

LESSON 13

Scripture passage: Psalms 59 and 34

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

Note to teacher: When discussing David as poet, do not treat the technical aspects of poetry at length. As a background, the teacher may stress that the poet writes with pictures in his soul and a song in his heart. Demonstrate by example various rhythms, and explain that there may or may not be a rhyme scheme. The teacher will explain that when a beautiful or sad or happy thing happened, the poet--in this instance, David--could not wait to get his words about it written. Suggestion: the children may want to open their Bibles to the Psalms studied.

LESSON MATERIAL

From the treasure of Davidic psalms, we have selected a few categories to study. Today's psalms tell of the period of David's early life, when he was running away from Saul. They are historical poems or psalms.

1. PSALM 59

- a. The occasion. David wrote this psalm some time after--and perhaps the very night--that Michal made him flee before Saul's servants came to capture him in his own house.
- b. David's cry for help. Michal could not save him. He could not save himself by running fast. But God could save him, and David cried to Him, vs. 1. He told the Lord--even though the Lord knew it--that he had not sinned, vs. 3.
- c. David's picture words. Notice what he called his enemies: mine enemies, workers of iniquity, bloody men, the mighty, the heathen, wicked transgressors, dogs. Vss. 6 and 7 show why David called Saul and his servants dogs. Try to see the picture. They waited until the darkness of evening to do their dirty work, just as the street dogs of David's time prowled at night. Swords were in the lips of these dogs, and every time they barked, words of murder and hate belched out. These dogs mocked, too, for they thought no one could hear them.
- d. God's sure help. God laughed at those dogs, vs. 8. David knew that the God of strength and mercy--his God--would destroy his enemies in His anger (vss. 9-13). Once more David looked over his shoulder at the pack of dogs who wanted meat--David's own flesh--and knew they would not get him. For the next morning he would be strong enough to sing loudly of God's mercy, vs. 16.

Suggestion: make David's figures of speech vivid and graphic for the small child. Additional Psalms of this period, to be read during devotions, are Psalms 52, 54, 56, and 57.

2. PSALM 34

- a. The occasion. When David was chased from one desert place to the next, from mountains to caves, he was afraid his life was not safe anymore in Israel; and he fled to Achish of Gath. There Achish the king of Gath (Abimelech was his title) said he had no need of David who had killed so many Philistines. (See I Sam. 21:11.) David was afraid and acted like a mad man. Do we remember?
- b. David's song of praise. David and his men had left King Achish and were perhaps back at the cave of Adullam. He was telling his men about

his God. Listen to him: I will bless (speak good words about) the Lord: O magnify (make great) the Lord; exalt (make high) His name. Would we be so joyful if everyone were trying to kill us for doing no wrong? Would we grumble?

- c. David's sorrow for his weakness. David did not have to act as if he were insane. His Psalm tells why: he looked for God and God saved him, vs. 4; in his moment of fear before Achish, the poor David cried, and like a rushing stream of water, his prayer went to the Lord, vs. 6; he really knew all the time that God's angel was camped right there with him in Gath, vs. 7. Next, David made a picture about food: he (and we) taste and see that God is good; young lions may be hungry, but God takes care of His own. David learned that lesson in Gath.
- d. David's talk to children--not only little children, but all God's children. Vs. 15 tells that David could have known that God would always hear him, even in Gath. Often He sends troubles, but saves His people from them all, vss. 17-22.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

1. When a friend frowns at us, we are not happy. When a parent frowns at us, we are miserable. Think of the wicked. God's face is always frowning at them (vs. 16). That is awful.
2. The angel of the Lord camped right along with David. God's angel cares for us, too. God sends His angels to watch over His children in love. His angels live with us. Think about it often.
3. What do we taste when we taste that the Lord is good? I will give you a start in your answers: mercy, love...

MEMORY WORK

"O taste and see that the Lord is good," Psalm 34:8

RESOURCE MATERIALS

1. Keil and Delitzsch, Commentary on the Psalms, Vol. 1 and 2.
2. The Standard Bearer, Vol. 19, -. 39 (by G. Vos); Vol. 17, p. 397 (by G. Vos).