9 Teacher preparation

9.1 INTRODUCTION

The teacher’s preparation to be able to teach Biblical Studies at school starts when he takes it as a subject at university. His study and preparation is rounded off by taking Subject Didactics for the Higher Education Diploma (HED). This facet of the teacher’s preparation will not be discussed here as it is not directly related to the teaching of the subject in the classroom.

The teacher’s preparation to teach his subject successfully is an important aspect of successful teaching. In his preparation the teacher has to pay attention to two facets:

° He must keep abreast of Biblical Studies as a science.
° He must prepare himself for teaching the subject.

9.2 TEACHERS MUST KEEP ABREAST OF THE LATEST SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE

A Biblical Studies teacher is supposed to keep abreast of Biblical Studies as a science, from which teaching content is selected to be taught at school. Like all other sciences, Biblical Studies shows a course of development, with which teachers ought to keep abreast by means of continued study. Through his study the teacher ought to be able to relate the science and the way in which knowledge should be imparted to pupils.

Teaching theories that are formulated in respect of teaching Biblical Studies should take into consideration the complexity of learning content that is taught. Because they are practically involved in teaching, teachers can make a valuable contribution to the formulation of teaching techniques in Biblical Studies through their continual studies. These teachers can make a valuable contribution so that the teaching is undertaken in such a way the examples selected for teaching content is made accessible in the best possible way(s). Before starting to teach, it is necessary to reflect on how meaningful the content will be in the anthropological-sociocultural milieu in which it is presented.
On the basis of his continual study the teacher must keep informed as to the extent to which the scientific content he brings to his teaching will make Biblical Studies more accessible to the pupil. To be able to do this, the teacher is obliged to read books or journals regularly which deal with this aspect of Biblical Studies and then to reflect on the extent to which what he has read applies to his situation. This theoretical preparation equips the teacher to give his attention to more practical preparation for teaching his subject, Biblical Studies (Beckmann 1978:10-11 and Geisler 1979:12).

Teachers who neglect to keep abreast of the theoretical aspect of teaching Biblical Studies have no contribution to make to the actual teaching of the subject. These teachers allow themselves to be led by Biblical Studies syllabuses and prescribed books. Those who do keep abreast of teaching theories, however, are able to interpret the syllabus and the textbook(s) so that the teaching presented in the subject is enriched. These teachers consult Van der Ven (1982), for instance, to give attention through self-study to topics such as

- evaluating the starting situation in a lesson presentation (Van der Ven 1982:661-662); and
- practical formation of Biblical Studies pupils (Van der Ven 1982:446-450).

Studying the above and similar topics in this book and other literature regarding teaching Biblical Studies enriches insight into teaching the subject. Such enriched insight enables teachers to prepare themselves better for the practical teaching they are about to undertake - their teaching as such should benefit.

9.3 PREPARATION FOR THE PRACTICAL TEACHING OF BIBLICAL STUDIES

9.3.1 Introduction

Beckmann (1979:10) points out that the teacher's preparation for presenting a lesson in no way guarantees the success of the teaching situation. Without preparing for a lesson, however, there is much less chance of presenting a lesson successfully.

9.3.2 Subject policy in teaching Biblical Studies

While preparing for a lesson, the teacher is obliged to take into account the subject policy in regard to Biblical Studies. In this regard various aspects have to be considered:
The nature and structure, including the objectives of Biblical Studies teaching, which are set out in Section B.

The relationship between Biblical Studies and other school subjects, such as History and Geography. Both these subjects fulfil a supplementary role in teaching Biblical Studies.

Chapters 2-5 also deal with the way in which Biblical Studies should be presented.

Testing and evaluating, which must be undertaken at different phases in the teaching of the subject, are discussed in chapter 6.

The way in which the teacher controls his class is related to the quality of his preparation for every lesson. A teacher who is thoroughly prepared is able to be in full control of his class since he is able to keep the pupils actively involved throughout the lesson.

9.3.3 The initial theoretical reflection

Preparation for a lesson presentation in Biblical Studies offers the basic principle for the teaching situation which enables the teacher to handle an unexpected development during the lesson. A teacher who is thoroughly prepared is ready to adapt or revise his teaching according to the situation, if necessary. The teacher who has prepared his lesson presentation has a guideline for handling the teaching situation in such a way that he can achieve predetermined objectives.

