

LESSON 6
JONATHAN'S COVENANT WITH DAVID

1 Samuel 20:1-42

Jonathan and David were close friends. Their friendship was very strong. They were loving and loyal to each other. Their kind of closeness could be used as the standard for measuring true friendship. Jonathan was the eldest son of King Saul and was supposed to be the heir to the throne of Israel. David on the other hand was the youngest son of his father who was not a king but a farmer. David and Jonathan became friends after David defeated the giant called Goliath who was the champion of the Philistines, the enemies of Israel.

King Saul became jealous of David because the women sang the praises of David after he killed

Goliath. Have you ever been jealous of your friends? Jealousy is a feeling of unhappiness when you see the prosperity or success of others. How do you react when your friend is commended and you are not? Are you happy when others get new clothes, shoes and toys while you receive nothing? These situations can make you jealous. When you realise that you envy your friends, ask God to help you to stop being jealous and envious.

King Saul's hatred for David was so bad that he tried to kill David over and over again. Jonathan was a true friend and was never jealous of David. He tried to make peace between David and his father but did not succeed. Yet, he continued his friendship with David and even made covenant with him. Jesus seeks to make friends with all sinful boys and girls. Come to Him now and He will receive you.

1. JONATHAN'S FRIENDSHIP WITH DAVID:

1 Samuel 20:1-11; 2 Timothy 3:12

When David realised that Saul actually wanted to kill him, he asked Jonathan to present his case before Saul and try to make peace between him and Saul. David knew that his friend, Jonathan, would never hurt him. God allowed David to face these trials so as to prepare him for his future role as king. As friends of Jesus, God sometimes allows trials to: (a) Help us develop godly character such as love, joy, peace, self-control and longsuffering. (b) Strengthen us to move ahead and not be discouraged. (c) Make us not to go astray (d) Help us to depend and trust in God (e) Prepare us to inherit eternal life.

At first, Jonathan did not believe that his father wanted to kill David. But David convinced him that it was true. The next day was the new moon. David being part of Saul's household was expected to be present to partake of the feast with King Saul. Saul was very angry at David's absence. Jonathan knew that protecting David might cost him his future throne, even his life. But he was willing to risk his kingdom for his friend, David.

As friends of Jesus, we must be willing to risk everything for Him. Serve Him with all your heart, soul and spirit and strive to bring the lost back to the Saviour.

2. JONATHAN'S COVENANT WITH DAVID:

1 Samuel 20:11-24

Jonathan knew that the case between David and his father was very serious; so, he met David and they made some plans secretly. Jonathan believed David would survive and one day become the king of Israel. He was not jealous. When God is using other children to do His work, pray for them instead of being jealous. Jonathan had certain qualities that made him a trustworthy friend. (a) He had a loyal heart (b) He was very loving, **"He loved David like himself"**. (c) He was steadfast and faithful to tell David about his father's intentions. (d) Jonathan had faith in God. Himself and his friend David had common faith in God. Who is your best friend? The Bible says evil communication corrupts good manners (1 Corinthians 15:33). Your bosom friends must be children of God. Together, you can encourage one another and serve God acceptably.

Jonathan realised that David will surely become the king of Israel. He made covenant with him. He asked that David show kindness to his children and their families forever. **"So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, Let the LORD even require it at the hand of David's enemies"** (1 Samuel 20:16). It was a solemn agreement between both of them.

In later years, after the death of Saul and Jonathan, David remembered the covenant. He brought the son of Jonathan named Mephibosheth to live and eat with him in his palace (2 Samuel 9:1-13). Covenant is a special agreement that must be obeyed by both parties. God expects us to come into a covenant relationship with Him and serve Him in Spirit and truth. This should be the desire of every child.

3. JESUS EVERLASTING COVENANT WITH HIS FRIENDS:

1 Samuel 20:16,42; Matthew 11:28-30; John 3:16; 15:13-15

As a good friend, Jonathan risked his own life to save David from the wrath of Saul. Jesus showed greater love than Jonathan by laying down His life to die in our place and redeem us from punishments for sin (John 15:13).

