

the mission
of the Prophets

Learning objectives

- : To understand the short and long term influence of the Messengers on the ongoing advancement of civilization
- : To understand the connection between the mission of the Messengers of God and the Greater Covenant

materials you will need

- :: Dictionary
- :: A copy of the activity sheet for every child
- :: Color pencils or crayons,
- :: Black pencils/pens,
- :: Erasers
- :: Copies of the Feedback and Homework sheet for each student

1. PRAYER (3 minutes)

Choose one prayer from the Prayers Page (section two). Recite it, and then 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 teachings of religions change our world in a positive way. We use the example of four teachings and ask the students to think about the difference these make in their lives.

Instructions:

1. Give a blank activity sheet (with the picture placeholders) to each child or group.
2. Divide the sheet with the "Before Pictures" on it in two and give each half to each student/group. Each half should contain a picture with a "teaching" beside it.
3. Ask them to cut out the picture and glue it to the top of the activity page, in the box tagged as the "before picture".
4. Then ask them to write out the "teaching" that was next to the picture, on the dotted line after the words "religions teach us:"
5. Ask each child or group, in turn, to describe the content of the picture on their page. You may need to help them describe what is happening in the picture.
6. Ask them, in turn, what their "religious teaching" says and how their picture would change if people listened to that particular teaching. Again, you may need to help them describe the change that will take place.
7. After they have described the changes, ask them to draw a picture of what happens afterwards in the box below next to the "AFTER..." label. Encourage them to use colored pencils or crayons to make their "after" picture as interesting as possible.
8. Ask them if they can think of other "teachings" of religions that make a difference in people's lives. Encourage them to ask their family and /or friends the same question. (see the Homework Assignment).

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.

The source of all learning is the knowledge of God, exalted be His Glory, and this cannot be attained save through the knowledge of His Divine Manifestation.

« Baha'u'llah, Tablets of Baha'u'lah »

7. ASSIGN HOMEWORK (1 minute)

- › Complete one copy of the “Homework and Feedback” form, in section 6 of this lesson, for each student and follow-up with the parents to make sure they have received it.
- › Read the Sacred Writing everyday before the next class try to memorize it. Read it at least once with an adult during the course of the week.
- › Everyone is to ask their parents or friends about a religious teaching that make people’s lives better. Write this down and bring it to the next session.

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

9. REFLECTION AND EVALUATION (3 minutes)

Your feedback and comments are very important because they will be used to improve this lesson. Please take a few moments after class to complete the "Reflection and Evaluation" sheet in section five of this lesson.

You may submit your feedback by e-mail to:

feedback@spiritual-education.org

Instead, you may wish to submit your feedback using the web-based form at:

www.spiritual-education.org/feedback

Thank you!

Choose one of the following prayers:

O my God! I ask Thee, by Thy most glorious Name, to aid me in that which will cause the affairs of Thy servants to prosper, and Thy cities to flourish. Thou, indeed, hast power over all things!

« Baha'i Faith, Baha'u'llah, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf »

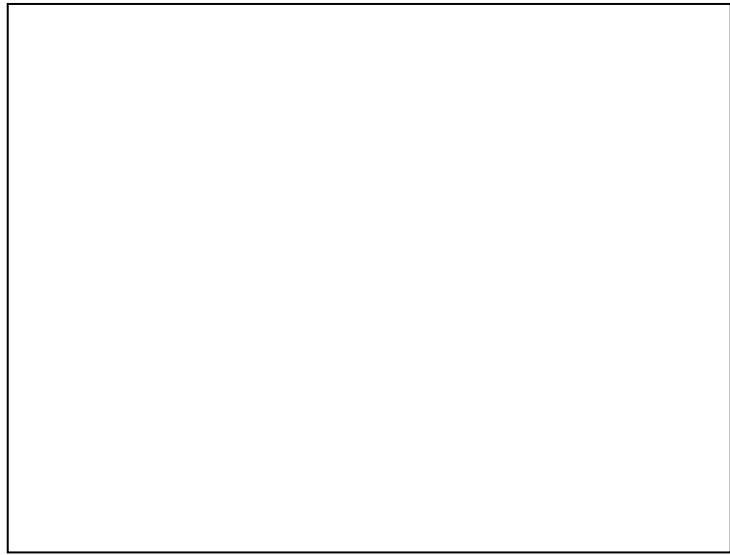
Be ye glad then in the covenant which ye have made with Him, for that is the mighty happiness!