While the teacher is doing his lesson preparation, he theorises on how he will teach the learning content effectively. Only when the teacher presents the lesson in class does he apply his theoretical knowledge in practice. Teaching preparation is thus the final theoretical step in Biblical Studies teaching, where use is made of all theories to present a lesson in practice. This preparation is therefore of prime importance since it is the meeting point of all theoretical reflection that will be applied in the classroom.

The preparation for presenting a Biblical Studies lesson generally involves the learning content to be presented in the particular lesson. However, it is necessary to also take into consideration the teaching principles and teaching methods which should be relevant to a specific learning content. As indicated, the teacher's preparation should be the keystone between theory and practice in teaching Biblical Studies. And then it should take place in such a way that the theory, even if it has to be adapted on occasion, forms the basis of practice (Beckmann 1978:10-11).
In his preparation the teacher should consider the immediate objectives to be achieved through a particular lesson presentation within the framework of the remote objectives of the teaching. It is important to consider in what way the revelational-historical will be clarified by means of teaching to pupils, also taking into account the way in which pupils become receptive to those realities. To make this clarification possible, it is necessary for the teacher to plan during his lesson preparation which teaching principles and methods he will use.

The theoretical aspect of the preparation prior to presenting a lesson in Biblical Studies contributes to the realisation of teaching goals in the context of double illumination (unlocking) in respect of the revelational-historical learning content to be raised in teaching.

9.3.4 Practice-oriented preparation for teaching Biblical Studies

After completing the aforementioned theoretical consideration, it is necessary, on that basis, to consider a lesson presentation in a practice-oriented way. The preceding theoretical reflection finds its fulfilment in practice-oriented reflection so that teaching based on theory is accomplished.

Practice-oriented consideration in preparing a lesson of a theoretical nature only becomes practice when the teacher actually presents the lesson and allows it to take shape. The practical application of this reflection will show to what extent the theory is valid in practice. This can be explained as follows:

It has been decided theoretically to make use of visual aids in the form of transparencies in the lesson presentation. The theoretical decision now needs to be implemented in a practice-oriented theoretical way. Transparencies are designed to present facets of the lesson visually. When designing the transparencies the teacher theorises on the way in which the visual presentation of the particular learning content will promote knowledge and understanding.

When the transparency is used in teaching Biblical Studies the theory is applied in practice. Teachers could experience the following:

- The theoretical reflection which led to the decision to use transparencies in the presentation of a lesson was correct in principle. Transparencies must necessarily be used to explain specific realities during the lesson. The effectiveness of the transparency in the application can be spoiled because the teacher does not succeed in making optimal use of it. Thus there is the possibility that the design of the concepts could be presented visually in a way that the pupils would not be able to grasp. Furthermore, there is a possibility that a transparency is designed in respect of a reality
that is easily explained, and therefore the transparency was not really
necessary. Yet a fact which the teacher interprets as being easy, is experi­
enced as difficult by pupils. The transparency which should have been
designed for such a case, might have been left out.

° A transparency which is intended to convey a visual image of a specific
revelational-historical fact does not succeed in doing so, in spite of the
teacher’s explanation. Concepts of the revelational-historical learning
content as depicted on the transparency are then not clarified. The trans­
parency thus makes no meaningful contribution to the course of the les­
on. A decision taken in the theoretical phase of teaching preparation is
shown to be faulty in the practice of teaching Biblical Studies.

The theoretical decision is taken to apply the teaching principle of self­
activity in a lesson. From this decision it follows that in the practice-oriented
phase of the teacher’s preparation the teacher will plan the way in which self­
activity will be applied in the lesson concerned. There are various possible
outcomes to the practical implementation of what up to this point has only
been theory:

° The lesson, of which the self-activity phase is a component, proceeds
smoothly according to prior theoretical planning. Self-activity contributed
significantly to unfolding the learning contents in Biblical Studies. The
theory in the preparation phase of the lesson was applied successfully in
practice.

