

Preschool
Playhouse®

teacher

Partners
in a New Creation

DEAR PRESCHOOL TEACHER

Summer is here and all the sun and fun that goes with it! Last summer, we were still dealing with the pandemic, but could see hope for better days ahead. This summer, my prayer is that you can enjoy the time with your little ones with lots of hugs, playtime, and stories of Jesus' love for them. I hope this season will bring much joy to you and the little ones you serve.

In this quarter, we will be focusing on God's deliverance and restoration. How apropos for the times in which we are living! God sees our struggles and always has a plan to bring redemption and hope to difficult situations. We will also look at Jesus, and how He brings healing, peace, and salvation and is preparing a wonderful place and great reward for His children. What a message of hope we all need to hear after our world has been turned upside down!

At UMI, Inc., our mission is for children to know and love God's Word. As an educator, I love to teach God's Word *and* help kids succeed in their academics. Your lesson plans contain a section called "ABC Connect." This is a teaching tip or information on how an activity can help prepare preschoolers for kindergarten and engage them in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) activities. Feel free to use these ideas in other areas of your lessons, personalizing them to your students' needs and interests.

The *Teaching Success Kit* includes activities and crafts that will help your children to learn letters, sounds, and numbers, develop fine and gross motor skills, and will also introduce basic STEAM activities and prepare them for kindergarten, all while the Scripture is being taught in a fresh and fun way.

The *Preschool Playhouse*® student and teacher curricula are designed to help you present Bible stories and scriptural principles to preschoolers so that they will know the love the Lord Jesus has for them, will seek to follow Him, and begin a life of telling others about His love. We start with the Scripture passages chosen by the International Uniform Lesson Series. From there, you will find lesson objectives which help you to see what we hope for the students to learn and how they will demonstrate their understanding of what has been taught each week.

Teaching aids, such as *Craft Kingdom*®, *Scripture Scenes*®, and the *Teaching Success Kit*, are sold separately. The *Sing-Along* CD is provided in the *Teaching Success Kit*. These wonderful materials enhance the learning experience by reinforcing the lesson concepts through intentional and fun activities, and hopefully make your job easier!

This summer, it is my prayer that you will experience hope, freedom, and joy as you serve your little ones! Jesus loves you and them so very much.

Praying for you each and every Sunday,

Brooke Zuidema
Preschool Playhouse® Editor

ONE-HOUR CLASS SCHEDULE

ACTIVITY	LENGTH	PURPOSE
OPEN THE LESSON: Focused Learning Center	10 minutes	Informal learning activities are provided, and the lesson concept is introduced.
PRESENT THE SCRIPTURES: Life Application Story (student folder—page 1)	6 minutes	The theme is introduced through an age-appropriate story for early readers while helping the teacher determine what the students already know about the topic.
READING THE BIBLE STORY: Bible Story (student folder—page 2)	7 minutes	The Bible Story is written so that early readers can read along. Discussion questions and presentation ideas help the students retell the Bible Story to show their understanding.
EXPLORE THE MEANING: Memory Verse	5 minutes	The students will memorize or enhance their understanding of the Memory Verse.
Action Time	5 minutes	The students will use large muscles to engage in games, songs, and activities that reinforce the lesson theme.
NEXT STEPS FOR APPLICATION: Knowing and Growing (student folder—pages 3 and 4)	12 minutes	These pencil and paper activities correspond to the Life Application Story and the Bible Story. Ideas for discussion are included.
Worship Time	5 minutes	These activities reinforce the topic and aid children in sharing the lesson with parents.
Craft Kingdom®	10 minutes	The children will create age-appropriate crafts that help them focus on God in their lives.

NOTES

T4T—TIPS FOR TEACHERS

TEACHING WITH GOD'S PURPOSE IN MIND

Do you remember why you became a Sunday School teacher? Did you follow this path because you saw an opportunity to share your skills and talents in a way that allowed you to serve your church family? Maybe you felt a desire to help young children grow spiritually? Then again, could it be that you felt your heartstrings experiencing the drawing of God's Holy Spirit, calling you to become a teacher of His Word? By whatever means you found yourself standing in the shoes of a Sunday School teacher of God's little ones, know you are standing in a mighty and very important place.

While there may be times when you find yourself feeling unsure or even a little intimidated, it is key and critical to your success as a Sunday School teacher to understand the importance of your role in the Body of Christ. Each time you stand before a class of young children, you are a vessel whose purpose is to impart knowledge concerning the Lord Jesus and His kingdom to future disciples, ministers, prophets, and, yes, even future Sunday School teachers.

