

YEAR 9 WEEK 6.THE RETURN (2) ISRAEL'S MISSION

1. We saw last week that Cyrus, the King of Persia, allowed the exiles in Babylon to go back to their own land. Isaiah was a prophet at that time, and he saw that this was part of God's plan. Read Isaiah 45:1-4,13.

Isaiah says that God was helping Cyrus to defeat other nations. Why? (to set the Israelites free and let them go back to Jerusalem).

2. Isaiah also tried to show the people why God had allowed them to be taken to a foreign land.

Read Isaiah 49:6

- (a) What task did God give to his servant Israel?  
(to be a light to the nations)
- (b) What sort of "light" could Israel give to other nations?  
(knowledge of one God, the right way to live as in 10 commands.)
- (c) Think back to how the Israelites felt when they were taken to Babylon. Do you think they would have felt happy to be a "light" to the Babylonians. Why or why not? (No, they wanted revenge).

3. JONAH Many Israelites didn't want to listen to Isaiah. They hated those nations that had defeated them and wanted God to punish Babylon and Assyria and all the others. Jonah was one of them.

Read Jonah 1:1-3, 3:1-10, 4:1-3.

1. Where did God tell Jonah to go? (Nineveh.)
2. In which country is this city? (see introduction to the book of Jonah in the Good News Bible) (-Assyria - the enemy of Israel.)
3. Why did Jonah refuse to go? (they were his enemies - hated them - afraid of them)
4. What happened when he finally went there? (The people repented)
5. How did he feel? (angry - he wanted God to destroy the people)
6. What did God try to teach him? (to be sorry for his enemies, to love his enemies as God does)

ACTIVITY Draw cartoon pictures of the story of Jonah.

Week 7 CONQUERED BY GREECE - FACING PERSECUTION

1. The Greeks

In 333 B.C. Alexander the Great, a Greek general, conquered the whole of the Middle East. The Israelites were conquered and ruled by the Greeks. The Greeks were very interested in sports, education, music, drama etc.

2. The Greek Policy The Greek rulers wanted to unite all the people and all the countries they had conquered and so to bring peace to all people in the world. They tried to do this by

- (a) teaching everyone the Greek language.
- (b) trying to make all the people they ruled follow Greek customs.
- (c) trying to make all people worship Greek gods.

3. The Greeks and the Jews

(a) Some Jews went to the Greek schools. They learned the Greek language and were given official jobs in the government. These Jews began to follow Greek customs, i.e. they played sports, they wore Greek clothes, they ate Greek food etc. These Jews formed a group called Sadducees.

(b) Some Jews refused to have anything to do with the Greeks. They kept their own language, they kept their own customs, especially the laws in the Old Testament about unclean food, keeping the Sabbath etc. These Jews were called "separated ones" or Pharisees.

(c) The Pharisees came into conflict with the Greek rulers because they refused to follow Greek ways and worship Greek gods. Many were killed or persecuted because they refused to give up their old customs. One of the Greek kings Antiochus IV, forced the Jews to burn their Bibles, he sacrificed a pig (unclean animal) on the altar in the Temple and forced Jews to eat pig. If they refused to sacrifice pigs to the Greek gods they were killed.

4. The book of Daniel was written at this time to encourage the Jews to stand firm in their faith and not to give in to Antiochus' laws.

- Read (a) Daniel 1:3-16
- (b) Daniel 3:1, 8-18
- (c) Daniel 6:6-10

NOTE: These stories pretend to be about Jews in Babylon. They are really about Jews under Greek rule.

Which laws (of the Greek king) do these people refuse to obey?

- (a) eating unclean food.
- (b) worshipping Greek gods.
- (c) not to pray to their God.

These stories encourage the Jews to stand firm in their faith and not obey the laws of Antiochus.

5. Read Daniel 7.

Daniel used pictures to give his message. He talked about beasts rather than people. (Why? - because the Greeks would have killed him and burned his book if he had written clearly about them).

See if the students can work out what each beast stands for and what the vision is about.

- eg. Who do you think the fourth beast is? (v.23) (Greece)  
 Who is the "little horn"? (v24-25) (Antiochus)  
 Who is the human being? (v.26-27) (the Jewish people)  
 What does the vision mean? (God will destroy the power of the Greeks and then the Jews will rule the world, and all other nations will serve them.)

The four beasts probably stand for

lion/eagle	-	Assyria
bear	-	Babylon
leopard	-	Persia
fourth beast	-	Greece
human being	-	Israel

**YEAR 9    TERM ONE**

**THE TEACHING OF JESUS I**

YEAR 9Lesson 1.           The Teaching of Jesus - What is God like?

