

According to the Scriptures



Vacation Bible School

Sample Packet

ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES

[Sample Packet]

A Vacation Bible School Program written and published by Pax Domini Press

Customer Service and Ordering Information - (419)475-6140

www.pax-domini.com

Who is Pax Domini Press?

Pax Domini Press is a small but growing publishing company which aims to provide an alternative to the highly commercialized products of the leading Christian publishing houses.

What are some Pax Domini Press Products?

Pax Domini Press has published nine Vacation Bible School programs, each available for purchase at \$150. These programs include: *Lord, Have Mercy* (on Law and Gospel), *In the Name* (on the Holy Trinity), *I Am* (on the 7 I Am's in the Gospel of John), *According to the Scriptures* (on Christ in the Old Testament), *Take up the Cross* (on the baptismal life), *The Remission of Sins* (on Holy Absolution), *Fervent Love for One Another* (on Christian charity), *Five Words of Understanding* (on the ICHTHUS), and introducing *A New Song* (on the songs of Scripture).

Finally, *Pax Domini Press* has available three Sunday School curricula. Like the VBS program, this curriculum is produced for self-publication. One curriculum is entitled, *Teaching them to observe all things*, which takes the student through the entire Gospel of Matthew. Another curriculum is entitled, *A.D. The Acceptable Year of the Lord*. It follows the Gospels of the Historic Lectionary. Finally, a new curriculum, *The New Song*, teaches Scriptural backgrounds for the texts of the liturgy.

What is included in this sample packet?

Included in this sample packet are a picture of the front cover, brief explanations of the materials given in the kit, lessons from each level (1-4), a sample from the puppet show, and a sample from the daily prayer bulletin, including the hymn.

How does Pax Domini Press's Vacation Bible School program work?

Pax Domini Press produces a CD with all the files needed for a congregation to publish a VBS program. Included on the CD are the following:

1. PDF files of a Program Manual with guidance on program implementation, instructions for the craft, and ideas for recreation time.
2. PDF files of teachers editions of each student workbook.
3. PDF files of workbook pages for the student workbooks.
4. PDF file of chapel bulletin with prayer service for each day of the program.
5. PDF file of puppet show script for use with Level 1 material.
6. PDF files of advertising materials (door hangings, bulletins, bulletin headers)
7. Extra electronic images and PDF files to be used with Level 1 material (coloring pages, activity pages, etc.) or for the craft (patterns, verses, etc.)

With these resources, the congregation simply assembles the workbooks, bulletins, and craft materials. The cost of the VBS can cost anywhere from \$10/child to \$20/child (pending on whether the craft kit is purchased or not, also pending on how the workbooks are assembled).

How do the workbooks work?

The congregation receives a CD with color and black/white PDF files of workbooks for Levels 1-4. The congregation has permission to do whatever it wants with these files. They may do the following:

- (1) Simply print them off for the children (files may print in black and white as well)
- (2) Take them to a printing professional to make booklets for the children
- (3) Advanced copiers/printers may have capabilities to produce booklets from PDF files

**Workbooks can also be ordered through Pax Domini Press for \$6/booklet (color).
Call (419) 475-6140 or go to the website, pax-domini.com.**

What is the age range for this program?

Level 1	Ages 4-5
Level 2	Ages 6-7
Level 3	Ages 8-9
Level 4	Ages 10-12

What is the theme of *According to the Scriptures*?

In the Nicene Creed the Church confesses that Jesus rose from the dead “according to the Scriptures.” This phrase introduces the truth that Jesus is the heart and center of the entire Bible, even the Old Testament. As such, this VBS aims to introduce the young disciple of Christ to four Old Testament stories in which Jesus is foreshadowed. These stories include (1) The Seed Promise, (2) The Passover, (3) The Psalms: Christ’s Diary, and (4) The Suffering Servant. An introductory lesson also presents the general theme that Jesus is the heart and center of the Scriptures.

Here is a summary of the lessons for the five days:

Lesson	Title	Lesson Theme
1	According to the Scriptures	Introduction to the Christocentricity of Scripture
2	The Seed Promise	Following the “Seed Promise” to fulfillment
3	The Passover Lamb	Understanding the Passover as a type of Jesus
4	The Psalms: Christ’s Diary	Reading the Psalms as a preview to Christ’s life
5	The Suffering Servant	Reviewing Scripture’s most famous prophecy

What is the craft like?

Typical *Pax Domini Press* crafts meet a high standard of materials, meaning, and craftsmanship, requiring strong oversight by craft supervisors. The goal is a craft that engages the child artistically as well as theologically. The craft for *According to the Scriptures* fits these qualifications.

The craft is a canvass scroll with the five themes of the week displayed on it. Using a variety of durable materials – wood, mustard seed, matzo bread, etc. – the children will make a craft that reminds them of the Christocentricity of Scripture.

The craft is displayed on the next page

What about worship?

Pax Domini Press provides a worship folder which has a simplified Matins service for each day of the week. In the service are the Matins versicle, a Psalm, a hymn, a reading, a message, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Apostle’s Creed. The hymn uses original words – five verses summarizing the five lessons of the week – and puts them to the tune of several hymns which may be found in the hymnal.

