

Orthodox Vacation Bible School 2020
Theme Book: Primary

Roots & Buds



OSSAE

Diocese of UK, Europe & Africa of Indian (Malankara) Orthodox Church

THE INDIAN (MALANKARA) ORTHODOX CHURCH

Diocese of UK- Europe and Africa

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SOUK/20/007

01 March 2020

Blessings to the Vicars/Priests-in-Charge, Sunday School Teachers, Parents and Students:

Dearly beloved in Christ!

Sunday School is the cradle and foundation of our Church. With all gratitude to God Almighty We are overwhelmed to see the blessed functioning of the OSSAE activities in our diocese. We appreciate the Parents and Teachers for your vigour and commitment for providing the right spiritual nourishment for our young children.

OVBS indeed plays an inevitable role in the Sunday School activities. It brings up motivation and enthusiasm in young children to learn the Holy Book and Church's teachings. This year our OVBS classes will be conducted in all our Sunday School units during the months of May to July as per the convenience of individual units.

The theme for OVBS 2020 is "Discern the will of God." This is based on 1 Thessalonians 5:18 which says, "*give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*" Let us remember and teach our children that Praising and Glorifying God is the corner stone of Christian Faith. Whatever we receive, whether it is as per your wish or not so comfortable to you, is the will of God which we shall adhere and accept in full spirit. We could see that Thanksgiving to God is very prominent throughout the Bible.

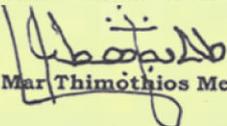
OSSAE diocesan Vice President Fr Anoop Abraham, Diocesan OSSAE officials and Sunday School Teachers are extensively contributing their wisdom and energy for the preparations for the sessions and it is well noticed that a song book will be published for this year's OVBS classes. The songs are well chosen and We are sure that it would be an added benefit and cheer for our children. Congratulation to the team behind this wonderful achievement.

We urge all the Parents and Sunday School teachers to encourage our children to attend the OVBS classes and be blessed.

We pray and extend best wishes for the success of OVBS 2020.

May God Bless you all!

Your Spiritual Father and Shepherd


+ Mathews Mar Thimothios Metropolitan

Foreword



Beloved Sunday School teachers, parents and my dear children,

First of all, I thank Our Lord Almighty for His kindness and mercy upon us during this pandemic. As we prepare ourselves for another OVBS, amidst all the joy and happiness of OVBS this year, we are also going through a very tough and sad situation. Let's seek the loving kindness of our Lord to overcome this, with all positiveness and Christian hope.

Orthodox Vacation Bible School is the season of fun, most of our children look year after year, but it's also a season of transformation and learning lessons that kids carry with them for the rest of their lives. Also, it is an opportunity for the church to teach children The Holy Bible and the Orthodox faith. This year we have an interesting theme for our OVBS "Discern the Will of God" from 1 Thessalonians 5:18 "give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus". This verse gives an inspiring hope in perceiving, recognising and understanding the Will of God and giving thanks to God during a pandemic, which badly affects our life. If we belong to Christ, we have to renew our thankfulness by delighting to look into our heavenly Father's will he has revealed in the Scriptures. OVBS 2020 theme will help us to "Discern the Will of God" in our spiritual journey.

I take this opportunity to thank you all, especially our Diocesan Metropolitan H G Dr Mathews Mar Thimothios Thirumeni, all Vicars, OSSAE UK Director, Secretary, Treasurer, OVBS coordinators, District Inspectors, Head Teachers, Teachers, Volunteers and Parents, for your dedication, selfless work and support to OSSAE-UK and OVBS 2020. Special thanks to the team behind the song and theme books. Your every effort to support and nurture our children in Christ will be rewarded by Our Lord.

In our song book, as previous years, we have included official songs provided by OSSAE OVBS 2020 and a few English songs to make it more lively for our children. Each unit has the freedom to choose a number of songs from the song book based on their OVBS duration, however, prayer, marching and theme songs are mandatory to be taught in all units.

Even though we conclude our OVBS with a Holy Qurbana and rally every year, I would request vicars and head teachers to conduct OVBS 2020 based on the convenience available at individual churches i.e. using online medium or smaller groups depending on the situation.

Prayers and wishes for a blessed OVBS 2020.