« Islam, Quran (tr. E.H. Palmer), Sura 9 »

Blind are all those who, on this earth, do not follow the religion, do not benefit the living...

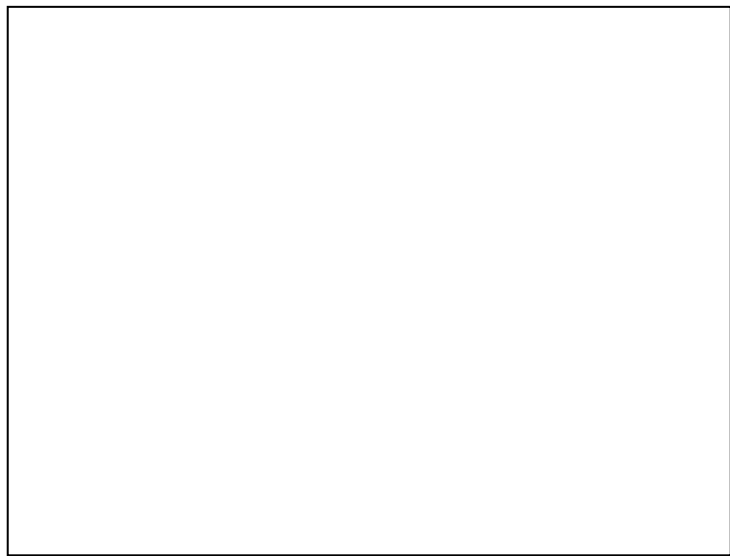
« Zoroasterianism, The Zend-Avesta, Avesta Fragments, Verse 50 »

BEFORE



religion teaches us:

AFTER



"Before" Pictures



All must seek knowledge.



Care for the earth.

"Before" Pictures



Love all people.



Help others.

GUTENBURG AND HIS PRINTING PRESS



This is the story of an important inventor. His name is Johannes Gutenberg. He lived about 600 year ago in Germany (a country in Europe).

When Johannes was growing up, there weren't many books around.

Do you know why? Because there were no printers anywhere at that time. None! That means that there were only two ways to make a book: by wooden blocks, or by hand.

If you were making a book by wood blocks you would need a craftsman to cut a pieces of wood with the shape of a letter of the



on its surface. This was very time-consuming because it was like making a number of stamps out of wood for every page of the book. A whole bunch of little wood blocks would be joined together into a big block. Then the block would be inked (someone would brush or roll ink over it). Finally, a sheet of paper would be pressed over the big block to make a single print. The problem was that wood block could not remain sharp for long. It would dent and get messy quickly and after a few prints you would have to start all over again a make all new wood stamps! The best you could do would be to get a few copies of a book from each block.

The other way to make a book was to write it all out by hand. Can you imagine how long it takes to copy a book without making a single mistake? There were people whose job was to copy books day and night.

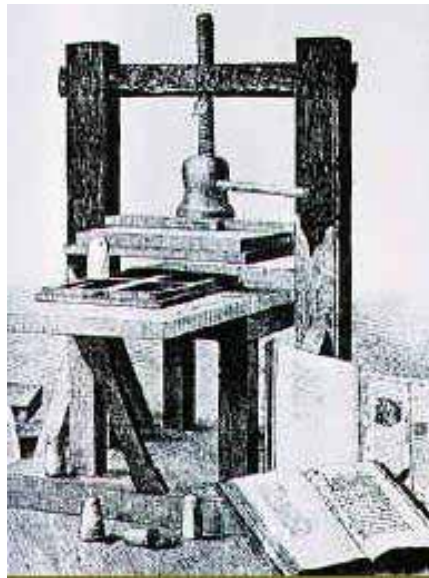


Some of these books were very beautiful, with hand colored pages and decorated covers. But they would take so long to make that only a few of them could be made during a person's lifetime.

Now this is where Johannes comes in...

He grew up to become a goldsmith (someone who makes jewelry). He was good at making small things out of metal. He soon began to think about making letters of the

alphabet out of metal. So he slowly figured out how to make stamps for each letter of the alphabet and place



them together in a mold to make up words. By inking the tops of these letters and pressing a white piece of paper on them he could print the words on page after page. He could then arrange words, sentences, and whole paragraphs this way.

