

The Midianite Oppression

1 The Israelites did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord gave them
into the hand of Midian seven years. 2 The hand of Midian prevailed over Israel; and
because of Midian the Israelites provided for themselves hiding places in the
mountains, caves and strongholds. 3 For whenever the Israelites put in seed, the
Midianites and the Amalekites and the people of the east would come up against
them. 4 They would encamp against them and destroy the produce of the land, as far
as the neighborhood of Gaza, and leave no sustenance in Israel, and no sheep or ox
or donkey. 5 For they and their livestock would come up, and they would even
bring their tents, as thick as locusts; neither they nor their camels could be
counted; so they wasted the land as they came in. 6 Thus Israel was greatly
impoverished because of Midian; and the Israelites cried out to the Lord for help.

7 When the Israelites cried to the Lord on account of the Midian-
ites, 8 the Lord sent a prophet to the Israelites; and he said to them, "Thus says
the Lord, the God of Israel: I led you up from Egypt, and brought you out of the
house of slavery; 9 and I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians, and from the
hand of all who oppressed you, and drove them out before you, and gave you their
land; 10 and I said to you, 'I am the Lord your God; you shall not pay reverence to
the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live.' But you have not given heed to
my voice."

The Call of Gideon

11 Now the angel of the Lord came and sat under the oak at Ophrah, which
belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, as his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the
wine press, to hide it from the Midianites. 12 The angel of the Lord appeared to him
and said to him, "The Lord is with you, you mighty warrior." 13 Gideon answered
him, "But sir, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And
where are all his wonderful deeds that our ancestors recounted to us, saying, 'Did
not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?' But now the Lord has cast us off, and given
us into the hand of Midian." 14 Then the Lord turned to him and said, "Go in this
might of yours and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian; I hereby commission
you." 15 He responded, "But sir, how can I deliver Israel? My clan is the weakest in
Manasseh, and I am the least in my family." 16 The Lord said to him, "But I will be
with you, and you shall strike down the Midianites, every one of them." 17 Then he
said to him, "If now I have found favor with you, then show me a sign that it is you
who speak with me. 18 Do not depart from here until I come to you, and bring out

my present, and set it before you." And he said, "I will stay until you return."

19 So Gideon went into his house and prepared a kid, and unleavened cakes from an ephah of flour; the meat he put in a basket, and the broth he put in a pot, and brought them to him under the oak and presented them. 20 The angel of God said to him, "Take the meat and the unleavened cakes, and put them on this rock, and pour out the broth." And he did so. 21 Then the angel of the Lord reached out the tip of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the meat and the unleavened cakes; and fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened cakes; and the angel of the Lord vanished from his sight. 22 Then Gideon perceived that it was the angel of the Lord; and Gideon said, "Help me, Lord God! For I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face." 23 But the Lord said to him, "Peace be to you; do not fear, you shall not die." 24 Then Gideon built an altar there to the Lord, and called it, The Lord is peace. To this day it still stands at Ophrah, which belongs to the Abiezrites.

25 That night the Lord said to him, "Take your father's bull, the second bull seven years old, and pull down the altar of Baal that belongs to your father, and cut down the sacred pole that is beside it; 26 and build an altar to the Lord your God on the top of the stronghold here, in proper order; then take the second bull, and offer it as a burnt offering with the wood of the sacred pole that you shall cut down." 27 So Gideon took ten of his servants, and did as the Lord had told him; but because he was too afraid of his family and the townspeople to do it by day, he did it by night.

Gideon Destroys the Altar of Baal

28 When the townspeople rose early in the morning, the altar of Baal was broken down, and the sacred pole beside it was cut down, and the second bull was offered on the altar that had been built. 29 So they said to one another, "Who has done this?" After searching and inquiring, they were told, "Gideon son of Joash did it." 30 Then the townspeople said to Joash, "Bring out your son, so that he may die, for he has pulled down the altar of Baal and cut down the sacred pole beside it." 31 But Joash said to all who were arrayed against him, "Will you contend for Baal? Or will you defend his cause? Whoever contends for him shall be put to death by morning. If he is a god, let him contend for himself, because his altar has been pulled down." 32 Therefore on that day Gideon was called Jerubbaal, that is to say, "Let Baal contend against him," because he pulled down his altar.

33 Then all the Midianites and the Amalekites and the people of the east came together, and crossing the Jordan they encamped in the Valley of Jezreel. 34 But the spirit of the Lord took possession of Gideon; and he sounded the trumpet, and the Abiezrites were called out to follow him. 35 He sent messengers throughout all Manasseh, and they too were called out to follow him. He also sent messengers to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they went up to meet them.

The Sign of the Fleece

36 Then Gideon said to God, "In order to see whether you will deliver Israel by my hand, as you have said, 37 I am going to lay a fleece of wool on the threshing floor; if there is dew on the fleece alone, and it is dry on all the ground, then I shall know that you will deliver Israel by my hand, as you have said." 38 And it was so. When he rose early next morning and squeezed the fleece, he wrung enough dew from the fleece to fill a bowl with water. 39 Then Gideon said to God, "Do not let your anger burn against me, let me speak one more time; let me, please, make trial with the fleece just once more; let it be dry only on the fleece, and on all the ground let there be dew." 40 And God did so that night. It was dry on the fleece only, and on all the ground there was dew.

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7. Gideon Surprises and Routs the Midianites

1 Then Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) and all the troops that were with him rose early and encamped beside the spring of Harod; and the camp of Midian was north of them, below the hill of Moreh, in the valley.

2 The Lord said to Gideon, "The

troops with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand. Israel would only take the credit away from me, saying, 'My own hand has delivered me.' [3] Now therefore proclaim this in the hearing of the troops, 'Whoever is fearful and trembling, let him return home.'" Thus Gideon sifted them out; twenty-two thousand returned, and ten thousand remained.

[4] Then the Lord said to Gideon, "The troops are still too many; take them down to the water and I will sift them out for you there. When I say, 'This one shall go with you,' he shall go with you; and when I say, 'This one shall not go with you,' he shall not go." [5] So he brought the troops down to the water; and the Lord said to Gideon, "All those who lap the water with their tongues, as a dog laps, you shall put to one side; all those who kneel down to drink, putting their hands to their mouths, you shall put to the other side." [6] The number of those that lapped was three hundred; but all the rest of the troops knelt down to drink water. 7 Then the Lord said to Gideon, "With the three hundred that lapped I will deliver you, and give the Midianites into your hand. Let all the others go to their homes." [8] So he took the jars of the troops from their hands, and their trumpets; and he sent all the rest of Israel back to their own tents, but retained the three hundred. The camp of Midian was below him in the valley.

[9] That same night the Lord said to him, "Get up, attack the camp; for I have given it into your hand. [10] But if you fear to attack, go down to the camp with your servant Purah; [11] and you shall hear what they say, and afterward your hands shall be strengthened to attack the camp." Then he went down with his servant Purah to the outposts of the armed men that were in the camp. [12] The Midianites and the Amalekites and all the people of the east lay along the valley as thick as locusts; and their camels were without number, countless as the sand on the seashore. [13] When Gideon arrived, there was a man telling a dream to his comrade; and he said, "I had a dream, and in it a cake of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian, and came to the tent, and struck it so that it fell; it turned upside down, and the tent collapsed." [14] And his comrade answered, "This is no other than the sword of Gideon son of Joash, a man of Israel; into his hand God has given Midian and all the army."