Yours in Christ

Fr. Anoop Abraham Malayil
(Vice President OSSAE –UK)

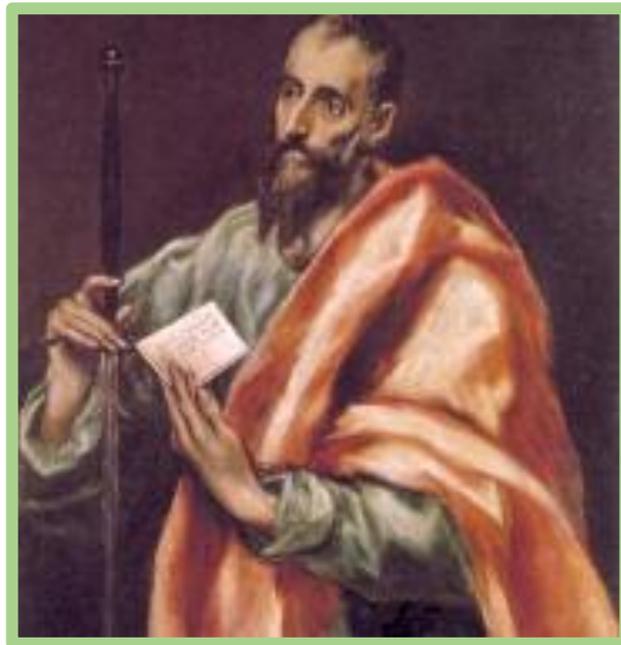
Lesson 1: Introduction

Lesson objectives

1. To know who St Paul is.

The theme for this year – “Discern the will of God” is based on 1 Thessalonians Chapter 5:18 – **“Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”**

‘*Discern*’ means to recognise, see or understand. Saint Paul who wrote the above verse in his letter to the Thessalonians is an example of a person who completely changed his life after discerning God’s will. He chose to walk on the path that God planned for him rather than his own plans.



Who Was Saint Paul?

Saint Paul the Apostle, also known as Saul of Tarsus was from the tribe of Benjamin. His birth name was Saul and was born in Tarsus of Cilicia. As a Roman citizen he also had another name – Paul.

As a young boy he was very obedient towards Jewish laws and followed the traditions of the fathers. He received his education under the guidance of a teacher named Gamaliel in Jerusalem. According to the Jewish customs, Saul learned a trade which was to make tents, but he grew up to become a religious leader and protector of the Jewish laws and practices.

When Saul saw that the Christian community was growing, he became very bitter and started troubling against Jesus’ followers. He arrested and put them in prison and beat them up.

- Name: Saul (birth name) and Paul (Latin name)
 - Birth place: Tarsus, Cilicia (present day Turkey)
 - Teacher: Gamaliel
 - Profession: Tentmaker and religious leader
-
- Name the 12 tribes of Israel?
 - Jewish Laws or Ten commandments given to Moses – Name 2 commandments?

Conversion of Saint Paul

Submitting to Gods Will

On one such occasion he set off to Damascus to arrest men and women who were following the teachings of Jesus Christ and bring those people to Jerusalem and punish them.

As he was journeying and came near Damascus, a great light from heaven started shining on Saul. He fell on the ground and heard a voice saying "Saul, Saul why are you persecuting me?" Saul couldn't see anything, he replied "Who are you Lord?" The voice said, "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting." Saul responded, "What shall I do, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

There were a few men with him who brought him into Damascus where Saul was without sight for three days.

In the same village lived a man named Ananias who was a disciple of Jesus Christ. Jesus appeared to him and told him to go to Saul and put his hand on Saul's eyes so that he might receive sight. Ananias did what the Lord asked him to do and immediately something like scales fell from Saul's eyes and he received his eyesight. He got up and was baptised.

Saul accepted God and God's will for his life, which was completely different from how he had lived till then. He received strength and started preaching in the synagogues proclaiming that

"Jesus is the son of God."

All who heard him were amazed. Later Saint Luke addressed him with his Latin name, Paul, as Saint Paul started his missionary journey among the Gentiles.

He preached the Gospel and established churches in Asia Minor and Europe. There are 14 letters of Saint Paul in the Bible - 10 of them were written to churches and 4 to individuals. His epistles are instructions, responses to problems and important spiritual messages to everyone.

Tradition says Saint Paul was martyred in Rome during the reign of Nero at the same time as Saint Peter. Our Indian Orthodox church observes the Apostles' Fast starting on 16 June and ending with the remembrance of the two chief Apostles, Saint Peter and Saint Paul on June 29. In our Holy Qurbana, one of the readings from the scriptures is always from Saint Paul's epistle.

- Converted to follower of Christ: Damascus
- Healed by: Ananias
- Epistles written : 14

- Name any 2 epistles of Saint Paul?
- Which epistle do we find our OVBS theme in?

Activity 1: Bible verse (Text mapping)

Here are some Bible verses to memorise

1.

