

Aim

To explain to Primary Children the Story of the Good Samaritan as told in St. Luke's Gospel, chapter 10 verses 25-37.

Background Information for Teachers

A Jewish lawyer once asked Jesus, "Who is my Neighbour?" Instead of replying in the usual manner, Jesus told a story which answers this genuine question. The Jewish lawyer may have considered that his neighbour was any one of his fellow Jews. Jesus by use of this parable widens the definition of a 'neighbour'.

The meaning of this parable is that any person from any country, who is in distress or need, is my neighbour.

The road that runs from Jerusalem to Jericho was a very dangerous road. Jerusalem is above sea level, and Jericho is below sea level. The road is some twenty miles long. It went downwards the whole way to Jericho. In those days, travellers reported that it was inhabited by gangs of robbers.

Children's Bible Story: The Good Samaritan

The Pharisees (strict teachers of the Jewish law) did not like what Jesus was teaching and so they tried to catch him out. One of them asked him, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?"

Jesus replied, "What does the Jewish law say? To love God with all my heart and mind and strength, and to love my neighbour as much as myself". "But who is my neighbour?" the man asked. In reply, Jesus told this story:

There was once a merchant who was travelling down the road, from Jerusalem to Jericho. As he was on his journey, he was ambushed by robbers, who beat him, and stripped him of his clothes, and stole all his valuable possessions. They left him lying, half-dead on the roadside.

A Priest happened to come down the road. When he saw the poor bleeding traveller lying on the

ground, he thought only of keeping himself safe, so he quickly passed by on the other side of the road.

Later, a second man came down the road. He was a singer from the Temple Choir, known as a 'Levite'. He too looked at the wounded traveller, lying bruised and wounded by the road-side. He also became rather fearful for his own safety. He quickly passed by on the other side of the narrow road, and went on his journey. He did not do anything to help the wounded victim.

A third man came travelling down the road. He was a Samaritan. In those days, Jewish people did not speak to the people from Samaria. There had been a religious dispute between the two peoples, many years before. They kept themselves to themselves.

However, when the Samaritan saw the traveller lying wounded by the roadside, he took pity on him. The Samaritan crossed over the road to help him. He poured oil and wine into the traveller's wounds to clean and to heal them. He carefully bandaged his wounds.

The Samaritan put the wounded man on his own donkey. He carried him to a hotel. He gave the hotel-manager two silver coins to pay for the wounded man's stay at the hotel. The Samaritan said to the hotel-manager, "Look after him, and if his stay with you, costs any more, I will pay you the next time I am passing by."

Having told the story, Jesus asked the Pharisee, "Which of these three do you think was the neighbour to the wounded man lying by the roadside?" The Pharisee answered, "The Samaritan who came to the man's rescue." Jesus then said, "Go and act in the same manner."

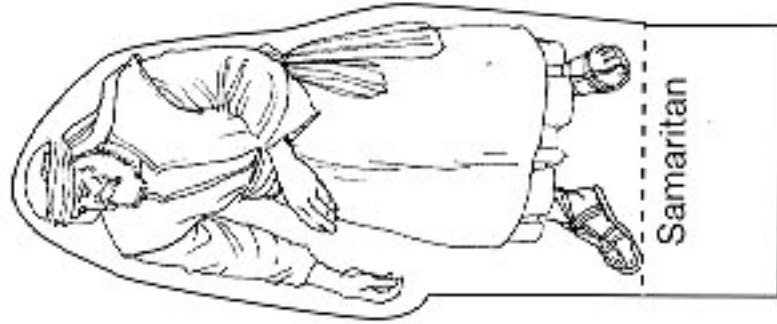
Jesus was teaching that although the Samaritans were not liked by the Jewish people at that time, it

was a Samaritan who really was the man's neighbour. Christians believe Jesus was teaching that anyone who needs help, is the Christian's neighbour.

