

TESTAMENT

the Bible in animation

A teaching resource manual by

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to support

nine animated Old Testament Bible stories

produced for BBC Education by

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FOREWORD

These programmes provide opportunities for young people, whatever their backgrounds of belief, to find out about one of the most significant books ever compiled. The impact of the Bible on individuals and communities has been immense. Testament: the Bible in animation includes nine stories from the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament, seen by Jews and Christians as central to their understanding of God, the universe and humankind. This series will be followed by an animation about the life of Jesus.

After watching each programme in its entirety, most users will want to review it in shorter sections to stimulate discussion and the related activities suggested in these notes. The least effective way to use the programmes is to show them without any introduction. Young people will gain infinitely more if time is taken to prepare for the programmes by linking the stories to their own experiences and concerns. For each programme, ways are suggested of doing this. Viewing the animations will provide a springboard for a variety of activities, but one of the most important of these is to read the stories in print, whether in a complete Bible or a children's version.

I am grateful to Margaret Cooling for the wealth of material she has provided, and for making the activities suitable for use by a variety of age groups in schools and religious groups. My thanks also go to Laurie Rosenberg, from the Board of Deputies of British Jews, for his valuable comments on the manuscript.

Geoffrey Marshall-Taylor
Executive Editor
BBC School Programmes

Testament: The Bible in animation

A series provided by the BBC at the request of the Educational Broadcasting Council for the United Kingdom

Age 7-13

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INTRODUCTION

Using stories in RE

Important notes for teachers

This resource is aimed at pupils aged 7-14, teachers are asked to select from the material as appropriate for the age and aptitude of their pupils. The programmes similarly are aimed at a wide age range. Programmes do not have to be shown in their entirety; suitable clips can be selected appropriate for the age group.

Biblical material

The Biblical material given at the beginning of each of the programmes note is for teacher information to show the parts of the Bible on which the programme draws. Material would need to be carefully selected for pupils and a children's Bible is suitable for use with younger pupils.

Background notes

The background notes are for teacher information and only for sharing with pupils as appropriate. For example, some detail practices such as child sacrifice which is not suitable for sharing with younger pupils.

Pastoral concerns

Many biblical stories raise pastoral issues, for example: the binding of Isaac, Pharaoh's actions against the children of the Hebrew slaves, the death of the firstborn and the flood. All these stories

need sensitive handling. For younger pupils the use of a children's Bible helps as stories are usually suitably rephrased.

Health and safety

All activities should be carried out with regard to health and safety and only child-safe materials should be used. Teachers are referred to their health and safety documents.

Photographs

Activities involving photographs need permission.

Stories

Story remains one of the most popular methods of teaching RE. There are good reasons for this:

- Stories convey abstract ideas in a concrete form and give them a context. This equips pupils to handle the ideas within a story.
- Stories can enable people to consider ideas which they have never thought about before.
- Stories organise ideas and events. They contain both content and understanding.
- Stories can be 'safe ground' where ideas are explored in a less direct and threatening manner.
- Stories stimulate work in other areas of the curriculum.
- Stories engage the whole person and bring the storyteller and class into a relationship.
- Stories offer explanations. In RE, stories offer religious explanations of why the world is as it is.

Handling religious stories classroom

Religious stories need to be handled in a way that allows the teacher and pupils freedom to explore them comfortably, whatever their religious commitment. Stories should be rooted in the tradition from which they come so that pupils know what are exploring. The source of Testament is the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible. Stories and beliefs can be introduced with phrases such as:

'Believers (Jewish and Christian) believe that this story teaches ...'

'This is a very important story for Christians and Jewish believers.'

Christians believe...

In this way, assent is not assumed; both teacher and child are free to identify or not with the material studied.

Types of story

'Story' is a very wide term, covering many different forms: historical narrative, parable, moral tale, etc. The word 'story' itself does not imply a judgement on historical truth or lack of it. Where beliefs substantially differ over how a story should be classified (for example, Creation, Noah, Jonah). I have indicated this in the text.

Levels of exploring story

Storytelling can take place at three levels:

1. The child masters the content of the story.
2. The child explores the story imaginatively.
3. The story challenges the child.

At the first two levels the story is passive. Only at the third level does the story become active and make the child think about his or her own values, beliefs and attitudes. There are two ways of achieving this: good storytelling can cover all three levels at once, or the process can be split and activities used for the different levels. The activities in the book help teachers to explore the stories at all levels. The third level (where the story challenges the child and may cause them to reflect) should not be threatening or intrusive. A child's thoughts should remain private, not openly shared unless a pupil wishes to. Appropriate material for reflection is provided for each programme. The teacher can give pupils the opportunity and the time for reflection; it should be up to each child whether he or she takes advantage of it or not.

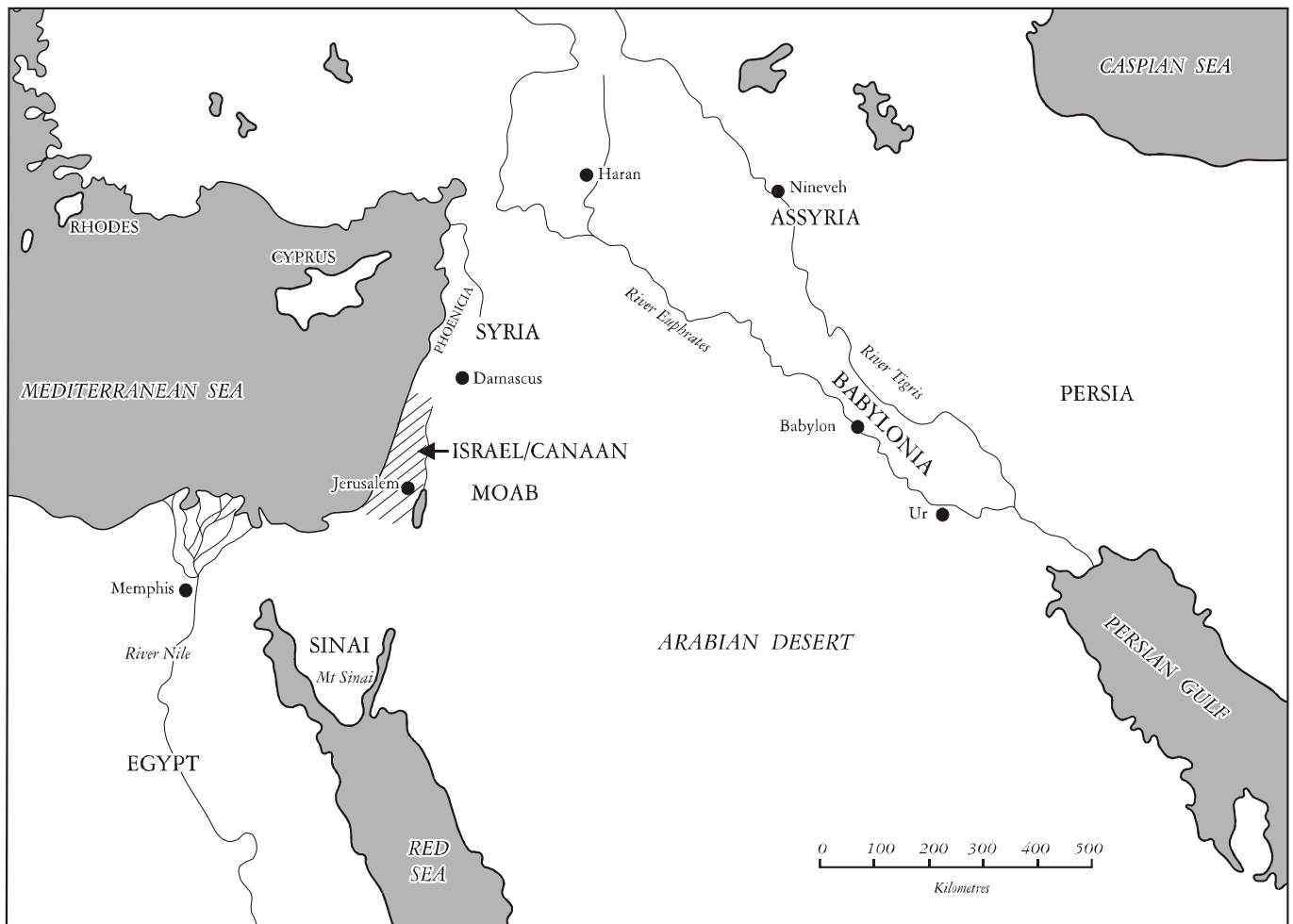
Explanation abbreviations

Where dates in stories have been referred to, the abbreviation **BCE** (Before Common Era) is used, in preference to **BC** (Before Christ). This avoids using an explicitly Christian term for the dating.

Note: Some locations are not certain, e.g. Sinai and Tishbe. These have been indicated according to evidence but should be taken as provisional.

Biblical story	RE topics / key words	Concepts	Key elements of the broadcast	Subject activities
Creation / Fall / Flood	Creation stories beginnings beliefs about God creation sign / symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creation • responsibility • sin / wrong • judgement • promise • salvation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noah's ark built and entered • Noah tells the Creation story • Noah tells of the fallen angels • Noah tells of Eden, Adam and Eve • Flood recedes, family lands • New life begins again 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation mystery play • poetry • story recipe • signs and symbols
Abraham	journeys leaders / founders key religious figures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • call of God • faith • promise • covenant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abraham and Sarah long for a child • Abraham moves to Canaan • Abraham will be father to a great people • Lot leaves Abraham, goes to Sodom • Hagar leaves; Ishmael disheartened • Sodom destroyed; Lot's wife made salt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • birth announcement • points of view • family tree • what makes a good story
Joseph	Biblical characters families history link - Ancient Egypt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change • group responsibility • good coming out of evil • 'providence' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joseph left for dead • In Egypt, Joseph accused by Potiphar's wife • In prison, Joseph interprets dreams • Interprets Pharaoh's dreams, gains power • Joseph's family comes to Egypt for gain • Joseph reunited with his family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rap • mirror poems • costume design • faces (paper plates)
Moses	leaders / founders key religious figures law / rules festivals / Passover history link - Ancient Egypt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God using the weak to • defeat the powerful • God's choice • God the rescuer • encountering God 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moses, murderer, escapes to desert • Moses, shepherd, tells his life story • The burning bush - Moses' return to Egypt • Moses pleads for Hebrews' freedom: Pharaoh resists, plagues are sent • Exodus from Egypt • Crossing of the Red Sea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diaries • design a superhero • Senses poem • spiritual ('Let my people go')
Ruth	harvest Jewish festivals (Shavuot) sharing families Biblical characters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • love / faith in action • God as a guide • welcoming the stranger • God as protector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Famine and death affect Naomi • She travels to Bethlehem with Ruth • Ruth meets Boaz who shows her kindness • Their relationship develops, they marry • Their child will be David's grandfather 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making a DVD cover • mirror images • role play • word picture
David	founders / leaders key religious figures poetry / music (arts as a means of expression of faith)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preparation • trust / loyalty • rescue • obedience • weak defeating the strong 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King Saul troubled; David's harp comforts • David defeats Goliath • David marries Saul's daughter, Michal • Jealous Saul tries to kill David • Saul and Jonathan die in battle • David becomes King 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • data file • metaphor poems • music for moods • making decisions

Elijah	suffering for faith messages prophets key religious figures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • power • listening to God • making decisions • standing up for what you believe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ahab and Jezebel corrupt Kingdom • Elijah visits woman and child • Drought - Elijah's contest with priests of Baal • Elijah experiences God in stillness and wind • Elijah taken to God in chariot of fire • His mantle falls on Elisha 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coat hanger poem • word portraits • soundscape • spiritual ('Swing low sweet chariot')
Jonah	Jewish festivals (Day of Atonement) repentance / change forgiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • forgiveness • God's love for all • repentance • providence • obedience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God sends Jonah to Nineveh • He sails another way to avoid it • In a storm, he is thrown overboard • Great fish swallows him, takes to Nineveh • He warns Nineveh against wrongdoing • God saves Nineveh, Jonah learns about God's compassion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • character cards • illuminated letters • parallel poems • animal point of view • time, place, weather and person poems
Daniel	standing up for what you believe Biblical characters faith in action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prayer • persecution • justice • judgement • rescue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Israelites exiled to Babylon • Daniel and friends powerful under Nebuchadnezzar • Next King Belshazzar killed, Darius rules • For worshipping his God, Daniel goes to lion's den 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • story boards • list poems • artist's commission • inside / outside writing



PROGRAMME 1 - Creation and the flood

Biblical references

Creation: Genesis 1-2

The Fall: Genesis 3

The Flood: Genesis 6.9-9.17

Note: please select activities appropriate for the age of your pupils. Biblical and background material is listed for teacher information, please select suitable material for pupils and use a children's Bible for primary children. Teachers can select appropriate clips from the programme or show the whole programme depending on the time available and the age and aptitude of the pupils.

The story of the flood raises pastoral issues and needs sensitive handling, particularly with younger pupils. With younger pupils emphasise promise and hope. Many children's Bibles have a sensitive phrasing of this story.

Background information

OTHER CREATION STORIES There are various creation stories originating in the Ancient Near East, such as the Atrahasis epic, but superficial similarities often disguise deep differences of thought. In the Biblical story, Creation is from a thought. God creates from nothing. The command, 'Let there be light', is enough. In the biblical story, men and women are the climax of creation, not an afterthought created for the god's convenience.

OTHER FLOOD STORIES The Atrahasis and Gilgamesh epics reflect similar events, but are very different in tone and underlying beliefs. In these epics, the flood is the result of humanity being too noisy! The biblical story of the flood is a story of moral judgement and promise.

STORY OR HISTORY Within both Judaism and Christianity there are differences over this. Some see Creation as a story with a very powerful message. Others see it as history. Some see evolution as the means by which God created. Others believe in a literal six day creation. Whichever view is taken, the emphasis is on a purposeful creation by God. Creation is no accident of random chance. Similar positions are taken over the flood: some maintain it was a historical event, others a powerful story built on a kernel of history.

EDEN, ADAM AND EVE The name Eden sounds like the root of the word 'delight' in Hebrew. Alternatively it may mean 'plain' or 'steppe'. The name Adam just means 'man' or 'mankind' and is probably related to the name for ground or earth, 'Adamah'. By showing Adam as made from the soil, the Bible allies humanity firmly with the earth. Eve's name means 'life'. She is made from Adam to show that they are mutually dependant. The word 'helper' does not necessarily mean 'subordinate' but indicates a source of strength. The term is also used of God.

THE SERPENT The serpent was a creature used for evil purposes, not evil personified, which is known by different names in the Bible: the Devil, Lucifer or Satan. Later, the serpent became identified with Satan (Lucifer, etc.) in people's thinking.

NOAH, THE ARK AND THE RAINBOW The name Noah means 'rest'. The ark is described as a floating, three-storied, box-like construction, rather than a streamlined boat. The word used for rainbow means 'bow of war', literally an archer's bow. Traditionally, the rainbow represents the war bow turned away from earth.

Introducing the story of Creation and Flood

Ask the pupils to bring in things they have created and talk about how they feel about them. How would they feel if their creation was wrecked by someone? Make a promise at the beginning of the lesson and ask the pupils to make sure you keep it.

Aims and objectives

- To explore the ideas of creation, responsibility, judgement, promise and hope through the stories of the Creation and Flood.
- To relate these to life today and to encourage pupils to reflect on their own experience of some these ideas and their relevance to the modern believer.

CREATION OUT OF NOTHING

Introduction

Talk with the pupils about day dreaming. What would happen if their thoughts became realities? Would the classroom end up populated with television personalities, animals and cartoon figures? The Bible talks of God creating by just a thought. Creation is God's thoughts becoming realities.

The play on the next page is part of a script of a medieval mystery play. Pupils can compare this with the biblical text.

- The teacher can read the play and the pupils can interpret it in drama or dance.
- Photocopy and cut up the play. Pupils can take a 'day' each to read or illustrate.
- Pupils can read round or perform the play.

CREATION

adapted from the York Mystery Cycle

Day1

A simple word, the voice's might,
Fills my new-made world with light
Thus I make both day and night.
Finished now is the first day,
And as I look on this array
I smile, for all is as it should:
All I have made is truly good.

Day2

Waters separate shall be -
Sky divide the rain and sea.
The space above 'heaven' shall be called,
With clouds and planets set withal.
Thus ended is the second day,
Pleasing me in every way.

Day3

Gathered shall the waters be,
Forming both the earth and sea.
Clothe every hill in garment green
Each gentle vale or steep ravine.
Thus have passed three days and nights:
All Creation is a-right.