° The self-activity phase of the lesson does not make the expected sig­
nificant contribution envisaged in the theoretical phase of the prepara­
tion. This phase of the lesson was not a complete failure, but did not
measure up to overall expectation. The learning content involved in the
self-activity was not unfolded successfully. The theoretical decision to
apply self-activity was essentially wrong.

Gaps could probably also be shown in the practice-oriented reflection con­
cerning the introduction and application of pupil activity to the overall course
of the lesson. A shortcoming in the practice-oriented teaching preparation
has emerged in practice. The inadequacy of the self-activity phase probably
indicates that learning content of the revelational-historical that was involved
in this phase was not suitable at all times.

Practice-oriented reflection in the teacher’s preparation ought to consider
the nature of the learning content when theorising about its application. If, in
practice-oriented reflection, no way can be found to implement a decision
taken in the theoretical reflection, that decision is clearly wrong.
9.3.5 Practical problems that impede the teacher’s preparation

When the teacher is preparing a lesson, he must take into consideration that practical teaching takes place in a multitude of heterogeneous teaching situations. Among other things, the following could emerge:

(a) Teaching the same learning contents in consecutive years shows that the two consecutive class groups are not equally gifted. Particular aspects of the same learning content which one class group found difficult is interpreted as easy by the next year’s class.

(b) Teaching the same learning content to two groups of the same class, such as Std IX A and IX B, the same year shows that comprehension does not occur in the same way. Teaching should be adapted in such a way then that it is related to the comprehension and ability of each separate class group.

The well-prepared teacher is equipped to overcome the problems in (a) and/or (b). He can do this by allowing his planning - begun in his preparation - to adapt to the problems encountered in practice in teaching Biblical Studies.

(c) In his teaching presentation the teacher does not always succeed equally well in conveying learning content effectively, in spite of thorough teaching preparation. This could be due to the following reasons - to mention only a few:

° the human inability of teachers to maintain a uniformly high or effective level of teaching at all times; and

° interruptions caused by pupils in the course of teaching: a pupil’s question which holds up the planned course of teaching, or pupils who neglected to study the previous learning content sufficiently so that they are now prevented from being able to follow the subject content presently under discussion.

It is precisely the unexpected turn a lesson sometimes takes that the teacher who is prepared can handle with confidence. On the basis of his preparation, such a teacher is often able to capitalise on that type of situation to promote the lesson being presented.

9.3.6 Summary

A teacher who has prepared his lesson has taken the necessary precautions to be able to present the relevant learning content successfully according to the stipulated objectives. Because of his preparation the teacher can approach his teaching in Biblical Studies confidently because he knows exactly
what he is going to teach and how he wishes to present it. The basic aspects listed below must be taken into account in the course of preparation.

9.4 SOME BASIC ASPECTS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT DURING PREPARATION

9.4.1 Explanation

While the teacher is preparing his lesson, there are specific fixed teaching principles and methods of which he may not lose sight. These principles and methods lay the foundation for successful lesson presentation.

9.4.2 Important basic teaching principles and methods in teaching preparation for Biblical Studies

9.4.2.1 Traditional teaching principle

In the preparation of a lesson the traditional teaching principle is the starting-point of all teaching that is presented. The following should be considered:

° An easy beginning motivates the pupils to participate in what is being presented to them. This easy beginning counts with regard to questions and learning content in a lesson presentation. Pupils in the lower category of their grade level especially must be able to take part during at least the first half of the presentation of the learning content.

° Questions set in the reinforcement phase must be planned in such a way that the easy questions at the start become systematically more difficult. Pupils who have paid the necessary attention during the course of the lesson should be able to answer approximately half of the questions correctly. This does mean that the easy or easier questions will be of an inferior standard.

° The manner in which the teacher wishes to deal with abstract learning content should be planned in such a way that the initial abstract concepts are simple enough for most pupils to grasp. As the lesson proceeds these concepts systematically become more difficult so that eventually only the brightest pupils can grasp them. At the beginning of the lesson all pupils must be able to form an understanding of the abstract content.