What about the pre-schoolers?

The Level 1 material includes a puppet show (which older children may also enjoy) and a story booklet written in simple verse. Also included is a teacher's book with suggestions and ideas for songs, games, and activities which will emphasize the theme for the day.

Congregations interested in expanding their program to include 3 year olds may also purchase *Let the Little Children Come unto Me*. This is a "catechism kit" with coloring books and a mini-VBS that teaches the Holy Trinity. See website for more details.

What else does the kit come with?

The kit also comes with recreation ideas. These recreation ideas are activities which incorporate the theme of the VBS. The kit also includes masters for canvassing, posters, and bulletin inserts. Finally, the kit gives some guidance and advice on running a VBS; it includes a check-list of things which must be done 3-4 months prior, 3-4 weeks prior, 3-4 days prior, during the VBS, and after the VBS.



THE SEED PROMISE

Level 4 Sample

The "Seed Promise" is the first great prophecy of the Old Testament. In fact, following the fulfillment of the "Seed Promise" in the Bible is like going on a scavenger hunt. The promise of the Seed was first given to Adam and Eve after they had sinned against God.

Read about the "Seed Promise":

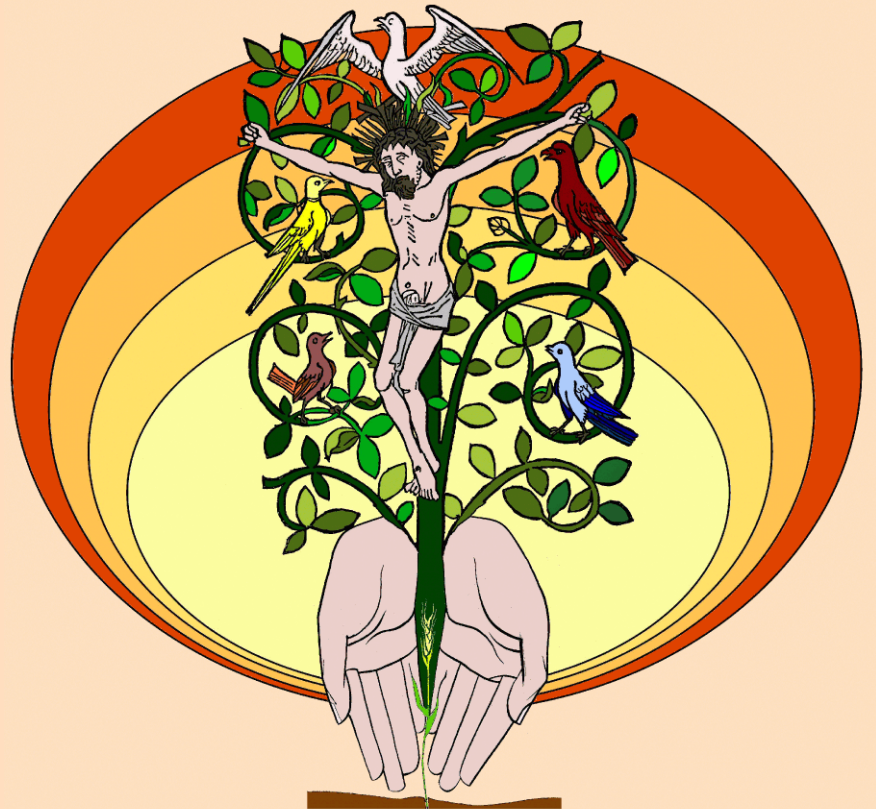
[After Adam and Eve had eaten of forbidden fruit, they became afraid of the Lord and hid themselves.]

And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?"

So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."

And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"



"And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."

Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate."

And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."

Answer the questions:

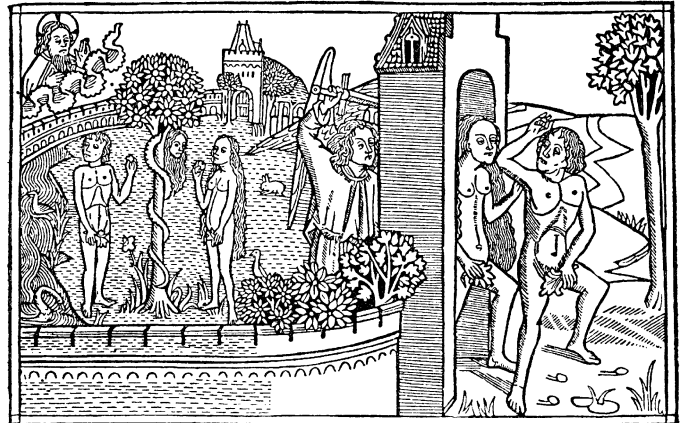
What is the "Seed" of the woman? To what does this refer?

How would the "seed" of the devil bruise the head of the "Seed" of the woman?

Following the Seed Promise...

When Eve had her first son, Cain, she thought that he was the one who fulfilled the "Seed Promise." Why would she think this?