Day4

Now split the new-made world with light,
One called 'Moon' and one called 'Sun':
By day, the sun shall rule in might,
By night, the moon shall gently run.
A starry ceiling now I make,
Stars a-plenty I create.
Thus the fourth day is fulfilled -
A work which pleases me full well.

Day5

The seas I set with life within -
Whales and fish that flit with fin:
With birds I populate the air
To soar in flight with feathers fair.
Diverse beasts shall fill the earth,
Each according to its birth -
Worm and serpent, sheep and dog,
Braying donkey, snorting hog.
Now the fifth day ended is
And all the world I gladly bless.

Day6

Five days' work can now be seen
In heaven and earth a beautiful scene.
But still no beast here can I see
That yet is skilled to worship me.
Therefore a skilful beast I make
In my likeness, in my shape.
Of simple earth I shall him form,
Out of clay make blood and bone.
Rise up, O earth, in shape of man!
Complete the works I have begun!
A female shalt thou have for mate,
Lest thou should feel full desolate
Without thy faithful friend and bride -
Whom I did make from thy left side.
Receive you both your souls of me.
'Adam' and 'Eve' your names shall be.

Day7

Six days have passed ere I could rest:
All I like well, but this the best.
The seventh day I take my ease,
For nothing here does me displease.

RESPONSIBILITY

Introduction

Talk about the meaning of the phrase 'passing the buck'. It means not accepting responsibility, blaming someone else. There are usually plenty of incidents in school where people 'pass the buck'. Such anecdotes can be used but keep them impersonal. In the story of Adam and Eve, neither of them accept responsibility: they find someone else to blame.

Activity

- There is no apple in the story of Adam and Eve: the fruit is not named. An apple has traditionally been referred because the Latin word for 'apple' (malus) was almost the same as the word for 'bad' (malum). Adam and Eve made a 'bad' choice! Ask pupils to create their own symbol for wrong.
- Do people find it hard to accept responsibility for the wrong they have done? Read the biblical story. Who do Adam and Eve blame? Pupils can create short sketches where other people are blamed.

THE FLOOD

Introduction

Read pupils a recipe so that they can see the style. Stories can be written as recipes, for they have many different ingredients - not only the people and places, but also the ideas, beliefs and feelings of the people.

The story of the Flood contains the concepts of judgement and promise. It is also about faith, obedience and hope. God is seen as a just judge who cannot ignore evil, but the story ends with the reassurance that never again will he flood the earth. For believers, the story is about taking God seriously, it is about obedience, faith and promise and that even in the midst of judgement there is hope. With younger pupils emphasise hope and promise.

Activities

- Having heard several cookery recipes, create a recipe for a story of the Flood, either as a class or individually. This can be done in recipe format or as a series of lists (people, places, feelings, etc). It can also be laid out as a poem. Pupils will need a Bible or a version of the Bible story to go over the story and note down different feelings, etc.

Example

To make a story of the flood you will need:

Mr and Mrs Noah,

Three sons,

Their wives,

Other people.

To make a story of a flood you will need:

An ark and a rainbow,
Lots of animals,
Plenty of rain.

To make a story of the flood you will need:

Violence and wrong,
Sadness,
Anger,
Grief and hope.

- Pupils might like to design a festival called 'The flood is past' for believers. How would such a festival be celebrated? What would be read? What would believers do? What would be the mood of the festival?

SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

Introduction

Show some signs, for example, a no smoking sign. Ask pupils what they mean. Pupils might like to bring in some signs and ask others what they mean. Plenty are available on line.

http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_Page

A symbol is a sign that evokes a response or feeling. Show some of the symbols. The Noah story is associated with many symbols which represent the main ideas found in it.

Activities

- Create a symbols sheet for the story of the Flood. Go through the story of the Flood with pupils and ask them what items from the story might be used as symbols. They might like to invent their own symbols of the Flood.

THE RAINBOW represents promise and the hint of judgement, for it is a bow (a weapon of war) turned away from the earth. This idea of promise can be introduced to pupils using a five pound note on which is written 'I promise to pay the bearer' The paper itself is worth nothing. It is the promise that gives it worth. Option: pupils can create rainbows in different media with the words of the promise on them.

THE ARK The story contains the idea of rescue in the saving of Noah's family. The ark became a symbol of rescue and hope. Option: look up organisations that use the ark as a symbol .

THE DOVE AND THE OLIVE BRANCH The dove and the olive branch are both symbols of peace. Look out for organisations and campaigns using these symbols.

- The basic shape of these symbols is very easy and can be printed using different methods.

MONOPRINTING Pupils can paint a symbol on a suitable surface. Place paper over then and press evenly.

PRINTING OR RUBBING Place child-safe glue in a squeeze bottle. Squeeze it out gently into the shape of a symbol onto thick card. When the glue is dry, paint it. Place a sheet of paper on and gently press or run a roller over the top.

CUT CARD ... in the required shape, and attach a card 'handle' on the back. Paint the card shape and print.

Reflection

Teachers might like to select from the reflections below, depending on the age of the pupils and the context in which they work. Parts of these reflections can be read while the pupils listen quietly. A spoken response is not required.

- Place an apple on a table. The apple is a symbol of a wrong choice. We all make wrong choices sometimes but we can learn from wrong choices, we can often make amends.
- Eden stands for lost delights - the things we regret losing. Listen to the poem by A.E. Housman. It was not written about Eden but it captures the idea of loss.
- Using a prism, create a rainbow. Ask pupils to look at the colours. The colours are beautiful, yet the symbol comes from a story of judgement. In the Bible, God's judgement is always contrasted with his love. Anger is always infinitely less than his love. To bring out the contrast, the Bible says God's anger is but for a moment but his love for a thousand years (Psalm 30.5).

The message of the story of Creation and Flood

For the believer, these stories carry a message about God, themselves, the world and humanity's place in it. People are seen as created and not as a product of chance. Life therefore has a purpose: people were created for relationships with God and with others. The Bible also states that people were created in the image of God: people are in some way like God. That might mean that are like him in their ability to create, their ability to make relationships or moral judgements. Whatever it means, for believers this gives people value. Each person is valuable as they are made by God in his image.

People do not have to do anything to be valuable: they do not have to be beautiful, clever or useful. Each person is like a painting by a famous artist.

For believers, the story of Adam and Eve explains the state of the world. They believe that this world is not now as God intended it to be: it is marred by evil through the wrong choices people make. The story of the Flood indicates that God does not tolerate evil for ever but he has chosen other means of dealing with it. For believers who are Christians, the 'other means' are the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Resources

MUSIC

J. Haydn, *Creation*

Benjamin Britten, *Noye's Fludde* (Boosey and Hawkes, 1958)

J. Horovitz and M. Flanders, *Captain Noah and his floating zoo* (Novello, 1970)

BOOKS

H. Amery, *The Usborne Children's Bible* (Usborne 2009)

A. Pilling, *The Kingfisher Children's Bible* (Kingfisher, 1993)

S. Hastings, *The Illustrated children's Bible* (Dorling Kindersley, 2005)

M. Cooling, *The Bible Through Art* (RMEP 2000)

M. Cooling, *Writing and Poetry Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

M. Cooling, *Story and Drama Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

M. Cooling, *Art and Music Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

M. Cooling, *Ten minute miracle plays* (Bible Society, 1995)

PROGRAMME 2 - Abraham

Biblical references

The call of Abraham: Genesis 11.31-12.9

The promise of land and children: Genesis 12.2; 13.14-18; 15.1-21; 17; 22.17-18

The angel visitors: Genesis 18.1-15

Ishmael: Genesis 16; 21.8-21

Sodom and Gomorrah: Genesis 18.16-19.29

Isaac's birth: Genesis 21.1-8

Abraham's test: Genesis 22.1-19

Note: please select activities appropriate for the age of your pupils. Biblical and background material is listed for teacher information, please select suitable material for pupils and use a children's Bible for primary children. Teachers can select appropriate clips from the programme or show the whole programme depending on the time available and age and aptitude of the pupils.

Background information

ABRAHAM AND SARAH came from Ur and wandered in the region of Canaan. They were resident aliens rather than true Bedouins, always living on the fringes of settled society. Abraham was quite wealthy, having a large number of servants (he could field 300 men in battle). Abraham is painted as a person with good and bad points he is a man of faith but he also had his faults. God is seen as coming into a relationship with ordinary, imperfect people.

LOT AND HIS FAMILY Lot was Abraham's nephew. He chose to wander in the well watered region of the Jordan Valley and later settled near Sodom at the far end of the Dead Sea. Eventually, Lot seems to have given up his pastoral existence and settled in the town.

SODOM AND GOMORRAH were two towns at the far end of the Dead Sea were infamous for their evil. (Pupils do not need to know the details of this, only that they were renowned for evil.) They were sited in an area 396 metres below sea level in the Great Rift Valley. The incident referred to could be an earthquake, or a volcano. The area is full of chemicals, from evaporated sea water, which cause strange rock formations.

CHILD SACRIFICE was a part of Canaanite religion and probably took place in times of stress, such as famine. It was but not part of Israel's faith. There were occurrences of it when the Israelites lapsed but such occurrences were condemned. Ur was a sophisticated urban culture. Houses had courtyards, chapels, and toilet facilities. It was a centre for the worship of the moon god. It was a busy trading city and during the period of Abraham and his immediate descendants (2000-1500 BCE) it was very prosperous.

CANAAN must have been a disappointment after Ur. It was a series of states which would sometimes band together in a loose confederation.

Introducing the story of Abraham

Ask pupils about moving. Some pupils may be able to remember and the upheaval it causes. Abraham and Sarah moved from a civilised, developed society to being wanderers in Canaan. For the rest of their lives, they wandered on the edges of society having no place they could call their own.

Aims and objectives

- To explore the concepts of covenant, trust and life as a walk with God, through the story of Abraham and Sarah
- To relate these to life today and to encourage pupils to reflect on their own experience of some these ideas and their relevance to the modern believer.

WALKING BEFORE GOD

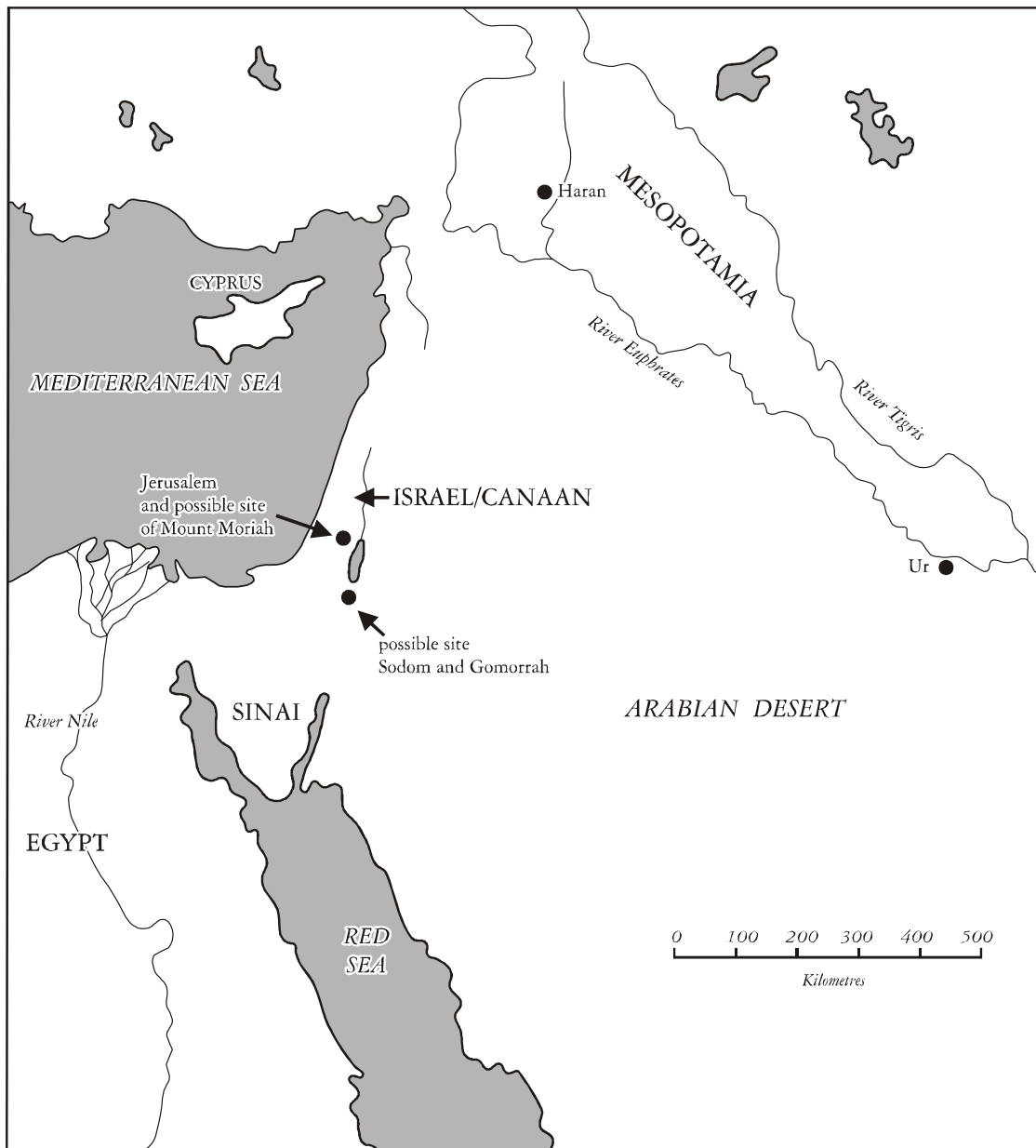
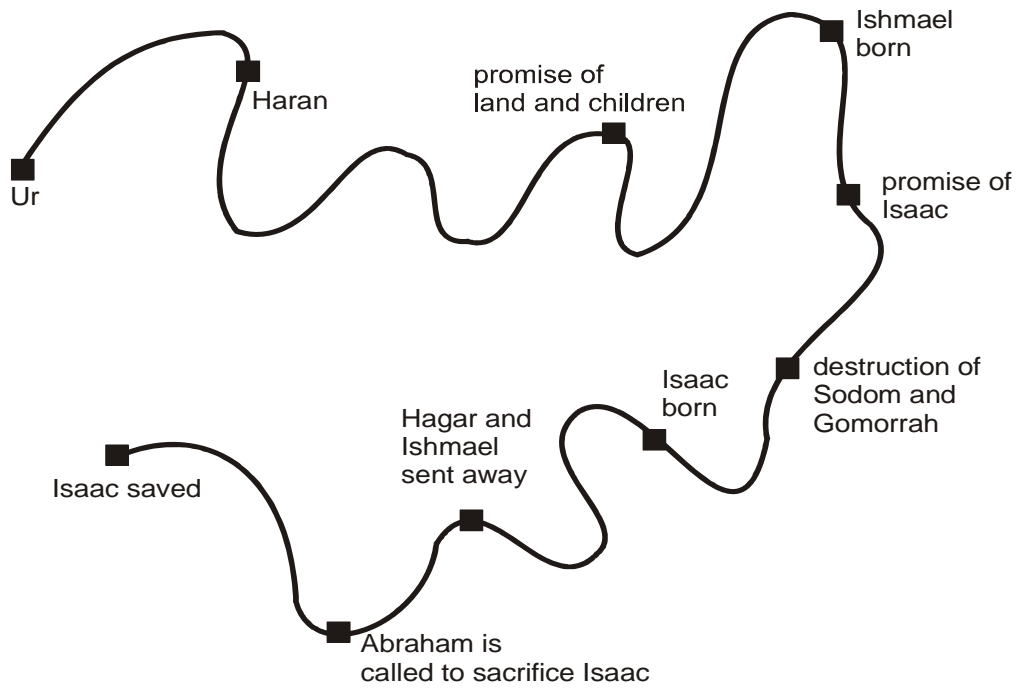
Introduction

Talk about going for walks with people. Often when we go for walks with a friend, we chat as we go along and we can share things we notice on the way. The Bible talks about Abraham walking with or before God through life. Life is likened to a journey which people travel with God.

Activities

Look at the map on page 8. It shows some of the places where Abraham travelled. He came from Ur, moved to Haran and eventually to Canaan. The conditions in Canaan would have been very different from sophisticated Ur. Pupils can explore aspects of Abraham and Sarah's walk with God using the following activities.

