

SUNDAY SCHOOL NOTES 1 MAY 2016

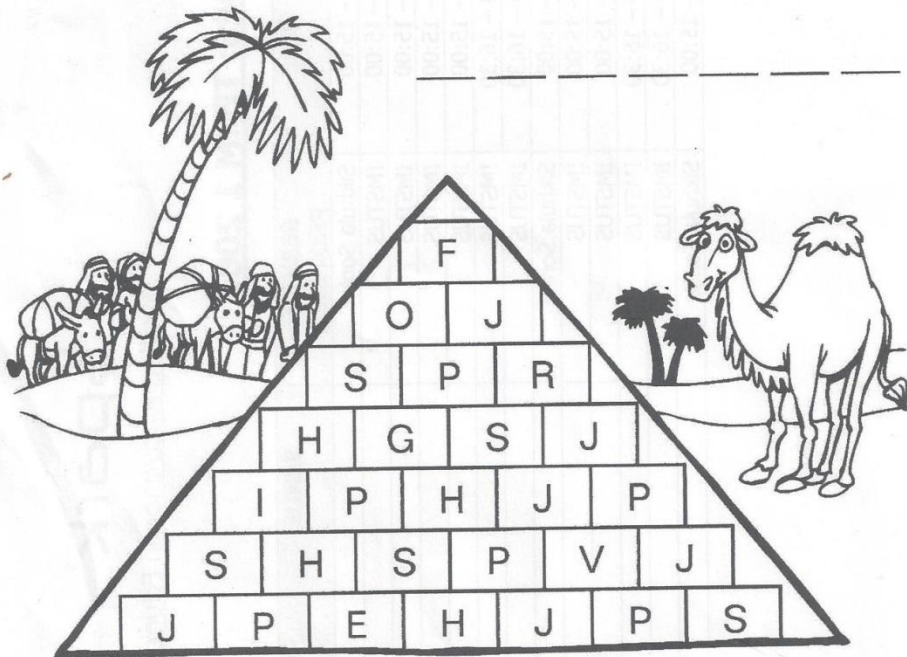
JUNIORS:

JOSEPH FORGIVES HIS BROTHERS

Genesis 44- 45:11

Joseph's brothers were not nice to him. They sold him to be a slave. They pretended he was dead. Much later, Joseph became a powerful leader in Egypt. When the brothers needed help, they went to Egypt. What did Joseph do?

Use a dark color to fill in all the bricks in the pyramid that have the letters J, S, P, and H. Copy the leftover letters, from top to bottom, onto the spaces below. They will spell the answer.



SENIORS: Acts 16:6-18

Saul – now known as Paul – was chosen by God to tell non-Jews about Jesus. But Paul didn't just go wherever he wanted. He went where God sent him.

One night, just after Paul and his friends had arrived in a town with a harbour, God told Paul what to do through a dream. Paul dreamt that there was a man standing on the other side of the sea, begging them to "Come over to Macedonia and help us".

The very next day, Paul set about trying to get there because he just knew that God had sent that dream. He booked places on the boat and he and his travelling companions started out on their next adventure for God. When they reached the main harbour city in Macedonia, Paul realised that God didn't want them to stop there. Instead God guided them to travel 15 kms further.

They came to a town called Philippi. No wonder this was where God wanted them to be. It was a major trading city on one of the big roads that the Romans had built. Every day, travellers would stop off there to rest and shop. And later they would tell others all the news they had heard. What a wonderful place to talk about Jesus! The news about him would spread far and wide.

Usually when Paul went into a new place he aimed straight for the synagogue and started to preach there but this time things were different. There wasn't a synagogue anywhere in Philippi. When Paul asked around, he was told that some women who believed in the true God met to pray on the banks of the river. So that's where Paul and his friends went. There they sat down and began to tell them about Jesus.

One of these women was called Lydia. She must have been quite a grand lady because she ran her own company, buying and selling purple cloth. Now that sounds funny to us because we wear different coloured clothes every day. But in those days, if you wanted to make coloured cloth you had to find plants and berries and use the juice to dye your clothes. However, purple dye came from a rare shellfish. These shellfish had to be gathered by hand and then the dye was squeezed out, drop by drop. This took a huge amount of time and, besides, the juice from thousands of shellfish was needed to dye 1 meter of cloth. The purple cloth was so expensive that only royalty or very important and rich people could afford it.

As one who sold this, Lydia was probably quite a rich lady. But as she listened to Paul and Luke talking about how Jesus was raised from the dead, she knew that this news was better than money. She and her household were baptised to show that they believed this good news and then Lydia began to think of how she could show her love for God.

Perhaps she discovered that Paul and Luke were staying in a grubby hotel or inn – they didn't have money to stay in grand places. Suddenly she knew what God wanted her to do. She begged them to come and stay in her home with her and so they moved in there. So Lydia served God by looking after his messengers.

And that was where the church of Philippi began – in her home. What is more, we know Lydia's attitude influenced others to share. Many years later, long after Paul had left Philippi, he wrote a letter to that church, thanking them for being so generous. We can read the letter in our Bibles and we should also copy their example.

PUZZLE

Find the beautiful letter which Paul wrote to the people of Philippi in your Bible. (Clue: The title of the book starts with the name of the town.) Use that book to answer all these questions.

1. Paul wrote this letter from Rome but we know from 1:13, 14 that he was no longer free to travel around. What word tells us this?
2. Paul is not complaining about this. Instead he explains that what has happened to him has helped to
3. The people of the church at Philippi had sent a messenger with presents for Paul (2:25; 4:18). What was the messenger's name?
4. What had happened to this messenger when he got to Rome?.....
5. Write down the words which show that Paul was very grateful to the church at Philippi (4:14).
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