



# The Teacher's Pet

## It's Raining Cats and Dogs

by Jeanetta Watkins



If someone were to tell you that it's raining cats and dogs, you would assume they meant it was really coming a downpour. If you told a small child that, however, they would run to the window fully expecting to see animals falling from the sky. That's because children are very literal beings. They haven't learned the concept of abstract thought. This is why paying attention to your vocabulary is so very important.

I've got a collection of stories about things that have happened in children's Bible classes, and misunderstanding of the teacher's words make up a good number. One teacher was teaching about Joseph and Mary's "flight" into Egypt, and some of the children thought she meant they had taken an airplane ride. Another child thought God could only use his left hand because the teacher had said that Jesus was "sitting on the right hand of God." Oh, you'll find a few children scattered here and there that might know that obnoxious means something that is distasteful or rude, but more will understand what you are saying if you select a word that's in keeping with the vocabulary of their age group. To illustrate the point, compare the two versions of the same story to be told to a pre-school class. Which do you think most of the children would understand?

### Example 1

When time came to select a new king, Samuel traveled to the city of Bethlehem. He arrived at the house of a man called Jesse, who was from the ancestry of Benjamin.

After looking over the sons of this great patriarch, he asked if there was another son. Jesse told him he had one, called David, that was in the field pasturing the sheep. Samuel told him to send for him.

When David came in Samuel knew he was a righteous person and one that contemplated on God's word regularly. He knew that David would make a formidable king.

He had David kneel down and anointed him to be king over Israel. God had told Saul that because he had been unfaithful, his kingdom would be overthrown and another would reign instead. This didn't happen right away, but a period of time elapsed before God's prophecy came true.

### Example 2

When time came to select a new king, Samuel went to the city of Bethlehem. He went to the house of a man named Jesse.

After looking at the boys of this good person, he asked if there was another boy someplace. Jesse told him that he had one more boy, named David, who was out in the field taking care of the sheep. Samuel told him to call him.

When David came in Samuel knew he was a good person and one that thought about God a lot. He knew David would be a wonderful king.

He told David to bow down, and he made him King. God had told King Saul that because he had not listened to him, he was not going to let him be king any more, but another person would be the king. This didn't happen right away, but later on what God had said would happen came true.

The minds of young children are like sponges, and a Bible class teacher has the wonderful opportunity to fill their minds with a love of God and His Word. If you want to be able to do this to the fullest, remember the language capabilities of the age group you are teaching and keep your lessons understandable.