1. Introduction: (a) Jesus was one of the most famous of all teachers. People who heard him were amazed at his teaching - he taught with authority (Luke 4:31-32). He did not refer to other people's teaching, he said, "I say to you ..... (see eg. Matt. 5:21-22)
- (b) He used a special method of teaching - the parable. These were stories about everyday life, which showed some spiritual truth. Usually Jesus did not explain the meaning of his parables - the listeners had to think about the story and work out the meaning themselves. Finding the meaning meant you had to make a decision about your own life as well. (Quick quiz for the names of some parables the students know)

## 2. The main theme of Jesus Teaching:-

Read Luke 4:43

Jesus taught about the Kingdom of God - that is, God's rule over the lives of men and women. He announced that God wanted to rule in people's hearts now. Everyone who accepts God as ruler of their lives is part of God's Kingdom.

3. What is this God like, who wants to rule over men and women?  
 Read The Lost Sheep (Luke 15:4-7)  
 A parable usually has one point which comes at the end of the story.  
 What happened at the end of this story? (celebration or party).  
 Who did Jesus tell this parable to? (v2 - the Pharisees who grumbled).  
 Why did he tell it? (to show them why he welcomed outcasts).  
 What does it tell us about God? (God welcomes sinners).

(The other two parables in Luke 15, The Lost Coin and The Lost Son should also be studied. All have the same message - God is loving and forgiving and wants to take us back. He is happy when we come back to him. The elder son (Luke 15:25-32) is like the Pharisees who don't want sinners in God's Kingdom. Jesus pleads with them also to be glad that sinners are repenting).

4. Another parable which shows what God is like is The Workers in the Vineyard. (Matt. 20:1-15)  
Act the parable.

Discuss: Was the master fair? (No)  
Why did he pay all the same (he felt sorry for the last ones - they too had children to feed).  
What does it show us about God?  
(God is generous - he gives us much more than we deserve because he feels sorry for us.)

Lesson 2.      How does God's Kingdom grow?

1.    Parables of Encouragement

Jesus told a number of parables to encourage his disciples. When it looked like the believers were very few in number, when there was lot of opposition to Jesus and his message, he told stories of things that began small but grew much larger than expected.

- (a) The Mustard Seed - Matt. 13:31-32 like the seed of a nabanga, this seed grows in the end into a huge tree.

The Yeast - Matt. 13:33 a small amount of yeast makes a huge amount of flour rise (40 litres of flour would make a lot of bread!)

The Sower - Matt. 13:3-8 at first it seems that the man sowing the corn will have no success, (birds eat some, some dies from no soil, some dies from thorns). However, surprisingly, in the end, there is an unexpected harvest - a big one.

These parables are a call to trust God - he will make his rule grow.

2.    God makes his Kingdom grow - trust him

Study Mark 4:26-29

Is this man a good farmer? (No)

What should he do? (weed, etc)

Does he get a harvest? (Yes)

What makes his seeds grow? (the soil)

What does this surprising story show us about God's Kingdom.

(God himself is at work to bring his kingdom. We can trust him to bring good in the world).

3.    God is patient

Read Matt. 13:24-30. The Parable of the Weeds.

To think about:

What would you do if you found weeds in your garden? (pull them out)

What is surprising about the farmer? (he leaves them)

Why do you think he left the weeds there? (in case he pulled out some plants)

What is the parable saying to us?

(The farmer was afraid that if he pulled up the weeds, he might pull up some wheat too. It is hard for us to decide who is good and who is bad - only God sees the heart. Also people can change. God gives them a chance to repent. We should not separate ourselves from sinners or send sinners out of the church, or judge others. God is patient. He gives us all a chance to repent.)



Lesson 3.      How do you become a member of God's Kingdom?

1.    Repentance

(a)    Revise The Lost Son. When he was feeding the pigs, he came to his senses, and said, "I will get up and go to my father". - This is repentance, the way into God's Kingdom.

\* (b)    Nicodemus (John 3:1-8) was a good, religious man. He worshipped God, he kept the law, he was a great teacher; but Jesus told him he had to completely change his way of thinking and of acting - he had to trust God instead of his own goodness.

The change needed to come to God's kingdom is so great that it is like being born again - becoming a new person. (2 Corin. 5:17)

So the first step is repentance, a complete change of heart and life.

2.    Those who find God's Kingdom are willing to give up everything for it.

(a)    Act The Hidden Treasure    Matt. 13:44  
           The Pearl                            Matt. 13:45-46  
       Why were these men willing to give up everything to get the Treasure and the Pearl? (so happy, so important)

(b)    Read Luke 14:25-33    The Tower Building and the King going to war. We should think about the cost before we begin.  
       We must be prepared to give up somethings when we let God rule over us.  
       Not everyone has to give up the same things.