God is a loving Father; He does not want any child to perish and suffer in hell ☐ re. Therefore, He made provision by sending His only begotten Son to die for us. Jesus is a loving Friend; He paid the price for our salvation. For a sinner to enjoy this provision, he must ☐rst realise that he is a sinner. Repent and confess all his sins. Ask for forgiveness and cleansing in the blood of Jesus.

Jesus Christ is the best Friend you must have. Whenever you have any problem, turn to Jesus and He will always be there for you. Even when your loved ones forsake you, Jesus will always love you. Jesus died to save you from sin and eternal

death. Invite Him to come into your heart to be your Saviour and Friend. This step will bring the sinner into a loving relationship with Christ. He now has the assurance of escaping from eternal death to live with Jesus in heaven forever.

QUESTIONS:

1. _____ was the first son of King Saul.
2. Why did God allow David to go through these trials?
3. What was the content of Jonathan's covenant with David?
4. Jonathan had some special qualities, mention three of them.
5. What did Jesus do for His friends?
6. How can a sinful child come into a covenant relationship with Jesus?

MEMORY VERSE: "So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, Let the LORD even require it at the hand of David's enemies"
(1 Samuel 20:16).

LESSON: Jesus Christ has paid the price to bring us into a loving relationship with Himself.

THOUGHT: I surrender my life to Jesus so as to be qualified to escape eternal death.

ACTIVITY: Children should be shared into two groups to discuss: (i) The type of friends to keep. (ii) The kind of friends to avoid.

HOMEWORK: Read Mark 15:22-25 and write out what Jesus did to save sinners from death.

CONGREGATIONAL SONG: GHS 129 – GRACE GREATER THAN OUR SIN

CHORUSES: (1) Jesus conquered the world and gave us victory. (2) Jesus died on the cross. (3) I have decided to follow Jesus.

DAILY BIBLE READING

MONDAY	1 SAMUEL	19:1-3
TUESDAY	1 SAMUEL	19:4-7
WEDNESDAY	2 SAMUEL	9:1-5
THURSDAY	2 SAMUEL	9:6-9
FRIDAY	2 SAMUEL	9:10-13
SATURDAY	ISAIAH	1:18-20
SUNDAY	JOHN	3:14-17

BIBLE WORD SEARCH

Find the meaning of these words. You can use your dictionary: 1. Jealousy 2. Heir 3. Develop 4. Convince 5. Loyal.

LESSON 7

DAVID FLEES FROM SAUL

1 Samuel 21:1-15; 22:1-23; 23:1-29

David's victory over Goliath led him into the palace of King Saul. He was then appointed as an officer in Saul's army. David won many battles and became very popular with the people. However, popularity and success did not make him to become proud. He remained humble, dutiful and obedient to the king in whatever assignment he was given.

Saul, however, was filled with anger and envy because of David's success. He was afraid that David might take over the throne. Therefore, he secretly planned to destroy David. Saul tried many times without success. He attacked David openly with a javelin, and cunningly exposed him to the enemy's attack, but all his attempts to kill David failed (1 Samuel 19:10; 18:25). God loved David as He loves all righteous boys and girls. He delivered him from all the evil plans of King Saul. God will deliver you from all your enemies as you continue to live a holy life.

1. THE DEVILISH PLAN OF SAUL TO ELIMINATE DAVID:

1 Samuel 21:10; 22:6-23; 23:7-26

Saul developed deep hatred towards David and decided that he must kill him at all costs. Therefore, the plan to put David to death became King Saul's number one project. In pursuit of his devilish plan, Saul abandoned his God-given role as king of Israel and with thousands of soldiers began to search every nook and cranny of his kingdom for David.

Saul's evil plan was very clear to David and even Jonathan his son who was David's bosom friend. On two occasions, he threw his javelin at David to pin him to the wall, but David escaped (1 Samuel 19:10). After this, David started running from one place to another. Firstly, he ran to Gath – a city of the Philistines, Israel's

enemies. Saul went after him. Secondly, he escaped and went to a place known as Nob. He met with Ahimelech the priest, who received and helped him in some way. When Saul learnt that David went to the priest, he went after him with his servants. In anger that he did not meet David in Nob, he ordered Doeg, his servant to kill Ahimelech and the other priests. It was so bad that Saul lost his sense of reasoning just because of David. After shedding innocent blood, Saul was still not satisfied. When he heard that David was in another city called Keilah, he went there but he could not get David. God protected him. The Bible shows us the way that Saul was determined to eliminate David thus, **"And Saul sought him every day"** (1 Samuel 23:14b).