As a Sunday School teacher, you are enriching, as well as nurturing, a very special and cherished segment in the Body of Christ—God's young children. The love, compassion, and witness you show your students allows them to experience an aspect of Christian ministry and service that have the capacity to multiply in ways you may never know.

Always be mindful that the students you have taught, are teaching, and will teach can experience God's love, and ultimately your service can result in countless lives being transformed and changed forever.

So your question might be, "How do I know I'm teaching with God's purpose in mind?" Taking note of the following suggestions will surely add clarity in helping to answer this question.

First, continue to pray as you prepare your Sunday School lessons. Ask the Lord to provide creative and stimulating delivery of your lessons.

Second, prepare each week with your particular students in mind. Remember that children are individuals and have varied styles of learning. As often as you can, try to meet those needs with love and care.

Third, always try to enhance your lessons by putting Scripture to song and creating games. This will help students who may not fall into the category of "traditional learners" feel comfortable.

Finally, understand that your ability to teach is a spiritual gift from God. First Corinthians 12:4–11 tells us that these gifts have been given for "the common good" for all those who comprise the Body of Christ.

The answer to whether or not you are teaching with God's purpose in mind is clear. If, through your service as a Sunday School teacher, you are using your gift for the purpose of building and uplifting the Body of Christ, know with a resounding YES that you are! You can also rejoice in knowing that the Lord is pleased with your service.

Quarter At-A-Glance June 2022

Partners in a New Creation

Members of Christ's body have the grand opportunity to be co-laborers with the ever-abiding Spirit of God in reconciling, re-creating, and rightly restoring all things in the eternal reign of God. This summer quarter considers ways in which believers are partners with God in creation.

UNIT 1 • God Delivers and Restores

This unit has four lessons. Using three chapters of Isaiah, this study explores God's predictions of the future destruction of Babylon and deliverance for Israel. These events were evidence of God's power at work to grant mercy and redemption to the penitent and to restore God's people to a state of peace and prosperity.

UNIT 2 • The Word: The Agent of Creation

This unit has five lessons taken from John's Gospel. The lessons stress how the Creating Word, at work in and with humanity, became flesh, healed the sick, saved the lost, resurrected the dead and granted—through the Holy Spirit—peace.

UNIT 3 • The Great Hope of the Saints

In this unit, a four-lesson study draws from Revelation to help learners envision the new home and city God has prepared for the redeemed. In this new heavenly environment, the saints will enjoy the new water of eternal life.

NOTHING IS HIDDEN

WEEKLY THEME:

GOD FORETELLS DESTRUCTION

BASED ON:

Isaiah 47:10–15, NIV

KEY VERSE:

Isaiah 47:15, NIV

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Knowledge: Preschoolers will identify the order of the events of the Bible Story.

Attitude: Preschoolers will recognize that their sins are forgiven by Jesus.

Action: Preschoolers will pray for forgiveness when they do something wrong.

DEAR TEACHER

God punished the Babylonians for being unmerciful to the Israelites. God sees the good and bad we do, too. We need to express sorrow for our sin to Him.

SUPPLY LIST

SECTION	MATERIALS
Focused Learning Center	An object that represents sin and one that represents goodness (possibly two paper hearts, one with scribbles on it and the other clean)
Action Time	Beanbags, materials to build a tall structure, such as bed pillows or blocks
Worship Time	“Be Careful Little Eyes What You See” (author unknown)

OPEN THE LESSON

Focused Learning Center

Before class: Hide the hearts.

During class: Say, “I’ve hidden two hearts, one that represents bad choices, and the other good choices. Go find them.” Let the children look. Discuss how God sees the good choices and the bad choices that we make.

PRESENT THE SCRIPTURES

Life Application Story

(Distribute student folders.)

Before reading, say to the children, “How do you feel after you’ve been unkind?” Let the children share. Say, “There is a girl in today’s story that has been mean and now she feels bad. Let’s find out what she does to help herself feel better.”

While reading, pause after the sentence, “Do you know what an eraser is?” Ask the same question to the children. Have them describe what an eraser does. Continue reading.

After reading, say to the children, “How is praying for forgiveness like an eraser?” (It helps to erase your sad feelings. It gives you a fresh start to do what’s right.) Discuss.