[15] When Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its interpretation, he worshiped; and he returned to the camp of Israel, and said, "Get up; for the Lord has given the army of Midian into your hand." [16] After he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and put trumpets into the hands of all of them, and empty jars, with torches inside the jars, [17] he said to them, "Look at me, and do the same; when I come to the outskirts of the camp, do as I do. [18] When I blow the trumpet, I and all who are with me, then you also blow the trumpets around the whole camp, and shout, 'For the Lord and for Gideon!"

[19] So Gideon and the hundred who were with him came to the outskirts of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, when they had just set the watch; and they blew the trumpets and smashed the jars that were in their hands. [20] So the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the jars, holding in their left hands the torches, and in their right hands the trumpets to blow; and they cried, "A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!" [21] Every man stood in his place all around the camp, and all the men in camp ran; they cried out and fled. [22] When they blew the three hundred trumpets, the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow and against all the army; and the army fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah, as far as the border of Abel-meholah, by Tabbath. [23] And the men of Israel were called out from Naphtali and from Asher and from all Manasseh, and they pursued after the Midianites.

[24] Then Gideon sent messengers throughout all the hill country of Ephraim, saying, "Come down against the Midianites and seize the waters against them, as far as Beth-barah, and also the Jordan." So all the men of Ephraim were called out, and they seized the waters as far as Beth-barah, and also the Jordan. [25] They captured the two captains of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb; they killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they killed at the wine press of Zeeb, as they pursued the Midianites.

http://brotherhoodofchristianaggies.wordpress.com/2011/04/13/gideon-%E2%80%93-are-we-supposed-to-test-god-if-so-in-what-way/

Student Introduction

Today, we are going to learn about how God can give ordinary people wisdom and insight to fulfill His calling when we put our wholehearted faith in Him. Have you ever been faced with an overwhelming task that you felt unworthy to complete? Have you ever been challenged to rise to the occasion to do something that seems impossible? Sometime in your life, God will call you to do things that may seem out of your comfort zone. God's call will not be an easy route; putting your faith in Christ means that you are willing to put yourself in situations that may make you feel uncomfortable and uneasy. When you trust in God, he will empower you with the qualities that you need to overcome your obstacle. These qualities are God given, and thus our success stems from Christ alone.

Frances Jane "Fanny" Crosby (1820 -1915) an American hymn writer and composer is one of the most prolific hymnists in history. Although Fanny became blind from infancy, her life and works is a living testimony of the wonders God can do in your life when you surrender your "weakness" to God. Many of her hymns are still sung in churches around the world. In 1975, Fanny was inducted in to the Gospel Music Hall of Fame and she is known as the "Queen of Gospel Song Writers". She never stopped praising God for the gifts He has given her. She was not only a song writer, but also knew by heart many portions of the Bible . Some of her well-known hymns that are still sung in our churches are:

To God be the Glory (1875)

To God be the Glory, great things He has done;

So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,

Who yielded His Life atonement for sin,

And opened the life gate that all may go in

Blessed Assurance (1873)

Blessed Assurance, Jesus is mine!

O what a foretaste of glory divine!

Heir of salvation, purchase of God,

Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood

Safe in the Arms of Jesus (1868)

Safe in the Arms of Jesus,

Safe on His gentle breast,

There by His love o'ershaded,

Sweetly my soul doth rest

Once a preacher sympathetically remarked to Fanny, "I think it is a great pity that the Master did not give you sight when He showered so many other gifts upon you." She replied quickly, "Do you know that if at birth I had been able to make one petition, it would have been that I should be born blind?" "Why?" asked the surprised minister. "Because when I get to heaven, the first face that shall ever gladden my sight will be that of my Savior!"

Fanny Crosby's remarkable ability to submit to the will of God and her ability to glorify God even in her weakness is a great example for us to follow.

Bible Exploration: When the Israelites' finally settled down in the Promised Land after travelling for many years in the wilderness, they immediately faced opposition from enemies such as the Midianites and the Amalekites. While the Israelites livelihood and crops were being destroyed, their lives were also becoming impoverished and there was great suffering. In desperation, they cried out to the Lord for an answer. God answered their prayers through a man named Gideon. Gideon was not a man of great status, neither was he a fighter. If anything, Gideon was really quite an ordinary man. His clan was the weakest in the Manasseh tribe and Gideon was the least in his family.

The call of Gideon

One day when Gideon was beating out wheat in a wine press in secret from the Midianites, an angel appeared to him informing him that he was to lead the Israelites to victory against their oppressors. Gideon's name literally means "Mighty Warrior", but he was still not convinced that he was the chosen one and he needed more of an assurance of his call. So he asked the angel to show him a sign that it is truly the angel of God that is speaking to him.

Sign of the fire: Judges 6: 17- 22

Gideon prepared an offering of meat and bread and presented before his guest. The angel of the Lord touched the offering with the end of the stick he was holding and fire came out of the rock and burnt the meat and bread. Gideon was now convinced that it was indeed God's calling. Under God's instructions, Gideon destroyed the altar of Baal and the idol of Asherah that his father worshipped and built an altar to God instead. Because of his actions, Gideon was renamed "Jerubbaal" meaning "Let Baal contend against him".

Sign of the wool fleece: Judges 6: 36-40

To see whether God will deliver Israel by his hand, Gideon asked God for another sign; He laid a wool fleece on the threshing floor and asked God to make the fleece wet and the floor dry and it was so. Again Gideon asked God to keep the fleece dry and the floor wet and God did so that night. After these signs Gideon was ready to fight the Midianites.

Victory belongs to God

When Gideon was selecting people to fight against the Midianites, the Lord wanted to ensure that the battle was not won by sheer strength of numbers. Originally there were 32 000 men but that was reduced to 300. He chose these individuals by a simple test of how they drank their water from a river: those that lapped the water like a dog with their tongues were selected and, those that knelt down to drink the water were sent home.

Although their army was small in number, Gideon used signs from God to arm the battle. The night before the battle, Gideon overheard a man telling a dream in which a barley cake was rolled into the Midianite camp and struck the tent. They were sure that this was the sword of Gideon. Gideon used this dream as a guide, when He divided his army into three parts each having jars, lights, and trumpets. Gideon skillfully instructed his team to simultaneously break the jars and blow the trumpets. In confusion, the Midianites began to fight against themselves leading the Israelites to victory.

Gideon truly believed that it was through the power of God alone that they were led to victory. Gideon's small army defeated their enemies by following Gideon's tactful and decisive plan of using noise and lights to scare the enemy. God knew Gideon was a leader, and he patiently guided Gideon to take the right steps towards success.

Let's Review

1. What were the signs given by God to show that Gideon was more than ordinary- that he was chosen to lead the Israelites?

