

General Church Education



# We Thank the Lord

Psalm 136

## Lesson 26

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 1: The Lord Is Our Creator

For ages 6-7 years

## WE THANK THE LORD

### PSALM 136

The reading for today comes from the Book of Psalms. This Psalm is one of many that gives joyful praise and thanks to the Lord for His blessings. We might puzzle about why the Lord, who is the All in All, should so clearly ask us to thank Him. The following excerpt from the *Arcana Coelestia* tells a little about why this is true.

The Lord does, it is true, demand humility, worship, thanksgiving, and much else from a person, which seem like repayment, so that His gifts do not seem to be free. But the Lord does not demand those things for His own sake, for the Divine derives no glory at all from a person's humility, worship, or thanksgiving. It is utterly inconceivable that any self-love should exist within the Divine, causing Him to require such actions for His own sake. Rather, they are required for man's own sake, for if someone possesses humility he is able to accept good from the Lord, since in that case he has been parted from self-love and its evils which stand in the way of his accepting it. Therefore the Lord desires a state of humility in a person for that person's sake, because the Lord can flow in with heavenly good when that state exists in him. The same applies to worship and thanksgiving. *Arcana Coelestia* 5957

### IDEAS FOR PARENTS & TEACHERS

- Children take an innocent delight in thanking the Lord for His creation and for family and friends. As adults, we also can take delight in thanking the Lord for His gifts to us. These gifts are both natural and spiritual.
- The Heavenly Doctrine reminds us that the Lord came into the world to save humankind from the overwhelming influence of the hells. It is entirely appropriate at a time of Thanksgiving to offer a special prayer of thanks to the Lord for the mercy of His salvation.

### FROM THE WRITINGS

"The feast of unleavened bread" means worship and thanksgiving on account of deliverance from evil and from the falsities of evil. As regards this feast, it should be recognized that the glorification of the Lord's Human, and so the remembrance of this and thanksgiving on account of it, is its proper meaning. The glorification of His Human and the subduing of the hells by the Lord have given humankind deliverance from evils and salvation. For the Lord glorified His Human by means of conflicts against the hells and the victories He always gained over them. See *Arcana Coelestia* 10656

# WE THANK THE LORD

## IMPORTANT IDEAS

It is good to thank the Lord for all that He gives us.

The Lord's mercy is everlasting.

Today our reading from the Word comes from the Book of Psalms. The Book of Psalms is a collection of beautiful poetry and songs, given to us by the Lord. Many of the Psalms were written by King David. Some were written by other people. These poems often are words of praise to the Lord and thanks for His gifts which are our blessings from Him.

The Psalms are used by many churches as words for their hymns. The Children of Israel sang them during times of worship and they were often accompanied by instruments similar to a harp.

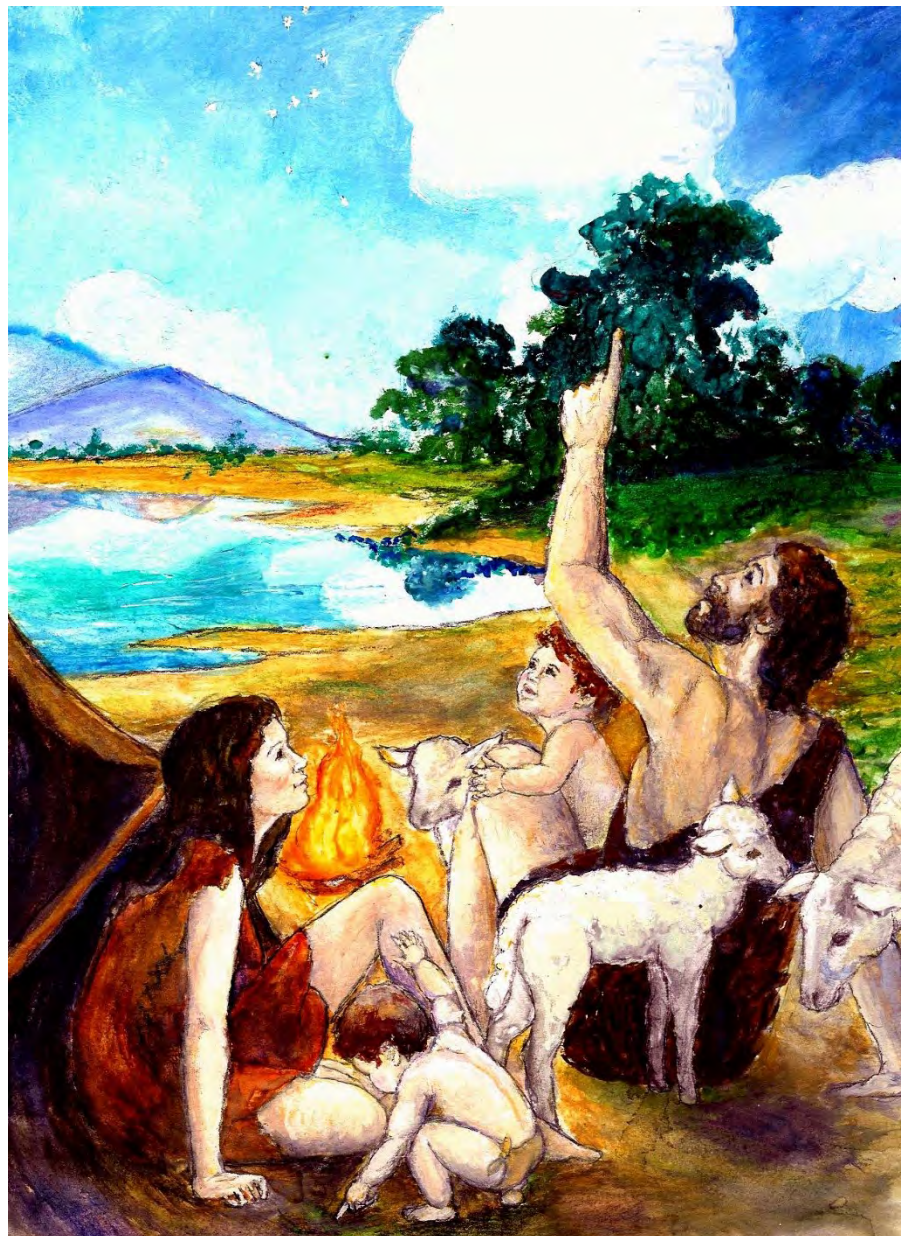
Our Psalm is one of thanksgiving. The Lord wants us to thank Him because He knows that giving thanks brings joy to our heart and brings us closer to Him. Read Psalm 136:1-9.