But Cain was not the fulfillment of the "Seed Promise." In fact, after Cain killed Abel, Eve had another boy, Seth, who became the one who would carry the "Seed Promise" in himself. But Seth was not the one about whom the Lord was promising. Seth had a son, Enosh. But Enosh was not the One. Enosh had a son, Cainan. But Cainan was not the One.



Here are the names of the line of descendants who carried the "Seed Promise" but were not the One: After Cainan came, in order, Mahalalel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, and then, Noah. From the time that the "Seed Promise" was first given to the birth of Noah was 1056 years.

God destroyed the world with the Flood, but saved Noah. By saving Noah, He was also saving the "Seed Promise," because Noah was the one who was now carrying the "Seed Promise."

Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and passed on the "Seed Promise" to Shem. After having a son, Arphaxad, Shem lived for 500 years. After Shem came, in order, Arphaxad, Salah, Eber, Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor, Terah, and then, Abram (or Abraham). From the time that Shem gave birth to Arphaxad to the birth of Abram was 290 years.

Who was still alive when Abraham was called by God to be a great "Father of many nations"?

Melchizedek, the Man of Mystery

Abraham was a great man. He was called by God and given this promise: *"I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

It was to Abraham that the "Seed Promise" was to be given. But by whom?

During Abraham's life, a very mysterious man came to him and gave him a blessing. Read the story here: *Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most*

"And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

High, Possessor of heaven and earth; And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand."

The Bible says that this Melchizedek was an ancient man and that no one knew from where he came. Who might this "Melchizedek" be?

The Patriarchs

Abraham carried the "Seed Promise," and certain new promises were added to the promise given to Adam and Eve.

Read how God added to the "Seed Promise" given to Abraham: *"By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, ...In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."*

Abraham's son was Isaac, and Isaac's son was Jacob. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are called "The Patriarchs." They are the "Fathers of Israel." In fact, any Christian may call Abraham his father. Based on the promise given to Abraham above, why can any Christian call Abraham "father"?



The Tree of Jesse, from whom comes David, Solomon, and the kings of Judah

The Seed Gets Royal Blood!

After Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the "Seed Promise" fell to Judah. With Judah, a new promise was added to that given to Adam and Abraham. Read what was promised to Judah: *The scepter shall not depart from Judah...*

What is a scepter? What does it mean if someone has a scepter? What does it mean that the scepter shall not depart from Judah?

Thus was it promised that later on in the future, one of the descendants of Judah would be a great king. This promise was fulfilled about 1,000 years later. In the meantime, the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob - the Israelites - became slaves in Egypt, were led by Moses out of Egypt, wandered in the wilderness, entered the Promised Land, were led by Judges, and finally, had a king. Their first king was Saul. The king after Saul was a young boy from the tribe of Judah named David. King David thus became the first one to fulfill the promise given to Judah way back in time.

King David now carried the "Seed Promise." Read how the Lord blessed David and added to the Promise He had first given to Adam, Abraham, and Judah: *"I will set up your seed after you, and I will establish his kingdom. I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him. And your house and your kingdom shall be established*

And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever."

forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever."

The Seed Promise Goes Underground

The "Seed Promise" passed on from King David to his son, King Solomon. But after Solomon, some kings were good, and some were bad. Eventually, the kings got so bad that the Lord allowed other nations to conquer Israel. Israel became exiled and no longer had their land. Israel no longer had a king. It seemed as if the Lord had failed on His Promise to David.

But there were many in Israel who still believed the Lord's promises. They believed that a king would arise in Israel who would continue the promise given long ago, that the scepter would never depart from Judah.

Who was this king? How does He reign forever?

Reviewing the Seed Promise

God gave the "Seed Promise" to answer the sin of Adam and Eve. He added to the Promise with Abraham, Judah, and David. In the left column below, write in the correct Promise from the choices given below. In the right column, write how Jesus fulfilled that Promise.

I will set up your seed after you...and I will establish his kingdom [forever].

The scepter shall not depart from Judah.

He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.

In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.

	The Promise	The Fulfillment
Adam		
Abraham		
Judah		
David		

THE PASSOVER LAMB

Level 3 Sample

One of the greatest events in the Old Testament is the story of the Passover. The Passover happened at the end of Israel's long 400 year slavery to Egypt. God raised up Moses to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt, and He used the Passover to free them.

The people of Israel remembered the Passover every year. The Passover reminded them that their God was a Savior. Jesus Himself kept the Passover. In fact, the Jesus' death fulfilled the Passover forever!

Read the story of the Passover:

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Speak to all Israel and say: 'On the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb for his family. If his family is too small for the lamb, let him share with his neighbor.

Your lamb shall be without any flaws, a one year old male. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. You shall take care of it until the fourteenth day of the month. Then all the people of Israel shall kill it at sunset.

Then they shall take some of the blood of the lamb and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. That night, they shall eat the lamb meat. The lamb shall be roasted in fire. They shall eat it with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs. Do not eat the lamb raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire -- its head with its legs and its insides. You shall let none of it remain until morning. What remains of the lamb at morning you shall burn with fire.