We 

him



CAUSE



us - 1 John Chapter 4:19

Answer:

2.



al



- 1 Thessalonians Chapter 5:16

Answer:

3.

Your



is a



and a



my



- Psalms 119:105

Answer:

Activity 2: Saint Paul sees a bright light on his way to Damascus – colour the picture



Lesson 2: Understanding God's will

Lesson objectives

- 1 Increase our understanding of God the Father and his relationship with us.
- 2 Understanding the will of God and knowing what he wants from us

Introduction

In the last lesson, we learnt about St Paul and how he changed his life around by understanding the will of God and, living his life according to God's will.

Let us review the last lesson

1. Where was Saint Paul born?
2. Describe the incident that changed him?
3. How many epistles did Saint Paul write?

Now, we shall study a bit more about who God is and what our relationship with God should be like.

Who is God?

God created us and he loved us

If you had to describe God in one Word, how would you describe Him?

From the Creation story (Genesis 1 & 2), we see God, the Creator, who created human beings in his likeness. From this we understand that we were created to be holy like him. We are therefore God's children (Ephesians 5:1). However, through disobedience and not following what God wanted us to do (i.e., the will of God), we have distanced ourselves from God. This 'moving away' from God to follow our own desires has resulted in us living in sin.

However, we see that our God is a loving God, who cares for us just as a father would care for his own children (Ps 103:13).

God became incarnate (took on human form) and came down from heaven to be among us. We see this within the Nicene Creed which is recited in almost every prayer and especially during the Holy Qurbana.

He came to us so that we may fully understand what the will of God is and how we can have eternal life and regain our place back in Paradise.

Memory Verse – St. John 3:16

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

God is our Protector, Provider and Healer

We see many instances in the Bible where God intervened and protected the people who follow his will. For example, Mary and Joseph were able to escape Herod, King David was able to defeat Goliath, etc.

We also see a God who provided what was needed for the people. For example, when the people of Israel went hungry in the desert, God provided 'Manna' (Exodus 16).

Our Lord Jesus Christ also performed many miracles of healing, and we read about a few of these miracles in the Gospel readings during lent. Can you remember any of these miracles?

From the above, we can see that we have a loving God who gives us what we need. We find a God who is worthy of Praise and Thanksgiving. One way we praise God is during the **Qaumo** (Kauma) prayers (Book of Common Prayer 2016). Do you remember the Qaumo prayers? Can you say it together as a class?

QAUMO

Holy art Thou, O God
 Holy art Thou, Almighty
 Holy art Thou, Immortal
 + Crucified for us, Have mercy on us. *(three times)*

Lord have Mercy upon us
 Lord, be kind and have mercy
 Lord, accept our service and our prayers
 Have mercy upon us

Glory be to Thee, O God
 Glory be to Thee, O Creator
 Glory be to Thee, O Christ the King
 Who has compassion on His sinful servants

Activity 3

Here below are some words that describe different aspects of God, however, the letters have been rearranged. Unscramble the nine words below by rearranging the letters.

VIOLNG -----	GIVINGROF -----	TYMALIGH -----
LUFIMERC -----	EAPEC -----	LYHO -----
GKIN -----	TALIMMOR -----	ROTECAR -----

Understanding the WILL of God

God is our Heavenly Father who loves us. Now, let us study a bit more about what God wants us to do.

Mathew 22:37,39

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'

'Love your neighbour as yourself.'

What God wants us to do can be found within the Ten Commandments, however, Jesus Christ summed this up in the following two commandments.

As we are the children of God, we are expected to live a life of love and thanksgiving. We are expected to live in the 'Light' and do good things and be thankful to God. If we are greedy or immoral (do bad things) then we are living a life that is against God's will and are in darkness (Ephesians 5:1-19).

We are meant to be treating others with kindness. Jesus Christ mentions this through the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37).

This means that we treat all people well, regardless of what they may have done to us. We also need to stand up for people who are treated badly. So for example if you see children being bullied or treated badly, then you need to make sure that you tell someone you can trust. This could be your parents, school teacher, or Sunday school teacher.