Saul failed in all his attempts to slay David because God was with him. As a friend of Jesus, you have nothing to fear. God is our strength and refuge and a present help in time of trouble. All you need do is to trust Him. The plan and purpose of the wicked ones against you will fail.

2. DAVID FLEES FROM SAUL:

1 Samuel 21:1-15; 22:1-5; 23:1-29

To flee means to run away from danger to safety. As long as Saul remained as king of Israel, David had to run for his dear life to avoid being killed.

At this time, David was too scared of Saul to spend time to pray. He failed to trust God completely. In an attempt to save his life, he ran to Gath where he fell into temptation to tell a lie. He sought refuge among the ungodly Philistines. Also, David ran to Ahimelech the priest at Nob. This action led to the slaying of Ahimelech and other priests through Saul's instruction.

At another time, David took his parents and other family members and ran away from King Saul. Sometimes, he would be in the wilderness; at other times, he would hide in caves. Yet, Saul continued to pursue him. It was a time of trial for David. Some of the people David helped like the inhabitants of Keilah planned to betray him but did not succeed. Through all the trials and troubles, God was with David. He did not allow him to fall into the hand of Saul, his enemy. There are important lessons for us to take note of here:

- i) David relied on God to help him. He did not think of paying back evil with evil. We must love everyone, even our enemies.
- ii) David, through God's wisdom, fled from danger. It is important for you to recognize danger signs and also run into a safe place.
- iii) In his distress, David still made himself available to help the people of Keilah. Even though they tried to betray him, he was not angry with them. Always show love to people no matter what you are passing through. God will reward and help you in time of need.
- iv) **"And Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand"** (1 Samuel 23:14b).

This shows that it is only God who can deliver us from our enemies. As long as you put your trust in Him, He will not leave you to the will of those who hate you.

3. DIVINE PROTECTION FOR THE RIGHTEOUS:

1 Samuel 23:14; Psalm 91:1-16; Proverbs 18:10

It would have been easy for Saul to destroy David if God had not provided divine protection for him. Saul had all the resources at his disposal, but God in His love and mercy provided the place of refuge and safety for David. When a child surrenders his life to Jesus and becomes His friend, he comes into the Ark of safety. It is only those who reject God that will be exposed to the enemy's attack.

The reason you should run into Christ today is for the salvation of your soul and protection of your life. Many people run up and down looking for protection and solution to their problems but they get into wrong hands and false doctrine.

Jesus Christ is our hiding place. The enemy is in the world roaring like a hungry lion, seeking whom he may devour. However, **"The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe"** (Proverbs 18:10). You can run into Christ today by forsaking your sins. Ask God to forgive you and wash you with the blood of Jesus. Read God's word, meditate on its promises and obey all its commandments. Also watch and pray. As you do these, the enemy will never be able to harm you in Jesus' Name.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did Saul want to kill David?
2. Where did David run to in a bid to escape from Saul's plan?
3. Where should a friend of Jesus run to for safety?
4. What are the benefits of running into Christ?
5. What steps should a sinful child take to come under God's protection?

MEMORY VERSE: "And David arose, and fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath" (1 Samuel 21:10).

LESSON: God's protection and care is for only boys and girls who are in Christ.

THOUGHT: I will forsake my naughty ways and run into Christ so as to enjoy God's protection.

ACTIVITY: Read Acts 9:23-25; 12:3-11 and find out the following: (a) The personalities in the passages (b) Reasons for the persecution of the friends of Jesus. (c) How friends of Jesus were protected and delivered. (d) Lessons learnt from their deliverance.

HOMEWORK: Pray every day for divine protection and guidance in every area of your life.

CONGREGATIONAL SONG: GHS 60 – WHERE COULD I GO

CHORUSES: (1) The rock that never fails (2) Under the canopy (3) Satan can never, never conquer me.