Reading the Bible Story

Nothing Is Hidden

The Bible Story in the student folders is designed for preschool students to read. The Scripture Scene® is provided as a visual aid. Be sure to study the information on this Bible passage in the white pages of the Teacher Guide.

God’s people did wrong. They didn’t rest on the Sabbath. They worshiped idols. They disobeyed

God. So God disciplined them. He let Babylon capture them. Babylon was a mighty kingdom. It took God's people. It destroyed God's Temple. It took the lovely things inside it.

The Babylonians were proud of doing wrong. They hurt young and old people. They hurt the strong and the weak. They weren't sorry.

God said, "You are in trouble, Babylon! Other kingdoms will destroy you now. Your gods won't help. Your magic won't help. Your friends won't help."

EXPLORE THE MEANING

Memory Verse

"You have trusted in your wickedness and have said, 'No one sees me.' Your wisdom and knowledge mislead you" (from Isaiah 46:10, NIV).

Explain to the children that this verse teaches us that we need to choose God's way. He will always help us when we live for Him. Use five simple hand movements to teach this verse. Practice them first. For "you," have them point. For "wickedness," have the children make a "mean" face. For "No one sees me," have them hide their face with their hands. For "wisdom and knowledge," have them tap the side of their forehead. For "mislead," have them wag their index finger back and forth. Then say the verse slowly and add the motions. Repeat several times.

Action Time

Before class: Build a tower. Stack pillows or blocks.

During class: Seat the children in a line. Say, "In our Bible Story today, God was angry with the unmerciful Babylonians. He let their kingdom get destroyed. We are going to take turns destroying this structure. Everyone will get a turn. When it's your turn, you'll toss the bean bag at the structure. Let's see if we can knock it down." Give the first child in line a bean bag to toss.

Let them toss it and then have them go to the end of the line. Next, say, "It's much better when we help others and we build things up instead of tear them down. Let's build the tower back again!"

NEXT STEPS FOR APPLICATION

Knowing

Story Order

Read the directions aloud. Then look at the pictures together. Ask, "Which event happened first?" Discuss the order of events. Encourage the children to match the appropriate number to each box. *Answers:* 1 – God's people worshiping idols, 2 – Babylonian army capturing God's people, 3 – Babylonians destroying God's Temple, 4 – God warning the Babylonians.

ABC Connect: *This helps with early comprehension skills.*

Growing

I'm Sorry, God

Read the directions. Look over the picture together. Ask, "What is the child doing?" Let the children share ideas of what they could draw inside the thought bubble. Give them time to complete their pictures. After a few minutes, pray aloud and ask God to forgive each child for their sin. Encourage the children to draw an X over their picture to help them see that their sin is forgiven.

Worship Time

Seat your preschoolers. Sing together the traditional hymn, "Be Careful Little Eyes What You See." Have your preschoolers put their hands over their face with spread their fingers as they sing the first verse to this song. For the second verse, have them place spread their fingers over their ears. For the third verse, have them fold their hands as they sing.

Pray together to end the class. You can have a time of silence during the prayer where the children can confess their sins and ask for forgiveness. Close the prayer by thanking Jesus for dying on the cross so that our sins can be forgiven.

Craft Kingdom®

Craft Kingdom® provides directions to complete a craft that reinforces the lesson. Play the *Sing-Along* CD as students work.

God Foretells Destruction

Bible Background • ISAIAH 47

Printed Text • ISAIAH 47:10–15 | Devotional Reading • PSALM 137

Aim for Change

By the end of this lesson, we will UNDERSTAND why God would destroy Babylon; GRAPPLE with the destructiveness of delighting in power and pleasure; and REPENT from thoughts, actions, and feelings that separate us from God.

In Focus

Jeremy's life turned around when he earned a free ride scholarship to Yale. When he graduated, he went into investment banking. His salary was more than anything his family had imagined. He could afford the finer things in life, and he wasn't ashamed to flaunt it.

Time passed and Jeremy got married and had kids of his own. He rose up in the ranks at his company and even became vice president. Soon Jeremy abandoned going to church, claiming he was too busy and that the preacher only wanted money. He also rarely visited home and often talked down about the neighborhood where he came from.

One day his wife, Judy, said, "Your mom called earlier. Wanted to see if we could come over for dinner on Friday."

"We'll see her on the Fourth," Jeremy said. "Isn't that soon enough?"

"Maybe she just wants to see her son," Judy said.