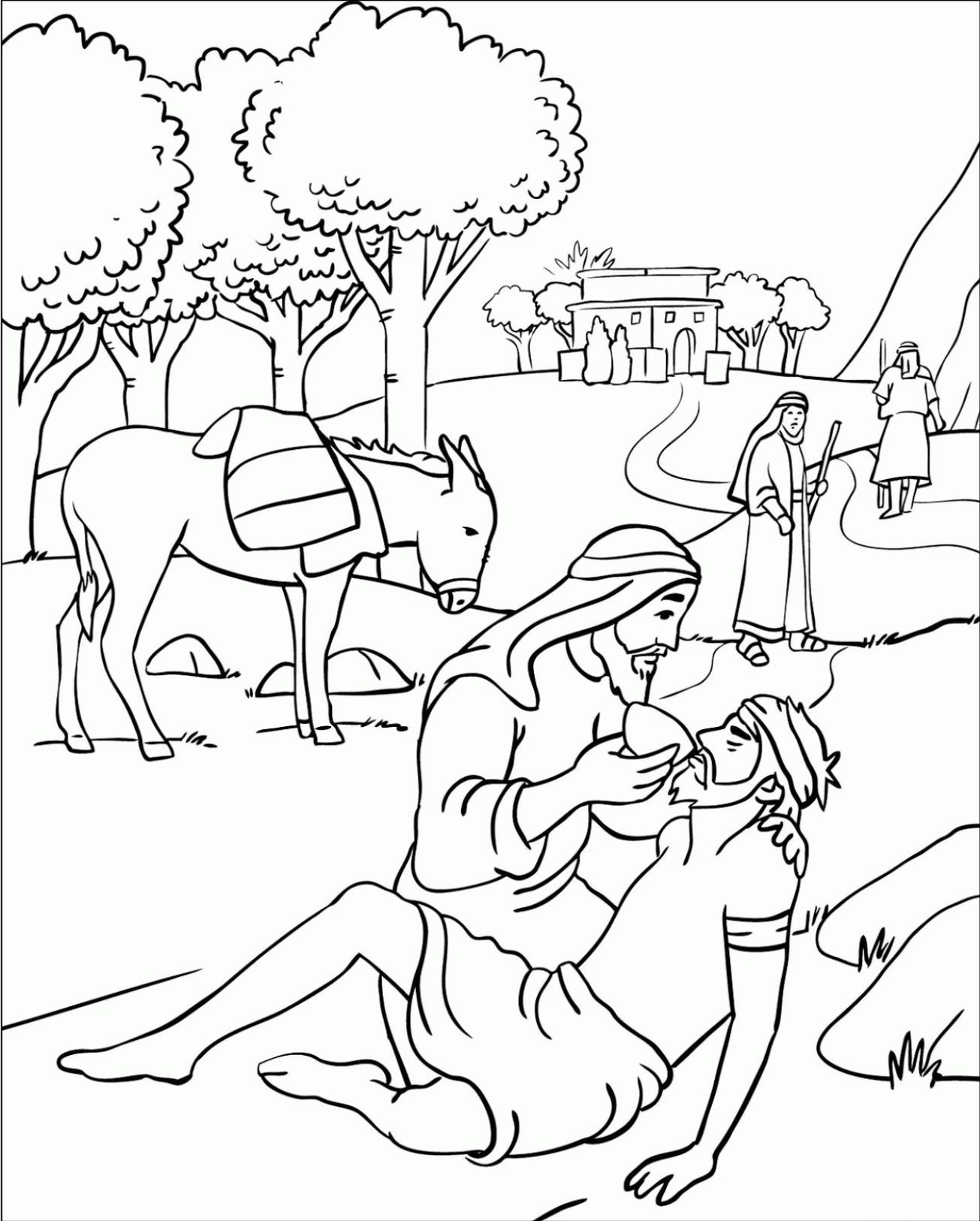
Activity 4 – Word search

The following words describe the qualities we must have within ourselves. Find them all

- LOVE
- JOY
- PEACE
- PATIENCE
- KINDNESS
- GOODNESS
- FAITHFUL
- GENTLE
- HUMBLE

C	G	J	P	A	U	L	P	R	I	N	C	E
A	A	G	O	O	D	N	E	S	S	O	A	E
M	F	E	B	T	I	N	A	I	S	T	N	C
E	X	A	J	A	C	K	C	L	E	I	D	N
O	T	J	I	T	A	N	E	T	N	N	L	E
F	G	E	N	T	L	E	F	O	D	G	O	I
O	T	C	O	T	H	M	U	T	N	I	V	T
R	O	K	A	L	T	F	N	K	I	P	E	A
G	O	E	E	L	B	M	U	H	K	S	O	P
E	S	I	M	P	L	Y	L	L	I	G	H	T
T	J	O	Y	O	U	S	E	E	R	T	D	O

Activity 5: The Good Samaritan - colour the picture



Lesson 3: Giving thanks in all situation

Lesson objectives

1. Being thankful and accepting Gods will.
2. Building a better relationship with God through our daily actions
3. Discerning the will of God.

Being thankful and accepting Gods will.

