

Teaching Plan
EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Date: August 19, 2018
Lesson Title: "Thankful"
Lesson Passage: 2 Samuel 22:26-36,50-51

ABOUT THIS LESSON

The Bible passage for this lesson is a portion of the 22nd chapter of Samuel, which is almost identical with Psalm 18. Some biblical scholars assign it to the period in David's career when his kingship had been made secure by the conquests described in 2 Sam. 8, and before the griefs that overtook him in connection with the revolt of Absalom. Basically, this passage is a song of praise and thanksgiving which is full of humble representations of the power and grace of God.

TEACHING/LEARNING GOALS

- (1) Name four of the blessings for which David was thankful.
- (2) Explain the meaning of "Thou art my lamp, O Lord."

BEGINNING THE LESSON

Observe that the Bible text for this week's lesson is a poetic passage, quite different from the descriptive language of Old Testament history that comprises most of 1 & 2 Samuel. (For example, compare the poetic style of 2 Samuel 22:27b, KJV ["with the froward thou wilt show thyself unsavory,"] with the descriptive prose of 2 Samuel 21:10, KJV: "Rizpah... took sackcloth and spread it for her upon the rock"). With this in mind, our study of this week's lesson passage will be devoted primarily to interpreting its poetic language.

TEACHING PROCEDURES

Your treatment of a poetic passage like 2 Samuel 22 should give a great deal of attention to the symbolic language. For this reason, the following suggestions for teaching the text will put considerable emphasis on the meaning of the language used in selected passages:

1. 2 Sam. 22:26-27: In these verses, the writer attributes the same qualities to God as are found in people. For instance, those who are loyal (faithful, obedient) to God can count on His faithfulness (i.e., constant love). Those who are pure (blameless) can count on the continuing kindness of God; but those who are "crooked" (i.e., perverse) will be treated as their deeds deserve. (When applied to both God and man, "loyalty" and "faithfulness" are similar in meaning. Both terms connote unflinching devotion.)

2. 2 Sam. 22:28: "A humble people" refers to people who have been humbled by difficult circumstances. "Deliver" (RSV) translates a verb

that means "help" in 2 Sam. 10:11,19 and "gave victory" in 2 Sam. 8:6. In contrast, "the haughty" (in a colloquial translation, "people who put their noses up") will be "brought down."

3. 2 Sam. 22:29-30: "Thou art my lamp, O Lord" (v. 29) means that God is the source of life, vitality and health. The idea is not that God dispels the darkness of ignorance, but, rather, the darkness of sin, destruction and death, and continuously gives David life and strength. (The next verse, 22:30, continues this thought.)

4. *Suggest that the TEV translation of 2 Sam. 22:31-32 would be an excellent congregational reading in a worship service: "This God--how perfect are his deeds, how dependable his words! He is like a shield for all who seek his protection. The Lord alone is God; God alone is our defense."*

5. *Let someone read 2 Sam. 22:33-36, then observe that this prayer, like Psalm 18:1-3, seems to come from the soul of David the warrior:* (1) In v. 33, "God is my strong refuge" refers to a place of safety. The term often denotes a "stronghold," a place of safety, like a fortress atop a mountain (refer to Psalm 9:9). (2) "He made my feet like hinds feet" (v. 34) is translated in the TEV, "He makes me sure-footed as a deer." "He...set me secure on the heights" (v. 34, RSV) might have a similar meaning; that is, even when climbing on hazardous mountain trails, God sets his feet firmly in place, like those of a female deer. (3) God has also strengthened the arms of David the warrior, so that he can "bend a bow of bronze" (v. 35). NOTE: A bow of bronze would be very heavy, and only a strong man would be able to use it. (4) The "shield of salvation" (v. 36) is a figurative reference to protection and safety in battle. "Thy help made me great" (v. 36) is not a kingly boast, but David's way of saying, "You answered my prayers and made me strong in battle."

6. *Finally, interpret 2 Sam. 22:50-51:* (1) "I extol thee, O Lord" means "I sing your praises" (as in Psalm 7:17 and Psalm 18:49) ("among the nations" refers to the world's populations--this is a good missionary text. (Verse 50 is cited in Romans 15:9.) (2) 2 Sam. 22:51 closes the passage on a triumphant note, a statement of God's constant love for "King David and his descendants forever." (3) The word "triumphs" in this verse translates the Hebrew word for "salvation." Here it refers to King David's victories over his enemies, which he has achieved because God has been with him and has enabled him to win.

CLOSING THE LESSON

Encourage discussion of this question: "What does this Bible passage tell you about David?" After encouraging responses from class members, suggest that one of the outstanding traits of David is that, with all the difficulties in his life, he never failed to give God credit for his successes.