- Write a postcard as if you were either Sarah or Abraham to friends or relatives at home in Ur. Describe your present life and events that have been meaningful. For example if you are Abraham you might describe the visit of the angels. Pupils can remind themselves of events and incidents using a Bible or watching the programme.
- Design a birth announcement card which Abraham and Sarah might have sent for Isaac. Write inside what you think they might have written. Pupils should go back to the story to examine what Abraham and Sarah felt about this.
- Draw a life journey for Abraham and Sarah. This involves drawing a line and writing or drawing the main incidents of their lives. It can be drawn in any shape: see example on page 19



POINTS OF VIEW

Introduction

The same event can have a different impact on different people. 1066 was a disaster for the Saxons but victory for the Normans. The same event can be good news for some and bad news for others. Wind turbines are good news to those wanting to save energy, but bad news if they spoil your view. Discuss with pupils the way people have different points of view about the same event. Many will have seen television debates which demonstrate this.

Older pupils. Sarah was glad when Hagar was able to have a child for Abraham. This was the normal and legal procedure in those days. However, she was also jealous and eventually she threw Hagar out. Was she right to do so? Was she justified? Was she provoked?

What of Abraham? Did he do enough to protect Hagar? Did he think Sarah or Hagar was in the right?

Hagar was a slave with few rights. Did she deserve her treatment or was she unjustly treated?

Activities (Older pupils)

- Put pupils in groups of three.
- Take three pieces of paper for each group and label them Sarah, Abraham and Hagar.
- Fold and mix the papers and ask pupils to select at random.
- Pupils should write about their character's perspective on the story after researching their character from the Bible.
- Alternatively, this can be recorded, or done as a series of interviews on a chat show.

Activity (Younger pupils)

The activity above can be used with the story of Abraham's call with younger pupils. How would Sarah have felt about the idea of moving? What about the relatives who stayed behind? What would their points of view have been?

COVENANT

Introduction

Ask pupils to think of agreements they make. What sometimes stops them keeping their side of the bargain? Create a class list of things that stop people keeping their agreements.

God entered into a covenant or agreement with Abraham. A covenant is an agreement but it is not between two equals. The two things a semi-nomad (a wanderer) really wanted were children and land. Abraham was told he would have so many descendants that they would be like the stars in the sky or like the grains of sand on the seashore. This made both Abraham and Sarah laugh, for they had no children at all and were too old to have a family.

Abraham and Sarah were also promised land at a time when they owned nothing. This must have seemed equally laughable. It is hardly surprising that when Isaac was eventually born, he was named 'laughter'. On Abraham's side, his acceptance of the Covenant was shown in the sign of circumcision.

Note: teachers may not wish to explain circumcision to young pupils. This should not prevent teachers exploring the idea of covenant.

Activities

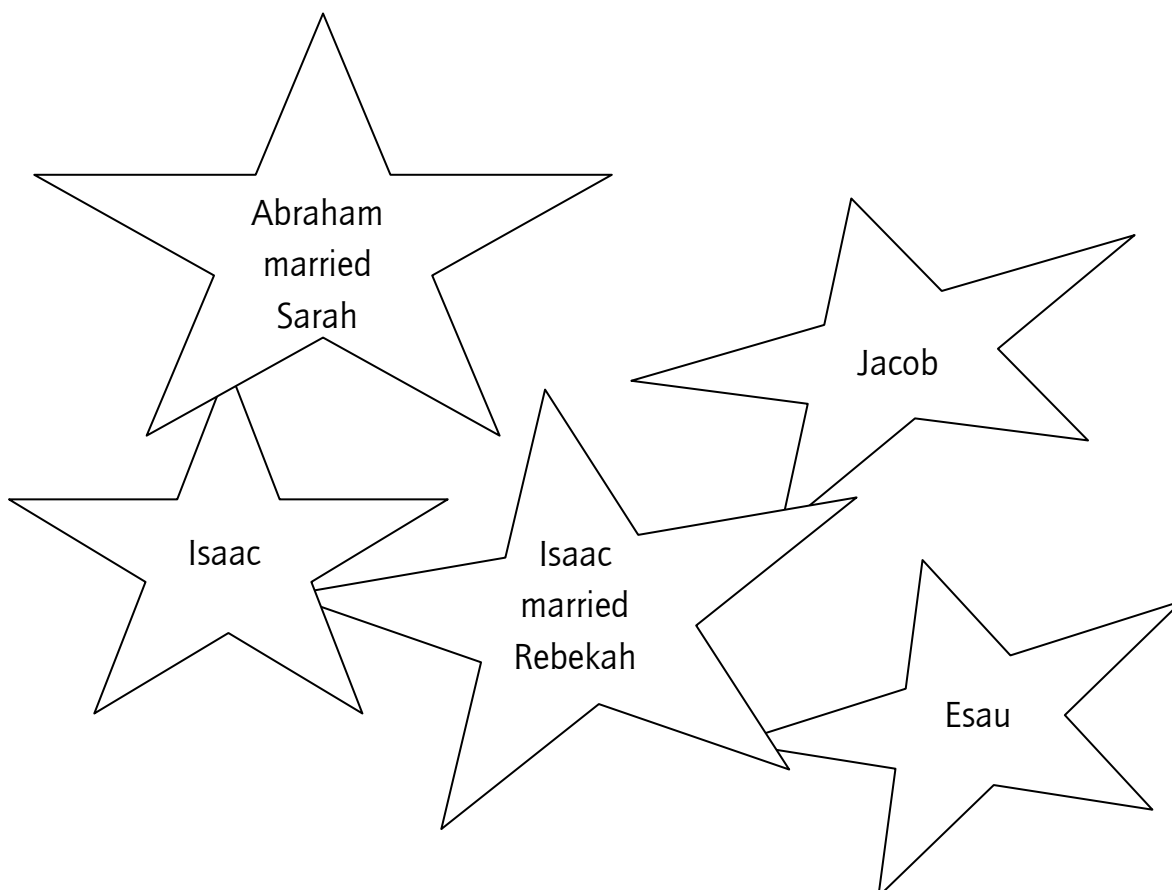
- Abraham was promised that:
'Your children will be as many as the stars in the sky'.
'As the grains of sand on the sea shore.'
Genesis 15.5; 22.17

Using the text, make a family tree for Abraham using star shapes (see example below). Younger children will need to be given the names. Older pupils can research them.

- Count how many children and grandchildren Abraham and Sarah had. Do you think he felt God had kept his promise?

The names of Jacob's wives and children can be found in Genesis 35.23-26.

Esau's children can be found in Genesis 36.1-5.



THE TRIAL

Note: this story needs handling very sensitively. The activity has been labelled for older (secondary) pupils.

Introduction

Discuss tests with pupils, and passing them or not. Abraham was faced with a terrible test. One explanation for this was that he was to be the father of a nation: God had to make sure that Abraham was the right person. God presumably knew what sort of person Abraham was, but did Abraham? Child sacrifice was not part of Israel's worship - indeed it was banned, and children were of great value in Hebrew society. Some of the other nations might have sacrificed their children to their god but it was not sanctioned in Israel. Part of the reason for this ban lies in the story of Abraham and Isaac. There is no intention of harming Isaac. The intention is to test Abraham's faith. Would he withhold his most precious thing - his son, his only son, Isaac, whom he loved?

Activities (older pupils)

- Ask older pupils what makes a good story. As a class, produce a list of elements that make a good story. Alternatively, pupils can create individual lists, and then collate them into one larger list.

Example

It has humour

Tension

Keeps you guessing

Is imaginative

Has interesting characters

Makes you cry

Makes you think

Teaches you something

Is interesting

Has lots of action

- Look at or read again the story from the Bible. What elements of a good story does the story of Abraham and Isaac have? Ask pupils to go down their list and tick the elements they think apply to this story. This can be done as a class or individual exercise. It can be verbal or written.

Reflection

Teachers might like to select from the reflections below, depending on the age of the pupils and the context in which they work. Parts of these reflections can be read while the pupils listen quietly. A spoken response is not required.

- Abraham saw life as a journey walked with God. Think about your own life's journey. What have been the significant events for you?

- Abraham was asked if he would be willing to give up his most precious item. For him it was Isaac. What would be your most precious item?
- Abraham's life has been described as a 'trial by hope'. Think about things you have waited for in hope. How difficult was it to wait a long time?

The message of the story of Abraham and Sarah

The story of Abraham and Sarah is remembered by Jews today at Rosh Hashanah which occurs in September or October.

The message of Abraham and Sarah for believers is that God keeps his promises even when all hope has been given up. The story also carries the messages that obedience is important, and that God can be trusted. It was much harder for Sarah, and therefore what faith she had was remarkable for she did not have the direct experiences of God which Abraham had. She heard most things second hand.

Jews today recite part of the Bible which refers to Abraham:

'A wandering Aramean was my father.'
Deuteronomy 26.5

For Jews Abraham is the father of the Jewish people. For Christians he is honoured as a man who followed God's calling, the first of many heroes of faith.

Resources

- B Hartman *Angels Angels All Around* (Lion Hudson, 2004)
 H. Amery, *The Usborne Children's Bible* (Usborne 2009)
 A. Pilling, *The Kingfisher Children's Bible* (Kingfisher, 1993)
 S. Hastings, *The Illustrated children's Bible* (Dorling Kindersley, 2005)
 M. Cooling, *The Bible Through Art* (RMEP 2000)
 M. Cooling, *Writing and Poetry Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)
 M. Cooling, *Story and Drama Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)
 M. Cooling, *Art and Music Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

PROGRAMME 3 - Joseph

Biblical references

Joseph, his brothers and his dreams: Genesis 37.1-36

Slave and prisoner: Genesis 39.1-40.23

Pharaoh's dreams/Joseph as ruler: Genesis 41.1-57

Joseph and his brothers reconciled Genesis 42-46.7

Note: please select activities appropriate for the age of your pupils. Biblical and background material is listed for teacher information, please select suitable material for pupils and use a children's Bible for primary children. Teachers can select appropriate clips from the programme or show the whole programme depending on the time available and age and aptitude of the pupils.

Background information

JACOB was the grandson of Abraham and Sarah. He had four wives and twelve sons and a daughter called Dinah. Joseph and Benjamin were the sons of Rachel, his favourite wife.

PHARAOH was the ruler of Egypt. This Pharaoh may have been one of the Hyksos Pharaohs (1750-1550 BCE), Semitic rulers who had infiltrated Egypt from Canaan and set up a dynasty. If this Pharaoh was one of the Hyksos Pharaohs it would partly explain Joseph's rise to power, since he was also Semitic.

THE BROTHERS Joseph had ten half brothers. The eleventh brother, Benjamin, was Joseph's full brother. Reuben was the eldest. Jacob's treatment of Joseph may have been interpreted by the brothers as an attempt to make Joseph take Reuben's place. If so, it is surprising that Reuben wanted to save him. Jacob himself was a younger son who had tricked his older brother out of his inheritance.

THE COLOURFUL COAT The word for this coat may indicate 'colourful', 'many parts' or 'a long robe with sleeves'. Whatever form the coat took, it was a sign of favour and became the focus of jealousy.

THE PIT This was probably a dry cistern.

THE SLAVE PRICE A young slave like Joseph fetched about twenty shekels. Female slaves of child bearing age were the most valuable. Joseph was one of many young Semites sold into slavery in Egypt between 1900 and 1600 BCE. Some did reach high positions. Joseph probably became Vizier or Minister of Agriculture.

THE PRISON Egyptian prisons served three purposes: local lock ups, pools of forced labour, and remand prisons for those awaiting trial.

Introducing Joseph

The pupils' one association with Joseph will probably be his coat. It is possible to start from this and move on to the story and the ideas it contains. Alternatively, use music from the musical *Joseph and his Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. The pupils can make notes about the subject, writing on a large sheet of paper all they think they know about the story of Joseph.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To explore the ideas of change, group responsibility and good coming out of evil, using the story of Joseph.
- To relate these ideas to life today and to encourage pupils to reflect on their own experience of some these ideas and their relevance to the modern believer.

THE JOSEPH RAP

Introduction

Sometimes it looks as if everything is going wrong but good sometimes comes out of a bad situation. Discuss this with the pupils. Believers say that God does not will the bad situation but he can create good out of it. It is like making a mistake in art and the mistake being changed into a valuable part of the picture. The fact that good came out of Joseph's situation does not justify the brothers' or Joseph's behaviour.

Activities

- Pupils can learn to perform the rap or write their own rap on the Joseph story. Use the rap rhythm button on a keyboard to keep the beat.
- Pupils can take the various parts or accompany the rap with percussion.

The Joseph rap

Hi, I'm, Joseph, Dad's favourite son,
Out of all the twelve I'm the special one!
Dad got me a coat with a coloured design,
I started to see pictures in my mind.
My brothers, they hate me, they think I'm a creep,
But I have seen strange things in my sleep.

We're the brothers, you don't know how we feel,
The way Joseph acts it makes us reel.
He makes up to Dad and gets a gorgeous coat,
So we ripped it and dipped it in the blood of a goat.
'Joseph's dead' we told our Dad,
But we'd sold him to a merchant instead.

Hi, I'm Jacob, the father of eleven,
The twelfth's made his journey up to heaven.
His beautiful coat caused nothing but grief
When he told the boys about stars in his sleep.

I'm Potiphar's wife and I fancied that Joe,
I thought me and him should give it a go.
Joseph's our slave and handsome at that,

But he said, 'No', the stupid rat.
Now he's locked up, I've sent him away,
You don't refuse me and see the light of day!

Pharaoh's my name, I love that Joe,
He saved me money when I let him go.
I told him my dream and he saw us slim,
When seven fat cows and seven thin
Came out of the Nile, the thin ate the fat,
But they got no bigger. Joseph warned me that
For seven years there'd be food galore
But seven years later there'd be no more.

I'm the Prime Minister but Joseph to you.
I've come a long way, well don't you know,
I left my family - they thought I was dead,
God made me Egypt's leader instead.
All that went wrong has turned to good
I was able to give my family food.

Heather Wilson (year 8) Nottingham Girls High School

JUDAH AND REUBEN'S STORY

Introduction

Sometimes we think of things in groups - a flock of geese, a pride of lions, a shoal of fish. Ask the pupils to suggest others. What would you call twelve brothers? A gaggle of boys? A herd of brothers?

The brothers are usually spoken of as a group but several of the brothers stand out as slightly different. Reuben tries to stop the brothers killing Joseph, planning to rescue him later. Judah suggested selling Joseph in preference to murder. Later, Judah offered his life in place of Benjamin.

The brothers stand together in the way they treat Joseph and as a group they bear the guilt. None of them 'broke ranks' and told their father what really happened. As they all shared in the negative feelings about Joseph, they shared the blame, even if there were degrees of guilt.

Activities

- Read or watch the story of Joseph again. Write either Reuben's story or Judah's story.
- Turn the story of Joseph visiting his brothers and being sold as a slave into a drama.
- Write a mirror poem for either Judah or Reuben.
 - Ask pupils to imagine that a mirror can reflect both their outward appearance and what they are thinking or feeling. Would they buy such a mirror?
 - Give pupils mirror card for this.
 - If either Reuben or Judah looked into the mirror what would they see?

- What would Reuben or Judah be feeling after this incident?
- The poems do not have to rhyme, but they should have rhythm and pattern.

Example

Reuben looked into the mirror
and saw:
fear,
guilt,
desperation.
Eyes that said 'if only'.

Reuben looked into the mirror
and saw:
despair,
grief,
tears.
How could he tell his father?

FAMILIES

Introduction

Talk about jealousy and the types of things that can make people jealous.

Families in the Bible are not always depicted as harmonious. Joseph and Benjamin were the sons of Jacob's favourite wife, Rachel. Jacob had worked for seven years without wages in order to be able to marry Rachel. When the wedding day arrived, he lifted the veil and discovered he had married her sister instead. He had been tricked! Jacob married Rachel as well as her sister, Leah. He offered to work for another seven years with no wages for Rachel. Rachel had two sons, Joseph and Benjamin, but she died giving birth to Benjamin.

The other brothers were half brothers to Joseph and Benjamin and they resented their father's favouritism. The jealousy focused on the coat that Jacob gave to Joseph. Whether the coat was long sleeved, of many colours, or made up of many parts, it was significant. It was a slap in the face to the others, a constant reminder to them that Joseph was the favoured son.

Activities

- Design a costume for someone playing Joseph that will emphasise that he was the favourite. Drawings can be coloured or swatches of material can be fixed around the edge of the finished design. Patches of colour and notes explaining the design can be written round the drawing.
- Design a costume for one of the brothers to contrast with Joseph. They were working men, although they were not poor.
- Underneath the drawings pupils can write how the brothers and Joseph felt about each other and how the coat became a focus of their feelings.

- If this story were written today, what would Jacob have brought Joseph to show he was the favourite? (Handle sensitively.)

CHANGE

Introduction

As we grow, we all change. We also change in the way we behave. Discuss this with pupils.

Our changing feelings are often displayed in our faces. Joseph had to leave the room several times when he met his brothers because his face nearly gave him away. He had to be alone to cry, and then compose his face to meet them again.