What did these people have to give up?

\* (a)    Levi (Luke 5:27-28) (Job)  
       (b)    The rich man    (Mark 10:21-22)            (money)  
       (c)    The disciples    (Luke 14:26)            (family)  
       (d)    Leaders    (Mark 10:42-44)            (power)  
       What other things do some people have to give up? (bad habits, etc).

3. Will you accept the invitation?  
The parable of the Great Feast. (Luke 14:15-24)

- (a) Note the excuses. What sort of excuses do people today give for not joining God's Kingdom?
- (b) In this parable, Jesus was referring to the Jewish leaders (the invited guests) who refused his message, and the outcasts and sinners (poor, crippled, etc) who accepted it. Those out in the country probably refer to the Gentiles and other races. God's Kingdom is for everyone, but we must be willing to join it.

Lesson 4. Parables are very suitable for acting. A good follow up lesson for this section would be to divide the ~~class~~ into groups. Each group should prepare and act one parable. The rest of the class has to guess which parable they are acting.

**YEAR 9 TERM 2**

**MY RESPONSIBILITY FOR MYSELF  
AND FOR OTHERS**

Week 1-2My Responsibility for myself1. Introduction

As we grow older, we have to take responsibility for ourselves. A child of 5 has to be told to go and have a shower, or comb his hair or not to touch this or not to do that. But as we get older, we have to decide these things for ourselves.

One thing we have to be responsible for is our own health. Christians should care about their health because our bodies are the Temple of the Holy Spirit - (I Corin 6:19).

2. By discussion, list activities we need to keep healthy

- (a) good food, regularly,
- (b) clean water
- (c) exercise
- (d) cleanliness
- (e) sleep

Things that spoil our health - too much sugar, fat etc. too much alcohol, kava and smoking.

3. Show a filmstrip or give a talk about the effects of smoking.

- (a) the smoke damages the lining of the lungs, filling the tubes with mucus and blocking the air-tubes. This leads to bronchitis, short wind, coughing, and other chest complaints.
- (b) Smoking is the cause of lung cancer which kills thousands of people a year.

- (c) Smoking also damages the heart, leading to heart disease and heart attacks.
- (d) Smoking during pregnancy leads to birth defects and small, weak babies.
- (e) The most dangerous substances in cigarette smoke are nicotine and tar. Nicotine is addictive, that is, once you start to smoke it, it changes the composition of your body, so that you must have it all the time. Most heavy smokers cannot stop smoking.
- (f) Smoking also wastes a lot of money.

4. Why do people smoke?

- 1. They copy others.
- 2. Advertisements trick people into thinking it is glamorous, manly, grown up to smoke (show some advertisements and see how they persuade people to smoke).
- 3. Showing off - grown up, 'cool'.
- 4. To help you relax and be free from worry.

Activities

- 1. Design a poster against smoking.
- 2. Write a letter to a friend who smokes, explaining why he/she should stop.

Week 3-4 Alcohol

1. Show a filmstrip or give a talk on the effects of drinking too much alcohol. Include.
  - (a) what alcohol is and the different types - beer, wine, and distilled spirits like gin, whisky, rum etc.
  - (b) damage to the body - liver, brain, stomach etc.
  - (c) social effects:  
car accidents  
fighting, wife beating, breaking things  
crime and damage to property  
sexual assaults  
poverty, lose of jobs, waste of money  
broken homes, divorce.
2. Draw some cartoon pictures of the effects of drinking too much alcohol.
3. Why do people drink?
  - (a) social custom - not able to say "no" when others are drinking.
  - (b) worry, wanting excitement, "fun".
  - (c) wanting to show you are "grown up".
  - (d) wanting to feel brave.
  - (e) not able to stop once you start.
4. What does the Bible say?
  - (a) does not totally condemn alcohol - Jesus drank wine with meals - seen as a good gift from God (eg. Ps. 104:14-15)
  - (b) Drinking too much and getting drunk seen as great foolishness. (Proverbs 20:1 ; 23:29-34)

- (c) Christians don't need wine to make them feel excited and happy. We have the Spirit of God. (Ephesians 5:18)
- (d) We should care for our bodies as the temple of the Holy Spirit. (I Corin 6:19-20)
- (e) \* We should make sure our behaviour does not hurt others. (Romans 14:21)  
\* This is the most important reason for Christians.

### Discussion

What could we do about the "drink" problem in Vanuatu?