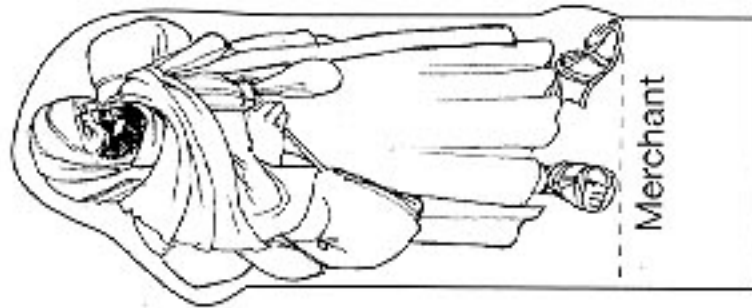
Suggested Classroom Activities

- **Photocopy onto card, decorate, cut out and use the figures opposite to retell the story of the Good Samaritan.**
- **The figures may be stood up or attached to thin wire or Art Straws. If time, make simple background scenery. Practice telling the story in small groups. Offer a reward for the best presentation to the whole class.**
- **Act out the story for a school assembly.**
- **Discuss ways we can help others:**
 - (a) locally
 - (b) nationally
 - (c) internationally.
- **Look in newspapers for evidence of wars or disputes between different groups of people e.g. Northern Ireland.**
- **Talk about people who are discriminated against simply due to the colour of their skin. Has anybody any first hand experience of this?**
- **Talk about bullying. Would we walk by and do nothing if we saw somebody being bullied?**