The story of Joseph is about change. Joseph changed from a spoilt child to a responsible and forgiving man. The brothers changed from being bitter and to being understanding and honest. Jacob's life changed from grief to joy.

Pupils can go back to the story and choose a character, looking at the way that person's circumstances and feelings change. Puppets can be used to express that change.

- Look at the range of faces on page 29 and put them in pairs to show how people changed. For example, for Jacob you might select sad and happy.
- Draw the two faces and write underneath what emotions they represent and who felt them and why. Paper plates can be used for this. Fix two small plates together, back to back, and draw different expressions on each one. A folded art straw can be in the middle so that the face can be turned to show the different expressions.
- Paper bag puppets can be also be used to express changing circumstances and reactions.
- Draw one expression on one paper bag.
- Draw a second expression on another, slightly larger bag. Place one bag over the other to show the change of feelings. A script based on the biblical story can be created and a series of different sized bags used to show the feelings and circumstances.

Surprise



Anger/Jealousy



Sad



Happy



Relief



Scared



Reflection

Teachers might like to select from the reflections below depending on the age of the pupils and the context in which they work. Parts of these reflections can be read while the pupils listen quietly. A spoken response is not required.

- Think about times in your own life when it looked as if things were going wrong but some good came out of them. Although it is important to recognise that good can come out of bad situations, the bad should never be labelled anything but bad. A war may bring out courage in people but that does not make war good. We can praise the courage, but war still remains a wrong that our world would be better without..
- The story of Joseph is also about jealousy. In the Bible, jealousy is described as deadly, something that must be dealt with before it causes trouble. The brothers let their jealousy grow. In the poem, William Blake imagines anger or wrath as a tree that grows if you don't stop it. Every time you hear the word angry or wrath, replace it in your mind with the jealous or jealousy.

I was angry with my friend:
I told my wrath, and my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe (enemy):
I told it not, and wrath did grow.

William Blake

The message of the story of Joseph

For believers, the story of Joseph is a story of complex good, which means that out of all the twists and turns of Joseph's life (his brothers' hatred, slavery, Potiphar's wife's lies, the butler's forgetfulness) God brought good. When Joseph was needed, he was in the right place with the power to save not only his family but the Egyptians:

'You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good ... the saving of many lives.' Genesis 50.20

The story of Joseph is also about the difficulties of living in families. Biblical families are not cardboard cut-outs or perfect heroes and heroines. They are painted as fallible people with many faults. It is with these imperfect people that God works.

Resources

<http://www.topmarks.co.uk/judaism/joseph/joseph1.htm>

MUSIC/Film

A. Lloyd Webber and T. Rice, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream coat* (Really Useful Group, 1991)

Lloyd Webber and T. Rice, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream coat* (Really Useful Films, 1999)

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0175790/>

<http://www.reallyuseful.com/shows/joseph/the-film-1/joseph-film-clips>

BOOKS

H. Amery, *The Usborne Children's Bible* (Usborne 2009)

A. Pilling, *The Kingfisher Children's Bible* (Kingfisher, 1993)

S. Hastings, *The Illustrated Children's Bible* (Dorling Kindersley, 2005)

M. Cooling, *The Bible Through Art* (RMEP 2000)

M. Cooling, *Writing and Poetry Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

M. Cooling, *Story and Drama Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

M. Cooling, *Art and Music Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

PROGRAMME 4 - Moses

Biblical references

Birth and saving: Exodus 2.1-10

The killing of the Egyptian and leaving Egypt: Exodus 2.11-25

The burning bush: Exodus 3.1-4.31

Pharaoh and the plagues: Exodus 6.28-11.10

Escape and Red Sea: 12.1-14.31

Note: please select activities appropriate for the age of your pupils. Biblical and background material is listed for teacher information, please select suitable material for pupils and use a children's Bible for primary children. Teachers can select appropriate clips from the programme or show the whole programme depending on the time available and age and aptitude of the pupils.

Background information

THE ISRAELITES IN EGYPT The Israelites settled in Egypt under Joseph. After a while, a different, Pharaoh ascended to the throne. A large, non-Egyptian group living on the border with Canaan was a threat: they might side with enemies wanting to invade (Exodus 1.8-11). Egypt had been infiltrated from Canaan before. The Israelites were reduced to slaves to neutralise the threat and provided a cheap labour source.

THE PHARAOHS The Pharaoh of the oppression may have been Rameses II (1290-1224 BCE) or his father Seti I (1303-1290 BCE). The Pharaoh of the Exodus (escape) may have been Merenptah (1224-1214 BCE), the son of Rameses II. Dating the Exodus is difficult: Egyptians did not consider slave rebellions worthy of record. The Merenptah 'stele', a stone monument, records Israel as a people in Canaan in 1220 BCE. That puts the date of the Exodus as some time before 1220 BCE. For alternative dating of the Exodus and the possibility of other Pharaohs see www.crivoice.org/exodusdate.html

THE BULRUSHES AND THE PRINCESS Children were very precious to Hebrew parents. Floating Moses in the river would have been done in hope of rescue, not death; exposure of children was not a practice of the Hebrews. The basket is called an 'ark' in Hebrew, a means of saving. The princess would have been one of many. Moses would have lived with his parents for about three years: babies were breast fed for as long as possible.

THE PLAGUES Some see these as a series of natural events: the Nile turning red, being the red silt that is washed down from the hills, etc. Others accept them as direct intervention by God. A third option is God using the natural order. The death of the first born is, however, in quite a different category; it is not part of the natural order of events.

THE RED SEA The term 'yam suf' is often translated 'red sea' but means 'sea of reeds'. It could be a shallow area north of the Red Sea. Again, people have different interpretations. Some take the strong wind referred to in the text as a sign of natural phenomena, others would see it as direct intervention. God is often described as using nature.

Introducing the story of Moses

Describe a reality TV scenario: a camp in the jungle with guards, how would the children get out? How would they find their way out of the jungle? What would be their escape plan? Egypt had been a place of safety for the Israelites, a place of welcome. It became a place of oppression. The story of Moses is the story of God's unusual escape plan.

Aims and objectives

- To explore the ideas of the weak defeating the powerful, God's unusual choice, encountering God, and God the rescuer through the stories of Moses
- To relate these to life today and to encourage pupils to reflect on their own experience of some of these ideas and their relevance to the modern believer.

THE WOMEN WHO OUTWITTED PHARAOH

Introduction

Ask pupils to name powerful people they have heard of and people who are not powerful. Put these suggestions together in pairs. For example: my granny, the prime minister.

The story of Moses is about the powerless defeating and outwitting the powerful.

In the early part of the story of Moses the powerless people are a group of women: the midwives, Moses' mother and his sister Miriam and the princess. (In those days, princesses did not have much power.) Each woman has her part to play in outwitting Pharaoh. The most powerful man in the kingdom is defeated by women who are part of God's plan.

Activities

- Older pupils can look through the Bible story and find out what part each of the women has to play in defeating Pharaoh's evil plan. The class can be split in three, each group researching a different part (the midwives, Moses' mother and sister, the princess). Each group can share their findings with the others. Once the research has been done or the story told, pupils can write a diary entry for their character(s). They should think about the events, the risks that the women took and their feelings.
- With younger pupils, the teacher can tell the story highlighting the role of the women in defeating Pharaoh. (It is about harming children so needs handling sensitively.) Pupils can either tell the Princess' story the basket's story or the river's story.

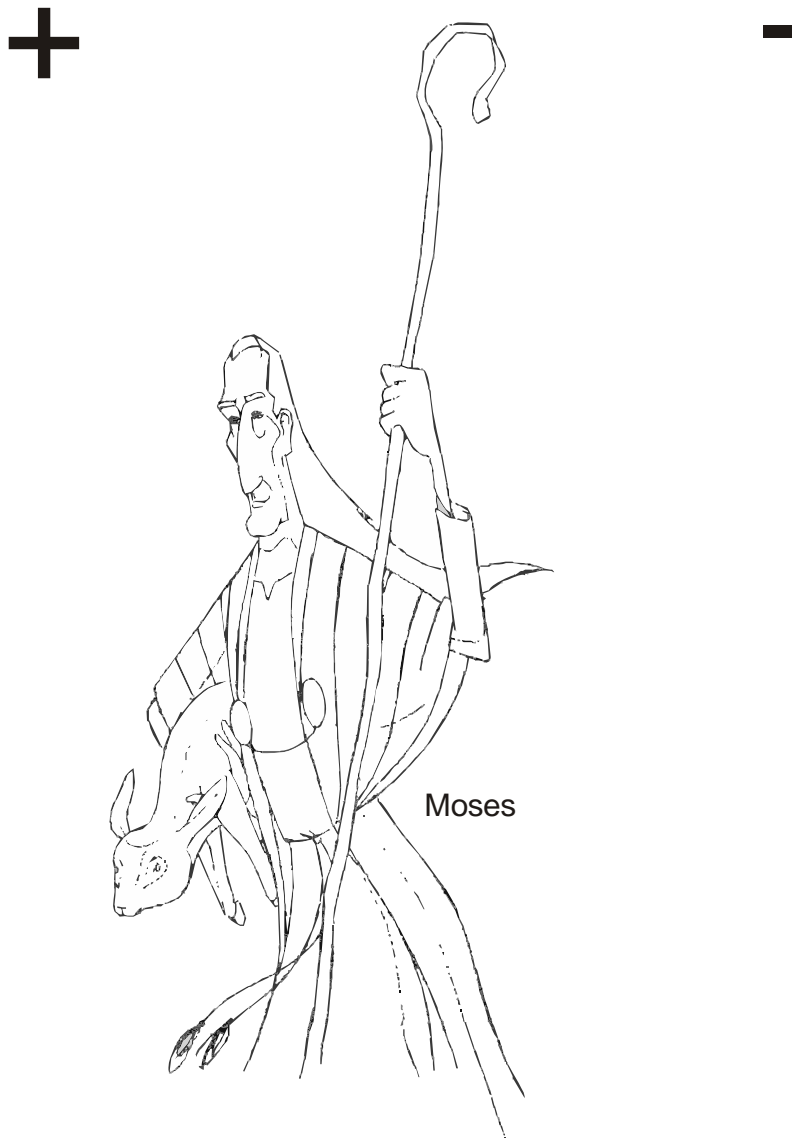
DESIGN A HERO

Introduction

Discuss superheroes with the pupils. Talk about, the powers they have and the types of things they do. Moses was hardly the superhero type. He did defend a slave but quickly ran away. He spent years in the desert looking after sheep - hardly SAS training! Moses had a stammer and little self-confidence. When God tried to give him the job, he thought up as many excuses as he could: he could not speak well, he did not feel up to the job, no one would believe him etc. Moses was no superhero, most biblical leaders were not. Believers stress that God does not ask for superheroes, In the Bible he often chose ordinary people: Gideon was afraid and Jeremiah was shy and young. The heroes of the Bible are not superheroes in modern media terms; their very humanity makes them easier to relate to.

Activities

- Pupils can design a superhero. What will she or he look like? What powers will they have? What causes will they fight for?
- Photocopy the picture of Moses. Pupils can write 'Moses Superhero' across the top, then list the qualities that qualify Moses to be thought of as a superhero on the plus side and those that disqualify him on the minus side.
- Pupils can examine Moses' excuses, sorting them into two groups. Which were really serious reasons why Moses felt he could not take the job? Which do they feel were just excuses? This can be done as a class exercise or the teacher can have the reasons and excuses written on cards and the pupils can sort them.
- Although Moses did not have the training to be a superhero, he had the training he needed. How did his Hebrew background prepare him for his future role? How did his Egyptian background prepare him?



THE BURNING BUSH

Introduction

Discuss with the pupils key things that change our lives. Sometimes we meet someone or experience something, and life is never the same again. Moses had a life-changing experience. After so many years in the desert, to have an encounter with God and to be sent back to Egypt must have been a shock.

Moses did not 'see' God, he only heard a voice. God described himself as 'Who I am', or 'I am who I am': he is an active presence who will be with Moses in the days to come. Moses' life was never the same again after this meeting.

Activities

- Ask the pupils to imagine Moses alone in the vast desert. Egypt must have become a distant memory. Suddenly Moses sees a bush, burning but not destroyed.
- Pupils can write a senses poem about this encounter and explore what Moses was experiencing with all his senses and how he was feeling. This can be an individual task or a group effort.
- Pupils can draw and cut out a number of flames and write one word on each which describes Moses' encounter with God. Each child can provide a flame for a class burning bush. The bush can be painted on a large sheet of paper and the flames stuck on. Alternatively, this can be an individual exercise. Draw the bare branches and ask pupils to cut flames and write words on them that describe Moses' experience.

Example

A burning bush that didn't burn,
A shepherd on a lonely hill,
He smelt the burning,
He saw the bush,
He heard the calling,
Felt the presence of the Lord,
Tasted the love of God,
As he touched holy ground.

©Marlene Boyd age 14 Endowed School, Magherafelt

THE RESCUE

Introduction

Refer to television programmes about rescue, or talk about the rescue services. There are several rescues in this story. Moses is rescued from death by the midwives and later by the princess. Moses himself rescues the Hebrew slave. The great rescue, known as the Exodus, is when God rescues the Israelites through Moses. This rescue has come to stand for freedom for all oppressed peoples. The African slaves in America sang the story as a spiritual as they too longed for freedom.

Activities

- Think of other groups for whom this story would be appropriate - people who need freedom from oppression, one example could be child labour. Create a news board.
http://www.stopthetraffik.org/downloads/primary_school_lessons.pdf
<http://www.stopthetraffik.org/resources/chocolate/chaga.aspx>
- Listen to or sing the spiritual http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Go_Down_Moses Create an accompaniment to go with the verse. It could be a rhythm played on untuned instruments such as the tambourine or drum. It could be a short tune played on xylophone, keyboard or another tuned instrument.

Let my people go (anon)

When Israel was in Egypt's land,
Let my people go.
Oppressed so hard they could not stand,
Let my people
Go down Moses way down in Egypt's land
Tell ole Pharaoh,
Let my people go!

Reflection

Teachers might like to select from the reflections below depending on the age of the pupils and the context in which they work. Parts of these reflections can be read while the pupils listen quietly. A spoken response is not required.

- Have there been times when you have been given a job which you have felt was too much for you on your own? Think about how you coped.
- **Superheroes**
Superheroes have special powers -
We are ordinary.
Superheroes are not frightened -
We are often scared.
Superheroes are confident -
We're not always sure of ourselves.
Moses had no special powers, only God's.
Moses faced fear and ran,
He feared his own failure.
God called Moses, not a superhero.
Moses did not fail.
In the Bible God calls ordinary people to do the extraordinary.

The message of the story of Moses

For believers, the message of Moses is that God does listen to the oppressed and he acts. Often, while it looks as if nothing is happening, someone is being prepared. The story of Moses is also about the people God chooses. God does not seem to call people who are superbly confident; often he calls people who are ordinary but prepared to trust him. Finally the message of the story of Moses is that an encounter with God is a life changing experience. Believers today would say this is the same today as it was three thousand years ago. The Exodus (escape from Egypt) is all about freedom, but the subsequent story of the Israelites in the wilderness shows that freedom was not easy to handle. With freedom comes responsibility.

The story of the escape from Egypt is the story celebrated and relived by Jews in the festival of Passover. The Passover is also central to understanding the Christian festival of Easter.

Resources

<http://www.topmarks.co.uk/judaism/moses/moses1.htm>

MUSIC/Film

Prince of Egypt (DreamWorks Pictures 1998)

Roger Jones, *From Pharaoh to freedom* (NCEC, 1985)

BOOKS

J. Yolen, *Prince of Egypt* (Ladybird Books 1998)

H. Amery, *The Usborne Children's Bible* (Usborne 2009)

A. Pilling, *The Kingfisher Children's Bible* (Kingfisher, 1993)

S. Hastings, *The Illustrated Children's Bible* (Dorling Kindersley, 2005)

M. Cooling, *The Bible Through Art* (RMEP 2000)

M. Cooling, *Writing and Poetry Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

M. Cooling, *Story and Drama Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

M. Cooling, *Art and Music Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

ROGRAMME 5 - Ruth

Biblical references

The Book of Ruth 1-4

See also map on page 48

Note: please select activities appropriate for the age of your pupils. Biblical and background material is listed for teacher information, please select suitable material for pupils and use a children's Bible for primary children. Teachers can select appropriate clips from the programme or show the whole programme depending on the time available and age and aptitude of the pupils.