We say the words 'thank you' when someone has been kind to us, similarly, we thank God during our prayers for giving us a wonderful life. St. Paul advised us to thank God for everything. This means when you pray it is important you thank God for your blessings.

It is also important to keep being thankful during hard times. When we are tackling challenges, we must thank God for giving us this challenge. Facing different challenges makes us stronger and helps us learn and prepare ourselves to face more difficult challenges in life.

In the Old Testament, we come across a man called Job. Job lived in the land of Uz, where he owned many cattle. He was a good man; not only was he kind to others, he was also faithful to God. Job had a wonderful home, with a lovely family that loved him. One day Satan asked God to prove that Job loved God unconditionally, and not only because God gave him nice things. God allowed Satan to test Job to prove this.

One day, all of Job's cattle was killed. Soon another messenger came and told Job that all his children were killed in a horrific storm. Even though this made Job very upset, he praised God and continued to love and trust him.

The love and trust Job had for God, proved that Job was faithful to God. However, Satan still wasn't convinced of Job's love for God. Therefore, Satan gave Job a horrible disease where sores broke out on his body. This made his wife mad at him and she told Job to be angry at God for giving him something so horrible. However, Job would not complain against God. He said to her "When God sends us something good, we welcome it. How can we complain when God sends us trouble" (Job 2:9).

Job's friends heard about his troubles and went to comfort him. They told Job that God was punishing him for doing something bad. This saddened Job. He did not understand why these things happened to him. Then God answered Job and explained to Job that He was the Almighty creator of all things, and no one could question His actions even if it didn't make sense. Job repented and began trusting the Lord again. Eventually, God took away Job's sickness, gave him a new house with a wonderful family and his wealth doubled.

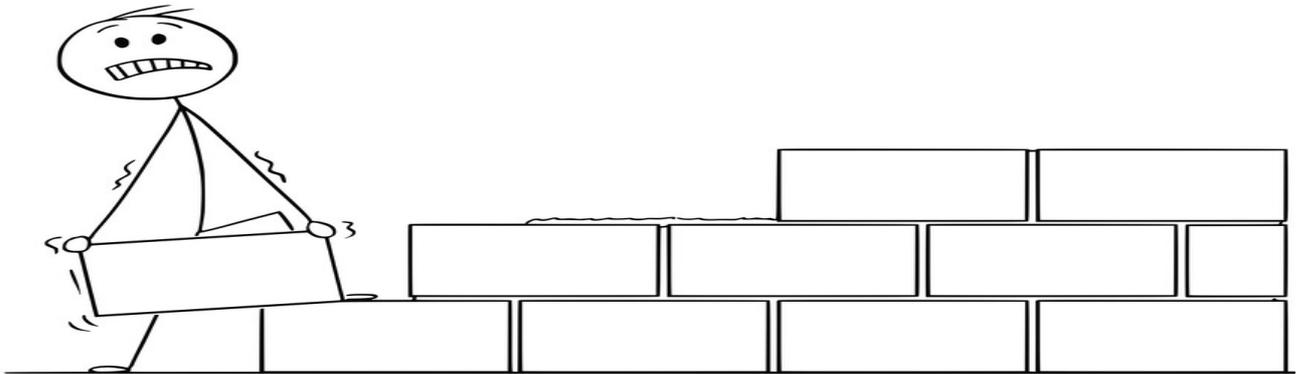
Question: From Job's story, why should we not complain God during hard times?



Building a better relationship with God.

If we are going to have somebody as our friend and companion, we need to know them quite well and build a relationship with them. Similarly, if we God to be in our lives, we need to build a relationship with Him.

Activity 6: Write down on the bricks below, the different ways we can build a relationship with God



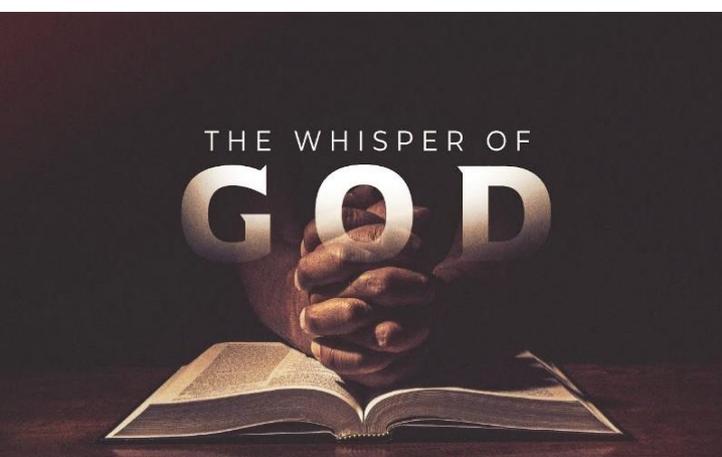
Discerning the will of God?