DAILY BIBLE READING

MONDAY	PSALM	91:1-3
TUESDAY	PSALM	91:4-6
WEDNESDAY	PSALM	91:7-9
THURSDAY	PSALM	91:10-12
FRIDAY	PSALM	91:13-16
SATURDAY	ACTS	9:22-25
SUNDAY	PSALM	46:1-5

BIBLE WORD SEARCH

Find the meaning of these words. You can use your dictionary 1. Jealousy 2. Achievement 3. Determine 4. Security 5. Safety.

LESSON 8

PAUL'S FAREWELL MESSAGE TO THE EPHESIANS

Acts 20:1-38

Apostle Paul in continuation of his missionary journey left Ephesus to sail to Macedonia and later went to Greece where he spent three months. Then he returned to Macedonia and from there went to Philippi and also to Troas. There were many other friends of Jesus who accompanied him on this journey. In all his missionary journeys, the most important concern of Paul was to preach the gospel, get people saved and teach them the word of God in preparation for the coming of the Lord.

When he got to Troas, he gathered the brethren together, taught them the word of God and also observed the Lord's Supper with them. From Troas, Paul travelled to Miletus. From there, he invited the elders of the Ephesian church to come to him. He called them to give them a final message of encouragement. The Ephesian church

started with about twelve (12) people. It then grew to become a large congregation of believers due to the special work of the Holy Spirit through Apostle Paul (Acts 19:1-7). In Acts 20, Apostle Paul was rounding off his missionary journey; therefore, he went round to teach, confirm and encourage the churches to carry on the work of the gospel and also to stand firm on God's word.

Apostle Paul was not too concerned about his personal comfort; he was consumed with passion for the gospel and to do God's will. This is what God demands from every believer. We are commanded to surrender our lives to Jesus, consecrate our all to serve Him faithfully and acceptably all the days of our lives. Be counted among the faithful servants of God in your generation.

1. PAUL: AN EXAMPLE OF A FEARLESS AND COMMITTED LEADER:

Acts 20:1-16

Paul was an exemplary Christian leader. He did not only tell people what to do, he also did it. He preached the gospel even when it was risky (dangerous) to do so. When the Holy Spirit told him of the suffering awaiting him in Jerusalem, he was still determined to go there. He visited many cities, helped many people to become friends of Jesus and also taught them. He went on many missionary journeys in order to preach and teach the people. He was not afraid of the danger on the way, all he wanted to do was to fulfill his ministry.

Friends of Jesus are expected to follow this godly example and be faithful in carrying out the great commission.

2. PASTORAL COUNSEL TO THE EPHESIANS:

Acts 20:17-35

Paul the apostle was an evangelist and a pastor. He preached in many cities where many people became friends of Jesus. After leaving there for other cities, he always went back to visit and encourage these friends of Jesus. He wanted to visit Jerusalem but stopped at Miletus and sent for the Ephesian elders so that he could talk to them. Paul reminded them of the good news he had preached to them and taught them how to live for God and serve Him. He told them all these because he did not want them to be deceived by false prophets. He also told them how he earned a living by working with his own hands as a tent maker. Thus, they also should not be lazy so that they will be able to take care of themselves and other members of the church.

In later years, Paul wrote a long letter of encouragement to them which we can find in the book of Ephesians. It is our duty not only to preach the gospel, but to teach and train new converts.

3. PRACTICAL EXAMPLE OF CHRISTLIKE LOVE:

Acts 20:36-38

Having delivered his farewell speech to the Ephesian believers, he knelt down with them and prayed. It was an emotional and touching moment for both Paul and

the Ephesian Christians. The meeting between Paul and the brethren shows a remarkable example of Christian fellowship and love. Paul had served the Ephesian church with great care and concern. He often shared in their joys and sorrows. He ministered and taught them with his whole heart and mind. He laboured among them not minding the trial and persecution. The people were heart broken and wept aloud especially at the thought of not seeing Paul again.

The Christlike love between Paul and the Ephesian Christians should characterize our fellowship. Children should show love to their teachers who teach them God's word. We are also to care for and love one another as Christ loved us and gave His life for us. Love is kind and never fails. Jesus desires that His friends show love to God, one another, sinners and even their enemies.

There are many blessings that we will enjoy when we visit and maintain strong bond of love. These include: (i) Establishment of new converts (new friends of Jesus). (ii) Numerical increase in the church. (iii) Joy in heaven. (iv) Divine protection (v) Abundant provision (vi) Peace and prosperity (vii) Success (viii) Eternal life in heaven.