Background information

RUTH is set in the time of the judges: the time after the Israelites entered Canaan under Joshua but before they had kings such as Saul, David and Solomon. During this period of about two hundred years, leaders such as Samson, Deborah and Gideon, arose to meet emergencies. They were called judges for they not only led the Israelites in battle, but in peacetime they ruled or judged their area. The period of the judges was a time of sporadic warfare, for the Israelites' grip on the land was not secure. Many Canaanites still remained in the plains and valleys. The story of Ruth is set, though not written, in this period (possibly the twelfth century BCE) and shows another side to life. This is a tale of ordinary folk, not war and politics. It is about life and death, loyalty, love and hard work.

MOAB (RUTH 1.1) Moab was east of the Dead Sea, and was traditionally an enemy of Israel. The Moabites worshipped the god Chemosh (2Kings 3.27). There were sometimes lulls in the hostility as this story reflects. Moab was not far away but its high plateau secured a greater rainfall and meant it was not so liable to famine.

GLEANING (RUTH 2.3) Gleaning was the practice of picking up fallen grain by the poor. The poor had rights within Israel: gleaning was not charity. The farmer could not cut the corner or edges of his fields; neither could he return for a forgotten sheaf. Fallen grain was left for the gleaners who followed behind the reapers (Leviticus 19.9-10; 23.22; Deuteronomy 24.19-22). The poor are described in the Bible as those particularly cared for by God. To oppress the poor was to insult God (Proverbs 14.31). These laws acted as a safety net for the needy members of society and gave them dignity and value.

LEVIRATE MARRIAGE (RUTH 1.11, 4.1-7) It was very important that a family did not die out. To this end, a close relative, usually a brother-in-law would marry the widow and raise children to continue the family. This was called Levirate marriage (Deuteronomy 25.5-10).

SHOE (RUTH 4.7) In the story of Ruth, a shoe is removed to seal the transaction. No one is quite sure what this custom is but Ruth is not being sold. It probably signifies a transfer of rights and responsibilities.

Introducing Ruth

Bring in a paperback love story or True love magazine. Talk with the pupils about romantic literature. Often romance is seen as rather soft and slushy. Ruth is nothing like that. It is a story of love - Ruth's love and commitment to Naomi and the love between Boaz and Ruth. There is nothing soft or slushy about Ruth: it is a love that stands the test of hardship and grief. Love in the Bible is more than emotion, it includes commitment, will and the way life is lived. In that sense Ruth is a very definitely a love story.

Aims and objectives

- To explore the ideas of loving kindness lived out in daily life; God as a guide; and welcoming through the story of Ruth
- To encourage pupils to reflect on their own experience of some of these ideas and their relevance for the modern believer.

Introduction

Talk about what a 'tough' film might be with older pupils. Ruth is a story of goodness, loyalty and love. Often the world is painted as tough and hard, and qualities such as love and loyalty are seen as all right for the home or classroom but won't work in the 'real' world. Ruth paints a different picture. In the face of poverty, hunger, back-breaking work and terrible grief Ruth shines out as a human being with integrity and worth. She shows it is possible to live rightly in the tough 'real' world. With younger pupils introduce some of the different classifications for films and why they are there. Talk about different types of DVD's: love stories, action stories etc.

Activities

Bring in some appropriate DVD's and look at the front and back covers and the classification. Choose from the activities below depending on pupils' age and ability.

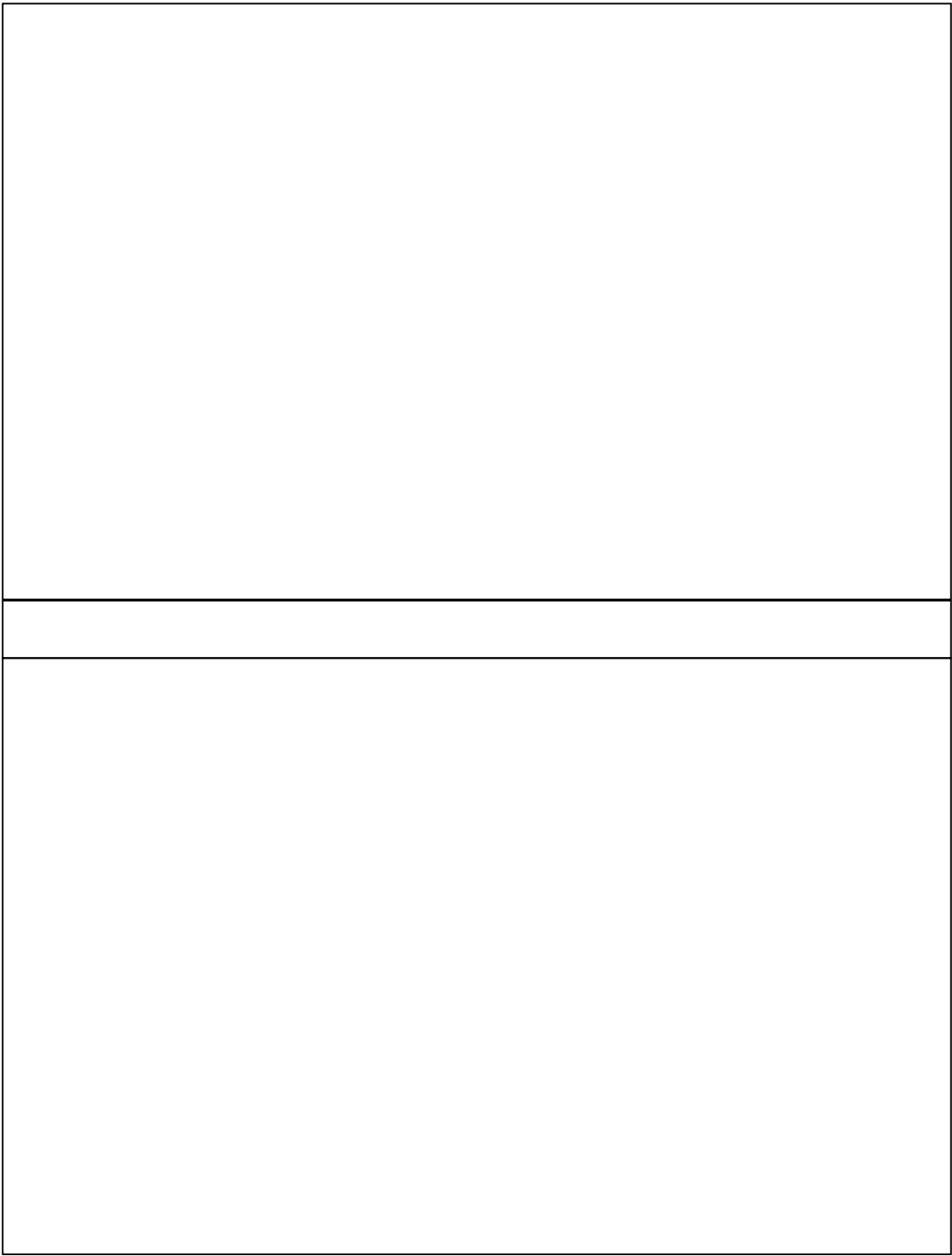
- Pupils can write information for the back cover of a DVD of the story of Ruth, giving an idea of the story and the issues covered. The drawing of a DVD can be enlarged and used.
- Create a title for the DVD.
- Design a cover that will express the 'feel' of the story.
- Give it a rating: U, PG, 12, 15 or 18. Pupils might like to devise their own rating (it does not have to be age related) for this type of story.
- Decide what type of DVD it is and create an advert for it. Is it a thriller? Is it a love story? Will it make people laugh or cry?

Design a DVD cover for the story

FRONT

SPINE

BACK



MIRROR IMAGES

Introduction

Talk about medals that are awarded to people for bravery. Medals are often awarded for bravery 'above and beyond' the call of duty. In other words the person was awarded the medal because they did more than was expected of them. Ruth is a story about someone who did more than was required or expected. She showed more love, kindness and loyalty than she had to. The Hebrew word for this is

חסד

chesed (the 'ch' is pronounced like the 'ch' in 'loch').

Chesed is an important word in the Bible: it describes both the love of God and the love of people for each other. It means love, loyalty, kindness, compassion and mercy, all expressed beyond what is expected. Pupils might like to learn to write the word *chesed* in Hebrew and write the different things it means. Look up the word mercy and create a drama to demonstrate what it means.

Activities

Both Ruth and Boaz are examples of *chesed* expressed in ordinary life. Ruth does more for Naomi than a daughter in law was expected to do. Boaz does more for Ruth than he had to. Ruth and Boaz are mirror images of each other in kindness. Select from the activities below according to the age and abilities of the pupils.

- Double a piece of paper and cut two figures but leave them joined at the hand. Label them Ruth and Boaz. Within each figure write how they showed *chesed* in ordinary life, using the story to support your answer.
- Draw round two pupils (feet together and with permission). Label one Ruth the other Boaz. As a class the pupils can suggest how Ruth and Boaz showed *chesed* and the teacher or pupils can write in the suggestions.
- Ask pupils to suggest ways in which this type of kindness can be shown in everyday life today. Pupils might like to write a modern story where people show *chesed*, or think of current role models who display *chesed*.

THE EDITOR'S CHOICE

Introduction

Ruth was the great grandmother of King David. This could be seen as a 'skeleton in the cupboard' as Ruth was from Moab, one of the enemies of Israel. Imagine the headlines, 'Israel's greatest King descended from a Moabite!' On the other hand, having Ruth as an ancestor could be an asset. She was a shining example of someone who showed love and loyalty in everyday life.

Activity

The following activity can be run as a role play in groups. Pupils need to know the situation and they will need the information on their card.

- Pupils are in pairs: reporter and source. Older pupils can research the roles and flesh them out, writing down what they will say to the editor. What people will say and what the headline will be should be discussed, planned and written before the role play begins.
- Younger pupils can do the same but will need more support and can be given more information or do a little research

THE SITUATION: THE EDITOR'S OFFICE Three reporters each bring their 'source' into the office. Each is given a few minutes to describe how they would present the story of Ruth and they can involve their source to back up their story. The reporter should also be able to suggest a headline. After hearing all three cases, the editor has to choose and give a reason for the choice.

Reporter 1 She or he wants to run with the skeleton in the cupboard idea. Ruth was Moabite. She came from a people that worshipped an idol, Chemosh. The Moabites had long been the enemies of Israel.

Source 1: farm worker on Boaz estate Ruth was a Moabite. He was worried about how the other workers might feel. He noticed that Boaz showed favouritism towards her.

Reporter 2 She or he wants to highlight the romantic element. Ruth was a young widow who gave up the chance of remarriage to be with Naomi and unexpectedly found love.

Source 2: elderly citizen of Bethlehem. She went to Ruth's wedding as a child, remembers the moment when Boaz almost lost his chance to marry Ruth.

Reporter 3 She or he wants to report the kind stranger aspect. Here is a stranger who adopts the Israelite faith and excels at living it out.

Source 3: niece of Naomi She remembers her parents telling her about the conditions in which Ruth worked. She has gleaned herself and knows how hard it is.

Editor of a local newspaper She or he has to make the final decision about the headline and which story the newspaper runs with. A reason must be given for the choice.

Debriefing Take time to debrief. Ask the players in role what they felt. Any questions should be addressed to the character, not the student. For example, 'How did the reporter react to...?' not 'How did you react?' Go over what was learnt and ease the pupils out of role.

Example of a case by a reporter 'I think we ought to run a story on Ruth that is really romantic. Lots of readers like a love story and the story of Ruth also has some drama when the wrong person nearly marries Ruth. I think our readers will really like it, particularly as the news has been so bad lately - it will cheer them up. Listen to what my source says: she actually went to Ruth's wedding!'

See the resources section for helpful websites on making news stories

UNDER THE SHADOW OF HIS WINGS

Introduction

Talk about 'word pictures'. Sometimes words conjure up a very strong picture in your mind. Read out some of the phrases below and ask the pupils what images they see in their minds, for example:

snow capped peaks

winter's icy hand

fiery sunset

These are all 'word pictures'. Mountains don't wear caps, winter does not have a hand and the sky is not on fire. They are not meant to be taken literally: they build a picture in our minds. In the story of Ruth, God is very much in the background, guiding and protecting. Ruth happens to find the field that belongs to Boaz; she arrives in Bethlehem just as the harvest is starting. This experience of God's protective guiding is described by Boaz as being 'under the shadow of his wings'. Boaz is not saying that God has wings! It is a 'word picture' that describes God's role and way of behaving. The prophet Isaiah likened God to a mother bird that protected its chicks. In Psalm 23, God is likened to a shepherd who guides his sheep.

Activities

- Ask pupils to look at the poems. In each case decide what image of God is being used and what message the word picture conveys. Does it tell people that God is gentle and caring, or strong and powerful? Pupils can be given a photocopy of the poems or they can copy or type them, then illustrate the poems with images that reflect their meaning.
Select the poems according to the age and ability of the pupils.

The Lord cares for his people,
Just as a shepherd cares for his flock.
He carries the lambs in his arms;
He gently leads the sheep expecting lambs. Isaiah 40.11

I love you God, you are my strength.
You are my rock where I feel safe;
You are my strong shelter and my shield. Psalm 18.1-2

At night I lie awake and think of you God.
You always help me.
I cling to you as a bird clings to its mother;
I am safe under the shadow of your wings. Psalm 63.6-8

Reflection

Teachers might like to select from the sections below depending on the age of their pupils and the context in which they work. Sections of these reflections can be read while the pupils listen quietly. A spoken response is not required.

- Think about times when you have done more than what was expected. Some people go through life doing the bare minimum. It's less work but do they miss something important in life?
- Goodness sometimes gets a bad press: in films, on television and in books, goodness is sometimes mocked. People doing the right thing are held up as 'do gooders', and often portrayed in an unattractive light. Real goodness is attractive: it is evil that wrecks lives. Think about one character from a film, a book or television who you felt was good and was portrayed in an attractive way.
- Think about the images of God you have heard about. If you think about God, what image comes to mind?
- The image of God in Ruth is of quiet guiding in the difficulties of life.

The message of the story of Ruth

The story of Ruth is remembered by Jews at the festival of Shavuot. For believers Ruth is a reminder that great kindness can come from unexpected quarters. The people of Bethlehem found that the stranger in their midst outdid them in kindness, love and faith (She adopts Naomi's faith). Stereotypes and prejudices should not stop people finding goodness in the stranger. For believers, Ruth is a story of God's quiet guiding. It is not dramatic. Ruth is also a story of hope, love and loyalty triumphing over and disaster. It shows how love can be into practise in lives. The story of Ruth is also a reminder of the place of the poor. In the Bible they are God's priority.

Resources

http://www.cleo.net.uk/index.php?category_id=317

http://www.cleo.net.uk/index.php?category_id=313

<http://www.womeninthebible.net/1.13.Ruth.htm> - go to famous paintings of Ruth

http://www.dltk-bible.com/old_testament/ruth-puzzle.htm on line puzzle

On line Ruth and Naomi Jigsaw puzzles available, search by 'Ruth and Naomi on-line jigsaw' check suitability

BOOKS

H. Amery, *The Usborne Children's Bible* (Usborne 2009)

A. Pilling, *The Kingfisher Children's Bible* (Kingfisher, 1993)

S. Hastings, *The Illustrated Children's Bible* (Dorling Kindersley, 2005)

M. Cooling, *The Bible Through Art* (RMEP 2000)

M. Cooling, *Writing and Poetry Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

M. Cooling, *Story and Drama Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

M. Cooling, *Art and Music Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

PROGRAMME 6 - David

Biblical references

Boyhood: 1 Samuel 16.1-13; 17.34-37
Saul's servant: 1 Samuel 16.14-23
David and Goliath: 1 Samuel 17.1-58
Saul's jealousy: 1 Samuel 18.1-19.18
David and Jonathan: 1 Samuel 18.1-4; 20.1-42
Michal helps David escape: 1 Samuel 19.11-17
David the outlaw: 1 Samuel 21.1-23.29
David spares Saul: 1 Samuel 24.1-22; 26.1-25
Saul and the medium: 1 Samuel 28.1-25
Saul's death and David's lament: 1 Samuel 31.1-13; 2 Samuel 1.1-27

Note: please select activities appropriate for the age of your pupils. Biblical and background material is listed for teacher information, please select suitable material for pupils and use a children's Bible for primary children. Teachers can select appropriate clips from the programme or show the whole programme depending on the time available and age and aptitude of the pupils.

Background information

David was the youngest son of Jesse of Bethlehem. His great grandmother was Ruth. As a young man, David looked after the family sheep. David was also a musician who played the harp and made up songs, some of which are recorded in the Book of Psalms. David eventually became Israel's greatest king and was the father of Solomon.

JONATHAN was the son of Saul. As Saul's heir, he stood to lose the most by David taking over. This makes Jonathan's friendship with David all the more remarkable.

SAUL was the first king of Israel, he had been chosen by Samuel the prophet. Saul had successfully defended the country against the Philistines though he was never able to defeat them completely.