The adherence to the traditional teaching principle in Biblical Studies must enable all pupils, if they pay adequate attention, to successfully participate in at least 50 per cent of the teaching content of a lesson presentation.
9.4.2.2 Teaching principle of perception and activity

Very often when preparing a lesson the teacher plans to apply a particular visual aid without reference to the pupil activity that should accompany it. A pupil who observes and listens passively while a teacher explains a particular learning content with a transparency only learns to a limited extent. Transparencies should be designed and the teaching based on them planned in such a way that the pupils are actively involved in the teaching.

Activity that follows from looking at a transparency or another form of visual aid should be such that pupils can acquire a better insight into and grasp the learning content concerned. To combine activity with observation requires well thought out planning from the teacher when he is preparing the presentation of his lesson.

Observation without activity usually implies that the visual aid (transparency) is only being presented for the sake of visual display.

9.4.2.3 Applying the question-and-answer method

The question-and-answer method is applied during the introductory and presentation phases of a lesson to determine the pupils’ progress and the success of the teacher’s teaching. These questions, which play a decisive role in the supervision of successful teaching, must be closely planned during teaching preparation. A number of factors must be taken into account when planning the questions.

° Off-the-cuff questions that are asked in the course of a lesson are seldom, if ever, effective. Questions must be planned beforehand when preparing a lesson.

° A question should motivate a pupil to such an extent that he gives an answer of at least one full sentence. These questions ought to prepare pupils to be able to answer short written questions in tests or examinations. For example:

Who called Abraham to go to the promised land?

*Answer:* God.

This question and answer are of little value.

Why did Abraham move out of Ur?

*Answer:* Because God commanded him to go to a land that He would show him.
In the first question the answer expected from the pupils formed part of the question. The second question was set in such a way as to test pupils' knowledge of the events.

- A question may not precede the learning content which still has to be taught in the lesson. Such a question, which the pupil cannot answer, serves no purpose.

In the introductory phase of a lesson on "theocracy", the question is asked, "What does the word ‘theocracy’ mean?" The meaning of the word which is the subject of the lesson thus does not test the pupils' existing knowledge.

(a) Can you name two Judges?
(b) Who appointed the Judges?

These two questions help to determine the existing knowledge on which to build learning content with regard to "theocracy".

Short questions in the form of problems that are set especially to Higher Grade pupils in the introductory phase must be of such a nature that the pupils can answer them if they have the necessary knowledge. Problems are intended to test advanced insight and understanding.

*The functionality of questions in a Biblical Studies lesson is closely linked to their precise formulation.*

**9.4.2.4 Applying the discussion method**

The teacher who wishes to use the discussion method must plan it very carefully in his preparation. In such a discussion the aim should be to let pupils talk about a particular topic in Biblical Studies which has already been covered with them. The pupils should mainly discuss the topic while the teacher should play a supportive role, when necessary. To launch such a discussion meaningfully, the following fundamental aspects have to be taken into consideration:

- To start with the easy facts related to the topic must be discussed. The teacher launches the discussion by means of questions. As the discussion progresses, the teacher's questions are related to facts which become increasingly difficult. Initially most of the pupils are able to participate in the discussion. Gradually fewer and fewer pupils are involved in the discussion because the realities under discussion become too difficult for them. Participation in the discussion should be organised in such a way that especially those pupils who are unable to discuss the more difficult
facts should be given the opportunity of taking part at the beginning of the discussion.

- In the course of the discussion, transparencies which illustrated the relevant facts during the lesson presentation could be utilised. Pupils can now make use of these transparencies to explain points of discussion. By means of the transparency, pupils can show how well they can expound their knowledge. However, the possibility of erroneous deduction from the transparency cannot be excluded - in this case the visual aid was less successful and the teacher will have to rectify the matter. Such a transparency should not be used in future lessons.

- Questions by the teacher which form the starting-point of a discussion should be carefully planned when preparing the lesson. A discussion is doomed to failure if questions determining the meaningful progression of a discussion do not fulfil their purpose.

- Discussions focused on a single topic need not take longer than five or six minutes. Guidance provided by the teacher's questions will determine to what extent core facts of a topic can be discussed and a conclusion reached. Brief discussions of a topic have more meaning than a long discussion that gradually becomes meaningless.