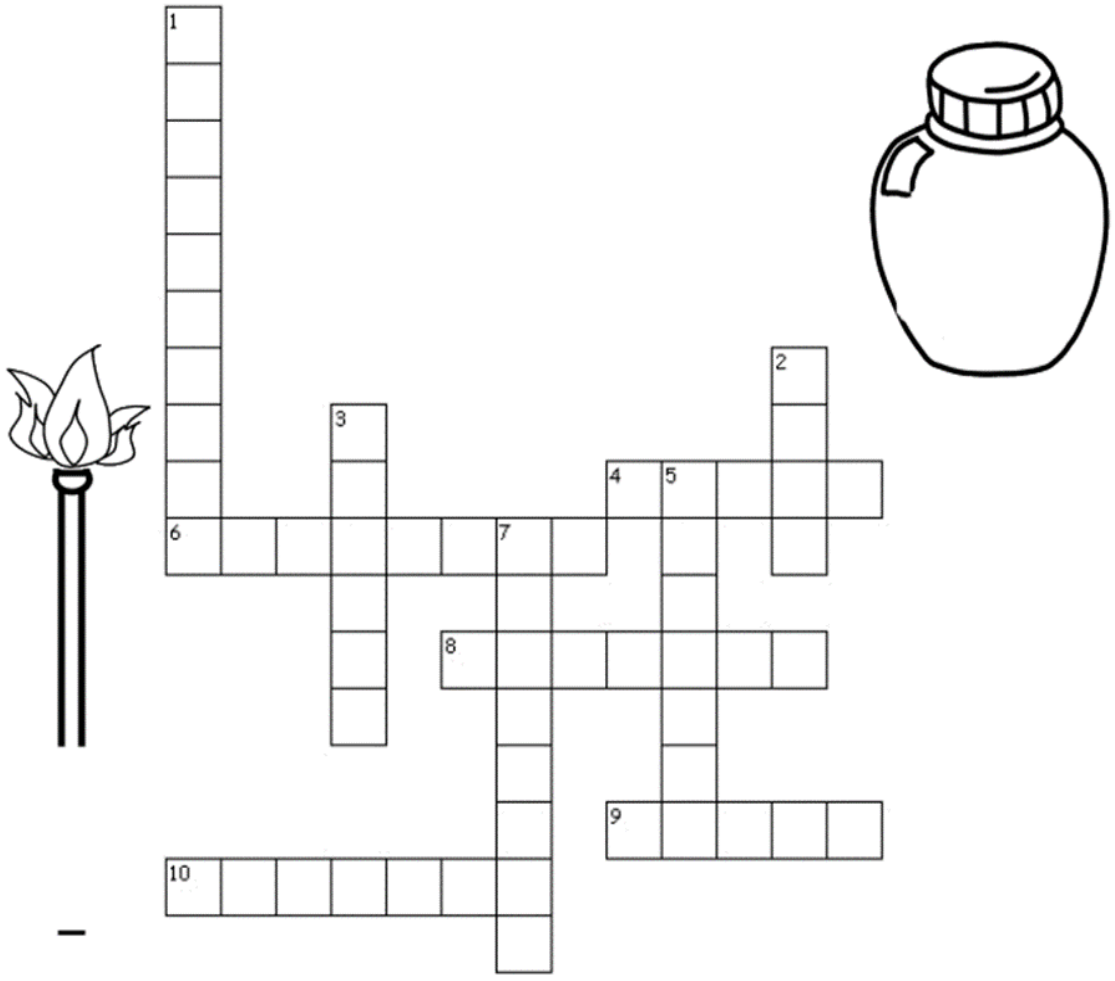
2. How did Gideon select people for the battle?

3. How did Gideon fight against the Midianites with such a small army?

4. What was the secret of Gideon's victory?

5. Use three characteristics to describe Gideon before and after the battle.

Activities



Across

4. The Israelite army chanted: The ____ of the Lord and of Gideon.
6. It was God's ____ that won the battle for the Israelites.
8. The army started out being thousands and ended up being three ____.
9. The army got smaller after God asked Gideon to watch the men do this.
10. Gideon thought he was the ____ in his clan, but God didn't see him that way.

Down

1. These were the people that God helped Gideon defeat.
2. The army carried trumpets and broke these to scare the Midians.
3. Gideon wanted to see if this was wet and the ground was dry.
5. When the angel approached Gideon he called him a mighty ____.
7. There was no fighting. The army blew these and scared the Midian's away.

Values For Life

- God chooses ordinary people to do extraordinary work.
- God will give us guidance, wisdom, and favorable circumstances to overcome our obstacles if we put our wholehearted faith in him.
- All of our successes, victories, and triumphs are owing to God's strength, power, and unconditional love for us

Faith in Action

- How have you made a difference in others' lives - in your family, school, church, community, and world?
- How have others changed the way you think in a positive light?
- In what ways can you stand out as a leader for God's kingdom starting today? What kind of projects can you lead in the future?
- What do you do when you face obstacles and challenges? In what ways can you turn to God when you are feeling overwhelmed with life?

Memory Verse

"Then the Lord turned to him and said, "Go in this might of yours and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian; I hereby commission you."

Judges 6:14

Closing Prayer

Heavenly and Almighty God, thank you for allowing us to gather in your name to learn more about you and how you reveal your purpose through ordinary people like Gideon. God, we are just like Gideon. We are not famous, we have flaws, we have imperfections. We doubt things in our life Lord, and sometimes we have questions. Lord, help us to remember that you are always guiding us. Enable us to have the wisdom and the insight to face our challenges with a pure heart and a strong mind. Lord, we are going to face challenges in our life just like Gideon. Help us to remember that we are nothing without you, and that we can find comfort and peace only through your Grace. Lord help us to be leaders of change in our world. Strengthen our faith so that we can fully submit our lives to your greatness. We thank you Lord that you love us for being ordinary people, and we pray in your glorious name that you make us into extraordinary leaders like Gideon. Amen.

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Accessed December 2013

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Call of Isaiah

Theme: Vision and Mission

UNIT 2, LESSON 8

AIM:

To understand the call and prophetic commission of Isaiah

Isaiah 6:1-13 (NRSV)

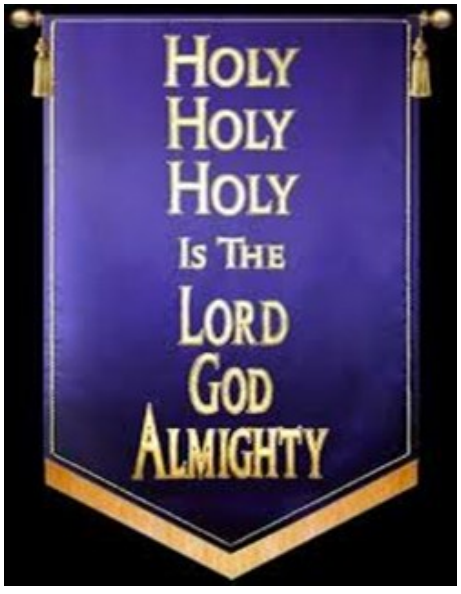
1 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw
the Lord sitting on a throne, high and
lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the
temple. 2 Seraphs were in attendance
above him; each had six wings: with two
they covered their faces, and with two
they covered their feet, and with two
they flew. 3 And one called to another
and said:

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
the whole earth is full of his glory."

4 The pivots on the thresholds shook at
the voices of those who called, and the
house filled with smoke. 5 And I said:
"Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of
unclean lips, and I live among a people
of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen
the King, the Lord of hosts!"