“Make me know your ways, O Lord teach me your path”- Psalms (25:4).



Sometimes we get confused about the right thing to do. God knows the answers to all our questions. We can trust God to help us in our confusing situations. We should seek God's will in all that we do. God loves us and wants to help us know the right thing to do.

To discern God's will means to find out, recognise and understand God's plans for us and what God expects from us.



To discern God's will, we must actively seek to hear His voice. The Bible is the voice of God. Our faith is strengthened when we listen to the word of God.

To discern God's will, we must free our minds of distractions and unwanted thoughts and spend time with Him and His word.

God's will is to bring us closer to Him. He uses different ways in our lives to do this. We must take Holy Qurbana regularly to keep God close to us always.

Wise Solomon

Solomon chooses Wisdom (1st Kings 3)

King Solomon was the son of King David (the one who defeated the Goliath the giant) and Bathsheba. King Solomon was a powerful man, who had a powerful army that defeated many enemies.

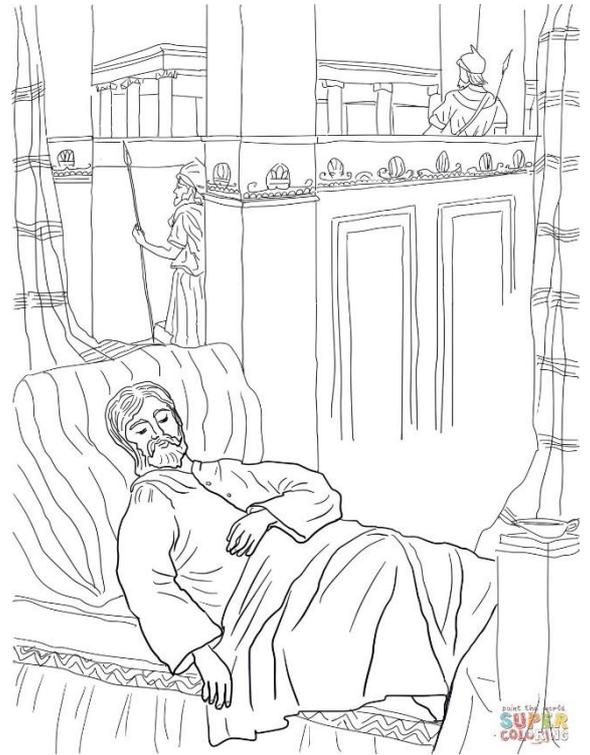
King Solomon was sleeping at his palace in Gibeon; when God asked him "*What would you like me to give you?*" (1st Kings 3:5). Solomon first responded by thanking God for guiding his father King David who was very loyal to the Lord, and Solomon asked

"So, give me wisdom I need to rule your people with justice and to know the difference between good and evil.

Otherwise how would I ever be able to rule this great people of yours" (1st Kings 3:9).

God was very happy with Solomon for asking for wisdom and not material things like riches. God showed that he was proud of Solomon's choice by giving him wealth and honour, and if Solomon obeyed the Lord's laws and commandments, God promised Solomon a long life.

The next morning Solomon woke up from his sleep and realised that God had given him wisdom. Solomon thanked God, by going to the Lord's Covenant Box, to offer his sacrifices.



Solomon makes a bold choice

King Solomon was very well known in his kingdom for his wisdom, a gift he got from God. King Solomon met so many people from far away, wanting his help. One morning, two women came to him, fighting over this one baby. The two women were fighting because they both had given birth to a baby in the same house on the same day, but only one baby had survived. So, the other mother whose baby had died; stole the living baby and claimed that the child was hers. Both mothers argued in front of the King saying that "the living child is mine, and the dead child is yours" (1st Kings 3: 22).

King Solomon was angered by this case, and he knew how to find out the truth. He asked his guard to get his sword and said to the two mothers "Cut the living child in two and give each woman half of it" (1st Kings 3:25). As soon as he announced this; one mother smiled and agreed with the king to split the living baby in half. The other mother cried and said, "*don't kill the child, give it to her*" (1st Kings 3:26). King Solomon knew for certain that the true mother was the one who plead for child to be alive and was willing to give to the other woman the child so it can live. Then Solomon stopped the sword and gave the child to its true mother.