The aim of a discussion is to ascertain whether pupils have grasped a particular section of the learning content. A further aim is to get pupils to voice their ideas in order to get the discussion going meaningfully.

9.4.2.5 Summary

No teacher should present a lesson which he has not prepared. Because the teacher who has prepared knows what and how he is going to teach, he is equipped to present his lesson meaningfully. If something should happen to disturb the lesson he has prepared, he is able to overcome it so that the lesson can continue on course again as planned.
Section D

Presentation of the lesson
10 Presentation of the lesson in Biblical Studies

10.1 INTRODUCTION

When a Biblical Studies teacher presents a lesson, he is applying theory in practice. Practice is the proof of successful theorising. Teachers starting to teach Biblical Studies should keep in mind that the perfect Biblical Studies lesson has not been given. But this does not mean that the teacher is incapable of giving a good lesson.

Some important practical aspects need to be considered when presenting a Biblical Studies lesson. Note the following:

10.1.1 Perspective of the layman

Teachers should take into account that pupils find themselves in the position of approaching the learning content from the point of view of a layman. Teachers, with their advanced knowledge and experience, should be able to succeed in addressing the pupils' thinking and comprehension in the presentation of the lesson. This does not mean that the quality and standard of prescribed learning content should be lowered. What does have to happen though is that revelational-historical contents must be worded in such a way that pupils become receptive to the reality of the revelational-historical so that those realities will be made accessible to them (Kuiper 1980:292).

10.1.2 Answering questions

When answering pupils' questions during and after the lesson, the teacher must bear in mind that the pupil is a layman in the area of Biblical Studies. Teachers must answer a pupil's question so that he is able to comprehend the response, which is related to his development in Biblical Studies. Pupils expect teachers to answer their questions in such a way that the problems they have in Biblical Studies are clarified (Van der Ven 1982:559).
Communication (conversation) takes place between teachers and pupils in all phases of a Biblical Studies lesson when questions are asked and answered. There is even stronger communication when specific topics are discussed under the teacher's guidance. Such dialogue in a lesson is important because through the discussion the teacher can determine whether pupils experience the relevant learning contents as facts only or, in faith, as of a revelational-historical nature. Thielicke points out that: "Either faith is 'real', i.e. it exists in self-realization or it does not exist at all and is nothing but a 'lie'."

Notwithstanding the fact that Biblical Studies is an academic subject which must meet examination requirements, faith in God ought to be reflected as an intrinsic quality of Revelational-historical learning content. If, besides their academic knowledge, pupils can experience the varied Biblical Studies learning content in faith, they are achieving self-realisation as believing Christians (irrespective of their church affiliation). In a lesson on "The Lord's Prayer", the first prayer should be experienced in such a way that "... the Father in heaven, who has become your Father, is perfect; therefore you be perfect" (Thielicke 1966:53).

Interwoven with academic knowledge Biblical Studies pupils experience knowledge of the faith of their heavenly Father and on that basis they arrive at a special relationship with God.

Through communication in the teaching of Biblical Studies the teacher establishes whether like him, his pupils have come to a special relationship with the Bible (Van Huyssteen 1986:194). De Jong (1989:123) warns that the "Christian can be full of good intentions and can earnestly search the Scripture, but can and often will miss the mark".

The quotation from De Jong underlines that Biblical Studies teaching that is not undertaken in faith will fail. A study of the Bible that is undertaken outside of faith in Jesus Christ cannot succeed because it is a study that does not take into account the revelational-historical content.

Communication between teachers and pupils in a lesson is of prime importance in establishing whether the immediate objectives (which were predetermined) have been achieved. Pupils' answers or the nature of the discussions indicate clearly how far the serious study of the Bible, as De Jong put it, corresponds to the immediate objectives.
10.1.4 Summary

When the teacher presents a lesson, he is striving to present a good lesson on the basis of his preparation. It has to be kept in mind that he is working with laymen whose academic knowledge of the Bible he wishes to improve. At the same time a relationship with God could be established.