6 Then one of the seraphs flew to me,
holding a live coal that had been taken
from the altar with a pair of tongs. 7 The
seraph touched my mouth with it and
said: "Now that this has touched your
lips, your guilt has departed and your sin
is blotted out." 8 Then I heard the voice
of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send,
and who will go for us?" And I said,
"Here am I; send me!" 9 And he said,
"Go and say to this people:

'Keep listening, but do not comprehend;
keep looking, but do not understand.'
10 Make the mind of this people dull,
and stop their ears,
and shut their eyes,
so that they may not look with their
eyes,
and listen with their ears,
and comprehend with their minds,
and turn and be healed."
11 Then I said, "How long, O Lord?" And
he said:
"Until cities lie waste
without inhabitant,
and houses without people,
and the land is utterly desolate;
12 until the Lord sends everyone far
away,
and vast is the emptiness in the midst
of the land.
13 Even if a tenth part remain in it,
it will be burned again,
like a terebinth or an oak
whose stump remains standing
when it is felled."
The holy seed is its stump.



Student Introduction

In the Bible, we see how God dealt with individuals. First God spoke directly to people as He did to Moses. Then He sent prophets and angels as His messengers. Today, we are going to learn about the vision of Isaiah and his divine commission to become a prophet. Isaiah is one of the greatest prophets in the Bible. One day, he saw a vision of God seated on the throne in heaven. This vision changed his life.

A prophet is a person who speaks on behalf of God. He brings messages and warnings from God. Isaiah chapter 1- 5 describe Prophet Isaiah's vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. Chapter 6: 1-13 is about how the call of God reached Isaiah and made him a prophet. His commission was to go and speak to the stubborn people of Judah about their doom and the eventual restoration of a remnant.

Bible Exploration

Seraph touches Isaiah's mouth with a burning coal.

Key words

Holy: sacred, exalted, divine

Seraph: an angelic being with 3 pairs of wings

Mission: a calling or vocation

Commission: command or duty given to a person

Vision – A Call from God

Isaiah was a Jewish prophet of the 8th century B.C. The meaning of the word Isaiah is 'Yahweh is salvation'. Isaiah, the son of Amoz belonged to the royal family. His prophetic ministry continued during the reigns of 4 kings of Judah namely Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah.

In Isaiah chapter 6, we read about Isaiah's vision of God, himself and society. This vision was of great importance because it was a guiding force throughout Isaiah's prophetic ministry.

Vision Involves Worship

Isaiah was in the temple of God when he had the vision. He saw God seated on a high throne, with His robe filling the whole temple. Seraphs were in attendance, each with six wings. With two wings they covered their faces, with two wings they covered their feet and the other two wings were used for flying, ready to do God's will. They called out to one another and said, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory."

If angels are reverent as they wait on God, how much more should we approach God's throne with Godly fear?

Vision Purifies

In the presence of a holy God, Isaiah became aware of his sins and that of his people. He lamented over his unclean lips. He felt his lips were not pure enough to praise God in the presence of the seraphs. Isaiah humbled himself before God and his penitence made him worthy to stand in God's presence. Isaiah was purified, his sins were forgiven and he was separated for God's work. The word "Holy" is repeated thrice because the seraphs were declaring the holiness of God to the highest possible degree. Holy is an attribute used only for God..

A Holy Mission

When Isaiah saw God, he humbled himself and confessed that he was a man with unclean lips. The seraph then touched Isaiah's mouth with a burning coal and told him that he was cleansed from his sins. Now, Isaiah heard God's voice for the first time. God's work was to be done and He asked Isaiah 'Whom shall I send and who will go for us?' Isaiah answered without hesitation 'Here am I, send me.' Isaiah offered himself in response to God's call to go and speak to the wicked and stubborn people of Judah about their doom and eventual restoration of a remnant.

Activities

I	S	A	I	A	H	Q	M	U	M
E	E	K	T	A	A	D	O	T	X
J	N	A	E	L	C	N	U	M	N
O	D	K	W	P	P	V	T	O	O
U	H	O	L	Y	L	S	H	E	B
D	E	I	F	I	T	C	N	A	S
G	E	L	P	M	E	T	C	L	U
F	D	S	L	P	V	M	Z	O	L
S	E	R	A	P	H	I	M	R	P
K	B	A	L	A	O	C	L	D	M

COAL **LORD** **SERAPHIM** **HOLY**
ISAIAH **MOUTH** **TEMPLE** **UNCLEAN**
LIPS **SEND** **SANCTIFIED**

Let's Review

- Explain Isaiah's vision.
- How did Isaiah respond to God's call?
- How did vision lead to mission in Isaiah's life?

Values for Life

- People receive God's call in various ways.
- When we confess our sins before God, He is ready to work in our lives.
- Isaiah saw a vision of God and responded to God's call without any hesitation.

Faith in Action

Have you ever realized God's call in your life? If you hear God's passionate call 'follow me', how will you respond? Let us humble ourselves and submit to the Lord to be used for His mission.

The seraphs sang so powerfully in the presence of God that even the door posts of heaven were shaken. Shouldn't we also sing praises to God with the same passion and intensity? We have so many reasons for which we have to thank and praise God.

Memory Verse

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!"

Isaiah 6:8

Closing Prayer

Dear Lord, we realize that you are a Holy God, worthy of praise and worship. Help us to humble ourselves before You and make ourselves available for Your work on this earth. Cleanse us from our sins and make us worthy to stand before Your Holy presence. We pray for Your power and strength for all missionaries throughout the world who are doing your work. In Jesus' Name, we pray. Amen.

Jeremiah—A Prophet to the Nations

AIM:

Each one of us is important in God's eyes and that he has a plan and purpose for you. And that each one of us is uniquely made.

Theme : A Purposeful Life UNIT 3, LESSON 9

Jeremiah 1:1-19 (NRSV)

1 The words of Jeremiah son of Hilkiah, of the priests who were in Anathoth in
the land of Benjamin, 2 to whom the word of the Lord came in the days of King
Josiah son of Amon of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. 3 It came also in
the days of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, and until the end of the elev-
enth year of King Zedekiah son of Josiah of Judah, until the captivity of Jerusalem
in the fifth month.
4 Now the word of the Lord came to me saying,
5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I
consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations."
6 Then I said, "Ah, Lord God! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a
boy." 7 But the Lord said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a boy'; for you shall go
to all to whom I send you, and you shall speak whatever I command you. 8 Do
not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord."
9 Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the Lord said to
me, "Now I have put my words in your mouth.
10 See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to
pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant."
11 The word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Jeremiah, what do you see?" And I
said, "I see a branch of an almond tree." 12 Then the Lord said to me, "You have
seen well, for I am watching over my word to perform it." 13 The word of the
Lord came to me a second time, saying, "What do you see?" And I said, "I see a
boiling pot, tilted away from the north."
14 Then the Lord said to me: Out of the north disaster shall break out on all the
inhabitants of the land. 15 For now I am calling all the tribes of the kingdoms of
the north, says the Lord; and they shall come and all of them shall set their
thrones at the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem, against all its surrounding walls
and against all the cities of Judah. 16 And I will utter my judgments against them,
for all their wickedness in forsaking me; they have made offerings to other gods,
and worshiped the works of their own hands. 17 But you, gird up your loins;
stand up and tell them everything that I command you. Do not break down be-
fore them, or I will break you before them. 18 And I for my part have made you
today a fortified city, an iron pillar, and a bronze wall, against the whole land—
against the kings of Judah, its princes, its priests, and the people of the land. 19
They will fight against you; but they shall not prevail against you, for I am with
you, says the Lord, to deliver you.