King Solomon's Wisdom



Activity task –

1. Connect the dots to find out what weapon was Solomon using

— — — — —

2. Draw what was in the basket, which the two mothers were fighting over
3. Colour the picture

Teachers Guide

Lesson 1: Introduction

Lesson objectives

1. Know who Saint Paul was

Introduction

Read through Saint Paul's story and answer the questions:

- 1) Name the 12 tribes of Israel?
 - a) Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Joseph, Benjamin
- 2) Jewish Laws or Ten commandments given to Moses – Name 2 commandments?
 - a) I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; Do not have any other gods before me. (Exodus 20:2-3)
 - b) You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them. (Exodus 20:4-5)
 - c) You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name. (Exodus 20:7)
 - d) Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. For six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and consecrated it. (Exodus 20:8-11)
 - e) Honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. (Exodus 20:12)
 - f) You shall not murder. (Exodus 20:13)
 - g) You shall not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14)
 - h) You shall not steal. (Exodus 20:15)
 - i) You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour. (Exodus 20:16)
 - j) You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour. (Exodus 20:17)
- 3) Name any 2 epistles of Saint Paul?
 - a) Romans, 1&2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1&2 Thessalonians, 1&2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews
- 4) Which epistle do we find the theme in?
 - a) 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Activity 1: Answers

- 1) We love him because he first loved us – - 1 John Chapter 4:19
- 2) Rejoice always – 1 Thessalonians Chapter 5:16
- 3) Your word is a lamp to my feet and light for my path - Psalms 119:105

Lesson 3: Giving thanks in all situation

Lesson objectives

1. Being thankful and accepting God's will
2. Building a better relationship with God through our daily actions
3. Discerning the will of God

Introduction

Being thankful

- It is important to thank god for worldly possessions. God has allowed us to have access to a car, a house, anything materialistic which is used to enrich both physical and spiritual aspects of life. By having access to these things, we are blessed.
- The bishop of Constantinople John Chrysostom said that we should be thankful to God “not only from the deliverance of evil, but also at the time we suffer.”
- When Job and the prodigal son lost their materialistic possessions; the hardships of life only encouraged them to be more thankful for Gods blessing. Thanking god for preserving and nourishing life is important.
- Activity – colour in the picture of Job
- Ask the children how we should be like Job in our day to day life.

Building a better relationship with God through our daily actions

- It is important to build a relationship with God, as this will strengthen us and guide us all to the correct path thus discerning the will of god. We can build a relationship by reading the bible, participating in the holy Qurbana, helping other when they are in trouble like the good Samaritan. As Jesus once said we should “love thy neighbour”.
- It is also important to maintain a relationship with God when we are going through trying times like Job. Job endured so much, but his commitment to being faithful for the Lord only made him a better man.

Activity – On the cartoon bricks write down ways to build a relationship with God. Eg- Praying, participating in holy Qurbana, helping others in need, Obeying parents, participating in Sunday school and etc..

Discerning the will of God

- In order to discern Gods will is to understand what God has plans for us. One way to communicate with God is to read the bible, so our faith is straitened. By reading the bible, we can have an insight on what type of person god wants us to be.
- We can discern the will of God, by maintain a good frame of mind. Use the “**Think Vegetarian, Eat Vegetarian and Speak Vegetarian**” analogy. By having clean thoughts, and emitting a clean persona, we are helping ourselves in future.
- Stress the importance of being close to god to maintain a good relationship and to discern his will. One way to do this is by participating in the Holy Qurbana.

Activity 1 – colour in

Activity 2, Join the dots, Answer **Sword**, Colour in the characters, the missing object to draw in is a baby

Plenary task- Ask the students how they can apply the them in their day to day life

- School – e.g. Helping other children at times of trouble.
- Family – e.g. Thanking their parents for giving them a lovely home
- Church- Participating in the Holy Qurbana, attending Sunday school.
- Friends – e.g. Remind one another to be kind

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Acknowledgement



All OVBS participants, head teachers, teachers, coordinators, music teachers, parents and volunteers, Let us praise and thank our Almighty God for guiding us in all our centralized Sunday school activities within UK and Ireland. This is our eighth successive centralized OVBS programme. Considering the unique needs of our children growing up in the UK and Ireland, similar to previous years, the OVBS scheme has been developed and modified by incorporating some changes to make it an enjoyable experience for the children but keeping the essential and core components from OSSAE.

First of all, I would like to express my humble gratitude to H.G. Dr Mathews Mar Thimothios, our Diocesan Metropolitan and president for OSSAE-UK & Ireland for the blessings and invaluable guidance to all our Sunday school activities in this region.

