LESSON 21

PAUL FACES DEATH



Aim: **To teach the children that Paul was not afraid of death since he was a Christian.**

Scripture Reading: **Acts 21:10–14, 17–40; 22:1–24**

Memory Verse: **Psalm 23:4**
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me …

Presenting the Lesson

Starting Point

What are you frightened of? The children may not be willing to say they are frightened of anything, so have some suggestions ready, for example: Are you frightened of the dark? Are you frightened of snakes?

Main Points of the Lesson

1. Paul experienced many difficulties and problems on his journeys as a missionary. Sometimes he was thrown into prison or taken to court because of his preaching. **Show Pictures 18 and 20 again, and remind the children of the circumstances.**
   Paul wanted to return to Jerusalem, the headquarters of the early church. Some of the Christians pleaded with him not to go there. They were afraid that the Jews in Jerusalem would kill him. The Jewish religious leaders were still very angry that Paul, who had been such a hater of Jesus' followers, had turned into one himself. Paul said that he was not afraid to die for the good news about Jesus (Acts 21:12–13).
2. The Christians in Jerusalem welcomed Paul warmly, but the Jews tried to kill him in the street outside the temple. That caused a riot (21:17, 27–28, 31).
3. Roman soldiers arrived to stop the riot. They saved Paul from the crowd, but arrested him for causing a riot. **Describe the scene in 21:31–36 in your own words.**
4. Before they locked him up, Paul got permission to make a speech to the people (21:37, 39–40). **Show Picture 21.** He was not afraid to say what God wanted him to say, even though he had to be surrounded by soldiers to keep him safe from the angry Jews.
5. Paul gave his testimony: He had been a very religious Jew who had persecuted Christians until Jesus met him and changed his whole life (22:3–16). Show Picture 13.
6. When Paul said he was obeying God's own command by sharing the Gospel with the Gentiles, the crowd refused to listen anymore. They demanded that Paul be put to death (22:21–23).
7. Paul was not afraid to die for the message of salvation in Jesus. However, the Roman soldiers put him in prison to save him from the people (22:23–24a).

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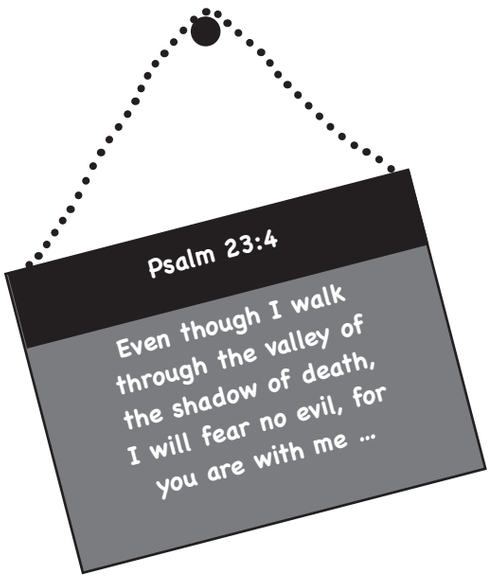


Our Response to the Story

Paul was not afraid to die because he knew that for the faithful death is not the end, but the beginning of a new life with the Lord. No suffering in this life is greater than the reward of spending eternity with Jesus Christ (2 Tim 4:8).

A young man in Uganda was arrested by rebels. He, and several other men, were about to be killed by a firing squad. He asked the man next to him if it was too late now to accept Jesus as his Saviour and ask for forgiveness of his sins. No, he was told. So he gave himself to Jesus while the soldiers were preparing to shoot. He was not afraid to die anymore. Jesus takes away our fears when we put our trust in him. However, when the soldiers fired, that young man was not killed! He lived to follow Jesus and share his witness with others.

Instil the Memory Verse



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