Jeremy doubted it. "Or maybe Aunt Pearl wants to ask me again if I'll cover her rent."

"Times have been hard for people in your old neighborhood."

"They were hard for me, too, but I got out of it. Why can't they? They're poor because they're just lazy and wouldn't take advantage of the opportunities they have like I did."

One day everything Jeremy trusted in came crashing down. His doctor told him he had a brain tumor. Now he wished he had a stronger relationship with God, and in the corner of his office, he knelt down to ask God to forgive him for his pride.

Has your pride ever separated you from God?

Keep in Mind

"Thus shall they be unto thee with whom thou hast laboured, even thy merchants, from thy youth: they shall wander every one to his quarter; none shall save thee."

(Isaiah 47:15, KJV)

Focal Verses

KJV **Isaiah 47:10** For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me.

11 Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know.

12 Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail.

13 Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee.

14 Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame: there shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it.

15 Thus shall they be unto thee with whom thou hast laboured, even thy merchants, from thy youth: they shall wander every one to his quarter; none shall save thee.

The People, Places, and Times

Isaiah. Isaiah was a prophet during the eighth century. His prophetic ministry spanned the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Manasseh. Scholars have argued that Isaiah was more than likely connected to the king's court in some way, based on his call narrative. Throughout his ministry, Isaiah's prophecies are directed at Judah and its idolatry and oppression. Isaiah's prophetic ministry can be summarized as judgment, renewal, and hope as he foretold Judah's Babylonian captivity as well as its return from exile and the coming of the Messiah. Tradition tells us Isaiah was eventually sawn in half during the reign of Manasseh.

Babylon. Babylon is an ancient city, and the name Babylon can be translated as "the gate of gods." It is mentioned in the Bible, along with Egypt, as the antithesis to God's people. When Israel sinned against God through idolatry and injustice, God allowed the Babylonians to punish Israel by sending Nebuchadnezzar to conquer Judah and send the Jews into exile. Babylon remained a superpower until the

Medes and Persians conquered Babylonia in 539 BC.

Background

Isaiah prophesies the demise of Babylon (Isaiah 45). Isaiah announces the conquest of Babylon by King Cyrus of the Medo-Persian Empire. This prophecy is linked to the salvation and restoration of Israel as they return from exile under Cyrus' reign. Babylon is condemned for its idolatry (Isaiah 46). The idols of Babylon are deemed powerless. They are made from created things and cannot save their worshipers. The reign of Babylon is over, and its gods cannot protect its people.

God calls the Babylonian sorcerers and astrologers to account (Isaiah 47). Their knowledge is world-renowned, but it is powerless against the sovereign judgment of the Lord. None of their astrological understanding or spells of witchcraft can prevent the disaster coming upon them. The once proud city will be humbled through the divine arrangement of its conquest by a foreign power.

What is bad news for the Babylonians is good news for the Jews. Because of Babylon's conquest, they will gain an ally in Cyrus who will give them freedom to return to their homeland and rebuild their capital Jerusalem as well as their Temple. God assures them no idol could have foretold these things and establishes His superiority over the gods and idols of other nations (Isaiah 48). He is God and He is in control of the destiny of not only Israel but all the nations of the globe.

Their kingdom would be taken over, and they could do nothing about it. As believers we have no reason to despair when proud and wicked rulers or leaders are in power. Eventually all of us will come before the judgment seat of God. There none of our knowledge, wealth, or social standing will be of any use—only whether we were righteous and humble before Him.

What is your response when you see wicked and proud people in power?

At-A-Glance

1. The Pride of Babylon and Its Consequences (Isaiah 47:10–11)
2. False Trust in Babylon's Expertise (vv. 12–13)
3. The Ultimate Demise of Babylon (vv. 14–15)

In Depth

1. The Pride of Babylon and Its Consequences (Isaiah 47:10–11)

God, through Isaiah, calls out Babylon's prideful attitude. They have committed wickedness brazenly as if they were accountable to no one. The Babylonians were renowned for their knowledge, and this knowledge was the source of Babylon's pride. Because of this they put themselves in the place of God by saying, "I am, and none else beside me" (v. 10). These are proud, blasphemous words which display the inward attitude of the heart.

God would not allow Babylon to remain unpunished for this sin of pride. Calamity and disaster would come upon the city in the form of the Medo-Persian Empire and King Cyrus. None of Babylon's sorcery and knowledge could conjure an escape from the Medes and Persians.