These benefits are only for friends of Jesus. If you are still a sinner and you want to enjoy God's blessings, you must: (i) Know yourself as a sinner. (ii) Confess and repent of your sins. (iii) Ask God to forgive your sins. (iv) Invite Jesus into your heart as Lord and Saviour. You can then start to live for Jesus and serve Him.

QUESTIONS:

1. Paul was an example of a fearless and faithful leader. Yes/No?
2. Where did Paul meet with the Ephesian Christians?
3. Where was Paul going before he stopped over to talk to the Ephesian Christians?
4. Mention three important things Paul told the Ephesians.
5. Mention one important lesson you learnt from Paul's meeting with the Ephesian Christians.

MEMORY VERSE: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).

LESSON: The preaching of the gospel is the most important work given to all friends of Jesus.

THOUGHT: I will give my life to Jesus and preach the gospel to sinners.

ACTIVITY: Children should identify those children that have been absent from fellowship for a long time. They are to be shared into groups and assigned to visit them.

HOMEWORK: Children should visit at least three other children and bring the report of their visitation to the church next week.

CONGREGATIONAL SONG: GHS 78 - FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

CHORUSES: (1) I have decided to follow Jesus. (2) When He calls me, I will answer.
(3) Isaiah heard the voice of the Lord.

DAILY BIBLE READING

MONDAY	ACTS	18:19-21
TUESDAY	ACTS	18:22-23
WEDNESDAY	ACTS	19:1, 2
THURSDAY	ACTS	19:4-7
FRIDAY	ACTS	19:8-10
SATURDAY	EPHESIANS	1:1-3
SUNDAY	EPHESIANS	1:4-7

BIBLE WORD SEARCH

1. Find the meaning of these words. You can use your dictionary:
1. Believers 2. Farewell 3. Establish 4. Depend 5. Emotional.

LESSON 9

PAUL TAKES A JEWISH VOW

Acts 21:1-40

Apostle Paul, after he became a friend of Jesus, committed his life to the special assignment of preaching the gospel. He went with other Christians from town to town and city to city preaching the gospel. They also revisited the places where they had preached so as to strengthen those that had been converted. Now the apostle was set to go to Jerusalem (Acts 20:22). As he journeyed, he stopped over at specific places where he had fellowship with the brethren. At last, he got to Jerusalem and the apostles with the whole church welcomed him. They were happy, hearing all that the Lord had used Paul to do in Gentile nations.

However, he was advised to take a Jewish vow in order to show obedience to the law of Moses. Not only that, the cleansing that goes with the vow will ensure that the Jews will have no reason to accuse Paul of wrongdoing. This action notwithstanding, the wicked people still gathered together to arrest Paul. This arrest led him to stand trial before the Jewish councils and Roman kings. In all these, Paul was not afraid because God was with him. He had already received the assurance of divine help.

Apostle Paul's determination and willingness to suffer for the gospel's sake serves as encouragement to friends of Jesus today. Do not fear; make up your mind to do the will of God at all times. He has promised that He will never leave us nor forsake us.

1. PAUL'S JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM:

Acts 21:1-17; 19:21; 20:16

Paul the apostle was a man of determination, purpose, commitment and courage. When directed by the Spirit of God to do something, nothing discouraged him from doing it (Acts 19:21). During this period, he was getting to the end of his missionary journeys. Paul and his company left Asia and sailed by sea to Ephesus because he had determined to be at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. They stopped along the way to encourage the brethren.

In every city, the Holy Spirit told him that sufferings and imprisonment awaited him at Jerusalem. Paul was not afraid to suffer for Christ. His desire was to spread the gospel of the grace of God to all. Friends of Jesus are to learn from Paul's example that they should never be discouraged when problems or persecutions come in the course of preaching the gospel.

When Paul and his company got to the city of Caesarea, they lodged in the house of Philip. Philip the evangelist was one of the seven people of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost who were appointed to serve food. He was mightily used of God to preach the gospel in many places.