Saul was rejected as the king because he had disobeyed God. Possibly in consequence of this rejection, Saul suffered from depression over a period of years. David's music seemed to be one of the few things that helped him to cope. Saul became jealous of David who had won the loyalty of both his son Jonathan and his daughter Michal. It seemed that David had taken everything: family, nation, and soon the crown.

GOLIATH was a gigantic warrior of the Philistines, a people who inhabited the coastal strip of Palestine. They were a military power who were difficult to defeat. They were known to wear high helmets which would have made them appear even taller. Goliath is recorded as being almost three metres tall and acted as a champion for the Philistine army. That makes Goliath a little taller than the tallest recorded person.

THE SLING was carried chiefly by shepherds to ward off wild animals and guide sheep by dropping stones to make them move. In the right hands could be quite a formidable weapon. The sling was made of leather with thongs which could be released at the vital moment.

Note: pupils should not infer from this that throwing stones is appropriate. David used the appropriate weapon in a time of war.

Introducing David

The story of Goliath will be the pupils' main association with David. Take a piece of paper and write notes on all they already know about David. Ask them to write a one line character summary. Return to this after seeing the programmes, and see if they have changed their opinions. If pupils have no prior knowledge of the story, start by sharing words to describe something big: huge, enormous, gigantic etc. Do the same for small as a way of leading into the story.

Aims and objectives

- To explore ideas of preparation, trust, divided loyalties and the role of music through the stories of David.
- To relate these to life today and to encourage pupils to reflect on their own experience of some of these ideas and their relevance to the modern believer.

DAVID THE SHEPHERD

Introduction

Talk with pupils about the way we prepare for adult life. As pupils get older they go on work experience. We also prepare ourselves for adult life with the things we learn when we are young.

David was a shepherd when he was a young man. He probably looked a most unlikely candidate for a king but his early training as a shepherd stood him in good stead in later life.

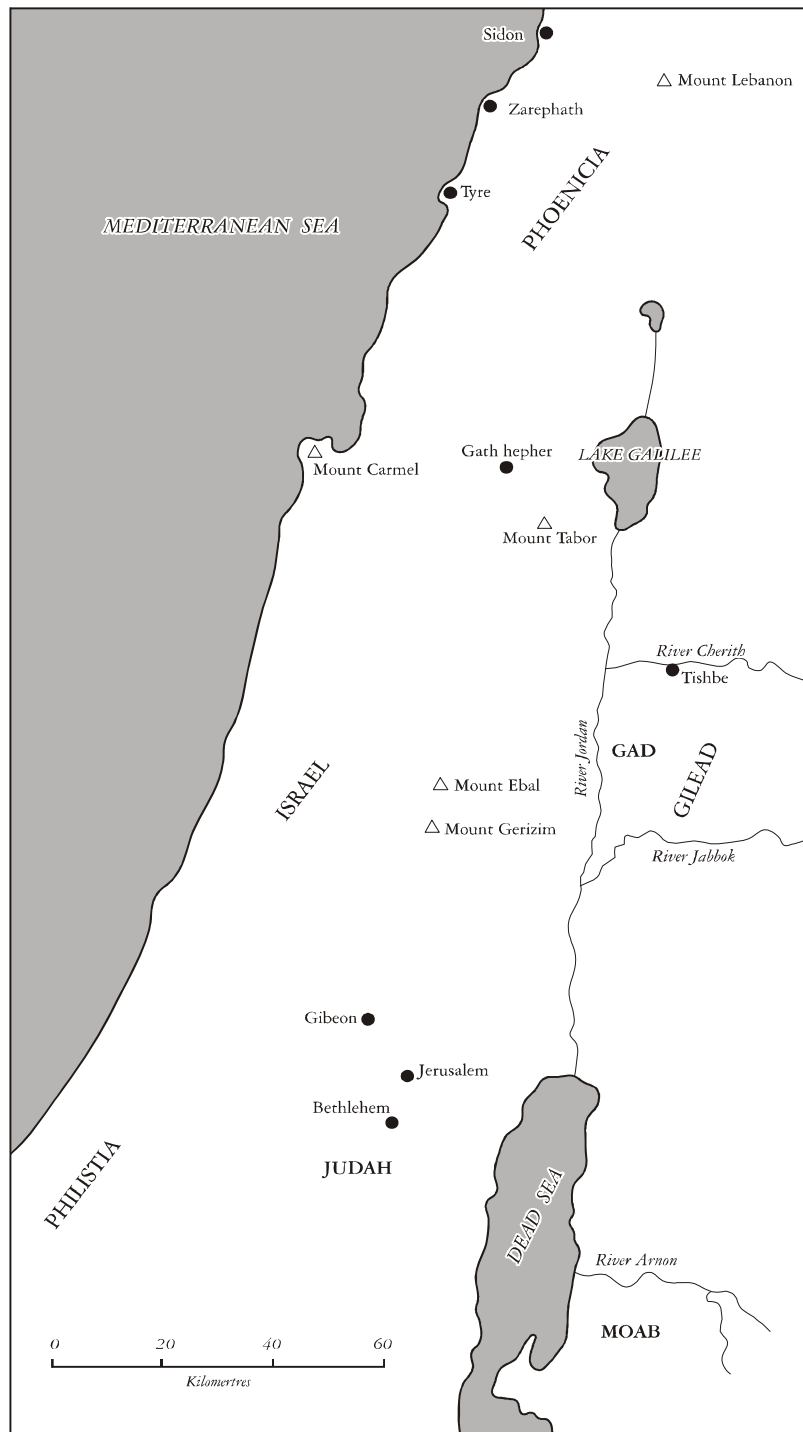
Activities

- Pupils can create a fact file on the life of a shepherd in biblical times, then work out how that helped David in later life. The size of the file can vary according to the age and ability of the pupils. The file can be made on paper or it can be created on computer.
- A picture fact file can be created with notes around the pictures. Pupils will need access to Bibles for this activity though some basic facts are given below.

INFORMATION

- Looking after sheep was often a lonely job. There was plenty of time to think, pray, play a musical instrument and notice the natural world.
- The shepherd was responsible for the sheep. He had to defend them from wild animals. Wolves, bears and lions would attack sheep.

- The shepherd had a club and a sling as weapons. He also had a staff for herding and rescuing the sheep.
- The shepherd did not drive the sheep: he led them to fresh grass which was not always easy to find in a dry and stony land.
- At night, the shepherd counted the sheep into a fold. He often lay in the doorway to protect the sheep. Some shepherds had tents for night time.
- When pupils have made their fact file, they can write about how it helped David in later life. How many stages of David's life pupils explore will depend on their age and ability.
 - as musician to the king
 - as warrior against Goliath
 - as friend of Jonathan
 - as outlaw
 - as King



DAVID THE SONGMAKER

Introduction

Talk about the power of music. Films and television use a lot of background music to influence the audience. Advertisements often make very clever use of music. David was a skilled musician and song writer. Some of his songs can be found in the Book of Psalms. David's music soothed Saul when he was depressed.

Activities

Play a series of short pieces of music and ask pupils to write or describe the mood of the music. Does the music affect them? Pupils may like to bring in pieces of music from home and describe their moods. Pupils can select different pieces of music for different episodes in David's life. They will need to refer back to the biblical story for this.

Joy

Beethoven, *Ode to joy from Symphony number 9* (last movement) (Teldec, 9031-75713-2)

Elton John and Tim Rice, *The Lion King, The circle of life* (Mercury, 522690-4)

A. Menken, *Beauty and the Beast, Transformation* (Pickwick, DST CD 458)

Sadness

Saint Saens, *The swan from Carnival of the animals* (VC, 7907862)

Verdi, *Chorus of the Hebrew slaves, from Nabucco* (Imp Classics, PCD 908)

Andrew Lloyd Webber, *Cats, Memory* (Polydor, 817 810-2)

A. Menken, *Beauty and the Beast, The Beast lets Belle go* (Pickwick, DST CD 458)

War

G. Holst, *Mars, from the Planet suite* (Virgo, VJ 9 71457-2)

A. Menken, *Pocahontas, Savages, parts 1 and 2* (Walt Disney Records, WDR 7546-4)

Storm/anger

Beethoven, *Sixth symphony (Pastoral): the storm movement* (Teldec, 9031-75709-2)

Wagner, *Ride of the Valkyries* (Collins Classics, 12072)

Fear

A. Menken, *Pocahontas, Ship at sea* (Walt Disney Records, WDR 7546-4)

J. Williams, *Jurassic park, The raptor attack* (MCA, MCD 10859)

Grieg, *Hall of the mountain King from Peer* (Sony Classical, 5BK53257)

Peacefulness/reflective

Vangelis, 1492, *West across the ocean sea and Twenty eighth parallel* (East West, 4509-91014)

S. Myers, *The deer hunter, Cavatina* (Love Themes, Point 2641592)

Holst, *Venus from the Planet suite* (Virgo, VJ 971457-2)

Powerful/victorious

Carl Off, *O Fortuna from Carmina Burana* (Sony Classical, 5BK 47668)

P. Doyle, *Much ado about nothing, Overture* (EPIC MOOD, CD 30)
Strauss, *Thus spake Zarathustra* (Deutsche Grammophon, 410 959-2)

Loneliness

Simon and Garfunkel, *The sound of The definitive Simon and Garfunkel* (Columbia, MOOD CD 21)
Vaughan Williams, *Sinfonia Antarctica* CDC7475162)

MICHAL

Introduction

Discuss what it feels like when we are faced with a situation and we have to find a solution quickly. Michal was faced with a threat to her husband David but she did not want to hurt her father, Saul. She also had to think of the consequences for herself.

Activities

Read the story of Michal helping David to escape. As you read the story, bring out what she was feeling. Enact the story with the class.

- Draw round one child (feet together with permission) using the back of wallpaper.
- Label the figure Michal.
- Write inside the figure the options which were open to her. What possible actions could she have taken? What would have been the results?
- Write the story of Michal, emphasising what was felt and the decision she made. Note: this can be done as a group, individual or class exercise depending on the ages and abilities of the pupils.

DAVID AND GOLIATH

Introduction

Ask the pupils to think of a time they have felt daunted by a task that was too big for them. This is not for open sharing. Ask them to invent a job that would be too big, for example, to write an encyclopaedia.

David was faced with a job which he felt was too big for him. He faced a man of gigantic proportions - Goliath. Goliath's height and strength would have been emphasised by his armour.

The Israelites were told to trust God and to make the point God often used small, weak or powerless people. David had a weapon but he did not rely on it solely, he trusted God. Goliath, in contrast, boasted of his strength.

Activity

Talk with the pupils about metaphors. A metaphor describes one thing by saying it is something else, such as: 'the moon is a silver balloon', 'the sun is a ball of fire'.

Metaphors can communicate the contrasts between David and Goliath. Goliath, compared to David, was a skyscraper. David was an ant!

- Pupils can go through the story and mark the places where Goliath's size, armour and strength are emphasised.
- They can repeat this activity looking for references to David's size, lack of armour, youth and inexperience.
- Pupils can create metaphors to communicate Goliath's size, etc. compared to David.

Example

If Goliath was a giant turnip David would be a radish.

If Goliath was a sun flower David would be a snowdrop.

If Goliath was an eagle, David would be a sparrow.

Reflection

Teachers might like to select from the reflections below, depending on the age of the pupils and the context in which they work. Parts of these reflections can be read while the pupils listen quietly. A spoken response is not required.

- Play some peaceful music from the list of music on page 50. Ask pupils to think about David's life and how his very different talents, which he developed as a young man, were used when he grew up. Ask them to think about themselves and the talents and interests they have now and how they might be used in the future.
- Most of us do not face a Goliath, but we do often have to face giant size problems during our lives. David was met by ridicule from his brothers, and particularly from Goliath. They did not look for defeat to come from someone such as David. They were looking for someone at least as strong as Goliath. The course of history is often changed by unlikely people.
- David was rich in friendships. He wept when Saul and Jonathan died and wrote a lament (sad song) for them. While listening to David's song think about your own friends.

Saul and Jonathan were easy to love.
Neither in life or death were they parted.
They were swifter than eagles,
Stronger than lions.
How are the mighty fallen!
I am heartbroken over you, my brother.
You have been so kind to me.
How are the mighty fallen!
2 Samuel 1.23, 26

The message of the story of David

For believers, the message of the life of David is that God often uses the weak because they will depend on him. Over and over again, Israel is told not to depend on her forces or armour alone. That did not mean weapons could not be used: it was about attitudes. Ultimately God was the one who rescued and he acted through other people who were prepared to trust him.

The story is also about God's timing and patience. David was promised the throne but he did not grab it. Several times he could have killed Saul but did not. He was content to wait. David knew the value of friendship. David's name probably means 'beloved' and David was beloved by many: Jonathan, Michal, the people, his followers, even Saul. The quality of David's friendships says much about him. David is revered as Israel's greatest king by Jews; for Christians he is also honoured as the ancestor of Jesus, who was of Davidic descent.

Resources

On line David and Goliath Jigsaw puzzles available, search by 'David and Goliath on-line jigsaw' check suitability

MUSIC

M. Carpenter , *Giant -Slayer* (Out of the Ark Music) www.outoftheark.co.uk/products/other-musicals/giant-slayer.html

Little David play on your harp – performances available online

BOOKS

B. Hartman, *The Complete Bible Baddies* (Lion Hudson 2005)

H. Amery, *The Usborne Children's Bible* (Usborne 2009)

A. Pilling, *The Kingfisher Children's Bible* (Kingfisher, 1993)

S. Hastings, *The Illustrated Children's Bible* (Dorling Kindersley, 2005)

M. Cooling, *The Bible Through Art* (RMEP 2000)

M. Cooling, *Writing and Poetry Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

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M. Cooling, *Art and Music Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

PROGRAMME 7 - Elijah

Biblical references

Elijah and the drought: 1 Kings 16.29-17.24

The contest on Mount Carmel: 1 Kings 18.16-46

The still, small voice: 1 Kings 19.1-18

The fiery chariot: 2 Kings 2.1-18

Note: please select activities appropriate for the age of your pupils. Biblical and background material is listed for teacher information, please select suitable material for pupils and use a children's Bible for primary children. Teachers can select appropriate clips from the programme or show the whole programme depending on the time available and age and aptitude of the pupils.

Background information

ELIJAH Elijah's name means 'Yahweh is God'. He lived in the ninth century and came from Tishbe in Gilead, which is in the north east of Israel

AHAB was a powerful king who reigned for 22 years. He inherited a large kingdom from his father Omri. Ahab made it secure by building fortresses, and by allying himself to the kingdom of Phoenicia (modern Lebanon) by marrying Jezebel, the daughter of the Phoenician king. Ahab was a good politician, but became a byword for a bad king because his policies opened Israel to the influence of Canaanite religion encouraged by Jezebel.

JEZEBEL was the daughter of Ethbaal, King of Phoenicia. She was a devotee of the god Baal Melkart whom the Phoenicians worshipped. She brought hundreds of her prophets with her and sought to impose her faith on Israel. In Israel, the power of the king was limited: he was only 'a prince under God'. Jezebel knew of no such restraints on her power, and encouraged Ahab to murder and to worship the god Baal.

ELISHA The prophet who took over from Elijah.

MOUNT CARMEL Mount Carmel is the northern ridge of a range of hills, rather than an isolated mountain.

BAAL The name Baal means 'my husband' or 'my master'. When used as a title, it refers to the god of the Canaanites. Canaanite was the general term (like European) which covered a number of nations living in the region. All these groups worshipped some variation of the god Baal (Baal-zebul, Baal Melkart, etc). The worship of Baal was a constant temptation to the Israelites. It was a fertility cult and involved sexual rites. The Bible also states that it involved child sacrifice. Ironically, Baal was the storm god in charge of the weather. Elijah's first challenge was the withholding of rain, which showed how powerless Baal was.

Introducing Elijah

Talk about the phrase 'a pain in the neck'. Some people are a 'pain' because they cause trouble. Others are considered a pain unfairly because they remind people of what they should be doing and how they should be behaving. King Ahab saw Elijah as a pain in the neck. When he saw him coming, his comment was, 'Here comes trouble'. When everyone else gave in to Ahab and Jezebel, Elijah stood firm. He didn't mince his words and didn't let Ahab go unchallenged.

Aims and objectives

- To explore the ideas of power, making decisions, and Heaven as 'home' through the stories of Elijah To relate these to life today and to encourage pupils to reflect on their own experience of some these ideas and their relevance to the modern believer.

THE GREAT DROUGHT

Introduction

Talk with the pupils about people who are powerful in our society and the type of power they have.

