

=BOOKS OF THE BIBLE=

Lesson 52

I Thessalonians

Objects to have:

Sign for this new Bible book: I THESSALONIANS

Jesus is Coming

The mailman with a “letter” to the Thessalonians

Chalk and chalkboard

Your Bible.

Introducing the lesson:

(Show the children your Bible.) This is the best Book in the whole world. It is the most important Book in the world. Everybody ought to know what is in the Bible. There are thousands and millions of other books which people read. They read these books one time and then they put them away or give them away, but the Bible is a book which we enjoy reading every day of our lives.

We have been hearing about the books of the New Testament. Let’s say all the names of those books that we have studied. (Do this—through Colossians.)

Men wrote down the words which are in the Bible. God the Holy Spirit told them what words to write. Let’s hear another exciting Bible story today; it’s about the book of I Thessalonians. (Show the children the location of I Thessalonians.)

Telling the story:

Thessalonica was a big, important city. People lived there in their houses. There were many streets in the city. There was one big, wide street which was a highway. Our highways are wide with cars and trucks going one way on one side and cars and trucks going the other way on the other side. In Thessalonica there was a big, wide highway that went through the city, but there were not cars and trucks on the road. There were chariots pulled by horses. There were people riding donkeys and leading donkeys. There were also many people walking along the side of the highway. There were camels plodding along, carrying people. There were soldiers marching along this highway that went through Thessalonica. Big cannons on carts were pulled by horses that were driven by soldiers. Some soldiers were riding in chariots that were pulled by horses down the highway through Thessalonica. What a busy highway was this wide road through Thessalonica!

In Thessalonica there were also places where people went to church services. They knew that they needed the help of Somebody stronger than they and more powerful than they and smarter than they. People everywhere want to pray, asking for help—but some people in Thessalonica did not know the right Person to Whom they should pray. In Thessalonica some of the people were mixed up about God.

There was a building in Thessalonica called the synagogue. Jewish people went to the synagogue. Men sat on benches around the walls on the inside of the synagogue. The ladies went upstairs and sat in the balcony in the back of the synagogue. The men and the women would listen to a teacher who told them that someday God Himself would come to earth and be the King of the whole earth. The men and the ladies were watching (while saying this, draw a pair of eyes on the chalkboard) for God to come to earth as a Man Who would rule the whole earth. These Jewish people in the synagogue were waiting for God to come as King. When they meant to say King, they said the word Christ. (Write in a box under the eyes the word “Christ”.) This is the word which they used when they were talking about the King Who would someday rule the whole earth. They called that King, Christ. The Jewish people in the synagogue knew that in the Old Testament part of the Bible there were verses that taught them that when Christ would come to rule the whole earth, there would be no more sin, no sickness, no

sadness; that everything would be perfectly wonderful. The Jewish people were watching for Christ to come to earth. They talked about Him in the synagogue.

One day two strangers to the Thessalonians came down the highway of Thessalonica. These two men were named Paul and Silas. They found a house where they could stay. After they unpacked their clothes, they went to the synagogue. It was on the day of the week when the people went to the synagogue. We come to Sunday school and church on Sunday. Paul and Silas went to the synagogue on Saturday, the day of the week when the people went to the synagogue. The people went to the synagogue to talk about what was in the Old Testament books, and to talk again about Christ Who would come to earth.

Paul said to the ruler of the synagogue, "I am a teacher. May I please speak to these people?" The ruler of the synagogue let Paul teach. Paul said, "Jewish people, you are looking for Christ to come to earth. He has already come. He is not King yet, but He has already come, and He will come again." How surprised the Jewish people were! They did not know Christ had already come.

Paul said, "I know that you are surprised to hear me say that Christ has already come. He has already come to do one part of His job. He has already come to save us from our sins. Our King's name is Jesus. Jesus has already come to earth." Some of the men in the synagogue stood up to argue with Paul. These men had heard about Jesus, but they did not believe that He was their King.