He had figured out to make lots copies of a story or even a whole book without having to write all the pages. His method was much faster, easier, and cheaper than making a copy of a book using wooden blocks or by hand.

Now all this took a few years to figure out and he had spent all his money to make his printing machine. But he was ready to print his first book. What book should he print? What book was the most popular book in Germany? What book would everyone want to have in their home? What book would you print first if you were in his place?

Do you know which religion most Germans belonged to? Most Germans were Christians and the Christian Holy Book is the Bible. Johannes thought that everyone would want to read the Bible to get closer to God. What better book than the Bible for his first print?



He made over 2,000 copies of the Bible and sold them all. Now many people could read the Bible at their own homes. They no longer had to go to a big library and wait in turn to read the Bible. They could learn about the life of the prophets of the Old Testament and the life and teachings (sayings) of Jesus Christ by reading the Bible for

themselves. The love people had for the prophets and Messengers of God had made Gutenberg's printing machine very useful and popular. He sold almost all the Bibles he printed.

Soon other people figured out how to make similar printing machines and they started printing books of all kinds...

books about science and literature, books filled with stories, books about history and geography, books about physics and chemistry, books about animals and humans. Slowly all these books were sold to anyone who wanted them and more and more people started learning to read and write so that they could read these books.



The next time you pick up a book, remember Johannes Gutenberg and his love for the Bible. If it were not for that, maybe you wouldn't be able to read. Maybe someday you can go to a museum and see one of the Bibles that Gutenberg printed; there are still 50 of them left in the world (after 600 years).

Example Discussion Questions for Story

- › What did Guttenberg invent? (*the printing press*)
- › Was the printing press useful? How? (*it could print many copies of a book, with fewer mistakes, and for a much lower cost*)
- › How could people get a copy of a book before Guttenberg? (*they had be copied by hand or printed by wooden blocks which were like huge stamps*)
- › Why did Guttenberg pick Bible as the first book to print? (*because that was the book everyone wanted to read*).
- › If people at Guttenberg's time did not believe in the Bible, do you think they would have wanted to buy his books? (*no*)
- › Do you think you would be able to read or write if there were no books around?
- › On a scale of 1 to 10 how important do you think the invention of the printing press is?
- › Can you see how important religion is in helping "civilization advance" (*for our lives to become better and more convenient, for us to understand more about each other, to learn more about our world, etc.*)?
- › Can you name one important thing you have read in a book that you think helps you in your life?

1. What did you like about this lesson? _____

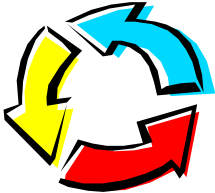
2. Which parts of the lesson did the students like? _____

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

4. Did the lesson's level match the students' capabilities? _

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

You can submit your feedback by e-mail to feedback@spiritual-education.org
or by using the web-based form at www.spiritual-education.org/feedback.



TO THE PARENTS OF: _____

FROM: _____

DATE: _____



WHAT DID WE DO?

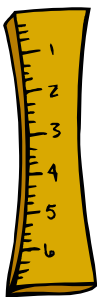
The topic for this session was:

The Mission of the Prophets

The learning objective was:

- : To understand the short and long term influence of the Messengers on the ongoing advancement of civilization
- : To understand the connection between the mission of the Messengers of God and the Greater Covenant

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?



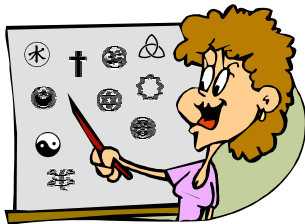
- Read the Sacred Writing (below) everyday until the next class session and try to memorize it. Read it with an adult at least once during the week.

The source of all learning is the knowledge of God, exalted be His Glory, and this cannot be attained save through the knowledge of His Divine Manifestation.

« Baha'i, Baha'u'llah, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf »

- Ask your parents or friends about a religious teaching that make people's lives better. Write this down and bring it to the next session.

WHAT WILL WE DO AT THE NEXT SESSION?



We will continue with topic four:

The Mission of the Prophets

We will cover the following learning objectives:

- :: To perceive the beauty of each of the world's religions as evidence of God's Message to humanity
- :: To discern the twofold purpose for learning about the missions of the Messengers of God
- :: To consort with the followers of other faiths in a spirit of love and unity
- :: To expand one's own understanding of one's religion by learning about other religions