The story of Elijah is about a conflict of power. Ahab and particularly Jezebel try to use their power for wrong purposes. Elijah is a constant pain to them. He is the one person who defies their power. Throughout the stories Elijah demonstrates that God is powerful. This story shows God's power over the weather and even over life and death. In contrast, Ahab and Jezebel search for him everywhere and cannot find him. God sends Elijah to hide in Zerephath in Phoenicia, Jezebel's country - the one place Jezebel would not look! Elijah is cared for by a widow who is starving: a person lacking any power in her own society.

Activities

- A coat-hanger poem
– Ask pupils to write the word 'power' down the centre of a piece of paper in large coloured letters. The poem does not have to rhyme, but it must have the letter P in the first line, O in the second line, etc. The words can be arranged on either side. The subject of the poem should be the different types of power in the story. Go through the story with pupils discussing the different types of power.

Example

She was **P**oor without power
Only bread t**O** share
He was alone **W**ithout power
Only faith to shar**E**
A greate**R** power

- Pupils can share the lines out and put them together afterwards.
- It can be done as a class poem with teacher support.
- It can be written as prose, not poetry.
- Make a collage of people or symbols of power (money, tanks, influence etc).

THE CONTEST

Introduction

Discuss the idea of 'sitting on the fence' or not making up your mind with pupils. There are many different ways of expressing this idea. In the Bible, Elijah calls it 'limping between two opinions'. We sometimes talk about 'being in two minds' about something. In Bangladesh, they call it 'having your feet in two boats'. Many of us 'sit on the fence' and don't make our mind up about issues until we are made to. In the contest on Mount Carmel, Elijah forced the people to make up their minds. This was an issue about which they could not be indifferent.

Activities

- Pupils can design a poster which expresses this idea of not making up your mind. It could be someone literally sitting on the fence. It could use another image that captures the same idea.
- Pupils can write word portraits of the key characters. Word limits can be set for these depending on age.

A WHISPER OF VOICE

Introduction

People see us in very different ways. To our friends, we might be cheerful and friendly. Our families might see the quieter side of us. We are still the same person. In this story, Elijah experienced the gentle aspect of God. He experienced God's power in the fire on Mount Carmel, afterwards he experienced something different. Fire, earthquake, wind and storm were traditional ways to express experiencing God. Elijah discovered that God was not in any of these when he met him on the mountain. God spoke in a small whisper of a voice to a man who was tired and depressed, a man who had had enough and wanted to give up. The still small voice and the God of fire were the same person.

Activities

- Soundscape
 - Give pupils a copy of the story. Pupils can mark the places where sound plays an important part and select instruments that will express the story. The emphasis should be on expressing Elijah's sadness and the terrible nature of the earthquake and storm, and the voice that reassures him he is not alone.
 - The soundscape can be written out and symbols drawn to show what instruments to play and how to play them.

Example (extract)

- When Jezebel learned that her prophets had been defeated she was angry and sent a death threat to Elijah

shakers x 10 slowly getting louder, cymbal crash x 1

- Elijah read the death threat and ran. He ran and ran until he could run no more and he sank exhausted to the ground.

fast beats on the wood blocks getting slower and finally stopping

- Elijah felt he had failed. He wished he was dead. In misery he fell asleep.

single low notes on the xylophone x 5

- An angel came and woke begging him to eat.

higher notes on the glockenspiel x 5

- Elijah slept.

single low notes on the xylophone x 5

- Again an angel woke him and begged him to eat.

higher notes on the glockenspiel x 5

GOING HOME

Introduction

Discuss being away from home with the pupils and what it feels like when you know you will soon go home. Home is not just a house or a flat. Home is a place where there are people we know and love.

To believers, 'going home' is a term used to express going to Heaven. It is going home to be with God. Home is very much 'where the heart is' and Christianity is about a friendship with God. For Christians 'home' is where the important relationships are both on earth and in heaven so Christians have two 'homes'. Christians believe that this world matters, people can live the values of heaven now and make a difference. The Bible also speaks of a new or renewed earth at the end of time. In the new earth God is at the centre of life and there is no sadness or evil or pain (Revelation 21.3-4). Because God will be there, earth will be home once more.

In the story of Elijah, this 'going home' is expressed by a chariot of fire and horses that take him straight to Heaven. Death is still a cause for grief for those left behind, but for believers it is not final, it is a pause. It is more like a comma than a full stop.

This idea of going home is expressed in the spiritual 'Swing low, sweet chariot'. Performances can be found on line.

<http://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special%3ASearch&search=swing+low+sweet+chariot&go=Go>

Swing low, sweet chariot (Composed by Wallis Willis before 1862)

Swing low, sweet chariot,
coming for to carry me home.
Swing low, sweet chariot,
coming for to carry me home.
I looked over Jordan and what did I see
coming for to carry me home.
A band of angels coming after me,
coming for to carry me home.

Activities

- Play or use a recording of the song with pupils. Discuss the ideas expressed in the song.
- Encourage pupils to create an accompaniment with percussion instruments.
- Create a dance using fabric for the chorus.

Reflection

Teachers might like to select from the reflections below, depending on the age of the pupils and the context in which they work. Parts of these reflections can be read while the pupils listen quietly. A spoken response is not required.

- Play the spiritual again and ask pupils to listen quietly.
- 'Power corrupts. Absolute power corrupts absolutely.'
Elijah witnessed the truth of this saying in the behaviour of Ahab and Jezebel. Ahab and Jezebel thought they could do as they liked and no one had the right to question them. Elijah believed that God was the greater power that kings and queens had to answer to. When we hear the news, it is easy to feel helpless in the face of powers that oppress those who cannot defend themselves. The story of Elijah is a reminder to believers that such people are not all-powerful: only God has that sort of power.

The message of the story of Elijah

The message of Elijah for believers is that it is possible to stand up to people who have power but don't expect to be popular. Just doing the right things can remind others of what they should be

and provoke a negative reaction. The Elijah stories are also a reminder that God treats people differently at different times in their lives, according to their needs. When Elijah needed a display of power, God sent fire. When he was sad and needed encouragement, God came in a whisper and reassured him. Finally, the fiery chariot is a reminder to believers that death is not the end, life can go on differently.

Resources

MUSIC

Mendelssohn, *Elijah* (extracts)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swing_Low,_Sweet_Chariot

BOOKS

- B. Hartman *Angels Angels All Around* (Lion Hudson 2004)
- B. Hartman, *The Complete Bible Baddies* (Lion Hudson 2005)
- H. Amery, *The Usborne Children's Bible* (Usborne 2009)
- A. Pilling, *The Kingfisher Children's Bible* (Kingfisher, 1993)
- S. Hastings, *The Illustrated Children's Bible* (Dorling Kindersley, 2005)
- M. Cooling, *The Bible Through Art* (RMEP 2000)
- M. Cooling, *Writing and Poetry Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)
- M. Cooling, *Story and Drama Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)
- M. Cooling, *Art and Music Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

PROGRAMME 8 - Jonah

Biblical references

The Book of Jonah, chapters 1-4

Note: please select activities appropriate for the age of your pupils. Biblical and background material is listed for teacher information, please select suitable material for pupils and use a children's Bible for primary children. Teachers can select appropriate clips from the programme or show the whole programme depending on the time available and age and aptitude of the pupils.

Background information

JONAH is mentioned as a prophet who lived in the time of Jereboam II (786-746 BCE). He came from Gath hepher which was in the north of Israel, between Nazareth and Cana.

ISRAEL After 931 BCE, Israel was divided into two states: a northern state called Israel and a southern state called Judah. The story reflects the eighth century BCE, though it was probably written later. During the eighth century, Assyrian power was rising. The Assyrian empire was a threat to the northern state of Israel and conquered it in 722 BCE. The south retained its independence a little longer.

ASSYRIA/NINEVEH The Assyrians were a byword for cruelty and because of this, were hated by the Israelites. Nineveh was the last capital of Assyria. It finally fell in 612 BCE to the Babylonians.

TARSHISH is the place to which Jonah tried to flee, it may have been the southwest coast of Spain. Wherever it was, it was as far as possible from Nineveh.

HISTORY OR PARABLE? People understand the Book of Jonah in a number of ways. Some take it as history, others read it as a story with a powerful message, built round an historical character.

THE WHALE (JONAH 1.17) The Bible does not mention a whale. The word used just means great fish.

THE PLANT (JONAH 4.6) Possibly the castor oil plant or a gourd.

Introducing Jonah

The pupils will probably have only one association with the Book of Jonah, and that will be with a whale. The book, however, is really about God's generous forgiveness in contrast to Jonah's grudging attitude. Design some speech or thought bubbles with pupils that illustrate something done grudgingly, for example, 'If I have to', 'I suppose so'.

Discuss doing things grudgingly and how we communicate to others that we are unwilling (body language, etc). Jonah was very grudging in his attitude towards the people of Nineveh. He finally went because he felt he had to but he did not exactly rejoice over them changing their ways for the

better. God's attitude is depicted as the exact opposite. He forgives willingly and generously. This forgiveness is extended to Israel's enemies, who are seen as inside his control and care.

Aims and objectives

- To explore the ideas of forgiveness, 'providence' (God's guiding and control for good purposes), and God's love for all, using the story of Jonah.
- To relate these to life today and to encourage pupils to reflect on their own experience of some of these ideas and their relevance to the modern believer.

LIMITING GOD'S LOVE

Introduction

Ask pupils what job they would really not like to do and the reasons for not wanting that job. Jonah was a prophet on the run. God had given him a job he did not want. It involved too much responsibility and if the people believed his message and changed their ways the city would not be destroyed. As a result, some people might think Jonah was a false prophet because the doom he had predicted had not come true. He would lose all credibility. Jonah considered the people of Nineveh as enemies who were outside God's love and he would rather have seen them punished than saved. Jonah wanted to limit God's love. The story of Jonah shows how God's care was not limited. No one was outside his love.

Activities

- Go through the story of Jonah with pupils. Ask them to find between three and six words that they think describe each of the following people:
 - The sailors
 - The people of Nineveh
 - Judah
- With younger pupils, make a class list of words for each character. Write the words on cards. Ask pupils to select cards they think fit each person or group.
- Talk about the way the sailors and the people of Nineveh are presented in Jonah. The sailors pray while Jonah sleeps, they are reluctant to kill him, and the people of Nineveh respond to Jonah's message. Jonah is the one who is presented negatively.

GOD IS EVERYWHERE

Introduction

Most pupils will remember playing hide and seek. Sometimes people can find really good places to hide. The story of Jonah is about a man who found there was nowhere he could hide from God. Jonah tried to flee from his mission. Although he was aware of God as the creator of the entire world, he still tried to escape by catching a boat to Spain. Far out at sea, and even in the belly of the fish, Jonah discovered that God is everywhere.

Activities

- Photocopy this paraphrase of Psalm 139.7-12. How does it relate to the story of Jonah? Pupils can write the psalm using a large letter W to start it. The letter can be filled with images that reflect Jonah trying to escape from God.
- The psalm can be danced or signs added. Just add one or two key signs per line. Pupils can also create their own signs to reflect the meaning of key words.
<http://www.christiansigns.co.uk/> <http://www.learnbsl.org/bsldictionary.htm>
<http://www.britishsignlanguage.com/>

Where could I escape from you?

Where could I be hidden from your sight?

If I climb to Heaven, you are there.

If I descend to the world of the dead you are there also.

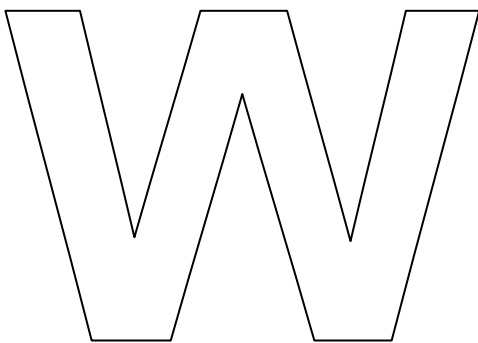
If I had wings and flew across the ocean

Even there your hand would guide me.

If I hid in the dark, in deepest night,

The darkness would be light to you.

Psalm 139.7-12



All CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL

Introduction

Most of us learn by experience. By trial and error we find out about the world. Our parents tell us not to touch the iron: if we take no notice we find out the hard way that the iron is hot. Discuss this with pupils.

Talk about how we shelter from the sun, bring in a sun hat.

For believers this is a story about what God is like. Jonah learned the hard way that God cares for all. Jonah wanted that care to be reserved for him. He was glad of the fish that rescued him, but he did not want the people of Nineveh to be rescued. It took a worm to make the point. Jonah, exposed to the sun and suffering badly from the heat, regretted the loss of the plant that saved him from heat stroke. Only when God pointed out that Jonah was sorry for a plant and he, God, was sorry for a nation, did the force of the argument hit him. Between the fish and the worm, Jonah learned that God forgives gladly and not grudgingly and that judgement is a last resort.

Throughout the story, God is shown as in control. He causes the storm, he sends the fish to save Jonah, he causes the plant to grow, then sends the worm to nibble its roots. Such beneficial control is called 'providence' by believers. The fish and the worm were not there by chance: they were part of God's plan to teach Jonah a lesson about forgiveness.

Activities

- Pupils can create an outline of a fish or a worm and tell either the story of the fish or the worm, explaining what part they played in teaching Jonah a lesson about God. The outline can be done on the computer and the text poured into the space, or the drawings can be done by hand.
- Pupils can make this story into a book for younger pupils and design a cover and title. The emphasis should be on the lessons learnt. Pupils should see a number of pupils' Bibles to see how the text is made easier for younger pupils.
- How would the story be told in a modern form to teach the same lessons?
- What does the book of Jonah teach people about God?

TIME, PLACE, WEATHER AND PERSON

Introduction

Talk about occasions when it takes a long time to understand something. Jonah found things equally hard; he only finally came to understand God's forgiveness after many experiences.

Activity

This activity captures one moment in the story of Jonah and explores the feelings and experiences taking place. Each child needs an A4 sheet of paper and access to the Bible story. You can either use the whole story of Jonah or restrict pupils to one part of the story.

- The pupils think of a time, any time day or night, for example, 3.30 pm. A clock stamp can be used for this or a clock drawn in one corner.
- The pupils then select a character and write their name in another corner.
- The pupils select a place that is appropriate for the story and draw that in the third corner.
- In the fourth corner pupils draw what the weather was like. Weather symbols are given overleaf. The pupils should end up with four coordinates. Examples:

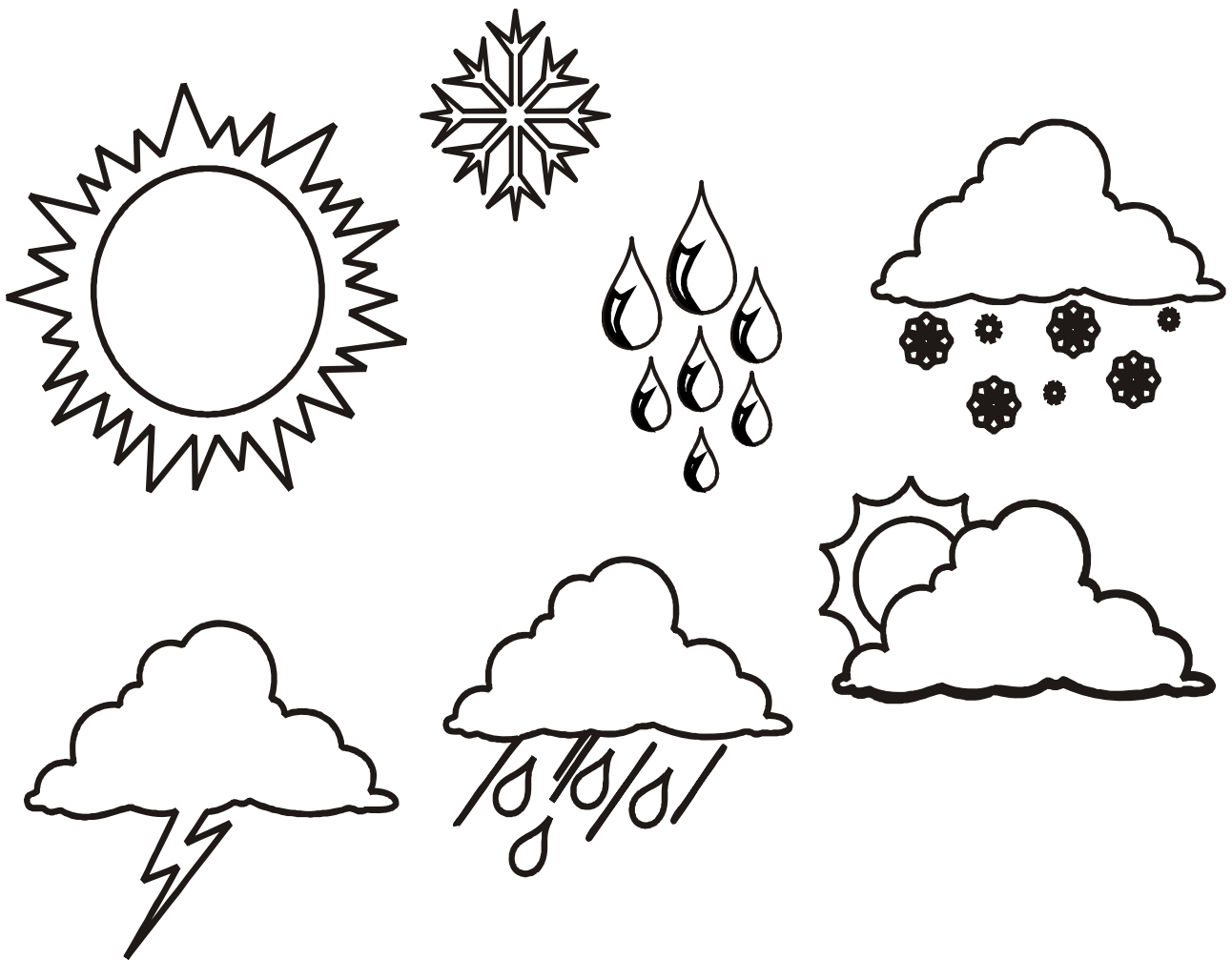
Jonah	Sailors	People of Nineveh
Hot, dry day	Thunder storm	Cloudy
Outside Nineveh,	At sea	Market place
3.30 pm.	5pm	1pm

The pupils can write a poem or prose in the centre of the page describing how Jonah felt and what he had learnt.