Did you hear in the Psalm what gifts we are to thank the Lord for? The Lord created all things in this world and in the heavens. The Lord also made us so that He could love us and look after us as our Heavenly Father. His creation gives us everything that we need. When we think about this, we can say "Thank you, Lord, for such wonderful gifts, the gift of life and the gift of Your love."



Did you notice the words that were repeated over and over in the Psalm? "His mercy endures forever." The Lord's mercy endures forever. That means that He will always love each one of us and will continually help us to find the way to happiness with Him in heaven. We learned in an earlier lesson that the "truths" in the Word tell us about the Lord and the way to go to heaven. The Lord's truths stand ready to help all people forever. We can thank the Lord for these truths and the wonderful blessings they can bring. How can we thank the Lord? When we are joyful in our worship of the Lord it is a way of saying "Thank you!" to Him. The Lord is delighted by the happy, joyful songs that we sing to Him.

The Lord also takes special delight in us when we happily follow His teachings and do what He asks us to do with a cheerful attitude. This is what our recitation means by "Serve the Lord with gladness." Sometimes we may feel sad or be in a bad mood. We may even feel like not doing what we know is right. When we remember to put on a happy attitude and do what is right, we are saying "Thank you!" to the Lord.



## DISCUSSION

- The Lord has given us many gifts. What gifts from the Lord were talked about in the psalm we read today? **(Everlasting mercy, the creation of the heavens and the earth, the sun, moon and stars.)**
- Why do you think "For His mercy endures forever" is repeated so many times? **(To let us know that the Lord will always take care of us.)**
- Can you think of some other things that the Lord has given you that you would especially like to thank Him for? **(Answers may include other things of nature, family members, friends, pets, your country with its freedom to worship the Lord.)**
- Can you think of some ways to say "Thank you" to the Lord? **(Answers may include going to church, joyful singing in worship, saying a blessing before meals, cheerfully doing the Lord's will, thanking Him as our Creator, thanking Him for His love, thanking Him for His Word.)**
- Sometimes we can show the Lord that we thank Him by how we treat other people. Can you think of things that you can do for other people that are a way of thanking the Lord for His gifts to you? **(Answers may include thanking people in this world who do nice things for us, acting with kindness to others as a mirror of the Lord's kindness to us, showing parents and other family members how much we love them.)**
- We can remember that when we thank the Lord, it can open our hearts to Him in a way that allows Him to be closely present with us and bring us happiness.



# WE THANK THE LORD | Activities

## Recitation

- Learn the recitation.  
Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands!  
Serve the Lord with gladness:  
Come before His presence with singing.  
Know that the Lord, He is God;  
It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves;  
We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.  
Enter into His gates with thanksgiving,  
And into His courts with praise.  
Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.  
For the Lord is good;  
His mercy is everlasting,  
And His truth endures to all generations.  
Psalm 100:1-5



When the recitation has been learned, give children the recitation picture on the last page of this lesson, and a sticker, e.g. a star, to decorate it.

## Song

- For Peace and for Plenty  
Listen at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-for-peace-and-for-plenty/>

## Projects

- Thanksgiving Wreath Project
- Picture to color

## Additional Activity

- Write a poem or song about thanking the Lord

## Thanksgiving Wreath Project

This project helps children focus on specific things for which they are thankful.