10.2 SOME EXAMPLES OF LESSON PRESENTATION

10.2.1 Explanation

The aim in presenting a number of lessons in Biblical Studies is to set out and explain a lesson in detail. This setting out is merely a guideline for how a lesson could be presented and hopefully offers the beginner some guidance and the more experienced teacher something to consider. No reference is made to teaching principles or methods in these lessons. When studying these lessons, the teacher should think about the principles and methods which have been applied.

10.2.2 Differences between the Synoptic gospels and the Gospel according to John

10.2.2.1 Existent knowledge

It is presumed that pupils have a knowledge of the Synoptic gospels and the Synoptic problem, which has been dealt with in previous lessons.

10.2.2.2 Introductory phase

Questions are posed to ascertain existent knowledge:

(a) Why is the Gospel according to John not placed between Matthew and Mark or between Mark and Luke?

(b) Why is the Gospel according to John placed between Luke and Acts, when Luke and Acts are written by the same author?

(c) Explain why John the Baptist could not have written the Gospel according to John.

(d) What other book in the Bible is written by the same author of the Gospel according to John?

(e) In what way does the Gospel according to John refer to the creation in Genesis?
The first four questions are aimed at testing knowledge about the person John, the author of the book. If necessary, this knowledge has to be supplemented. The fifth question, which is the transition to the presentation phase of the lesson, obliges pupils to look up the answer in the Bible. Based on what they read in John 1 the teacher then starts the presentation phase.

10.2.2.3 Presentation phase

(a) Pupils read how John 1:1-3 refers to Genesis.

(b) Ask pupils how John differs from the other Gospels (Synoptic Gospels) in this respect. Pupils must attempt to establish this difference for themselves. Based on what the pupils find out and, where necessary, with the teacher's help, the first difference is determined.

(c) Refer to John 2:13-17, where the purification of the Temple is described. When do the Synoptics describe it? Is John referring here to another occasion when Jesus purified the Temple? The reference to the time of the event in John differs from that of the Synoptics, but it is actually the same event.

On the grounds of the time difference shown here, the time difference regarding John's account of the Passover is then explained with reference to the Synoptics.

(d) Let us see whether there are parables in the Gospel according to John like those in the Synoptics. Divide the Gospel into five parts so that each group of pupils has to look up about four books. The headings at the top of chapters and subsections help the pupils to find the required information. In John 10:1-21 we read of the parable of the Good Shepherd and in John 15:1-5 of the parable of the true vine. These parables are not exactly the same as those in the Synoptics, and not one of the parables mentioned in the Synoptic gospels is recorded in the Gospel according to John.

(e) Point out to pupils with the necessary Scriptural references that according to John's Gospel Jesus worked and acted mainly in Jerusalem. According to the Synoptics, Jesus worked mainly in the North of Israel in the vicinity of the Sea of Galilee and He went up to Jerusalem to end His task on earth.

(f) Then point out details that are to be found in John which do not appear in the Synoptics.

The time limit of a lesson period prevents pupils from determining all the differences themselves between the Gospel according to John and the Synoptics. The task in respect of the parables takes up a considerable amount of time already.
(g) Pupils must be told that these differences which they have stipulated should not lead them to the conclusion that there are contradictions in the Bible. As in the case of the Synoptic problem, we are dealing here with different authors who wrote down their version of the work of Jesus - and under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Because John wrote his Gospel long after the others, he decided not to present a mere repetition of their account. He decided instead to supplement their accounts, hence the differences in John. In fact, John's account of Jesus' actions does not conflict with those of the other evangelists.

10.2.2.4 Reinforcement phase

As already indicated, in this phase questions can be put to pupils in different ways. The following questions serve as examples:

(a) An example of a multiple-choice question

The purification of the temple as described by John indicates that
(a) Jesus purified the temple twice;
(b) John recorded the event at a later stage than the other evangelists;
(c) John no longer knew exactly when it happened because he wrote his book so late;
(d) John regarded the event as being of great importance, and therefore recorded it early in his book.

All the options contain a possible element of truth. For a long time scholars thought that Jesus did in fact purify the temple twice. Alternatives (c) and (d) contain an element of truth, in relation to what was discussed in the lesson. Pupils who paid close attention will know that (b) is the correct answer.