- (a) ban alcohol sale ??
- (b) make laws - under age, ??
  - restricted hours
  - heavy punishments
- (c) educate people to make their own decisions - be responsible.

Week 5-6My Responsibility to my Family1. Introduction

Show pictures of families (from magazines).

Discussion : What do you enjoy doing with your family?  
 What is the best thing about living in a family?  
 What is the worst thing about living in a family?

2. Why do we need families?

All people grow up in families. We need our families to

- (a) care for us when we are children.
- (b) care for old people.
- (c) teach us how to behave/customs etc.
- (d) provide a safe place for us - we always feel we have somewhere to go when we have troubles.
- (e) help us to solve our problems.
- (f) help us in our work etc.

3. What are some problems that families face? - what causes family quarrels?

ROLE PLAYS : Ask students to divide into groups and prepare a play about a family quarrel.

Present the plays to the whole class.

Ask : What caused the quarrel in each play?



**Summarize the causes of family quarrels:**

- (a) between parents and children.  
 eg. going out - asking permission.  
 sharing jobs to be done.  
 favouritism - some children  
 given more or less work etc.  
 disobedience.
- (b) between wife and husband.  
 one going out without telling  
 the other -----> jealousy.  
 money  
 drinking alcohol  
 sharing jobs in the house.
- (c) between brothers and sisters  
 taking each others things  
 favouritism  
 sharing jobs in the house.

**4. How to solve the problems**

The fault is never on one side only. Every member of the family has a part to play. Each member must respect and be thoughtful towards all the other members.

- (a) Study Ephesians 6:1-4.  
**Main points:** Children must obey and respect their parents because they have cared for them and they are wiser etc. But parents too must be thoughtful towards their children, give them some freedom, teach them the right behaviour, talk with them and understand their point of view. Parents need to spend time with their children; tell them stories, read to them, play with them, show them skills etc.
- (b) Study Luke 6:31  
 When we love other people, we think about them first and not ourselves first. Each member of the family should help the others, and put their needs first.

**ASSIGNMENT** Make a list of 10 Do's and Don'ts for Family Living.

Week 7    Boy/Girl Relationships and MarriageIntroduction

Write these sentences on the board. (if possible have some pictures to illustrate each one.)

1. I love my little sister.
2. John loves Agnes.
3. Jimmy and David love being together.
4. Christians should love their enemies.

Discuss

(a) What does the word love mean in each sentence?

1. Family love or affection.
2. Sexual love.
3. Friendship.
4. Christian love.

(b) What sort of love do you need between husband and wife?

Show that we need all four kinds to make a happy marriage.

i. Read Genesis 1:27-28. Sex is good - it is part of God's plan for a man and a woman to love each other, be married, and have children.

(sexual love)

ii. Read Genesis 2: 18-24. Marriage is not just for sex. The husband and the wife are to be companions or friends for each other, do things together and help each other.

(friendship)

iii. Christian love is caring love, wanting what is good for the other person. We saw last lesson that we need this kind of love in families.

iv. Family love includes loyalty - sticking with your own family, staying with your husband and wife through good times and bad times.

(Read the promises made during a marriage service -

I take you to be my wife/husband. I promise to love and care for you in sickness and in health, for better or for worse, for richer, for poorer, until God separates us by death.)

(c) What qualities would you look for in the boy/girl you chose to marry?

Discuss which of these are important and let each student make a list.

beautiful  
clever  
has a lot of money  
\* interested in the same things as you  
\* kind  
willing to obey you  
\* works hard  
chosen by your parents.

Add other qualities of your own.

(d) Study I Corinthians 13:4-7 and make a list of the qualities suggested here.

Week 8-9Sex before MarriageIntroduction

Many young boys and girls in Vanuatu today sleep together before they get married.

Sex is a good gift from God, but it can be used in the wrong way.

1. Discussion in small groups.
  - (a) Why do many people in Vanuatu have sex before marriage?
  - (b) Why is it wrong?
2. Discuss the answers given by the groups.

Main points:-

- (a)
  - i. Sometimes boys want to prove they are manly and boast to their friends.
  - ii. Sometimes girls want to force boys to marry them or prove that someone loves them.
  - iii. If parents don't agree to the marriage, having a baby may force them to agree.
  - iv. Boys can't afford the brideprice and a proper marriage first.
  - v. Young people get excited by alcohol, or dancing or videos and lose self-control.
  - vi. They think only about the desire of that moment, not about the future.