2. False Trust in Babylon's Expertise (vv. 12–13)

Isaiah mocks the knowledge and abilities of Babylon's sorcerers and astrologers. No matter what they do, they could not stop the judgment of God. Isaiah taunts them by pointing out that although they are experienced in enchantments and sorceries, they still will not withstand God's disaster. Astrology and sorcery were ways to control destiny. Babylon would soon face the truth that it was not in control of its destiny.

With all of their counselors, they weary themselves. They cannot figure a way out of their situation. Their astrologers try to predict an overturning of their fate, but it will not make a difference. Babylon's wisdom and knowledge will not be able to help it. Nothing they take pride in will pull them out of the ditch they dug for themselves through blasphemous pride and wickedness.

This same understanding of reality needs to be imprinted on our own hearts and minds. We are not in control, and any attempt to control our destiny is empty and vain. God is sovereign over our lives, and we need to look to Him for help. He controls our future and our destiny.

How do you respond to the fact that God controls your future and your destiny?

3. The Ultimate Demise of Babylon (vv. 14–15)

The astrologers and sorcerers of Babylon are compared to straw or stubble burning in the fire. They will not be able to save Babylon. Their fate was with the city and its empire. Looking to them for help would be fruitless. Sitting by their fire would bring no warmth. They can't save Babylon because they can't save themselves.

The nations who have dealt with Babylon since its origin will turn their backs on it. They will not help Babylon when calamity strikes. The pride of Babylon will be broken by the sovereign will of God. Babylon will have no way to escape it, no one to turn to, and no resources to meet this disaster.

Where do you turn when you are facing an impossible situation?

Search the Scriptures

1. What is Babylon's declaration of pride (Isaiah 49:10)?
2. What did Babylon rely on in times of disaster (vv. 12–13)?

Discuss the Meaning

1. What are the modern equivalents in our country to Babylon's knowledge and witchcraft? What do we trust in as a nation?
2. Why do people turn to things like astrology and witchcraft?

Liberating Lesson

We may be tempted to despair as we see the world and its leaders walk in pride and wickedness. When it comes to our own nation, hyper-patriotism and blind allegiance has puffed up many with misplaced pride. They believe we as a nation are superior to others and continually progressing toward increasing splendor. Our Scriptures tell us God is in control of the nations. He lifts up some and casts down others. Loyalty

to your country is a good thing but blind loyalty and pride absent of dependence on God is a path to ruin. We may despair at the injustice we see in the world, but God will call the nations to account for their pride and wickedness. Oppressive regimes and unjust laws are a result of human pride. But human pride will always be brought low under the sovereignty of God.

Application for Activation

No nation is beyond the pride we read about in Isaiah's description of Babylon. As individuals, we are equally in danger of exhibiting this kind of pride. In the coming week, take some time to pray for our nation and its leaders. Also make a plan to serve others. This is a surefire way to root out pride in your life.

Follow the Spirit

What God wants me to do:

Remember Your Thoughts

Special insights I have learned:

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Say It Correctly

Jotham. JAW-thum.

Ahaz. AYE-hazz.

Manasseh. Mah-NAH-suh.

Antithesis. an-TIH-thuh-siss.

Daily Bible Readings

MONDAY

Babylon's Days Are Numbered
(Jeremiah 29:8–14)

TUESDAY

Let Your Compassion Come Speedily
(Psalm 79)

WEDNESDAY

Persecution Foretold
(Mark 13:1–13)

THURSDAY

Keep Awake!
(Mark 13:28–37)

FRIDAY

Rise Up, O God!
(Psalm 74:10–23)

SATURDAY

The Humiliation of Babylon
(Isaiah 47:1–9)

SUNDAY

No Security in Wickedness
(Isaiah 47:10–15)

Notes

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

WEEKLY THEME:

GOD WILL MAKE THINGS BETTER

BASED ON:

Isaiah 49:1–11, NIV

KEY VERSE:

Isaiah 49:8, NIV

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Knowledge: Preschoolers will review the Bible Story by identifying the main characters.

Attitude: Preschoolers will recognize that Jesus is their hero and desire to be one of God's chosen.

Action: Preschoolers will draw a picture of someone they want to tell about Jesus.

DEAR TEACHER

Isaiah delivers a message that God is going to rescue His children and make them a light for the world and draw others to Him through them.