When you eat it, you shall have a belt on your waist, sandals on your feet, and a staff in your hand. So you shall eat it quickly. It is the LORD's Passover. For I will pass through Egypt on that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast. I will judge all the gods of Egypt: I am the LORD.

Now the blood shall protect the houses where you are. When I see the blood, I will pass over you; and I will not destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD forever."



Answer the questions:

What kind of Lamb are the people of Israel to use?

What are they to do with the blood of the lamb?

What else are they to eat with the lamb?

What will the Lord do when He sees the blood?



Read the following sentences which speak about the Passover event. The next sentence teaches how Jesus fulfills the Passover. Fill in the blanks to complete the thought:

1.) The people of Israel were slaves in Egypt. When we are born we are slaves to _____

2.) God raised up Moses to free His people. To free us He sent _____.

3.) The people of Israel killed a lamb without flaw. The perfect Lamb of God who was killed for us is _____.

4.) The blood of the lamb painted on the doorposts and lintel protected Israel from judgment.

The Blood of Jesus Christ on us protects us from _____

5.) The people of Israel ate the meat of the lamb. We eat the Body and Blood of Jesus when

we _____.

6.) The people of Israel ate unleavened bread with the lamb. We also eat unleavened bread

when we _____.

7.) After Israel was freed from Egypt, they came to the Red Sea. The Lord parted the Red Sea and Israel walked through it. When Israel had passed through the sea, Egypt followed them. But then the Lord let the waters of the Red Sea come together again after Israel had passed through. The sea washed away all the Egyptians. We also pass through a certain water which washes away all that is evil.

We do this when we are _____.

8.) After Israel passed through the Red Sea, they came into a desert. They wandered for 40 years in this desert. Life was not easy. They had many trials. They were taught to rely on God completely.

After we are baptized, we too _____.

9.) When Israel wandered in the desert for 40 years, God fed them with manna from heaven and gave them water from a Rock to drink. While we live on this earth, God feeds us with

_____.

10.) After 40 years, Joshua led Israel into the Promised Land. At the end of our lives, Jesus

will lead us into _____.

The Agnus Dei

What is the "Agnus Dei"? Did you know that Churches sing the "Agnus Dei" every time they have Holy Communion?

To figure out what "Agnus Dei" means, and where it is sung in church, do the following puzzle.

Look at the following rows of letters. Seek out the letters of AGNUS DEI (from A - I). After each letter you discover is a word. Underline the word you discover. Together, the words spell out a familiar phrase. You will seek out AGNUS DEI twice to discover the full phrase.



TIACHRISTWKBLGLAMBCVRQPOMZNOFPDSLKUGODERTVIOPI

SWHOWUIPICDTAKESFLKGJHEAWAYCLKDFJITHEQWOIURTASIN

FJCBJCLKFJGOF AOIVUGJTWITJNTHEWODICJRIDKTUWORLD AO

WIEUFJEIDJDIEWSHAVEALSIWUERUCUVUFDMERCYBOIDUQWI

WRTYFUCDUEUPONJFNNTJFUENCNDHEIUS.

The first "GNU" is the meaning of "Agnus Dei."

What is the meaning of "Agnus Dei"?

THE PSALMS: CHRIST'S DIARY

Level 2 Sample

The biggest book in the Bible is the Book of Psalms. This book is in the middle of the Bible. Many people love the Psalms. Some people have a favorite Psalm. The Psalms contain some of the most famous words of the entire Bible.

Many Christians have memorized Psalm 23. Read the 23rd Psalm together:

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd;

I shall not want.

He makes me to lie down in green pastures;

He leads me beside the still waters.

He restores my soul;

*He leads me in the paths of
righteousness For His name's sake.*

*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death, I will fear no evil;*

*For You are with me; Your rod and Your
staff, they comfort me.*

*You prepare a table before me in the
presence of my enemies;*

*You anoint my head with oil; My cup
runs over.*

*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All
the days of my life;*

*And I will dwell in the house of the
LORD Forever.*



The Psalms were written over 900 years before Jesus was born. Yet, the Psalms are about Jesus. How can this be?

Jesus was still the Son of God before He became a little baby. He told people what to write about Him long before He came to earth. He "inspired" them to write of Him.

The Psalm we just read is about Jesus. It teaches that Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He cares for us like a shepherd takes care of lambs.

There are many, many more Psalms which talk of Jesus. Today, we will learn about these passages.



Jesus' Diary from the Cross

Some children keep a diary. A diary is a book that people write in. They write about what they did that day. They also write about their thoughts and feelings for that day.

Someone might write, "Today the class bully pushed me out of his way, and I felt really bad. I wanted to hit him back, but I didn't."

In a way, Jesus Himself kept a diary. He wrote down what happened to Him on the cross. He also wrote down what He felt and thought about being on the cross.

But Jesus wrote His diary over 900 years before He was even born! He wrote His diary by inspiring men to write about Him.