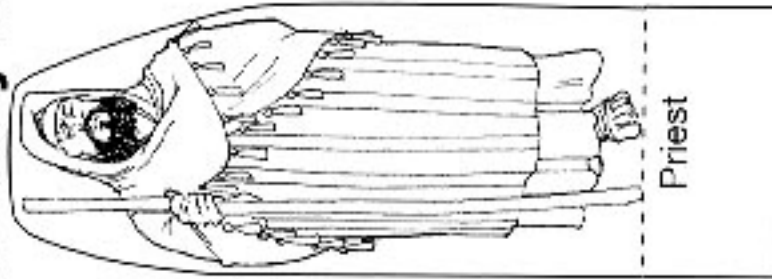
Act out the story of the Good Samaritan



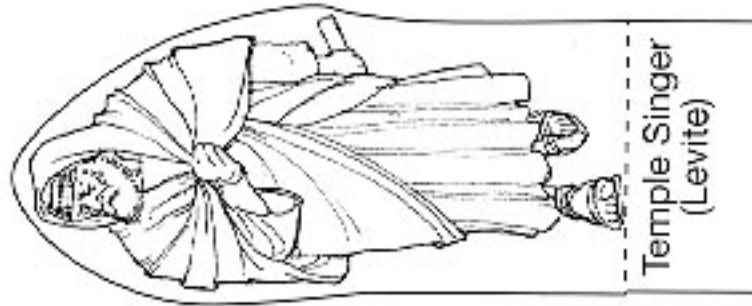
Samaritan



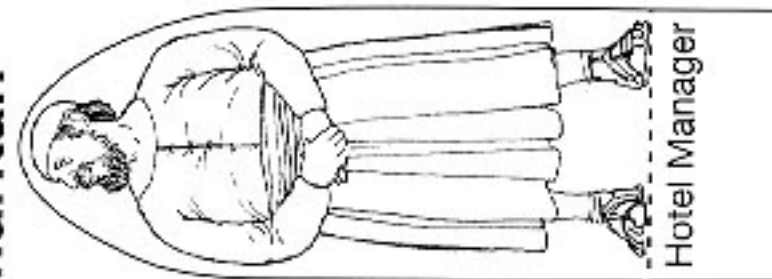
Merchant



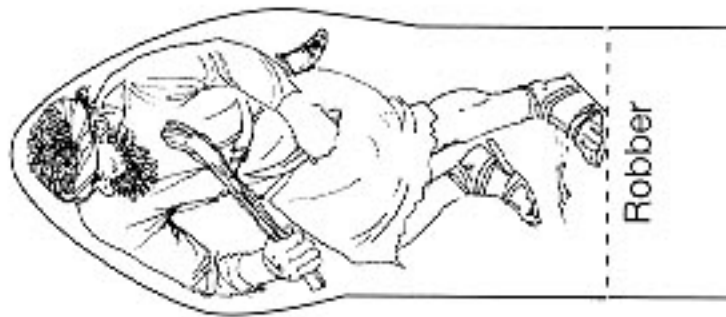
Priest



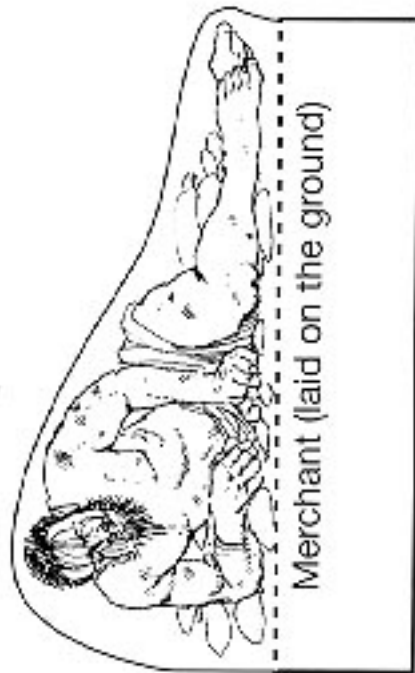
Temple Singer
(Levite)



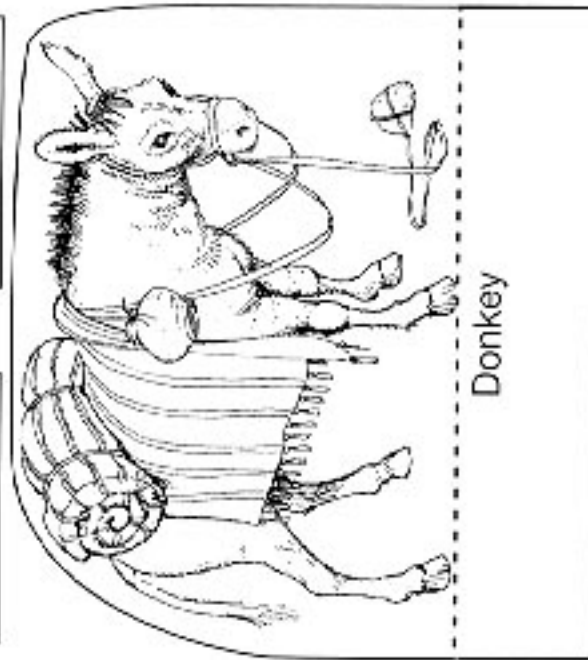
Hotel Manager



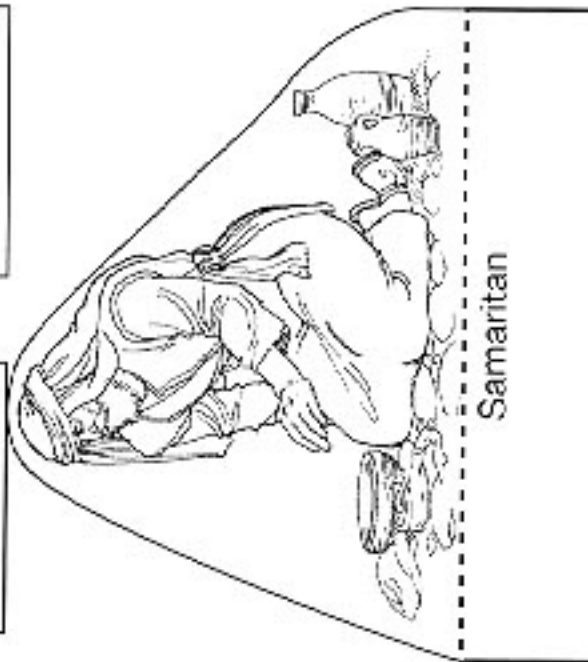
Robber



Merchant (laid on the ground)



Donkey



Samaritan