SUPPLY LIST

SECTION	MATERIALS
Focused Learning Center	Pictures of popular heroes, including Jesus
Action Time	Music that can be easily turned on and off
Worship Time	"This Little Light of Mine" song (author unknown), flashlight

OPEN THE LESSON

Focused Learning Center

Set out pictures of familiar heroes. Lay them right side up. Take turns letting each child choose a picture and explain why that person is a hero.

PRESENT THE SCRIPTURES

Life Application Story

(Distribute student folders.)

Before reading, say to the children, "What superheroes can you name?" Let the children share. Say, "Today we are going to read about how someone's dad became a superhero."

While reading, pause after the sentence, "She wanted someone to defeat the dark." Ask, "What does that mean? How can darkness go away?" Discuss how light pushes darkness away. Continue reading.

After reading, ask the children these questions, "Who did Angel call a superhero? How did he defeat the darkness? How is Jesus like a

superhero? Can we be Light Superheroes, too, and make sad or scary situations better?"

Reading the Bible Story

Hope for the Future

The Bible Story in the student folders is designed for preschool students to read. The Scripture Scene® is provided as a visual aid. Be sure to study the information on this Bible passage in the white pages of the Teacher Guide.

Isaiah was God's special messenger. He said, "Listen up, everyone! Those who live far away, listen! Yes, you! I have a message for you!"

"God chose me. He gave me words to share. I have a story to tell!"

"God's people have been slaves. They have been living far from Him. They have been laboring for others. God wants to rescue them. He wants to bring them home. He wants to help them make good choices. They'll be good in a bad world. They'll be light in the darkness. Everyone will

see how God blesses them. Others will want to be God’s children. God will accept them. Even you!”

EXPLORE THE MEANING

Memory Verse

“*In the time of my favor I will answer you, and in the day of salvation I will help you*” (from Isaiah 49:8, NIV).

Let’s use two familiar hand motions to learn this verse. Have the children pretend to answer a phone. Say the beginning of the verse, “In the time of my favor I will answer you.” Practice pretending to answer a phone together as you say the words several times. Then put out your hands and pretend to help someone. Say the second part of the verse, “and in the day of salvation I will help you,” as you pretend to help someone. Review the motions and words repeatedly.

Action Time

Play a game of freeze dance, using dark and light. Have the children dance in one place so they don’t run into each other. Turn off the lights, play music, and when the music stops, turn on the light and have the children freeze. Talk about how the light helps us see. You can also talk about how children might be afraid of the dark, and a little light can help. Jesus is like a light that helps us!

NEXT STEPS FOR APPLICATION

Knowing

Story Sound Match Up

Read the directions aloud. Then look at the first picture together. Ask, “What is this a picture of?” Look at each letter on the left and sound it out together. Have them draw a line matching the picture of “children” to letters “ch.” Repeat this process for each illustration. *The answers are:* ch – children, h – home, l – light, m – message, I – Isaiah, s – slave.

ABC Connect: *Learning to recognize first sounds is one of the first steps in learning to read.*

Growing

Jesus is Our Hero

Read the directions. Look at the image of Jesus. Discuss how He is a hero. (He’s brave. He’s a leader. He fights for good. He can do miraculous things. He can defy death. He helps people in need.) Then encourage your preschoolers to draw a picture of a friend or family member they’d like to invite to church. When they’re done, ask if anyone would like to share.

Worship Time

Seat your preschoolers. Say, “God has made us lights in the world. People who are listening and loving Jesus make classrooms, workplaces, and homes a better place. If you are loving others and loving God, then you are a light. Let’s sing a song about letting our light shine.” Turn out the lights in the classroom and hold the flashlight. Sing the traditional song, “This Little Light of Mine” together. Pray together to end the class.

Craft Kingdom®

Craft Kingdom® provides directions to complete a craft that reinforces the lesson. Play the *Sing-Along* CD as students work.

NOTES

God Foretells Redemption

Bible Background • ISAIAH 49:1-17

Printed Text • ISAIAH 49:1-11 | Devotional Reading • PSALM 111:9-10

Aim for Change

By the end of this lesson, we will UNDERSTAND that God’s mission for the people of Israel is to show all people the way to God, CELEBRATE that all people who serve God are included in God’s promises, and TELL others about God’s never-ending love and salvation for all people.

In Focus

For two centuries, African Americans were slaves with seemingly no hope of deliverance. As they toiled in wretched conditions, they sang songs and prayed prayers, hoping for relief. God heard their cries, and He allowed someone to rise among them. Her name was Harriet Tubman, and she was known as the “Moses” of her people.