Jesus inspired King David to write Psalms about Him. King David wrote down many of the

Psalms. These Psalms are like Jesus' diary. They speak of His thoughts and feelings about being crucified on the cross.

Look to the picture to the left. What instrument did King David use to sing his psalms? What inspired him? What was always set before him?

Look at the following Psalms and discuss what Jesus is talking about through King David:

Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.

Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries; For false witnesses have risen against me, And such as breathe out violence.

My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning?

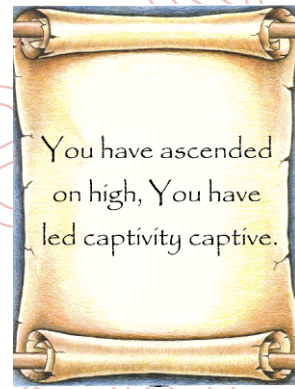
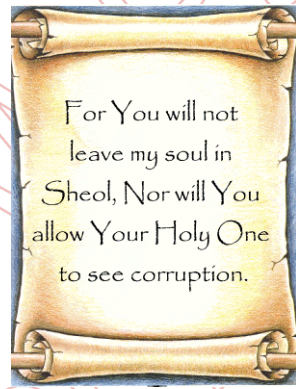
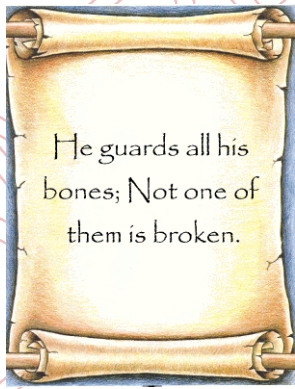
All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, "He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!"

I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me.

For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet.

They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.

They also gave me gall for my food, And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.



These words were written over 900 years before Jesus' death!!

Jesus Diary Becomes Our Diary

When we are baptized, we are baptized into Jesus. We become part of His Body. We begin to feel and think things that He felt and thought. His Psalms become our Psalms. His diary becomes our own diary. We pray the Psalms to help us through hard times. Look at the following parts of Psalm 55. Write out a prayer based on the words of this Psalm which you might pray when you are afraid of something.

Psalm 55 (parts)

Give ear to my prayer, O God.

My heart is severely pained within me, And the terrors of death have fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling have come upon me, And horror has overwhelmed me.

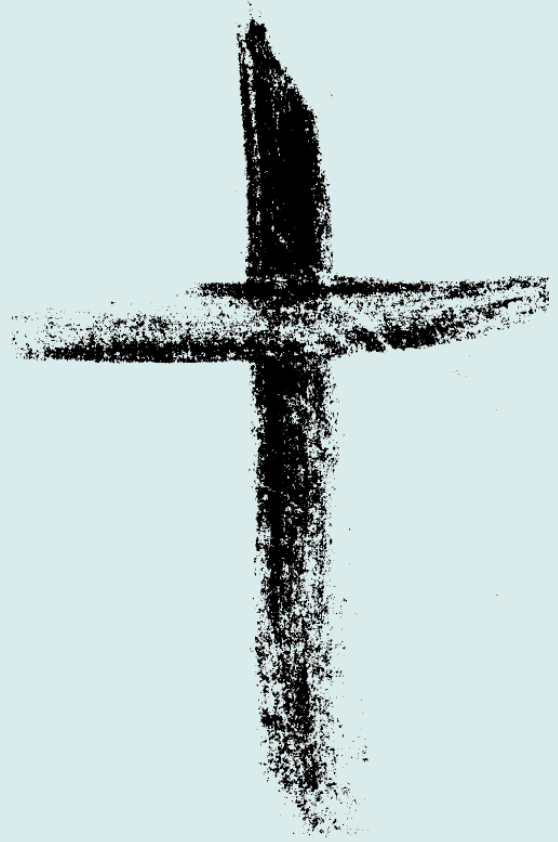
As for me, I will call upon God, And the LORD shall save me. Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, And He shall hear my voice.

Cast your burden on the LORD, And He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved.

But You, O God, shall bring them down to the pit of destruction; Bloodthirsty and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; But I will trust in You.



Dear Heavenly Father:



Through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

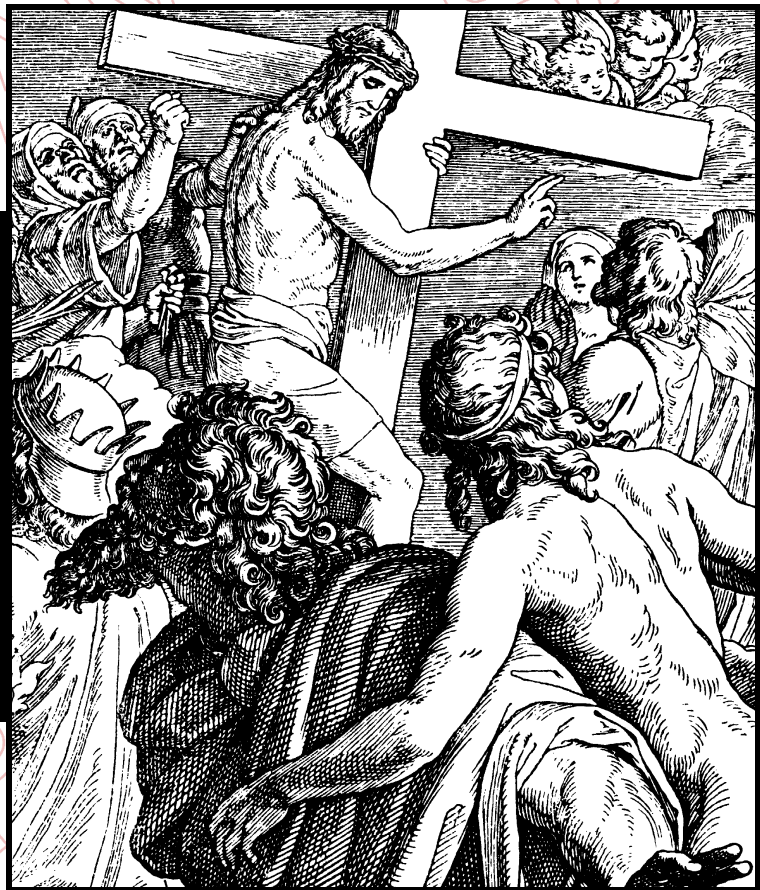
Lesson Five

Level 1 Sample



The **SUFFERING SERVANT** was wounded for our sins. By His stripes we are healed. The Lord has laid on Him the sins of us all.

Many years before
Christ died
The prophets by the
Spirit sighed.
The cross of Christ
they did behold.
The death of Jesus
they foretold.



They saw the stripes of
blood on Christ,
How for His cloak,
they rolled the dice;
How Jesus did not say a word,
When false accusers Pilate heard.

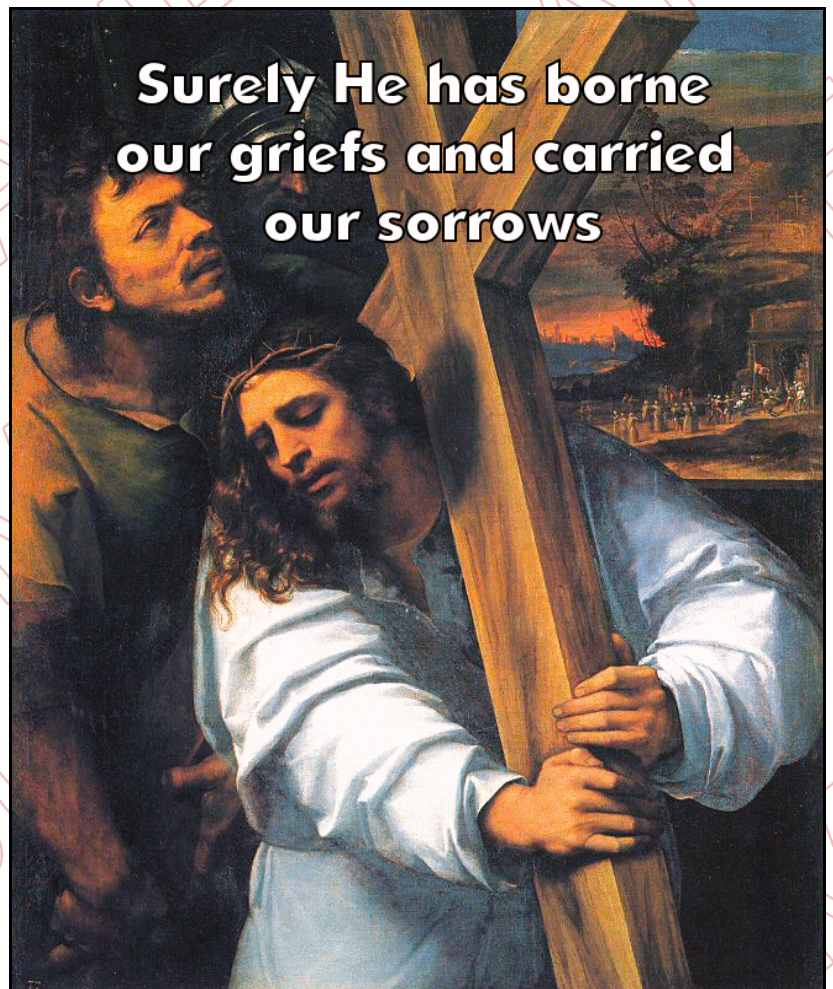


How mocking soldiers had
Him whipped,
And with the scourge,
His flesh they ripped.
They capped Him
with a thorny crow,
And wrapped Him
in a purple gown.