Reflection

Teachers might like to select from the reflections below depending on the age of the pupils and the context in which they work. Parts of these reflections can be read while the pupils listen quietly. A spoken response is not required.

- Jonah was reluctant to see the people of Nineveh forgiven. He would rather have enjoyed seeing them punished! Sometimes we catch ourselves enjoying someone else getting in trouble at school. Think about how it must feel to be on the receiving end of such an attitude.
- Forgiveness and mercy are closely related. Mercy includes forgiveness. Someone might deserve a punishment; mercy is when they are not given it because they have been forgiven. The people of Nineveh deserved punishment, Jonah was right in his assessment of them. Being right was not enough. God went beyond what they deserved and was merciful.



Forgiveness,
It isn't fair!
Mercy is more than fairness
not less.
Forgiveness,
It's not what they deserve!
Mercy is more than deserving
it's a gift not wages.
It is easy to cry justice or revenge on enemies
but only forgiveness and mercy for ourselves.

The message of the story of Jonah

Jonah reminds believers that God is everywhere. They believe that the modern tyrant is ultimately accountable to God. The dominating theme of the Book of Jonah is forgiveness. It is read in synagogues on the afternoon of the Day of Atonement. The Day of Atonement emphasises the forgiveness of sins. The Book of Jonah assures believers that God is ultimately in control, that He forgives willingly and that forgiveness extends even to the enemy. In no way does God delight in a person's punishment, even if they do deserve it. Believers stress that God is merciful whenever possible.

Resources

MUSIC

M. Hurd, *The Jonah Man Jazz* (Novello, 1966)

BOOKS

H. Amery, *The Usborne Children's Bible* (Usborne 2009)

A. Pilling, *The Kingfisher Children's Bible* (Kingfisher, 1993)

S. Hastings, *The Illustrated Children's Bible* (Dorling Kindersley, 2005)

M. Cooling, *The Bible Through Art* (RMEP 2000)

M. Cooling, *Writing and Poetry Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

M. Cooling, *Story and Drama Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

M. Cooling, *Art and Music Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

PROGRAMME 9 - Daniel

Biblical references

Daniel and the food: Daniel 1.1-21

Nebuchadnezzar's dreams: Daniel 2.1-49; 4.1-37

The writing on the wall: Daniel 5.1-31

The lion's den: Daniel 6.1-28

Note: please select activities appropriate for the age of your pupils. Biblical and background material is listed for teacher information, please select suitable material for pupils and use a children's Bible for primary children. Teachers can select appropriate clips from the programme or show the whole programme depending on the time available and age and aptitude of the pupils.

Background information

THE EMPIRES: BABYLON AND PERSIA The northern kingdom, Israel (see map on page 49) fell to the Assyrians in 722 BCE, leaving the tiny state of Judah. Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, defeated Judah in 597 BCE and took the King, Princes and rulers of Judah back to Babylon, leaving a puppet King in charge. Daniel and his friends were in this first group of captives in 597 BCE. In 587 BCE, Judah rebelled and Nebuchadnezzar decided to crush it once and for all. Jerusalem and its Temple were destroyed. Large numbers of people died or were sent into exile in Babylon. In 539 BCE, Babylon itself was defeated by Persia and the Jewish exiles just swapped masters. Under the Persians, many were allowed to go home but some, like Daniel, stayed on.

THE KINGS IN DANIEL **Nebuchadnezzar** was King in Babylon and ruled from 604-562 BCE. **Belshazzar** (c. 556-539 BCE) was the last King of the Babylonian empire he was ousted by the Persians. **Cyrus II** (559-530 BCE) the King of Persia who ousted Belshazzar in 539. **Darius** is difficult to place. One possibility is that it is an alternative name for Cyrus. At present this king remains a mystery outside of biblical records.

DANIEL AND THE LIONS' DEN (DANIEL 6.16-23) Lions were kept for hunting. The word pit literally means underground cistern.

It was not unusual for a slave to reach high office. Joseph was an earlier example.

PRAYER (DANIEL 6.10) Many Jews pray regularly. Twice a day is more usual, and generally Jews pray standing rather than kneeling. Kneeling or prostrating is a sign of extreme feeling and Jews today only kneel at Rosh Hashanah (New Year) and Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement).

Introducing Daniel

The story of Daniel is about living according to beliefs and standards that others do not share. Daniel was a stranger in a strange land. He was a prisoner and so not in control of his own future. These stories show how a person can stand by their principles, still serve others by working in a

society and contributing to it but they may face opposition. Talk with pupils about how people can stand up for what they believe in and about keeping themselves safe in such situations.

Aims and objectives

- To explore the ideas of standing up for your beliefs in a difficult environment
- To relate these to life today and to encourage pupils to reflect on their own experience of some these ideas and their relevance to the modern believer.

THE KING'S MENU

Introduction

Talk about 'drawing the line'. Often we go along with friends until they do something we really don't agree with. Then we draw the line and say, 'I'm not doing that!' We all have points at which we draw the line. Daniel and his friends drew the line at eating the King's food because it did not conform to Jewish food laws (it was not Kosher) and had probably been sacrificed to idols.

Activities

- Photocopy the storyboard sheet for the pupils. Use the sheet as a master and photocopy enough for each student or group to have one. Retell the story or pupils can read it from a suitable version. Talk about the main point of the story. What would be the one point they would really want to communicate? Explain that they have been given a storyboard. They can draw in the frames and write next to each frame what is happening and any relevant dialogue, in order to tell the story. By the time they have got to the last frame they must have communicated the main point of the story.

Variations

- Draw pin people in the frames and write action and dialogue beneath them.
- Draw properly executed pictures in the frames and write action and dialogue next to them.
- Use the pin people as a basis for creating a series of tableaux, one for each frame. Once the pupils have posed for a frame, a photograph is taken (with permission). Transfer the photographs to the computer and add dialogue and bubbles to create a photo story. For this, pupils need to work in groups and take it in turns to be the photographer.
- Give one sheet per group and make the storyboard a group task.

<div>3</div>		<div>6</div>	
<div>2</div>		<div>5</div>	
<div>1</div>		<div>4</div>	

A GOD OF JUSTICE

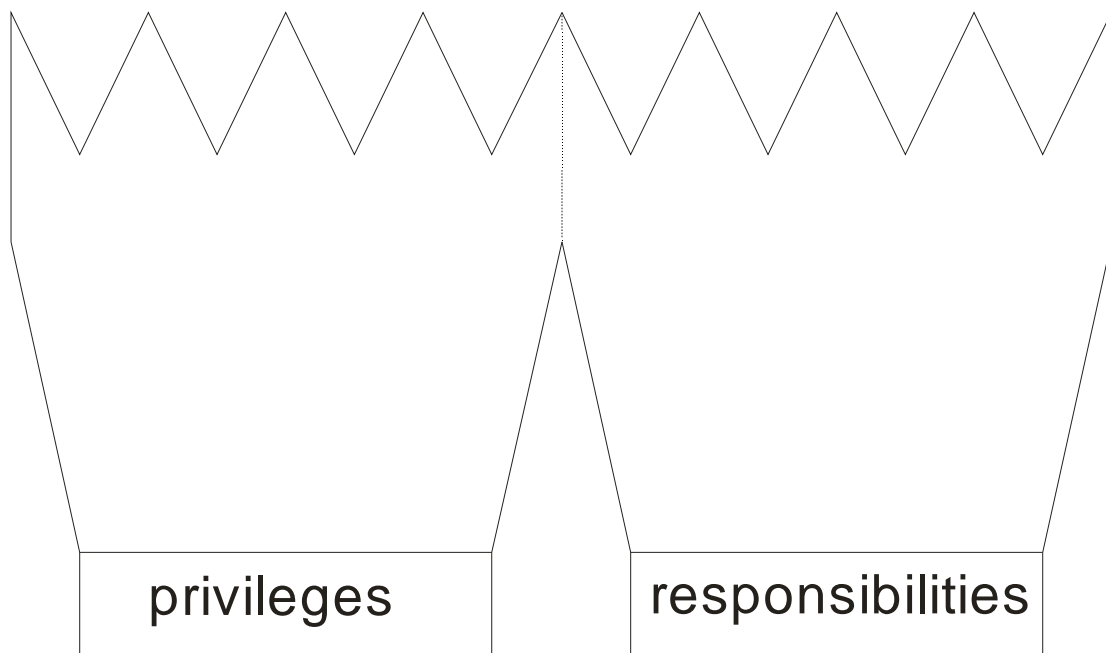
Introduction

Discuss fair and unfair situations. Explain that justice is another word for fairness: it means doing what is right. It also means seeing that right is done and behaving appropriately to those who don't do right.

Sometimes people get into trouble for things they have not done and others do wrong and are not caught. Sometimes the very people who should have protected people are the ones who oppress them. The Bible sees kings as having responsibilities as well as rights. The king should look after the needy and make sure justice is done. The Bible describes God as a just judge. He himself is just and wants people to copy him and act justly towards others. Nebuchadnezzar was judged for his pride and injustice. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar his fate could be changed if he 'did justice and looked after the needy'.

Activities

- Fold a piece of paper in half. Draw and cut out a paper crown, leaving one small section joined at the edge. Open out the crown. On one crown write the privileges of a king/those who rule, on the other the responsibilities. Nebuchadnezzar wanted the privileges without the responsibilities. One responsibility was to see that justice was done.



- Pupils can write a list poem on justice. These poems do not rhyme, but they do have rhythm and structure. The poems can be done individually, by a group, or as a class.

Example

- The prophet Micah wrote:
'What does God ask of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?' Micah 6.8.
The phrase can be typed and rearranged so that the reader emphasises important words. This can be done on the computer using different fonts and colours, or it can be done by hand.

Example

What
Does God ask of you
But
To do justice
Love **mercy**
And
Walk humbly with your God.

THE ARTIST'S COMMISSION

Introduction

The story of Belshazzar is one of judgement. Many find this difficult to handle but without judgement on the oppressor, where is justice for the victim? Talk with the pupils about the way we judge things every day: we say things are good or bad. We also say the same over certain types of behaviour. In the Bible, God is seen as the one who is qualified to judge and who sets the standards of human behaviour. With younger children, Leon Garfield's version of this story, *The writing on the wall* (Methuen Children's Books, 1983) can be used to explore the idea of judgement in a sensitive way.

Activity

Ask pupils to imagine they are an artist who has been commissioned to paint a picture of the story of Belshazzar's feast. Research the story using a Bible. Depending on the pupils' age and ability, select from the activities below.

- What moment will you choose?
- Who will be in your picture?
- How will you group them?
- What will the mood of the picture be? Why?
- What will people be doing?
- What facial expressions will you paint? Why?

- What colours would you use?
- Where will the focal point be? Where would people be looking?

Give an A4 sheet with computer generated frame. They can decide which way they want to use it (horizontal or vertical). Pupils can draw pin people to indicate the details of their painting. They can also make notes in answer to the questions round the edges. Patches of colour can be added round the outside to indicate what colours would be used.

The pupils' ideas can be compared with Rembrandt's Belshazzar's feast,

http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/learn-about-art/artists/meeting-rembrandt/*/?viewPage/3

THE LIONS' DEN

Introduction

Talk about not being pressurised to do what we believe is wrong or to stop doing what we believe is right. In the story Daniel was under pressure to stop praying.

Note: this story brings up the issue of does God save people from dangerous situations? The stories of Daniel and his friends are all about maintaining beliefs and values when others do not share them. In such a situation, can a person stand up for what they believe and expect God to protect them every time?

People have the freedom to choose between good and evil. Unfortunately we suffer the results of our own and other people's wrong choices. Daniel and his friends were living in a world where people had made very different choices about how to live. Daniel knew there would be a point where he would have to make a stand: can God save him? The answer of the Book of Daniel, and the Bible as a whole, is, 'Yes, and he often does' - but not in every situation. There have been other believers who have died by lions for their beliefs. Such evils are the results of other people's wrong choices. If every time a wrong choice was made, God altered the consequences by saving the victim, where would be the freedom of choice? For freedom to exist, there must be a right and wrong to choose from and those choices must have consequences or people will think the choice does not matter - God will put it right anyway!

Inside / outside	Place	Action / mood
inside	the pit	Daniel pray calmly
outside	in the palace	The King paces, worried
inside		
outside		

Activities

Talk through the choices Daniel makes in this story and use the activity to explore the results. Contrast what was going on inside the pit with what was happening outside.

This can be done in a number of ways, and the number of sentences can be varied according to the pupils' age and ability.

- Alternative sentences: 'Inside the pit Daniel prayed. Outside the king paced up and down.'
'Inside Daniel was calm. Outside the King worried.'
- Recordings: Alternatively, sentences can be spoken by pairs and recorded.
- Grid : Create a grid like the one above using short phrases.

Reflection

Teachers might like to select from the reflections below depending on the age of the pupils and the context in which they work. Parts of these reflections can be read while the pupils listen quietly. A response is not required.

- Does experiencing the results of our choices help us to choose differently next time?
- Set up a small domino rally. Choices matter, our choices affect not only ourselves but others.
- Think about it

We are given a world: we can use its resources well or destroy it.

We are given brains: we can find cures for diseases or create wars.

We are given friends: we can enjoy them or treat them badly.

We are constantly faced with choices: it's the price of freedom.

The message of the story of Daniel

For believers the message of Daniel is about trying to live by a different set of values to those around you while still serving the community and being part of society. Daniel and friends were faced with three choices:

- opt out and have nothing to do with this society;
- opt in and don't try to be different;
- work with the society and serve it well, but maintain your own values and beliefs. Daniel and his friends decided on the third option. They worked in the government and were good workers but tried to maintain their beliefs. This meant there were bound to be times when two sets of ideas clashed. The message is clear from the stories of Daniel. You can work in society but if you are going to maintain your own beliefs it will not always be easy, that will depend on the type of society you are in.

Resources

http://www.cleo.net.uk/index.php?category_id=570 Cleo board on line **MUSIC**

M. Carpenter *Daniel* (Out of the Ark Music) www.outoftheark.co.uk/products/other-musicals/daniel.html

Didn't My Lord deliver Daniel performances on line

<http://www.kididdles.com/lyrics/d039.html>

H. Chappell, *The Daniel Jazz* (Novello, 1963)

http://www.musicroom.com/se/ID_No/012282/details.html

BOOKS

B. Hartman, *Angels, Angels All Around* (Lion Hudson 2004)

H. Amery, *The Usborne Children's Bible* (Usborne 2009)

A. Pilling, *The Kingfisher Children's Bible* (Kingfisher, 1993)

S. Hastings, *The Illustrated Children's Bible* (Dorling Kindersley, 2005)

M. Cooling, *The Bible Through Art* (RMEP 2000)

M. Cooling, *Writing and Poetry Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

M. Cooling, *Story and Drama Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

M. Cooling, *Art and Music Toolkit: creative ideas for exploring the Bible* (Bible Society, 1996)

L. Garfield, *The Writing on the Wall* (Methuen Children's Books, 1983) (Belshazzar)

L. Garfield, *The King in the Garden* (Methuen Children's Books, 1984) (Nebuchadnezzar)