- (b) It is wrong to have sex before marriage because
- i. Sex is the highest form of love and you should experience it with only one person - the one you love so much you want to spend your whole life together. (see Gen. 2:24 and Mark 10:6-9)
  - ii. Sex produces children. Children need a safe, loving home with both mother and father to grow up in. Children born to parents who are not married do not receive enough love and attention, and often become trouble-makers.
  - iii. Sex outside of marriage is just for "fun" - you are using another person to satisfy your own desires, and not showing real love and concern for the other person.
  - iv. God has given us bodies to use for his service (see I Corinthians 6: 18-20).
  - v. There is danger of getting a disease (like AIDS).
  - vi. You feel guilty and ashamed when it is found out. This spoils your relationship with your family, with God, and with your friends.
  - vii. If you are still at school, it will spoil your chance for further study.
  - viii. It will spoil your chance of getting married later. Others will think of you as "secondhand".

3. Some Help in overcoming temptation and saying "no".

Divide into small groups again. Ask the students to think about the following situations and give some advise to the friends.

- (1) Tom and Amy are in love and have been friends for about six months. One evening Tom asks Amy to go for a walk with him down to the beach. What should Amy do?

(say "no". Suggest something else for them to do together. Stay with other people, not go to a lonely place. eg. play a game together, go out with some other young people.)

- (2) Tom wants to take Amy to a disco dance at a nightclub. What advise would you give them.

(don't drink alcohol; stay with other friends, go home early with other friends, tell your parents where you are going, and arrange for one of your parents to pick you up)

- (3) One of the boys or girls in your dormitory has a magazine with pictures of naked women or men in it. Many of the students want to see the book. Some want to put the pictures on the wall. What should you do?

(Read Ephesians 5:3-5. Pictures, magazines, videos and dirty talk can put bad ideas into people's minds. They treat women's bodies, and sex as something to be laughed at instead of something beautiful, good, and given by God.

We should keep our minds clean too. Encourage your fellow students to go out and play sports or do some healthy activity rather than giggling over dirty pictures).

Week 10Spoiling RelationshipsA Swearing

**Discuss:** When do people swear?  
 Why do they swear?  
 How do you feel when someone swears at you?

Points to bring out:

Swear words either use God's name or are words about sex. We swear at someone when we are angry, and want to hurt someone. Some people swear without thinking.

What the Bible says

- (a) Ephesians 5:4 Sex is something good and should not be made fun of.
- (b) Ephesians 4:25-27, 29-32. As Christians, we should try to help others and encourage them, not hurt them with our words.
- (c) James 3:5-10 Words can cause a lot of trouble. We must control our tongues.

B Stealing

1. "Do not steal" is one of the Ten Commandments but we need to look more deeply into the reasons why people steal and different kinds of stealing.
2. Ask the students if they know the story of Robin Hood, who stole from the rich to give to the poor. Was he right or wrong?

### Different kinds of stealing

Study these passages - what do they say about stealing?

Deuteronomy 24:14-15 (not paying fair wages is a form of stealing)

Amos 8:4-6 (another form of stealing is charging high prices, selling bad food etc.)

Ephesians 4:28 Some people steal because they are too lazy to work or they are greedy and want too many things.

#### 4. What to do about stealing

Imagine that someone has been stealing in the school dormitory. One student has lost 500VT, another has lost a pair of shoes, another has lost a packet of biscuits. What should you do? (discuss)

#### Points to bring out

- (a) Stealing spoils relationships. It breaks down the trust and friendliness there should be in a community. It is wrong.
- (b) The answer to stealing is sometimes sharing. Study Acts 4:32-35. It is wrong to steal, but it is also wrong for some people to have a lot of things and other people to have nothing. We need to share our things so that people don't need to steal because they are hungry etc.

5. Compare traditional village life and modern town life.  
Why didn't people steal in villages?  
Why do people steal in towns?

(Again it is a question of sharing, or of greed).



Week 11My Responsibility for my Community

We all live in some kind of community, a village, a school, an area in the town. We need to play our part in the community too.

1. Who especially needs help?

Study Exodus 22:21-27  
 Leviticus 19:32  
 Luke 10:25-37  
 Luke 13:10-17  
 Luke 6:6-10  
 Matthew 25:34-36

Make of list of the types of people God wants us to care for especially or that Jesus cared about especially.

The list should include

old people  
 strangers, foreigners  
 orphans  
 widows  
 disabled, handicapped  
 poor - those in need  
 prisoners

2. Why do these people need help? Because they can't help themselves.

3. How can we help them?

Get suggestions from the class first

- sharing food  
 giving land  
 collecting firewood, cleaning, making gardens etc.  
 talking to them, spending time to make them feel wanted  
 taking them on outings, making friends  
 visiting