More importantly was that he trained his children in the way of the Lord. His four daughters were virgins (undeiled) and had the gift of prophecy. Are you like the daughters of Philip? Sinful boys and girls must surrender their lives to Christ today while friends of Jesus should keep themselves holy, pure and continue to serve the

Lord.

Apostle Paul eventually got to Jerusalem despite all the appeals from brethren to make him change his mind. He was determined to preach to everyone not minding the suffering that awaited him. Children of God must not be discouraged. They must continue to preach the gospel. Jesus has told us that we shall suffer persecution. However, He gave us the assurance that we shall overcome.

2. PAUL ARRIVES JERUSALEM AND TAKES A JEWISH VOW:

Acts 21:17-26

The believers at Jerusalem were eagerly expecting Paul because they wanted to hear from him personally about the success of the gospel work and the enlargement of Christ's kingdom among the Gentiles. When they arrived Jerusalem, Paul and those that accompanied him were joyfully received and praised. The following day at a meeting with the elders of the church, Paul gladly reported all that God had done through him among the Gentiles.

The whole church rejoiced and praised God for His wonderful work of salvation in all the nations of the world. However, there were some misconceptions among the early

Church concerning the works of Paul among the Gentiles. The believers at the time of Pentecost were one hundred and twenty. At this time, the church had grown and become a great multitude with thousands of Jewish believers among them. These Jewish converts, according to the elders, still loved to keep the law of Moses and they misunderstood Paul because of some false accusations against him. They accused Paul of not keeping the law of Moses. Because of this, the elders persuaded Paul to take the Jewish vow. They thought it would convince everyone that the report was false and that Paul being a Jew, walked orderly and kept the law.

Paul accepted to take a Jewish vow because: (a) he wanted to please the Lord in all things. (b) he did not want his actions to make others fall. (c) he knew that keeping the law will not diminish his faith in Christ. (d) he wanted to show an example of obedience to leadership. You must abstain from whatever you do that will make others to offend God. The vow Paul took was about ceremonial cleansing. God was with him because he did all things in good conscience. God takes vows seriously and expects us to keep our vows to Him and other people. As friends of Jesus, the vow we make may not be a Nazarite vow as we have in the law of Moses. We can make our vows to reflect the following:

- a. Love the Lord with all our hearts and mind and be separated unto Him.
- b. Serve God, honour and obey Him always.
- c. Preach the love of Jesus to sinners. d. Live a holy and righteous life.
- e. Pay tithes and offerings.
- f. Follow Jesus till the end no matter what happens.

Sinful children are to come into a covenant relationship with Jesus by repenting and turning away from their sins. Make your vows to the Lord and also keep it.

3. PAUL'S ARREST AND TRIAL:

Acts 21:27-40

While performing his vow as prescribed by the law, the religious rulers came round to falsely accuse Paul of polluting their temple. They incited the people and caused a riot. These wicked people were determined to kill Paul and stop the preaching of the gospel. God in His love and mercy made the Roman rulers to receive information about the uproar. They sent soldiers to rescue Paul. God is our strength and refuge; He will always send help to us in time of need. There are important lessons for us to learn here:

- i. God is aware of everything that is happening in the life of His servant. It has already been revealed to Paul through some prophets that he will face persecution in Jerusalem. This revelation prepared him for the task.
- ii. No one can take the life of a faithful servant of God. His promise of protection is sure, we have nothing to fear. Only make sure that you are living a life leasing unto God.
- iii. No power on earth can stop the preaching of the gospel. Many people who tried it regretted their actions. The gospel will outlive all those who oppose it. Therefore, you must not be afraid to preach the gospel.

Apostle Paul was convinced that everyone needs salvation, even those who wanted to kill him. That was why he asked for permission to speak to them after his arrest. Paul surrendered his life completely to the preaching of the gospel, he was concerned about the salvation of souls. He worked tirelessly until the end of his life. Now he is in heaven enjoying his reward. It is now your turn; you must not allow threats, persecution or opposition from friends and relatives to hinder you from preaching the gospel. As you preach the gospel and win souls for the Lord, heaven will be your reward at the end.

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the main assignment of Apostle Paul?
2. Where was the apostle heading to when he was warned of the sufferings that awaited him?
3. Did Apostle Paul allow the warning to stop his journey?
4. State three reasons Paul took a Jewish vow when he got to Jerusalem.
5. Give two examples of vows that a friend of Jesus can make to God.