Teacher's Preparation

This lesson is about the purpose of our lives and it's shown to us through the life of one of the prophets whose ministry by human standards might be measured a failure.
By God's standards it was a great success because Almighty looks at it differently.
In the context of Mathew 16:24-26; Jeremiah took up his responsibility/calling and denied himself and followed the Lord without considering what the world thought.
Start by asking kids about what they think God's purpose is for each on them.

Student Introduction

When we are called by God to do his ministry, it might not be the easiest thing to do by setting aside all the priorities we might have and take up the priorities God has set aside for us.

In her poem, "*It's not always easy*", famous Christian writer *Glenda Fulton Davis* portraits it clearly:

It's not always easy to smile and be nice
When we are called to sacrifice.
It's not always easy to put others first
Especially when tired and feeling our worst.
It's not always easy to do the Father's will.
It wasn't so easy to climb Calvary's hill.
But we, as His children, should learn to obey;
Not seeking our own but seeking His way.
It's not always easy to fight the good fight.
But it is always good, and it is always right

Catherine and William Booth

Let us learn about two missionaries who were called for His work and were used by God to do great things.

Catherine and William Booth lived in London in the middle of the nineteenth century, at the dawn of the Industrial Revolution. The Industrial Revolution had its own vices in England, like unemployment, labor abuse, forceful child employment and homelessness. Both of them were actively preaching the Gospel in many churches then. For the first 10 years of their marriage, William kept asking himself, "What should I do with my life. What is God calling me to do?"

Late one night, he took a walk through the slums of London's East End. Every fifth building was a pub. Most had steps at the bar so little children could climb up and order alcoholic drinks. That night he told Catherine how it seemed that God was calling him to do something for those children and their parents of London. He didn't need to go to some foreign country to find people who needed help. They were right there in front of him.

Later that year, 1865, the couple opened the "Christian Mission" in London's poorer districts. This grew into what we know as the Salvation Army. The Salvation Army went to the poorest areas, provided them food and shelter, and they tirelessly advocated the rights of factory workers, working women and homeless children.

Bible Exploration

Jeremiah was a prophet who ministered during the reign of a good king, King Josiah. His ministry lasted some 40 years. He was a contemporary of Habakkuk and in his later years of prophetic ministry, Ezekiel.

Over 40 years he prophesied endlessly. Jeremiah is the longest book in the Bible *(with the most words)* and is devoted to telling Judah about their judgment. Yet he remained committed and faithful to his calling. Jeremiah did exactly what God told him to do. Despite tremendous obstacles, he persevered. He watched the fall of his great city and, despite his intense sorrow, never wavered in his perspective of God's goodness.

Jeremiah's ministry lasted about 40 years!

It's important to realize that God does not always call us to what men might call "success." Instead, he calls us to be faithful. Though Jeremiah's ministry did not inspire repentance and though he ultimately saw the demise and captivity of his people; he did not abandon God's mission for his life. He was faithful, despite massive sorrow.

Let's now look in detail on the key points from the Bible portion.
Jeremiah was timid due to young age and inexperience (v.6), but he was:

- Very dedicated to God
- True Patriot
- Fearless and
- Faithful

The Call of Jeremiah is what you will see in (v.9-10), the divine endowment and commissioning;

"Build and plant" is the positiveness, which we all should have as Christians. It's a call for each one of us to build a life on good values. That is what we see in Paul's life in New Testament as God strengthened him in his ministry.

"Uproot and tear down" and *"destroy and overthrow"* seems negative but it's only pointing out that we have to eliminate evil and wrong practices that is in our society.

After God commissions Jeremiah as a prophet, God gives him three promises. You will see these visions are often spoken by God (or His Angel) to introduce a prophetic vision to Jeremiah.

1. *The almond tree* (v.11-12). The budding of the almond tree announced the coming of spring. Jeremiah would do ministry under some very difficult circumstances. It would not always look as though God is at work. Jeremiah needed to be reassured that God is at work to fulfill His word.

2. *The boiling pot* (v.13-16). The pot was coming out of the north *(Babylon was a nation in what is now Iraq)*. God is saying to Jeremiah that He is going to judge and discipline His people for their sin. God is not going to continue to look the other way. The main sin that God accuses the people of is idolatry. They have

forsaken Him and turned to idols that their hands made.
This is a warning to us!
God has unbelievable patience and is longsuffering, but a day of judgment comes. God is Holy. He can't allow disobedience to go on indefinitely.
3. *The city, a pillar and a wall* (v.17-19) God doesn't leave Jeremiah to do this ministry alone. God strengthens Jeremiah, so that he can be faithful. God assures him again of his protection and to stand against abuse and persecution.

Finally v18-19 shows us the;

- Divine Defense
- Divine Protection
- Divine Presence

We might have looked only at a small portion from Jeremiah's life in this lesson, but we should take away the following from Jeremiah's life:
Jeremiah knew that Almighty God was in complete control of events. Many of his countrymen did not believe Jeremiah, and some of them continued to undermine his messages, which were directly from the Creator.
But God had said: *"You have seen well, for I am watching over my word to perform it."* (v.12)
Our Creator has a definite plan and purpose for the salvation of mankind. Few things in this world really make sense unless we grasp that fact.

Activities

1. Find a partner in the class (Teacher help to group kids in twos or threes). Share how you want to be more faithful to God. Also, pray for each other that each of you can be faithful, that when trials come you will not abandon your mission, and pray that God grows your passion for His Word and the ministry He is giving you. Help your partner by reminding each other of your decisions sometime this week. Get a phone number if you need to, and be ready to answer to one another next week about this promise you're making today.
2. All of us have a talent hidden within us; so let's see if one of your hidden talents is writing. Write a *Poem* or *Short Story* or an *Essay* on the *"Purpose of your life through Christ"*. Make this a take-home assignment.

Lesson Review

1. Jeremiah was from _____?

2. Jeremiah's dad was _____.

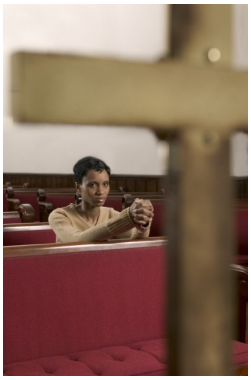
3. What did Jeremiah think about being a prophet?

4. When did the Word of the Lord come to Jeremiah? Why did God call Jeremiah? When does verse 3 say his ministry ended?

5. What visions does God give Jeremiah to confirm his calling? What do these visions mean, according to the Lord? What sins did God say His people had committed?

Values For Life

"Our God's Word is always reliable and trustworthy and whatever God says will happen for sure. It might not be on our timetable or plans, but God will always be faithful to keep His word to his kids."



Faith In Action

1. Do you believe that the Almighty has a plan for your life?
2. Re-imagine the call of Jeremiah, as if God were calling you, and you least expected it. On two columns, write

   What would be your excuses?

   What would be your reasons to go?
3. Write two positive and two negative aspects about yourself.