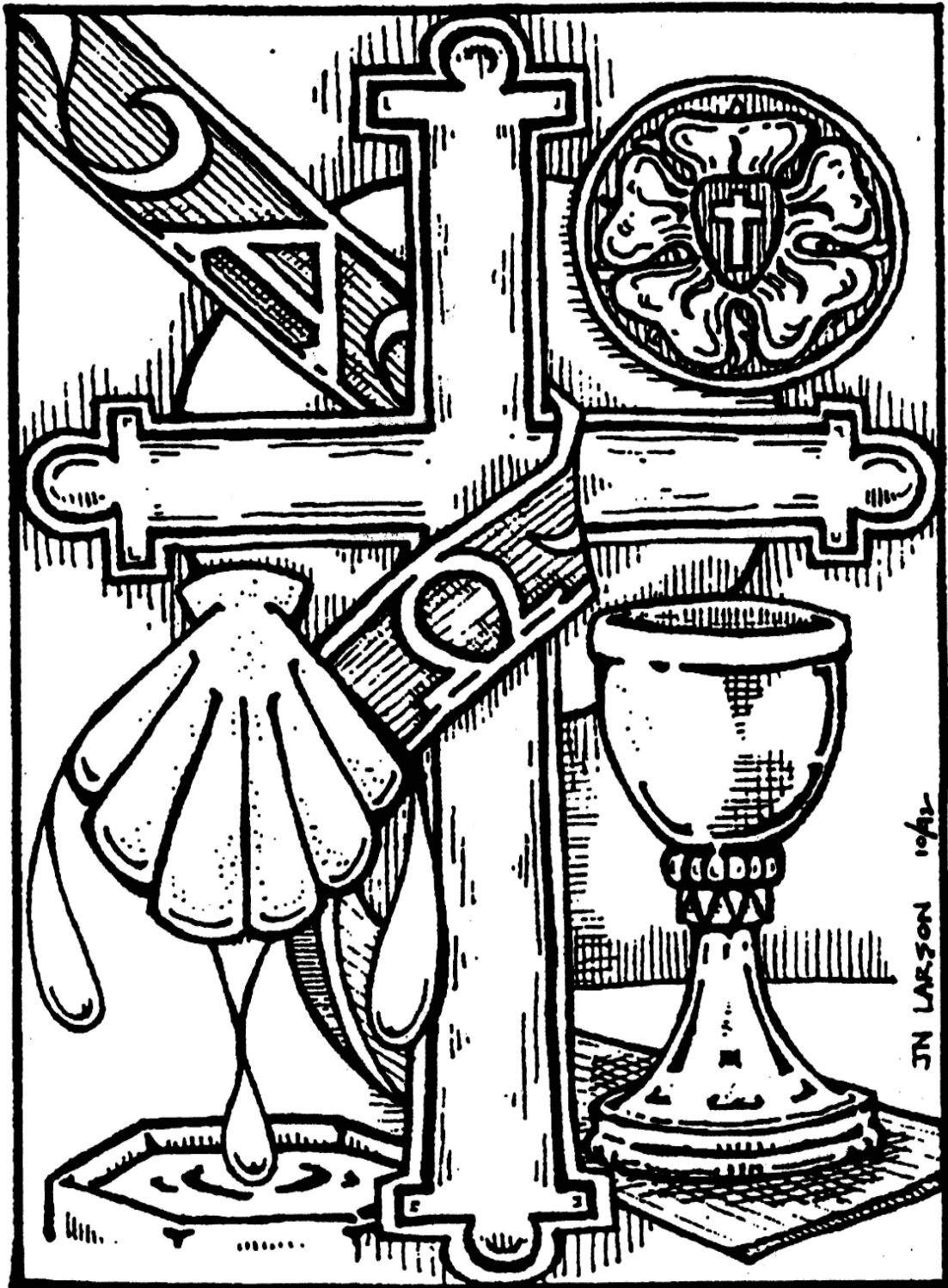
How Jesus' hands and feet were pierced,
And how the dogs 'round Him were fierce.

These things they saw of
Christ our Lord,
But mainly how His Blood
was poured.



**Surely He has borne
our griefs and carried
our sorrows**

For by His Blood we're cleansed therein,
And in His death He bore our sin.
Though we like sheep have gone astray
He died our sin to take away.



Sample of a Chapel Service for a Day

Monday Prayer

Pastor: In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Children: Amen.

Pastor: O Lord, open my lips.

Children: And my mouth will declare your praise.

Psalm 119: 25-28

Pastor: My soul clings to the dust; Revive me according to Your word.

Children: I have declared my ways, and You answered me; Teach me Your statutes.

Pastor: Make me understand the way of Your precepts; So shall I meditate on Your wondrous works.

Children: My soul melts from heaviness; Strengthen me according to Your word.

Pastor: Remove from me the way of lying, And grant me Your law graciously.

Children: I have chosen the way of truth; Your judgments I have laid before me.

Pastor: I cling to Your testimonies; O LORD, do not put me to shame!

Children: I will run the course of Your commandments, For You shall enlarge my heart.