MEMORY VERSE: "Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law" (Acts 21:23,24).

LESSON: God desires that friends of Jesus keep to their vows and go on preaching the gospel even in times of difficulties.

THOUGHT: I will make my vow to the Lord and keep it.

ACTIVITY: Prayer (i) for courage to preach the gospel everywhere and at all times; (ii) for missionaries who are facing difficult situations; (iii) for nations where the preaching of the gospel is not allowed.

HOMEWORK: Children are to go out during the week and preach the gospel to at least two people.

CONGREGATIONAL SONG: GHS 89 - O JESUS, I HAVE PROMISED

CHORUSES: (1) I have decided to follow Jesus. (2) The Lord knows the way through the wilderness. (3) Give me grace to follow.

DAILY BIBLE READING

MONDAY	ECCLESIASTES	5:4-6
TUESDAY	GENESIS	28:20-22
WEDNESDAY	NUMBERS	30:1-4
THURSDAY	PSALM	61:3-5
FRIDAY	PSALM	61:6-8
SATURDAY	PSALM	76:11,12
SUNDAY	JONAH	2:8-10

BIBLE WORD SEARCH

Find the meaning of these words. You can use your dictionary:

1. Opposition 2. Persecution 3. Vow 4. Gentiles 5. Purification.

LESSON 10
PAUL SPEAKS ABOUT HIS CONVERSION

Acts 22:1-30

Conversion means the process or act of transformation of a person from a particular state to a brand new one. It describes the gracious act of salvation that take place when a sinner repents, turns from his past sinful life to become a new creature. Such a person is said to have been translated from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:13,14).

This was the life - changing experience that Paul the apostle had on his way to Damascus. He so cherished his conversion that he was always seizing every opportunity to speak about it to everyone that he comes in contact with.

After his conversion, Saul who later became Paul travelled wide, preaching to the Jews and Gentiles alike. His return to Jerusalem in Acts 21 led to his arrest after being falsely accused of defiling the temple. Acts chapter 22 records Paul's defence before the Jewish crowd. He spoke to them in their native language wanting to convince them of the need to surrender their hearts to Christ.

His defence was not to escape suffering or persecution; instead, he saw it as an open door to preach the gospel to every creature. If you are saved, then you must follow Paul's example and share your testimony with those who are not saved yet.

Children who are not saved yet must not be like the Jewish crowd. The time of ignorance is gone; repent now, confess your sins to God, ask Him to forgive you and wash your heart clean with the blood of Jesus. This is the greatest experience every child must thirst after and partake in (Acts 17:30).

1. PAUL'S ARREST AND DEFENCE:

Acts 21:27-40; 22:1-3

The arrest of Paul in Jerusalem was because of the following reasons. Firstly, to

rescue him from mob action. The crowd made up of religious Jews and rulers were bent on attacking and probably killing Paul because of his faith. Secondly, it was to help the Roman authorities to clearly understand the issues about the uproar. Thirdly, which was the most important, it was a means to fulfill God's desire for Paul to stand before the ordinary people, rulers, kings and emperors to testify about Jesus Christ. This would mean that no one will have any excuse for not partaking in the great salvation.

As Paul stood to defend himself, he knew he was facing a hostile audience, so, he spoke in their native language. This was why he referred to them as, "Men, brethren, and fathers" (Acts 22:1). This made them to become calm and ready to hear his message. This method show how effective it is to preach the gospel in the language that the sinners will readily understand.

Apostle Paul wanted to show that he is not a criminal or law breaker. He made them to understand that he was a Jew born in Tarsus and trained in the strict religious way, by Gamaliel, a known religious teacher. This introductory part of his defence should have convinced the people to embrace the word of salvation. However, they chose to harden their hearts against the word of God. Sinful children must not harden their hearts. Rather, they should humbly seek God for forgiveness and cleansing of their sins.

For friends of Jesus, it is important to know that the world is still hostile to the gospel as it was in the time of Paul. The opposition may not really result in physical arrest. But Satan is subtly using things that seem insignificant to distract children of God today from serving Him wholeheartedly – things like bad games, films, worldly attractions in form of bad dressing, music, ceremonies, etc.