(b) An example of a number of short questions

(a) Explain why John's indication of the time of the Passover differs from the other Evangelists.
(b) In what way does the beginning of John's Gospel differ from the other Evangelists?
(c) Name the parables that are found in John's Gospel.
(d) How does John's Gospel differ from the other Evangelists with regard to the location where Jesus mainly worked.
(c) Explain how John's calculation of time caused a difference in his indication of time.

All the above questions are aimed at knowledge of the content of the lesson. They are thus aimed chiefly at Standard Grade pupils.

(c) An example of a number of questions requiring the application of concepts

(a) Give a possible reason or reasons why the Gospel according to John differs from the other Gospels.

(b) Could it be said that John's Gospel conflicts with the Synoptics? Give reasons for your answer.

(c) Give reasons why you would say that John used or did not use information different from the other Evangelists.

In these last three questions Higher Grade pupils are expected to apply their knowledge and understanding in giving their answers.

(d) Questions to be answered at home

As a follow-up to the reinforcement phase related to the presentation of the lesson the pupils can answer the following questions at home. These questions are drawn up to give pupils a basis for their revision.

Standard Grade pupils:

(a) Name the details described by John which do not appear in other Gospels.

(b) Explain why the purification of the temple as described by John is not a second purification of the temple.

Higher Grade pupils:

"The information in John's Gospel conflicts with that given in the Synoptic Gospels." Discuss this statement critically.

(e) Comments on lesson presentation

° A criticism of this lesson presentation could be that no use is made of visual aids. It was of such a nature that the lesson could be presented successfully without visual aids.

° The lesson presentation centred on reading the Bible and reference work on the Bible. In this way the knowledge of Biblical Studies came into its own right.
A criticism could be that too little learning content was presented in the lesson. On the contrary, the mistake that many beginners make is trying to present too much in a limited time. Rather present four or five main points, as in this lesson, that pupils can really learn thoroughly, than present ten facts, which pupils can only master poorly, if at all, because of the quantity.

Pupils’ self-activity has been applied within the limits of possibility.

10.2.3 "You shall not steal" (Higher Grade abstract learning content)

10.2.3.1 Existent knowledge

Pupils ought to be familiar with the commandment that forbids stealing. Even if they do not know the exact number of the commandment, they do know that they may not unlawfully take something from another.

10.2.3.2 Introductory phase

Ask the following questions to determine existent knowledge:

(a) What happens in everyday life if someone steals?
(b)(i) Is it possible to steal except by actually taking something from another?
(ii) How does this kind of theft or stealing happen?

Because pupils in all probability have a good existing knowledge of this topic, it need not be tested intensively.

Question (b)(ii) provides a general introduction to the lesson. Pupils' attention is drawn to the fact that it is possible to "steal" without taking something away from another. A person can also "steal" with his eyes: for instance by copying from another in school; by passing someone else's idea off as your own without acknowledging your source, and other similar examples.

10.2.3.3 Presentation phase

(a) Stealing as mentioned in various places in the Old Testament

(a) Exodus 22:6 - Stealing cattle (punishment)
(b) Exodus 20:16 - Stealing people (punishment)
(c) Deuteronomy 24:7 - Stealing people (punishment)
(d) Proverbs 6:30-31 - Stealing if one is hungry (punishment)
(e) Jeremiah 23:29-31 - Stealing the Word of the Lord
(f) Malachi 3:8-10 - Stealing by not giving tithes to God - God is robbed.

The form of stealing is indicated in an "ascending line": cattle, people and the property of God. Attention is drawn to the fact that theft, which is a fundamental sin, constantly increases in proportion.

(b) Stealing as written about in the New Testament

(a) Acts 5:1-10 - Ananias and Saphira deceitfully withhold money which was pledged - the punishment they consequently receive.


(c) 1 Timothy 6:10 - Paul's pronouncement on avarice: "For the love of money is a source of all kinds of evil; and because some have been so eager to have it, they have wandered away from the faith...".

In the above examples pupils are introduced to the evil of avarice with reference to the Old Testament and how it leads to a wrong form of "desire". The correct form of "desire" is to "long for" eternal life and all that goes with it.