Memory Verse

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations."

Jeremiah 1:5

Closing Prayer

Almighty Lord, who has given each one of us a purpose for our life. We appreciate highly allowing us to gather as a Sunday school class and learn about the prophecy and faith of Jeremiah. How he thrived through his life even when called at a very young age and even though in worldly words his work might not have been a success. Give us the spirit, the mind, and eagerness to love and trust you. Help each one of us to believe in the purpose of life that you have set for us. Help our dedication to you and our Christian life never be unraveled. Lord, thank you for giving your son Jesus Christ. Make us a blessing to many in our family, community, school, church and wherever we are sent by you and make us the soldiers holding up your torch for your kingdom. Amen

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Daniel in a Foreign Land

AIM:

To have the awareness that we are God's children in every experience of our lives and we must remain firm in our faith and commitment even when our life is at risk.

Theme : Upholding Faith and Commitment in the midst of adversity

UNIT 3, LESSON 11

Daniel 1:1-21 (NRSV)

1 In the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. **2** The Lord let King Jehoiakim of Judah fall into his power, as well as some of the vessels of the house of God. These he brought to the land of Shinar and placed the vessels in the treasury of his gods.

3 Then the king commanded his palace master Ashpenaz to bring some of the Israelites of the royal family and of the nobility, **4** young men without physical defect and handsome, versed in every branch of wisdom, endowed with knowledge and insight, and competent to serve in the king's palace; they were to be taught the literature and language of the Chaldeans. **5** The king assigned them a daily portion of the royal rations of food and wine. They were to be educated for three years, so that at the end of that time they could be stationed in the king's court. **6** Among them were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, from the tribe of Judah. **7** The palace master gave them other names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego.

8 But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the royal rations of food and wine; so he asked the palace master to allow him not to defile himself. **9** Now God allowed Daniel to receive favor and compassion from the palace master. **10** The palace master said to Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king; he has appointed your food and your drink. If he should see you in poorer condition than the other young men of your own age, you would endanger my head with the king." **11** Then Daniel asked the guard whom the palace master had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: **12** "Please test your servants for ten days. Let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. **13** You can then compare our appearance with the appearance of the young men who eat the royal rations, and deal with your servants according to what you observe." **14** So he agreed to this proposal and tested them for ten days. **15** At the end of ten days it was observed that they appeared better and fatter than all the young men who had been eating the royal rations. **16** So the guard continued to withdraw their royal rations and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables. **17** To these four young men God gave knowledge and skill in every aspect of literature and wisdom; Daniel also had insight into all visions and dreams.

18 At the end of the time that the king had set for them to be brought in, the palace master brought them into the presence of Nebuchadnezzar, **19** and the king spoke with them. And among them all, no one was found to compare with

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they were stationed in the king's court. **20** In every matter of wisdom and understanding concerning which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom. **21** And Daniel continued there until the first year of King Cyrus.

Teacher's Preparation

Daniel comes from Hebrew meaning "God is my judge"

Jerusalem, the capital of the Southern Kingdom Judah was captured by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar in 597 BCE during the reign of king Jehoiachin. Daniel was one of the Hebrew boys taken into exile in Babylon. King Nebuchadnezzar decided to train some young Hebrew boys from the royal lineage who were physically fit, handsome and wise to serve in the palace court. Of these boys, four of them; Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah stood out as God's chosen people because they remained faithful to the Jewish law while serving a foreign king. They chose to eat vegetables and drink water rather than defiling themselves with the rich and fattening food and wine that was served from the King's table. Even though the palace officials believed that they must eat the "choice food" in order to be physically strong and wise, the four young men proved them wrong and were found to be more superior in intelligence and wisdom than the young men who ate the palace food. God's favor was shown upon these four men because they remained steadfast in their faith. Although they had the opportunity to succumb to the worldly temptations of the palace, was they chose to live simply and humbly serving the God of Israel. The aim of the lesson is to make the students understand that if you remain steadfast in your faith, God will provide and watch over His chosen people at all times.

Student Introduction

Have you ever been in a situation where you feel like you need to give into the temptations of the world? Were you ever given opportunity to share your faith in God with others?

Tim Tebow used his career as a professional NFL player to witness his faith and commitment to God. Tim witnessed his faith by wearing John 3:16 on his eye black during a championship game. This act generated over 90 million Google searches. Although Tim was criticized for his acts of faith, he continued to wear different Bible verses. What does Tim Tebow's life teach us about our witnessing?

Tim Tebow

Picture Source: http://www.cbssports.com/mcc/blogs/entry/22475988/34284646)

Bible Exploration

The Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar, commanded his palace master Ashpenaz to train some of the Hebrew boys to be specially trained in Babylon to serve in the King's court. Of the men chosen, four stood out for their courage and willingness to profess their faith in the midst of adversity. The men were given new names by the chief official. To Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah the name Shadrach; to Mishael the name Meshach and to Azariah the name Abednego. As a part of the King's order, they were offered food and wine from the King's table. However, Daniel did not want to defile himself by indulging in the royal food and wine, so he asked the chief official for permission to not eat the palace food. Although refusing to follow the king's order meant death, they decided to remain steadfast in their faith and religious practices rather than polluting their bodies with food that was not prepared according to the Jewish law. In Leviticus Ch:11, we read that the Israelites were not allowed to eat the meat of certain "un-clean" animals. Also, in Leviticus 17:12, we can see that the Israelites were forbidden to eat meat that was not slaughtered according to the Jewish laws.

Picture Source: http://www.jw.org/en/publications/books/bible-stories/part-4-israels-first-king-to-captivity-in-babylon/story-75-four-boys-in-babylon/

The chief official feared that if he granted Daniel's wish, the King would become angry and kill the chief official for not taking proper care of the four men. Daniel then asked for a test for ten days. He asked that they be given nothing to eat and drink but vegetables and water. The test would compare the appearance of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah with the other young men who were eating the royal food. At the end of the ten days, the four men looked healthier and superior in appearance than the men who ate the food given by the palace. God blessed the men by giving them knowledge and understanding and Daniel could understand dreams and visions. The time had come for the chief official to present the men to King Nebuchadnezzar and "the king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah" and they were stationed in the King's court. They were found to be 10 times better in wisdom and intelligence than all the enchanters and magicians in the whole kingdom.

Activities

1. Match the Following

1,.	Daniel	A	Abednego
2.	Hananiah	B	Meshach
3.	Mishael	C	Belteshazzar
4.	Azariah	D	Shadrach

2. What are some of the qualities of these young men which we can relate to our personal life?

3. Imagine you had to leave you family and go to a new place. How would you ensure that you continue to grow in faith? Share your response with your classmates.

Lesson Review

1. What qualities did King Nebuchadnezzar find favorable in the young men?

2. How strong was the faith and obedience of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah? How was their faith tested?

3. How did Daniel respond when he was offered worldly pleasures in the palace?

Values For Life

1. If we remain steadfast in our faith , God will bless us immensely no matter how difficult the circumstances are
2. We must always have unwavering faith in God

Faith In Action

Although they did not succumb to the worldly acts at the palace, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah sustained and grew in their devotion to God. Even though they did not eat the food of the palace, they still gained strength through God. Challenge yourself on how you would react in this situation. Oftentimes, we tend to pick worldly pleasures over Godly direction which weakens us instead of strengthening us.