Sunday schools in UK and Ireland are greatly indebted to Central OVBS committee headed by H. G. Dr Gabriel Mar Gregorios, President OSSAE; Rev. Fr. Dr.Varghese Varghese, Director General OSSAE; Rev. Fr. Mathew Koshy, OVBS Director; Dr. Ipe Varghese, General Secretary OVBS; Prof. Dr. Cherian Thomas, Publication Officer; Prof. K.V. George, OSSAE Executive Officer for providing us with OVBS central curriculum and song book of OSSAE.

My sincere gratitude to Rev. Fr. Anoop Malayil Abraham, Vice President OSSAE-UK & Ireland for his inspirational leadership and encouragement specifically towards OVBS and generally to all Sunday school activities within UK and Ireland region.

I whole heartedly thank Rev. Fr. Aashu Alexander for spending his valuable time and effort in preparing the synopsis and reviewing all theme books.

Kindly join me to convey our hearty gratitude to Mrs. Merlin Robin (St. Thomas IOC, Cambridge), our OVBS Coordinator and Mrs. Sony Jerrin (St. John The Baptist IOC Stoke-on-Trent), OVBS Assistant coordinator for their valuable contribution and painstaking efforts especially in compiling OVBS theme books and song book for UK and Ireland as well as in the procurement and distribution of OVBS materials to all participating units. Specially acknowledging all the Sunday school teachers and students assisted them. Also passing our sincere gratitude to all the students who sent drawing book covers.

Extending a big thanks to Suresh Daniel, Secretary of OSSAE-UK & Ireland for his support in preparation of this years' OVBS. Also remembering Mr. Baby Cherian, our dear treasurer for his support in OVBS activities.

Similar to previous years, the OVBS Theme books have been prepared exclusively for OSSAE-UK & Ireland by Sunday school teachers from different units. I hereby sincerely thank all teachers who wrote and reviewed the lessons namely

Seeds [Beginners]

- Authors—Mr. Biju Mathew, Dr. Deepa S Joseph, Mrs. Rini Mathew and Mrs. Sony Jerrin (St. John The Baptist IOC Stoke-on-Trent)
- Reviewer— Mrs. Lisha Simon (St Gregorios IOC, London)

Roots & Buds [Primary]

- **Authors– Mr. Sudarshan Thomas, Mrs. Shiji Baboy & Miss. Dibitha Mathew (St Thomas IOC, Hemel Hempstead)**
- **Reviewer–Mrs. Roshnnie Manoj (St Gregorios IOC, London)**

Leaves and Branches [Juniors]

- **Authors– Miss. Emy Anil (St. George IOC Leicester)**
- **Reviewers–Mrs. Anuja S Joseph (St Gregorios IOC, London)**

Flowers [Intermediates]

- **Authors– Mrs. Sumitha Kurian, Mrs. Soumya C Ipe, Mrs. Merin Elizabeth Mani (Holy Trinity IOC, Cork)**
- **Mr. Saju K Chacko, Mrs. Bincy Binu, Mr. John Mathew (St. Thomas IOC, Dublin)**
- **Dr. Febe Francis, Mr. Prince Mathew, Mrs. Rajee Mary Joseph (St. Gregorios IOC, Waterford).**
- **Reviewers– Mr Joshi Eapen (St George IOC, Manchester)**

Fruits [Seniors]

- **Author–Mr. Linz Aynattu(St Thomas IOC, Liverpool)**
- **Reviewers–Mr. Shaji Varghese (St George IOC, Manchester)**

Sunday school activities in UK and Ireland are strengthened and led by all our vicars, district Inspectors, Sunday School head teachers, teachers, talent competition coordinator, volunteers and parents working at different capacities within limited resources and in various circumstances. I thank each and everyone for their commitment, dedication and efforts for making our children grow in Orthodox faith enabling them to serve God in the true Christian way.

A special mention to Mrs. Gincy Shine Panicker [Holy Trinity IOC, Cork] for composing three songs for this year's OVBS.

We have chosen a few out of the 21 cover page designs received from our children. Sincerely thanking all the students, parents and teachers for showing interest.

Finally, I would like to thank all Sunday school children in all units for their enthusiasm and spirit; Sunday school teachers, music teachers, and OVBS unit coordinators for their commitment; head teachers and district inspectors for their dedication; volunteers and parents for their motivation; OSSAE-UK & Ireland executive committee members for their outstanding support; and Church managing committee of various units for jointly working with Sunday school teachers to make this OVBS a grand success.

May God Almighty continue to shower His Blessings in all our activities in future and help us to work together for His Glory and spiritual growth of our students!

Yours in Christ

Simon Chacko | Sunday School Director-UK& Ireland| sundayschool.iocuk@gmail.com)