All these are influencing some children from doing the will of God. The Bible warns of the danger of loving the world and its corrupting activities. You must be wise and run away from every appearance of evil. Live a holy life, preach the gospel at all times, be prayerful and watchful.

2. PERSONAL TESTIMONY OF GENUINE CONVERSION:

Acts 22:1-22; 8:3; 9:1-12; 26:9-19

After being arrested in Jerusalem by Roman soldiers, Paul stood before a hostile crowd to defend himself. Instead of arguing for his freedom, he shared his life changing testimony – how he once persecuted Christians and how he was transformed by Christ. His testimony reveals the power of God to change life and the boldness of faith that comes thereafter.

The message of Paul to the Jewish angry crowd, reveals many things:

- i. His past life of sin and rebellion against God. Anyone who claims to be born again must be able to differentiate between his past life and present state. No one is born a Christian, because all have sinned and come short of God's glory (Romans 3:23).
- ii. His personal encounter with Jesus, the Saviour of the world. Every sinful child must repent of all sins and come into a loving relationship with Jesus.

This is called genuine conversion (Romans 10:8-13).

iii. His purposeful call to the work of preaching the gospel to everyone – young, old, rich, poor and rulers of the people. This is the greatest assignment given by Jesus to all His friends. After your conversion, you must preach the gospel (Mark 16:15).

iv. His present and future hope of finishing his race well and receiving his crown.

This should be the desire of every saved child. You must be determined like Paul to run the Christian race successfully to the end. Jesus will always be there to help you even in times of persecution (1 Corinthians 9:26,27; 2 Timothy 4:5-8).

3. PREACHING THE GOSPEL TO THE UNSAVED:

Acts 22:21-30; 9:13-22

The main reason Paul shared his conversion experience was to help sinners discover the truth, and also make a definite decision to be saved. The Jewish crowd rejected Paul's message. However, he was not discouraged; he was determined to spread the gospel to everyone who will be willing to listen and accept. The lessons for us to take to heart are:

- i. We must be determined to share our testimonies. Like Paul, we should be prepared to share our personal testimony of how Jesus transformed our lives, using this as a powerful tool for evangelism.
- ii. We must be bold in witnessing. Even in the face of opposition, we are called to boldly proclaim the truth of the gospel.

Salvation from sin is the greatest thing that can happen to any boy or girl. If there is any life experience worth sharing, it is the salvation of one's soul. Are you saved? Then you should be excited to share the story of your salvation with others. If you are not yet saved, then this is the time to repent. Be sorry for all the bad things you have done.

Pray and ask God to pardon you and wash your heart with the blood of Jesus. Promise God that you will not go back to your sins anymore. Ask Jesus to come into your heart and reign as your personal Saviour and Lord. Then go forth and share your experience with sinners around you.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the meaning of conversion?
2. Why was Apostle Paul arrested?
3. What is the most important point in his defence?
4. Mention four major elements of Paul's message to the Jewish crowd.
5. Mention three lessons you have learnt from Paul's commitment to preaching the gospel.

MEMORY VERSE: "I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all

are this day" (Acts 22:3).

LESSON: God's desire for all sinners is that they be saved.

THOUGHT: Lord, I surrender my life to You.

ACTIVITY: A boy and a girl should share with others in the fellowship how they became friends of Jesus.

HOMEWORK: Go and share the testimony of how you gave your life to Jesus with at least two people this week. Write their names and addresses and show it to your teacher when next you meet.

CONGREGATIONAL SONG: GHS 35 – A NEW NAME IN GLORY

CHORUSES: (1) I wandered far away, lost in the wilderness (2) Go and tell them (2ce) Jesus died for sinful world. (3) He's alive. Amen.

DAILY BIBLE READING

MONDAY	ACTS	26:9-11
TUESDAY	ACTS	26:12-14
WEDNESDAY	ACTS	26:15-18
THURSDAY	ACTS	26:19-22
FRIDAY	ACTS	26:23-29
SATURDAY	ROMANS	3:3-7
SUNDAY	2 TIMOTHY	4:1-7

BIBLE WORD SEARCH

Find the meaning of these words. You can use your dictionary: 1. Conversion 2. Defence 3. Testify 4. Hostile 5. Testimony.