Memory Verse

But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the royal rations of food and wine; so he asked the palace master to allow him not to defile himself.

Daniel 1:8

Closing Prayer

Lord, thank you for giving us the opportunity to learn about how faith in you was practiced in the Bible and in modern times. Help us to remember you in times of adversity and to show our faith in whatever platform we are given. Amen

Naboth's Vineyard

Theme: Stand up for truth

UNIT 3, LESSON 12

AIM:

To learn that one should always stand up for truth and not get carried away with unnecessary desires.

By abusing his royal power, King Ahab broke the 9th and 10th commandments: coveting Naboth's vineyard and killing Naboth by arranging false witnesses thus subjecting him and his

1 King 21:1-29 (NRSV)

21 Later the following events took place: Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard in Jezreel, beside the palace of King Ahab of Samaria. 2 And Ahab said to Naboth, "Give me your vineyard, so that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near my house; I will give you a better vineyard for it; or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its value in money." 3 But Naboth said to Ahab, "The LORD forbid that I should give you my ancestral inheritance." 4 Ahab went home resentful and sullen because of what Naboth the Jezreelite had said to him; for he had said, "I will not give you my ancestral inheritance." He lay down on his bed, turned away his face, and would not eat.

5 His wife Jezebel came to him and said, "Why are you so depressed that you will not eat?" 6 He said to her, "Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and said to him, 'Give me your vineyard for money; or else, if you prefer, I will give you another vineyard for it'; but he answered, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'" 7 His wife Jezebel said to himself, "Do you now govern Israel? Get up, eat some food, and be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."

8 So she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal; she sent the letters to the elders and the nobles who lived with Naboth in his city.

9 She wrote in the letters, "Proclaim a fast, and seat Naboth at the head of the assembly; 10 seat two scoundrels opposite him, and have them bring a charge against him, saying, 'You have cursed God and the king.' Then take him out, and stone him to death." 11 The men of his city, the elders and the nobles who lived in his city, did as Jezebel had sent word to them. Just as it was written in the letters that she had sent to them, 12 they proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth at the head of the assembly. 13 The two scoundrels came in and sat opposite him; and the scoundrels brought a charge against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, "Naboth cursed God and the king." So they took him outside the city, and stoned him to death. 14 Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth has been stoned; he is dead."

15 As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been
stoned and was dead, Jezebel said to Ahab, "Go, take
possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite,
which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth
is not alive, but dead." 16 As soon as Ahab heard that
Naboth was dead, Ahab set out to go down to the
vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession
of it.

17 Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the
Tishbite, saying: 18 Go down to meet King Ahab of
Israel, who rules[a] in Samaria; he is now in the
vineyard of Naboth, where he has gone to take
possession. 19 You shall say to him, "Thus says
the LORD: Have you killed, and also taken
possession?" You shall say to him, "Thus says
the LORD: In the place where dogs licked up the
blood of Naboth, dogs will also lick up your blood."

20 Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, O my
enemy?" He answered, "I have found you. Because
you have sold yourself to do what is evil in the sight
of the LORD, 21 I will bring disaster on you; I will
consume you, and will cut off from Ahab every male,
bond or free, in Israel; 22 and I will make your house
like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat, and like
the house of Baasha son of Ahijah, because you have
provoked me to anger and have caused Israel to
sin.23 Also concerning Jezebel the LORD said, 'The
dogs shall eat Jezebel within the bounds of
Jezreel.' 24 Anyone belonging to Ahab who dies in the
city the dogs shall eat; and anyone of his who dies in
the open country the birds of the air shall eat."
25 (Indeed, there was no one like Ahab, who sold
himself to do what was evil in the sight of the LORD,
urged on by his wife Jezebel. 26 He acted most
abominably in going after idols, as the Amorites had
done, whom the LORD drove out before the
Israelites.)

27 When Ahab heard those words, he tore his clothes
and put sackcloth over his bare flesh; he fasted, lay in
the sackcloth, and went about dejectedly. 28 Then the
word of the LORD came to Elijah the
Tishbite: 29 "Have you seen how Ahab has humbled
himself before me? Because he has humbled himself
before me, I will not bring the disaster in his days;
but in his son's days I will bring the disaster on his
house."

Student Introduction to the Lesson:

⇒ Is there anyone here who has never told a lie?

⇒ Has anyone ever lied to you?

⇒ Do you think there is a scale for truth?

⇒ Do you believe that you should always tell the truth no matter what or can you bend truth as needed if it's done for a good cause?

⇒ Do you think cheating in sports is okay if the team collectively agrees to do it?

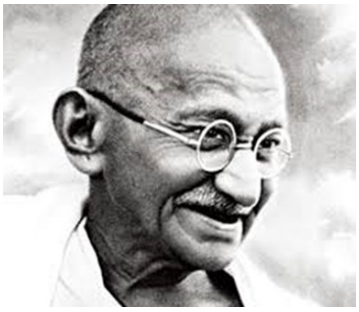
Please follow this link and check out how an honesty testing in various cities conducted by *Reader's Digest* turned out: http://www.rd.com/slideshows/most-honest-cities-lost-wallet-test/#slideshow=slide1

This shows a certain pattern and that is, the world still values the virtues more, even though the test showed that not everyone returned the wallet. That's the sad part of it! We have to make sure not to keep or take that is not ours and have to absolutely respect other's choice if it's based on faith.

Students can listen to excerpts from Mahatma Gandhi's story. Let's look at the life of Mahatma Gandhi the Father of the largest democratic nation, India, as outlined in his autobiography *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*.An online version of the book is available. It's a great read and gives us the insights into the life of Gandhiji in the 1920s. http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00litlinks/gandhi/

Excerpts from Gandhi's autobiography (Part 1 Chapter 8)

"A relative and I became fond of smoking. Not that we saw any good in smoking, or were enamored of the smell of a cigarette. We simply imagined a sort of pleasure in emitting clouds of smoke from our mouths. My uncle had the habit, and when we saw him smoking, we thought we should copy his example. But we had no money. So we began pilfering stumps of cigarettes thrown away by my uncle. The stumps, however, were not always available, and could not emit much smoke either. So we began to steal coppers from the servant's pocket money in order to purchase Indian cigarettes.



The other theft was committed when I was fifteen. In this case I stole a bit of gold out of my meat-eating brother's armlet. This brother had run into a debt of about twenty-five rupees. He had on his arm an armlet of solid gold. It was not difficult to clip a bit out of it. Well, it was done, and the debt cleared. But this became more than I could bear. I resolved never to steal again. I also made up my mind to confess it to my father. But I did not dare to speak. I was afraid of the pain that I should cause him. But I felt that the risk should be taken; that there could not be a cleansing without a confession.

I decided at last to write out of the confession, to submit it to my father, and ask his forgiveness. I wrote it on a slip of paper and handed it to him myself. In this note not only did I confess my guilt, but I asked adequate punishment for it, and closed with a request to him not to punish him for my offence. I also pledged myself never to steal in future.

"I was trembling as I handed the confession to my father. He read it through, and pearl-drops trickled down his cheeks, wetting the paper, for a moment he closed his eyes in thought and then tore up the note. He had sat up to read it. He again lay down. I also cried. I could see my father's agony. It is still so vivid in my mind. Those pearl-drops of love cleansed my heart, and washed my sin away. Only he who has experienced such love can know what it is."

