

exploring without
prejudice

LESSON
4

Learning objectives

- : To know that the Manifestations of God described the steps leading to the knowledge of God and to become generally familiar with them
- : To understand the importance of investigating religious truth
- : To perceive how religious differences occur when man does not investigate reality

materials you will need

- :: A dictionary
- :: Pens, pencils, crayons, markers, colored pencils, etc.
- :: White paper
- :: One copy of the "Homework and Feedback" sheet for each student

1. PRAYER (3 minutes)

Choose one prayer from the Prayers page (section two) and have one of the children recite it. Alternatively, you can use any other prayer that corresponds with one of the stated learning objectives.

2. GO OVER HOMEWORK (5-10 minutes)

3. ACTIVITY (15-20 minutes)

The purpose of this activity is to show that, in order to investigate reality, we need to look for ourselves. When our understanding is only based on others' descriptions, we might miss something important.

1. Cut out the pictures on the activity sheet (section 3). Keep them in the groups indicated. Make sure the children don't see the pictures at this time.

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2. Divide the class into two groups. Ask the groups to sit opposite each other.
3. Give each group one set of (3) pictures to look at but not to talk about them out loud.
4. Give each group a few sheets of white paper and some crayons or colored pencils.
5. Ask the first group to describe their first picture to the second group, without giving the item's name or color (e.g., if they are looking at a red ball, they can say that it's round, or it's the color of a fire engine, but they cannot use the words "red" or "ball").
6. Ask one or more persons in the second group to try to draw the picture the first group is describing. Allow 1 minute for them to draw the first picture.
7. Now give the second group a turn to describe what they are looking at and ask the first group to draw it. Allow 1 minute for them to draw the picture.
8. Alternate like this until all 6 pictures are drawn.
9. Lay all the pictures on the table.
10. Choose one picture and ask the children to compare the drawing to it. Ask them to note the similarities and differences between the two. Make the observation that no matter how good the drawing is, it is different from the picture in some important ways (this is because the person making the drawing never gets to see the picture, but only hears other people's description of it). If there is more than one drawing of a picture, ask the children to note how different these drawings are from each other, even though they describe the same picture.

11. Explain that this is how religions can appear different (because people have different understandings of what they have heard about their own or other people's religions).

5. STORY (10-15 minutes)

Read the attached story and discuss the questions that follow it. Alternatively, you can use any other story that illustrates the stated learning objectives.

6. SACRED WRITING (5 minutes)

Review the passage below and make sure that everyone understands all the words. Alternatively, you may use any other Sacred Writing that corresponds with one of the stated learning objectives.

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

« King James Bible, Luke 11:9-10 »

7. ASSIGN HOMEWORK (1 minute)

- › Complete one copy of the "Homework and Feedback" form in section 6 for each student and follow-up with the parents to make sure they have received it.

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- › Ask everyone to read the Sacred Writing every day and try to memorize it.
- › Ask everyone to find this Sacred Writing in the Bible with their parents' help. They should write it out on a piece of paper and decorate it to show to the class.

8. PREPARE TO GIVE CLASS REPORT TO ENTIRE SCHOOL (5 minutes)

9. REFLECTION AND EVALUATION (3 minutes)

Take a few moments after the end of class to complete the "Reflection and Evaluation" sheet in section five.

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Choose one of the following prayers:

If thou wishest the divine knowledge and recognition, purify thy heart from all beside God, be wholly attracted to the ideal, beloved One; search for and choose Him and apply thyself to rational and authoritative arguments.

« Bahá'í Faith, Abdu'l-Baha, Tablets of Abdu'l-Baha »

Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

« Christianity, King James Bible, Luke 8:9 »

Seeking felicity I laud him nigh to help, the source, of bliss, Who, Vigorous one, hath drawn to him the hearts of all, drawn them, the Vigorous One, the God.

« Hindu, Rig Veda »

LESSON 4

GROUP 1



GROUP 2



LESSON **4**

**THE
TOWER
OF BABEL**

*from the Old Testament (Genesis 11: 1-9),
based on a retelling by:
Paul Dallgas-Frey (paul@essex1.com)*

"Aren't we wonderful?"

"Yes! And aren't we great?"

"You know? We are SO wonderful, that we should build a magnificent city to show just how wonderful we are!"

Oh, oh! The people were at it again! They'd forgotten that everything they had come from God. And God is far, far more wonderful than they were. But, still, they said one to another, "Let's build a glorious city. And in that city, let's build a tower that reaches into heaven!"

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"That's a splendid idea!"

"Yes, it's top rate!"