Tubman was born in slavery and experienced many hardships. Unlike some who had accepted their lot, she longed for freedom. God did indeed allow her to escape the bonds of slavery. She enjoyed her freedom, but she couldn’t forget her brothers and sisters who were still in bondage. She returned to the South many times and led her people to freedom, just as Moses had done in Egypt for his people.

The slaves were clever. They included coded escape signals in their songs. After dark, “Steal Away” was the song used to signal slaves to move to a meeting place from which to escape to the North via the Underground Railroad. Harriet Tubman helped more than 300 slaves escape to freedom this way. And though she only delivered relatively few from the bonds of slavery, her heroic deeds focused attention on the need for emancipation. Moses, Harriet Tubman, Martin Luther King Jr., and others were powerful leaders led by God. Each came to lead a particular people at a particular time. However, Jesus came for ALL people and His great work has and will be felt through all eternity.

How have you helped spread the Word of God’s deliverance to all people?

Keep in Mind

“Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages.” (Isaiah 49:8, KJV)

Focal Verses

KJV **Isaiah 49:1** Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.

2 And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me;

3 And said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.

4 Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the LORD, and my work with my God.

5 And now, saith the LORD that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength.

6 And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles,

that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

7 Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.

8 Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages;

9 That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places.

10 They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.

11 And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted.

The People, Places, and Times

The Suffering Servant. Arising out of the complex prophecies of Isaiah, this enigmatic figure serves God and will suffer for others (see Isaiah 42:1–4; 49:1–7; 50:4–11; 52:13–53:12). In their original context, these passages attempt to explain the harsh suffering the Israelites would pass through during their exile.

One song explicitly identifies the servant as Israel (Isaiah 49:3). But the servant was also said to be God's perfect Servant, which can only be Jesus. This paradigm makes sense of the most difficult aspect of the Jesus tradition—His suffering. Equally important, it pointed to

the Gentiles as the object of God's healing and forgiveness alongside the Jews.

Background

God instructed His prophet, Isaiah, to write concerning Israel's captivity in Babylon. For seventy years, the nation suffered under this oppression. Then the Lord allowed them to return to Jerusalem. He gave them the resources to rebuild the Temple and establish themselves once again as God's representative.

But the Israelites got comfortable in Babylon. They became accustomed to the Babylonian ways and their gods. Most of the Israelites

refused to move. Only a small remnant traveled back to Judah.

God speaks through Isaiah about these upcoming problems (Isaiah 48). In the first part of the chapter, he rebukes their negative attitudes and behaviors. However, God changes His tone in the last half of the chapter. In several of the later chapters of Isaiah, the Lord offers hope and help with the promise of the Messiah's coming. Like a loving mother attempting to get her cranky toddler to take a nap, the Father begins to speak softly. He highlighted promises about a coming Savior, Jesus, to save Israel and the entire world.

Are you willing to move forward on God's promises? Or are you staying behind, enjoying Babylonian, worldly comforts?

At-A-Glance

1. The Servant's Call and Mission (Isaiah 49:1–7)
2. The Servant Saves and Restores (vv. 8–11)

In Depth

1. The Servant's Call and Mission (Isaiah 49:1–7)

In the book of Isaiah, four passages are called “the Servant Songs” (Isaiah 42–50). The second song found here outlines the coming Messiah's mission on earth. Jesus, God's redeemer, brings light, healing, and restoration. He offers His salvation promises to the Jewish people and the entire world.

God speaks through the Messiah in the first person. He asks for listening ears. His calling started in the womb of His mother. Before the Holy Spirit placed Jesus' embryo in Mary's body, the angel said, His name is Jesus, the Savior of all humanity (Luke 1:31).

Isaiah compared Jesus' mouth, His words, to instruments of war. The well-polished sword and the shaft pierces the intended target. God kept Jesus out of the main limelight until a particular time in history. At the appointed time, He introduced the Savior and His penetrating message (Galatians 4:4–5).

Isaiah calls the Servant, whom we now understand to be the Messiah, by the name Israel. This nation originally carried God's salvation message. When the Jewish people rebelled, the Messiah picked up the baton, committed to completing God's assignment.