The moral of the story is that when the world lures us into a web of falsehoods, it is hard to be truthful and it is painful at times, though it is the right thing to do. Like Gandhiji's father, God's love will cleanse us of our sin when we confess. Like Gandhiji, we also need to have that innate love for truth and pursue it no matter what happens. Christ said that, "He Is the Way, the Truth and the Life". Then, as Christians when we lie we are moving away from our Savior. Reflecting truth in our actions is part of being a good witness.

Bible Exploration

Following are the key points from the Bible portion we read and it is the story of a person, Naboth, who stood for the truth without fearing the consequences.

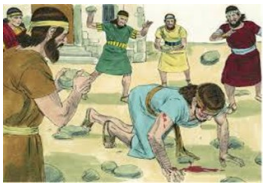
⇒ Naboth's vineyard was the inheritance of his ancestors.

⇒ King Ahab had an eye on this vineyard and asked for it. Naboth refused.

⇒ King Ahab also knew he was breaking the 10th Commandment.

⇒ Naboth didn't sell the vineyard for rightful reasons as he was being true to God. As in Numbers 36:7; God had forbidden selling inherited properties.

⇒ Ahab was sulking and refusing to eat and seeing this, his wife, Queen Jezebel, being a Phoenician, got Naboth killed by cheating. She misused the royal authority to arrange stoning of Naboth through false witnesses.



⇒ Ahab, knowing that Naboth was killed, could have repented before God. But, the king didn't respect God's laws and was blind to the truth of God.

⇒ King Ahab's coveting of neighbor's vineyard overpowered his conscience. The king immediately took possession of the vineyard, thus showing his cruelty.

⇒ Finally, God's justice caught up with him. Prophet Elijah, through the word of the Lord, confronted Ahab and prophesized the consequences.

⇒ As we saw, God was very patient with Ahab and Jezebel. He gave them many opportunities to repent and turn to Him. But Ahab insisted on having things his way.

⇒ Breaking of 9th and 10th Commandments resulted in the breakup of his dynasty and the tragic end of Jezebel.

⇒ After Prophet Elijah's prophecy Ahab was remorseful. Thus, God seeing Ahab humbling himself, decided to spare Ahab of the judgment and bring it about in his son's time.

⇒ Notice that Ahab and Jezebel's sin brought terrible consequences for their children. They lived wicked lives in front of their children. Thus, their children followed their wicked behavior, and they too were punished (1 Kings 22:52, 2 Kings 2,3,9).

⇒ Our sin ALWAYS ruins things, and it always affects other people.

⇒ Even though God is just, He must punish sin because He is holy. He also loves us and is willing to give us several opportunities to turn from our sin and to turn to Him.

Times have passed but life situations are very much the same today. There is so much each of us wants. We crave for something that someone else has. Our selfish desires force us to abandon truthful methods and acquire what we want, no matter what the consequences.

Sometimes we don't even have to speak in order to lie; just a nod of our head or even silence (refusing to speak up the truth) is a lie. Sometimes it's easier not to tell the truth in order to stay away from troubles. One lie will always lead to more and more to cover up. It is not simple and easy. It is important that we are honest in school and in the community.

There will be always complications if we stand for truth. But truth always wins. God is a just God and He is the absolute truth and expects the same from all His children. Being truthful is not easy. To follow the path of truth, we need to seek help from the word of God and have a prayerful living.

"A lie gets halfway around the world before the truth has a chance to get its pants on."

Winston Churchill

"If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything."

Mark Twain

Activities

How can you demonstrate the qualities of a truthful person in the following situations?

A. **You promised your parents that you would clean up your room, but you were watching your favorite show instead, on your smart phone.**

Be honest and apologize to your parents that you were watching the show.

B. **You bought three chocolate bars from a store but the store clerk only charged for two instead of three.**

Let the store clerk know that you have been charged for only two chocolates and pay for the third one.

C. **The rating for a particular movie was "14A" which means you have to have an adult accompany you. You still get in and watch it since no one asked for your age.**

You know you are not old enough. Be honest and do not watch the movie.

Let's Review

1. Write the answers and then circle them in the word search

a.Who was the owner of the vineyard? Naboth

b.Who wanted the vineyard? Ahab

c.What did he want to grow there? Vegetables

d.What was King Ahab's wife's name? Jezebel

e.How was Naboth killed? Stoned

f. Whom did the Lord send to King Ahab? Elijah

g.What did King Ahab do in the eyes of the Lord? Evil

B A S Z G Z D D Y P M L F L A
E R O V P R L M G X E B H D D
N Z M D O I J E Z E B E L Z L
G X Q D V F Z W T K M F W X Z
L U M E S F S A M D D D F C I
K T N B E B N V T M I O Q K W
P J A O L X F K V C T J Z E H
H H V D B I B I D B B X B L F
A M L V A H F T M S W Y R I X
Z W P A T D T U B L M P P J I
Q R H O E H B W N B S A C A N
Q C B N G Z E X V O X U W H A
L A O O E K J V U L A A G M F
N T R L V C K Z N N O G K K S
S N X T R J B V X T R W E W X

2. Why was King Ahab resentful and sullen after talking to Naboth?

King Ahab coveted Naboth's vineyard and Naboth refused to give it as the law of the Lord forbid to give away ancestral inheritance.

3. How did Jezebel conspire to get Naboth's vineyard?

Jezebel wrote letters to the elders and nobles using King Ahab's seal. She asked them to falsely accuse Naboth of cursing God and the king and punishing him by stoning to death.

4. Whom did God send to King Ahab? What was God's judgment on Ahab?

   God send prophet Elijah to King Ahab. He told that God would destroy him and his family for all the evil he had done.

5. How did prophet Elijah's prophecy change Ahab's behavior?

   Ahab tore his clothes. He put on sackcloth and fasted. He lay in sackcloth and went around in a sad manner.

6. How did King Ahab's remorse change God's judgment?

   When God saw that Ahab had humbled himself he said that he would spare Ahab of the judgment and instead bring it about in his son's time

Values for Life

- We should always stand up for the truth.
- We should always make our decisions that lead us in the path of truth. Listen to your conscience and have faith.
- Our family and friends will respect and trust us when we are truthful and honest.

Faith in Action

- Mistakes can happen but we should have the courage and willingness to confess to God. This will help us move closer to God.
- We need to consider the implications of our life not only for our families but also for the community we live in.
- We need to work hard on being truthful with the help of the Word of God.

Memory Verse

[1] O Lord, who may abide in your tent? Who may dwell on your holy hill? [2] Those who walk blamelessly, and do what is right, and speak the truth from their heart.

Psalm 15: 1-2

Closing Prayer

Almighty Lord, we thank you wholeheartedly for allowing us to gather as a Sunday school class again, when many around the world don't even have your word in them. As we take everything for granted, pardon our wrongdoings: our dishonesty, our lies that we use for our benefit and for coveting things that belong to others. Forgive us for hurting others and help us to remember that every time we hurt others, we are actually hurting you. Thank you, Jesus for taking away our sins. Make us a blessing to many in our family, community, school and church. In Jesus' name. Amen

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