(c) Positive injunction hidden in the commandment

(a) As early as Genesis 3:19 God commands: "By the sweat of your brow shall you eat bread ..."

As a result of the Fall God punishes man (Genesis 3:17) so that he will earn his keep with "difficulty".

(b) In 2 Thessalonians 3:10 Paul writes: "Whoever refuses to work must not be allowed to eat."

Paul teaches his readers that it is the command of God that man must work.

(c) In Deuteronomy 8:3 it is written that "...man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from GOD".

In Matthew 4:4 and Luke 4:4 Jesus refers to these words when He answers the devil who had tempted Him to change stones into bread. What this means is that man must work, but all his labour must be of service to God. Man's life does not depend on work, but on God.

The positive interpretation of this commandment may not attempt to revoke the original negative statement, but should supplement it. Gispen (s.a.:72) points out that God, who is the absolute Owner of everything, has made man His steward. In this capacity man may not steal in any way whatsoever.
10.2.3.4 Reinforcement phase

Since this lesson interprets abstract learning content which consists of more comprehensive totalities, it is useless to split up the separate wholes into smaller components for the sake of questioning. For instance it serves no purpose to ask what Exodus 22:6 says about stealing cattle or what Malachi 3:8-10 says about tithing. In this reinforcement phase it is more useful to ask questions which pupils have to answer by means of longer answers or even arguments.

The following questions may be asked:

(a) Explain, quoting relevant texts, what action was taken in the Old Testament with regard to stealing cattle, people and the Word of God.
(b) Discuss how Ananias and Saphira broke the commandment which forbids stealing.
(c) Explain how Christ explained that avarice is also a transgression of the commandment.
(d) Explain how Paul links up in 2 Thessalonians 3:10 with what God commanded in Genesis 3:19.
(e) With reference to appropriate texts, indicate whether you agree that man’s life does not depend on work but on God.

The abstract nature of the learning content means that questions in the reinforcement phase require pupils to be able to incorporate their knowledge and understanding into their answers. As a follow-up to the reinforcement phase and related to the lesson presentation, pupils can answer the following question as a basis for revision they have to undertake:

(a) Explain how Paul’s pronouncement in 1 Timothy 6:10 has a bearing on the parable of the rich fool in Luke 12:13-21.
(b) Proverbs 6:30-31 refers to a person who steals because he is hungry. In Thessalonians 3:10 Paul writes that a person who does not work is not permitted to eat.

Explain whether these two texts complement or are in contrast with each other. Pay special attention to Proverbs 6.31.

The two questions above highlight the eighth commandment once more. Pupils are required to take the positive connotations of the commandment into account as well.
10.2.3.5 Comments on the presentation of the lesson

- Because of the abstract nature of the learning content the teacher was obliged to impress the specific texts under discussion on the pupils. The nature of the learning content prevented the pupils from doing reference work in the Bible themselves to be able to come to specific conclusions. Therefore there was not any real self-activity to speak of.

- At first glance it would appear that too much learning content may have been presented to pupils. Twelve texts in all are referred to, each of which had to be explained. The texts referred to are short and together form a main section. Only three main sections were discussed.

- After pupils have been taught as thoroughly as possible in the presentation phase, self-activity was employed in the reinforcement phase. Based on the previous lesson phase pupils had to answer the questions on their own in the reinforcement phase. Those who did not pay attention, or for some reason did not understand so well, have to be assisted by the teacher to answer the questions.

10.3 A FINAL WORD

Lesson presentations in Biblical Studies are determined by the learning content to be taught and especially by the teacher's approach in his presentation. The lesson on the differences between the Synoptics and the Gospel according to John could be presented equally successfully, for example, by means of a table showing the contrasts. In this way the differences unfold one by one for the pupils. In this method, however, pupil self-activity is not quite so evident.

The two examples of lessons presented represent a basic principle according to which

- a differentiated lesson is presented for Higher and Standard Grade pupils;
- a lesson is presented only for Higher Grade pupils.

No further examples are presented because the other lessons would follow more or less the same pattern as the examples above.
Bibliography


Lombard, J. C. 1977. *In Woord en wetenskap.* Bloemfontein: VCHO.