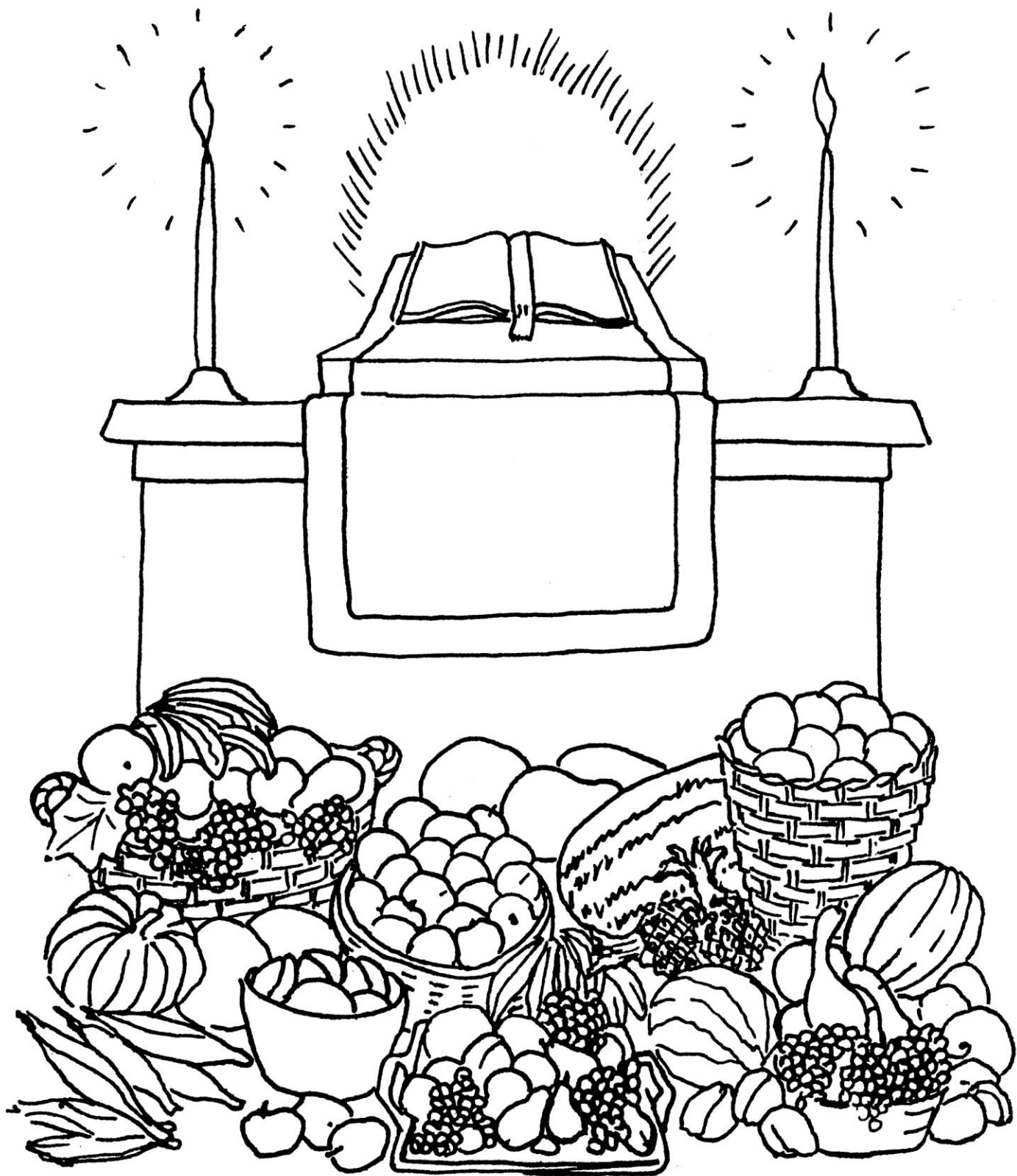
### Supplies needed

- 6 pieces of paper in a variety of colors, 9"x12" (23cm x 30cm)
- pencil
- scissors
- glue or tape

### Directions

1. You are going to make hand shapes and then put them together to form a wreath of thanksgiving to the Lord. Using your hand as a pattern, trace around it on one of the colored papers. Place your hand on the paper so that you can fit two handprints on each colored page. Cut them out. If you are careful, you can probably cut out several layers of paper at once.
2. While you are cutting out about 12 hand shapes, think of things you are thankful for. Try to think of ones that are direct gifts from the Lord, such as your food, materials to make clothing and houses, your parents, other family members and friends and especially the gift of His Word where we learn the truths about heavenly life. Using a pencil, write or dictate one thing for which you are thankful on each of the hand prints. Or, have others help you write things for which they are thankful on some of the hands.
3. Connect the hands with glue or tape, as in the illustration, forming a circle. When it is dry you can hang it up to remind you of all the good gifts that come from the Lord. Or, place it on a table and put a candle (in a candle holder) in the center.







# Recitation Award | Lesson 26

