

Lesson No. (16)

Broken Promises

References:

Nehemiah 10.

Notes for Servants

- ★ The Lord punished His people for their sin. The Lord sent their enemy to destroy their land and everything they have to teach them a lesson.
- ★ Many people return to Christ through sickness, afflictions and temptations. We should thank the Lord for His love for us.

Objectives

General: The outcome of sin.

Specific:

The children will be able to...

- A. Understand the Meaning of God's punishment.
- B. Know that sin make God angry.
- C. Learn that confession is the only way that God forgive us sin.

Bible Verse

“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.”
(Ps 51:10)

Teaching Aids

Felt figure and flannel board.

Instruction

- (1) Review last week's lesson.
- (2) Who remembers the verse?
- (3) Remind the children about the church occasions for the coming week.

Story Time

Long ago the people of Israel were very bad. God was angry with them and let their enemy to take their land and destroy everything even the Temple. There was a good priest his name was Ezra, he prayed

to God to help him to take his people back to their land and to rebuild the Temple.

God answer his prayer and the king give Ezra permission to go back with his people and rebuild the Temple. When they arrived to their land Ezra start to read the word of God to them. They knew their fault and promised God that they will be good. In their hearts the people wanted to be good and please the Lord. Three hours a day they listened as Ezra and other priests read to them; and three hours a day they confessed their sins "and worshipped the Lord their God."

One day one of the leaders cried, "Stand up and bless the Lord your God for ever and ever." They stood. Then with bowed heads they joined in this beautiful prayer: "Blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise. Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee."

To prove they really meant to be good from now on they drew up an agreement and signed it. Princes, priests, and people "entered . . . into an oath, to walk in God's law." In this document they agreed, among other things, 1. That they would not let their girls marry heathen boys; or their boys marry heathen girls. 2. That they would not buy anything on the Sabbath. 3. That they would pay so much a year to help keep up the Temple services. 4. That they would pay their tithe to the priests and Levites.

Nehemiah was the first to sign the document. Then all the other leaders signed it. What a solemn agreement it was! With the people thus pledged to do right, and the wall built, Nehemiah felt it was a good time to go back to Persia and report to the king, as he had promised to do.

How long he stayed there we do not know. Certainly he must have been away from Jerusalem many months, possibly years. At last he got permission from the king to return; and it was a good thing he did. When he came back he found princes, priests, and people had forgotten the pledge they had made. As Nehemiah continued his inquiries he found that the people had not kept their promise to pay their tithe, with the result that the Levites were starving. He soon changed that.

Then he noticed that on the Sabbath, which was supposed to be a holy day, the people were acting just as though it were an ordinary weekday. They were buying and selling, harvesting and traveling, seemingly without a thought that this was God's day. Always a man of action, Nehemiah determined to put a stop to this wrongdoing at once. So he set some of his own faithful servants at every gate, with orders to close them at sunset every Friday evening and not to open them till after the Sabbath.

He had built these gates as a protection against Israel's enemies; now he shut them to help his people remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. So Nehemiah, the king's cupbearer, tried his best to bring Israel back to God; to keep them in the way of truth and righteousness; to save them from further punishment. Alas, but few heeded his counsel, and the sad story of broken promises went on and on down the years.

Discussion

- 1 - Follow up the story by talking about it with the children.
- 2 - Continue the discussion while they do the activity.

Learning Activities

Activity Sheet.