And so, they all agreed... The neat thing was that they COULD actually all agree, because at that time (very long ago) everyone spoke the same language. They COULD all work together. And when you work together, you can do almost anything.

One day God came to visit the magnificent city and see the great tower the people were building. God didn't like what He saw. The people were working on building this enormous tower and were slowly forgetting about Him. They thought that the tower would help them reach heaven without God's help.

God decided to show them what would happen if He took away the things He'd given them... things like one common language that they could ALL use to speak with one another. So, He began to confuse the language of the

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people on earth and they started calling the same things by different names.



“Hand me that hammer,” one worker said to the other one day under the hot sun, while they were working together way up on the tower. And the other worker handed him a brick instead. He didn’t know what the other worker was talking about anymore.

“No! No! What’s wrong with you! I don’t want a brick... I need a HAMMER!” So the other worker would get even more confused and hand his friend a shovel. After a few times going back-and-forth like this, not understanding anything the other one was saying, a big fight would break out between them.

Well, they couldn’t get much work done like that! And soon the people weren’t getting along so well anymore. They quit building the great city and the tower. Everybody was getting into arguments all the time. So everyone who

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spoke different languages moved away. And, slowly, over time, people settled all over the earth.

Either way, the magnificent tower never got finished. It became known as the tower of Babel because that's where God made all the people's language sound like babbling to each other.



But God has promised that one day, when we've shown that we appreciate all the things He's given to us, He would return the big gift that He took away... the gift of one common language.¹

¹ "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent.", King James Bible, Zephaniah 3:9.

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Example Discussion Questions for Story

- › Why did the people want to build a tower?
- › Was the tower really going to help bring them closer to God?
- › Why did God originally give people the same language?
- › Why didn't God want like what the people were doing?
- › What happened when everybody started speaking a different language?
- › Just because we call the same thing by different names, does that mean we're talking about different things?
- › When we use different words to describe God, does that mean that we're talking about different "Gods"? Do you think this confuses people so they think we all worship a different God?
- › Do you think that if we all spoke the same language there would be fewer arguments and less fighting in the world?

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1. What did you like about this lesson? _____

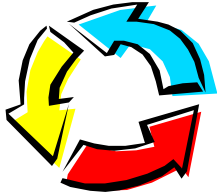
2. Which parts of the lesson did the students like? _____

3. Were the students able to answer the questions asked throughout the lesson? _____

4. Did the level of the lesson match the students' capabilities? _____

5. What would you change or add to the lesson? _____

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TO THE PARENTS OF: _____

FROM: _____

DATE: _____



WHAT DID WE DO?

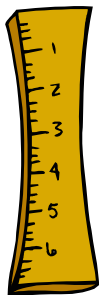
The topic for this session was:

How to Investigate Without Prejudice

The learning objectives were:

- :: To know that the Manifestations of God described the steps leading to the knowledge of God and to become generally familiar with them
- :: To understand the importance of investigating religious truth
- :: To perceive how religious differences occur when man does not investigate reality

HOW DID YOUR CHILD DO?



Preparation: [] **Great!** Active participation
[] **Fair.** Passive participation
[] **Poor.** Not active (needs to improve)

Participation: [] **Great!** Active participation
[] **Fair.** Passive participation
[] **Poor.** Not active (needs to improve)

Interaction: [] **Great!** Very understanding and cooperative
[] **Fair.** Occasionally helpful, occasionally disruptive
[] **Poor.** Distractive to others (Needs to improve)

Comments: _____

WHAT'S THE HOMEWORK FOR THE NEXT LESSON?



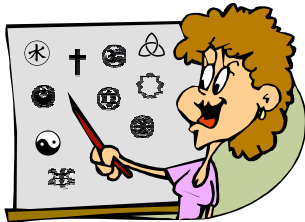
1. Read the Sacred Writing every day and memorize it.

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

(King James Bible, Luke 11: 9-10)

2. Ask everyone to find this Sacred Writing in the Bible with their parents' help. They should write it out on a piece of paper and decorate it to show to the class.

WHAT WILL WE COVER NEXT SESSION?



Next session we will continue with the topic:

How To Explore Without Prejudice

The learning objectives for the next session will be:

- :: *To understand the spiritual qualities necessary of a true seeker*
- :: *To gain insight into the meaning and importance of detachment and of purifying one's heart in order to be a seeker after truth*
- :: *To discern how both love and hate can prevent us from gaining spiritual knowledge*
- :: *To perceive how our task of becoming a true seeker is a life long endeavor to spiritualize our being*