God called Jesus to draw back the Israelites to Jehovah. God raised Him and gave Him the might and power to carry out the task. The first Christian missionaries and the authors of the Bible were Jewish people, God's instruments to introduce salvation to the world. The Servant fulfilled the covenant God made with the Israelites, and He is the actual covenant. Some of the Jewish people pushed Jesus aside, denying His claim as Messiah. They looked down upon Him, calling Him unclean, a liar. However, God viewed Him as valuable and deemed worthy of praise (1 Peter 2:4).

Jesus respected those in positions of authority in the secular government and within the Jewish religion. But both plotted against Him. When Jesus returns to the earth for the second time, He will be honored and worshiped. Rulers and every human being will prostrate before Him (Philippians 2:10–11).

How did Jesus complete the work that Israel was supposed to do?

2. The Servant Saves and Restores (vv. 8–11)

Jehovah heard the prayer of the Servant and helped Him fulfill a fruitful ministry. God is committed to lifting this universe out of its critical condition, placing His Spirit in desolate, godless places. His desire is for the

entire human race to know the truth through His Son Jesus.

God frees captives. God freed the captives in Babylon, and He offers freedom to all humanity bound in sin. It is now possible to bask in the presence of a Holy God—no sin hinders or divides (Isaiah 61:1).

Messiah bids everyone come openly to the light. Christ found the Jews enslaved to the law, covered in the darkness, and separated from God. Christ lifted their burdens. The Compassionate Shepherd is always leading to greener pastures. Jesus keeps His sheep away from the scorching sun, leads them to lush feeding grounds and fresh water. Even in places that are downtrodden and barren—God provides for His sheep.

These promises are not only for the Jewish nation or people in biblical days. Jesus still saves and restores anyone willing to come to Him.

In a letter to the Corinthians, Paul references these verses and explains that “today is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2). How does this affect our reading of Isaiah?

Search the Scriptures

1. Use the Scripture verses in Isaiah 49:1–11 to describe the characteristics and mission of the Lord’s servant. (Example characteristics, v. 1 called before birth, v. 2 words of judgment are sharp, v. 3 a Servant; Example mission points: v. 1 wants people in distant and faraway lands to listen, v. 4 work seems useless)

2. In verse 1, Isaiah addresses the “isles,” meaning a place far, far away from him. What expression would we use today to confer this understanding?

Discuss the Meaning

The Scriptures clearly state Jesus’ job description. He came to seek and save humanity. His death on the Cross allowed freedom from the bondage of sin. This lesson reminds

Christians that the Savior is light out of darkness, He restores and is our Shepherd to lead us into His beautiful pastures. Think about the past couple weeks. How have you seen Jesus do this in your life? What kinds of people or things have you or others turned to instead of Christ to foster a better life?

Liberating Lesson

The word “servant” does not always sit well with African Americans. It rakes up pictures in our minds of Black people as slaves or only getting a job as a maid, driver, or butler. Yet, when the word “servant” is used in the Bible, God desires for Christians to have a different picture. Jesus came to serve all humanity. He, too, was mistreated and unappreciated. But He kept placing Himself in God’s protective hands, being assured of God’s watchful eye.

Get alone with God and express any anger or hostility you may feel about the mistreatment of people of color. Ask God to begin a transformation in your heart about how to be a true servant.

Application for Activation

Many individuals today continuously wonder, “What about me? What about me?” God saw the need for salvation. He sent Jesus to meet that need in our world, and Jesus completed God’s assignment. As Christians, we are to answer the same call. Pray for more sensitivity to the Holy Spirit as we go through our daily activities. How can I help those around me foster the same attitude and be less selfish and self-centered?

Follow the Spirit

What God wants me to do:

Remember Your Thoughts

Special insights I have learned:

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- Oswalt, John N. *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40–66*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.
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Say It Correctly

Enigmatic. eh-nig-MAH-tik.
Eunuch. YOU-nik.

Daily Bible Readings

MONDAY

God's Redemption Defies
Human Wisdom
(1 Corinthians 1:18–25)

TUESDAY

Righteousness, Sanctification,
and Redemption
(1 Corinthians 1:26–31)

WEDNESDAY

God Sent Redemption to God's People
(Psalm 111)

THURSDAY

Christ Brings Eternal Redemption
(Hebrews 9:11–14)

FRIDAY

Pardon My Guilt, O Lord
(Psalm 25:1–11)

SATURDAY

Redeem Israel, O God
(Psalm 25:12–22)

SUNDAY

The Lord Will Have Compassion
(Isaiah 49:1–11)

Notes
