

Lesson Plans that Work
Year A – Eighth Sunday after Epiphany
Lesson Plans for Younger Children
Revised Common Lectionary Old Testament Readings – Track One

Scripture: Isaiah 49:8-16a

Isaiah is a major prophet (the others are Ezekiel and Jeremiah). Prophets offer warnings, consequences of waywardness, as well as, reminded the people of God's promises. Isaiah has three sections: chapters 1-39, 40-55, and 56-66. The first calls the people to trust God. The second is about returning to Jerusalem, and the last section encourages life in the Promised Land as faithful to God. Jesus identifies with chapter 61 in the fourth chapter of the Gospel of Luke. The Messiah is associated with social justice and looking after the poor, orphans and widows.

A Notation on this Week's Scripture

From Isaiah we learn that the people and Jerusalem have been restored in their relationship with God and God invites them to rejoice. It is metaphor that God does and will continue keep the "Promise" of restoration. God will always have compassion on all people who suffer. God is faithful to all his creation.

Theme: I Will Not Forget You

Before: You will need copies of the Bible or copies of today's scripture for each child. You will also need paper, crayons, markers, pens, and pencils for the activity.

Beginning: Invite the children to look down at their hands. Are there any defining marks on your hand? Scars? Finger nail polish? Marker?

Opening Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for making us each unique and for loving us all so much. Help us to remember your pledge that you will not forget us. Amen.

The Story

People who lived before Jesus waited a long time for him to be born. While the people waited God began to get them ready to receive the gift of Jesus. God told particular people called prophets what was going to happen. Prophets listened to God in a special way. The prophets reminded the people of God's love and the great things God had promised to do.

God spoke to Isaiah and told him about what was coming. He used these words:

"Thus says the LORD: In a time of favor I have answered you, on a day of salvation I have helped you; I have kept you and given you as a covenant [or light] to the people, to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages...they shall not hunger or thirst, neither scorching wind nor sun shall strike them down, for he who has pity on them will lead them, and by springs of water will guide them. 11 And I will turn all my mountains into a road, and my highways shall be raised up."

See says the Lord: In a time of favor I have answered you, on a day of salvation I have helped you; I have kept you and given you as a covenant to the people to establish the land, to

apportion the desolate heritages saying to the prisoners, “Come Out” and “I will not forget you. See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands.”

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Questions

- What did you hear that makes it sound like God is trying to take care of people? (You may prompt them: God gave them a covenant or a promise, does not want them hungry or thirsty, does not want them scorched by wind or sun, but wants to lead them by springs of water.)
- What happens when the mountains are turned into roads and highways are raised up? (Hold left high and lower. Then hold right hand lower and raise to meet lowered left hand.) Now they seem even.
- God seems to have care for the less fortunate. I wonder how we can we help God by sharing our blessings? (Help children brainstorm and maybe prompt them to name ministries in our parish so they can participate.)

Activities:

Inscribed

God tells us that we will not be forgotten and that we are inscribed on the palms of God’s hand. What does inscribed mean? (give them time to respond) God is telling us that we are carved or decorated onto the palms of God’s hands. Think about how many times we look down at our hands in a day. Does that mean that God will see us and think of us often? If we are on God’s palms, that means that God will see us each day, many times.

With a partner (or you can help the children) trace each others hands and then decorate them to show how God sees you – how you are inscribed.

Closing Prayer: Loving God, I am so glad you live in me. I am grateful to be Child of God and to be able to show compassion for others as you show compassion to us. Amen.

Epiphany Lesson Plans for Young Children Writer: Linda Nichols

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