All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Hymn

To His Disciples Jesus Said [back page]

Scripture Reading

Luke 24: 36-47

The Apostles' Creed

[back page]

Message

According to the Scriptures

Lord's Prayer

Prayers

Benediction

Sample of a Chapel Service for a Day

To His Disciples Jesus Said ("As Hymnodus Sacer" TLH 288)

1. To His disciples Jesus said
when He had risen from the dead:
"The Scriptures speak alone of Me;
How I from sin have set you free."
2. After the fall of man to sin,
The promised Seed would crush
Satan.
Patriarchs, kings, and prophets
came
Carrying the Seed to Bethlehem.
3. As slaves the sons of Israel
Cried out to God amidst their hell.
He gave them the Passover lamb,
From death his blood protected
them.
4. In Psalms inspired by God's
dear Son
King David sang of the cross often
Forsaken by both friend and foe,
Christ gives these prayers for those
in woe.
5. Isaiah prophesied of Christ,
How on the cross He paid the price.
Our sins and sorrows He bore for
us,
And suffered all to make us just.

Sample of Puppet Show Script

Day Two — The Seed Promise

[Jessie and Nickolai come on stage playing tug-o'-war with a branch, growling, grunting, etc.]

Jessie: [panting] OK, OK. Enough for now. I'm tired. Whew! I never knew you could have that much fun with a single little branch.

Nickolai: [also panting] Yeah. We played for an hour with this one little branch! Boy, aren't we're cheap fun. There are so many branches in the yard, no one would ever have to get real toys for us!

Jessie: I know. I guess that's one good thing about being a dog. It doesn't take a lot to amuse us. Give us a branch, and we'll be happy for hours!

Nickolai: Jessie, I have a question.

Jessie: OK, shoot.

Nickolai: Where do all these branches come from? I mean, we play with one branch and rip it up. We chew up another branch, and it's destroyed. But there are always more branches.

Jessie: That's a good question, Nickolai, and it leads right into the Vacation Bible School lesson for today. Did you know that all these branches come from a single seed?

Nickolai: A single seed? A small little seed?

Jessie: Yes. You plant the seed in the soil. God gives it water. God gives it sunlight. And eventually, that seed turns into a small tree. And then that small tree turns into a bigger tree. And then...

Nickolai: That bigger tree turns into a HUGE tree. I got it. All from that little seed, eh?

Jessie: Yup! And then, that HUGE tree will have all these little branches all over. And from one branch, you may have all sorts of littler branches. And from all those littler branches, you will have thousands of even littler branches. You know one tree may have thousands and thousands of little branches. All from that little seed.

Nickolai: And then one of them drops to the ground, and we can play tug-o'-war with it. I get it. But what does that have to do with our lesson for today?

Jessie: Well, have you ever heard of a family tree?

Nickolai: Of course. I'm AKC certified!

Jessie: Maybe you should explain to the children what that means.

Nickolai: OK, to have a family tree just means that you can trace your family back for many, many years. For example, I know my mom and dad, Yukon and Cherokee. And then, my mom Yukon's mom and dad are Stinger and Sonoma. And my dad Cherokee's mom and dad are Buttons and

Butch...

Jessie: Buttons? Your grandma's name was Buttons?

Nickolai: Don't be saying anything about Nanna Buttons! She was the lead sled dog for a champion sled team!

Jessie: Anyway...go on with your explanation, Buttons...

Nickolai: Whatever...anyway, that's my family tree. You trace your family background all the way back to way long ago.

Jessie: So what does this all have to do with the lesson for today? Tell them, Nickolai.

Nickolai: Well, Jesus also has a family tree. Long, long ago, God promised Adam and Eve that one of their "seeds" would save the world from sin, death, and the devil.

Jessie: Yup, like a seed planted long ago, from one little couple, Adam and Eve, came all the people in the entire world. Adam and Eve had Cain, Abel, and Seth. And then Cain and Seth had children. And then their children had more children. And then their children even had more children. Pretty soon the whole world was filled with people. All from one little couple, Adam and Eve.

Nickolai: And one of those people that came from Adam and Eve is Jesus. Adam and Eve are the great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, Grandparents of Jesus.

Nickolai: That's like how from a single seed, you get all those many thousands of branches.

Jessie: Right. And one of those branches was Jesus. So today, the children are going to learn how God promised Adam and Eve that their Seed would save the entire world and crush the head of the Devil.

Nickolai: OK, I'm confused. Are Adam and Eve the seed? Or is Jesus the Seed? If Adam and Eve are the seed from which comes the big tree, how is Jesus also the Seed?

Jessie: Very good question, Nickolai. Well, think about what falls from trees every year.

Nickolai: Leaves?

Jessie: Yeah, leaves. But something else always falls from trees.

Nickolai: Ohhhhh, more seeds. I see. From one seed not only comes all sorts of branches, but also many, many more seeds.

Jessie: That's right, and one of those seeds is Jesus. That's how Jesus is called the Seed.

Nickolai: So, do we plant Jesus? Where does Jesus get planted in the ground? And does He have a large family tree that comes from Him also?

Jessie: He most certainly does! Jesus was planted in the ground when He died and was buried. And then He sprouted when He rose again. And you know who all His branches are?

Nickolai: All these children here. These children are the branches who grow from the single Seed that was Jesus.

Jessie: But...I don't think we could play tug-o'-war with these branches, Nickolai!