"Jesus was a man," these Jewish men said to Paul. "We have heard that He did many wonderful things, but we have also heard that He was crucified. He was killed on the cross. He was buried in a tomb grave. This man Jesus could not have been our King."

"Gentlemen, listen to me," said Paul. "You do not know all the story. Jesus' body was in the tomb only three days and three nights. Then He rose from the dead. He proved to us that He is the Son of God. After 40 days, He went up from the earth; He went back to Heaven. He is coming again someday. He will be our King. Jesus is Christ."

Paul opened his Bible. He taught the Jewish people Who Jesus was and is. Only a few of the Jewish people said, "We know that we are sinners. We believe that Jesus died for our sins." Only a few of them bowed their heads and asked Jesus to be their Saviour. Then it was time for the Jewish people to leave their synagogue and go to their homes. Paul and Silas left the synagogue, too.

The next day Paul and Silas did not go to the synagogue because it was not a day for the people to go there. They went other places to talk to people. They went to talk to some people who were bowing down to idols. These people, called Greeks, were praying to the idols. Paul and Silas said to them, "You are worshipping the wrong god. You are praying and bowing down to something that is not God at all. Listen to us. We will teach you about the true, living God." Some of the Greeks listened to Paul preach. Some of the Greeks asked Jesus to be their Saviour. Day after day Paul and Silas went to the people of the city, telling them that they should believe in Jesus.

At the end of the week it was time for the Jewish people to go back to their synagogue. Paul and Silas went back there, too. They talked again about Jesus. During the next days they went to the houses of the people and to the marketplaces—the stores where the people bought things. In the marketplaces Paul and Silas talked to the people of Thessalonica about Jesus. For the third time at the end of the week Paul and Silas went to the synagogue. In the synagogue more Jewish people asked Jesus to be their Saviour.

In the synagogue, however, were many Jewish people who would not ask Jesus to be their Saviour. These men got mad at Paul and Silas for preaching about Jesus. They were so mad at Paul and Silas that they decided to punish them for preaching about Jesus.

Secretly, one day, these angry Jewish people went and talked to some criminals and said to these bad men, “Go get Paul and Silas. We do not like them. They are teaching bad things. We will pay you money to get rid of Paul and Silas.”

Some of the Jewish people who had asked Jesus to be their Saviour heard about this. They ran to warn Paul and Silas, “Paul, Silas, we must get you out of the city of Thessalonica. You will surely be treated badly and then killed by these people who hate Jesus and hate you.”

When it was very dark at night, some Christian people helped Paul and Silas get out of the city of Thessalonica. Paul and Silas got out of Thessalonica safely. They went on to another city to tell people about Jesus.

While he was in another place, Paul wrote a letter back to the Christians in Thessalonica. (Pull out that “letter” from the mailbag and pretend to be reading it.) I’m pretending to be getting that letter from the mailbox. The letter was written to the Thessalonians and was the first letter that Paul wrote to the Thessalonians. So, this letter is called First Thessalonians. In the letter, Paul tells the Christians of Thessalonica: “Do not ever forget what Jesus has done for you: He has saved you from your sins. Remember this: You used to watch for Jesus to come to earth the first time. Now watch for Him to come the second time.” (Draw another box under the picture of the eyes. Write the name Jesus in this box.) “Watch for Jesus. He is going to come again someday. Only God the Father knows when Jesus will come for us who have trusted Him. At first He will come in the air, to a cloud. Everybody who has trusted Him and who has died, besides everybody who has trusted Him and is still alive, will go up to meet Jesus in the air. Everyone who has trusted Jesus will be with Him forever and ever.”

Children, that’s for us, too! This letter to the Thessalonians, the letter called First Thessalonians, is for us to read, too. (Open your Bible to I Thessalonians.) We are supposed to watch for Jesus to come to earth from Heaven, also.

LEARN OUR BIBLE VERSE: I Thessalonians 5:2, “For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.”